



For Immediate Release
Contact: Jessica Trubowitch
415-977-7410
Cell: 415-305-7753
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The Jewish Community Relations Council opposes a biased and divisive resolution related to the Gaza Flotillas to be introduced at the San Francisco Board of Supervisors

The San Francisco based Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, Sonoma, Alameda and Contra Costa counties, which represents over seventy synagogues and Jewish organizations, strongly opposes the resolution "Freedom Flotilla and Gaza Blockade" being introduced to the Board of Supervisors today, Tuesday, June 15, 2010, by Supervisor John Avalos. The JCRC released the following statement from JCRC President Ruvim Braude, and Executive Director Rabbi Doug Kahn:

The Jewish community was truly saddened by the deaths and injuries that occurred during the Gaza flotilla interdiction on one of six boats in the flotilla when Israeli soldiers were attacked upon descending onto the deck. At the same time we strongly believe that the proposed resolution does not belong before the Board of Supervisors and that the resolution is extremely biased and one-sided in its statements.

The proposed resolution is divisive and pits San Francisco community members against one another on an issue happening thousands of miles away. It also creates a hostile environment for the Jewish community living in San Francisco as it unfairly targets the Jewish State. The Board of Supervisors should be working to unify San Franciscan, not polarize communities from one another.

This resolution does nothing to bring about a peaceful solution to conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Rather, this resolution will embolden the radical elements in Hamas and potentially bring more bloodshed and heartache in the region.

The one sided nature of this resolution is very concerning to our community. The proposed resolution does not address key facts, including:

1. The organizers of the flotillas, The Turkish Foundation for Human Rights Liberties and Humanitarian Relief (IHH) and the Free Gaza Movement have known and demonstrated ties to Hamas, a radical Islamist terror organization. The Gaza flotilla organizer Greta Berlin told Agence France –Presse on May 27, "This mission is not about delivering humanitarian supplies, it's about breaking Israel's siege" on Gaza.
2. Essential aid does enter into Gaza through Israel each week. On average 15,000 tons of goods per week, including heavy duty diesel for the Gaza power station, clothing and footwear, propane gas for cooking, and other items. On average 500 Gazans enter Israel each week for medical treatment at Israeli hospitals and clinics.

At a time when there are so many challenges looming for the City of San Francisco, this resolution takes away valuable time and resources from the business of the City.

Other faith communities also oppose the resolution:

"At a time of crisis and human challenge, people should turn to each other and not on each other with finger-pointing. We should come to common ground, get the facts and move toward sensible resolution. But the resolution is very divisive and the Board of Supervisors should focus its attention on the immediate crises in our local community," **Dr. Amos C. Brown, Senior Pastor, Third Baptist Church, San Francisco.**

"I am greatly concerned that such a statement by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors will, far from having any positive effect in the Middle East, only foment aggression here in San Francisco where community leaders are working toward consensus and cooperation among these communities." **Father John Talesfore, Pastor, Saint Mary's Cathedral**

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