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For Immediate Release:

Oakland Port protest fueled by extremism, alienates our community

Monday, August 18, 2014, Jewish Community Relations Council, San Francisco - This past weekend, demonstrators turned out at the Port of Oakland with the offensive and polarizing message that "Zionism is not welcome on our coast". This was not a peace rally. This was not a demonstration in support of two states for two people. This was an overt expression of extremism, extremism that is alienating to the vast majority of Bay Area citizens including our community and has no place on our coast or anywhere else.

Sadly, this is one of many instances in which Israel has been unjustly singled out. As millions face discrimination, torture and death at the hands of ISIS, Syrian militia and other ruthless leaders and oppressors both in the Middle East and elsewhere, Israel continues to be placed under a microscope despite the egregious human rights violations taking place in countless other countries.

Beyond the harmful political implications, this demonstration has the potential to cause severe financial repercussions for the people of Oakland, who may lose significant business from shipping companies tired of political protests disrupting their loading schedules. In attempting to shut down the port, protestors thrust their political agenda upon workers who went home without doing their jobs.

Calling on demonstrators to support the "resistance in Gaza" is rallying for Hamas, a terrorist group that seeks Israel's destruction, at a time when we desperately need to rally for restored calm, allowing the people of Israel and Gaza to return to their daily lives after thousands of rockets were launched at Israel's citizens and Israel responded in self-defense. In the wake of over a month of violence, now is the time for us to unite in favor of peace and a pathway forward that will enable both Israelis and Palestinians to build a secure future.

Let us block hatred, not boats.

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