

Rep. Henry A. Waxman

H.Res. 34

January 9, 2009

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 34, a resolution that expresses solidarity with Israel in its efforts to defend itself from Hamas. The resolution also calls on the President to work for a durable and sustainable ceasefire, stresses the need to address the humanitarian situation in Gaza and emphasizes the importance of protecting innocent civilians to the maximum extent possible.

The Hamas leadership has held the Palestinian people hostage to its terrorist aspirations. Peace negotiations have been stalled by its bloody coup against Fatah and Gaza is now in shambles because of its relentless rocket fire against Israel. If Israel is unable to stop Hamas from rearming again, hope will continue to fade for achieving an enduring two state solution with a democratic Jewish Israeli state living beside a viable, independent and democratic Palestinian state.

In the summer of 2005 Israel disengaged from Gaza entirely, unilaterally removing settlements and military installations at a great financial and political cost. One year later Israel went to war with Hezbollah, despite the Israeli Army's complete disengagement from Southern Lebanon six years earlier.

The Israeli people face a grim reality that Hamas and Hezbollah seek their destruction despite Israel's overtures of peace and tranquility. Although that does not mean Israel will not continue to take risks for peace, it is imperative that Israel and the United States continue to take all measures necessary to fight these terrorists and safeguard Israel's security.