

Julie Dachtler

From: Arik Davidyan <arikdavidyan@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 10:38 AM
To: Angel Barajas; Oscar Villegas; Mary Vixie Sandy; Jim Provenza; Lucas Frerichs
Cc: Clerkoftheboard
Subject: Yolo County Ceasefire Resolution

Dear all,

My name is Dr. Arik Davidyan, and I am a proud Davis and Yolo County resident. On October 7th, while celebrating the harvest festival in Capay Valley, I learned that over 1,200 Israeli civilians, some of which my family members and friends, were murdered, raped, and tortured. These events took place during a ceasefire. Israel is a small country with roughly 9 million citizens, and this attack profoundly shattered life and impacted many in the country. The October 7, 2023, terrorist attack is equivalent to the killing of over 40,000 Americans in a matter of hours. Hamas also kidnapped men, women, and children—even babies, into Gaza. Again, putting this in perspective, the number is roughly equal to the kidnapping of over 9,500 American civilians. The atrocities committed by Hamas were shockingly celebrated in Davis and communities across the United States.

Following these events, many leaders in local communities around the U.S., California, Yolo County, and Davis failed to condemn these events unequivocally. To make matters worse, some local leaders took steps that lacked foresight and understanding of the impact of their actions. For example, the Oakland, CA City Council considered a resolution on the Israel/Hamas War. The meeting featured over five hours of public comment plagued by antisemitic jeering and the perpetuation of revolting and dangerous conspiracy theories. Closer to home, on December 12, 2023, Davis City Council made the same mistake of bringing forward a resolution regarding the Hamas/Israeli war over the protest of the Jewish community. Activist groups advertised the meeting outside of Davis and transported their members from the Bay Area and Sacramento to Davis to flood the City Hall chambers. The meeting took hours, and the resulting resolution did nothing to alleviate the suffering of Palestinians and Israelis abroad. Instead, it resulted in splitting an already divided community further and creating a platform for antisemitism and bigotry. It was, and still is, an extremely painful event for the Jewish community in Davis that pitted neighbor against neighbor. The Davis Jewish community is still reeling from the October 7th events and our city councilmen and council the actions of women. I urge you not to make this mistake in Yolo County.

These resolutions and these messages absolve Hamas, an organization recognized by our government as a terrorist organization, of any wrongdoing and attempt to strip Israel of the basic right to self-defense that every nation has. I ask you to consider the American reaction to similar events by a bordering government. Not a single one of you would ask the US not to respond when many of its citizens are still held hostage, and the bordering government proudly calls for a repeat of the events. These resolutions are designed to promote antisemitic vitriol, agitate the community, and exacerbate the rhetoric that has already led to the meteoric rise of antisemitism. Study after study demonstrates that the vast majority of the American public supports Israel in this war against terror. While we all want hostilities to end, just 20% of Americans believe in an unconditional ceasefire that does not include removing Hamas from power and freeing all the hostages. Please do not waste public resources on this divisive, time-consuming, and pointless exercise. If you desire to make a statement regarding the events, ensure that a resolution will **condition a ceasefire in Gaza on the release of all hostages and the dismantlement of Hamas**, similar to the one passed in the EU Parliament earlier this week.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Arik

Arik Davidyan, Ph.D.

Pronouns: *He* | *Him* | *His*

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