



Rent Stabilization Board

DATE: December 4, 2023

TO: Honorable Members of the Rent Stabilization Board

FROM: Vice Chair Soli Alpert, Chair Leah Simon-Weisberg, Commissioner Dominique Walker, and Commissioner Ida Martinac

SUBJECT: Resolution Calling for an Immediate Ceasefire and End to Forced Displacement in Palestine and Israel and Honoring United Against Hate Week

Recommendation:

That the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board adopt the attached resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire and end to forced displacement in Palestine and Israel and honoring United Against Hate Week.

Background:

See attached Resolution.

Financial Impact:

None.

Name and Email Address of Contact Person:

Vice Chair Soli Alpert, RSBAlpert@cityofberkeley.info

RESOLUTION 23-30

CALLING FOR AN IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE AND END TO FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL AND HONORING UNITED AGAINST HATE WEEK

BE IT RESOLVED by the Rent Stabilization Board of the City of Berkeley as follows:

WHEREAS, November 12th to 18th was United Against Hate Week, an event started in Berkeley in 2017;¹ and

WHEREAS, on October 7th, Hamas launched an attack that killed approximately 1,200 people in southern Israel,² including hundreds of civilians, and took over 200 hostage;³ and

WHEREAS, in the weeks since October 7th, over 14,000 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli armed forces in Gaza,⁴ amounting to 1 in 200 Gazans,⁵ the vast majority civilians;⁶ and

WHEREAS, more than 6,100 of those killed in Gaza have been children,⁷ or one child killed every ten minutes according to the World Health Organization,⁸ leading Save the Children to declare that in just three weeks the number of children killed in Gaza surpassed the annual number of children killed in global conflict zones since 2019;⁹ and

WHEREAS, in addition to the thousands dead, over 1.5 million Gazans face forced displacement and homelessness;¹⁰ and

WHEREAS, as many as 200,000 Israelis have fled or evacuated towns bordering Gaza and Lebanon;¹¹ and

WHEREAS, Israel has cut off electricity, water, food, medicine, and aid to Gaza, leading Oxfam to conclude Israel is using starvation as a weapon of war;¹² and

WHEREAS, attacks by the Israeli army and settlers armed by the Israeli government against Palestinians in the West Bank have skyrocketed,¹³ including the forcible depopulation of entire villages;¹⁴ and

¹unitedagainsthateweek.org/history

²npr.org/2023/11/11/1212458974/israel-revises-death-toll-hamas-attacks-oct-7

³amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/11/israel-opt-hamas-and-other-armed-groups-must-release-civilian-hostages-and-treat-all-captives-humanely/

⁴axios.com/2023/11/27/gaza-civilian-deaths-israel-conflict-zones

⁵washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2023/gaza-rising-death-toll-civilians/

⁶ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-39

⁷ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-53

⁸reuters.com/world/middle-east/child-killed-average-every-10-minutes-gaza-says-who-chief-2023-11-10/

⁹savethechildren.net/news/gaza-3195-children-killed-three-weeks-surpasses-annual-number-children-killed-conflict-zones

¹⁰ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-reported-impact-day-33

¹¹timesofisrael.com/about-200000-israelis-internally-displaced-amid-ongoing-gaza-war-tensions-in-north/

¹²oxfam.org/en/press-releases/starvation-weapon-war-being-used-against-gaza-civilians-oxfam

¹³news.un.org/en/story/2023/11/1143087

¹⁴theintercept.com/2023/10/13/israel-settlers-gaza-palestinians-west-bank/

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WHEREAS, the mass killing of civilians in Gaza,¹⁵ the restriction on water, food, medicine, fuel, and aid to Gaza,¹⁶ and the targeted violence and displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank¹⁷ amount to a clear and ongoing campaign of collective punishment by Israel against the Palestinian people, a war crime wherein a group of people is punished for a crime committed by individual members of the group;^{18,19} and

WHEREAS, UN officials have said that the totality of the violence being committed in Gaza and the “discernibly genocidal and dehumanizing rhetoric coming from senior Israeli government officials” “point to a genocide in the making;”²⁰ and

WHEREAS, the conflict occurring today did not begin on October 7th, but rather is a continuation of the dispossession, oppression, occupation, and apartheid that the Palestinian people have been subject to by the state of Israel for decades;²¹ and

WHEREAS, the Gaza Strip, one of the most densely populated places on Earth, has been repeatedly referred to by human rights groups as “the world’s largest open-air prison” even prior to this conflict due to ongoing, unbearable living conditions imposed by the state of Israel,²² including a 16-year full air, land and sea blockade, the strict prohibition of Palestinians from leaving and entering the territory freely, and severe limitations on the availability of drinking water, electricity, and medicine;²³ and

WHEREAS, on June 17, 2021 the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board adopted Resolution 21-12, becoming the first public elected body in the nation to recognize Israeli apartheid against Palestinians as documented by myriad human rights groups and call for an end to American financial and political support for the dispossession and occupation of the Palestinian people;²⁴ and

WHEREAS, despite this ongoing oppression, the United States has sent more than \$130 billion in military aid to Israel to date, currently \$3.8 billion annually,²⁵ with virtually no

¹⁵[reuters.com/world/un-experts-say-israels-strikes-gaza-amount-collective-punishment-2023-10-12/](https://www.reuters.com/world/un-experts-say-israels-strikes-gaza-amount-collective-punishment-2023-10-12/)

¹⁶[amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/israel-opt-israel-must-lift-illegal-and-inhumane-blockade-on-gaza-as-power-plant-runs-out-of-fuel/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/israel-opt-israel-must-lift-illegal-and-inhumane-blockade-on-gaza-as-power-plant-runs-out-of-fuel/)

¹⁷[972mag.com/west-bank-gaza-war-protests/](https://www.972mag.com/west-bank-gaza-war-protests/)

¹⁸[guide-humanitarian-law.org/content/article/3/collective-punishment/](https://www.guide-humanitarian-law.org/content/article/3/collective-punishment/)

¹⁹[casebook.icrc.org/a_to_z/glossary/collective-punishments](https://www.casebook.icrc.org/a_to_z/glossary/collective-punishments)

²⁰[ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/gaza-un-experts-call-international-community-prevent-genocide-against](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/gaza-un-experts-call-international-community-prevent-genocide-against)

²¹[hrw.org/report/2021/04/27/threshold-crossed/israeli-authorities-and-crimes-apartheid-and-persecution](https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/04/27/threshold-crossed/israeli-authorities-and-crimes-apartheid-and-persecution)

²²[nrc.no/news/2018/april/gaza-the-worlds-largest-open-air-prison/](https://www.nrc.no/news/2018/april/gaza-the-worlds-largest-open-air-prison/)

²³[hrw.org/news/2023/10/18/israel-unlawful-gaza-blockade-deadly-children](https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/10/18/israel-unlawful-gaza-blockade-deadly-children)

²⁴records.cityofberkeley.info/PublicAccess/api/Document/AUv4r2CMIz8xcP1F6A3SalofAgnG39DpH6wJIK%C3%81CbiRfy8EqXmFOGLP2hIHZhyktOUDSyLx9qjITsvwkIJEsg%3D/

²⁵time.com/6331133/israel-gaza-biden-military-support/

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conditions or accountability,²⁶ and has increased the transfer of lethal aid during Israel's assault on Gaza;²⁷ and

WHEREAS, Islamophobic, antisemitic, and anti-Palestinian hate crimes have increased sharply in frequency since October 7th,²⁸ including the violent assault of tenant Hanaan Shahin and the murder of her six-year-old son Wadea al-Fayoume by their landlord in Chicago;²⁹ and

WHEREAS, on November the 24th, Israel and Hamas began a temporary ceasefire to allow for the exchange of some hostages and entrance of some humanitarian aid;³⁰ and

WHEREAS, truly Uniting Against Hate requires us to combat hate both at home and abroad.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board honors United Against Hate Week and recognizes and upholds the dignity and equality of all people, regardless of religion, ethnicity, race, or heritage and opposes racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, colonialism, and ethno-nationalism in all their forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board mourns the death of all civilians on October 7th and in the weeks since, Palestinian and Israeli, and opposes the forced displacement that has resulted from this conflict; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Rent Board calls on all people to recognize that Hamas and the state of Israel are distinct from the Palestinian and Israeli people and Muslim, Arab, and Jewish people across the globe, and that everyday Jews and Palestinians in the United States are not responsible for the actions of Hamas and the state of Israel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board reiterates that discrimination in housing against tenants or applicants on the basis of race, religion, creed, heritage or national origin is illegal and will not be tolerated, and that harassment, intimidation, or violence against tenants or landlords on the basis of their identity or beliefs is reprehensible and illegal in the City of Berkeley; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board welcomes the temporary ceasefire and limited exchange of hostages, but finds that it is entirely insufficient to restore peace, and so calls for Berkeley's elected representatives to demand:

- an immediate and permanent ceasefire and respect for international law;
- the unrestricted entry of humanitarian aid and emergency medical assistance into Gaza;

²⁶[reuters.com/world/no-us-conditions-security-assistance-israel-austin-says-2023-10-12/](https://www.reuters.com/world/no-us-conditions-security-assistance-israel-austin-says-2023-10-12/)

²⁷[wsj.com/world/middle-east/u-s-plans-320-million-weapons-transfer-to-israel-as-gaza-toll-mounts-7c50afd9](https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/u-s-plans-320-million-weapons-transfer-to-israel-as-gaza-toll-mounts-7c50afd9)

²⁸[reuters.com/world/us/us-antisemitic-islamophobic-incidents-surge-with-war-advocates-say-2023-10-25/](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-antisemitic-islamophobic-incidents-surge-with-war-advocates-say-2023-10-25/)

²⁹[chicagotribune.com/news/breaking/ct-czuba-indicted-wadea-al-fayoume-slaying-20231026-20231026-ak57i5xyi5ekpjvmxgvqmbqba-story.html](https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/breaking/ct-czuba-indicted-wadea-al-fayoume-slaying-20231026-20231026-ak57i5xyi5ekpjvmxgvqmbqba-story.html)

³⁰[reuters.com/world/middle-east/israelhamas-war-hostage-deal-ceasefire-gaza-2023-11-22/](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israelhamas-war-hostage-deal-ceasefire-gaza-2023-11-22/)

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- the restoration of food, water, fuel, and electricity to Gaza;
- the release of all hostages held by Hamas & Israel, including the thousands of Palestinians being indefinitely detained in Israeli prisons without trial;³¹
- an end to all U.S. military aid to Israel;
- the development of a lasting peace that addresses the root causes of the current conflict which lie in decades of institutionalized oppression, occupation, and apartheid; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board endorses the Ceasefire Now Resolution submitted by Representative Cori Bush and others,³² and thanks our Congresswoman Barbara Lee for cosponsoring that vital statement;³³ and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board stands in solidarity with the Palestinian people as they face the war crime of collective punishment and the looming threat of expulsion from Gaza, an act of ethnic cleansing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, State Senator Nancy Skinner, Governor Gavin Newsom, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Senators Laphonza Butler and Alex Padilla, President Joe Biden, and Vice President Kamala Harris.

Dated: December 4, 2023

Adopted by the Rent Stabilization Board of the City of Berkeley by the following vote:

YES:

NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Leah Simon-Weisberg, Chairperson
Rent Stabilization Board

Attest: _____
DéSeana Williams, Executive Director

³¹[amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/11/israel-opt-horrifying-cases-of-torture-and-degrading-treatment-of-palestinian-detainees-amid-spike-in-arbitrary-arrests/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/11/israel-opt-horrifying-cases-of-torture-and-degrading-treatment-of-palestinian-detainees-amid-spike-in-arbitrary-arrests/)

³²[bush.house.gov/media/press-releases/rep-bush-tlaib-carson-lee-ramirez-lead-colleagues-in-call-for-immediate-ceasefire](https://www.bush.house.gov/media/press-releases/rep-bush-tlaib-carson-lee-ramirez-lead-colleagues-in-call-for-immediate-ceasefire)

³³[lee.house.gov/news/press-releases/lee-jayapal-casar-mcgovern-castro-escobar-garcia-release-statement-calling-for-ceasefire](https://www.lee.house.gov/news/press-releases/lee-jayapal-casar-mcgovern-castro-escobar-garcia-release-statement-calling-for-ceasefire)