

Many thanks to Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt, Senior rabbi of Congregation B'nai Tzedek in Potomac, Maryland, for this letter which is filled with critically timely information:

As members of the Jewish community, we are all surely deeply concerned by the rockets launched indiscriminately by the anti-Semitic militant terrorist entity Hamas and which are reaching all parts of Israel. Hamas' actions, encouraged and funded by Iran, are consistent with its charter which calls for the destruction of the State of Israel and the killing of Jews.

This is a time when the people of Israel need to know they are not alone, but that they have our full unequivocal support and solidarity.

The current crisis has its origins in the internal struggle among various factions for Palestinian leadership, especially against the backdrop of their recently canceled elections. The battle cry which has been used to incite and inflame Arabs over the past 100 years, since the riots in Hebron in 1921 resulting in the expulsion of the Jewish population is that Israel (or the Jews) are going to destroy the Al Akqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Inaccurate charges are picked up by those who we hope would know better, such as members of Congress, who accuse Israel of, in the words of Rashida Tlaib, "stealing Palestinian homes and burning their lands."

What do you need to know?

Do not be deceived by simplistic language or terms such as "disproportionate response". As Michael Oren mentioned in his interview with Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt, it is disproportionate because Israel chooses to invest in Iron Dome and measures to save lives of its citizens while Hamas chooses to invest in tunnels and weapons, leaving their people exposed. And as has been well-documented, they also place their operations centers and house missiles in populated areas, such as schools, where the terrorists take refuge, often cruelly hiding behind children, for they know that Israel takes actions to limit harming of innocents and non-combatants.

So what can we do at a time such as this?

Be informed so you can counter the misinformation and know how to listen to the news reports critically. To that end, I strongly suggest you follow (and support) CAMERA, The Committee for Accuracy in MidEast Reporting in

America, as they publish regular well-documented corrections of incorrect or biased reporting. (Go to www.camera.org)

To get a fuller picture of what is happening, from reporters much more objective and aware of nuances not understood by reporters for the NYTimes, WPost, CNN or other mainstream media, I suggest reading www.TimesofIsrael.com and www.JPost.com. For a good overview of what is going on, check out www.dailyalert.org, which has a precis of a number of articles which you can click on and read the full article. You will find outstanding explanations in www.jns.org, especially the articles by Jonathan Tobin.

I also recommend you check out publications from the American Jewish Committee, www.ajc.org, especially this brief “Four Myths About the Violence in Jerusalem.” <https://www.ajc.org/news/4-myths-and-facts-about-the-violence-in-jerusalem>

What can you do?

Show your solidarity with Israel by speaking out. Let public officials know that you support Israel’s actions defending itself. AIPAC, the pro-Israel lobby that really is pro-Israel has a helpful, easy to use means of communicating to your representatives: <https://p2a.co/u9jbbtK>.

Here is the interview Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt conducted yesterday with Israel’s former ambassador to the United States, Michael Oren. www.zionistrabbis.org/oren/

Because there is so much misreporting about supposed Israeli expelling of Palestinians to allegedly seize their land, I am including an article which provides important background information about the area known as Sheikh Jarrah: <https://jinsa.org/the-truth-about-the-sheikh-jarrah-eviction/>

Finally, feel free to join us for services in the upcoming days as we pray for the peace of Jerusalem.