

## **RESOLUTION 2023-386**

### **A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA, IN SUPPORT OF ISRAEL AS IT DEFENDS ITSELF IN THE WAR LAUNCHED BY THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION HAMAS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, early Saturday October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists launched a deadly barrage of thousands of rockets and sent gunman into southern Israeli territory in a large-scale surprise assault by air, land, and sea that killed hundreds of Israeli citizens; and,

**WHEREAS**, since October 7, 2023, Hamas launched over 4,500 rockets into southern and central Israel; and

**WHEREAS**, this heinous assault took place just after the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the multi-front 1973 Yom Kippur War against Israel; and

**WHEREAS**, this heinous assault took place in the midst of the Jewish festival of Simchat Torah, when hundreds of thousands of Israelis were on their way to synagogues to celebrate the holiday and Shabbat in their communities; and

**WHEREAS**, innocent civilians, including women and children, have been targeted, taken hostage, injured and murdered in this series of attacks, including hundreds of concert attendees at the Tribe of Nova trance music festival near Kibbutz Reimat, “a tribal journey, where the essence of unity and love combines forces with the best music,” according to the festival website; and

**WHEREAS**, Hamas terrorists have killed over 900 Israelis and injured more than 2,600 others which include children and the elderly; and

**WHEREAS**, at least 11 United States citizens in Israel are among those killed by Hamas since October 7, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, Hamas is directly responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Palestinians since October 7, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, on Sunday October 8, 2023, Israel declared war against Hamas, the Palestinian militant group based in Gaza; and

**WHEREAS**, the expansion of this war to other fronts by Hezbollah, Iran, or others would create an even more devastating regional catastrophe; and

**WHEREAS**, Hamas is a United States-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization; and

**WHEREAS**, Iran has long provided support to Hamas and other terrorist groups and proxies, and prior to United States Government unclassified assessments indicated that “Iran has historically provided up to \$100 million annually in combined support to Palestinian Terrorist groups including Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command”; and

**WHEREAS**, Hamas used rudimentary civilian equipment, such as bulldozers, paragliders, and rubber boats in its assault on Israel, demonstrating the importance of fully enforcing tight controls on what materials go into the Gaza Strip, including through thorough vetting of assistance; and

**WHEREAS**, under the 2016 U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding, the United States pledged to provide Israel \$3.3 billion per year in Foreign Military Financing Program Assistance and \$500 million per year in missile defense for 10 years, which Congress has appropriated annually; and

**WHEREAS**, the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2021 and other additional appropriations beyond the terms of the 2016 U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding have provided funds for the defense of Israel; and

**WHEREAS**, Israel is a major non-NATO ally and Major Strategic Partner of the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Florida is the home to roughly 650,000 Jews, the third largest Jewish population in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Florida has signed historic legislation that prohibits Florida from investing in companies that discriminate against Israel, combats antisemitism in our state, and strengthens and supports Florida’s Jewish Community; and

**WHEREAS**, at its October 17, 2023 meeting St. Johns County is set to proclaim November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, as St. Johns County – Israel Friendship Day; and

**WHEREAS**, St. Johns County stands with Israel and condemns these terrorist attacks.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, that:

**Section I.** St. Johns County hereby:

- A. Mourns the lives lost through these violent acts and stands unequivocally allied with Israel as it defends itself in the barbaric war launched by the terrorist organization Hamas and other terrorists.

- B. Reaffirms Israel's right to self-defense.
- C. Condemns Hamas' brutal war against Israel.
- D. Calls on all countries to unequivocally condemn Hamas' brutal war against Israel.
- E. Calls on Hamas to immediately cease these violent attacks and safely release all living hostages and return bodies of deceased hostages.
- F. Urges the United States to continue its commitment to Israel's security and the prevention of foreign assistance from benefiting terrorists, directly or indirectly.
- G. Condemns Iran's support for terrorist groups and proxies, including Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.
- H. Urges the United States to enforce sanctions against Iran to prevent Iran's funding of terrorist groups, including Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.
- I. Supports the United States commitment to stand ready to assist Israel with emergency resupply and other security, diplomatic, and intelligence support.

**Section 2.** To the extent that there are typographical errors that do not change the tone, tenor, or context of this Resolution, then this Resolution may be revised without subsequent approval of the Board of County Commissioners.

**Section 3. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become effective upon signature.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, this 17th day of October, 2023.

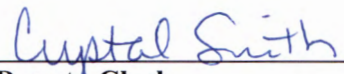
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Rendition Date: OCT 25 2023

By:   
Christian Whitehurst, Chair

ATTEST: **Brandon J. Patty, Clerk of  
the Circuit Court & Comptroller**

Effective Date: OCT 25 2023

By:   
Deputy Clerk

