

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

Madam Speaker, the most fundamental purpose for any government is its national defense and the protection of its citizens. I stand here today in heartfelt support for Israel and for its right to defend its innocent citizens from the attacks of a relentless enemy that seeks its destruction. The conflict unfolding in Israel's heartland today is not unfamiliar to the Israeli people.

Since its establishment in 1948, the tiny State of Israel--22 of which would fit into our State of California--has faced enemies on every side that openly oppose its right to exist and work actively to bring about its destruction.

Indeed, Israel has never known a reality where its very existence was not threatened by this insidious ideology called jihad; an ideology so sinister as to make men and women leap for joy at killing their own children in order to be able to kill the children of others, whether that means flying commercial airplanes into the World Trade Center or sending a Qassam rocket into the side of a bus carrying small school children in Israel.

Madam Speaker, in Imperial China, there was a terrible form of execution known as death by a thousand cuts. It was an unspeakably cruel demonstration meant to terrify observers into submissions. Israel is fighting to stop the "death by a thousand cuts" strategy used by Hamas to inflict constant, incessant destruction and terror on the Israeli citizens; and the nation of Israel has acted nobly for the sake of innocent Israelis, as well as innocent Palestinian civilians to justly refuse to allow the bloodletting to continue.

Hamas was designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the United States in 1995. And it is a known proxy of the Iranian regime which openly seeks to see Israel wiped from the face of the Earth. The governing charter of Hamas openly calls for the destruction of the State of Israel, with the goal of raising the banner of jihad over every square inch of the State of Israel.

And still, Madam Speaker, time after time, Israel has acted in good faith and has extended gestures of goodwill towards its Palestinian neighbors and Hamas, including its complete disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005 and its commitment to target only military installations of its enemies despite the routine attacks against its own women and children on almost a daily basis.

Madam Speaker, in all of its conflicts, Israel seeks to minimize civilian casualties; Hamas has sought to maximize them. Hamas has broken every cease-fire agreement and every honorable rule of war by deliberately embedding their terrorist militants and weapons caches in the homes of private citizens, and in schools, and in hospitals, and mosques; and Hamas has repeatedly used innocent Palestinian civilians as human shields while they deliberately target Israeli civilians.

There is no moral equivalence here, Madam Speaker. Hamas and Israel are guided by two completely opposite philosophies: One is committed to equality and human dignity under

God, and one is committed to a totalitarian ideology of hatred and intolerance; one is devoted to protecting innocent human life, and one commands its destruction.

When a cease-fire agreement was reached between Israel and Hamas last June, Hamas used that opportunity to build up its stockpiles of rockets and weapons that now threaten approximately one million Israelis. And now, Madam Speaker, in a struggle for peace and survival, Israel is once again forced to carry out defensive action against Hamas in order to stop the terrorizing of its innocent civilians.

And once again, once again, Madam Speaker, certain members of the international community are calling on Israel to ``exercise restraint."

Madam Speaker, if 6,000 rockets had fallen on an American city over a space of four years, what would we say to anyone who called upon us to restrain ourselves in the effort to protect our own citizens? If those same members of the international community who so harshly criticize Israel for the defensive actions had to suffer for 1 week--just 1 week--under these indiscriminate incessant attacks against their families and their loved ones as Israel has done for decades, Madam Speaker, I would submit that the layers of Hamas would have been made ashes once and for all long ago.

Madam Speaker, Charles Krauthammer recently wrote in the Washington Post something I wish every world leader could understand. He said, ``Some geopolitical conflicts are morally complicated. The Israeli-Gaza war is not. It possesses a moral clarity not only rare, but excruciating."

Madam Speaker, I could not agree with those words more.

If the beleaguered Jewish people have learned anything in their struggles for survival over the millennia against enemies who have sought their complete annihilation, it is, as one Holocaust survivor said, ``When someone says they intend to kill you, believe them."

Madam Speaker, consider some of the things that terrorist enemies of Israel have said they intend to do to Israel.

Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah stated, ``We have discovered how to hit the Jews where they are most vulnerable. The Jews love life, so that is what we shall take from them. We will win because the Jews love life, and we love death."

Wael al-Zarad, a Hamas Cleric, said, ``As Muslims, our blood vengeance against them will only subside with their annihilation"

And Egyptian Cleric Safwat Higazi gave this mandate to jihadists on Hamas television. He said, ``We say to you: Dispatch those sons of apes and pigs to the Hellfire on the wings of the Qassam rockets. Jihad is our path" This is our strategic option, and not peace. They [the Jews] deserve to be killed. They deserve to die. You should not care if you hit a man, woman, or a child. Destroy" everything"

Madam Speaker, those are horrifying words even when we hear them here in the safe enclaves of our own homes and work places of America. But for the people of Israel, such words mean terror and death.

Madam Speaker, America's enemies and Israel's enemies in this war are the same. Both of us face the reality of radical Islamic jihadists who would see our nations wiped from the face of the Earth if they could. Both of our nations have been struck deeply, and Israel, in its case, has been repeatedly, by any stretch of imagination, has been struck by this same ideology time and time again; the same ideology that murdered Olympic athletes in 1972, that took American hostages in Iran, that murdered Marines in their barracks in 1993, that bombed the World Trade Center in 1993, that bombed Riyadh in 1995, the Khobar Towers in 1996, the embassy in 1998, the USS *Cole* in 2000. And then, Madam Speaker, this murderous, hellish ideology massacred nearly 3,000 Americans on September 11.

And this enemy makes little distinction between those who support Israel and Israel itself, and for that reason, Madam Speaker, we must realize that an attack on Israel is an attack on America and freedom itself.

Listen to the words of Sheikh Ahmad Bahr, acting speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council. He said, ``Allah willing, America and Israel will be annihilated kill them all, down to the very last one."

Madam Speaker, any policy of the United Nations or the United States must articulate three concepts as prerequisites reached to any agreements reached between Israel and Hamas. First, it must reject any moral equivalence between the goals of Hamas and Israel. Secondly, it must place the blame for this current conflict squarely on the shoulders of Hamas, and third, it must clearly restate that America's commitment to the State of Israel remains unshakable.

We stand with Israel not as Republicans, Madam Speaker, not as Democrats, but as Americans and fellow members of the human family, equal heirs of those unalienable gifts of God we call life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; these basic human freedoms. We stand with the innocent people of Israel who have been terrorized on a daily basis, some for as long as they can remember. And we also, Madam Speaker, stand with those courageous Palestinian souls who also long for freedom and peace with their Israeli neighbors.

Madam Speaker, President Harry Truman, who formally recognized the State of Israel only 11 minutes after Israel had declared its independence, said, ``I had faith in Israel before it was established, I have faith in it now. I believe it has a glorious future before it- not just another sovereign nation, but as an embodiment of the great ideals of our civilization."

Madam Speaker, we recognize those words to be true and believe that the cause of liberty will prevail in the land of Israel as it has so many times before and that Israel indeed does have a glorious future before it.

Throughout its history, the hand of God has been upon Israel, and today we join in the solidarity with the State of Israel, and its people, with the innocent Palestinians, and with all of who love peace, and we pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.