

New York Stands with Israel

Story & Photos by Henry Levy

The Israel Consulate General, JCRC and UJA-Federation organized a Zoom Rally for Israel on Wednesday, May 12th, on one day notice and an amazing 1700 attended.

Here are some of the remarks of the main speakers and organizers including Congressmen Gregory Meeks and Ritchie Torres:

Amy Bressman, President, UJA-Federation:

In the span of 24 hours nearly 1,000 rockets were launched against Israel by Hamas which is about one rocket every two minutes. There is no sign of it stopping. There are sirens blaring throughout the country from Ashkelon to Jerusalem to Herzliya and the death and injury count is rising. There is never any justification sending rockets into civilian neighborhoods, ever! Our hearts are with the Jewish people around the world as there are recent reports of anti-Semitism in Germany and Spain.

Michael Miller, former Executive Vice President & CEO, Jewish Community

Relations Council of NY:

Many Americans are worried about their family and friends currently in Israel. My two daughters, their husbands, my nine grandchildren and countless friends live there and I will be flying there tomorrow for Shabbat and Shavuot, after nearly a year of separation due to COVID-19 travel restrictions to lend my support. With rockets continually raining down on Israel, think about the sirens waking restless Israelis in their beds, gathering their children and elderly parents and then racing to the safe room with only 20 seconds to get there. Think about the human toll, the wounded, the trauma. Think about their "today" and what their "tomorrow" will be. Let Israelis know that their lives and ours intertwine. They are our sisters and brothers, our family. We are one people and we will always be there for them. The nation of Israel lives and their destiny is our destiny.

Israel Nitzan, Israel's Consul General in New York:

Israel is currently experiencing

a wave of large scale terrorism. We have 6 civilians killed including a 6 year old child and one million under threat of border fire from Gaza. No other country would put up with such a threat to its citizens and security. Israel has the right, the obligation, to defend its citizens. Hamas spews its hatred and its misses show no prejudice. Hamas is targeting the diversity of Israel's society. Yesterday an Israeli Arab father and daughter were killed by a rocket fired from Gaza. An Indian national was killed in an attack in Ashkelon. Israel cares about human rights. Hamas doesn't. Hamas is a murderous organization responsible for the killing of thousands of Israeli and Arab citizens. Hamas' founding charter is an anti-Semitic document calling for the killing of Jews solely on the basis of their religion. Hamas, while presenting itself as the defender of Jerusalem and holy sites, actually shot rockets at Jerusalem, the third holiest place for Islam. What hypocrisy! We call on the international community to affirm Israel's

right to protect and defend itself and to address the critical element of incitement to violence that lead to this evil round of violence.

Eric Goldstein, CEO, UJA-Federation:

Thank you to the over 1500 people on this virtual Zoom Rally with barely any notice. My youngest daughter, now 18, is currently in Israel doing a gap year. If we can't be there physically, we must be there virtually and we must be loud and strong in our support of Israel. At a time with COVID-19 not allowing travel to Israel, let our friends there know of the support of the world Jewish community.

Congressman Ritchie Torres, 15th CD, South Bronx, Vice Chair of House Committee on Homeland Security:

Israel is under siege not only from relentless rocket fire at the hands of Hamas but also from an endless propaganda war that has taken on a new intensity here in the United States and elsewhere.

I am here to affirm that, as a Member of Congress (one who



From left: Amy Bressman, President, UJA-Federation of New York. Photo: Event official video. Michael Miller, former Executive Vice President & CEO, JCRC of New York. Photo: Event official video. Israel Nitzan, Consul General of Israel in New York. Photo: Event official video.