

On Justice and Peace in the Aftermath of the October 7 Attack on Israel

WHEREAS, On October 7, 2023, the nation of Israel was attacked by Hamas, an organization designated by the United States Department of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, which committed unspeakable atrocities such as the murder of 1,200 people, the abduction of 253 people, and the rape, torture, and other cruel and inhumane treatment of countless others including children, women, and the elderly, with nearly half of the hostages being foreign nationals or having multiple citizenships; and

WHEREAS, While no modern nation-state is above reasonable critique, Hamas unequivocally bears responsibility for the atrocities committed and the devastating repercussions that have affected the Jewish people, Palestinians living under the tyranny of this terrorist organization, our Christian brothers and sisters in the region, and all neighboring people; and

WHEREAS, Hamas' leadership openly declared that they will repeat such attacks until Israel ceases to exist as a nation; and

WHEREAS, Incidents of antisemitism have dramatically increased both domestically and abroad since the terrorist attack on October 7; and

WHEREAS, While theological perspectives on Israel and the Church vary within the Southern Baptist Convention, we are unified in calling current antisemitic attacks against Jewish people especially heinous, as the Jewish people have often been targeted by their neighbors since God called them as his people in the days of Abraham; and

WHEREAS, True peace will not be achieved until the return of Jesus Christ (Revelation 21:4); now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 11-12, 2024, condemn Hamas' terrorist attacks of October 7, commit to standing with the Jewish people and those suffering in the region, and oppose all forms of antisemitism; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we deny assertions of moral equivalence between Israel and Hamas; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we are appalled by anti-Israel and pro-Hamas activities on university campuses, within professional associations, and in the culture at large; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we commit to supporting biblical solutions to the conflict, advocating for principles of justice, mercy, and humility in all actions taken by Israel in its pursuit of a just peace (Micah 6:8); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we oppose calls for the nation of Israel to lay down its arms, repudiating any calls for a permanent ceasefire that do not also result in the immediate release of all hostages; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call for the international community to redouble its efforts to support the nation of Israel toward a just and lasting peace, addressing underlying issues such as terrorism, human rights violations, and regional instability, consistent with biblical calls to defend the oppressed and promote justice, especially among non-combatants and civilians (Psalm 82:3-4; Isaiah 1:17); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we recognize the dignity and personhood of all people living in the Middle East and affirm God's love and offer of salvation to them through Jesus Christ, honoring the difficult ministry of Jewish and Palestinian believers who labor for the gospel as we pray for their protection and ministry; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we encourage Southern Baptists to pray diligently for a peaceful resolution to the war and all affected by warfare, petitioning God for wisdom, protection, and the ultimate blessing of a just and lasting peace among nations (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

