

continue. Preconditions are an obstacle to that process in the Middle East as much as they were for another seemingly intractable conflict, in Northern Ireland.

Others have asked these questions, which are worth repeating: Does the Gaza war improve Israel's long-term, or even short-term, security? Was it realistic and in Israel's long-term interests to expect Hamas to accept Israel in advance of negotiations, rather than push for a total cessation of the use of violence and blockade, followed by negotiations? Was it realistic to expect the ceasefire to hold while Gaza remained under siege, rife with hunger, illness, joblessness, and hopelessness, and while construction of settlements continued, and even accelerated, in the West Bank?

On January 6, Secretary of State Rice spoke to the U.N. Security Council. I do not doubt the sincerity of her concern with the humanitarian situation in Gaza, or for the need for a ceasefire "that can endure and bring real security." We all want that. But her words were noteworthy for what they said about the dismal failure of the Bush administration's approach to the Middle East conflict. Eight years were squandered and mishandled, and President-elect Obama faces a far more difficult situation than his predecessor inherited.

Our credibility in the entire world has suffered immeasurably since 9/11. In particular our image in predominantly Muslim countries has been affected by the failure to advance a credible strategy to help resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict. This has pronounced and obvious implications for our security, for Israel's security, and for the entire Middle East region.

At this time of great opportunity in America to change our policies and make a true contribution to peace in the Middle East, we should be careful when we adopt resolutions on subjects as sensitive as this to be cognizant of the history of the region and the complexities of the situation. Above all, our goal should be to enhance our role as a force for peace and our ability to advance our Nation's interests.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, that there be no intervening action or debate, and that any statements related to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 10) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 10

Whereas Hamas was founded with the stated goal of destroying the State of Israel;

Whereas Hamas has been designated by the Secretary of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization;

Whereas Hamas has refused to comply with the requirements of the Quartet (the United States, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations) that Hamas recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence, and agree to accept previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinians;

Whereas, in June 2006, Hamas crossed into Israel, attacked Israeli forces and kidnapped Corporal Gilad Shalit, whom they continue to hold today;

Whereas Hamas has launched thousands of rockets and mortars since Israel dismantled settlements and withdrew from Gaza in 2005;

Whereas Hamas has increased the range of its rockets, reportedly with support from Iran and others, putting additional large numbers of Israelis in danger of rocket attacks from Gaza;

Whereas Hamas locates elements of its terrorist infrastructure in civilian population centers, thus using innocent civilians as human shields;

Whereas Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in a statement on December 27, 2008, that "[w]e strongly condemn the repeated rocket and mortar attacks against Israel and hold Hamas responsible for breaking the ceasefire and for the renewal of violence there";

Whereas, on December 27, 2008, Prime Minister of Israel Ehud Olmert said, "For approximately seven years, hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens in the south have been suffering from missiles being fired at them. . . . In such a situation we had no alternative but to respond. We do not rejoice in battle but neither will we be deterred from it. . . . The operation in the Gaza Strip is designed, first and foremost, to bring about an improvement in the security reality for the residents of the south of the country";

Whereas, on January 2, 2009, Secretary of State Rice stated that "Hamas has held the people of Gaza hostage ever since their illegal coup against the forces of President Mahmoud Abbas, the legitimate President of the Palestinian people. Hamas has used Gaza as a launching pad for rockets against Israeli cities and has contributed deeply to a very bad daily life for the Palestinian people in Gaza, and to a humanitarian situation that we have all been trying to address";

Whereas the humanitarian situation in Gaza, including shortages of food, water, electricity, and adequate medical care, is becoming more acute;

Whereas Israel has facilitated humanitarian aid to Gaza with over 500 trucks and numerous ambulances entering the Gaza Strip since December 26, 2008;

Whereas, on January 2, 2009, Secretary of State Rice stated that it was "Hamas that rejected the Egyptian and Arab calls for an extension of the tahadiya that Egypt had negotiated" and that the United States was "working toward a cease-fire that would not allow a reestablishment of the status quo ante where Hamas can continue to launch rockets out of Gaza. It is obvious that that cease-fire should take place as soon as possible, but we need a cease-fire that is durable and sustainable"; and

Whereas the ultimate goal of the United States is a sustainable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that will allow for a viable and independent Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with the State of Israel, which will not be possible as long as Israeli civilians are under threat from within Gaza: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses vigorous support and unwavering commitment to the welfare, security, and survival of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state with secure bor-

ders, and recognizes its right to act in self-defense to protect its citizens against acts of terrorism;

(2) reiterates that Hamas must end the rocket and mortar attacks against Israel, recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence, and agree to accept previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinians;

(3) encourages the President to work actively to support a durable, enforceable, and sustainable cease-fire in Gaza, as soon as possible, that prevents Hamas from retaining or rebuilding the capability to launch rockets and mortars against Israel and allows for the long term improvement of daily living conditions for the ordinary people of Gaza;

(4) believes strongly that the lives of innocent civilians must be protected and all appropriate measures should be taken to diminish civilian casualties and that all involved should continue to work to address humanitarian needs in Gaza;

(5) supports and encourages efforts to diminish the appeal and influence of extremists in the Palestinian territories and to strengthen moderate Palestinians who are committed to a secure and lasting peace with Israel; and

(6) reiterates its strong support for United States Government efforts to promote a just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a serious and sustained peace process that leads to the creation of a viable and independent Palestinian state living in peace alongside a secure State of Israel.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEVIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST STEPHEN G. ZAPASNIK

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a very special person and remember his life and sacrifice as a young man. I can identify with this; I was a specialist in the U.S. Army.

Stephen Zapasnik of Broken Arrow, OK—that is right outside of Tulsa—lost his life. He was only 19 years of age. He died on December 24—that was on Christmas Eve—in Baghdad, Iraq, along with two other soldiers in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Stephen followed in the footsteps of his father by joining the Army and