

Mr. President,

We must be clear why we are here, at yet another Special Session, which will feature fierce condemnations of Israel and almost inevitably end with the passage of a one-sided resolution.

We are here because Hamas is seeking the violent destruction of Israel by any means necessary.

We are here because Hamas has fired over 2,000 rockets at Israel, forcing 80% of Israel's population to run to bomb shelters at a moment's notice. This has been described by even the Palestinian representative to this Council, in a moment of candor, as a war crime, although we know better than to expect to see that kind of honesty in today's resolution.

We are here because Hamas prefers to use Palestinian civilians as human shields by placing missiles, tunnels and command centers in and around homes, schools, mosques and hospitals. Israel has put its own soldiers' lives at risk by calling and sending text messages and providing warning at target sites, all in attempts to warn civilians to flee areas that are harboring terrorist infrastructure. What other nation would go to these lengths to minimize civilian casualties? And how many would show the restraint that Israel has shown after many years of incessant rocket attacks?

We are here because the international community, and this Council in particular, has been silent when it comes to addressing Palestinian terrorism. But, when Israel exercises the legitimate right of self-defense against this aggression, this Council is primed to spring into action, calling for a seventh special session dedicated solely to criticizing Israel and once again belittling and obscuring all crimes committed by Hamas against Israeli and Palestinian civilians. That is why we find ourselves here.

Thank you, Mr. President.