

Hello, my name is De'Narde. I am a constituent in Anne Arundel County and an organizer for the Baltimore Branch of the Party for Socialism and Liberation. I have come to show my full support of the Resolution that calls for a ceasefire in Gaza.

To the General Assembly, I urge you to actually listen. Many here have witnessed the horrific images and videos from Gaza. Children crying and screaming in pain, Mothers and Fathers mourning the loss of their children and family members horrified that their families have been wiped out. Homes destroyed, hospitals no longer functioning, and civilians targeted and either brutally tortured or humiliated by Israeli forces, all while the United States and its allies stood idly by in either silence, or sheer act of aiding and abetting these atrocities. It has been _____ days and the genocide campaign still rages on, with the backing of this very country, and money coming our pocket is funding these horrific atrocities. Many Israeli elected officials, cabinet members, Netanyahu, and Israeli military members have stated bluntly about the goal for Israel, and that goal is to wipe Palestinians off the face of the earth by any means necessary. Just recently, the United States once again aided and abetted Israel, by cutting off funding for UNRWA, whose main directive is to distribute humanitarian aid to Palestinians refugees. These act are not only helping Israel in making Palestinians suffer, but are actively going against the ruling of the International Criminal Court, and helping them violate international laws and helping aid and abed this genocide campaign, that South Africa has shown that there is multiple evidence of that. The Council must show that it stands not only with the Palestinians, but also stand with International Law.

While here in the US, across the country, elected officials have constantly picked a side. From the federal branch, who passed a resolution sanctioning the only Palestinian in Congress and falsely equating anti-Zionism to anti-semitism, to the state and local level, passing laws to ban boycott, divest and sanctions, which was previously used against Apartheid South Africa, and defunding agencies and organization that shows any support for Palestinian human rights like Council on American-Islamic Relations. It makes me wonder whether or not our elected officials actually care, and have actual humanity. This resolution is a test to that, and we will see whether or not humanity still linger in this Assembly. Who will stand for humanity and human rights, and who will stand for atrocities and genocide.

I want to make it clear to everyone here in this committee and to the people behind me. The people who are calling for the end of the bombardment and the collective punishment in Gaza are not calling for the eradication of the Jewish people or saying anything that is deemed as anti-semitic. Calling for the end of the brutal killing of civilians and children in Gaza and the West Bank does NOT equate anti-semitism. Criticism of a country's policy and their actions against another group of people or

ethnicity does NOT equate anti-semitism. Calling for a country to be held accountable for violating International laws does NOT equate antisemitism. And calling on the United States to stop acting as Israel's diplomatic and legal shield to the UN and personal arms salesmen does NOT equate anti-semitism. There will be those who are here, either outside or in this room, who are calling for the council to be against the end of the brutal killing of civilians and will try to take my words and those who stand with humanity, out of context and claim antisemitism.

The people are not asking much. All we ask is that you at the bare minimum, recognize the basics of humanity. Palestinians are human beings too. Palestinians are every other human being in the world. Supporting this resolution is a sign that you are not only listening to the majority of Americans who support a ceasefire, but you actually care, and that you are willing to take action to show communities that you care. A vote for the resolution is a win for humanity. A vote for a ceasefire is a vote to stop the state from sending our tax dollars to fund a genocide. A vote for the resolution is a win to the majority of Americans from Howard County, to Maryland, to all across the United States who want an end to the slaughter of Palestinian civilians and children. Almost 70% of Americans support a ceasefire, with 80% of Democrats, 57% of Independents and 3rd Party voters and 56% of Republican voters support a ceasefire. You say that you care about human beings and that you are listening to your constituents, show us. Show that there is at least some humanity left in this legislature. Show us that you are listening to the majority of your constituents and a majority of Americans, a majority that are saying, no, that we are saying loudly: CEASEFIRE NOW. We demand that you prove that they have some humanity left and vote YES for a ceasefire resolution. Thank you. Assalamu Alaikum.