

Condemning Violence and Violations of Law – Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gaza, and Sudan

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in strong support of House Joint Resolution 9, which recognizes the immense human suffering occurring in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gaza, and Sudan and affirms Maryland's commitment to the protection of civilian life and international humanitarian law. The scale of violence described in this resolution—including mass displacement, widespread civilian casualties, sexual violence, and the destruction of essential infrastructure—demands moral clarity and public accountability from all levels of government.

This resolution is an important acknowledgment that Marylanders are directly connected to these crises. Our state is home to communities with deep familial, cultural, and personal ties to the DRC, Gaza, and Sudan, many of whom are grieving loved ones or struggling to support relatives trapped in conflict zones. By speaking out, the General Assembly affirms that their suffering is seen and that Maryland stands firmly against atrocities wherever they occur.

I especially support the resolution's call for:

- **Immediate and sustained ceasefires or cessation of hostilities** to protect civilians;
- **Unhindered humanitarian access** so that food, medical care, and shelter can reach those in desperate need;
- **The release of unlawfully detained civilians**; and
- **Independent investigations and accountability mechanisms** to ensure that violations of international law do not go unanswered.

These are not partisan positions—they are fundamental principles of human dignity and the rule of law. Upholding them strengthens global norms against genocide, collective punishment, and war crimes, and reinforces the values that Maryland has consistently championed in past resolutions.

Finally, urging the United States government to use its diplomatic and political influence to prevent further atrocities is both appropriate and necessary. State-level voices matter, especially when they reflect the moral concerns of residents who feel the impact of these conflicts in their daily lives.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the General Assembly to adopt House Joint Resolution 9. It is a principled, humane, and urgently needed statement of solidarity with civilians who are enduring unimaginable harm.

Thank you,
Dr. Marie Najjar
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