

the truth, need to speak out as well and just as forcefully so the American people can know the truth and our actions can follow the evidence.

This is a time for moral clarity. We are watching a battle of good versus evil, and there can be no ambiguity about where America stands. President Biden traveled to Tel Aviv yesterday to affirm America's unyielding support for Israel as it defends itself. Good for him. I am glad he made the trip, and I hope the Israeli people can find some comfort and some confidence in the message of solidarity.

If Israel needs weapons, which it does, particularly for the Iron Dome, which is the anti-rocket defense weapon that is designed to knock out these hundreds of rockets being launched from Gaza into Israel—they need the Iron Dome in order to stop those rockets from hitting innocent civilians. But, of course, they need increased access to our intelligence capabilities to supplement their own, humanitarian aid, diplomatic support. Whatever it is, the United States will provide it. Israel has our complete and unwavering support.

As each of us knows, support for Israel is only part of the equation. America cannot relinquish its leadership role in the world, which means we cannot simply replenish Israel's arsenal or bolster its efforts to defend itself. We must also adopt a new approach to deal with those who are spreading terrorism in the Middle East—namely Iran. Iran is the leading state sponsor of international terrorism, and it has bankrolled and trained Hamas.

Again, I am troubled by this idea that somehow Iran was not involved in this attack. Of course, they were, by sending \$100 million a year to Hezbollah and Hamas with which to train them and then by providing weapons, with the objective of wiping Israel off the map. The blood is on Iran's, including the Supreme Leader's, hands, and he is proud of it because his goal is to wipe Israel off the map by any means necessary. Iran has provided Hamas and other terrorist proxies in the region, as I said, with funding, weapons, and training to enable the types of attacks we have witnessed.

We should be absolutely clear. President Bush, some 20 years ago, made a fairly controversial statement at the time by identifying the axis of evil—he called it—which included Iran, Iraq at the time, which was under the rule of Saddam Hussein, and North Korea; but, today, that axis should include not only Iran but also Russia, which is more than happy to have its ally Iran distract the world from what they are doing in Ukraine, and, of course, the Chinese, who are more than happy, in exchange for the oil that they import from places like Iran and Russia, to provide support for their evil aims.

The Supreme Leader of Iran once labeled the United States as Iran's "No. 1 enemy." There is no doubt that Iran

has serious skin in this game, and it has a lot to gain from Hamas.

President Biden needs to reassess his approach in dealing with Iran. Rather than appeasement, which has allowed them to circumvent the sanctions that we put on, for example, oil exports, they are now back in business, and their economy is booming as a result of the oil they are selling to countries like China and others. And the idea that President Biden would accept anything, any kind of deal—even a bad deal—on the Iranian nuclear weapon development is giving them the confidence that they can continue not only to negotiate a weak agreement but also continue to sell drones to Russia with which to kill Ukrainians. Eventually, they will be able to succeed in their No. 1 goal, which is to develop a nuclear weapon.

Can you imagine, given the death and destruction in the Middle East now that has been caused by Iranian-sponsored proxies like Hezbollah and Hamas, if that same country—the No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism—got a nuclear weapon? That cannot happen. That must not happen. So I hope these events have caused the administration to reconsider its approach.

The series of missteps has projected an image of weakness to our adversaries, who are eager to exploit any cracks in our defense. Appeasement, as we learned from World War II, is not a viable strategy because countries like Iran, led by the Supreme Leader and this theocracy which is bent on the destruction of Israel, can't be reasoned with. There is not really a cost-benefit analysis. They are not rational actors; they are ideologues determined to accomplish their goal, which is to wipe out countries like Israel.

So we need to get to work and work together to confront the threats that Iran and its proxies present and reestablish a credible deterrence in the Middle East. Until that happens, we can expect assaults on Israel and other pro-democracy movements in the Middle East. They will be under constant and increased assault.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ISRAEL

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, on September 11, 2001, even while smoke was still billowing from the wreckage of the Twin Towers, I knew deep within me that that attack on American soil would change not just my Nation's future but my own, and it did.

I rushed back to the assault helicopter company I commanded at the time, ready to seek out the terrorists

who attacked my Nation and slaughtered civilians. I did it willingly, without hesitation, because every fiber in my being felt the need to defend my country when she was threatened.

So, today, let me be very clear. As a soldier and as someone who has always supported Israel, I strongly believe in Israel's right to defend herself and her people, especially when under attack from a terrorist organization like Hamas—a group that redefines the word "cruelty," that seems to take pleasure in bloodshed, that refuses to adhere to the rule of law or international norms.

If I were an Israeli soldier—if I woke up two Saturdays ago to the sights and sounds of massacre like they did—I, too, would be desperate to defend my nation and my neighbors; I, too, would want to make sure that those who turned my children's playgrounds into battlefields, who turned the grass under my daughter's swing set from a rich green to blood red, were never able to inflict such horrors again.

I grieve for every Israeli life that was upended or, in too many cases, ended in such a horrific fashion.

There is never an excuse or justification for terrorism, none. And I will stay on this floor for as long as it takes, vote as many times as I have to, to ensure that our Israeli allies have the resources and support they need in time of war.

I am also clear-eyed about the fact that there is a humanitarian crisis unfolding just miles away in Gaza, and I recognize the urgent need to help the innocent Palestinians, who are also suffering as a result of Hamas's brutal attacks.

It is this simple: We should all be able to agree that no child deserves to starve to death or die of thirst. We should all be able to agree that no child deserves to be brutalized or burned alive, whether they live in Gaza or Tel Aviv. We should all be able to agree that no child deserves to be terrorized, whether their home is on a kibbutz or in Plainfield, IL, or behind a blockade.

Every time I have gone home from work since that awful Saturday morning, I have held my little girls as tightly as I could. I have given them one more squeeze than usual and held on to them for a couple more seconds than normal. My daughters are just 8 and 5. They don't understand why I am so upset. So I just tell them that Mommy's heart is hurting, that she is really sad right now, and that all she wants in that moment is just to hold them a little closer for a little longer.

I am haunted by the faces of the Israeli children whom Hamas terrorists abducted, just as I am by the conversations I have had with parents desperate to get their children home from the captivity of a terrorist organization.

I am haunted by the stories of the Palestinian children who have been buried in rubble, just as I am by the images of 6-year-old Wadea Al-

Fayoume, who was brutally murdered by his landlord over the weekend in my home State of Illinois because he just happened to be a Muslim—a 6-year-old who loved playing with his LEGOs, a 6-year-old who could have been any one of ours.

I know many others in this Chamber, across the country, and around the world are haunted, too.

So we must—must—act with urgency to secure the sustained flow of humanitarian aid into Gaza.

We must—must—restore essential services like water as quickly as we can.

We must—must—ensure hostages being held in Gaza receive urgent medical treatment and are safely brought home as soon as humanly possible.

Innocent life needs to be protected consistent with the laws of armed conflict. These actions mark both moral imperatives by helping innocent civilians but also are steps toward ensuring Israel's security.

I am grateful that the administration has been working around the clock on these priorities, and I will continue to do everything in my power to support them because, during a crisis that is almost always defined by lose-lose outcomes, this could be the rare step that would actually benefit all innocent parties. It would help to get those trapped innocent Palestinian families who are mourning their own lost loved ones and who have been living with no access to basic necessities. It would get assistance to the hostages from Israel, the United States, and other nations whom we are all praying for so desperately. It would send the message that the global community is unified in ending the suffering of innocent human souls.

As someone who was shot down by an insurgent in the Middle East, I know all too well that these are the kinds of moments when the next generation of insurgents get radicalized, as groups like Hamas thrive when people are suffering the most. They take advantage of the despair and the hopelessness that they themselves manufacture, that they themselves manipulate, and they use it to recruit more to their cause.

We cannot let Hamas succeed. We cannot let the blast of missiles drown out the voices of our better angels because our hearts are big enough and our perspectives wide enough to know that Hamas's reign of terror terrorizes the little girls and boys of not just Israel but Gaza, too, as they use them as human shields.

In this moment, it is hard not to feel the darkness weighing down upon us. But for all of those in harm's way, we must channel our devastation into motivation. We must use our voices to lift up the humanity of innocent civilians, not to dehumanize those who may look or pray differently than us. We must work as hard as we can to bring about a tomorrow for both Israelis and Palestinians alike, where their skies won't

be marred with missiles, and their streets won't be scarred with blood.

That is exactly what I am going to do. I am going to roll out of this Chamber, head back to my office, and keep fighting to get our hostages home. I will fight to get our greatest ally in the Middle East, Israel, the aid and support they need, and I am also going to work to get basic humanitarian aid into Gaza.

Then, tonight, when I go home, I am going to hold my daughters in my arms until they wiggle free, and every moment that that hug lasts, I am going to be more aware than ever how lucky I am just to be able to squeeze them tight.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 417, submitted earlier today; that at 1:45 p.m., the Senate vote on adoption of the resolution; that if the resolution is agreed to, the preamble be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

STANDING WITH ISRAEL AGAINST TERRORISM

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 417) standing with Israel against terrorism.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, in 1984, President Ronald Reagan designated October as National Down Syndrome Awareness Month. We have been honoring that month ever since. We are attempting to ensure that Americans have had the opportunity to celebrate and recognize individuals with Down syndrome and those individuals' contribution to our world.

Since 2015, I have served as the co-chair of the Congressional Down Syndrome Task Force, a bipartisan, bicameral caucus dedicated to promoting policies that enhance the quality of life for individuals with Down syndrome.

Last September, the task force partnered with leaders in Down syndrome advocacy groups and the medical research sector to host a roundtable discussion on recent scientific advances in Down syndrome research. During the roundtable, self-advocates brought awareness to the issues important to their communities, such as work and education opportunities, policies to improve independent living, support for their loved ones and caretakers, and medical research.

Hearing the firsthand testimonies from individuals of Down syndrome and medical professionals who have dedicated their careers to the understanding of Down syndrome in order to better care for the community was meaningful to me, and it helped us better understand the needs of the Down syndrome community.

Through my interactions on the task force, I have also had the privilege to meet amazing parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, advocates, and caregivers who support individuals with Down syndrome in living successful and fulfilling lives. The dedication to improving the lives of those in the Down syndrome community is appreciated not only this month of October, but in every month, every day, every year.

As a cochair of the task force, I have worked to advocate for Federal resources for the Down syndrome community to support medical research and enable individuals with Down syndrome to live a full and independent life.

Through congressional commitment to expand Federal resources, Down syndrome research has improved significantly in recent years. In May of 2022, the National Institutes of Health report stated Federal investment in Down syndrome research had increased from \$18 million in fiscal year 2014 to around \$124 million in fiscal year 2022. This increase in funding is a recognition of the gaps in our medical research and works to make certain that we prioritize learning more about Down syndrome.

As we take this month to celebrate the Down syndrome community and their families, I look forward to building on recent successes and urge Congress to renew its commitment to pursuing policies that support the Down syndrome community and improve the quality of every American's life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

ISRAEL

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first, I know that we will be voting on shortly the resolution showing our support for the State of Israel from the horrible attack by Hamas. I just really want to thank our colleagues for the cooperation in getting this resolution before us. Right after this horrific attack, I worked with Senator RISCH to show bipartisan support to draft the resolution that would express our strong support for Israel, that we had their back, that