Consulate General of Israel
Political & Economic Affairs

Over the past three weeks Florida has embraced and supported Israel in a fashion which was unanimous and unsurpassed anywhere in the USA or elsewhere.

Statements of support and recognition of Israel's right to self defense were issued in various formats - press releases, public statements and on the floor of the House of Representatives in Washington, DC.

It is humbling to experience the overwhelming support for Israel and the Israeli Consulate wishes to acknowledge and thank everyone, publicly, for this.

Statements of Support for Israel Were Issued By:

- Governor Charlie Crist
- Attorney General Bill McCollum
- Senator Mel Martinez
- Senator Bill Nelson

As well as the entire Florida Congressional Delegation:

- Congressman Jeff Miller (R-1st)
- Congressman Allen Boyd (D-2nd)
- Congresswoman Corrine Brown (D-3rd)
- Congressman Ander Crenshaw (R-4th)
- Congresswoman Ginny Brown-Waite (R-5th)
- Congressman Cliff Stearns (R-6th)
- Congressman John Mica (R-7th)
- Congressman Alan Grayson (D-8th)
- Congressman Gus Bilirakis (R-9th)
- Congressman Bill Young (R-10th)
- Congresswoman Kathy Castor (D-11th)
- Congressman Adam Putnam (R-12th)
- Congressman Vern Buchanan (R-13th)
- Congressman Connie Mack (R-14th)
- Congressman Bill Posey (R-15th)
- Congressman Tom Rooney (R-16th)
- Congressman Kendrick Meek (D-17th)
- Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-18th)
- Congressman Robert Wexler (R-19th)
- Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-20th)
- Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-21st)
- Congressman Ron Klein (D-22nd)
- Congressman Alcee Hastings (D-23rd)
- Congresswoman Suzanne Kosmas (D-24th)
- Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart (R-25th)

The State of Florida was the only state to formally support Israel:

- The State Senate of Florida unanimously passed a resolution supporting Israel
  - introduced by State Senator Ted Deutch

- The Florida House of Representatives passed a resolution supporting Israel
  - introduced by House Majority Leader Adam Hasner

Excerpts from the Statements of Support for Israel:

- **Governor Charlie Crist**

  During this critical time for the Israeli people, I am honored to express support for the State of Israel and the Israeli people.

- **Attorney General Bill McCollum**

  I voice my continued support for our friend and democratic ally. Israel has every right to act in self defense to secure its borders and protect its citizens against acts of violence of any sort.

- **Senator Mel Martinez**

  Israel has a right to defend itself and its citizens. Terrorist organizations like Hamas cannot be allowed safe haven in any territory.

- **Senator Bill Nelson**

  I strongly support Israel's sovereign right to defend itself against terrorism. Hamas has terrorized the citizens of Israel. Hamas must be held responsible for causing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

- **Congressman Jeff Miller (R-1st)**

  I support the right of Israel to defend itself and encourage the people of Gaza to demand that their elected leaders cease the unjustified rocket attacks and the conscious choice to act as terrorists.

- **Congressman Allen Boyd (D-2nd)**

  Israel is acting in self-defense in response to daily barrages of rocket fire from Hamas. When Israel is attacked, the United States must continue to stand strongly with our friend and democratic ally.

- **Congresswoman Corrine Brown (D-3rd)**

  Israel has the right to defend itself against the barrage of rocket attacks launched by Hamas, as well as against the constant threat of terrorism carried out by Hamas and its regional allies, Iran and Syria.

- **Congressman Ander Crenshaw (R-4th)**

  Hamas has constructed a sophisticated military infrastructure. Israel acted to protect its citizens from further terrorist attacks. Hamas is responsible for the current situation in the region.

- **Congresswoman Ginny Brown-Waite (R-5th)**

  I support Israel's right to defend its citizens against attack. It is imperative that Israel has our support for their actions to defend its people from continuous terrorism

- **Congressman Cliff Stearns (R-6th)**

  The government of Israel has an obligation to defend its citizens. Hamas continues to use civilians as a shield in launching its attacks; any loss of innocent life is a result of this cowardly tactic.

- **Congressman John Mica (R-7th)**

  I support Israel's right to defend itself against Hamas terrorist attacks. Until Israeli citizens can live without fear of these attacks, Israel is justified in its effort to maintain national security.

- **Congressman Alan Grayson (D-8th)**

  Hamas has been firing rockets into Israel. Any country would seek to end attacks like this on its citizens. By using Palestinians as human shields, [Hamas] is multiplying the casualties in the area.

- **Congressman Gus Bilirakis (R-9th)**

  Israel is our most important ally in the Middle East, serving on the front lines in our joint battle against terrorism and weapons proliferation. Extraordinary restraint has been exercised by Israel.

- **Congressman Bill Young (R-10th)**

  As a sovereign nation, Israel has the right to defend itself just as our nation and any of our allies would. [As] long as Hamas hides and operates [in] civilian locations there will be civilian casualties.

- **Congresswoman Kathy Castor (D-11th)**

  Once someone begins firing rocket into your home you have a right to respond. I hope they can all work for peace now and turn the corner.

- **Congressman Adam Putnam (R-12th)**

  Israel not only has the right to defend itself, but the responsibility to its citizens to protect them. The loss of civilian lives is tragic, but we must be clear: It is the actions of Hamas that are unacceptable.

- **Congressman Vern Buchanan (R-13th)**

  All Americans should stand behind the courageous Israelis fighting to defend themselves from an incessant barrage of Hamas sponsored terrorism.

- **Congressman Connie Mack (R-14th)**

  Hamas' [is] a cancer on the free world, like other organizations such as Al Qaeda and Hezbollah. Israel, and any nation that is attacked by terrorists, has the right and duty to eradicate that cancer.

- **Congressman Bill Posey (R-15th)**

  Israel [has] an obligation to defend its citizens from deadly terrorist attacks. Over the past year 3,400 rockets were fired from Gaza into Israeli civilian communities.

- **Congressman Tom Rooney (R-16th)**

  Hamas rockets have indiscriminately targeted Israeli civilians. Israel has the right and duty to protect her citizens. Israel targets terrorists attacking Israeli civilians, while Hamas hides among civilians.

- **Congressman Kendrick Meek (D-17th)**

  Hamas has never relented in its quest to terrorize Israel's citizens. Israel is justified in protecting its citizens. I ask all Americans to stand in solidarity with Israel in its defense of democracy and freedom.

- **Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-18th)**

  The barrage of attacks by Iranian-sponsored Islamist militants continue a pattern of indiscriminate targeting of innocent [people] in Israel that could not go unanswered. Israel had no choice but to defend itself. We stand with the Jewish State of Israel in its ongoing efforts to protect its citizens from those who seek its destruction.

- **Congressman Robert Wexler (R-19th)**

  I support Israel's right to self-defense in response to continuous deadly attacks. It is unconscionable for anyone to expect that the Israeli government sit idly as thousands of deadly rockets rain down on their cities. I urge the international community to join the United States in denouncing the daily terrorist acts carried out by Hamas and support Israel's right to self-defense and security.

- **Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-20th)**

  It has pained me to hear the unfair and unjust criticism of Israel as she strives to protect her citizens from Hamas' attacks.

- **Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-21st)**

  Israel has the right defend itself. The terrorist group known as "Hamas" has launched countless deadly attacks on Israeli civilians from its sanctuary in Gaza.

- **Congressman Ron Klein (D-22nd)**

  Israel is doing what any sovereign government should do: defend its citizens. Hamas is solely responsible for the death and injuries on both sides. Israel's actions are justified, and I join all Americans who believe in democracy and freedom in standing by Israel in her time of need.

- **Congressman Alcee Hastings (D-23rd)**

  Israel was forced into this situation. Hamas has chosen war over peace. Israel has but no other choice to respond and protect its citizens.

- **Congresswoman Suzanne Kosmas (D-24th)**

  Israel is acting in self-defense to safeguard its citizens against Hamas' unceasing aggression. When Israel is attacked, the United States must stand strongly with our democratic friend and ally

- **Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart (R-25th)**

  Israel is absolutely justified in defending herself and in taking all necessary military steps to guarantee the safety and security of its people. Israel has our full support as it acts to defend itself.

Note:

- Copies of the full statements are available on request from: paofficer@miami.mfa.gov.il
- In addition, statements of support for Israel were made by various **Christian leaders** as well as many **Hispanic leaders** including most of the Cuban organizations in Florida.