



Mission permanente d'Israël
auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies
et des Organisations Internationales à Genève

משלחת ישראל
ליד משרד האומות המאוחדות
והארגונים הבינלאומיים בג'נבה

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**Statement by
H.E. Itzhak Levanon
Ambassador, Permanent Representative**

**Before the Vote on Resolution L.12
3rd Regular Session Human Rights Council**

27 November 06

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

During her visit to the region last week, the High Commissioner witnessed for herself firsthand the Gaza-based rocket attacks that plague Israel on a daily basis, as a Qassam rocket landed on a factory in Sderot a few hundred meters away from the High Commissioner. The attack fatally injured a factory worker, Yaakov Yaakobov, the father of two young children, and was the second fatality from Qassam rockets in less than a week. These deaths were caused by the “Christmas firecrackers” the Palestinian delegate referred to last week. The military wing of Hamas—the Palestinian government—has claimed responsibility for the attack, together with Islamic Jihad.

Last week, two Red Cross workers were also abducted by gunmen in Gaza. Although fortunately they were later released unharmed, it reminds us that Corporal Shalit is still in the hands of his abductors and not yet free.

Additionally, Human Rights Watch has published a statement urging the Palestinian Authority to take immediate steps to stop Hamas' indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian objects. Since September of last year, Palestinian armed groups have fired 1,700 rockets into Israel. These attacks have maimed civilians, including children, and have heavily damaged civilian infrastructure and homes. As Human Rights Watch has rightfully acknowledged, not a single one of the rockets has hit a military target, simply because they are not aimed at military targets, but rather at civilians. As the High Commissioner herself noted, “[t]he use of Qassam missiles, an inherently directionless weapon, is done only with the intent to kill and to spread fear without discrimination...As such they are in breach of international humanitarian law.”

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

Yesterday, Israelis and Palestinians reached a ceasefire agreement, which is holding so far. In light of such encouraging developments, I have asked my Palestinian colleague to withdraw this resolution, giving an indication of their positive and constructive intentions.

The resolution is tabled for purely political reasons, and as a distraction technique to the real issues which must be resolved. It is a resolution purportedly decrying Israeli "settlement activity," but which pointedly fails to acknowledge Israel's good will in the complete dismantling of its settlements in Gaza in June 2005, and withdrawal from settlements in the northern West Bank, unilateral moves which only served to create an ever-worsening security situation for Israeli civilians.

The text of today's resolution recognizes the principles set out on the Oslo Accords and subsequent agreements. However, it deliberately fails to mention that within these arrangements the issue of the settlements will be left to the Permanent Status negotiations between the parties. Therefore, this resolution not only pre-judges the outcome of these negotiations, but it also fails to project reality on the ground and at the same time impedes positive development that could work towards solving the conflict. All those who will vote for this resolution are perpetuating the conflict instead of pushing for a solution.

I call on you once again to cast a no in this vote.

Thank you.