



Representative Rashida Tlaib  
2438 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

October 11, 2023

Dear Rep. Tlaib,

On behalf of the Union for Reform Judaism, the largest denomination in American Jewish life including a vibrant network of nearly 850 Reform synagogues, I write to express our unequivocal and strong opposition to your comments since Hamas's heinous attack on Israel beginning October 7. Your call critical of U.S. support for Israel at this time when Israel has seen more than 1200 deaths, approximately 150 hostages taken, and thousands more injured, is shameful.

For more than seven decades, Israel has faced unique challenges as a nation bordered by hostile enemies. Through multiple wars instigated by those enemies, Israel has persevered thanks to the bravery of its people and international support. The U.S., as the first country to officially recognize the Jewish state, has been an invaluable ally, a position that has also served U.S. strategic interests.

If there is ever to be peace, it requires that people of conscience condemn those in their own communities that act in ways that are counterproductive to justice and peace. To that end, we have been vocal in our calls for an end to the Occupation, which has exacted a terrible toll on the Palestinian people. So too, this is such a moment when your voice – indeed all voices of conscience – should be absolutely clear in their condemnation of Hamas's horrific October 7 massacre targeting women, children, and the elderly, among others.

At this time, we find your call to end U.S. support for Israel incomprehensible. Though legitimate criticism of Israeli policies is a healthy part of any public discourse, what country would accept the murder of hundreds of its young people at a music festival, the rape of scores of its women, the abduction of its children, and the parading of its kidnapped and brutalized people through the streets of Gaza? How can any of these events elicit anything other than a full-throated condemnation?

October 7 was not just the Sabbath, but the end of the Fall holiday season. Our prayers throughout the season were for a new year of peace. The tragedy that befell Israel this past weekend has shattered those prayers. We will have to find the resolve to continue working toward a day when every child can grow up without the fear of war and with the opportunities that every child deserves. But that future will only be realized when we are all willing to reject those who seek violence and bloodshed. A sacred partnership calls for connection, not hindering efforts toward peace.

We urge you to retract your statement and, instead, reject those who perpetrated the violence of October 7.

Sincerely,  
/s/  
Rabbi Rick Jacobs  
President

