

**Congresswoman Barbara Lee**  
**Statement for H.Res. 921**  
**July 19, 2006**

Mr. Speaker, I join those who condemn the recent kidnapping of Israeli soldiers and rocket attacks into Israel.

And, I rise in strong support of Israel's right to protect and defend itself from attacks in accordance with international law, including Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

However, the resolution before us goes much further than that and it also omits any mention of how and why the United States should exert its leadership in stopping the violence. I strongly believe this is so critical at this stage. Too many people, Israelis Lebanese and Palestinians, have been killed, and there is no end in sight.

Mr. Speaker, very seldom do I cast a present vote but in this instance, I will. Let me explain why:

This resolution reaffirms our support for Israel, demands that the government of Lebanon do everything in its power to find and free the kidnapped Israeli soldiers and to gain control of its borders in order to prevent future attacks. It also condemns Hamas and Hezbollah for killing Israeli soldiers, and for indiscriminately targeting Israeli civilians. And it recognizes the plight of the families of the innocent victims. These provisions warrant our support and certainly send a strong message in support of Israel.

On the other hand, there are provisions in this resolution that are unfinished, or missing, and that leave this resolution incomplete.

This resolution ought to make it clear that the United States will not support a strategy of the use of military force or regime change against Iran or Syria. This resolution leaves the door open for such a course of action.

This resolution ought to make it clear that the only way to remove the threat to Israel, and to the larger region, is to resolve these issues through an immediate ceasefire and commit the United States to high-level and sustained diplomacy in support of the Road Map and other initiatives. This resolution does not address how to end the escalating violence that does real violence and harm to Israel's long-term interests in living in peace with her neighbors.

This resolution should offer concrete steps on how to achieve peace and security for Israel and the region. This resolution says nothing about advancing the peace process.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is there is absolutely no military resolution to the issues confronting this region -- notwithstanding the acts of self-defense to which Israel may have resorted.

If we don't put a stop to all hostilities today, what's to stop future violence with more technologically advanced weapons systems, rockets with even longer ranges? Where does it end? Is war the only answer?

Israel's security and a sustained peace that includes a two state solution cannot be achieved militarily. The only option, the only hope is a political solution to this crisis and for a lasting peace.

That's why, Mr. Speaker, it is imperative for all parties to return to internationally recognized borders and for parties to resume urgent, multilateral diplomatic efforts including a return to the Roadmap, implement UN resolutions, and full engagement by the Quartet.

What we should be doing today is imploring both sides to agree to a ceasefire, insist on the return of hostages, and agree to an international security force.

That is why I am cosponsor of H.Con.Res. 450, a resolution introduced by the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Kucinich, that I believe presents a more appropriately realistic solution to this crisis.

Mr. Speaker, the road ahead may be long and challenging, but it is one that we must tread for the sake of peace and security and stability in region-and the world.

If we can reach the end of that road then our ally Israel will find the peace and security that she and her people rightly deserve.