



Executive Council
of Australian Jewry Inc.

MEDIA STATEMENT

25 March 2019

Palestinian rocket attacks on Israel and voting in the UNHRC

The Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the peak representative body of the Australian Jewish community is deeply concerned by reports of renewed rocket fire from Gaza, which has caused injuries and loss of property in the vicinity of Kfar Saba in central Israel. We understand that at least six people, including two babies have suffered burns and shrapnel injuries, and that at least one home was totally destroyed in the attack. In a tragic and oft-overlooked aspect of such acts of war, four pet dogs also died from the impact of the rocket.

The firing of rockets at civilian populations is a war crime. Not only is it designed to terrorise and cause maximum loss of civilian life in Israel, the rockets are often deliberately fired from densely populated civilian areas in Gaza, to provide cover from Israeli return fire. This also is a war crime that endangers the very people Palestinian militants claim to be protecting, and turns civilian infrastructure into legitimate military targets.

We wish the people of Israel strength in this difficult time and pray for the speedy recovery of the injured in body and mind.

It appears that these attacks are timed to distract international attention from the growing uprising against Hamas's tyrannical rule in Gaza, which is being brutally repressed by Palestinian security forces using methods including live fire and torture. We call on both government and non-governmental actors to condemn the rocket attacks without equivocation and to pay due attention to events in Gaza, which have for the most part escaped the focus of international media and activists who claim to champion Palestinian human rights.

We also wish to commend the Australian Government for voting against all anti-Israel resolutions tabled under the UN Human Rights Council's notorious Agenda Item 7, which is the only agenda item devoted to condemning a specific country. The Australian government is also to be commended for voting against the adoption by the UN Human Rights Council of a report falsely accusing Israel of committing war crimes in Gaza. We are pleased that a growing number of European and South American nations are now following the leadership and moral clarity of Australia by opposing these egregious resolutions both in word and in deed.

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