

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak and for his hard work on this resolution.

I attempt to carefully examine the terminology and the nuance in such efforts because I want to make sure the United States' policy is carefully reflected in terms of our long-term interests, the security of Israel, and those of peace. And I think this resolution meets that test.

The attacks on Israel by Hezbollah are both unjustified and unprovoked, particularly given Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon 6 years ago.

Since the initial raid across the Israeli-Lebanese border, in which Hezbollah killed eight Israeli soldiers, took two others hostage, they have continued indiscriminately targeting Israeli civilians with increasingly sophisticated weaponry.

It is in this context that Israel has exercised its right of self-defense, which I completely support. I am, of course, I hope we all are concerned about the impact on the actions that deal with innocent Lebanese civilians. But as I cringed a little bit when I saw one of my colleagues look at the minority, and talked about shortcomings in the resolution, because I know Mr. Lantos had offered up on behalf of the minority specific language of concern for innocents which, sadly, is not in the resolution. But I do think it is a good starting point.

Even the Saudis and the Egyptians have recognized the responsibility for the current crisis lies with Hezbollah, Syria and Iran, as well as with Lebanon's inability to disarm Hezbollah as called for by Security Council Resolution 1559.

We should not seek to impose a cease-fire that returns the region to the status quo without ensuring that Hezbollah is no longer a threat to Israel or Lebanon.

This resolution is a strong signal of support for Israel. It is a signal to people who are playing their terrorist politics with innocent lives, of the United States' intentions. It is a signal to governments on the sidelines that they need to step up and help.

## Condemning the Recent Attacks Against the State of Israel

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Nothing has been more vexing to me during my tenure in the House than this continuing conflict with Israel. I don't pretend to know the answers, but I do know it does start with support for Israel and this resolution.