

## **Resolution Affirming Richmond's Support and Solidarity with the Palestinian People of Gaza**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Richmond stands in solidarity with the Palestinian people of Gaza, who are currently facing a campaign of ethnic cleansing and collective punishment by the state of Israel; and

**WHEREAS**, collective punishment is considered a war crime under international law, and refers to a form of sanction imposed on persons or a group of persons in response to a crime committed by one of them or a member of the group; and

**WHEREAS**, the state of Israel is engaging in collective punishment against the Palestinian people in Gaza in response to Hamas attacks on Israel; and

**WHEREAS**, this collective punishment of the Palestinian people includes shutting off all access to electricity, drinking water, food, and humanitarian aid; and

**WHEREAS**, the UN says approximately 2 million people in Gaza may soon run out of drinking water and all medical care; and

**WHEREAS**, ethnic cleaning refers to the creation of an ethnically homogenous geographic area through the elimination of unwanted ethnic groups by deportation, forcible displacement, or genocide; and

**WHEREAS**, Israel is now engaged in an ethnic cleansing campaign by explicitly requiring two million Palestinians to leave Gaza immediately or risk being bombed in their homes by the Israeli army; and

**WHEREAS**, the Gaza Strip, one of the most densely populated places on Earth, has been repeatedly referred to by human rights groups as “the world’s largest open-air prison” even prior to this conflict; and

**WHEREAS**, Gaza is known as “the world’s largest open-air prison” due to ongoing, unbearable living conditions imposed by the state of Israel, including a full air, land and sea blockade, enclosure of its borders by concrete walls and barbed wire fences, and the strict prohibition of Palestinians from leaving and entering the territory freely; and

**WHEREAS**, this blockade on Gaza has caused a 42% unemployment rate, while 84% of the population relies on humanitarian aid, 41% of Palestinians have too little food, 60% of Palestinian children are anemic, and the Gazan population cannot count on more than 2-4 hours of continuous electrical power a day; and

**WHEREAS**, prior to this current water shortage, only 1% of Gaza population has access to safe drinking water, leaving Gaza’s population – half of whom are children – increasingly vulnerable to waterborne diseases, infections, and dehydration; and

**WHEREAS**, Israel has not allowed many common cancer diagnosis and treatment tools, including PET CT and radiotherapy, to enter Gaza since 2007; and

**WHEREAS**, pediatric cancer cases that are typically considered treatable are often fatal in the Gaza Strip, as a result of the lack of healthcare and restrictions on movement; and

**WHEREAS**, the state of Israel would not be able to maintain an apartheid regime without enormous military aid provided by the United States every year, thereby also depriving Americans of money for their own urgent needs;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Richmond takes seriously the entreaty of “Never Again,” and that the historical memory of the Holocaust means fighting ethnic cleansing and apartheid everywhere; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City of Richmond vows to combat antisemitism and ethno-nationalism in all its forms; and

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Richmond advocates for the dignity and safety of residents in every community, regardless of what crimes its leadership may commit, and that peaceful diplomacy is the only way to achieve this safety and dignity.