



October 2, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Jeffries, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell:

As we approach the somber one-year mark of the horrific October 7th attacks on Israel by Hamas terrorists and in response to yesterday's shocking bombardment from Iran, we write to you to unequivocally reaffirm the support of Southern Baptists for the people and the nation of Israel.

Since the inception of the modern state of Israel in 1948, Israel has faced numerous attacks, incursions, and violations of its national sovereignty. The Jewish people have long endured genocidal attempts to eradicate them and to destroy the Jewish state. These antisemitic, deadly ideologies and terrorist actions must be opposed.

As thousands of evangelical leaders wrote in the [Evangelical Statement in Support of Israel](#) in the days immediately following the October 7th attack, "Israel stands as a rare example of democracy in a region dominated by authoritarian regimes. The tragic events of October 7th further underscore the importance of democracy in our world and stand as a sober reminder that supporting Israel's right to exist is both urgent and needed."

This summer at the annual meeting of our convention of churches, Southern Baptists overwhelmingly passed a [resolution](#) "On Justice and Peace in the Aftermath of the October 7 Attack on Israel." That resolution states clearly that Southern Baptists "condemn Hamas' terrorist attacks of October 7, commit to standing with the Jewish people and those suffering in the region, and oppose all forms of antisemitism." The resolution further rejects "calls for the



nation of Israel to lay down its arms, repudiat[es] any calls for a permanent ceasefire that do not also result in the immediate release of all hostages” and urges “the international community to redouble its efforts to support the nation of Israel toward a just and lasting peace, addressing underlying issues such as terrorism, human rights violations, and regional instability, consistent with biblical calls to defend the oppressed and promote justice, especially among non-combatants and civilians.”

As tensions rise and broader conflict throughout the Middle East appears imminent, our churches remain committed to praying for a peaceful end to this conflict. At this dire moment, we urge you not to waver in your commitment to support the right of Israel to exist and defend itself, to see all of the hostages returned home, and to oppose all forms of antisemitism that emerge at home and abroad.

We are praying that God would grant you wisdom and discernment as you make difficult decisions and lead our nation in the days to come.

Respectfully,

Clint Pressley
President
Southern Baptist Convention

F. Brent Leatherwood
President
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission
of the Southern Baptist Convention