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Title: Resolution calling upon the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress to recognize and support Israel's right to exist in peace without relinquishing land in the Golan Heights.

Sponsors: Noach Dear, Walter L. McCaffrey, John D. Sabini

Indexes:

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Res. No. 1145

Resolution calling upon the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress to recognize and support Israel's right to exist in peace without relinquishing land in the Golan Heights.

By Council Member Dear; also Council Members McCaffrey and Sabini.

Whereas, The territory of the Golan Heights is currently governed by the State of Israel and is settled by Israelis; and

Whereas, Jewish settlement and sovereignty in the Golan region dates back more than three thousand years and is biblically referenced as a part of the historic land of Israel; and

Whereas, The Golan Heights was controlled by the Republic of Syria only between 1948 and 1967, a period of nineteen years; and

Whereas, During those years of Syrian control and until Israel captured the region, the Golan Heights was used by Syria as a fully militarized zone and as a primary staging point for military actions against the State of Israel including attacks on the civilian residents of Israel's Galilee; and

Whereas, Israel captured the Golan Heights in the Six-Day War of 1967 and has developed the previously barren land for more than thirty-two years; and

Whereas, Israel's capture of the Golan Heights removed the geographical advantage Syria held over the low-altitude Israeli Galilee and thereby, effectively ended the deplorable Syrian artillery and missile attacks on Israeli civilians, including women and children, of the Galilee; and

Whereas, Israeli citizens have subsequently settled the land of the Golan Heights establishing both agricultural settlements and the region's first modern cities; and

Whereas, The Golan Heights, as part of Israel, has been developed in a completely unprecedented fashion with leading cities including Katzrin and has become a world leader in areas such as the wine industry; and

Whereas, Syria, which is effectively an autocratic state, can offer no tangible assurance that it will remain peaceful towards its democratic neighbor, Israel; and

Whereas, Historical incidences of so-called "land for peace" compromises have not regularly proven successful in their goal of achieving peace, a prime example being Great Britain's relinquishment of the Sudetenland in the Munich agreement prior to World War II; and

Whereas, The United States, in its zeal to broker worldwide peace, must be extremely cautious to facilitate only arrangements that best serve that goal in a practical and real fashion rather than in a more ceremonial manner, which may be desirable from a publicity standpoint, but counterproductive from the perspective of a lasting peaceful resolution; and

Whereas, The responsibility of the U.S., as the leader of the democratic world, is to leave the decisions about a peace deal with Syria to the residents and citizens of the democratic State of Israel without tying any assistance or aid for that nation to a U.S.-backed arrangement; and

Whereas, The U.S. government should support Israel, its only democratic ally in the Middle East, regardless of the progress of negotiations on the Syrian front; and

Whereas, The U.S. government should recognize Israel's right to exist in peace without the threat of violence from any of its neighbors free of any and all contingencies and conditions except Israel's own commitment to peace; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress to recognize Israel's right to exist in peace without relinquishing land in the Golan Heights.

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