

Talking Points for Letters to the Editor and Op-eds

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Letters to the Editor should be no more than 200 words long; op/eds should be no more than 750 (though 650-700 is better). For assistance, write adam@btvshalom.org.

- Our concern over the situation in Gaza flows from our Jewish identity. It is very important to note (especially if writing to the mainstream press) that you are an American Jew, and that you support Israel – that, in fact, you are pro-peace *because* you are pro-Israel.
- There is no military solution to what is a political problem. Israel has the right and the duty to defend itself, but after more than 60 years of self-defense, it has become clear that the country has not been made safe by military action. Only negotiations can achieve real peace and real security.
- A ceasefire in Gaza is a crucial first step, and we call on the American government to act decisively to achieve an immediate ceasefire between the sides. Yet if that ceasefire doesn't lead to a comprehensive diplomatic effort toward a negotiated settlement, it is likely to end in more bloodshed, as the most recent ceasefire ended in the current violence.
- On the other hand, a continuation or escalation of Israel's current military action will not serve the Israeli people or U.S. interests, and it is proving devastating to the Palestinians. Israel cannot be safe as long as its nearest neighbors are angry, hungry, and in mourning, and neither Israeli nor American interests are served by inflaming extremists elements across the Muslim and Arab world.
- The Bush Administration spent eight years mouthing platitudes but failing to take effective action toward a durable resolution of the conflict. If the new Administration is to change this abysmal record, President-elect Obama and Secretary of State-designate Clinton will have to act quickly and decisively. They will have to demand the kinds of compromise and difficult choices that are the foundation of any true peace, and they will have to insist – to both sides – that agreements signed with the United State of America mean something, and must be abided by.
- Americans who support Israel will call for an immediate ceasefire, and they will call on their Senators, Representatives, and incoming President to engage in vigorous diplomacy from the first days of the new Administration.