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NORTH VANCOUVER'S MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

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Good will towards all in troubled times

It has been difficult for many to think about the holidays this year given the horrific events happening in Israel and Gaza.

On October 7th the world was witness to barbaric attacks by Hamas inside Israel that killed 1200 civilians – including many children – with over 200 hostages taken.

We have since witnessed sustained retaliation against Hamas on the part of the Israeli military...retaliation that has tragically led to thousands of innocent Palestinian civilians being killed – once again, many of them children.

I think everyone understands that Israel cannot allow itself to be in a position where an attack like October 7th could happen again in a year or two.

By the same token, the scale of the devastation wrought on the people of Gaza cannot continue indefinitely. Civilians in Gaza are not Hamas. Hamas, we must condemn. But the civilians of Gaza, the international community – and Israel itself – must seek to protect.

As a global community, we must pursue long-term, sustainable solutions to a conflict that has gone on for far too long. Canada – in partnership with other like-minded countries – is working towards pathways to provide stability, peace and security for both Israelis and Palestinians.

The joint statement from Canada, Australia and New Zealand on December 12th and the UN vote that same day calling for an immediate sustainable ceasefire are intended to move the needle towards durable solutions for an end to this conflict.

Bringing it home

Here in North Vancouver, my constituency office has been working these past several weeks to help evacuees arriving here. Our office and the community as a whole are working to provide a safe and supportive place for those evacuated – whether they

be from Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, or from Ramallah and Gaza.

A Jewish-Canadian family living in Tel Aviv evacuated by a Canadian Forces aircraft, arrived with the children asking where the bomb shelters are in North Vancouver. My staff worked to ensure the children were promptly enrolled in school and have the support necessary to begin healing and recovering from the trauma they've experienced.

A young family evacuated at a moment's notice from the West Bank with a single suitcase and two small children in their arms raced to a bus arranged by Global Affairs Canada - desperate to escape random attacks on their apartment building. They reached North Vancouver after a grueling trip from Jordan. Dad and children are Canadian citizens – now reunited with extended family living here; Mom, a Palestinian, is applying for permanent residency.

A time for reflection

As peaceful as life seems here in North Vancouver, the world can be a violent and unsettling place, and no one is immune to its terrors and challenges.

My staff often say that it is both a responsibility and a privilege to undertake this form of local humanitarian work that comes with the job.

I am so very grateful for their dedication and resiliency. And for their commitment to ensuring that all North Vancouverites, when in need, are treated equally with respect, dignity and understanding.

Peace and good will to all – something to reflect upon during and beyond the holiday season.



To view the PM statement, scan this QR code.

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