

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

Ms. Sima Bahous  
UN Women  
220 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10017

November 29, 2023

Dear Ms. Bahous,

We write to urge UN Women to publicly condemn Hamas for its brutal October 7<sup>th</sup> attack on innocent Israelis that included the murder, torture, rape and sexual violence against Israeli women and women of other nationalities. As Israeli women deal with the traumatic fall out of sexual violence, UN Women's mission to protect women remains critically important. As the world just observed the UN's International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25<sup>th</sup>, UN Women cannot expect to be viewed as an honest advocate for women's rights if it continues to ignore Israeli women and women of other nationalities brutalized by Hamas terrorists on October 7<sup>th</sup> in an attack that claimed the lives of 1200+ Israelis and injured thousands more. We call on UN Women to publicly condemn the use of Hamas' brutal tactics, specifically murder, torture, abduction, rape, and sexual violence.

We condemn Hamas' assault on Israeli civilians on October 7<sup>th</sup>, targeting Israeli civilians and the destruction of the one and only Jewish State. Since the attack, Israeli authorities have publicly documented instances of sexual violence perpetrated against Israeli women, including gang rape, genital mutilation, and necrophilia. Survivor testimony, interrogations of arrested terrorists and first responder accounts all indicate systematic sexual abuse against Israeli women. One eyewitness recounted a woman raped and passed to another man in uniform, after which she was shot and mutilated.<sup>1</sup> Volunteers with the Israeli first responder unit, ZAKA have recounted women found face down and naked from the waist down<sup>2</sup>. Forensic medical units at the Israeli makeshift morgue in Shura have identified several bodies with signs consistent with sexual abuse, including shattered pelvises. One pregnant woman was found with her stomach cut open and her unborn baby beheaded.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, interviews with arrested Hamas terrorists indicate that the terrorist organization ordered terrorists to kill, behead and even to "have sex [with] their bodies."<sup>4</sup> Due to the volume of murdered Israelis and staff shortages, Israeli forensic teams have had to prioritize identifying bodies, limiting the ability to systematically collect physical

---

<sup>1</sup> [Israeli Police Collect Eyewitness Testimony of Gang Rape During Hamas Attack - Israel News - Haaretz.com](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Israeli Emergency Responder: 'I Saw 20 Children Shot, Burned And Piled Together In Two Piles' - I24NEWS](#)

<sup>3</sup> [At the army base where Israel identifies its dead: 'They went from house to house burning family after family' | Fox News](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Amid war and urgent need to ID bodies, evidence of Hamas's October 7 rapes slips away | The Times of Israel](#)

evidence of rape and sexual violence. This has been exploited to promote skepticism and denial of the sexual atrocities committed against Israelis which we denounce in no uncertain terms.

This attack comes on the heels of Hamas' yearslong sustained abuse and subjugation of Palestinian women in Gaza. UN Women has remained silent since October 7<sup>th</sup>, neither condemning Hamas' for its terrorist attack on Israeli civilians, nor acknowledging its horrific tactics against women and girls, including rape and sexual assault. For decades, UN Women has served as the leading international voice to protect women's rights across the globe. International skepticism and downright denial of the atrocities perpetrated against Israeli women is a dangerous phenomenon that will ultimately harm the memory of those murdered and raped by Hamas while also delegitimizing international work to prevent violence against vulnerable communities, specifically women and girls. We hope UN Women will #BelieveIsraeliWomen and condemn Hamas' evil practices.

The failure by UN Women to publicly stand up for Israeli women and condemn Hamas' systematic atrocities undermines UN Women and highlights its one-sided approach. The documented cases of sexual violence against Israeli women committed by Hamas and other Palestinian terrorists were omitted from the UN Women's October 13<sup>th</sup> statement "condemning" the attack on Israeli civilians, a long week after the gruesome incident and falling short of UN Women's important mission. Meanwhile, UN Women continues to repeatedly call for a permanent ceasefire under humanitarian pretenses which would serve to benefit Hamas. On October 20<sup>th</sup>, UN Women released a report titled "UN Women rapid assessment and humanitarian response in the Occupied Palestinian Territory" addressing the effect of Israel's ground invasion in Gaza on Palestinian women. The report does not address any gender-based violence, sexual abuse or mutilation directed at Israeli women or women of other nationalities targeted by terrorists on October 7<sup>th</sup>. It also does not mention any assessment about the wellbeing of the many women – Israeli, American and other nationalities – being held hostage by Hamas in Gaza, including a pregnant foreign worker who is presumed to have given birth in captivity by now. While we are encouraged that UN Women met with the Israeli Civil Commission of Oct. 7 Crimes by Hamas Against Women and Children, your statement only acknowledges "reports" of alleged crimes against women while neither naming nor condemning Hamas. Your disregard and tone deaf response to Hamas' attack is woefully unsatisfactory and consistent with the UN's longstanding bias against Israel.

We urge UN Women to condemn Hamas' attack on Israeli civilians in no uncertain terms, while also stating outright that UN Women stands with Israeli women and women of other nationalities who are reeling from the systemic sexual abuse, torture, and mutilation they endured on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Such atrocities and abuse of women in Israel requires swift condemnation from the leading international organization dedicated to protecting women from violence worldwide. As the international community shines a light on the sustained abuse of hundreds of thousands of women across the globe, we urge UN Women to maintain its credibility by publicly denouncing the atrocious violation of women's rights by Hamas terrorists.

Sincerely,



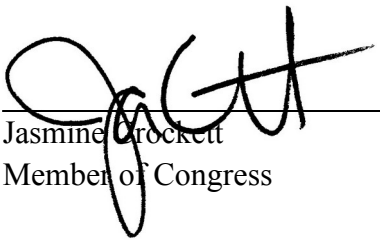
---

Young Kim  
Member of Congress



---

Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
Member of Congress



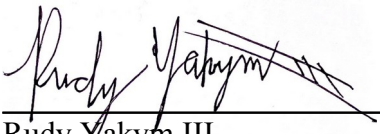
---

Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



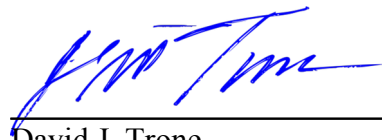
---

Jared Moskowitz  
Member of Congress



---

Rudy Yakym III  
Member of Congress



---

David J. Trone  
Member of Congress



---

Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



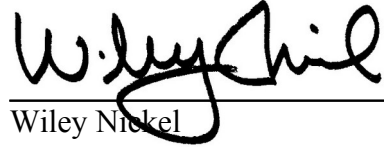
---

Matt Cartwright  
Member of Congress



---

Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



---

Wiley Nickel  
Member of Congress



---

Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



---

Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress



---

Dan Newhouse  
Member of Congress



---

Brandon Williams  
Member of Congress



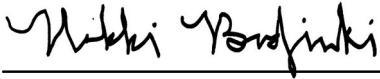
---

Brad Finstad  
Member of Congress



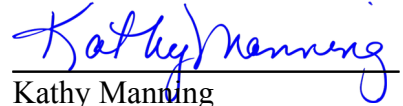
---

Bryan Steil  
Member of Congress



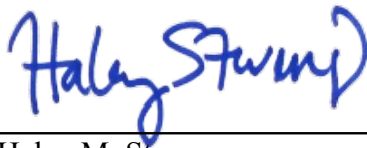
---

Nikki Budzinski  
Member of Congress



---

Kathy Manning  
Member of Congress



---

Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



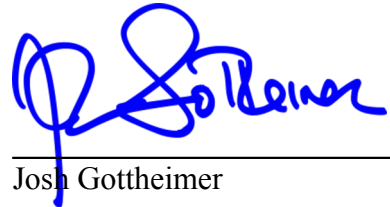
---

David Kustoff  
Member of Congress



---

Blake D. Moore  
Member of Congress



---

Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



---

Patrick K. Ryan  
Member of Congress



---

Jake Auchincloss  
Member of Congress



---

William R. Timmons, IV  
Member of Congress



---

Susan Wild  
Member of Congress



---

Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



---

Ben Cline  
Member of Congress



---

Chris Deluzio  
Member of Congress



---

Jefferson Van Drew  
Member of Congress



---

Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress



---

Jared Golden  
Member of Congress



---

Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress



---

Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



---

Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



---

Don Bacon  
Member of Congress



---

Greg Landsman  
Member of Congress



---

Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



---

Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress



---

Susie Lee  
Member of Congress



---

Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



---

Mike Rogers  
Member of Congress



---

Larry Bucshon, M.D.  
Member of Congress



---

Claudia Tenney  
Member of Congress



---

John Rose  
Member of Congress



---

Jenniffer González-Colón  
Member of Congress



---

Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



---

Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress



*Kathy Castor*

---

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

*Ashley Hinson*

---

Ashley Hinson  
Member of Congress

*Mark E. Amodei*

---

Mark E. Amodei  
Member of Congress

*Dan Meuser*

---

Daniel Meuser  
Member of Congress

*Erin Houchin*

---

Erin Houchin  
Member of Congress

*Eric Sorensen*

---

Eric Sorensen  
Member of Congress

*Frederica S. Wilson*

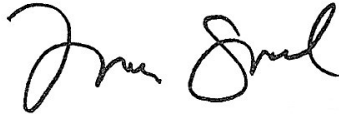
---

Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress

*Julia Brownley*

---

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



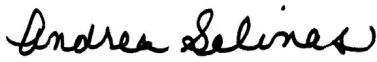
---

Michelle Steel  
Member of Congress



---

Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



---

Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



---

Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress



---

Donald Norcross  
Member of Congress



---

Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress



---

C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress



---

Michael K. Simpson  
Member of Congress



---

David P. Joyce  
Member of Congress



---

Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



---

Angie Craig  
Member of Congress



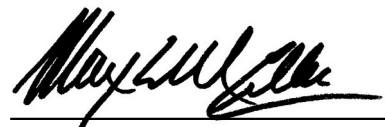
---

Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress



---

Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



---

Max L. Miller  
Member of Congress



---

Kelly Armstrong  
Member of Congress



---

Michael Waltz  
Member of Congress



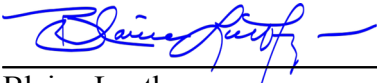
---

Darrell Issa  
Member of Congress



---

David Scott  
Member of Congress



---

Blaine Luetkemeyer  
Member of Congress



---

Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



---

Randy Feenstra  
Member of Congress



---

Nathaniel Moran  
Member of Congress



---

Michael Guest  
Member of Congress



---

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



---

Pat Fallon  
Member of Congress



---

Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



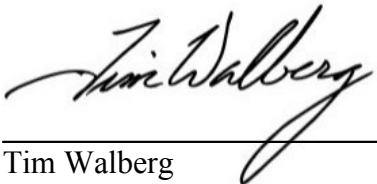
---

Mike Levin  
Member of Congress



---

Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress



---

Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress



---

Carol D. Miller  
Member of Congress



---

Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress