

Mr. Danon (Israel):

Once again we have gathered to discuss the Middle East, Israel and the Palestinians. Time and time again we meet in this Chamber for this debate. We hear very long discussions about the nature of the conflict and new proposals to solve it. But the root of the conflict is not very hard to understand, and the solution is clear.

For 67 years, Israel has been pursuing peace. Despite decades of war and rejection, we never gave up on that goal. Israel finally achieved peace when two brave Arab leaders, President Sadat and King Hussein, chose to lay down their arms. They chose the path of cooperation and partnership over the misery of war and conflict. That was the key to peace with Egypt in 1981. That was the key to peace with Jordan in 1994. And it is the key to peace with the Palestinians today.

The Palestinian people deserve peace. They deserve a brighter, better future. Therefore, let me be clear. On the day the Palestinian leadership rejects terror and violence, on the day they embrace coexistence and cooperation, that is the day there will be peace. But is that what the Palestinian leadership really wants? Do they really want peace? If those gathered here believe that to be true, then they will have to explain a few inconvenient facts.

Fact number one is that the Palestinian leadership refuses to condemn the murder of Israeli men, women and children. Let me ask everyone in the Chamber: do not Israeli lives matter?

Fact number two is that the Palestinian Authority glorifies terrorism and terrorists. They name squares after suicide bombers and hang posters of them on school walls. Tell me, when did terrorism become heroism?

Fact number three is that Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian Authority, refuses to even sit down with Prime Minister Netanyahu. How can we make peace if we cannot even talk? Just recently, the Palestinian Foreign Minister, Riyad Al-Maliki, said loudly and clearly, "We will never go back and sit again in a direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiation."

We understand that members of the Council may not have answers to those questions. What we do not understand is why we do not demand answers.

The State of Israel and the people of Israel do not have any more time to wait for answers. For decades we have been facing Palestinian terrorism. In just the last few months, Israelis have faced a wave of non-stop daily attacks by Palestinian terrorists: over 300 separate attacks in 176 days. That means two terror attacks per day, every day, for half a year. That is the reality. Thirty-four people have been killed, and hundreds have been injured. How has the Palestinian leadership responded? Have they stopped the daily calls for violence that are fuelling the bloodshed? Has there been a clear condemnation by the Palestinian leadership? The answer is no. Instead of condemning those attacks, they encourage them. They reward terrorists and their families with monthly salaries. The more horrific the attack, the more horrific the crime, the higher the payment. In Palestinian society, terrorists are treated like heroes.

This year, we all participated in the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. On International Women's Day, official Palestinian Authority television called Dalal Mughrabi a role model for Palestinian women. For those who may not know or who may not remember, Dalal Mughrabi was a terrorist. In 1978, she hijacked an Israeli bus and murdered 38 innocent people, including 13 children. This is the woman the Palestinians have turned into a national symbol.

These are facts we never seem to hear in this Chamber. Instead, some are all too eager to offer justification for Palestinian terror and excuses for violence. Many find it convenient to ignore the basic truth: the endless incitement and the ongoing glorification of violence is directly responsible for the murder of innocent Israelis.

For many Palestinians, incitement is a daily reality. Children go to school and listen to tales of terrorists. Teenagers turn on the television and see a constant flow of images of hate and violence. Young adults go to mosques and hear sermons demonizing Israel and calling for its destruction, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This reality has deadly consequences. On 17 January, a young Israeli mother was painting the door of her house when she was brutally attacked by a 16-year-old Palestinian terrorist. She was repeatedly stabbed at the entrance to her home. Knowing her children were inside, a few metres away, she heroically fought the terrorist. Even as she was bleeding to death, she stopped him from pulling the knife from her body. With her last ounce of strength, she made sure that the terrorist could not use the knife again to attack her six children.

That woman's name was Dafna Meir. Dafna was a hospital nurse from Otniel, a loving wife and a mother of six. At her funeral, Dafna's husband, Natan, said, "You left me six treasures, I will keep them safe for you. My Dafna is one in a million. My Dafna, thank you for every moment I had with you." One of those treasures, Dafna's eldest daughter, Renana, said, "I didn't just lose a mother, but also my best friend. It's hard for me to think we will not laugh together or fight anymore, that you won't accompany me down the aisle and to the maternity ward."

Today, Natan and Renana are here with us in the Chamber, sitting behind me. They lost a wife and a mother. They paid the most painful price.

We have to ask ourselves why that happened. What drives a 16-year-old boy to stab another human being to death? The Palestinian teenager — he was arrested — gave us the answer in his confession. He said that what made him want to kill a Jew, any Jew, was a television show on Palestinian television. The Palestinian culture of hate and constant brainwashing is responsible for the loss of too many Israelis, and it is directly responsible for the murder of Dafna Meir.

It is time for real answers, it is time for the truth. Since no one else will ask the hard questions, I will. In the name of the people of Israel, in the name of the Israeli victims, and in the name of the family of Dafna Meir, let me ask the Palestinian observer here with us today. Mr. Mansour, will you condemn Palestinians who commit terror attacks against Israelis?

All of us, or maybe all of us, around this table know what it takes to be a leader. Leaders assume responsibility. Leaders speak out. Leaders educate. For the sake of the next generation, this is the lesson the Palestinians must learn. On the day Palestinian leaders, like Mr. Mansour, publicly condemn terror against Israelis — publicly — on the day they end their campaign of hate and violence, on the day respect for all — all — human beings is taught in Palestinian schools, on that day they will find a partner ready to work with them for the promise of peace. The State of Israel and the people of Israel continue to hope that that day will come soon.

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