



## RACIAL AND ETHNO-CULTURAL EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

January 31, 2024

A Special Meeting of the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee was held on Wednesday, January 31, 2024, at 6:03 pm via electronic means.

**PRESENT:** Steph Kallstrom, Chair  
Nimrah Anwar  
Victoria Barclay  
Ajay Puri  
Jeremiah Rojas  
Lydia Tang  
Pavandeep Toor

**ABSENT:** Naina Varshney, Vice-Chair  
Harjot Banwait  
Alexandra Gunn  
Alemu Nenko

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Pete Fry, Council Liaison  
April Sumter-Freitag, Social Planner, Staff Liaison

**CITY CLERK'S OFFICE:** Kevin Burris, Manager, Civic Agencies

### WELCOME

The Chair acknowledged we are on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tseil-Waututh Peoples. We thank them for having cared for this land and look forward to working with them in partnership as we continue to build this great city together.

### 1. Resolution for Ceasefire in Gaza

MOVED BY Jeremiah Rojas  
SECONDED BY Nimrah Anwar

#### WHEREAS

1. The ongoing bombardment in the Gaza Strip comes in the context of the 75-year displacement of Palestinians and 56-year illegal military and settler occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, and the 17-year blockade of Gaza;
2. On October 7, 2023, a surprise attack by Hamas against Israel resulted in the tragic loss of 1,068 Israeli and 71 foreigner lives, including 695 civilians and 36 children,

- with more than 1,590 wounded, and 200 hostages taken;
3. Palestinians living in Gaza are being killed at an unprecedented rate. As of January 31, 2024, Over 27,019 Gazans – including over 10,000 children and 7,000 women – have been killed, meaning 1 child in Gaza is killed every 10 minutes. Due to the collapse of the health infrastructure, the death toll is expected to be higher. Furthermore, 339 medical workers and over 122 journalists have been killed. Proportional to population, the death toll in Gaza is the equivalent of over 4.5 million American deaths. In addition, over 66,139 Gazans have been wounded;
  4. The Government of the State of Israel has bombed civilian entities indiscriminately, destroying or damaging over two-thirds of all homes in northern Gaza; 24 hospitals, 62 medical clinics and 127 ambulances; 326 schools; around 1,250 places of worship; bakeries; refugee camps; roads; and other essential infrastructure. This has destroyed access to food, clean water, healthcare, shelter, and sanitation essential to human life and caused mass displacement of as many as 90% of Gazans;
  5. Amid escalating humanitarian concerns in Gaza, the U.N. General Assembly, with 193 members, adopted a ceasefire resolution on December 12, 2023, with 153 countries, including Canada, voting in favor;
  6. The Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee unequivocally condemns the targeting and killing of Palestinian and Israeli civilians – a violation of international law;
  7. The Cities of Burnaby, Maple Ridge, and New Westminster, among other Canadian municipalities, have issued calls for a ceasefire and peaceful resolution to the conflict in Gaza;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee request that the Mayor and City Council communicate to relevant national and international authorities, expressing the City's strong desire for a ceasefire and peaceful resolution to the conflict in Gaza, including the following:
  - Strongly urge all parties involved in the conflict to immediately and unconditionally cease all hostilities;
  - Express support for humanitarian initiatives and urge safe and unimpeded access for humanitarian aid to reach those in need in Gaza;
  - Express support for the release of over 132 Israeli hostages held by Hamas;
  - Express support for the release of thousands of Palestinians, including children, held indefinitely without cause and trial in Israeli military prisons;
  - Reiterate City Council's dedication to human rights, the principles of international law, and the promotion of peaceful coexistence among all communities;
  - Support an end to Canadian military support to the State of Israel, and an end to Canadian taxes and investments contributing to humanitarian catastrophe and loss of life;

- B. THAT the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee request that City Council commit to staying informed on the situation in Gaza and exploring opportunities for the City to contribute positively to ongoing peace efforts;
- C. THAT a copy of this resolution be transmitted to relevant diplomatic missions, international organizations, and advocacy groups, and that it be made publicly available to the residents of Vancouver.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### **ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED by Victoria Barclay  
SECONDED by Nimrah Anwar

THAT this meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### **Next Meeting:**

DATE: Thursday, March 21, 2024  
TIME: 5:30 PM  
PLACE: Cascadia Room, 3rd Floor, City Hall  
/ Webex Online

The Committee adjourned at 6:11 pm.

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