Thank you, Mr. President.

I am honored to stand here today.  I am honored to stand here to represent Israel at every UN forum and in every UN hall. I am honored because I would rather speak in this room every single day in defense of my people than give even one eulogy for one Israeli killed by Hamas.

That is why I am here today: to stand up for a basic right afforded to every country in the world – the right to defend its citizens.

The General Assembly has convened two emergency special sessions in the past six months. Both are related to Israel. The first one was about Jerusalem. It was the international community’s attempt to take away the right to determine our own capital. This session today is about our right to defend our people. It is the international community’s attempt to take away our basic right to defend ourselves.

The resolution before you today does not protect innocent Palestinians. It does not protect innocent Israelis. It does not condemn – or even mention – Hamas, the terror group directly responsible for the violence in our region.

By supporting this resolution, you are colluding with a terrorist organization. By supporting this resolution, you are empowering Hamas.

Over the past two months, we have heard from some of the world’s worst offenders about the so-called Palestinian “Great March of Return.” Ismail Haniyeh, the head of Hamas; President Erdogan of Turkey; and others have expressed their support for these attacks against Israel.

In fact, this resolution was introduced a few moments ago by Turkey and Algeria – not exactly two champions of human rights.

The resolution is nothing more than a twisted stamp of approval for terrorism.

It seems that certain leaders will call for an emergency special session branding Israel as the scapegoat in order to satisfy their political bases for an upcoming election.

The name of these riots tells you everything you need to know. These rioters do not march with the intention of returning to Gaza, or even to Judea and Samaria. What they mean when they say “return” – they want to seize Tel Aviv, and Haifa, and Jerusalem, and replace the Jewish state. We take them at their word, and we pledge to make sure they do not succeed.

This so-called Great March of Return was not a march at all. It was a violent assault on Israel by Hamas.

The Palestinians claimed it was peaceful protest – you heard that. So let me ask you: when someone plants explosives on the fence separating Gaza and Israel – is that peaceful? When someone throws Molotov cocktails or fires weapons – is that peaceful? When Hamas launches hundreds of rockets at Israeli civilians – is that peaceful? When one of Hamas’ mortar shells hits a kindergarten – is that a peaceful protest?

Hamas is even using children’s toys as weapons. They have turned kites into bombs and sent them over the fence, igniting over 400 fires in Israel. 4,400 acres of Israeli agricultural fields were set aflame.

Ask yourselves: how would you react if 40,000 rioters calling for your destruction tried to storm your border? Think for a moment about it – about your country, about your borders. What if the UN then called for an emergency special session condemning your country for defending itself? What if you were standing here, in my place? What would you do? What would you say?

Just imagine what would have happened had the rioters – the 40,000 rioters in Gaza – succeeded in breaching the fence. The world would have witnessed endless Israeli and Palestinian casualties.

Last month, Hamas claimed responsibility for 85% of those killed during a day of rioting. Some members of the Security Council stood in solidarity with these confirmed terrorists – it’s not me saying it. It’s the Hamas leaders.

[These Security Council members] actually attempted to pass a resolution blaming Israel for the crimes of Hamas. The resolution did not pass – thanks to the United States and other brave countries that did not support it. But because it’s Israel, this resolution is being discussed here at the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

It is about time to expose the falsehoods of the situation in Gaza and draw the clearest demarcation between right and wrong. If you support this resolution, you are supporting Hamas.

Let us set the record straight with the facts.

First, the Palestinian rioters were neither unarmed nor defenseless.

Second, the true root cause of the violent riots of recent weeks was the terrorism orchestrated by Hamas. It was Hamas that decided when to attack and when to retreat. It was Hamas that decided when it would send its own people straight into harm’s way and even to their deaths.

Third, it is Hamas that is recognized as a terrorist organization by Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the European Union, Japan, the United Kingdom, Egypt and the United States.

And finally – and I will be very clear – the only country facing a double standard on the world stage, and here in the General Assembly, is Israel.

Today, the General Assembly seeks to join the so-called UN Human Rights Council in Geneva by passing a grossly biased resolution condemning Israel. This is the same Council that has one permanent agenda item for condemning Israel, and one agenda item for every other conflict in the world.

The hypocrisy of the General Assembly should come as no surprise. Last year alone, the General Assembly adopted twenty resolutions condemning Israel. There have been ten emergency special sessions of the General Assembly since the founding of the United Nations. Five out of the ten were on Israel. The tenth session – the one we are in now – is about Israel. It was first convened in April 1997. It has been open for over twenty years. This session has been reconvened eighteen times, including today.

It is not only a mockery of the UN. It is abuse and misuse of the UN.

Just for comparison, the devastation in Syria that has claimed 500,000 lives and displaced seven million people has never resulted in an emergency special session of the General Assembly.

This type of worldwide assault is reserved only for Israel. It is not criticism. It is not a difference in opinion on policy. It is Antisemitism.

Mr. President,

Israel has gone to great lengths to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Despite the fact that we withdrew fully from Gaza in 2005, Israel facilitates the transfer of hundreds of tons of goods into Gaza every single day.

It is Hamas that destroyed the crossing providing entry to those goods. It is Hamas that steals international aid – the money that you give to Gaza. It is Hamas that in 2017 spent 260 million dollars on terrorism.

Yet, it is Hamas that is not even mentioned in today’s resolution.

I ask you all; I ask the Ambassador of Turkey: why couldn’t you include Hamas in the resolution?

I ask the Ambassadors of Algeria; of Bangladesh; of Venezuela: read the resolution. Do you support terrorism? Do you support suicide bombers?

Hamas was not alone in generating this conflict. Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, has refused to pay the Palestinian Authority employees in Gaza for months. While Israel works with the UN and others to promote development projects in Gaza, it is Abbas and the Palestinian Authority that hold progress back.

Israel wants to help the residents of Gaza, but humanitarian gestures must go both ways. We will not rest until Avera Mangistu, Hisham al-Sayed, and the bodies of Oron Shaul and Hadar Goldin are returned safely to Israel.

Mr. President,

The situation taking place along the fence with Gaza is very clear. Israel is a democracy defending itself. Hamas is a terrorist organization attacking Israelis and Palestinians. Therefore, if the UN passes this resolution, it will have signed in writing its unequivocal support for terrorism against Israel.

Let us not pretend. If ISIS were to attack Stockholm tomorrow, ISIS would be held responsible for the attack. If al-Qaeda assaulted Paris, the UN would issue the strongest condemnation of al-Qaeda.

Only when Hamas attacks Israel does the UN seek to blame Israel.

The moral majority in this chamber should not tolerate a different standard for Israeli victims of terror.

I have a simple message for those who support this resolution today. You are the ammunition for Hamas’ guns. You are the warheads for Hamas’ missiles.

Mr. President,

We will continue to do everything in our power to save innocent lives on both sides of the fence. But make no mistake. Israel will never compromise when it comes to the safety of our citizens – when it comes to defending our country.

A vote for this resolution is a vote for Hamas.

Thank you.