

July 24, 2024



National Council of Jewish Women

Dear NCJW Leaders,

National Council of Jewish Women was founded to ensure that Jewish women have a seat at the table on the issues that matter most to us. This is why I took my rightful seat at the table on behalf of our movement to meet with Prime Minister Netanyahu last night when he gathered leaders of Jewish organizations in Washington, DC. We believe it is vital to continue showing up and speaking out for the many voices who cannot — especially the 120 hostages still in captivity, the families suffering in Gaza, the women silenced on October 7, and everyone impacted by the war since then.



I did not control the list of invitees, and if I had, more diverse voices would have been present. I was one of the few women in the room and one of the only people representing an organization committed to progressive values.

So, what did I share?

I shared that it has been 290 days since 251 people were taken hostage by Hamas, with 120 hostages still being held. I shared that in this time, families have been in agony and despair, worrying about the fate of their children, parents, siblings, and friends. As we know from released and rescued hostages, there is ongoing sexual assault for many in captivity. Even one extra minute in captivity is one too many. And without a deal immediately, families will only see their loved ones coming home in body bags.

I urged Prime Minister Netanyahu to reaffirm his support for a negotiated deal to secure the release of all hostages, end the war, and increase aid to begin healing the suffering of both Palestinians and Israelis. I pleaded with him to prioritize this now, as there is too much pain and suffering. I shared that American Jews want this deal immediately.

Today, I will attend Prime Minister Netanyahu's speech to Congress as our presence helps shine a light on the goals shared above. I will attend the address as a guest of Leader Schumer and at the request of the American hostage families, who asked American Jewish leaders to be present to draw attention to their plight. Additionally, this week I will also meet with other hostage families protesting the speech, as well as Israeli and Palestinian families whose loved ones were killed on or since October 7th, who are turning their pain into purpose by fighting for peace.

The best path forward is a negotiated agreement accepted by both Israel's government and Hamas to secure the release of all hostages, end the war, and increase aid to begin healing the suffering of both Palestinians and Israelis. This is a path to a safe and secure Israel, and a safe and secure region. As we apply pressure on Prime Minister Netanyahu while he is in Washington, we also acknowledge that Hamas has yet to accept a ceasefire deal or any deal to end the war.

Every second counts to save more lives. I will continue making this clear in all the tables I'm at.

It's always an honor to represent our movement in important spaces that help us build a better future for women, children, and families.

Warmly,
Sheila