

July 19, 2024

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United State House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

CC: Congressional Democrats

Dear Leaders Schumer and Jeffries,

We are sincerely disappointed in your decision to invite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to address a joint session of Congress. While this will be Prime Minister Netanyahu's fourth address to Congress, it comes at a tumultuous time in relations between the United States government, Prime Minister Netanyahu's government, and the American people who are deeply concerned about the ongoing conflict in Gaza.

We strongly agree with Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, who not only said the invitation was "wrong," but that Prime Minister Netanyahu should resign for the catastrophic violence he has unleashed on the Palestinian people. [According](#) to the UN, following Hamas' horrific attack on October 7, the Israeli military's brutal siege of Gaza and blockage of humanitarian aid has killed over 34,000 people and pushed over a million to the brink of mass starvation. As an organization that advocates for access to healthy food and clean water, we're devastated by reports [confirmed](#) by UN experts that famine is quickly spreading across the entire Gaza strip due to "Israel's intentional and targeted starvation campaign."

As a result of Prime Minister Netanyahu's actions in Gaza, he has been [charged](#) by the International Criminal Court (ICC) with war crimes and crimes against humanity. Majority Leader Schumer, you were right when you stated, Prime Minister Netanyahu "has lost his way by allowing his political survival to take precedence over the best interests of Israel." By joining your Republican colleagues on the invitation, you are enabling Prime Minister Netanyahu to do just that.

Your invitation to Prime Minister Netanyahu also comes at a time when a misinformation watchdog [recently exposed](#) Israel's secretive, paid social media campaign meant to influence U.S. lawmakers and American public opinion on Israel's deadly actions in Gaza. Top targets of this unethical attempt to foster support for Netanyahu's war include Senator Raphael Warnock, Representative Ritchie Torres, and even Leader Jeffries. The actions of Netanyahu's government are not the actions of an ally that has earned the honor of addressing a joint session of Congress.

We commend the moral leadership of Congressional Democrats who are refusing to attend the speech. **We likewise urge you both to rescind your invitation and join your colleagues in boycotting the address. We also ask you to continue efforts to secure a ceasefire and put an end to this tragic conflict.**

Sincerely,

Friends of the Earth