

DECEMBER 2008 - JANUARY 2009

ISRAEL'S MILITARY OPERATION AGAINST HAMAS



Terrorists in Gaza launching rockets into Israel.

Between January 2001 and December 2008, terrorists in Gaza fired 8,165 rockets and mortars at civilian communities in southern Israel. Hamas has used human shields by embedding its infrastructure in school, hospitals, and apartment buildings.

On December 27, 2008, Israel began its defensive military operation, "Cast Lead," against Hamas and other terrorists in Gaza.

2000-2005

ISRAEL TRIED TO PROMOTE PEACE

2000: Israel offered a two-state solution: Israel offered Palestinians a state in 100 percent of Gaza and 97 percent of the West Bank with a \$30 billion resettlement fund for Palestinian refugees. The Palestinians' answer was a brutal terrorist war, the "Intifada."

2005: Israel withdrew from Gaza to promote peace. Israel evacuated all Jews from the thriving Gaza communities they had built over the previous 30 years. The policy was divisive and wrenching for Israelis, pitting soldier against civilian, family against family.



IDF soldiers comfort the anguished evacuees even as they enforce the disengagement.



A child being evacuated from her home.

Israel hoped that the removal of any Jewish presence would reduce Palestinian grievances and help them begin nation-building. The Israeli government left the flourishing Jewish greenhouses intact for Palestinians to use to begin developing their own economy.

Palestinians did not use Israel's withdrawal to bring prosperity. They immediately destroyed the greenhouses and diverted the hundreds of millions of dollars they received in international aid to build their terrorist infrastructure, not to develop their economy.

Palestinians did not use Israel's withdrawal to foster peace. Terrorist attacks from Gaza increased over 500 percent within months.

Palestinians were as enraged by Israel's departure from Gaza as by Israeli presence in Gaza.



Hamas and other terrorist groups felt empowered, claiming their violence had driven the Israelis out of Gaza.

2005-2007

TERRORISM FROM GAZA ESCALATES

2006: HAMAS WINS PALESTINIAN ELECTIONS

2007: HAMAS SEIZES CONTROL OF GAZA IN VIOLENT COUP

Escalation: rocket and mortar attacks against southern Israel following disengagement

2005: 1,255 ATTACKS

2006: 1,771 ATTACKS

2007: 2,774 ATTACKS

- Hamas is designated as a radical Islamist terrorist group by the US, EU, Canada, Japan, and Israel and is banned in Jordan, the UK, and Australia.
- Hamas tortured and murdered hundreds of its political rivals (Fatah) to seize full control of Gaza in June 2007.
- Iran is Hamas' main sponsor, supplying training for terrorists and over \$250 million a year.
- Hamas used Iranian money and humanitarian international aid to build its terrorist infrastructure, weapons capacity, arms-smuggling tunnels, and underground bunkers.
- Hamas kidnapped IDF soldier Gilad Shalit in June 2006 and has held him incommunicado, violating international law by refusing to allow the International Red Cross or other humanitarian agencies access to him.
- Hamas' political objective, in accordance with its founding document, is the murder of Jews, "obliteration" of Israel, and replacement of Israel with a Taliban-like Muslim theocracy. It denounces all negotiations and compromises, and violently opposes a two-state solution (Hamas Charter, 1988).
- Hamas' strategic tactic is ongoing terrorism.

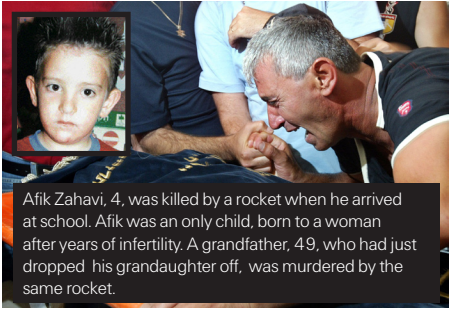
"Rockets against Sderot will cause mass migration, greatly disrupt daily lives and government administration and can make a much huger impact on the government.... We are succeeding with the rockets. We have no losses and the impact on the Israeli side is so much."

—Hamas Minister Mahmoud Al-Zahar, August 2007

2005-2007

THE DEFENSELESS VICTIMS OF HAMAS TERRORISM: MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN SOUTHERN ISRAEL.

- **Lethal Attacks:** Twelve civilians were murdered and 275 seriously injured in rocket and mortar attacks from 2005-2007.
- **Psychological Trauma:** Palestinians target civilian communities, especially nearby Sderot. Rocket and mortar fire have hit kindergartens, hospitals, schools, day care centers, homes, and playgrounds.



On September 3, 2007, terrorists timed a barrage of rockets to hit when parents were taking their children to school and day care centers. The terrorists claimed it was a “gift” for the first day of school.

When the red alert siren warns of an incoming attack, Israelis have only 15 seconds to flee to the safety of bomb shelters.

Ninety-four percent of children in Sderot suffer from post-traumatic stress syndrome. Others suffer from nightmares, bedwetting, and severe anxiety.

Daily life is haunted by the terror of the red alert suddenly warning of incoming rocket attacks.



2005-2007

ISRAEL'S RESTRAINED RESPONSE: PINPOINT COUNTERATTACKS & CONTINUED HUMANITARIAN AID

- Israel mounted periodic defensive operations to rescue Gilad Shalit and to destroy rocket-launching sites, munitions depots, and terrorists preparing attacks.
- Israel sought to prevent harm to civilians, but Hamas used human shields by embedding its infrastructure in school, hospitals, and densely populated residential areas, in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law.

Use of Human Shields

Hamas's Al-Aqsa TV and PalMedia Web site called upon civilians to form a human shield at the home of Abu al-Hatal in the Sajaiya neighborhood (in Al-Sha'af according to other version) because the IDF had threatened to blow it up (March 1).



The inscription reads: "Hamas calls upon on [the Palestinian] public to come to the house of Abu al-Hatal in al-Sha'af [neighborhood] to act as human shields" (Al-Aqsa TV, March 1).

- Despite incessant rocket and mortar attacks from Gaza terrorists, Israel continued to transfer thousands of tons of humanitarian aid, fuel and general supplies into Gaza through designated crossings.
- Terrorists frequently attacked the Gaza crossings, making deliveries life-threatening for Israelis and forcing temporary closures. The Karni crossing was attacked repeatedly. On December 25, 2007, rockets targeted the Kerem Shalom and Sufa crossings.
- Terrorists tried to use the humanitarian deliveries to transport explosive material. On December 29, 2007, the IDF revealed that six tons of potassium nitrate, used for making explosives and rocket propellants, were packed in sugar bags with EU markings.
- Israel continued to allow patients from Gaza to enter Israel for medical treatment. Israel granted 4,932 medical permits in 2006 and 7,176 in 2007. On May 30, 2007, two women used false medical information to enter Israel for treatment. They planned to commit a double suicide bombing. Twenty such incidents of terrorists abusing medical permits have occurred since the disengagement.

2008

COUNTDOWN TO CONFRONTATION: HAMAS INCREASES ITS ATTACKS & CAPABILITIES

The number of attacks soared:

862 rocket and mortar attacks occurred in January and February, 2008, an average of one attack every three hours.

2,284 rocket and mortar attacks occurred from January 1 to June 19.

Hamas upgraded its weapons capabilities to raise the number of Israeli casualties with each attack. It smuggled in Iranian GRAD rockets, which have a longer range and more lethal impact than Kassam rockets. The longer-range GRADS put 500,000 Israelis in rocket range.

Hamas launched 23 GRAD missiles. Most of them hit Ashkelon, a city 12 miles north of Gaza.



The rocket attacks cause serious injuries and death.



A GRAD struck an Ashkelon shopping mall on May 14, 2008, wounding 90 people, including young children.

Israel's Reaction: Restraint

Even as the rockets rained down, Israel attempted to transport goods and humanitarian aid to Gaza. Thirty-five thousand trucks carrying almost 814,000 tons of goods arrived between February 27 and June 19.

Nonetheless, Hamas repeatedly claimed Israel was causing a humanitarian crisis. Hamas manufactured the crisis for media consumption by refusing to distribute the goods, seizing them for Hamas fighters, and attacking the crossings where the goods were transported.

Israel maintained its restraint and mobilized its civil defense system to protect Israeli lives.

Hamas distributed these pictures to imply Israel had cut off Gaza's electric supply. But they forgot to turn out the street lights.



JUNE 19-DECEMBER 19, 2008:

HAMAS EXPLOITS A TEMPORARY TRUCE

On June 19, Israel accepted a six-month truce with Hamas, brokered by Egypt. Hamas exploited the "calm" to continue its war against Israel.



- Hamas fired 362 missiles and rockets into southern Israel.
- Hamas strengthened its terrorist infrastructure, smuggling weapons, intensified terrorist training, and built a network of underground tunnels to reach Israel for terrorist acts and to kidnap Israelis.
- Hamas leaders continued to incite murderous hatred of Jews through cleric speeches and television shows for children and adults.
- Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, and other terrorist groups continued to provide support, arms, training, and money to Hamas.
- On November 4, Israel destroyed a Hamas tunnel dug under the border to reach Israel. Hamas used Israel's limited defensive operation as an excuse to escalate its attacks.

DECEMBER 27, 2008

TURNING POINT:

ISRAEL LAUNCHES OPERATION “CAST LEAD”

- The truce ended on December 19. Israel sought to extend it. Despite Hamas’ violations of the truce, Israel exhausted every diplomatic channel to persuade Hamas to renew it.
- Hamas adamantly refused. Instead, the number of attacks against Israel soared. Between November 4 and December 19, Hamas launched 340 rockets and missiles.
- In the seven days after the truce ended, Hamas launched over 280 rockets and mortars—an average of 40 a day—that targeted the men, women, and children of southern Israel.

Israel had no choices left. Hamas had renewed its brutal war. No nation can allow its citizens to be intentionally targeted, attacked, and killed by enemies fanatically sworn to their destruction. Every sovereign nation has the duty to defend its citizens from armed aggression.

ISRAEL’S GOAL

Israel is not at war with Palestinians. Its goal is to disable Hamas and its terrorist infrastructure while preventing harm to innocent Palestinians.

- Israel is targeting terrorists. In the first 13 days of the war, 80 to 85 percent of casualties were combatants.
- Israel tries to protect innocent civilians. It phones residents of buildings that Hamas uses, alerting them of impending attacks so they can move to safe area. Hamas, however, tells residents to return to the areas that Israel is about to hit.
- Israel is continuing to provide humanitarian aid. In the first four days of its military operation, Israel ensured that 10 ambulances and 186 trucks carrying supplies reached Gaza.



Today (Dec 28) 23 trucks carrying humanitarian aid, including basic food items, were transferred to the Gaza Strip at the request of the PA, the Red Cross, WFP, and UNRWA Photography: IDF Spokesperson

ESSENTIAL FACTS ABOUT OPERATION "CAST LEAD"

- **Israel did not want war. Hamas declared war on Israel.**

For seven years, Hamas and other terrorists from Gaza bombarded southern Israel with thousands of rockets and mortars, and Israel exercised restraint. Israel mounted a defensive operation only in December 2008, when Hamas refused to renew the six-month truce and launched barrages of rockets at the half million men, women, and children living in southern Israel.

- **Israel is not fighting the Palestinian civilians of Gaza.** Its goal is to destroy the terrorist infrastructure and capabilities.

- **Hamas' goal is not to end Israeli "occupation."** Israel turned every centimeter of Gaza over to the Palestinian Authority and emptied Gaza of all Israelis in 2005.

- **Hamas' goal is not to end Israeli border closures.** Hamas could end the closures and the war simply by terminating its terrorist attacks.

- **Hamas' oft-stated goal is genocide and ethnic cleansing,** murdering Jews, "obliterating" Israel and replacing it with a Taliban-like theocracy.

- **Israel's response is not "disproportionate."** A proportionate response does not limit the defending nation to the same weapons and tactics used by the aggressor. It is not measured by who has more casualties.



Two Palestinian youths were transferred from Gaza to Israel in addition to the two youth, approximately 20 chronically ill youths, to Israeli hospitals. January 2, 2009.

The disproportion is that Israel strictly adheres to international and humanitarian law while Hamas does not. Israel tries to minimize Israeli and Palestinian civilian casualties, while Hamas flagrantly violates these standards, targets Israeli civilians, and intentionally endangers Palestinian civilians by using them as human shields.

- **The disproportion in civilian casualties is a direct result of Israel's versus Hamas' policies.** Israel mobilized its civil defense infrastructure and training, preventing mass casualties at apartment buildings, schools, and other sites hit by Hamas attacks. Hamas declared war and invested in building its terrorist infrastruc-

ture. It intentionally uses human shields to increase casualties for its PR war against Israel.

- **Israel is not just fighting Hamas.** The terrorist group is an Iranian agent. Israel is on the frontlines of the war against Iranian imperialism and radical Islamic terrorism and expansion.
- **Hamas has brought suffering and destruction to its own people,** ruthlessly violating the Palestinian Authority, murdering its opponents, and ruining Gaza's economy.
- **Hamas alone is responsible for the casualties and suffering of Gaza's civilians.** Leaders across the Arab world have condemned Hamas for



Israel to receive medical treatment at Israeli hospitals. In ill were transferred from the Shifa Hospital in the Gaza

launching this war and hold it responsible for the consequences.

- **Israel wants to live peacefully with its neighbors.** Hamas opposes peace and seeks the destruction of its neighbors. Hamas is following the mission of its founding document, which calls for the murder of Jews and the elimination of Israel.

"Residents of Gaza, we are not your enemies, and we are not fighting against you. This terrorist organization has brought disaster to two peoples....Our precise intelligence...enabled maximum strikes at those involved in terrorism and minimized harm to innocents. This is how we will act in the future."

—Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, December 27, 2008

"The annihilation of the Jews here in Palestine is one of the most splendid blessings for Palestine. This will be followed by a greater blessing, Allah be praised, with the establishment of a Caliphate that will rule the land and will be pleasing to men and God."

— Hamas Cleric Muhsen Abu It'a, July 13, 2008

"The difference between us and them is that they wait passionately for the day they can return home safely, while we bid farewell to our families and hope to die as martyrs."

— Hamas fighter, January 1, 2009

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