

**Date and Time:** Friday, May 3, 2024 4:30:00PM EEST

**Job Number:** 223446956

## Documents (100)

1. [Despite pitfalls, Israel should strike deal for Schalit, analysts tell 'Post'](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

2. [Gaza quagmire](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

3. [The truth about Israeli 'aggression' in Gaza LETTERS](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

4. [Column: Military action in Gaza could backfire, lead to future radicalism](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

5. [Young, gifted and militant](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

6. [\*Obama can build on Gaza ceasefire\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

7. [\*Israeli forces push deeper into Gaza City\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

8. [\*Daily struggle to find food and fuel in Gaza\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

9. [\*Amnesty urges arms embargo against Israel , Palestinians. Israel : Report is a 'tendentious description of reality that doesn't rest on objective and professional criteria'\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

10. [\*Israel pushed too far your say\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

11. [Gaza a battleground for hearts, minds; Osama bin Laden heaps criticism on Arab and Palestinian leaders, hoping to use Israel 's military action against Palestinians to rally moderate Muslims to support extremists' call for a global jihad](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

12. [Israel not innocent victim in Gaza horror](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

13. [Grim tally marks slow return to peace](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

14. [US Muslim charity leaders get 65 years in jail](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

15. [Palestinian civilians feel Israel 's wrath](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

16. [Peace for now](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

17. [Puzzled in Gaza](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

18. [Israel Shells U.N. Site in Gaza, Drawing Fresh Condemnation](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

19. [Weighing Crimes and Ethics In the Fog of Urban Warfare](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

20. [Fatah force could be deployed on Gaza border](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**

**Narrowed by**

News

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

21. [Israel does not really want peace](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

22. [Carnage in Gaza: Is it a war crime? Both sides in the conflict accused of putting civilians at undue risk](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

23. [Israel challenges Palestinian claims](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

24. [Gaza toll put at 1134 Palestinians](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

25. [Angry over Gaza, Turkey storms out of Davos forum](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

26. [Obama's party divided on Gaza conflict; New leader faces tough decision](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

27. [UN chief's 'heartbreak' Israel moves out of Gaza](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

28. [US lawmakers hear 'heart wrenching' tales during visit to Gaza](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

29. [Preparing for 'the day after'](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

30. [Dazed by devastation](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

31. [THE EVIDENCE IS IN ON ISLAMIST TERRORISM](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

32. [\*Column: No easy solution to Gaza conflict\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

33. [\*Many deaths, few other facts Commentary\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

34. [\*YOUR LETTERS\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

35. [\*OBAMA RAPIDLY CHANGING APPROACH TO MIDDLE EAST\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

36. [\*Mitchell gets earful from Mideast\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

37. ['Some' progress in Gaza ceasefire talks; Reported bin Laden message calls for jihad against Israel](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

38. [Israelis are hit by new wave of rockets fired from Lebanon](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

39. [Which way will Obama jump on Israel ?](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

40. [\(Ducking the\) Decision Day](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

41. [Jerusalem blasts Red Cross for its report slamming Israel](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**

**Narrowed by**



News

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

42. [\*Choice is talk or fight again\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

43. [\*Middle East turmoil demands political initiative from Europe\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

44. [\*Israelis used Gaza boy, 11, as shield\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

45. [\*... and how life goes on amid the hostilities and rubble in Gaza\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

46. [\*There were no Hamas fighters anywhere in the vicinity of U.N. -run schools POLITICS: U.N. Chief Appalled at Israeli Destruction in Gaza\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

47. [Wrong Auntie, it's not political](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

48. [Peres slams UN Gaza inquiry as "outrageous"](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

49. [THE ONLY SOLUTION](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

50. [Israel disputes claim about civilian victims](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

51. [Gazans return to mourn their dead and salvage their lives \\* One family's story tells how Israeli shells killed dozens of relatives while soldiers vandalised their homes](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

52. [Antiwar has taken on new meaning -- genocide](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

53. [Soldiers pull out of Gaza](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

54. [Israel strikes Gaza ahead of unilateral ceasefire vote](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

55. [LUCKNOW WOMEN PROTEST AGAINST GAZA OFFENSIVE](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

56. [Jubilant Turks welcome PM home after summit clash; Shimon Peres accused of 'barbarian' acts in Gaza war](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

57. [Israel pulls last troops out of Gaza, but vows to monitor ceasefire; Military to investigate phosphorous bomb claims](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

58. [\*Push for ceasefire intensifies Israeli Defence Minister in talks with Prime Minister over halt to Gaza conflict as Palestinian death toll hits 1,000 Gaza crisis\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

59. [\*US envoy to visit Mideast as fragile truce holds\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

60. [\*Israelis leave a trail of debris in Gaza Ceasefire allows aid to flow into battle zone\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

61. [\*Fighting steps up as Israeli leaders weigh ceasefire\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

62. [\*Clean-up begins\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

63. [\*We have not heeded the cry, 'Never again'\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

64. [\*We have not taken heed of the call: Never again\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

65. [\*Turkey 's shift toward Iran , Syria is no short-term blip. Ankara has dispensed with its policy of equidistance between Israelis and Palestinians\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

66. [\*ARMY CLOSES IN ON GAZA AS THE DEATH TOLL CLIMBS\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

67. [\*There was no provocation from Israel\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

68. [\*Why Israel 's incursion into Gaza will not change much\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

69. [\*Turkish leader hailed after Israel spat\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

70. [\*International briefs\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

71. [\*Tragedy is no crime\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

72. [\*Hoping for a nonviolence movement in Palestine\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

73. [Disproportionate, dishonest and discriminatory critics](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

74. [IDF releases names of seven of the 12 Gazans it says were killed near UN school](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

75. [UN Chief is leaving on a grim peace mission to the Middle East POLITICS: U.N. Chief on Grim Peace Mission to Middle East](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

76. [World being fooled...](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

77. [Israel to shield troops from prosecution; UN probes allegations of war crimes in Gaza](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

78. [\*Israel Declares Unilateral Cease Fire In Gaza\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

79. [\*Thousands attend Anti- Israel march to protest against Israeli invasion of Gaza\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

80. [\*Israel and US sign memorandum of understanding to fight Gaza smuggling. Agreement calls for increased intelligence cooperation and funding \\* Rice: Gaza can never again be used as a launching pad against Israeli cities \\* 'This is a beginning,' Livni says\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

81. [\*It's time to boycott Ms. Klein An open letter to Naomi Klein, who called in "The Guardian" for a boycott of Israel .\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

82. [\*Blair 'persuaded Israel to give Adams Gaza visa'\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**

**Narrowed by**



83. [Israel -Gaza conflict : affects Obama , with opportunity or crisis ?](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** Hamas**Search Type:** Natural Language**Narrowed by:****Content Type**  
News**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

84. [In the eye of the storm](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** Hamas**Search Type:** Natural Language**Narrowed by:****Content Type**  
News**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

85. [Town crushed by thunder of Israeli guns Martin Fletcher travelled to Gaza in an armoured vehicle to see at first hand the devastation that three weeks of war has brought](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** Hamas**Search Type:** Natural Language**Narrowed by:****Content Type**  
News**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

86. [Israel 's calling card of ruined homes and ruined lives](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** Hamas**Search Type:** Natural Language**Narrowed by:****Content Type**  
News**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

87. [Letter: Mailbag - The situation must change](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** Hamas**Search Type:** Natural Language**Narrowed by:****Content Type**  
News**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

88. [\*Israel 's media star chambers\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

89. [\*BARACK INTO THE BREACH\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

90. [\*Israelis try to justify the massive loss of civilian life in Gaza RIGHTS: Aid Groups Dispute Israeli Claims in Gaza Attacks\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

91. [\*Israel and Palestine must live as neighbours\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

92. [\*ICC to mull war crimes case against Israel\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

93. [Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Gaza's underground lifeline: Rory McCarthy visits the blockade-busting tunnels that run into Egypt and discovers that despite Israeli efforts to destroy them, they are still working](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

94. [Counted out: Belatedly, the IDF enters the life-and- death numbers game](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

95. [Labels only obscure Mideast realities](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

96. [G2: Inside the Gaza tunnels: They were one of Israel 's key targets during its three-week assault on Gaza. But the relentless air strikes failed to destroy the hundreds of tunnels running under the border to Egypt . Rory McCarthy goes underground to watch the everyday smuggling of boxes of women's underwear, car parts and even goats](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

97. [No one left in the ruins to hear the thunder of Israel 's guns Martin Fletcher, travelling in an Israeli armoured vehicle, becomes the first British newspaper journalist to see at first hand the devastation that three weeks of war have brought to Gaza](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

98. [The politics of War](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

99. [Israel committing systematic mass murder](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

100. [December 27-January 18: Thousands Dead, Thousands More Suffering](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to Jun 30, 2009

## *Despite pitfalls, Israel should strike deal for Schalit, analysts tell 'Post'*

The Jerusalem Post

March 16, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 9

**Length:** 1007 words

**Byline:** YAAKOV LAPPIN

### **Body**

---

A prisoner exchange with Hamas to free kidnapped soldier Gilad Schalit would undermine Israel's deterrence, free dangerous terrorists who will return to plotting attacks, and give hope to remaining security prisoners that future kidnappings will set them free as well. But despite the pitfalls, Israel must proceed with the deal, a security analyst who spent years researching Hamas prisoners says.

Lt.-Col. (res.) Anat Berko, author of *The Path to Paradise: The Inner World of Suicide Bombers and Their Dispatchers* - frequented maximum security facilities to interview Hamas terrorists.

On June 26, 2006, the day Schalit was abducted just outside the Gaza Strip, Berko was interviewing female security prisoners. They became excited upon hearing of the kidnapping. "It was clear to them there would be a deal and they would be set free," Berko, a visiting professor at George Washington University, recalled during an interview with The Jerusalem Post on Sunday.

In the same vein, Hamas co-founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin had told Berko in prison in 1996 that their next meeting would take place in Gaza. Three months later, he was released.

"Even those with 40 life sentences are hopeful, because they clearly have a feeling that they are in an Israeli prison for a limited time. In the meantime, they develop a routine, attend political and religious lessons, read books, and take part in Open University courses. Some receive Jordanian higher education qualifications," Berko said.

Despite their good conditions, security prisoners do not modify their attitude to Israel in jail, but rather become more hostile, she said.

"Terrorism for them is a life career, beginning with rock throwing and ending with car bombings. This won't end when they're released. Many will go back to the terror industry," Berko said. "That's what they talk about in prison."

Nevertheless, Berko, who is based at the Institute for Counter-Terrorism at the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, is adamant that Hamas terrorists must be released in exchange for Schalit. "Israel must do all it can to release soldiers it sends out to defend the borders. This is a moral duty," she said. "This is our soldier."

At the same time, Israel should set tough conditions, and "pay as little as possible" to free Schalit. "The families of Hamas prisoners also want them home," Berko added.

According to Maj.-Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror, it was a big mistake to end Operation Cast Lead before securing Schalit's release.

Despite pitfalls, Israel should strike deal for Schalit, analysts tell 'Post'

"The [proposed] deal is a disaster for Israel," Amidror, program director of the Institute for Contemporary Affairs at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, said on Sunday.

"We should have never have reached this stage," he added.

"The cabinet has no option now but to vote in favor of the deal. But it has pushed itself into a corner," said Amidror, a former commander of the IDF's National Defense College and its Staff and Command College.

"Israel must have the strength to demand that its soldiers make sacrifices for its safety. But it's right to demand that sacrifice is conditioned on a commitment to its soldiers. The minute the commitment is violated, as was the case when Operation Cast Lead ended without Schalit's release, the state loses its right to demand sacrifices," he said.

Yoram Schweitzer, director of the program on Terrorism and Low Intensity Conflict at Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies, said the prisoner exchange should proceed both because Israel's ethical framework left the government with no choice but to approve it, and because Schalit's captivity has been like a bone stuck in Israel's throat, choking off efforts to reach a cease-fire agreement with Hamas and straining ties with Egypt.

"The bottom line is yes, the deal should go ahead," Schweitzer said. "The value of his life means that we must return prisoners to retrieve our lost soldier. We must take the consequences.

"Speaking from a cold analytical perspective, Schalit's captivity has bound Israel in many ways. The issue of opening the crossings with Gaza has been tied to Schalit's release. Israel's interest lies in opening the passages, in order to reach a negotiated cease-fire agreement. Schalit's captivity constitutes a strategic obstacle to reaching such an agreement," he said.

"Rockets are being fired because we haven't completed any agreement [with Hamas]," he said. "So tactically, Schalit's captivity has been a huge obstacle, which must be removed by bringing him home."

Acknowledging the cons of a prisoner swap, Schweitzer said there could be no doubting the moral boost Hamas would receive, enabling them "to claim a victory. Fatah will be weakened too," Schweitzer said, although the release of hundreds of Hamas men will not change the balance of physical power.

At the same time, future Israeli soldiers and their parents will know that their government is prepared to do whatever is necessary to secure their release in the event of future kidnappings, Schweitzer said, adding that this "will increase social cohesion, motivation to serve in the army, and will have a positive influence on mothers sending their sons to the IDF."

Militarily, too, Schalit's captivity may have hindered Israel. "If Israel knew where he was in Gaza, that area would not have been bombed during Cast Lead," he said.

The Egyptian-mediated cease-fire talks between Israel and Hamas have been badly affected by Schalit's captivity, Schweitzer said, adding that this in turn has increased tensions between Jerusalem and Cairo.

"It is causing friction with the Egyptians. Look at the Amos Gilad affair [the recent dispute between Gilad, head of the Defense Ministry's Diplomatic-Security Bureau, and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert], which is connected to Schalit. The Egyptians want to pursue their interests, [by mediating a cease-fire], and are angered by what they see as Israel's refusal to pay Hamas's price for Schalit."

Nevertheless, Schweitzer added that Israel should not pay "any price" for its soldiers. "The Schalit family is also saying this," he said.

## Graphic

---

Despite pitfalls, Israel should strike deal for Schalit, analysts tell 'Post'

Photo: AVIVA AND NOAM SCHALIT sit with their son Yoel in a protest tent outside the prime minister's residence yesterday. (Credit: Sebastian Scheiner/AP)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

---

End of Document

## Gaza quagmire

The Press (Christchurch, New Zealand)

January 21, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 Fairfax New Zealand All Rights Reserved

**Section:** FEATURES; EDITORIAL; Pg. 14; OPINION

**Length:** 552 words

### **Body**

---

Israel's decision to pull its troops out of the Gaza Strip is a rare piece of welcome news from that region. Israeli authorities say that Operation Cast Lead achieved its goal of minimising the future threat to its citizens from Hamas missiles. But the respite afforded by the ceasefire will only be temporary; instead the devastation wrought by Israel in Gaza is more likely to result in another blow to that nation's international reputation.

There was an element of cynicism about this entire operation. It was launched on December 27, after a United States election which left George W. Bush an outgoing president with minimal influence on the world stage. And it ended just before his successor, Barack Obama, was sworn in, ensuring that he did not have to deal with fighting in Gaza on his first day in the job. Within Israel the operation offered its outgoing Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, the chance to redeem himself after his nation's disastrous foray into Lebanon in 2006.

But just what has Israel gained through its three-week air and ground offensive? It has certainly damaged Israel's international credibility. When the air attacks began there was at least an understanding in most countries of Israel's position that it had a duty to its citizens to protect them from Hamas rocket strikes, which had resumed after an earlier six- month ceasefire ended.

Yet Israel increasingly lost the public relations battle over an incursion which was regarded as a disproportionate and brutal response. Israel suffered 13 casualties, including 10 soldiers, during the offensive, but 1300 Palestinians died, including many women and children. Even allowing for Israel's argument that Hamas was using civilians as human shields, this was a horrific and unnecessary death toll.

In addition, tens of thousands of Palestinians have been rendered homeless, even more lack food and water, the United Nations headquarters in Gaza was mistakenly attacked, a Red Crescent hospital and several mosques were hit, and allegations have surfaced that Israel used white phosphorus shells against civilians.

And despite much of Gaza lying in ruins, Israel's success in quelling Hamas is not clear. The majority of the terrorist group's fighters appear to have survived the assault, although several leaders were killed. And even if Israel did reduce the supply of rockets in Gaza, Hamas has already vowed to rearm, no doubt with the help of its chief backer, Iran. Several European nations have suggested they might mount naval patrols to prevent rockets reaching Gaza but, given Hamas' past success in smuggling missiles around or under blockades, such action might not be enough to stop the flow.

If the missiles do start flying again, then a further assault by Israel and even more rigorous blockades, which could also hinder humanitarian aid, is likely, especially if hard-line Centre- Right parties prevail next month in Israel's elections.



## Gaza quagmire

Longer term, Israel's attack will leave a legacy of intense bitterness in Gaza, which is sure to provide **Hamas** with a new generation of recruits to its cause. And despite the renewed international calls from Western and some Arab nations for a negotiated settlement to the Gaza situation, that same bitterness among Palestinians realistically makes the prospect of this occurring unlikely.

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2009

---

End of Document

***The truth about Israeli 'aggression' in Gaza; LETTERS***

The Sunday Times (London)

January 18, 2009

Edition 1

Copyright 2009 Times Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved



# THE SUNDAY TIMES

Section: Pg. 24

Length: 556 words

## Body

---

DOMINIC LAWSON's article (No, we are not all Hamas now, Comment, last week) has given me renewed hope in the British media. Thank you for pointing out the stark differences between the murderous thugs who run Hamas and those who value life and consider it sacred, and also for exposing the stupidity of those who march against "aggression" and ignore the actions of those who deliberately target women and children in their incessant bombing of civilian areas. Winston Churchill would have applauded him.

Tim Parkinson

Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria

The Hamas factor Lawson's article is the first bit of decent reporting I've read about the situation with Hamas and Israel. As a third-generation Jew I totally agree with him that no one but the Jews will defend themselves. Fortunately America has been a great ally to Israel - without its help Israel would not survive today.

I cannot see there ever being a Palestinian state, as it would have to cross over from the West Bank to Gaza and would jeopardise the safety of Israelis.

I do wish more people would see that the killing of the poor people in Gaza (which I don't condone and I know Israelis regret) is laid at the feet of Hamas entirely. This is surely a global battle against terrorism.

Roz Kadir

Kingston upon Thames, London

Marching for peace

My daughter marched to the Israeli embassy last week. She is not a "luvvie" or a "superannuated Stalinist" and I'm sure she would never shout, "We are all Hamas now." She is merely someone appalled by the senseless savagery being inflicted on a defenceless people. Euan Cameron London W14

## The truth about Israeli 'aggression' in Gaza LETTERS

### Hope of understanding

These are not easy times to be a confident Israeli - I know we are doing the right thing, even if it's not being done as well as we might wish. A just cause does not always help those caught in the crossfire, including many of the civilians of Gaza. However, Lawson's article gave me hope that there are some who understand us a little better.

Jeremy Leigh Jerusalem, Israel

### Not about the Holocaust

As a long-time respector of Lawson's work I was very disappointed by this article.

I have been a lifelong supporter of the Jewish cause and of Israel's right to exist.

Many of my friends and family worked in kibbutzim. But any link between the sufferings of the Holocaust and the brutal activities of the contemporary state of Israel is now, once and for all, broken.

Indeed, to call in aid the memory of those who died in the gas chambers to try to justify Ehud Olmert and his gang is to debase their sacred memory.

Larry Rushton Maignaut-Tauzia, France

Double standards Strange that none of your correspondents complaining about non-compliance with United Nations resolutions by Israel mentioned the Arab rejection of the 1947 partition plan and subsequent invasion by six Arab armies, which, after all, gave rise to the problem.

Nor did they think to mention the Geneva convention demanding the placement of military installations away from civilian areas, places of religion and hospitals, or the access of the Red Cross to prisoners such as Gilad Schalit [an Israeli soldier held hostage by Hamas since 2006].

Professor Bryan Reuben London South Bank University

### Eloquent argument

Thank you for putting Israel's case so eloquently. I'm glad we read it before the Letters page.

Dena and Michael Aronberg Dunmow, Essex

**Load-Date:** January 18, 2009

## **Column: Military action in Gaza could backfire, lead to future radicalism**

University Wire

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 The Daily Gamecock via U-Wire

**Length:** 429 words

**Byline:** By Ryan Quinn, The Daily Gamecock; SOURCE: U. South Carolina

**Dateline:** COLUMBIA, S.C.

### **Body**

---

The United States entered into the war in Iraq with the misconception that radicalism could be destroyed through bloodshed and firepower. This notion that has been proven untrue by six years of horror for both our troops and the Iraqi people. Now Israel is making the same mistake.

Despite pleas from the UN -- and even the Vatican -- for Israel to pull out of Gaza, the invasion rolls on. The Palestinians have suffered 900 casualties since the start; 400 of those were civilians, and half of those were women and children. In Israel's attempt to wipe out the radical Hamas, they are breeding a new generation of radicals: the children of those who saw what the invasion did to their innocent countrymen.

Israel's attack is perhaps justified: The catalyst of the invasion was rocket attacks by Hamas onto innocent Israeli civilians. Though the damage done by these attacks pale in comparison to the retaliation -- around four innocent Israelis killed since the beginning of the invasion compared to 400 innocent Gazans -- Israel can't be scolded for defending their people. But the scope is entirely unnecessary -- a bombardment and an invasion is overkill if the mission is simply to stop radicals from firing a few rockets. This is because Israel has another objective, stated by Daniel Klaidman in a recent Newsweek article: "to crush Hamas altogether, first by aerial attacks and then with a grinding artillery and infantry assault."

This is a doomed cause, for even if Israel does manage to wipe out Hamas, a new branch of radicalism will emerge, bent on avenging the injustices done to their fathers. Many in Gaza cannot comprehend the true nature of the conflict: The fact that Israel simply wants to destroy Hamas, not all Palestinians. All they see is predominately Muslim civilians being killed by predominately Jewish soldiers, and they interpret it as a Holy War. They don't distinguish between Hamas and themselves.

Likewise, the United States thought that it could destroy radicalism with military action, both in Afghanistan and Iraq, and found that it could not. Radicals feed off of bloodshed; they want war and they want civilians to be killed in order to establish the false image of a non-Muslim bully nation attacking an innocent Islamic nation. Neither the United States nor Israel should give them what they want. We must fight on our own terms with the weapons they don't possess -- the weapons of restraint, diplomacy and education. We must teach the next generation of Palestinians the true nature of this conflict.

(C) 2008 The Daily Gamecock via UWIRE

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2009

Column: Military action in Gaza could backfire, lead to future radicalism

---

End of Document

## *Young, gifted and militant*

The Leader-Post (Regina, Saskatchewan)

January 27, 2009 Tuesday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 The Leader-Post, a division of Canwest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. B8

**Length:** 660 words

**Byline:** Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service

**Dateline:** JABALIYA, Gaza Strip

### **Body**

---

JABALIYA, Gaza Strip -- It was impossible to tell by the bespectacled 27-year-old Al-Quds Open University student's preppy cardigan, his polite manner and the enthusiasm with which he zapped the television remote control, dialing in various English Premier League soccer matches, but to most of the world the young man sitting on the chesterfield is a terrorist.

Abu Mousab -- a nom de guerre meaning Father of Moses -- is part of the engineering department of Ezzedeen Al-Qassam Brigades, the notorious armed branch of Hamas, which is an Arabic acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement.

"We do the final tests on rockets and mines and advise launching units how best, from a technical point-of-view, to use them," Abu Mousab said as he nibbled on pretzels and date cake in the living room of an old friend in the Jabaliya refugee camp while the friend's two-year-old daughter cheerfully gamboled about.

It was to crush Hamas and prevent it from launching rockets at Israel that the Jewish state went to war on Dec. 27. During the 22-day conflict that followed, as many as 1,300 Palestinians and 13 Israelis died, but Hamas has remained unbowed and firmly in control of Gaza.

"We won because we continued to launch rockets throughout the invasion and their forces did not reach many of the militants, only civilians," Abu Mousab said in a flat tone that lasted throughout the interview. "Our morale remains good. We still have lots of weapons."

Like many Gazans, Abu Mousab blamed Israel for "killing so many innocent women and children." But rockets fired for years by Hamas and its allies had also killed women and children in Israel who had had nothing to do with the conflict.

"For sure I don't feel sorry when their women and children die," he said without any hesitation or hint of remorse.

"They must drink from the same poisoned cup that they make us drink from."

As is the fashion among many younger Hamas members, Abu Mousab sported a short, neatly trimmed beard and a closely cropped haircut. Married a few months ago, he will graduate next semester with a bachelor of science degree.

## Young, gifted and militant

After claiming that "support for Hamas has never been higher," he was told that many Gazans had told foreign journalists that they wanted Hamas to stop provoking Israel by firing rockets.

"Yes, a lot of people think we should stop using rockets. I know this," he said.

"The people who have suffered damage and death are against this. This is normal. But the rest of the citizens are with us. They love Hamas and all its branches because we share the same customs and habits."

The U.S., the European Union, Egypt and Israel have been urgently discussing plans to try to prevent weapons from reaching Hamas through smugglers' tunnels built under the sand from Egypt.

"Whether they will actually succeed is a big 'if,' " Abu Mousab said. "If they actually do succeed, we will make the very best weapons we can with Palestinian hearts and minds. There is nothing that is too difficult for us. We will do anything to get our revenge on Israel."

Abu Mousab's unit lost one man during the war. He died when a missile fired from an Israeli drone exploded on his doorstep.

"We lost other humans and materiel, too, but we are already rebuilding," Abu Mousab said. "We continue to get new weapons and there are other weapons that we have not yet touched."

It had been six years since Abu Mousab joined the Qassam Brigades because "God told me to." One of eight children, his parents' families were both from a village near what is now the Israeli town of Ashkelon. He had only been to Israel once -- when he was 12 his father took him to the town of Ramla, near Tel Aviv. Otherwise, he has never set foot outside the tiny coastal enclave.

"My wife is afraid for me, but I tell her that if I don't do this someone else will because our Prophet Muhammad pushes us to fight our enemies," he said.

"Whether or not I die is the same thing because it is God's will. It is not so bad to be a martyr."

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2009

## Obama can build on Gaza ceasefire

The Toronto Star

January 19, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

**Section:** EDITORIAL; Pg. AA06

**Length:** 567 words

### **Body**

---

The 1.5 million people of Gaza emerged from the smoke and rubble yesterday, as a shaky ceasefire took hold, and began a grim accounting. Israel's three-week assault left 1,300 people dead, Gaza officials said, and 5,000 wounded. On the Israeli side, 13 were killed.

In Gaza, whole neighbourhoods now lie in ruins. Yesterday children scavenged for school bags and notebooks in the blitz-like debris of mosques, homes, schools. Thousands were said to be homeless, without power or heat. Streets were awash in raw sewage.

The two ceasefires, first declared by Israel and followed 12 hours later by a still-defiant Hamas after one final volley of rockets, should have come many days ago. Now much of Gaza must be rebuilt from scratch.

Countries that stood on the sidelines of this catastrophe, Canada included, have a moral duty to help rebuild. Prime Minister Stephen Harper should authorize generous humanitarian aid.

While Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had good reason to respond to the 3,000 rockets and mortars Hamas has fired since it took control of Gaza in 2007, that point was driven home in the first few days of this lopsided conflict. Israel did not enhance its image, materially improve its security or increase the odds of long-term peace by making Gaza's rubble jump. For his part Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal, from the safety of Damascus, was contemptibly eager to wage war against the "Zionist entity" to the last Gazan, using women and children as shields.

And when the guns fell silent, the propaganda war raged on.

From the Israeli side, Olmert invited disbelief with his claim that "we feel the pain of every Palestinian child" after weeks of air strikes and shelling. And Hamas deputy leader Moussa Abu Marzouk made the risible claim that "the Zionist aggression ... has failed."

In fact, Hamas was "badly stricken," as Olmert said. Key leaders are dead or in hiding, hundreds of militants have been killed, and rocket factories and smuggling tunnels bombed. Hamas was bloodied.

If the ceasefire holds, the U.S. and the international community will now pool efforts to seal off the supply of arms to Gaza, so that its borders can safely be reopened to people and non-military goods.

That should be possible now that Israel's leaders have reassured the nation, prior to the Feb. 10 election, that they can effectively suppress attacks from Gaza.



## Obama can build on Gaza ceasefire

But where does this leave short-term prospects for Mideast peace? Not in good shape. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and other moderates have been discredited by the civilian suffering, while **Hamas** militants claim to be winners merely by virtue of surviving.

Moreover, U.S. President-elect Barack Obama is already being advised that the time isn't right for a push for peace. He will be urged to focus on making Gaza's truce durable, or on Israel/Syria relations.

But the Gaza crisis should galvanize Obama, not deter him. He has seen, on the eve of his swearing-in tomorrow, the cost of leaving the Mideast to its own devices, given the chronic lack of leadership in the region. Obama can only damage America's image and its interests by refusing to invest his presidential authority in securing a peace deal that delivers security for Israel and a viable state for the Palestinians.

Obama comes to office promising "new energy, new ideas, a new direction." Welcome as that will be for America, it would be even better for the troubled Mideast.

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Israeli forces push deeper into Gaza City*

The Toronto Star

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

**Section:** WORLD AND COMMENT; Pg. AA01

**Length:** 707 words

**Byline:** Oakland Ross, Toronto Star

**Dateline:** JERUSALEM

### **Body**

---

Israeli ground forces fought their way to within 1.5 kilometres of Gaza City's centre yesterday, continuing their gradual penetration of the densely populated city, where thousands of **Hamas** fighters are believed to be concentrated.

The advance did not appear to herald the launch of a long-awaited third phase of the Israeli offensive in Gaza.

Israeli media reports said the country's political leaders were allowing time for progress to be made on international efforts to draft a peace plan acceptable to both sides.

Now in its 19th day, the Israeli offensive began Dec. 27 with an aerial assault, accompanied a week later by a ground invasion aimed at securing open areas of the territory and isolating Gaza City.

A third phase, should it go ahead, would involve a concerted, house-by-house drive toward the centre of Gaza City.

"The fighting goes on, and (Israeli troops) continue to apply force," said Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak.

Early today, an Israeli warplane fired a missile at the former Gaza city hall, used as a court building in recent years, witnesses said. The structure was destroyed and many stores in the market around it were badly damaged, they said.

The military reported killing at least 30 **Hamas** fighters yesterday, in clashes that mainly took place on the outskirts of Gaza City.

On the diplomatic front, Egyptian mediators pushed **Hamas** to accept a truce proposal and Israel sent its lead negotiator to Cairo for "decisive" talks on a ceasefire.

Egypt is overseeing the talks in part because Israel refuses to speak directly with **Hamas**, which it considers a terrorist organization.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also headed for the region to join diplomatic efforts. He is scheduled to visit Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown pressed leaders of Israel and Egypt for moves towards a full, sustainable ceasefire, his office said.

## Israeli forces push deeper into Gaza City

Ismail Haniyeh, a **Hamas** leader in Gaza, said in a televised address from his hideout yesterday that his side was willing to consider a truce with the Israelis. But **Hamas** has also said - in a seeming contradiction of Haniyeh's statement - any deal must include an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and the lifting of Israel's 19-month-long blockade of the territory.

Israel says Gaza must stop its rocket fire prior to the signing of a truce and is also seeking provisions that would guarantee an end to arms smuggling into the territory.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and intelligence chief Omar Suleiman, who has brokered the ceasefire negotiations, left Cairo for Saudi Arabia yesterday for talks with King Abdullah as Arab leaders tried to co-ordinate a regional strategy for ending the conflict.

Meanwhile, in Gaza, Israeli artillery continued to pound the city's periphery, and the Israeli air force attacked more than 100 targets, including weapons caches, tunnels, rocket launching sites and squads of **Hamas** militants.

Eighteen Palestinian rockets flew out of Gaza by mid-afternoon, hitting Ashkelon, Sderot and other southern Israeli towns but causing no damage or injuries.

**Hamas** fighters have been launching 20 to 30 rockets a day in recent days, down from more than twice that number at the outset of the Israeli offensive.

Israeli officials said an army officer was critically wounded when a booby-trapped house exploded in the northern Gaza Strip.

Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi, chief of the general staff, warned of increased civilian casualties as the close-range urban combat proceeds.

Yesterday's killings by the Israeli military raised the 18-day Palestinian death toll to about 950, according to the Israeli count. The military said 450 of the dead were known **Hamas** militants and many of the remaining 500 might also be.

Palestinian medical sources say more than half the dead are **women** and children. Over 4,000 Palestinians have been wounded.

Thirteen Israelis, 10 of them soldiers, have been killed.

The International Committee of the Red Cross confirmed yesterday Israel has been using the chemical agent white phosphorous in Gaza, both to illuminate night operations and to hide manoeuvres carried out by day. The ICRC said it had no evidence the agent, which can be severely harmful to humans, was being used improperly.

With files from the Star's wire services

## Graphic

---

KHALIL HAMRA AP Palestinians mourn outside the morgue in Beit Lahiya, Gaza, yesterday.

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2009

## *Daily struggle to find food and fuel in Gaza*

The New Zealand Herald  
January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 The New Zealand Herald All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; World

**Length:** 493 words

### **Body**

---

GAZA CITY - In 17 days of war, Hisham Abu Ramadan has fallen into a new routine.

He gets up before dawn and goes to his mosque, not just to pray but to charge his cellphone, since it's the only place in the neighbourhood with a generator. After prayers, he queues at a nearby bakery, where as many as 150 people are already waiting to buy bread.

"We've got accustomed to this life," said Abu Ramadan, 37. Others face a tougher time.

In Khaled al-Dali's two-room shack in the Shati refugee camp, 21 people - half of them relatives who fled the fighting - take turns sleeping because there are not enough mattresses to go around. Without fuel, the family cooks on fires made from rubbish. He has sold most of his furniture to buy food.

Gazans have become adept at coping with conflict, but Israel's

unprecedented assault on their ***Hamas*** rulers has strained even their survival skills. The massive bombardment has badly disrupted the flow of electricity and water, already stop-and-go before the start of the war. Israel has cut Gaza in half, cutting north and south off from each other.

During the short daylight hours, shoppers crowd the few open stores and outdoor markets in a hunt for scarce goods, from nappies to milk. At dusk, streets quickly become deserted as civilians retreat indoors, for fear of being mistaken for militants by Israel's military.

"Everything is difficult now - eating, drinking, moving," said Mohammed

Saleimeh, 26. When electricity comes on in the Nusseirat refugee camp in

central Gaza, the ***women*** in his 20-member family rush to bake bread. When water comes on, they wash the cloth nappies they now use instead of disposable ones.

In southern Israel, ***Hamas*** rocket barrages have also severely disrupted life, sending people rushing into shelters when air raid sirens go off.

## Daily struggle to find food and fuel in Gaza

Many businesses have closed and classes have been suspended, but residents have sufficient food, electricity and fuel.

In Gaza, the ability to cope largely depends on how much of a buffer, in food and cash, families had going into the war, and in part on their ties to Gaza's **Hamas** rulers.

Mohammed Awad, a senior **Hamas** official, told the movement's Al Aqsa TV on Monday that 25,000 people on the **Hamas** payroll, from police to civil servants, had received their December salaries. **Hamas** members said the money was being paid in cash, with **Hamas** activists making the rounds to distribute it.

A man with a trimmed beard was seen handing out money from a suitcase in the hallway of a building in one Gaza City neighbourhood, then asking employees to sign a receipt.

## THE AID LIFELINE

Israel is allowing some humanitarian aid convoys to enter but the shipments and distribution are often disrupted by fighting.

A three-hour daily truce was introduced last week to allow aid into Gaza.

There are 60 trucks carrying aid entering Gaza each day, less than a sixth of the 400 truckloads deemed the minimum necessary.

As many as 88 per cent of Gaza's residents are said to now require food aid.

- AP

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2009

**Amnesty urges arms embargo against Israel, Palestinians. Israel: Report is a 'tendentious description of reality that doesn't rest on objective and professional criteria'**

The Jerusalem Post

February 23, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 1

**Length:** 882 words

**Byline:** TOVAH LAZAROFF and HERB KEINON, Rebecca Anna Stoil contributed to this report.

## **Body**

---

The human rights group Amnesty International called on the United States to stop weapons sales to Israel and on all countries to impose an arms embargo on both Israel and the Palestinians.

"As the major supplier of weapons to Israel, the USA has a particular obligation to stop any supply that contributes to gross violations of the laws of war and of human rights. The Obama administration should immediately suspend US military aid to Israel," said Malcolm Smart, Amnesty's Middle East director.

He also called on the "UN Security Council to impose an immediate and comprehensive arms embargo on Israel, **Hamas** and other Palestinian armed groups."

The London-based group, which operates in 150 countries, targeted both Israel and **Hamas** in the 38-page report it issued late Sunday night.

But the bulk of the text detailed Israeli actions against Palestinians in Gaza and US culpability for Israel's 22-day military operation in the Gaza Strip. Amnesty has been highly critical of Israel in past reports.

In this report, Amnesty focused on the issue of arms sales, and explained that due to a 10-year agreement lasting until 2017, the US was due to provide \$30 billion in military aid to Israel.

"To a large extent, Israel's military offensive in Gaza was carried out with weapons, munitions and military equipment supplied by the US and paid for with US taxpayers' money," said Smart.

Its use in Gaza was in violation of US and international law, the report charged.

"Israeli forces used white phosphorus and other weapons supplied by the US to carry out serious violations of international humanitarian law, including war crimes. Their attacks resulted in the death of hundreds of children and other civilians, and massive destruction of homes and infrastructure," said Donatella Rovera, who headed Amnesty International's fact-finding mission to southern Israel and Gaza.

Amnesty researchers found fragments and components of munitions used by the IDF - including many made in the US - littering school playgrounds, in hospitals and in people's homes, according to the report.

Amnesty urges arms embargo against Israel , Palestinians. Israel : Report is a 'tendentious description of reality that doesn't rest on objective and profession....

They also found remnants of a new type of missile, seemingly launched from unmanned drones, which releases large numbers of tiny sharp-edged metal cubes, each between 2 and 4 square millimeters in size.

Rovera also charged that **Hamas** and the Palestinians had committed war crimes against Israel by firing rockets at Israeli civilians along the southern border.

Israel initially denied using white phosphorous during Operation Cast Lead but has since stopped denying it and is investigating the matter.

The Foreign Ministry issued a sharp attack on the report prior to its publication and said it was a "tendentious description of reality that doesn't rest on objective and professional criteria."

The statement stressed that the weapons Israel had used during Operation Cast Lead were compatible with international law.

The statement said Israel had never intentionally targeted civilians, and testimony to the contrary in the report had come from "interested parties, under **Hamas** influence."

The ministry took Amnesty to task for its comparison of the supplying of arms to Israel to the supplying of arms to **Hamas**.

"Israel is a sovereign state obligated to use force to protect its citizens, while **Hamas** is a terrorist organization. Is it possible to compare the arms in al- Qaida's hands to the weapons in the hands of the NATO forces?" the statement read.

According to the Foreign Ministry, the report ignores the basic fact that **Hamas** is a terrorist organization that is so recognized by the US, the European Union and other countries.

"The organization systematically refuses to recognize Israel and any possibility of reaching peace with it, and publicly declares its yearning for its destruction," the ministry said.

The statement also took Amnesty to task for not mentioning **Hamas**'s uses of civilian shields, something it knew would lead to civilian casualties during combat.

"**Hamas** openly and in an organized fashion uses **women** and children to protect military targets, and booby-traps homes and public buildings," the statement read.

While mentioning the rocket fire on Israel, the ministry said the Amnesty report ignored its scope - the fact that some 10,000 rockets and mortars had been fired at Israel over the last eight years.

In advance of the report, Gerald Steinberg, the executive director of NGO Monitor, said, "This report is clearly part of a campaign to deprive Israel of the means to defend itself. This is another example of Amnesty's double standards and anti-Israel bias exploiting the language of international law."

"Amnesty's reports on Israel are often based on inaccuracies, half-truths and unverifiable allegations from so-called eyewitnesses, and reflect a lack of serious credible research capabilities," Steinberg said.

"In 2002, an Amnesty 'expert' first confirmed the nonexistent Jenin 'massacre,' and in the 2006 conflict with Hizbullah, many of Amnesty's claims were later shown to be unsubstantiated.

The factual errors are amplified by inaccurate statements using the rhetoric of international law, using terms such as 'disproportionate' and 'war crimes,' which they apply far more to Israel than to groups such as **Hamas**. This ideologically biased pattern was repeated in the recent Gaza conflict."

Amnesty urges arms embargo against Israel , Palestinians. Israel : Report is a 'tendentious description of reality that doesn't rest on objective and profession....

---

End of Document



*Israel pushed too far; your say*

Illawarra Mercury (Australia)

January 15, 2009 Thursday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 Illawarra Newspapers Holdings Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Letters; Pg. 17

**Length:** 346 words

## **Body**

---

Your article, "Muslims agonise over Gazan horror", (Mercury, January 10) requires a reply to not only the question posed - "people are asking questions from the elderly people as to why this is happening and we find it hard to explain" - but a rendition of the reality.

Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip three years ago. Since then Israeli civilians have been bombarded with more than 6000 rockets and mortars. Imagine being in your hometown. A siren sounds and you have 15 seconds to find shelter before a rocket hurtles from the sky and explodes, spraying deadly shrapnel in all directions. How many countries would tolerate that happening to its citizens?

These rockets are targeting kindergartens, schools, hospitals and civilian homes. Israel acted with restraint all those years trying to formulate a peace plan, to no avail and now has finally decided to act.

Israel responded with moral clarity, even warning occupants of buildings before they were targeted. But there's no moral equivalence between Israel, a democracy seeking peace, and the terrorist organisation **Hamas** which, backed by Iran, targets the innocent.

Israel is launching precision strikes against **Hamas** rocket launchers, arms depots, and headquarters. **Hamas** deliberately attacks Israeli civilians and hides behind Palestinian civilians - a double war crime. Any responsible government will try to minimise civilian casualties, but won't grant immunity to terrorists using civilians as human shields.

William Berry, Wollongong.

Majority suffer

In answer to Reg Wilding's letter (Mercury, January 8): I didn't see his letters against **Hamas** attacks on innocent shoppers or bus passengers in Israel, plus their rocket attacks on Israeli towns killing innocent **women** and children and innocent Palestinians.

The problem is Palestinian officials not rounding up the **Hamas** terrorists. If one is terrorised enough they will retaliate two-fold.

These "Muslim terrorists" don't want peace in Israel or anywhere in the world. They are the minority, but the majority suffers. Who is backing these terrorists?

Israel pushed too far your say

Karl Munn, Dapto.

## Graphic

---

Photo: Devastating: Smoke rises after Israeli attacks in Gaza.

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2009

---

End of Document

**Gaza a battleground for hearts, minds; Osama bin Laden heaps criticism on Arab and Palestinian leaders, hoping to use Israel's military action against Palestinians to rally moderate Muslims to support extremists' call for a global jihad**

Edmonton Journal (Alberta)

January 28, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 Edmonton Journal, a division of Canwest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** IDEAS; Pg. A15

**Length:** 1566 words

**Byline:** W. Andy Knight, Freelance

## **Body**

---

A couple of months ago, at a conference at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Pakistani-born British author Tariq Ali suggested that Osama bin Laden might be seriously incapacitated, or dead. After all, the last time bin Laden went "public" was on May 18, 2008, when he made an urgent call for all Muslims to break the Israeli-led blockade of the Hamas-controlled Gaza strip.

When al-Qaida's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahiri, released an audio tape mocking Barack Obama and commenting on the 2008 American elections, bin Laden's silence was deafening. Recall that in 2004, bin Laden was quick off the mark with a comment on the American elections -- suggesting that it did not matter whether Americans elected George Bush or John Kerry if U.S. foreign policy in the Muslim world remained unchanged.

Again, a couple of weeks ago, it was al-Zawahiri, rather than bin Laden, who called on Muslims to launch strikes against Israeli and Western targets around the world in retaliation for Israeli military raids in Gaza. This sparked further questions concerning the whereabouts of the al-Qaida leader.

Bin Laden's back

Well, we now know that bin Laden is still alive and seemingly well. He is back.

In a 22-minute audio message, posted Jan. 22 by the Islamic forum Al-Falija, bin Laden taunted America and railed against Israel for its attacks on Gaza. He criticized all the leaders of the Arab world for not coming to the aid of Palestinians in Gaza, calling them "enemies of the Islamic Ummah" -- that construct of an imagined global community of Islamic followers.

But his condemnation was not limited to Arab leaders.

Bin Laden also criticized the Palestinian leadership for basically betraying the Palestinian people. There is no love lost between the Salafist-oriented al-Qaida and Hamas. The Hamas leadership is more nationalistic in its fervour than the Salafist religious fanatics in al-Qaida. And, recently, Hamas's security forces killed nine members of Jaysh al-Islam, a Salafi extremist group with links to al-Qaida, in a shootout in Gaza.

Gaza a battleground for hearts, minds; Osama bin Laden heaps criticism on Arab and Palestinian leaders, hoping to use Israel's military action against Palestin....

But bin Laden was also particularly harsh on Arab writers, journalists and intellectuals for their uncritical acceptance of what the U.S. is doing in Afghanistan and Iraq. He referred to them as "the Crusaders' agents."

In addition, the al-Qaida leader suggested that the current global financial crisis has exposed the Achilles heel of the world's sole superpower and that this weakness is sure to make Israel more vulnerable.

Thanks to Israel's disproportionate and indiscriminate military raids on Gaza, bin Laden and his group of extremists are back to doing what they do best -- that is, using a major foreign policy blunder as fodder for their recruitment drive.

By calling for a global jihad over the Gaza, essentially what bin Laden is trying to do here is to turn Muslim radicals, and even some moderates, into "extremists."

Radicals are individuals who desperately want to change the status quo and will use various forms of protest in order to accomplish their goal.

Extremists are those radicals who decide to resort to the use of violence as the means to achieve their ends, even when peaceful, legal avenues are available for them to pursue those goals.

Unfortunately, many of the already radicalized Palestinians living in the Gaza strip will heed bin Laden's message. Why? Because the 19-day Israeli onslaught on Gaza, which has resulted in more than 1,000 Palestinians dead and hundreds more injured, has become an accelerant doused onto an already simmering cauldron of adolescents, already primed for acts of martyrdom.

Israeli tactics under scrutiny

Senior UN officials and human rights groups like the International Committee of the Red Cross, Human Rights Watch, and even the prominent Israeli human rights group B'Tselem are demanding the establishment of an independent international investigation into alleged indiscriminate shelling of residential areas in Gaza by Israeli forces.

During this conflict, the Israeli military used banned phosphorous shells on Gazans, as it did on Hezbollah guerrilla groups during the Lebanese/Israeli conflict in 2006. While these weapons are useful for illuminating and marking military targets or territory, they also cause severe chemical burns to humans who happen to be in the vicinity of legitimate military targets. White phosphorous is a translucent wax-like substance that, once ignited, creates intense heat and smoke. Its use in civilian areas has been banned by the Geneva Conventions.

The Israeli military has also been accused of targeting and killing civilian Palestinian police, who apparently did not have a military role; of killing 12 ambulance workers close to a medical facility; and of shelling the United Nations Relief and Works Agency -- drawing major condemnation from the international community.

It has also been alleged that Israeli soldiers used Palestinian families as human shields at certain points in the 22-day conflict.

It is these kinds of accusations that provide ammunition for extremists like bin Laden.

Normally moderate Muslim youth all over the world, who witnessed the carnage in Gaza on Al-Aqsa TV and on the Internet, will now be much more susceptible to the diatribe and violence-laden rhetoric of extremists like bin Laden.

When they see limp bodies of dead little Palestinian babies, or the bloodied faces of screaming and terrified infants being brought into dilapidated hospitals that have been shelled by the Israeli military, it is no wonder that young Muslims may be pushed over the edge and into the arms of extremists.

There is no question that Israel, as a recognized sovereign state, has the right to exist and the right to defend itself. It is also quite clear, as the Palestinian Authority leader on the West Bank, Mahmoud Abbas, has said, that **Hamas**

Gaza a battleground for hearts, minds; Osama bin Laden heaps criticism on Arab and Palestinian leaders, hoping to use Israel's military action against Palestin....

is largely to blame for igniting the current Gaza crisis and putting Palestinian civilians at risk. After all, **Hamas** is responsible for the eight-year aerial barrage of rocket and mortar shells that targeted southern parts of Israel.

While **Hamas**'s indiscriminate shelling of Israeli towns, like Sderot and Ashkelon, may have resulted in only a few deaths (28 fatalities since 2001), this does not absolve the **Hamas** leadership of responsibility for putting so many Palestinian **women** and children in harm's way.

While the core leadership of **Hamas** was safely hiding out during the Israeli barrage, it continued to give orders to its most loyal factions to keep up the random firing of rockets into Israel.

Hiding among civilians

Many launching pads for **Hamas**'s rockets were deliberately located close to schools, hospitals and places of worship. Such acts are criminal.

**Hamas** leaders know full well that if Israel responded directly to demolish those rocket launchers, many innocent Palestinian lives would be lost.

The Israeli government's response was to stop the random rocket attacks that threaten close to one million Israelis on a daily basis. It also hoped to deter future rocket strikes by making the **Hamas** leadership pay a very heavy price.

To some extent, the Israeli military seems to have succeeded in that goal. More than 400 **Hamas** militants (Qassam Brigades) were killed in the conflict and much of the **Hamas** military infrastructure and capability have been degraded, if not completely destroyed. Additionally, the Israeli military was able to destroy a number of tunnels used to smuggle weapons and militants into Gaza from Egypt.

However, Israel's successful, but disproportionate, military response has resulted in it losing the propaganda war.

**Hamas** leadership knew that it was no match for Israel's military might. But it also knew that the "collateral damage" caused by Israeli strikes in the highly populated cities in Gaza would provoke international criticism.

The International Crisis Group (ICG) notes that Israeli attacks in Gaza were directed against government institutions, civil police stations, the interior, foreign affairs, finance, public works, justice, education, labour, and culture ministries, as well as the presidential compound, the prime minister's office and parliament. These are all civic institutions of the Palestinian people, not just of **Hamas**.

This Israeli response to **Hamas**'s provocation has certainly creating fertile ground for extremism. Bin Laden, and other extremists like him, will now try to plant the seeds of extremism globally and reap the rewards.

What Barack Obama must do

Let's hope that U.S. President Barack Obama will somehow find a way to thwart bin Laden's plans. Let's hope that Obama will be able to convince whom-

ever is elected prime minister in the upcoming Israeli elections of the obvious diminishing returns of brute force and the absolute need for a diplomatic solution to this protracted conflict.

Obama's appointment of the former U.S. senator, George Mitchell (an Arab-American), is a reassuring sign that the new president is on the right track. So, too, is Obama's commitment to the "two-state solution" proposed by the UN Security Council last December.

Israel will never be at peace until there is a de jure and de facto Palestinian state.

And, the Palestinian people will continue to bury their young unless and until they come to recognize Israel's right to exist.

Gaza a battleground for hearts, minds; Osama bin Laden heaps criticism on Arab and Palestinian leaders, hoping to use Israel 's military action against Palestin....

W. Andy Knight is professor of international relations at the University of Alberta and a governor of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Ottawa

## Graphic

---

Photo: Bloomberg News; A Palestinian boy is carried to hospital following an Israeli attack in Gaza City, on Jan. 14. Al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden is hoping such images will cause normally moderate Muslim youths to embrace his call for holy war against Israel. ;

Photo: Agence France-Presse, file photo; Osama bin Laden is shown in this undated file photo. ;

**Load-Date:** March 23, 2009

## *Israel not innocent victim in Gaza horror*

WeekendPost (South Africa)

January 24, 2009

Copyright 2009 AVUSA Media LTD All Rights Reserved

# WeekendPost

**Section:** OPINION & EDITORIAL

**Length:** 686 words

**Byline:** Sara Dowse

## Body

---

Israel has been a colonising state, masquerading as the most democratic, most humane nation in the region

IT HAS taken me days to begin writing this, so horrified have I been by Israel's latest actions. My sense of justice, however - as a mother, a Jew and a human being - impels me to try.

The massacre in Gaza has its roots in virulent European anti- Semitism and the 1917 Balfour Declaration, when the British government promised Zionists that Jewish people would have a homeland in Palestine if Britain was victorious in World War I.

The key word here is homeland, and it should be remembered that the promise was qualified by the condition that such a homeland would "not be to the detriment" of the Palestinians. The steady increase in Jewish immigration under the British mandate provoked riots and protests, but Palestinians were still in the majority until, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, the Zionists declared an Israeli state.

Despite the suffering of the Palestinians, whose land was taken from them, for many years the sympathy of the developed world was with Israel, refuge for the survivors of the Nazi slaughter of European Jews, and beleaguered by surrounding hostile Arab states.

With the 1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, Israel could no longer be accepted as a victim. Yet it has continued to play on the sympathies of Western governments, most particularly the US, and Jews of the diaspora. In reality Israel has been a colonising state, masquerading as the most democratic, most humane, most modern nation in the region. It has served the Western powers to have such a proxy in the Middle East, and most recently, under the Bush administration and in concert with the Israelis, they have played a cynical game of divide and rule, encouraging the Israelis in their blind refusal to negotiate with Hamas, just as for years Israel refused to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the forerunners of Fatah, whom they now support.

Hamas is not a terrorist organisation but the legitimate, democratically elected government of the Palestinian Authority.

Undermining of that government by Israel and the West is but one of a string of cynical actions on their part.

The rationale that Hamas has refused to accept Israel's existence or to eschew violence is yet another example of how the truth has been twisted.

## Israel not innocent victim in Gaza horror

What **Hamas** rejected was the continued, barbaric Israeli occupation of the West Bank, and the laying down of arms against an aggressive military occupation. I have heard with my own ears the **Hamas** Prime Minister, Ismail Haniyeh, say exactly that. Is he to be trusted? It would have been worth a try.

And who now would trust Israel? So here we have it: a tough, technocratically savvy, nuclear power with the backing of the largest military power the world has known, bombing, then invading, a territory the size of a small city, with a population of 1,5 million, most of whom are civilians, to "defend our citizens".

The ceasefire was meant to lift the Israeli blockade on Gaza, but it didn't. It was meant to facilitate the release of Palestinian prisoners, many of whom were members of the elected **Hamas** government, but it didn't. Israeli planes raided southern Gaza in November. The **Hamas** rockets continued. Which side broke the ceasefire?

**Hamas** may not be blameless, but the situation is far more complex than Israel claims. The fact that more than 600 people have died because in a couple of weeks the US will have a new government and next month Israel will have an election, is the most shocking form of cynicism the Palestinian people have yet faced.

Since the 2006 invasion of Lebanon I have undergone what for me, as a Jew, has been an agonising realignment of my feelings about Israel. I have come to believe that a specifically Jewish state has been a terrible mistake.

I don't know how it will come about - I hope with as little bloodshed as possible - but I look forward to the distant day when the land becomes a multicultural country again.

Sara Dowse is an author who wrote Sapphires, a novel about three generations of Jewish **women**.

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2009



## *Grim tally marks slow return to peace*

therecord.com

January 22, 2009 Thursday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 Metroland Media Group Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** FRONT; Pg. A6

**Length:** 617 words

**Byline:** Karin Laub, The Associated Press

**Dateline:** KHAN YOUNIS, GAZA STRIP

### **Body**

---

Squatting in the rubble, his briefcase perched atop his knees, the human rights researcher interviewed residents of a house shelled by Israel as he compiled a list of Gazans killed and wounded during Israel's offensive against **Hamas**.

Yasser Abdel Ghafar's work is part of a painstaking endeavour by the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights to count the casualties of the 23-day war. The group released a final tally yesterday, saying 1,284 Gazans were killed and 4,336 wounded, the vast majority civilians.

Israel has accused **Hamas** of inflating the civilian casualties, saying it has the names of more than 700 **Hamas** militants killed in the fighting.

The two sides disagree on the death toll, particularly the ratio of combatants and civilians.

Yesterday, fieldworker Abdel Ghafar worked to uncover the circumstances of how one family lost its home and two relatives.

As family members and neighbours sat on plastic chairs in an alley nearby, Abdel Ghafar spoke quietly to 28-year-old Rami Najar, who was in the three-storey house in Khan Younis close to Israel's border when it came under fire last week.

His 75-year-old grandfather Khalil Najar and the elderly man's seven-year-old granddaughter, Alla, were killed in the attack, which reduced the house to rubble.

Using his briefcase as a writing table, the researcher took down the survivor's story as the two sat on a huge chunk of concrete.

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights has been publishing daily death toll updates with names, ages and whether the victims were civilians or combatants on its website since the beginning of the war, and expects to present the final list in several days.

The group said that 894 of the dead were civilians, including 280 children and minors aged 17 and under, as well as 111 **women**.

## Grim tally marks slow return to peace

The remaining 390 dead were members of **Hamas** or other militant groups. They included 167 civil police, many of them killed on the job, and 223 fighters, said Ibtissam Zakout, head of the group's research team.

That figure is higher than the 158 dead fighters acknowledged by **Hamas**, Islamic Jihad and other militant groups.

"Maybe they (the militants) were interested to show that they have fewer losses and casualties," Zakout said.

Others, including Gaza Health Ministry official Dr. Moawiya Hassanain, have raised the possibility the militants buried some of their fighters in secret, without reporting their deaths.

Hassanain has kept a running list of casualty tolls since the start of the Dec. 27 fighting.

The ministry, like most Gaza government agencies, is run by **Hamas**. Israeli warplanes targeted many **Hamas** ministries during the war, and the Health Ministry moved part of its operations to Gaza's main Shifa Hospital after the start of the offensive.

The ministry's computer centre is fed by faxed reports sent by teams deployed at Gaza's 20 hospitals and clinics, said statistics chief Dr. Samir Radi, who did part of his physician's training at an Israeli hospital.

The Health Ministry's final toll is 1,324 dead and 5,400 wounded -- or 40 more dead and about 1,000 more injured than the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights.

Asked about the discrepancies in casualty tolls, Zakout said that she believes there has been some inadvertent double-counting at the ministry, an outcome of the chaos of the war.

Also, the ministry includes psychological trauma cases as war injuries, while the rights group does not.

Field worker Abdel Ghafar said for him, the hard work is just beginning. In his district, the southern city of Khan Younis, he has counted 83 deaths. Initial questioning determined that 61 were civilians, 13 police officers and nine fighters, he said. Of the militants, five were from **Hamas** and four from Islamic Jihad.

## Graphic

---

Photo: Ben Curtis, The Associated Press , A wake for the Samouni family, whose many deaths were described by the UN as 'one of the gravest incidents' to happen in Gaza once Israeli infantry and armoured troops entered on Jan. 4, is held yesterday in the Zeitoun neighbourhood in Gaza City.

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2009

## *US Muslim charity leaders get 65 years in jail*

AlArabiya.net

May 26, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 AlArabiya.net. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 771 words

### Body

---

Two founders of a U.S. Islamic charity will likely spend the remainder of their lives in prison for their role in the largest terrorism financing case in American history, six months after a federal jury found all five men guilty of funneling millions of dollars to the Palestinian group Hamas.

Last November a grand jury convicted the Holy Land Foundation and five of its leaders for conspiracy to support a foreign terrorist organization, money laundering, tax fraud and other charges.

The group said it focused on legitimate disaster relief and aid to Palestinian refugees. Effectively life sentences

"I did it because I cared, not at the behest of Hamas," Shukri Abu Baker, 50, told a federal court in Dallas as U.S. District Judge Jorge Solis sentenced him and Ghassan Elashi, 55, to 65 years in prison, the Dallas Morning News reported.

"You didn't tell the whole story. Palestinians were in a desperate situation, but that doesn't justify supporting Hamas," the judge said, according to the newspaper.

Abu Baker, whose brother Jamal Issa is the head of Hamas operations in Yemen, was Holy Land's chief executive officer and the first to be sentenced

Holy Land cofounder Mohamed al-Mezain, who is related to Hamas deputy political leader Mousa Abu Marzook, was sentenced to 15 years in jail.

Two other defendants were sentenced to lesser terms ranging from 15 to 20 years.

Acquitted then convicted

"I was acquitted of all charges" in the first trial, said Mufid Abdulqader, 49 and a top volunteer fundraiser for Holy Land, was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

"And now I'm facing a long, long prison sentence. I do acknowledge the verdict in this trial. I believe in the system. My faith has not been shaken, it's been inspired. But it is un-American to ignore suffering and starving women and children."

A jury failed to convict the men on nearly identical charges in 2007, resulting in a mistrial.

## US Muslim charity leaders get 65 years in jail

This time jurors returned guilty verdicts on 108 charges of providing material support to terrorists, money laundering and tax fraud.

The foundation, based in a Dallas suburb, was one of the biggest Islamic charities in the United States before the government shut it down in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

**Strong warning**

"These sentences should serve as a strong warning to anyone who knowingly provides financial support to terrorists under the guise of humanitarian relief," David Kris, Assistant Attorney General for National Security, said in a statement.

Muslim charities that remained open reported significant drops in contributions because of fears of prosecution even as juries deadlocked on the Holy Land case and rendered acquittals and convictions of lesser charges in two other high-profile terror financing cases in Florida and Chicago.

The Justice Department vowed in October 2007 to retry the five Holy Land leaders after jurors could not agree on verdicts on nearly 220 charges and a new jury was seated in mid-September.

Prosecutors took about two months to present evidence that Holy Land was created in the late 1980s to gather donations from deep-pocketed American Muslims to support the then-newly formed **Hamas** movement resisting the Israeli occupation.

This evidence included testimony from an anonymous Israeli lawyer, which the defendants said they were not allowed to review. The defense vowed to appeal.

**Question of intent**

**Hamas** -- a multi-faceted Islamist political, social and armed movement which controls the Gaza Strip in the Palestinian territories -- was designated a terrorist organization by the United States in 1995 and the trial centered over whether Holy Land continued to support the group after this point.

Prosecutors did not accuse the charity of directly financing or being involved in terrorist activity. Instead, they said humanitarian aid was used to promote **Hamas** and allow it to divert existing funds to militant activities.

Defense attorneys said the charity was a non-political organization which operated legally to get much-needed aid to Palestinians living in squalor under the Israeli occupation and argued that their clients were on trial chiefly because of their family ties.

But a 1991 "explanatory memorandum" from Mohamed Akram on the strategic goals of the group in North America formed the basis for the government's case and some of the most inflammatory evidence.

In the document it described the Muslim Brotherhood's role as a "Civilization-Jihadist Process" in which jihad would aim to destroy and sabotage Western civilization from within so that Islam would become the primary religion.

The defense attorneys dismissed the documents as ramblings of a fringe element.

**Load-Date:** May 28, 2009

## *Palestinian civilians feel Israel's wrath*

The Leader-Post (Regina, Saskatchewan)

January 16, 2009 Friday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 The Leader-Post, a division of Canwest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** VIEWPOINTS; Pg. B8

**Length:** 742 words

**Byline:** Aijaz Husain, The Leader-Post

### **Body**

---

Israel would have the world believe that the conflict in Gaza is the direct result of Hamas' constant rocket strikes against its territory -- a "security problem", it says, that needs to be "fixed once and for all". One wonders if the Hamas rockets -- slingshots compared to the weaponry that Israel has in its possession -- are such a serious threat to Israeli security then couldn't there be some better way to handle it than going to an all-out war? True, those rockets have been raining on Israeli border towns and villages for many years in retaliation for the harsh conditions under which the Palestinians in Gaza have been living under Israeli occupation. The rockets have indeed caused a few fatalities and some property damage. But that damage pales in comparison to the suffering the people of Gaza have endured as a result of the blockade that Israel has imposed on their territory.

The Hamas rockets have seldom caused any damage serious enough to warrant a military action on a scale as heavy as the one Israel is currently waging. Not all the people living in Gaza are Hamas militants. Of the 1.5 million Gazans, as many as almost two-thirds happen to be women, children and elderly residents, most of them living in conditions of near- starvation.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, writing in an op-ed article in the Washington Post on Jan. 8, recalls that at the time of his trip to Israel last April, he was told that there had been no more than three Israeli deaths in seven years of rockets attacks by Hamas. It was further brought to his attention by a U.N. source that "acute malnutrition in Gaza was on the same scale as the poorest nation in southern Sahara, with more than half the Palestinian families eating only one meal a day".

What then could have prompted Israel to use a military option to solve its security problems on its southern border? After all, a six-month truce brokered by Egypt last June, though fragile, had lowered the temperatures to some extent. With some diplomatic efforts that truce could have been further extended. The question is: why a shooting war now? Whatever the rationale for the start of the war, the fact is that a general election is due in Israel next month; and the ruling Kadima party is well behind former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hardline Likud Party in the opinion polls. The one hope that the Kadima leadership has of winning that election is by re-establishing its credentials as a party that can make tough decisions and stand up to Israel's enemies. A victory over Hamas -- something it did not achieve over Hezbollah in Lebanon two years ago -- will be a trophy.

A second factor that seems to have gone into Israeli calculations is the timing for the military action. There appears to be an urgent need to take advantage of the dying days of the Bush administration that has provided Israel with a level of unconditional support, they fear, they might not get from the newcomers in Washington.

## Palestinian civilians feel Israel 's wrath

And then, there is Ehud Olmert, the outgoing Israeli prime minister, who has a personal stake in scoring a victory against **Hamas**. The accusations he has faced for having bungled his handling of the war with Hezbollah in Lebanon, plus many of the legal problems he is facing today, have turned him into a hawk in the hope that his initiative for going on the offensive in Gaza will rehabilitate him politically and help him regain some respectability among his own people.

It is not clear as to what the outcome of the current conflagration is going to be. Both parties to the conflict have rejected the UN ceasefire resolution. In the case of **Hamas**, the rejection of the call for ceasefire sounds more like a death wish -- a wish that Israel seems only too ready to help **Hamas** fulfill.

Already pretty close to a thousand Gazans, mostly civilians have perished in this war, and the death toll keeps rising. Thousands have been rendered homeless. The wounded have nowhere to go for treatment. The graphic television images of the dead and dying, children lying in hospitals with lost limbs and families shattered and traumatized are all too gruesome to comprehend: the brutality and senselessness of the war.

It is unlikely, in fact a certainty, that the war is not going to resolve anything. It remains to be seen if the good sense will ever prevail on the warring parties to drop their weapons, swallow their egos and go to the negotiating tables.

- Husain is a Regina freelance writer.

## Graphic

---

Colour Photo: Getty Images ;

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Peace for now*

Herald Sun (Australia)

January 19, 2009 Monday

1 - FIRST Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 21

**Length:** 367 words

### **Body**

---

GAZA had its first bomb-free night in three weeks yesterday after Israel halted a war on **Hamas** that killed more than 1200 Palestinians and left large swathes of the impoverished enclave in ruins.

More than six hours after Israel's ceasefire took effect at 2am (11am Melbourne time), no air raids or major clashes were reported in the Palestinian territory, witnesses and the army said.

Egypt was to host an international summit overnight, attended by several European leaders and UN chief Ban Ki-moon, to seek a lasting truce between Israel and **Hamas**.

Earlier, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert announced after a meeting of his security Cabinet that he was calling an immediate end to offensive operations.

But he added that soldiers would stay in Gaza for the time being, under orders to return fire if attacked.

"We have reached all the goals of the war, and beyond," Mr Olmert said.

Defence Minister Ehud Barak said there was "no guarantee" that **Hamas** would stop firing rockets -- and the Israeli army would retaliate if it did.

The response from **Hamas**, the Islamist group that has ruled Gaza since June 2007 and is sworn to the destruction of the Jewish state, stopped short of an outright threat to continue the rocket attacks.

"We will not accept the presence of a single soldier in Gaza," **Hamas** spokesman Fawzi Barhum said.

He restated the movement's demands for a complete Israeli withdrawal and the opening of Gaza's border crossings.

One of the main aims of Israel's offensive had been to put a halt to rocket and mortar attacks on it, but more than 30 projectiles were launched from Gaza yesterday -- including eight fired after Mr Olmert's announcement.

During the war, which began on December 27, schools, hospitals, UN compounds and thousands of homes all came under attack.

The Palestinian Authority put the cost of damage to infrastructure alone at more than \$710 million.

Peace for now

At least 1206 Palestinians, including 410 children, were killed, according to Gaza medics, who said another 5300 people were wounded.

The slain included 109 women, 113 elderly, 14 paramedics, and four journalists.

Israel halted its bombing after pledges from Washington and Cairo to help prevent arms smuggling into Gaza.

**Load-Date:** January 18, 2009

---

End of Document



## **Puzzled in Gaza**

The Jerusalem Post

March 3, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** OPINION; Pg. 14

**Length:** 974 words

**Byline:** YVONNE GREEN

**Highlight:** The Gaza I saw was societally intact. There were no homeless, walking wounded, hungry or underdressed people. The writer is a poet and freelance writer who lives in London. Her collection Boukhara was a 2008 Smith/Doorstop prize winner. She also translates the poetry of Semyon Lipkin, the Russian World War II poet.

### **Body**

---

I'm a poet, an English Jew and a frequent visitor to Israel. Deeply disturbed by the reports of wanton slaughter and destruction during Operation Cast Lead, I felt I had to see for myself. I flew to Tel Aviv and on Wednesday, January 28, using my press card to cross the Erez checkpoint, I walked across the border into Gaza where I was met by my guide, a Palestinian journalist. He asked if I wanted to meet with **Hamas** officials. I explained that I'd come to bear witness to the damage and civilian suffering, not to talk politics.

What I saw was that there had been precision attacks made on all of **Hamas**' infrastructure. Does UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon criticize the surgical destruction of the explosives cache in the Imad Akhel Mosque, of the National Forces compound, of the Shi Jaya police station, of the Ministry of Prisoners? The Gazans I met weren't mourning the police state. Neither were they radicalized. As **Hamas** blackshirts menaced the street corners, I witnessed how passersby ignored them.

THERE WERE empty beds at Shifa Hospital and a threatening atmosphere. **Hamas** is reduced to wielding its unchallengeable authority from extensive air raid shelters which, together with the hospital, were built by Israel 30 years ago. Terrorized Gazans used doublespeak when they told me most of the alleged 5,500 wounded were being treated in Egypt and Jordan. They want it known that the figure is a lie, and showed me that the wounded weren't in Gaza. No evidence exists of their presence in foreign hospitals, or of how they might have gotten there.

From the mansions of the Abu Ayida family at Jebala Rayes to Tallel Howa (Gaza City's densest residential area), Gazans contradicted allegations that Israel had murderously attacked civilians. They told me again and again that both civilians and **Hamas** fighters had evacuated safely from areas of **Hamas** activity in response to Israeli telephone calls, leaflets and megaphone warnings.

Seeing Al-Fakhora made it impossible to understand how UN and press reports could ever have alleged that the UNWRA school had been hit by Israeli shells. The school, like most of Gaza, was visibly intact. I was shown where **Hamas** had been firing from nearby, and the Israeli missile's marks on the road outside the school were unmistakable. When I met Mona al-Ashkor, one of the 40 people injured running toward Al-Fakhora - rather than inside it as widely and persistently reported - I was told that Israel had warned people not to take shelter in the school because **Hamas** was operating in the area, and that some people had ignored the warning because UNWRA previously told them that the school would be safe. Press reports that fatalities numbered 40 were denied.

## Puzzled in Gaza

I WAS TOLD stories at Samouni Street which contradicted each other, what I saw and later media accounts. Examples of these inconsistencies are that 24, 31, 34 or more members of the Fatah Samouni family had died. That all the deaths occurred when Israel bombed the safe building it had told 160 family members to shelter in; the safe building was pointed out to me but looked externally intact and washing was still hanging on a line on one of its balconies. That some left the safe building and were shot in another house. That one was shot when outside collecting firewood. That there was no resistance - but the top right hand window of the safe building (which appears in a BBC Panorama film "Out of the Ruins" aired February 8) has a black mark above it - a sign I was shown all day of weaponry having been fired from inside. That victims were left bleeding for two or three days.

I saw large scoured craters and a buckled container which appeared to have been damaged by an internal impact (its external surfaces were undamaged). Media accounts of Samouni Street don't mention these possible indications of explosive caches (although the container is visible on media footage). The Samouni family's elder told me during a taped interview that he had a CD film of the killings. As far as I'm aware, no such film has been made public. He also told me that there are members of his family who have still not been found.

The media have manufactured and examined allegations that Israel committed a war crime against the Samounis without mentioning that the family are Fatah and that some of its members are still missing. They have not considered what might flow from those facts: that **Hamas** might have been active not only in the Samouni killings but in the exertion of force on the Samounis to accuse Israel.

THE GAZA I saw was societally intact. There were no homeless, walking wounded, hungry or underdressed people. The streets were busy, shops were hung with embroidered dresses and gigantic cooking pots, the markets were full of fresh meat and beautiful produce - the red radishes were bigger than grapefruits. Mothers accompanied by a 13-year- old boy told me they were bored of leaving home to sit on rubble all day to tell the press how they'd survived. **Women** graduates I met in Sajaya spoke of education as power as old men watched over them.

No one praised their government as they showed me the sites of tunnels where fighters had melted away. No one declared **Hamas** victorious for creating a forced civilian front line as they showed me the remains of booby trapped homes and schools.

From what I saw and was told in Gaza, Operation Cast Lead pinpointed a totalitarian regime's power bases and largely neutralized **Hamas's** plans to make Israel its tool for the sacrifice of civilian life.

Corroboration of my account may be found in tardy and piecemeal retractions of claims concerning the UNWRA school at Al-Fakhora; an isolated acknowledgment that Gaza is substantially intact by The New York Times; Internet media watch corrections; and the unresolved discrepancy between the alleged wounded and their unreported whereabouts.

## Graphic

---

Photo: PALESTINIAN CHILDREN walking after heavy rains in Shati refugee camp of Gaza City on Friday. (Credit: AP)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

## *Israel Shells U.N. Site in Gaza, Drawing Fresh Condemnation*

The New York Times

January 16, 2009 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2009 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1598 words

**Byline:** By ISABEL KERSHNER; Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza City, Steven Erlanger from Jerusalem, and Neil MacFarquhar from the United Nations.

**Dateline:** JERUSALEM

### **Body**

---

Israel stepped up its 20-day-old offensive against the Islamic group **Hamas** on Thursday, shelling the headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and other buildings in central Gaza. The strikes intensified condemnation of Israel, already heated because of the number of civilian deaths, and further strained fraught relations with the agency that provides aid to Palestinian refugees.

The strike, which Israel said was in response to enemy fire, came even as Israeli officials indicated some progress in the Egyptian-brokered cease-fire talks. The Israeli foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, left for the United States late on Thursday, seeking an internationally guaranteed mechanism to stop arms smuggling into Gaza through Egypt.

But Israel tightened the military pressure on **Hamas** on Thursday, perhaps to push it closer to a cease-fire that would meet the Israeli aim of stopping **Hamas** rocket fire into Israel.

A senior **Hamas** leader, Said Siam, was killed along with his brother and his son when Israel bombed the house that they were in. Mr. Siam was the powerful interior minister of the **Hamas**-run government in Gaza and the overall chief of its security forces, a significant blow for **Hamas** days after Israel indicated that its military structure remained largely intact.

**Hamas**, meanwhile, fired off about 25 mortar shells and rockets, seriously wounding a 7-year-old Israeli boy in the city of Beersheba.

The strike against the United Nations headquarters wounded three people, destroying with three shells a warehouse full of hundreds of tons of food and medicine, said John Ging, director of United Nations operations in the area.

The incident, a week after some 40 people were reported killed when an Israeli mortar shell struck near a United Nations school, underscored the difficult relations between Israel and the United Nations that stretch back to Israel's founding.

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations, in Jerusalem to discuss possible cease-fire terms, expressed "strong protest and outrage" and demanded an investigation.

## Israel Shells U.N. Site in Gaza, Drawing Fresh Condemnation

But Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, on Thursday justified the attack on the refugee agency headquarters, saying that Hamas militants had fired at Israeli forces from within the compound.

"Surely," said Mark Regev, a spokesman for Mr. Olmert, the refugee agency "understands that Israel cannot give immunity to terrorists because they are working from within, or adjacent to, a United Nations compound."

United Nations officials vehemently denied the allegations. Mr. Ging, as he often has during the war, denounced Israel in extended televised interviews and questioned why Israeli liaison officers had never mentioned Hamas activity in the area, even though he said they were in constant contact.

"They should tell us if there are militants operating in our compound or in our area," he said. "The fact that they don't, we take that as indicative of the fact that there wasn't."

Over many decades, Israel has questioned the neutrality of many of the organization's branches and complained of institutional bias. While both sides have been making efforts in recent years to work more constructively together, Thursday's incident served to pry open the divide.

Adding to the tensions, the United Nations General Assembly convened an emergency session on the Israeli offensive in Gaza with its president, Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann of Nicaragua, accusing Israel of violating international law and using "disproportionate military force."

Even though modern Israel came into existence months after a historic General Assembly voted in 1947 to partition Mandatory Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, the country's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, famously wrote off the United Nations in the 1950s, using its Hebrew acronym to dismiss it as "UM, shmum."

Describing some of the abiding challenges, Israeli officials note that the same 21 anti-Israel resolutions are passed by an automatic majority in the General Assembly every year. "That is before we've done anything," one official said.

When it comes to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, Israel is in a special bind. On one hand Israeli officials say they recognize the vital role of the organization that provides food and other assistance to hundreds of thousands of Gaza's poor.

On the other hand, the agency is often accused by critics in Israel and beyond of perpetuating the Palestinian refugee problem, being the only United Nations branch dedicated to a specific refugee population whose numbers, according to the agency's criteria, constantly grow.

The attack on the compound underscored mutual suspicions and inherent antipathy on both sides.

Christopher Gunness, a spokesman for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, said that in a meeting with its representatives on Thursday, Israeli Army representatives "privately admitted" that the source of the militants' fire was several hundred yards away from the compound.

"With every false allegation, the credibility of those accusing us is incrementally diminished," Mr. Gunness said.

Citing agency representatives who were present during the attack, Mr. Gunness said three white phosphorus shells had hit the compound, causing fires that raged for hours, an allegation to which the Israeli military did not respond.

White phosphorus is a standard, legal weapon in armies, long used as a way to light up an area or to create a thick white smoke screen to obscure troop movements. While using it against civilians, or in an area where many civilians are likely to be affected, can be a violation of international law, Israel has denied using the substance improperly. On Wednesday, Hamas fired a phosphorus mortar shell into Israel, but no one was hurt.

## Israel Shells U.N. Site in Gaza, Drawing Fresh Condemnation

In Israel, there is parallel outrage that the world is not vociferously protesting how Hamas uses civilians and civilian institutions in Gaza as a shield.

Yigal Palmor, an Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman, went further, saying that most of the United Nations agency's staff in Gaza were local Palestinians and alleging that a "large part are affiliated one way or another with Hamas."

More than 1,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Israeli campaign so far, about 40 percent of them women and children, according to the Hamas-run Ministry of Health; Israel says only a quarter may be civilians. Three Israeli civilians have been killed in rocket attacks and 10 soldiers have died during the current campaign.

Witnesses said Thursday's military push into Gaza City sent thousands of panicked residents fleeing from their homes.

Among other buildings hit in the center of the city was one occupied by several media organizations, witnesses said. Two Palestinian television camera operators were hospitalized.

As Israeli tanks took over the outlying neighborhood of Tel al-Hawa, a local hospital came under fire. In a statement on Thursday, the International Committee of the Red Cross said that Al Quds Hospital, run by the Palestine Red Crescent Society, suffered at least one direct hit and that the second floor of the hospital caught fire.

Jakob Kellenberger, the president of the Red Cross, who had just completed a three-day visit to the area, said, "It is unacceptable that wounded people receiving treatment in hospitals are put at risk."

The Israeli military did not give precise details of its latest ground operations in Gaza City on Thursday, but a spokesman said that "fierce fighting" was under way "relatively deep inside Gaza."

The military escalation may have been aimed at stepping up pressure on Hamas as Egyptian-brokered cease-fire talks entered a pivotal stage.

A senior Israeli Defense Ministry official, Amos Gilad, returned from talks in Cairo on Thursday to report to the Israeli leadership.

Though Israel had yet to relay its official response to the latest proposals, Egyptian television reported that Israel had agreed in principle to a truce plan, pending some clarifications. Hamas is also demanding some clarifications, the group's officials have said.

Mr. Regev, the Olmert spokesman, said Thursday that Israel was "trying to find a durable solution."

"Hopefully," he said, "that durable solution seems closer than ever before."

Confirming the air raid that killed Said Siam, the Israeli military described him in a statement as "a zealous extremist who liaised directly with Hamas's military wing and the terror organization's senior leadership in Gaza and abroad." It said that his brother, Iyad, was his "right-hand man."

According to witnesses and hospital officials, four members of a family in a building next door to the Siams were also killed in the Israeli raid.

## Iran Leader Assails Israel

TEHRAN -- President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran denounced the Israeli offensive in Gaza on Thursday, and he called on President-elect Barack Obama to take a different approach in American-Iranian relations.

"People in Gaza have won," Mr. Ahmadinejad said in a news conference. "They fulfilled their duty in defending their dignity and honor."

"This is the victory of humanity against barbarism," he added.

## Israel Shells U.N. Site in Gaza, Drawing Fresh Condemnation

Mr. Ahmadinejad also urged Mr. Obama to adopt a new policy toward Iran, saying that Iran did not appreciate what he characterized as the carrot-and-stick approach followed by the Bush administration. "I don't consider the policy of carrot-and-stick respectful," he said. "People welcome policies that are based on respect and friendship."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

## Graphic

---

PHOTOS: Palestinian children scavenged goods from the bombed interior of a mosque in Rafah in the Gaza Strip on Thursday, on a day when Israel intensified its attacks.(PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT NELSON/WORLD PICTURE NETWORK, FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

An Israeli attack on Thursday on a United Nations agency in Gaza City destroyed a warehouse full of food and medicine. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KHALED HASAN/BLOOMBERG NEWS)(A12)

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Weighing Crimes and Ethics In the Fog of Urban Warfare*

The New York Times  
January 17, 2009 Saturday  
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2009 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 3194 words

**Byline:** By STEVEN ERLANGER; Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza, and Sabrina Tavernise from Jerusalem.

**Dateline:** JERUSALEM

### **Body**

---

Your unit, on the edges of the northern Gaza town of Jabaliya, has taken mortar fire from the crowded refugee camp nearby. You prepare to return fire, and perhaps you notice -- or perhaps you don't, even though it's on your map -- that there is a United Nations school just there, full of displaced Gazans. You know that international law allows you to protect your soldiers and return fire, but also demands that you ensure that there is no excessive harm to civilians. Do you remember all that in the chaos?

You pick GPS-guided mortars, which are supposed to be accurate and of a specific explosive force, and fire back. In the end, you kill some **Hamas** fighters but also, the United Nations says, more than 40 civilians, some of them children.

Have you committed a war crime?

Whatever the military and political results of Israel's 21-day war against **Hamas** in Gaza, Israel is again facing serious accusations and anguished questioning over the legality of its military conduct. As in Israel's 2006 war against Hezbollah in Lebanon, the popular perception abroad of how Israel fights, and hence of Israelis, may prove to be more lasting than any strategic gains or losses.

The televised images of devastation in the crowded Gaza Strip and the large asymmetry in deaths, especially of civilians, have created an uproar in the Arab world and the West reminiscent of 2006.

A plethora of Western foreign ministers, United Nations officials and human rights groups, both Israeli and foreign, have expressed shock and disgust; some have called for investigations into possible war crimes. Such groups also say **Hamas** is clearly violating the rules of war.

More than 1,100 Palestinians have died in Gaza, according to the **Hamas**-run Ministry of Health, which estimates that 40 percent are **women** and children under 18. Israel estimates that only a quarter of the dead are civilians. Israel, which has suffered 13 dead, 3 of them civilian, is being accused of a disproportionate use of force. Death tolls in warfare may carry a moral weight, but not a legal one.

Question of Proportionality

## Weighing Crimes and Ethics In the Fog of Urban Warfare

Under international law, proportionality is defined as a question of judgment, not of numbers: Is the potential risk to civilians excessive in relationship to the anticipated military advantage? That puts the weight on military advantage, since civilian risk is a given and must only not be "excessive." Even if the target is legitimate, was the right weapon used to try to minimize civilian damage? The key is the expected damage the commander anticipated from the use of a certain weapon, and not what actually happened when it was fired.

The other key legal principle is discrimination: has a military struggled hard enough to hit only military targets and combatants, while trying to avoid purely civilian targets and noncombatants?

Deciding requires an investigation into battlefield circumstances that cannot be carried out while the fighting rages, and such judgments are especially difficult in urban guerrilla warfare, when fighters like Hamas live among the civilian population and take shelter there. While Israel is the focus of most criticism, legal experts agree that Hamas, a radical Islamic group classified by the United States and Europe as terrorist, violates international law.

Shooting rockets out of Gaza aimed at Israeli cities and civilians is an obvious violation of the principle of discrimination and fits the classic definition of terrorism. Hamas fighters are also putting civilians at undue risk by storing weapons among them, including in mosques, schools and allegedly hospitals, too, making them potential military targets. While urban and guerrilla warfare is not illegal, by fighting in the midst of civilians, often in civilian clothing, Hamas may also bring risk to noncombatants.

But Hamas's violations tend to be treated as a given and criticized as an afterthought, Israeli spokesmen and officials say. They say that Israel has never sought to hit civilians, medical workers or United Nations facilities or personnel. "The rules of engagement are very clear," said Mark Regev, the government spokesman. "Not to target civilians, not to target U.N. people, not to target medical staff. All this is very clear in Israeli military doctrine."

Asa Kasher, 69, has a chair in ethics at Tel Aviv University and helped write the Israeli military's ethical code. He still teaches in the army's College of Command and General Staff.

He said that the Israeli Army's ethical and legal standards were high and that he believed they were conscientiously taught to its military. But as for what happens on the ground, he said, "I have a general confidence in their attitudes and decency, but who knows?"

A senior lawyer for the United Nations, who was authorized to speak only if she remained anonymous, agreed that the Israeli code was excellent, but said that the military was not doing enough to protect neutrals or to provide havens for civilians. "A proper weighing of proportionality on the battlefield is just not happening as it should," she said.

Israel's chief army legal officer, whose name cannot be published under censorship rules, called the charges "deeply unfair and unjust," and spoke of the horrible realities of war and compared Israel's behavior favorably to that of the American military in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo.

The most intense criticism of Israel's behavior has centered on how it has conducted the war and weighed risks to civilians, access of medical personnel to the wounded and provision of vital supplies to civilians in Gaza who cannot escape the sealed territory. A few events encapsulate the arguments and are fiercely disputed.

### The Fakhura School

One of the touchstones of the war so far has been the fate of a group of Palestinian civilians fleeing the fighting who were lining up to enter a United Nations school. They were killed on Jan. 6 in an exchange of mortar fire between Hamas fighters and Israeli troops. The facts are disputed; John Ging, the Gaza director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, said that 43 people died and that no militants fired from inside the school grounds or were harbored there. The Israeli military first said that it had returned fire at a Hamas mortar team inside the school and killed two fighters. Then the army briefed diplomats to say that the Hamas men were firing next to the school, and that one mortar shell, equipped with a guidance system, had gone off target. But after completing its initial inquiry, the army now has returned to its first version -- that Hamas militants fired from inside the school



## Weighing Crimes and Ethics In the Fog of Urban Warfare

compound. The army has also questioned the figure of 43 dead, saying that it was manipulated by Hamas and is too high, given the limited explosive power of a mortar shell.

The director of the Palestinian human rights group Al-Haq, Shawan Jabarin, said in an interview that the Israelis knew that the school was sheltering civilians.

"While they did not attack the school directly, they have to take into account civilians there. Because they didn't take that into account, and they knew the shells would fragment, they didn't take care with civilian lives," he said. "They bear the responsibility. Under international law, if you don't take all measures to respect civilians, you bear responsibility."

Witnesses, including Hanan Abu Khajib, 39, said that Hamas fired just outside the school compound, probably from the secluded courtyard of a house across the street, 25 yards from the school. Israeli return fire, some minutes later, also landed outside the school, along the southwest wall, killing two Hamas fighters. Nearly all the casualties were in the street outside the compound, with only three people wounded from shrapnel inside the walls.

The United Nations relief agency takes great care not to harbor militants in its buildings in order to protect civilians and their children, said the agency's spokesman, Christopher Gunness. The agency normally deals with as much as half of Gaza's population of 1.5 million, and it is eager to make clear that its workers are neutral and not to be fired upon.

Mr. Gunness and other agency officials say that they do not want to get into a fight with Israel over allegations of war crimes, though they stress that they had provided the map coordinates of all agency schools, shelters and buildings to the Israeli military. But they are troubled by regular Israeli allegations, most recently by the Foreign Ministry and by Avi Dichter, Israel's minister of public security and former head of the Shin Bet counterterrorism agency, that the agency has been infiltrated by Hamas partisans and fighters, which may, Mr. Gunness said, lead young Israeli soldiers to believe that the agency is a justifiable target.

Israel, too, has tried to avoid a public fight with the agency, sending a senior Defense Ministry official to express his regrets for the death of an agency driver -- whose killing the United Nations attributed to Israel but Israel denied it -- and to say that Israel appreciates the work the agency does in Gaza, diplomats and Israeli officials said.

But the legal question of war crimes is different.

First, if Hamas fired from inside or even next to the United Nations school, knowing that it was an agency building and thus trying to use its neutrality for protection, endangering civilians, then the Hamas fighters are potentially guilty of a crime, according to B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights group. They also, by firing, turned the place from which they fired into a legitimate military target -- as mosques became legitimate targets because Hamas stored large caches of rockets and weaponry inside them.

Investigators would then have to decide if Israeli troops fired back with appropriate weapons, and with the appropriate balancing of military benefit for the entire operation against potential civilian harm.

"The important issue is how the Israeli forces balanced the military benefit of hitting the target with the expected collateral damage to civilians," said the Israeli army chief legal officer. "As I understand it, I don't think they expected this number of casualties. When you look at mortar fire, you don't expect 43 casualties -- if in fact there were 43 casualties. We think a wall collapsed or there was another explosion. It's not clear."

The Israeli mortars had GPS guidance, the army said. But a commander must also consider the probability that it might miss. "If it is rare to go off target, then it's not something you have to take into account," the legal officer said. "But I don't know how much the soldiers were aware of who was inside the building -- maybe they should have known better, but getting information to forces in a firefight on the ground is a problem. But if the firing was from outside and they didn't expect the building to be hit, then that affects the judgment."

## Weighing Crimes and Ethics In the Fog of Urban Warfare

There is a "field debriefing" going on, the officer said. But it is not clear when the investigation will be completed or whether it will be made public. Usually field investigations are internal, with only conclusions revealed, unlike criminal investigations and courts-martial.

## The Samouni Clan

The Israeli ground invasion began Jan. 3, and in the early hours of Jan. 4, the International Committee of the Red Cross began hearing of a large clan, the Samounis, who were wounded and trapped by the fierce fighting around Zeitoun, in eastern Gaza City. The Red Cross began asking the Israeli Army for access to the wounded.

The Samouni clan said it was moved by Israeli soldiers from house to house, but the Israeli military denies it. The last house was shelled, and some 30 members of the extended family died, raising the question of whether the Israeli Army targeted a house where it knew refugees were sheltering. The Red Cross was not granted access to the area to reach the Samounis and others until Jan. 7, when four children were found emaciated, next to their dead mothers.

It was not clear why the house was shelled, but Maj. Jacob Dallal of the Israeli Army said an investigation showed that no specific buildings in Zeitoun had been chosen as targets that day, and that the army only heard later about the family's plight. He said that an inquiry showed that the army had not moved the Samouni family from house to house, though they may have done so themselves in response to Israeli calls to leave the battlefield.

The Red Cross, which normally works quietly, issued a rare public statement rebuking Israel, charging that the Israeli military had failed to meet its obligation under international humanitarian law to care for and evacuate the wounded in a timely way.

Anne-Sophie Bonefeld, a Red Cross spokeswoman based in Jerusalem, said, "We were really, really shocked by the delay." The aim of going public, she said, "was to try to ensure that we never have such a situation again."

The Red Cross statement also shocked the Israelis, who work well with the Red Cross and trust it, Mr. Regev said. "We found it very troubling, because we take them very seriously," he said. "It is incumbent on us in difficult situations to help the I.C.R.C. to do its job."

Maj. Peter Lerner, spokesman for the Defense Ministry's coordination office for Gaza, said that access to the battlefield "is severely influenced by the combat going on," adding that "tactical coordination was there from the start and worked in many cases, and sometimes due to intense fighting it didn't work as well."

But Israel then moved to set up an additional special joint operations room with the main humanitarian agencies near Tel Aviv.

**Hamas** has misused ambulances and Red Crescent and United Nations symbols in the past and is doing so during this conflict, Major Lerner charged.

"We've had gunmen coming out of ambulances and taking up positions here in the last week; my people saw it," he said. "So of course this makes the troops in the field very wary about any vehicles approaching them, and why coordination has to be from the top to the very bottom, all the way down the line to the unit in the field."

The army's chief lawyer said about the Samounis: "There was at no stage a policy to not take care of the wounded. We're trying to improve coordination. But there can be no high intensity fighting in such a densely populated place without mistakes. I'm sure there are mistakes."

Since then, the Red Cross has noted improvements, even praising Israel for trying to avoid civilian casualties and provide humanitarian assistance in a briefing for Europeans in Tel Aviv, according to a European diplomat who attended the briefing.

## Weighing Crimes and Ethics In the Fog of Urban Warfare

Pierre Wettach, head of the organization in Israel and the Palestinian territories, said of the Israel Defense Forces in an interview: "I believe there is a true concern on the part of the I.D.F. to address these things, which are extremely complicated to organize."

### Targets Challenged

Human rights groups are also troubled by Israel's strikes on buildings they believe should be classified as civilian, like the parliament, police stations and the presidential palace.

"Some of the targets are government offices of Hamas and the civilian authorities," said Jessica Montell of B'Tselem. Unless used for military purposes, she said, "these are not legitimate targets," and added, "we have suspicions that the I.D.F. does not respect these regulations."

The army attacked "both aspects of Hamas -- its resistance or military wing and its dawa, or social wing," a senior intelligence officer said. He argued that Hamas was all of a piece and in a war, its instruments of political and social control were as legitimate a target as its rocket caches. Since June 2007 and the Hamas takeover of Gaza in a brief war with its secular rival Fatah, both Israel and Egypt have tried to seal the territory. But there has been an active smuggling trade through tunnels from Egypt, and a year ago, Hamas blew open the Egyptian border, letting Gazans go to Egypt and shop for food, cooking oil, medicines, refrigerators and the like. But Hamas also used the open border to smuggle in large rockets and other weapons, Israeli officials say.

To try to stop rocket attacks from Gaza, Israel halted normal trade with Gaza and kept it on a much reduced diet for electricity, gasoline, diesel and cooking oil, wheat flour and many other items. The idea was a form of economic sanction, Mr. Regev, the government spokesman, said, a reminder that Israel would not let life be normal under Hamas.

But many human rights groups banded together to sue the government in the Supreme Court, alleging violation of international law and "collective punishment of civilians." The Israeli government argued that there was no humanitarian crisis in Gaza, that basic necessities were provided -- using the United Nations' figure for the minimum calories required daily for subsistence -- and the court generally agreed. But the rockets did not stop.

The effective closure continued through a six-month cease-fire with Hamas that ended last month, and the shortage of diesel oil for Gaza's only power generator, for example, meant many hours a day without electricity. That put a strain on hospitals, generators and on the water supply and sewage system, which depend on electric pumps.

Nine Israeli human rights groups charged that the fighting had caused a crisis in the health and sanitation systems and have petitioned the Supreme Court again.

Sari Bashi, of the human rights group Gisha, said the current lack of electricity had limited the access to potable water to more than 500,000 people; she said that there was sewage in the streets and that hospitals were running on generators missing spare parts. Ms. Montell of B'Tselem said that even though Israel pulled out of Gaza in 2005, "there is no legal vacuum" and it retains responsibility for basic needs and trade. "The argument that it's collective punishment of civilians I find very compelling," she said.

### Replacement for Sanctions

But since the war began, fighting has replaced sanctions as a means for stopping the rockets, Mr. Regev said.

Philippe Lazzarini, head of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said that since the war started, "The number of trucks Israel has allowed into Gaza is much higher than during the blockade." But he laughed and said, "Anything seems like a big increase when you compare it to practically nothing." Major Dallal said that "people lose sight of the context of a war zone in a densely populated area, where every time a door is pulled open, a soldier wonders who is behind it."

## Weighing Crimes and Ethics In the Fog of Urban Warfare

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights said the Israeli military had acted with "total disregard for the lives of Palestinian civilians."

Major Dallal, however, said the fundamental question, and not just for Israel, was, "How does an army fight a terrorist group?"

"If we," he added, meaning the world, "just see the pictures and don't use our heads, then the terrorists will always win these public opinion battles."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

## Graphic

---

PHOTOS: AFTER THE STRIKE: Women inspected a house damaged Jan. 6 by an Israeli bombing near a United Nations school.

(PHOTOGRAPH BY ABID KATIB/GETTY IMAGES)

SHOW OF GRIEF: Men carried the bodies of three toddlers on Jan. 5. They had been killed in an airstrike, Palestinian medical officials said.

(PHOTOGRAPH BY HATEM MOUSSA/ASSOCIATED PRESS)(pg. A8)

**Load-Date:** January 17, 2009

## *Fatah force could be deployed on Gaza border*

The Irish Times

February 2, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The Irish Times All Rights Reserved

**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 11

**Length:** 551 words

### **Body**

---

Israel says it will consider any agreement between Fatah and **Hamas** as both factions prepare to meet in Cairo, writes **Michael Jansen**

A **HAMAS** delegation is scheduled to arrive in Cairo today for discussions on a one-year ceasefire with Israel. **Hamas** has reportedly agreed to the deployment along Gaza's border crossings of forces under the control of Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas, who heads the rival Fatah faction. These forces will co-ordinate their activities with **Hamas**.

Israel has reportedly agreed to consider any arrangement the two parties reach. Abbas cancelled a trip to the Czech Republic to travel to Cairo to finalise terms.

Movement towards accommodation on the ceasefire, was, however, contradicted by a claim of responsibility issued yesterday by Fatah's military wing, al-Aqsa Brigades, for the firing of three rockets into southern Israel.

Palestinian sources say sporadic rocket and mortar fire is a consequence of the power struggle in Strip. Although **Hamas** secured the agreement of all factions except Fatah's al-Aqsa Brigades ahead of proclaiming a unilateral ceasefire on January 18th, some smaller groups have also been involved in the 30-odd rocket and mortar firings since the truce was declared.

Smaller factions seek to sustain pressure on Israel to lift the siege and blockade of Gaza. But analysts say al-Aqsa could be violating the ceasefire to invite Israeli retaliation. This would exert pressure on **Hamas** to capitulate to Fatah's demands ahead of reunification negotiations set for February 22nd.

The people of Gaza are alarmed by the deterioration of the ceasefire and fear the resumption of Israeli air, land and sea attacks. Most believe they have already suffered enough and lost too much to be subjected to another Israeli onslaught.

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) published figures on losses during the 23-day Israeli offensive.

The PCHR, which is supported by Trócaire and Front Line, said 1,285 Palestinians died, 82.6 per cent of them civilians. Of the 1,062 non-combatants, 895 were civilians and 167 were civilian police, 281 were children and 111 **women**. There were 4,336 wounded, 1,133 of them children.

Some 2,400 homes were completely destroyed; 490 targeted by air strikes.

## Fatah force could be deployed on Gaza border

Twenty-eight public buildings housing ministries, municipal offices, governorates, and parliament and 60 police stations were destroyed.

Twenty-nine educational institutions were destroyed or damaged. Thirty mosques were destroyed and 15 damaged; the offices of 10 charitable societies were devastated. Five cement factories were destroyed as were juice and ice cream plants; buildings housing health and media offices were destroyed; 21 private restaurants, wedding halls, tourist resorts and hotels were wrecked. The fishing harbour was bombed and Gaza's farmland was razed.

Other sources estimate that 60,000-75,000 dunums of Gaza's 175,000 dunums (44,000 acres) of agricultural land were put out of production; 13,000 farming families lost their livelihood. The Strip's food output fell from 50 per cent to 25 per cent of consumption. Israel laid waste to the World Bank-funded sewage treatment plant and the industrial estate where Palestinian workers once produced goods for the Israeli market. Electricity installations, water pumps and pipes were destroyed.

**Load-Date:** February 2, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Israel does not really want peace*

The Mercury (South Africa)

January 19, 2009 Monday

e1 Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent News and Media Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7

**Length:** 306 words

### **Body**

---

The view given by the Israeli ambassador to South Africa, Segev Steinberg (The Mercury, January 9), cannot go unchallenged.

The main reason for the "Islamic fanatics" causing inexcusable mayhem in the world is mainly the result of the barbaric actions of Israel, supported by the US, over 60 years on a defenceless, captive, population of Palestine. Israel's despicable actions in Gaza will worsen this attitude, rather than help the war on terror.

Palestinians have the same basic rights as citizens in the rest of the world, which Israel repeatedly denies. The whole of Palestine has lived in fear of Israel for the past 60 years.

Israel kills Palestinian women and children in their own homes. Any Palestinian leader that disagrees with Israel gets killed.

The reason why Hamas became radical is because of the high handed, violent and barbaric attitude of Israel. Israel wants all of Palestine. It is terrorising and provoking the Palestinians so they either get killed or leave. There are five million Palestinian refugees all over the world.

Hamas won a democratic election in Palestine. Israel, the US and other Western countries refused to allow Hamas to govern. Hamas's humanitarian and welfare work is well documented by humanitarian agencies.

"Every year, the United Nations General Assembly votes on a resolution entitled 'Peaceful settlement of the Palestine Question'. And every year the vote is the same: it's the whole world on one side; Israel, the United States and some South Sea atolls and Australia on the other side. The vote this past year was 164 to 7." (Norman Finkelstein). Israel does not want peace.

Israel negotiates with a heavy foot on the throats of Palestinians. If they retaliate, they get blamed, then either terrorised or killed.

The world will be a better place if Israel genuinely wants peace.

F Haffejee

Sydenham

Israel does not really want peace

**Load-Date:** January 18, 2009

---

End of Document



**Carnage in Gaza: Is it a war crime?; Both sides in the conflict accused of putting civilians at undue risk**

The International Herald Tribune

January 17, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 International Herald Tribune All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 1

**Length:** 3129 words

**Byline:** Steven Erlanger - The New York Times Media Group

**Dateline:** JERUSALEM

## **Body**

---

Reporting was contributed by Taghreed El-Khodary from Gaza and Sabrina Tavernise from Jerusalem.

\*

Your unit, on the edges of Jabaliya, has taken mortar fire from the crowded refugee camp nearby. You plot the launch and go to return fire, and perhaps you notice - or perhaps you don't, even though it's on your map - that there is a United Nations school just there, full of internally displaced Gazans. You know that international law allows you to protect your soldiers and return fire, but also demands that you ensure that there is no excessive harm to civilians. Do you remember all that in the panic?

You pick GPS-guided mortars, which are supposed to be accurate and of a specific explosive force, and fire back. In the end, you kill some of the **Hamas** fighters, but also, the United Nations says, more than 40 civilians, some of them children. Have you committed a war crime?

Whatever the military and political results of Israel's three-week-old war against **Hamas** in Gaza, Israel is again facing serious accusations and anguished questioning over the legality of its military conduct. As in Israel's 2006 war against Hezbollah, the perception abroad of how Israel fights, and hence of Israelis, may prove to be more lasting than any strategic gains or losses.

The photographs of devastation in crowded Gaza and the large asymmetry in deaths, especially of civilians, have created an uproar in the Arab world and the West reminiscent of 2006.

A plethora of Western foreign ministers, United Nations officials and human rights groups, both Israeli and foreign, have expressed shock and disgust. Human Rights Watch and Israel's B'Tselem have called for investigations into possible war crimes. Such groups also say **Hamas** is clearly violating the rules of war.

More than 1,100 Palestinians have died in Gaza, the **Hamas**-run Ministry of Health says, which estimates that 40 percent were **women** and children under 18. Israel contends that only a quarter of the dead were civilians. Israel, which has suffered 13 dead, 3 of them civilians, has been accused of a disproportionate use of force.

Death tolls in warfare may carry a moral weight, but not a legal one.

## Carnage in Gaza: Is it a war crime? Both sides in the conflict accused of putting civilians at undue risk

Under international law, proportionality is defined as a question of judgment, not of numbers: Is the potential risk to civilians excessive in relationship to the anticipated military advantage? That puts the weight on military advantage, since civilian risk is a given and must only not be "excessive." Even if the target is legitimate, was the right weapon used to try to minimize civilian damage? The key is the expected damage the commander anticipated from the use of a certain weapon, and not what actually happened when it was fired.

The other key legal principle is "discrimination" - has a military struggled hard enough to hit only military targets and combatants, while trying to avoid purely civilian targets and noncombatants?

Deciding requires an investigation into battlefield circumstances that cannot be carried out while the fighting rages, and such judgments are especially difficult in urban guerrilla warfare, when fighters like Hamas live among the civilian population and take shelter there. While Israel is the focus of most criticism, legal experts agree that Hamas, a semi-state, radical Islamic group, is guilty.

Shooting rockets out of Gaza aimed at Israeli cities and civilians is an obvious violation of the principle of discrimination and fits the classic definition of terrorism. Hamas fighters are also putting civilians at undue risk by storing weapons among them, in mosques, schools and, the Israelis say, hospitals, making them potential military targets. While urban and guerrilla warfare is not illegal, by fighting in the midst of civilians, often in civilian clothing, Hamas may also bring unnecessary risk to noncombatants.

But Hamas's violations tend to be treated as a given and criticized as an afterthought, Israeli spokesmen and officials assert. They insist that Israel has never targeted civilians, medical workers or United Nations facilities or personnel.

"The rules of engagement are very clear," said Mark Regev, the spokesman for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. "Not to target civilians, not to target UN people, not to target medical staff. All this is very clear in Israeli military doctrine."

Asa Kasher, 69, has a chair in professional ethics at Tel Aviv University and helped write the Israeli military's ethical code. He still teaches in the army's College of Command and General Staff.

He said that he believes the Israeli Army's ethical and legal standards are high and that they are conscientiously taught to its military. But as for what happens on the ground, he said, "I have a general confidence in their attitudes and decency, but who knows?"

A senior lawyer for the United Nations, who was authorized to speak only if he remained anonymous, agreed that the Israeli code was excellent, but said that the military was not doing enough to protect neutrals or to provide safe havens for civilians. "A proper weighing of proportionality on the battlefield is just not happening as it should," the lawyer said.

Israel's chief army legal officer, whose name cannot be published under censorship rules, called the charges "deeply unfair and unjust," spoke of the horrible realities of war, and compared Israel's behavior favorably with that of the U.S. military in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo.

The most intense criticism of Israel's behavior has centered on how it has conducted the war, access of medical personnel to the wounded and access of vital supplies to civilians in Gaza who cannot escape the sealed territory. A few incidents encapsulate the arguments and are fiercely disputed.

\*

### Al Fakhura School

One of the touchstones of the war so far has been the fate of Palestinian civilians fleeing the fighting who were lining up to enter a UN school. They were killed by Israeli mortar fire. The Israelis said militants had fired mortars at Israeli soldiers from near the school.

## Carnage in Gaza: Is it a war crime? Both sides in the conflict accused of putting civilians at undue risk

But John Ging, director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, said that 43 people died and that no militants fired from inside the school grounds or were harbored there. The Palestinian Center for Human Rights, [www.pchrgaza.org](http://www.pchrgaza.org), called the shelling of the Fakhura school "another horrible crime" of many committed by the Israeli Army acting "with total disregard for the lives of Palestinian civilians."

The Israeli Army first said that it had returned fire at a **Hamas** mortar team inside the school and killed two fighters. Then the army briefed diplomats to say that the **Hamas** men were firing next to the school, and that one mortar, equipped with a guidance system, had gone off target. But after completing an initial inquiry, the army now has returned to its first version - **Hamas** militants fired from inside the school compound. The army has also questioned the figure of 43 dead, saying that it was manipulated by **Hamas** and is too high, given the explosive power of a mortar.

The director of the Palestinian human rights group Al-Haq, [www.alhaq.org](http://www.alhaq.org), Shawan Jabarin, said in an interview that the Israelis knew that the school was sheltering civilians.

"While they did not attack the school directly, they have to take into account civilians there. Because they didn't take that into account, and they knew the shells would fragment, they didn't take care with civilian lives. They bear the responsibility. Under international law, if you don't take all measures to respect civilians, you bear responsibility."

Witnesses who spoke to The New York Times, including Hanan Abu Khajib, 39, said that **Hamas** fired from just outside the school compound, probably from a secluded courtyard of a house across the street, 25 meters from the school. Israeli return-fire, some minutes later, landed outside the school, along the southwest wall, killing two **Hamas** fighters. Nearly all the casualties were in the street outside the compound, with only three people wounded from shrapnel inside the walls.

The United Nations relief agency takes great care not to harbor militants in its buildings to protect civilians and their children, said its spokesman, Christopher Gunness. The agency normally deals with as much as half of Gaza's population of 1.5 million, and it is eager to make clear that its workers are neutral and not to be fired upon.

Gunness and other agency officials say they do not want to get into a fight with Israel over allegations of war crimes, though they stress that they had provided the map coordinates of all agency schools, shelters and buildings to the Israeli military. But they are troubled by regular Israeli allegations, mostly recently by the Foreign Ministry and by Avi Dichter, Israel's minister of public security and former head of the Shin Bet counterterrorism agency, that the agency is "infected" with **Hamas** partisans and fighters, which may, Gunness said, lead young Israeli soldiers to believe that the agency is a justifiable target.

Israel, too, has tried to avoid a public fight with the agency, sending a senior Defense Ministry official to express his regrets for the death of an agency driver - whose killing the United Nations blames on Israel but Israel denies - and to say that Israel appreciates the work the agency does in Gaza, diplomats and Israeli officials said.

But the legal question of war crimes is different. First, if **Hamas** fired from inside or even next to the school, knowing that it was an agency building and thus trying to use its neutrality for protection, endangering civilians, then the **Hamas** fighters are potentially guilty of a crime, said Fred Abrahams, senior researcher for Human Rights Watch. They also, by firing, turned the place from which they fired into a legitimate military target - as mosques became legitimate targets if **Hamas** stored large caches of rockets and weaponry inside.

Investigators would then have to decide whether Israeli troops fired back with appropriate weapons, and with the appropriate balancing of military benefit for the entire operation against potential civilian harm.

"The important issue is how the Israeli forces balanced the military benefit of hitting the target with the expected collateral damage to civilians," said the Israeli chief legal officer. "As I understand it, I don't think they expected this number of casualties. When you look at mortar fire, you don't expect 43 casualties - if in fact there were 43 casualties. We think a wall collapsed or there was another explosion. It's not clear."

## Carnage in Gaza: Is it a war crime? Both sides in the conflict accused of putting civilians at undue risk

The Israeli mortars had GPS guidance, the army said. But a commander must also consider the probability that one might miss.

"If it is rare to go off-target, then it's not something you have to take into account," the officer said. "But I don't know how much the soldiers were aware of who was inside the building. Maybe they should have known better, but getting information to forces in a firefight on the ground is a problem. But if the firing was from outside and they didn't expect the building to be hit, then that affects the judgment."

There is a "field debriefing" going on, the officer said. But it is not clear when the investigation will be completed or whether it will be made public. Usually field investigations are internal, with only conclusions revealed, unlike criminal investigations and courts-martial.

\*

### The Samouni Family

The Israeli ground invasion began Jan. 3 and in the early hours of Jan. 4, the International Committee of the Red Cross began hearing of a large clan, the Samounis, who were wounded and trapped by the fierce fighting around Zeitoun, in eastern Gaza City. The Red Cross began asking the Israeli Army for access to the wounded.

The Samouni clan said that it was moved by Israeli soldiers from house to house for protection. The last house was shelled and about 30 members of the family died, raising the question of whether the Israeli Army targeted a house where it knew refugees were sheltering. The Red Cross was not granted access to the area to reach the Samounis and others until Jan. 7, when four children were found, emaciated, next to their dead mothers.

It was not clear why the house was shelled, but Major Jacob Dallal of the Israeli Army said an investigation showed that no specific buildings had been targeted in Zeitoun that day, and that the army heard only later about the family's plight. He said that an inquiry showed that the army had not moved the Samouni family from house to house, though they may have done so themselves in response to Israeli calls to leave the battlefield.

The Red Cross, which normally works quietly, issued a rare public statement rebuking Israel, charging that the military had failed to meet its obligation under international humanitarian law to care for and evacuate the wounded in a timely way.

Anne-Sophie Bonefeld, a Red Cross spokeswoman, said that "we were really, really shocked by the delay." The aim of going public, she said, "was to try to ensure that we never have such a situation again."

The statement also shocked the Israelis, who work well with the Red Cross and trust it, said Regev, the government spokesman. "We found it very troubling, because we take them very seriously," he said. "It is incumbent on us in difficult situations to help the ICRC to do its job."

Major Peter Lerner, spokesman for the Defense Ministry's coordination office for Gaza, said that access to the battlefield "is severely influenced by the combat going on," adding that "tactical coordination was there from the start and worked in many cases, and sometimes due to intense fighting it didn't work as well."

But Israel then moved to set up an additional special joint-operations room with the main humanitarian agencies near Tel Aviv.

Israel says **Hamas** has misused ambulances and Red Crescent and UN symbols in the past and is doing so during this conflict, Lerner charged.

"We've had gunmen coming out of ambulances and taking up positions here in the last week - my people saw it," he said. "So of course this makes the troops in the field very wary about any vehicles approaching them, and why coordination has to be from the top to the very bottom, all the way down the line to the unit in the field."

## Carnage in Gaza: Is it a war crime? Both sides in the conflict accused of putting civilians at undue risk

The army's chief lawyer said about the Samounis: "There was at no stage a policy to not take care of the wounded. We're trying to improve coordination. But there can be no high-intensity fighting in such a densely populated place without mistakes. I'm sure there are mistakes."

Since then, the Red Cross has noted improvement, even praising Israel for trying to avoid civilian casualties and provide humanitarian assistance in a briefing for Europeans in Tel Aviv, according to a European diplomat who attended the briefing.

Pierre Wettach, head of the organization in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, said in an interview: "I believe there is a true concern on the part of the IDF to address these things, which are extremely complicated to organize."

Human rights groups are also troubled by Israel's targeting of buildings they believe should be classified as civilian, such as the Parliament, police stations and the presidential palace.

"Some of the targets are government offices of Hamas and the civilian authorities," said Jessica Montell of B'Tselem. Unless used for military purposes, she said, "these are not legitimate targets," and added, "We have suspicions that the IDF does not respect these regulations."

The army attacked "both aspects of Hamas - its resistance or military wing and its *dawa*, or social wing," a senior intelligence officer said. He argued that Hamas is all of a piece and that in a war its instruments of political and social control were as legitimate a target as its rocket caches.

\*

### The Closure

Since June 2007 and the Hamas takeover of Gaza in a brief war with Fatah, both Israel and Egypt have tried to seal the territory. There has been an active smuggling trade through tunnels from Egypt, and a year ago Hamas blew open the Egyptian border, letting Gazans go to Egypt and shop for food, cooking oil, medicines, refrigerators and the like. But Hamas also used the open border to smuggle in large rockets and other weapons, Israeli officials say.

To try to stop rocket-firing from Gaza, Israel halted normal trade with Gaza and kept it on a much-reduced diet for electricity, gasoline, diesel oil, cooking oil, wheat flour and many other items. The idea was a form of economic sanction, Regev said, a reminder that Israel would not let life be normal under Hamas.

But many human rights groups banded together to sue the army in the Supreme Court, alleging violation of international law and "collective punishment of civilians."

The government argued that there was no humanitarian crisis in Gaza, that basic necessities were provided - the United Nations' figure for the minimum calories required daily for subsistence - and the court generally agreed. But the rockets did not stop.

The effective closure continued through the six-month cease-fire with Hamas that ended last month, and the shortage of diesel oil for Gaza's only power generator, for example, meant many hours a day without power.

That put a strain on hospitals and generators and on the water supply and sewage systems, which depend on electric pumps.

Nine Israeli human-rights groups charged that the fighting had caused a crisis in the health and sanitation systems and have petitioned the Supreme Court again.

Now, said Sari Bashi of the human rights group Gisha, with so little electricity, more than 500,000 people have no access to potable water, there is sewage in the streets and hospitals are running on generators, missing spare parts.

Carnage in Gaza: Is it a war crime? Both sides in the conflict accused of putting civilians at undue risk

Montell of B'Tselem said that even though Israel has withdrawn from Gaza, "there is no legal vacuum" and it retains responsibility for basic needs and trade.

"The argument that it's collective punishment of civilians I find very compelling," she said.

But since the war began, fighting has replaced sanctions as a means of stopping the rockets, Regev said.

Dallal, the army major, said that "people lose sight of the context of a war zone in a densely populated area, where every time a door is pulled open, a soldier wonders who is behind it."

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights, [www.pchrgaza.org](http://www.pchrgaza.org), said the Israeli military has acted with "total disregard for the lives of Palestinian civilians, considering them a form of collective punishment against the Palestinian civilian population."

But Dallal, the army major, said the fundamental question, and not just for Israel, was "how does an army fight a terrorist group?"

"If we," he added, meaning the world, "just see the pictures and don't use our heads, then the terrorists will always win these public opinion battles."

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2009

## *Israel challenges Palestinian claims*

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

March 27, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

**Length:** 463 words

**Byline:** Steve Weizman Associated Press

### **Body**

---

JERUSALEM ? The Israeli military on Thursday disputed Palestinian claims that most of the people killed in the recent Gaza Strip war were civilians, claiming the "vast majority" of the dead were **Hamas** militants. Israel says the three-week offensive was aimed solely at **Hamas** militants, while Palestinians say hundreds of people were killed by an overwhelming show of force that showed little regard for civilians.

Maj. Avital Leibovich, an army spokeswoman, said Thursday that the military had completed an investigation and determined that a total of 1,166 Palestinians were killed in the operation. It found that 709 were **Hamas** militants, while 295 were civilians, including 89 minors and 49 **women**. It was unclear whether another 162 men who died were militants or civilians. The figures clashed with numbers released last week by the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, which said 1,417 people were killed, including more than 900 civilians. Its toll included the names and ages of all of the dead. The Israeli military said it also had a list of names, but the army did not provide it to reporters. The Palestinian center Thursday called the Israeli report "a deliberately manipulative attempt to distort the reality of the offensive and to disguise Israel's illegal actions." It said, for instance, that Israel wrongly classified 255 "noncombatant" police officers killed at the outset of the war as militants. The heavy civilian death toll caused an international outcry and fueled calls from human rights groups for a war crimes investigation against Israel. An Israeli military school's publication last week of soldiers' accounts of wanton destruction and slack rules of engagement that may have caused unnecessary civilian deaths has added to the uproar. The military's report was unlikely to resolve the debate over the death toll, although Leibovich said the army's information was "checked, crisscrossed and double-checked with the different intelligence bodies in Israel." When asked to explain the discrepancy, she said "you have to ask your Palestinian sources" and acknowledged it was not a precise science. "We are receiving different information from different sources, the majority of which is not based on hard evidence," she said. "I can tell you for a fact that our information is checked according to different intelligence organizations and Palestinian authorities and these are the right figures." Israel waged the war in Gaza in an attempt to weaken **Hamas**, which it considers a terrorist group, and halt persistent rocket fire from Gaza on Israeli border towns. Israel blames **Hamas** for the heavy civilian casualties, saying the group launches attacks from schools and residential areas and uses civilians as "human shields" to deter Israeli attacks.

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2009

## **Gaza toll put at 1134 Palestinians**

Weekend Australian

February 14, 2009 Saturday

1 - All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 15

**Length:** 202 words

### **Body**

---

JERUSALEM: Israeli intelligence agencies have concluded that 1134 Palestinians were killed in the fighting between Israel and **Hamas** in Gaza last month. The toll was slightly down on the figure issued by the Palestinian Ministry of Health -- 1314 dead -- which itself differed slightly from the figure of 1284 issued by the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights.

Israel intelligence was able to identify most of the dead by age, gender and, where appropriate, affiliation with militant groups. It identified 673 of the dead as active members of **Hamas** and other militant groups in Gaza.

It also identified 288 civilians killed, including **women** and children up to the age of 16 -- about 25 per cent of the total dead. It was still trying to identify 173 others, including men of arms-bearing age.

The percentage of Palestinian civilians, particularly children, among the casualties was a feature of reporting from Gaza during the 23-day war.

Palestinian officials and non-Palestinian human rights agencies accused Israel of war crimes or, at best, excessive use of force.

Israel, in turn, accused **Hamas** of using the civilian population of Gaza as human shields, deliberately firing on Israelis from within populated areas.

**Load-Date:** February 13, 2009



## **Angry over Gaza, Turkey storms out of Davos forum**

Charleston Gazette (West Virginia)

February 4, 2009, Wednesday

Copyright 2009 Charleston Newspapers

**Section:** EDITORIAL; Pg. P4A

**Length:** 795 words

**Byline:** Trudy Rubin

### **Body**

---

DAVOS, Switzerland - In the 12 years I've been attending Davos, I've never seen anything like it.

An extraordinary, emotional debate over Gaza took place between Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Israeli President Shimon Peres at the World Economic Forum on Thursday. It ended with Erdogan storming off stage and saying he would never return to Davos, after the moderator refused him more time to respond.

What made the exchange even more astounding was that Turkey has deep relations with Israel - it is her closest Muslim ally. Moreover, Peres is known for his efforts at peacemaking and Erdogan had been mediating talks between Israel and Syria.

The drama between these two peacemakers laid bare the white-hot tensions unleashed by Israel's invasion of Gaza. Their confrontation also showed how difficult it will be for the Obama administration to renew any peace process.

It was clear that the Turkish leader took the Dec. 27 Gaza invasion very personally. On Dec. 23, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had visited Ankara for the fifth round of indirect talks with Syria.

"The goal was to see if we could move to the next phase, direct talks," Erdogan told the audience. He said he had called Syrian President Bashar al-Assad during the Olmert visit. He had also suggested that Turkey try to mediate with **Hamas** for the release of kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit.

"He [Olmert] said he would respond the next day, but we got no answer. Four days later, Israel was in Gaza," Erdogan said. The Turkish leader was humiliated. Members of his party accused him of collusion with Israel, assuming Olmert had warned him of the coming invasion.

Erdogan blames the continuing violence in Gaza on the fact that the strip is still effectively occupied by Israel, which controls airspace, sea space and territorial borders. And he was furious about Israel's "disproportionate response" to **Hamas** rocket attacks that left hundreds of innocent Palestinian **women** and children dead, and Gaza's infrastructure shattered.

"**Hamas** are not the only people in Gaza," Erdogan shouted, his voice rising, as he decried the difficulty of getting humanitarian aid through Israeli checkpoints into Gaza. "We should not be judging anyone by race or religion if they are in distress."

## Angry over Gaza, Turkey storms out of Davos forum

But Peres was equally furious at Erdogan's inference that his, and Israel's, reputations were sullied by the Gaza carnage. He said **Hamas** had fired 5,500 rockets and 4,000 mortars toward Israel over the last five years.

Peres feels the world fails to understand the psychological and economic trauma of **Hamas** rocket fire on cities, which kill only a few, but totally disrupt normal life.

"One million people slept in shelters. What would you do?" he demanded, blaming Iran for supplying the rockets. "People who never demonstrated against thousands of missiles [fired against Israeli civilians] are demonstrating now."

Peres also resents the fact that past Israeli peace efforts have been forgotten, including, in his view, the 2005 pullout from Gaza. His own prime ministership was destroyed in 1996 when Palestinian bus bombs murdered dozens of civilians and undercut Israeli faith in the peace process. As a consequence, the dovish Peres was defeated by the hawkish Benjamin Netanyahu.

The Israeli president insists the Gaza invasion was forced on Israel by **Hamas**. "For us, victory is peace, not war," he said.

But Peres was not apologetic about striking back at those who rocket Israel. "Hezbollah has learned a lesson," he said, a reference to Israel's 2006 bombing of Lebanon; Hezbollah hasn't fired rockets at Israel since then. "We hope **Hamas** will learn a lesson."

So what exactly is the lesson of this Davos psychodrama for the future of peace talks?

Obama's new peace emissary, former Sen. George Mitchell, will find an Israeli public that believes that **Hamas** deserved to be punished, never mind the staggering cost to innocent Palestinians. Most Israelis are convinced that if they give back more land they will get more missiles on their heads, so they will probably return Netanyahu to power in this month's elections.

Mitchell will also find an Arab, and Turkish, world that shares Erdogan's anger and was horrified by TV scenes of dying Palestinian children, which decimated any remaining belief in the peace process.

The good news is that moderate Arab leaders want to give peace talks one last shot. And Erdogan told journalists that, although Turkish mediation is now "shelved," Turkey would be willing to resume it if it was requested by the parties.

But Mitchell, who visits the Middle East this week, will have to overcome a boiling anger that runs deep in Israel, Turkey and Arab countries. That rage was in full view on stage in Davos last week.

Rubin is a columnist the Philadelphia Inquirer.

**Load-Date:** February 4, 2009

## Obama's party divided on Gaza conflict; New leader faces tough decision

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 The Vancouver Sun, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** CANADA & WORLD; Pg. B7

**Length:** 675 words

**Byline:** Irwin Stelzer, The Daily Telegraph

### **Body**

---

Most American presidents take office intending to focus on domestic issues. Franklin Roosevelt planned to keep America out of foreign wars, and instead became one of the leaders of the war against Adolf Hitler. George W. Bush won election promising to make tax cuts his primary goal: 9/11 changed his priorities.

So with Barack Obama. The president-elect has been trying to keep Congress and the American public solidly behind his domestic economic stimulus package. With difficulty, as Congressional opposition to some features of that program mounts. "I don't work for Barack Obama," says Harry Reid, leader of the Democrats in the Senate.

Inevitably, foreign affairs are diverting attention from Obama's domestic plans. Looming in the background is Afghanistan, to which he has promised to commit more troops. And Iran, with nuclear ambitions that candidate Obama said he finds unacceptable and a threat to the world. Leaping to the foreground is the Israeli effort to end Hamas's rocket attacks on its civilians.

In five days, Obama will no longer be able to avoid the issue by claiming, quite rightly, that America has only one president at a time.

Polls suggest most rank-and-file Democrats want the Israelis to declare a ceasefire, thus leaving in place Hamas's ability to rearm and with no credible way of preventing the terrorist group from launching hundreds of missiles at increasingly distant targets within Israel.

Never mind that civilian casualties caused by the Israeli military are collateral damage, while the casualties caused by Hamas are the purpose of its rocket attacks. Or that Hamas is violating the Geneva Convention by hiding behind its women, endangering children by storing arms in schools, and risking the lives of the sick by placing its headquarters under Gaza City's Shifa hospital.

Most Democrats, understandably appalled by the horrible pictures that Hamas makes available to the western press, want Israel to stop its attacks. Now.

Whether the Israelis will bow to mounting international pressure remains to be seen.

One faction in its government knows that the world has stood silent while thousands of rockets have rained on its people during the years of the so-called truce with Hamas, and that history suggests that "the international community" cares little about the survival of the world's only Jewish state.

## Obama's party divided on Gaza conflict; New leader faces tough decision

Another sees the goodwill of other nations as key to Israel's long-run survival.

The key, of course, remains the United States, Israel's so-far staunch ally. Which puts Obama front and centre on Jan. 20. The Bush administration, itself divided between Condoleezza Rice doves and Dick Cheney hawks, won't be around to hide behind.

Obama shares his party's belief in diplomacy, in the importance of working with allies in international organizations, and will be reluctant to exercise the veto at the UN Security Council that has stood between Israel and the wrath of Arab nations and others.

He will feel the tug of his party's left-wing base -- the people who gave him the nomination over the more moderate Hillary Clinton. The new president will also be hearing from those among his advisers who see Israel not as a strategic asset in the global war on terror, but as a liability that dilutes American influence in the Muslim world.

Israel is counting on the realists in the Obama foreign-policy team to make its case. These advisers know that diplomacy cannot bridge the difference between parties when one contestant is so committed to the destruction of the other that it uses its resources to construct tunnels through which to smuggle arms rather than to build a viable economy. International monitors who can't shoot straight, or not at all, will not prevent the rearming of Hamas or the continuation of rocket attacks, as experience in Lebanon proves. Incoming secretary of state Hillary Clinton knows that.

Obama will have to choose between the lady at his State Department and the left-wing talk-at-any price wing of his party. No one can guess which this most opaque of all new presidents will choose.

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2009

---

End of Document

## *UN chief's 'heartbreak' Israel moves out of Gaza*

Herald Sun (Australia)

January 22, 2009 Thursday

1 - FIRST Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 26

**Length:** 300 words

### **Body**

---

ISRAELI soldiers completed their pullout from the Gaza Strip yesterday, the army said.

"The last soldier left the Gaza Strip this morning," an army spokesman said. "However the army remains deployed all around the Gaza Strip to meet any eventuality."

Emboldened by their survival, **Hamas** declared victory at rallies of thousands of supporters. "**Hamas** today is more powerful," leader Ismail Radwan told one of the crowds.

Earlier, UN chief Ban Ki-moon paid the first visit by a world leader to Gaza since Israel halted its deadliest offensive ever on the **Hamas**-ruled territory.

Describing the scenes there as "heartbreaking," he called for those responsible for the bombing of UN buildings to be held accountable.

"It is an outrageous and totally unacceptable attack on the United Nations," he said from outside the still-smouldering UN compound.

He said he felt "utter frustration, utter anger" over the shelling of the compound and two UN schools.

Israel has said it made every effort to prevent civilian deaths and said troops were fired upon from inside or near each of the UN sites in question.

But Mr Ban accused Israel of using "excessive force"; however, he also condemned Palestinian rocket fire on Israel as "completely unacceptable."

Visiting the southern town of Sderot, 5km from the Gaza border, which has taken the brunt of rocket fire, he said: "You live every day with a threat of a rocket falling from the sky. No human being can live in a state like this. I expect basic humanitarian law to protect civilian life to be respected . . . and not violated as **Hamas** has done."

Gaza's health ministry lists more than 1300 dead, including 410 children and 100 **women**, and 5300 hurt -- 1855 children and 795 **women**. The bureau of statistics says 4100 homes were destroyed and 17,000 damaged.

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2009

## UN chief's 'heartbreak' Israel moves out of Gaza

---

End of Document

## *US lawmakers hear 'heart wrenching' tales during visit to Gaza*

The Daily Star (Lebanon)

February 20, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Daily Star - The Daily Star FZ LLC. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved

# THE DAILY STAR

LEBANON

**Length:** 1148 words

**Byline:** Daily Star Staff

## **Body**

---

US Democratic representatives Brian Baird and Keith Ellison expressed shock at the plight of the war-shattered Gaza Strip during a rare visit to the Palestinian enclave on Thursday. "The amount of physical destruction and the depth of human suffering here is staggering" Baird said in a statement issued jointly.

GAZA CITY: US Democratic representatives Brian Baird and Keith Ellison expressed shock at the plight of the war-shattered Gaza Strip during a rare visit to the Palestinian enclave on Thursday. "The amount of physical destruction and the depth of human suffering here is staggering" Baird said in a statement issued jointly with Ellison during their visit which coincided with a similar trip by US Senator John Kerry.

The visits were the first by US lawmakers since Hamas, an Islamist movement Washington labels a terrorist outfit, took power in Gaza by force after having won legislative elections in 2006.

Ellison, a representative from Minnesota, harshly criticized restrictions on the delivery of desperately needed goods into the coastal strip that has been under a crippling Israeli blockade imposed after the Hamas electoral victory. "People, innocent children, women and noncombatants, are going without water, food and sanitation, while the things they so desperately need are sitting in trucks at the border, being denied permission to go in," he said.

"The stories about the children affected me the most," said Ellison. "No parent, or anyone who cares for kids, can remain unmoved by what Brian and I saw here."

Baird, from Washington state, said the situation he saw was "shocking and troubling beyond words."

"The personal stories of children being killed in their homes or schools, of entire families wiped out, and relief workers prevented from evacuating the wounded are heart wrenching," he said.

Ellison, the first Muslim elected to the US Congress, hailed US President Barack Obama for acting "quickly to send much needed humanitarian funding to Gaza for this effort."

"However, the arbitrary and unreasonable Israeli limitations on food, and repair and reconstruction materials are unacceptable and indefensible," Ellison added.

## US lawmakers hear 'heart wrenching' tales during visit to Gaza

Ellison and Bair both stressed that their visit did not have the official sanction of the Obama administration.

They said they held talks with civilians and relief workers, while Palestinian officials stressed they did not meet with any representatives of Hamas.

During their visit, the pair visited Izzbet Abed Rabbo, a community in northern Gaza devastated during the deadly 22-day Israeli offensive that ended on January 18.

An estimated 14,000 to 20,000 homes and other buildings were damaged or destroyed during the military offensive in which more than 1,300 Palestinians, two-thirds of whom were civilians and including over 400 children, were killed.

"The first and most urgent priority must be to help the people in Gaza. At the same time, the rocket attacks against Israeli cities must stop immediately," Baird and Ellison said in their joint statement.

"Just as the people of Gaza should not be subject to what they have experienced, the Israeli civilians should not have to live in fear of constant and indiscriminate rocketing," they said.

On Friday, the two planned to tour the Israeli towns of Sderot and Ashkelon, which are regularly targeted by the rocket attacks from Gaza.

US Senator John Kerry on Thursday also made a visit to the Gaza Strip, but stressed this did not reflect a change of policy toward the territory's democratically elected leaders.

The visit "does not indicate any shift whatsoever with respect to Hamas," said Kerry, who heads the Senate's powerful foreign relations committee.

Kerry's first stop in the impoverished Palestinian enclave was the American school left in ruins by the deadly 22-day Israeli offensive that ended on January 18.

Talking to a Palestinian lawyer amid the dust and rubble, Kerry defended Israel for responding to the rocket attacks by Hamas and other Palestinian groups. "Your political leadership needs to understand that any nation that has rockets coming into it over many years, threatening its citizens, is going to respond," Kerry told Shar Habeel al-Zaim.

The US senator was presumably referring to Palestinian rockets and not Israeli rockets and missiles, which have also been shot into Gaza by the thousands over many years.

Under the terms of an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire that went into effect last June, Hamas was to reign in rocket attacks if Israel lifted its siege of the territory. However, while the Islamists managed to virtually halt the attacks, Israel did not honor its pledge.

However, the deal largely held until November 4, when Israel shattered the agreement by invading Gaza and killing seven Palestinians. The incursion prompted Gaza based fighters to resume rocket attacks, the stated reason for Israel's 22-day onslaught of the enclave.

"There is nothing in a visit that changes anything," said Kerry, who is also scheduled to visit Syria as part of his tour of the region.

"What has to change is behavior. What has to change obviously is Hamas's consistent resort to instruments of terror," he said in the Israeli city of Sderot before entering the Palestinian enclave aboard a UN vehicle.

"We feel very deeply that no one should have to live under this threat," he said after he and Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni inspected rockets fired by Gaza militants that are exhibited in Sderot police station.



## US lawmakers hear 'heart wrenching' tales during visit to Gaza

Early on Thursday, Israeli helicopter-backed troops were reportedly involved in a firefight when they briefly entered Gaza. Two rockets and two mortar rounds were then fired in retaliation from the enclave and Israel responded with an air raid on smuggling tunnels on Gaza's border with Egypt. There were no reports of casualties.

Meanwhile, Egypt expressed its "indignation" on Thursday over Israel's decision to link a Cairo-brokered truce in Gaza with **Hamas** to the release of a seized soldier.

Cairo "feels indignation" after Wednesday's vote by Israel's security cabinet to make a truce conditional on the release of Gilad Shalit, a senior official told AFP.

The young conscript was captured by Gaza militants in a deadly cross-border raid in June 2006 that followed on the heels of dozens of arrests of elected **Hamas** representatives.

"Israel has demolished its credibility" and this attitude will "complicate the situation," said the official, who did not wish to be identified.

"It was clear from the beginning that the issue of the soldier was not linked to the truce agreement," he added.

"Egypt will not change its position. The Shalit case cannot be linked to the truce," he said echoing similar remarks made earlier this week by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

**Hamas** insists that Shalit's release be negotiated separately as part of a prisoner exchange involving hundreds of Palestinians currently held in Israeli jails. - with The Daily Star

**Load-Date:** February 19, 2009

## *Preparing for 'the day after'*

The Jerusalem Post

January 16, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** FEATURES; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1275 words

**Byline:** YAAKOV KATZ

**Highlight:** SECURITY AND DEFENSE. As residents of Gaza sift through what is left of their homes, the defense establishment is collecting evidence proving Hamas's responsibility for the havoc wreaked on the civilian population. It's also aiming to establish an international mechanism to prevent future weapons smuggling well before missiles make their way into tunnels

### **Body**

---

The real work for the Foreign Ministry and IDF Spokesman Brig.-Gen. Avi Benayahu will start once Operation Cast Lead is officially over and the troops have returned to Israel from the Gaza Strip.

It is then, when the Palestinians go back to their homes - or what is left of them - in northern Gaza that we will bear witness to the devastation this war has caused. The foreign media, which until now have been barred from entering the Strip, are expected then to be allowed inside. It is then that the world will be flooded with photos of Palestinians sifting through the ruins.

The pictures will be difficult. Some are already making their way out via the media pools that the IDF has allowed inside for a brief glance at what it is doing there - and fighting against. The assessment in the IDF is that it will take Hamas several years to rebuild its infrastructure and recover from the Israeli offensive.

But the IDF does not accept blame for the level of destruction on civilian buildings, as these are homes from which Hamas has opened fire at troops. Thus, it says, they were legitimately bombed from the air, just as D-9 bulldozers legitimately plowed through streets, ripping up asphalt, to make it difficult for Hamas suicide bombers on motorbikes to reach Israeli forces.

"Hamas cynically uses civilian infrastructure to strike at Israel," a top officer commanding troops inside Gaza said this week. "They use mosques to fire at us, hide inside hospitals, plant booby-traps and dig tunnels at the entrance to homes and rig schools with explosives."

One officer with Armored Brigade 401 gave another reason for the damage: "In some cases, when we blew up a tunnel discovered in the middle of a field, the explosion also destroyed the home it was connected to - even though we didn't know they were connected."

A main reason for this is an IDF decision, made prior to the war, that when the life of a soldier is weighed against Israel's image abroad, the soldier's life comes first.

## Preparing for 'the day after'

DEFENSE MINISTER Ehud Barak is already preparing for the "day after," when international lawsuits are expected to abound. As a result, he has ordered the establishment of an "Incriminating Team" of intelligence and legal experts to collect evidence against Hamas and its military infrastructure.

The group has received all footage filmed by IDF Combat Camera teams deployed inside the Strip, for it to review and decipher. The footage, much of which is being released to the media on a daily basis, shows clearly how Hamas booby traps schools and zoos, uses mosques to hide weapons and turns innocent civilians into human shields.

There is also the issue of casualty figures. The United Nations has officially adopted the Palestinian Health Ministry's claims that among the close to 1,000 dead, more than half are innocent civilians, including 311 children and 76 women.

The IDF and Israeli intelligence agencies have invested much time and effort in refuting these claims. They have managed to compile a list of 900 names of Palestinians killed in the fighting. Of those 900, the IDF says, 150 are women, children and elderly. According to IDF assessments, the highest number of civilian casualties is around 250; the other fatalities are terrorists.

One source of this discrepancy is the way a "child" is defined. In the UN reports, 17-year-olds - such as Mohammed Jamal Yassin, killed during clashes with Israeli soldiers in northern Gaza - are classified as children. But, according to the IDF, Yassin was a Hamas operative. (The same kind of discrepancy emerged following the Second Lebanon War, when Israel was accused - then, too - of killing 1,000 Lebanese civilians. Since Hizbullah refused to release the number of its dead, the IDF and intelligence agencies compiled a list which showed that at least 600 out of the 1,000 were Hizbullah guerrilla fighters.)

Take, as well, the case of the UNRWA school, which Israel shelled when Hamas terrorists used it as a base from which to fire mortars at troops. In its most recent report on humanitarian conditions in Gaza - released on Thursday - the UN repeated Palestinian claims that 43 civilians had been killed in the attack. In fact, the IDF discovered after examining the incident, that 21 Palestinians had been killed, among them several Hamas operatives, two of them known terrorists.

BUT MAKE no mistake: The real end-game is taking place not in Gaza or Israel, but rather in Cairo and Washington DC.

Egypt is working to broker a cease-fire between that will last longer than the six-month truce which began in June and collapsed in December. The United States is playing an equally important role, by helping to create a mechanism in Egypt and around the world that will stop the weapons smuggling under the Philadelphi Corridor and into Gaza.

Israel's demand for a stop to the smuggling is based on the lessons it learned from Security Council resolution 1701, which ended the Second Lebanon War, but which did not put an end to the smuggling of weapons into Lebanon from Syria. Since then, Hizbullah is believed to have tripled its missile stockpile - from 15,000 to more than 40,000 - with longer ranges and larger warheads.

The fear in Israel is that if the smuggling into Gaza is not stopped, Hamas will do as Hizbullah did.

As was reported earlier this week in The Jerusalem Post, the IDF supports a plan, formulated five years ago by former National Security Council head Giora Eiland, which calls for the erection of a two-part barrier encompassing the Egyptian side of Rafah, to be manned by Egyptian soldiers preventing weapons smugglers into the area.

The idea behind the plan is for the smuggling to be stopped before the weapons even reach Rafah - not after they are already inside the tunnels. Egypt is reluctant to adopt this plan, but says it is open to all sorts of proposals, including the building of a moat along the Philadelphi Corridor and assistance from the US and Germany, in the form of tunnel-detection technology.

## Preparing for 'the day after'

The US comes into play with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that Israel is hoping to extract from the Bush administration before Tuesday, when Barack Obama is due to be sworn in as president. In addition to Egyptian action along the border, Israel wants the MOU to create an international mechanism to combat the smuggling well before any weaponry reaches the Sinai Peninsula.

An example of such weaponry is the dozens of Grad- model Katyusha rockets that are currently being fired into Israel. These rockets have a 40-kilometer range, and are very similar to the 122-mm Soviet-made Katyusha rockets that were used by Hizbullah during the Second Lebanon War.

Defense officials said that the rockets were smuggled across the Egyptian border in January 2008, after **Hamas** blew a hole in the border wall.

The question remains as to how they got from China, where they are manufactured, to the Sinai Desert.

Officials explained that, from China, the rockets make several stops before reaching Gaza. In many cases, they are purchased by Iran or Hizbullah, and then transferred to the Sinai. In other cases, the Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) has learned, weaponry that comes from Yemen and Eritrea is transferred to Sudan, then smuggled into Egypt and finally brought down into a tunnel to Gaza.

Due to this intricate smuggling system, Israel is asking the US to enlist NATO, the European Union and other countries in Africa and the Middle East in the creation of a mechanism through which to share intelligence and stop the smuggling - not when it is being lowered into a tunnel along the Philadelphi Corridor, but when it is being loaded onto a ship or truck somewhere in Africa.

## Graphic

---

Photo: RUMMAGING THROUGH the ruins in Gaza. When the operation is over, the world will be flooded with photos like these. (Credit: AP)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

---

End of Document

## *Dazed by devastation*

Canberra Times (Australia)

January 24, 2009 Saturday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 The Federal Capital Press of Australia PTY Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** A; Pg. B02

**Length:** 941 words

**Byline:** The Canberra Times

### **Body**

---

On a stretch of sand between flattened buildings, the stricken Samouni family were on Wednesday erecting the mourning tent for 22 of their relatives whose decomposed bodies had been dragged from the rubble a fortnight after being killed by Israeli shelling.

It was the first day that Gazans were able to return to the site of their ruined homes since the end of the Israeli military offensive. Most of the survivors of the Samouni extended family came to survey the 4ha of razed farmland, a destroyed mosque and the pile of bulldozed concrete which had been the warehouse where 80 of them had taken shelter, only to come under lethal tank or aerial fire, or both.

For Mousa Samouni, 19, reticent and with every indication of still being in deep shock, the return was the culmination of a horrific experience that began at 7.30am on January 4, when Israeli troops arrived at his home in the Zeitoun district of southern Gaza City under the cover of heavy fire as the offensive pushed west from the border towards the coast.

The accountancy student, in his first year at Al-Azhar University, said the troops had moved his family next door and then told both groups to join other members of the clan in a warehouse across the road, owned by the vegetable seller Wael Samouni.

The troops then occupied the two houses.

He returned yesterday to find the houses ransacked and scarcely habitable, with furnishing and electrical appliances tossed out of the window, gaping holes in the wall made for firing positions, furniture smashed, clothes piled on the floor, pages of family Korans torn out and remains of soldiers' rations littered in many rooms.

Stars of David and graffiti in Hebrew and English proclaiming "Arabs need 2 die", "no Arabs in the State of Israel", and "One down and 999,999 to go" had been scrawled on walls. A drawing of a gravestone bore the inscription "Arabs 1948 to 2009".

But the two houses were at least still standing. Many smaller homes to the east had been flattened by bulldozers after being cleared of their occupants, apparently to establish a clear field of fire from which troops could target any militants to the east.

One family member, Hesham Samouni, 35, said 14 of these homes had been destroyed.

## Dazed by devastation

As had Wael Samouni's warehouse.

It had first been hit by Israeli missiles in an attack on January 5 reported in detail in The Independent which was launched as a few family members began taking other relatives to the building, which they thought was safe. Mousa said he fainted in the attack.

By the time he came round, his mother, Rebab, 36, his father, Rashed, 42, and his two brothers, Mohammed and Walid, were dead, along with at least 21 others, including several children, among them a five-month-old baby.

After the attack, he escaped with his freshly widowed sister-in-law, Maysaa, to the nearby home of an uncle, where he found about 50 other members of the clan, including at least half a dozen men handcuffed and blindfolded. He said soldiers ordered him to stay, and confirmed his sister-in-law's testimony that the men were being kept in detention "in case Hamas comes".

The detained men included Imad Samouni, 38, who said yesterday that the others had been released but he and Mousa, again blindfolded and their hands tied with nylon handcuffs, were kept on opposite sides of a room and told to remain sitting or kneeling until the Wednesday.

At one point, he claimed the soldiers guarding them had put bags of white powder apparently explosives attached to wires near him. He said the soldiers had at times talked to each other in Hebrew which he understood from 12 years working in Israel of shooting him if he disobeyed.

Acknowledging that the soldiers had offered food and water to the men, Imad Samouni added: "Mousa did eat but I refused. They let us go to the bathroom if a soldier was with us though this depended on who was on duty. Mousa did in his pants a few times. Then on the Wednesday an Israeli who said his name was Eitan came and said: 'I can see you're not Hamas. You are not eating and you will die here if you carry on. You can go.' I said I would not leave without Mousa and they let us go."

There was little sign of support for Hamas among the family yesterday.

In the house next door to Mousais, Khamiz Samouni contemplated the damage wreaked on his home, including a one-by-six-metre hole ripped out of the floor, apparently to allow soldiers to fill bags with sand.

The 22-year-old car paint-shop worker, who also lost his father, Talal, and his mother, Rahme, in the January 5 attack on the warehouse, also said that they had been ordered by troops to go to the warehouse the day before the attack.

"I blame both Israel and Hamas," he said.

"Do you think all this would have happened if Hamas had not been in power?"

The Palestinian health ministry in Gaza claims that 48 members of the Samouni family were killed during the course of the operation.

After the Red Cross found four terrified and weak children in the area two days after the attack, Navi Pillay, the United Nations high commissioner for human rights, suggested the attack could qualify for a war crimes investigation.

The Israeli military says it is investigating the events but regularly lays blame on Hamas for operating in civilian areas.

Clan members insist Hamas was not active in the immediate area and that bullet holes in the two houses occupied by the troops had been made by Israeli forces as they approached.

As women of the family attempted to clean up one of the houses, Wafa Samouni said, "Hamas and Israel should make peace. I want Israel or Hamas to lose. I don't want our children to be the losers." Independent

Dazed by devastation

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2009

---

End of Document

## THE EVIDENCE IS IN ON ISLAMIST TERRORISM

The Australian

February 6, 2009 Friday

1 - All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** FEATURES; Pg. 13

**Length:** 731 words

### **Body**

---

From Melbourne to the Middle East, terrorists want to kill

ABDUL Nacer Benbrika is morally on a different planet from the rest of us and it is about time people who think the terror threat is exaggerated realise it. Benbrika was sentenced in a Melbourne court on Tuesday to 15 years for terror offences. Six of his henchmen also went to prison. The cause of their convictions explains a great deal about the way Islamist extremists, some mad, some bad and all dangerous to know, will twist the tenets of the honoured Muslim faith into a justification of mass murder. Their example shows how terrorists, from Melbourne to the Middle East, think and act the same. And it demonstrates how enemies of Israel in the West, who explain terrorism as an inevitable response to the problems of the Palestinians, miss the point. The grim reality is that for religious zealots with murder on their mind, any excuse will do.

Anybody who believes Benbrika was a misguided man who did no harm in the end should consider the evidence against him. Despite Australia giving him a home, and an unearned social security income paid to support his seven children, he was keen to kill as many of us as he could. Certainly, he said Australians deserved to die because of the country's involvement in the war against Saddam Hussein. But he also argued Islam sanctioned death for unbelievers. That Benbrika is as incompetent as he is irrational and never launched an attack does not matter. The World Trade Centre attackers were not highly trained combatants either -- struggling to fly a plane straight. As judge Bernard Bongiorno said in court, "terrorist acts as they have been experienced in modern times are often carried out by amateurs whose principal attribute has not been skill, but rather zealous or fanatical belief".

For an example of the fanaticism Justice Bongiorno points to, it is impossible to beat Samira Ahmed Jassim, who was arrested in Iraq this week. This woman is an enemy of the emerging Iraqi democracy and expressed her political opinions by organising 28 terrorist attacks. Her modus operandi was to arrange for women to be raped and then tell them the only way they could erase the shame was to blow themselves up, taking unbelievers, in this case ordinary Iraqis, invariably Muslims, with them. The pointless brutality of such crimes beggars belief for all but those who see mass murder as a form of worship. It is nonsensical to suggest that it serves any political purpose. Nor does the way the Hamas Government of Gaza uses suicide bombers and rocket attacks. Hamas has the despicable distinction of deploying the first female suicide bomber. That 2002 attack killed two, wounded 150 people and accomplished precisely nothing. Nor did the Hamas rocket attacks that led the Israeli army to intervene in Gaza last month. Hamas has no chance of defeating Israel in open war and there was no chance that Muslim nations would come to its assistance. But attacking Israel at every opportunity makes sense to anybody who believes in a divine directive to destroy the Jewish state.



## THE EVIDENCE IS IN ON ISLAMIST TERRORISM

It is time for people who believe Western decadence and the Iraq war are the cause of terror attacks to accept the obvious. While Islamic extremists sometimes dress up their motives in the language of conventional politics, they are at war with everybody who does not agree with them. The vast majority of Muslims understand this and recognise there is no place in their faith for terror of the **Hamas** and Benbrika kind. Opposition to sectarian conflict was one of the reasons Iraqis voted against religious candidates at last weekend's provincial elections, with Shia religious parties losing control of five of the seven provinces they previously ran. It is also time for enemies of Israel to stop blaming the Jewish state for war crimes it did not commit, presumably on the assumption that anything that makes Israel look bad helps **Hamas**, the ostensible ally of innocent Palestinians. Last month, UN officials in Gaza said Israeli forces had mortared a school where they knew civilians were sheltering. It made international headlines and undoubtedly encouraged Muslim anger all over the world. But it wasn't true -- and the UN knew it. There is no reasoning with **Hamas** terrorists and the Benbrikas of the world and no case for any argument that explains their actions as anything other than acts of evil.

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2009

---

End of Document

## **Column: No easy solution to Gaza conflict**

University Wire

January 29, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 Badger Herald via U-Wire

**Length:** 636 words

**Byline:** By James Sonneman, Badger Herald; **SOURCE:** U. Wisconsin

**Dateline:** MADISON, Wis.

### **Body**

---

Words over the recent conflicts and humanitarian crisis in Gaza have been flying across this campus as swiftly as snowballs on Bascom. The pages of this paper have recently been peppered with quotes from Palestinians by Kyle Szarzynski and quotes from Israelis by Jordan Soffer.

The truth is that this is a ridiculously complicated situation that nobody outside of the two territories can perhaps comprehend completely - no one comes back from a Campus Antiwar Network meeting or a Birthright trip with such intricate knowledge of what exactly is going on in the Holy Land.

Soffer diplomatically pleads "to the media, to governments around the world, and to every student on this campus to help find that common ground." It is a step in the right direction, but a step several years behind the times. To imply that common ground doesn't exist already does a severe injustice to the millions on both sides who peacefully seek a two-state solution.

The two-state solution has the highest support among both peoples. Most Palestinians acknowledge that Israelis must have a state (they have put down their roots as deeply as the English in Northern Ireland). On the other hand, most Israelis say the same for the Palestinians, who cannot just fuck off to a place that they don't come from.

Carrying out the solution is not easy, however. As Thomas Friedman eloquently put it in the New York Times, "**Hamas** is busy making (it) inconceivable, while (Israeli) settlers have steadily worked to make it impossible." A great schlep is being done to both Israelis and Palestinians by those who benefit from hostilities between the peoples. While **Hamas** gains notoriety, and distance from Fatah, by firing rockets in the vicinity of civilians, some overzealous Israelis continue to settle in agreed upon Palestinian territory, destroying Palestinian homes in the process. The generals on both sides, meanwhile, get to keep their jobs and build their budgets.

The recent Israeli incursion was simply asinine if its goal was to eventually achieve peace. What has been achieved since December when the crisis began? The military campaign certainly did nothing to bring elements of **Hamas** back into the fold of Fatah and establish peace between the Palestinians themselves - an important element in the creation of Palestinian autonomy and independence. A score of people are dead, some were thugs, many were innocent **women** and children, and the peace process has taken a further step back.

**Hamas** rockets are inexcusable but cannot be an excuse for the intensity of Israel's reaction. By funneling its scarce resources into such relatively useless rockets while its people suffered tremendously under a crippling economic blockade, **Hamas** was greatly undermining its legitimacy in Gaza. **Hamas** was arguably on the road to destroying itself from within, had the Israeli government played the waiting game more prudently. Admittedly, it is

## Column: No easy solution to Gaza conflict

difficult to win an upcoming election - Feb. 10 - when the government does nothing in response to a few crude rocket attacks.

In Madison, we can debate about the issue in the papers all we want and, seemingly, not much difference will be made. I implore you - consume information, read books with five-star Amazon ratings, watch movies such as "Paradise Now" or "Live from Bethlehem" - an excellent documentary on Palestinian media produced by University of Wisconsin students. As Amira Hanania said, we are "the future leaders of America and in politics nothing is very far from America. (We) have a responsibility to make our country do whatever it can to make the lives of Palestinians, Israelis and all people throughout the world as good and peaceful as possible." Or at least, as the Flight of the Concorde say, "Just think about it. (falsetto) Think, think about it."

(C) 2008 Badger Herald via UWIRE

**Load-Date:** January 29, 2009

---

End of Document

*Many deaths, few other facts; Commentary*

The Sunday Telegraph (London)

January 18, 2009

Copyright 2009 Telegraph Media Group Limited All Rights Reserved

# The Sunday Telegraph

**Section:** NEWS; International; Pg. 33

**Length:** 580 words

**Byline:** TIM BUTCHER IN JERUSALEM

## Body

---

THE UNDISPUTED facts to come from Israel's Operation Cast Lead are clear but few.

For three weeks the Israeli armed forces have pounded the Gaza Strip with an intensity not seen since the Six Day War of 1967.

Palestinian hospital officials have counted over 1,100 people in their mortuaries, of which more than 350 are children and at least 80 women.

Many more lie yet uncounted in the wreckage of buildings hit by Israeli airstrikes or in places where ground combat has been too intense for them to be recovered.

Among the Palestinian dead are 13 ambulance crew, including drivers, paramedics and at least one doctor.

Several senior figures from Hamas, the militant Islamist group Israel regards as its enemy, were killed including Said Siam, the de facto interior minister, as well as an unknown number of "troops".

Israel has been accused of war crimes after a number of incidents including the shelling of clearly marked United Nations facilities such as schools and an aid delivery headquarters.

Its actions have drawn a surprisingly high level of criticism from Europe, although America has remained solidly supportive of the Jewish state.

Palestinian militants inside Gaza have throughout the operation continued to fire rockets into Israel although at a daily rate that has slowed over the 21 days of the operation by roughly two thirds. And over the three weeks Israel has suffered 13 fatalities, 10 soldiers and three civilians.

Those are just about the only undisputed facts that historians will be able to mine from the conflict.

Where the dispute begins will be in what has been achieved by Israel and Hamas.

Israeli intelligence sources said a few days ago that it is "very unlikely" militants will stop firing rockets into Israel.

## Many deaths, few other facts Commentary

In their assessment, the Israeli armed forces had destroyed "some but not all" of the rocket stockpile so further launches should be expected.

Those same sources also said that even if the number of **Hamas** members killed in Operation Cast Lead was at the top end of the Israeli estimate (600), that would still leave as many as 19,400 militants under arms.

So **Hamas** has not been dealt a killer blow and, indeed, may enjoy a surge of popular support over in the West Bank as Palestinians ruled by Fatah, the secular rival of **Hamas**, show sympathy for the suffering of Gazans.

Israeli sources said the conflict had "re-established" deterrence by showing **Hamas** the Jewish state is not afraid to use its firepower.

A reputation, the argument goes, for Israeli invincibility has been restored after the perceived defeat inflicted by Hizbollah in the 2006 war in Lebanon. This argument sounds rather unconvincing when you consider that Israel has never shied away from using firepower in Gaza and, indeed, has killed 1,400 Palestinians there since 2005.

One key impact of the war, and one which it is too early to judge the success of, is the possible closure of Gaza's border with Egypt. If, as Israel hopes, that border ends up being closed to all smuggling of weapons, then it is fair to say Operation Cast Lead has had a significant impact.

Israel certainly hopes this is the case and has made much of the offer from America, Britain and other European nations to help seal the border.

But historians will probably also learn that by sealing off the Egyptian border, the festering wound of resentment felt by Palestinians inside Gaza since 1948 has not been cured. Instead it has just committed the region to further bouts of violence downstream.

**Load-Date:** January 18, 2009

---

End of Document

## **YOUR LETTERS**

Dayton Daily News (Ohio)

January 17, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 Dayton Newspapers, Inc.

**Section:** OPINIONS; Pg. A13

**Length:** 691 words

### **Body**

---

Israeli actions play into **Hamas**' hands

The Palestinian bodies are piling up. Men, **women** and children are dying because Israelis are defending themselves - or are they simply seeking revenge?

It is obvious that **Hamas** is using civilians as shields. It is also obvious that Israel is capable of wiping the Gaza Strip clean if it chooses to do so.

Israel is playing into terrorists' hands by overreacting and creating more bad press for its cause. This is like someone poking you with a stick until you get mad enough to beat them up, and then they call the authorities and have you arrested. You try to explain that they have been torturing you and you just couldn't take it anymore. The authorities say they understand, but your reaction was not warranted, and you go to jail, leaving the poor victim free to cause more trouble.

Israel is making it hard for any country that wants to support it. The United States needs to wash its hands of the Middle East until Israel starts to pursue peace instead of death and destruction.

Christopher Berry

Beavercreek

A terrorist base on Israel's border

The late Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin warned Egypt not to expect Israel to permit establishment of a Palestinian state. Begin said Israel would never return to the borders of June 4, 1967. He also said a Palestinian state would never rise in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

At the time, Egypt claimed Begin had corrupted the atmosphere of peace.

Now a terrorist group, **Hamas**, is in control of the Gaza Strip, elected by the Palestinian people. This gives **Hamas** a terrorist base on the Israeli border. **Hamas**, Iran and others would like to see genocide in Israel.

So sad that so many innocent people are being killed because of terrorist groups around the world.

Ronald Kidwell

West Milton

## YOUR LETTERS

Israel shows concern for civilians

I am a sixth-grade student at Hillel Academy in Dayton and an avid reader of the comics in the Life section of the Dayton Daily News. Due to the conflict in Israel and Gaza, I have been reading the rest of the paper as well, including the letters to the editor.

I was shocked at a recent letter, "Israel's atrocities just keep coming," Jan. 10. How can any person compare Israel to the likes of Saddam Hussein and the atrocities that he committed?

On the contrary, Israel has provided various types of humanitarian aid to the civilians of Gaza, including providing supplies and hospitalization for the wounded Palestinians in Israeli hospitals.

What other country drops leaflets, sends text messages and makes cell-phone calls to warn civilians to leave the area prior to a strike?

I am surprised that the letter writer does not question the tactics of Hamas, the "elected" leaders of the people in Gaza, for using their own people as human shields.

The writer asks for Americans to stand up for the innocent. I believe they are. Thank God for the U.S., which stands by Israel and acknowledges a country's right to defend its citizens from terrorist organizations like Hamas.

It is my hope that this conflict will come to an end without any further loss of innocent lives on either side.

Jacob Zwelling

Dayton

Graduation rate explains a lot

Re "Cash demand puts Dayton in a tough spot," Jan. 12: I agree with Dayton city leaders when they deny that there is a pattern of intentional discrimination in hiring police officers and firefighters. Sure, there are concerns about the lack of minorities in these departments.

But, instead of looking at the civil service exam and alleged discriminatory hiring practices, perhaps the Justice Department should have been looking at the high school graduation rate for black students in Dayton.

It has been improving, but it has been extremely low. In my mind, that explains much more about the problem than the test itself or the city's hiring practices.

If the unspoken goal is to change the testing and hiring practices to significantly increase the number of minority police officers and firefighters, why not just eliminate the test? Is a high school diploma required? If so, eliminate that, too.

I know this sounds ridiculous, but that seems to be the direction in which we are heading.

Joe Brafford

Beavercreek

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2009

## **OBAMA RAPIDLY CHANGING APPROACH TO MIDDLE EAST**

The Santa Fe New Mexican (New Mexico)

January 31, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 The New Mexican

**Section:** MAIN; Pg. A-8

**Length:** 802 words

**Byline:** BILL STEWART

### **Body**

---

We live in extraordinary times. This past week, President Barack Obama went to the Hill to lobby House Republicans to vote in favor of the \$825 billion stimulus package. The next day, the House indeed voted for the bill, but without a single Republican vote. Nevertheless, that evening, the president invited the Democratic and Republican leaderships from both the House and the Senate to cocktails at the White House. When was the last time that happened? In fact, has it ever happened? Moreover, did it do any good?

The verdict is still out, but there is no doubt that Obama is changing the tone in Washington.

At the same time as the vote, former Senate Majority leader George Mitchell was in Jerusalem trying to restart the Middle East peace process, something Obama has put at the top of his foreign policy agenda, along with Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Middle East peace process has languished for the past eight years, the victim of an indifferent Republican White House. If it isn't dead, it lies in a deep coma. Yet anyone with an ounce of common sense and a week's experience in the region knows that the Palestinian-Israeli dispute, sometimes with guns, always with bitterness, is the mother of all issues in the Middle East. It is not the cause of all that is wrong in the region, but it poisons the atmosphere of attempts to reach agreements on all the other issues. There is simply no getting around the problem; it must be faced and faced squarely. Obama appears to understand this, and has taken the bull by the horns, something his predecessor refused to do.

In the wake of Sept. 11, 2001, the war in Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq, the Bush administration seemed to believe there was no time left over to address the issue. The White House did not want to expend its political capital on a problem that no one else had been able to resolve, so why should they? It was a waste of time. Moreover, one of the underlying reasons for the war in Iraq was to change the equation in the Middle East that would ultimately favor Israel, which was a strong supporter of the "war on terrorism," though for its own reasons. The White House seemed to believe that the road to peace in Jerusalem lay through Baghdad. A democratic Iraq would be a beacon of light for the Middle East, helping Arab moderates and everyone else who wanted a deal with Israel. It sounds good, but it was a disastrous miscalculation; the road to peace in Jerusalem lies through Jerusalem. It always has; it still does.

The war in Gaza, which began Dec. 27 and semi-ended recently with unilateral truces declared by Israel and Hamas, has brought the Israeli-Palestinian issue to the forefront once again. Twelve Israeli soldiers were killed and one Israeli civilian. Between 1,500 and 2,000 Palestinians were killed, including hundreds of women and children. Critics of Israel say that the Israeli response to Hamas' rockets was out of proportion to the offense. Israel's overall



## OBAMA RAPIDLY CHANGING APPROACH TO MIDDLE EAST

security was never at risk, though the lives of individual Israelis were often in jeopardy. Israel answers that proportionality is not an issue when dealing with armed threats to the security of its citizens. Israel will do whatever it has to do to protect itself.

And that's where the matter stands as George Mitchell begins his initial round of talks in Jerusalem and the Arab capitals of Ramallah (the West Bank), Amman, Cairo and Riyadh. One intriguing question is how Mitchell will deal with Hamas, because deal with it he must. Much of the world, including the U.S., Israel and the European Union, regard Hamas as a terrorist organization bent on the destruction of Israel. The other aspect of Hamas, specifically its role as the governing authority in Gaza, is ignored as long as Hamas refuses to recognize Israel and renounce the use of violence. Hamas replies that as long as the Israeli blockade imprisons the 1.5 million people of Gaza and makes their lives intolerable, what use is their in dealing with the Jewish state?

Where to begin in this mess?

In the bigger picture, it is right, I believe, for Mitchell to be talking not only to the Israelis and the Palestinians, but also to the Egyptians, the Jordanians and the Saudis. Any deal must get regional backing to make it effective. But big steps begin with small ones. Israel says it will not lift the blockade until Hamas releases an Israeli soldier kidnapped several years ago. The problem is the soldier may well be dead. But surely this is one of the places to begin in restarting the whole peace process. A small success can lead to larger ones.

Who knows, maybe at one point Mitchell can host a cocktail party for Israeli and Palestinian negotiators. Now that would be progress.

Bill Stewart, a former Foreign Service officer and correspondent for Time magazine, lives in Santa Fe.

## Graphic

---

See pdf's for exact rendition, caption, graphics and photographer info.

**Load-Date:** February 2, 2009

## *Mitchell gets earful from Mideast*

Christian Science Monitor

February 2, 2009, Monday

Copyright 2009 The Christian Science Publishing Society All Rights Reserved

**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 6

**Length:** 896 words

**Byline:** Caryle Murphy Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

**Dateline:** RIYADH, Saudi Arabia

### **Body**

---

Winding up his week-long tour of the region, President Barack Obama's Middle East envoy, George Mitchell, met Saudi officials here over the weekend for an exchange of ideas on ending the volatile Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Mr. Mitchell conferred with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud bin Faisal Saturday night and met with King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Sunday.

Specifically, the talks were said to cover the Saudi-initiated Arab Peace Initiative - first offered to Israel in 2002 - as well as how to counter what many Arab states regard as an alarming development: The increased involvement of Iran in Palestinian affairs, through its partners, Syria and Hamas.

"Something needs to be done about Syria, Iran, and Hamas," said one Saudi source. "They believe that by doing what they're doing it's going ... to put them on top.... [We need] to counter it once and for all."

Arab officials and commentators have praised Obama's initial moves to improve US relations with the Muslim world. But Mitchell is no doubt discovering that there is also a deep well of skepticism that the new US president will succeed in breaking the deadly impasse on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Consensus seems widespread among Arabs that Washington must, at a minimum, demand a halt to expansions of Jewish settlements on the West Bank if the US is to convince the world that it is serious about tackling the six-decade-old conflict.

"The vast majority remains skeptical about America's efforts to repair relations with the Arab and Muslim world," wrote columnist Samar Fatany in the Arab News, a Saudi daily.

After being "an accessory to the Israeli brutality against innocent Palestinian women and children for many years," she added, "we need to hear America apply its sense of justice."

Mitchell's visit comes at a time when feelings are running high in the wake of Israel's three-week military assault on Gaza that left about 1,300 Palestinians dead, including many women and children. Israel claims it was targeting Hamas militants, but its bombs also hit hospitals and United Nations-run schools.

## Mitchell gets earful from Mideast

In brief remarks during previous stops in the Middle East, which included Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Mitchell said that securing a sustained, workable cease-fire between Israel and Hamas was of "critical importance."

Egypt, supported by Saudi Arabia, is leading the Arab diplomatic charge to reach that cease-fire, but their leverage over Hamas is limited because of their contentious relations with the Islamist movement.

Cairo and Riyadh have blamed Iranian and Syrian-backed Hamas for its rocket attacks on Israel, which instigated Israel's attack on Gaza.

Now, apparently emboldened by Iran's support, Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal has called for new Palestinian leadership to replace the Fatah-dominated Palestine Liberation Organization led by Mahmoud Abbas, who is favored by Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

On Saturday, King Abdullah called upon Palestinians to stop their "selfishness" and unite. "The competition between them is a big mistake," Saudi papers quoted him saying. "It will do them more harm than that done by Zionism. I appeal to them again to stand united in order to strengthen their cause."

Turki al-Sudairy, editor of Ar Riyadh newspaper, which reflects government thinking, said in a telephone interview: "Iran's meddling in Middle East affairs and the provocative acts of ... Hamas won't be stopped without a strong American stand on the peace process."

The Mitchell talks will include discussion on how to incorporate the Arab Peace Initiative into any new US approach to the conflict, according to a Saudi source.

Two weeks ago, frustrated by Israel's failure to respond positively to the initiative, King Abdullah told a gathering of Arab leaders in Kuwait that "Israel must understand that ... the Arab peace initiative that is on the table today will not remain there indefinitely."

Some Arab commentators were disappointed by President Obama's failure to unreservedly embrace the initiative. Announcing Mitchell's appointment at the State Department, the president said the plan "contains constructive elements" and urged Arab states to start "taking steps towards normalizing relations with Israel."

This was not received well by some Arab analysts, including Mouin Rabbani, in Amman, Jordan. To suggest that Arab countries should open diplomatic relations now, even before Israel accepted the Arab peace plan, was "an insult to Arab intelligence," Rabbani said in an interview.

But the Saudis have chosen not to dwell on that aspect of Obama's remarks. One source said that the Obama camp has been saying since last summer that it had "reservations" about the Arab peace plan.

Prince Saud bin Faisal told Saudi-owned Al Arabiya television station earlier this week that Arab states had "no reservations" about "respond[ing] to any questions posed by the American administration about the peace plan."

The prince's brother, former ambassador to Washington, Prince Turki al-Faisal, has been less diplomatic in recent days. In a widely noted opinion piece, published in the Financial Times, Mr. Turki wrote: "If the US wants to ... keep its strategic alliances intact - especially its 'special relationship' with Saudi Arabia, it will have to drastically revise its policies vis-a-vis Israel and Palestine."

(c) Copyright 2009. The Christian Science Monitor

**Load-Date:** February 1, 2009

**'Some' progress in Gaza ceasefire talks; Reported bin Laden message calls for jihad against Israel**

Ottawa Citizen

January 15, 2009 Thursday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 Ottawa Citizen, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. A6

**Length:** 690 words

**Byline:** Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service; with files from News Services

**Dateline:** JERUSALEM

## **Body**

---

As **Hamas** and Israel each gave mixed signals about whether they were willing to accept a ceasefire yesterday and a new audio message believed to be from Osama bin Laden called for Muslims to launch a jihad or holy war against the Jewish state, the death toll in Gaza passed 1,000, according to medical workers there.

After a chaotic Cairo news conference that included much shouting, but almost no information, exiled **Hamas** leaders returned to Syria yesterday to discuss reservations that they still had with an Egyptian-backed truce proposal, while their counterparts from Gaza, who were thought to be more flexible, stayed in Egypt to await another round of talks.

A senior Israeli envoy was slated to return to Cairo today to present his country's position to Egyptian go-betweens and to get from them as good an idea as possible of what **Hamas's** position was.

Until now, the Egyptian initiative has been hung up over **Hamas** demands that Israel withdraw all its troops from Gaza and completely re-open its borders with the territory.

For their part, Egyptian negotiators said some progress had been made towards agreement on a ceasefire. There were few details, but **Hamas** seemed prepared for the first time to accept a European offer of observers to monitor the tunnels used to smuggle arms from Egypt and a gradual ceasefire that, if it held, would soon be followed by an agreement covering the next year.

With the international clamour for a ceasefire growing louder, there was a growing feeling in Israel that the war, which has so far cost 13 Israeli lives, had reached its final stages. This sentiment has gone hand-in-hand with intense speculation here that Israel wants most or all of its troops out of Gaza before Barack Obama is sworn as U.S. president next Tuesday.

"We can and should do all of this by the 20th," Giora Eilan, a retired major-general who was Israel's national security adviser from 2004 to 2006, told a small group of foreign journalists. Mr. Eilan, who had been a senior operations officer in the army, said that the factor causing delay in the talks was not so much **Hamas** as it was Egypt, which also had concerns about the border with Israel that it wanted to address.

'Some' progress in Gaza ceasefire talks; Reported bin Laden message calls for jihad against Israel

Without elaborating, Mr. Eilan said: "Some people (in Israel) believe we are in exactly the right spot today and can reach a solution within a few hours or days. ... A simple ceasefire can and should be agreed to by Israel in a short time."

The Israeli media have also made much of bickering between Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who, it is said, wants to continue the war and Defence Minister Ehud Barak, who does not. Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni was apparently sitting on the fence, but perhaps tilting slightly toward Mr. Olmert's view.

Israeli tanks and artillery pounded Gaza city in a relentless barrage of shelling early today. Video footage from a Reuters camera in downtown Gaza showed sustained artillery fire from the edge of the city. Shells exploded in downtown areas and long machine-gun bursts echoed off cramped housing blocks.

Israeli warplanes blasted Gaza's southern border with Egypt, carrying out approximately 35 bombing raids.

At least 16 people were killed in the night-time raids across the territory.

Of the Palestinians who have died in Gaza, more than 40 per cent of them were women and children, according to medical workers in the enclave. Mark Regev, Mr. Olmert's spokesman, expressed regret to the BBC over the civilian deaths, but said Hamas was to blame because it insisted on fighting in heavily populated areas.

Israel also released an update on the delivery of 111 truckloads of humanitarian aid and 104,000 litres of fuel to Gaza yesterday. International aid agencies have said this was not nearly enough assistance to alleviate a humanitarian crisis among the coastal strip's 1.5 million residents.

Islamist websites yesterday carried what was reported as a new Bin Laden audio message urging a holy struggle over the Gaza offensive.

"We are with you and we will not let you down. Our fate is tied to yours in fighting the Crusader-Zionist coalition, in fighting until victory or martyrdom," the voice on the tape said.

## Graphic

---

Colour Photo: Mahmud Hams, Agence France-Presse, Getty Images; An unidentified boy peers out from a building damaged by an Israeli air strike in Gaza City yesterday. ;

**Load-Date:** January 15, 2009

**Israelis are hit by new wave of rockets fired from Lebanon**

The Evening Standard (London)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

A Edition

Copyright 2009 Evening Standard Limited All Rights Reserved

London  
**Evening  
Standard**

**Section:** Pg. 6

**Length:** 468 words

**Byline:** MARTIN BENTHAM

**Body**

---

ISRAEL was today hit by rocket attacks from Lebanon. At least three Katyusha rockets landed in northern Israel, prompting residents to flee to bomb shelters, although there were no reported injuries.

In return, Israel fired eight rockets into southern Lebanon in what it said was a "pinpointed" strike aimed at the source of the rocket fire.

The clashes, which follow a similar exchange of fire last week, will raise renewed fears that the 19-day-old conflict in Gaza could spread to Israel's border with Lebanon in what would be a serious escalation of the fighting.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for today's rocket fire, although Hezbollah, the militant organisation which fought a monthlong war with Israel in 2006, denied being behind last week's attacks. It is likely that the rockets were fired by Palestinian militants sheltering in Lebanon, which would reduce the likelihood of a serious conflagration.

In Gaza City, **Hamas** militants and Israeli troops fought hand to hand today. The clashes occurred in the suburbs as Israel's troops continued to push towards the city centre.

The ground offensive, which came as doctors warned of severe malnutrition across Gaza, was backed up by about 60 new air strikes by Israeli warplanes and renewed shelling from gunboats.

In return, at least three rockets were reported to have hit Israel today to add to the total of 25 which were launched by Palestinian militants yesterday.

At least five Israeli soldiers were injured in the clashes, while the overall Palestinian death toll is now approaching 1,000, including several hundred children and a substantial number of **women**. Israel says that 10 of its soldiers and three civilians have died.

## Israelis are hit by new wave of rockets fired from Lebanon

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who has repeatedly called for an immediate ceasefire, arrived in Egypt for talks with president Hosni Mubarak in a renewed bid to win support for a Franco-Egyptian peace plan upon which hopes of an end to the violence are pinned.

Mr Ban is also due to meet Israeli and Palestinian leaders and senior politicians in Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan, but is not scheduled to meet any representatives of **Hamas**.

Options thought to be under discussion are for Turkish troops to be deployed along Egypt's border with Gaza to prevent weapons smuggling by militants and the resolution of Israel's key demand that any peace plan must include measures that would prevent **Hamas** from rearming.

Mr Ban is also expected to press for new efforts to encourage the re-opening of border crossings into Gaza, one of **Hamas**'s central demands, and to bolster the flow of humanitarian aid.

Incoming US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton warned that the new American administration will not engage in negotiations with **Hamas** unless it first renounces violence and recognises the right of Israel to exist..

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Which way will Obama jump on Israel?*

The Daily Telegraph (London)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 Telegraph Media Group Limited All Rights Reserved

# The Daily Telegraph

**Section:** FEATURES; Leading article; Pg. 21

**Length:** 863 words

**Byline:** Irwin Stelzer

## Body

---

Most American presidents take office intending to focus on domestic issues. Franklin Roosevelt planned to go down in history as the destroyer of the Great Depression and the man who kept America out of foreign wars, and instead became one of the leaders of the war against Hitler's genocidal Nazi regime. Lyndon Johnson intended to wage war on poverty, and ended up waging war in Vietnam. George W Bush won election promising to make tax cuts his primary goal: 9/11 changed his priorities.

So with Barack Obama. The President-elect has been trying to keep Congress and the American public solidly behind his domestic economic stimulus package. With difficulty, as Congressional opposition to some features of that programme mounts. "I don't work for Barack Obama," says Harry Reid, leader of the Democrats in the Senate.

Inevitably, foreign affairs are diverting attention from Obama's domestic plans. Looming in the background is Afghanistan, to which he has promised to commit more troops. And Iran, with nuclear ambitions that candidate Obama said he finds unacceptable and a threat to the region and the world. And leaping to the foreground is the Israeli effort to end Hamas's rocket attacks on its civilian population.

In five days Obama will no longer be able to avoid the issue by claiming, quite rightly, that America has only one president at a time. Polls suggest that a majority of rank-and-file Democrats want the Israelis to declare a ceasefire, leaving in place Hamas's ability to rearm using its network of tunnels from Egypt, and with no credible way of preventing the terrorist group from launching hundreds of missiles at increasingly distant targets within Israel.

Never mind that the civilian casualties caused by the Israeli Defence Force are collateral damage, while the casualties caused by Hamas are the purpose of its rocket attacks. Or that Hamas is violating the Geneva Convention by hiding behind its women, endangering children by storing arms in schools, and risking the lives of the sick by placing its headquarters under Gaza City's Shifa hospital - built by the Israelis when they occupied Gaza. Most Democratic voters, understandably appalled by the horrible pictures that Hamas makes available to the Western press, want Israel to stop its attacks. Now.

Whether the Israelis will bow to mounting international pressure remains to be seen. One faction in its government knows that the world has stood silent while thousands of rockets have rained on its people during the years of the



## Which way will Obama jump on Israel ?

so-called truce with Hamas, and that history suggests that "the international community" cares little about the survival of the world's only Jewish state.

Another sees the goodwill of other nations as key to Israel's long-run survival, and worries that Britain is taking an increasingly anti-Israel line: foreign minister David Miliband is insisting that Israel labels products of the West Bank in a way that would make their importation into the EU difficult or impossible, and Gordon Brown has lined up with the peace-at-any-price, ceasefire-with-no-conditions crowd. Throw in Nicolas Sarkozy's attempt to strut across the world stage as the arbiter of the current dispute, and you have a powerful coalition forming to deny Israel this chance to enhance its security.

The key, of course, remains the United States, Israel's so-far staunch ally. Which puts Barack Obama front and centre on January 20. The outgoing Bush administration, itself divided between the Condi Rice doves and the Dick Cheney hawks, won't be around to hide behind.

Obama shares his party's belief in diplomacy, in the importance and efficacy of working with allies and international organisations, and will be reluctant to exercise the UN Security Council veto that has stood between Israel and the wrath of Arab nations and others opposed to the existence of the Jewish state or indifferent to its survival. He will feel the tug of his party's Left-wing base - the people who gave him the nomination over the more moderate Hillary Clinton. The new president will also be hearing from those among his advisers who see Israel not as a strategic asset in the Middle East and the global war on terror, but as a liability that dilutes American influence in the Muslim world.

Israel is counting on the realists in the Obama foreign-policy team to make its case. These advisers know that diplomacy cannot bridge the difference between parties when one contestant is so committed to the destruction of the other that it uses its resources to construct tunnels through which to smuggle arms rather than to build a viable economy. International monitors who can't shoot straight, or not at all, will not prevent the rearming of Hamas or the continuation of rocket attacks, as experience in Lebanon proves. Incoming Secretary of State Hillary Clinton knows that, even if the department professionals don't. She knows, too, that despite their posturing most Arab governments have little use for Hamas.

Obama will have to choose between the lady at his State Department and the left-wing talk-at-any price wing of his party. No one can guess which this most opaque of all new presidents will choose.

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2009

## *(Ducking the) Decision Day*

The Jerusalem Post

January 30, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** OPINION; Pg. 24

**Length:** 2112 words

**Byline:** DAVID HOROVITZ

**Highlight:** Even would-be friends of Israel don't know which vision of the country they should be defending. How can they know, when we won't make up our own minds? EDITOR'S NOTES

### **Body**

---

The elections are still more than a week away, but I can tell you already who lost. Israel did.

The polls consistently indicate that Binyamin Netanyahu's Likud will be the biggest party in the next Knesset. Tzipi Livni's Kadima would have to manage a late surge to surpass it, but having long since lost the center-right, it is now losing part of the center, too, and is slipping backward. Ehud Barak's Labor party has been bolstered by his perceived efficient performance as defense minister in the confrontation with Hamas. But Labor lags far behind, and is looking over its shoulder, worrying that Avigdor Lieberman's Israel Beiteinu will overtake it as Israel's third largest party. We will, thus, almost certainly be electing a right-wing or center-right government to replace the center-left coalition led by Kadima.

All this I know, as do you. What I don't know, clearly and specifically, is which Israel it is that these key parties want to lead toward, if given the opportunity by our voters next week. Many of the smaller parties do have defined positions; these more minor parties, though, will not be dominating the next coalition.

Most importantly, I don't know if the Likud, our likely new party of government, is committed to dramatically expanding Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria, as several of its Knesset members-in-waiting dearly hope; whether it will restrict expansion to "natural growth," without building new settlements, as Netanyahu has indicated; or whether it might even prove susceptible to pressure for a settlement freeze and the dismantling of homes.

Will the man who chose not to firmly oppose the Gaza disengagement until it was too late to stop it, now seek a hard-to-discern middle path on security and negotiation? How will he reconcile pressures from the Obama administration, on one side, and the hawks on his own Knesset list, on the other? Does he have a clear goal in terms of Israel's permanent contours, or will his be a reactive prime ministership, defined by the pressures placed upon him at home and abroad and his ability to maneuver, short-term, between them?

Likewise, I don't know if Kadima, in the unlikely event of its continued primacy, is bent on accelerating the negotiations its outgoing Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has been conducting with the Mahmoud Abbas-led Palestinian Authority, in which Olmert was desperately striving to reach an accord on all areas of dispute, involving unprecedented readiness for territorial compromise. Or whether Kadima's new leader, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, would adopt a more cautious approach, notably as regards the fate of Jerusalem. Or whether a more hawkish stance, as set out by her defeated party leadership rival Shaul Mofaz, would prevail.

## (Ducking the) Decision Day

Then there's Labor, the party that, at Camp David in 2000 and in the subsequent final months of president Clinton's administration, sought and failed to achieve a permanent agreement with the Yasser Arafat-led PA. I don't know whether, even as a junior coalition partner, it would push for further concessions than those considered by Barak back then. Those concessions, it will be recalled, fell some way short of the parameters apparently contemplated by Olmert in recent months. Labor in the years up to and including Camp David, after all, confidently predicted that it would be able to reach a permanent accommodation with the PA while expanding Israeli sovereignty into five, 10 or more percent of the West Bank.

And finally, there is Israel Beiteinu, enjoying a dramatic rise in the polls by playing on rising Israeli Jewish concerns over deepening Arab hostility. I don't know how seriously it would seek to press its trademark demand for a remaking of Israel's sovereign borders, to redraw the line so that predominantly Arab areas adjacent to the West Bank border in northern Israel were redesignated as part of a Palestinian state, in return for the annexation by Israel of parts of Judea and Samaria with a heavy settlement presence.

Since our politicians have refused, entirely predictably, to reform our dismal electoral system, and we are thus condemned to further years of multi-party paralysis - excuse me, multi-party government - this already muddy picture will be further confused by the conflicting goals of the coalition partners.

And, yes, Israel will be the loser.

ISRAEL'S OFFICIAL public relations head honchos are feeling rather pleased with their performance during Operation Cast Lead. They note, accurately, that articulate spokespeople were made available to set out Israel's case in a variety of languages as the conflict unfolded.

They note that when the IDF killed 30 or more civilians at a UN school in Jabalya on January 6, the heavy civilian loss of life did not prove a turning point that massively exacerbated international criticism and constrained ongoing military action - in contrast to a similar incident during the war against Hizbullah in 2006. The difference, this time, was that the IDF Spokesman produced a chapter-and-verse response almost immediately, including the contention that a **Hamas** mortar battery had fired on the IDF, the names of two **Hamas** operatives purportedly killed in the return fire and footage of fire from the same school area in 2007.

But such "achievements" notwithstanding, any official Israeli PR contentment is wildly misplaced. Israel achieved impressive, if limited, military success against **Hamas**, confronting, though still not yet entirely halting, the rocket fire, while keeping IDF losses to a minimum and enjoying the backing of an efficiently marshalled home front. The portents are not good, but the jury is necessarily still out on the efficacy of the much-touted new mechanisms to prevent **Hamas** from rearming and strengthening.

But overall, on the media-diplomacy battlefield, Israel suffered a stinging defeat. Its legitimate insistence that **Hamas** brought disaster down upon the people of Gaza has not widely resonated. Its legitimate assertion that it sought to minimize civilian fatalities - pursuing pinpoint targets and warning locals to leave areas that were about to be attacked - when fighting an enemy that had ruthlessly placed Gaza civilians in the line of fire, is widely dismissed.

And if that uncomprehending trend in world public opinion is largely the fault of superficial international media coverage, Israel contributed to the momentum by failing, 2006-style, to prepare the media and diplomatic ground for its resort to force with the same kind of efficiency it displayed in its military preparations. Just as the army carefully researched and selected its **Hamas** targets in the months ahead, success on the public diplomacy battlefield required - also for months ahead, in all diplomatic and public frameworks - highlighting the avowed destructive goals of **Hamas**, the relentless threat of the rocket attacks, and the untenable reality these had produced for southern Israel.

Once the conflict began, the IDF contributed further to the negative perception by failing to produce figures on the number and nature of the Palestinian dead to counter **Hamas**-Gaza government claims that most of those killed were civilians, including many hundreds of **women** and children. Belatedly and off-the-record, Israeli officials now assert that the overwhelming majority of the Gaza fatalities were **Hamas** members, and even claim to have

## (Ducking the) Decision Day

identified the vast majority of them. Too vague. Too late. As Israel had to know it would be, the toll of the civilian dead was the barometer by which Israel's purported "disproportionate" response was measured; all evidence that Israel had of the skewing of that total needed to be produced with the same urgency as was displayed in the response to the shelling of the UN school.

The negative diplomatic fallout - emblemized by the UN Security Council resolution - was an inevitable consequence of the critical media coverage. And the aftershocks, already felt far and wide, will also linger long. Latin American countries severing ties; Turkey shifting from ally to enemy; a global spike in anti-Semitism - these are the most overt indications. But the damage is more severe still.

Ordinary people watching TV everywhere, people who consider themselves "right-thinking" decent folk, were terribly affected by the footage from Gaza - as, of course, we were here, too. But here we could see what was off-camera. We recognized that Hamas had been gradually acquiring the capacity to terrorize all of Israel, and was holding (a largely sympathetic) civilian Gaza hostage in the hope of deterring Israel from tackling that threat. We knew that the IDF was striving to defang Hamas without setting off the booby-trapped schools and apartment blocks in which Hamas was hoping more Palestinians would be killed. We knew that Hamas was fighting out of uniform and that the Palestinian "civilian" death tolls were distorted.

Nowhere else were viewers as able to absorb those wider, perception-shifting factors. And so, inevitably, they have drawn erroneous conclusions about Israel and Hamas, protector and aggressor, right and wrong.

BUT WHILE the challenge of explaining Israel's actions in Gaza was daunting - and Israel was defeated on that second battlefield by the mix of its own public diplomacy shortcomings and media superficiality - it is dwarfed by the wider task of explaining Israel, and defending Israel and "selling" Israel, even to our friends, when we have yet to decide which Israel it is we wish to be and thus to sell.

In every conceivable forum - every media panel, every conference, every diplomatic gathering - representatives of Israel speak in a jarring discord of patriotic voices. Israel should retake Gaza; no, it must open the borders to Gaza and negotiate with Hamas. There can be no compromise on Jerusalem; no, we must relinquish the Palestinian neighborhoods of our capital city. Israel must retain all of Judea and Samaria, and hang the consequences in terms of our own democracy and international support; no, it must return to the pre '67 lines, stay Jewish, take security risks; no again, we must find a new middle ground short of the "Auschwitz borders."

Is an international political "friend of Israel" someone who pushes for the kind of accord advocated by our departing prime minister - someone, that is, like France's President Nicolas Sarkozy, who passionately tells us that "the future of Israel is at stake" and that we must show trust and take risks for peace? Or does that stance render Sarkozy a liability to our true cause? Is the Obama administration's likely maintenance of long-standing American opposition to the settlement enterprise proof of its flaws, or evidence that it has accurately judged where our best interests lie? Are the Greater Israel Christian Evangelists our worst nightmare or our best true friends?

There is no consensual Israeli answer to these questions. Our diplomats and advocates are thus left promoting a product whose most basic dimensions they cannot decisively describe. Our friends cannot know which Israel they ought to be supporting; we haven't told them.

Contrast that with the Palestinians. They speak with just two voices. What we want, the Abbas-led PA and its supporters chorus in unison, is a Palestinian state in the West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem and a just solution to the problem of the refugees. What we want, counters Hamas, is the elimination of Israel, albeit with the possibility of an interim accommodation along the '67 lines. Duplicitous or not, it's a clear agenda, offering a clear choice to both the Palestinians themselves and would-be peacemakers.

What, meanwhile, does Israel want? For the 41-and-a-half years since the Six Day War, we have insistently not made our minds up, even as facts shifted inexorably on the ground. For much of that time we deluded ourselves that Arab intransigence to any notion of compromise rendered such a decision irrelevant. Our heads are in the sand even as it shifts.

(Ducking the) Decision Day

Of course, all other democracies strive to reconcile internal divides, but only in ours have the arguments, decade after decade, failed to produce a workable consensus as to the very contours of our nation.

A week-and-a-half from now, across these unresolved fundamental divides, we will be unhappily casting our uncertain ballots for representatives who, on the whole, have managed to avoid setting out their own red lines and telling us their own specific conception of Israel - representatives who, in some cases, aspire to lead us without even having made those conceptual choices themselves. The blind led by the evasive.

What does Israel seek for itself? The day of fateful choice is upon us again. Watch us duck it.

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

---

End of Document

## *Jerusalem blasts Red Cross for its report slamming Israel*

The Jerusalem Post

June 30, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 4

**Length:** 540 words

**Byline:** JUDY SIEGEL and HERB KEINON

### **Body**

---

Israel rejected as "scandalous" a highly critical report released by the International Committee of the Red Cross on Monday marking six months since Operation Cast Lead, saying it was inconceivable that the document would chastise Israel for the situation in Gaza while ignoring the continued detention of IDF soldier Gilad Schalit or the "intransigent belligerence" of Hamas.

According to the report, residents of the Strip are "living in desperation" due to their "daily struggle for existence."

"Gazans still cannot rebuild their lives," the report reads. "Most people struggle to make ends meet. Seriously ill patients face great difficulty obtaining the treatment they need. Many children suffer from deep psychological problems. Civilians whose homes and belongings were destroyed during the conflict are unable to recover," the ICRC maintained.

"During the 22 days of the Israeli military operation, nowhere in Gaza was safe for civilians. Hospitals were overwhelmed with casualties, including small children, women and elderly people. Medical personnel showed incredible courage and determination, working around the clock to save lives in extremely difficult circumstances.

"Meanwhile, daily rocket attacks launched from Gaza put thousands of residents at risk in southern Israel. Medical workers in Israel provided care for the traumatized population and treated and evacuated casualties," the Red Cross report said.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor said it was "scandalous" that the report "completely ignored the detention of an Israeli hostage under absolute isolation for three years, and in breach of every elementary human right."

Palmor said the Red Cross had failed miserably in its responsibility to visit prisoners. "What is more, it evades the question of his [Schalit's] inhuman detention and of the role of that case in bringing about the current crisis," said.

Palmor said the crisis in Gaza had been brought on by "the Hamas junta," and that the Red Cross knew perfectly well "what Hamas needs to do to dramatically improve the situation."

Disregarding Schalit and Hamas in a report on the Gaza Strip, Palmor said, "does not add to the credibility of the Red Cross's important mission, nor does it contribute to finding a real solution to the Gaza problem."

The "bread and butter" of the Red Cross mission was to visit prisoners, and its failure to visit Schalit reflected poorly on the organization, Palmor said.

## Jerusalem blasts Red Cross for its report slamming Israel

According to the ICRC report, "Israel's military operation left thousands of homes partly or totally destroyed. Whole neighborhoods were turned into rubble. Schools, kindergartens, hospitals and fire and ambulance stations were damaged by shelling. This small coastal strip is cut off from the outside world. Even before the latest hostilities, drastic restrictions on the movement of people and goods imposed by the Israeli authorities... Insufficient cooperation between the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and the **Hamas** administration in Gaza had also hit the provision of essential services."

The authors claimed that even though \$4.5 billion worth of goods have been promised the Palestinians in Gaza, little will come of the aid as the transfer of goods into the Strip is severely limited by Israel.

## Graphic

---

Photo: DUTCH DEVELOPMENT Aid Minister Bert Koenders runs by children at an UNRWA summer camp on the beach in Gaza City yesterday. (Credit: Hatem Moussa/AP)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

---

End of Document

## *Choice is talk or fight again*

Weekend Australian

January 31, 2009 Saturday

2 - All-round First Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** FEATURES; Pg. 23

**Length:** 2422 words

**Byline:** John Lyons

### **Body**

---

Blood, horror, hate and hope -- Middle East correspondent John Lyons enters the Gaza Strip after Israel's siege and invasion and finds a new battle for hearts and minds

HOW is it that a 15-month-old girl, her body cooked by fire, can lie by the side of the road for eight days being eaten by dogs as soldiers from one of the most powerful armies in the world march by?

This week, as that girl's older brother, Mahmoud Abu Halima, walked through the strawberry fields of the Gaza Strip in the late afternoon sun, the Mediterranean Sea glistening in the distance, it appeared an idyllic lifestyle.

But a few minutes later, as we looked across the wall that marks the border with Israel, he began fiddling with his mobile phone. Finally, he handed me an image saved on his phone that surely must be the most horrible thing anyone could see: a photograph of his 15-month-old sister, Shahed, the flesh eaten off both legs of her little charred body.

Shahed Abu Halima died a horrible death, burned by fire that appears to have been caused by white phosphorus shells, something illegal under international law. It appears to have been phosphorus because when her brother tried to pour water on his burning father as he hugged three of his children the flames accelerated.

All four died. They had been sitting in the centre of the house, where there were no windows, thinking this would protect them against the Israeli attacks when a rocket came through the roof and incinerated them.

The end of Shahed's life -- dying in her father's arms, along with a brother and sister -- as Mahmoud tried to throw water on her was horrible. But even in death she had no dignity.

Her body lay at the side of the road for eight days, her temporary grave the site of what three witnesses have alleged to Inquirer was the scene of a war crime by Israeli soldiers.

It was January 4, about 4pm, the day after Israel began its ground offensive in the Gaza. The Israeli shelling was heavy and Mahmoud had been at a friend's house. He heard a shell explode nearby and rushed out to see where it landed. He saw smoke coming out of his family home. He ran, wanting to see whether any of his family members were inside. The first thing he saw was his mother staggering down the corridor.

The story of the Abu Halima family is but one of the horrors of the Gaza war.



## Choice is talk or fight again

Like many wars, this war is complicated. It is just not as simple as Israelis are all bad and Palestinians are all good.

**Hamas**, the faction of Palestinians that runs the Gaza, has done some dreadful things, such as its campaign -- on and off for eight years, even before it won government -- to fire rockets into Israel, sometimes up to 70 a day. This means 800,000 civilians in Israel live within range -- and fear -- of death by missile.

**Hamas** puts fear into many Palestinians; and people who speak openly against **Hamas** and in favour of their rival Fatah, know that broken kneecaps, literally, are not out of the question.

But a tour this week showed some horrifying realities of life in Gaza after the war. This is a desperate place sinking deeper into despair that in turn may fuel the sort of anger that Israel would rather not have to deal with.

The main hospital of Gaza is desperate. I saw doctors running from one building to another, trying to save some of the estimated 5000 people injured. A tent has been set up in the carpark to cater for the overflow.

Israel has said it is committed to humanitarian aid to assist those injured from the conflict. But the Erez crossing -- the main crossing between Israel and Gaza -- is like a ghost town. When trucks with humanitarian aid are desperately needed, Erez checkpoint is deserted. It is closed at random by Israel and few trucks with aid are getting through.

As I left Gaza for Israel on Thursday, I was the only person that day to have got through after an hour and a half from its opening. They just leave people sitting around for hours. Only two cars entered Gaza.

Just when Palestinians need aid more than ever the blockade that Israel has had on Gaza for 18 months has been tightened even further. This was not helped by the killing this week of an Israeli soldier by **Hamas**. Israel has a policy that whenever such an incident happens it automatically closes its crossings into Gaza.

Inside Gaza in the main hospital I saw Third-World conditions: a toilet room was flooded and the toilet bowl full of faeces. My attempts to flush it came to nothing as the toilet was broken. Food was left lying around, dirty clothes on the floor and the medical staff near breaking point, surely a recipe for an outbreak of infection.

In the hospital I visited an eight-year-old boy who, while playing, picked up what his mother called "some little leftovers" that blew up in his face. I spoke to a 15-year-old girl with a smashed leg whom French doctors tried to take to France for better treatment but Egyptian officials refused to let her pass. A little girl with a bleeding kidney came up to me, at the urging of her mother, to shake my hand in case I could help. A woman, thinking I was a doctor, asked my translator if I could give her son priority as his condition was deteriorating quickly; when I told her I was only a journalist she thanked me anyway. At the Erez crossing a humanitarian worker had been waiting for two hours and still couldn't get through.

In the hospital I met a woman whose leg was blown off when a rocket landed in her house. Her friend, by her bed, said when she arrived she could recognise bits of the leg on the floor.

War is not pretty, but in Gaza the peace is ugly too. The children's ward has a terrible sadness about it. When I asked the 15-year-old who had tried to get to France why she thought Israel had attacked she said: "I don't know."

Israel's standard response to the deaths of civilians is that, while unfortunate, they happened to be around **Hamas**, who deliberately use civilians as shields. This is sometimes true: a 2007 video clearly shows **Hamas** fighters using school grounds to fire rockets into Israel.

And one man I met, whose house had been destroyed, confirmed that **Hamas** had been firing from his area.

This is also the tale of two cities: Gaza City and Israel's capital, Jerusalem. Last Sunday I sat in a park in the well-to-do Jerusalem suburb of Rehavia with my young son as some mothers arrived. They sat around with the best prams money can buy, discussing in American accents which prams had the best designs. Life as we know it in the West.

## Choice is talk or fight again

Ninety minutes' drive from there, during the following four days, I found in Gaza a different world with dramatically different concerns. I met a man whose life is dominated by the image of his burned sister; I met a woman who saw her son shot dead and says as a result the first chance she gets she will help Hamas fire rockets into Israel; I watched a doctor who had just pleaded for both sides to listen to each other cry at the graves of his three daughters.

Gaza is one of the poorest places one could imagine, a poor place that has just become much poorer. Shops turn their electricity off to save money. I went into a shop to buy water and it was so dark I could barely see anything.

Driving through Gaza one comes across entire areas that have been devastated, police stations are in ruins, houses have crumbled. Palestinian authorities claim 5000 buildings were totally destroyed, about 50,000 partially destroyed, 20 schools destroyed and 75 mosques hit.

The holes in the walls are like silent witnesses to the 22-day war: one minute you see where mortar shells have destroyed entire rooms. Then you'll see where dozens of bullets were sprayed across a house.

The reactions of Gazans are crucial for where the conflict goes now.

Israel says a key aim was deterrence: that any Palestinian will know that a single rocket into Israel will bring a huge response and that this will cause Palestinians to pressure Hamas to give up violence.

I found that many who had been directly hit by the attacks -- either lost a relative or had their house destroyed -- were angry and pledged support for Hamas, whereas people who were not directly hit often expressed anger that Hamas's insistence on firing rockets into Israel had caused all this.

Despite fear of speaking against Hamas, I found three men who criticised Hamas saying Gaza had deteriorated since Hamas had been in charge. One man made a spitting gesture when I mentioned Hamas as he pointed to destroyed buildings saying, ``Hamas cause Israeli rocket".

An accountant showed me a picture on his mobile phone of a five-year-old girl he knew who had been killed by ``an Israeli sniper". Nonetheless, the man said Hamas was the problem. When I asked him what was the solution, he said: ``The solution for me is to emigrate to another country. Living here we might be killed tonight, tomorrow, next week."

The psychological pressure is certainly real. I was in Gaza the day the news came through that an Israeli soldier had been killed: many people said they dreaded the news because they knew there would be retaliation. To get into Gaza from Israel one walks down a long, dusty road of no-man's land at the Erez crossing. To the right are smashed buildings and piles of concrete. If you turn around and look up you see a large balloon that Israel uses for surveillance: the Gaza, after all, is only 40km long and 10km wide. More blood must have been spilt here per square kilometre than almost anywhere else on earth.

Surveillance planes and drones seem ever present. One afternoon as I spoke to farmers in a strawberry field the sound of a surveillance plane became louder. The farmers said standing in a group is dangerous and they quickly dispersed.

I met two Palestinians who were both angry because of the Israeli offensive but whose anger was directed in completely different ways. The woman wanted revenge and said the war had turned her from somebody who confronted Hamas to someone who would now fire rockets at Israel. The man had just had three daughters killed but wanted healing.

The woman is Nabeela Abu Halima who watched as her 18-year-old son, Matar, was shot, she says in cold blood. She and two other eyewitnesses say even though he had his hands in the air the soldiers shot him and another man who had been taking injured people to hospital on a tractor.

Israeli Defence Forces spokesman Captain Benjamin Rutland told Inquirer the incident was being investigated but that soldiers were trained to respect civilians and try to minimise injuries to civilians. A statement issued later by the

## Choice is talk or fight again

IDF said that after preliminary investigations ``two armed militants were spotted riding a tractor along with an infant's body".

``The militants opened fire on IDF troops, and both the terrorists were killed in the following exchange of fire."

The woman showed us where soldiers had allegedly violated her house, painting graffiti on her wall, including of a naked woman, a map of Israel with a clenched fist at the border of the Gaza, a Star of David and in Hebrew the words: ``Next time it's going to be harder."

The soldiers also allegedly defecated in her pots and pans.

The IDF refused to answer Inquirer's questions about why four people were shot -- two fatally and Nabeela and Omar Abu Halima through the arms -- if there were only two armed militants on the tractor, why the body of the girl was left by the road for eight days and whether soldiers had defecated in Nabeela Abu Halima's pots and pans and written graffiti on her walls.

Abu Halima says she used to confront **Hamas** fighters who wanted to fire rockets into Israel from her street because she knows it brings certain retaliation.

But now she is angry that her son was killed in front of her. She is angry that her younger son, Ali, 15, ``saw the bullet go into his brother and the blood spilt over other people". She says she now has nothing to lose: ``Now if **Hamas** members come back I swear to god I will help them fire rockets into Israel."

But doctor Izzeldin Abu al-Aish is directing his anger very differently. Abu al-Aish speaks Hebrew fluently. He lives in Gaza but as an obstetrician and gynaecologist has many patients in Israel.

His case has affected many Israelis: a newspaper columnist wrote in Haaretz that the doctor had ``managed to finally penetrate the layer of cast lead that has sealed the ears of the Israeli public since the Gaza operation began", referring to Operation Cast Lead, the official name for the siege and incursion.

During the war he was talking on Israeli television when his own house was bombed. Three of his daughters were killed.

Abu al-Aish then held a media conference to plead for an end to the war. His pleas were interrupted when an Israeli woman shouted ``who knows what was going on in your house?", suggesting **Hamas** had been there.

Another woman joined in, shouting that he was a ``piece of trash" and then the media representatives turned on the **women**.

When I visited Abu Al-Aish this week at his house in Gaza I found a man with the sort of courage that is needed if this conflict is ever to be solved. Rather than show bitterness he says he felt the media acted wrongly by shutting down the woman. The media should have allowed her to express her views, he says. She had three sons as Israeli soldiers and had legitimate concerns. After the press conference the doctor initiated a meeting with the woman. ``I told her we can disagree but we must listen to each other."

The profile the whole episode has given him in Israel has given him some comfort.

``The blood of my daughters and the blood of the innocent Palestinians, the Gazans, was not futile. It entered the minds, the hearts, the houses of every Israeli.

``She was one of two or three Israelis who attacked me, but look on the other side. How many Israelis were listening?"

The future for the conflict is not looking good. The war has set back any peace hopes even further. Israel, in the medium term, can survive on military might. But in the long term, for the sake of both Israelis and Palestinians, peace, security and economic wellbeing are crucial.

Choice is talk or fight again

The battle for the hearts and minds on both sides is on in earnest.

For Palestinians, the issue is whether more people listen to those who would perpetuate the cycle of violence -- such as Abu Halima, who says she watched her son shot in cold blood -- or those who would break it, such as the doctor, Abu al-Aish. For Israelis, the key question is whether more people feel like the woman who shouted at the doctor before she sat down with him -- or after.

US intervenes -- Page 24

**Load-Date:** January 31, 2009

---

End of Document

## Middle East turmoil demands political initiative from Europe

The Irish Times

February 18, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 The Irish Times All Rights Reserved

**Section:** OPINION; Opinion; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1305 words

### **Body**

---

**OPINION:**The attack on Gaza has underscored the need for Europe to help forge peace in the region, writes PROINSIAS DE ROSSA

*Have you ever wondered what hell looked like? Well . . . look around you bitch. Ha Ha Ha.*

Those chilling words, written in a neat hand, were left by an Israeli soldier on the walls of a house in the countryside I visited during my trip to Gaza last week.

Speaking through interpreters, neighbours told us how the tanks came, and how they ran from their house to a house further up the laneway. The Israeli Defence Forces called on them to come out with their hands up. Using bits of cotton as white flags, they walked back down. The Israelis started firing on them. Two women were hit and fell: a grandmother and her 35-year-old daughter. They bled to death where they fell. Ambulances were refused access. The two women lived in the house used by Israeli soldiers for graffiti practice. This was cold-blooded murder; a war crime. It cannot be explained away by claiming these women were shielding Hamas militants.

Elsewhere in a suburb of Gaza City, we visited the pile of rubble that used to be the American International School, a privately owned school that taught American business methods to 200 Palestinian students. We met the school's director, who wondered in bewilderment why Israel would want to demolish his school. The irony is that Israel – the most Americanised part of the Middle East – destroyed a school that Hamas had tried to shut down on three previous occasions.

I also met Palestinian politicians including prime minister Salam Fayyad, the former World Bank official. During my previous trips, such meetings had been polite, but this time they were frank. When I wondered how Hamas could not realise the counter-productive effect of their rockets launched into Israel, they asked whether we Europeans realise they have been under occupation for 40 years.

One of their questions was particularly telling: will Europe ostracise Israel if Avigdor Lieberman (the far-right politician who won 15 seats in the Knesset) joins the government, in the same way that we ostracised the Palestinian unity government because it included Hamas?

All politicians we met in the West Bank and Gaza – whether representing Fatah, Hamas or the PLO – stated their support for a Palestinian government of national accord. They are pessimistic about unity. They are putting their hopes in the Egyptian-sponsored meetings later this month aimed at forging such an agreement.

There was heavy criticism by the smaller parties we met of human rights abuses, including physical abuse by Palestinian security personnel in both parts of the territories. All were dismissive of Tony Blair's role as the envoy

## Middle East turmoil demands political initiative from Europe

for the quartet of interests (the United Nations, European Union, United States and Russia). Since being appointed in mid-2000, he has yet to visit Gaza.

Every Palestinian we met wanted to know why Europe does not hold Israel accountable for violating human rights, and why we do not demand that Israel make reparations to European taxpayers for the destruction of EU-funded infrastructure.

Czech and Swedish consuls, as well as European Commission representatives, also briefed us. They too were frank and to the point in their pessimistic assessment of developments in the region.

There would now appear to be a growing European consensus that non-engagement with Hamas when they were elected was a mistake. I pointed out that it is not sufficient to lay down generalised conditions regarding what Palestinians had to do. Palestinians need to know precisely what is required of them and they had to see the same conditions applied to Israel; while we need to understand the limits of what each can deliver.

Why, for example, does Europe persist with political engineering in the Middle East by offering to upgrade relations with Israel in order to boost Kadima leader Tzipi Livni? We know the result Kadima, with the support of the Israeli Labor Party, launched a war of terror, as well as an economic war, against the people of Gaza.

Representatives of Gaza businesses illustrated the effects of that economic war to us. They told us about an industrial estate close to the northern border with Israel which employed 3,000 people, demolished some years ago by Israel. During the recent invasion, the Israelis destroyed an ice cream factory and biscuit factory and 200 other industrial units. This was planned destruction of the economic infrastructure by tanks and bulldozers.

In one case soldiers demolished a cement silo by strapping dynamite to its retaining pillars. The businessmen told us that Gaza has been a hub of international trade for 4,000 years and it has 3,000 idle engineers and 220 contractors with the skills to rebuild Gaza. In recent years business could survive only by bringing goods in through tunnels at horrendous cost. A sack of cement brought in via a tunnel costs EUR 70, while in Ireland it costs about EUR 4.

Everyone we met had one basic demand: an end to the siege of Gaza which is crushing the population, 90 per cent of whom are now dependent on food aid. They want the crossings from Israel into Gaza opened, and they need the daily average of 120 truckloads of goods to be increased to at least 500. They want more than food to be let through. Israel is refusing to allow the UN to bring in paper for Gaza's 200 schools, saying it is dual use. Most of all, those we met want peace and the freedom to run their own affairs. Freedom to grow their fruit and flowers and harvest their olives, write their poems and sing their songs; freedom to follow their own gods in the small corner of land that the international community has so kind-heartedly left them with.

With all our experience of war and peace, can Europe find a way to help the Palestinians, while also helping Israelis overcome their fear of annihilation? I believe we can. But progress requires Europe and the United States to be hard-headed and even-handed, and to apply common democratic norms to all concerned.

Europe, in particular, needs to back up its rhetoric about two viable independent states. We must engage with elected Hamas representatives and spell out the criteria by which we will judge Hamas's actions. We must insist on verifiable evidence that Hamas is doing all in its power to prevent rocket attacks on Israel. Hamas must release the soldier it holds, Cpl Shallit.

Fatah and Hamas must end the intimidation of their internal opponents. The factions must be assisted in creating a common governing structure for the West Bank and Gaza, which is pluralist and democratic.

Europe needs to press Israel to end the siege of Gaza, and to freeze the settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Israel must end the house demolitions and evictions, and scale back the almost 700 roadblocks in the occupied West Bank.

Europe must make it absolutely clear to Israel that relations will not be upgraded until these conditions have been met and until Israel has demonstrated a willingness to enter substantive negotiations on final status issues. We

## Middle East turmoil demands political initiative from Europe

must also initiate procedures to hold Israel to account for the damage to EU-funded infrastructure in Gaza, and assess the extent to which Israel is in breach of its human rights obligations under its trade agreement with the EU, as well as applying sanctions in response to those breaches.

During my trip I met a man who lost his wife and four of his children. Forty-seven members of his extended family were killed during the invasion. His 10-year-old daughter was trapped along with her siblings and her dead mother for 12 days. As we talked, she clung to him while he hugged her close. She is the reason why Europe can no longer stand by on the political sidelines.

Proinsias De Rossa is a Labour Party member of the European Parliament for Dublin

**Load-Date:** February 18, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Israelis used Gaza boy, 11, as shield*

March 24, 2009

Edition 1, National Edition

Copyright 2009 All Rights Reserved

**Section:** Pg. 9

**Length:** 384 words

### **Body**

---

ISRAELI soldiers used an 11-year-old Palestinian boy as a shield during the war against **Hamas** in the Gaza Strip, UN human rights experts said yesterday.

The Israeli Defence Force ordered the boy to walk in front of soldiers being fired on in the Gaza neighbourhood of Tel al-Hawa and enter buildings before them, said the UN Secretary-General's envoy for protecting children in armed conflict.

The boy was also told to open the bags of Palestinians - presumably to protect the soldiers from possible explosives - before being released at the entrance to a hospital, said Radhika Coomaraswamy.

She said the incident on January 15, after Israeli tanks had rolled into the area and during "intense operations," was a violation of Israeli and international law.

It was included in a 43-page report published yesterday, and was just one of many verified human rights atrocities during the three-week war between Israel and **Hamas** that ended on January 18, she said.

Ms Coomaraswamy accused Israeli soldiers of shooting Palestinian children, bulldozing a home with a woman and child still inside, and shelling a building they had ordered civilians into a day earlier.

"Violations were reported on a daily basis, too numerous to list," said Ms Coomaraswamy, who visited Gaza and Israel for five days in February.

Ms Coomaraswamy said there were also allegations that **Hamas** used human shields or fired from heavily populated areas, and that UN officials were investigating.

Israel criticised the report as "unable or perhaps unwilling" to address **Hamas** rocket attacks from Gaza or the threat of terrorism, citing Saturday's failed attempt to explode a car bomb in a Haifa mall car park as the most recent manifestation.

"The report claims to examine Israel's actions while it wilfully ignores and downplays the terrorist and other threats we face," Ambassador Aharon Leshno Yaar told the 47-nation Human Rights Council.

He said terrorists use **women** and children as human shields when they launch attacks from schools, homes, hospitals and mosques. He did not address the report's allegation about the boy, but an army spokeswoman rejected the claim.



Israelis used Gaza boy, 11, as shield

"We are an army to which morals and high ethical standards are paramount." Ms Coomaraswamy said her list was "just a few examples of the hundreds" documented by UN officials..

**Load-Date:** July 6, 2010

---

End of Document

*... and how life goes on amid the hostilities and rubble in Gaza*

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

March 14, 2009 Saturday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 11

**Length:** 347 words

**Byline:** Jason Koutsoukis

## **Body**

---

ALMOST two months after Israel declared an end to its 22-day military assault on Hamas, life in Gaza has returned to relative normality.

But with only food, medicines and limited fuel and equipment coming through the borders with Israel and Egypt, there aren't many signs of improvement.

"We have enough food to eat, yes," Gaza resident Hassan Naim told the Herald. "What Gaza needs is the stuff to build, to get the people back to work, to get the economy working again."

Naim, 23, is unemployed. "This was a functioning society with factories and businesses and universities that has been turned into a prison," he says, "and we are still locked up."

With no concrete or reinforcing steel, there has been no progress in rebuilding the thousands of homes and buildings smashed during the war.

Piles of rubble remain exactly as they were when the ceasefire was declared on January 22.

Nor have hostilities ended between militants in Gaza and Israel. In the first two weeks of March, more than 50 rockets and mortars reportedly were fired into Israel, with no casualties, and there have been more than 30 Israeli airstrikes on Gaza in return.

A sustained Israeli bombing campaign has stymied the smuggling business that had supplied Gaza with most of its consumer goods.

On Thursday the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights released what it said was a final, definitive death toll from the conflict: 1434 dead, including 960 civilians, of which there were 288 children and 121 women, 239 police and 235 Hamas militants.

The Palestinian Ministry of Health has said a further 5303 Palestinians were injured, including 1606 children and 828 women.

Disputing these figures, the Israel Defence Forces estimate the death toll at about 1250, two-thirds of whom were Hamas fighters.

. . . and how life goes on amid the hostilities and rubble in Gaza

A confidential report leaked to The Jerusalem Post last month said the IDF's estimate of the Palestinian death toll was "more than 1200".

Colonel Moshe Levi, head of the IDF's Gaza administration, told the newspaper "false reporting" by **Hamas** gave the international community a vastly distorted impression of the death toll.

## Graphic

---

PHOTO: Dusty reminder . . . Palestinian schoolgirls climb among the ruins of a building destroyed by Israeli airstrikes in the northern area of Jabaliya. Photo: AP

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2009

---

End of Document

***There were no Hamas fighters anywhere in the vicinity of U.N.-run schools;  
POLITICS: U.N. Chief Appalled at Israeli Destruction in Gaza***

IPS (Latin America)

January 30, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 NoticiasFinancieras/Grupo de Diarios America All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 851 words

**Byline:** Thalif Deen

## **Body**

---

But John Ging, director of operations for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), based in Gaza, kept insisting there were no **Hamas** fighters anywhere in the vicinity of U.N.-run schools or warehouses.

'What we have regretted in the past is that we have not been given a hearing to answer,' he told reporters Monday.

He charged that most of the allegations made by Israel were 'unsubstantiated, unfounded - and continue to be repeated.'

Perhaps his strongest indictment of the Israelis was reflected in his response to a question on military tactics: 'We don't, in a civilised world, shoot the hostage to get to the hostage taker.'

But in reality that was what the Israelis were doing in Gaza, says an Arab diplomat, echoing Ging's comment.

'The Israelis violated every single international convention governing the rules of war and the treatment of civilians,' he told IPS. 'Their military excesses can, in no way, be justified.'

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who praised Israel at a press conference in Jerusalem last week, describing the Jewish state as 'a responsible member of the United Nations', apparently had second thoughts when he saw the devastation caused in Gaza.

Standing outside a U.N. compound that was destroyed by Israel, Ban told reporters Tuesday: 'I am just appalled. Everyone is smelling this bombing still. It is still burning. It is an outrageous and totally unacceptable attack against the United Nations.'

Despite pleas from the secretary-general, Israel bombed U.N.-run facilities, including schools and warehouses, on four different occasions.

One of the bomb attacks on the UNRWA compound took place on the same day Ban arrived in Israel.

According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, the final tally read: 1,314 Palestinians killed, including 416 children and 106 **women**; 5,320 injured, including 1,855 children and 795 **women**.

In comparison, the number of Israelis killed included four civilians and nine soldiers, along with 84 injured.

There were no Hamas fighters anywhere in the vicinity of U.N. -run schools  
POLITICS: U.N. Chief Appalled at Israeli Destruction in Gaza

And according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the buildings destroyed included 4,100 residential homes (with 17,000 damaged), 20 mosques, 25 educational institutions and medical facilities, 31 security offices, 16 government buildings and 1,500 factories and shops.

The Office of the U.N.'s Humanitarian Coordinator pointed out that 16 health facilities and an equal number of ambulances were destroyed or damaged during the 22-day conflict.

Nadia Hijab, senior fellow at the Washington-based Institute for Palestine Studies, told IPS: 'The scale of the devastation is such that Israel and its supporters are unlikely to be able to bury or bulldoze it out of the collective conscience of the world.'

There have already been calls to bring war crimes charges against Israeli leaders, she pointed out.

Although the formal wheels of international justice may grind slowly, citizens are not waiting.

'Trade unions in different parts of the world are calling for a boycott. Israel's fruit shipments are rotting in its warehouses as importers in Scandinavia, Jordan and the UK cancelled orders,' she said.

In an open letter in the London Guardian last weekend, Israeli citizens themselves called on world leaders to impose sanctions against their own country: 'This is the only road left. Help us all, please!'

Although a ceasefire has been declared, said Hijab, Gaza's torment and siege is not over and the U.N.'s 'We the peoples' are likely to remain mobilised until justice is done.

Speaking from Gaza, Ging told reporters that the population in Gaza remains shell-shocked, traumatised and living in real fear.

Asked about the 'most outrageous' incident he had witnessed, Ging said: 'The dead children.'

Meanwhile, the United Nations is expected to lead international efforts to rebuild Gaza.

But Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the external affairs commissioner of the 27-member European Union, was quoted as saying that the EU would not fund reconstruction as long as Hamas was in control of Gaza.

Humanitarian aid, however, would be provided without any conditions, she added.

Hijab told IPS that 'it is almost as though there are two different worlds, with the mainstream media, European and U.S. leaders, and U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon living in one world.'

And in the other, she said, are the leaders of the Third World, the president of the General Assembly (Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann), and millions of outraged citizens.

D'Escoto has taken a very strong stand denouncing the United Nations as ineffective in taking any action against Israel.

Hijab said the former parrot the Israeli line about Israel's need for protection while the latter exchange U.N. reports and eyewitness accounts of the destruction and damage to thousands of homes, schools, hospitals and civilian infrastructure.

They also share photographs of phosphorous shells showering white flame on unprotected civilians; read about the killing of entire families among the thousands of dead and wounded; and respond with horror to the reports of women whose legs have been shorn off by new kinds of weapons, she added. </ © 2009 NoticiasFinancieras - IPS  
- All rights reserved

There were no Hamas fighters anywhere in the vicinity of U.N. -run schools POLITICS: U.N. Chief Appalled at  
Israeli Destruction in Gaza

---

End of Document

## *Wrong Auntie, it's not political*

Birmingham Evening Mail

January 30, 2009 Friday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 12

**Length:** 357 words

**Byline:** Maureen Messent

### **Body**

---

WE'VE seen the Gaza mortuaries.

We've seen fathers carrying their children's corpses. We've seen those wildly weeping women raising their arms to the sky in grief and our sympathy for their plight knows no bounds.

We don't, for instance, look at a pile of bodies and think they were mere pawns in the Hamas publicity campaign.

We grieve with the bereaved because they are human and can empathise with them in their trauma.

And the BBC has sold us all short when, with Sky, it decided not to screen a Disasters' Emergency Committee appeal to raise cash for the mourning and almost starving Gazans caught up in death and destruction.

Mark Thompson, the BBC's Director General, believes such an appeal could have been interpreted as taking a political stance on an ongoing story and might appear as if the BBC was taking sides. He's wrong. We want to give because, in the face of the Gazan mortality rate and its flattened buildings, we feel moved to help.

Yes, we recognise that such broadcasts are seen as recruitment campaigns by Hamas who take every frame of death and horror as grist to their bellicose mill, but that happens in troubled times.

It's surely against the human grain to ignore cries for help lest aid falls into Hamas's hands.

We give in hope. We are perfectly able to distinguish between a charitable request to involve ourselves in a disaster and what the BBC says would be misconstrued as support for militant factions.

We know this cynicism of Hamas. We also know, in our hearts, we must overlook this in our efforts to help those in dire straits.

The BBC showed DEC appeals for Ethiopia, Rwanda and, more recently, for Darfur with no fear of making political points - probably because the oppressors involved lacked the power of Zionist/Israeli lobby.

By declining to show this appeal the BBC itself forsakes impartiality. There is nothing political about dead and starving children. Once again the BBC has got it wrong.

Is Maureen right?

Wrong Auntie, it's not political

Write:

Your Say, Birmingham Mail, Floor 6, Fort Dunlop, Fort Parkway, Birmingham B24 9FF Call:

0800 138 2555 between 8am and 5.30pm.

Email:

[letters@birminghammail.net](mailto:letters@birminghammail.net)

## Graphic

---

We can empathise with the suffering in Gaza.

**Load-Date:** January 30, 2009

---

End of Document



## *Peres slams UN Gaza inquiry as "outrageous"*

AlArabiya.net

May 6, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 AlArabiya.net. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 656 words

### Body

---

Israeli President Shimon Peres Wednesday slammed as "outrageous" and "one-sided" a United Nations inquiry that blamed Israel for six serious attacks on U.N. buildings during its Gaza offensive and said the Jewish state will not apologize for defending its citizens against Hamas missile attacks.

"It's outrageous, we shall never accept it (the report)," he told reporters after conferring with U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon. "We don't think we have to apologize because we have the right to defend the lives of our children and women."

Peres said the U.N. board of enquiry overstepped its authority, noting that it was supposed to probe damage to U.N. installations, but "instead decided to investigate the whole situation in Gaza." No mention of Hamas. "We don't accept one word," he added, blasting the conclusions as "unfair" and "one-sided." But he appeared to exonerate Ban, saying he had the "highest regard" for him.

"The secretary general is not responsible for the report," Peres said. "He tried to distinguish between what is necessary in order to be objective and fair and listen to us."

The Israeli president insisted that his country has cooperated fully with the U.N. enquiry team and conceded that "we made some mistakes."

"We're outraged because they didn't mention Hamas," he said. "If Hamas didn't shoot, there wouldn't be a single problem."

The U.N. report was drawn up by an independent panel set up to investigate nine cases in which U.N. buildings in Gaza were damaged by bombardments or arms fire during the three-week Israeli offensive.

The findings laid out the latest criticism of Israel over the war it launched against the Hamas-run enclave on Dec. 27 in response to ongoing rocket fire from Gaza militants. More than 1,330 Palestinians and 13 Israelis died.

"In six of the nine incidents, the board concluded that the death, injuries and damage involved were caused by military actions, using munitions launched or dropped from the air or fired from the ground, by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)," the report said.

White phosphorous

## Peres slams UN Gaza inquiry as "outrageous"

A seventh less serious incident was also blamed on Israeli light arms fire during the offensive, while the eighth was attributed to a Palestinian faction, probably Hamas.

The probe by the U.N. panel, however, could not determine who was to blame for the ninth incident.

The report accused Israel of failing to protect U.N. buildings and the civilians inside them, and recommended that the U.S. seeks damages.

Peres furthermore said his country didn't overstep in its use of white phosphorous, an incendiary substance whose use was criticized by the inquiry. He added that Israel never targeted civilians and made 250,000 phone calls to warn people he said were being used as "human shields" to leave their houses before Israeli attacks.

Security Council diplomats said the U.N. report would be discussed by members during closed consultations on Thursday, when Libya was expected to circulate a draft resolution on its findings.

#### Roadmap

Peres, meanwhile, was also asked whether the Jewish state under the new government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was still committed to a "two-state solution" under which a viable Palestinian state would be created alongside a secure Israel.

Peres made clear that the current Israeli government announced it would respect the decisions made by the previous government.

"The previous government of Israel took the decision to accept the roadmap that was introduced by the (Middle East diplomatic) Quartet," he added. "In the roadmap, there is a clear reference to the two-state solution and that is my answer."

The roadmap, drawn up by the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations, foresees the peaceful co-existence of Israel and Palestine, and calls for a halt to Jewish settlement activity in Palestinian territories and an end to Palestinian attacks against Israel.

The plan has made little progress since it was drafted in 2003.

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2009

## THE ONLY SOLUTION

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

January 15, 2009 Thursday

SOONER EDITION

Copyright 2009 P.G. Publishing Co.

**Section:** EDITORIAL; LETTERS TO THE EDITOR; Pg. B-4

**Length:** 231 words

**Byline:** SAMIRA SHAHEEN HAGERTY, Regent Square

### **Body**

---

Regarding Celia Shapiro's letter "Rightful Actions" (Jan. 12), in which she mentioned unfair media coverage: As a Palestinian-born American, I am saddened by Ms. Shapiro and others who feel the slant in the media is pro-Hamas and pro-Palestinian. Her statements reflect that she is biased in her beliefs; most Arab Americans see it as just the opposite.

The Post-Gazette seems to print letters in a balanced response, although pictures are mostly of Israelis. Relying on the U.S. media hardly shows the horrors of the assault. The truth is the international media have not been allowed to bear witness to the assault on Gaza since December. Who is really choosing to manipulate the media?

The war on Hamas has been devastating to Palestinian civilians; half of the 930 killed are women and children. The numbers of the dead are rising every day. Israel is fighting a war against the Palestinians, with little regard for loss of civilian life.

The humanitarian crisis in Israel is a human catastrophe. It is not a contest of public opinion. Both parties feel justified in continuing the conflict. Hamas wants open borders and self-determination; Israel says it wants the rockets stopped. Playing the blame game leads nowhere.

A cease-fire is the only solution. Haven't we learned from the similar assault of Lebanon? Violence is counterproductive for Israel, for the Palestinians and for peace.

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2009

## *Israel disputes claim about civilian victims*

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

March 28, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 Woodward Communications, Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** D; Pg. 6

**Length:** 246 words

**Byline:** The Associated Press

### **Body**

---

JERUSALEM (AP) - The Israeli military on Thursday disputed Palestinian claims that most of the people killed in the recent Gaza Strip war were civilians, claiming the "vast majority" of the dead were **Hamas** militants. Israel says the three-week offensive was aimed solely at **Hamas** militants, while Palestinians say hundreds of people were killed by an overwhelming show of force that showed little regard for civilians.

An army spokeswoman said Thursday that the military had completed an investigation and determined that a total of 1,166 Palestinians were killed in the operation. It found that 709 were **Hamas** militants, while 295 were civilians, including 89 minors and 49 **women**. It was unclear whether another 162 men who died were militants or civilians. "We have a list of names. We have based our conclusions on a number of sources, including Palestinian sources and intelligence sources of different kinds," said Maj. Avital Leibovich. The figures clashed with numbers released last week by the Palestine Center for Human Rights, which said 1,417 people were killed, including more than 900 civilians. Its toll included the names and ages of all of the dead. The Palestinian center Thursday called the Israeli report "a deliberately manipulative attempt to distort the reality of the offensive and to disguise Israel's illegal actions." It said, for instance, that Israel wrongly classified 255 "noncombatant" police officers killed at the outset of the war as militants.

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2009

**Gazans return to mourn their dead and salvage their lives; \* One family's story tells how Israeli shells killed dozens of relatives while soldiers vandalised their homes**

The Independent (London)

January 20, 2009 Tuesday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent Print Ltd All Rights Reserved

**The**  **INDEPENDENT**

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 24

**Length:** 947 words

**Byline:** Donald Macintyre IN GAZA CITY

## **Body**

---

On a stretch of sand between flattened buildings, the stricken Samouni family were yesterday erecting the mourning tent for 22 of their relatives whose decomposed bodies had been dragged from the rubble a fortnight after being killed by Israeli shelling.

It was the first day that Gazans were able to return to the site of their ruined homes since the end of the Israeli military offensive. Most of the survivors of the Samouni extended family came to survey the 12 acres of razed farmland, a destroyed mosque and the pile of bulldozed concrete which had been the warehouse where 80 of them had taken shelter, only to come under lethal tank or aerial fire, or both.

For Mousa Samouni, 19, reticent and with every indication of still being in deep shock, the return was the culmination of a horrific experience that began at 7.30am on 4 January, when Israeli troops arrived at his home in the Zeitoun district of southern Gaza City under the cover of heavy fire as the offensive pushed west from the border towards the coast.

The accountancy student, in his first year at Al-Azhar University, said the troops had moved his family next door and then told both groups to join other members of the clan in a warehouse across the road, owned by the vegetable seller Wael Samouni. The troops then occupied the two houses.

He returned yesterday to find the houses ransacked and scarcely habitable, with furnishing and electrical appliances tossed out of the window, gaping holes in the wall made for firing positions, furniture smashed, clothes piled on the floor, pages of family Korans torn out and remains of soldiers' rations littered in many rooms.

Stars of David and graffiti in Hebrew and English proclaiming "Arabs need 2 die", "no Arabs in the State of Israel" and "One down and 999,999 to go" had been scrawled on walls. A drawing of a gravestone bore the inscription "Arabs 1948 to 2009".

Gazans return to mourn their dead and salvage their lives \* One family's story tells how Israeli shells killed dozens of relatives while soldiers vandalised the....

But the two houses were at least still standing. Many smaller homes to the east had been flattened by bulldozers after being cleared of their occupants, apparently to establish a clear field of fire from which troops could target any militants to the east. One family member, Hesham Samouni, 35, said 14 of these homes had been destroyed.

As had Wael Samouni's warehouse. It had first been hit by Israeli missiles in an attack on 5 January - reported in detail in The Independent - which was launched as a few family members began taking other relatives to the building, which they thought was safe. Mousa said he fainted in the attack. By the time he came round, his mother, Rebab, 36, his father, Rashed, 42, and his two brothers, Mohammed and Walid, were dead, along with at least 21 others, including several children, among them a five-month-old baby.

After the attack, he escaped with his freshly widowed sister-in-law, Maysaa, to the nearby home of an uncle, where he found about 50 other members of the clan, including at least half a dozen men handcuffed and blindfolded. He said soldiers ordered him to stay, and confirmed his sister-in-law's testimony that the men were being kept in detention "in case Hamas comes".

The detained men included Imad Samouni, 38, who said yesterday that the others had been released but he and Mousa, again blindfolded and their hands tied with nylon handcuffs, were kept on opposite sides of a room and told to remain sitting or kneeling until the Wednesday.

At one point, he claimed the soldiers guarding them had put bags of white powder - apparently explosives - attached to wires near him. He said the soldiers had at times talked to each other in Hebrew - which he understood from 12 years working in Israel - of shooting him if he disobeyed.

Acknowledging that the soldiers had offered food and water to the men, Imad Samouni added: "Mousa did eat but I refused. They let us go to the bathroom if a soldier was with us though this depended on who was on duty. Mousa did in his pants a few times. Then on the Wednesday an Israeli who said his name was Eitan came and said: 'I can see you're not Hamas. You are not eating and you will die here if you carry on. You can go.' I said I would not leave without Mousa and they let us go."

There was little sign of support for Hamas among the family yesterday. In the house next door to Mousa's, Khamiz Samouni contemplated the damage wreaked on his home, including a one-by-six-metre hole ripped out of the floor, apparently to allow soldiers to fill bags with sand.

Khamiz, 22, a car paint-shop worker, lost his father, Talal, and his mother, Rahme, in the 5 January attack on the warehouse. He also said that they had been ordered by troops to go to the warehouse the day before the attack. "I blame both Israel and Hamas," he said. "Do you think all this would have happened if Hamas had not been in power?"

The Palestinian health ministry in Gaza claims that 48 members of the Samouni family were killed during the course of the operation.

After the Red Cross found four terrified and weak children in the area two days after the attack, Navi Pillay, the UN high commissioner for human rights, suggested the attack could qualify for a war crimes investigation. The Israeli military says it is investigating the events but regularly lays blame on Hamas for operating in civilian areas.

Clan members insist Hamas was not active in the immediate area and that bullet holes in the two houses occupied by the troops had been made by Israeli forces as they approached.

As women of the family attempted to clean up one of the houses yesterday, Wafa Samouni said: "Hamas and Israel should make peace. I want Israel or Hamas to lose. I don't want our children to be the losers."

ROBERT FISK Page 26

PATRICK COCKBURN Page 27

Gazans return to mourn their dead and salvage their lives \* One family's story tells how Israeli shells killed dozens of relatives while soldiers vandalised the....

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Antiwar has taken on new meaning -- genocide*

The Calgary Herald (Alberta)

April 1, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 The Calgary Herald, a division of Canwest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** THE EDITORIAL PAGE; Pg. A14; Naomi Lakritz

**Length:** 740 words

**Byline:** Naomi Lakritz, Calgary Herald

### **Body**

---

Take a good look at the photo accompanying the letters to the editor on today's op-ed page. Yes, that is indeed British MP George Galloway exchanging hugs with Ismail Haniyeh, a senior **Hamas** leader. Or to put it another way, that is indeed George Galloway hugging a man who heads up a terrorist organization whose oft-stated goal is to kill every Jewish person in Israel. Might as well be hugging Hitler, George. It amounts to the same thing.

Why the antiwar crowd lionizes Galloway is beyond comprehension. Maybe "antiwar" doesn't mean the same thing anymore as it did in the days of the Vietnam protests when people marched with signs saying, "Make love, not war," and "War is not good for children and other living things." You cannot be "antiwar" while giving money and material goods to **Hamas**. That makes you pro-war, because fighting and killing is what **Hamas** is all about. And when you give money to **Hamas**, as Galloway has, purportedly for humanitarian aid in Gaza, you have zero guarantee that anyone will actually be aided by that money. It's far more likely the money will go to buying more weapons for use against Israel.

This week, a Federal Court judge turned down Galloway's bid to enter Canada by citing a law that says no one is allowed into the country who has given material aid to terrorists. The Toronto Coalition to Stop the War had invited Galloway to speak on March 30, but Immigration Minister Jason Kenney rightly refused to exempt Galloway under the law. The coalition's website says: "Our mandate is simple. We oppose war and occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan. We oppose Islamophobia, anti-Arab bigotry and all forms of racism." The phrase "all forms of racism" doesn't appear to include the Jews in Israel. Genuine antiwar sentiment would deplore the actions of someone who gives money to a group that advocates genocide. The coalition's hyperbole about pursuing "a strong co-ordinated voice for peace and justice" leaves some other people out of the equation, too--the girls of Afghanistan who had acid thrown in their faces by the Taliban for daring to go to school. The selectivity of these faux peaceniks boggles the mind--yes, let's just stop the war this minute and let the Taliban take the **women** of Afghanistan right back to the Stone Age. Just whom are "peace and justice" really for?

The topic of Galloway's speech was the rather puzzling one of "resisting imperialism from Gaza to Kandahar." What imperialism, George? Israel has been out of Gaza since 2005. Before it left Gaza, it transferred some 3,000 greenhouses in Gaza from Israeli ownership to the Palestinian Authority. The greenhouses were first sold to Jewish donors in America for \$14 million, and those donors, including former World Bank president James Wolfensohn, who contributed \$500,000 of his own money, then transferred ownership to the Palestinians. Thanks to generous American Jews, the greenhouses were an opportunity for the Palestinians to be self-sufficient and to prosper in Gaza. But on Sept. 13, 2005, Palestinians destroyed 30 per cent of the greenhouses and looted the equipment.



Antiwar has taken on new meaning -- genocide

Meanwhile, **Hamas** continues to spend money on whatever weapons fuel its fanatic goal to wipe out Israel. If the antiwar types in Canada were truly antiwar, they'd be anti-**Hamas** because the misery in which Palestinian civilians live is a direct result of their leaders' obsession with, and funding of, war and genocide.

Maybe what Galloway calls "imperialism" then is Israel attacking **Hamas** in Gaza after the terrorists had fired thousands of rockets for months into Israel. Do Galloway or his antiwar cheerleaders even care about the siege the citizens of Sderot were under before Israel finally retaliated? And if self-defence is imperialism, then how does Galloway feel about the RAF resisting the Luftwaffe in the Battle of Britain during the Second World War? Maybe that was intolerable imperialism on Britain's part, since it was as much self-defence as Israel's Operation Cast Lead in Gaza was.

No, antiwar is no longer antiwar. The activists do not care for truth; if they did, they'd urge the Arab terrorists to lay down their weapons and stop teaching their children to hate, because the simple truth is that this is the only way there will ever be peace in the Middle East. As for Galloway's come-on to Jason Kenney to debate him "like a man," Kenney shouldn't even stoop to give that blowhard the time of day.

[nlakritz@theherald.canwest.com](mailto:nlakritz@theherald.canwest.com)

**Load-Date:** April 3, 2009

---

End of Document

## **Soldiers pull out of Gaza**

Northern Territory News (Australia)

January 22, 2009 Thursday

1 - Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 15

**Length:** 245 words

### **Body**

---

JERUSALEM: Israeli troops have completed their withdrawal from the Gaza Strip after a 22-day offensive against the Islamist **Hamas** movement, an army spokesman said yesterday.

“The last soldier left the Gaza Strip this morning,” the spokesman said yesterday.

“However the army remains deployed all around the Gaza Strip to meet any eventuality.”

The pull out began on Sunday after Israel declared a ceasefire and Palestinian militants matched it. **Hamas** gave Israel a week to remove all troops and open crossing points into Gaza or face renewed hostilities.

Israel launched its massive assault on December 27, bombarding the narrow coastal strip, where 1.5 million Palestinians live, from land, air and sea.

Palestinian health ministry figures list more than 1300 people dead, including 410 children and about 100 **women**. Another 5300 people were wounded -- 1855 of them children and 795 **women**.

The Palestinian bureau of statistics reported 4100 homes totally destroyed and 17,000 others damaged in the offensive.

On Tuesday, UN chief Ban Ki-moon became the first world leader to visit the enclave since Israel halted the deadliest offensive it has ever launched on the Palestinian territory, which has been ruled by **Hamas** since June 2007.

He accused Israel of using “excessive force” in the conflict, but he also condemned Palestinian rocket fire on southern Israel which sparked the invasion. Eight Israeli human rights groups have accused the army of ignoring the rules of war.

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2009

## *Israel strikes Gaza ahead of unilateral ceasefire vote*

The Balochistan Times (AsiaNet)

January 17, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 The Balochistan Times  
All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 811 words

### **Body**

---

GAZA CITY : Israeli troops assaulted Gaza from land, air and sea on Saturday as the Jewish state said it was close to reaching its goals and its powerful security cabinet prepared to vote on a unilateral ceasefire.

Despite weeks of heavy fighting in which more than 1,200 Palestinians have been killed, **Hamas** vowed to fight on until all Israeli forces withdraw from the battered enclave and open its border crossings. Israeli warships and tanks, dug in on the outskirts of Gaza City, kept lobbing shells into the densely populated urban area, while to the north in Beit Lahiya a UN-run school was set ablaze by bombs.

A woman and a child were killed and another dozen people wounded in the attack, in which burning embers rained down on a school where some 1,600 people were sheltering, setting parts of the building alight. Rights groups have accused Israel of using phosphorus bombs, which are designed to send up a smokescreen on open battlefields, in crowded civilian areas. Israel has said its weapons are all legal under international law.

"This yet again illustrates the tragedy that there is no safe place in Gaza and not even a UN installation is safe," said Chris Gunness, a spokesman for the UN refugee agency which operates the school. "There is no place to flee."

The UN demanded an investigation into the incident, the fourth time Israel has targeted its facilities in the territory, where 80 percent of the 1.5 million population relies on foreign aid.

An Israeli military spokesman said investigations have been launched into all incidents in which civilian targets have been hit, but said initial investigations revealed that troops had been fired upon from each location.

At least 1,205 Palestinians, including 410 children, have been killed since the start of Israel's deadliest-ever assault on the territory on December 27, according to Gaza medics, who said another 5,300 people have been wounded.

Those slain in the war also include 108 **women**, 113 elderly people, 14 paramedics, and four journalists, according to Dr. Muawiya Hassanein, the head of Gaza emergency services.

Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak said however that Israel was getting closer to achieving its goals of halting Palestinian rocket fire on southern Israel and the smuggling of arms into the **Hamas**-ruled territory from Egypt.

He cautioned however that "the defence forces must continue their operation and be ready for any development."

The army said that it had carried out 70 aerial attacks against weapons smuggling tunnels along Gaza's border with Egypt, **Hamas**'s rear supply route. But **Hamas** remained defiant, despite talk of a unilateral ceasefire.

## Israel strikes Gaza ahead of unilateral ceasefire vote

"This unilateral ceasefire does not foresee a withdrawal" by the Israeli army, Osama Hemdan, the movement's Lebanon representative, told AFP. "As long as it remains in Gaza, resistance and confrontation will continue."

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who had been trying to broker a bilateral truce between Hamas and Israel, also said troops must leave Gaza immediately. The anticipated stop to the violence came after the Jewish state won pledges from Washington and Cairo to help prevent arms smuggling into the Islamist-run enclave from Egypt, a key demand for ending the war. Britain, France, and Germany have also said they would help prevent smuggling.

But Egypt has not given any details about what assurances it has given Israel, and on Saturday president Mubarak said he would never allow international monitors on Egyptian soil. "Egypt, in its efforts to stop the aggression, is working on securing its borders with Israel and the Gaza Strip and it will never accept the presence of foreign observers on its territory," he said in a television address.

Mubarak said an Israeli ceasefire would not be enough on its own, saying its troops must leave Gaza as well.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Abul Gheit also fired a warning shot across Israel's bows by saying that Cairo is "absolutely not bound" by the US-Israeli agreement on arms smuggling.

Diplomatic sources in Cairo meanwhile said Egypt has invited several international leaders, along with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, to a summit on the Gaza crisis on Sunday.

Under the terms of the proposal being discussed by the security cabinet, Israel would silence its guns even without a truce with Hamas, which has controlled Gaza since June 2007, a senior government official said. The official said however that the army would respond to any Hamas attacks even after a ceasefire order from the security cabinet. Gaza militants meanwhile fired some seven rockets into Israel on Saturday, without causing any casualties. Since the start of the operation 10 soldiers and three civilians have been killed in combat or in rocket strikes. The army says more than 700 rockets and mortar rounds have been fired into Israel during that period.

**Load-Date:** January 30, 2009

---

End of Document

## **LUCKNOW WOMEN PROTEST AGAINST GAZA OFFENSIVE**

Hindustan Times

January 19, 2009 Monday 2:09 PM EST

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 225 words

**Byline:** Report from Asian News International brought to you by HT Syndication.

**Dateline:** Lucknow

### **Body**

---

Lucknow, Jan. 19 -- (ANI): Scores of women here staged a demonstration against Israeli offensive in Gaza to show solidarity with the Palestinians.

The protest was organised under the aegis of the All India Muslim Women

Personal Law Board (AIMWPLB) and Communist Party of India (CPI) on Sunday and came after Israel offered a unilateral ceasefire in Gaza.

Protestors urged New Delhi to snap all diplomatic ties with Israel.

"We are protesting against the Israeli attack on Palestine. We urge the Government of India to close the embassy of Israel and snap all diplomatic ties with the nation. Israeli strikes on Palestinian territory, hospitals and mosques are illegal. The United Nations must take action on this," said Shaista Amber, President of AIMWPLB.

More than 1,150 Palestinians have been killed since Israel launched its offensive against Gaza on December 27 to force Hamas to stop rocket attacks on its territory.

Israel has accused Hamas of taking shelter among the civilian population and using sites such as mosques and schools as military posts.

Hamas said on Sunday it would cease fire immediately along with other militant groups in the Gaza Strip and give Israel, which already declared a unilateral truce, a week to pull its troops out of the territory. (ANI)

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Asian News International.

-964553

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at [htsyndication@hindustantimes.com](mailto:htsyndication@hindustantimes.com)

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2009

**Jubilant Turks welcome PM home after summit clash; Shimon Peres  
accused of 'barbarian' acts in Gaza war**

Edmonton Journal (Alberta)

January 31, 2009 Saturday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 Edmonton Journal, a division of Canwest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. A13

**Length:** 488 words

**Byline:** Burak Akinci, Agence France-Presse

**Dateline:** ANKARA

## **Body**

---

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan received a hero's welcome on his return to Istanbul after a heated debate with Israel's president a day earlier, in a discussion on the Gaza war at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

"We will never allow anyone to show disrespect to the prime minister of Turkey," Erdogan told a cheering crowd as he returned home following his clash with Israeli President Shimon Peres.

He slammed the hundreds of civilian deaths in ***Hamas***-ruled Gaza during Israel's recent 22-day offensive, but said his anger was directed not at the Jewish people, rather "the practices of the Israeli government.

"The death of civilians cannot be seen as a simple work accident," Erdogan said.

In Ankara, Israeli ambassador Gaby Levy sought to defuse tensions, saying he is confident relations between the two "closest and ... friendliest countries" will recover "within a period of time."

Turkey and Israel have overcome other spats in the past because their ties "are solidly based... on strategic interests," Levy told reporters.

"It is in the interest of both countries to start trying to calm down and move forward," he said.

The influential Turkish army, which has a series of co-operation accords with the Israeli military, stressed "national interests" in signalling that close relations would continue.

Erdogan said Turkey is determined to pursue peace efforts in the Middle East, while officials announced that Palestinian leader Mahmod Abbas will visit Ankara next week to discuss "all aspects of the Palestinian problem, including efforts to secure unity among Palestinian groups."

Before he marched off the stage in front of Peres and UN chief Ban Ki-moon, Erdogan said Israel committed "barbarian" acts in Gaza, lashed out at the audience for applauding Peres's emotional defence of the war and vowed he would never return to Davos.

Jubilant Turks welcome PM home after summit clash; Shimon Peres accused of 'barbarian' acts in Gaza war

Erdogan's gesture made headlines across Europe and the Middle East, although a spokesman said his move was directed not at Peres but at the moderator of the debate, who interrupted his speech.

Turkey is one of Israel's rare allies in the Muslim world but Erdogan has been a fierce critic of the Jewish state's military onslaught on Gaza that left more than 1,300 Palestinians dead.

Peres, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, defended the offensive, saying Israel had no other choice to stop **Hamas** rocket attacks -- adding, with his finger pointing, that Erdogan would have done the same if rockets fell on Istanbul every night.

"**Hamas** pays tribute to the courageous stand of Turkey's prime minister ... who in Davos directly defended the victims of the criminal Zionist war against our children and **women** in Gaza," **Hamas** spokesman Fawzi Barhum said on Friday.

"We consider his departure from the room an expression of support for the victims of the Holocaust carried out by the Zionists," he said in a statement.

Senior **Hamas** leader Khalil al-Hayya also showered Erdogan with praise.

## Graphic

---

Colour Photo: Reuters; Protesters carrying Turkish flags shout slogans as they wait for the arrival of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan at Ataturk Airport in Istanbul on Friday. ;

**Load-Date:** January 31, 2009

**Israel pulls last troops out of Gaza, but vows to monitor ceasefire; Military to investigate phosphorous bomb claims**

Edmonton Journal (Alberta)

January 22, 2009 Thursday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 Edmonton Journal, a division of Canwest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. A10

**Length:** 635 words

**Byline:** Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service

**Dateline:** JERUSALEM

## **Body**

---

Israel pulled the last of thousands of troops out of the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, but warned that it was "ready for any scenario and any realities" if **Hamas** or its allies break separate ceasefires that were announced Sunday.

Israel made the announcement in a two-sentence statement, ending, for now at least, a conflict that cost about 1,300 Palestinian and 13 Israeli lives during 22 days of fighting.

As the last of the Israeli soldiers in Gaza took up positions close to their side of border, the Israel Defence Force announced Wednesday that it had assigned a senior artillery officer to investigate whether reservists from a paratroop unit had illegally used phosphorous shells.

The Haaretz newspaper reported Wednesday that the troops fired about 20 of the shells into the village of Beit Lahiya.

Human Rights Watch had previously alleged that the IDF used the controversial artillery shells in densely populated areas.

The UN has claimed that three of the shells, which are designed to provide a smoke screen for ground units, hit their headquarters and main food warehouse in Gaza last week.

If an exploded phosphorous shell touches skin, it can only be stopped from burning through to the bone by denying oxygen to the wounded area or removing the burning chemical.

The Israeli position throughout the conflict has been that the weapons used by its troops in Gaza were in compliance with international law.

U.S. President Barack Obama spent part of his first day in office speaking by telephone to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah about the Gaza crisis and the badly stalled Annapolis peace process initiated 14 months ago by Obama's predecessor, George W. Bush.



Israel pulls last troops out of Gaza, but vows to monitor ceasefire; Military to investigate phosphorous bomb claims

Obama promised the leaders "a commitment to active engagement in pursuit of Arab-Israeli peace from the beginning of his term," his spokesman said in a statement.

The first of many daunting tasks the new president faces in the region is likely to be trying to consolidate the awkward separate ceasefires declared by Israel and **Hamas** on Sunday.

As the neighbours do not speak to each other, all negotiations are usually carried on through Egyptian mediators.

Meanwhile, in a television interview from Damascus, **Hamas**'s leader-in-exile, Khaled Meshaal, claimed that by withstanding the might of the IDF, "the Gaza Strip has won a victory" and that the war had been "a real turning point in the struggle against the Zionist enemy."

In another development, Israel was blocking the Palestinian Authority from paying its workers in Gaza, according to Reuters.

Such a move may further weaken western-backed Abbas, who is from the Fatah faction.

It is expected to cost at least several billion dollars to repair the widespread war damage in Gaza, but getting money into Gaza to do this may also prove tricky.

Israel made it known several days ago that it intended to approve every rebuilding project in the territory on a case-by-case basis and that no reconstruction funds or materials would be allowed to enter the territory if any of it passed through **Hamas**'s hands.

**Hamas**, which is considered a terrorist organization by many western countries including Canada, seized power in Gaza from Fatah in a bloody coup in mid-2007.

It denies Israel's right to exist.

"It's a real Pandora's Box," an unidentified senior diplomat told Reuters because of objections by Israel and much of the international community to **Hamas** having any role in reconstruction projects and the Islamist movement's insistence that it must be a partner.

Caught in the crossfire once again are Palestinian civilians already reeling from the war and international aid agencies, which have said that urgent action was required to prevent a humanitarian crisis in the densely populated strip.

## Graphic

---

Colour Photo: Getty Images; Palestinian **women** sit in the garden of a destroyed house in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip on Wednesday. ;

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2009

**Push for ceasefire intensifies; Israeli Defence Minister in talks with Prime Minister over halt to Gaza conflict as Palestinian death toll hits 1,000 Gaza crisis**

The Independent (London)

January 15, 2009 Thursday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent Print Ltd All Rights Reserved

**The  INDEPENDENT**

**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 22

**Length:** 631 words

**Byline:** Donald Macintyre IN JERUSALEM

## **Body**

---

A potential ceasefire package to end Israel's 19 day offensive in Gaza began to take shape last night as the country's top Defence Ministry official prepared to fly to Cairo for intensive talks with Egyptian mediators.

The chances of Egypt's peace initiative depend heavily on Cairo's ability to overcome the residual reservations of the **Hamas** leadership and a clear division between Israel's premier and his defence minister over when to end a war whose Palestinian death toll rose above the 1000 mark yesterday.

A security source confirmed before a crucial meeting of the two leaders with the Foreign Minister, Tzipi Livni, that the Defence Minister now believed that the operation had "achieved its goals" and was in favour of calling at least a temporary halt to hostilities to allow diplomatic moves to progress.

Amos Gilad, the most senior official in Defence minister Ehud Barak's department will fly to Cairo for talks today despite the inclination of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to continue the air, sea and land campaign which has for longer before calling a halt.

Mark Regev, the Prime Minister's spokesman, said last night after a meeting of Mr Olmert, Mr Barak and foreign minister Tzipi Livni that Israel was against a ceasefire that would allow **Hamas** to "rearm and regroup". He added: "Israel seeks a durable quiet that contains a total absence of hostile fire from Gaza into Israel and a working mechanism to prevent **Hamas** from re-arming."

But Mr Barak, who is strongly against a "third phase" of warfare in Gaza's inner cities, believes that the risk of the Islamic faction regrouping is outweighed by those of a protracted and deepening conflict. He is also said to consider that even if **Hamas** does not immediately accept Egypt's plan in full, it would use a week or ten day lull to persuade the faction's Damascus-based leadership to let it do so.

Last night **Hamas** official Salah al-Bardawil, told a news conference that his organisation had presented a "detailed vision" to the Egyptians. He added: "There is no disagreement with the Egyptian leadership. The issue is

Push for ceasefire intensifies Israeli Defence Minister in talks with Prime Minister over halt to Gaza conflict as  
Palestinian death toll hits 1,000 Gaza crisis

differences over how to deal with the Zionist enemy [Israel] through the clauses of this initiative." The UN reported last night that continued Israeli airstrikes, along with tank and artillery shelling in the Strip was causing extensive destruction to homes and infrastructure, further threatening water, sewage and medical services and "intensifying" an already dire humanitarian crisis.

Palestinian figures cited by the UN were of 1,013 Palestinians dead, of whom 76 were women, and 332 - or a third - were children under 18, bringing the total close to that seen in Lebanon during the five weeks of the 2006 war. The figure for child casualties has tripled since the Israeli ground invasion began 11 days ago. Associated Press reported that one airstrike hit an overcrowded cemetery, spreading body parts and rotting flesh over a wide area. The Israeli military said it had been targeting a weapons cache hidden near the graveyard. The UN said it was operating 41 shelters with 37,937 people who had fled their homes, including more than 3,000. But the total number of internally displaced people was considerably higher.

Meanwhile a 22-minute audio tape was issued by Osama Bin Laden calling for a "jihad" against the Israeli offensive in Gaza and criticising Arab regimes for preventing those who want to "liberate Palestine". The Israeli military said militants had fired more than 12 Qassam rockets from Gaza by yesterday afternoon - a significantly lower figure than at the peak of Hamas's retaliation against the Israeli offensive.

It said the airforce had attacked the launcher of a Grad missile which landed in Beersheeva, along with another 20 "terrorist sites." ends

FURTHER REPORTS, PAGES 24 & 25

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2009

## *US envoy to visit Mideast as fragile truce holds*

Daily News Egypt

January 23, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2013 Daily News Egypt - Egyptian Media Services Ltd. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 652 words

### **Body**

---

GAZA CITY: US President Barack Obama said Thursday he was dispatching new Mideast envoy George Mitchell to shore up the fragile truce in Gaza, as Israel warned it would strike again if ***Hamas*** is allowed to rearm.

Both Obama and United Nations officials also called on Israel to open Gaza border crossings.

"As part of a lasting ceasefire, Gaza's border crossings should be open to allow the flow of aid and commerce," Obama said, during his first visit to the State Department as president.

UN humanitarian chief John Holmes said the borders must be opened to allow reconstruction of the enclave.

"You have to have cement and construction materials and pipes and spare parts," he said at a UN-run school hit by an Israeli missile in the northern Gaza town of Beit Lahiya.

Since Israel began its 22-day offensive on Dec. 27, the army said it had allowed 2,284 truckloads of humanitarian supplies into Gaza where the 1.5 million population relies on the border crossings for virtually everything.

In a final casualty toll, Gaza medics said the Israeli offensive had killed 1,330 people, at least half of them civilians, including 437 children. Another 5,450 were wounded, including 1,890 children.

Obama said his administration would "actively and aggressively seek a lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians, as well as Israel and its Arab neighbors."

The president confirmed George Mitchell, a veteran diplomat renowned for negotiating the 1998 Good Friday agreement that helped bring peace to Northern Ireland, as his Middle East envoy.

He said he would be sending the former senator "to the region as soon as possible to help the parties ensure that the ceasefire that has been achieved is made durable and sustainable."

In a call to Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, new US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also vowed to work for a "durable and just peace as quickly as possible," Abbas spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeina told AFP.

## US envoy to visit Mideast as fragile truce holds

Israel pounded the Gaza Strip for 22 days to reduce the threat from the Islamist group Hamas, before ceasefires on both sides came into effect this week.

But the Jewish state warned it would attack the territory again if Hamas uses smuggling tunnels under the Egyptian border to rearm.

"Things must be clear € Israel reserves the right to react militarily against the tunnels once and for all," Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said.

Her ministry said Livni told Clinton in a phone conversation that peace talks with the Palestinians should resume as soon as possible.

Livni stressed the necessity for a resumption of negotiations with Abbas, omitting Hamas.

A senior aide to Abbas, whose forces were booted out of Gaza by Hamas in May 2007, said that the Islamists would not be allowed to turn Gaza into a separate entity in the wake of the war.

"We will not allow the creation of a separatist entity, no matter what the price," Yasser Abed Rabbo told a press conference. "The plot aiming to separate Gaza from the West Bank will not pass."

Two women, two children and an elderly man were wounded on Thursday by fire from Israeli navy boats patrolling the Mediterranean, medics said. The army said it fired warning shots at a fishing boat.

Four Palestinians were injured when two tunnels on the Gaza-Egypt border collapsed, an Egyptian security official said on Thursday.

On Thursday morning a tunnel caved in, injuring Palestinian Sharif al-Shaer, in his 20s, who was hospitalized with broken bones and respiratory problems, he said.

Earlier the security official said another tunnel had collapsed on Wednesday and that three Palestinians were hospitalized in Egypt for respiratory problems.

During its offensive on Hamas, Israel bombed hundreds of tunnels on the Gaza-Egypt border, destroying 150, according to Defence Minister Ehud Barak.

Israel declared a ceasefire on Sunday after guarantees from Cairo and Washington to secure the enclave's porous border with Egypt.€AFP

© Daily NewsEgypt 2009

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2009

**Israelis leave a trail of debris in Gaza; Ceasefire allows aid to flow into battle zone**

The Herald (Glasgow)

January 19, 2009 Monday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 Newsquest Media Group All Rights Reserved

# The Herald

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 602 words

**Byline:** CAROLYN CHURCHILL

## Body

---

AS Israeli tanks rolled out of Gaza, infantry soldiers walked across the border, their guns and packs slung over their shoulders. The withdrawal left scenes of destruction in its wake, with buildings flattened and dozens of bodies recovered from the rubble.

Ahead of the offer of a temporary ceasefire by **Hamas**, militant rockets peppered southern Israel. Thirteen Israelis died during the offensive, including four killed by rocket fire, but despite the barrage, government spokesman Mark Regev said Israel's ceasefire offer stood.

In Damascus, Moussa Abu Marzouk, **Hamas**' deputy leader, told Syrian TV that the ceasefire would last a week to give Israel time to withdraw and open all Gaza border crossings to let humanitarian aid into the embattled seaside territory.

"We, the Palestinian resistance factions, declare a ceasefire from our side in Gaza and we confirm our stance that the enemy's troops must withdraw from Gaza within a week, " he said.

**Hamas**, which rejects Israel's right to exist, violently seized control of Gaza in June 2007, provoking a harsh Israeli blockade that has deepened destitution in the territory and confined 1.4 million Palestinians to the tiny coastal strip. Egypt has also kept its border with Gaza largely sealed.

Israel mounted the offensive three weeks ago and since then more than 1200 Palestinians - more than half of them civilians - have been killed. Yesterday, survivors loaded vans and donkey carts with mattresses and ventured out to see what was left of their homes .

**Women** sat weeping amid the ruins of their houses, hiding their faces, many too distressed to speak. Others sifted through the debris to gather cherished belongings in plastic bags.

One held a necklace. "This is all that's left, " she said.

## Israelis leave a trail of debris in Gaza Ceasefire allows aid to flow into battle zone

Children tried to salvage schoolbags and torn notebooks. Shereen Abed-Rabbo, a 12-year-old girl, returned to her home to find it reduced to rubble. Among her destroyed belongings was a torn Koran, she said.

"This is forbidden, this is the book of God. God will punish them very harshly when he sees his book was torn into pieces."

In Gaza City, the Shahadeh family was preparing to return home to the hard-hit northern Gaza town of Beit Lahiya.

"I've been told that the devils have left, " said Riyadh Shahadeh, referring to the Israelis. "I'm going back to see how I'm going to start again. I don't know what happened to my house. I am going back there with a heart full of fear because I am not sure if the area is secure or not, but I have no other option."

**Hamas**, eager to show it still controls Gaza despite the Israeli onslaught, sent policemen back on to the streets .

Municipal bulldozers pushed aside crushed cars and fallen chunks of concrete from the streets, but nothing could conceal the scale of destruction wrought by Israel's military machine.

Ambulances negotiated roads to recover bodies that had lain for days in rubble in Beit Lahiya and open areas to the north. **Hamas** police said about 95 bodies, mostly of militants, had been found .

In southern Israel, residents who have endured rocket attacks for eight years accused the government of stopping the offensive too soon. Israel declared the ceasefire before reaching a long-term solution to the problem of arms smuggling into Gaza, one of the war's declared aims.

The head of a parents' association in the town of Sderot faulted the government for not reaching an agreement directly with **Hamas** .

"It's an offensive that ended without achieving its aims, " Batya Katar said.

"All the weapons went through Egypt. What's happened there? The weapons will continue to come in through the tunnels and by sea."

## Graphic

---

LOSS: A Palestinian woman shouts out in despair in front of her house, which was destroyed during Israel's offensive in Jabalya. RECRUITS: A rally of around 300 newly sworn-in Hezbollah 'Fighters for Gaza' in the southern Lebanese town of Qana. TALKS: Prime Minister Gordon Brown in Sharm El Sheikh. RETURN: Israeli soldiers greet each other as they come back across the border early yesterday after a combat mission in Gaza . Picture: Yannis Behrakis/Reuters

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2009

## *Fighting steps up as Israeli leaders weigh ceasefire*

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

January 16, 2009 Friday

Fourth Edition

Copyright 2009 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 7

**Length:** 530 words

**Byline:** JASON KOUTSOUKIS IN JERUSALEM

### **Body**

---

FIGHTING looks set to continue in the Gaza Strip for several days after Israeli forces last night launched their most aggressive assault in the conflict so far.

The intensity of the fighting stepped up as Israeli officials considered a ceasefire deal proposed by Egypt and accepted by Hamas.

As the war on Hamas enters its 21st day, the death toll from the conflict stands at 1055 Palestinians killed, including 322 children and 76 women, and 4900 wounded.

Despite signs that agreement on a ceasefire was near, Israeli tanks and troops began moving towards the heart of Gaza City and Hamas militants launched a new wave of rocket attacks on Israel.

The Israeli Air Force was also continuing with nightly bombing raids, hitting about 70 targets yesterday and, according to Israeli Army Radio, killing 35 Hamas fighters.

A senior Israeli Defence official, General Amos Gilad, arrived in Cairo last night to discuss Egypt's plan for stopping arms smuggling into the Gaza Strip.

Hamas wants a full withdrawal of Israeli troops as part of a ceasefire, as well as a detailed plan for the opening of the border crossings into and out of the Gaza Strip.

Egypt and Israel want forces loyal to the Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas, and his Fatah party to take control of the border between Egypt and Gaza.

General Gilad was scheduled to return to Jerusalem early this morning to present the Egyptian plan to the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, the Defence Minister, Ehud Barack, and the Foreign Minister, Tzipi Livni.

If the Egyptian plan meets their approval, it will be taken to the Israeli security cabinet for discussion and approval.

Because General Gilad twice cancelled plans to travel to Cairo last week, last night's visit was being interpreted as a sign that significant progress had been made between the two.

Israel is also pushing a plan that would involve building a perimeter fence that encloses the border city of Rafah, half of which is located in Gaza and the other half in Egypt.



## Fighting steps up as Israeli leaders weigh ceasefire

Densely populated on both sides, Rafah is used as a hub for smuggling arms and consumer goods into Gaza.

Israeli security officials believe smuggling can only be stopped by enclosing the whole of Rafah inside a security fence policed by Egypt.

"Between Rafah and Cairo is the Sinai Desert, so if you build the fence outside Rafah, it's very easy to see what's going in and out, and it's impossible to tunnel under the fence and into the desert without being seen," General Giora Eiland, a former director of Israel's National Security Council, told the Herald.

Before Israeli withdrew from Gaza in 2005, General Eiland had responsibility for preventing smuggling into Gaza.

"Because Rafah is so densely populated on both sides, it is impossible to prevent tunnels from one side to the other. A fence around Rafah is the only way," General Eiland said.

Meanwhile Israel's Foreign Ministry director-general, Aharon Abramovitch, left for Washington last night to seek guarantees that the United States would help prevent the arms smuggling from Iran to Gaza by stopping them before they pass through Egypt.

It is asking the US to increase sea and land patrols, and impose tighter sanctions on Iran.

**Load-Date:** January 15, 2009

## Clean-up begins

Geelong Advertiser (Australia)

January 22, 2009 Thursday

1 - Main Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 14

**Length:** 278 words

**Byline:** ISRAEL Jerusalem, Wednesday

### **Body**

---

ISRAELI troops completed today their withdrawal from the Gaza Strip after a 22-day offensive against the Islamist Hamas movement, an army spokesman said.

``The last soldier left the Gaza Strip this morning," the spokesman said. ``However the army remains deployed all around the Gaza Strip to meet any eventuality."

The pullout began on Sunday after Israel declared a ceasefire and Palestinians militants matched it. Hamas gave Israel a week to remove all troops and open crossing points into Gaza or face renewed hostilities.

The Israel Defence Forces later issued a statement saying the troops had returned to Israeli territory.

``The forces are now redeployed outside the Gaza Strip," it said.

Israel launched its massive assault on December 27, bombarding the narrow coastal strip where 1.5 million Palestinians live from land, air and sea. The army conditioned a full withdrawal on a halt to rocket attacks on southern Israel by Palestinian militants, which sparked the invasion.

Palestinian health ministry figures list more than 1300 people dead, including 410 children and about 100 women. Another 5300 people were wounded 1855 of them children and 795 women.

The Palestinian bureau of statistics reported 4100 homes totally destroyed and 17,000 others damaged in the offensive.

UN chief Ban Ki-moon yesterday became the first world leader to visit the enclave since Israel halted the deadliest offensive it has ever launched on the Palestinian territory, which has been ruled by Hamas since June 2007.

He accused Israel of using ``excessive force" in the conflict, but he also condemned Palestinian rocket fire on southern Israel which sparked the invasion. -- AFP

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2009

Clean-up begins

---

End of Document

*We have not heeded the cry, 'Never again'*

The Sunday Independent (South Africa)

February 01, 2009

e1 Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent News and Media Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 9

**Length:** 429 words

## **Body**

---

The article by Peter Bills refers.

January 27 marked United Nations International Holocaust Memorial Day, when people reflected on the greatest genocide, a tragedy inestimably cruel and calculating in its methods. We memorialised and remembered the precious lives lost and remember with dread the motivation that led to this horrific human tragedy. The numbers are inconceivable - 6 million Jews, of whom 1,5 million were children.

The holocaust was the systematic torture and killing of those the Nazi government deemed unsuitable or "untermetschen". Apart from the millions of Jewish people murdered, other minority groups were singled out, including Gypsies, political dissidents, homosexuals and the handicapped, but it was the Jews as a nation who were hunted for extermination.

The loss of any child's life is deplorable and tragic but no comparison can be made with what children were exposed to during the Holocaust, how they were used for medical experiments - blinded, crippled and tortured - to satisfy the sick and perverted fantasies of Nazi doctors determined to create "the perfect Aryan race".

During Operation Cast Lead, the Israeli defence forces took every possible measure to ensure as little civilian casualty as possible. From cellphone and radio communication to the dropping of leaflets from the sky, every effort to warn civilians was taken. Hamas, on the other hand, made no secret of its use of women and children as human shields. Encouraging jihad and martyrdom among children, surely a most insidious form of child abuse, is enforced everywhere, in school textbooks and in children's television shows. We have witnessed the firing of rockets from schoolyards and the dragging of children to the front line where they are used to retrieve the weapons of the dead. And if they are killed in the process? Well, they are just considered collateral in Hamas's crafty public relations war.

This heinous disrespect for human life has resulted in mounting death tolls among children. Where are our citizens calling for war crimes tribunals against Hamas terrorists? Sadly, we have not taken heed of the cry, "Never again". Instead, we ignore these atrocities or lay blame somewhere else. Our silence is deafening.

Hamas, with its deadly genocidal charter that is never challenged, its blatant flouting of human rights laws by firing rockets indiscriminately into Israel's towns and cities and its callous use of the children as cannon fodder, only serves to remind us that it was words, deeds and silence that built places like Auschwitz.

Rolene Marks

Johannesburg

We have not heeded the cry, 'Never again'

**Load-Date:** February 1, 2009

---

End of Document

## *We have not taken heed of the call: Never again*

Argus Weekend (South Africa)

February 01, 2009

e1 Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent News and Media Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 32

**Length:** 415 words

### **Body**

---

January 27 marked United Nations International Holocaust Memorial Day, when people reflected on the greatest genocide, a tragedy inestimably cruel and calculating in its methods.

We memorialised and remembered the precious lives lost and remember with dread the motivation that led to this horrific human tragedy.

The numbers are inconceivable - six million Jews, of whom 1.5m were children.

The holocaust was the systematic torture and killing of those the Nazi government deemed unsuitable or "untermetschen". Apart from the millions of Jewish people murdered, other minority groups were singled out, including Gypsies, political dissidents, homosexuals and the handicapped, but it was the Jews as a nation who were hunted for extermination.

The loss of any child's life is deplorable and tragic but no comparison can be made with what children were exposed to during the holocaust, how they were used for medical experiments - blinded, crippled and tortured - to satisfy the sick and perverted fantasies of Nazi doctors determined to create "the perfect Aryan race".

During Operation Cast Lead, the Israeli defence forces took every measure to ensure as little civilian casualty as possible.

From cellphone and radio communication to the dropping of leaflets from the sky, every effort to warn civilians was taken. But **Hamas** made no secret of its use of **women** and children as human shields. Encouraging jihad and martyrdom among children, a most insidious form of child abuse, is espoused everywhere, in school textbooks and in children's television shows.

We have witnessed the firing of rockets from schoolyards and the dragging of children to the frontline where they are used to retrieve the weapons of the dead. And if they are killed in the process? Well, they are just considered collateral in **Hamas**'s crafty public relations war.

This heinous disrespect for human life has resulted in mounting death tolls among children. Where are our citizens calling for war crimes tribunals against **Hamas** terrorists? Sadly, we have not taken heed of the cry, "Never again". Instead, we ignore these atrocities or lay blame somewhere else. Our silence is deafening.

We have not taken heed of the call: Never again

**Hamas**, with its deadly genocidal charter that is never challenged, its blatant flouting of human rights laws by firing rockets indiscriminately into Israel's towns and cities and its callous use of children as cannon fodder, only serves to remind us it was words, deeds and silence that built places like Auschwitz.

Rolene Marks

Johannesburg

**Load-Date:** January 31, 2009

---

End of Document

**Turkey's shift toward Iran, Syria is no short-term blip. Ankara has dispensed with its policy of equidistance between Israelis and Palestinians**

The Jerusalem Post  
February 20, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 8

**Length:** 946 words

**Byline:** JONATHAN SPYER

**Highlight:** ANALYSIS. Jonathan Spyer is a senior researcher at the Global Research in International Affairs Center, IDC, Herzliya. Translations of comments by Iranian officials by Memri.

## **Body**

---

Last weekend, a conference held under the title "Gaza the victory" took place at hotel near Istanbul's Ataturk airport. The conference brought 200 Sunni clerics and activists together with senior, Damascus-based **Hamas** officials.

Closed meetings held after the main conference sessions focused on the creation of a "third jihadist front" against Israel - the first two being Iraq and Afghanistan, in the view of the conference delegates. The gathering was addressed by Muhammad Nazzal, a top **Hamas** official from Damascus.

In an echo of the attempts by Islamists across the Middle East to pressure Egypt during the recent Gaza operation, Nazzal called on regional governments to "open the borders and let the fighters through."

The gathering in Istanbul is significant for two reasons. First, it showcases the continued efforts by Islamist movements to present the Gaza events as a watershed dividing the path of "resistance," which they favor, from the path of "collaboration" that they accuse leading Arab states of following.

Second, and perhaps more important, the location of the conference is a further indication of the move of the Islamist AKP government in Turkey toward a more and more open alignment with anti-Western and anti-Israeli forces in the region.

The conference organizers themselves were aware of the significance of the event's location. One of them told a BBC journalist attending the event, "During the past 100 years relations [between Arabs and Turks] have been strained, but Palestine has brought us together."

Speakers at the conference made constant reference to Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's decision to storm off the stage in protest during a recent debate in Davos, Switzerland, on the Gaza operation.

The current Turkish government's willingness to engage with and host regional and Palestinian Islamist forces is not new. **Hamas** leader Khaled Mashaal made a controversial trip to Ankara less than a month after **Hamas**'s victory in Palestinian Legislative Council elections in January 2006. Interestingly, Mashaal was asked to come directly by the AKP government, after the more secular-minded Turkish Foreign Ministry refused to extend an invitation to him.



Turkey 's shift toward Iran , Syria is no short-term blip. Ankara has dispensed with its policy of equidistance between Israelis and Palestinians

At the time, some analysts sought to present the invitation to Mashaal as a one-off gesture without deeper significance for the Israeli-Turkish relationship. Subsequent events have disproved this interpretation.

Turkey's response to the Gaza offensive has highlighted a deep rift in relations. Erdogan in the course of the operation questioned Israel's UN membership. The atmosphere in Turkey during Operation Cast Lead became deeply charged against Israelis and Jews - with a number of ugly incidents recorded across the country. Erdogan attended the emergency summit in Doha on January 16 that was convened by Syria and Qatar to offer support to **Hamas**.

Turkey's courting of **Hamas** and hosting of Islamist gatherings form part of a more general regional policy pursued by the AKP government in Ankara. The AKP seeks to build Turkey's regional "strategic depth" - in its preferred phrase - by building up relations with Syria and Iran. This is presented as a desire to counter-balance, rather than replace, Ankara's already deep links with the West.

However, in the current situation of sharp polarization and cold war in the region, it is becoming increasingly unfeasible for countries to maintain close relations with both the US-led and the Iranian-led camps. The prospect of Turkey moving toward the Iranian-led alliance can no longer be dismissed as fanciful.

Turkish analysts have noted the rise of a "Muslim nationalist" orientation in the country, of which the political dominance of the AKP over the last half decade forms the political expression.

From this perspective, a regional policy which stresses alliances with other Muslim governments and movements across the region is a natural choice. Growing warmth in Turkey's relations with Iran and Syria, and the sympathy shown their key client organization **Hamas** last weekend in Istanbul are all elements of this emerging policy.

Of course, it is much too soon to write off the relationship between Turkey and Israel. There are powerful forces within the country which oppose the AKP's "strategic depth" orientation. Nevertheless, Turkey's position on recent events has brought great cheer to the Iranian-led camp, and is leading to corresponding new efforts at courtship from Teheran.

Senior Iranian officials praised Turkey's stance during the Gaza crisis, and called for a strategic alliance between the two countries. Yahya Safavi, former commander of the Revolutionary Guards and now security adviser to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, said earlier this month that "Erdogan's... courageous words at the Davos summit against the war crimes of the Zionist regime... are evidence of the Islamic awakening among the Turkish people - a result of the influence of Iran's Islamic Revolution."

Majlis speaker and former nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani visited Turkey during the Gaza crisis, holding closed talks with Erdogan. Following the meetings, both men called to enhance the already extensive economic links between Iran and Turkey.

Where is Turkey heading?

What can be said with certainty is that Ankara's long- maintained policy of equidistance between Israelis and Palestinians has been dispensed with by the current leadership. The AKP government is aligning itself not only with the Palestinians, but with **Hamas**. In the longer term, this may portend a slow shift toward greater alignment with the Iranian-led regional alliance. Such a shift, if it occurs, will be of primary significance to the strategic balance in the region.

## Graphic

---

Photo: **WOMEN** CHANT Islamic slogans and wave Palestinian flags in Istanbul last week. (Credit: Ibrahim Usta/AP)

Turkey 's shift toward Iran , Syria is no short-term blip. Ankara has dispensed with its policy of equidistance between Israelis and Palestinians

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

---

End of Document

## **ARMY CLOSES IN ON GAZA AS THE DEATH TOLL CLIMBS**

Metro (UK)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

London and all shared stories Edition

Copyright 2009 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved



**Section:** Pg. 13

**Length:** 242 words

**Byline:** JO STEELE

### **Body**

---

ISRAELI forces advanced into the suburbs of Gaza City yesterday as the offensive against **Hamas** entered its 18th day.

Overnight, Israeli jets attacked more than 60 targets. Explosions and heavy machine gun fire could be heard across the city, home to 500,000 people.

Medical workers said three civilians and 18 Palestinian gunmen, most of them members of the Islamist **Hamas** group that rules the Gaza Strip, were killed. Two rockets hit Beersheba in southern Israel, causing no casualties.

To date, violence has killed more than 900 Palestinians many of them **women** and children and 13 Israelis, including three civilians hit by rockets fired from the Gaza Strip.

The latest strikes came as Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert decided against ordering troops to engage in all-out urban warfare fearing that opening a phase three of the offensive could complicate truce efforts. In Cairo, a **Hamas** delegation resumed talks with Egypt on a ceasefire plan proposed by the country, which borders the Gaza Strip and Israel. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was heading to the region for a week of talks. He said: My message is simple, direct, and to the point the fighting must stop. To both sides, I say: Just stop now. Human rights groups have reported shortages of vital supplies, including water. Israel has permitted daily shipments of food and medicine. But Human Rights Watch said Israel's daily three-hour break in attacks to allow aid in was woefully insufficient.

### **Graphic**

---

On the march: Israeli troops head towards Gaza City yesterday Picture: Reuters

## ARMY CLOSES IN ON GAZA AS THE DEATH TOLL CLIMBS

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2009

---

End of Document

## *There was no provocation from Israel*

The Sunday Independent (South Africa)

February 15, 2009

e1 Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent News and Media Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 9

**Length:** 413 words

### **Body**

---

Dr Firoz Osman's letter ("All victims of inhumanity deserve our sympathy", February 8) refers.

He ends his letter with a demand for sympathy for victims of atrocities. I do not believe that the victims need his sympathy; they would rather learn what he proposes to do about preventing such atrocities.

When the Hamas in Gaza fire an estimated 10 000 missiles at Israeli civilian settlements over an eight-year period, that was meant to be an atrocity. Had each missile caused only one Israeli casualty, the result would have been 10 000 Israeli dead and wounded.

Considering that there was no provocation and initially no retaliation from the Israeli side, that bombardment could have resulted in an atrocity. The fact that it did not must be researched with our clergy and the people who provided every Israeli in the affected area with an air raid shelter.

When the Hamas unilaterally abrogated the truce that had been achieved by Egypt and began to rain 80 rockets a day onto Israeli civilians, Israel decided that there had to be a limit to its forbearance.

We all know the result - thousands of civilian casualties in Gaza, mainly because Hamas was unable to visualise an eventual Israeli response.

Their civilians were not protected. They put their own men, women and children in harm's way by using them as human shields. They fired missiles from within areas containing civilians. They placed civilians on the roofs of buildings after Israel had warned the occupants that the place was a legitimate military target.

Could it be that Hamas prefers it that way, knowing that dead civilians - men, women and children - are their most potent propaganda weapon?

For the past 60 years, Palestinians have been living in poverty or in refugee camps. In the meantime, Israel has prospered and today is regarded as one of the most technically developed countries in the world. Its population has increased from the initial 650 000 to more than 7 million, of which 20 percent are Arabs.

Palestinians and Israelis will never agree on what caused them to arrive at this naqba, (catastrophe) and as long as the Palestinians continue to imbue their children with hatred and the glorification of shaheed, (martyrdom), there will never be peace.

There was no provocation from Israel

Today, Egypt and Jordan have peace treaties with Israel. Jordan and Israel co-operate in many fields to their mutual advantage. What advantages have the past 60 years of hatred and intifada (uprising) brought to the Palestinians?

Don Krausz

Johannesburg

**Load-Date:** February 14, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Why Israel's incursion into Gaza will not change much*

The Irish Times

January 17, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 The Irish Times All Rights Reserved

**Section:** OPINION; Opinion; Pg. 15

**Length:** 925 words

**Byline:** RAMEZ MALUF

### **Body**

---

**WORLD VIEW:**THE SOUND blasts from the loudspeakers in the mosque near my office in Beirut are causing the windowpane to shudder. It is noon on Friday, and the local muezzin is leading the faithful in prayer. The mosque is full, the crowd of believers spilling over to the sidewalk in front. Today, the muezzin is more upset than usual, and he has been very upset of late.

He is admonishing Arab leaders for failing to stop the violence in Gaza, for failing to confront Israel and the United States, for failing to come to the assistance of Hamas and the Palestinians. Arab leaders are traitors to the ummah [Arab world], he tells the crowd. He quotes from the Koran to make it clear that they will burn in hell.

You ask why they are not coming to the help of our people? Because they are corrupt; they are cowards, puppets of the imperialists. That is the reason.

It is taking him a long time to make his point, but that is the gist of this Friday's sermon.

In my opinion, there is at least another reason, and that is that Arab leaders, as well as large segments of their populations, are suffering from war fatigue. They want to see an end to the conflict, one way or another. If Israel is able to crack down decisively on Hamas, they reason, the road may be open for a peace agreement. Admittedly, to many others, this is nothing short of defeatism, surrender to the enemies of man and God.

But defeatism or not, there is no denying that an increasing number of Arabs want an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Those leaders being admonished by the muezzin probably believe that only a minority of diehards, particularly Hamas and Hizbullah supporters, remain as obstacles to peace.

That may be the case. But even if so, the Israeli incursion into Gaza is unlikely to change matters much. Hamas and Hizbullah are likely to remain thorns in Israel's side for a long time, and this for at least three reasons.

The first is that come what may, Hamas will portray this last round of fighting as a victory. From his exile in Damascus, the Islamic group's leader, Khaled Meshal, has been touting the success of his fighters' resistance every day. Despite the human tragedy, he remains unwilling to compromise. His tone is defiant and unyielding. Almost incomprehensibly, many of his and Hizbullah's supporters are convinced that the tide has changed. When he speaks about fighting for Palestine, he means all of Palestine, and not just land lost in 1948.

Recently on a morning political show on Hizbullah's Al Manar TV, a respected Shia scholar told his hosts that it was about time Arabs start discussing what the Middle East will look like without Israel. I am not saying that this is going

### Why Israel 's incursion into Gaza will not change much

to happen tomorrow or after tomorrow, he said. But there is reason to think that we will not have a Jewish state in the region in the not too distant future.

Was it not time for scholars and politicians to study that possibility? Obviously, seemed to think his female co-hosts, who nodded repeatedly in agreement.

Particularly after the failure of the Israelis to end the July 2006 attack on Lebanon on their own terms, morale among Hizbullah and Hamas militants has soared. The myth of Israeli invincibility has been conclusively put to rest, Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah tells TV audiences at every one of his appearances.

The second reason is the ability of Hamas and Hizbullah to secure weaponry.

Unless the Israeli incursion results in the destruction of all artisan tunnels between Egypt and Gaza, Hamas will continue to have access to armament and material needed to manufacture their rockets.

The Dubai-based Institute for Near East and Gulf Military Analysis reported on January 14th that Palestinians in Gaza have recently started to manufacture a 122mm-calibre Grad version of the Katyusha that is about 30 per cent lighter than the most advanced Qassam rockets they previously used, with an improved range of 18-30km. According to the report, the Palestinians may be on the verge of improving their range capability and placing the larger Katyusha rocket as the mainstay of their inventory in place of the Qassam, which carries a lighter explosive load and has a range of no more than 9km .

While Israel is currently in the midst of restructuring its anti-rocket defence systems, even the more favourable assessments recognise that its options are limited and will ensure only partial results. Matters may improve after 2010 when the Jewish state begins to take delivery of its high-speed anti-rocket Iron Dome defence system, and more so after 2013 when it will start putting in place its long-range Magic Wand systems. Nevertheless, Israel s vulnerability to rocket attacks will be diminished but not considerably removed.

The third reason is that the appeal of Islamic organisations among Palestinians, as well as other Arab militants, is likely to grow rather than diminish in the years to come. It is naïve to expect that the impoverished Palestinian and Arab populations surrounding Israel will choose to confront Israel as secular liberal democrats, when the West in all of its wisdom, wants to support, arm, and, in the case of the United States, finance a Jewish state in the Middle East, albeit dressed in the garb of modernity.

Those who want to support a religious state must be ready to fight a religious war. The muezzin in the mosque nearby has learned that lesson, and his crowd grows larger every week.

Ramez Maluf is a professor of communication at the Lebanese American University in Beirut.

Paul Gillespie is on leave

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2009



## **Turkish leader hailed after Israel spat**

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

January 31, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

**Length:** 901 words

**Byline:** Christopher Torchia Associated Press

### **Body**

---

ISTANBUL, Turkey ? Turkey's prime minister drew praise Friday from **Hamas** militants for confronting the Israeli president over civilian casualties and said "everybody should take sides," despite Turkish efforts to mediate in the Middle East. The uproar raised questions about where Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan wants to lead Turkey, which seeks to join the European Union but is prepared to disagree with its Western allies and act as a voice for many in the Muslim world. It thrust Turkey, which has military ties with Israel and has hosted indirect talks between Israel and Syria, into the role of champion of Iran-backed **Hamas**, which is considered a terrorist group by the West and is shunned by some Arab nations.

Red and white Turkish flags flapped next to green **Hamas** banners at rallies throughout Gaza City on Friday, as well as the ruins of a bombed-out mosque in the Gaza refugee camp of Jebaliya. Later, about 5,000 **Hamas** supporters rallied in front of the ruined Palestinian parliament, some waving Turkish flags and carrying pictures of Erdogan. "We consider this a daring and responsible position that expresses the pulse and outlook of the Islamic nation and confirms the rights of the Palestinian people," **Hamas** legislator Mushir al-Masri Mashir said of Erdogan's confrontation with Israeli President Shimon Peres. "It is a position more advanced than those of the Arab and Islamic regimes." The Israeli offensive killed nearly 1,300 Palestinians, including hundreds of civilians, and caused an estimated \$2 billion in damage, Palestinian officials say. Thirteen Israelis died during the Gaza assault, which was launched to halt years of **Hamas** rocket fire on southern Israel. "No one should portray the killing of those children or **women** as a simple job accident," Erdogan said at the inauguration of a subway station in Istanbul on Friday. "Being silent in the face of oppression is oppression itself." Israel has blamed civilian deaths in Gaza on **Hamas** and other Palestinian fighters for allegedly using the population as cover for operations. Erdogan, however, said "no one can downplay" the Palestinian casualties. "We are not categorically accusing Israel, Israelis or Jews. Our criticism is directed at phosphorus bombs, weapons of mass destruction. Our reaction is against the Israeli administration," he said. "Everybody should take sides and Turkey's side is clear: it is on the side of peace." A crowd of about 1,500 people chanted "Turkey is proud of you" and "Down with Israel." Earlier, more than 5,000 jubilant supporters, many waving Turkish and Palestinian flags, thronged the airport to welcome Erdogan after he returned from the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The dispute about Israel's offensive took place at a panel discussion there on Thursday. It ended when Erdogan told Peres: "You kill people," and then stalked off the stage. Peres said Friday his heated public exchange with Erdogan was not personal and ties between the two nations won't change. He said he spoke afterward with Erdogan. "I called him up and said, 'Yes, I do not see the matter as personal ... and the relations can remain as they are,' Peres said. "My respect for him didn't change. We had an exchange of views." Some Turkish media reported that Peres apologized to Erdogan. Peres spokeswoman Ayelet Frisch denied that. Both Israeli mass-circulation papers put the confrontation on the front page. Yediot Ahronot's headline was "And what if they shot rockets at Istanbul?" ? a reference to Palestinian militants' rockets that were fired at Israel. Maariv's headline was "Turkey against Peres." Writing in Yediot, Alon Liel ? who served as

## Turkish leader hailed after Israel spat

an Israeli diplomat in Turkey and was the director of Israel's Foreign Ministry ? reminded readers that in November 2007 Peres made history when he addressed Turkey's parliament. "And it was the same Peres who was dealt, along with all of us, a stinging slap on the face by the Turkish prime minister who briefly turned Davos into the sewer of Istanbul," he wrote. "It's true that Israel occupied territory, but Turkey is also holding occupied territory. It's true that Israel has violated U.N. resolutions, but Turkey has ignored dozens of such resolutions. It's true that Israel is far from perfect, but don't tempt us to mention all of Turkey's crimes," he wrote. Erdogan's outburst appeared to put at risk efforts to transform his country ? a nation with secular ideals and an overwhelmingly Muslim population ? into a Mideast mediator. "From now on, Turkey has lost its neutrality," said Huseyin Bagci, who teaches international relations at Middle East Technical University in Ankara, the Turkish capital. "Turkey's role as an objective mediator in the Middle East is over." Turkey is Israel's best friend in the Muslim world. During the Gaza war, Turkey positioned itself as a potential mediator with unique access to the two enemies, but its perceived neutrality faded with Erdogan's harsh criticism of the Israeli offensive. The Turkish military, which suspects Erdogan's government seeks to undermine Turkey's secular principles, indicated its ties with Israel would not immediately change. "The rule is to act according to national interests in bilateral military relations with all countries," Brig. Gen. Metin Gurak, the military spokesman, said Friday in response to a question on the possibility of cutting military ties.

**Load-Date:** January 31, 2009

---

End of Document

## International briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

February 15, 2009 Sunday

Copyright 2009 Woodward Communications, Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** A; Pg. 7

**Length:** 727 words

**Byline:** The Associated Press

### **Body**

---

15 killed, 160 hurt in train derailment BHUBNESHWAR, India - At least 15 people were killed and more than 160 injured when a train derailed in eastern India, a railroad official said Saturday. Forty people were hospitalized in serious condition, but their injuries were not life-threatening, J.P. Mishra, spokesman for the East Coast Railway, told The Associated Press. The accident occurred Friday night in Orissa state near the town of Jajpur, about 65 miles north of the city of Bhubneshwar, Mishra said. Residents return to fire-destroyed town BUXTON, Australia - Residents of the town worst hit by Australia's wildfire disaster made a brief and emotional return Saturday but were not allowed to stay because the entire village is being treated as an arson crime scene.

About 300 people from Marysville were loaded on buses with fire and police officials and driven through the town exactly one week after waves of blazes swept southeastern Victoria state, killing at least 181 people and razing 1,800 homes in a matter of hours. One man has been arrested and charged with arson causing death and deliberately lighting a wildfire in connection to one of the fires, although not the one that destroyed Marysville. The suspect, also charged with possessing child pornography, is in custody pending a court hearing Monday. **Hamas** reports snags in Gaza truce talks GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - Gaza's **Hamas** rulers are reporting snags in truce talks with Israel. Egypt has been brokering truce talks since the end of Israel's war on **Hamas** a month ago. In any agreement, Israel would gradually ease its blockade of Gaza and Gaza militants would halt attacks on Israel. There has been speculation that a cease-fire deal is close. But a **Hamas** official said Saturday that new problems have come up. **Hamas** wants an 18-month cease-fire. **Hamas** spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said Israel created new obstacles by seeking an open-ended cease-fire. Report: North Korea might test-fire missile SEOUL, South Korea - North Korea's most advanced long-range missile is being assembled at a launch site for a possible test-firing later this month, a newspaper said. Washington urged Pyongyang not to take any "provocative" actions that could undermine peace efforts. The Taepodong-2 missile has recently been moved to the Musudan-ni site on the North's eastern seaboard, but it has not yet been seen near the launch pad, South Korea's mass-circulation Chosun Ilbo reported Friday. "We assume that they are currently assembling the first- and second-stage rockets," the newspaper quoted an unidentified South Korean government official as saying. South Korean and American intelligence authorities believe the North could test-fire the missile, potentially capable of reaching the western U.S., around Feb. 25, the first anniversary of South Korean President Lee Myung-bak's inauguration, the newspaper said. The National Intelligence Service, Seoul's top spy agency, said it could not confirm the report, citing the sensitivity of intelligence matters. Saudi king shakes up religious establishment RIYADH, Saudi Arabia - The Saudi king on Saturday dismissed the chief of the religious police and a cleric who condoned killing the owners of TV networks that broadcast "immoral" content, signaling an effort to weaken the country's hard-line Sunni establishment. The shake-up - King Abdullah's first since coming to power in August 2005 - included the appointment of a **female** deputy minister, the highest government position a Saudi woman has attained. The king

## International briefs

also changed the makeup of an influential body of religious scholars, for the first time giving more moderate Sunnis representation to the group whose duties include issuing the religious edicts known as fatwas. Saudi Arabia's king does not have unlimited power. He has to take into account the sentiments of the sprawling ruling family as well as that of the powerful religious establishment, which helped found the state nearly a century ago. Abdullah's changes indicate that he has built the necessary support and consensus in the religious elite and in the ruling family.

Refugee bus attacked COLOMBO, Sri Lanka - A suspected Tamil Tiger rebel hurled a hand grenade at a bus full of war-displaced refugees Saturday, killing a woman and wounding 13 others, the military said. The bus was attacked in Puliyankulam village in the north.

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Tragedy is no crime*

The Jerusalem Post

January 19, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** OPINION; Pg. 13

**Length:** 714 words

**Highlight:** Editorial

### **Body**

---

You are a freshman university student on the first day of a philosophy course. Your professor poses this ethical dilemma: A devoutly religious man is shooting at you with an AK-47. He is determined to kill you and your family. Is it moral to shoot back? Before you answer; consider that he is shielded by his pregnant wife and three young children.

Ordinary Israelis know what any undergraduate not suffering from a death-wish intuitively appreciates - namely, that human beings should not intentionally injure other human beings but may sometimes need to resort to violence to keep themselves and others from harm.

We are sensitive to the heartrending loss of innocent life in Gaza during Operation Cast Lead. Arab and foreign press reports claim upwards of 1,300 Palestinians killed, including 300 children and 100 women. It will take Israeli experts time to accurately determine how many of the dead were truly non-combatants. For now, there are huge discrepancies.

Of the 900 enemy dead that Israeli intelligence had reportedly identified by last Thursday, about 250 were said to be non-combatants. The blame for their deaths rests solely with Hamas. Hamas provoked this war, and then fought it from behind Palestinian men, women and children.

Still, for some knee-jerk enemies of Israel like British MP Gerald Kaufman, even the killing of "militants" is inexcusable. He's implied that Israel's shooting of a Hamas gunman is akin to the Nazis' murder of his grandmother during the Holocaust. We can have no common language with someone whose moral compass is so warped. Kaufman, like the mullahs in Iran, has convinced himself that Israel is exploiting the "continuing guilt from Gentiles" over the Holocaust "as justification for their murder of Palestinians."

That broken record won't play. Presumably, Kaufman means the "gentiles" who control the United Nations. But how sympathetic are they to Israel's right of self-defense? Or perhaps he means the "gentiles" in the international media? How convincing is it to suggest that they side with Israel in their Gaza coverage?

Even Kaufman's notoriety as a "Jewish critic" of Israel has lost its cachet - such critics are hardly a rare species.

And anyway, Kaufman has been siding with the Palestinians since 1988, when he endorsed the first intifada.

The Kaufmans of the world apart, Israel can also do no right in the eyes of those critics who believe that our existence here is an "original sin"; that since there were 600,000 Jews here in 1948 and, arguably, twice that

## Tragedy is no crime

number of Arabs, any partition of Palestine was inherently "theft." We have no claims on the hearts of those who embrace the Arab narrative so utterly.

BUT WE'VE also been let down by those who profess to believe that the Jewish people do have the right to a homeland. Why is it so hard for them to comprehend the nature of the enemy we're facing in Gaza? After all, the theology that motivates Hamas is analogous to the fanaticism that brought down the World Trade Center, exploded London's transport system, and continues to spill innocent blood from Bali to Mumbai.

Israelis are told that no matter the provocation, we are "too quick" to resort to force. As if negotiations with Hamas were an option; as if eight years was too quick.

And if we've acted so "disproportionately" in our brutal march to triumph, how come the enemy is still standing and declaring victory?

To the morally obscene charge that we've committed "genocide" in Gaza - does anyone seriously doubt that were genocide our goal, heaven forbid, there would be 500,000 dead Palestinians, and not 1,000?

What other army drops warning leaflets and makes automated warning calls prior to attacking? Why is it ethical for Hamas to fire from a mosque or over the walls of a UN facility, but unethical for our citizen-soldiers to save themselves by responding with heavy weapons?

The truth is that no Western country faced with a similar set of circumstances - fighting an enemy that principally targets non-combatants while hiding behind its own civilians - would comport itself with higher moral standards than the IDF.

Sophomoric ideals about wartime morality are barely tolerable in Philosophy 101. When mouthed by leaders and pundits who should know better, they reflect intellectual laziness and dishonesty.

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

---

End of Document

## *Hoping for a nonviolence movement in Palestine*

Daily News Egypt

January 26, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2013 Daily News Egypt - Egyptian Media Services Ltd. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 902 words

### **Body**

---

PHILADELPHIA: Since I was a small child, I have been taught that the powerless party always deserves "affirmative action" in any unbalanced conflict before a true resolution can be settled. As a Muslim who now lives in the West, I keep trying very hard to understand why so many in the mainstream West assume that the much more powerful Israel is the "good guy", while the less powerful Palestinian is the "bad guy" in the Palestinian crisis.

Is it compensation by the West for their "guilty feeling" over the Holocaust?

Is it more about the power of Jewish money? Is it related to skin-color? How are we to understand that 200 "home-made" rockets sent by Hamas to Israel during the first week of the crisis deserve more attention, as a proof of terrorism, than over 700 lives, mostly Palestinian civilians, taken by sophisticated Israeli weapons in the same week?

Many of my fellow Muslims and I have never agreed with Hamas which perceives every single Jew as the villain whose blood is halal (permissible by God) and therefore can be shed. We also disagree with some Muslims, including members of Hamas and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who want to wipe Israel from the map. A true "two-state" solution is the most reasonable option.

Moreover, I completely understand that any attack on Jews should remind all of us of the Holocaust which was the most horrible crime against humanity. Everyone should work to prevent that from happening again in our history, not only to Jews, but also to every human being. And surely, let us acknowledge that since 1948 the Palestinians have been suffering from a deep wound as a displaced and dispossessed people from their land.

However, in this satanic circle of violence, arguments for justified killings by either side, or why people should support one party rather than the other, are both endless and useless, or worse "are creating an even larger crisis. Clearly, the situation in Gaza today is much more complicated.

The temptation to continue to use weapons on both sides is terribly strong, either in the name of self-defence, justice, dignity, revenge or even God. I have no capacity whatsoever to tell them what is the right thing to do. For over 60 years, the use of weapons by the Palestinians has only provided justification for the Israelis to kill more and to occupy more Palestinian land.

## Hoping for a nonviolence movement in Palestine

If the Palestinians ceased using weapons, if Arab leaders and the Muslim world in general could help Hamas and other radical groups to stop the shooting, then Israel's justification to kill would cease to exist.

Let friends of Israelis argue the same point. Only when Israel, as the more powerful party stops using weapons, will those Muslim radicals, including Hamas that was created by Israel, have no legitimacy and lose Palestinian support. Israel must stop calling Hamas "a terrorist organization" and the Palestinians must stop defining Israelis as the "evil people". Peace can be made if they learn to talk and work together.

World leaders need to take every possible step towards peacemaking, and we "common global citizens" need to share in the responsibility. Beside the various efforts made thus far, from prayer to humanitarian efforts, we Muslims especially, need to react strategically. So far, many Muslims around the world have reacted in ways that increase the violence.

Yes, we have been sharing responsibility through prayers, fundraising, press releases, discussions, protests, art works and news exchanges. However, most of our actions stem from a "justification argument". For example, in my home country, Indonesia, the largest Muslim country in the world, Muslim protesters shut down the only synagogue last week because they assumed an automatic connection between Israel and Judaism. Some Indonesian Muslim groups, such as the Islamic Defender Front, (FPI) are even ready to send untrained voluntary troops to Gaza to fight.

Instead of helping the crisis, these reactions only magnify the waves of hate, vengeance and atrocity that extend from Gaza to the outside world. With Gaza as the epicentre of this violence, many Muslims worldwide identify with the oppressed Palestinian who wants to fight the enemy "the evil Israeli."

Condemnation of the killing and helping victims, in whatever form, are very important. It is also equally important for Muslim leaders around the world to present the Gaza crisis not primarily as a conflict between "us" Muslims against "them" Jews. Both the Israeli government and Hamas deserve condemnation and both sides are responsible for the increasing number of casualties, many of whom are children, women and the elderly.

We need to speak out and act, not as a particular national or religious group, but as an inter-religious global community. We Muslims outside of Palestine need to collaborate with each and every morally concerned individual "Muslim, Jew, Christian, black, white, female or male" to take care of the victims and work effectively for the same purpose: Peace.

By working together, not only can we isolate the Gaza violence, but, through our sympathy, support and hope, we can also disseminate a message of peace.

Achmad Munjid is President of Nahdlatul Ulama Community in North America and a PhD candidate in Religious Studies at Temple University, Philadelphia. This article is distributed by the Common Ground News Service (CGNews) with permission from the author.

© Daily NewsEgypt 2009

**Load-Date:** January 29, 2009



## *Disproportionate, dishonest and discriminatory critics*

The Jerusalem Post

January 29, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** OPINION; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1048 words

**Byline:** GIL TROY

**Highlight:** Center Field. Malevolence coursed through much Gaza war criticism, especially among those who designate themselves knights in the fight against racism. The writer is professor of history at McGill University in Montreal. The author of *Why I Am a Zionist: Israel, Jewish Identity and the Challenges of Today* and *Leading from the Center: Why Moderates Make the Best Presidents*.

### **Body**

---

Israel's justified, in fact long delayed, military response to the rocket fire from Gaza triggered debate worldwide. Some criticism was reasonable, anguished, sympathizing with a state's right to self-defense after eight years of bombardment, no matter how intermittent, while questioning the response's intensity. Alas, much criticism was - dare we say it - disproportionate, dishonest and frequently discriminatory. Shouting at Jews "go back to your ovens" in Fort Lauderdale, vandalizing synagogues in Chicago, smashing Starbucks Coffee windows in London, lacks any ambiguity. The barrage of criticism launched illustrates how quickly condemnation of Israeli actions degenerates into anti-Zionism, which is often a thin veneer for anti-Semitism.

Although calling the response disproportionate implicitly conceded that some response was justified, most critics went further. Critics silent about Muslim murders of fellow Muslims in Gaza, Iraq or Sudan became obsessed with Israel's "crimes," no matter how surgical the IDF tried to be. More disturbing, the Mideast conflict's dysfunctional, polarizing gravitational physics led many who criticized Israel's actions to idealize **Hamas**.

Demonstrating this dishonesty in prominent essays in The Washington Post, Guardian and The New York Times, respectively, former president Jimmy Carter, Avi Shlaim of Oxford University and Rashid Khalidi of Columbia University all sanitized **Hamas** to demonize Israel.

Carter treated **Hamas** as a peace-loving movement seeking a "comprehensive cease-fire in both the West Bank and Gaza," ignoring its charter's vows to destroy Israel. Khalidi defined Israel's 2009 war aims by unearthing a 2002 comment from Moshe Ya'alon, chief of General Staff at the time, about trying to crush Palestinians, ignoring many more recent, far uglier, Palestinian calls to annihilate Israel. And in a down-is-up essay, wherein Israel's painful withdrawal from Gaza became an attempt to expand its territory, Shlaim treated **Hamas** as a democratic movement even though it seized power in a coup by murdering fellow Palestinians.

Shlaim wrote of **Hamas**: "Denied the fruit of its electoral victory and confronted with an unscrupulous adversary, it has resorted to the weapon of the weak - terror." It is particularly disingenuous for an historian to claim **Hamas** only "resorted" to terror due to the evil Israelis - as if **Hamas** had not first used such "weapons of the weak" back in the early 1990s, to sabotage the Oslo peace process.

### Disproportionate, dishonest and discriminatory critics

Despicably, others used Holocaust shorthand to berate Israel. Calling Gaza a "big concentration camp," as Cardinal Renato Martino, the Vatican's justice and peace minister, did, or writing in on-line in Spain that "the Machiavellian brain of this entire extermination operation is no different from that which designed Nazi Germany," crossed the line. For starters, the Holocaust - and other genocides - killed thousands, tens of thousands, millions - dwarfing the Palestinian civilian casualties in the hundreds despite three weeks of war.

Moreover, there is something particularly dastardly about preying on an ethnic group's historic sensitivities. President Barack Obama will endure much criticism, but if critics make slavery analogies or refer to minstrel shows, their condemnation will be racist. During her campaign, Hillary Clinton and her supporters did not deem attacks on her Iraq war stance sexist. They complained about excessive attention to her clothes, speculation about her grit and other comments invoking stereotypes which historically demeaned women.

MANY OF these anti-Zionist attacks resurrected the historic ghost of anti-Semitic essentialism. When asked about his fellow protester in Florida who shouted at Jews, "You need a big oven, that's what you need," one rally organizer initially seemed to disavow the remarks. "She does not represent the opinions of the vast majority of people who were there," Emmanuel Lopez told Fox News. But Lopez quickly added that "Zionism in general is a barbaric, racist movement that really is the cause of the situation in the entire Middle East." Lopez, a state coordinator for ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) engaged in classic racist essentialism.

For centuries, critics of Jews have degenerated from criticizing specific Jews' individual actions to generalizing about Jews and Judaism. Generalizing about Zionism's essence condemns Jewish nationalism with this age-old anti-Semitic tactic. A sign at a Melbourne rally took this rhetoric further, crying: "Clean the Earth from Dirty Zionists." You do not need a PhD in Jewish history - or in genocide studies - to see the Hitlerian overtones. Many victims of racism - and most especially the Jews in the Holocaust - were tagged as unclean, thus deserving of extermination, lest the general population be infected.

The ugly inverted rhetoric follows its inexorable logic: accusing the victims of the 20th-century's most horrific genocide of committing genocide, then essentializing and demonizing their movement for collective national fulfillment, leads to calls for eradication. (It also excuses Iranian calls for Israel's genocide). Jews have seen this happen too often to be blase about it, whether the speaker is a Vatican official or a street punk.

Essentialism poisons the environment and corrupts other arenas. In the past 40 years, no Western power has engaged in any major military action that did not trigger massive criticism. However, the broad lynch-mob atmosphere against Israel singularly questions its existence, not just the proportionality of its actions. More than 60 years after the country's founding, the world still has the Jewish state on probation, seemingly only accepted when it behaves well. Rogue states like Pakistan - an artificial creation carved out of a crumbling British Raj - do not have their existence questioned, while Israel constantly has to justify itself.

It is depressing in the 21st century to see such anti-Semitism, especially among those who designate themselves knights in the fight against racism. But the disproportionate demonization, the idealization of Hamas, the essentialism, the animosity coursing through so much criticism of Israeli actions suggests that the world has yet to heal from one of its most persistent afflictions.

## Graphic

---

Photo: A rally in Pakistan on Monday. Rogue states like Pakistan, an artificial creation carved out of a crumbling British Raj, do not have their existence questioned, while Israel constantly has to justify itself. (Credit: AP Photo/K.M.Chaudary)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

Disproportionate, dishonest and discriminatory critics

---

End of Document

## **IDF releases names of seven of the 12 Gazans it says were killed near UN school**

The Jerusalem Post  
February 20, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 422 words

**Byline:** YAAKOV KATZ

### **Body**

---

The IDF's Gaza Coordination and Liaison Administration (CLA), which earlier this week told The Jerusalem Post that 12 Palestinians were killed in the shelling near a UN school in Jabalya, north of Gaza City - and not 42 as claimed by Palestinian officials at the time - has now given the Post the names of seven of those fatalities.

The seven names - two females and five males - bring the number of those named by the IDF as having been killed in the incident to nine. Within hours of the incident on January 6, the IDF named two Hamas operatives, Immad Abu Askar and Hassan Abu Askar, as being among the dead. The IDF said at the time the area next to the school had been used by terrorists to fire mortar shells at troops stationed nearby, and that the IDF had fired back.

The CLA, which is completing a register of Palestinian fatalities throughout Operation Cast Lead, and has identified more than 1,200, told the Post on Monday that the civilian death toll from the 22-day conflict was no higher than a third of the total fatalities, and that the international community had been duped by Hamas "fabrications" that pointed to twice as many civilian deaths.

The incident at the UN school was a key case in point, said the CLA's head, Col. Moshe Levi, since initial reports erroneously stating that the IDF had fired at the school, and putting the death toll at 42, were widely adopted at first by the UN and various NGOs. Earlier this month, the UN corrected its position and confirmed that the shelling and all of the fatalities had taken place outside the school compound.

The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has been working to compile its own data on the number and nature of all the Gaza casualties, "to gain clarity" on the controversial issue, a UN official said earlier this week.

Levi said nine Hamas operatives and three noncombatants died in the incident near the school. The seven names newly released by the CLA were: Ranin Abdullah Sameh, 12, Hadifa Jihad Kahloud, 17, Faris Mahmoud Faraj Allah, 21, Nafed Abu Abid, 22, Abed Muhammad Kadas, 25, Ayman Ahmad el-Khourd, 35, and Basem Abdel Gabin, 40.

The CLA would not specify how it had obtained the names. Officials said these names were being checked and categorized as combatants or noncombatants.

IDF releases names of seven of the 12 Gazans it says were killed near UN school

On the day of the incident, officials further said, officers from the CLA contacted the Palestinian Health Ministry and were told that three Palestinian civilians had been killed and that **Hamas** was hiding the identities of the remaining casualties.

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

---

End of Document

**UN Chief is leaving on a grim peace mission to the Middle East; POLITICS:  
U.N. Chief on Grim Peace Mission to Middle East**

IPS (Latin America)

January 21, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 NoticiasFinancieras/Grupo de Diarios America All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 706 words

**Byline:** Thalif Deen

## **Body**

---

But the ultimate success of his weeklong visit will depend on whether or not he can persuade both the Israelis and **Hamas** to implement last week's Security Council resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire to end the three-week-old fighting.

'In the name of humanity and international law,' both warring parties must observe the resolution, Ban told reporters Monday on the eve of his trip.

Asked how he plans to help implement the resolution in the face of defiance by both parties, he said he was talking to countries, including the United States, Egypt, Syria and Turkey, who can help influence the Israelis and **Hamas**.

'The Security Council resolution is binding -- and all member states should comply,' he added.

However, an Arab diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, told IPS that **Hamas** was not identified by name in the resolution, nor is it a member state, or even 'recognised' by the United Nations.

'If Israel, a member state, is unwilling to abide by the resolution, how can you expect **Hamas**, which has no standing at the U.N., to comply?' he asked.

Asked whether he was willing to talk to **Hamas**, which has a democratically elected government in Gaza, Ban ducked the question.

'As secretary-general, I deal with internationally-recognised Palestinian leaders,' he said, referring to Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), who is recognised by the United States, Israel and the European Union as the legitimate leader of the Palestinians.

The PNA, which was established in 1994, oversees the administration of the West Bank, the second half of the Israeli-occupied territories.

Describing the gravity of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Ban said more than 900 Palestinians have died and about 4,000 more have been injured.

'They have no place to hide, no place to run,' said. 'It is tragic and heartbreaking to see so many civilians killed and suffering.'

In contrast, the Israeli casualties have been around 10 to 12, according to published reports.

UN Chief is leaving on a grim peace mission to the Middle East  
POLITICS: U.N. Chief on Grim Peace Mission to Middle East

Asked if he would like to visit Gaza, Ban would only say he would meet with his senior officials based there, and who are overseeing the U.N.'s humanitarian operations.

The Israelis, who barred U.N. human rights expert Richard Falk from visiting Gaza last month, are unlikely to permit the secretary-general to take a tour of the occupied territories -- if and when he makes a request.

Ban said he was awaiting a response from Israel on a proposal to send an independent investigating team to probe the bombing of a U.N. compound where about 40 Palestinians died last week.

Meanwhile, John Ging, director of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Gaza, told reporters Monday that more than 40 percent of the nearly 900 Palestinians killed in the Israeli offensive were women and children.

After a visit to the over-burdened Al Shifa hospital in Gaza, he said: '(It) is the place of course where you see the most horrific human consequences of this conflict.'

'Among the tragic cases that I saw were a child, six years of age, little or no brain activity, people don't have much hope for her survival; multiple amputee another little girl; and a pregnant woman who had lost a leg.'

Ging said the sense of fear in Gaza 'was all pervasive among a battle-hardened population of 1.5 million that had already seen many years of conflict.'

'In my three years here I have never witnessed anything like the scale of fear that is there. We have to recognise that there's no safe place in Gaza and that continues to be the case and the casualty figures speak to that,' he added.

Ging said 35,000 Gazans had fled their homes for 38 UNRWA shelters, and many more had sought refuge with relatives.

Responding to a question, he said there was no evidence that Shifa hospital was being used by Hamas and reiterated his call last week for an independent investigation.

The secretary-general told reporters that the United Nations has about 10,000 staff on the ground overseeing humanitarian operations.

'I want my visit to be a tangible expression of support for their work under the most difficult and dangerous circumstances,' Ban said.

'I salute their bravery and their dedication to the U.N.'s mission,' he added.< © 2009 NoticiasFinancieras - IPS - All rights reserved

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2009

*World being fooled...*

Gulf Daily News

January 16, 2009

Copyright 2009 Gulf Daily News - Hilal Publishing and Marketing Group. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 445 words

## Body

---

This is in response to the letter (GDN, January 11) from Fahad (assuming that is his real name). He is a dullard for questioning a palpable historical fact about land ownership in Palestine. It is undisputed that 94 per cent of the land was owned by its native Muslims and Christians before it was stolen by Zionist Jews with the help from the guilt-ridden West following Nazi atrocities against Jews. So yes, Israel was created on stolen Arab land.

He is a racist for insinuating that Palestinians (Hamas) don't value the lives of their civilians as "Hamas deliberately stores weapons and missile sites in civilian areas to increase civilian casualties." In fact, terrorising and killing civilians is an official Israeli policy to create a rift between the resistance and its main supporters, the public.

It did so in the recent attacks by bombarding a civilian shelter at a UN school, then acknowledging their mistake after more than 40 civilians died. It did so when it forced over 100 civilians to assemble in a home, then shelling it killing over 30 human beings and preventing the Red Cross from reaching the site for a week. The Red Cross ran into gruesome discovery with injured children lying over the decomposed carcass of their dead mothers. It did so also in 2006 in Lebanon when it ordered refugees from the village of Marwahin to leave their homes, then to slaughter them by an Israeli helicopter.

Israel uses white phosphorous on civilian areas; it uses 1000 tonne bombs to destroy civilian homes, under the pretext that the head of household is a Hamas member. Just imagine if Hamas has the ability to bomb all the police stations and the homes of all Israeli political leaders and members of the army (which is everyone in Israel). Are those civilians or military targets?

According to statistics gathered by an American peace organisation, since September 2000, and not including the current losses in Gaza, 123 Israeli children were killed by Palestinians while 1,050 Palestinian children were murdered by Israelis.

The results of the current carnage speak volumes of the Israeli slaughter with more than 1,100 murdered Palestinians, of which 50pc are children and women. On the other side one Israeli civilian was killed. Notwithstanding Israel continues to fool the world (and the so-named Fahad) as being the victim. Israel is a habitually lying political machine, alas, successful in fooling some and blackmailing others, while everyone



World being fooled...

(including Arabs) sits and watches the suffering of the Palestinians. Just as the world sat and watched the suffering of Jews at the hands of the Nazis. Sadly, the yesteryear's "Nazi victim" is today's victimiser.

Allen

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2009

---

End of Document

**Israel to shield troops from prosecution; UN probes allegations of war crimes in Gaza**

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

January 26, 2009 Monday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 Times Colonist, a division of Canwest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. A2

**Length:** 570 words

**Byline:** Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service

**Dateline:** AZBET ABADRAPOH, GAZA STRIP

## **Body**

---

As the United Nations investigates whether Israeli soldiers committed war crimes in Gaza this month, Israel decided yesterday that all military personnel who fought in the Hamas-run Palestinian enclave will receive protection from foreign prosecution.

"The commanders and soldiers sent to Gaza should know they are safe from various tribunals and Israel will assist them on this front and defend them, just as they defended us with their bodies during the Gaza operation," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said.

Allegations that there was improper behaviour by Israel Defence Forces have been made by the UN and such agencies as Amnesty International.

Much of the territory, including most of Gaza City, was not touched by the war. The charges of misconduct centre on at least four communities in central and northern Gaza that bore almost the full brunt of attacks by Israeli forces.

One is Azbet Abadrapoh, just east of the Jabaliya refugee camp and about 1.5 kilometres from the Israeli border. This weekend, as residents combed through scores of flattened homes, Sannaa Awadallah of the UN's Gaza office and an associate went around with clipboards thick with notes.

"I am collecting tragic stories to send to our directors for analysis," Awadallah said as a crowd swarmed her and an associate. "It is important for the UN to know exactly what happened here and also to find out what help is required now. We are particularly interested in knowing what happened to women and children."

Piecing together who did what, when and where will be an immense challenge as so many people wanted their narratives chronicled. For Awadallah, the most harrowing of the 70 accounts she had recorded involved a mother who died while feeding her baby, who lay beside her corpse for three days before Israel allowed Palestinian medics into the area.

Ambulance driver Khalid Abu Aouk spent many days trying to co-ordinate with Israeli troops to rescue the injured and collect bodies. "They were very unhelpful," was one of his few relatively neutral comments.

## Israel to shield troops from prosecution; UN probes allegations of war crimes in Gaza

Pensioner Ahmed Muhammad Baduan's street looked as if an earthquake had hit it. When his wife, Halima, was hit in the head by a piece of shrapnel fired from a tank, he went outside and told an Israeli in the next street that his wife was wounded inside. But one of three tanks parked about 50 metres from his home fired, he said, bringing his already battered house down, killing his wife.

Israel Defence Forces entered neighbourhoods from which rockets had been launched and did what they had to do there to defend themselves, the IDF has said. This explanation was sometimes difficult to reconcile with the high level of destruction. Adding to the confusion have been accounts that soldiers gave to Israeli newspapers of how little resistance they encountered from **Hamas** forces, many of whom seem to have sat the war out.

On the other hand, it was unlikely in the worst-hit residential area that residents were telling the truth when they adamantly denied any **Hamas** members lived among them.

This may have been true in Azbet Abadrapoh, where most homes were flying the yellow flags of **Hamas**'s rival Fatah, and a pasture suitable for launching rockets was some distance away. It may have been less true in El Atatra, where Israeli forces said homes had been booby-trapped and where they had blown up a tunnel used to store rockets and from which **Hamas** fighters would run out to launch them.

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Israel Declares Unilateral Cease Fire In Gaza*

RTT News (United States)

January 17, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 NoticiasFinancieras/Grupo de Diarios America All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 435 words

### **Body**

---

(RTTNews) - Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert on Saturday declared a unilateral cease-fire in the Gaza Strip after 22 days of military operations in the besieged Palestinian territory aimed at ending the rocket fire by the militants there into southern Israel.

Olmert made the announcement in a in a televised address after a late-night cabinet meeting on Saturday and declared that the cease-fire would come into force by 2 a.m. Sunday (7 p.m. ET Saturday).

"**Hamas** has been dealt a very serious blow," Olmert said. "We can say that the conditions have been brought about that enable us to say that the aims that we laid down for the operation have been completely achieved."

He said that the Israeli troops would remain in the Gaza Strip for the time being, warning that the Jewish state would respond aggressively to any further rocket fire into Israel by the Gaza militants despite the unilateral cease-fire declaration.

"If foes decide to continue to fight against us, then we will be ready and we shall consider ourselves justified in replying," he said. "I do not suggest that **Hamas** or other terrorist organizations try us," adding that Israel would "consider pulling out of Gaza at a time that befits us".

Meanwhile, the United States welcomed Israel's unilateral cease-fire declaration in the Gaza Strip, saying it "expects that all parties will cease attacks and hostile actions immediately".

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon expressed also his relief after Israel announced the cease-fire, saying the ceasefire should be "the first step leading to the full withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza".

However, various media reports quoted **Hamas** officials as saying on Saturday that they will not accept Israel's unilateral cease-fire declaration as long as Israeli troops remain in Gaza.

The cease-fire comes 22 days after Israel launched a military offensive in the Gaza strip in response to continued rocket fire into southern Israel by Palestinian militants in Gaza after a six-month long Egyptian-brokered cease-fire deal expired on 19th December.

**Hamas**, the radical Islamist group that controls the Gaza Strip, had refused to renew the truce deal reached on 19th June, accusing the Jewish nation of failing to keep its end of the bargain of lifting its blockade on the Palestinian territory.

It is estimated that at least 1,200 Palestinians, including **women** and children, and 13 Israelis have been killed and many more injured in the 22 days of fighting that began on 27 December.

## Israel Declares Unilateral Cease Fire In Gaza

For comments and feedback: contact [editorial@rttnews.com](mailto:editorial@rttnews.com)

Copyright(c) 2009 RealTimeTraders.com, Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Load-Date:** April 16, 2010

---

End of Document

## **Thousands attend Anti-Israel march to protest against Israeli invasion of Gaza**

The Balochistan Times (AsiaNet)

January 18, 2009 Sunday

Copyright 2009 The Balochistan Times  
All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 625 words

### **Body**

---

KARACHI Hundreds of thousands of people marched on the city roads on Sunday to protest against Israeli invasion of Gaza, and killing of innocent Palestinians, especially women and children. The march, organized by Jammat-e-Islami, was the biggest anti-Israel event held so far in Pakistan, as waving flags could be seen from Tibet Center to Mazar-e-Quaid.

The march was also attended by the leaders and activists of PML(N), Ttehrik-e-Insaf, Jamiat Ulema Pakistan, Jamiat Ulema Islam, Jeay Sindh Tehrik, Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadit and Islami Tehrik. Chanting anti-Israel and pro-Hamas slogans, angry youths burnt effigies of Israeli Prime Minister, Edhu Olmert, and US President Bush. They threw shoes on the portraits of the two leaders at various spots during the march.

The participants were carrying different placards, and banners inscribed with slogans such as " Down with Israel and America", " Death of Israel", " We all are Hamas", and so on. They were also carrying mock coffins of Palestinian children.

Addressing the march, the JI Chief, Qazi Hussain Ahmad appealed to the Muslim countries to wake up and take practical steps to help the besieged Palestinians. Criticizing the role of Arab world, Qazi observed the Arab rulers had once again showed that they stood alongside America and Israel.

He asked the Egyptian government to immediately open its border with Gaza so that the victims of a modern day holocaust could take refuge.

" Muslims should stop depending on UN. This (UN) is nothing except a tool of the West, which is united against Muslims", Qazi opined and added " Israel has been violating the rejecting the UN resolutions on Palestine brashly and cock-surely, but no action has been taken against it. On the other hand, Muslim countries are being invaded by the Western world without any concrete proof".

Qazi said that the so-called civilized world had exposed its tall claims about peace and impartiality by financially and militarily patronizing Israel, which had been committing genocide of Palestinians. " Are the three-year, four-year, and five-year old children terrorists? Is this called the right of defense wherein Israel has been targeting schools, hospitals, and unarmed people?", he asked. The JI chief asked the Muslim rulers, especially Arab rulers not to prevent the Muslims from joining hands with Hamas against Israel.

" IF you cannot do anything, then at least do us a favour. Don't create hurdles in our way. Let us join the ranks of Hamas. We are ready to provide them arms, food, medicines, and other stuff", he said. " When America is openly

## Thousands attend Anti- Israel march to protest against Israeli invasion of Gaza

providing weapons to Israel to commit genocide through state terrorism, that under which legal or moral rule, you can stop us from helping **Hamas**", he maintained.

Criticizing the Pakistani government, the JI leader said that on the one hand, America had been supporting Israel, which had let lose a reign of terror against Palestinians, while on the other hand, Pakistani forces were killing their own people to appease the US.

" I assure you that if Pakistan comes out of the US war, there will be no terrorism in Pakistan", he said. Addressing the march, the JI Secretary General Syed Munawwar Hassan said that if the "state actors" did not act to protect the lives and properties of Muslims, then " non-state actors" would emerge in all over the Muslim world, and would protect their Muslim brothers.

" Which Muslim state actor is acting at the moment? When state actors fall asleep, only then the non-state actors take their place and act", he observed. The march was also addressed by JUP leader, Siddique Rathor, Islami Tehrik leader, Allama Nazir Abbas Naqvi, Tanzeem-e-Islami leader, Shujauddin Khan, Jeay Sindh Tehrik leader, Qamar Bhatti, and others.

**Load-Date:** January 30, 2009

---

End of Document

**Israel and US sign memorandum of understanding to fight Gaza smuggling.  
Agreement calls for increased intelligence cooperation and funding \* Rice:  
Gaza can never again be used as a launching pad against Israeli cities \*  
'This is a beginning,' Livni says**

The Jerusalem Post

January 18, 2009 Sunday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 2

**Length:** 1017 words

**Byline:** HILARY LEILA KRIEGER, Jerusalem Post correspondent

## **Body**

---

WASHINGTON - Hours before US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's official farewell to the State Department Friday, she and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) pledging greater US and international assistance to stymie weapons smuggling into the Gaza Strip.

The MOU enhances US-Israeli intelligence and military cooperation, and calls on international partners to stop Iran from funneling weapons to Hamas via the Middle East and Africa.

Ending the smuggling has been a central demand from Israel for any cease-fire deal.

"For a cessation of hostilities to be durable, there must be an end to the smuggling of weapons into Gaza. That is why the MOU we sign today is so important as a vital component for the cessation of hostility," Livni said as she stood by Rice at the MOU signing ceremony at the State Department Friday morning.

"I believe that this MOU, together with a parallel understanding with Egypt and an end to attacks from Gaza, can create the basis for Israeli decisions on the future of the operation," she said.

Rice concurred.

"We've said repeatedly that the continued supply of armaments to Hamas and other terrorist groups in Gaza, including by some in the region, is a direct cause of the current hostilities," Rice said, squarely blaming Hamas for the ongoing violence.

"It is, therefore, incumbent upon us in the international community to prevent the rearmament of Hamas so that a cease-fire will be durable and fully respected. There must be an international consensus that Gaza can never again be used as a launching pad against Israeli cities," she said.

The MOU aims to be a blueprint for enlisting greater international support and action, potentially by serving as a model for similar bilateral agreements between Israel and other allies.

The agreement also has the support of the incoming US leadership, according to State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack.



Israel and US sign memorandum of understanding to fight Gaza smuggling. Agreement calls for increased intelligence cooperation and funding \* Rice: Gaza can neve....

"It commits the United States," he said, noting Rice had discussions with incoming secretary of state Hillary Clinton concerning the matter.

"I think it's safe to assume that we wouldn't have moved forward if we hadn't done some careful consultations prior to signing this with the incoming folks," he said.

He noted that Rice also conducted intensive telephone diplomacy as part of the flurry of diplomatic activity Thursday to draw up the agreement, including three calls to Livni and two apiece to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Defense Minister Ehud Barak.

The MOU begins by "recalling the steadfast commitment of the United States to Israel's security" and determining that "the acquisition and use of arms" by Hamas was the direct cause of the current conflagration.

It then commits the US to working with the international community "to prevent the supply of arms and related materiel to terrorist organizations" in Gaza from the Mediterranean, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea and eastern Africa by working with NATO and regional partners.

The MOU calls for enhanced US security and intelligence cooperation with regional governments, further intelligence integration with international naval forces, and enhanced international sanctions and enforcement against providing support to Hamas and terrorists organizations "including through an international response to those states, such as Iran."

There is also an indication of stepped-up American funding from a US pledge to provide logistical help and train and equip regional security forces to combat smuggling, as well as help expand international aid to provide employment opportunities for those involved in smuggling.

"This is a beginning," Livni said when asked about the practical implications of the MOU at a press conference following the signing. "The understanding is that this is a priority."

She continued, "We are going to work with the international community and other parties in Europe to translate it into more concrete action. The idea is to enhance, to add some new ideas how to do so, in an understanding that rearmament of Hamas is something which is against the interests of the world and not something which is only the Israeli problem."

The press conference, held at the National Press Club, turned into a tense affair as Livni was asked about alleged Israeli war crimes in Gaza, its barring of journalists from the fighting and charges that Israel had started the conflict by blockading Gaza. These questions were posed mainly by Arab journalists and representatives of Arab outlets.

One questioner was escorted out after calling Livni a "terrorist," but she retained her composure and insisted on answering his question, to defend Israel's actions in Gaza and stress that the IDF regrets causing civilian casualties.

Livni responded more emotionally to a question from Al-Jazeera English TV, asking whether she had made the trip to Washington to score a diplomatic achievement to help her chances in the upcoming elections.

"Nonsense," she replied, adding, "There are four- letter words that I don't want to use."

She then backed her political rival, Defense Minister Ehud Barak, and the military effort, but said it was her responsibility to make progress diplomatically, just as it was the IDF's responsibility to wage an effective military campaign.

On the diplomatic front, she dismissed Mauritania's decision to cut ties with Israel when asked about the move, saying, "I'm sure that these will be renewed, in an understanding that what Israel is doing is pure self- defense."

Israel and US sign memorandum of understanding to fight Gaza smuggling. Agreement calls for increased intelligence cooperation and funding \* Rice: Gaza can neve....

She responded to Turkey's call to bar Israel from the UN by referring to Muslim public opinion's sharp turn against Israel.

"I can understand the need or maybe the unwillingness of some leaders to stand for the right thing. And they cannot face the public opinion," she said. "And we can hear these kind of talks coming from all over."

While she spoke, a group of Code Pink women antiwar protesters demonstrated outside the National Press Club building.

After the event, Livni was whisked to meetings on Capitol Hill, including with Senate Majority leader Harry Reid and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, wrapping up a lightning visit to Washington.

## Graphic

---

Photo: FOREIGN MINISTER Tzipi Livni and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice sign a memorandum of understanding at the State Department in Washington on Friday to fight Hamas arms smuggling efforts. (Credit: Luis M. Alvarez/AP)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

***It's time to boycott Ms. Klein; An open letter to Naomi Klein, who called in "The Guardian" for a boycott of Israel.***

Globes [online] - Israel's Business Arena

January 15, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 Globes Publisher Itonut (1983) Ltd. All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 888 words

**Byline:** Lilac Sigan

## **Body**

---

Dear Ms. Klein,

I'm sorry to be the one to break the news, but the "occupation" of Gaza that you urged the world to boycott Israel for in your column in "The Guardian", no longer exists. Yes, Ms. Klein, three years ago, when you may have been too busy to catch up with current events, the Israeli government decided it was tired of hopelessly trying to reach a peace treaty with the fragmented and polarized Palestinian people, and therefore unilaterally pulled out of Gaza and evacuated the settlements in the area. Just like that. It was called "the disengagement". Perhaps you should google it before you write your next defamatory column.

You may be asking yourself, then, why haven't Palestinians organized funding and tried to build their own country? Well, that's because their leaders preferred to spend their time and money shooting at Israel. Not at the Israeli army or settlers, which are no longer there, but at civilians. Astounding, isn't it?

Actually, while we're on the subject, this might be a good opportunity to inform you that this was not the first Israeli attempt to leave the Palestinian Authority and reach some kind of peaceful solution, or at least a ceasefire. This has actually been going on for, oh, at least 15 years. In 2000, the Palestinians, then headed by the late Yasser Arafat, were offered 97% of all the territories they claimed were theirs, including parts of East Jerusalem, in exchange for peace. Mr. Arafat's response to this offer was the outbreak of the second intifada (uprising).

The Palestinian people have suffered greatly. No-one will argue with you about that. But the occupation, which mind you was the result of attacks on the Jewish state of Israel and declarations about wanting to wipe it off the face of the earth, is a very small part of the reason for their suffering.

The Palestinians have been unfortunate enough to be headed time and time again by bloodthirsty leaders of a terrorist bent, ending up with the most extreme group leading them for the past few years: **Hamas**. This group of people slaughters and lynches Palestinians (yes, Palestinians, this is not a mistake) who dare to even think of opposing them. They ruthlessly execute Palestinians with milder views, who belong to Fatah. Their crimes against Israel, such as sending suicide bombers to restaurants and shopping malls and shooting at a civilian population, are nothing compared with what they do to their own.

**Hamas**, by the way, are totally unashamed of their nature and openly declare they want to wipe Israel off the map, hopefully with every last Jew in it dead. Perhaps you should google that, too.

It's time to boycott Ms. Klein An open letter to Naomi Klein, who called in "The Guardian" for a boycott of Israel .

The fighting in Gaza is not against the Palestinian civilians, but against their leaders: **Hamas**. It is not a simple problem to solve, seeing that **Hamas** has built hideouts and military camps inside hospitals and schools, using Palestinian children as their human shields. But since **Hamas** has been shooting hundreds of rockets at Israeli cities for years, terrorizing, injuring, and killing innocent men, **women** and children, the Israeli government understood that it had to make a terrible but inevitable choice: **Hamas** must be fought and stopped, even though it hides among civilians.

Israel, by the way, has been trying to reach a ceasefire for about a week now, but **Hamas** keeps refusing. I wonder what would you do in this situation? Just stand there and let them kill you? Is that the solution you urge?

You must be asking yourself: Why does no-one know about all this? How come no other journalist writes about these things?

Well, to this I have a sad but true answer. As sophisticated as Israel is in science and hi-tech, despite our remarkable record in developing advanced products (the Microsoft XP operating system and Intel Pentium 4 chip just to name two), and despite the fact our economists have won the Nobel prize, we are hopeless at PR. I would even go as far as saying we are total failures at explaining our situation to the rest of the world.

You, on the other hand Ms. Klein, seem to be a PR wizard. So cynically devoted to selling your new book, that you would overlook facts, and rush to exhibit extreme ignorance in your defamation-happy column. Would you do anything to identify your new book with popular beliefs, even if they are twisted, anti-Semitic and wrong? That's really too bad, Ms. Klein, because your words have an impact. Being a Jew yourself, the damage is ten times worse. I don't recall hearing you call for a boycott of Russia for its actions in Georgia, or of the US for invading Iraq. But why not blame Israel if it can help you sell a few more copies, right?

In your column you bragged about boycotting Israel yourself with your new book. I must admit, Ms. Klein, that I, for one, am an Israeli who is completely uninterested in what a book written by someone of your superficial nature has to say. So yes, let's throw away the political correctness, and call things by their name. I say, boycott Naomi Klein's books, because if you don't, you will be supporting a writer who supports terrorism. It is as simple and true as that.

Published by Globes [online], Israel business news - [www.globes.co.il](http://www.globes.co.il) - on January 15, 2009

© Copyright of Globes Publisher Itonut (1983) Ltd. and Lilac Sigan 2009, who permit the full publication of the above article with proper attribution.

**Load-Date:** January 15, 2009

## *Blair 'persuaded Israel to give Adams Gaza visa'*

Irish News

April 11, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 The Irish News Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** Pg. 8

**Length:** 448 words

**Byline:** Claire Simpson

### **Body**

---

Former British prime minister Tony Blair intervened with Israeli defence minister Ehud Barak to allow Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams to enter the Gaza Strip, The Jerusalem Post has reported.

Mr Adams visited Gaza on Wednesday, despite fears he would not be allowed into the Palestinian territory because he refused to rule out meeting key figures in **Hamas**, the group which has controlled Gaza since June 2007.

Israel controls entry into the territory and has refused to recognise **Hamas** as a legitimate group.

The Sinn Fein leader met **Hamas** prime minister Ismail Haniyeh in Gaza City during his visit.

However, The Jerusalem Post said Mr Adams was only allowed to enter Gaza after Mr Blair, now an envoy to the Middle East, intervened with the Israeli authorities.

Speaking from Israel last night, Mr Adams told The Irish News he had contacted Israeli officials following newspaper reports that he may not be allowed to visit the territory.

"We spoke to the foreign ministry and we were allowed in," he said.

"The visit proceeded as we planned.

"We spoke to the Israeli embassy in Dublin before St Patrick's Day about the visit."

Mr Adams said he was shocked by the conditions he had witnessed in the Palestinian territory.

"People have no idea how bad it is in Gaza and in the West Bank," he said.

"Gaza is an open-air prison.

"There are one and a half million people - the size of the population of the north - living in a place the size of Co Louth.

"We visited a hospital which has very few supplies.

"We saw two machines used to treat cancer which aren't working because they can't get the parts.

"It's just dreadful."

Blair 'persuaded Israel to give Adams Gaza visa'

He said his meeting with Hamas had been useful.

"It was a good meeting," he said.

"We clearly set out Sinn Fein's position which is that we are opposed to all rocket attacks.

"We want genuine peace talks. That is one of the best ways to have a viable, sustainable future.

"I was told by them that they want a peaceful settlement and they want a two-state settlement.

"They don't harbour any hatred against the people of Israeli. They are angry about the bombardment."

Mr Adams said 550 children died in Gaza during the Israeli bombardment after Christmas and that the "international community have behaved shamefully" in not dealing with the crisis effectively.

"I intend to write a report on my visit and supply it to the Irish government," he said.

"I am also going to report back to (special US Middle East envoy) George Mitchell.

"I have talked to a huge number of people. This has been a jam-packed schedule. We have spoken to 40 or 50 groups, from women's organisations to educationalists and universities.

"I think over the Easter break I am just going to reflect on what I have seen."

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Israel-Gaza conflict : affects Obama , with opportunity or crisis ?*

Your Local Guardian

January 29, 2009

Copyright 2009 NewsQuest Media Group Limited All Rights Reserved

**Section:** YOURNEWSSUTTON (YOURNEWSSUTTON)

**Length:** 296 words

**Byline:** Yousstina Bolis

### **Body**

---

Undoubtedly, everyone has heard about the terrible ordeal the people of Gaza are suffering as the war between **Hamas** and Israel fails to reach an end...

Whatever faint hope President-elect Barack Obama's national security team may have held of pushing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the back burner was unfortunately unsuccessful. As ever, "the conflict," now focused on Gaza, is put forward to the President's plate as we rely on him to save the innocent and suffering.

But are we expecting too much ?

Many hope that the president-elect will seize this fearsome crisis and its aftermath as an opportunity to help the people of the Middle-East. What better path for a president looking to define a new role for the United States in the 21st century than to lead **Hamas** and Israelis toward settling their conflict- the long-running conflict which has caused their way of life, or even life- to be stolen. Barack Obama also has hopes, hope for a peaceful and a comprehensive ceasefire, but what will the result be ?

According to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, 4,336 Gazans were wounded and 1,284 killed with 894 of the killed civilians, including 280 children and minors, age 17 and under, as well as 111 **women**. Of the remaining 390 dead, 167 were members of **Hamas**' civil police and 223 were combatants. This figures are another sign of terror that has passed through the lives of people who have suffered the loss of loved ones. Will Obama see this as an opportunity or is this crisis too big for our hopes ?

There are many questions which need to be answered relating to this current crisis, but all will be revealed in time when we see whether Barack Obama, one man and his hopes, can turn a reality highly volatile dangerous situation into a hopeful future, for some .

**Load-Date:** January 29, 2009

## *In the eye of the storm*

The Irish Times

January 17, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 The Irish Times All Rights Reserved

**Section:** WEEKEND; News features; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1513 words

**Byline:** MICHAEL JANSEN

### **Body**

---

**PROFILE: JOHN GING:** John Ging is an ex-Army officer who worked in Rwanda during the genocide and was in the Balkans when ethnic cleansing took place. As one of the UN's main men on the ground in Gaza, he says the current Palestinian situation is the worst he has ever encountered.

LIVING WITH THE angel of death perched on one shoulder, along with 1.5 million Palestinians, John Ging has become a voice for the voiceless during Israel's devastating land, air, and sea war on Gaza.

As director of operations for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), Ging has seen the impact of Israel's bunker-busters, smart bombs and artillery, mortars, tanks and white phosphorus shells on living flesh and the jerry-built concrete constructions where Gazans dwell and work.

On Thursday morning, UNRWA's headquarters compound at the centre of Gaza City took direct hits from Israeli rounds, which set fire to its warehouse and wounded three staff. Like everyone else in Gaza, Ging cannot escape the trauma of war.

He feels the pangs of hunger of Palestinian families who have not received UNRWA rations since the war began on December 27th, who cannot leave their homes to forage for food in empty shops, who cannot afford to buy anything, or who have no cash.

When asked for personal background for this profile, Ging told The Irish Times to feature a double-amputee child from Gaza instead of him. He insists that the heroes of this dark chapter of Gaza's history are the people of Gaza and the refugees whom UNRWA serves. They have suffered untold tragedy and they should be featured, not him.

His response was typical of the man. Forthright, frank and no respecter of political correctness or the sensitivities of UN members who do not take kindly to criticism of Israel, Ging is a man fighting a war against man's inhumanity to man. But he does not stand alone. He is joined in this battle by UNRWA's commissioner general Karen Abu Zayed and her deputy, Filippo Grandi.

Born in 1965 in Portlaoise, Ging was educated at the Silesian College in Ballinakill (which has since moved to Celbridge) and graduated with a BA in political science. He also has a bachelor of Law and qualified as a barrister.

He began his career with the Irish army in 1983, serving for 12 years in peacekeeping missions in central Africa, the Balkans and southern Lebanon, before reaching the rank of captain. He resigned his commission voluntarily in 2002.



### In the eye of the storm

During his time in the army, Ging worked for 18 months with the Irish non-governmental organisation Goal, as regional director for Zaire, Tanzania, and Rwanda in the aftermath of Rwanda's civil war.

The army took the unprecedented step at the time of seconding 16 officers to a civilian organisation for this mission, which also included 70 Goal staff. The worst task at hand was managing the Kimumba refugee camp in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), packed with Hutu women and children as well as men who may have been participants in the killing of Tutsis in Rwanda. Goal CEO John O Shea chose Ging, a junior officer, to head the team. He says Ging had both authority and common sense . . . Working in the camps was the hardest job Goal has done over the years.

Goal had to organise the burial of more than 40,000 refugees who had died of cholera in order to get the outbreak under control. O Shea says Ging got the very best out of those who worked with him.

Tom Clonan, a security analyst with this newspaper and a former army colleague, describes Ging as one of the brightest and the best . . . intellectually a shining light, personable and popular, with a wicked sense of humour . Clonan says Ging's military bona fides are impeccable , and enable him to gauge Israel's tactical doctrine and position on the ground.

Ging took up his UNRWA post on February 1st, 2006, five days after the Muslim Hamas movement won a majority of seats in the Palestinian legislature in a free and fair election.

From the very first moment he arrived in the Gaza Strip, this tiny territory of 360 square kilometres was in a state of confrontation with Israel and the western powers that rejected the result of an election that their ally, the secular Fatah movement, was expected to emerge victorious from.

After weeks of trying and failing to convince Fatah to enter into a coalition government, Hamas formed a cabinet at the end of March. Israel and a quartet comprising the US, EU, UN and Russia demanded that to gain acceptance Hamas had to recognise Israel, end violence, and endorse agreements reached between Israel and Fatah. Although Hamas had indirectly met these conditions, Israel and the quartet demanded capitulation.

Hamas refused. Consequently, Israel began to restrict the flow of supplies into Gaza and the quartet cut off development funds. Ging, who had been put in charge of UNRWA's development programmes as well as humanitarian assistance to 750,000 refugees, found he had to struggle to secure enough food to sustain the refugees and implement a \$90 million programme for upgrading schools, clinics and other facilities.

Tension escalated in 2007 when clashes between Hamas and Fatah elements culminated in the takeover of the Gaza Strip by Hamas in mid-June, prompting Israel to reduce further the flow of supplies to UNRWA, from 500 lorries a day to between 50 and 100. Only basic foodstuffs and medical supplies were allowed into the Strip. Malnutrition among the young half of Gaza's population was rife.

WHILE HOSTILITIES continued into 2008, UNRWA, the World Food Programme, feeding 265,000 non-refugee Palestinians, and other agencies functioned under very difficult conditions, particularly after Israel cut fuel supplies for the Gaza power plant and vehicles. The June 19th ceasefire between Israel and Hamas improved the situation considerably although Israel did not lift its blockade. The ceasefire was shattered when on November 4th, Israeli forces entered Gaza and killed six Palestinians who Israel claimed were digging a tunnel with the aim of crossing beneath the border fence to kidnap Israeli soldiers. Palestinians say the men were digging a trench. This incident prompted fire from both sides.

By November 21st, UNRWA had run out of supplies. Ging said: I have met with the armed factions over the past two days and they stated their position clearly: they are committed to the calm as long as Israel abides by it.

On December 14th, Hamas said it was prepared to renew the ceasefire but exchanges of rockets and Israeli fire continued. The ceasefire collapsed on the 19th. Hamas fired a salvo of rockets into southern Israel, which responded with air strikes. This led to the air phase of Israel's Operation Cast Lead on the 27th, and a ground

## In the eye of the storm

assault a week later. Since then UNRWA has struggled mightily to provide food, water and medical services to refugees.

Responding to statements by Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni that there is no humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Ging said: We have a catastrophe unfolding in Gaza for the civilian population. The people in the north have no water. That comes on top of having no electricity. They re trapped, they re traumatised, they re terrorised by the situation.

They re in their homes. They re not safe. They re being killed and injured in large numbers, and they have no end in sight. The inhumanity of this situation, the lack of action to bring this to an end is bewildering to them.

He also castigated Israel s targeting of public buildings. The whole infrastructure of the future state of Palestine is being destroyed. Blowing up the parliament building that s not a **Hamas** building. The president s compound is for the president of Palestine. Schools, mosques.

Following Israel s strikes on the UN compound, as Israeli troops advanced into Gaza City, Ging called for the fighting to stop. It s now in the centre of the most densely populated place on this planet. You cannot use artillery shells and tank rounds in such an environment. This is what we ve all be saying for so long and we re now, of course, at the receiving end here. But so too are tens of thousands, in fact, hundreds of thousands of people. Our plight is their plight.

Ging has said he has never experienced anything quite as disturbing as what is happening in Gaza. He said he was in Rwanda at the time of the genocide and in the Balkans during the ethnic cleansing.

This is happening in full view of the entire planet . . This is a disaster that should not be happening. There was a UN resolution . . . issued last week which requires all civilised people to abide by it. [This is] a test of our ability to enforce legality and not be just bystanders, waiting until the two parties decide to implement the ceasefire.

### **CV OF JOHN GING**

#### **WHO IS HE?**

Director of operations for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees

#### **MOST APPEALING CHARACTERISTIC?**

Honesty

#### **LEAST APPEALING CHARACTERISTIC?**

Honesty

#### **MOST LIKELY TO SAY?**

Stop the war

#### **LEAST LIKELY TO SAY?**

Israel and the international community are assuming their humanitarian responsibilities toward the Palestinians of Gaza

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2009

**Town crushed by thunder of Israeli guns; Martin Fletcher travelled to Gaza in an armoured vehicle to see at first hand the devastation that three weeks of war has brought**

The Times (London)

January 16, 2009 Friday

Edition 2

Copyright 2009 Times Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

# THE TIMES

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 3

**Length:** 808 words

**Byline:** Martin Fletcher

## Body

---

"It's not a pleasant sight," the brigade commander conceded, and he was right. The Gaza Strip was always grim, but 20 days after the Israeli military unleashed its firepower on that sliver of Palestinian territory, it looks - and sounds - like Armageddon.

Under pressure, the Israelis yesterday allowed in the first small group of foreign journalists since the war began. We were not taken far, only to the edge of al-Atatra, a town from whose environs **Hamas** regularly fired rockets into southern Israel a few miles north. It has paid a terrible price.

The houses and ugly concrete apartment blocks have been abandoned and mostly reduced to shells, their walls pockmarked by shrapnel. The commercial greenhouses have been crushed. The metal roof of what used to be a factory or warehouse has been sent crashing to the ground.

The vegetable fields have been churned up by tanks and bulldozers.

There is not a Palestinian to be seen - just the odd scarecrow standing forlornly in the midst of their ruined crops. An empty casino and the odd palm tree overlook a deserted beach and the deep-blue Mediterranean.

It is scarcely surprising that the civilians have fled. This is no longer a place where anyone would want to linger. The air reverberates with the crump of exploding shells and the crackle of automatic gunfire. Tanks and giant bulldozers roar past, throwing up clouds of dust behind them.

Great banks of smoke billow from bomb sites amid long, low rows of distant buildings, casting a pall across the sky. This area now appears largely to be secured, but we still cannot go too close for fear of snipers or boobytraps.

The only people in sight are Israeli soldiers.

Town crushed by thunder of Israeli guns Martin Fletcher travelled to Gaza in an armoured vehicle to see at first hand the devastation that three weeks of war ha....

It was a stunning contrast to the peaceful citrus orchards, the neat fields of vivid green spring wheat, and the orderly rows of hothouses of southern Israel that we had left behind 20 minutes earlier. But Colonel Herzi, the commander, and his fellow paratroops are not afflicted by doubts about the justice of their mission, or about their overwhelming use of force. If they are aware of the international condemnation of Operation Cast Lead, they do not let it trouble them.

**Hamas** brought this death and destruction on itself, they argue with manifest passion. By continuing to rain rockets on Israel, it left them with no alternative. "I don't like seeing these ruined houses," Colonel Herzi said, "but they didn't give us any choice except to fight and show them that they should stop and find another way to live with us." He recalled the Israeli withdrawal from al-Atatra and other Gazan settlements in 2005. "Three years ago they had a wonderful chance to create with us industry, agricultural areas," he said. "We left this place in very good condition. But they chose to go in a different way and so we had to fight."

Avi Ronzki, a uniformed army rabbi with a long grey beard, agreed. "It's a very righteous war," he said. "Our army is showing that to beat terror you need to use a lot of force like the Americans in Iraq or Afghanistan." Another senior officer insisted that the Israelis were striving to minimise civilian casualties - even telephoning houses before shelling them to tell the occupants to leave. It had to do this, he said, because **Hamas** was using civilians as human shields.

Colonel Herzi was contemptuous of **Hamas**. He claimed that it had boobytrapped one third of the houses, left a bomb concealed in a Unicef bag, and chiselled explosives into the walls of a mosque so that its men could bring the entire building tumbling down when Israeli soldiers entered.

He claimed that the soldiers faced daily suicide attacks, many by **women**, though when pressed he admitted that only two had got close to his men. He also said that **Hamas** was using the daily three-hour truce for the distribution of humanitarian aid to rearm.

These claims cannot be verified, but the colonel did display photographs of guns, rockets and tunnels that his men had discovered. A few of his men had been wounded, and one who had got married a day before the operation began was in a critical condition. In the face of such challenges, he said, "you have to use power ... we have an enemy that doesn't know any law".

He insisted that the Israelis were winning. **Hamas** had been shocked by the ferocity of the offensive. Its fighters were demoralised. They were engaging only at long range. "They still fight on, but not in a strong way." But Colonel Herzi is a veteran who believes that Israel's battle for survival is never finished. The aim was to teach **Hamas** such a harsh lesson that it would never provoke Israel again. But he said: "I don't think this war will bring peace. It's part of a long process.

Because that's the way they choose to deal with us it's very important that we win every battle ... Will they leave their weapons for ever? I know for sure the answer is no."

## Graphic

---

A foreign worker at the UN aid compound in Gaza City that was hit by Israeli shells yesterday

MAHMUD HAMS / AFP / GETTY IMAGES

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2009

Town crushed by thunder of Israeli guns Martin Fletcher travelled to Gaza in an armoured vehicle to see at first hand the devastation that three weeks of war ha....

---

End of Document

## *Israel's calling card of ruined homes and ruined lives*

The Irish Times

January 23, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Irish Times All Rights Reserved

**Section:** FRONT PAGE; Pg. 1

**Length:** 469 words

### **Body**

---

BROKEN GLASS crunched under my shoes as I stepped out of the taxi. The shattered pieces glimmered in the dark, and a line from a second World War song about the Blitz in London, went through my head: The streets of town were paved with stars . . . , writes **LARA MARLOWE** in Gaza City

But there is nothing romantic about Gaza 2009. The hotel lobby was dank and cold.

Perhaps to prepare me for the plastic sheeting that has replaced my bedroom window, the receptionist complained that the price of glass multiplied tenfold, from 50 Israeli shekels per square metre before the three-week war to 500 Israeli shekels since hostilities stopped last Sunday.

But is it really over?

I woke before dawn to a loud, hammering noise. From the street outside, I could see an Israeli gunboat lobbing artillery shells along the coastline.

The practice may prevent **Hamas** receiving weapons, but Gazans see it as a wicked way to stop them fishing and eating. Several people were hospitalised as a result of yesterday's shelling, and **Hamas** officials told me five fishermen were killed.

In central Gaza, the bomb sites were purposefully, if disputedly, chosen, like Baghdad in 2003.

Like the Americans in Baghdad, the Israelis took a swipe at the press building, wounding two journalists.

Cheerful, uniformed policemen lined the pavement opposite the bombed-out central police station. We're back at work. This is our office now, they told me.

The Palestine Legislative Council, once the finest building in Gaza, was flattened so much for promoting Arab democracy.

Flattened too was the government palace overlooking the sea, where Yasser Arafat received world dignitaries.

The former home of Nizar Rayan, a **Hamas** leader who was killed by a one-tonne bomb with two of his four wives and 12 of his children on January 1st, has become a shrine. The targeting of Rayan's building was not precise. Most of a city block was chopped into debris, with brocade curtains and living room furniture dangling from uprooted girders.

## Israel 's calling card of ruined homes and ruined lives

Men, women and children strolled past Rayan s house, pointing and staring at the home of the martyr . A Hamas youth group arrived on motorcycles.

The further one advances towards Gaza s northern border, the more extreme the destruction.

Beyond the crest of a hill in the Abed Rabbo residential district lies a vista of devastation that again reminds one of the second World War, or, more recently, the villages of southern Lebanon.

At twilight, donkey carts rattled down the hillside towards Jabalya. Orange campfires burned brightly in the rubble, where refugees brewed pots of tea.

The Israelis destroyed some 4,300 Gazan houses in three weeks, a good proportion of them on the high ground to the north of the enclave. These fields of ruined homes and ruined lives have become a calling card that says: Israel passed here.

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2009

**Letter: Mailbag - The situation must change**

Huddersfield Daily Examiner

January 20, 2009 Tuesday

1ST Edition

Copyright 2009 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

**Section:** LETTERS; Pg. 24

**Length:** 296 words

**Byline:** FAROOQ AFTAB

## **Body**

---

I REFER to the letter published by your correspondent on January 13, 2009. While I do not agree entirely with the views of the author I do agree that the political situation in both Israel and Palestine needs to change.

What also needs to be borne in mind is that there is much history to this issue which most political and media analysts are not aware of or do not take into consideration. This history has to be taken into account when considering any viable solution.

We could also argue as to who broke the ceasefire and who is responsible for causing this catastrophe, the rocket firing, etc. But I do not believe that would be prudent at present. The issue at hand is the killing of innocent civilians and the despairing humanitarian crisis.

The world needs to unite to ensure an immediate ceasefire takes place. In this respect the onus is on the superpowers (i.e. the USA, UK) who must exert substantial pressure on Israel to stop this war and enter into dialogue with Hamas. Let me make it clear that Hamas is not innocent, but peace cannot be achieved without entering into dialogue and positive engagement with both Israel and Hamas.

Enough is enough now. The killing of innocent children and women has to stop. There is no justification for the excessive and brutal force used by Israel. This is a crime against humanity.

The western nations have always portrayed themselves as protectors of human rights and advocates of democracy while accusing the eastern nations of radicalism and extremism.

The truth is that true democracy requires absolute justice in all respects and not double standards and hypocrisy to suit political and individual needs. If this is not achieved then the world stands on the brink of a great catastrophe.

FAROOQ AFTAB Huddersfield

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2009



## *Israel's media star chambers*

The Jerusalem Post

March 24, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** OPINION; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1883 words

**Byline:** CAROLINE B. GLICK

**Highlight:** With Netanyahu forming the government, the media no longer feels it necessary to support the IDF.  
OUR WORLD

### **Body**

---

By any sane definition of armed conflict, Israel's counter terror operation in Gaza against **Hamas** in December and January was a fully justified, lawful and moral undertaking. The IDF abided by the laws of war. It took every possible precaution to protect civilians in Gaza. The operation was conducted for the sole purpose of protecting the one million Israeli citizens in the country's south under assault from Palestinian missiles launched by terror operatives in **Hamas**-ruled Gaza.

Then too, by any sane definition of armed conflict, the missile war that **Hamas** and its sister terror organizations in Gaza launched against Israel was unjustified, illegal and immoral. The expressed purpose of those projectiles was to kill, maim and terrorize as many Israeli citizens as possible in order to effect a disintegration and collapse of Israeli society. Schools, nurseries, and synagogues were purposely and repeatedly targeted.

The only unjust aspect of Operation Cast Lead was the outgoing Kadima-Labor government's failure to finish what it started. By pulling IDF forces out of Gaza without first overthrowing **Hamas**'s terror regime, the government did two things which are both wholly unjust. It allowed **Hamas** to survive to fight another day. And by leaving the **Hamas** regime in place, it indirectly legitimized it.

For Israel's foes - particularly in the West - **Hamas**'s survival has expanded its credibility. Today anti-Israel political activists no longer blink when they equate Israel with **Hamas**. Every day violent demonstrations are held in one Western city or another where Israel's flag is burned and torn, and the flag of **Hamas** - a genocidal terror group - is waved proudly. The IDF is daily castigated as a terrorist organization and **Hamas** upheld as a "resistance movement." Calls are made by political activists and self-declared "human rights" organizations for war crimes charges to be brought against IDF soldiers and commanders as more and more European governments consider following Britain's lead and openly advocate recognizing **Hamas**.

Until last week, the IDF and the outgoing government were able to minimize the significance of the post-Operation Cast Lead campaign against Israel because the operation enjoyed the support of the Israeli Left - and particularly of the media. So long as the Left remained loyal, both the outgoing government and the IDF could reasonably assume that the impact of the manufactured allegations against Israel would not harm the IDF's ability to function.

But now the media are beginning to switch sides.

## Israel 's media star chambers

OPERATION CAST LEAD was an unpleasant event for the Israeli Left and particularly for the national media which it controls. There were two main reasons for this.

First, the media were the primary supporter of then prime minister Ariel Sharon's plan to remove all Israeli military personnel and civilians from Gaza in 2005. In the lead-up to the withdrawal, the media demonized all who questioned the wisdom of the plan and who warned that its implementation would expose southern Israel to Palestinian rockets, mortars and missiles.

The Palestinians' missile onslaught against the south was incontrovertible proof of their profound stupidity.

Second, Operation Cast Lead was carried out by a leftist government on the eve of the election. Had the media even thought about criticizing it, they would have shown that Kadima leader Tzipi Livni's claim that only a war fought by the Left will be supported was a lie. To shore up votes for Kadima and Labor, the media had to swallow their pacifist pride and rally around the flag.

For their efforts, the media found themselves ridiculed by the popular leftist satire program Eretz Nehederet which portrayed them as warmongers.

It is hard to know whether the media would have kept up their vigilant support for Operation Cast Lead if Kadima had won the elections, but now that Kadima has lost, and Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu is forming the government, it is clear that the media no longer feel it is necessary to support the IDF. After all, the next battle will be led by Likud.

THE FIRST SIGN that the media were turning on the IDF came last month. It followed the well-known pattern: A far left political activist made unsubstantiated allegations against an IDF commander. The media treated the allegations as credible and demanded an investigation. In the event, Tel Aviv University Prof. Haim Ganz, who heads the Minerva Center for Human Rights, informed Ha'aretz that he wrote a letter to Prof. Hanoch Dagan, the dean of Tel Aviv University Law School, protesting his decision to hire retiring IDF Col. Pnina Baruch-Sharvit as an international law lecturer. Baruch-Sharvit was just ending her tour of duty as the commander of the IDF's International Law Division.

Ganz charged that Baruch-Sharvit had committed war crimes by giving legal authorization to IDF forces to carry out missions in Gaza, and that her presence on the law faculty was an insult to the humanitarian values of the university.

Ganz's allegations were patently absurd and libelous. But Ha'aretz was only too happy to give them credence and publish an editorial calling for her contract to be cancelled. In the end, after Defense Minister Ehud Barak and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert defended her, Dagan stood by his decision to bring her onto the faculty.

The damage, however, was done. First, Ganz and Ha'aretz gave an Israeli face to the anti-Israel activists claiming that our soldiers and officers are war criminals. And second, their assault on Baruch-Sharvit will be in the minds of other IDF lawyers planning a post-military career. They will now think twice before giving legal approval to clearly legal military missions knowing they are liable to be blacklisted for defending the country.

If the storm over Baruch-Sharvit was the opening salvo, the first major media assault on the IDF came on Thursday. Here too, the campaign was a coproduction of a far-left political activist and far-left reporters.

The Yitzhak Rabin pre-military academy in Jaffa is run by the kibbutz movement. It is the only pre-military academy that is openly and avowedly leftist. Its founder and director Danny Zamir was jailed in 1990 for refusing to serve in Nablus during the height of the Palestinian uprising. In 2004 he allowed his 1990 manifesto calling for soldiers to refuse orders to be reprinted in a book Refusnik: Israel's Soldiers of Conscience which was published with a forward by Susan Sontag and a recommendation by Noam Chomsky.

In its year-long program, Rabin academy cadets are subjected to post-Zionist political philosophy that according to sources familiar with the institution indoctrinates them to believe that Israel has no right to exist as a Jewish state. In a recent conference the academy co-hosted with the Druse pre-army military academy, the Druse soldiers

## Israel 's media star chambers

expressed their amazement that while they identified themselves with Israel and Zionism, their Jewish counterparts at the Rabin academy were avowedly anti- Israel.

Last month Zamir organized a conference of his former cadets who are now serving in IDF combat units. There, he encouraged these young soldiers to tell him and their war stories. In what can only be compared to a Communist group confessional, Zamir told Channel 10 that young soldiers were encouraged to view their actions in Gaza as immoral. A number of them accepted the terms of debate and described purportedly immoral acts they alleged were carried out in Gaza. In most cases, Zamir's soldiers acknowledged that they were not present on the scenes in the events they described. These included killing Palestinian women and children who entered fire zones and behaving in an unfriendly manner to Palestinian civilians whose homes the soldiers commandeered during the operation. Others characterized ethical, legal standing orders - such as the requirement for soldiers to value their lives and the lives of their comrades more highly than the lives of terror suspects - as immoral or illegal.

Zamir claims that he took these non-eyewitness accounts to the IDF and asked that they be investigated. Since he refused to provide the names of the soldiers involved in the alleged incidents and his eyewitness accounts were from soldiers who had not witnessed the accounts, the IDF officers he spoke with said they would have a hard time investigating.

UNHAPPY WITH THIS response, Zamir published the unsubstantiated accounts in his school's bulletin and gave the bulletin to two far-left reporters - Ofer Shelach from Channel 10 and Amos Harel from Ha'aretz.

In an act of unmitigated journalistic malpractice, on Friday night Shelach presented the unattributed testimonials as first-person accounts. He used actors to read out the soldiers' statements as if they were the soldiers themselves, and never told his audience that the voices they were hearing were not the voices of the actual soldiers. Then, he attacked the IDF for refusing to take these accounts seriously and for having the nerve to note that the Rabin pre-military academy is a known leftist institution. He of course didn't mention that Zamir himself served a prison sentence for refusing orders or that as recently as 2004 he contributed to a book explaining why the IDF is an immoral army.

As for Harel, he published the soldiers' statements in Ha'aretz. He then wrote an "analysis" arguing that the IDF cannot discount the statements by these anonymous voices because, in his view, the soldiers have "no reason" to lie. The fact that they present no evidence of their claims is apparently of no importance.

Now by presenting these second hand accounts of battles as fact; by presenting Zamir as a credible and objective observer; and by instructing the IDF to be ashamed of itself and mend its ways, Shelach and Harel are certainly atoning for their "sin" of supporting the army in Operation Cast Lead. Perhaps for them, that was all this was about.

But the consequences of their actions will be devastating for both the IDF and for the country. Just as Ha'aretz's campaign against Baruch-Sharvit will frighten other military lawyers called upon to assess the legality of proposed operations into refusing to make decisions, so incidents like this will make commanders in the field think twice before they tell their soldiers to protect themselves. That is, they will make the IDF a far less effective fighting force.

Internationally, Shelach's and Harel's unattributed and unsubstantiated reports will serve to legitimize the West's move towards Hamas. Already, thousands of news reports parroting theirs have been published throughout the world. And why not? What could be more damning than Israeli press reports citing Israeli soldiers? If these are the people Hamas is fighting, no wonder it wishes to destroy Israel.

Aside from the aid and comfort their reports provide to Western politicians keen to have their pictures taken with Khaled Mashaal, Shelach's and Harel's reports also place every IDF soldier and commander travelling to Europe at risk of arrest and indictment and trial on imaginary war crimes charges before the kangaroo courts springing up all over the continent. No doubt, for their efforts, Shelach and Harel can count on receiving front row tickets to the first star chamber. Lucky them.

[caroline@carolineglick.com](mailto:caroline@carolineglick.com)

## Graphic

---

Photo: SOLDIERS DURING the Gaza offensive. The first sign that the local media were turning on the IDF came last month with the campaign against hiring IDF Col. Pnina Baruch-Sharvit as an international law lecturer. (Credit: Ariel Jerozolimski)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

---

End of Document

## **BARACK INTO THE BREACH**

Daily News (New York)

June 5, 2009 Friday

SPORTS FINAL EDITION

Copyright 2009 Daily News, L.P.



**Section:** EDITORIAL; Pg. 38

**Length:** 491 words

### **Body**

---

An American President could not have extended a more understanding hand to Muslims than the one Barack Obama extended in his much-anticipated speech in Cairo.

He was respectful, praised Islam as a great humanizing faith, paid tribute to Muslim contributions through history and used his presence in the Egyptian capital as a powerful statement of good faith.

So far, so very good.

The intent was to begin changing hearts and minds among the many millions for whom an irrational hatred of the U.S., if not of all Western civilization, has been woven into the fabric of life. The most starry-eyed optimist would have to agree that this will be a long, long process, at best.

You have to start somewhere.

Maybe by saying Assalamu Aleikum in the largest city in the Arabic-speaking world.

Obama married his appeal for better relations with some hard truths that needed telling and challenges that needed making.

Explaining the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, he said:

"I'm aware that there's still some who would question or even justify the offense of 9/11. But let us be clear. Al Qaeda killed nearly 3,000 people on that day. The victims were innocent men, women and children from America and many other nations who had done nothing to harm anybody."

Describing Israel and the terrible history that led to the country's founding, he said:

"America's strong bonds with Israel are well-known. This bond is unbreakable. . . . Around the world, the Jewish people were persecuted for centuries. And anti-Semitism in Europe culminated in an unprecedented Holocaust. . . . Six million Jews were killed, more than the entire Jewish population of Israel today. Denying that fact is baseless. It is ignorant, and it is hateful."

## BARACK INTO THE BREACH

Speaking of the most destructive currents of Islam, he said: "Among some Muslims, there is a disturbing tendency to measure one's own faith by the rejection of another's."

As for the tough facts on the ground, Obama approached the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by placing burdens on the two sides with, it must be said, extraordinarily excessive evenhandedness.

Leaving aside that Israel has made repeated moves toward a two-state resolution - including withdrawing from Gaza - and leaving aside that **Hamas** fired 7,000 Gaza-based rockets last year, Obama called on Israel to stop settlements and "to ensure that Palestinians can live, and work, and develop their society."

On the other hand, Obama tasked the Palestinians with renouncing violence and building a civil society. And he said **Hamas** must recognize Israel's right to exist. All of which represent fundamental and necessary prerequisites for progress.

As unbalanced as the President's burden-sharing was, **Hamas'** hearts and minds remain locked in stone.

"Obama's speech is an attempt to mislead people and create more illusions to improve America's aggressive image in the Arab and Islamic world," eight Palestinian factions, including **Hamas**, said in a statement.

Open hand, meet clenched fist.

**Load-Date:** June 5, 2009

## *Israelis try to justify the massive loss of civilian life in Gaza; RIGHTS: Aid Groups Dispute Israeli Claims in Gaza Attacks*

IPS (Latin America)

January 19, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 NoticiasFinancieras/Grupo de Diarios America All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 806 words

**Byline:** Thalif Deen

### **Body**

---

Did the Israelis misidentify a school run by the U.N. Relief Works Agency (UNWRA), where 43 Palestinians seeking shelter were killed in an early morning air strike? Or were there **Hamas** gunmen shooting from the school drawing Israeli fire?

Neither assertion is accurate, says John Ging, UNRWA's director of operations in Gaza.

All U.N. schools in Gaza are clearly marked, and they fly the Organisation's distinctly discernible blue-and-white flags.

Moreover, he told reporters, Israel has been provided with Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates of all of UNRWA's installations in Gaza.

So there could not have been a misidentification of the U.N. school in the Jabaliya refugee camp whose compound was hit by an artillery shell early this week.

Asked if **Hamas** militants could have taken shelter in the school that was attacked, Ging said that UNRWA was 'hugely sensitive' to maintaining the integrity of its facilities.

'We vet all those who seek shelter in our facilities to make sure militants were not taking advantage of them,' he said.

Ging said that after visiting the site, he was confident no militants had been inside the building at the time of the bombing and no fire had come from within.

However, he said, 'Israel's position on the issue had shifted to suggest that militant fire had come from the vicinity of the school rather than from inside.'

Still, Ging demanded an independent investigation to prove the U.N.'s credibility against the unfounded charges.

On Thursday, UNRWA was forced to suspend its relief work following the killing of one of its drivers and the wounding of another. They were in a clearly marked aid convoy.

Ging said that while the Israeli authorities had given clearance to U.N. aid workers to move around, 'it is wholly and totally unacceptable that (Israeli) soldiers on the ground are firing on our aid workers.'

# Israelis try to justify the massive loss of civilian life in Gaza RIGHTS: Aid Groups Dispute Israeli Claims in Gaza Attacks

On Friday, however, UNRWA resumed its relief operations after the Israeli defence ministry provided 'credible assurances' that U.N. personnel and humanitarian operations would be fully respected.

Told that Israeli officials were denying the existence of a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes dismissed the denial by pointing out that the crisis was 'worsening day by day'.

The appeals to halt the violence, he said, fell on deaf ears, both on the Israeli side and on the **Hamas** side.

According to the United Nations, the two-week old Israeli military operation in Gaza has killed 758 people, of whom 257 were children and 56 **women**, with 3,100 wounded, including 1,080 children and 452 **women**.

The staggering numbers were provided to the United Nations by the local Ministry of Health.

Although the United Nations could not independently verify the figures, Holmes told reporters 'they appeared credible'.

In contrast, the total number of Israeli deaths, both military and civilian, was about 10, including by friendly fire, according to press reports.

At a news conference Wednesday, Sarah Leah Whitson, executive director of the Middle East and North Africa Division of Human Rights Watch, said Israel had attacked police stations in Gaza on the ground they were 'combatants'.

'Police were not combatants and could not represent legitimate targets unless actively engaged in hostilities,' she pointed out. 'It was Israel's burden of proof to show the police they targeted were, indeed, **Hamas** militants.'

Instead, she said, it appeared that Israel had targeted police stations on a 'blanket basis'.

Whitson said that only combatants actively engaged in fighting were legitimate targets of Israeli attacks.

Thus, a **Hamas** official at the Ministry of Health was not a legitimate target and neither was a **Hamas** media broadcasting station.

The situation in Gaza is so abominable that both the U.N. and international human rights organisations have refused to remain silent. Israel has been accused of violating both humanitarian law and the Geneva conventions on military operations.

In a letter to the U.N. Security Council Friday, the London-based Amnesty International (AI) called for firm action 'to ensure full accountability for war crimes and other serious abuses of international human rights and humanitarian law'.

AI also urged the Council to dispatch international human rights monitors to Gaza and southern Israel to investigate and report on the continuing abuses by both warring parties.

Even the Vatican seemed outraged by the unmitigated violence by the Israelis.

Cardinal Renato Martino, head of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, compared Gaza to a 'concentration camp', reminiscent of the horrors of a Nazi era -- provoking anger from the Israelis.

'Look at the conditions in Gaza,' the Cardinal was quoted as saying, 'more and more, it resembles a big concentration camp.' © 2009 NoticiasFinancieras - IPS - All rights reserved



Israelis try to justify the massive loss of civilian life in Gaza RIGHTS: Aid Groups Dispute Israeli Claims in Gaza Attacks

---

End of Document

## *Israel and Palestine must live as neighbours*

Cape Argus (South Africa)

January 19, 2009 Monday

e1 Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent News and Media Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 13

**Length:** 769 words

### **Body**

---

There will never be peace in the Middle East, between Arab and Jew.

For the past few weeks, in spite of enjoying the many festive season opportunities coming my way, this has been the overwhelming message that has emerged from my many social interactions with colleagues, friends and the strange people I encounter in this fishing village.

My retort is always the same - it will have to happen. The world can't watch the killings, bombings and terror that is ripping the Middle East apart for another few centuries. Peace and sanity will have to prevail as the slaughter of innocents and the destruction of nations can only lead to a never-ending cycle of violence and war.

Yet in spite of the intense initiatives, "road maps to peace", international mediators and several presidents and prime ministers all trying to find that magic formula, the situation between Israel and the Palestinian occupied territories just gets worse and worse. The tit-for-tat attacks and rocket launches into the neighbouring lands continues unabated.

The history of the "holy land" is one that is riddled with wars of occupation, dispossession and religious intolerance.

It has pitted Arab against Jew, yet the wars have always been about control and domination of the region.

It has been an attempt to find a place of safety while being surrounded by your enemies.

The dynamic of the war today has not changed too much from when the conflict started all those years ago.

The balance of forces favours the state of Israel as it has the backing of the powerful United States military machine while many of its former Arab adversaries - countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria - have come to accept the reality of life with a Jewish state in their midst.

But in the troubled West Bank and the Gaza Strip, life for the Palestinians is hell.

Because of a "divide and rule" strategy employed in the West Bank after **Hamas** won the Palestinian election, the results of which the US, Israel and other Western countries rejected, the Fatah-dominated Palestinian Authority in that settlement has been more accommodating to the demands of the West.

The Gaza Strip though has been turned into a virtual prison with the Israeli military controlling who and what can enter and leave the territory.

## Israel and Palestine must live as neighbours

Medical supplies, food, water, electricity and other necessities life's sustenance have over the past months been trickling into the area at the whim of the Israeli government.

Thousands of ordinary Palestinians - Muslims, Christians and other religious types - have to bear the brunt of this collective punishment against the militant Hamas group, which controls the territory.

It is also from this region that Hamas has launched hundreds of rockets into southern Israel, forcing thousands of Jews to live in constant fear.

These rocket attacks and the continual threat of suicide bombers blowing themselves up in busy Israeli markets and on buses have been the excuse the Jewish state has used to justify its latest offensives and deadly air strikes on Gaza, which have left more than 1 000 people dead, the majority being women and children.

Hamas must therefore also shoulder some of the blame for the loss of life and destruction that is being visited upon the region. But Israel's callous disregard for human life and the suffering being inflicted on the people living in Gaza as well as their use of excessive military force cannot be justified.

It is an outrage.

Their bombing of the United Nations headquarters last week - this, despite the UN giving Israel the co-ordinates of the building - and the recent bombing of a UN school, convoys of Red Crescent/ Cross ambulances and hospitals is tantamount to war crimes.

It is these type of actions that engender rage and hate and make finding solutions to the crisis near impossible.

Talks of a cease fire between the warring factions started almost immediately after Israeli war planes rained bombs down on the Gaza Strip. Yet the calls from the UN Security Council and the international community have that all-too-familiar ring to them - stop the bombings and talk.

The time has come for the Palestinians, Hamas in particular, and their political backers, to face the reality that the state of Israel is there to stay and like any other nation, will protect its sovereignty

Israel and its Western allies also need to accept that the Palestinian people have a right to self-determination, even if they elect Hamas representatives to lead them.

Palestine too must be allowed to be a nation in their own right and make decisions that may not be popular but will not undermine the security of their neighbours.

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2009

## *ICC to mull war crimes case against Israel*

AlArabiya.net

February 2, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 AlArabiya.net. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 789 words

### **Body**

---

As the International Criminal Court (ICC) launched a "preliminary analysis" on Tuesday to establish whether Israel had committed war crimes in its assault on Gaza, the Jewish state's warplanes bombed a number of tunnels connecting the strip with Egypt after a rocket launched from the enclave struck the Israeli port city of Ashkelon.

Residents of the Gaza border crossing town of Rafah and Hamas officials said Israeli planes were attacking the tunnels, which have been bombed several times since early January.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the rocket launched earlier onto Ashkelon, which caused no casualties or damage, but prompted Israel to threaten to use "great force" in retaliation. ICC mulls war crimes probe

Meanwhile, the ICC prosecutor in The Hague said he would need to determine whether there was such a legal entity as a Palestinian state, a precursor to a possible probe of war crimes in Gaza.

The prosecutor said he had received a request from the Palestinian National Authority to investigate the recent assault, Luis Moreno-Ocampo said: "My work is now to analyze this in accordance with (international) law."

Documents also showed that the Palestinian National Authority has recognized the jurisdiction of the ICC, in a move designed to allow investigations of alleged crimes in the Palestinian territories.

Moreno-Ocampo said his office had received more than 150 other "communications" on Gaza from individuals and non-government bodies, as well as from Israeli authorities.

U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay last month called for independent investigations into possible war crimes after Israel's shelling of a U.N. school compound killed 42 people, including women and children, on Jan. 6.

U.N. officials also said war crimes may have been committed after Israeli tank fire killed two boys in another U.N. school.

Once he makes his decision on Palestinian jurisdiction, the prosecutor would next have to determine whether crimes under the court's jurisdiction had been committed in Gaza.

Israel has not signed the Rome Statute, which created the ICC. The ICC can investigate alleged war crimes in the territory of a state party, if the U.N. Security Council refers a situation to the court or if a non-state party voluntarily accepts the jurisdiction of the court.

## ICC to mull war crimes case against Israel

Israel's 22-day assault last month on Gaza left more than 1,300 Palestinians dead before a ceasefire took effect on Jan. 18. Thirteen Israelis were killed.

## Diplomacy

Meanwhile, foreign ministers of U.S.-allied Arab states meeting in Abu Dhabi said they were seeking to consolidate Arab support for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in his row with **Hamas**.

"Our aim is to boost Arab solidarity, to mobilize our backing for the Arab peace initiative and to bolster support for the Palestinian Authority under the leadership of President Mahmoud Abbas," the United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahayan told Reuters.

Sheikh Abdullah said ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Yemen and the Palestinian Authority also backed the Palestine Liberation Organization as the "sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people", after **Hamas** called for it to be replaced by a body less dominated by allies of Abbas.

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon called for the opening of Gaza's borders and Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad urged Israel to allow cash into the strip to ease the territory's liquidity crisis.

Meanwhile Fayyad told journalists in the West Bank town of Ramallah: "We are trying to get cash in but Israeli authorities haven't authorized it so far."

"This situation has largely affected the functioning of the banks whose capacity to respond to the needs of the citizens will remain very limited as long as Israel has not lifted the prohibition to transfer bank notes to Gaza."

Because of the liquidity crisis, Gaza banks limit withdrawals to 800 shekels (\$200, EUR155) a day per person.

Banks in Gaza regularly lack cash because of the blockade Israel imposed after **Hamas** seized power in June 2007.

## Netanyahu

In Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, frontrunner in the race to become premier, vowed he would smash **Hamas**.

Netanyahu, the former prime minister, told residents of the southern Israeli city of Ashkelon: "We must smash the **Hamas** power in Gaza."

"We will act in a way to make it fall and put an end to the threat the rockets present in Ashkelon and other areas of the south," said Netanyahu, who heads the right-wing Likud party.

"Over the past year, the blind policies of Kadima have led us to where we are now," he said in reference to the ruling party of Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni which trails Likud in opinion polls.

**Load-Date:** May 5, 2009

***Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Gaza's underground lifeline: Rory McCarthy visits the blockade-busting tunnels that run into Egypt and discovers that despite Israeli efforts to destroy them, they are still working***

Guardian Weekly

February 27, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

## ***The* Guardian Weekly**

**Section:** Pg. 25

**Length:** 1831 words

**Byline:** Rory McCarthy

### **Body**

---

A few paces from Egypt's border with Gaza stands a large white tent made from plastic sheeting with jagged shrapnel holes. Inside, as in the hundreds of identical tents left and right, is a scene of illicit industriousness: a dozen Palestinian smugglers sweating to overcome the punitive economic blockade on Gaza. A stone's throw away on the opposite side of the border is an Egyptian police post, with relaxed officers standing on the roof. They gaze down without concern.

One unanswered question about Israel's three-week war in Gaza is why the air strikes, artillery shells, tank fire, bulldozing and detonations that caused such devastation and loss of life across the territory did so little damage to the hundreds of smuggling tunnels under Gaza's southern border with Egypt. These tunnels, which bring in food, clothes and machinery as well as weapons and ammunition, were supposed to be among Israel's key targets. On the final day of the conflict, the Israeli military said it had hit 100 tunnels. Gazans in the border town of Rafah spoke of night after night of enormous air strikes that cracked the walls of their houses and shattered their windows.

But while the sandy border is marked with many large craters, the damage caused to the tunnels was often repaired within days. Already some are operating again and new tunnels are being dug under the close eye of **Hamas** officials, who walk from one tent to the next with their walkie-talkies.

The smugglers believe that their tunnels were too deep to be badly damaged, even by the heavy one-tonne bombs dropped by Israeli F-16s. The serious damage was generally only to the entrances to the tunnels, which were soon uncovered again by Palestinians with bulldozers, and then rebuilt. It may be that the focus of the Israeli attacks was on the weapons tunnels, which are closely guarded by **Hamas** and other armed groups and are not open to public view.

Inside the large white tent is a wooden rack from which hang the jackets and spare clothes of a dozen men. There is also an electrical circuit board with five sockets; from its back, the wires run out of the tent, across the dunes and directly into the public electricity supply of the municipality of Rafah. From the front, a cord runs out to power a winch. A black plastic butt with a tap provides the thirsty workers with fresh drinking water - again, courtesy of the municipality. All of this is registered and paid for. Smuggling in Gaza is a semi-official business.

Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Gaza's underground lifeline: Rory McCarthy visits the blockade-busting tunnels that run into Egypt and discovers that despite Is....

The focus of activity is the tunnel's well: a 15 -metre-deep shaft lined on its four sides by planks of wood. Three metal beams are positioned

pyramidally over the well and support the electric winch, with a cable that runs down the shaft to its sandy floor below. There, two men crouch and operate two more winches that run horizontally 300 metres to the south along the tunnel, stretching out of Gaza and into Egypt. One winch draws in the goods from the Egyptian side, a train of boxes and sacks sliding over the sand on plastic containers. The second winch sends back the empty containers.

It took about eight weeks to dig this tunnel; a team of men worked long days underground using a pneumatic drill to loosen the soil, which they then carried out in large, plastic containers and dumped nearby. By the time it was finished, the tunnel was tall enough for a man to stand with his head bowed, and nearly a metre wide along its full length. The tunnel walls are bare soil with regular wooden supports to prevent collapse - although tunnelling still remains dangerous. Around 40 Palestinian tunnellers were killed last year in cave-ins.

It is midday and the work is constant. Every 30 seconds one of the men below shouts "raise" and a man sitting over the mouth of the well switches on the top winch and pulls up another sack. So far this morning, they have contained dry chicken feed; spare parts for cars; a box of coat hooks; microwaves; kerosene cookers; packets of women's underwear; and now several large, 5.5kW generators.

Notably absent are drugs and alcohol, which are forbidden by Hamas; cigarettes, which are heavily taxed by Hamas; and anything even resembling weaponry or military material, which come in through discreet tunnels that may or may not have been more seriously damaged.

"Without these tunnels, everything would stop in Gaza," says one of the workers, who gave his name only as Abu Zeid, 22. "And they say we are terrorists. Where are the terrorists here? The world knows very well what's going on, but they don't want us to live. If they opened the crossings, why would we need to do this business?"

Since Israel pulled its soldiers and settlers out of Gaza in mid-2005, it has imposed an ever-tighter economic blockade on what it calls the "hostile entity". For the last year and a half, that has meant closures of the crossings: banning all exports and prohibiting all imports, save for a limited list of humanitarian goods. The UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon called it "collective punishment", illegal under international law. It has left more than 80% of Gazans reliant on aid.

The policy was designed to weaken Hamas and convince the Palestinians they had made a mistake when, in 2006 - in what was widely acknowledged as one of the most free and fair elections in the Arab world - they voted in strength for the Islamists. Egypt has also kept its border crossing at Rafah mostly closed.

"It's politics, dirty politics," says Abu Zeid.

Most of the workers in this tunnel were once employed in Israel as daily labourers, but Palestinians have long been refused such jobs. Now in Gaza there is barely any work. Some at this tunnel are former policemen once employed by Hamas's bitter rival, Fatah; others are farmers whose livelihoods collapsed with the ban on exports. "There is nothing for us except the tunnels," says another worker. "I have a house, and land and money but I want to go abroad," says Abu Eyash, 28, a tunneller who once spent four years in an Israeli jail for his connections with Fatah. "I'm not satisfied here. There's always war and never any security."

These men may not earn much from the tunnels, but others do. This tunnel cost about \$142,000 to build and the owners say they earned that back within the first two months. The original owners of the land are given a 10% commission and Egyptian security officials on the other side earn healthy bribes. As his staff worked, one owner took out a thick fold of dollar bills, from which he was to send the equivalent of \$18,500 to the Egyptians, enough to provide protection for the tunnel for about 10 days until the next payment was due.

Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Gaza's underground lifeline: Rory McCarthy visits the blockade-busting tunnels that run into Egypt and discovers that despite Is....

In the weeks since the end of its war in Gaza, Israel has launched several more air strikes against the tunnels after militants from small, non-Hamas groups fired rockets and mortars into southern Israel. This tunnel was one of those hit in the strikes, although the workers said the damage would take only a few days to repair.

Not everyone celebrates the tunnel industry. A short walk away from this tent is the home of Mohammad Abu Saud, 40, who is spending the day covering his broken windows with plastic sheeting and wondering how he is going to repair the massive cracks in his walls caused by the bombing of the tunnels. "I don't earn any benefit from the tunnels and I'm suffering because of them - you can see the cracks here and the windows gone, as well as the fact that the prices in the market have risen a lot," he says.

"I think the tunnels are delaying a solution," says his brother Ala'a, 35. "If there were no tunnels, there would be such a heavy price that it would force Hamas to sit and find a solution and the only solution is to reopen the crossings. I'm not even asking them to liberate Palestine, just open the crossings."

About half an hour's drive north from the border are the recently destroyed remains of what until the attack was one of the largest food-processing industrial estates in the Gaza strip, owned by the wealthy Al-Wadeya brothers. Yaser al-Wadeya has a PhD in industrial engineering from Cleveland State University in the US and little sympathy for Hamas. He estimates the damage caused by the Israeli military to his biscuit, ice cream, snacks and dessert factories at about \$21.5m. If he had the money for repairs, Israel's restrictions would still mean that he would not be able to import new machinery.

Even before the war, Al-Wadeya had directed some of his Israeli suppliers to give up waiting for the Israeli crossings to open and ship their products to Egypt, where they were then smuggled under the border into Gaza. "The main reason for all of this is to destroy the economic infrastructure of the weak Palestinian economy," he says. "They want to make sure that we will never have a state in Palestine."

Israel's military said it was conducting "post-operation investigations" into accounts of civilian casualties and property damage, but added that it "does not target civilians or civilian infrastructure, including factories, unless it is being used by the Hamas for terrorist purposes".

However, Palestinians, including Al-Wadeya, disagree and argue that much of the bombing during this war was aimed directly at civilian infrastructure. Among the targets that were hit were the largest cement factory in Gaza, the largest flour mill, the only parliament building, a major sewage project and the leading private school, plus 21,000 homes and more than 200 factories that were completely or partially destroyed.

Al-Wadeya argues that Israel has allowed the commercial tunnel economy to function as part of a broader campaign to break Gaza's economic and political links with Israel and to force it towards a dependent relationship with Egypt. "During the occupation, from the beginning until now, our whole relationship is with Israel. You can't just break it and move towards Egypt."

Some senior Israelis have spoken publicly in recent years of their desire to hand over the

responsibility for Gaza to Egypt, and to keep most of the Jewish settlements on the occupied West Bank while handing the remaining Palestinian cantons over to Jordanian control.

And Hamas, with its insistence on opening the Rafah crossing with Egypt to give access to the rest of the Islamic world, appears at times to be pushing for the same Egypt-orientated future for Gaza.

The Islamists seem not to have grasped the full extent of the devastation suffered in Gaza, or the people's frustration with them. Shortly after the war, a Hamas official arrived at the rubble of the al-Wadeya factory and offered the brothers \$5,000 towards its repair. "I told him to get the hell out of here," says Al-Wadeya. "What would that buy? Not even new locks for the doors. I really believe that if we stay where we are with Hamas and Fatah and this political issue, we will never do anything in Gaza. It will become like Somalia or Sudan. We need two peaceful states, Palestine and Israel, living together. Without this we will be at war for the next century."



Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Gaza's underground lifeline: Rory McCarthy visits the blockade-busting tunnels that run into Egypt and discovers that despite Is....

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2009

---

End of Document

## *Counted out: Belatedly, the IDF enters the life-and- death numbers game*

The Jerusalem Post

February 16, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The Jerusalem Post All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 1

**Length:** 702 words

**Byline:** DAVID HOROVITZ

**Highlight:** ANALYSIS

### **Body**

---

Throughout the three weeks of the Gaza fighting in Operation Cast Lead, this newspaper attempted to gather, from official Israeli sources, reliable information on the number and nature of the Palestinian dead.

It was clear that the overall death toll in the Strip - and more specifically the number of the civilian fatalities - was serving as the yardstick by which the "proportionality" of Israel's response to Kassam fire was being measured.

However, Israel was unable to provide even reasonably firm official figures for the death toll and its civilian component. Part of this inability was an inevitable consequence of the fog of a war fought in enemy territory. But part of it also stemmed from the minimal allocation of Israeli resources to the task.

In the absence of official Israeli numbers, reporters worldwide were left with firm **Hamas**-Gaza-supplied figures, and vague, unofficial Israeli estimates. Unsurprisingly, the Palestinian figures were universally cited in news reporting of the conflict, by the international media and largely by the Israeli media, too. These figures indicated that the overwhelming majority of those killed were civilians - indications that, in turn, exacerbated hostile international attitudes to Israel among reporters, politicians and the general public in this region and far beyond.

On Sunday, four full weeks after the fighting ended, the IDF's Gaza Coordination and Liaison Administration (CLA) was finally ready to show The Jerusalem Post its research into the fatalities - information compiled from a variety of sources, notably including **Hamas**'s own media and other open Palestinian sources.

This research contradicts the official **Hamas**-Gaza government claims, in the course of the fighting and since, that most of those killed were civilians. Attempting to investigate every fatality, the CLA now has a list of names, ID numbers, occupation/affiliation and circumstances of death for most of the 1,338 Palestinians killed in the course of Operation Cast lead. (Thirteen Israelis were killed during the fighting - 10 soldiers and three civilians.)

This dossier is not yet complete, but 1,200-plus fatalities have been identified by name, and the Post was shown the dossier that details them. Some 880 have been categorized as combatants or noncombatants, and the ratio is approximately two-to-one - the reverse of the impression created by Palestinian officials during the conflict, and a world away from the **Hamas** claim that just 48 of its fighters were killed.

Perhaps the most emblematic alleged distortion of the death toll relates to the deaths near the UN school in Jabalya refugee camp, north of Gaza City, on January 6. Palestinian medical officials claimed then that some 40 Palestinians, many of them **women** and children who had sought refuge from the fighting, were killed at the school

Counted out: Belatedly, the IDF enters the life-and- death numbers game

by IDF shells. These claims sparked condemnation from the UN, widespread allegations of a "massacre" against Israel and escalated international political demands for an urgent end to the fighting.

The CLA on Sunday, however, belatedly reported that the Palestinian death toll in that incident - which, it restated, involved Israel returning fire against **Hamas** gunmen outside the school facility - caused an estimated 12 fatalities, nine gunmen and three noncombatants.

CLA head Col. Moshe Levi acknowledged on Sunday that all this information - on both such specific incidents as the UN school and the overall classifications of the dead - would probably be largely ignored today, since it was being made available so long after the fighting ended. But Levi explained that the IDF was not prepared to issue information unless and until it was confident of its accuracy, no matter how grievous the damage to Israel's image, and the consequent political pressures caused by the delays in contesting inaccurate facts and figures.

Levi remarked that, in future conflicts, the IDF might need to bolster the resources it allocates to establishing, in real time, facts as basic as the number and identities of the dead.

Given that compiling the dossier appears to have been the responsibility of a single officer in the CLA, some might regard this remark as something of an understatement.

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

---

End of Document

## *Labels only obscure Mideast realities*

The Toronto Star

March 10, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

**Section:** OPINION; Pg. A17

**Length:** 700 words

**Byline:** Martin Regg Cohn, Toronto Star

### **Body**

---

Genocide. Apartheid. Occupation.

Words matter - whether in a war of words, or the way we use words to describe wars. If we can't agree on words, we'll agree on nothing.

And if Canadians use words to demonize and polarize, rather than discuss and persuade, there's no hope for conflict resolution anywhere - least of all the Middle East.

Reading some of the recent coverage of Israeli Apartheid Week, that annual rite of Canadian campus conflict, you'd think the 1968 Paris student riots had come to Toronto. Commentators had a field day attacking and defending it this month, devoting column inches out of all proportion to the number of people who attended or protested.

If the aim of Israeli Apartheid Week is to raise consciousness in Canada about the plight of Palestinians, and ultimately pressure Israel to change its policies, it seems a clumsy vehicle. Canada is a free country and campus debate should be wide open, but caricaturing the other side is counterproductive.

Getting bogged down on whether Israel is, or isn't, an apartheid state seems like a perpetual distraction. Why not be precise, by calling an occupation an occupation? Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory since 1967 has been its biggest blunder and the continued expansion of Jewish settlers has tied the country in knots. It humiliates the occupied and coarsens the occupiers.

But what's the point of calling this apartheid - unless the motive is to muddy the waters by reviving a bygone brand: the anti-apartheid struggle and the glory days of boycotts that united idealists against South Africa's state-sanctioned racism and its policy of shunting blacks into bantustans.

Apartheid conjures up not just "separation," but racism. Yes, Israel has treated the Palestinians shabbily over the years. It has given back Gaza but restricts its borders because of a standoff with Hamas. That negotiations are bogged down, that the West Bank is now criss-crossed with checkpoints, that a (temporary) separation barrier has gone up, doesn't mean South Africa has come to the Holy Land. It means a miserable occupation drags on.

There may be an analogy to bantustans - the small territories that South Africa dreamed up to displace blacks from their land - but it's weighed down by too much racist baggage.

If the goal is to broaden our understanding of the Middle East, then look at the quiet initiative at Osgoode Hall Law School by Jewish and Muslim students, who described their efforts in an Opinion article that ran online last week on

## Labels only obscure Mideast realities

thestar.com. Submitted by Ahsan Mirza, head of the Muslim Law Students' Association, with co-author Joseph Juda of the Jewish Law Students' Association, the article bemoaned the perennial standoff on campus, compared with their own efforts at finding common ground.

"Apartheid Week only seeks to divide the campus more than it already is," they wrote. "Debate is never futile, but what goes on at York's campus can hardly be referred to as anything resembling a debate."

Amidst the sound and fury of Israeli Apartheid Week - denouncing Israel's attacks on Gaza while downplaying the rockets fired by **Hamas** militants - there was relative silence on campuses about last week's historic developments in Sudan, where the genocide in Darfur is in its sixth year.

**Hamas**, however, was anything but silent. Moussa Abu Marzouk, the second-in-command of **Hamas**, made a point of flying to Khartoum so he could stand by Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir in his hour of need. Al-Bashir had just been indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes in Darfur, where more than 300,000 people have been slain and 2.7 million others displaced.

"The leaders who should be tried and criminalized are those who killed the children and **women** in Gaza ... Iraq, Afghanistan," Abu Marzouk announced. Presumably that would include Canada's Prime Minister. A pro-Sudan rally was held the next day in Gaza.

So while student organizers on Canadian campuses are determined to recast the Israeli occupation as apartheid, **Hamas** is trying to reinterpret the Sudanese genocide as a struggle against foreign imperialism.

The war of words continues.

Martin Regg Cohn, the Star's deputy editorial page editor, appears Tuesday.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2009

**G2: Inside the Gaza tunnels: They were one of Israel's key targets during its three-week assault on Gaza. But the relentless air strikes failed to destroy the hundreds of tunnels running under the border to Egypt. Rory McCarthy goes underground to watch the everyday smuggling of boxes of women's underwear, car parts and even goats**

The Guardian - Final Edition

February 10, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

theguardian

**Section:** GUARDIAN FEATURES PAGES; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1865 words

**Byline:** Rory McCarthy

## Body

---

Barely a few paces from the Egyptian border stands a large white tent, fashioned from plastic sheeting and pockmarked with jagged shrapnel holes. Inside, as in the hundreds of identical tents dotted to the left and right, is a scene of energy and illicit industriousness: a dozen Palestinian smugglers sweating to overcome the punitive economic blockade on Gaza. A stone's throw away on the opposite side of the border is an Egyptian police post, with relaxed uniformed officers standing on the roof. They gaze down without a hint of concern.

One unanswered question of Israel's three-week war in Gaza is why the air strikes, artillery shells, tank fire, bulldozing and detonations that caused such devastation and loss of life across the territory did so little damage to the hundreds of smuggling tunnels under Gaza's southern border with Egypt. Those tunnels, which bring in food, clothes, machinery as well as weapons and ammunition, were supposed to be one of Israel's key targets. On the final day of the conflict alone, the Israeli military said it had hit 100 tunnels. Gazans in the border town of Rafah spoke of night after night of enormous air strikes that shook cracks into the walls of their houses and shattered their windows.

But while the sandy border is marked with many large craters, the damage caused to the tunnels was, in many cases, repaired within days. Already some are operating again and new tunnels are being dug under the close eye of Hamas officials, who walk from one tent to the next clutching their walkie-talkies.

The smugglers believe their tunnels were simply too deep to be badly damaged, even by the heavy 500lb or one-tonne bombs dropped by Israeli F-16s. In most cases, the serious damage was only to the entrances to the tunnels, which were soon uncovered again by the Palestinians using bulldozers and then rebuilt. It may be that the focus of the Israeli attacks was on the weapons tunnels, which are closely guarded by Hamas and other armed groups and not open to public view.

G2: Inside the Gaza tunnels: They were one of Israel's key targets during its three-week assault on Gaza. But the relentless air strikes failed to destroy the ....

Inside the large white tent is a wooden coat rack from which hang the jackets and spare clothes of a dozen men or more. To the right is an electrical circuit board with five sockets. From the back, the wires run out of the tent, across the sand dunes and directly into the public electricity supply of the municipality of Rafah. From the front, a cord runs out to power a winch. Outside, a large black plastic water butt with a tap provides the thirsty workers with fresh drinking water - again, courtesy of the municipality. All of this is registered and paid for. Smuggling in Gaza is a semi-official business.

The focus of activity is the tunnel's well: a 15m deep shaft lined on its four sides by planks of wood. Three metal beams are positioned pyramid-shape over the well and support the electric winch, whose cable runs down the shaft to the sandy floor below. There, two men crouch low and operate two more winches that run horizontally 300m to the south along the tunnel, stretching out of Gaza and into Egypt. One of the winches draws in the goods from the Egyptian side, a train of boxes and sacks sliding over the sand on plastic containers. The second winch sends back the empty containers for reloading.

It took about eight weeks to dig this tunnel; a team of men worked long days underground using a pneumatic drill to dig out the soil, which they then carried out in large, plastic containers and dumped nearby. By the time it was finished, the tunnel was tall enough for a man to stand with his head bowed, and nearly a metre wide along its full length. The tunnel walls are bare soil with regular wooden supports to prevent collapse - although it still remains a dangerous business. Around 40 Palestinian tunnellers were killed last year in cave-ins.

It is midday and the work is constant. Every 30 seconds one of the men below shouts "Raise" and a man sitting over the mouth of the well switches on the winch and pulls up another sack. So far this morning, they have contained: dry, yellow chickenfeed; spare parts for cars; a box of coat hooks; microwaves; kerosene cookers; packets of rather dowdy women's underwear; and now several large, 5.5kW generators.

Notably absent are drugs and alcohol, which are forbidden by Hamas; cigarettes, which are heavily taxed by Hamas; and anything even resembling weaponry or military material, which come in through more discreet tunnels far from the public eye that may or may not have been more seriously damaged by the war.

"Without these tunnels, everything would stop in Gaza," says one of the workers, who gave his name only as Abu Zeid, 22. "And they say we are terrorists. Where are the terrorists here? The world knows very well what's going on, but they don't want us to live. If they opened the crossings, why would we need to do this business?"

Since Israel pulled its soldiers and settlers out of Gaza in mid-2005, it has imposed an ever-tighter economic blockade on what it calls the "hostile entity". For the past year and a half, that has meant closures of the crossings: banning all exports and prohibiting all imports, save for a limited list of humanitarian goods. Even the UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon called it "collective punishment" - illegal under international law. It has left more than 80% of Gazans reliant on aid.

The policy was designed to weaken Hamas and convince the Palestinians they had made a mistake when, in 2006 - in what was widely acknowledged as one of the most free and fair elections in the Arab world - they voted in strength for the Islamists. Egypt has also kept its border crossing at Rafah largely closed. "It's politics, dirty politics," says Abu Zeid.

Most of the workers in this tunnel were once employed as daily labourers within Israel, but Palestinians have long been refused such jobs. Now in Gaza there is barely any work available. Some at this tunnel are former policemen once employed by Hamas's bitter rival, Fatah; others are farmers whose livelihoods collapsed with the ban on exports. "There is nothing for us except the tunnels," says another worker.

"I have a house, and land and money but I want to go abroad," says Abu Eyash, 28, a tunneller who once spent four years in an Israeli jail for his connections with Fatah. "I'm not satisfied here. There's always war and never any security."

G2: Inside the Gaza tunnels: They were one of Israel's key targets during its three-week assault on Gaza. But the relentless air strikes failed to destroy the ....

These men may not earn much from the tunnels, but others do. The tunnel cost around £100,000 to build and the owners say they earned that back within the first two months. The original owners of the land are given a 10% commission and Egyptian security officials on the other side earn healthy bribes. As his staff worked, one of the owners took out a thick fold of dollar bills, from which he was to send the equivalent of £13,000 to the Egyptians, enough to provide protection for the tunnel for around 10 days until the next payment was due.

In the last two weeks since the end of its war in Gaza, Israel has launched several more air strikes against the tunnels after militants from small, non-**Hamas** groups fired rockets and mortars into southern Israel. This tunnel was one of those hit, although the workers said the damage would take only a few days to repair.

Not everyone celebrates the tunnel industry. A short walk back from this tent is the home of Mohammad Abu Saud, 40, who is spending the day covering his broken windows with plastic sheeting and wondering how he is ever going to repair the massive cracks in his walls caused by the bombing of the tunnels. "I don't earn any benefit from the tunnels and I'm suffering because of them - you can see the cracks here and the windows gone, as well as the fact that the prices in the market have risen a lot," he says.

"I think the tunnels are delaying a solution," says his brother Ala'a, 35. "If there were no tunnels, there would be such a heavy price that it would force **Hamas** to sit and find a solution and the only solution is to reopen the crossings. I'm not even asking them to liberate Palestine, just open the crossings."

Around half an hour's drive north from the border are the recently destroyed remains of what, a month ago, was one of the largest food-processing factory compounds in the Gaza strip, owned by the wealthy al-Wadeya brothers. Yaser al-Wadeya has a PhD in industrial engineering from Cleveland State University and little sympathy for **Hamas**. He estimates the damage caused by the Israeli military to his biscuit, ice-cream, snacks and dessert factories is worth around £15m. Even if he had the money for repairs, Israel's restrictions mean he would not be able to import new machinery.

Even before the war, Al-Wadeya directed some of his Israeli suppliers to give up waiting for the Israeli crossings to open and ship their products to Egypt, then for them to be smuggled under the border into Gaza. "The main reason for all of this is to destroy the economic infrastructure of the weak Palestinian economy," he says. "They want to make sure that we will never have a state in Palestine."

Israel's military said it was conducting "post-operation investigations" into accounts of civilian casualties and property damage, but added that it "does not target civilians or civilian infrastructure, including factories, unless it is being used by the **Hamas** for terrorist purposes".

However, Palestinians, including al-Wadeya, disagree and argue that much of the bombing during this war was aimed directly at civilian infrastructure. Among the other targets hit were the largest cement factory in Gaza, the largest flour mill, the only parliament building, a major sewage project and the leading private school, not to mention the 21,000 homes and more than 200 factories completely or partially destroyed.

Al-Wadeya argues that Israel has allowed the commercial tunnel economy to function as part of a broader campaign to break Gaza's economic and political links with Israel and to force it towards a dependent relationship with Egypt. "During the occupation, from the beginning until now, our whole relationship is with Israel. You can't just break it and move towards Egypt," he says.

Some senior Israelis have spoken publicly in recent years of their desire to hand over responsibility for Gaza to Egypt, and to keep most of the Jewish settlements on the

occupied West Bank while handing the remaining Palestinian cantons over to Jordanian control. Ironically, **Hamas**, with its insistence on opening the Rafah crossing with Egypt to give access to the rest of the Islamic world, appears at times to be pushing for the same future for Gaza.



G2: Inside the Gaza tunnels: They were one of Israel 's key targets during its three-week assault on Gaza. But the relentless air strikes failed to destroy the ....

The Islamists appear not to have grasped the full extent of the devastation suffered in Gaza, or the people's frustration. Shortly after the war, a **Hamas** official arrived at the rubble of the factory and offered £3,500 towards its repair. "I told him to get the hell out of here," says Al-Wadeya. "What would that buy? Not even new locks for the doors.

"I really believe that if we stay where we are with **Hamas** and Fatah and this political issue, we will never do anything in Gaza. It will become like Somalia or Sudan," he says. "We need two peaceful states, Palestine and Israel, living together. Without this we will be at war for the next century".

**Load-Date:** February 10, 2009

---

End of Document

**No one left in the ruins to hear the thunder of Israel's guns; Martin Fletcher, travelling in an Israeli armoured vehicle, becomes the first British newspaper journalist to see at first hand the devastation that three weeks of war have brought to Gaza**

The Times (London)

January 16, 2009 Friday

Edition 1

Copyright 2009 Times Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

# THE TIMES

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1195 words

**Byline:** Martin Fletcher

## Body

---

"It's not a pleasant sight," the brigade commander conceded, and he was right. The Gaza Strip was always grim, but 20 days after the Israeli military unleashed its firepower on that narrow sliver of Palestinian territory, it looks - and sounds - like Armageddon.

Under pressure, the Israelis yesterday allowed in the first small group of foreign journalists since the war began. We were not taken far, only to the edge of al-Atatra, a town from whose environs **Hamas** regularly fired rockets into southern Israel a few miles north. It has paid a terrible price.

The houses and ugly concrete apartment blocks have been abandoned and mostly reduced to shells, their walls pockmarked by shrapnel. The commercial greenhouses have been crushed. The metal roof of what used to be a factory or warehouse has been sent crashing to the ground.

The vegetable fields have been churned up by tanks and bulldozers.

There is not a Palestinian to be seen - just the odd scarecrow standing forlornly in the midst of their ruined crops. An empty casino and the odd palm tree overlook a deserted beach and the deep-blue Mediterranean.

It is scarcely surprising that the civilians have fled. This is no longer a place where anyone would want to linger. The air reverberates with the crump of exploding shells and the crackle of automatic gunfire. Tanks and giant bulldozers - their cabins caged in steel to block rocketpropelled grenades - roar past, throwing up clouds of dust behind them.

Great banks of smoke billow up from bomb sites amid long, low rows of distant buildings, casting a pall across the sun and sky. This area now appears largely to be secured, but we still cannot go too close for fear of snipers or booby-traps. The only people in sight are Israeli soldiers flourishing their automatic weapons.

No one left in the ruins to hear the thunder of Israel's guns Martin Fletcher, travelling in an Israeli armoured vehicle, becomes the first British newspaper j....

It was a stunning contrast to the peaceful citrus orchards, the neat fields of vivid green spring wheat, and the orderly rows of hothouses of southern Israel that we had left behind 20 minutes earlier. But Colonel Herzi, the commander, and his fellow paratroops are not afflicted by doubts about the justice of their mission, or about their overwhelming use of force. If they are aware of the international condemnation of Operation Cast Lead, they do not let it trouble them.

Hamas brought this death and destruction on itself, they argue with manifest passion. By continuing to rain rockets on Israel, it left them with no alternative. "I don't like seeing these ruined houses," Colonel Herzi said, "but they didn't give us any choice except to fight and show them that they should stop and find another way to live with us." He recalled the Israeli withdrawal from al-Atatra and other Gazan settlements in 2005. "Three years ago they had a wonderful chance to create with us industry, agricultural areas," he said. "We left this place in very good condition. But they chose to go in a different way and so we had to fight." Avi Ronzki, a uniformed army rabbi with a long grey beard, agreed. "It's a very righteous war," he said. "Our army is showing that to beat terror you need to use a lot of force like the Americans in Iraq or Afghanistan." The soldiers did not want to stop now, the rabbi added. "They want to destroy Hamas. If you leave even a small core it will rise again, so it should be snuffed out entirely." Another senior officer insisted that the Israelis were striving to minimise civilian casualties - even telephoning houses before shelling them to tell the occupants to leave. It had to do this, he said, because Hamas was using civilians as human shields.

Colonel Herzi was contemptuous of Hamas. He claimed that it had boobytrapped one third of the houses, left a bomb concealed in a Unicef bag, and chiselled explosives into the walls of a mosque so that its men could bring the entire building tumbling down when Israeli soldiers entered.

He claimed that the soldiers faced daily suicide attacks, many by women, though when pressed he admitted that only two had got close to his men. He said that on Wednesday two Hamas fighters had shot at an Israeli post, retreated into a house, and had blown it up when the Israelis followed, trapping an officer beneath the rubble. He also said that Hamas was using the daily three-hour truce for the distribution of humanitarian aid to rearm.

None of these claims can be verified, but the colonel did display photographs of various guns, explosive devices, rockets and tunnels that his men had discovered. A few of his men had been wounded, and one who had got married a day before the operation began was now critically injured. In the face of such challenges, he said, "you have to use power ... we have an enemy that doesn't know any law".

He insisted that the Israelis were winning. Hamas had been shocked by the ferocity of the offensive. Its fighters were demoralised. They were engaging only at long range. "They still fight on, but not in a strong way." But Colonel Herzi is a veteran who believes that Israel's battle for survival is never finished. Indeed, his command includes Unit 101, which Ariel Sharon, the hawkish former Israeli Prime Minister, set up at David Ben-Gurion's request more than half a century ago to stamp out Beduin attacks from the Gaza Strip.

The aim of the offensive, he said, was to teach Hamas such a harsh lesson that it would never provoke Israel again. But he added: "I don't think this war will bring peace. It's part of a long process. Because that's the way they choose to deal with us it's very important that we win every battle against them ... Will they leave their weapons for ever? I know for sure the answer is no."

Denial outweighed by evidence

Behind the story Michael Evans

White phosphorus is controversial stuff. It has a dual use in warfare, one of which is deemed to be legitimate and the other, if used in the wrong environment and with devastating consequences for civilians, could lead to allegations of war crimes.

Artillery shells containing white phosphorus, launched to create a smoke screen for advancing troops, breaches no recognised international convention. The chemical exposed to oxygen rains smoke down over the battlefield.

No one left in the ruins to hear the thunder of Israel 's guns Martin Fletcher, travelling in an Israeli armoured vehicle, becomes the first British newspaper j....

If it is launched as a deliberate incendiary weapon aimed at burning civilians and homes, a war crimes case can be made on the basis that its use violates Protocol 111 of the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons.

Despite growing evidence, first revealed by The Times, that white phosphorus was being used by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) during attacks on Gaza, Israel's military has denied firing shells with the chemical as a payload.

Spokesmen for the IDF have repeatedly stated that Israel has used only weapons that meet international rules on warfare, and that it has not resorted to any system that other countries, including Nato members, have not deployed in past battles.

The evidence that white phosphorus shells have been fired as a smoke screen is so compelling that the denials have increasingly lacked credibility.

By firing such shells into a densely packed urban environment there was always the danger that particles of ignited white phosphorus could land on the skin of an innocent civilian.

## Graphic

---

A foreign worker flees after a UN warehouse in Gaza City is hit by Israeli shells. Some relief work was suspended

MAHMUD HAMS / AFP / GETTY IMAGES

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2009

## *The politics of War*

Sunday Business Post

February 15, 2009

Copyright 2009 Thomas Crosbie Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved



**Section:** AGENDA

**Length:** 687 words

### **Body**

---

The most recent Israeli campaign against the Palestinians coincidentally also lasted weeks, but to write that may be anti-Semitic.

In fact, unless you have something nice to say about Israel, maybe you should say nothing at all. One thing is certain: Israel doesn't need unwelcome foreign attention on its ongoing struggle in the Middle East, unless of course that attention is in the form of military and financial aid from the US. Otherwise, non-Israelis should just mind their own business.

Following the election, the favourite to form the next government is Binyamin Netanyahu of the right-wing Likud party. He looks like he will beat Tzipi Livni of the more centrist Kadima party to the job. Both these parties ran on a 'Palestinians Are a Bad Lot' ticket.

The third most popular party in the election was the extreme right-wing Yisrael Beiteinu, which is led by Avigdor Lieberman. He ran his campaign on an 'Arabs Are a Bad Lot' ticket. In fourth place was Ehud Barak's Labor party, which ran its campaign on a 'Palestinians Are a Bad Lot But Would Talking to Them Kill Us?' ticket. Parties which failed to get any votes at all in the Israeli elections included Hamas, Hezbollah and the Give Peace a Chance party.

The election campaign was always going to be dominated by security issues. Knowing this, the Palestinians tried to sabotage the campaign in late December by provoking the Israeli government into bombing it to pieces for several weeks. This resulted in the deaths of more than 1,000 Palestinians, about 400 of which were women and children.

Coincidentally, aggressive action like this towards Palestinians increased the popularity of both Netanyahu and Livni during the campaigns.

However, to suggest that the bombing campaign was deliberately carried out in the run-up to an election would be very cynical. It would imply that Israeli politicians were willing to have Palestinian people killed in order to win votes. Whether this is true or not, it is undeniable that the more aggressive the war against the Palestinians, the more certain political parties in Israel benefited in terms of votes.

## The politics of War

Coincidentally, the parties that are most hardline against Palestinians did well in the election. All of the major ones tried to get in on the act. Even Barak and Labor seemed to try to increase their popularity through escalating the conflict in Gaza.

These politicians must be aware that the campaign against Hamas was not viewed in a very positive light by the international community. Then again, who cares? The international community doesn't get to vote in Israel's elections. Most people in the world probably want to see peace in the Middle East.

They obviously realise that Hamas is not blameless in the ongoing fighting there. Many also believe that a good way to achieve peace is through dialogue, and that trying to kill as many Palestinians as possible is probably not going to help the peace process.

Indeed, if anything, Hamas and Arab opposition to Israel have probably grown stronger because of the Israeli campaign.

It is important to remember that Gaza is not exactly a thriving little economy with lots of resources. During the recent hostilities, it was deprived of food, water and medicine and described by the head of the Vatican Council for Justice and Peace as "a concentration camp".

Whoever does become prime minister of Israel will obviously have to deal with the Palestinians in some way. It seems unlikely that trying to wipe out Hamas will achieve peace. Presumably, despite the way leading Israeli politicians act and Israeli people vote, peace is what they all want. Maybe this is a crazy idea, but wouldn't it be nice if the new prime minister pushed for a peaceful solution?

This might be way out of left-field as a suggestion, but a two-state solution might be one way to work things out. Then, possibly, there could be Israelis and Palestinians co-existing peacefully in the Middle East.

Then again, maybe that's not what anyone on either side wants. It certainly seems as if leaders on both sides quite enjoy the slaughter of innocents, particularly if it's politically expedient.

**Load-Date:** February 15, 2009

## *Israel committing systematic mass murder*

Daily News (South Africa)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

e1 Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent News and Media Ltd All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 11

**Length:** 995 words

**Byline:** YUSUF ISMAIL

### **Body**

---

Despite the ongoing genocide in Gaza being perpetrated by the Israelis, very few people are aware of the dialectics of the conflict. Clichéd slogans and empty rhetoric in the mass media accentuate the misinformation writ large on a mass scale.

The "sickness, lurking in the collective mass subconscious of many" as your recent correspondent Larry Lachman put it, is in reality not the intolerance directed against the Jewish state, but rather the failure of the world to stand up against the monstrosity that the state of Israel has metamorphosed into. A cursory glance at the New York Times, The Washington Post, or the popular wire news services of Associated Press, Reuters or Agence France-Presse, indicate that people are still being fed with the same diet of propaganda that Israel is the unfortunate "victim" in this conflict.

Make no mistake. What we are witnessing is no conflict or sanguinary warfare; rather it is systematic mass murder on a grotesque scale perpetrated by one of the most tyrannical regimes on Earth. A recent delegation of ultra-orthodox Jewish rabbis in Durban described the unfolding events as a "perpetual holocaust". With the advent of the internet, alternative news forums and outlets such as youtube, people can now witness first-hand babies being shot point blank by the brutal Israeli Defence Force (IDF), women being systematically raped by Jewish soldiers and schools and villages being blown up.

Enforced starvation, denial of resources, such as fuel and water, destruction of infrastructure have only one purpose - to decimate a population.

Photographic evidence has now also emerged that Israel has been using controversial phosphorous shells in its offensive on Gaza, despite official denials by the IDF. This causes the skin to melt away and the victim's internal organs are burnt while he is alive. Cluster bombs are being dropped from the air. All of this is prohibited under international law.

Those causing the untold horror in Gaza are aware that the events do not relate to Israel's right to exist or even Hamas's involvement. Every massacre that Israel has engaged in over the past 60 years has nothing to do with Israeli security and more to do with the increased appropriation of land and the expulsion and eviction of the indigenous Palestinian population. We are repeatedly told that the invasion of Gaza has to do with the rockets fired by Hamas who had allegedly broken the ceasefire in place since July. But what is the reality to the present impasse? And how indeed was it sparked? In an excellent debate held on Democracy Now between academic

## Israel committing systematic mass murder

Norman Finkelstein and former US Ambassador to Israel Martin Indyk, Finkelstein illustrates how Israel had deliberately broken the ceasefire between Hamas and Israel on November 4 by venturing into Gaza and killing 10 people, which it deemed militants after which Hamas retaliated by rocket launches.

### Muscle

According to the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz, defence minister Ehud Barak began plans for this invasion as early as March 2008. After their defeat in Lebanon in 2006, Israel wished to flex its military muscle and illustrate it was still a force to be reckoned with. Over and above this, Hamas was signalling to the international community that it wanted a diplomatic settlement of the conflict along the June 1967 borders. It had gained and entered international consensus. And in order to destroy this peace initiative by Hamas, Israel decided to attack and wage a killing spree. In fact,, Israel had enforced a blockade preventing all economic activity of the Palestinians long before Hamas was democratically elected into power. In describing the catastrophe, former High Commissioner for human rights, Mary Robinson, described the blockade as a destruction of civilisation.

The Dagan Plan, named after General Meir Dagan, who was with Ariel Sharon in the 1982 Lebanon invasion, involves the imprisonment of Palestinians in a ghetto wall, running right through the West Bank and Gaza, leaving Palestinians enslaved in a virtual concentration camp.

On the eve of the creation of Israel in 1948, history documents how the Stern and Irgun Gang, Jewish terrorist groups, slaughtered thousands of women and children in Deir Yassin. In one event, survivors of the attack were paraded around like cattle before they were taken to the quarry, beheaded, with their torsos dumped in rivers. Leading members of this group were people like Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir who later became prime ministers of Israel. One of the most powerful Israeli historians in the world today, Ilan Pappé in The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947-1951, shows how the massacres of Palestinians were not randomly committed, but part of a master plan, to rid the Jewish state of as many Palestinians as possible. This is ethnic cleansing. Israel's creation, according to Pappé, was thus built by military force, ethnic cleansing and additionally the forced expulsion of close to a million people - the original inhabitants of Palestine.

The expulsion was a direct authorisation by the first prime minister and warlord, David Ben Gurion, when he made a dismissive gesture with his hand, stating, "Expel them". The events in Gaza unfolding by the minute give us a clue.

### Descendants

The very people of Gaza are direct descendants of the million refugees who were expelled from what is now the Jewish state. Any realisation of the refugees' internationally recognised right to return would be the death-knell to the brutal Zionist project.

Richard Falk, the newly appointed UN Special Rapporteur for human rights in the occupied territories, recently asked: "Is it irresponsible to associate the treatment of Palestinians by Israelis with this criminalised Nazi record of collective atrocity? I think not."

And that is the moral dilemma of our times. The once oppressed have transmogrified into the modern version of the Third Reich.

p Yusuf Ismail is an attorney and commentator on political issues

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2009



## *December 27-January 18: Thousands Dead, Thousands More Suffering*

University Wire

February 5, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 The WORD via U-Wire

**Length:** 632 words

**Byline:** By Ariel Tirosh, The WORD; **SOURCE:** Hunter College

### **Body**

---

Israel began its military offensive against **Hamas** December 27, and the war ended January 18, 2009 with what is being called an unilateral ceasefire. I was in Israel for a large part of the conflict. During that period, both sides claimed the moral high ground. There have been countless arguments about whether **Hamas** is a terrorist group, whether Israel's response to the rocket fire was disproportionate, if Israel was and is oppressive and who is really at fault.

I was there to visit family. On the news, pundit-talk about the war never ceased. I heard their voices, and watched the videos and their live feeds from Gaza. On the Israeli version of YouTube, at least one of the featured videos would be about the latest action.

Walking down streets, I could hear any number of conversations about the offensive. In Tel Aviv, where I stayed, life went on. People went to work, parents went grocery shopping, and their children went to school or played in the parks. And the city harbored refugees who had fled from the widening range of cities that were under **Hamas** rocket fire. My aunt harbored her sister's family who lived in Ashkelon, and the day after they arrived in Tel Aviv, a rocket hit their house, destroying the daughters' bedroom. Many who had fled also found shelter in Haifa.

Over 1,000 rockets hit Israel in the past six months alone. The arms **Hamas** had been receiving were becoming more sophisticated, their range extending. Currently, almost 800,000 Israelis live in range of the Qassam.

This is not my way of saying that Israelis are suffering more than the Palestinians. In fact, it is quite the opposite. Palestinians live in very close quarters, and fighting has broken out on the streets of Gaza more than once since **Hamas** took power in June, 2007. Thousands have died or have been injured in the three-week war. While the full numbers are in dispute, there is no question that many of the casualties were civilians.

A week before the conflict, a French news crew got a rare chance to film conditions in Gaza. They taped a class where the children were being taught to hate and kill Israelis. The children were made to march with guns and shout anti-Israel slogans. The crew also filmed arms being stored in civilian houses, schools, mosques and public buildings. Indeed, the live feed of bombs being dropped on buildings in Gaza showed secondary explosions that clearly demonstrated that buildings were being used to store explosives and other munitions.

On the January 15, I went to a bar in Tel Aviv. I met two men who had just gotten back from Gaza that morning. When I asked one, Lior, what it was like in Gaza, his face grew dark and his eyes became a little wild. He moved his hands around his head in rapid, random motions and said that it was crazy, and he was now crazy.

He saw things he had never wanted to see, and killed people whom he had never before met. He described the pain and the suffering of the people of Gaza as well as that of him and his friends. He expressed a deep regret for

## December 27-January 18: Thousands Dead, Thousands More Suffering

the actions that he had taken, but he also said that if he had to do it again, he would not do it differently. Israel is his country, he told me, and Israelis deserve as much of a right to live a peaceful life as anybody else. Rockets had been fired from Gaza every day for a long time.

Like many Israelis, Lior did not want to fight in this war. He did not want to go into Gaza and kill people. He did not fully agree with his government's actions, nor did he really support the current administration. But he like many other Israelis stood in solidarity, not with his government but with his country and his people. He believed in the need for an offensive because the lives of men, women and children were in danger and he wanted to protect them.

(C) 2008 The WORD via UWIRE

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2009

---

End of Document