

Date and Time: Friday, May 3, 2024 4:25:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223446578

### Documents (100)

#### 1. Hamas's brilliant propaganda

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

#### 2. Fatah and Hamas battle out their differences

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

#### 3. Hamas has a new face

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

#### 4. World - Top Hamas militants killed in clashes between Palestinians

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

#### 5. Hamas says prisoner-swap talks in Cairo have resumed

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

#### 6. Ceasefire doubt at Hamas demand

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

#### 7. Hamas defiant Israeli campaign killed `only' 48

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

#### 8. Hamas failure to fight may be a trap

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

#### 9. Gaza's women seek Hamas matchmakers

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

#### 10. Hamas holds the key to lasting peace

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

#### 11. Organizers unrepentant as Hamas leaderfails to address British Parliament meeting

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

#### 12. Hamas denies giving Kerry a letter to Obama

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

#### 13. The younger face of Hamas; Educated, militant and unrepentant

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

#### 14. Hamas vows to keep fighting, but some say it will honor 'lull'

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

#### 15. The younger face of Hamas: educated and unrepentant

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

#### 16. The younger face of Hamas; ... educated, militant, unrepentant

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

#### 17. 'Hamas betrayed Palestine' Palestinian ambassador to SA says the movement gave Israel an excuse

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

#### 18. US Muslim charity leaders jailed for aiding Hamas

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

#### 19. Gaza under Hamas: order and absurdity Border closure makes life difficult for ordinary citizens

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Jun 30, 2009

#### 20. Hamas hopes for prisoner exchange

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

#### 21. Hamas may sign truce if Israel agrees to concessions



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

22. <u>PM: We need to free many Hamas terrorists in exchange for Schalit. Israel considering early release for</u>
Barghouti \* Hamas insists on freeing Park Hotel massacre mastermind

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

23. Militant Hamas gets into the matchmaking business

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

24. Hamas suspects beggars on Gaza streets are Israeli spies

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

25. Hamas militiamen used woman as human shield in shootout with PA police

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

26. The assault may only have vindicated the notion of resistance MIDEAST: Politically, Hamas May Have Won

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

27. Int'l community was duped by Hamas's false civilian death toll figures, IDF claims

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

28. PA officials welcome failure of prisoner swap talks. Releasing 'commanders of Hamas's army staff' in W.

Bank would have seriously hurt Abbas

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

29. Hamas wants dead civilians on both sides; Rockets fired into Israel invite retaliation against Palestinians set

up as human shields
Client/Matter: -NoneSearch Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

30. Hamas softens terms for ceasefire; Egypt meetings. Temporary truce would see Israel withdraw as talks

continue

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

31. Hamas: not my idea of heroes

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

32. 'Hamas has been badly beaten'; Israel says goals met, ceases fire in Gaza

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

33. Hamas calls off talks on Schalit. Spokesman says if negotiations resume, group will up its demands to 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

34. Israel and Hamas both guilty of abandoning their responsibilities to civilians

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

35. No truce in Gaza as Hamas asks for backing U.S. vows to help stop weapons smuggling

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

36. World: Israel PM's family link to Hamas peace bid: Olmert rejected Palestinian attempts to set up talks through go-between before Gaza invasion

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

37. Israel draws verbal fire as hope for deal rises; Soldiers kill two Hamas leaders, shell UN compound

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

38. Schalit dominates last cabinet meeting. Friedmann tells ministers it's fine to restrict Hamas prisoners' rights

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

39. Brother of Hamas spokesman arrested in Arish

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

40. Parliamentarians wrong to portray Hamas as peace-loving

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

41. International: Hamas refuses to free Israeli soldier in return for lifting Gaza blockade: Leader accuses Israel

of backtracking over truce: Corporal's fate linked to release of Palestinians

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. <u>Gaza crisis: Airstrike kills senior Hamas minister as Cairo talks inch towards ceasefire: Said Siam dies as</u>
Israeli jets target Jabaliya camp: UN anger grows over bombing of compound

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

43. Peace talks shot down After coming under fire for asking Hamas to speak, Clare Short MP finds the route to a truce in the Middle East difficult

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

44. Agony of rocket attack victims of Hamas overlooked, says Scot

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

45. <u>Videotape adds to rift in Jewish community Some object to the way images portray T.O.'s 'pro-Hamas'</u> protests

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

46. <u>IDF: Large majority of Palestinians killed in Operation Cast Lead were terrorists. 1,166 dead: 709 Hamas operatives, 162 male casualties not yet classified and 295 non-combatants</u>

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

47. Peres to UN's Ban: We have no reason to apologize for Gaza war. President blasts Hamas in heated exchange with Al-Jazeera reporter

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

48. <u>Obama visit: Abbas brings Palestinian cause, but not support, to Washington Not only are Fatah and Hamas</u> deadlocked in a power struggle. Abbas's own Fatah bloc has rejected his new government.

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

49. Netanyahu casts himselfas player on a world stage Right-winger calls for destruction of Hamas in defence of democracy

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

50. <u>Guardian Weekly: Assault on Gaza: Israelis advance into Gaza City as Olmert says goals nearly met:</u>
<u>Military leaders speak of eagerness to tackle Hamas in urban areas</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

#### 51. New deadly raid on Hamas

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

#### 52. Iran 's the winner if ceasefire fails

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

#### 53. Master bomber Yihye Ayyash's mother: IDF is more polite than PA when raiding Palestinian homes

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

# 54. We must make the ceasefire stick and work out a solution COLUMNIST the thursday essay As the ceasefire between Hamas and Israel appears to be holding, Ann Clwyd MP, chair of the all-party Parliamentary human rights group, explains what must happen next to ensure lasting peace in Gaza

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

#### 55. Just defence despite death toll

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

56. In the smart West Bank health club, between jogging and swimming laps, people were screaming 'Death to Israel ...' In an exclusive dispatch, we reveal how the Israeli war on Gaza may actually make Hamas stronger - and could now make Middle East peace an impossible dream SPECIAL REPORT

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

57. Entrapping Netanyahu

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

58. My terror as a human shield As battle raged in Gaza, Israeli soldiers forced Majdi Abed Rabbo to risk his life as a go-between in the hunt for three Hamas fighters. This is his story ...

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

59. Look further, think harder, don't take it at face value

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

60. Spinning the vicious circle Gaza

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

#### 61. Israeli Officials Say Main Goals in Gaza Are Still Unfulfilled

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

#### 62. Israel 's is a 'defensive war'

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

#### 63. Peace and goodwill has to be mutual agreement

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

#### 64. Myth of the noble terrorist takes an overdue battering

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

#### 65. Living next door to a serial killer

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

## 66. Images of bloodshed obscure truth of Gaza

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

#### 67. Rubble and Painkillers in Gaza, an Island Adrift After War Fades

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

#### 68. Rebuilding Begins Upon a Wobbly Truce

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

# 69. Cease-fire holding as Israelis pull out Gaza largely quiet after 22-day battle that killed more than 1,300

**Palestinians** 

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

## 70. Abbas swears in new Palestinian govt

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

#### 71. Middle East Reality Check



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

#### 72. Middle East reality check Globalist

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

#### 73. Peace is fragile, and the omens are bad

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

#### 74. Column: Blame game continuing to fuel Gaza battle

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

#### 75. Campaign Against Israel Has Succeeded

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Jun 30, 2009

#### 76. Israel sends negotiator to Egypt; U.S. opinion solidly behind Israel: poll

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 14, 2009 to

Jun 30, 2009

#### 77. Israel: Gaza offensive may be near 'final act'

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Jun 30, 2009

#### 78.\_65 years' jail for terror financiers

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Jun 30, 2009

#### 79. Siege of Gaza creates prison with no future

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

# 80. <u>Disputing Gaza death toll, Israel offers no other figures. IDF, unofficially, says only 150 of 900 confirmed fatalities were civilians</u>

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

#### 81. Children in war zones

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

82. Egypt hosts stepped-up talks on Mideast prisoner swap

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

83. NEW ROCKET ATTACKS FUEL ISRAELI WARNING

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

84. Guardian Weekly: Reply: Attack on Gaza

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

85. Guff on Gaza as US show goes on

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

86. Israel pulls back as war enters its 'final act' Truce deal is close, says UN Secretary-General

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

#### 87. Shalit `to Egypt ' in plan to lift Gaza siege

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

#### 88. Israeli Cabinet Is Poised To Call Cease-Fire in Gaza

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

#### 89. 'I used to count my children when we went out. Now I don't need to'

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

#### 90. So, I asked the UN secretary general, isn't it time for a war crimes tribunal? Comment

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

### 91. Rally for peace ends in conflict

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

# 92. The charities are guilty, not the BBC The Corporation is right not to run the Gaza appeal. Oxfam and others are clearly anti- 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

#### 93. Smoke Screen Israel 's cause is just but some of its tactics are self-defeating

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

# 94. Bin laden calls for jihad as ceasefire pondered in Gaza; Death toll tops 1,000 as Egyptian truce proposal considered

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

#### 95. Secretary-General will promote truce on tour

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

#### 96. War on Gaza

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

# 97. Calls for an 'international force' to protect the civilian population MIDEAST: Resistance Rejects International Gaza Force

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

#### 98. Medical workers say death toll reaches 1,000

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

#### 99. Israeli offensive in Gaza

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

#### 100. Olmert dodging ceasefire meetings

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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# Hamas's brilliant propaganda

Sunday Tribune (South Africa)

March 01, 2009

e1 Edition

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Section: Pg. 23

Length: 255 words

# **Body**

The recent anti-Israel media coverage in this country and throughout the world attests to the success of the brilliant <u>Hamas</u> campaign against Israel.

Despite numerous attempts, and outnumbering the Israelis by millions, the Arab states have realised that the obsession they have with the destruction of the state of Israel cannot be achieved in a frontal war.

So Arab strategists and others opposed to the Jewish state have devised a strategy using <u>Hamas</u> as their surrogate.

The plan was brilliant in its simplicity. <u>Hamas</u> took over (by force) part of the Palestinian state closest to Israel. Then, like the child prodding a bear with a stick, <u>Hamas</u> antagonised Israel by firing rockets into Jewish territory, knowing that Israel had to retaliate eventually.

By using <u>women</u> and children as shields and firing rockets from residential areas, <u>Hamas</u> ensured that the Israelis' retaliation would be disproportionate and civilian casualties high.

#### Media

Just as no one likes seeing a bear attack a child, no matter the provocation, so <u>Hamas</u> (with the connivance of the media) has used pictures of demolished buildings and dead woman and children to mobilise world opinion against the nasty Israeli bear.

Arab strategists know that in countries such as Britain, France and Germany, anti-Semitism lurks close to the surface and this has been confirmed by widespread condemnation of the Israelis.

Out of the woodwork have poured all the useful idiots calling for sanctions and the demise of Israel; the plan has worked brilliantly.

C B Rogers

Durban

Load-Date: February 28, 2009



# Fatah and Hamas battle out their differences

AlArabiya.net
June 5, 2009 Friday

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Length: 548 words

# **Body**

The Islamist <u>Hamas</u> movement on Saturday protested the killing of its members by the Fatah movement in the West Bank as its own Gaza-based security forces launched an overnight campaign of arrests against Fatah.

Around 2,200 **women Hamas** supporters protested against the West Bank-based Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas after a violent shootout Thursday night in town of Qalqilya between his police and **Hamas** left two **Hamas** members and a Palestinian policeman dead.

"No to Abbas, No to Fayyad," the <u>women</u> in Gaza City chanted, referring to Western-backed Prime Minister Salam Fayyad who has launched a security crackdown in the Israeli-occupied West Bank over the past several months.

The <u>women</u> waved green <u>Hamas</u> flags and held signs reading "Abbas's security forces are the bodyguards of the Zionists" and "No dialogue with arrests in the West Bank." Earlier this week six people were killed in a similar shootout.

An investigation by the Al-Haq human rights organisation published on Thursday said <u>Hamas</u> militants opened fire first on both occasions. Fatah and **Hamas** trade accusations

Officials in Abbas's Fatah party accused <u>Hamas</u>-run security forces of detaining scores of its members in a campaign of arrests launched overnight.

"In Gaza the arrests and abductions against us continue," said Fahmi al-Zaarir, a Fatah spokesman in the West Bank. "There are more than several dozen people wanted by *Hamas* and they began arresting them last night."

But senior <u>Hamas</u> leader Ahmed Bahar accused Abbas and Fayyad of treason for allegedly cooperating with Israel against the Islamist movement.

"You can either return to the Palestinian people and the dialogue in Cairo or you can continue your treachery in the embrace of the (Israeli) occupation," he told the crowd of protesters.

"But this occupation will never do anything for you. They will toss you aside as they have tossed aside others in the past," he said.

#### Fatah and Hamas battle out their differences

The <u>Hamas</u>-run interior ministry in Gaza said it was targeting "criminal and outlaw groups" accused of collecting information on its leaders and militant hideouts to sell to Abbas's Palestinian Authority and Israel.

It went on to accuse the groups of gathering information about political leaders and militant hideouts to pass along to Abbas's government in the West Bank and to Israel. It did not specify how many people had been detained.

The bitter divide between <u>Hamas</u> and Abbas's secular Fatah movement climaxed in June 2007 when <u>Hamas</u> gunmen drove Abbas's forces out of the Gaza Strip in a week of deadly street battles that cleaved Palestinians into hostile rival entities.

Since then each movement has accused its rival of political arrests and persecution in the territories under its control.

Maan News agency reported that Sheikh Nafez Azzam, a senior Islamic Jihad (Holy War) movement's leader said in a press statement that his movement is holding contacts with Fatah leadership to defuse the tension with <u>Hamas</u> movement in the West Bank and to contain the internal crisis.

"Both Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> should immediately stop mutual arrests in both Gaza and the West Bank in order to create a proper atmosphere to resume the national dialogue," said Azzam, adding "the issue of arrests, mainly in the West Bank would have destructive impact on the national reconciliation."

Load-Date: June 6, 2009



# Hamas has a new face

Windsor Star (Ontario)

January 27, 2009 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. B7

Length: 454 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service

Dateline: JABALIYA, Gaza Strip

# **Body**

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 <u>Hamas</u>, 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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 <u>women</u> and children." But rockets fired for years by <u>Hamas</u> and its allies had also killed <u>women</u> and children in Israel who had had nothing to do with the conflict.

"For sure I don't feel sorry when their <u>women</u> 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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.

#### Hamas has a new face

Israeli soldiers returning from the battlefield expressed surprise at how little combat they faced from <u>Hamas</u>. Abu Mousab quietly but firmly denied this.

"The Israeli side fought with all their power and there were some hard exchanges of fire and some ambushes," he said tersely. "I was able to move back and forth, but it was dangerous. We were working, never more than two of us together, on 24-hour shifts. When things were bad we stayed on duty for 48 hours at a time."

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

# **Graphic**

Photo: Canwest News Service; MARTYR: "We will meet in paradise" proclaims a poster at a beachfront mosque in Gaza City which remembers Muhammad Hamis Bekker of <u>Hamas</u>'s notorious military wing, Ezzedeen Al-Qassam Brigdes. Bekker died during the first day of the war against Israel on Dec. 27.;

Load-Date: January 27, 2009



# World - Top Hamas militants killed in clashes between Palestinians

Irish News

June 1, 2009 Monday

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Section: Pg. 21

Length: 587 words

# **Body**

Palestinian security forces loyal to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas stormed the hideout of <u>Hamas</u> members yesterday, leaving six dead in the bloodiest clash since the Palestinian president launched a crackdown on <u>Hamas</u> in the West Bank two years ago.

Two top <u>Hamas</u> militants - on the run from Israel for years - were among those killed, along with an unarmed <u>Hamas</u> supporter and three Palestinian policemen.

After the hours-long battle, hundreds of spent bullet casings, puddles of blood and tear gas canisters were visible at the hideout, a two-storey building in the northern West Bank town of Qalqiliya. Parts of the walls were burned down.

The Islamic militant <u>Hamas</u> immediately hurled angry accusations at the western-backed president, Mahmoud Abbas, accusing him of betraying Palestinians resisting Israeli occupation and threatening revenge. Relations have been sour since <u>Hamas</u> retook Gaza by force two years ago, leaving Mr Abbas only in control of the West Bank.

The arrest raid underscored Abbas's determination to rein in militants as part of his obligations under the US-backed 'road map' peace plan.

The shoot-out came just three days after Mr Abbas met President Barack Obama at the White House and renewed a pledge to honour these commitments. The US has been training Abbas's elite forces to help him affirm his control of the West Bank and prepare for eventual statehood.

Despite <u>Hamas</u>' threats of reprisals, it was not immediately clear whether it would change its tactic of lying low in the West Bank while it weathers Mr Abbas's crackdown.

Since <u>Hamas</u>' Gaza takeover, Mr Abbas' security forces have detained hundreds of <u>Hamas</u> supporters in the West Bank and closed the group's institutions and charities.

The Qalqiliya clash began late yesterday when Palestinian troops surrounded a hideout of Mohammed Samman, a leader of <u>Hamas</u>' military wing, Izzedine al-Qassam, and his assistant, Mohammed Yassin. Both had been on Israel's wanted list for six years, Palestinian security officials said.

Initially, about two dozen officers stormed the house, breaking down the door, said a policeman who had participated in the raid.

The <u>Hamas</u> men lobbed a grenade and opened automatic fire, killing three officers and critically wounding two, he said. Other officers fled, then brought in reinforcements.

#### World - Top Hamas militants killed in clashes between Palestinians

The ensuing battle lasted until midmorning yesterday.

Police say they found bombs, suicide belts and bullets in their search of the house.

Qalqiliya, which elected a <u>Hamas</u> mayor several years ago, was tense. <u>Women</u> gathered near the scene heaped insults on policemen.

Sporadic gunfire erupted in other areas of town, and police said the shots came from <u>Hamas</u> loyalists targeting officers, though there were no reports of injuries.

Security officials seized the bodies of the <u>Hamas</u> militants, fearing a public burial would turn into angry protests against the Palestinian Authority. Muslim tradition demands the dead should be buried quickly.

<u>Hamas</u> officials in the West Bank said that some 40 loyalists of the group had been arrested in Qalqiliya in the past week as part of the search for the top two fugitives.

In Gaza, Abu Obeida, a spokesman for the *Hamas* military wing, threatened "tough and harsh reprisal".

**Hamas** opposes Mr Abbas's policy of trying to negotiate a peace deal with Israel.

In recent months Mr Abbas and <u>Hamas</u> have tried to reach a unity deal, but talks have run aground over <u>Hamas'</u> refusal to recognise Israel and renounce violence, a precondition for joining a coalition with Abbas supporters.

Load-Date: June 1, 2009



# Hamas says prisoner-swap talks in Cairo have resumed

The Jerusalem Post June 5, 2009 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 5

Length: 305 words

Byline: KHALED ABU TOAMEH

# **Body**

<u>Hamas</u> confirmed on Thursday that its representatives have traveled to Cairo for talks on the fate of kidnapped IDF soldier Gilad Schalit.

A <u>Hamas</u> official in the Gaza Strip said that "a number of <u>Hamas</u> operatives" had been summoned by the Egyptian authorities as part of renewed efforts to reach agreement with Israel over a prisoner exchange.

The official refused to comment on a report in the London-based Al-Hayat newspaper, according to which Ahmed Jabari, commander of <u>Hamas</u>'s armed wing, Izzadin Kassam, was among the <u>Hamas</u> representatives who headed to Egypt.

The report claimed that Marwan Issa, another senior member of Izzadin Kassam, was also in Egypt for the same purpose.

The newspaper quoted "informed Palestinian sources" as saying that indirect negotiations between Israel and <u>Hamas</u> over the release of Schalit and Palestinian prisoners held in Israel jails had actually been resumed from the point where they ended a few months ago.

<u>Hamas</u> is demanding, in return for Schalit, the release of some 1,000 prisoners, half of whom are serving lengthy sentences for their involvement in killing Israelis.

Osama Mazini, a top <u>Hamas</u> official who serves as a spokesman on the Schalit case, said on Thursday that his movement was not opposed to renewing the negotiations with Israel over a prisoner swap.

He pointed out that <u>Hamas</u>'s demands for the release of Schalit remained unchanged. "We continue to insist on the release of 1,000 prisoners, including those serving lengthy sentences, <u>women</u>, minors and the elderly," he said. "If they accept our conditions, the case of the soldier will be over."

Mazini added that <u>Hamas</u> had no plans to soften its position or change its demands. He said that the Egyptians would continue to act as mediators between Israel and <u>Hamas</u> in an attempt to achieve agreement over a prisoner exchange.

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



# Ceasefire doubt at Hamas demand

Canberra Times (Australia)
January 20, 2009 Tuesday
Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 14 Length: 793 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

# **Body**

Provided both sides adhere to the terms of their ceasefire offers (and this remains in considerable doubt given <u>Hamas</u> has demanded that Israel withdraw all its troops within a week and that Gaza's border crossings be reopened to which Israel has responded that it does not "take dictates from <u>Hamas</u>") then the latest conflict in the Middle East looks to have run its short course.

<u>Hamas</u>, with its usual bluster and bravado, has claimed a "great victory", and Israel has declared it has achieved its main military objective: to drastically reduce <u>Hamas</u>'s ability and will to fire rockets out of Gaza and to endanger the security of the southern areas of the country.

Neither side is talking much about the human cost of the 22-day conflict.

Some 1300 Palestinians (more than 500 of whom were <u>women</u> and children) and 13 Israelis were killed, and the collateral damage to Gaza's houses and infrastructure has been significant.

In fact, neither side can claim to have secured any military advantage, short term or otherwise. The campaign may have proved (once again) that Israel has unrivalled power and the ability to punish its enemies, and is prepared to ignore most of the conventions and norms that govern proper and lawful international affairs while doing so. However, <u>Hamas</u> remains unbowed, and in all likelihood will recover its ability to fire rockets into southern Israel a capability the Israeli Government said at the outset of the assault that it would destroy completely. In fact, such barrages, while undoubtedly intended to strike fear into Israelis living near to Gaza, are nothing more than pin- prick attacks.

Significantly, <u>Hamas</u> was unable to make good on its threat to respond to Israel's assault by launching terrorist attacks within Israel itself, or indeed to even inspire Palestinians living in the West Bank to launch their own attacks or suicide bombings to avenge the suffering of those under attack in Gaza. Which suggests that Israel's ability to defend itself from asymmetric threat has never been greater or more complete.

But by responding so disproportionately to <u>Hamas</u>'s continued nuisance attacks, and flagrantly ignoring all international calls for restraint as it bombed, shelled and marched its way into Gaza, Israel has handed <u>Hamas</u> a propaganda victory. Not only has it ensured Hama's continued popularity with ordinary Gazans, who might otherwise have grown tired of their leaders' inability to negotiate with Israel to end the economic blockades that make life there so difficult, but it has given another generation of young Palestinian men reason to commit their lives to the cause of overthrowing Israeli suzerainty.

#### Ceasefire doubt at Hamas demand

No country can, or should, countenance its citizens being deliberately and continuously targeted by terrorist organisations. The view of Israel's leaders is that because the country suffers disproportionately from such acts and is surrounded by people sworn to its destruction that the correct (indeed only) response to terrorism is to react quickly and with twice or three times the force.

The failure of this tactic to win the respect, acquiescence or submission of its enemies should have a more subtle approach, but Israel possessed of a nuclear deterrent, the strongest military forces in the region, and the unquestioning support of the world's only superpower sees little or no need these days to talk or negotiate with anyone; and it disguises its disdain for such talks by insisting on pre-conditions it knows will be met.

Israel would still be pounding Gaza to rubble if not for the fact that the leaders of eight European and Arab nations had pledged their support to end the smuggling of weapons from Egypt into Gaza.

Even when it occupied Gaza (before disengaging in 2005), Israel was unable to prevent arms-smuggling, in part because of the territory's closeness to Egypt.

It is now desperate for an internationally guaranteed mechanism that would prevent *Hamas* from re-arming.

The inauguration of Barack Obama is the other reason that Israel unilaterally declared its ceasefire in Gaza late last week.

But despite his unqualified support for Israel, Obama is likely to demand more of the country's leaders than George W. Bush ever did though given the US's economic woes, this won't happen immediately.

Israel's assault on Gaza demonstrated quite clearly that it is not interested in negotiating with the Palestinians on a two-state solution.

Only a clear signal from Obama that the US expects measurable progress towards a lasting peace in the Middle East will persuade Israel's leaders that talks with the Palestinian Authority and <u>Hamas</u>, as unpalatable as this might be cannot be avoided, and that such is required to alleviate the present intolerable state of the Palestinians in the Middle East.

Load-Date: October 11, 2011



# Hamas defiant Israeli campaign killed `only' 48

Geelong Advertiser (Australia)

January 20, 2009 Tuesday

1 - Main Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 15

Length: 369 words

Byline: MIDDLE EAST Gaza City, Monday

# **Body**

**HAMAS** armed wing says it lost only 48 fighters during Israel's 22-day operation in Gaza and vowed to fight on unless the Jewish state withdrew its forces from the Palestinian enclave.

"We announce to our people the martyrdom of 48 Qassam fighters," Abu Obeida, spokesman for the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades, said.

Israel reported killing more than 500 <u>Hamas</u> members during Operation Cast Lead, which it launched on Gaza on December 27 and ended on Sunday with a ceasefire.

Gaza medics said a total of more than 1300 Palestinians have died.

Abu Obeida also claimed that Israel lost "at least 80 soldiers" in the fighting. The Jewish state listed 10 soldiers killed.

The spokesman repeated the ``victory" cry declared by <u>Hamas</u> leaders on Sunday as the guns fell silent and underlined that **Hamas**' own ceasefire would only last a week unless Israel fully withdrew troops from Gaza.

"We have given the Zionist enemy one week to pull out of the Gaza Strip, failing which we will pursue the resistance," he said.

The Islamist movement's capacity to fire rockets into Israel had not been reduced, he added. One of Israel's main aims during the offensive was to stop rocket attacks.

"Our arsenal of rockets has not been affected and we continued to fire them during the war without interruption," the spokesman said.

"We are still able to launch them and, thanks be to God, our rockets will strike other targets" in Israel.

Abu Obeida listed the projectiles <u>Hamas</u> fired at Israel during the war as 345 Qassam rockets, 213 Grad rockets and 422 mortar shells.

Israel's efforts, backed by the United States and European leaders, to prevent <u>Hamas</u> from re-arming would also fail, Abu Obeida said.

#### Hamas defiant Israeli campaign killed `only' 48

"Let them do what they want. Bringing in weapons for the resistance and making them is our mission, and we know full well how to acquire weapons."

Israel had failed to achieve ``any of the objectives it had set for the war . . . and only killed hundreds of children, **women** and old people."

"The main aim of the war was to destroy *Hamas* and this resulted in crushing failure," he said.

"What we lost during this war in terms of military capability is small and we managed to compensate for most of it even before the war ended."

Load-Date: January 20, 2009



# Hamas failure to fight may be a trap

The Australian

January 15, 2009 Thursday

1 - All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 7

Length: 590 words

**Byline: ABRAHAM RABINOVICH** 

### **Body**

#### **ANALYSIS**

IF <u>Hamas</u> has a plan to lure Israeli troops into the dense warrens of Gaza's streets by demonstrating passivity, it might explain the performance of the group's military wing in the fighting.

In an article headlined ``Where is *Hamas*?", the military commentator of the newspaper Yediot Achronot, Ofer Shelach, says that in the first 10 days of Israel's ground offensive, which has brought it to the edges of Gaza City and several refugee camps, the army has not met resistance from any force as large as a squad -- that is, about 10 men.

Army spokesmen report dozens of clashes every day and speak of fierce fighting but the absence of detailed accounts of such battles suggests they may involve only individuals or small groups emerging from tunnels or houses.

"It's not clear <u>Hamas</u> isn't offering opposition because it can't," says Shelach, a paratroop officer, "or whether it's waiting for the IDF (Israel Defence Force) to reach a place where <u>Hamas</u> prefers to do battle."

Many officers believe the former is the case. They cannot discern any clear command structure in the forces opposing them or a well-organised resistance.

Before the war, <u>Hamas</u>'s military wing was reported to consist of 15,000 to 20,000 men organised in several brigades under a divisional command.

This was greater than the number of Israeli troops that entered the Gaza Strip less than two weeks ago -- four infantry brigades backed by heavy tanks.

Hundreds of <u>Hamas</u> fighters were believed to have trained in Iran or with Hezbollah in Lebanon. The force was said to be armed with Russian-made anti-tank missiles and other weapons, including anti-aircraft weapons.

<u>Hamas</u> was said to have sophisticated roadside bombs like those used in Iraq, prepared under Iranian guidance. In previous Israeli incursions, <u>Hamas</u> mines destroyed Israeli tanks.

On Monday, an Israeli tank force entering Gaza at its 9.6km-wide waist cut across the strip and reached the sea in a few hours without reports of a single missile being fired at it.

#### Hamas failure to fight may be a trap

And the only anti-aircraft fire enountered by Israeli warplanes and helicopters over the strip have been from machineguns.

Israeli spokesmen claim that between 300 and 450 <u>Hamas</u> fighters have been killed since Israeli troops invaded Gaza, but in view of the absence of major battles it is unclear how that happened unless those killed in the Israeli airstrikes are included.

The army did not permit Israeli journalists to accompany the troops in the first days of fightingand even now it allows only poolreporters confined to specific units. No clear picture hasemerged in Israel of what has taken place on the ground.

Ten Israeli soldiers have died in Gaza, a small number for an offensive of this size, and half of these were killed by Israeli troops.

One soldier looking for booby traps was killed by a suicide bomber who grabbed him before detonating himself. Other suicide bombers, including *women*, are said to have been killed before causing Israeli casualties.

<u>Hamas</u> fighters are reported to have emerged from tunnels in Israeli army uniforms and attacked from close quarters several times without causing fatalities, before being killed.

It is possible the ``shock and awe" of Israel's week-long preliminary air assault and the artillery barrage that accompanied the entry of ground troops sapped *Hamas*'s will to fight.

The targeting of <u>Hamas</u> commanders in Israeli airstrikes may also be a factor. However, it cannot be ruled out that a coherent defence will emerge if Israeli troops attempt to penetrate deep into Gaza's built-up areas.

Load-Date: January 14, 2009



#### Gaza's women seek Hamas matchmakers

AlArabiya.net

June 15, 2009 Monday

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Length: 829 words

#### **Body**

Marleen Abu Sal, 27, is one of Gaza's countless unmarried <u>women</u> searching for a husband, a rare commodity in the war torn enclave. With no luck in finding someone through traditional family routes, she turned to the Islamist group <u>Hamas</u> for help.

"Like everybody else I want to get married but the traditional family matchmaking connections were leading me nowhere so I opted for <u>Hamas</u>," Abu Sal, one of 1,000 applicants with the <u>Hamas</u> run Tayseer Association for Marriage and Development, told Al Arabiya.

"It is hard finding a husband here," Marleen said, "they are either married with kids or cannot afford to keep a wife."

<u>Hamas</u> may be Gaza's Islamic armed resistance and governing party, but it is also the Strip's top matchmaker and the last hope for many unmarried <u>women</u>, many of whom struggle to find a husband in a war torn society where husbands have become a rare commodity. The association is a <u>Hamas</u>-run humanitarian organization, one of several social and welfare services provided by <u>Hamas</u> loyalists. <u>Hamas</u> branched out from resistance into matters of the heart in 2007 as Israel began imposing an all-out blockade on the Strip after **Hamas** took power.

Prices flared as basic commodities like food, water and medicine were seldom available. Basic furnishings like dressers and refrigerators became unaffordable for young couples.

After Israel's three week war on Gaza in that ended in January, husbands became a rare commodity as well.

#### Hamas's mission in Gaza

"We started out by providing welfare services to young couples who could not make ends meet to get married," Dr. Wael Zarid, director of Tayseer Association for Marriage and Development, told Al Arabiya, adding that marriage costs were the main obstacle to Gaza's youth.

"But after Israel's war on Gaza, our mission is now to ensure the perpetuation of our people and allow young people to get married, have families and rebuild their battered society," Zarid said.

The latest war decimated traditional societal structures. Of the 1,400 killed, 900 were men who I turn left behind 700 wives, or "widows of martyrs" as they are referred to. And more than half of the 5,000 injured were male amputees or men with other handicaps.

#### Gaza's women seek Hamas matchmakers

Much of the remaining male population has been forced to find work and stability outside the Gaza Strip, compounding an already-imbalanced population in which there are three <u>women</u> to every man, Waleed al-Maydanah, one of Tayseer's social workers, explained to Al Arabiya.

"You have an increasing number of <u>women</u> in Gaza searching for husbands to no avail because of economic hardship," said Maydanah. "We do our best to arrange the right matches and bypass traditional taboos like marriage to older **women** or divorcees."

Gazan society is a religiously conservative Muslim society that is also among the poorest in the world.

"In such a society a woman's marriageable age is very short and hitting 30 while still single means you have missed the 'marriage train', " psychologist Reem Abu Fayed told Al Arabiya.

A new ethos

Social workers and psychologists described the typical ideal for men in the society as a fair-skin, tall woman not older than 26 with "colored eyes," a term for either green or blue eyes. <u>Women</u> tend to value tall, able-bodied, unmarried and economically independent men, the standard ideal across the Arab world.

Years of war and blockades, however, have given rise to a new set of values based on Islamic ideals of martyrdom and the life of the Prophet Mohammed.

"We are seeing a wave of maturity in Gaza's youth many of whom take wives of shuhadaa (martyrs) and male amputees for husbands," Maydanah said. "We tell them it is the quality of a Muslim to be merciful, mature while seeking spouses."

She said she was optimistic that Gaza's youth were becoming more realistic in their choices given the limited circumstances.

Tayseer has managed to arranged 120 marriages, the most recent of which took place two weeks ago. Afaf Hamdan, 24, one of Gaza's widows of martyrs, married Mohammed Ekeel, 28 and father of four children from two previous marriages after being introduced through Tayseer's matchmakers.

"One of Tayseer's matchmakers contacted me three weeks ago and said they found a potential husband for me," Hamdan told Al Arabiya. "He has children from previous marriage and I have none because my first husband died in the war," Hamdan said.

For Ekeel, marrying a widow of a martyr was "killing two birds with one stone."

"I am honored to marry a wife of a shaheed (martyr) because this is something the Prophet did after several battles left many of the Muslim <u>women</u> widowed," Ekeel told Al Arabiya. "Afaf is the perfect match for me and I am blessed to have a mother to my children and a wife to care for."

<u>Hamas</u>'s Tayseer provides \$2800 in aid to the newlyweds and organizes group wedding celebrations annually. Its humanitarian program offers welfare programs to the poor that cover medical care to food coupons and religious programs for kids.

Load-Date: June 16, 2009



# Hamas holds the key to lasting peace

New Straits Times (Malaysia) January 29, 2009 Thursday

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Section: Pg. 19; LOCAL

Length: 330 words

Byline: S. Ragunathan

# **Body**

MALAYSIANS have been, by and large, unanimous in denouncing the attacks on Gaza by Israeli forces which resulted in the deaths of more than 1,000 Palestinians. including **women** and children.

Our hearts go out to the suffering Palestinians. It's very encouraging to note that Malaysians are responding overwhelmingly to donate to the NSTP Fund for Gaza.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the sincere and forthright opinions by some Malaysians that <u>Hamas</u> should not have stirred up the hornet's nest and invited trouble by launching frequent rocket attacks on Israeli towns.

<u>Hamas</u> knows full well that persistent provocation against Israel will be answered by Israeli's powerful air force and army. It knows that it can never defeat or win a war against Israel no matter how hard it tries.

At best, *Hamas* can cause minimal damage to Israeli targets with their rockets, as was the case recently.

Considering these factors, <u>Hamas</u> should have instead sought other alternatives to strengthen its position in Gaza and other regions under its control.

The Palestinians should now seek the help of the United Nations and their Arab neighbours, and other friendly Muslim countries like Malaysia, to rebuild the war- torn country economically, politically and socially so as to bring about lasting peace, progress and prosperity to Palestine and its people.

If the <u>Hamas</u> government genuinely loves its people and wants to prevent them from continuing to become victims of Israeli attacks, it must stop launching rockets into Israeli territory or carry out other provocative measures that might precipitate another round of conflict with Israel.

Meanwhile, let us hope and pray that United States President Barack Obama will do everything within his power to ensure the truce now established between the two parties is safeguarded and prolonged indefinitely.

The US should also play its role effectively and impartially so that peace will prevail between Israel and Palestine.

#### S. RAGUNATHAN

Petaling Jaya

Load-Date: January 28, 2009



# Organizers unrepentant as Hamas leaderfails to address British Parliament meeting

The Jerusalem Post April 24, 2009 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 10

Length: 541 words

Byline: JONNY PAUL, Jerusalem Post correspondent

## **Body**

LONDON - Technical problems prevented <u>Hamas</u> leader Khaled Mashaal from addressing a group of MPs and peers in the British Parliament on Wednesday night.

Only around 30 MPs and peers attended the meeting, which was set up to support the position that there can be no peace in the Middle East without talking to the Islamist movement.

Mashaal was unable to address the meeting when the video link failed.

Independent MP Clare Short, who organized the meeting, said she would invite the <u>Hamas</u> leader to address a future meeting again via video link.

The decision to allow a representative of <u>Hamas</u>, considered a terrorist organization in the UK, to speak in Parliament was condemned by Israel's ambassador to Britain and by the Foreign Office and an array of politicians.

The Conservative Foreign Affairs team wrote a letter to the speaker of the House of Commons, Michael Martin, expressing its concerns.

"<u>Hamas</u> remains a proscribed terrorist organization under UK law," Shadow Foreign Minister David Lidington said. "It would be inconceivable that Khaled Mashaal would be permitted to travel to the UK in person to address MPs. I have written a letter to the speaker, urging him to consider whether parliamentary facilities should be used in such a meeting."

MP James Arbuthnot, parliamentary chairman of the Conservative Friends of Israel, said it was "unacceptable that the head of *Hamas*'s political bureau be allowed to communicate with MPs and peers in Parliament via a video link-up."

He, too, noted that Mashaal would not have been allowed to enter the country for a face-to-face meeting, adding, "This is clear maneuvering around the system and makes a mockery of our parliamentary institutions, as well as painting parliament as soft on terrorism and as supporters of terrorism."

Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor echoed these sentiments, saying it was "regrettably ironic that a man who could never receive an entry visa to Britain because he is considered a terrorist would have the privilege to address MPs in parliament, thanks to new technologies."

Organizers unrepentant as Hamas leaderfails to address British Parliament meeting

During the meeting, <u>Hamas</u> was portrayed as a resistance movement, and Short told participants that what people read about **Hamas** was "propaganda."

"<u>Hamas</u> told us that you cannot believe what you read about <u>Hamas</u> and that their charter is 20 years old. They told us that when an independent Palestinian state is set up, it will have its own constitution, and the charter will be irrelevant," she said.

In response to a question from the audience regarding the status of <u>women</u> in <u>Hamas</u>-controlled territory, Short said that **Hamas** had **women** MPs and that not all **women** in Gaza were veiled.

Chairing the meeting, Lord John Alderdice, a former Northern Ireland politician and Liberal Democrat Party peer, compared the situation with Northern Ireland.

"We made peace in Ireland by talking to the IRA, so why not talk to *Hamas*?" he said.

Also speaking at the meeting was Labor MP Lyn Jones, who met Mashaal and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command representatives Ahmed Jabril and Talal Naji in Syria last month.

"Anyone who genuinely wants to see peace in the Middle East ought to listen to what he has to say and engage with him. He is a powerful figure," Jones said.

# **Graphic**

Photo: Khaled Mashaal (Credit: AP)

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



#### Hamas denies giving Kerry a letter to Obama

#### AlArabiya.net

February 19, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 588 words

#### **Body**

<u>Hamas</u> denied on Friday having passed on to visiting United States Senator John Kerry a letter for President Barack Obama, whose nation considers the Islamist group to be a terror organization.

"Hamas denies having given a letter to John Kerry," spokesman Fawzi Barhum told AFP in the Gaza Strip.

"However, we are willing to forge ties with anyone who is ready to back the rights of the Palestinian people," Barhum added.

A United Nations spokesman earlier said that Kerry was given a letter for Obama believed to be from <u>Hamas</u> during a visit by the senator to the **Hamas**-ruled and war-ravaged Gaza Strip on Thursday, as part of a regional tour.

"A letter addressed to Obama was left at the gate of our offices in Gaza; it is believed to be from <u>Hamas</u>," said Christopher Gunness of UNRWA, the agency for Palestinian refugees. Middle East tour

Asked about the contents of the letter, Gunness said: "We are very polite at UNRWA, we don't open other people's mail."

He said the letter was given to the influential senator when he met relief officials at the U.N. compound during his tour of the devastated enclave, which no U.S. official had visited in years.

Kerry did not meet any <u>Hamas</u> representative during his Gaza visit but stressed that his presence in the coastal strip did not indicate a shift of U.S. policy towards the Islamist group which has ruled Gaza since June 2007.

The United States, the European Union and Israel all list *Hamas* as a terrorist organization.

Kerry, a 2004 Democratic presidential candidate who now heads the Senate foreign relations committee, is on a regional Middle East tour that has already taken him to Jordan and Egypt. He plans to visit Syria on Saturday.

On Friday the influential U.S. senator was set to hold talks with Israeli President Shimon Peres before meeting Palestinian officials.

The president's office said Peres and Kerry would discuss "the regional reality in the wake of the war in Gaza" among other issues.

Gaza devastation

#### Hamas denies giving Kerry a letter to Obama

Kerry saw for himself on Thursday the devastation wrought by Israel's 22-day offensive in Gaza, which targeted <u>Hamas</u> and killed more than 1,300 Palestinians. Thirteen Israelis also died. He defended Israel for responding to the rocket attacks by <u>Hamas</u> and other fighting 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 a Palestinian lawyer amid the rubble of the American International School destroyed in the war that ended on Jan. 18.

Democratic congressmen Brian Baird from Washington state and Keith Ellison from Minnesota expressed dismay at the plight of the overpopulated coastal strip, which they visited at the same time as Kerry.

"The amount of physical destruction and the depth of human suffering here is staggering," Baird said in a statement issued jointly with Ellison.

The first Muslim elected to Congress, Ellison slammed restrictions on the delivery of desperately needed goods into Gaza, which has been under a crippling Israeli blockade imposed after the 2007 *Hamas* takeover.

"People, innocent children, <u>women</u> and non-combatants, 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. On Friday, Baird and Ellison planned to tour Sderot, an Israeli city frequently targeted by Palestinian rockets, which Kerry visited with Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni just before he went to neighboring Gaza.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009



# The younger face of Hamas; Educated, militant and unrepentant

Ottawa Citizen

January 27, 2009 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A7

Length: 499 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service

Dateline: JABALIYA, Gaza Strip

#### **Body**

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 <u>Hamas</u>, 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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 <u>women</u> and children." But rockets fired for years by <u>Hamas</u> and its allies had also killed <u>women</u> and children in Israel who had had nothing to do with the conflict.

"For sure I don't feel sorry when their <u>women</u> 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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.

The younger face of Hamas; Educated, militant and unrepentant

After claiming that "support for <u>Hamas</u> 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."

#### **Graphic**

Colour Photo: Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service; 'We will meet in paradise' proclaims a poster at a beach front mosque in Gaza City which remembers Muhammad Hamis Bekker of <u>Hamas</u>' notorious military wing, Ezzedeen al-Qassam Brigades. Mr. Bekker, very much embodying the younger face of <u>Hamas</u>, died during the first day of the war against Israel on Dec. 27.;

Load-Date: January 27, 2009



# Hamas vows to keep fighting, but some say it will honor 'lull'

The Jerusalem Post January 18, 2009 Sunday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 269 words

Byline: KHALED ABU TOAMEH

# **Body**

<u>Hamas</u> said on Saturday it will continue to fight despite Israel's decision to unilaterally declare a cease- fire in Gaza.

Despite the defiant statements issued by a number of <u>Hamas</u> representatives, sources close to the movement said it would honor the cease-fire.

"Hamas needs the lull," the sources said. "They have been hit hard and they have no choice but to comply."

<u>Hamas</u> representatives said they would resist any attempt by Israel or other parties to confiscate its weapons. They also warned against allowing forces loyal to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to return to the Strip.

"We will continue the resistance operations for as long as there is one Zionist soldier in the Gaza Strip," <u>Hamas</u> spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said. "We will continue regardless of the price."

Fawzi said <u>Hamas</u>'s conditions for accepting a cease- fire included a halt to the IDF operation, the reopening of the border crossings into the Gaza Strip and the lifting of the blockade.

The <u>Hamas</u> spokesman said that the decision to declare a unilateral cease-fire showed that the war was also a unilateral move on the part of Israel against the Palestinians.

"This war had nothing to do with the rockets or the presence of <u>Hamas</u> in the Gaza Strip," he said. "This war against children, <u>women</u> and the elderly was part of the upcoming Israeli election campaign."

<u>Hamas</u> also voiced opposition to the US-Israeli agreement to stop the smuggling of weapons under the border between Gaza and Egypt.

"This agreement is aimed at tightening the siege around the Gaza Strip and establishing a new base for spying on the Palestinians and Egypt."

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



# The younger face of Hamas: educated and unrepentant

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

January 27, 2009 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: CANADA & WORLD; Pg. B5

Length: 687 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service

Dateline: JABALIYA, Gaza Strip

## **Body**

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"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 gambolled about.

It was to crush <u>Hamas</u> 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 <u>Hamas</u> has remained unbowed and firmly in control of Gaza.

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"For sure I don't feel sorry when their <u>women</u> 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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.

#### The younger face of Hamas: educated and unrepentant

Israeli soldiers returning from the battlefield expressed surprise at how little combat they faced from *Hamas*. Abu Mousab quietly but firmly denied this.

"The Israeli side fought with all their power and there were some hard exchanges of fire and some ambushes," he said tersely. "I was able to move back and forth, but it was dangerous. We were working, never more than two of us together, on 24-hour shifts. When things were bad we stayed on duty for 48 hours at a time."

After claiming that "support for <u>Hamas</u> has never been higher," he was told that many Gazans had told foreign journalists that they wanted <u>Hamas</u> 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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 material, 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."

"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."

# **Graphic**

Colour Photo: Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service; Martyr poster at a mosque in Gaza City. <u>Hamas</u> terrorist 'Abu Mousab' blames Israel for 'killing so many innocent <u>women</u> and children.';

Load-Date: January 27, 2009



#### The younger face of Hamas; ... educated, militant, unrepentant

The Gazette (Montreal)

January 27, 2009 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A11

Length: 690 words

Byline: MATTHEW FISHER, Canwest News Service

Dateline: JABALIYA, Gaza Strip

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It had been six years since Abu Mousab joined the Qassam Brigades because "God told me to." He is one of eight children whose 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 Mohammed 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



# 'Hamas betrayed Palestine'; Palestinian ambassador to SA says the movement gave Israel an excuse

Daily News (South Africa)
January 16, 2009 Friday
e1 Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 586 words

Byline: Deon de Lange and Sapa

#### **Body**

The Palestinian ambassador to South Africa, Ali Halimeh, has accused <u>Hamas</u> of betraying the Palestinian cause by spreading disunity among Palestinians and giving Israel an "excuse" to go to war against the people of the Gaza Strip.

The military campaign, which Israel claims is aimed at rooting out <u>Hamas</u> fighters responsible for firing thousands of rockets into Israel over the past months, has thus far killed more than 1 000 people, including dozens of <u>women</u> and children.

And as Israeli missiles rained down on a United Nations relief agency compound in Gaza yesterday - prompting "strong protest and outrage" from UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon - Halimeh told MPs on the National Assembly's foreign affairs committee that *Hamas* was mostly to blame for the present crisis.

Referring to the six-month truce between Israel and <u>Hamas</u> which collapsed in December last year, Halimeh said it was <u>Hamas</u> leader Khaled Meshaal's "refusal" to enter into Egyptian-sponsored talks for a renewal of the truce, that had allowed the Israeli assault to take place.

"The six-month truce was broken by both sides, not only <u>Hamas</u> ... But, unfortunately, <u>Hamas</u> made a strategic mistake here. And the Palestinian people and leadership are paying the price ... We cannot today put the blame on others," he said.

ANC MPs, who have a long association with the Palestinian cause, appeared somewhat taken aback by Halimeh's explanation, with committee chairman Job Sithole saying he was not convinced that <u>Hamas</u>, "who won a democratic election to govern the territory", should shoulder the blame.

Other MPs questioned Halimeh's Palestinian credentials, suggesting he was speaking not for the Palestinian Authority as a whole, but for the Fatah faction, which lost its parliamentary majority to <u>Hamas</u> in the elections three years ago.

But Halimeh reminded the MPs that he was the Palestinian, and not the Fatah ambassador to South Africa - and that he spoke for all Palestinians.

'Hamas betrayed Palestine ' Palestinian ambassador to SA says the movement gave Israel an excuse

"Israel is an innocent country that has no ambitions of its own, but we should be reasonable and intelligent enough not to allow Israel to out-manoeuvre us," he said.

Halimeh also repeated the common Israeli and American refrain that the invisible hand of Iran lay behind the rocket attacks on Israel.

"We know exactly the role of our Iranian friends in the region ... Khaled Meshaal can sometimes take instructions from other countries. Some countries would like more influence in the region. They want to interfere," said the ambassador.

"What is Khaled Meshaal doing today? Is he engaging with Egypt to put an end to this madness, this war? We urge <u>Hamas</u> to respond to (the peace talks) just to save those human lives out there," he pleaded.

Halimeh said Middle East peace initiatives were hindered by the fact that "the Arab people are not united" and he accused *Hamas* of undermining the Palestinian people's quest for statehood.

"Why did we take up the gun in the 1960s? Were we not fighting for a political solution? Why didn't <u>Hamas</u> join the Palestinian Authority in negotiations with Israel? Surely we are not just fighting for the sake of fighting? But <u>Hamas</u> wants to fight to the last woman and child."

Halimeh also said the late Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, would "never" have allowed *Hamas* to come to power.

"Arafat would not have had an election if he knew it (<u>Hamas</u>) would come to power. (Palestinian Authority president) Mahmoud Abbas allowed it and <u>Hamas</u> stabbed him in the back.

Israel's ambassador to South Africa was due to brief the committee today.

Load-Date: January 16, 2009



#### US Muslim charity leaders jailed for aiding Hamas

AlArabiya.net

May 26, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 823 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*.

The top volunteer fundraiser and brother of <u>Hamas</u> political leader Khaled Meshaal, Mufid Abdulqader, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for three countes of conspiracy.

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 <u>Hamas</u>," 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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.

Aquitted then convicted

"I was acquitted of all charges" in the first trial, said Abdulqader, 49, who was convicted of consiracy to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization; conspiracy to provide funds, goods and services to a specially designated terrorist; and conspiracy to commit money laundering.

#### US Muslim charity leaders jailed for aiding Hamas

"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 <u>women</u> and children."

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

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 <u>Hamas</u> movement resisting the Israeli occupation.

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

Question of intent

<u>Hamas</u> -- 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



# Gaza under Hamas: order and absurdity; Border closure makes life difficult for ordinary citizens

Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia)

June 22, 2009, Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. P3A

Length: 677 words

Byline: STEVEN GUTKIN and KARIN LAUB, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## **Body**

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - Two years after <u>Hamas</u> seized power, the Gaza Strip is a jumble of absurdities: an economy sustained by smuggling through tunnels, a civil service that gets paid on condition it doesn't work, and a population no longer fearful of gangs but feeling muzzled under the thumb of <u>Hamas</u>.

Under a border closure enforced by Egypt and Israel, the U.N. says, shampoo can come in but conditioner can't. Nor can toys, candy or footballs.

The blockade was imposed on Gaza to drive the Islamic militants from power by cutting off all but basic humanitarian needs. Instead it has entrenched their power while forcing hundreds of thousands deeper into poverty and making Gaza more of an obstacle to any peace deal.

Voices calling for new thinking are growing louder, with the Obama administration arguing that squeezing ordinary Gazans is a recipe for instability. But there's no clear path forward, since opening the borders would require engaging the militants whom much of the world has shunned.

Meanwhile, the closure is making it impossible to rebuild Gaza after Israel's devastating winter offensive. It's also deepening the rift between the two territories that are supposed to comprise a future Palestinian state, with <u>Hamas</u> running Gaza while Western-backed President Mahmoud Abbas rules the West Bank.

And with each passing day, more jobs, opportunities and hope are lost.

"The pace of the downward spiral has accelerated so much, and it's going to places where it will not be recoverable," said John Ging, the head of the U.N. agency whose food handouts sustain over two-thirds of Gaza's 1.4 million people.

The Gaza Strip is surrounded by fences and a heavily patrolled coast and Gazans aren't free to leave.

For all the negative effects of the blockade, there seem to be just enough escape valves to allow <u>Hamas</u> to sustain itself.

While Iran spends millions of dollars to keep <u>Hamas</u> afloat, the Abbas government has its influence: It pays tens of thousands of Gaza civil servants' salaries, provided the bureaucrats don't work for the <u>Hamas</u> government.

Gaza under Hamas: order and absurdity Border closure makes life difficult for ordinary citizens

<u>Hamas</u> has made little attempt to impose Islamic restrictions. Even before the takeover, Gaza was deeply conservative and most Gazan **women** wore headscarves in a show of religious observance.

The main reason the boycott has failed to weaken <u>Hamas</u> is that ordinary Gazans blame Israel, not the militants, for their predicament - though it's unclear how <u>Hamas</u> would fare if elections were held today. The group has been able to keep smuggling weapons and cash through the tunnels to finance its operations, and now has 23,000 civil servants on its payroll.

<u>Hamas</u> has restored a sense of security, ending months of clan feuds and militia rule. Beaches are full, cops keep traffic flowing smoothly and **Hamas** police have replaced the often lawless gunmen who controlled the streets.

But <u>Hamas</u>' brand of order comes at a price. Human rights activist Khalil Abu Shammala said seven people have been killed and hundreds more tortured in <u>Hamas</u> custody since the war with Israel ended in January.

Some Gazans manage to beat the sanctions. Carpenter Rabbah Yassin said he used cement smuggled through the tunnels to repair his war-damaged family home even though it cost him seven times the pre-blockade price.

But most of the estimated 250,000 people whose homes were damaged or destroyed have been unable to rebuild.

Five months after Israel launched its offensive to halt <u>Hamas</u> rocket fire, the Abed Rabbo neighborhood close to Israel's border looks just as it did on the day fighting stopped: mountains of rubble.

Most Gazans are preoccupied these days with getting basic needs.

Israel only lets in medicines, food staples and other basic goods, banning anything deemed luxurious.

Gaza importer Ala Hamada, 30, said he ordered 24 containers with tea, tomato paste and powdered drinks and all have sat in Israel's Ashdod port for months. He pays \$500 per container for storage each month, and many of the goods are close to their expiration date.

Having waged war on *Hamas*, he said, "now they make war on the businessman."

Load-Date: June 23, 2009



#### Hamas hopes for prisoner exchange

The Irish Times

January 27, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: WORLD; War in Gaza; Pg. 11

Length: 374 words

Byline: LARA MARLOWE in Gaza City

## **Body**

CLOSE TO 100 sad, ageing <u>women</u> crowded into the front courtyard of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) here yesterday, clutching photographs of their sons and husbands in Israeli prisons.

The Israel-<u>Hamas</u> ceasefire has raised hopes of a prisoner exchange. In the war, 100 Palestinians were killed for every Israeli. The ratio however works to the Palestinians advantage in hostage swaps. <u>Hamas</u> hopes to obtain the freedom of up to 400 prisoners in exchange for the Franco-Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit it holds.

We will release all the <u>women</u> in Israeli jails. This is our main demand, shouts a young man. Abu Mujahed, spokesman for <u>Hamas</u> s Popular Resistance, tells me there are 150 <u>women</u> and 350 boys under the age of 18 among 11,000 Palestinians held in Israel.

It is a violation of the fourth Geneva Convention for Israel to move prisoners from occupied territory to Israel, the ICRC says.

Shalit will not be the only soldier, Abu Mujahed harangues the <u>female</u> crowd. We will kidnap more soldiers to release our prisoners. We captured some during the aggression three-week war, but the Israelis killed them in bombardments, he continues.

Nawal Salem (50) frets that her son Rami, who is serving a 16-year sentence for laying land mines and shooting at Israeli soldiers, worried terribly about his family in Gaza during the war. When the prisoners write home, they beg the <u>women</u> to speak to them on thrice-weekly broadcasts on Palestinian radio stations entitled: We will not forget our prisoners.

Majda Haddad (49) attends every meeting of the Association to Free Prisoners, even on feast days, even during the bombing, because it gives me strength. Her son Ra ed (29) has served half his 14-year sentence.

He s with the [Fatah] al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. They sent him to southern Lebanon to train for a month with Hizbullah. The Israelis grabbed him at the Rafah crossing, on his way home.

Two foreign guests are treated like celebrities.

Sami el-Haj, the Sudanese journalist for al-Jazeera television whom US forces arrested in Afghanistan in 2001, has come from Guantánamo (where he was freed last May) to Gaza out of solidarity, and Magdi Hussein, an Egyptian Islamist and scholar who is close to the Muslim Brotherhood.

Load-Date: January 27, 2009



## Hamas may sign truce if Israel agrees to concessions

#### The Irish Times

February 14, 2009 Saturday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 11

Length: 375 words

**Byline: MICHAEL JANSEN** 

## **Body**

<u>HAMAS</u> IS prepared to sign deals next week for an 18-month truce with Israel, the lifting of Israel s blockade on Gaza and the exchange of Palestinian prisoners for Israeli soldier Cpl Gilad Shalit, captured by Palestinian fighters in 2006.

The London-based pan-Arab daily al-Hayat reported yesterday that <u>Hamas</u> would formally announce the truce within the next three days and conclude by Wednesday a deal over Cpl Shalit.

If the report is correct, he will be released in exchange for 1,000 Palestinians jailed by Israel, including *Hamas* legislators, *women* and children.

While <u>Hamas</u> had previously refused to tie the truce to the freeing of the soldier, it appears that Israel s conditions for the lifting of restrictions on the kind of goods allowed into Gaza may have forced it to concede. This linkage is, however, denied by the deputy head of its Damascus-based politburo, Moussa Abu Marzouk.

But Egyptian intelligence chief and deal-broker Omar Suleiman told the Cairo daily Al-Ahram that Israel was refusing to allow iron, aluminium and cement into Gaza until a deal over Cpl Shalit was achieved. Delay over the import of the essential materials would hold up reconstruction of infrastructure and housing which was devastated during Israel s 23-day offensive that ended on January 18th.

He said that several issues remain to be resolved before the truce is finalised, including continuing rocket fire from Gaza into Israel, the width of a buffer zone, the halt of weapons smuggling into Gaza and guarantees.

Amos Gilad, Israel s negotiator, is expected to return to Cairo as early as tonight. Both sides seek to reach agreement on these issues before the current caretaker government leaves office.

Once the truce is declared and the prisoner deal concluded, Israel would open its crossings into Gaza and Egypt would free up movement through the passenger terminal at Rafah which would be supervised by EU monitors and police deployed by the Palestinian Authority. A buffer zone from which fighters would be excluded would be established along the Gaza-Israel border.

On February 22nd, Cairo is set to commence reconciliation talks between *Hamas* and Fatah.

In spite of reports of progress, three rockets were fired into south- ern Israel, causing no injuries.

Load-Date: February 14, 2009



# PM: We need to free many Hamas terrorists in exchange for Schalit. Israel considering early release for Barghouti \* Hamas insists on freeing Park Hotel massacre mastermind

The Jerusalem Post February 16, 2009 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1 Length: 1227 words

Byline: HERB KEINON, KHALED ABU TOAMEH and ETGAR LEFKOVITS, Yaakov Katz contributed to this report.

#### **Body**

The security cabinet may discuss within a matter of days a proposal for a Gaza truce that includes the release of hundreds of security prisoners, including terrorists responsible for some of the worst attacks of the second intifada, in exchange for kidnapped soldier Gilad Schalit.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert met with Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and Defense Minister Ehud Barak following Sunday's cabinet meeting to discuss the situation in the South. The troika decided to bring a detailed proposal to the security cabinet for approval.

No date for the security cabinet meeting was given, and one source in the Prime Minister's Office said it might not even be this week.

Nevertheless, the security cabinet regularly meets on Wednesday, and there was speculation that the proposals could come up for a vote then.

Sources in the Prime Minister's Office said that in light of last Tuesday's elections, any deal would be made in consultation with Likud head Binyamin Netanyahu.

Olmert, meanwhile, said Sunday night that Israel would not reopen Gaza's border crossings until Schalit was freed, reiterating a change of policy that he articulated in a statement from his office on Saturday.

"We will not allow the opening of the crossings to Gaza, to the extent that it will bring back life to normal, certainly not before Gilad Schalit is home," Olmert said in an address to a delegation of American Jewish leaders visiting Jerusalem.

Although progress has recently been reported in Egyptian mediated talks, Olmert cautioned that a deal would not necessarily happen soon. He said that he would not bring any proposal to the cabinet that did not include Schalit's release, and he added that he would not allow unspecified materials into Gaza that would strengthen the Islamist regime's position.

In his remarks, Olmert conceded that Israel would need to free many *Hamas* terrorists in exchange for Schalit.

PM: We need to free many Hamas terrorists in exchange for Schalit. Israel considering early release for Barghouti \* Hamas insists on freeing Park Hotel massacre....

"There are those who might say it is a point of weakness, others will call it a point of great strength that the life of one is so important to us," Olmert said in an address to the annual Jerusalem gathering of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

<u>Hamas</u>, meanwhile, said it would not make any concessions regarding the prisoners it is demanding in exchange for Schalit.

<u>Hamas</u> representatives said that they presented the Egyptian authorities with a list of some 1,000 prisoners the movement was demanding in an exchange.

Abu Obaidah, spokesman for the armed wing of <u>Hamas</u>, Izzadin Kassam, said his group would not accept any prisoner swap that did not include the release of prominent figures such as Ahmed Sa'adat, secretary-general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who was convicted of involvement in the assassination of tourism minister Rehavam Ze'evi in 2001, and Marwan Barghouti, the top Fatah operative who is serving five life-terms for five murders.

Channel 10 reported Sunday night that Israel was actually considering the release of Barghouti ahead of any prisoner swap with <u>Hamas</u>, as a way of strengthening Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah faction.

Barghouti's lawyer, Hader Shkirat, told Channel 10, "There will not be a Schalit deal without the release of Marwan Barghouti."

Abu Obaidah also named two other prisoners that <u>Hamas</u> insists should be included in a prisoner swap: Abbas al-Sayed, the mastermind of the Pessah eve massacre at the Park Hotel in Netanya in March 2002, and Ibrahim Hamed, the former commander of Izzadin Kassam in the West Bank.

Abu Obaida insisted that the case of Schalit should be dealt with separately and without any connection to other issues such as the reopening of the border crossings into the Gaza Strip and a truce.

"We affirm that the issue of the prisoner exchange has an independent and separate track and should not be linked to other issues," the <u>Hamas</u> spokesman said. "We won't allow the enemy to extort us on this issue."

"The ball is now in the Israeli court," a <u>Hamas</u> legislator in the Gaza Strip told The Jerusalem Post. "We are waiting for the Egyptians to tell us about Israel's response."

The legislator, who participated in the Egyptian- sponsored talks in Cairo on a possible truce with Israel, said a cease-fire could be announced as soon as Israel accepted <u>Hamas</u>'s conditions, namely that the border crossings into the Gaza Strip be reopened and the blockade lifted.

He added that with regards to Schalit, "the issue is very simple - if Israel releases all the prisoners we are demanding, the soldier can go home."

Ismail Radwan, a senior <u>Hamas</u> official in the Gaza Strip, said he understood Olmert's "strong need" to leave office with "some kind of an achievement, such as the release of the Israeli soldier."

<u>Hamas</u> was not opposed to striking a deal on Schalit as soon as possible, Radwan said. "An agreement can be reached immediately once Israel accepts all the demands of the captors," he said. "I see no reason why a deal can't be reached soon."

A deal would likely be carried out in two phases. The first stage would include an expanded opening of the Gaza crossings and the release of Palestinian prisoners from a list of 350 names submitted by *Hamas*.

The names would have to be approved by a committee headed by Vice Prime Minister Haim Ramon.

PM: We need to free many Hamas terrorists in exchange for Schalit. Israel considering early release for Barghouti \* Hamas insists on freeing Park Hotel massacre....

In the second stage, according to reports, Schalit would be transferred to Egyptian custody and an additional 500 security prisoners would be released as a gesture to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

The third phase would see the full opening of the crossings, the release of another several hundred prisoners - mostly **women** and teenagers - and the transfer of Schalit to Israel.

"There is a new sense of optimism," a defense official said Sunday. "A deal may happen in the coming weeks or may roll over to a new government."

In a related development, Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) head Yuval Diskin told Sunday's cabinet meeting that <u>Hamas</u> was making great efforts to reconstruct its arms smuggling tunnels into the Gaza Strip, and Israel had identified a number of arms shipments that had gotten through since the unilateral cease-fires declared last month.

"The Egyptians are acting in a way which suggests that they are combating smuggling," Diskin said. "This is a positive trend, but their actions are relatively slow."

Earlier in the cabinet meeting, Public Security Minister Avi Dichter said that despite the achievements of the three-week IDF offensive, *Hamas* was still a dangerous force, and was still looking to rearm.

"When <u>Hamas</u> speaks about the reconstruction of Gaza, they are talking about reconstruction of their supply of rockets, which will be fired into Israel," he said.

"Following the successful IDF operation, the smuggling of weapons into Gaza, which includes rockets, is its Achilles' heel," Dichter continued. "The Egyptian action is too little and too slow. The government must define for the army an appropriate, harsh and determined policy in order to create deterrence against *Hamas*. We must not wait for a rocket to land in Yavne."

Speaking about the Palestinian cease-fire violations, the Shin Bet chief said that not all the rockets had necessarily been fired by *Hamas* terrorists.

"The rocket fire is being perpetrated by rebellious elements," Diskin said. "We see all sorts of factions that are trying to commit all sorts of terrorist attacks against Israel."

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



#### Militant Hamas gets into the matchmaking business

Charleston Gazette (West Virginia)

June 7, 2009, Sunday

Copyright 2009 Charleston Newspapers

Section: NEWS; Pg. P7A

**Length:** 1047 words **Byline:** Diaa Hadid

## **Body**

#### The Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - At 29, Tahani is considered a spinster by the standards of deeply conservative Gaza. So in her search for a husband, she turned for help to the best in the marriage business: the Islamic militant group *Hamas*.

"I gaze at all the men on the street and think, 'Oh God, isn't there just one for me?" said the young woman with dark skin and honey-colored eyes, set off by a maroon headscarf.

Her application is among 287 from single <u>women</u> in the files of the Tayseer Association for Marriage and Development in Gaza. Photographs stapled to the files show Muslim <u>women</u> in headscarves, some wearing makeup, some smiling, others looking startled. They all want a husband, and the <u>Hamas</u> loyalists running the association are intent on finding a man for each.

Despite its fearsome reputation elsewhere, <u>Hamas</u> is known here for its cradle-to-grave welfare programs for the poor. It is a cornerstone of its political support in Gaza, where poverty is deepening as Israel and Egypt maintain an almost two-year blockade of the <u>Hamas</u>-run territory. Now, the group is branching out into matters of the heart.

"This is our vision of humanitarian work," said Wael Zard, director of the Tayseer association. "This makes people close to *Hamas* and makes *Hamas* close to the people."

While Tayseer's matchmaking service helps men as well as <u>women</u>, it is particularly important for <u>women</u>, since staying single is a cruel fate for them in Gaza. They often are treated as unpaid maids by their extended families and, says Gaza sociologist Naser Mahdi, increasing economic hardship has made the marriage market even harsher.

The dwindling number of middle-class men with steady incomes can have their pick of the prettiest <u>women</u>, leaving others to work hard to find a suitable husband. Meanwhile, poor families are reluctant to marry off working daughters, hoping to keep their salaries.

About 40 marriages have been arranged since Tayseer opened its matchmaking department in 2007. Most <u>women</u> apply in secret because it's taboo for <u>women</u> in Gaza to seek husbands outside the traditional route. Most girls are married in matches set up by their mothers. Dating is nearly nonexistent and love-based marriages are a novelty.

#### Militant Hamas gets into the matchmaking business

Tahani, who spoke on condition that only her first name be used because she is using the service without her family knowing, said she turned to Tayseer a year ago. Her mother died when Tahani was young, and none of her relatives were helping her find a groom.

The young woman said she became more determined to find a husband after the three-week war between Israel and <u>Hamas</u>, which ended in January. Israel's offensive reportedly killed hundreds of civilians, and Gaza's residents hunkered down in houses and shelters during the shelling, not knowing where bombs might fall next.

"My brothers held their wives when they were scared. I felt lonely," said Tahani, a university graduate in social work.

Most women are shy when they first come in the door, said Tayseer matchmaker Nisrin Khalil, 21.

"I tell the girls, be like Khadija!" said Khalil, referring to the Prophet Muhammad's first wife.

Muslim tradition says Khadija proposed to Muhammad - and was years his senior. It's a powerful message to <u>women</u>: Islam's first lady bucked conservative Arab tradition more than 1,400 years ago and they can defy Gaza tradition now.

The applicants, who pay a fee of \$10-\$70, are divided into categories according to their eligibility. **Women** under 25 are easiest to marry off; more challenging are **women** over 30 and divorcees.

In a nod to Gaza's grinding poverty triumphing over its conservative culture, there is a special file for **women** with jobs. Bringing home a salary in Gaza can trump any other category, matchmakers say.

In the <u>women</u>'s application, they describe their ideal man. Most ask for a devout Muslim with a job and his own apartment, a top find in crowded Gaza.

<u>Women</u> also must describe their appearance and answer a killer question: "Do you consider yourself pretty according to Gaza standards?"

The ideal of beauty in Gaza means tall and fair-skinned with blue or green eyes and light-colored hair - and that's what men usually ask for. Most Gaza **women** have dark hair and bronze skin.

"If we see a girl that appears to match [a man], but she's not physically what he wants, I'll call him and say, 'Well, she's pretty, but she's dark.' Or 'she's short, but she's white.' We encourage them to be a bit more realistic," Khalil said.

The one other matchmaking service in Gaza is little used. The Tayseer association was originally founded to fund and organize mass weddings, a service for poor or disabled Gazans who often can't afford the costs of a ceremony. Next month, a mass wedding is planned for more than a dozen blind Palestinians.

<u>Hamas</u> is considered a terrorist group in the West because of its attacks on Israeli civilians - including suicide bombings - but it also provides Gaza's poor with food coupons, medical care and other services.

Its social network helped make the group popular, gaining it victory over its Palestinian rival, Fatah, in 2006 Parliament elections. The following year, *Hamas* seized power in the Gaza Strip in armed clashes with Fatah.

About 40 men a month turn to Tayseer in search of a wife. When association employees think there's a match, they quietly organize a meeting, with employees acting as chaperones in compliance with Islamic law. If the couple like each other, Gaza's traditional courtship kicks in.

The man's relatives visit the woman's family, saying that a well-meaning stranger told them of a girl wanting to marry. The matchmakers are not mentioned, because their role is still taboo, said Khalil.

If the woman's family accepts, a wedding is planned. Often <u>women</u> bully their families into agreeing, Tayseer workers said.

#### Militant Hamas gets into the matchmaking business

Rania Hijazi, 29, applied to Tayseer in March 2008 and, two months later, married Ashraf Farahat, 36. She said she went to the service because she feared her family's matchmaking efforts were going nowhere.

"I felt embarrassed when I applied," said Hijazi, who has since become a mother, "but then I said, 'I won't find a man any other way,' and I tried to be strong."

Plenty of other women are waiting.

"I want to have a man, a husband," said Tahani. "I don't think that's a selfish request."

Load-Date: June 8, 2009



#### Hamas suspects beggars on Gaza streets are Israeli spies

The Jerusalem Post April 16, 2009 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 239 words

Byline: KHALED ABU TOAMEH

# **Body**

<u>Hamas</u> is convinced that many of the beggars who have popped up on the streets of the Gaza Strip are actually spies working for Israel.

This was the first time ever that the Palestinians accused Israel of using beggars as informants.

Palestinians who are convicted of "collaboration" with Israel are almost always sentenced to death. While most of the death sentences are not carried out, the accused are often killed by armed Palestinian groups or individuals.

Islam Shahwan, spokesman for the <u>Hamas</u>-controlled security forces, said that his men recently uncovered a "network of spies" which had deployed many beggars at main street intersections and traffic lights throughout the Gaza Strip.

He claimed that the ringleaders had exploited the economic crisis to recruit many poor children and <u>women</u> beggars as "collaborators" with Israel. He also accused the suspects of abusing the beggars sexually.

"Many people in the Gaza Strip, especially the youth, have turned begging into a profession," Shahwan noted. "The [*Hamas*-run] Interior Ministry has decided to combat the phenomenon and over the past few days we have arrested many beggars and those who operate them."

Social worker Nael Makadmeh warned that the phenomenon of begging had risen sharply over the past few months. He said that unlike in the past, where the majority of beggars were either disabled or elderly, the new street beggars came from a variety of ages and backgrounds.

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



#### Hamas militiamen used woman as human shield in shootout with PA police

The Jerusalem Post June 4, 2009 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 444 words

Byline: KHALED ABU TOAMEH

# **Body**

The two <u>Hamas</u> militiamen killed earlier this week by Palestinian Authority policemen in Kalkilya initially used a local woman as a human shield during the seven-hour gun battle before she herself threw a grenade at the policemen, PA security sources said on Wednesday.

The woman, Amal, is the wife of Abdel Nasser al-Basha, the owner of the house where the two <u>Hamas</u> men, Muhammad Samman and Muhammad Yassin, had been hiding.

The sources claimed that an investigation by the PA security forces into Sunday's bloody standoff showed that the three PA security officers who died were killed by a hand grenade that the woman lobbed at them as they tried to enter the house.

"The <u>Hamas</u> gunmen were hiding behind the woman, who surprised the police officers by throwing a hand grenade at them," the sources told The Jerusalem Post. "This is not the first time that <u>Hamas</u> has used <u>women</u> or children as human shields."

The three officers were killed in the initial stages of the raid that was carried out by PA security forces on the house, the inquiry revealed. Their bodies lay inside the house until the operation ended seven hours later.

Amal's husband was also killed during the shootout. She is reported to have been seriously wounded, with doctors forced to amputate her right arm.

Amal has been placed under arrest at the Kalkilya hospital where she is being treated, eyewitnesses said.

A PA security official said that the woman would be charged with killing the three police officers. "She will be put on trial," he said. "She could face the death sentence if convicted."

Meanwhile, sources in Tulkarm told the Post that security forces loyal to PA President Mahmoud Abbas arrested more than 30 *Hamas* supporters in the city over the past 48 hours.

The sources said that the arrests were carried out in the context of the PA security forces' efforts to track down Muhammad Kharyoush, the local commander of <u>Hamas</u>'s armed wing, Izzadin Kassam, who has long been wanted by Israel for his involvement in terrorism.

The PA security forces also summoned dozens of Islamic preachers and school teachers affiliated with <u>Hamas</u> in the northern West Bank and warned them against inciting against the PA, the sources added.

#### Hamas militiamen used woman as human shield in shootout with PA police

In a related development, Izzadin Kassam announced on Wednesday urged its members in the West Bank to open fire at any PA policeman who tries to arrest them.

Abu Obaidah, spokesman for Izzadin Kassam, warned Abbas's security forces against repeating the case of Kalkilya. "Our men will resist any attempt to arrest them by Abbas's treacherous forces because they are working on behalf of the Zionist enemy," he said. "We don't trust these forces, nor do our people."

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



# The assault may only have vindicated the notion of resistance; MIDEAST: Politically, Hamas May Have Won

IPS (Latin America)

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 1127 words

Byline: Analysis by Adam Morrow and Khaled Moussa al-Omrani

#### **Body**

'The steadfastness of the resistance in Gaza in the face of Israeli military power has resuscitated the idea of armed resistance,' Gamal Fahmi, political analyst and managing editor of opposition weekly Al-Arabi Al-Nassiri told IPS.

From Dec. 27 to Jan. 17, Israel pounded targets throughout the Gaza Strip from air, land and sea, in ostensible retaliation for rockets fired at Israel by Palestinian resistance factions, chief among them <u>Hamas</u>. The latter two weeks of the campaign brought a parallel ground offensive that encountered fierce resistance in and around a number of population centres.

The campaign only came to a close - albeit an uncertain one - following Israel's announcement of a unilateral ceasefire Jan. 17. The next day, Palestinian resistance factions also announced a temporary cessation of hostilities, but not before launching several rocket salvoes at targets inside Israel.

Over the course of the following week, Israel gradually withdrew its ground forces from the Gaza Strip. When the dust settled, more than 1,300 Gazans lay dead, mostly **women** and children. Thousands were injured.

Israeli military officials hastened to declare the operation a success. Some Egyptian commentators, however, say that despite the high civilian death toll and infrastructural damage the conflict represented a strategic victory for the Palestinian resistance.

'Victory in war isn't determined by casualty rates but by the achievement of war aims,' Abdelhalim Kandil, political analyst and editor-in-chief of independent weekly Sout Al-Umma wrote Monday (Jan. 26). 'And Israel failed to achieve its stated aims after more than three weeks of punishing Gaza.'

He said Israel's 'unilateral ceasefire' - for which Israel received nothing in return from the <u>Hamas</u>-led resistance - was unprecedented in the history of Israeli war-making. 'The resistance called its own ceasefire one day later, but not before demonstrating that its capacity for launching rockets at Israel remained intact,' Kandil wrote.

Gamal Mazloum, former Egyptian Army general, said Israel's stated war objectives changed more than once midcampaign.

'Over the course of the conflict, Israeli officials went from saying that the goal of the operation was 'removing' *Hamas*, to 'degrading' its rocket-launching capacity, to 'teaching *Hamas* a lesson',' Mazloum told IPS. 'But the unexpected steadfastness of the resistance forced them to conclude operations without achieving any of these. Now Israel says its chief aim is to 'cut off weapons smuggling' to Gaza.'

The assault may only have vindicated the notion of resistance MIDEAST: Politically, Hamas May Have Won

According to *Hamas* officials, Israel's real objective was clear from the outset.

'The reason for Israel's aggression is to change the <u>Hamas</u> government in the Gaza Strip,' <u>Hamas</u> leader Musa Abu Marzook was quoted as saying during the conflict Jan. 13. 'They have been thinking about this ever since **Hamas** won the elections.'

This was not the first attempt at forcible removal of the resistance group.

Shortly after <u>Hamas</u>'s surprise victory in the 2006 legislative elections, the U.S. covertly armed and trained elements of the Palestinian Fatah movement, <u>Hamas</u>'s secular rival, with the aim of wiping out the <u>Hamas</u> leadership in Gaza in one fell swoop. Based in the West Bank, Fatah currently heads the Palestinian Authority (PA) under the leadership of western-backed PA President Mahmoud Abbas.

The scheme, coordinated by U.S. Lt-Gen Keith Dayton and Fatah strongman Mohamed Dahlan, later became known as the Dayton Plan.

But after learning of the plot in mid-June 2007, <u>Hamas</u> pre-emptively routed its Fatah adversaries and seized control of Gaza. <u>Hamas</u> has maintained control of the Gaza Strip ever since. As a result, Gaza been subject to an internationally-sanctioned embargo that has brought it to humanitarian ruin.

<u>Hamas</u> officials say that Israel's latest assault was simply an attempt to finish the job that Fatah - with U.S. and Israeli support - failed to do in 2007.

'They tried to push Fatah to stand and fight *Hamas*, but we defeated them in the Gaza Strip,' Marzouk said in a reference to the failed Dayton plot. 'So Israel took action themselves.'

Several commentators agree that both campaigns had the same objective - namely, the obliteration of <u>Hamas</u>. Both the Dayton Plan and Israel's recent war aimed - and failed - to remove <u>Hamas</u> from power in Gaza,' said Mazloum.

Despite the Dayton Plan's significance in the chronology of the conflict, it is seldom referred to in current reporting by the western mainstream media.

'The Dayton affair is largely ignored - but then facts concerning Palestine are always subject to deceptions and disinformation in the western media,' Fahmi said. 'The western press also rarely mentions that <u>Hamas</u> won democratic elections in 2006, or the extent of corruption in the PA.'

Along with Israel's failure to achieve its stated war aims, commentators note that the war on Gaza - horrific images of which have been transmitted around the world - represented a public relations catastrophe for Israel.

'The war revealed Israeli criminality to the entire world,' said Fahmi. 'It also served to put the Palestinian cause back on the conscience of the international community.'

'Israel's image is now at an all-time low,' said Mazloum, pointing to the massive demonstrations worldwide in solidarity with Gaza. 'Israel is already suffering from the effects of this crisis, politically, economically and socially.'

Mazloum attributed Israel's uncharacteristic unilateral ceasefire declaration to mounting worldwide outrage over its assault on Gaza's largely defenceless civilian population.

'There was an unprecedented explosion of popular rage in the Arab world, which put most Arab governments under tremendous pressure and could have led to serious regional escalations,' said Mazloum. 'The blatant carnage also eventually led to pressure on Israel by the international community to stop the aggression.'

Both domestically and regionally, he said, <u>Hamas</u> was already reaping the fruits of what amounted to a political victory.

The assault may only have vindicated the notion of resistance MIDEAST: Politically, Hamas May Have Won

'Both in Gaza and the Fatah-controlled West Bank, the people have rallied around <u>Hamas</u> as defender of the Palestinian cause,' said Mazloum. 'And on the regional level, <u>Hamas</u> proved its staying power and showed it cannot be simply removed from the equation. Egypt, for one, will now have no choice but to deal with <u>Hamas</u> as a political reality.'

According to Fahmi, the most notable outcome has been a resurgence of the notion of armed resistance to Israel - after some 30 years of fruitless negotiations.

'Resistance doesn't mean irrational violence devoid of political considerations, as its detractors would suggest,' he said. 'On the contrary, it is - particularly in the face of brutal occupation - the only logical choice. © 2009 NoticiasFinancieras - IPS - All rights reserved

Load-Date: February 3, 2009



### Int'l community was duped by Hamas's false civilian death toll figures, IDF claims

The Jerusalem Post February 16, 2009 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 773 words

**Byline:** YAAKOV KATZ

Highlight: Lead Story. ARMY'S GAZA LIAISON UNIT SHOWS ITS LIST OF 1,200 PALESTINIAN FATALITIES TO

'THE JERUSALEM POST'

### **Body**

Four weeks after the cessation of Operation Cast Lead, the IDF finally opened its dossier on Palestinian fatalities on Sunday for the first time, and presented to The Jerusalem Post an overview utterly at odds with the Palestinian figures that have hitherto formed the basis for assessing the conflict.

While the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, whose death toll figures have been widely cited, reports that 895 Gaza civilians were killed in the fighting, amounting to more than two-thirds of all fatalities, the IDF figures shown to the Post on Sunday put the civilian death toll at no higher than a third of the total.

The international community had been given a vastly distorted impression of the death toll because of "false reporting" by <u>Hamas</u>, said Col. Moshe Levi, the head of the IDF's Gaza Coordination and Liaison Administration (CLA), which compiled the IDF figures.

As an example of such distortion, he cited the incident near a UN school in Jabalya on January 6, in which initial Palestinian reports falsely claimed IDF shells had hit the school and killed 40 or more people, many of them civilians.

In fact, he said, 12 Palestinians were killed in the incident - nine <u>Hamas</u> operatives and three noncombatants. Furthermore, as had since been acknowledged by the UN, the IDF was returning fire after coming under attack, and its shells did not hit the school compound.

"From the beginning, <u>Hamas</u> claimed that 42 people were killed, but we could see from our surveillance that only a few stretchers were brought in to evacuate people," said Levi, adding that the CLA contacted the PA Health Ministry and asked for the names of the dead. "We were told that <u>Hamas</u> was hiding the number of dead."

As a consequence of the false information, he added, the IDF was considering setting up a "response team" for future conflicts whose job would be to collect information, analyze it and issue reports as rapidly as possible that refuted *Hamas* fabrications.

Basing its work on the official Palestinian death toll of 1,338, Levi said the CLA had now identified more than 1,200 of the Palestinian fatalities. Its 200-page report lists their names, their official Palestinian Authority identity numbers,

the circumstances in which they were killed and, where appropriate, the terrorist group with which they were affiliated.

The CLA said 580 of these 1,200 had been conclusively "incriminated" as members of <u>Hamas</u> and other terrorist groups.

Another 300 of the 1,200 - <u>women</u>, children aged 15 and younger and men over the age of 65 - had been categorized as noncombatants, the CLA said.

Counted among the <u>women</u>, however, were <u>female</u> terrorists, including at least two <u>women</u> who tried to blow themselves up next to forces from the Givati and Paratroopers' Brigades. Also classed as noncombatants were the wives and children of Nizar Rayyan, a <u>Hamas</u> military commander who refused to allow his family to leave his home even after he was warned by Israel that it would be bombed.

The 320 names yet to be classified are all men; the IDF has yet complete its identification work in these cases, but estimates that two-thirds of them were terror operatives.

The CLA gave the Post the names of several fatalities who it said had been classified by the Palestinians as "medics," but who it stated were <u>Hamas</u> fighters, including Anas Naim, the nephew of <u>Hamas</u> Health Minister Bassem Naim, who was killed during clashes with the IDF on January 4 in the Sheikh Ajlin neighborhood of Gaza City.

Following the clashes, the Palestinian press reported that Naim was killed and that he was a medic with the Palestinian Red Crescent. The Gaza CLA, however, produced photographs of Naim posing holding a rocket-propelled grenade launcher and a Kalashnikov assault rifle that had been posted on a <u>Hamas</u> Web site.

Levi stressed that on no occasion were civilians deliberately targeted, and that every effort was made to minimize civilian casualties.

Work on the death toll list was started during Operation Cast Lead under Levi's direction. A special team was set up and led by an officer in the CLA who coordinated efforts with the Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) and worked from statistics and information on the dead from the <u>Hamas</u> Health Ministry, the media in Gaza, and other Palestinian and Israeli intelligence sources.

Much controversy and confusion has surrounded the number of Palestinian noncombatants killed during Israel's three-week campaign against <u>Hamas</u>, with the IDF and the Shin Bet refusing to release official numbers to refute <u>Hamas</u> allegations. Israeli estimates were intermittently leaked to the press but not published in official press statements.

### **Graphic**

2 photos: ANAS NAIM, a nephew of <u>Hamas</u> Health Minister Bassem Naim who was killed on January 4 in Gaza City, was described in Palestinian reports as a 'medic,' the IDF said yesterday. But photographs such as this, posted on *Hamas* Web site, told a different story, the IDF said.

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



### PA officials welcome failure of prisoner swap talks. Releasing 'commanders of Hamas's army staff' in W. Bank would have seriously hurt Abbas

The Jerusalem Post
March 19, 2009 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 790 words

Byline: KHALED ABU TOAMEH

**Highlight:** ANALYSIS

### **Body**

Some Palestinian Authority officials in Ramallah have welcomed the failure of the prisoner exchange negotiations between Israel and *Hamas* as good news.

The PA has many reasons to fear a deal between Israel and *Hamas*.

First, the release of hundreds of Palestinian security prisoners would have been seen as a major victory for *Hamas*.

Recent public opinion polls have shown that <u>Hamas</u>'s popularity is on the rise, in part thanks to Operation Cast Lead, which won the Islamic movement more sympathy among Palestinians in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

A prisoner exchange agreement would have further boosted *Hamas*'s popularity, said a local newspaper editor.

"I know several Palestinian officials here who were happy to hear that the talks between Israel and <u>Hamas</u> had collapsed," he said. "They were concerned that such a deal would embolden <u>Hamas</u> and undermine the credibility of Fatah."

An official closely associated with PA President Mahmoud Abbas said he was particularly concerned about the possibility Israel and Egypt would reopen the border crossings into Gaza in the context of a prisoner swap.

The reopening of the crossings, especially the Rafah terminal, would only help <u>Hamas</u> tighten its grip on Gaza, the official pointed out. "We must not forget that <u>Hamas</u> seized power in the Gaza Strip through a military coup [in 2007]. As such, <u>Hamas</u> is not a legitimate authority there," he said.

Reports about secret contacts between some European diplomats and <u>Hamas</u> representatives over the past few weeks have also left officials in the Mukata "presidential" compound worried.

Over the past two years, the PA has worked hard to isolate *Hamas* both in the local and international arenas.

"We don't understand those voices that are coming from Europe and the US and which call for ending the boycott of <u>Hamas</u>," complained one official. "Are they trying to reward <u>Hamas</u> for the bloody coup that it staged in the Gaza Strip?"

PA officials welcome failure of prisoner swap talks. Releasing 'commanders of Hamas's army staff' in W. Bank would have seriously hurt Abbas

The PA was also worried the release of hundreds of <u>Hamas</u> operatives to their homes in the West Bank would have created a big headache for its security forces. The PA would have preferred to see many of the <u>Hamas</u> prisoners and their families "relocated" to other areas, such as the Gaza Strip.

The top 10 <u>Hamas</u> prisoners whom Israel has refused to release in return for Gilad Schalit are regarded by the PA as the "commanders of **Hamas**'s army staff" in the West Bank.

Hassan Salameh, Ibrahim Hamed, Abdullah Barghouti, Abbas a-Sayed and Jamal Abu al-Hija were behind one of <u>Hamas</u>'s deadliest military infrastructures in the West Bank. As experts in preparing various types of explosive devices, they are responsible for the killing of hundreds of people during the second intifada.

These men are seen as heroes by many Palestinians, and this is how they would be received in their villages and towns if they were released from prison.

Abbas's aides are not worried as much about the parties that would be held for the released <u>Hamas</u> prisoners as about the high probability the released men would rebuild their movement's military infrastructure in the West Bank and resume terror activities not only against Israel, but also against the PA.

In the past year, the PA security forces, with the help of Israel and the US, have waged a massive campaign aimed at eliminating <u>Hamas</u>'s political and military presence in the West Bank. The campaign has resulted in the arrest of more than 600 **Hamas** supporters and members, most of whom are being held in prison without trial.

The crackdown, PA officials explained, was a preemptive measure designed to thwart any attempt by <u>Hamas</u> to extend its control to the West Bank. As far as these officials are concerned, the tough anti-<u>Hamas</u> measures are "working." Today, there's almost no such thing as a <u>Hamas</u> political or military leadership in the West Bank, since most of the movement's prominent figures are either in Israeli prisons or in Abbas's detention centers.

The return of senior <u>Hamas</u> activists to the West Bank would certainly increase the movement's chances of staging another coup against the PA. Abbas's security forces wouldn't be able to arrest any of the released prisoners - even if they were seeking to undermine the PA - for fear of being accused of collaboration with Israel.

Another PA official said the only way to "minimize the damage" resulting from a prisoner exchange deal with <u>Hamas</u> was by persuading Israel to release a large number of inmates as a gesture to Abbas and Fatah. He said it would be a "disaster" for Abbas if Israel released important prisoners such as Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti in the context of a deal with **Hamas** and not Fatah.

If that happened, the official cautioned, "I won't be surprised if Barghouti and many Fatah members join Hamas."

### **Graphic**

Photo: PALESTINIAN <u>WOMEN</u> attend a protest held by the Islamic Jihad calling for the release of prisoners jailed in Israel, outside the International Red Cross office in Gaza City yesterday. (Credit: Khalil Hamra/AP)

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



# Hamas wants dead civilians on both sides; Rockets fired into Israel invite retaliation against Palestinians set up as human shields

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: CANADA & WORLD; Pg. B7

Length: 773 words

Byline: Alan M. Dershowitz, Special to the Los Angeles Times

### **Body**

A temporary ceasefire in Gaza that simply allows <u>Hamas</u> to obtain more lethal weapons will assure a repetition of <u>Hamas</u>' win-win tactic of firing rockets at Israeli civilians while using Palestinian civilians as human shields.

The best example of <u>Hamas</u>' double war crime tactic was on Jan. 6, when it succeeded in sending a rocket to a town fewer than 35 km south of Tel Aviv and injuring a child.

At the same time, it provoked Israel to attack a United Nations school from which <u>Hamas</u> was launching its rockets. Residents of the neighborhood said two <u>Hamas</u> fighters were in the area at the time, and the Israeli military said they had been killed, according to the New York Times.

The <u>Hamas</u> tactic of firing rockets from schools, hospitals and mosques dates back to 2005, when Israel ended its occupation of Gaza. Several months ago, the head of the Israeli air force showed me a videotape (now available on YouTube) of a <u>Hamas</u> terrorist moving his rocket launcher to the front of a UN school, firing a rocket and then running away, no doubt hoping that Israel would respond by attacking the rocket launcher and thus killing Palestinian children.

This is the <u>Hamas</u> dual strategy: to kill and injure as many Israeli civilians as possible by firing rockets indiscriminately at Israeli civilian targets, and to provoke Israel to kill as many Palestinian civilians as possible to garner world sympathy.

Lest there be any doubt about this, recall the recent case of Nizar Rayan, the <u>Hamas</u> terrorist and commander killed in Gaza by an Israeli missile strike Jan. 1. Israeli authorities had warned him that he was a legitimate military target, as was his home, which was a storage site for rockets. This is the same man who in 2001 sent one of his sons on a suicide mission to blow himself up at a Jewish settlement in Gaza.

Rayan had the option of moving his family to a safe area. Instead, his four wives and children remained with him and became martyrs as Israel targeted his home for destruction.

<u>Hamas</u> leaders have echoed the mantra of Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, that, "We are going to win because they love life and we love death."

It is difficult to fight an enemy that loves death in a world that loves life.

Hamas wants dead civilians on both sides; Rockets fired into Israel invite retaliation against Palestinians set up as human shields

The world tends to think emotionally rather than rationally when it is shown dead <u>women</u> and children who are deliberately placed in harm's way by <u>Hamas</u>. Instead of asking who was really to blame for these civilian deaths, people place responsibility on those who fired the fatal shots.

Consider a related situation: An armed bank robber kills several tellers, then hides behind a hostage, the robber while killing civilians. Police, trying to prevent further killings, shoots at the robber but accidentally kills the hostage. Who is guilty of murder? The bank robber who fired from behind the human shield.

International law of war, likewise, makes it a war crime to use human shields in the way <u>Hamas</u> does. It also makes it a war crime for *Hamas* to target Israeli civilians with anti-personnel rockets.

In Lebanon in 2006, Hezbollah used this tactic in its war with Israel, setting up civilians to be in harm's way. When Israel accidentally killed civilians, Hezbollah celebrated them as martyrs.

The New York Times reported Friday that a wounded fighter was smiling at the suffering of civilians, saying, "They should be happy," because they "lost their loved ones as martyrs."

The best proof of <u>Hamas'</u> media strategy of manipulating sympathy is the way it dealt with a rocket it fired the day before Israel's airstrikes began. The rocket fell short of its target in Israel and landed in Gaza, killing two young Palestinian girls. No one saw pictures of these two dead children because they were killed by Palestinian rockets rather than by Israeli rockets. <u>Hamas</u> knows that pictures are more powerful than words.

Israel must continue to try to stop the <u>Hamas</u> rockets that endanger more than a million Israeli civilians. It also must continue to do everything in its power to avoid Palestinian civilian casualties, not only because that is the right thing to do but because every Palestinian death plays into the hands of **Hamas**' leaders.

A bad day for <u>Hamas</u> is a day in which its rockets fail to kill or injure any Israeli civilians and Israel kills no Palestinian civilians. That is what Israel and the world must strive for. <u>Hamas</u> knows that the moment it ends its policy of firing rockets at Israeli civilians from behind the shield of Palestinian civilians, Israel will end its military activities in Gaza. That is precisely the result <u>Hamas</u> does not want to achieve.

Dershowitz is a professor of law at Harvard University.

Load-Date: January 14, 2009



### Hamas softens terms for ceasefire; Egypt meetings. Temporary truce would see Israel withdraw as talks continue

The Gazette (Montreal)

January 15, 2009 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A14

Length: 678 words

Byline: RICHARD BOUDREAUX and FAYED ABU SHAMMALEH, MATTHEW FISHER, Los Angeles Times;

Canwest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

#### **Body**

After 19 days under Israeli military assault and Egyptian diplomatic pressure, <u>Hamas</u> softened its terms for a ceasefire yesterday as fighting in the Gaza Strip pushed the death toll past 1,000.

<u>Hamas</u> altered its stance in talks with Egyptian mediators in Cairo. It was the first sign of progress toward a deal to end the punishing offensive and halt rocket fire from Gaza into southern Israel.

Israel announced that it would send an emissary, Defence Ministry official Amos Gilad, to Cairo today to discuss a ceasefire proposal with the Egyptians. Officials and analysts on all sides said at least several more days of talks might be needed to reach even the first stage of an accord.

But as fighting raged on between the two sides yesterday, diplomacy took centre stage as Israeli and <u>Hamas</u> officials looked for a way out of a conflict that seems stalemated. The stated goal of Israel's relentless ground and air attacks, stopping years of rocket fire, remains unfulfilled; <u>Hamas</u>'s 15,000-man paramilitary force, although still dangerous, has been weakened.

<u>Hamas</u> previously demanded that Israeli forces halt the offensive, leave Gaza and lift a crippling blockade of the territory as a precondition for a ceasefire.

Yesterday, the group offered a temporary truce that would give Israel five days to withdraw its forces while talks continued on issues underlying the conflict: **Hamas**' insistence on open borders and Israel's demand for a halt to arms smuggling from Egypt into Gaza.

A senior <u>Hamas</u> official in Cairo disclosed the group's position on condition of anonymity after Egyptian and <u>Hamas</u> officials decided not to comment publicly on details of the talks.

<u>Hamas</u> altered its terms after Egypt reportedly pressed for a 10-day temporary truce. Israel's relentless air and ground attack also apparently swayed <u>Hamas</u>' leaders, who have sounded more open to a deal in recent days.

Hamas softens terms for ceasefire; Egypt meetings. Temporary truce would see Israel withdraw as talks continue

With international clamour for a ceasefire growing louder, there was a feeling in Israel that the war, which has so far cost 13 Israeli lives, was in 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 U.S. president-elect Barack Obama is sworn in on 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 yesterday.

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.

Also yesterday, a new audio message believed to be from Osama bin Laden called for Muslims to launch a holy war against the Jewish state. Islamist websites carried what was reported as a new audio message from bin Laden, 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 says.

On the battlefield yesterday, <u>Hamas</u> and its allies fired at least 14 rockets at Israel. Israel struck back with 60 air strikes and assaults on what its military described as "approximately 20 terrorist sites," including nine areas used by rocket launchers. Several intense firefights were reported.

Three rockets were also fired at Israel from Hezbollah-controlled southern Lebanon. Israel countered those attacks with air strikes on the launch sites.

Of the Palestinians who have died in Gaza, more than 40 per cent are <u>women</u> and children, according to medical workers in the enclave. Mark Regev, who is Olmert's spokesman, expressed regret to the BBC over the civilian deaths, but said <u>Hamas</u> is to blame because it insists 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 that this was not nearly enough assistance to alleviate a humanitarian crisis there.

### **Graphic**

Colour Photo: ABID KATIB, GETTY IMAGES; Palestinians cover their faces as smoke rises from an Israeli air strike in Gaza City yesterday. Fighting pushed the death toll there past 1,000.;

Load-Date: March 21, 2009



### Hamas: not my idea of heroes

Guardian.com
January 15, 2009

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# theguardian

Length: 1023 words

Highlight: Sunny Hundal: Israel's actions are indefensible. But when Hamas are portrayed by the left as brave

freedom fighters, it sticks in my craw

### **Body**

In June 1940, Udham Singh came before a judge at the Old Bailey and was eventually executed for a murder that had taken 19 years of planning and conspiring, and for which he had no regret. He is one of my great heroes.

General Michael O'Dwyer, in case your history doesn't extend to India, was responsible for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919, when over 1,500 unarmed men, <u>women</u> and children were mown down for taking part in in a peaceful demonstration against British rule. To this day Jallianwala Bagh is a big part of the Indian independence struggle and Udham Singh is held up as a national martyr.

At the time, even the Times of London called him a "fighter for freedom".

The independence struggle wasn't just about Gandhi's non-violent Quit India movement, it also encompassed people who achieved their aims by other means: including Bhagat Singh, Mangal Pandey, Chandrasekhar Azad, Surya Sen, Dr Zakir Hussain and even Subash Chandra Bose - who even tried to ally with Japanese forces to defeat the British (a mistake).

As someone who describes himself as British Asian and has studied in India, I have no problem with saying I'm proud of that history. Political violence has a long, proud history in the subcontinent, even before the British set foot. Sikhs, especially, were instructed by their gurus that bearing arms was essential if their creed was to survive. The gurus battled not just the Mughals but Afghans and Hindu Rajputs.

In 1984, after Indira Gandhi invaded the Golden Temple to take out Sikh separatists holed up inside the holiest of Sikh shrines, two of her Sikh bodyguards assassinated her. I've yet to hear any Sikh speak negatively of them.

So what parallels can we draw today? Many Indians no doubt see the Palestinian struggle through the same prism. Anyone who says violence is always wrong has never been subjugated as a people, with their freedom under lock and key.

As Peter Beaumont pointed out on Monday, the Palestinians put forward compelling reasons for why they reject non-violent resistance to their occupation. It's difficult to say more as I'm not in their position.

Hamas: not my idea of heroes

And let's not beat around the bush - the Palestinian people are being denied their independence by an Israeli military. The blockade, which was tightened before the ceasefire even expired, wasn't really going to make Palestinians feel positively about Israel, was it?

But here's the problem: the Palestinians are represented by terrible leadership. A war of resistance isn't just about fighting against the enemy until the cost of occupation becomes greater than the benefit, it is also a matter of public relations.

When Udham Singh shot General Dwyer, he was condemned by both Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru, the two most prominent agitators, for taking violent action. Nehru later backtracked because it was obvious the common man saw Singh as a hero. But they knew the British would find it easy to strike back if they responded with violence. Gandhi's non-violent movement may have been inspired by the principles of Ahimsa, but Hindu theology is generally accepting of political violence in self-defence. Gandhi was the exception rather than the rule.

But Gandhi aimed to provide moral clarity in a way that made it impossible for the British to sustain their empire in India (the economic decline helped, of course). Whatever you say about him, and he has a range of detractors from Sikhs to Jews, he took his non-violent stance seriously enough to not just inspire people through a feeling of moral superiority, but demonstrated results.

The problem for Palestinians is that while <u>Hamas</u> style themselves as freedom fighters, their racism for Jews in general offers only moral confusion. They're not comparable to Gandhi, or even Udham Singh - who at his excecution offered his name as Ram Mohammed Singh Azad, using common Hindu, Muslim and Sikh names to signify the Indian independence movement.

The problem with Palestinian leadership has been their inability to provide moral clarity. To see them as merely as freedom fighters is an injustice to selfless freedom fighters from across the world, including Martin Luther King, who stood for higher principles. When I march for a free Palestine, I cannot march for <u>Hamas</u>.

Furthermore, not only are <u>Hamas</u> letting the Palestinian people down, but as I said last week, so is a hardcore minority of British Muslims. Can anyone explain why there was a need to let off firecrackers or burn placards in front of the Israeli embassy on Saturday? How does the rise in antisemitic attacks help anyone? To justify attacks on British Jews for Gaza is no different to Islamophobic incidents following terrorist attacks in the UK.

Saul Alinsky, in his seminal book Rules for Radicals, rightly said the problem was that much revolutionary literature came through the prism of socialism and communism. Udham Singh, though born to a Sikh family, had communist leanings. In the Middle East, the journey started the same way since the 1950s.

But when pan-Arab socialism declined during the 1970s, pan-Islamism took up the rallying call for Muslims to break free from outside interference. The Palestinian struggle for freedom has now become the epitome of that struggle. Israel might complain that it cannot have a partner in peace in the rabidly antisemitic *Hamas*, but it has also squandered opportunities with the socialist Fatah.

My point is: it's patronising to freedom fighters when the left hold up <u>Hamas</u> as brave revolutionaries, because frankly I wouldn't want to live in a state they ruled. And it's also patronising to assume that Muslim freedom fighters can only be rabidly racist. The experience of South Asia suggests otherwise.

All this isn't to detract from the fact that Israel is occupying, subjugating and holding all Palestinians responsible for what <u>Hamas</u> does. It doesn't detract from the fact they cannot paint themselves as victims when holding all the cards and possessing overwhelming military strength. But my point about Palestinian leadership still stands.

The lack of moral clarity over Israel/Palestine has unnecessarily paralysed the left - it needs to be talked about and resolved.

Load-Date: January 15, 2009

Hamas: not my idea of heroes



### 'Hamas has been badly beaten'; Israel says goals met, ceases fire in Gaza

Ottawa Citizen

January 18, 2009 Sunday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 1195 words

Byline: Richard Boudreaux, Jeffrey Fleishman, and Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service and the Los Angeles

Times with files from Reuters and the Washington Post

**Dateline: JERUSALEM** 

### **Body**

Declaring that Israel had crippled <u>Hamas</u>, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert yesterday announced a unilateral halt to its three-week-old offensive in the Gaza Strip and said the army would remain there while Egypt mediates a long-term truce with the terrorist group.

"The conditions now exist by which our aims as we have set them out at the onset have been fully realized and beyond," Mr. Olmert said during a national television address from Tel Aviv, referring to an agreement with Egypt and the U.S. to eliminate weapons smuggling using tunnels from Egypt.

"<u>Hamas</u> has been badly beaten both militarily and in the infrastructure of its regime. Its leaders are in hiding. Many have been killed. The factories in which its missiles were manufactured have been destroyed. The smuggling routes, through dozens of tunnels, have been bombed. <u>Hamas</u>' capability to convey weapons within the Gaza Strip has been damaged. The scope of missile fire directed at the State of Israel has been reduced."

The prime minister accused Iran of using <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah in Lebanon to "strive for regional hegemony," but he said <u>Hamas</u> had been "surprised" by the launch of the offensive and by Israel's resolve.

Congratulating the country's army, air force, navy and intelligence services on "a fantastic operation," he said that it once again proved "Israel's power" and would act as a deterrent to other countries in the region.

The truce was taking effect at 2 a.m. today. Mr. Olmert put no time limit on either the truce or the presence of Israeli troops in Gaza.

<u>Hamas'</u> representative in Lebanon, Osama Hamdan, told the satellite TV news channel Al-Jazeera: "If the Israeli military continues its existence in the Gaza Strip, that is a wide door for the resistance against the occupation forces."

However, Mr. Mr. Olmert warned that if <u>Hamas</u> chooses to "continue its wild terrorist attacks, it may find itself surprised again by the State of Israel's determination," he said. "I do not suggest that or any other terrorist organization test us."

'Hamas has been badly beaten'; Israel says goals met, ceases fire in Gaza

<u>Hamas</u> officials in exile have been adamant throughout the past week and again yesterday that there will be no truce. But the movement's civil wing, which rules Gaza, indicated to Egyptian negotiators last week that it was ready to observe a Cairo-backed ceasefire.

"We will cease fire, but we do not have full security," said Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak, who spoke after Mr. Olmert. "Hamas can keep shooting at our forces and I have told the IDF to be ready for any eventuality and the IDF will be ready to respond forcefully and dramatically."

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice yesterday welcomed Israel's announcement of the ceasefire and said Washington expected all parties to halt hostile actions immediately.

"The goal remains a durable and fully respected ceasefire that will lead to stabilization and normalization in Gaza," she said. "The United States commends Egypt for its efforts and remains deeply concerned by the suffering of innocent Palestinians. We welcome calls for immediate co-ordinated international action to increase assistance flows and will contribute to such efforts."

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon hailed the ceasefire, but also urged Israel to pull out its forces from Gaza rapidly.

In Gaza, exhausted residents said they hoped that a ceasefire would take root, but many were skeptical. Most, their nerves shredded and sleepless with fear and bereavement, just want the war to be over.

"We do not care how, we want a ceasefire. We want to go back to our homes. Our children need to go back to sleep in their beds," said Ali Hassan, 34 and a father of five, in Gaza city.

Noha Abu Jabaim, 37, a housewife whose family members were chased from their village by the fighting, said things could "still get much worse."

"We need a long ceasefire, 10 years at least," she said. "But, I don't see any light of hope with either side of this conflict. Both Israel and <u>Hamas</u> are losers. <u>Hamas</u> lost because Israel hit so many civilians. As for the Israelis, they didn't end the launching of the rockets or stop the resistance. They only killed the innocents. In the end, nobody wins."

The decision to end the 22-day war was made on the same day as UN officials in Gaza urged a war crimes investigation into what they alleged was an artillery attack with phosphorous shells by Israeli troops on a school where two young brothers had died earlier yesterday. Israel emphatically denied the UN charge.

About 1,000 children were said to have been sheltering at a UN school in northern Gaza that was allegedly hit. About 600 of them were still in the school "and there is nowhere else for them to go," said John Ging, the UN's director of refugee operations in the territory.

"We cannot return the lives of these people, but we must restore accountability," said Mr. Ging, the UN's senior representative in Gaza, as he called for the third attack on a UN school and other incidents allegedly committed by both sides to be investigated as possible war crimes.

"I condemn in the strongest terms this outrageous attack," said the UN's Mr. Ban earlier yesterday from Beirut. "The top Israeli leaders had apologized and given me their assurances only two days ago that they would respect the UN schools."

The Palestinian death toll in Gaza climbed to 1,193 yesterday, according to medical officials there. Ten Israeli soldiers and three civilians have died since the war began on Dec. 27.

Mr. Olmert and Mr. Barak spoke several times yesterday of their anguish at the large number of civilian casualties in Gaza. Both blamed them on <u>Hamas</u> which, they said, had used mosques, schools and hospitals as firing positions.

'Hamas has been badly beaten'; Israel says goals met, ceases fire in Gaza

"We feel the pain of every Palestinian child and family member who fell victim to the cruel reality created by <u>Hamas</u>, which transformed you into victims," Mr. Olmert said in a direct appeal to the 1.4-million Palestinians living in the coastal strip. "Your suffering is terrible. Your cries of pain touch our hearts.

"On behalf of the government of Israel, I wish to convey my regret for the harming of uninvolved civilians, for the pain we caused them, for the suffering they and their families suffered as a result of the intolerable situation created by *Hamas*."

Officials in Israel have also said they wanted to stop the fighting before Barack Obama is sworn in as president Tuesday to avoid clouding a historic day for the Jewish state's main ally and creating friction with the new U.S. administration.

One element of a truce deal fell into place in Washington, D.C., on Friday when U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni signed an agreement on steps the United States will take to help Egypt stop the weapons smuggling. Mr. Olmert thanked Egypt yesterday for its assistance in reaching the agreement.

The other element, the focus of ongoing talks in Cairo, the Egyptian capital, is that country's proposal for a longer-term halt in fighting by both sides.

Talks on the proposal centre on <u>Hamas'</u> demand for a reopening of Gaza's border crossings to human and commercial traffic, ending more than a year of blockade by Israel and Egypt. In return, <u>Hamas</u> has offered a one-year renewable truce.

### **Graphic**

Colour Photo: Gali Tibbon;AFP/Getty Images; Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert says the army will remain in Gaza until a long-term truce is realized.;

Colour Photo: Ibraheem Abu Mustafa, Reuters; Palestinian <u>women</u> mourn during the funeral of Al-Batran family members in Bureij in central Gaza Strip yesterday. Six members of the family were killed by an Israeli air strike on Friday, Palestinian authorities said.;

Load-Date: January 19, 2009



### Hamas calls off talks on Schalit. Spokesman says if negotiations resume, group will up its demands to Israel

The Jerusalem Post
March 19, 2009 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 590 words

Byline: KHALED ABU TOAMEH

#### **Body**

<u>Hamas</u> announced on Wednesday it is suspending talks over the release of St.-Sgt. Gilad Schalit following Israel's refusal to release all the prisoners the movement is demanding.

Ayman Taha, a <u>Hamas</u> spokesman, said that when the negotiations are resumed, his movement would up its demands, adding more names to the list of prisoners.

He warned that unless Israel accepted all of <u>Hamas</u>'s conditions, the fate of Schalit would be similar to that of IAF navigator Ron Arad, who was captured in Lebanon in 1986 and whose whereabouts are unknown since 1988.

Meanwhile, Palestinians across the political spectrum were unanimous in blaming Israel for the failure of the prisoner exchange talks with *Hamas*.

<u>Hamas</u> legislator Salah Bardaweel said his movement presented Egyptian mediators with a list of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners about 30 months ago.

"Since then, we have not changed the list or added new demands," he said. "Our demand remains the same as 30 months ago."

<u>Hamas</u>'s list consisted of 450 security prisoners who are serving lengthy sentences and who should be released in the first phase of a prisoner exchange agreement, Bardaweel said.

The second phase called for the release of all <u>females</u> and minors, as well as <u>Hamas</u> legislators and ministers who were arrested in the West Bank shortly after Schalit's abduction in June 2006.

Accusing Israel of "procrastination," the <u>Hamas</u> representative scoffed at Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's threats to step up the pressure on the Islamist movement and its prisoners being held by Israel.

"We are not afraid of these threats," he said. "Nor will they force us to change our demands or give up one name on our list."

Israel's insistence on deporting dozens of prisoners to the Gaza Strip and some Arab countries was one of the main reasons behind the current stalemate, Bardaweel said. He also called on Egypt to make public its stance regarding the failure of the negotiations and to name the responsible party.

Hamas calls off talks on Schalit. Spokesman says if negotiations resume, group will up its demands to Israel

A spokesman for the Popular Resistance Committees, one of the groups that had claimed responsibility for the kidnapping of Schalit, also blamed Israel for the deadlock.

Abu Mujahed, who was summoned to Cairo last week to participate in the indirect prisoner exchange negotiations with Israel, said the Olmert government "apparently does not have the power to sign an important deal."

Olmert backtracked at the last minute on an agreement that was reached in Cairo earlier this week, he said.

"Olmert and his failed government were unable to make a decision on the agreement that was reached in Egypt," he said.

Abu Mujahed said his group was determined to do its utmost to secure the release of all the Palestinians held in Israeli jails.

Hani Habib, a political analyst affiliated with the Palestinian Authority, accused the Olmert government of "deceiving" the Israeli public by creating a sense of optimism regarding the prospects of releasing Schalit.

Olmert chose to foil the talks because he did not want to bear the political consequences of a prisoner exchange agreement with *Hamas*, Habib said.

Had the deal been concluded, it would have been the first time that Israel "succumbed" to the demands of a Palestinian group from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and not from Lebanon or Syria, he said.

Omar al-Ghul, a writer and an adviser to PA Prime Minister Salaam Fayad, said Olmert did not sign the deal with <u>Hamas</u> because he's already thinking of making a comeback in the next Israeli election. He predicted that the case of Schalit would now be shelved unless <u>Hamas</u> softened its position.

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



### Israel and Hamas both guilty of abandoning their responsibilities to civilians

The Irish Times

January 15, 2009 Thursday

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Section: WORLD; War in Gaza; Pg. 12

Length: 1048 words

### **Body**

Tom Clonanon the claims of violations of the Geneva Conventions and the legal obligations of the warring parties

AMID MOUNTING claims and counterclaims surrounding Israel s intervention in Gaza, a simple military analysis reveals much about the legality of the conduct of the conflict by both the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) and *Hamas*.

Israel s ground incursion into Gaza is being conducted by troops from the IDF s elite Golani brigade with support from armoured units and special forces. The ground combat operations appear to be concentrated at the northern end of the Gaza Strip on an axis from Deir al-Balah through Bureij towards Gaza City. Concurrent air strikes and further ground operations are taking place to the south near Khan Yunis and the border with Egypt.

The Israeli air force, navy and artillery are also being used to strike at targets throughout the Gaza Strip.

An analysis of the pattern of these missile and artillery attacks shows that they do not follow any predictable firing schedule, are not organised in sequential grid patterns, and so cannot be anticipated by <u>Hamas</u> fighters or humanitarian agencies within Gaza.

As a result, civilians who have been ordered to leave buildings by leaflet drop, text message or phone call from the IDF cannot predict where a safe house, neutralised zone or evacuation corridor might lie.

In response to IDF orders to leave their homes, Palestinian families must play a desperate game of Russian roulette, seeking unknowable safe havens in Gaza s bombed-out streets.

This game is proving increasingly lethal, even when civilians obey the explicit instructions of IDF troops in this regard.

It appears that the IDF is using the full spectrum of its conventional combat capabilities indiscriminately. Under the terms of the Geneva Conventions, the use of such weapons systems in this manner among civilian population centres is interpreted as indiscriminate. In other words, the IDF can legitimately be accused of wanton destruction and wilful killing within Gaza.

Specifically, IDF attacks in recent days are in direct contravention of protocol one, article 51, sections four and 5a of the Geneva Conventions. They prohibit the use of weapons systems, or a method of attack that cannot be directed at or limited to a specific military objective or where there is a concentration of civilians or civilian objects.

The Geneva Conventions proscribe such attacks in urban environments where civilians reside and state that, when an attack could cause incidental loss of civilian life or damage to civilian objects, then the attack must be called off .

Given the ongoing loss of civilian life in Gaza, the IDF and Israeli government would appear to be legally bound to heed immediately the UN Security Council resolution requirement to halt the offensive.

Similarly, <u>Hamas</u> ought immediately to cease its ongoing war crimes against Israel and the civilian population of Gaza. The indiscriminate rocket attacks against Israeli civilians also represent attempts at wanton destruction and wilful killing. Unlike the IDF, <u>Hamas</u> does not have the fig leaf of claiming that some of its targets are military. It is self-evident that the attacks on Israel are calculated to kill civilians.

<u>Hamas</u> has also been shown to be launching rockets from the environs of schools, mosques and other civilian locales. Such attacks are clear breaches of the fourth protocol of the Geneva Conventions and represent war crimes.

By deploying among the civilian population, <u>Hamas</u> is using innocent Palestinian civilians as human shields against IDF retaliation.

By default or design, <u>Hamas</u> s combat posture is in direct contravention of article 51 (7) of the Geneva Conventions.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has confirmed that the IDF is using white phosphorous (WP) shells in Gaza.

On detonation of these shells, WP burns at a very high temperature and is designed to illuminate targets at night. It is also used to generate smokescreens during daylight operations.

TV and still images from Gaza clearly show WP shells detonating during daylight hours at low altitudes over civilian buildings. Image analysis shows burning WP filaments striking rooftops and falling into densely populated streets and housing complexes.

For urban combat, smokescreens of this nature would not be considered useful by infantry units as they mask the firing positions of enemy combatants and inhibit precision targeting. This suggests that the WP shells may be designed to generate high-temperature airbursts as a weapon of area suppression to deny <u>Hamas</u> fighters freedom of movement.

The indiscriminate hailstorm effect of burning WP generated by such airbursts causes horrific burning to anyone caught in the open, and has an incendiary effect on civilian and commercial property. The use of WP shells in this manner would constitute a clear breach of international law.

Even without an immediate ceasefire, the IDF is under an obligation to organise or permit the evacuation of civilians from Gaza.

Under the fourth Geneva Convention, article 17 states explicitly that the belligerents in any conflict are obliged to secure the removal from besieged or encircled areas, of wounded, sick, infirm, and aged persons, children and maternity cases.

No such evacuation of Gaza has been organised by the IDF or negotiated by or facilitated by *Hamas*.

Article 15 of the fourth Geneva Convention states that neutralised zones ought to be established by warring parties into which civilians particularly **women**, children and the infirm can evacuate.

With the majority of IDF operations concentrated to the north of Gaza, such an evacuation corridor to the south could easily have been facilitated by the warring factions in the current conflict.

As recently as December 2004 arguably under far worse combat stress the US military facilitated the evacuation of 200,000 civilians from Fallujah in Iraq in the hours before its assaults on insurgents there.

Israel and Hamas both guilty of abandoning their responsibilities to civilians

The IDF and <u>Hamas</u> whatever their stated war aims in Gaza would appear to be equally culpable in abandoning their responsibilities to the hundreds of thousands of innocent Palestinians caught up in the fighting.

Dr Tom Clonan is The Irish Times security analyst. He also lectures at DIT school of media

Load-Date: January 15, 2009



### No truce in Gaza as Hamas asks for backing; U.S. vows to help stop weapons smuggling

The International Herald Tribune
January 17, 2009 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 8

Length: 855 words

Byline: Ethan Bronner - The New York Times Media Group

**Dateline: JERUSALEM** 

### **Body**

Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza, Mark Landler contributed from Washington and Michael Slackman contributed from Cairo.

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Efforts to end the three-week-old Gaza war made progress Friday with Washington pledging to help stop arms smuggling to <u>Hamas</u> and Israeli officials returning from a second trip to Cairo after cease-fire talks. An Israeli government spokesman said, "I think we are heading to the endgame."

But portions of the Arab and Muslim worlds took a harder line. At a meeting organized by Qatar, a top exiled leader of *Hamas* rejected Israeli terms for a cease-fire and called for increased resistance.

"Israel will not be able to destroy our resistance, and the United States will not be able to dictate us their rules," the leader, Khaled Meshal, said in defiant remarks broadcast worldwide. "Arab countries should help <u>Hamas</u> to fight against the death of civilian Palestinians."

The meeting was boycotted by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Palestinian Authority, which held a competing meeting in Kuwait. A day after Israeli forces carried out their most extensive attacks inside Gaza City and killed one of <u>Hamas</u>'s most senior men, Friday saw continued but more limited military activity, including about 40 Israeli strikes and 15 <u>Hamas</u> rockets hitting Israel.

The funeral for the killed <u>Hamas</u> official, Interior Minister Said Siam, turned into a mass rally in Gaza City where thousands raised their fingers into the air as a speaker called out, "Let us say goodbye to one of the lions of <u>Hamas</u>!" Passersby stopped, elderly <u>women</u> emerged from houses and children stood on roofs and declared, "This is in the name of God!"

Gaza hospitals, damaged Thursday by the Israeli military, which said mortars had been fired at its forces from near the facilities, were struggling. Global aid groups like CARE International said they had resumed distribution after being forced to stop by the intense strikes of the previous day. They harshly condemned Israel's attacks.

In the southwestern Gaza City neighborhood of Tal al-Hawa, where fighting had been fiercest Thursday, Israeli tanks withdrew leaving a blighted landscape and several more dozen dead. Palestinian health officials put the death

No truce in Gaza as Hamas asks for backing U.S. vows to help stop weapons smuggling

toll above 1,100 for a war that Israel started Dec. 27, saying it wanted to end eight years of <u>Hamas</u> rocket fire at Israeli civilians. Palestinians, and other observers, say a large portion of the dead are civilians.

The most promising element for bringing the conflict to a close occurred in Washington, where Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni of Israel signed an understanding on a range of steps the United States would take to stem the flow of weapons to *Hamas* from the Egyptian Sinai, mostly via smuggling tunnels.

The agreement would provide American technical assistance, as well as monitors, to crack down on the tunnels. But the composition of the monitoring force was not clear, as Israeli and American diplomats were still working out the details, a senior U.S. official said on the condition of anonymity.

Rice said that ending the smuggling of weapons from countries like Iran was one of the conditions for a cease-fire and that European allies, including Britain, Germany and France, would probably join the monitoring effort.

But she said the agreement was only supportive of broader negotiations being carried out by Egypt and she declined to say when a cease-fire could actually take effect and the fighting in Gaza stopped. "We are doing everything we can to bring it to an end," Rice said.

She raised the possibility of donor conferences - possibly led by the Czech Republic and Norway - to deal with the humanitarian conditions in Gaza after a cease-fire was instituted and to help rebuild the territory.

"There is much that can be done to bring Gaza out of the dark of <u>Hamas</u>'s reign and into the light of the very good governance the Palestinian Authority can bring," she said.

But in Qatar, Meshal of <u>Hamas</u> was supported by Iran and Syria when he called for all Muslim countries to break contact with Israel. Qatar and Mauritania, which have low-level ties with Israel, were reported to have said at the meeting that they would freeze those relations. President Bashar al-Assad of Syria, who has been engaged in indirect peace talks with Israel, said a 2002 Arab peace initiative was "dead" and urged all Arab states to cut "direct and indirect" ties with the Jewish state.

In Kuwait, foreign ministers planning for a Monday summit meeting of the leaders of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Palestinian Authority agreed on a \$2 billion rescue package for Gaza and a pledge of support for the Palestinian Authority and Egypt's cease-fire efforts.

A senior Egyptian official said that <u>Hamas</u> was unhappy with Israel's plan to leave its forces in Gaza during a temporary cease-fire, but that it had accepted the idea of placing the Palestinian Authority in charge of the border crossing into Egypt and the stationing of European monitors there. It was unclear how the divisions within <u>Hamas</u>, as well as within the Arab world, would affect negotiations in the coming days.

Load-Date: February 6, 2009



# World: Israel PM's family link to Hamas peace bid: Olmert rejected Palestinian attempts to set up talks through go-between before Gaza invasion

The Observer (London) (England)

March 1, 2009

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## **The Observer**

Section: OBSERVER FOREIGN PAGES; Pg. 33

Length: 929 words

Byline: Peter Beaumont, Foreign Affairs Editor

### **Body**

<u>HAMAS</u>, THE militant Palestinian organisation, attempted to conduct secret talks with the Israeli leadership in the protracted run-up to the recent war in Gaza - with messages being passed from the group at one stage through a member of prime minister Ehud Olmert's family.

Confirmation of attempts to establish a direct line of communication between <u>Hamas</u> and Israel - and the willingness of senior figures in <u>Hamas</u> to contemplate direct negotiations - fundamentally alters the narrative of the build-up to the war in Gaza which claimed more than 1,300 Palestinian lives and led to about a dozen Israeli deaths.

Most remarkable is the story of the involvement of a member of the prime minister's family in the passing of messages to Olmert about the case of the kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit.

Although the Observer is aware of the identity of the family member and full details of the role played, it has agreed to protect anonymity. Gershon Baskin, a veteran Israel peace activist, was at the centre of attempts to open negotiations. Baskin was in touch with senior members of <u>Hamas</u>, Israeli officials and Olmert, via the member of his family.

Over two years, from the kidnap of Shalit, which triggered Israel's economic blockade of the Gaza Strip and its 1.5 million residents right up to the days before Israel launched its three-week long assault, <u>Hamas</u> officials expressed a willingness to talk to Israel directly about the kidnap, conditions for a new ceasefire and the ending of the blockade.

The motivation - from <u>Hamas</u>'s side - stemmed from a growing frustration with the role of Egypt as an intermediary over key issues between the two sides, especially in relation to ceasefires.

Baskin, who has a long background in encouraging Israeli-Palestinian contacts, believes that the failure to pursue the overtures was a lost opportunity that contributed to the outbreak of conflict.

World: Israel PM's family link to Hamas peace bid: Olmert rejected Palestinian attempts to set up talks through go-between before Gaza invasion

"Three times since Schalit's kidnapping [in June 2006 during a cross border raid out of Gaza] there has been the suggestion of opening a back channel through me. The first time that <u>Hamas</u> suggested to me opening a secret back channel was not long after Schalit's kidnapping."

According to Baskin, that offer was immediately rejected by the office of Olmert who said Israel did not negotiate with terrorists. His contacts, said Baskin, were two-fold. On the <u>Hamas</u> side, his contact was a senior figure whom he met in Europe, who was close to the organisation's leaderships both in the Syrian capital Damascus and the local leadership in Gaza. His liaison with the <u>Hamas</u> official focused on two issues: opening secret and direct contacts, and linking the prisoner exchange for Schalit's release to the renewal of the ceasefire and the ending of the economic siege on Gaza.

Baskin's "messenger" to Olmert on the Israeli side was the family member. "I was getting messages to Olmert through [this person]. And what I was getting back from Olmert through the same route was: 'We don't negotiate with terrorists'."

As part of this communication, which went on sporadically for months, <u>Hamas</u> offered a video proving Schalit was still alive, which would be supplied, the organisation said, in exchange for the release of some <u>women</u> and other minor prisoners from Israeli jails. Olmert's response - said Baskin - was that they did not need the video as Israel had already established that the soldier was alive. While that was rejected, the contact did, however, lead to a letter from Schalit to his father.

It was a channel of communication that was abruptly closed, allegedly when Israel's domestic intelligence agency Shin Bet intercepted members of <u>Hamas</u> discussing the identity of the Olmert family member involved in passing on the messages, infuriating Olmert.

A year after the first contacts, Baskin told the Observer, he had been given approval to pursue an informal effort to open secret direct contacts,

co-ordinating with Ofer Dekel, the official appointed by Olmert as his "special representative" to head efforts for Schalit's return.

This time, however, it was <u>Hamas</u>'s turn to block the opening of the secret negotiations - rejecting the linking of the prisoner exchange with the cease-fire and the end of the siege.

Baskin persisted with his dealings with *Hamas*, communicating with his contact through scores of emails, some passed on to the leadership in Syria and Gaza. While some hardliners, he readily admits, were not willing to initiate contacts - including Said Siam, the interior minister killed during Operation Cast Lead, and Mahmoud Zahar, who served as foreign minister - Baskin was able to reach other *Hamas* figures by email and text message - among them *Hamas* moderate and sometime spokesman Ghazi Hamad.

By now, Baskin admitted, his efforts to mediate between the two sides were largely his own initiative as he found himself increasingly shut out of the Israeli efforts to negotiate Schalit's release. He attempted too to use the Olmert "family member".

Two years after his first contacts through the Olmert family - and with war looming - Baskin said he tried to use his contact again. "I only involved [the person] one more time. I was desperate to get a message to Olmert." This time, however, he was told bluntly that he would "need to find another messenger". He told the Observer: "At this point war had already been decided on."

With the conflict only two weeks away Baskin arranged a meeting with his key <u>Hamas</u> contact in Europe, which resulted in another offer to link Schalit to the lifting of the ceasefire. Nobody on the Israeli side replied to the final offer.

World: Israel PM's family link to Hamas peace bid: Olmert rejected Palestinian attempts to set up talks through go-between before Gaza invasion

Load-Date: March 2, 2009



### <u>Israel draws verbal fire as hope for deal rises; Soldiers kill two Hamas</u> leaders, shell UN compound

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

January 16, 2009 Friday

Final Edition

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Length: 892 words

Byline: Sebastian Rotella, and Rushdi abu Alouf, Los Angeles Times

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

#### **Body**

On a day of action on military and diplomatic fronts, Israeli soldiers drove deep into Gaza City Thursday, killed two top <u>Hamas</u> leaders and incurred withering international criticism for shelling a UN compound full of provisions for refugees.

Despite the assault, <u>Hamas</u> fighters managed to fire at least 26 rockets and mortar shells at southern Israel, killing a woman and a seven-year-old boy.

But there also were signs that a ceasefire deal was within reach. Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni boarded a midnight flight to Washington, where she was expected to sign an agreement with U.S. diplomats for aggressive interdiction of rockets and other arms to the Gaza Strip.

U.S. officials said Livni would meet with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to work out details of an understanding on U.S. security assurances. Another Israeli envoy consulted with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert after meeting in Cairo with Egyptian officials, key players in the proposed anti-smuggling agreement. Olmert called Rice to say that Israel wanted to pursue the "Egyptian track" to end the military operation, officials said.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who met with Livni and other leaders after arriving from Cairo, expressed hope for a resolution. "I believe from my talks in Egypt that the elements are in place for this violence to end now." Ban said.

There is widespread belief here that Israeli leaders will end the combat before president-elect Barack Obama takes office Tuesday to avoid getting off on the wrong foot with the new administration.

Death ruled the streets and skies of Gaza City on the 21st day of the offensive. An Israeli air strike obliterated a three-storey building in the Yamarouk neighbourhood and killed Said Siam, 49, who as <u>Hamas</u> minister of interior oversaw the police and other security forces. Israeli and Palestinian officials said the explosion also killed Siam's brother, Iyad Siam, and one of Siam's deputies, Salah Abu Sharah, who was in charge of the domestic security apparatus.

Israel draws verbal fire as hope for deal rises; Soldiers kill two Hamas leaders, shell UN compound

Said Siam was one of the five top political figures in <u>Hamas</u> and very close to its military wing. Fellow militants eulogized him with defiant rhetoric.

"We will not wave white flags or surrender," said Osama Hamdan, a Lebanon-based <u>Hamas</u> figure. "This is evidence that <u>Hamas</u> leaders are in the battlefield and not hiding."

Fighting Thursday killed at least 70 people, according to Palestinian medical sources, bringing the death toll to more than 1,100. Thirteen Israelis have died, including three civilians killed by rocket fire from Gaza.

The war has plunged Gaza into a humanitarian crisis, with food, fuel, electricity and medicine in short supply.

Israeli forces advanced to within less than a kilometre of the heart of Gaza City, their deepest penetration yet into the densely populated area, according to Adnan abu Hasna, a spokesman for the UN Relief and Works Agency, or UNRWA.

Artillery fire hit a UNRWA compound where at least 700 Palestinians were being sheltered and thousands of litres of fuel were stored. The shelling set the compound ablaze, destroying thousands of pounds of badly needed food and medicine. Three UN employees were hurt.

"This fire is threatening to consume all the other buildings surrounding ours," said Abu Hasna.

In Jerusalem, Ban expressed "strong protest and outrage" about the attack and demanded an explanation.

Even Rice, speaking for the U.S., demanded Israel take more care to avoid such incidents.

Olmert said Israeli forces had returned fire at *Hamas* fighters in or near the UN site.

"It is absolutely true that we were attacked from that place, but the consequences are very sad, and we apologize for it," Olmert said. "I don't think it should have happened, and I'm very sorry."

Israeli leaders accuse <u>Hamas</u> of taking refuge in UN installations, hospitals, schools, mosques and other sensitive buildings in Gaza, and of using civilians as human shields. But UN officials denied <u>Hamas</u> militants fired from the compound.

Israeli authorities also took criticism from foreign media after gunfire hit a building that houses offices of media organizations, which rely on local employees because Israel has banned their correspondents from the strip. At least one photographer was injured, according to the Reuters news agency, which is in the building.

"We call on the military to halt this fire immediately," the Foreign Press Association of Jerusalem said in a statement. "These are buildings housing journalists working for international news agencies and must not be targeted. We note that these buildings are well-known landmarks in Gaza and that the IDF has been clearly notified of their location on several occasions."

An Israeli rights group accused the military of violating rules of war. "There is a sense that the Israeli forces do not care about hitting civilians," said Dan Yakir, a lawyer who runs the Association for Civil Rights in Israel. "It is true that <u>Hamas</u> fights from within the civilian population ... but the fact that <u>Hamas</u> commits war crimes does not give Israel the right to use the same currency and do the same."

Another such Israeli group, B'Tselem reported accusations that Israeli troops, who were ordering civilians out of homes before demolishing them, shot a *women* waving a white flag as she left.

Overall, though, Israeli public opinion remains strongly behind the war.

### **Graphic**

Colour Photo: Yannis Behrakis ; REUTERS; A few miles distant, but worlds apart: Smoke rises from Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip while a farmer works the fields in Israel. ;

Load-Date: January 16, 2009



### Schalit dominates last cabinet meeting. Friedmann tells ministers it's fine to restrict Hamas prisoners' rights

The Jerusalem Post March 30, 2009 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 919 words

Byline: HERB KEINON, Khaled Abu Toameh contributed to this report.

### **Body**

Issues relating to kidnapped soldier Gilad Schalit, which cast a long shadow over Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's nearly three years in office, dominated the government's final cabinet meeting on Sunday, just as they dominated innumerable cabinet meetings in previous months.

Justice Minister Daniel Friedmann and Prisons Service representatives briefed the cabinet on discussions that have been held over the past two weeks by an interministerial committee headed by Friedmann on curtailing the privileges for <u>Hamas</u> prisoners in Israeli jails.

"Just because we're the only democracy in the Middle East doesn't mean we have to be the only suckers," Friedmann said. "We must not radiate weakness."

Among the ideas being discussed are reducing the visitation rights of <u>Hamas</u> prisoners, curtailing their radio, television, telephone and newspaper privileges, and limiting their ability to pursue academic degrees in prison.

Friedmann told the cabinet that while these steps, apparently aimed at pressuring <u>Hamas</u>, were permissible under Israeli and international law, barring the Red Cross from visiting the prisoners, just as the Red Cross is bared from visiting Schalit, or banning letters to the prisoners, just as Schalit is not allowed any letters from his family, would not be legal.

Likewise, the religious rights of the prisoners could not be restricted, Friedmann said.

Recommendations on what steps should be implemented would be finished within the week and brought to the cabinet of Prime Minister-designate Binyamin Netanyahu, expected to be sworn in on Tuesday.

Before the meeting, Interior Minister Meir Sheetrit voiced support for Friedmann's plan, saying, "It's not reasonable that Schalit is living [in the Gaza Strip] without seeing his parents while <u>Hamas</u> prisoners live here as if they were at summer camp."

Welfare and Social Services Minister Isaac Herzog echoed Sheetrit's words, saying, "There is an abundance of <u>Hamas</u> terrorists in Israeli jails who enjoy special conditions and special treatment while our soldier hasn't even been visited once to check his well-being."

<u>Hamas</u> said such steps would not change its position regarding the release of Schalit.

Schalit dominates last cabinet meeting. Friedmann tells ministers it's fine to restrict Hamas prisoners' rights

Abu Obaidah, a spokesman for <u>Hamas</u>'s armed wing, Izzadin Kassam, said the proposed measures against the prisoners were "evidence of Israel's weakness, confusion and helplessness."

He said the measures were similar to those used by "gangsters, murderers and cowards."

These steps would only increase <u>Hamas</u>'s determination not to make any concessions on its conditions for the release of Schalit, he said.

"The Zionist enemy won't be able to blackmail us through these crimes," Abu Obaidah said. "This enemy appears to be so frustrated because of *Hamas*'s strong resolve and refusal to succumb."

Sunday's cabinet discussion came a day after Olmert's special envoy Ofer Dekel left the country in an effort to secure a deal for Schalit in the waning hours of Olmert's tenure.

Nevertheless, Cabinet Secretary Ovad Yehezkel told Army Radio that the "chances of securing Schalit's release in the next two or three days are not high."

Yehezkel said progress had been delayed because <u>Hamas</u> had not provided Israel with a revised list of prisoners to be released in an exchange deal, and that it now seemed that matters would have to wait for the Netanyahu government.

Olmert, meanwhile, wished Netanyahu well at the opening of the cabinet meeting, which he noted was the 146th meeting of Israel's 31st government.

"I have no doubt that Binyamin Netanyahu's new government will do its utmost to realize the State of Israel's dream to live in peace and security, with quality of life and in an atmosphere of joy and satisfaction, the dream that every government has hoped for, acted on behalf of and done its utmost to realize," Olmert said.

He recalled that when he first took over as prime minister, he met with Netanyahu who told him that he was embarking on a "tough job."

"I now know this. He has an advantage upon entering the post now for the second time, that he knows this from the first time," Olmert quipped.

"I wish that he succeeds in the job ... and I have no doubt that he will lead the country to achievements and will lead it toward fulfilling its dreams, which are the dreams of us all."

The final cabinet meeting, however, was not filled only with warm and sentimental feelings, as Olmert took the rare step of not approving a trip Defense Minister Ehud Barak had intended to take to Paris on Wednesday, that would have included a weekend there with his wife, Nili Priel.

Barak reportedly submitted the request late last week, and sources close to Barak charged that Olmert torpedoed it as an act of revenge against his bitter political rival, the man whom Olmert holds largely responsible for his having to leave office prematurely.

Barak wanted to go to Paris to attend an event on behalf of the Soldiers Welfare Association, as well as for diplomatic and security meetings with French officials.

Sources close to Olmert said the prime minister only heard about the visit on Sunday morning, and did not feel that it was right for him to bring the trip to the cabinet for approval, since the visit would take place after the new government was in power, and it should approve it.

Olmert also said that it was not right for him to approve the trip since it was not yet clear who would fill in for Barak during his absence.

Government sources said that some 30 minutes into the cabinet meeting, Barak wrote a note to Olmert saying he had already canceled the trip.

### **Graphic**

3 photos: PRIME MINISTER Ehud Olmert speaks at his last cabinet meeting yesterday. Daniel Friedmann. <u>WOMEN</u> ARE seen yesterday in the Gilad Schalit solidarity tent, which remains in place outside the prime minister's residence in Jerusalem, though the Schalit family left it over a week ago. (Credit: Ariel Jerozolimski/The Jerusalem Post. Dan Balilty/AP)

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



### Brother of Hamas spokesman arrested in Arish

Daily News Egypt
April 28, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 407 words

### **Body**

CAIRO: Yousef Abu Zuhri, brother of <u>Hamas</u> spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri, was arrested in Al-Arish Monday night on suspicion of entering Egypt illegally through an underground tunnel.

Abu Zuhri was arrested in a rented apartment on Mustapha Kamel Street in Al-Arish, which is 40 km from Egypt's border with Gaza. The owner of the flat was also arrested for not alerting the authorities to Abu Zuhri's presence.

According to Rafah-based journalist Mustapha Singer, Abu Zuhri might be taken to Cairo for further questioning regarding how he entered Egypt and that his arrest might be a link to the recently discovered Hezbollah cell that was operating in the area.

Security forces amassed on areas south of Rafah Tuesday at Wadi Amr near Al-Oja crossing after passing through Al-Gora village midway between the town of Rafah and the crossing.

Security forces also descended on the main road in the town of Sheikh Zowayed, 5 km from the Gaza border.

Until press time no raids had been conducted, but a heavy troop presence was seen in those areas. It is unclear whether the security increase was linked to the arrest of Abu Zuhri, but authorities are still searching for some 25 people in the area they suspect are linked to the Hezbollah cell.

Head of the Tagammu party in North Sinai Ashraf El-Hefny said that the arrest of Abu Zuhri was meant "to pressure *Hamas* for dialogue in the negotiations with Fatah in Egypt."

El-Hefny said that there had been a heavy security presence in many areas of Al-Arish since Monday with the aim of seeking out the Hezbollah suspects.

Security forces discovered another smuggling tunnel Monday in Rafah and confiscated an array of goods that had not yet been transported. No arrests were made and the entry was to remain guarded until the tunnel had been destroyed.

Bedouins in Sinai had attempted to protest Saturday south of Rafah against increased security raids in the wake of the Hezbollah cell capture.

#### Brother of Hamas spokesman arrested in Arish

Security forces managed to scupper the protest but the assembled Bedouins who gathered near Al-Oja in an area called Abu Hashad decided that another protest would be held on the first of June, especially if the raids continued.

"Because of the Hezbollah case, there has been an increased security campaign and raids on houses," said Democratic Front Party member in Rafah Mohamed El-Menei, "the protest is because of the raids. There are <u>women</u> in these houses and security raids on these homes violate our traditions."

Load-Date: April 28, 2009



### Parliamentarians wrong to portray Hamas as peace-loving

March 19, 2009 Edition 1

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Section: Pg. 25

Length: 215 words

### **Body**

Dear Editor, I respond to the contribution by Jonathan Walker Post March 17.

Of three British <u>female</u> Parliamentarians, all of whom have pro Palestinian credentials, at least two have shown distinct anti-Israel tendencies.

One at least, Baroness Tonge, does not disguise her deep seated antagonism to the Jewish state. These are the people whose views command multiple column inches in your esteemed journal.

<u>Hamas</u> is portrayed as peace-loving, all the evidence is to the contrary, but mealy mouth words have deceived those who were prepared to be deceived. There are many falsehoods in the statement - I will quote only two.

After many months of attrition and 3,000 rockets from Gaza, a ceasefire was agreed. Less than 24 hours later three more rockets were fired on Sderot.

Lynne Jones stated that Israel broke signed agreements with Yassa Arafat - the truth is that Arafat abrogated every agreement and refused the offer of 95 per cent of his demands from then Prime Minister Barak. His refusal heralded the start of the intefada and a season of suicide bombings.

Much is made of the economic deprivation of the people of Gaza. Reflect for a moment and enquire what has happened to the hundreds of millions of dollars, euros and sterling that have been poured into Gaza.

J.Sewell, Digbeth, Birmingham

Load-Date: March 19, 2009



# International: Hamas refuses to free Israeli soldier in return for lifting Gaza blockade: Leader accuses Israel of backtracking over truce: Corporal's fate linked to release of Palestinians

The Guardian - Final Edition February 20, 2009 Friday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 20

Length: 690 words

Byline: Ian Black, Damascus

#### **Body**

<u>Hamas</u> has flatly rejected Israel's demand that it free a captive soldier in return for lifting the blockade of the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian movement called instead for international pressure on Israel to force the borders open to relieve the humanitarian crisis after last month's war.

Mousa Abu Marzook, the deputy leader of <u>Hamas</u>, accused Israel of backtracking over a truce agreement and warned that Corporal Gilad Shalit would only be released in return for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails. "We will not change our position," he told the Guardian in Damascus yesterday.

On Wednesday Israel's security cabinet agreed to maintain the blockade and to hold back from any truce until the release of Shalit, who was captured in June 2006 near the Gaza boundary fence. Until then it seemed a new truce was imminent.

<u>Hamas</u> and Egypt, which is mediating between the Palestinians and Israelis, had been treating the two issues as separate. But Ehud Olmert, Israel's outgoing prime minister, has been pressing to put Shalit at the heart of any deal. Olmert has just weeks left in office following this month's elections and is keen to secure the soldier's freedom before his term is up.

"Israel and Egypt and <u>Hamas</u> have known for two years that the Shalit file is completely separate from other issues," protested Abu Marzook, just back in the Syrian capital from the truce talks in Cairo. "We are ready to start negotiating about Shalit, but the issue is not linked to any other as far as we are concerned. This is not acceptable to us."

The soldier is believed to be alive but his whereabouts are unknown and he has not been seen by the International Red Cross. "It's good that they (the Israelis) don't know where he is, otherwise they would have killed him," he claimed.

International: Hamas refuses to free Israeli soldier in return for lifting Gaza blockade: Leader accuses Israel of backtracking over truce: Corporal's fate link....

Abu Marzook signalled however that fresh information about Shalit might be provided if Israel moved Palestinian prisoners being held in solitary confinement to normal cells, released unwell <u>female</u> prisoners and published information on the <u>Hamas</u> fighters Imad and Adel Abdul lah, said to have been abducted by Israeli forces.

He said contacts between <u>Hamas</u> and European and US representatives had multiplied since the war, despite <u>Hamas</u> being formally designated as "terrorist" by the US and EU over its refusal to recognise Israel, renounce violence and abide by interim peace agreements. "There's been a big change since the war. But a lot of the people we've met have asked us to keep the talks confidential."

<u>Hamas</u> has sent a letter to President Barack Obama via US senator John Kerry who yesterday visited Gaza, the BBC reported. There was no information about the letter's contents.

Abu Marzook welcomed Obama's appointment of George Mitchell as special envoy for Middle East peace, describing the former senator as a "non-Zionist American representative" who had criticised Israeli settlements and helped to broker peace between Britain and the IRA. But despite hints of a potential shift in Washington, there was no sign that Mitchell would meet *Hamas*; he failed even to visit Syria on his first regional tour this month.

Abu Marzook said <u>Hamas</u> favoured reconciliation talks with Fatah, led by the western-backed Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, in the West Bank. Ending internal divisions is seen as key to lifting the Gaza blockade, enforced since the Islamist movement won elections in 2006, and tightened the following summer.

The 22-day war, which Israel launched with the aim of halting Palestinian rocket fire, killed at least 1,300 Palestinians, many of them civilians, destroyed about 5,000 homes and ruined much of Gaza's already rickety infrastructure. But it was a Palestinian victory because Israel failed to achieve its goals, argued Abu Marzook.

"Now there is global support for <u>Hamas</u> and not just in the Arab and Muslim worlds," he said. "This is a moral judgment against Israel. Israel has had moral support and legitimacy since the second world war and its propaganda has described <u>Hamas</u> as a terrorist group. There's been a real change on those two points - but this mass support has not managed to break the blockade of Gaza."

Load-Date: February 20, 2009



# Gaza crisis: Airstrike kills senior Hamas minister as Cairo talks inch towards ceasefire: Said Siam dies as Israeli jets target Jabaliya camp: UN anger grows over bombing of compound

The Guardian - Final Edition

January 16, 2009 Friday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 18

Length: 733 words

Byline: Toni O'Loughlin, Jerusalem

#### **Body**

Israel struck at the heart of <u>Hamas</u> yesterday, killing one of its most senior leaders and pushing deeper into Gaza City, as moves towards a temporary ceasefire inched forward.

<u>Hamas</u> reportedly told Egypt, which is brokering talks, that it would agree a year-long renewable ceasefire in Gaza if Israel pulled out its forces within seven days and reopened border crossings immediately.

Israel's envoy to Cairo returned to Jerusalem last night with details of <u>Hamas</u>'s position. After a meeting between Israel's leaders, the Israeli foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, was due to fly to Washington to finalise an accord aimed at delivering Israel's key condition for a ceasefire: preventing <u>Hamas</u> from rearming.

"This is not open ended, this is permanent," the Israeli government spokesman, Mark Regev, said.

Ayman Taha, a <u>Hamas</u> spokesman, said it wanted Israel to leave Gaza within two weeks, to end the siege and to open the crossings with European and Turkish observers looking on. <u>Hamas</u> also wants the Palestinian Authority and international monitors posted at the crossing into Egypt, at Rafah in Gaza's south.

Taha said that if Israel fulfilled these conditions it would reconsider extending the truce beyond one year.

Khaled Meshal, the de facto <u>Hamas</u> leader, said: "We will not accept any political movement that doesn't satisfy these demands."

Israeli jets yesterday bombed a house in the Jabaliya refugee camp, killing the <u>Hamas</u> interior minister, Said Siam, the most senior <u>Hamas</u> leader to be killed since 2004, when Israel assassinated Dr Abdel Aziz Al Rantissi, a founding member of the militant Islamist group.

A <u>Hamas</u> official vowed vengeance for Siam's death. "The blood of Said Siam will be a curse on the Zionist entity," Muhammad Nazzal told al-Jazeera television.

Gaza crisis: Airstrike kills senior Hamas minister as Cairo talks inch towards ceasefire: Said Siam dies as Israeli jets target Jabaliya camp: UN anger grows ov....

Earlier Israel shelled the main UN compound housing the Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). The aid agency distributes food to 750,000 of the 1.5 million Palestinians in Gaza.

Israel struck the compound where up to 700 Palestinians were sheltering shortly after the UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon had arrived in Israel.

Ban, who was in the region to press for an end to the violence, described the two hits on the compound as "intolerable". "I conveyed my strong protest and outrage to the defence minister and the foreign minister. The defence minister said it was a grave mistake. He assured me that extra attention will be paid to UN facilities and staff and this will not be repeated."

Israel's prime minister, Ehud Olmert, said that Israeli troops had retaliated against <u>Hamas</u> militants who were firing from within the compound. He later apologised, saying the response was "harsh".

Gordon Brown also condemned Israel for the attack. "When the UN is doing such vital work - humanitarian work among **women** and children in Gaza - no one can defend this attack by Israeli forces on the compound," he said.

It was the second time in this conflict that Israel has alleged that militants have used a UN compound to launch attacks. UNRWA's head in Gaza, John Ging, said the claim "was nonsense".

The UNRWA compound was one of several civilian institutions hit as troops moved into Gaza City, taking control of three neighbourhoods. Shells struck a hospital and a building housing international media, even though the military reportedly checked the co-ordinates of the structure just hours before it was hit.

In a terse statement the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said the damage to the al-Quds hospital was "completely and utterly unacceptable based on every known standard of international humanitarian law".

The US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, rang Israel's defence minister, Ehud Barak and the foreign minister, Livni, to say she was "deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza".

Israel's envoy to Cairo, Amos Gilad, was due to brief Olmert, Livni and Barak last night. The three have reportedly been in disagreement all week about ending the three-week assault.

Having refused to negotiate directly with <u>Hamas</u> since it was elected in 2006, Israel wants to ensure that an internationally brokered ceasefire does not deliver the militants the recognition they crave.

Ban said that he believed a truce could soon be reached. "There are certain elements in place that would enable a ceasefire, but it hinges on the political will of both sides," he told the media.

Simon Jenkins, page 33 >=

Load-Date: January 16, 2009



## Peace talks shot down; After coming under fire for asking Hamas to speak, Clare Short MP finds the route to a truce in the Middle East difficult

Birmingham Post
April 28, 2009 Tuesday
1ST Edition

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Section: Pg. 21

Length: 1149 words

#### **Body**

On Wednesday, 22 April, I arranged for a video link between a House of Commons committee room and Khalid Meshaal who is Chief of the Political Bureau of <u>Hamas</u> which is a political party supported by more than half of the Palestinian people.

An invitation was sent to all parliamentarians, inviting them to talk with <u>Hamas</u>. Fifty members of the Lords and Commons accepted. Inevitably, I was denounced by the Israeli Foreign Ministry, the Israeli Ambassador in London and the UK Minister for the Middle East for organising the event. I received a series of emails accusing me of being an anti-Semitic Nazi lover, in some of the extremely rude and abusive language.

This is, I am afraid, not an unusual experience.

If one makes a visit or speech sympathetic to the terrible suffering of the Palestinian people, vicious abuse and accusations of anti-Semitism flood in. I think the purpose is to frighten politicians from engaging with this terrible conflict which is dividing the Moslem world from the West and creating the sense of injustice and alienation on which recruiters for organisations like Al Qaeda thrive.

The invitation to the meeting pointed out that <u>Hamas</u> had won 65 per cent of the vote in internationally scrutinised elections in 2006. I suggested that if we did not talk to <u>Hamas</u>, we would be unlikely to find a path to peace.

I also pointed out that most serious observers believe that the possibility of peace based on two states, which is the policy favoured by the UK, the EU and the Obama administration was evaporating.

Without this, we face the prospect of decades of bloody conflict.

The strange thing about those who attacked me for organising the meeting is that they almost all go on to tell me what *Hamas* believes and stands for.

Thus they want to prevent us talking to <u>Hamas</u> and finding out what they stand for and why the Palestinian people are voting for them and then want to tell the world what <u>Hamas</u> believes.

The reason I organised the meeting was that in November I went with a group of European parliamentarians to Gaza to see for myself how people were living. I had been before in 1988/89 and things had been tough then. 70 per cent of the people of Gaza are refugees, displaced from their original homes in Palestine.

Peace talks shot down After coming under fire for asking Hamas to speak, Clare Short MP finds the route to a truce in the Middle East difficult

They live in desperately overcrowded conditions on a small strip of land 25 miles by six at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. Since the 2006 elections, Israel and the West has imposed a siege which means that all borders are blocked and limited amounts of food and humanitarian supplies are provided.

People are living with hunger, sewage systems that are overflowing and grossly inadequate medical supplies. The amazing thing in November was the dignity with which people lived, how smartly the children were dressed going to school, despite all their difficulties and suffering.

Whilst there, we met with Prime Minister Ismail Haniya and the parliamentarians who have not been imprisoned by the Israelis since the elections.

They had placed photographs on the desks of the 30 MPs who were in prison.

I asked the Prime Minister what his answer was to the three demands of the international community which are that they will not speak with <u>Hamas</u> until it gives up violence, recognises Israel and recognises previous agreements negotiated between the Palestinians and the Israelis. He said on violence they had agreed a ceasefire and had held to it, but Israel had not kept its side of the bargain, had not lifted the siege and had then broken the ceasefire and killed six <u>Hamas</u> members. He said they were very keen to agree another ceasefire and to get the siege lifted. I myself checked the numbers of Palestinian and Israeli injuries as a result of rockets from Gaza.

According to Btselem, the Israeli human rights organisation, in the seven years since the launch of the Qassam rockets from Gaza until the start of the bombardment launched by Israel on 27 December 2008, the rockets killed 13 innocent Israelis and one foreigner. In the same period, Israel killed 2990 Palestinians (634 of them children) in the Gaza strip. Most of them were civilians and many were **women**.

On the question of recognition of Israel, he said it was notable that Israel had not recognised the right of the Palestinians to a state of their own, but if they were offered their state on the basis of the land that belongs to them in international law, they would declare a long term truce and leave it to the next generation to make a final settlement. On previous agreements, he said their view was that the Oslo peace accords had not been good for the Palestinian people - on this I agree with him - but they recognised that the agreement had been reached by the legitimate Palestinian authorities.

After we left, Israel launched its attack on Gaza and very large numbers of people lost their lives and there was massive destruction of people's homes and other infrastructure. To this day, the borders remain closed and many people live in tents near the rubble of their houses.

In March, I again joined with a group of parliamentarians and visited Damascus to meet with the leaders of the Palestinian factions exiled there and in particular with Khalid Meshaal who is the most senior <u>Hamas</u> official.

We all found him charming and eloquent.

And he repeated over and over that they would like to negotiate a cease fire and a long term peace if they could possibly get their state the international committee constantly promised and did not deliver.

It was for this reason that I decided to organise the video link. Western leaders are pretending <u>Hamas</u> is intransigent and will not negotiate.

The reality seems to me to be very different.

I well remember attending a meeting in a House of Commons committee room after Sinn Fein had decided to stand for election and Gerry Adams was elected to the House of Commons.

Those of us who attended the meeting were denounced by all and sundry. A few years later, the Prime Minister was negotiating with Sinn Fein and now we have peace in Northern Ireland. I also remember Mrs Thatcher calling

Peace talks shot down After coming under fire for asking Hamas to speak, Clare Short MP finds the route to a truce in the Middle East difficult

Nelson Mandela a terrorist and a few years later the red carpet was rolled out in Westminster Hall to honour him as the new democratic President of South Africa.

I am convinced that we could make peace with <u>Hamas</u> and if we don't the future will be very bloody indeed. At the very least, we should surely talk to the properly elected representatives of the Palestinian people.

The final irony, after all the fuss, is that the video link did not work. But at least we had a thorough discussion of the desirability of talking with *Hamas*..

Clare Short sparked controversy when she invited Khalid Meshaal, Chief of the Political Bureau of <u>Hamas</u>, to address ParliamentariansWestern leaders are pretending <u>Hamas</u> is intransigent and will not negotiate. The reality seems to me to be very different

Load-Date: April 28, 2009



### Agony of rocket attack victims of Hamas overlooked, says Scot

Scotland on Sunday

January 18, 2009, Sunday

1 Edition

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Section: Pg. 23

**Length:** 546 words **Byline:** Fiona Gray

#### **Body**

A SCOTTISH professor last night told of his struggle to help Israeli victims of the conflict in Gaza.

Professor Eric Shinwell, based in an Israeli hospital close to the border with the Palestinian territory, said the victims of <u>Hamas</u> rocket attacks were often overlooked, and he criticised the Scottish health service, saying it was offering aid to victims in Gaza but not those in Israel.

The director of the hospital's child health department spoke of the dire situation at the hospital in the town of Rehovot, where staff are working around the clock to treat patients who are lying in the corridors and dining hall, as <u>Hamas</u> rockets explode a mile away.

Shinwell, 50, who left Glasgow for Israel 27 years ago, said the wards were running out of equipment and supplies to treat the hundreds of patients coming to the hospital, which was running at 200 per cent capacity.

Last week Nicola Sturgeon announced Scotland's health service was ready to help "civilians affected by the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza", and would respond to requests for doctors, nurses and supplies.

Shinwell hit back at the offer, claiming it was addressed to victims in Gaza without considering those suffering in Israel.

He said: "The suggestion that there is a humanitarian crisis that is only one-sided, but the situation here is that it's very dangerous and very unpleasant and I think the world outside ought to know what's going on.

"We are having 40, 60, 80 rockets fired at our town every day. It's an enormous problem on this side of the border as well. The goodwill of the doctors and nurses and technicians and everyone else is keeping the hospital open, a lot of people are working extra shifts."

The hospital, in the town of Rehovot, is just a mile outside the reach of <u>Hamas</u> rockets coming from across the Gaza border, which have razed much of the surrounding area.

Shinwell, who is in charge of the 6,000 <u>women</u> a year who give birth in the hospital and their babies, has seen dozen of pregnant mothers from the rocket zone arriving at the hospital in the past days.

He said: "The <u>women</u> who come here, we don't have enough beds for them, we don't have enough places to put them, the room is overflowing non-stop and we have people working around the clock.

#### Agony of rocket attack victims of Hamas overlooked, says Scot

"We had a mother who delivered here last week whose baby is very sick. She has three children at home in the rocket zone. The children are there with her parents, they are terrified but she can't go to be with them. The stress on people here is enormous."

Shinwell, who lives in Israel with his four children and two young grandchildren, said: "People who live in peaceful situations don't understand us. I imagine if some country was bombing Glasgow and Edinburgh and people had to run to Aberdeen, the world might see things ever so slightly differently."

But Mohammed Asif of the Scottish Palestinian Solidarity Campaign said: "In Gaza the hospitals are getting bombed, and with phosphorus which is illegal.

"You can't compare the humanitarian crisis, you see Israelis having to live in shelters but they are lucky, at least they have somewhere to shelter."

A Scottish Government spokeswoman denied that aid was offered solely to victims in Gaza. She said: "We have announced that we stand ready to respond to requests for assistance."

Load-Date: January 19, 2009



# <u>Videotape adds to rift in Jewish community; Some object to the way images</u> portray T.O.'s 'pro-Hamas' protests

The Toronto Star

January 15, 2009 Thursday

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Section: WORLD AND COMMENT; Pg. AA03

Length: 366 words

Byline: Emily Mathieu, Toronto Star

#### **Body**

The release of a videotape containing images of people burning flags and shouting slurs at "pro-<u>Hamas</u>" rallies has exacerbated a rift within Toronto's Jewish community over Israel's actions in Gaza.

"Everyone has the right to peacefully protest," said Bernie Farber, chief executive officer of the Canadian Jewish Congress, which released the tape at a Toronto media conference yesterday.

"People have the right to protest Israel's policies regarding Gaza as others have the right to protest terrorist groups like *Hamas*. No one has the right to vilify, demonize and incite."

Farber said the recent scenes of "pro-<u>Hamas</u>" demonstrators in Montreal and Toronto shouting slogans against Jews, burning Israel's flag and waving signs equating the Star of David with a swastika are examples of a "frightening" tide of intolerance flowing unchecked on Canadian streets.

He called for organizers and supporters at the rallies to condemn the excessive behaviour.

CJC put together the four-minute tape using its own video of the rallies and clips posted online by others. CJC has posted the tape on YouTube, under the heading "Canadian Jewish Congress exposes incitement to hatred and violence at pro-<u>Hamas</u> rallies." There is a link to the tape at cjc.ca.

A handful of protesters braved the frigid cold outside yesterday's conference to speak out against the CJC's release of the tape.

Dan Freeman-Maloy, a York University graduate student, said the group was "in no moral position, as its leaders shamelessly justify ongoing crimes against humanity, to smear those who have the basic human decency to speak out against these horrors."

He called the tape a diversionary tactic meant to deflect attention away from Israel's actions in Gaza.

Judy Deutsch, one of eight Jewish Canadian <u>women</u> recently arrested during a peaceful protest at the Israeli consulate in Toronto, said the tape gives a distorted view of the rallies and ignores the viewpoint of Jews opposed to Israel's action.

"It doesn't do Jews around the world any good if Israel continues to act with impunity, over and over again, against international law."

Videotape adds to rift in Jewish community Some object to the way images portray T.O.'s 'pro-Hamas' protests

The CLC has sent its tape to police in Toronto and Montreal and the RCMP to check for illegal conduct.

Load-Date: January 15, 2009



# IDF: Large majority of Palestinians killed in Operation Cast Lead were terrorists. 1,166 dead: 709 Hamas operatives, 162 male casualties not yet classified and 295 non-combatants

The Jerusalem Post March 27, 2009 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 339 words

**Byline: YAAKOV LAPPIN** 

#### **Body**

The IDF formally released precise figures on Thursday for the first time detailing Palestinian casualties incurred during Operation Cast Lead, and said a large majority of those killed were terrorists.

Of the 1,166 names of Palestinian dead gathered by the IDF's Research Department, 709 have been identified as "*Hamas* terror operatives," the IDF said, adding that the terrorists hailed from a variety of organizations.

According to the IDF, 162 additional names of men killed during the operation "have not been yet attributed to any organization."

A total of 295 Palestinian non-combatants died during the operation - 89 of them under the age of 16, and 49 of them **women**, the army added.

The figures were released "following the publication of reports that introduced false information originating from various Palestinian sources," the IDF said.

"In order to remove any doubt regarding the number of Palestinians killed in Operation Cast Lead, the IDF wishes to introduce the accurate figures to the public.

"The figures were gathered following the examination of various intelligence sources and after the names and numbers were thoroughly cross-referenced and examined," it added.

In its statement, the IDF stressed that Operation Cast Lead targeted <u>Hamas</u> "and not the citizens of the Gaza Strip."

"It must be stressed that the fighting took place in a complex battlefield, defined by the <u>Hamas</u> terror organization itself. The <u>Hamas</u> terror organization placed the primary fighting scene at the heart of civilian neighborhoods as it booby-trapped homes, fired from schools, and used civilians as human shields," the statement continued.

The IDF said it took "extensive measures" to avoid striking noncombatants. The steps included issuing warnings via leaflets, broadcast warnings in Palestinian media outlets, and phone calls to homes in the conflict zone.

IDF: Large majority of Palestinians killed in Operation Cast Lead were terrorists. 1,166 dead: 709 Hamas operatives, 162 male casualties not yet classified and ....

"The procedure of making use of warning shots and the briefing of commanders to take extra precautions in populated areas were also among the measures taken by the IDF," the army said.

### **Graphic**

Photo: Of the 1,166 names of Palestinian dead in Operation Cast Lead gathered by the IDF's Research Department, 709 have been identified as "*Hamas* terror operatives." (Credit: Hatem Moussa/AP)

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



# Peres to UN's Ban: We have no reason to apologize for Gaza war. President blasts Hamas in heated exchange with Al-Jazeera reporter

The Jerusalem Post

May 7, 2009 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 501 words

Byline: ALLISON HOFFMAN, Jerusalem Post correspondent

#### **Body**

NEW YORK - President Shimon Peres told reporters Wednesday that IDF forces did not intentionally aim at civilians or United Nations facilities during Operation Cast Lead, but acknowledged that Israel may have made "some mistakes."

Speaking after a private meeting with UN Secretary- General Ban Ki-moon, Peres repeated the government's position that it would not accept "one word" of a report about attacks on UN facilities during the war that was released Tuesday.

The report, commissioned by Ban in February, blamed Israel for failing to take adequate precautions to ensure that UN installations and civilians sheltering in them would be protected from shells or other fire intended for <u>Hamas</u> terrorists.

"I admit we made some mistakes - I don't know any war without some mistakes," Peres said, noting that Israeli soldiers were killed by friendly fire during the offensive.

"We would not like to kill a single civilian," he added.

But he said Israel would not apologize, as the board of inquiry recommended, for causing civilian deaths and injuries while trying to rout *Hamas*.

"We don't think we have to apologize because we have the right to defend the lives of our children and <u>women</u>," he said. He later added that the American army checked Israel's actions and found no violation of laws of war.

A reporter for Al-Jazeera interrupted Peres, replying, "But the United Nations says you were wrong."

"We never aimed at any civilians," Peres said during the heated exchange.

"You want an answer? I know as good as you know," Peres went on, challenging the reporter to explain why *Hamas* continued to fire rockets into southern Israel.

"Why did they fire? What for?" Peres said.

Peres to UN's Ban: We have no reason to apologize for Gaza war. President blasts Hamas in heated exchange with Al-Jazeera reporter

He criticized the four-person board of inquiry for failing to account for <u>Hamas</u> actions that drew fire into civilian areas, saying that if <u>Hamas</u> "didn't shoot, there wouldn't be a single problem." Peres said he felt the tenor of the report threatened a "rift" between Israel and the UN, but said he had aired his concerns with Ban.

"We had a problem, but it is settled," Peres said.

Ban is scheduled to discuss the report Thursday with the Security Council. He said Tuesday his office would not back any additional inquiry into Israeli conduct during the Gaza war, though a separate committee will review questions of compensation Israel may owe the UN for millions of dollars in damage to facilities operated by the Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees and other UN agencies.

Israel, which cooperated with the board of inquiry report, is party to that process.

The government has so far said it would not cooperate with a separate probe initiated by the UN's Human Rights Council, a body widely viewed as biased against Israel.

Peres added that he had raised additional concerns with Ban about the anti-Israel speech last month by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at the UN's conference on racism in Geneva.

"There is a limit to formalities," Peres warned. He added that Ban claimed not to know that Ahmadinejad would be speaking.

#### **Graphic**

Photo: PRESIDENT SHIMON Peres meets with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the United Nations in New York yesterday. (Credit: Amos Ben-Gershom/Government Press Office)

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



# Obama visit: Abbas brings Palestinian cause, but not support, to Washington; Not only are Fatah and Hamas deadlocked in a power struggle. Abbas's own Fatah bloc has rejected his new government.

The Christian Science Monitor May 28, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 868 words

Byline: Ilene R. Prusher Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

#### **Body**

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas came to meet President Barack Obama on Thursday to discuss the future of Middle East peace. But he is hobbled by the present instability back home. Not only are Palestinians bitterly divided between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah, estranged by politics, geography, and Israeli restrictions on their movement. Now Mr. Abbas's main support base in his government - the Fatah bloc of lawmakers - has summarily rejected the cabinet he cobbled together last week in what critics call a rushed attempt to present Mr. Obama with a sound negotiating partner.

"The idea was to form a government that would arm Abu Mazen [Abbas] with something stable before he met with Obama, but it backfired," says Hani el-Masri, head of Badael, the Palestine Media, Research and Studies Center here. "It was a rush to establish a new government by ignoring the internal conflicts and the Hamas-Fatah dialogue," says Mr. Masri. "Instead, they should have postponed forming a new government until after the meeting with Obama, and waited at least until July." Abbas promised disgruntled party members that he would hold a Fatah Congress on July 1 to determine the way forward. It's not yet clear whether the congress - which would be the first of its kind in 20 years - will be held, and if so, where. Also in early July, talks between *Hamas* and Fatah, which was forced to leave Gaza in June 2007 after violent clashes with Hamas, are scheduled to resume in Cairo. Many here believe that a reconciliation agreement, presumably leading to some form of national unity government, is the only way for Palestinians to present even a nominally united front in peace talks with Israel. That Abbas jumped ahead with installing a new government without waiting either for the reconciliation talks - or the major gathering of Fatah politicos - was taken as a sign he didn't put much value in either. "Hamas has made a lot of mistakes and has stopped things from moving forward," says Masri. "But had Abbas really wanted the dialogue to proceed, he would have shown some flexibility." But even a unity Fatah-Hamas government would face daunting challenges at the peace table. Israel, which announced Thursday that it had killed a prominent *Hamas* militant in the West Bank, has refused to deal with the group. Both Israel and the US considers *Hamas* a terrorist organization, but Obama has given some indications that his administration may be open to dealing with a unity government. Overlooked, rankand-file rebels Abbas's fellow Fatah members were affronted by his announcement last week of a new cabinet headed by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, infuriated that they were not consulted in picking his inner circle. Azzam el-Ahmad, the leader of the Fatah bloc in the 132-seat Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), says Abbas totally overlooked the rank-and-file representatives, elected in the January 2006 elections. "The Fatah bloc should be the backbone of the government," says Mr. Ahmad. "We're a hard-working unit that should not have been ignored during consultations on the formation of the government." He acknowledges that there was, however, mounting pressure on Abbas to improve his government's standing over the last one, dubbed a "caretaker government" because it was meant to be a temporary solution to the political crisis. Mr. Fayyad had submitted his resignation in

Obama visit: Abbas brings Palestinian cause, but not support, to Washington Not only are Fatah and Hamas deadlocked in a power struggle. Abbas's own Fatah bloc ....

March. "The government suffered from lack of professionals who could carry serious political weight in the past year, especially during the war in Gaza. We needed a stronger presence, and at times the people were disappointed with the performance of some ministers," Ahmad says. One small step for Palestinian democracy The Fatah representatives have clearly made themselves heard in the past week with their threat to ban the government of Abbas - this despite the fact that he is chairman of Fatah. They expect a shift in attitude. "Abu Mazen will take us more seriously now, and we'll agree to go back to the government if we sort out our problems with him," says Ahmad. Abbas still has four ministerial spots to distribute, which can serve to help patch things up. One position is slated to go to Rabeha Diab. She was offered the Ministry of Women's Affairs, but in solidarity with the rest of Fatah, she turned it down. "We created a positive commotion. Suddenly, people see we have the power to reject. We can stand up against our leadership if we see that something is wrong, and we've become stronger because of this," Ms. Diab said in an interview in the PLC headquarters here. In other words, that's one small leap for Palestinian democracy. But it's also a setback for Abbas's drive to gird himself for his work in Washington, in Cairo, and ultimately, with a new Israeli government that has so far declined to make any endorsement of the two-state solution. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says that to start negotiations, the Palestinians must first recognize Israel as a Jewish state - something *Hamas* has spurned. Abbas indicated this week that he will set similar preconditions before resuming negotiations: that Israel recognize the Palestinians' right to a state and that it freeze settlement expansion.

Load-Date: February 19, 2010



## Netanyahu casts himselfas player on a world stage; Right-winger calls for destruction of Hamas in defence of democracy

The Independent (London)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

First Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 20

Length: 765 words

Byline: Donald Macintyre IN JERUSALEM

#### **Body**

At any other time there would be nothing notable about Benjamin Netanyahu reminding everyone that he thinks that "at the end of the day" there is "no alternative" but to "bring down" <u>Hamas</u>. But at a time when the ostensible aims of the war Israel has waged for 18 days have fallen rather short of that, it can hardly fail to have an impact. The leader of the right-wing opposition party Likud, and the man the polls predict could become prime minister in less than a month's time chose to do it, moreover, during a fluent session with foreign journalists in which - for much of the time at least - he cast himself as a statesman comfortable on the global stage and determined to remain above party politics at a time of war.

He said he was looking forward, if elected, to working with Senator Hillary Clinton as US Secretary of State, without the slightest hint of the friction that existed between him and her husband, President Bill Clinton, when the Likud leader was prime minister in the Nineties.

Justifying a vote by a Knesset committee this week to ban two Arab parties from contesting the elections, he smoothly quoted a remark by the rationalist philosopher Baruch Spinoza that "democracy allows all the freedoms except the freedom to destroy democracy". And even at his most bellicose, he eschewed the rhetoric his main rival, Tzipi Livni, has unashamedly used about Israel "going wild". Instead he declared at one point of the many hundreds of Palestinian casualties: "We grieve for every one of them; we genuinely do," before adding, inevitably: "But a responsible government does not give immunity to criminal terrorists who fire at us while using civilians as a human shield."

But this is not the whole story. Mr Netanyahu was aiming yesterday at an overseas audience. Indeed he spoke explicitly about the need to start "rolling back" the attacks from abroad on Israel's conduct of the war - attacks which he said have a "dual feature". One is "that they distort the truth and the second is that they distort morality. It is not true that Israel is targeting civilians. It does everything in its power to minimise civilian casualties but these are inevitable in a war in which the terrorists embed themselves in the civilian population ... what would you do if your country was rocketed for a full eight years with thousands of rockets?"

Netanyahu casts himselfas player on a world stage Right-winger calls for destruction of Hamas in defence of democracy

He knows that he does not have to convince the large majority of Israelis still undeterred from their support for the war by a Palestinian death toll in Gaza which could, after only two and a half weeks, overtake the one incurred in Lebanon in five weeks in 2006, and included by Monday night 292 boys and girls under 18, and 75 <u>women</u>. And fully accepting of the military's explanation reported in the Israeli press that it has put its own soldiers' safety first and that of Palestinian civilians second. For an Israeli audience, Mr Netanyahu's task is to retain his appeal to just that supportive majority when - unlike two of his political rivals, Ms Livni and Ehud Barak, the Defence Minister - he is not actually running the war most of them so approve of.

But the long shadow of his own popularity, as the leading politician who has most consistently advocated the removal of <u>Hamas</u>, certainly hangs over this bloody campaign. For now he is choosing his words carefully, saying that Israel must achieve over <u>Hamas</u> "a victory which will cripple its capability to perpetrate terrorist attacks against us and restore deterrence throughout the region. It must stop the smuggling corridors that enable <u>Hamas</u> to smuggle thousands of rockets into Gaza ... The government has had and will continue to have my support to achieve this objective. I also said that <u>Hamas</u>, a terror organisation that is committed to our destruction, must ultimately be removed from Gaza. Should the government decide to seek that objective, it will also have our support."

Which leaves, as Ms Livni, Mr Barak and Ehud Olmert, the outgoing Prime Minister, know only too well, plenty of room in the interval - assuming there is one - between the end of the war and the election to criticise the basis on which it ends if it fails to meet his requirements, and to take some of the credit if it does. Towards the end of his news conference yesterday, he was asked if he thought the government might not have embarked on the operation if he hadn't been advocating it from an electorally threatening position. "I haven't any idea," he said crisply. It was a reply that strictly adhered to the ban on electioneering imposed during Operation Cast Lead. But it was hardly a denial.

Load-Date: January 13, 2009



# Guardian Weekly: Assault on Gaza: Israelis advance into Gaza City as Olmert says goals nearly met: Military leaders speak of eagerness to tackle Hamas in urban areas

Guardian Weekly

January 16, 2009 Friday

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### *The*GuardianWeekly

Section: Pg. 3

Length: 641 words

Byline: Rory McCarthy, Jerusalem

#### **Body**

Israeli tanks fought their way into the suburbs of Gaza City for the first time on Tuesday after a night of intense bombing.

Heavy fighting was reported in Tel al-Hawa, in the south of the city, where tanks and attack helicopters could be heard under waves of heavy air strikes and artillery bombardments. Several buildings were on fire, and clouds of black smoke hung over the city. Residents said they had endured one of the heaviest nights of bombing so far.

The death toll on the Palestinian side stands at 910, among them 292 children and 75 <u>women</u>, according to the Palestinian health ministry. Israel says it has weakened <u>Hamas</u>'s military capabilities and claims to have killed about 300 fighters, but there is no way to confirm that.

The Islamist movement fired at least 18 rockets into southern Israel on Monday, but there were no reports of injuries. More were fired on Tuesday morning. Thirteen Israelis have died during the conflict, including three civilians.

For the first time in the conflict, the violence was taken last week to northern Israel. Four rockets were fired from southern Lebanon into the town of Nahariya, injuring two people at a nursing home. A small Palestinian faction was believed to be behind the attack, but it did not appear to herald a regional escalation of the conflict.

Israel's prime minister, Ehud Olmert, said Israel was nearing its goals in the conflict, but divisions emerged again among Israel's leadership, with Olmert and some generals apparently eager to escalate the offensive, contrary to the advice of senior ministers. Olmert said the fighting would only stop if <u>Hamas</u> halted rocket fire and could not rearm. "Anything else will be met with the Israeli people's iron fist," Olmert said. "We will continue as long as necessary to remove this threat."

But Ehud Barak, the defence minister, and Tzipi Livni, the foreign minister, reportedly favour bringing the conflict to a swift end. Olmert is resigning and so, unlike Barak and Livni, is not standing in next month's general election, which some analysts said accounted for his intent to step up the conflict.

Guardian Weekly: Assault on Gaza: Israelis advance into Gaza City as Olmert says goals nearly met: Military leaders speak of eagerness to tackle Hamas in urban ....

Some Israeli generals were eager to invade Gaza's urban areas. Major General Yoav Galant, head of southern command, said an escalation was a "once in a generation" opportunity to strike at *Hamas*. "If we don't do that, we'll be missing an historic opportunity," he was quoted as saying.

Israel has banned all reporters from entering Gaza to report on the conflict, but on Monday it allowed a Reuters journalist to briefly embed with the Israeli military and release his report, after it had been passed by a military censor. "We are tightening the encirclement of the city," said Brigadier Eyal Eisenberg, a commander of the offensive. "We are not static. We are careful to be constantly on the move."

Another officer, named only as Lieutenant Colonel Yehuda, spoke in optimistic terms about the fight. "I think <u>Hamas</u> has already folded," he said. A tank commander, named only as Lieutenant Colonel Erez, said his forces had encountered anti-armour weaponry. "We have responded pre-emptively and forcefully," he said. "We also hit anyone seen trying to observe our movements."

Khaled Meshaal, the leader of <u>Hamas</u> who lives in exile in Damascus, said the offensive had ended any chance of a broader peace deal with the Palestinians. Addressing Israel, Meshaal said in a televised speech last Saturday: "You have destroyed the last chance for negotiations. No one will now believe you."

The US president-elect, Barack Obama, described the death of civilians as heartbreaking. "It makes me much more determined to try and break a deadlock that has been going on for decades," he said. He vowed to act quickly after his inauguration to position the US as a trusted third party that could act as an interlocutor between the Israelis and Palestinians.

Load-Date: January 24, 2009



#### New deadly raid on Hamas

The Star (South Africa)
June 05, 2009 Friday
e2 Edition

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Section: Pg. 4

Length: 634 words

### **Body**

QALQILYA: A policeman and a <u>Hamas</u> gunman were killed yesterday when Palestinian forces loyal to President Mahmoud Abbas raided a West Bank house, the second such operation in the past week. The raids, in Qalqilya, appeared to be an effort by Abbas to show the US he was carrying out the Palestinian Authority's security commitments under a 2003 US-backed peace "road map".

MADRID: Scores of would-be illegal immigrants trying to get to Spain were missing in the Straits of Gibraltar yesterday after the boat they were travelling in overturned. Coast guards found 11 men and 11 <u>women</u>, one of them pregnant, on the hull of the upturned boat south of Tarifa - Spain's most southerly tip - and near the Moroccan port of Tangier.

DADAAB, Kenya: Somalis fleeing war and hunger at home are pouring into neighbouring Kenya at an average of 7 000 a month, swelling what is already the world's largest refugee settlement, UN staff said yesterday. Eighteen years of civil conflict in Somalia show no sign of abatement, with foreign militants joining Islamist rebels seeking to topple a new government - the 15th attempt since 1991.

PARIS: The Air France jet that crashed into the Atlantic Ocean on Monday was flying too slowly before the disaster, Le Monde newspaper said yesterday, citing sources close to the inquiry. The paper said the manufacturer of the doomed Airbus would now issue a recommendation advising companies using the A330 aircraft of optimal speeds during poor weather.

#### Berlusconi laughs off smear

ROME: Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, in a counter-attack before a European election, yesterday said a probe into abuse of office for using state planes to transport friends "meant nothing" and would be shelved. Rome prosecutors had opened the probe after a complaint from the Codacons consumer association over reports that Berlusconi used state aircraft to fly guests to Sardinia.

DUBLIN: Leaders of 18 Catholic religious orders responsible for the abuse of thousands of Irish children in their care met government leaders yesterday to discuss what more they can contribute to the victims. The meeting comes two weeks after the publication of an investigation into six decades of beatings, molestation and humiliation in Church-run institutions for castaway children.

BEIJING: Chinese police yesterday aggressively deterred dissent on the 20th anniversary of the crackdown on democracy activists in Tiananmen Square, ignoring calls from US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and even

#### New deadly raid on Hamas

Taiwan's China-friendly president for Beijing to face up to the 1989 violence. Foreign journalists were barred from the vast square as police stood guard.

NEW DELHI: India's new government yesterday said it would seek to mend ties with Pakistan as long as Islamabad "confronted" militant groups operating on its soil. The comments came two days after New Delhi said it was disappointed by the decision of a Pakistani court to free the head of an Islamic charity which New Delhi says was linked to last year's Mumbai attacks.

MESA: Five Arizona police officers are on paid leave after one allegedly flushed a foetus down a toilet. Four officers responding to a call about a possible miscarriage at a motel discovered a woman who apparently lost a foetus estimated to be 12 to 14 weeks old. An officer not at the motel instructed the four over the phone to flush the 10cm foetus down the toilet, rather than take it to a hospital.

AMSTERDAM: Dutch police in Groningen in the northern Netherlands have arrested 140 teenagers suspected of having shoplifted at least 230 stores. They mostly stole make-up and clothes, which they hid in school lockers. Police said many of the 140 teenagers - mostly girls aged 12 to 17 - were acquainted but were not members of any gang. The arrests followed that of two others in March.

Load-Date: June 5, 2009



#### Iran's the winner if ceasefire fails

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

January 23, 2009 Friday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Opinion; Pg. 13

Length: 826 words

Byline: COLIN RUBENSTEIN. Dr Colin Rubenstein is executive director of the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs

Council and a former lecturer of Middle East politics at Monash University.

#### **Body**

Israeli troops have withdrawn from Gaza following the military campaign designed to degrade <u>Hamas</u>'s ability to continue firing rockets at Israeli civilians. The tenuous ceasefire has a chance to take hold - although it has been challenged several times by <u>Hamas</u> rocket fire - while terms are being finalised.

This latest fighting was part of the region-wide struggle between moderate Arab states on the one side, and Iran and its terrorist proxies on the other. A successful military operation against <u>Hamas</u>, followed by an effective ceasefire, will set back Tehran's regional ambitions and attempts to destabilise the region, and help prospects for a two-state resolution to the conflict.

The regional context of the fighting was clear. While Tehran warned <u>Hamas</u> not to accept the terms of an Egyptian ceasefire, the moderate Arab governments (Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and even the Palestinian Authority) were largely muted in their response to - and even quietly supported - Israel's actions. Despite anger over civilian casualties, many in the Arab world, including Palestinians, have correctly blamed <u>Hamas</u> for the violence.

Australian and other Western interests are implicated in the regional struggle, as <u>Hamas</u> and Iranian interests are diametrically opposed to all those who support a two-state resolution to the conflict and the wider fight for human rights. <u>Hamas</u>, the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, has run a brutal terrorist regime that seeks to impose an Islamist state over all of "Palestine"; it recently imposed Sharia law in Gaza; it murders its political opponents; and it oppresses <u>women</u>, gays and minorities.

Supporting a fellow democracy with which they have shared values and interests, the Australian Government and other democracies defended Israel's right to self-defence against <u>Hamas</u> rockets while also calling for a ceasefire and a return to the peace process. Importantly, these governments also recognised the true cause of the conflict: <u>Hamas</u>'s launching nearly 10,000 rockets at Israeli civilians for the last eight years.

Thanks to Iranian assistance, these rockets were no longer the "homemade" Qassams, but were of ever-increasing sophistication, range and lethality. <u>Hamas</u>'s capabilities had grown to the point that nearly a million Israelis and key strategic assets, including ports and the Dimona nuclear facility, were threatened.

Justifications by <u>Hamas</u> and its defenders for these attacks ring hollow. How can <u>Hamas</u> claim it is only "resisting occupation" when Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, and <u>Hamas</u>'s response was to fire even more rockets into pre-1967 Israel?

#### Iran 's the winner if ceasefire fails

Claims that the attacks are in response to Israel's internationally backed blockade are similarly specious. The blockade did not begin after *Hamas* was elected in 2006, as is frequently misstated, but was only imposed after *Hamas* ejected the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, and Fatah from Gaza in a violent June 2007 coup.

Israel and the international community offered to lift the blockade as soon as <u>Hamas</u> recognised Israel's right to exist, renounced violence, and accepted previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements. Hardly onerous requirements for entry to a peace process; but by studiously refusing to do any of the three, even after Israel quit Gaza, <u>Hamas</u> has demonstrated - yet again - that its true objection is Israel's existence. But that's not a surprise, since its charter calls for the destruction of Israel and extermination of Jews, and <u>Hamas</u>'s leadership repeatedly reaffirms those goals in both words and deeds.

Unfortunately, many of Israel's misguided critics have fallen prey to what has been called <u>Hamas</u>'s "win-win" strategy, whereby it seeks to kill as many Israeli civilians as possible while also endangering the lives of ordinary Gazans. Thus <u>Hamas</u> fires its rockets from schools and hospitals, stores ammunition at these and other civilian places, and its fighters blend in to the civilian population - all war crimes - while hoping Israel's response leads to civilian casualties, despite Israel's doing all in its power to minimise them.

Yet, Israel is accused of acting disproportionately or indiscriminately, targeting civilians when responding to valid military targets. Meanwhile, while using its own population as civilian shields, <u>Hamas</u> indiscriminately targets Israeli civilians, and few objections are raised by human rights activists or NGOs.

As long as <u>Hamas</u> is able to wage a rocket war against Israel with impunity, there will not be peace. That is why many, including the US President, Barack Obama, stress that the key to a durable ceasefire is to stop <u>Hamas</u> rearming.

The international community must be steadfast in refusing to negotiate with <u>Hamas</u> as long as it remains recalcitrant. Those who argue that Israeli-Palestinian peace is impossible unless <u>Hamas</u> is part of the process have it wrong. <u>Hamas</u> has absolutely no interest in peace with Israel, and thus negotiating with it is futile.

Load-Date: January 22, 2009



## Master bomber Yihye Ayyash's mother: IDF is more polite than PA when raiding Palestinian homes

The Jerusalem Post June 7, 2009 Sunday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 509 words

Byline: KHALED ABU TOAMEH

#### **Body**

IDF soldiers who raid the homes of Palestinians are more polite than the Palestinian Authority security forces in the West Bank, the mother of a top *Hamas* terrorist who was killed by Israel said over the weekend.

The mother was speaking shortly after security forces loyal to PA President Mahmoud Abbas stormed her family's house in the village of Rafat in the West Bank.

Her son, Yihye Ayyash, nicknamed The Engineer, was responsible for a spate of suicide bombings in the 1990s that killed more than 100 Israelis and wounded hundreds others.

The mother said that about 30 Palestinian security officers participated in the raid early Friday.

"They behaved in a shameful way," she said. "When the Jews come, they ask for permission and cry out before they enter a house." She said that Abbas's security forces acted in a "barbaric" manner and did not take into account that <u>women</u> and children were sleeping inside the house.

The Palestinian policemen did not even knock on the door, she added. "They raided the house and started searching for weapons," she said. "They left behind a lot of damage. Even a copy of the Koran was not spared."

The raid on Ayyash's home came amid increased tensions between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah in the West Bank. PA policemen killed four <u>Hamas</u> gunmen in Kalkilya in two separate incidents last week. Four policemen were also killed in the clashes.

Over the weekend, Abbas's forces arrested another six <u>Hamas</u> supporters in different parts of the West Bank, sources close to the Islamic movement said.

The sources said that the arrests bring to approximately 700 the number of <u>Hamas</u>-affiliated detainees who are currently being held in PA prisons in the West Bank.

The PA security forces have also banned the families of the four <u>Hamas</u> men who were killed in Kalkilya from mourning them in public, the sources said. They added that PA policemen prevented mourners from heading to the dead men's homes to offer their condolences to the families.

The wives of the owners of the houses where the *Hamas* men were hiding remain in custody.

Master bomber Yihye Ayyash's mother: IDF is more polite than PA when raiding Palestinian homes

Amal al-Basha, whose husband Abdel Nasser was killed in the first clash between the <u>Hamas</u> gunmen and PA policemen, is accused of hurling a hand grenade at the security forces, killing three policemen. She was seriously injured in the raid.

The second woman is the wife of Abdel Fattah Shraim. She and her husband are being interrogated on suspicion of providing shelter to the two <u>Hamas</u> terrorists who were shot and killed by PA policemen when they were discovered hiding in the family's basement.

Meanwhile, <u>Hamas</u> published photos and names of PA policemen and security commanders who allegedly took part in the elimination of the four <u>Hamas</u> men in Kalkilya.

<u>Hamas</u> called on its supporters in the West Bank to kill the policemen and their officers because of their role in the killings and for being "collaborators" with Israel and the US.

<u>Hamas</u>'s list included Husam Sheikh Hamed, a senior officer with the PA's Preventive Security Service, who is said to have personally led the attacks on the two <u>Hamas</u> cells.

#### **Graphic**

Photo: PALESTINIAN <u>FEMALE</u> supporters of <u>Hamas</u> gather during a demonstration in Gaza City yesterday against recent operations by the Palestinian Authority security forces against <u>Hamas</u> in the West Bank. (Credit: Hatem Moussa/AP)

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



We must make the ceasefire stick and work out a solution; COLUMNIST the thursday essay As the ceasefire between Hamas and Israel appears to be holding, Ann Clwyd MP, chair of the all-party Parliamentary human rights group, explains what must happen next to ensure lasting peace in Gaza

The Western Mail

January 22, 2009 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 24

Length: 777 words

Byline: Ann Clwyd MP

#### **Body**

I CONTINUE to hope, like many others, that the Israelis and the Palestinians will hammer out a viable two-state solution around the negotiating table.

Yet the recent scenario of Israelis and Palestinians hammering it out with tanks, planes and rockets risks taking us all, yet again, further from realising long-term stability and prosperity for both Israelis and Palestinians. We just can't let that happen.

The three-week assault on Gaza has been horrific. The damage to homes, neighbourhoods and public infrastructure is likely to cost more than EUR1bn to repair.

The death toll now stands at more than 1,300 Palestinians, with about 40% of those <u>women</u> and children, and 13 Israelis.

It will be a while before we can accurately assess the destruction, and the rights and wrongs committed by both sides.

I fully support the call from Foreign Secretary David Miliband that the "extremely serious allegations about the conduct of both sides during this conflict made by the Red Cross and others must be properly investigated".

This will require the consensus of the international community.

After the siege on Jenin in April 2002, in which more than 50 people were killed - and which I witnessed first-hand - the UN was prevented from carrying out an effective investigation.

This time Israel, or <u>Hamas</u>, cannot be allowed to impede efforts to bring those responsible for war crimes to account. And reparations should also be considered.

Unfortunately, as a Human Rights Watch report emphasised, Gaza was on the brink of a humanitarian catastrophe even before the recent fighting, because of Israel's blockade, assisted by Egypt's Gaza border closure.

We must make the ceasefire stick and work out a solution COLUMNIST the thursday essay As the ceasefire between Hamas and Israel appears to be holding, Ann Clwyd....

As the BBC highlighted in November, since <u>Hamas</u> took control of Gaza only basic humanitarian items have been allowed in, and virtually no exports permitted, paralysing the economy.

Limited fuel and a lack of spare parts have also had a serious impact on sewage treatment, waste collection, water supply and medical facilities.

The blockade is a form of collective punishment, illegal under international law, which will also have to be lifted if life in Gaza is to regain any sense of normality.

Has all this weakened *Hamas*?

Certainly the Palestinians as a whole have been weakened as the divide between Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> grows wider - arguing has already started over who is the rightful recipient of aid promised by foreign governments.

But this continued antagonism is bad not just for Palestinians, but for the viability of the two-state solution.

And ultimately, the suffering of Palestinians rebounds on Israelis, and the wider international community.

If the Israelis renew their attacks on Gaza or obstruct aid to Gaza, it will only serve to fuel further resentment among the Palestinian people, some of whom will be driven to support the agenda and activities of extremists.

The economic meltdown which has resulted from the blockade has also made many more reliant on <u>Hamas</u> handouts.

Of course, the flow of arms to <u>Hamas</u> has to be stemmed, and the death of Israelis due to continuing rocket attacks stopped, but without jeopardising the lives and livelihoods of law-abiding Palestinians.

Now that the fighting has stopped, a concerted effort has to be made to get the parties talking, whether directly to each other or via intermediaries.

I was in Israel and the West Bank last summer in my role as chair of the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Committee on Middle East Questions, trying to facilitate regular dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian Parliamentarians.

This is something I and my fellow committee members will continue to work on. If we are going to build positive momentum, moderates - whatever their political persuasion - have to come together and be allowed to deliver.

To that end, Palestinian parliamentarians in long-term Israeli custody, mostly from <u>Hamas</u> and some from Fatah, must either be charged and subjected to fair legal proceedings or released.

Unless it can be proven by a court of law that these individuals have committed a criminal act, they are entitled to exercise their mandates.

This episode is a regrettable detour from what needs to be done to resolve this long-standing conflict.

Getting negotiations back on track is now going to be harder than ever.

The immediate priority is to make this ceasefire stick. But then, if anything is to be salvaged from this terrible episode, it must serve as a timely reminder, to the Israelis, all Palestinians and the international community, that a military solution is illusory; the current humanitarian situation is indefensible and all parties have a part to play in reaching a viable settlement.

### **Graphic**

We must make the ceasefire stick and work out a solution COLUMNIST the thursday essay As the ceasefire between Hamas and Israel appears to be holding, Ann Clwyd....

LIFE GOES ON: A Palestinian boy hangs up laundry in front of the destroyed Palestinian Foreign Ministry in Gaza City yesterday

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### Just defence despite death toll

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First Edition

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**Byline: ROBERT GOOT** 

#### **Body**

The view that Israel is using disproportionate force against *Hamas* is a misconception.

NO WAY has yet been found to conduct even the most justified war without causing harm to innocent civilians.

During World War II, Royal Air Force bombers flattened entire German cities in response to Nazi bombing and rocket attacks against civilian targets in London and elsewhere. Most of the German dead, numbering in their tens of thousands, were civilians. Regrettably, on occasions the RAF's unintended victims included Allied prisoners of war.

Australian troops fighting in Vietnam, East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan have also sometimes caused more casualties among civilians than among the enemy. Yet nobody would have the right to call Australian troops murderers.

There is simply no such thing as a mistake-free war when it comes to avoiding civilian or "friendly fire" casualties.

To apply different, and much harsher, standards to Israeli forces engaged in putting an end to more than 8000 <u>Hamas</u> rocket attacks deliberately aimed at killing and maiming Israeli civilians, and which constitute a war crime, is therefore the height of hypocrisy.

Nearly a million Israelis live under the threat of being bombed. They get only 15 seconds' warning of an attack.

Israel's right to use force to defend and protect its citizens from armed attack is well recognised in international law. Its attempts to minimise civilian casualties among Gazans include targeting <u>Hamas</u> military infrastructure only and telephoning and leafleting civilians in combat zones before raids, even though <u>Hamas</u> also gets the benefit of these warnings.

Faced with rocket and mortar attacks against its own citizens, neither Australia nor any other country would expect its military forces to behave with any greater level of restraint.

<u>Hamas</u>'s strategy of attacking Israeli civilians while using Palestinian civilians as human shields is directly responsible for the current suffering in Gaza.

<u>Hamas</u> deliberately locates its missile launchers, weapons factories, tunnels and arms caches in densely populated residential areas, schools, homes and even hospitals and mosques.

#### Just defence despite death toll

Indeed, <u>Hamas</u> legislator Fathi Hamad recently boasted on Al-Aksa TV: "Palestinians formed human shields of <u>women</u>, children, the elderly and the mujahideen in order to challenge the Zionist bombing machine. It was as if they were saying to the Zionist enemy: 'We desire death like you desire life."

We are told more than 1000 Palestinians have died in the latest conflict but it is only rarely mentioned that at least two-thirds of them have been <u>Hamas</u> and other combatants, not civilians. Nor was there any media outcry over the recent murder of two young Palestinian girls in Gaza by <u>Hamas</u>, when one of their rockets fell short of its target in Israel.

The contention that Israel has used disproportionate force is misconceived. In international law, proportionality does not entail simplistic tit-for-tat comparisons of the number of casualties on each side or the extent of the force used by each side.

Israel is entitled to use such force as is necessary to repel the source of the armed attack against its people and territory, and to prevent it from recurring. Every civilian casualty is a tragedy, whether the victim is an Israeli or a Palestinian.

Israel has no quarrel with the Palestinian people. Its fight is with <u>Hamas</u>. On December 18, 2008, the day before the truce between Israel and <u>Hamas</u> was due to expire, Fawzi Barhoum, a spokesman for the <u>Hamas</u> rulers of Gaza, told Agence France-Presse after a meeting with Islamic Jihad and other factions in Gaza: "The truce will end tomorrow. There is no possibility of renewing the truce." <u>Hamas</u> followed this one week later by firing 80 rockets a day at Israel before Israel took military action.

The fact that a majority of <u>Hamas</u> members were elected to the Palestinian legislative council in 2006 cannot legitimise <u>Hamas</u>'s violent seizure of executive power in 2007, the summary execution of its opponents or its crimes against Israelis and its own civilians.

<u>Hamas</u> deserves its status as a listed terrorist organisation in numerous countries. Government officials and media outlets, even in the Arab world, have condemned **Hamas**.

The basis of the conflict remains the oft-repeated determination of <u>Hamas</u> and its Iranian backers to wipe Israel off the map and to exterminate or drive out its Jewish population. Genocidal attitudes towards Jews emerged in Palestinian politics in the early 1940s, long before Israel was established, when Palestinian leader Grand Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini shook hands with Hitler and aligned the Palestinian cause with Nazi Germany.

A Google search of <u>Hamas</u>'s charter and a reading of that document reveals its true objectives and its murderous attitude to Jews (not just Israel) all too clearly. Its openly genocidal agenda cannot be ignored or glossed over. **Hamas** has no fundamental aims that are capable of being negotiated.

When <u>Hamas</u> demands a ceasefire, it is demanding a one-way ceasefire by Israel alone, with <u>Hamas</u> free to resume rocket attacks against Israeli civilians at will. When <u>Hamas</u> demands that Israel lift its border restrictions, it is demanding that <u>Hamas</u> be free to continue smuggling weapons into Gaza to prepare for the next round in its self-declared war of annihilation against Israel.

Israel is committed to living peacefully alongside a viable State of Palestine. <u>Hamas</u>'s policy of attacking Israel is designed to prevent that occurring. All people of goodwill should support Israel's efforts to overcome <u>Hamas</u>'s campaign to destroy any prospects for a two-state solution to the conflict. It is the only hope for both peoples to live in dignity and peace.

Robert Goot is president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry.

By Invitation Only is a space for people of influence to have their say. Edited by Kerry-Anne Walsh. kwalsh@fairfaxmedia.com.au

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In the smart West Bank health club, between jogging and swimming laps, people were screaming 'Death to Israel...'; In an exclusive dispatch, we reveal how the Israeli war on Gaza may actually make Hamas stronger - and could now make Middle East peace an impossible dream SPECIAL REPORT

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**Length:** 2292 words **Byline:** David Rose

#### **Body**

In the 19th Century, there was a vogue for treating warfare as a spectator sport. At places such as Balaclava in the Crimea, where the Light Brigade made its doomed charge in 1854, and Manassas, Virginia, the site seven years later of the first battle of the American Civil War, people rode in their carriages from nearby towns, stood at a safe distance from the bloodshed and watched.

Last week, the third of Israel's assaults on the Gaza Strip, a drive along the 25-mile highway that runs along its eastern border inescapably brought this to mind. Most of the land is flat, and given the mile-wide 'sterile zone' between the road and the border, there is usually nothing to see.

But here and there are low hills, not much more than dunes, and on their summits stood a shifting cast of journalists, soldiers and ordinary Israelis, some with video cameras. From these viewpoints, Gaza's white concrete apartment blocks sparkled in the winter air, far enough away to seem disconnected but also so close that a German photographer told me he had managed to get shots with a telephoto lens of bloodied corpses lying in the streets.

Every day and night, the same drama was repeated. First would come the silvery streak of a rocket fired by the militants of <u>Hamas</u> or one of its allied factions, followed by its impact - in the case of those nearby, a deep, deafening boom.

Even before the rocket landed, one of the unmanned planes or 'drones' hovering over Gaza would try to pinpoint the launch site. Then would come the scream of an Israeli F16 jet, the streak of its own missile and another mighty explosion. Sometimes, the Israelis hit buildings that had been used to store ammunition, and the initial blast was followed by further streaks shooting into the sky like a giant display of fireworks. We knew there were people down there, but it seemed hard to believe given what was happening.

As the Palestinian death toll surpassed 1,000, including more than 300 children, it was also difficult to remember that just over a year ago President George W. Bush pledged to cement a lasting peace between Israel and a new Palestinian state before he leaves office on Tuesday.

A week in Israel and the occupied West Bank, which is still controlled by the secular Fatah party from which <u>Hamas</u> seized power in Gaza in June 2007, convinced me that fulfilling that dream is further away than ever. Mutual levels of hatred have reached a new and frightening intensity. But if that were not tragedy enough, I also found evidence that this war should have been avoidable, and that if Israel and the West had pursued a different policy, there might well have been real progress.

The daily TV images from Gaza, the work of a few crews who were inside the Strip when the attacks began, have all been similarly horrifying: scenes of bloodshed, grief and destruction.

Yet some kind of life goes on for Gaza's other 1.5million inhabitants, all of them trapped inside Israel's security wall. On Thursday, as Israeli ground troops made their deepest incursions yet into densely populated areas, I managed after many attempts to contact by phone my friend Hasan Jaber in Gaza City. A correspondent for the Palestinian newspaper al-Ayyam, he is a highly educated father of three who has visited Britain and is far from biased towards <code>Hamas</code>, which has banned the sale of his paper.

The Hasan I know is a round, jolly man who copes with the privations of life in Gaza by making jokes, preferably over a feast of Middle Eastern meze. This time, there was no hiding the flatness and fear in his voice. 'Every day, it just gets worse,' he said. 'Right now, there are Israeli soldiers a few yards from my house.

They are targeting buildings in my neighbourhood. There is an aircraft hovering in the sky and I know it could hit us at any time.' I asked him what he thought of the claim, made many times by Israeli spokesmen, that the reason there have been so many civilian casualties is that *Hamas* is using *women* and children as human shields.

He said: 'Hamas is still resisting, but by day they cannot move because there are helicopters hovering everywhere and if they move they will be killed. So most of them are at home and that is where they are being targeted.

Today at one house the Israelis killed a whole family - not fighters but the mother, the children. But to say they are deliberately firing from civilian homes is simply not true.' Despite the efforts of the UN, which has been bringing in supplies during a daily three-hour Israeli ceasefire, most types of food, including all fresh vegetables and fruit, ceased to be available weeks ago. Hasan said the shops were open fitfully, but when his family needed supplies, he or his wife would go alone.

'Even when it's calm, you feel fear. You just don't know when the Israelis will target this man, that building. If there's an airstrike when you're in the open it's better that only one of us will be killed than two or three.' H asan said that since the start of the war on December 27, his frightened children had been sleeping in his bedroom.

It was there, tidying up one morning, that he found a will written by his 14-year-old son Khossein.

'It said, "Dad, if I get killed at any time, I want you to know that I love you, my mother and my brother and sister." He wrote, "Please don't forget me," and that he wanted me to visit his grave once a week.

'As I read that I cried. All my life I have tried to protect my children from violence. I try to make sure they don't watch the TV news.

You raise your children with the hope they will become doctors or engineers. And suddenly you discover something like that.' Last week, Syria's President Bashar Assad warned that the war was sowing the seeds of future terrorism throughout the Middle East.

At ground level, the signs of this are everywhere. On the West Bank, an urbane and tolerant Palestinian woman told me that when she went to a Jewish friend's wedding in Jerusalem she was so worried about her teenage children's reaction that she hid her outfit from them and got changed at the reception.

But when she returned home, her children guessed where she had been and her son spat: 'I hope you didn't go to that Jewish b\*\*\*\*\*'s wedding.' A week ago, militants fired five rockets across Israel's northern border from Lebanon.

A woman described what happened when the news reached her smart, expensive health club in the West Bank city of Ramallah. It just electrified the place.

In between jogging and swimming laps, people were screaming "death to Israel!",' she said. Along with the hate came despair.

In the West Bank, where the Fatah Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas remains committed to negotiation, even his allies said the war was undermining any chance of a settlement, perhaps permanently.

'Before this war, I said we had one or two years maximum to save the two state option [Israel at peace with an independent Palestinian state],' said Qadoura Fares, a prominent Fatah legislator who has long campaigned for peace. 'After this, people are so angry that I'm no longer sure there will be a viable Palestinian partner.' A 'one-state solution', a single country for Israelis and Palestinians, is simply out of the question.

'The third option is a continuous religious war,' Fares said. 'Unfortunately, for that there are partners on both sides. The Muslims will turn back to the Koran, the Israelis to the Old Testament.' The hardening of attitudes was also evident among Israelis. At a vast camp in the Negev desert, about ten miles from the Gaza border, Israel's army has built a replica of part of Gaza City to train newly mobilised reservists in urban warfare before deployment.

Ariel Siegelman, 30, left his wife and one-month-old baby in Jerusalem after being called up. 'My wife and I were having dinner in a nice restaurant - it was the first time we had managed to get someone to mind the baby - when my mobile phone rang.

I got off the phone and she said, "You got called up, didn't you?" I could only say yes, and she started to cry.' How did he feel about the fact that if he was deployed inside the real Gaza City, he might end up killing a baby as young as his own? 'No person wants to spill innocent blood,' Siegelman said. 'But if a guy is shooting at me out of a school or a house - and I have to fire back or be killed - it makes me more angry with him and <u>Hamas</u> because they drew me into killing civilians.' If anything, he added, the Israelis were going too far to minimise civilian losses at considerable risk to themselves.

Gregory Ross, 41, served in the army when he lived in Israel in his 20s, but has been in Los Angeles for many years, where he works as a Hollywood producer and actor. 'I'm still a reservist and my unit has become my family,' he said. 'I had to be with them so I got on the plane.

There is nothing more important in my life than giving to the Jewish state and the Jewish people.' He too regarded the killing of civilians with equanimity. 'I got an email from an A- list actor,' said Ross. 'I can't say who but he said he thought what I'm doing is great.'

Ross said he trusted the judgment of Israel's leaders. Yet, as several Israeli analysts told me, the cabinet has been split between those who believe the war should go on until <u>Hamas</u> has been crushed or driven out, and others, led by Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, who are working feverishly to achieve a ceasefire on what they regard as acceptable terms. Leaving <u>Hamas</u> battered but still in power seems the most likely outcome.

But was the war avoidable all along? Most Israelis reject the notion that <u>Hamas</u> might have a moderate wing, one that could, given enough encouragement, become dominant, much as Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness led the IRA and Sinn Fein into abandoning armed struggle and into a shared government.

I am not so sure. In Gaza before the war, I spent time with avowed moderates such as Ahmed Yusuf, a senior adviser to *Hamas*'s prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh. He said he wanted to convince his militant colleagues that negotiation was more effective than rockets. What he got - despite the six-month ceasefire that ended last year - was a continued economic siege, which reduced most Gazans to poverty and dependence on aid.

In the West Bank last week, I met Nasser al-Shaer, who though officially not a party member, was deputy prime minister in the <u>Hamas</u> government that won the 2006 Pales- tinian election. He remains in close contact with its leaders. As we walked the streets of his home city, Nablus, his popularity was palpable: strangers stopped us to

shake his hand and proffered sweets. President Abbas would not set foot in the place without armed bodyguards, al-Shaer said, 'but as you can see, I'm happy to walk just with you'.

If anyone could claim to be <u>Hamas</u>'s Gerry Adams, it would be al-Shaer, who has a PhD - 'supervised by a Jew!' - from Manchester University.

'If <u>Hamas</u> had not been rejected by the whole world after the election, everything could have been different,' he said. 'My goal was to build the confidence you need to make peace, not with one bold gesture, but slowly, step by step.

'Yet, from the first minute, there were sanctions. What did Israel and the West give to those of us who opposed terrorism? The result now is there isn't any hope because they've damaged even their friends, and people have become more extremist.

They believe nice words like "democracy" have no meaning, and when we use them they say we are fools.' Al-Shaer has some influential supporters in the international community.

Last year he met former US President Jimmy Carter and, like other <u>Hamas</u> moderates, he is close to Britain's former UN Ambassador, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, who has become a frequent visitor to Gaza.

However, although the special international Middle East peace envoy Tony Blair often speaks of the 'risks for peace' that he took in Northern Ireland, al-Shaer has never met him.

Greenstock supports al-Shaer's most shocking, and ultimately depressing, claim - that in their determination to mount a military operation that would inflict potentially terminal damage on <u>Hamas</u>, the Israelis ignored serious offers for a further ceasefire shortly before the attacks. 'The Israelis were planning this from the beginning of the ceasefire last June,' Sir Jeremy told me. 'So far as I can see, part of the reason for this strike is to kill the twostate solution.'

One of the ceasefire offers, made via Egyptian mediators in December, is well documented. The second, al-Shaer said, was made through Turkey just before the war began. Mari Eisen, an Israeli spokeswoman, confirmed this, saying it was not taken seriously because Israel would not work through the Turks. 'That's cute,' she said. 'They didn't get what they wanted through the Egyptians so they went somewhere else.'

Yet the terms on offer from <u>Hamas</u> then - confirmed to me by two US sources who were close to the attempts at negotiation - are virtually identical to those being pressed by Israel now: an end to the rocketfiring and smuggling of weapons through tunnels beneath Gaza's border with Egypt in return for the opening of the border crossings into Gaza from Egypt and Israel.

<u>Hamas</u>, al-Shaer and these sources added, has been prepared for months to accept the condition that Israel has said was the sticking point - that the crossings be manned by forces loyal to the Fatah Palestinian presidency, and monitored by international observers.

So while there are hopes that the killing in Gaza will end, longerterm peace looks as remote as the explosions of the F16 missiles when viewed from the border hilltops.

'After this, <u>Hamas</u> will be stronger,' said my friend Hasan. 'No one will be able to speak against them. Just by surviving, they will say they won the battle.'

### **Graphic**

(1) FRIENDS: Rose and Hasan on an earlier trip (2) UNEASY PEACE: A young woman passes security forces in the West Bank (3) HITTING BACK: Israeli missiles strike Gaza City. Below: Tunnels from Egypt are used to smuggle anything from guns to goats

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#### Entrapping Netanyahu

The Jerusalem Post February 27, 2009 Friday

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Byline: Caroline B. Glick Highlight: COLUMN ONE

#### **Body**

Negotiations between the Likud and its coalition partners toward the formation of Israel's next government have only just begun. But the campaign to undermine the government-in-formation's ability to determine Israel's future course is already well underway.

Incoming Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu must understand the traps being set for him and their sources. And as he builds his government, he must appoint ministers capable of working with him to extricate Israel from those traps and discredit their sources.

On Thursday, US President Barack Obama's Middle East envoy George Mitchell arrived in Israel for his second visit. Whereas Mitchell's last visit - which took place in the last days of the electoral campaign - was touted as a "listening tour," Mitchell made clear that during his current stay, he intends to begin calling shots.

His first order of business, we are told, is to pressure the outgoing government to destroy the so-called outpost communities in Judea and Samaria and expel the hundreds of Israeli families who live in them. To defend this call for intra-Israeli instability and violence, Mitchell notes that Prime Minister Ehud Olmert gave his word to former president George W. Bush that he would destroy these communities.

Lest Israelis believe that Mitchell will drop this demand once Olmert leaves office, he has made clear that as far as he is concerned, Olmert's pledge was not his own - but Israel's. In Mitchell's view, it binds Netanyahu no less than Olmert. So if Olmert leaves office without having sent IDF soldiers to throw <u>women</u> and children from their homes, Mitchell, Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will feel free to pressure Netanyahu to take on the task, and to punish him if he refuses.

If the Obama administration believes that the presence of Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria is the primary obstacle to peace, then the <u>Hamas</u> regime in Gaza is the second greatest obstacle to peace. As long as <u>Hamas</u>, a recognized terror group, is in charge, the administration will be hard-pressed to push Israel to accept a Palestinian state.

To remedy this situation, the Obama administration has opted for a political fiction. The president and his aides have decided that a *Hamas*-Fatah government will moderate *Hamas*, and that therefore such a government will not only be legitimate, it is desirable. Whereas when the first *Hamas*-Fatah government formed in March 2007, the Bush administration refused to have anything to do with it, today the Obama administration is actively backing its reestablishment.

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As the Obama administration apparently sees it, a <u>Hamas</u>-Fatah government will provide cover for stepped up pressure on Israel to surrender land to the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria, because Israel will no longer be able to claim that it has no Palestinian partner. A <u>Hamas</u>-Fatah government will also allow the US to directly support the Palestinians in Gaza, by coercing Israel to transfer full control over its borders with Gaza to <u>Hamas</u> (which will be represented by Fatah), and by enabling the US to provide direct aid to Palestinian Authority agencies in Gaza.

To advance the administration's efforts to legitimize <u>Hamas</u>, Clinton will begin her first visit to the region at a conference in Cairo on Monday that seeks to raise some \$2.8 billion for Gaza. She will pledge nearly a third of that amount - \$900 million - in the name of US taxpayers.

The administration claims that none of this money, which it plans to funnel through UNRWA, will go toward funding *Hamas*. But this contention is demonstrably false.

UNRWA openly collaborates with <u>Hamas</u>. Its workers double as <u>Hamas</u> combatants. Its refugee camps and schools are used as <u>Hamas</u> training bases and missile launch sites. Its mosques are used as recruiting grounds. And as UNRWA's willingness to transfer a letter from <u>Hamas</u> to US Sen. John Kerry during his visit to Gaza last week demonstrated, the UN agency is also willing to act as **Hamas**'s surrogate.

While it makes sense for <u>Hamas</u> to agree to join a unity government that will leave it in charge of Gaza and expand its control to Judea and Samaria as well, on the surface it makes little sense for Fatah to agree to a deal that would subordinate it to the same forces who brutally removed it from power in Gaza in 2007. But Fatah has several good reasons to be enthusiastic about the deal.

First, by joining <u>Hamas</u>, Fatah will be able to get its hands on a considerable portion of the international aid money expected to pour into Gaza. Second, by joining <u>Hamas</u>, Fatah neutralizes - at least in the short term - <u>Hamas</u>'s interest in destroying it as a political force in Palestinian society. Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas's term in office as PA chairman expired last month. Were elections to be held today, he would lose a bid for reelection to <u>Hamas</u>'s candidate by a wide margin. By joining a <u>Hamas</u> government, he will probably avoid the need to stand for reelection anytime soon.

For Israel, a US-supported <u>Hamas</u>-Fatah government is a hellish prospect. The political support such a government will lend to the terror war against Israel will be enormous. But beyond that, such a government, supported by the US, will likely cause Israel security nightmares.

As a goodwill gesture ahead of the opening of unity talks this week in Cairo, Fatah released the <u>Hamas</u> operatives its US-trained forces had arrested. Due to US pressure, over the past year, Israel allowed those forces to deploy in Jenin and Hebron, and in recent months they took some significant actions against <u>Hamas</u> operatives in those areas. Based on this record of achievement, Clinton and Mitchell have been pressuring Israel to transfer security control over all the Palestinian cities in Judea and Samaria to these forces.

But now that Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> are acting in concert, any such transfers of authority to Fatah will constitute a surrender of control to <u>Hamas</u>. While no Israeli government could accept such a demand, the Obama administration, which supports the <u>Hamas</u>-Fatah government, is likely to view Israel's refusal to continue to cooperate with Fatah as a reason to criticize Israel.

THE OBAMA administration's ability to disregard the will of the Israeli voters and the prerogatives of the incoming government owes a large deal to the legacy that the outgoing Olmert-Livni-Barak government is leaving behind.

The outgoing government set the conditions for the Obama administration's policies in three ways. First, by not defeating <u>Hamas</u> in Operation Cast Lead, and then agreeing to negotiate a cease-fire with the terror group, the government paved the way for <u>Hamas</u>'s acceptance by the US and Europe as a legitimate political force.

Just as its willingness to conduct negotiations with Syria paved the way for the administration's current courtship of Iran's Arab client state, and its willingness to accept UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which placed Hizbullah on equal footing with Israel at the end of the Second Lebanon War, so, too, the outgoing government's willingness

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to negotiate with <u>Hamas</u> has facilitated the current US and European drive to accept the Iranian proxy as a legitimate political force in Palestinian society.

Second, since <u>Hamas</u>'s electoral victory in January 2006, the outgoing government accepted the false narrative that the Palestinian people in Gaza, who freely voted <u>Hamas</u> into power and have supported its regime ever since, bear no responsibility for the consequences of their actions. This false distinction between <u>Hamas</u>'s supporters and <u>Hamas</u> tied Israel's hands each time it was compelled to defend itself against <u>Hamas</u>'s aggression. After all, if Gazans are all innocent, then Israel's primary responsibility should be to make sure that they are safe. And since its counterterror operations necessarily place them at risk, those operations are fair game for international condemnation.

Moreover, at the same time that Israel accepted the dishonest distinction between <u>Hamas</u> and its supporters, it willingly took on responsibility for the welfare of Gaza residents. As <u>Hamas</u> shelled Sderot and Ashkelon and surrounding communities, Israel bowed to international pressure to supply its enemy and its enemy's supporters with food, medicine, fuel, water and anything else that <u>Hamas</u> and the West could reasonable or unreasonably claim fell under the rubric of humanitarian aid. Had Israel not accepted responsibility for a population that freely chose to be led by a group dedicated to its annihilation, today Clinton would be hard pressed to pressure Israel to open its border crossings into Gaza, or to justify giving \$900m. to Gaza.

Finally, through its unlimited support for Fatah, the outgoing government has made it enormously difficult for the incoming government to explain its objections to the Obama administration's policies, either to the Israeli people or to the Americans themselves. By supporting Fatah, the Olmert-Livni-Barak government set up a false distinction between supposed moderates and supposed extremists. That distinction ignored and so legitimized Fatah's continued involvement in terrorism, its political war against Israel and its refusal to accept Israel's right to exist.

If Fatah is legitimate despite its bad behavior and bellicose ideology, then two things must be true. First, abstaining from terror can no longer be viewed as a precondition for receiving international legitimacy. And second, there is no reason not to accept <u>Hamas</u>. Based on the latter conclusion, many European leaders and Israeli leftists now openly call for conducting negotiations with <u>Hamas</u>. And based on the former conclusion, the Obama administration feels comfortable escalating its demands that Israel give land, security powers and money to Fatah, even as it unifies its forces with **Hamas** and so expands **Hamas**'s power from Gaza to Judea and Samaria.

DUE TO the Olmert-Livni-Barak government's legacy, when it enters office the Netanyahu government will lack the vocabulary it needs to abandon Israel's current self- defeating course with the Palestinians and defend its actions to the international community in the face of the Obama administration's use of dishonest terms like "peace processes" and "moderates" and "humanitarian aid" to constrain Israel's ability to defend itself. To surmount these challenges, Netanyahu must move immediately to change the terms of debate on the Palestinian issue.

Despite his great rhetorical gifts, Netanyahu cannot change the terms of international debate by himself. He needs two seasoned public figures who understand the nature of these challenges at his side. If Netanyahu appoints Natan Sharansky foreign minister and Moshe "Bogie" Ya'alon defense minister, he will have the top-level support he needs to overcome his predecessors' legacy and change the nature of contemporary discourse on the Palestinians and on Israel's strategic significance to the West in the face of staunch opposition from Washington.

Like Netanyahu, Sharansky and Ya'alon understand the basic dishonesty of the current international conversation relating to the Palestinians. Both men have come out publicly against the false policy paradigms that have guided both the outgoing government and the US and Europe. Both are capable of working with Netanyahu to free Israel from the policy trap being set for him.

caroline@carolineglick.com

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



# My terror as a human shield; As battle raged in Gaza, Israeli soldiers forced Majdi Abed Rabbo to risk his life as a go-between in the hunt for three Hamas fighters. This is his story ...

The Independent (London)
January 30, 2009 Friday
First Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 30

Length: 1477 words

Byline: Donald Macintyre in Jabalya, Gaza

#### **Body**

After yet another fierce, 45-minute gun battle, Majdi Abed Rabbo was ordered once again to negotiate his perilous way across the already badly-damaged roof of his house, through the jagged gap in the wall and slowly down the stairs towards the first-floor apartment in the rubble-strewn house next door. Not knowing if the men were dead or alive, he shouted for the second time that day: "I'm Majdi. Don't be afraid."

All three men - with Kalashnikov AK-47 rifles, wearing camouflage and headbands bearing the insignia of the Izzedine el Qassam brigades - were still alive, though one was badly injured and persuaded Mr Abed Rabbo to tighten the improvised bandage round his right arm. The youngest - perhaps 21 - was taking cover behind fallen masonry from where he could see the Israeli troops who had sent the visitor to Jabalya, a refugee camp. Nervously, Mr Abed Rabbo told them: "They sent me back so I can take your weapons. They told me you are dead." It was the youngest who replied defiantly: "Tell the officer, 'If you're a man come up here'."

When the soldiers had arrived at about 10am, Mr Abed Rabbo, 40, had no inkling that over the next 24 hours he would make four heart-stopping trips, shuttling across increasingly dangerous terrain between the Israeli forces and the three besieged but determined <u>Hamas</u> militants who had become his unwelcome next-door neighbours. He would recall every detail of an episode which, in the telling, resembles the more melodramatic kind of war movie, but which was all too real for a man who by the end had lost his house and thought (wrongly) that his wife and children were dead. He had also witnessed at too close quarters the last stand of the men from the Qassam brigades in the face of relentless Israeli ground attacks and Apache helicopter fire.

Civilians were not killed in this episode, as they were in all too many during Operation Cast Lead. Instead, it offers a rare and detailed glimpse of an actual engagement between the Israeli military and <u>Hamas</u> fighters. And while it helps to reinforce Israel's contention that <u>Hamas</u> operates in built-up civilian areas, it also suggests that its own commanders were prepared to use civilians as human shields to protect Israeli troops.

My terror as a human shield As battle raged in Gaza, Israeli soldiers forced Majdi Abed Rabbo to risk his life as a go-between in the hunt for three Hamas fight....

It is one man's version of what happened, of course. But as the soldiers would find out when they checked later, Mr Abed Rabbo is a former member of the Fatah-dominated intelligence, still being paid by the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah. He believes the <u>Hamas</u> gunmen had no right to be in the house next door. But he also strongly objects to the use made of him by the Israeli military. "I could have been killed," he explained.

The soldiers arrived on 5 January, the second day of their ground offensive, with a Palestinian he knew only by his family name of Daher. After telling him to remove his trousers and roll up his shirt to establish he had no weapons, the soldiers told him to bring out his wife, Wijdan, 39, and family. Then, with Mr Abed Rabbo escorted at gunpoint by three soldiers and his family still in the yard, the troops searched his house up to the roof. The Arabic-speaking soldier assigned to Mr Abed Rabbo then asked him about the house next door. He told them he thought there was no one in the property. Then, he said, one of the soldiers brought a sledgehammer with which Mr Abed Rabbo was told to smash a hole in the wall between the two roofs, each opening to the apartments below.

An officer arrived and ordered a search of the house next door. The officer went first, stepping cautiously sideways down the stairs with his M16 rifle pointing downwards, then Mr Abed Rabbo with the soldiers and their guns pointed at his back. Suddenly, the officer turned and started screaming at his men. "We went back upstairs. The soldiers were pulling me and I fell twice," Mr Abed Rabbo said. "We went back to the roof of my house." It became apparent what the officer had glimpsed when suddenly the soldiers, by now on high alert and outside the yard of Mr Abed Rabbo's house, came under fire. He was taken into a mosque, which was already full of soldiers, across the road, then handcuffed and told to sit. After a 15-minute silence, the *Hamas* militants opened fire again. "The soldiers took position at the windows of the mosque and started shooting back. I was screaming at the soldier who spoke Arabic, 'My wife and children are in danger'." Mr Abed Rabbo said he was then told "shut up or I'll shoot you". "I collapsed and started to cry," he added. "I felt my family was dead."

He remained in custody for the next two days, sometimes handcuffed, staying with the Israeli unit as it moved through the area, often amid heavy exchanges of fire. Once, he was told to open the doors of two cars at another house to check them, before summoning the *female* occupants of the house downstairs. Then, in the afternoon, he was ordered to visit the damaged building where the armed *Hamas* men were. "I said I will not go. Maybe they will shoot me. I have a wife. I have kids," he recalled. But, he added, the Israeli officer told him he had "fired 10 rockets and killed them". He was then told to go into the house and bring out the weapons, after being hit with a rifle butt and given a kicking to reinforce the order. "I went to my house and saw my family was not there. I looked to see if there was any blood but there was nothing. It was empty. As I went down the stairs I was calling 'I'm Majdi' so they would not think I was Israeli and shoot me." Approaching the apartment door, he saw one gunman, his AK-47 pointed out, standing guard in the hall with two others behind him. Staying at the doorway, he told them the Israelis believed they had been killed. "They asked me where the army was and I said, 'They're everywhere'," he added. "They asked me to leave."

The soldiers, concealed behind the wall of a house 100 metres away, told him to strip naked to show he had not concealed any weapons as he left the house. Later, he was asked to make a third trip - his second journey alone - to the gunmen's redoubt. Mr Abed Rabbo says the Israeli officer cursed and hit him when he heard his report. Shortly afterwards, an Apache helicopter fired three missiles which destroyed the house containing the gunmen, and badly damaged his own. Night had fallen when he set out yet again under orders from the troops, but Mr Abed Rabbo persuaded them that the route through the rubble on his roof was impassable in the dark. "I kept asking about my family and they kept saying 'they're OK, they're OK'." The gunmen, incredibly still alive, opened fire yet again.

Mr Abed Rabbo was then taken to another house and told to stay there, handcuffed, cold and "worried about my family, my house". The Israeli soldiers came to fetch him again at about 6.30am, assuring him "we killed them last night" and telling him to go and see. "I said, 'How can I go? My rooftop is destroyed. It is very dangerous'," Mr Abed Rabbo explained. But given no choice, he managed to reach the stairs and descending cautiously, calling out as he had done twice before.

My terror as a human shield As battle raged in Gaza, Israeli soldiers forced Majdi Abed Rabbo to risk his life as a go-between in the hunt for three Hamas fight....

"I saw everything was destroyed. They were all injured but the one who had been bleeding was worst. He was holding his finger up and saying, 'There is no God but Allah'. One of them was lying under rubble but still alive. The one in better condition said there was no way they would surrender, they would become martyrs. One gave me his name and told me to give a message to his family."

Mr Abed Rabbo said the Israelis started shooting while he was there and he ran away. "I went back to the Army. I lied to them. I said, 'They said if I went back they would kill me'."

The Israeli troops now used a megaphone to tell the gunmen in Arabic: "You have families. Come out and we will take you to hospital and take care of you. [The] district is full of special forces. All the <u>Hamas</u> leaders are hiding underground."

According to Mr Abed Rabbo: "While they were talking like this the [*Hamas* men] opened fire again, the officer pushed me against a wall and said, 'You've been lying to me. There are more than three in there'."

The soldiers then ordered two other residents to take cameras into the house to photograph it and the <u>Hamas</u> fighters. Next, the army sent in a dog which returned injured and died soon afterwards. The gunmen were then told: "You have 15 minutes to come out with no clothes on and with your hands up. If you don't, we will bring the house down on you."

After 15 minutes, Mr Abed Rabbo said, a bulldozer moved into the area between the houses and the mosque, destroying large parts of his house before systematically demolishing the one the gunmen were hiding in. It was now Tuesday afternoon.

Before he was taken away, Mr Abed Rabbo had a clear view of his wrecked house, the pulverised property next door, and the bodies of the three *Hamas* gunmen lying in the rubble.

Load-Date: January 29, 2009



#### Look further, think harder, don't take it at face value

Canberra Times (Australia)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 11 Length: 888 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

#### **Body**

Atemporary ceasefire in Gaza that simply allows <u>Hamas</u> to obtain more lethal weapons will assure a repetition of <u>Hamas</u>'s win-win tactic of firing rockets at Israeli civilians while using Palestinian civilians as human shields.

The best example of <u>Hamas</u>'s double war crime tactic was last Tuesday, when it succeeded in sending a rocket to a town fewer than 35km south of Tel Aviv and injuring a child. At the same time, it provoked Israel to attack a United Nations school from which <u>Hamas</u> was launching its rockets. Residents of the neighbourhood said two <u>Hamas</u> fighters were in the area at the time, and the Israeli military said they had been killed.

The <u>Hamas</u> tactic of firing rockets from schools, hospitals and mosques dates back to 2005, when Israel ended its occupation of Gaza.

Several months ago, the head of the Israeli air force showed me a videotape (now available on YouTube) of a <u>Hamas</u> terrorist deliberately moving his rocket launcher to the front of a UN school, firing a rocket and then running away, no doubt hoping that Israel would then respond by attacking the rocket launcher and thus killing Palestinian children in the school.

This is the <u>Hamas</u> dual strategy: to kill and injure as many Israeli civilians as possible by firing rockets indiscriminately at Israeli civilian targets, and to provoke Israel to kill as many Palestinian civilians as possible to garner world sympathy.

Lest there be any doubt about this, recall the recent case of Nizar Rayan, the <u>Hamas</u> terrorist and commander killed in Gaza by an Israeli missile strike on January 1. Israeli authorities had warned him that he was a legitimate military target, as was his home, which was a storage site for rockets. This is the same man who in 2001 sent one of his sons on a suicide mission to blow himself up at a Jewish settlement in Gaza. Rayan had the option of moving his family to a safe area. Instead, his four wives and children remained with him and became martyrs as Israel targeted his home for destruction.

<u>Hamas</u> leaders have echoed the mantra of Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, that, "We are going to win because they love life and we love death". It is difficult to fight an enemy that loves death in a world that loves life.

The world tends to think emotionally rather than rationally when it is shown dead <u>women</u> and children who are deliberately placed in harm's way by <u>Hamas</u>. Instead of asking who was really to blame for these civilian deaths, people place responsibility on those who fired the fatal shots.

Consider a related situation: An armed bank robber kills several tellers and takes a customer hostage.

Hiding behind his human shield, the robber continues to kill civilians. A police officer, trying to prevent further killings, shoots at the robber but accidentally kills the hostage.

Who is guilty of murder? Not the police officer who fired the fatal shot but the bank robber who fired from behind the human shield.

The international law of war, likewise, makes it a war crime to use human shields in the way <u>Hamas</u> does. It also makes it a war crime for <u>Hamas</u> to target Israeli civilians with anti-personnel rockets loaded with ball bearings and shrapnel designed to kill as many civilians as possible.

In Lebanon in 2006, Hezbollah used this same tactic in its war with Israel, setting up civilians to be in harm's way of Israeli responses to rocket fire. When Israel accidentally killed civilians, Hezbollah celebrated them as martyrs. Similarly, the *Hamas* leadership quietly celebrates the deaths they provoke by causing Israel to fire at its rocket launchers, treating the dead Palestinian civilians as martyrs. The New York Times reported last Friday that a wounded fighter was smiling at the suffering of civilians, saying, "They should be happy," because they "lost their loved ones as martyrs".

The best proof of <u>Hamas</u>'s media strategy of manipulating sympathy is the way it dealt with a rocket it fired the day before Israel's airstrikes began. The rocket fell short of its target in Israel and landed in Gaza, killing two young Palestinian girls.

<u>Hamas</u>, which exercises total control of Gaza, censored any video coverage of those deaths. Although there were print reports, no one saw pictures of these two dead Palestinian children because they were killed by Palestinian rockets rather than by Israeli rockets. <u>Hamas</u> knows that pictures are more powerful than words. That is probably why Israel mistakenly in my view has kept foreign journalists from entering the war zone. Israel must continue to try to stop the <u>Hamas</u> rockets that endanger more than one million Israeli civilians. It also must continue to do everything in its power to avoid Palestinian civilian casualties, not only because that is the right thing to do but because every Palestinian death plays into the hands of <u>Hamas</u>' leaders.

A bad day for <u>Hamas</u> is a day in which its rockets fail to kill or injure any Israeli civilians and Israel kills no Palestinian civilians. That is what Israel and the world must strive for.

<u>Hamas</u> knows that the moment it ends its policy of firing rockets at Israeli civilians from behind the shield of Palestinian civilians, Israel will end its military activities in Gaza.

That is precisely the result *Hamas* does not want to achieve.

Los Angeles Times Alan M. Dershowitz is a professor of law at Harvard University.

Load-Date: January 13, 2009



#### Spinning the vicious circle; Gaza

The International Herald Tribune February 9, 2009 Monday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 9

Length: 264 words

Byline: Amos Oz - The New York Times Media Group

#### **Body**

Ehud Olmert has declared that Israel will give a disproportionate response to any further attack by <u>Hamas</u> on Israeli civilians.

I think disproportionate response is an immoral response.

I think disproportionate punishment is an immoral punishment.

This disproportionate response would strengthen the extremists in the Israeli elections and will play into the hands of the fanatics in Gaza and in the Arab world.

Disproportionate military operations are basically no more then revenge, and revenge is no more than satisfying base primitive instinct.

I regard <u>Hamas</u> as a bunch of criminals who for several years now have been targeting Israeli civilians. No less than 10 thousand rockets were fired by <u>Hamas</u> on Israeli towns and villages in the last few years.

<u>Hamas</u> are a bunch of criminals also because they are using Palestinian civilians as human sandbags and because they cynically hide behind <u>women</u> and children. But killing even more Palestinian civilians will take Israel nowhere, because **Hamas** could not care less.

As the <u>Hamas</u> leader Khaled Mashal said recently in Damascus: "The present generation of Palestinians may be sacrificed."

The only effective Israeli military response is a measured, proportionate attack on <u>Hamas</u> criminals while attempting to spare innocent Palestinian lives. Egypt is brokering a cease-fire. Israel must give it a chance.

Ultimately let us not forget that an adequate and final blow to <u>Hamas</u> will be a peace treaty between Israel and the moderate Palestinian Authority. Such a treaty is possible and perhaps even imminent.

Amos Oz is an Israeli novelist.

Load-Date: February 17, 2009



#### Israeli Officials Say Main Goals in Gaza Are Still Unfulfilled

The New York Times

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

Length: 1114 words

**Byline:** By STEVEN ERLANGER and MICHAEL SLACKMAN; Steven Erlanger reported from Tel Aviv, and Michael Slackman from Cairo. Reporting was contributed by Taghreed El-Khodary from Gaza City, Ethan Bronner and Sabrina Tavernise from Jerusalem, and Neil MacFarquhar from the United Nations.

#### **Body**

TEL AVIV -- Despite heavy air and ground assaults, Israel has yet to cripple the military wing of <u>Hamas</u> or destroy the group's ability to launch rockets, Israeli intelligence officials said on Tuesday, suggesting that Israel's main goals in the conflict remain unfulfilled even after 18 days of war.

The comments reflected a view among some Israeli officials that any lasting solution to the conflict would require either a breakthrough diplomatic accord that heavily restricts <u>Hamas</u>'s military abilities or a deeper ground assault into urban areas of Gaza, known here as a possible "Phase Three" of the war.

The intelligence officials said there were some signs that the military assault had undermined <u>Hamas</u>'s political cohesion, and that <u>Hamas</u>'s leaders in hiding inside Gaza were more eager for a cease-fire than group leaders in exile. They described this assessment as based on hard intelligence, presumably telephone intercepts.

A senior Egyptian official in Cairo said separately on Tuesday that representatives of <u>Hamas</u> had disagreed openly when participating in continuing Egyptian efforts to broker a cease-fire.

Inside Gaza, the military wing of <u>Hamas</u> has been hit "to a certain extent" with "a few hundred" <u>Hamas</u> fighters killed during the ground offensive that began midway through the war, the intelligence officials said. They spoke on condition of anonymity in return for discussing internal assessments of the conflict. <u>Hamas</u> is still able to launch 20 to 30 rockets a day, including 5 to 10 missiles of ranges longer than 20 kilometers, or about 12 miles, down by a third from the start of the war, the officials said.

Greater damage has been done to <u>Hamas</u>'s capacity to run Gaza, with a large number of government buildings destroyed over the course of the operation, they said.

The Israeli Army's chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi, speaking to Parliament on Tuesday, said that "we have achieved a lot in hitting *Hamas* and its infrastructure, its rule and its armed wing, but there is still work ahead."

In Egypt, efforts to broker a cease-fire were complicated by bickering inside <u>Hamas</u>, the Egyptian official said. The official said that <u>Hamas</u> representatives in Gaza were eager for a cease-fire, but were being blocked because political decisions were being made by the group's leadership in Damascus, Syria.

"Hamas is in a very difficult position," the Egyptian official said. "On the ground, their militants are not doing as good a job, not matching their rhetoric. But politically, they have been totally taken over by their sponsors.

"The guys inside are holding their ground, but they don't want to continue the confrontation," the official said. Egypt talks to *Hamas* but is not eager to see the radical Islamic group succeed in running a small statelet next door.

Israeli officials said they were delaying any expansion of the war until the negotiations succeeded or failed. But journalists and photographers along the Israeli border with Gaza said they saw large numbers of Israeli reservists moving into the territory, suggesting preparation for an intensified phase of the conflict.

On the eve of a visit to the region, the United Nations secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, demanded an immediate halt to the fighting in accordance with a Security Council resolution.

"Too many people have died," Mr. Ban said, while Gazans are facing a humanitarian disaster. United Nations officials have said that three-hour daily humanitarian lulls are insufficient to provide enough food, medicine and other essentials to civilians. Israel said that 102 trucks carrying aid entered Gaza on Tuesday, with a total of 1,028 since the war began.

John Ging, director of operations in Gaza for the United Nations Refugee and Works Agency, who has been highly critical of the Israeli military action, said by video link that the fighting was extracting an unacceptably high toll on civilians.

"Tragically, the horror continues overnight," he said. "Nineteen children killed and 52 injured last night. I would hope that would motivate those who can help."

Israeli officials say their primary aim in the operation is to stop <u>Hamas</u> from firing rockets from Gaza into Israeli cities.

<u>Hamas</u> is capable of building rockets with an advanced propellant that can go up to 18 miles, the intelligence officials said, using chemicals and parts smuggled in from Egypt. <u>Hamas</u> also is using 122-millimeter rockets that are Chinese-made and supplied by Iran that can go almost 25 miles, they said.

But they assessed the probability that <u>Hamas</u> now has rockets capable of going farther than 25 miles as "very low."

On Tuesday, *Hamas* fired 11 rockets and six mortar shells into Israel, the Israeli Army said.

General Ashkenazi said that Israeli aircraft had carried out more than 2,300 strikes since the offensive began on Dec. 27.

In Tuesday's fighting, 18 Palestinian fighters and seven civilians were killed, part of the 971 Palestinians who have died, according to Gaza's <u>Hamas</u>-run Health Ministry. Those figures are not thought to include many of the fighters killed since the ground war began.

Thirteen Israelis have died, including 10 soldiers. The Israeli military said one Israeli officer was critically wounded and two Israeli soldiers suffered light wounds in fighting overnight. They were hurt, the military said, after a bomb exploded in a booby-trapped house that they were searching.

General Ashkenazi said that <u>Hamas</u> fighters were using suicide bombers, sometimes <u>women</u> and sometimes dressed as Israeli soldiers, to try to get close to Israeli troops and kill them. One Israeli soldier was killed last week by a <u>Hamas</u> suicide bomber, the Israeli intelligence officials said. The method of the attack that caused the death had not been disclosed before.

Moussa Abu Marzouk, the exiled deputy to the <u>Hamas</u> political chief Khaled Meshal, told Al Jazeera television on Tuesday that while the organization had "serious reservations" about the Egyptian cease-fire plan, he believed that it might be accepted if changes were made.

#### Israeli Officials Say Main Goals in Gaza Are Still Unfulfilled

"If the initiative is accepted, it will be in accordance with the position set out by <u>Hamas</u> at the start, namely an Israeli withdrawal, a cease-fire and the opening of the crossing points" between Gaza, Israel and Egypt, he said.

The leader of Israel's opposition Likud Party, Benjamin Nentanyahu, said Tuesday that ultimately <u>Hamas</u> would have to be removed from Gaza and if the government chose to do so in this war, he would support it.

"At the end of the day there will be no escape from toppling <u>Hamas</u> rule," he said at a meeting with the Foreign Press Association, adding that "Israel can not tolerate an Iranian base right next to its cities."

http://www.nytimes.com

#### **Graphic**

PHOTOS: Israeli men looked to Gaza on Tuesday near the southern city of Sderot. Journalists along the border saw large numbers of reservists moving into the territory.(PHOTOGRAPH BY MOISES SAMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Palestinians mourned relatives outside a morgue in Beit Lahiya, northern Gaza, where the fighting has been intense.(PHOTOGRAPH BY FADI ADWAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A6)

A Palestinian woman, her son and daughter were treated Tuesday at a hospital in Gaza after an Israeli airstrike in Beit Lahiya.(PHOTOGRAPH BY FADI ADWAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

A wounded Israeli soldier Tuesday at a hospital in Beersheba. Thirteen Israelis have died in the war, including 10 soldiers.(PHOTOGRAPH BY RONEN ZVULUN/REUTERS)(pg. A12)

**Load-Date:** June 25, 2011



#### Israel's is a 'defensive war'

The Sunday Independent (South Africa)

February 01, 2009

e1 Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 9 **Length:** 236 words

#### **Body**

I, like Peter Bills, have been to Auschwitz. His vivid description of this death camp is accurate, chilling and terrifying. One-and-a-half million Jews were murdered at Auschwitz. More than 6 million Jewish men, <u>women</u>, children and babies were murdered in camps similar to the "model" death camp of Auschwitz. Yet Bills is unable to refer to the "people" murdered there as Jews. Why? Perhaps he cannot risk the reader empathising with Jews as victims: the very antithesis of the emotion he wishes to elicit in equating Gaza with Auschwitz.

There are many similarities between <u>Hamas</u> and the Nazis, albeit on a significantly different scale. The <u>Hamas</u> charter clearly states that the annihilation of Israel and Jews is its primary goal; <u>Hamas</u>, like the Nazis, rules by terror, ruthlessly hunting down "traitors" and "collaborators". <u>Hamas</u> abuses and indoctrinates its own children to hate Jews in much the same way as the Nazis used the Hitler Youth. <u>Hamas</u>, like the Nazis, deliberately murders Jewish men, **women** and children.

The war against <u>Hamas</u> was not a war against civilians. It was a defensive war aimed at protecting the citizens of Israel against an enemy determined to annihilate it. The Palestinian ambassador to South Africa admitted as much, as did a senior European Union representative, when he stated that Gaza's "terrorist <u>Hamas</u> rulers bear overwhelming responsibility for the war".

Felicia Levy

Johannesburg

Load-Date: February 1, 2009



#### Peace and goodwill has to be mutual agreement

The Sentinel (Stoke)
January 16, 2009 Friday

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Section: Pg. 8

Length: 280 words

#### **Body**

Parvaz Akhtar's letter on Friday, January 9 talks about the "season of peace and goodwill to all men". Does this mean firing dozens of rockets daily from Gaza indiscriminately into Israel as <u>Hamas</u> has been doing - not only during the "season of peace and goodwill" but for nearly three years?

The rockets are getting more sophisticated and dangerous.

Of course innocent <u>women</u>, children and the elderly inevitably become victims - they are being used as human shields. *Hamas* does not care a fig for these lives - they are collateral in achieving its own aims.

<u>Hamas</u> deliberately fires rockets from near schools, mosques and hospitals, and even has ammunition dumps in residential areas. Every innocent casualty is a success in its propaganda war against Israel.

Yes, the people of Gaza did democratically vote for <u>Hamas</u> - knowing full well that <u>Hamas</u> is dedicated to the destruction of Israel by violent means.

The violence which followed Israel's voluntary withdrawal from Gaza resulted in fighting between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah resulting in hundreds of deaths - with <u>Hamas</u> throwing people off roof tops. Mr Akhtar asks what kind of civilised society allows its military to carry out such actions. One that has got fed up of turning the other cheek and having its citizens rocketed thousands of times.

What would we do if we ere in their shoes? In Israel's shoes? Exactly what it is doing now - trying to protect its own citizens.

If in <u>Hamas</u>'s shoes? Exactly what it is doing now - carry on firing more rockets knowing that Israel will be blamed for all the resultant deaths.

Peace and goodwill can never be one sided - it has to be mutual and reciprocated by all sides.

R ELIAS

Weston Coyney

Load-Date: January 17, 2009



#### Myth of the noble terrorist takes an overdue battering

The Australian

January 27, 2009 Tuesday

1 - All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 11

Length: 774 words

Byline: Jason Koutsoukis, Denis Maceoin

#### **Body**

Jason Koutsoukis in yesterday's Sydney Morning Herald reports on the brutality of *Hamas* towards Gaza's citizens

PALESTINIAN civilians living in Gaza during the three-week war with Israel have spoken of <u>Hamas</u>'s attempt to hijack ambulances. Mohammed Shriteh, 30, is an ambulance driver registered with and trained by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. ``Mostly the war was not as fast or as chaotic as I expected. We would co-ordinate with the Israelis before we pick up patients, because they have all our names, and our IDs, so they would not shoot at us."

Shriteh said the more immediate threat was from <u>Hamas</u>, who would lure the ambulances into the heart of a battle to transport fighters to safety.

"You hear when they are coming. People ring to tell you. So we had to get in all the ambulances and make the illusion of an emergency and only come back when they had gone."

Eyad al-Bayary, 32, lost his job as a senior nurse at the Shifa Hospital because he is closely identified with Fatah.

Since the ceasefire was declared on January 17, <u>Hamas</u> has begun to systematically take revenge on anyone believed to have collaborated with Israel before the war. According to rumour, a number of alleged collaborators have already been executed.

Taher al-Nono, the <u>Hamas</u> Government's spokesman in Gaza, told the Herald that 175 people had been arrested so far on suspicion of collaborating.

And if the sentence is death? "We will respect the decision."

The commander of one al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade unit, who used the name Abu Ibrahim, said he would never accept peace or negotiation, even if it might lead to the creation of a Palestinian state.

Ynetnews.com reports that *Hamas* may have inflated the death toll in Gaza:

ITALIAN newspaper Corriere della Sera reported Thursday that a doctor working in Gaza's Shifa Hospital claimed that *Hamas* has intentionally inflated the number of casualties resulting from Israel's Operation Cast Lead.

#### Myth of the noble terrorist takes an overdue battering

"The number of deceased stands at no more than 500 to 600. Most of them are youths between the ages of 17 to 23 who were recruited to the ranks of *Hamas*, who sent them to the slaughter," according to the newspaper article. The doctor wished to remain unidentified, out of fear for his life.

A Tal al-Hawa resident told the newspaper's reporter: ``Armed <u>Hamas</u> men sought out a good position for provoking the Israelis. There were mostly teenagers, aged 16 or 17, and armed. They couldn't do a thing against a tank or a jet. They knew they are much weaker, but they fired at our houses so that they could blame Israel for war crimes."

The reporter for the Italian newspaper also quoted reporters in the Strip who told of <u>Hamas</u>'s exaggerated figures, "We have already said to <u>Hamas</u> commanders: why do you insist on inflating the number of victims?"

These same reporters mentioned that the truth that will come out is likely to be similar to what occurred in Operation Defensive Shield in Jenin. ``Then, there was first talk of 1500 deaths. But then it turned out that there were only 54, 45 of which were armed men," the Palestinian reporters told the Italian newspaper.

Denis Maceoin in The Jerusalem Post:

WATCH those films of <u>Hamas</u> gunmen dragging screaming children along with them to act as human shields, watch how they fire from behind the little ones, knowing no Israeli soldier will fire back. And even as they put their own children's lives at risk, they shout to high heaven that the Israelis are Nazis and the Jews are child-killers. <u>Hamas</u> has become proficient at resurrecting the blood libel, just as its fighters use the Nazi salute, just as their predecessor in the 1930s and '40s, Haj Amin al-Husseini, conferred with Hitler about building death camps in Palestine and raised a division of SS troops in Bosnia to fight for the Reich.

It is all self-contradictory: The Left supports gay rights, yet attacks the only country in the Middle East, where gay rights are enshrined in law. <u>Hamas</u> makes death the punishment for being gay, but ``we are all <u>Hamas</u> now". Iran hangs gays, but it is praised as an agent of anti-imperialism, and allowed to get on with its job of stoning <u>women</u> and executing dissidents and members of religious minorities. If British Prime Minister Gordon Brown swore to wipe France from the face of the earth, he would become a pariah among nations. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad threatens to do that to Israel and is invited to speak to the UN General Assembly. Israel guarantees civil liberties to all its citizens, Jew or Arab alike, but it is dubbed an apartheid state; <u>Hamas</u>, ever the bully, kills its opponents and denies the rest the most basic rights, but we march on behalf of <u>Hamas</u>.

Load-Date: January 26, 2009



#### Living next door to a serial killer

The Jerusalem Post January 22, 2009 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 16

Length: 773 words

Byline: BARRY RUBIN

**Highlight:** The Region. A cease-fire will only work if <u>Hamas</u> perceives itself as beaten, no matter what it says publicly. The writer is director of the Global Research in International Affairs Center at the Interdisciplinary Center

and editor of the Middle East Review of International Affairs Journal.

#### **Body**

Having <u>Hamas</u> as a neighbor is like living next door to a serial killer who abuses his children and threatens to kill them if you go in after him. You can defend yourself, but if the police won't arrest him, the only choices left are to build a wall around him, stop him from getting weapons, and send in food.

This is Israel's dilemma. The world demands peace but isn't prepared to do too much to help. The West's basic stand is to keep <u>Hamas</u> ruling Gaza, comparable to ensuring continued Taliban rule in Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks. Thanks to such international "support," Gaza's people will be able to "enjoy" a dictatorial regime dedicated to spending the next century fighting - and losing - wars.

Remember that the <u>Hamas</u> regime was not elected as such. Yes, it won an election but then seized total power in a bloody coup against the PA. Now it imposes a radical Islamist regime on its unfortunate subjects. <u>Hamas</u> has no policy for creating jobs or raising living standards. Its educational system doesn't teach useful skills or civic virtues but indoctrinates children with the ambition to become suicide bombers.

So the world should consider: Is this the kind of regime you want to save and succor? Do you want to keep *Hamas* in power when even most Arab states would like to see it fall? Why talk about a peace process while following a policy ensuring no peace process can succeed?

UNDERSTAND THAT <u>Hamas</u> believes the deity insists on its victory. It doesn't matter how long it takes or how many die. Its educational policy isn't aimed at training productive citizens but rather future suicide bombers, Well, it looks like the West is going to make that mistake, the PA itself isn't going to help provide an alternative government, and Israel can't solve this problem by itself.

So the next best thing is a cease-fire that works for a while. What is the basis for such a plan, which recognizes the fact that Israel won the war and that <u>Hamas</u> wants to restart it again? First, <u>Hamas</u> must perceive itself beaten no matter what it says publicly. This doesn't mean it will give up but does mean it will be slower to launch attacks in the future.

Second, Palestinians must perceive that <u>Hamas</u> was beaten so that they follow a more productive path of moderation and diplomacy.

#### Living next door to a serial killer

Third, the Arabic-speaking world - or as much of it as possible - must perceive <u>Hamas</u> as beaten so that Arab states are encouraged in their battle against radical Islamism, Iran and Syria, while the flow of recruits to extremist movements declines.

Fourth, <u>Hamas</u> must perceive itself as isolated. If it knows that cross-border terror attacks, firing rockets at civilians and cynically using its own people as human shields brings international sympathy and political profits, these tactics will be used again and be imitated by others elsewhere.

ALL OF these are realizable goals. The West can help by giving <u>Hamas</u> no recognition, no support and no help. A terrorist, genocidal movement which oppresses its own people and uses them as human shields should not be rewarded. That should be obvious.

What about the actual terms? Among the key provisions are these: A seriously effective regime of inspection and blocking smuggling must be put into place on the Egypt-Gaza border. This means Egyptian forces helped by a force which will really act to block tunnels and stop arms from coming in, not just sit and watch the contraband go by. If more weapons get in, that will bring another war.

Israel has the right to maintain sanctions, which means that while humanitarian and necessary goods for Gaza's society it can keep out items that have military applications.

Aid money to rebuild in Gaza and sustain Palestinian society must be kept out of <u>Hamas</u>'s hands. Not only would <u>Hamas</u> use such funds for military purposes, it would also steal them from being used for real relief. For example, <u>Hamas</u> cries there is not enough fuel, but that is because it diverts gasoline from civilian purposes for its own use.

Gilad Schalit, a hostage seized by <u>Hamas</u> in a cross-border raid, should be released unconditionally. It is bad enough to reward terrorists for their crimes; it is ridiculous to do so after they have been thoroughly defeated after launching an aggressive war.

Finally, we should remember the aims of the two sides. Israel's goal is very modest: security for its citizens, no cross-border attacks. *Hamas*'s goal is the destruction of Israel, wiping out its citizens, revolution throughout the Middle East, treating *women* as chattel and the creation of what it considers to be Allah's government on earth.

Knowing that, you can decide which side to support.

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



#### Images of bloodshed obscure truth of Gaza

The Australian

January 22, 2009 Thursday

1 - All-round Country Edition

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**Section:** FEATURES; Pg. 18

**Length:** 1066 words **Byline:** Albert Dadon

#### **Body**

<u>Hamas</u>'s refusal to accept Israel's existence and its deliberate attempt to increase civilian casualties on both sides is to blame for the destruction in Gaza but few condemn it, writes Albert Dadon

MANY friends have berated me about Israel's ``crimes" in Gaza during the conflict between <u>Hamas</u> and Israel. I understand how they felt. When I saw the images of <u>women</u> and children, victims of that war, I couldn't help, still can't, but feel a profound sense of loss.

At the same time, however, my friends only saw the international media hysteria against Israel, which was predictably exactly the same as in past conflicts. But consider this: it was *Hamas* that formally declared all peace agreements with Israel null and void, which formally ended the ceasefire on December 19, 2008, after having violated it with the firing of thousands of rockets on the southern Israeli populations prior to Israel's invasion of Gaza.

I did not notice any media hysteria about these attacks on southern Israel, in fact, barely a mention. What country in the world would allow 3500 missiles to be fired during a 12-month period on its civilian populated areas and not retaliate?

Some commentators have said that the rockets fired by <u>Hamas</u> claimed only a few Israeli victims, as if this somehow justified the attacks.

I was in the southern Israeli town of Sderot last June when the Australia Israel Cultural Exchange screened the opening film of our annual Australian Film Festival there as a mark of solidarity with the local population.

Given its proximity to Gaza, Sderot had until recently been the main target for <u>Hamas</u>'s rockets. The reality on the ground there is this: the population had stopped breathing for over a year. In order to protect civilian life from the <u>Hamas</u> rockets, extraordinary measures are taken. Shopping is planned like a military operation and taking kids to school becomes an operational nightmare.

The siren alarm system gives people less than 30 seconds to reach the nearest shelter. The people of Sderot, and now Ashkelon, Ashdod and Be'er Sheva, observe this rule with great discipline. This duty of care to protect civilian life by the Israeli state and their local civic leaders explains why there are so few casualties on the Israeli side.

#### Images of bloodshed obscure truth of Gaza

The psychological trauma of living with the anticipation of the next rocket attack and the threat of danger, day in day out, is the real definition of the word ``terror" for these people.

What is so galling and paradoxical to average Israelis, is the consistent call for Israel to be apologetic for the fact that it puts the welfare of its citizens first and seeks to minimise civilian casualties on both sides, despite the thousands of rockets hurled at its towns by <u>Hamas</u>. In contrast, <u>Hamas</u>'s stated aim is to kill Israeli civilians, yet they are virtually exempt from criticism in regards to these acts. Some media outlets even go so far as to justify <u>Hamas</u>'s targeting of civilians as a legitimate form of resistance.

Sure enough, some television programs did invite a token Israeli guest who tried to explain Israel's case. But the answers given seemed to be presented as propaganda, and the implication was that the only story to be believed was the *Hamas* narrative.

If Israel has learned the lessons of the 2006 war against Hezbollah in Lebanon, <u>Hamas</u> has learned from that war too. Hezbollah was able to use the southern Lebanese population as human shields, and get away with it.

You would think that such a crime would be denounced by humanitarian groups, by the UN and by Western media.

Alas, the strategy has worked for <u>Hamas</u>: it produced the images that screamed from the front pages of newspapers and TV screens, pushingthe buttons of people across theworld.

Emotions cloud the context; the result is a circus. It is mind-boggling that barely any media outlet outside Israel has consistently denounced *Hamas* for using Palestinian *women* and children as human shields.

By forgetting the context, voluntarily or not, much of the Western commentators have implied this: it is permissible for terror groups to use civilians as human shields, but not fora legitimate country to mistakenly kill civilians in the course of battlingenemy.

The latter is being portrayed as a crime against humanity. However harsh it is to lose civilians, this logic isabsurd.

French philosopher Bernard-Henri Levy said recently that you must not confuse the intentional act of shooting rockets on civilian populations with the clear intention of killing them (a crime against humanity) and the fire that is aimed at the enemy combatant that mistakenly kills civilians (however unacceptable and heartbreaking the loss of civilians always is).

After all, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that <u>Hamas</u> has built an infrastructure of bunkers and tunnels that were located under the most populated areas of Gaza. These were not for the benefit of the civilian population, but for **Hamas**'s own leaders to smuggle arms and hide.

The <u>Hamas</u> leadership had even taken refuge at the Shifa Hospital, the largest in Gaza, and at the UN Relief and Works Agency, which normally provides humanitarian and health services. There has been a lot of ranting by the UN regarding the attacks on UNRWA. It is interesting to note how the UN places the blame on Israel but does not place any responsibility on <u>Hamas</u>.

The rocket shootings against southern Israel take place from the buildings where civilians live. Mosques and schools are used as ammunition caches and arms depots. <u>Hamas</u> combatants had taken off their military fatigues from the start of the Israeli invasion and were wearing civilian clothes, surprising Israeli soldiers by mixing with civilians.

In such an environment, it is no wonder civilians were caught in the crossfire. The only surprise is the low number of civilian casualties in an area where 1.4 million Palestinians live. This is a result of the care with which Israel has operated.

Israel says 12 per cent of casualties are civilians, <u>Hamas</u> say 40 per cent. Whatever the percentage, it is a tragedy. But citing numbers and showing images while forgetting the context creates one more casualty: the truth.

#### Images of bloodshed obscure truth of Gaza

Immediately after Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert unilaterally declared a ceasefire on Sunday, accepting the Egyptian plan, *Hamas* fired eight rockets on southern Israel.

Albert Dadon AM is the founder and chairman of the Australia Israel Cultural Exchange.

Load-Date: January 21, 2009



#### Rubble and Painkillers in Gaza, an Island Adrift After War Fades

The New York Times
May 29, 2009 Friday
Late Edition - Final

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

Length: 1069 words

Byline: By ETHAN BRONNER; Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting.

Dateline: GAZA

#### **Body**

Dozens of families still live in tents amid collapsed buildings and rusting pipes. With construction materials barred, a few are building mud-brick homes. Everything but food and medicine has to be smuggled through desert tunnels from Egypt. Among the items that people seek is an addictive pain reliever used to fight depression.

Four months after Israel waged a war here to stop <u>Hamas</u> rocket fire and two years after <u>Hamas</u> took full control of this coastal strip, Gaza is like an island adrift. Squeezed from without by an Israeli and Egyptian boycott and from within by their Islamist rulers, the 1.5 million people here are cut off from any productivity or hope.

"Right after the war, everybody came -- journalists, foreign governments and charities promising to help," said Hashem Dardona, 47, who is unemployed. "Now, nobody comes."

But with the Obama administration pressing Israel to allow in reconstruction materials, and with attention increasingly focused on internal Palestinian divisions, Gaza will soon be back at the center of Middle East peace negotiations. The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, met with President Obama on Thursday in Washington.

For many Israelis, Gaza is a symbol of all that is wrong with Palestinian sovereignty, which they view increasingly as an opportunity for anti-Israeli forces, notably Iran, to get within rocket range.

That leaves Gaza suspended in a state of misery that defies easy categorization. It is, of course, crowded and poor, but it is better off than nearly all of Africa as well as parts of Asia. There is no acute malnutrition, and infant mortality rates compare with those in Egypt and Jordan, according to Mahmoud Daher of the World Health Organization here.

This is because although Israel and Egypt have shut the borders for the past three years in an effort to squeeze *Hamas*, Israel rations aid daily, allowing in about 100 trucks of food and medicine. Military officers in Tel Aviv count the calories to avoid a disaster. And the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees runs schools and medical clinics that are clean and efficient.

But there are many levels of deprivation short of catastrophe, and Gaza inhabits most of them. It has almost nothing of a functioning economy apart from basic commerce and farming. Education has declined terribly; medical care is declining.

#### Rubble and Painkillers in Gaza, an Island Adrift After War Fades

There are tens of thousands of educated and ambitious people here, teachers, engineers, translators, business managers, who have nothing to do but grow frustrated. They cannot practice their professions and they cannot leave. They collect welfare and smoke in cafes. A United Nations survey shows a spike in domestic violence.

Some people say they have started to take a small capsule known as Tramal, the commercial name for an opiate-like painkiller that increases sexual desire and a sense of control. *Hamas* has recently warned of imprisonment for those who traffic in and take the drug.

Yet the pills arrive, along with clothing, furniture and cigarettes, through the hundreds of tunnels punched into the desert at the southern border town of Rafah by rough-edged entrepreneurs who pay the <u>Hamas</u> authorities a tax on the goods.

Similar tunnels also serve as conduits for arms. Israel periodically bombs those in hopes of weakening <u>Hamas</u>, which says it will never recognize Israel and will reserve the right to use violence against it until it leaves all the land it won in the 1967 war. After that, there would be a 10-year truce while the next steps were contemplated, although the <u>Hamas</u> charter calls for the destruction of Israel in any borders.

Israel began the siege after <u>Hamas</u> won Palestinian legislative elections in 2006. It was tightened after <u>Hamas</u> pushed the Palestinian Authority out of Gaza in June 2007. Iranian backing for <u>Hamas</u> has added to Israel's conviction that the siege is the right path.

The aim is to keep Gaza at subsistence and offer a contrast with the West Bank, which in theory benefits from foreign aid and economic and political development. <u>Hamas</u> supporters will then realize their mistake. The plan has not gone well, however, partly because the West Bank under Israeli occupation remains no one's idea of paradise and partly because <u>Hamas</u> seems more in control here every year, with cleaner streets and lower crime, although its popularity is hard to gauge.

"<u>Hamas</u> is learning from its mistakes and getting stronger and stronger," said Sharhabeel al-Zaeem, a prominent lawyer here. He and others have been urging international officials to get construction materials and other goods into Gaza through the closed crossings.

They argue that the current system serves only <u>Hamas</u>, since it taxes the illicit tunnel goods and limited currency exchanges and is not blamed by the people for the outside siege. If glass and cement were allowed in through the crossings with Israel, they say, <u>Hamas</u> would not get the credit and the Palestinian Authority could collect the taxes.

"The people of Gaza are depressed, and depressed people turn to myth and fantasy, meaning religion and drugs," said Jawdat Khoudary, a building contractor. "This kind of a prison feeds extremism. Let people see out to see a different version of reality."

Israeli officials remain skeptical of opening the borders. Many believe that their war served as deterrence and note the drastic reduction in rocket fire as evidence. They fear that steel or cement will be siphoned off by <u>Hamas</u> for arms. But they are feeling pressure from the Americans and United Nations, and they are discussing a pilot project.

Meanwhile, Gaza feels more and more like a <u>Hamas</u> state and less linked to the West Bank. Men are increasingly bearded, <u>women</u> are more covered. <u>Hamas</u> is the main employer. Schools and courts, once run by the Fatah-dominated Palestinian Authority, are all <u>Hamas</u>. The government is collecting information on companies and nonprofit groups and seeking control over them.

Many here are especially worried about the young. At a program aimed at helping those traumatized by the January war, teenagers are offered colored markers to draw anything they like, says Farah Abu Qasem, 20, a student of English translation who volunteers at the program.

"They seem only to choose black and to draw things like tanks," she said. "And when we ask them to draw something that represents the future, they leave the paper blank."

http://www.nytimes.com

#### **Graphic**

PHOTOS Palestinians in the Gaza Strip sought shelter from the heat by taking refuge under rubble. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ASHRAF AMRA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

A smuggler digging a tunnel at the border of Egypt and the Gaza Strip. Everything but food and medicine has to be smuggled in.

The ruins of the parliament building in Gaza City, which was destroyed by Israel during the war four months ago. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ASHRAF AMRA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (pg. A10)

Load-Date: May 29, 2009



#### Rebuilding Begins Upon a Wobbly Truce

The New York Times

January 19, 2009 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 11

Length: 897 words

Byline: By ISABEL KERSHNER; Robert F. Worth contributed reporting from Beirut, Lebanon.

**Dateline: JERUSALEM** 

#### **Body**

Israeli troops and tanks began to leave Gaza on Sunday as a fragile cease-fire opened the way for intensified international efforts to build a more durable peace.

Small skirmishes broke out but Gaza was largely quiet after Israel, then <u>Hamas</u>, announced unilateral cease-fires, ending a devastating 22-day battle in which more than 1,300 Palestinians and 13 Israelis died.

European and Arab leaders met in Egypt, where they pledged support for rebuilding Gaza, and called for an end to arms smuggling, as Israel has demanded, and the opening of Gaza's borders, as demanded by <u>Hamas</u>, the Islamic militant movement that rules Gaza.

Six European leaders went on to Jerusalem, where Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told them that Israel was interested in leaving Gaza "as quickly as possible," as soon as the circumstances allowed. A military official confirmed on Sunday evening that a "gradual withdrawal" was under way.

When it embarked on the campaign, Israel said its main military objective was to significantly reduce the <u>Hamas</u> rocket fire out of Gaza and to fundamentally change the security situation in Israel's south. The results so far seem inconclusive.

Palestinian militants in Gaza fired at least 19 rockets at southern Israel on Sunday, including some after <u>Hamas</u> and other militant groups had declared a cease-fire. Most landed without causing injury, but one struck a house in the Israeli port city of Ashdod, lightly wounding one woman, the military said.

Israel said it carried out three airstrikes in Gaza on Sunday, one against a group of gunmen who opened fire on its forces and two against rocket-launching squads. There were conflicting news reports of casualties, with either one man or one girl said to have been killed.

B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization, cited a Gaza resident who had said that his brother, a farmer, was killed by Israeli fire.

In a speech broadcast Sunday night on <u>Hamas</u>'s Al Aqsa television, the <u>Hamas</u> leader Ismail Haniya, who has been in hiding for the past three weeks, claimed victory against Israel. He pledged to provide compensation to families who suffered damage during the war.

#### Rebuilding Begins Upon a Wobbly Truce

Gaza health officials increased the Palestinian death toll on Sunday to about 1,300 people, including 104 <u>women</u> and 410 children. The number is expected to rise as more bodies are found.

Israel's cease-fire took effect early Sunday morning. About 12 hours later, <u>Hamas</u> and other militant groups in Gaza announced their immediate, weeklong cease-fire.

<u>Hamas</u> and its associates gave Israeli troops a week to leave the coastal enclave. <u>Hamas</u> had previously said it would continue fighting as long as Israeli forces remained.

Referring to the one-week deadline, Mark Regev, a spokesman for Mr. Olmert, said Israel did not "take dictates from *Hamas*." But he also insisted that Israel, which began an air offensive against *Hamas* on Dec. 27 and sent ground forces in a week later, had no desire to stay in Gaza for long. "If it is quiet, it will be easier for us to leave expeditiously," he said.

Israeli military and political leaders have emphasized that Israel will respond to any attacks, but on Sunday the guns largely gave way to diplomacy.

<u>Hamas</u> demands the opening of the Gaza border crossings as a condition for a lasting truce. Israel's primary condition is an internationally guaranteed mechanism to prevent weapons smuggling across Egypt's border into Gaza.

At a summit meeting at the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el Sheik on Sunday, European and moderate Arab leaders offered their support for both goals. "We are ready to offer technical, diplomatic, military and marine assistance to Israel and Egypt to stop the smuggling of weapons," President Nicolas Sarkozy of France said at a news conference after the meeting.

Egypt also hopes to force <u>Hamas</u> into reconciliation talks with its rival, Fatah, as a means of unifying the Palestinian leadership and eventually returning Gaza to more moderate Palestinian Authority rule. <u>Hamas</u> seized control of Gaza in 2007, routing the Fatah forces loyal to the authority.

<u>Hamas</u>, which is classified by Israel, the United States and the European Union as a terrorist organization, has been severely battered by the Israeli military operation in Gaza but remains in control.

From Sharm el Sheik, the French, British, German, Spanish, Italian and Czech leaders traveled to Jerusalem for dinner with Mr. Olmert, who told his guests that undermining <u>Hamas</u> rule in Gaza depended on strengthening the Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, whose power is currently confined to the West Bank.

On Sunday, France also sent four planes carrying medical supplies, water treatment equipment and 80 aid workers including surgeons, doctors and bomb disposal experts to Egypt, the French Foreign Ministry said. The equipment and personnel were on standby on the Egyptian side of the Gaza border, ready to enter as soon as they could.

Meanwhile, competition for control of the reconstruction of Gaza seems to have begun.

Salam Fayyad, the prime minister of the Palestinian Authority, complained that European leaders and the United Nations secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, had proposed setting up an interim international committee to finance and organize the reconstruction. Such a committee would cut out *Hamas*, but it would also bypass the authority.

http://www.nytimes.com

#### **Graphic**

#### Rebuilding Begins Upon a Wobbly Truce

PHOTO: Israeli soldiers left Gaza on Sunday. <u>Hamas</u> gave the troops a week to leave the coastal enclave.(PHOTOGRAPH BY SEBASTIAN SCHEINER/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Load-Date: January 19, 2009



## Cease-fire holding as Israelis pull out; Gaza largely quiet after 22-day battle that killed more than 1,300 Palestinians

The International Herald Tribune January 20, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 5

Length: 892 words

Byline: Isabel Kershner - The New York Times Media Group

**Dateline: JERUSALEM** 

#### **Body**

Robert F. Worth contributed reporting from Beirut and Ethan Bronner from Gaza City.

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Israeli troops and tanks continued to leave Gaza on Monday as a fragile cease-fire opened the way for intensified international efforts to build a more durable peace.

Small skirmishes broke out on Sunday, but Gaza was largely quiet after Israel, then <u>Hamas</u>, announced unilateral cease-fires, ending a devastating 22-day battle in which more than 1,300 Palestinians and 13 Israelis died. Some news reports said Israeli forces planned to complete their withdrawal in time for the inauguration on Tuesday of Barack Obama as president of the United States.

But an Israeli military spokesman, speaking in return for customary anonymity, said there was "no official basis for that report, but there's a gradual thinning of troops going on." He declined to discuss the timetable for the withdrawal to be completed.

In Gaza, residents said police officers had returned to their posts and there had been no apparent renewal of hostilities.

As the full extent of the destruction emerged, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia pledged a \$1 billion contribution to a \$2 billion reconstruction fund that Palestinians are seeking to establish, according to news report. The Saudi monarch was speaking at a summit meeting of the Arab League as it got under way Monday in Kuwait.

Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the Palestinian Authority and a fierce rival of <u>Hamas</u>, was quoted in the same reports as saying at the meeting that it was time for his Fatah movement and <u>Hamas</u> to form a government of national unity. It was not clear how the idea would be greeted by <u>Hamas</u>, which routed Fatah from Gaza in gun battles in 2007.

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On Monday, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran called Khaled Meshal, <u>Hamas</u>'s senior exiled leader, in Damascus to tell him that: "Today is the beginning of victory and perseverance will complete the links of victory," the Iranian IRNA news agency reported.

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Load-Date: January 27, 2009



#### <u>Abbas swears in new Palestinian govt</u>

AlArabiya.net
May 18, 2009 Monday

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Length: 688 words

#### **Body**

A new Palestinian government, again headed by Western-backed Salam Fayyad, was sworn in on Tuesday.

The new cabinet took the oath of office at the Palestinian Authority (PA) headquarters in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

Ten of the 23 ministers are Fatah members and the remainder belong to other groups, but none to *Hamas*, which said it would not recognize the new government.

Riyad al-Malki will retain the foreign affairs portfolio in the new cabinet, and four ministries, including tourism and education, will be headed by **women**.

The ceremony came a day after the secular Fatah faction of Western-backed Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas and the rival *Hamas* adjourned a fifth round of talks in Egypt without agreeing on a unity deal.

The rival factions have been at loggerheads since <u>Hamas</u> forces ousted Abbas loyalists from the Gaza Strip in June 2007.

The U.S.-educated Fayyad announced on March 7 that he had submitted his resignation to pave the way for a "national consensus" between the two groups. Fayyad is a former World Bank and International Monetary Fund employee who won accolades in the West for his anti-corruption measures during his stint as Palestinian finance minister. Agree to disagree

Meanwhile, Egyptian efforts to reconcile the opposed factions have repeatedly been unsuccessful since Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> were unable to surmount their political differences on the composition and obligations of a proposed unity government.

Salah al-Bardawil, spokesman for <u>Hamas</u>'s parliamentary bloc, said any agreement on the formation of a new security force as part of Egyptian-brokered reconciliation talks would have to apply to all the occupied territories.

"The correct way to address the security issue is to rehabilitate the security apparatus in the West Bank and Gaza on a basis of professionalism and patriotism," he said in a statement posted on a *Hamas*-affiliated website.

#### Abbas swears in new Palestinian govt

"Any deal that limits an agreement on security forces to the Gaza Strip clearly means giving a certificate of good conduct to the security services in the West Bank and their role in fighting the resistance," he said.

Amr Souleiman, head of the Egyptian intelligence service, announced in a statement yesterday the sixth and final round of talks will be held in July of this year as a final attempt to reach an agreement on the suggested joint Fatah-Hamas security force which Hamas has rejected, as well as joint factional committee proposed by Egypt.

Analysts not hopeful

However experts on Arab-Israeli affairs are not hopeful anything will be resolved in the final meeting.

"My guess is the coming talks will be more of the same, with nothing resolved and more time wasted, unfortunately," Emad Gad, Arab-Israeli relations expert at the Ahram Foundation, told Al Arabiya.

Gad said the main problem in the talks is political rivalry between factions, none of which seems ready to compromise to break the deadlock.

While the Fatah government demands that any unity government must abide by past peace accords, <u>Hamas</u> insists that the new government must break free from such accords since they involve official recognition of Israel.

"When you have two parties that refuse to give up any political power or independence to move ahead, you cannot really resolve anything," Gad said.

Agreement between the two Palestinian factions is vital for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, devastated by Israel's 22-day offensive in December and January that killed more than 1,400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis.

Waheed abdul Magid, political analyst at the al-Ahram Center think tank, said that failure to create a unity government means *Hamas* risks losing out on reconstruction funds for Gaza.

"Internal divisions will also put <u>Hamas</u> in a critical position when it comes to who will be responsible for building Gaza," Magid told Al Arabiya.

International donor countries pledged \$4.5 billion to the Palestinian Authority at a conference in the Egyptian resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh in March, much of it for the reconstruction of Gaza.

But many donor countries refuse to channel their funds via <u>Hamas</u>, insisting Abbas' government must supervise the spending.

**Load-Date:** May 21, 2009



#### Middle East Reality Check

The New York Times

March 9, 2009 Monday

The New York Times on the Web

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Section: Section; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg.; OP-ED COLUMNIST

Length: 882 words

Byline: By ROGER COHEN

#### **Body**

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton grabbed headlines with an invitation to Iran to attend a conference on Afghanistan, but the significant Middle Eastern news last week came from Britain. It has "reconsidered" its position on Hezbollah and will open a direct channel to the militant group in Lebanon.

Like <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza, Hezbollah has long been treated by the United States as a proscribed terrorist group. This narrow view has ignored the fact that both organizations are now entrenched political and social movements without whose involvement regional peace is impossible.

Britain aligned itself with the U.S. position on Hezbollah, but has now seen its error. Bill Marston, a Foreign Office spokesman, told Al Jazeera: "Hezbollah is a political phenomenon and part and parcel of the national fabric in Lebanon. We have to admit this."

Hallelujah.

Precisely the same thing could be said of <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza. It is a political phenomenon, part of the national fabric there.

One difference is that Hezbollah is in the Lebanese national unity government, whereas <u>Hamas</u> won the free and fair January 2006 elections to the Legislative Council of the Palestinian Authority, only to discover Middle Eastern democracy is only democracy if it produces the right result.

The United States should follow the British example. It should initiate diplomatic contacts with the political wing of Hezbollah. The Obama administration should also look carefully at how to reach moderate <u>Hamas</u> elements and engineer a <u>Hamas</u>-Fatah reconciliation.

A rapprochement between the two wings of the Palestinian movement was briefly achieved at Mecca in 2007. The best form of payback from America's expensive and authoritarian allies -- Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan -- would be help in reconciling Gaza Palestinians loyal to <u>Hamas</u> with West Bank Palestinians loyal to the more moderate Fatah of Mahmoud Abbas.

Resolve is not the most conspicuous characteristic of those three allies. But Obama must push them to help. As long as Palestinians are divided, peace efforts will flounder.

#### Middle East Reality Check

With respect to <u>Hamas</u>, the West has bound itself to three conditions for any contact: <u>Hamas</u> must recognize Israel, forswear terrorism and accept previous Palestinian commitments. This was reiterated by Clinton on her first Mideast swing.

The 1988 <u>Hamas</u> Charter is vile, but I think it's wrong to get hung up on the prior recognition of Israel issue. Perhaps <u>Hamas</u> is sincere in its calls for Israel's disappearance -- although it has offered a decades-long truce -- but then it's also possible that Israel in reality has no desire to see a Palestinian state.

One view of Israel's continued expansion of settlements, Gaza blockade, West Bank walling-in and wanton recourse to high-tech force would be that it's designed precisely to bludgeon, undermine and humiliate the Palestinian people until their dreams of statehood and dignity evaporate.

The argument over recognition is in the end a form of evasion designed to perpetuate the conflict.

Israel, from the time of Ben Gurion, built its state by creating facts on the ground, not through semantics. Many of its leaders, including Ehud Olmert and Tzipi Livni, have been on wondrous political odysseys from absolutist rejection of division of the land to acceptance of a two-state solution. Yet they try to paint <u>Hamas</u> as irrevocably absolutist. Why should Arabs be any less pragmatic than Jews?

Of course it's desirable that <u>Hamas</u> recognize Israel before negotiations. But is it essential? No. What is essential is that it renounces violence, in tandem with Israel, and the inculcation of hatred that feeds the violence.

Speaking of violence, it's worth recalling what Israel did in Gaza in response to sporadic <u>Hamas</u> rockets. It killed upward of 1,300 people, many of them <u>women</u> and children; caused damage estimated at \$1.9 billion; and destroyed thousands of Gaza homes. It continues a radicalizing blockade on 1.5 million people squeezed into a narrow strip of land.

At this vast human, material and moral price, Israel achieved almost nothing beyond damage to its image throughout the world. Israel has the right to hit back when attacked, but any response should be proportional and governed by sober political calculation. The Gaza war was a travesty; I have never previously felt so shamed by Israel's actions.

No wonder <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah are seen throughout the Arab world as legitimate resistance movements.

It's time to look at them again and adopt the new British view that contact can encourage Hezbollah "to move away from violence and play a constructive, democratic and peaceful role."

The British step is a breakthrough. By contrast, Clinton's invitation to Iran is of little significance.

There are two schools within the Obama administration on Iran: the incremental and the bold. The former favors little steps like inviting Iran to help with Afghanistan; the latter realizes that nothing will shift until Obama convinces Tehran that he's changing strategy rather than tactics.

That requires Obama to tell Iran, as a start, that he does not seek regime change and recognizes the country's critical role as a regional power. Carrots and sticks -- the current approach -- will lead to the same dead end as <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah denial.

http://www.nytimes.com

Load-Date: March 9, 2009



# Middle East reality check; Globalist

The International Herald Tribune

March 9, 2009 Monday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 6

Length: 885 words

Byline: Roger Cohen - The New York Times Media Group

Dateline: NEW YORK

## **Body**

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Like <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza, Hezbollah has long been treated by the United States as a proscribed terrorist group. This narrow view has ignored the fact that both organizations are now entrenched political and social movements without whose involvement regional peace is impossible.

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A rapprochement between the two wings of the Palestinian movement was briefly achieved at Mecca in 2007. The best form of payback from America's expensive and authoritarian allies - Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan - would be help in reconciling Gaza Palestinians loyal to <u>Hamas</u> with West Bank Palestinians loyal to the more moderate Fatah of Mahmoud Abbas.

It won't be easy. Resolve is not the most conspicuous characteristic of those three allies. But it's not impossible. As long as Palestinians are divided, peace efforts will flounder.

#### Middle East reality check Globalist

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At this vast human, material and moral price, Israel has achieved almost nothing, beyond damage to its image throughout the world.

Israel has the right to hit back when attacked, but any response should be proportional and governed by sober political calculation, not violence for its own sake. The Gaza war was a travesty; I have never previously felt so shamed by Israel's actions.

No wonder <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah are seen throughout the Arab world as legitimate resistance movements.

It's time to look at them again and adopt the new British view that contact can encourage Hezbollah "to move away from violence and play a constructive, democratic and peaceful role."

The British step could be a game-changer. By contrast, Clinton's invitation to Iran is of little significance. There are two schools within the Obama administration on Iran: the incremental and the bold. The former favors little steps like inviting Iran to help with Afghanistan; the latter realizes that nothing will change until Obama convinces Tehran he's changing strategy rather than tactics.

That requires Obama to tell Iran, as a start, that he does not seek regime change and recognizes the country's critical role as a regional power. Carrots and sticks - the current approach - will lead to the same dead end as *Hamas* and Hezbollah denial.

Readers are invited to comment at my blog: www.iht.com/passages

Load-Date: March 17, 2009

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# Peace is fragile, and the omens are bad

The Australian

January 19, 2009 Monday

1 - All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 9

Length: 721 words

Byline: JOHN LYONS

# **Body**

#### **ANALYSIS**

THE fighting has stopped -- almost -- in the most fragile of ceasefires.

A relief to many, but the omens are bad. The two warring sides have yet to agree on anything. They remain neighbours, they still have significant weaponry, and they are just as hostile to each other as they were when the conflict broke out.

Twenty-two days of extraordinary firepower levelled at one of the poorest places on earth -- it's not even a country. That's not to say the conflict is a simple case of a powerful military pounding a defenceless population.

There's an element of that. But serious questions need to be answered by both sides before the peace can last.

Before this dispute can be resolved, the faults on both sides need to be acknowledged. <u>Hamas</u> should be brought to account on several fronts. It is not a reasonable, considerate political party. <u>Hamas</u> is committed to martyrdom -- it preaches a glory in dying for Allah. In the Palestinian territory of the West Bank, run

by *Hamas*'s rival faction Fatah, police and security forces seek to prevent such extremism.

How can an organisation with an ideology such as <u>Hamas</u> run the Gaza Strip? How can it do everything from raise revenue for roads and hospitals to conduct foreign affairs with Israel when it is committed to the destruction of its neighbour?

How can <u>Hamas</u> expect to be given legitimacy as a government of anybody, let alone 1.5 million Palestinians, when it continues to fire rockets to kill Israeli civilians?

Almost one million Israelis live within the 40km range of <u>Hamas</u>'s rockets. The rockets tend to miss their targets, but <u>Hamas</u> cripples civilian communities when 70 rockets are fired in one day. On ``heavy" days, schools cannot operate, childcare centres are closed and residents stay in their houses. This is intolerable for Israel. For those who entirely blame Israel for the past three weeks, there is one simple question: what should Israelis do about the rocket attacks they have endured for eight years?

Without that question being answered, Israel's mindset on Gaza cannot be understood.

#### Peace is fragile, and the omens are bad

Another question for <u>Hamas</u>: do they take any responsibility for what has occurred over the past 22 days? Had they not fired the rockets, Israel would not have had any pretext to invade.

While <u>Hamas</u> leaders sat in Damascus and Beirut, the people they are supposed to represent were slaughtered. While <u>Hamas</u> leaders talked tough, recording videos of how they would continue their ``resistance", innocent Palestinian civilians found themselves on the front line, watching their loved ones being killed andmaimed.

Israel, too, must confront tough questions. How could a military with the best technology and a reputation for precision and professionalism kill so many civilians? The Israeli claims inspire deep suspicion.

On many occasions when large numbers of civilians were killed, the instant response of the Israeli Defence Forces was that they were attacked from the site and simply fired back.

While Israel kept foreign journalists away from the war and engaged in heavy censorship, enough responses came from Gaza to show that on many occasions this was untrue.

When the Israelis hit the UN compound where 700 civilians had taken refuge last week, Israel claimed they were firing back at <u>Hamas</u> fighters in the centre. But two of the compound's managers disputed that and challenged Israel to provide the evidence.

No evidence has emerged.

How has a country that boasts one of the best intelligence services been unable to isolate <u>Hamas</u> fighters from the hundreds of civilians it killed? How could they kill so many men, <u>women</u> and children who were not <u>Hamas</u> fighters?

Israel prides itself on being a democracy, but the worst pictures from Gaza were kept off mainstream Hebrew television networks. Israelis did not see the pictures broadcast on France 24 of a man running with a child.

The child had lost his or her face. It was impossible to tell whether the child was a boy or a girl. All you could see was ripped skin and blood. They did not see the picture of the man kissing his dead boy or the child whose head was exposed in the rubble that buried the rest of the body.

The ceasefire is one rocket attack from becoming a full-scale war. Many tragedies have occurred in all this, one of whichis that after the dreadful human cost, the hostility is greater than ever.

Load-Date: January 18, 2009



# Column: Blame game continuing to fuel Gaza battle

University Wire

January 15, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 University Chronicle via U-Wire

Length: 494 words

Byline: By Paul Crawford, University Chronicle; SOURCE: St. Cloud State U.

Dateline: ST. CLOUD, Minn.

# **Body**

On Dec. 27, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launched an attack on Gaza, which has to date, resulted in the deaths of an estimated 900 Palestinians, many of whom were **women** and children.

The condition on the ground in Gaza, which even before the attacks was compared to a concentration camp by some, including the conservative political pundit Pat Buchanan, seems only to be worsening as the IDF pummels <u>Hamas</u> and inadvertently Palestinian citizens, homes and infrastructure.

Previous to the incursion, the peace between <u>Hamas</u> and the Israeli government was fragile, held together by a temporary ceasefire agreement. Then came the inflammation and intensification.

<u>Hamas</u> blamed Israel for not lifting the blockade on Gaza that would allow in humanitarian aid among other things.

In response, militant groups inside Gaza including <u>Hamas</u> and Islamic Jihad retaliated by launching rocket and mortar attacks on cities in southern Israel.

Israel then blamed <u>Hamas</u> for the rocket attacks on its southern cities that have killed 18 civilians since 2001. The IDF retaliated first by air strikes, then by a ground invasion.

One can easily argue, as many have, that Israel's retaliation on <u>Hamas</u> and the citizens of Gaza has not been proportional.

One can also argue that Israel's security will be threatened as long as *Hamas* is armed with rockets. And so it goes: the other side is always to blame for the violence.

But this blame game accomplishes nothing and is rather irresponsible.

Unfortunately, instead of condemning all violence and a calling for an immediate cessation of violence, our government's response is unequivocally one-sided and foolish.

President Bush decided on Jan. 5 to declare, "The situation now taking place in Gaza was caused by *Hamas*."

These types of statements have been the norm coming from the White House for decades. The president then stated on Jan. 12 regarding the prospect of a ceasefire agreement, "I'm for a sustainable ceasefire. And a definition of a sustainable ceasefire is that *Hamas* stops firing rockets into Israel."

Column: Blame game continuing to fuel Gaza battle

In other words, a ceasefire agreement will not be reached unless <u>Hamas</u> stops launching rockets into Israel. I was under the impression that a ceasefire is an agreement to cease fire on both sides?

As long as our government continues to play the blame game by supporting Israeli retaliations, violations and occupations in the Palestinian territories, there will never be a chance for sustainable peace.

A more pragmatic and even-handed response would be to condemn all violence on both sides, even if it means disappointing and possibly angering a strong ally.

The clock has run out on Mr. Bush and his administration, and its unlikely that his tone will change before Jan. 20. Even if it did, the damage has been done.

One can only hope that Mr. Obama's "change" includes a change in policy toward our relationship with Israel-one that will make Israelis, Palestinians and Americans more secure.

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Load-Date: January 16, 2009



# Campaign Against Israel Has Succeeded

The Mercury (South Africa)
February 16, 2009 Monday
e1 Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 7 **Length:** 260 words

# **Body**

The recent utterances by Patrick Bond in The Mercury attest to the success of the <u>Hamas</u> campaign against Israel.

Despite numerous attempts, and outnumbering the Israelis by millions, the Arab states have realised that the obsession they have with the destruction of the state of Israel cannot be achieved in a frontal war.

So, Arab strategists and others opposed to the Jewish state have devised a strategy using <u>Hamas</u> as their surrogate.

The plan is brilliant in its simplicity. <u>Hamas</u> takes over (by force) part of the Palestinian state closest to Israel. Then, like the child prodding a bear with a stick, <u>Hamas</u> antagonises Israel by firing rockets indiscriminately into Jewish territory, knowing that eventually Israel has to retaliate.

By using the old guerrilla-trick of <u>women</u> and children as shields, and firing rockets from residential areas, <u>Hamas</u> ensures that the Israeli retaliation will be "disproportionate" and civilian casualties high.

Just as no one likes seeing a bear attack a child, no matter the provocation, so <u>Hamas</u> has used pictures of demolished buildings and dead **women** and children to mobilise "world opinion" against the nasty Israeli bear.

Arab strategists know that in countries such as Britain and France, not to mention Germany, anti-Semitism lurks close to the surface, and this has been confirmed by the widespread condemnation of the Israelis.

Out of the woodwork have poured all the useful idiots calling for sanctions and the demise of Israel. The plan has worked brilliantly.

And people such as Bond have taken the bait.

C B Rogers

Durban

Load-Date: February 15, 2009



# Israel sends negotiator to Egypt; U.S. opinion solidly behind Israel: poll

Edmonton Journal (Alberta)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. F12

Length: 550 words

Byline: McClatchy Newspapers

**Dateline: JERUSALEM** 

# **Body**

Israeli officials said on Tuesday that they would send a top negotiator to Cairo on Thursday for what they described as "decisive" talks, but Israel's military advances in the Gaza Strip appeared to be outpacing diplomacy.

Israel is expected to send top negotiator Amos Gilad to Cairo for indirect talks with <u>Hamas</u>, led by Omar Suleiman, Egypt's intelligence chief. Gilad, a defence ministry official, led Israel's original Gaza cease-fire talks and is key to any deal taking shape.

Gilad had been expected to head to Cairo earlier, but Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's talks with <u>Hamas</u> faltered, apparently because <u>Hamas</u> balked at tough conditions to stop future weapons smuggling.

Should Gilad return without significant progress, it is more likely that Israel would intensify its military operation in Gaza.

So far, nearly 1,000 Palestinians and 13 Israelis have died since the campaign began Dec. 27.

Keeping up the pressure on <u>Hamas</u>, Israeli forces are methodically closing in on the heart of Gaza City, where soldiers are facing stronger resistance from Palestinian militants. On Tuesday, Israeli units pushed to within a mile of central Gaza City before pulling back.

So far, Israeli forces have taken lighter-than-expected losses. Nine Israeli soldiers have been killed fighting in Gaza, while the Israeli military estimates that more than 300 Palestinian fighters have been killed.

Nearly 1,000 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli strikes in the past 18 days, according to Gaza health officials. More than 40 per cent of those killed were **women** and children.

International pressure on Israel is building for an end to the fighting, although a new poll shows that U.S. public opinion is solidly behind Israel.

A McClatchy/lpsos poll released Tuesday showed that 44 per cent of Americans blamed <u>Hamas</u> for the current conflict, and only 14 per cent blame Israel. Also, 57 per cent of Americans thought that <u>Hamas</u> had used "excessive" force, whereas 44 per cent thought that Israel had used "appropriate" force.

Israel sends negotiator to Egypt; U.S. opinion solidly behind Israel: poll

As part of a renewed push to bring the fighting to a halt, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon flew to the Middle East with renewed appeals for Israel and *Hamas* to agree to UN calls for an immediate cease-fire.

Israel and *Hamas* rebuffed the UN Security Council cease-fire resolution passed last week.

Israeli leaders have vowed to expand military operations in Gaza unless <u>Hamas</u> ends its rocket attacks on southern Israel and new steps are taken to ensure that Palestinian militants can't dig tunnels between Gaza and Egypt to smuggle weapons.

<u>Hamas</u> leaders said they would end their attacks when Israel reopens its borders with Gaza and allows supplies to flow back into the isolated Mediterranean strip.

If diplomats are unable to bridge the significant differences, Israel has threatened to bring its fight into the heart of the Gaza Strip.

"Israel cannot end this without a ceasefire and an end to the weapons smuggling," said Yossi Alpher, a former official with Israel's Mossad spy agency. "Otherwise the Israeli government will have a hard time explaining itself -- and it will be a blow to Israeli deterrence."

The deepening military campaign is raising concerns that Israeli politicians don't have a game plan for ensuring that they'll come out of Gaza with a decisive victory.

Load-Date: January 14, 2009



# Israel: Gaza offensive may be near 'final act'

Guardian.com January 16, 2009

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# theguardian

Length: 926 words

Highlight: Diplomatic moves to achieve ceasefire follow death of <u>Hamas</u> interior minister and attack on UN

compound

# **Body**

Israel said today its Gaza offensive could be "in the final act" as moves towards a temporary ceasefire inch forward.

The Israeli envoy Amos Gilad was flying to Cairo this morning for the second day in a row to seek clarifications and express Israeli views about the latest Egyptian proposal for a ceasefire.

After a meeting last night between Israel's leaders, the foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, flew to Washington this morning to finalise an accord aimed at delivering Israel's key condition for a ceasefire: preventing *Hamas* from rearming.

Today's diplomatic manoeuvres follow reports that <u>Hamas</u> told Egypt, which is brokering the negotiations, that it would agree a year-long renewable ceasefire in Gaza if Israel pulled out its forces within seven days and reopened border crossings immediately.

"Hopefully we're in the final act," said Mark Regev, spokesman for the prime minister, Ehud Olmert, this morning. Briefings by the envoys working in Washington and Cairo could be followed by swift decisions by the security cabinet, he added.

The Egyptians have reportedly proposed an immediate time-limited ceasefire, during which the crossings will be opened for humanitarian aid. However Israel reportedly will not have to withdraw until a long-term truce is reached, which will include provisions to stop arms smuggling and a full lifting of the blockade. It is also insisting that Fatah and *Hamas* mend their split.

The moves come a day after Israel struck at the heart of <u>Hamas</u>, killing one of its most senior leaders and pushing deeper into Gaza City.

Israel kept up its pressure on <u>Hamas</u> today, with its aircraft striking about 40 targets over Gaza. An official statement by the military said targets included smuggling tunnels along the Egyptian border, a rocket launcher that was allegedly ready for firing, and a mosque which housed a tunnel entrance and was used to store arms..

Ayman Taha, a <u>Hamas</u> spokesman, said it wanted Israel to leave Gaza within two weeks, to end the siege and to open the crossings in the presence of European and Turkish observers. <u>Hamas</u> also wants the Palestinian Authority and international monitors posted at the crossing into Egypt, at Rafah in Gaza's south.

Israel: Gaza offensive may be near 'final act'

Taha said it would reconsider extending the truce beyond a year if Israel fulfilled those conditions.

Khaled Meshal, the de facto <u>Hamas</u> leader, said: "We will not accept any political movement that doesn't satisfy these demands."

Israeli jets yesterday bombed a house in the Jabaliya refugee camp, killing the <u>Hamas</u> interior minister, Said Siam, the most senior <u>Hamas</u> leader to be killed since 2004 when Israel assassinated Dr Abdel Aziz Al Rantissi, a founding member of the militant Islamist group.

A <u>Hamas</u> official vowed vengeance for Siam's death. "The blood of Said Siam will be a curse on the Zionist entity," Muhammad Nazzal told al-Jazeera television.

Earlier in the week Israel bombed the house of <u>Hamas</u>' deposed prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh, and last night it attacked and surrounded the house of the former foreign minister Mahmoud Al Zahar.

Yesterday Israel shelled the main UN compound housing the Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which distributes food to 750,000 of the 1.5 million Palestinians in Gaza.

Israel struck the compound, where about 700 Palestinians were sheltering, shortly after the UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, arrived in Israel.

Ban, who was in the region to press for an end to the violence, described the two hits on the compound as "intolerable".

He said: "I conveyed my strong protest and outrage to the defence minister and the foreign minister. The defence minister said it was a grave mistake. He assured me that extra attention will be paid to UN facilities and staff and this will not be repeated."

Olmert said Israeli troops had retaliated against <u>Hamas</u> militants who were firing from within the compound. He later apologised, saying the response was "harsh".

The British prime minister, Gordon Brown, condemned Israel for the attack. "When the UN is doing such vital work - humanitarian work among <u>women</u> and children in Gaza - no one can defend this attack by Israeli forces on the compound," he said.

It was the second time in this conflict that Israel has alleged that militants have used a UN compound to launch attacks. UNRWA's head in Gaza, John Ging, said the claim "was nonsense".

The compound was one of several civilian institutions hit as troops moved into Gaza City, taking control of three neighbourhoods. Shells struck a hospital and a building housing international media, even though the military reportedly checked the co-ordinates of the structure hours before it was hit.

In a terse statement, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said the damage to the al-Quds hospital was "completely and utterly unacceptable based on every known standard of international humanitarian law".

The US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, rang Livni and Israel's defence minister, Ehud Barak, to say she was "deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza".

Gilad briefed Olmert, Livni and Barak last night. The three have reportedly been in disagreement all week about ending the three-week assault.

Having refused to negotiate directly with <u>Hamas</u> since it was elected in 2006, Israel wants to ensure an internationally brokered ceasefire does not deliver the militants the recognition they crave.

Ban said he believed a truce could soon be reached. "There are certain elements in place that would enable a ceasefire, but it hinges on the political will of both sides," he told the media.

Israel: Gaza offensive may be near 'final act'

Load-Date: January 16, 2009



# 65 years' jail for terror financiers

The Australian

May 29, 2009 Friday

2 - All-round First Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 8

Length: 398 words

# **Body**

DALLAS: Two leaders of a Muslim charity have been jailed for 65 years in the US's largest terror-financing case.

The Texas-based Holy Land Foundation and five of its leaders were convicted last year of funnelling more than \$US12 million to help *Hamas* resist the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands.

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

<u>Hamas</u>, which has controlled the Gaza Strip since ousting forces loyal to Western-backed Palestinian Authority president Mahmud Abbas in June 2007, was designated a terror organisation by the US in 1995 and the trial centred on whether the charity, Holy Land, continued to support the group after this point.

Prosecutors did not accuse the charity of directly financing or being involved in terror.

They said humanitarian aid was used to promote *Hamas* and allow it to divert existing funds to militant activities.

Defence lawyers said the charity was a non-political body that operated legally to get aid to Palestinians living in squalor under the Israeli occupation and argued their clients were on trial chiefly because of family ties.

Holy Land chief executive officer Shukri Abu Baker, whose brother Jamal Issa is the head of <u>Hamas</u> operations in Yemen, was sentenced to 65 years' jail yesterday. Board chairman Ghassan Elashi, who is related by marriage to <u>Hamas</u> deputy political leader Mousa Abu Marzook, received the same sentence.

Holy Land co-founder Mohammad El-Mezain, a cousin of Marzook, and Abdulrahman Odeh, the charity's New Jersey representative, both received 15 years. The two men declared they were innocent. Fundraiser Mufid Abdulqader, brother of <u>Hamas</u> political leader Khaled Meshaal, received 20 years. ``I do acknowledge the verdict in this trial," Abdulqader said during the sentencing hearing. ``I believe in the system. My faith has not been shaken, it's been inspired.

Prosecutor Barry Jonas said the men's speeches showed a lack of repentance: ``These defendants are distancing themselves from the facts of the trial.

<sup>&</sup>quot;But it's un-American to ignore suffering and starving women and children."

## 65 years' jail for terror financiers

``(Abdulqader) claims to be devoted to peace, but I think that those videos show otherwise," he said, referring to footage of skits at Holy Land fundraising rallies in which Abdulqader pretends to be a <u>Hamas</u> fighter and mimics killing an Israeli.

Load-Date: May 28, 2009



# Siege of Gaza creates prison with no future

Scotland on Sunday May 31, 2009

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Length: 953 words

Byline: Ethan Bronner in Gaza City

**Highlight:** DOZENS of families still live in tents amid collapsed buildings and rusting pipes. With the import of construction materials barred, a few are building mud-brick homes. Everything but food and medicine has to be

smuggled through tunnels from Egypt. Among the most sought items is an addictive pain reliever.

# **Body**

Four months after Israel waged a war to stop <u>Hamas</u> rocket fire, Gaza is like an island adrift. Squeezed from without by an Israeli and Egyptian boycott and from within by their rulers, the 1.5 million residents are cut off from any productivity or hope.

"Right after the war, everybody came - journalists, foreign governments and charities promising to help," said Hashem Dardona, 47. "Now, nobody comes."

But with the US administration of President Barack Obama pressing the Israel government of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to allow in reconstruction materials, and with attention increasingly focused on internal Palestinian divisions, Gaza will soon be back at the centre of Middle East peace negotiations.

For many Israelis, Gaza is a symbol of all that is wrong with Palestinian sovereignty, which they view increasingly as an opportunity for anti-Israel forces, notably Iran, to get within rocket range. Unless a way can be found to tie Gaza back to the West Bank politically and geographically while mitigating Israeli fears, a Palestinian state seems further away than ever.

That leaves Gaza suspended in a state of misery that defies easy categorisation. It is, of course, crowded and poor but it is better off than nearly all of Africa as well as parts of Asia. There is no acute malnutrition, and infant mortality rates compare with those in Egypt and Jordan, according to Mahmoud Daher of the World Health Organization, who is in Gaza.

This is because although Israel and Egypt have shut the borders for the past three years in an effort to squeeze *Hamas*, Israel rations aid daily, allowing in about 100 trucks of food and medicine. Military officers in Tel Aviv count the calories to avoid a disaster. And the UN agency for Palestinian refugees runs schools and medical clinics that are clean and efficient.

But there are many levels of deprivation short of catastrophe, and Gaza inhabits most of them. It has almost nothing of a functioning economy apart from basic commerce and farming. Education has declined terribly; medical care is going the same way. There are tens of thousands of educated and ambitious people: teachers, engineers, translators, business managers, who have nothing to do but grow frustrated. They cannot practice their professions and they cannot leave. A UN survey shows a spike in domestic violence. Many say they have started to take Tramal, the commercial name for a painkiller, tramadol, that increases sexual desire and a sense of control. <u>Hamas</u> has recently warned of imprisonment for those who traffic in and take the drug.

#### Siege of Gaza creates prison with no future

Yet the pills arrive, along with clothing, furniture and cigarettes, through the hundreds of tunnels punched into the desert at the southern border town of Rafah by rough-edged entrepreneurs who pay the authorities tax on the goods.

Similar tunnels also serve as conduits for arms. Israel periodically bombs those in hopes of weakening <u>Hamas</u>, which says it will never recognise Israel and will reserve the right to use violence against it until it leaves all the land it won in the 1967 war.

Israel began the siege soon after <u>Hamas</u> won a surprise victory in Palestinian legislative elections in 2006. It was tightened after <u>Hamas</u> pushed the Palestinian Authority entirely out of Gaza in June 2007, following four days of street battles. Iranian backing for <u>Hamas</u> has added to Israel's conviction that the siege is the right path.

The aim is to keep Gaza at subsistence level and offer a contrast with the West Bank, which in theory benefits from foreign aid and economic and political development. The plan has not gone well, however, partly because the West Bank under Israeli occupation remains no-one's idea of paradise and partly because <u>Hamas</u> seems more in control every year, with cleaner streets and lower crime, although its popularity is hard to gauge.

"<u>Hamas</u> is learning from its mistakes and getting stronger and stronger," said Sharhabeed al-Zaeem, a prominent lawyer in Gaza. He and others have been urging international officials to get construction materials and other goods into Gaza through the closed crossings.

They argue that the current system serves only <u>Hamas</u>, since it taxes the illicit tunnel goods and limited currency exchanges and is not blamed by the people for the outside siege. If glass and cement were allowed in through the crossings with Israel, they say, <u>Hamas</u> would not get the credit and the Palestinian Authority could collect the taxes.

"The people of Gaza are depressed, and depressed people turn to myth and fantasy, meaning religion and drugs," said Jawdat Khoudary, a building contractor. "This kind of a prison feeds extremism. Let people see out to see a different version of reality."

Israeli officials remain sceptical of opening the borders but they are feeling pressure from the US and United Nations, and are discussing a pilot project.

Meanwhile, Gaza feels more and more like a <u>Hamas</u> state and less linked to the West Bank. Men are increasingly bearded, <u>women</u> are more covered. <u>Hamas</u> is the main employer. Schools and courts, once run by the Fatah-dominated Palestinian Authority, are all <u>Hamas</u> since the West Bank government ordered its employees to stay home. The government is collecting information on companies and nonprofit groups and seeking control over their activities.

Many are especially worried about the young. At a scheme aiming to helping those traumatised by the January war, teenagers are offered coloured markers to draw anything they like, said Farah Abu Qasem, 20, a student who volunteers at the programme.

"They seem only to choose black and to draw things like tanks," she said. "And when we ask them to draw something that represents the future, they leave the paper blank."

Load-Date: June 4, 2009



# <u>Disputing Gaza death toll, Israel offers no other figures. IDF, unofficially,</u> says only 150 of 900 confirmed fatalities were civilians

The Jerusalem Post January 23, 2009 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 1530 words

Byline: TOVAH LAZAROFF and YAAKOV KATZ, Herb Keinon and Jerusalem Post staff contributed to this report.

# **Body**

Almost a week after the end of Operation Cast Lead, Israel is privately vehemently contesting Palestinian figures for the number of civilians killed, but has released no official figures on the overall death toll, or on the proportion of civilians and *Hamas* operatives among the fatalities.

IDF Military Intelligence has set up a team to produce a comprehensive list of Palestinian fatalities, including their names and affiliation. It will be completed within two weeks, officials said, but it is not clear whether it will be made public.

Privately, throughout the operation and since, Israeli officials have disputed "official" Palestinian figures for the number of civilians killed in the 22-day assault on <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza, insisting that the <u>Hamas</u> Health Ministry, the source of those figures, has significantly inflated the civilian death toll and played down the number of <u>Hamas</u> operatives killed. There is also growing controversy as to the accuracy of the overall count, put by the <u>Hamas</u> ministry at 1,314.

The ministry said the majority of the fatalities were civilians, including 412 children and 110 <u>women</u>. The Palestinian count also shows 5,300 wounded, including 1,855 children and 795 <u>women</u>.

The IDF privately told Israeli reporters Thursday, by contrast, that only 150 of the 900 fatalities it has checked were civilians and that it was likely that the rest were <u>Hamas</u> combatants. But Israel has presented no formal alternative information.

Thirteen Israelis - 10 of them soldiers - were killed in the course of the fighting.

In the absence of official Israeli figures, the 1,000 plus foreign journalists who covered the campaign relied almost exclusively on the Palestinian figures, as did foreign governments and NGOs. The death toll was one of the most critical aspects of the operation, and could be central to any war crimes claim against Israel.

International organizations, such as the United Nations and the Red Cross, said they had relied on the Palestinians for their own death counts, given that the verification process is cumbersome and could involve cross- checking records at the hospitals or the morgues as well as on-the-scene investigation at the site of the IDF attacks.

So far only the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) and Italian journalist Lorenzo Cremonesi have publicly attempted to verify the death count on their own, with vastly differing results.

Disputing Gaza death toll, Israel offers no other figures. IDF, unofficially, says only 150 of 900 confirmed fatalities were civilians

On Thursday, Cremonesi published an article in the Italian paper Corriere della Sera, in which he claimed that the Palestinians had distorted their claims, much like in past incidents.

He quoted a doctor at Gaza City's main Shifa Hospital who said no more than 500 or 600 could have been killed in the IDF attacks, and that most were men between 17 and 23 recruited to *Hamas*'s ranks.

Cremonesi, who based his report on tours of hospitals in the Gaza Strip and on interviews with families of casualties, also assessed the number of wounded to be far lower than 5,300, the number quoted by <u>Hamas</u> and repeated by the UN and the Red Cross in Gaza.

"It is sufficient to visit several hospitals [in Gaza] to understand that the numbers don't add up," he wrote.

In the European Hospital in Gazan Rafah, one of the facilities that would presumably be filled with wounded from the "war of the tunnels," many beds were empty, according to Cremonesi.

A similar situation was noted in the Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis, and in the privately-run Amal Hospital, where Cremonesi reported that only five out 150 beds were occupied.

He noted that in past instances, such as in Jenin during Israel's Operation Defensive Shield in 2002, there was initially talk of 1,500 dead, which ended up being whittled down to 54, of whom 45 were gunmen.

Cremonesi's report on the Gaza dead was ridiculed by Jaber Wishah, the deputy director of the PCHR, during a telephone interview from Gaza on Thursday with The Jerusalem Post.

"It is completely incorrect," Wishah said. His organization had 45 field workers posted at hospitals and morgues, counting bodies and checking names, he said. They had also gone to the sites of IDF attacks and interviewed the families of the dead, he said.

A lengthy but incomplete report on the group's Web site lists names, ages, and circumstances of death.

In total, Wishah said, his organization - which is independent of both <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah - counted 1,285 dead. Of those, 82 percent, or 1,062, were civilians, he said, while another 168 were policemen who were not engaged in the fighting. That would leave barely 50 <u>Hamas</u> dead - a figure almost identical to <u>Hamas</u>'s own claims. He added that among the dead were 280 children and 111 <u>women</u>.

He insisted that although Israel has argued that many of the "civilian" fatalities were actually <u>Hamas</u> fighters who were out of uniform, those people listed as "civilians" in his total were not <u>Hamas</u> operatives.

In addition, 4,536 people were wounded, of whom 1,133 were children and 735 were women, he claimed.

"Our records have been checked and double-checked," said Wishah. Even so, he added, his staff continued to compile evidence of the dead. When they were certain of the names and that all the relatives had been contacted, they planned to post them on their Web site, he said.

Tony Laurance, who heads the World Health Organization's office in the West Bank and Gaza, said the information from the Gaza Health Ministry "is likely to be close to accurate."

It was "reported on a daily basis by hospitals to the central information center within the Ministry of Health," he added. That center had identifying details of the casualties in terms of names and ages and places of residents.

The ministry has been "quite prepared to share those details with us, but we have not been able to verify them for ourselves," he said.

He added that until one combed through the details meticulously, it would be impossible to know how many dead were civilians and how many were gunmen.

Disputing Gaza death toll, Israel offers no other figures. IDF, unofficially, says only 150 of 900 confirmed fatalities were civilians

When the Post contacted the IDF to ask for its numbers of Gaza dead, the response was that the matter was under investigation and that a full count was not known. At best, a spokesman said, he could relate that after the 10th day of battle some 400 *Hamas* gunmen had been killed or wounded.

Israeli military correspondents, however, have been able to prepare a count from briefings and private conversations with top military commanders. Israeli defense officials have said that some 1,300 Palestinians were killed during the fighting, and that a majority of them were *Hamas* operatives.

The IDF's Gaza Coordination and Liaison Administration has compiled a list with 900 names of Palestinians killed during the operation, out of which 750, it says, are believed to be *Hamas* operatives.

IDF estimates are that two-thirds of all those killed were gunmen affiliated with <u>Hamas</u>, Islamic Jihad and other Palestinian terror factions.

<u>Hamas</u> deliberately played down the number of its dead and on Sunday claimed that only 48 members of its military wing had been killed, defense officials said. Many bodies belonging to <u>Hamas</u> operatives were being stored in the morgue in Shifa Hospital, the officials added.

They said the vast majority of the <u>Hamas</u> operatives killed were not wearing uniforms, to disguise their affiliation, another reason for the exaggerated estimate of civilian casualties cited by the United Nations and others.

The IDF's unofficial death count was not welcomed by the Foreign Ministry, which continues to state that it lacks any such figures.

One Foreign Ministry official warned that the IDF should be very careful about circulating a number for casualties, adding that the only figures about which the Foreign Ministry could be certain were for gunmen killed in direct battle with the IDF.

It had, however, warm words for Cremonesi's work. "Because this is the first independent evaluation, it needs to be taken seriously by all the NGOs," one ministry official said.

One Israeli official told the Post there was speculation that a higher number for overall Gaza deaths - such as the one <u>Hamas</u> and the PCHR are circulating - was actually helpful to Israel in winning its long-term war against **Hamas**. A high death count increased the deterrence value of Operation Cast Lead, the official explained.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Andy David said he did not believe a death count prepared by Israel would be useful from a public relations standpoint.

"We understand that public relations is not about facts. It is about mental attitude. Those who are supportive of Israel will continue to support Israel. I do not think that Israel has done things that other countries would not do," David said.

Opponents of Israel would always find a way to blame it and accuse it of wrongdoing, he said.

He referred to the story of the 12-year-old Palestinian boy, Muhammad al-Dura, who was killed by gunfire at the start of the second intifada in September 2000. The IDF was accused of shooting him during a clash with Palestinian security forces in the Gaza Strip - an accusation the IDF ultimately rejected after an investigation and amid claims that he was killed by Palestinian fire. "But that didn't convince anyone in Saudi Arabia, where there is still a street named after him," David said.

Load-Date: October 4, 2011



# Children in war zones

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

January 15, 2009 Thursday

SOONER EDITION

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Section: WORLD; HOT TOPIC; Pg. E-7

Length: 571 words

Byline: Valerie Strauss The Washington Post

## **Body**

As you read this, kids in at least 30 places around the world are living in war zones. The conflicts you may have heard the most about are in Iraq and Afghanistan, because U.S. soldiers are fighting in both countries.

Now a new war has captured the world's attention, one in the troubled Middle East. Children on both sides of the conflict are in the middle.

The latest fighting is between the forces of the nation of Israel and an organization called <u>Hamas</u>, which stands for "Islamic Resistance Movement" and has vowed to destroy Israel. The war is unfolding in the Gaza Strip, an area of towns, villages and farmland about twice the size of Washington, D.C. The Gaza Strip is bordered by Israel, Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea.

Controlled by <u>Hamas</u>, the area has about 1.5 million Palestinians living in it, about 80 percent of whom live in poverty.

To understand this new war, you need to know that Israel was created in 1948 to be a homeland for Jewish people after World War II, when millions of them were killed by the Nazis.

Many Arabs in the Middle East believe the land to create Israel was unfairly taken from Arabs who were living there, people called Palestinians. Several wars between Israelis and Arabs have been fought since then. One of them happened in 1967. Israel's army, under threat of Arab attack, took over territory that the Palestinians see as their future country. Gaza is part of that territory.

But all Palestinians do not agree on how big their country should be or who should run it. Some want it to be created next to Israel in Gaza and other land Israel has kept its army in since 1967. Others, such as <u>Hamas</u>, believe what is now Israel should be part of a Palestinian country. <u>Hamas</u> is fighting in part to take control of the land.

Israel, the United States and other countries consider <u>Hamas</u> to be a terrorist group because of the way it fights Israel: using suicide bombers, people who blow themselves up and kill innocent people as well as themselves. <u>Hamas</u> also fires rockets from Gaza into Israel. But to many Palestinians, <u>Hamas</u> is a political party that runs hospitals and schools in Gaza, and so is seen by many Arabs as a defender of Palestinian rights.

#### Children in war zones

From about June to December last year, there was relative calm on the Gaza-Israel border because both sides had agreed not to attack each other. Then in December, *Hamas* suddenly started firing rockets into Israel again.

Israel's powerful army launched an invasion of Gaza so, the Israeli government said, its soldiers could put an end to <u>Hamas</u>' ability to fire rockets.

Since the fighting began, more than 800 Palestinians have died and several thousand have been wounded. *Hamas* says many of them have been *women* and children. Thirteen Israelis, including six soldiers, have died.

Palestinians say the large number of dead and wounded shows that Israel is attacking them with too much force. Israel says a big reason so many Palestinians have died is that <u>Hamas</u> puts fighters and military equipment in the middle of areas packed with innocent people. So when Israel targets those fighters, civilians get caught in the fighting.

Other governments, including the United States, are working hard to get both sides to stop the war. But the fighting is very emotional because it involves issues of religion, land, identity and survival. That is what makes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict so difficult -- and why peace has been so difficult to achieve.

## **Notes**

MY GENERATION: For Kids, About Kids, By Kids

## **Graphic**

PHOTO: Said Khatib/AFP/Getty Images A Palestinian child eats freshly-baked bread on charcoal fire at his family's home in the town of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. Families in Gaza fled advancing Israeli troops by car and on foot.

Load-Date: January 16, 2009



# Egypt hosts stepped-up talks on Mideast prisoner swap

Daily News Egypt

March 12, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 438 words

# **Body**

CAIRO: Egypt hosted closed-door talks on Wednesday on a prisoner swap between the <u>Hamas</u> and Israel that would set free soldier Gilad Shalit along with hundreds of Palestinians.

For a third time in two weeks, Israeli negotiator Ofer Dekel returned to Cairo on Tuesday night in an effort to nail down an elusive deal, that could pave the way for a long-term truce for the Gaza Strip.

"Intensive and tough negotiations are underway on the names of the <u>Hamas</u> prisoners to be traded for Shalit," a source close to the talks told AFP, asking not to be named.

Dekel "is now expected to spend a second night in Egypt and will pursue talks, in an apparent sign that things are moving," the source said later on Wednesday.

He said the two sides were in a race against the clock to seal a deal before an April 3 time-limit for Israeli right-wing hardliner and prime minister-designate Benjamin Netanyahu to form a new government.

Israel has insisted that any agreement for a lasting ceasefire in and around the <u>Hamas</u>-ruled Gaza Strip depends on the release of Shalit, who was captured by Palestinian guerrillas in June 2006.

Dekel is locked in talks with Egypt's intelligence chief General Omar Suleiman, who has been working to mediate a deal in the absence of direct talks between *Hamas* and Israel €" which boycotts the group as a terrorist outfit.

The negotiations coincide with talks between rival factions including <u>Hamas</u> and Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah to try to form a unity government that would be acceptable to the international community.

The latest prisoner swap efforts coincide with a visit to Cairo by Moussa Abu Marzuk, the deputy head of *Hamas*' politburo, for the inter-Palestinian talks.

"I don't have information on Shalit. I don't even know if he is alive or not," the Damascus-based Abu Marzuk told an Arab newspaper. "Only the factions holding him know, and such information comes at a price."

He said 450 convicted Palestinians were up for release as well as 550 other detainees: youths, <u>women</u> and <u>Hamas</u> political figures.

### Egypt hosts stepped-up talks on Mideast prisoner swap

According to the Israeli daily Haaretz, Dekel has proposed a deal for the release of 400 prisoners, including 220 "with blood on their hands" for anti-Israeli attacks.

"There are some names of terrorists (on the list) whose release would be unacceptable for Israeli public opinion," said the source close to the talks.

"The question is whether *Hamas* is flexible enough to remove such names."

He said Cairo was preparing a two-stage release: about 300 Palestinians would walk free in return for Shalit's transfer to Egypt, and he would return home once the rest are released.

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Load-Date: March 12, 2009



# NEW ROCKET ATTACKS FUEL ISRAELI WARNING

Daily News (New York)
February 2, 2009 Monday
SPORTS FINAL EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 18

Length: 233 words

Byline: BY HELEN KENNEDY

# **Body**

THE FRAGILE GAZA ceasefire was teetering last night after Israel's prime minister threatened a "sharp and disproportionate" retaliation to rocket attacks from Gaza.

At least three rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel yesterday, but they caused no damage or injuries.

Israel's Military Intelligence Chief Amos Yadlin said this time, the rocket fire should not be blamed on *Hamas*.

"Terrorists that are not <u>Hamas</u> are challenging <u>Hamas</u> and carrying out attacks for a renewed escalation," Yadlin said.

"Hamas, for its part, has been deterred and is honoring the ceasefire."

The constant firing of <u>Hamas</u> rockets prompted Israel to launch a three-week blitz against Gaza last month that killed 1,300 Palestinians, many of them **women** and children.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said the war could start again at any time.

"We will not warn the terrorist elements in advance as to how, where and when we will respond, but we will respond," Olmert said in his weekly cabinet meeting.

"We need a response, and the response won't be a light one, because we cannot afford an escalation similar to what we had before."

Israelis were also warned of a "concrete, high-level threat" from Hezbollah, which is seeking to mark the first anniversary of the Feb. 12 assassination of the militia's deputy leader Imad Mughniyah.

Likely attempts include killing a top Israeli minister, the counterterrorism bureau said.

Load-Date: February 2, 2009

## NEW ROCKET ATTACKS FUEL ISRAELI WARNING



# Guardian Weekly: Reply: Attack on Gaza

Guardian Weekly

January 16, 2009 Friday

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# *The*GuardianWeekly

Section: Pg. 23

Length: 600 words

Byline: S A Seferiades, Derick Hawkins, Ray Johnstone and Michael Edwards

# **Body**

\* Ian Black's article on the Israeli assault seems to have all too glibly fallen in with politically correct newspeak that comfortably passes over truths and obfuscates issues concerning the suppression of the captive and essentially defenceless Palestinian people of Gaza, which is nothing more than an enormous concentration camp (Long-planned strikes at Gaza launched by Israel, 2 January). Echoes of the Warsaw ghetto and collective punishment?

He says <u>Hamas</u> "took over" from Fatah, implying, by omitting the election, that there was something other than legitimacy involved. The phrase "targeting personnel" surely means extrajudicial assassination, not a process of law. Some might call it state terrorism.

"Not all the victims are from *Hamas*. Some are civilians," says Black. But in the densely populated areas of Gaza, how can an F16 dropping high explosives tell the difference?

S A Seferiades

Athens, Greece

\* You have devoted a lot of column inches to the situation in Gaza in the 2 January Guardian Weekly; however, it seems that you have a strong bias in favour of the Palestinians.

You say that the air strike proves Israel's indifference to human life, yet Israel gave plenty of warning to <u>Hamas</u> that it would strike if they did not stop the rockets; this they chose not to do. <u>Hamas</u> cynically position their security forces compounds between residential buildings (which you report) along with the rocket launchers. In so doing, <u>Hamas</u> has made it impossible for Israel to retaliate without collateral damage to civilians. Israel apologises for civilian casualties. In stark contrast to Israel, *Hamas* actively celebrates targeting Israeli civilians.

You do not report, nor have you done over the past months, any of the violations by <u>Hamas</u> in sending in rockets during the truce. <u>Hamas</u> steadfastly refuses to stop these attacks in spite of pleas from the PLO leader Mahmoud Abbas and from Egypt.

Surely it is <u>Hamas</u> who are ensuring that the two-state solution does not get off the ground. The chances of an agreement after the Israeli election will probably be greatly reduced.

Guardian Weekly: Reply: Attack on Gaza

#### **Derick Hawkins**

#### Chelmsford, UK

\* Ian Black's assessment of Israel's actions is in line with most military historians (Air strikes likely to boost Palestinian support for militia, 2 January). The bombing of civilian populations by the Luftwaffe on Britain and the allies on Germany in the second world war, and by the US on the North in the Vietnam war, had exactly the opposite to the planned effect. Rather than demoralising the targets, it steeled the populations' resolve to resist.

It therefore seems doubly surprising that the Israeli Defence Force did not learn that laying waste to Lebanese cities was not effective against the small, highly mobile Hezbollah rocket-launching teams in the recent war against Lebanon. This led to Israel's large, hi-tech army being seen as impotent by some observers and even as having lost the war by others. At the very least, the IDF risks being seen as having being outmanoeuvred once more.

Ray Johnstone

Mezin, France

\* What is the international community to do with this rogue state in the Middle East? It possesses weapons of mass destruction. It practices ethnic cleansing and the killing of innocent <u>women</u> and children. It uses disproportionate violence against the same. It cleanses other ethnic groups from villages they have lived in for hundreds if not thousands of years. It has built the first politically motivated wall since Berlin's. It consistently refuses to comply with UN resolutions.

What is one to do about Israel?

Michael Edwards

Townsville, Queensland, Australia

Load-Date: January 24, 2009



# Guff on Gaza as US show goes on

Canberra Times (Australia)

January 21, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 11 Length: 589 words

**Byline:** ROBERT FISK

# **Body**

It's a wrap, a doddle, an Israeli ceasefire just in time for Barack Obama to have a squeaky-clean inauguration with all the world looking at the streets of Washington, DC, rather than the rubble of Gaza.

America's Condoleezza Rice and Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni thought their new arms- monitoring agreement reached without a single Arab being involved would work. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki- moon welcomed the unilateral truce. The great and the good gathered for a Sharm el-Sheikh summit. Only *Hamas* itself was not consulted. Which led, of course, to a few wrinkles in the plan.

First, before declaring its own ceasefire, <u>Hamas</u> fired off more rockets at Israel, proving that Israel's primary war aim to stop the missiles had failed. Then Egypt shrugged off the deal because no one was going to set up electronic surveillance equipment on its soil.

And not one European leader travelling to the region suggested the survivors might be helped if Israel, the European Union and the United States ended the food and fuel siege of Gaza.

After killing hundreds of <u>women</u> and children, Israel was the good guy again, by declaring a unilateral ceasefire that <u>Hamas</u> was certain to break. But Obama will be smiling. Was not this the reason, after all, why Israel suddenly wanted a truce?

Egypt's objections may be theatre the US spent the equivalent of about \$A40 million last year training Egyptian security men to stop arms smuggling into Gaza and since the US bails out Egypt's economy, ignores the corruption of its regime and goes on backing Hosni Mubarak, there's sure to be a "compromise" very soon.

And <u>Hamas</u> has had its claws cut. Israel's informers in Gaza handed over the locations of its homes and hideouts and the Government of Gaza must be wondering if they can ever close down the spy rings. <u>Hamas</u> thought its militia was the Hezbollah a serious error and the world would eventually come to its aid. The world (though not its pompous leaders) felt enormous pity for the Palestinians, but not for the cynical men of <u>Hamas</u> who staged a coup in Gaza in 2007 which killed 151 Palestinians. As usual, European statesmen appeared hopelessly out of touch with their own electorates.

And history was quite forgotten.

#### Guff on Gaza as US show goes on

The <u>Hamas</u> rockets were the result of the food and fuel siege; Israel broke <u>Hamas</u>'s own truce on November 4 and 17. Forgotten is the fact <u>Hamas</u> won the 2006 elections, although Israel has killed a clutch of the victors.

And there'll be little time for the peacemakers of Sharm el-Sheikh to reflect on the three UN schools targeted by the Israelis and the slaughter of the civilians inside.

Poor old Ban Ki-moon. He tried to make his voice heard just before the ceasefire, saying Israel's troops had acted "outrageously" and should be "punished" for the third school killing. Some hope. At a Beirut media conference, he admitted he had failed to get a call through to Livni to complain.

It was pathetic. When I asked him if he would consider a UN war crimes tribunal in Gaza, he said this would not be for him to "determine". But only a few journalists bothered to listen and his officials were quickly folding up the UN flag on the table.

What no one noticed was that the Sharm el-Sheikh meeting on Sunday night was opening on the 90th anniversary to the day of the opening of the 1919 Paris peace conference which created the modern Middle East. One of its main topics was "the borders of Palestine". There followed the Versailles Treaty. And we know what happened then.

The rest really is history. Independent

Load-Date: October 11, 2011



# Israel pulls back as war enters its 'final act'; Truce deal is close, says UN Secretary-General

The Times (London)

January 17, 2009 Saturday

Edition 1

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 40

Length: 1142 words

Byline: Martin Fletcher, , Sheera Frenkel

# **Body**

An end to the war in Gaza appeared close last night as Israel sought to convert its three-week offensive against *Hamas* into a diplomatic victory before the inauguration of Barack Obama on Tuesday.

Two top Israeli negotiators were in Cairo yesterday to discuss the details of an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire agreement. In Washington Tzipi Livni, the Israeli Foreign Minister, and

Condoleezza Rice, the US Secretary of State, signed a separate agreement on ways to stop Hamas re-arming.

"Hopefully we're in the final act," Mark Regev, the Israeli government spokesman, said. "Diplomacy now is in high gear. We want this to be over as soon as possible." Ban Ki Moon, the UN Secretary-General, said that a deal on a truce appeared close and might be sealed within a couple of days.

However, Israeli leaders are also thought to be considering a unilateral halt to their offensive instead of reaching a formal deal as a way of depriving <u>Hamas</u> of any political gains, such as easing the Israeli blockade that has been in place since 2007.

After a week of increasing force the Israeli military pulled back yesterday.

"We have given <u>Hamas</u> a day of quiet to think things over but if they don't accept our ceasefire terms our troops are still there," a defence official said.

Beyond stopping <u>Hamas</u> rockets, Israel's priority is to stop the militants using hundreds of tunnels beneath Gaza's southern border with Egypt to smuggle in more weaponry. Another, unstated priority is to secure the release of Gilad Schalit, the Israeli soldier captured in Gaza in 2006.

<u>Hamas</u>, whose negotiators were returning to Cairo after the Israelis left last night, wants an immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops and the lifting of the blockade.

Israel pulls back as war enters its 'final act' Truce deal is close, says UN Secretary-General

Khaled Mashal, the exiled <u>Hamas</u> leader in Damascus, rejected the insistence by Israel that its demands be met before its troops withdraw but, beyond Israel wanting to end the fighting before the inauguration, <u>Hamas</u> has little bargaining power.

Even as Mr Mashal urges them on from the safety of Damascus, <u>Hamas</u> fighters are losing heart. Their leaders in Gaza want the fighting to stop. Muhammad Abu El-Hissi, a captured <u>Hamas</u> fighter, told the Israeli newspaper Maariv: "We thought the most the Israelis would do was something from the air, come in and straight out again. We never imagined anything like this. Fear eats up our hearts." One Israeli commentator compared <u>Hamas</u> to the Black Knight in Monty Python and the Holy Grail who "even after having both arms and one leg severed continued to hop up and down on the remaining leg, screaming and threatening".

Egypt has little sympathy for <u>Hamas</u> and is pressing it to agree to a ceasefire. It is also seeking to restore the influence of Fatah - the rival movement ousted by <u>Hamas</u> in 2007 - in Gaza. It wants the Fatah-controlled Palestinian Authority to help to stop smuggling across Gaza's border and to supervise other crossings jointly with Israel.

Whatever the ceasefire terms <u>Hamas</u> will claim that it has won just by resisting the region's strongest military power for three weeks and continuing to fire rockets into Israel. But for all its early boasts it has killed only six Israeli soldiers, brought terrible destruction on its own people and secured little support from the rest of the Arab world.

Israel's leaders argue that they have established the principle of deterrence, restored the prestige of its military after its unsuccessful attempt to crush Hezbollah in southern Lebanon in 2006, and served an unmistakable warning to its Arab neighbours that they attack Israel at their peril.

Domestically the war has proved hugely popular, with one poll showing 78 per cent considering it a success.

The Israeli media has been so supportive that even the leftish newspaper Haaretz relegated Israel's bombing of a UN relief agency's warehouse to a single paragraph on page 2 yesterday.

However, the prospect of peace between Jews and Arabs looks more remote than ever, and Israel's global standing has been battered by pictures of Palestinian <u>women</u> and children caught in the fire, its shelling of schools and shelters, and its defiance of UN demands for an immediate ceasefire. More than 1,100 Palestinians, half of them civilians, are said to have been killed, with about 5,000 wounded and thousands more left homeless..

The road to my house in the Tel-al Hawa neighbourhood of Gaza City is like an obstacle course. My car weaves around spent shells, rocket fragments, broken glass and the skeletal remains of burnt-out vehicles on what used to be our tidy streets. I look for the signs, anything I can recognise amid the debris. But my markers - the grocery store, the corner high-rise, the park - are gone.

Black soot licks at the windows of many buildings, marking where a flame passed through. Bullet holes dot façades, as do gaping holes where shells punched through the concrete. The air smells smoky, charred, and in some areas a pungent smell persists that nobody can identify.

All of the tall buildings have been hit, their top floors gone.

Around me, one apartment has four large holes where bombs must have landed, another has eight, the next one six. The south-facing buildings have borne the brunt of the damage, taking heavy fire from where the Israeli troops marched in.

My building is mostly intact.

Neighbours told me that my flat was one of the most dangerous because it looked directly on to the position of the Israeli troops.

We left earlier this week along with many of the neighbours.

Israel pulls back as war enters its 'final act' Truce deal is close, says UN Secretary-General

The few who stayed behind Who knows how long the quiet will last? First Person Azmi Keshawi, Gaza City cowered in the stairwells, hoping the slight reinforcement would protect them. Now the Israeli soldiers are gone and we will go back, but who knows how long the quiet will last.

I pass the park where my four children used to play. Donated by the city of Barcelona, it used to be the pride of the city and a joy for my children. Now the park is in ruins.

My wife and I can see that our children are frightened but they try not to show it. Like everyone here they look on silently and wait to make sense of what has happened. Yesterday a shell landed 400 metres away from the safe house where we had sought refuge. A week earlier a shell landed only 100 metres away. It is impossible to know where is safe and where isn't. We just hope, like everyone else, that we have a fifty-fifty chance of surviving.

Today people have begun to move around quietly. Most look on in silence, trying to fathom what they have lost. They tell us that a ceasefire is a few days away but we don't know if the fighting will start again.

Down the street I see that someone has rehung a <u>Hamas</u> flag. Most still support them; the feeling is that <u>Hamas</u> is holding its own and has not folded, and they admire it for that.

'My local markers - the store, the park, the high rise - are all gone'

# **Graphic**

An Israeli fires teargas at protesters

Load-Date: January 17, 2009



# Shalit `to Egypt' in plan to lift Gaza siege

The Australian

June 29, 2009 Monday

1 - All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 12

Length: 499 words

Byline: Abraham Rabinovich

## **Body**

#### Jerusalem

CAPTURED Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit will shortly be transferred by <u>Hamas</u> to Egyptian custody as the first step of an ambitious plan to lift Israel's siege of the Gaza Strip, restore Palestinian unity and free about 1100 Palestinian prisoners, Arabic reports say.

The report in the London-based Asharq al-Awsat newspaper comes in the wake of similar claims last week from European diplomatic sources, the official news agency of the Palestinian Authority and other sources.

Israeli security officials said they were unaware of any progress on the matter and <u>Hamas</u> Prime Minister Ismail Haniya said yesterday that the reports did ``not reflect reality".

Despite these reservations, the sense that something major is afoot is widespread in the region.

According to the Asharq al-Awsat report, Corporal Shalit, who has been held in Gaza for three years without any visits by the Red Cross, will be visited by his family once he is transferred to Egypt. He will be held on ``deposit" until Israel releases Palestinian prisoners.

The number of prisoners to be released has been the main point of contention since Corporal Shalit's capture. <u>Hamas</u> has demanded the release of 450 hard-core prisoners, some of them serving multiple death sentences for involvement in the detonation of buses and other terror attacks.

Israel has reportedly agreed to release only 175 persons on <u>Hamas'</u> list. Egyptian intermediaries have proposed a compromise figure of 325. The newspaper said Israel would release 400. In addition, Israel has already agreed to release about 600 other prisoners of lesser security weight, including <u>women</u> and youths.

Under the mooted deal, Israel would ease its blockade of the Gaza Strip, which has permitted entry of little more than food and humanitarian aid to the area's 1.5million residents for two years and paralysed the economy.

The Egyptian-brokered initiative, which reportedly has the blessings of Washington, goes well beyond a prisoner exchange and the lifting of the blockade.

The release of Corporal Shalit would be the first step in a process aiming at achieving Palestinian unity as well as an overall peace agreement between Israel and the Arab world.

### Shalit `to Egypt ' in plan to lift Gaza siege

Talks planned in Cairo between the Gaza-based <u>Hamas</u> movement and the Fatah movement, which dominates the West Bank, will focus on forming a unity government in the Gaza Strip until overall Palestinian elections will be held in January.

As a first step, the Egyptians are attempting to promote a prisoner swap between <u>Hamas</u>, which holds about 200 Fatah prisoners in Gaza, and Fatah, which holds about 800 <u>Hamas</u> prisoners on the West Bank.

If the Palestinians are able to resolve their internal differences sufficiently to establish a stable government, the way will be open to the resumption of peace negotiations with Israel.

The US and moderate Arab states, mainly Egypt, would play key roles in this process.

The international community advocates bilateral Israeli negotiations with the Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon.

Load-Date: June 28, 2009



# Israeli Cabinet Is Poised To Call Cease-Fire in Gaza

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: 1413 words

**Byline:** By ETHAN BRONNER and MARK LANDLER; Ethan Bronner reported from Jerusalem, and Mark Landler from Washington. Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza City, and Michael Slackman from Cairo.

## **Body**

JERUSALEM -- Israel's security cabinet is expected to meet Saturday night to declare a cease-fire in Gaza and will keep its forces there in the short term while the next stage of an agreement with Egypt is worked out.

"It looks as if all the pieces of the puzzle are coming together," Mark Regev, a spokesman for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, said Friday. "There will be discussions tomorrow morning, and it looks like a cabinet meeting will take place tomorrow night. Everyone is very upbeat."

Meanwhile, Israeli tank fire killed two boys at a United Nations-run school on Saturday in the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Lahiya, a U.N. official told Reuters. Adnan Abu Hasna, a spokesman for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, said two brothers had been killed and 14 people had been wounded in the attack, including the boys' mother. An Israeli army spokesman said that he was checking the report.

The most promising element for bringing the three-week conflict to a close occurred in Washington on Friday, where Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni of Israel signed an understanding on a range of steps the United States would take to stem the flow of new arms to <u>Hamas</u> from the Egyptian Sinai, mostly via tunnels.

The agreement came on the last business day of the Bush administration and set the stage for the Obama administration to play a more active role in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. President-elect Barack Obama and Secretary of State-designate Hillary Rodham Clinton signed off on the plan, the State Department said.

Whether <u>Hamas</u> will comply with the terms of parallel talks with Egypt was unclear. At a meeting organized by Qatar, a top exiled <u>Hamas</u> leader rejected Israeli terms for a cease-fire and called for increased resistance.

"Israel will not be able to destroy our resistance, and the United States will not be able to dictate us their rules," the leader, Khaled Meshal, said in defiant remarks broadcast worldwide. "Arab countries should help <u>Hamas</u> to fight against the death of civilian Palestinians."

But the Gaza branch of *Hamas*, squabbling with exiles out of the line of Israeli fire, seems to have agreed to much of Egypt's cease-fire proposal.

#### Israeli Cabinet Is Poised To Call Cease-Fire in Gaza

Fighting in Gaza continued Friday, despite the apparent progress toward ending it. Palestinian medical officials said the death toll had risen above 1,100 people, many of them civilians.

The cease-fire under discussion is more formal than the one that broke down late last month, when each side accused the other of failing to live up to its terms, and in some ways seems devised to overcome the last one's weaknesses.

Unlike the last one, this will be written down, in Israel's case, in the form of an agreement with Egypt and the understanding with the United States. Israel and <u>Hamas</u> do not speak officially but Egypt has been brokering terms between the two. Israel was unwilling to have an accord that might confer legitimacy on <u>Hamas</u>, which preaches Israel's destruction.

The agreement hammered out in Washington would provide American technical assistance, as well as international monitors, to crack down on the tunnels. It would not, however, involve the deployment of American troops in the region. The composition of the monitoring force was not yet clear, a senior American official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity. The agreement stipulates that the United States would work to interdict weapons with its NATO partners, expanding significantly the responsibility to keep *Hamas* disarmed.

After meeting with Ms. Rice, Ms. Livni, who has been hawkish on continuing the assault aimed at stopping <u>Hamas</u> rockets from coming into Israel, stressed that the nation had met its war aims and was prepared to enter a cease-fire cautiously.

"Israel embarked on the campaign in order to change the equation and restore its deterrent capacity," she told Israel Radio. "We did that a few days ago, in my opinion. It has to be put to the test. If <u>Hamas</u> shoots, we'll have to continue. And if it shoots later on, we'll have to embark on another campaign."

The Bush administration agreed to the deal after consulting Mrs. Clinton and Gen. James L. Jones, who will be Mr. Obama's national security adviser. Ms. Rice discussed the terms over lunch with Mrs. Clinton on Thursday, the State Department spokesman said, and briefed Mr. Obama by phone.

"It's safe to assume that we wouldn't have moved forward if we hadn't done some careful consultations, prior to signing, with the incoming folks," the spokesman, Sean McCormack, said.

The timing of the agreement, after a last effort of American diplomacy, struck some Middle East experts as symbolic of a Bush administration that had refused to engage in the peace process until late in its term, and has left its successors with little choice but to re-engage.

"They will inherit this agreement, which is critically important and will make them more engaged in the region than Bush was," said Aaron David Miller, a public policy analyst at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. "This is the shape of things to come."

Ms. Rice said the agreement was only supportive of broader negotiations being carried out by Egypt, and she refused to say when a cease-fire could actually take place and when the fighting in Gaza would stop.

"We are doing everything we can to bring it to an end," she said.

In Gaza, Palestinians tried to recover Friday from a heavy assault from Israel the day before.

A funeral for a senior <u>Hamas</u> official, Interior Minister Said Siam, who was killed Thursday by an Israeli attack, turned into a mass rally in Gaza City. Thousands raised their fingers into the air as a speaker called out, "Let us say goodbye to one of the lions of <u>Hamas</u>!" Passers-by stopped, elderly <u>women</u> emerged from houses, and children stood on roofs and declared, "This is in the name of God!"

Gaza hospitals were struggling. They were damaged on Thursday by Israel, which said mortars had been fired at its forces from sites near the hospitals. CARE International and other global aid groups said they had resumed distribution after being forced to stop by the intense attacks of the previous day. They condemned Israel's actions.

#### Israeli Cabinet Is Poised To Call Cease-Fire in Gaza

In Tal Al Hawa, a neighborhood in southwestern Gaza City where fighting was fiercest on Thursday, Israeli tanks withdrew, leaving a blighted landscape and several dozen more dead.

Palestinians reported that a mother and her five children -- 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12 years old -- had been killed in the Bureij refugee camp. Three riders on motorbikes, means of transport increasingly used by <u>Hamas</u> fighters, were also killed by missiles.

Israel stepped up military activity on Friday evening. Palestinian medical officials reported that at least 10 Palestinians had been killed in the Shajaiye section of Gaza City by a shell that hit a house of mourning. Four more people were killed in an attack on a house in Jabaliya, north of the city.

At the meeting in Qatar, the <u>Hamas</u> leader, Mr. Meshal, was joined by Iran and Syria in calls for all Muslim countries to break ties with Israel. Qatar and Mauritania, which have low-level ties with Israel, were reported to have said at the meeting that they were freezing those relations.

It was not clear what impact Mr. Meshal's fiery speech would have on any cease-fire. But his presence before the emergency meeting underscored the continued evolution of power in the region away from state players aligned with the West, to non-state players, like *Hamas*, and their anti-Western benefactors who support a more direct and aggressive stance toward Israel.

The once dominant regional leadership of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and even Jordan tried to undermine this meeting, refusing to attend, and pressed other Arab states to stay away, too.

But it was those who boycotted the event who found themselves marginalized -- at least for the day -- as Mr. Meshal spoke before an audience that included representatives from Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Algeria, Iran and about 10 other countries assembled for the meeting in Doha, Qatar's capital.

A senior Egyptian official said that <u>Hamas</u> was unhappy with Israel's plan to leave its forces in Gaza during a short cease-fire, but that it had accepted the idea of placing the Palestinian Authority in charge of the border crossing into Egypt and the presence of European monitors there. It was unclear how the divisions within <u>Hamas</u> as well as within the Arab world would affect negotiations in the coming days.

http://www.nytimes.com

# Graphic

PHOTO: Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice after signing a deal on stopping the flow of arms to *Hamas*.(PHOTOGRAPH BY SHAWN THEW/EUROPEAN PRESSPHOTO AGENCY)(pg. A9)

Load-Date: June 28, 2011



## 'I used to count my children when we went out. Now I don't need to'

Financial Times (London, England)

January 20, 2009 Tuesday

Asia Edition 1

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Section: MIDDLE EAST CRISIS; Pg. 7

Length: 764 words

Byline: Anna Fifield in Gaza City

**Highlight:** Eyewitness

Anwar Baalousha tells Anna Fifield of the night he lost five daughters in an Israeli airstrike on Gaza City

## **Body**

The first Anwar Khalil Baalousha knew of the tragedy that had struck his family was when the water tank in his house exploded over him as he slept.

"I didn't hear the airstrike - it was like I was having a dream - then I was suddenly drenched in water," says Mr Baalousha, a slight man with a dark beard and almost equally dark rings under his eyes.

What started in a dream turned into a nightmare. When an Israeli airstrike destroyed the Imad Akl mosque in the Jabaliya area of Gaza City that night, it also took his house and five of his daughters.

Tahreir, 17, Ikram, 14, Samar, 12, Dina, seven, and Jawaher, four, were all killed when the mosque collapsed through their bedroom wall. Baraa, who was only 12 days old when the war began, was saved when the force of the explosion flipped her cot over and gave her shelter.

"Before, I used to count my children when we went out for family lunch or dinner, to make sure all nine were there," says Mr Baalousha, 37. "Now I don't need to."

Gazans say that the Israeli airstrikes destroyed more than 35 mosques, many of which Israel suspects of being *Hamas* ammunition storage centres.

Israel yesterday said that its troops would leave the Gaza Strip before Barack Obama's inauguration as US president today, the first official indication that the Jewish state plans a rapid withdrawal of its forces.

With tanks pulling back to the border, Gaza City residents ventured on to the streets, struggling to assess the extent of the destruction in their neighbourhoods and to make sense of it.

Mr Baalousha and his wife, Samira, 36, returned to their old house for the first time since they buried their daughters. The family - with three remaining daughters and a son - is now staying in a friend's one-bedroom apartment, which counts a bed and foam mattresses on the living room floor as its only furniture.

"It was so unbelievable. I still feel sick right now," says Mr Baalousha. His wife does not utter a single word and only her eyes move. It is almost as if the rest of her face has been frozen in horror.

'I used to count my children when we went out. Now I don't need to'

Mr Baalousha - who used to work as a tailor until the lack of fabric, due to the Israeli blockade of Gaza, put him into the ranks of the unemployed - says they are trying to get themselves together again, for the sake of the children who survived.

Iman, 16, who has difficulty walking because of the injuries she sustained in the attack, says she will now study for medical school, which her elder sister was planning to attend.

But the airstrike has changed Mr Baalousha's life in more than one way. "I'm ready to become a martyr now," he says dispassionately. "I'm ready to take part in a martyrdom operation."

His brother, Nafez, chimes in: "The thing is, he wasn't political at all before the attack. He even used to work in Israel. The killing of his five daughters has done this to him."

Indeed, despite the huge human cost of the Israeli attacks, the devastation has strengthened support for *Hamas* in some quarters.

"They are Muslims committed to resisting Israel and, by <u>Hamas</u> rule, we will be victorious against the Israelis," says Hitam, a 39-year-old housewife now living in a United Nations school-cum-refugee camp.

Some Gazans point out that Israel succeeded in targeting only two senior figures in the organisation. Although hundreds of *Hamas* fighters were killed, at least 15,000 foot soldiers remain.

The Islamist group says it lost only 48 fighters during the 22-day war, many less than the 500 Israel claims to have killed. It vows to fight on. "We have given the Zionist enemy one week to pull out of the Gaza Strip, failing which we will pursue the resistance," says Abu Obeida, for the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades, the militant wing of <u>Hamas</u>.

Near Mr Baalousha's ruined house, a young man who works as a bodyguard to a senior <u>Hamas</u> figure is defiant as he surveys the destruction.

"Before, <u>Hamas</u> stayed inside Gaza, but it was only after Israel closed the borders that we started launching rockets outside," says the man, declining to give his name. "Now <u>Hamas</u> will become even stronger because all Palestinians can see that Israel has destroyed houses and mosques, that they have killed innocent <u>women</u> and children."

Not everyone, however, feels this way. Ra'afad, a 27-year-old security guard who supports Mahmoud Abbas, leader of the rival Fatah party, blames *Hamas* for bringing war to Gaza.

"I am so angry with <u>Hamas</u>, especially since we do not have any concrete results," he says in front of a concrete jumble that was once a police station. "If <u>Hamas</u> could agree with Fatah, the siege would be lifted and there would be no war."

Load-Date: January 19, 2009



# So, I asked the UN secretary general, isn't it time for a war crimes tribunal?; Comment

The Independent (London)
January 19, 2009 Monday
First Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 20

Length: 605 words

Byline: Robert Fisk in Beirut

## **Body**

It's a wrap, a doddle, an Israeli ceasefire just in time for Barack Obama to have a squeaky-clean inauguration with all the world looking at the streets of Washington rather than the rubble of Gaza. Condi and Ms Livni thought their new arms-monitoring agreement - reached without a single Arab being involved - would work. Ban Ki-moon welcomed the unilateral truce. The great and the good gathered for a Sharm el-Sheikh summit. Only *Hamas* itself was not consulted. Which led, of course, to a few wrinkles in the plan. First, before declaring its own ceasefire, *Hamas* fired off more rockets at Israel, proving that Israel's primary war aim - to stop the missiles - had failed. Then Cairo shrugged off the deal because no one was going to set up electronic surveillance equipment on Egyptian soil. And not one European leader travelling to the region suggested the survivors might be helped if Israel, the EU and the US ended the food and fuel siege of Gaza.

After killing hundreds of <u>women</u> and children, Israel was the good guy again, by declaring a unilateral ceasefire that <u>Hamas</u> was certain to break. But Obama will be smiling on Tuesday. Was not this the reason, after all, why Israel suddenly wanted a truce?

Egypt's objections may be theatre - the US spent £18m last year training Egyptian security men to stop arms smuggling into Gaza and since the US bails out Egypt's economy, ignores the corruption of its regime and goes on backing Hosni Mubarak, there's sure to be a "compromise" very soon.

And <u>Hamas</u> has had its claws cut. Israel's informers in Gaza handed over the locations of its homes and hideouts and the government of Gaza must be wondering if they can ever close down the spy rings. <u>Hamas</u> thought its militia was the Hizbollah - a serious error - and that the world would eventually come to its aid. The world (although not its pompous leaders) felt enormous pity for the Palestinians, but not for the cynical men of <u>Hamas</u> who staged a coup in Gaza in 2007 which killed 151 Palestinians. As usual, the European statesmen appeared hopelessly out of touch with what their own electorates thought.

So, I asked the UN secretary general, isn't it time for a war crimes tribunal? Comment

And history was quite forgotten. The <u>Hamas</u> rockets were the result of the food and fuel siege; Israel broke <u>Hamas</u>'s own truce on 4 and 17 November. Forgotten is the fact <u>Hamas</u> won the 2006 elections, although Israel has killed a clutch of the victors.

And there'll be little time for the peacemakers of Sharm el-Sheikh to reflect on the three UN schools targeted by the Israelis and the slaughter of the civilians inside. Poor old Ban Ki-moon. He tried to make his voice heard just before the ceasefire, saying Israel's troops had acted "outrageously" and should be "punished" for the third school killing. Some hope. At a Beirut press conference, he admitted he had failed to get a call through to Israel's Foreign Minister to complain.

It was pathetic. When I asked Mr Ban if he would consider a UN war crimes tribunal in Gaza, he said this would not be for him to "determine". But only a few journalists bothered to listen to him and his officials were quickly folding up the UN flag on the table. About time too. Bring back the League of Nations. All is forgiven.

What no one noticed yesterday - not the Arabs nor the Israelis nor the portentous men from Europe - was that the Sharm el-Sheikh meeting last night was opening on the 90th anniversary - to the day - of the opening of the 1919 Paris peace conference which created the modern Middle East. One of its main topics was "the borders of Palestine". There followed the Versailles Treaty. And we know what happened then. The rest really is history. Bring on the ghosts.

Load-Date: January 18, 2009



## Rally for peace ends in conflict

The Daily Free Press: Boston University

January 15, 2009 Thursday

University Wire

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1 Length: 651 words

Byline: Lilia Stantcheva

## **Body**

Despite the crowds cries for peace, the pro-Israel rally in Copley Square Wednesday night was anything but peaceful.

Around 1,500 protesters gathered in support of Israels attack on Gaza, while about 50 pro-Palestine advocates counter-protested. Boston Police Department officers were forced to separate the two groups at the end of the rally as tension escalated.

Activists share the sidewalk with racists, Dexter Van Zile, Christian Outreach director and member of the Executive Committee for Christians for Fair Witness on the Middle East said in a speech. <u>Hamas</u> clearly stated goal is to destruct the Jewish state. We must fight for the sanctity of our citizens.

When the speeches ended, the pro-Israel protesters, sporting red hats to symbolize the sirens that sound in response to <u>Hamas</u>-sanctioned rocket attacks, confronted the counter-protest group. The pro-Palestinian side chanted, <u>Hamas</u> wants human rights, Israel wants violence, while the pro-Israeli group countered with, Israel wants peace, **Hamas** wants genocide.

There will be peace in the Middle East when <u>Hamas</u> decides they love their children more than they hate Jews, protestor Miriam Kosowsky said, repeating a quote she said is frequently cited with regard to the civilian deaths in Gaza. Israel must respond. We left Gaza, and <u>Hamas</u> has continuously targeted our civilians. Why do they hide their rockets behind schools?

Boston University College of Geberal Studies sophomore Adam Korn said the time he spent in Israel, Jordan and Lebanon opened his eyes to the dangers Israelis encounter every day.

Its scariest when the sirens go off, Korn, liaison to the American Israel Political Affairs Committee, said. You have so little time.

Since Dec. 27, <u>Hamas</u> has fired 729 rockets at Israel, according to the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The death toll has reached over 1,000 Palestinian casualties and 13 Israeli casualties, according to the latest Associated Press information at press time.

One seventh of Israels population is in danger of attacks every day, Korn said. Its a tragedy whenever civilians have to die, but Israel should have the right to protect itself.

### Rally for peace ends in conflict

Other attendees echoed Korns sentiments. Jill Yanofsky, a Syracuse University alumna, returned from her Birthright trip to Israel a few days ago, and said she thinks Israel simply wants peace.

My heart is with Israel, she said. *Hamas* has to stop, and U.S. government support is necessary.

Heiam Al-Sawalhi, a Palestinian with family members in Gaza, said she thinks the attacks on Gaza need to stop as well.

Im surprised this is allowed to go on, she said. It is war against humanity, against <u>women</u> and children. Its just the 18th [19th] day and over 1,000 have died.

Israeli officials need to take into consideration what the attacks are doing to the childrens psyches, Alsawalhi said.

Ask yourself, what will happen to the young who survive the attacks? she said. Will they grow up normal, or will they be fanatical? There can be no hope for peace when this goes on.

Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Bostons Board of Governance member Ben Siegel delivered a speech recommending that everyone involved talk to family, friends and even counter-protesters about Israel.

Tell them that people have 15 seconds to hide, he said. Tell them that Qassam rockets are targeting civilians every day. Tell them Israel has had enough with *Hamas* playing Russian roulette with Israeli lives.

While a military conflict would undoubtedly leave Israel the victor, Israel is less than victorious in the war of public opinion, Siegal said.

We are losing the war of the media and information every day, he said. We need to get our message out.

The Jewish Community Relations Council hosted a rally in support of Israel in Chestnut Hill on Jan. 8. According to the Boston Globe, 20 Palestine supporters demonstrated at the Park Plaza Israeli Consulate the same day, which led to four arrests.

Load-Date: December 1, 2014



# The charities are guilty, not the BBC; The Corporation is right not to run the Gaza appeal. Oxfam and others are clearly anti-Israel

The Times (London)

January 26, 2009 Monday

Edition 1

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 24

Length: 904 words

Byline: Andrew Roberts

## **Body**

Mark Thompson, the Director-General of the BBC, is quite right to refuse to broadcast the appeal of the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) for humanitarian relief for Gaza, but not for the reason he thinks. He is under the impression that it will damage the BBC's reputation for impartiality in reporting the Israel-Palestine question, but the fact is that the BBC does not have any such reputation, having for years been institutionally pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli. The reason that his decision is brave and right, however, is that many of the 13 charities that make up the DEC are even more mired in anti-Israeli assumptions than the BBC itself.

Mr Thompson rightly appreciates that the issue of humanitarian relief in this conflict is quite unlike humanitarian relief for victims of a tsunami or a famine.

Who adjudicates on which victims to support via such charitable aid - and according to whose political morality? Why did the BBC not launch an appeal for the victims of collateral damage during Nato's bombing of Serbia in 1999 during the Kosovo campaign? And had it done so, would it have given money to ethnic Serbs as well as to Kosovars and Bosnian Muslims, all of whom were "cleansed" during the Balkan wars of that decade? What about the victims of insurgencies and counterinsurgencies in Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Chechnya or Georgia? Or Israeli victims of the next *Hamas* suicide attack?

Indeed, what about the Palestinian victims of <u>Hamas</u>'s hideous human rights abuses, still so shamefully underreported by the British media as a whole? And who are these supposedly impartial charities who are attacking Mr Thompson's (albeit belated) attempt to uphold the Corporation's traditional standards?

While groups such as the British Red Cross and Christian Aid are generally impartial in other areas of the world, that cannot be said to apply to their role in the Israeli-Palestinian struggle, where they regularly view the conflict through a deeply partisan lens.

In the months prior to the decision by <u>Hamas</u> to end the six-month ceasefire and resume rocket attacks, these charities issued a flood of onesided denunciations aimed at Israel.

The charities are guilty, not the BBC The Corporation is right not to run the Gaza appeal. Oxfam and others are clearly anti- Israel

Their campaign repeated tendentious and often highly inaccurate terms such as "collective punishment" and "violation of international law". On March 6, 2008, CARE International, Cafod, Christian Aid and Oxfam (among others) published a widely quoted report under the headline "The Gaza Strip: A Humanitarian Implosion". The authors did not bother to hide their political bias against Israel, repeating standard Palestinian political rhetoric and including claims that Israeli policy "constitutes a collective punishment against ordinary men, <u>women</u> and children" and is "illegal under international humanitarian law".

The report was wrong on many counts, including allegations over the availability of food and basic necessities, which were later contradicted by both the World Bank and World Health Organisation, neither of which are exactly Israeli stooges. The fact that <u>Hamas</u> chose to pursue war with Israel rather than the welfare of its people, was not covered in these reports. There was no sense that any of these claims might be disputed by the other side or by genuinely neutral observers.

During the three-week war, Oxfam and other charities were extremely active in the ideological campaign that highlighted Palestinians as the sole victims and Israelis as the sole aggressors. Numerous Oxfam press statements included language such as: "The international community must not stand aside and allow Israeli leaders to commit massive and disproportionate violence against Gazan civilians in violation of international law."

Violence against Israelis, including deaths, are virtually ignored by Oxfam officials, who have referred to "collective punishment illegal under international humanitarian law yet tolerated by the international community". For those of us who reject such gross ideological bias, which absolves the <u>Hamas</u> leadership for a confrontation which they openly sought, such statements by charities are unacceptable and should not be rewarded by the BBC.

The final issue is the fraught one of the practicability of actually distributing the aid on the ground.

After <u>Hamas</u> seized total control of Gaza in June 2007 there have been many well-documented reports of <u>Hamas</u> officials diverting assistance for themselves. On February 7 last year, for example, the Deutsche Presse-Agentur reported that "at least ten trucks with humanitarian aid sent to the Gaza Strip by the Jordanian Red Crescent Society were confiscated by <u>Hamas</u> police shortly after the lorries entered the territory".

Journalists also reported that the aid was "unloaded in *Hamas* ministry warehouses" and that a similar seizure took place in January 2008.

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the founder of <u>Hamas</u>, used to say that <u>Hamas</u> was like a bird that needed two wings to fly the armed branch, but also the charitable-welfare side of the organisation. Do the 13 charities and their political allies that are so vocally attacking the "cowardly" BBC really have the guts and wherewithal to do a proper audit on how those monies might be spent in today's Gaza Strip? I, for one, do not believe it.

Andrew Roberts is the author of Masters and Commanders: How Roosevelt, Churchill, Marshall and Alanbrooke Won the War in the West (Allen Lane)

Allegations about food and basic necessities were contradicted by the WHO

Load-Date: January 26, 2009



# Smoke Screen; Israel's cause is just but some of its tactics are selfdefeating

The Times (London)

January 16, 2009 Friday

Edition 1

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 2

Length: 570 words

## **Body**

Eleven days ago The Times reported that Israel appeared to be using white phosphorus shells over built-up areas of Gaza. Since then, Israeli spokesmen and <u>women</u> have issued a series of increasingly forlorn denials as the number of Palestinian deaths in Gaza has passed 1,000 and many of the injured have been treated for burns caused, apparently, by white phosphorus.

It is time to clear the air. Israel has a right to defend itself, and the nature of its enemy makes that task extraordinarily hard. <u>Hamas</u>, like Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, regards the use of civilians as human shields as a central plank of its strategy for tormenting Israel. Like its principal state sponsor, Iran, <u>Hamas</u>'s rallying cry is not the creation of a Palestinian state but the destruction of the Jewish one. This is why, when a ceasefire ended last month with an onslaught of <u>Hamas</u> rockets aimed at civilian Israeli targets, Israel had no choice but to prosecute this war. But the need to strike back does not excuse the mistakes that Israel has made in doing so.

The dreadful death toll from 20 days of fighting points to three possible conclusions about

Israel's methods and intentions: first, that the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) are guilty of woeful failures of execution, not least the shelling of a UN aid distribution centre in Gaza City; second, that despite years of meticulous intelligencegathering on the <u>Hamas</u> threat, the IDF have committed needless tactical errors in fighting it; or, third, that Israel actually intends to send a message that it is willing to incur international opprobrium for the bloodshed in Gaza if that is the price of breaking the will of <u>Hamas</u> and the Palestinians of Gaza who suffer under its rule.

The first two conclusions are broadly accurate.

The third is not. Israelis grieve as all humans do for the children cut down in Gaza's maelstrom, and their leaders know full well the damage that this conflict is doing to the country's reputation, especially where images of Palestinian suffering are broadcast more as propaganda than news.

The IDF's continued obfuscation on white phosphorus only compounds that damage.

## Smoke Screen Israel 's cause is just but some of its tactics are self-defeating

White phosphorus is illegal under international law when used in built-up areas, but a legitimate weapon of war when used to provide cover for troops in open country. There is scant evidence of the IDF using it deliberately against civilians, but northern Gaza, where the fighting is concentrated, is one of the most densely populated places in the world. Civilian casualties were inevitable, and the deep burns that white phosphorus can cause are virtually untreatable. The longer that the IDF equivocate about its use, the more ammunition they hand to those who would accuse them of war crimes (see page 4).

It bears repeating that the crime that triggered this war was last month's <u>Hamas</u> rocket barrage; vivid proof of its defining dread of peace. <u>Hamas</u> knew then that only its refusal to acknowledge Israel's right to exist stood in the way of a resumption of the peace process. It knows now that only its refusal to end the rocket attacks and stop rearming through tunnels under Gaza's Egyptian border stands in the way of a ceasefire.

Israel holds itself to higher standards than its enemies. So does the world. That is why, as the world waits for <u>Hamas</u> to accept Israel and renounce violence, it also expects Israel to prosecute this war with greater respect for civilian life.

Load-Date: January 16, 2009



# Bin laden calls for jihad as ceasefire pondered in Gaza; Death toll tops 1,000 as Egyptian truce proposal considered

The Calgary Herald (Alberta)

January 15, 2009 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A11

Length: 535 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service

**Dateline: JERUSALEM** 

## **Body**

A s <u>Hamas</u> and Israel each gave mixed signals about whether they were willing to accept a ceasefire on Wednesday 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 news conference in Cairo that included much shouting but almost no information, exiled <u>Hamas</u> leaders returned to Syria on Wednesday 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 on Thursday to present its 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 <u>Hamas</u> demands that Israel withdraw all its troops from Gaza and completely reopen its borders with the territory.

For their part, Egyptian negotiators said some progress had been made toward agreement on a ceasefire. There were few details, but <u>Hamas</u> 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, was now in 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 U. S. president-elect Barack Obama is sworn 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 on Wednesday. Eilan, who was a senior operations officer in the army, said that the delay in the talks now was not so much *Hamas* as it was Egypt, which also had concerns about the border with Israel that it wanted addressed.

Bin laden calls for jihad as ceasefire pondered in Gaza; Death toll tops 1,000 as Egyptian truce proposal considered

Without elaborating, 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."

Meanwhile, on the battlefield Wednesday, <u>Hamas</u> and its allies fired at least 14 rockets at Israel. Israel struck back with 60 air strikes and assaults on what its military described as "approximately 20 terrorist sites," including nine areas used by rocket launchers. Several intense firefights were reported.

Three rockets were also fired at Israel from Hezbollah-controlled southern Lebanon. Israel countered those attacks with air strikes on the launch sites.

Of the Palestinians who have died in Gaza, more than 40 per cent of them were <u>women</u> and children, according to medical workers in the enclave. Mark Regev, who is Olmert's spokesman, expressed regret to the BBC over the civilian deaths, but said that <u>Hamas</u> was to blame because it insisted on fighting in heavily populated areas.

## **Graphic**

Photo: Suhaib Salem, Reuters; A Palestinian boy, who fled with his family during Israel's offensive, waits to receive food at a UN school in Jabalya in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday.;

Load-Date: January 15, 2009



## Secretary-General will promote truce on tour

The Leader-Post (Regina, Saskatchewan)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. D9

Length: 503 words

Byline: Jonathan Ferziger and Saud Abu Ramadan, Bloomberg

**Dateline: TEL AVIV** 

## **Body**

Israel and <u>Hamas</u> prepared for a United Nations-driven diplomatic push to stop fighting in the Gaza Strip that raged into a 19th day as Israeli troops battled Palestinian gunmen armed with anti-tank missiles.

Defense Minister Ehud Barak said the army's campaign to remove the ability of <u>Hamas</u> to launch rockets at Israel wouldn't stop the government from considering international efforts to bring about an Egyptian-brokered cease-fire.

"We are closely following the progress on the Egyptian truce initiative, but the fighting goes on," Barak told reporters yesterday during a visit to an air force base. *Hamas* leaders also vowed to keep on fighting, while leaving the door open to a cease-fire.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon arrives from New York today on a Middle East shuttle mission that will take him to Egypt, Israel, the West Bank, Jordan and Syria to promote the Security Council's call for a truce. Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, a former European Union envoy for the Middle East, is also in the region pushing for a cease-fire.

Damascus-based <u>Hamas</u> official Musa Abu Marzouk told Al- Jazeera television that while the organization had "serious reservations" about the Egyptian initiative, he believed changes could be introduced that would lead to its acceptance.

At least 18 rockets were fired into Israel yesterday, according to a police spokesman. The number of rocket attacks has been cut to around 20 a day from more than 70 before the war, the military said. About 500 rockets and 200 mortar shells have been fired since the start of the operation on Dec. 27.

Thirteen Israelis have died, nine in combat, and one was critically injured last night, according to the army.

The Israeli army intensified its ground operations around Gaza City and the northern Gaza Strip, Palestinians and local radio stations said. Palestinian residents said they witnessed the fiercest gun battles between Israeli soldiers and Gaza militants since the beginning of the offensive. Israeli aircraft were called in to strike gunmen spotted with anti-tank missiles, the army said.

## Secretary-General will promote truce on tour

The Israeli campaign has killed 960 Palestinians and left 4,400 wounded, according to Muiawia Hassanein, chief of emergency medical services in Gaza. The UN Relief and Works Agency said at least a quarter of the dead are civilians, many of them <u>women</u> and children. Hassanein says the figure is more than half.

<u>Hamas</u> still has an ample supply of rockets and more than 15,000 members of its military wing who enable the movement to keep fighting, a senior Israeli military intelligence officer said in a briefing to reporters. A network of tunnels dug inside the territory enable <u>Hamas</u> leaders to move around and transport arms, he said.

Their weapons are probably no more sophisticated than the Russian-designed rockets whose range of about 40 kilometers won't reach Tel Aviv, according to the officer, who couldn't be identified because of military regulations.

If *Hamas* had more powerful rockets, it would have used them already, he said.

Load-Date: January 14, 2009



## War on Gaza

The Salt Lake Tribune
January 25, 2009 Sunday

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Section: OPINION; Editorials

Length: 396 words

Byline: Tribune Editorial

## **Body**

The Israeli war on Gaza is a primer on the limits of military power.

Israel's tactical goal was to suppress <u>Hamas</u> rocket attacks into Israel. The Jewish state has achieved that, at least temporarily. But the current cease-fire is unilateral on both sides, and it could be broken at any time.

Israel's strategic goal was to provoke the United Nations into policing arms smuggling into Gaza in order to make it impossible for <u>Hamas</u> militants to continue their rocket attacks. But at this writing, there is no U.N. agreement for patrolling arms shipments to Gaza or international arms-control inspections within the strip itself.

For these limited gains, Israel has paid a high moral price. Most of the world is rightly disgusted by the disproportionate loss of life and the tremendous material destruction inflicted by Israeli forces on the helpless Palestinian civilian population. Americans cannot lecture anyone else on that score in light of the U.S. record of disproportionate civilian deaths and material damage in Iraq, but facts are facts.

Israel has a right to defend itself and cannot be expected to suffer rocket attacks for eight years without taking steps to suppress them and exact retribution. But the loss of 1,300 Palestinian lives, many of them civilian <u>women</u> and children, against 13 Israelis speaks for itself. The infliction of \$1 billion worth of material damage, including Israeli attacks on U.N. aid warehouses and schools, has undermined the Israeli case for self-defense.

In fact, the war has brought into high relief the Palestinian claims of injustice at the hands of Israel. A key <u>Hamas</u> demand since before the war has been an end to the Israeli blockade of Gaza, and we believe that any just settlement of the war must include an opening of all Gaza border crossings by Israel in exchange for an end to rocket attacks by <u>Hamas</u>.

<u>Hamas</u> should be obliged to accept international inspections to stop arms smuggling only if peacekeeping troops also stand as a barrier against Israeli aggression, given its overwhelming military superiority. The Israeli blitz in Gaza can lead to no other conclusion.

So long as <u>Hamas</u> remains committed to Israel's destruction, the injection of more heavy weapons into Palestinian hands is unthinkable. But the Gaza war also makes clear that leaving the Palestinians' fate to the tender mercies of Israel is equally unthinkable.

Load-Date: February 7, 2009



# Calls for an 'international force' to protect the civilian population; MIDEAST: Resistance Rejects International Gaza Force

IPS (Latin America)

January 28, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 848 words

Byline: Adam Morrow and Khaled Moussa al-Omrani

## **Body**

'The resistance will not accept international forces (in the Gaza Strip),' Khaled Meshaal, head of <u>Hamas</u>'s Damascus-based political bureau said recently on Syrian state television. 'We know that such forces would only serve Israel and its occupation.'

On Saturday (Jan. 10), Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas called for an 'international presence' to 'protect Palestinian civilians' in the Gaza Strip, which has been governed by <u>Hamas</u> since the summer of 2007. 'We want the international force to be deployed in Gaza, not on the Egyptian border,' he told reporters in Cairo.

Abbas added that he had 'no objection' to the deployment of an international force to the PA-controlled West Bank as well as to the Gaza Strip. According to media reports, several countries, including Turkey and a handful of EU member states, have expressed readiness to contribute troops.

On the same day, Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul-Gheit ruled out deployment of an international force along Egypt's 14-kilometre border with the besieged territory. 'International troops will not be on the Egyptian side,' Aboul Gheit said at a press conference.

He did not, however, expressly dismiss the notion of an international force inside the Gaza Strip.

The idea has been floated before. Following *Hamas*'s seizure of the strip from the PA in June 2007 (after *Hamas* won the elections in 2006), Abbas made public calls for an international force to be sent to the territory. 'We have insisted on the necessity of deploying an international force in the Gaza Strip to guarantee the delivery of humanitarian aid and to allow citizens to enter and leave freely,' Abbas said at the time.

But with the exception of Abbas's U.S.-backed Fatah party, the idea was quickly dismissed by Palestinian resistance factions as a non-starter. *Hamas* declared it 'will not under any circumstances' allow international forces to enter the Gaza Strip, adding that such forces would be 'greeted with artillery shells and missiles.'

Cairo, too, ruled out the idea at the time. An international deployment to Gaza would, a diplomatic source said, 'have a negative effect on (Palestinian) national unity, on the (Egypt-Gaza) border and on Egyptian national security.'

Although Abbas's proposal eventually fizzled out, it found endorsement by Israeli Cabinet Minister Avigdor Lieberman, head of the right-wing Yisrael Beiteinu Party. At the time, Lieberman went so far as to visit several North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) member states in an effort to garner support for NATO-led Gaza deployment.

Calls for an 'international force' to protect the civilian population MIDEAST: Resistance Rejects International Gaza Force

This time around, Palestinian resistance factions in Gaza -- after three weeks of punishing Israeli assaults from air, land and sea -- are no more willing to countenance the idea.

Answering Abbas's latest proposition on the same day, leaders of ten Damascus-based Palestinian resistance factions -- including *Hamas*, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's General Command -- declared their 'total refusal of any international forces or 'observers' in the Gaza Strip.' In a Jan. 10 joint statement, the factions reiterated their 'rejection of any security arrangements that infringe on the (Palestinian) resistance or its right to resist the (Israeli) occupation.'

Moussa Abu Marzouk, vice-president of *Hamas*'s political bureau, called the idea of an international force to protect Palestinian civilians in Gaza 'ridiculous'.

'We've seen how international institutions have protected their schools and offices thus far,' he said, in a reference to the Jan. 6 bombing of a United Nations Welfare and Relief Agency (UNRWA) school in which some 45 people -- mostly <u>women</u> and children -- were killed by Israeli artillery. 'How can they be expected to protect the Palestinian people?'

'The (Palestinian) resistance is the sole and fundamental means of defending the Palestinian people,' Abu Marzouk was quoted as saying in independent daily Al-Masri Al-Youm on Monday (Jan. 12). 'The resistance will not be delivered into the hands of the UN.'

According to Abdelaziz Shadi, coordinator of Cairo University's Israeli studies programme, Abbas's call to internationalise Gaza -- given political realities on the ground -- stands little chance of success.

'As long as <u>Hamas</u> controls Gaza, no international force will be allowed in,' Shadi told IPS. 'This latest appeal by Abbas, whose popularity in the West Bank has nosedived since the beginning of the Israeli aggression in Gaza, is just empty words.'

Aymen Abdelaziz Salaama, professor of international law at Cairo University, says that under Chapter 6 of the UN charter, international forces can only be sent with the express permission of the host country.

'The problem is that neither <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza nor the PA in the West Bank represents a sovereign Palestinian state,' Salaama explained. 'Therefore, if Article 7 were to be invoked -- which allows for the deployment of an armed 'peacekeeping' mission without the consent of the host -- <u>Hamas</u> and the resistance could be legally powerless to stop it.' © 2009 NoticiasFinancieras - IPS - All rights reserved

Load-Date: January 28, 2009



## Medical workers say death toll reaches 1,000

The Leader-Post (Regina, Saskatchewan)

January 15, 2009 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. D8

Length: 597 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, Canwest News Service

**Dateline: JERUSALEM** 

## **Body**

As <u>Hamas</u> and Israel each gave mixed signals about whether they were willing to accept a ceasefire on Wednesday 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 news conference in Cairo that included much shouting but almost no information, exiled <u>Hamas</u> leaders returned to Syria on Wednesday 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 more talks.

A senior Israeli envoy was slated to return to Cairo on Thursday to present its 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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, was now in its final stages. This sentiment has gone hand-in-hand with speculation here that Israel wants most or all of its troops out of Gaza before U.S. president-elect Barack Obama is sworn in.

"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 group of foreign journalists. Eilan, who was a senior operations officer in the army, said that the delay in the talks now was not so much *Hamas* as it was Egypt, which also had concerns about the border with Israel that it wanted addressed.

### Medical workers say death toll reaches 1,000

Without elaborating, 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."

Meanwhile, on the battlefield, <u>Hamas</u> and its allies fired at least 14 rockets at Israel. Israel struck back with 60 air strikes and assaults on what its military described as approximately 20 terrorist sites, including nine areas used by rocket launchers. Several intense firefights were reported.

Three rockets were also fired at Israel from Hezbollah-controlled southern Lebanon. Israel countered those attacks with air strikes on the launch sites.

Of the Palestinians who have died in Gaza, more than 40 per cent of them were <u>women</u> and children, according to medical workers in the enclave. Mark Regev, who is Olmert's spokesman, expressed regret to the BBC over the civilian deaths, but said that *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. International aid agencies have said that this was not nearly enough assistance to alleviate a humanitarian crisis among the thin coastal strip's 1.5 million residents.

Islamist websites on Wednesday carried what was reported as a new audio message from bin Laden, urging a holy struggle over the Gaza offensive.

Load-Date: January 15, 2009



The Irish Times

January 15, 2009 Thursday

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 15

Length: 1952 words

## **Body**

Madam, Alan Shatter (January 13th) is correct to assert that the only meaningful long-term solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict is a two-state strategy. I can empathise with his frustration over the lack of debate surrounding the behaviour of <u>Hamas</u> in the run-up to the current conflict. However, I believe that Israeli actions over the past two weeks constitute a retrograde step in the search for a peaceful settlement.

If anything, the current conflict has strengthened the hand of <u>Hamas</u> leaders, whose democratic mandate in Gaza, as Mr Shatter points out, is tentative at best. As with the conflict two years ago with Hizbullah in Lebanon, Israel must realise that this kind if trigger-happy diplomacy will only condemn it to another decade of conflict in the region. Israel has yet to accept that a majority of Palestinians do wish to live in peace and to live normal lives. In Richard Nixon s term, they are a great silent majority. These people are the most frustrated when Israel rises to the provocation of *Hamas* by returning violence with violence, perpetuating conflict and strife.

I don t see a final goal for Israel in this current military operation and I don t believe there is one. Nor will this violence end with a conclusive victory for either side. For Israel to find a solution it must see the Palestinian people not as foot-soldiers for either Fatah or *Hamas* but as human beings with the same hopes, dreams and aspirations that they have. President Kennedy said in a famous speech during the height of the Cold War in 1963 that in its relations with the Soviet Union the US had to ask itself: What kind of a peace do we mean and what kind of a peace do we seek? Israel should not look for a peace with Palestinians that is imposed by armed stalemate or mutually assured destruction but a durable peace that, as Kennedy said, makes life on earth worth living.

I join the growing calls for an end to the current violence by both sides, but I hope for a peace that will mean more than a cessation of violence. A two-state solution is the only solution but it will never thrive under fear, suspicion and contempt. Yours, etc,

PAUL MAC FLYNN.

Bristol.

England.

Madam, As reported in your edition of January 14th, Sinn Féin TD Aengus Ó Snodaigh described the contributions of Ireland s only Jewish TD and the Israeli ambassador at an Oireachtas committee as being worthy of Joseph Goebbels. Mr Ó Snodaigh is described as his party s spokesman on justice, equality and international affairs, surely the ultimate oxymoron.

One might have thought that he would steer clear of Nazi references, given his political forebears connections with that evil regime. Sean Russell sought the help of the Nazi murder machine and in fact died on a Nazi U-boat. Some IRA members illuminated parts of Belfast so that the Luftwaffe could carry out their bombing missions over an Irish city. And some Nazis who landed here were given succour by various IRA members throughout the land.

Maybe Mr Ó Snodaigh is not aware of those facts or is he exhibiting the usual SF sins of amnesia and arrogance? Yours, etc,

BRENDAN CAFFERTY,

Ballina,

Co Mayo.

Madam, Alan Shatter says there is a tragic inevitability of civilian deaths in the current conflict. That is true if military tactics such Israel s are used. After 121 soldiers were killed in Lebanon in 2006, Israeli public opinion would not allow their soldiers to be killed on foreign battlefields in such large numbers again.

The Israeli army unites the state: all the sons and daughters of Israel must serve and the protection of those lives is paramount. So in Gaza, Israel has adopted the American shock and awe tactics which were so devastating for civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan but resulted in relatively few casualties for the coalition of the willing.

The deaths of <u>women</u> and children are not inevitable unless, for instance, you shoot tank rounds into a UN school. Shock and Awe, second edition. Yours, etc,

CIARAN O CARROLL,

Maynooth,

Co Kildare.

Madam, We, the undersigned, are united in seeking the immediate expulsion of the Israeli ambassador to Ireland, Dr Zion Evrony. We believe the ambassador must leave Ireland until such time as there is a complete end to Israel s war on Gaza and its continued slaughter of the Palestinian people. Your, etc,

MAIREAD MAGUIRE, Nobel Peace Laureate; KATHY SINNOTT MEP; MARGARET CONLON TD; MAGGIE RONAYNE, NUIG; GERRY GREHAN, Chairman, Peace People; RAYMOND DEANE, BRENDAN BUTLER, NGO Peace Alliance; ROBERT BALLAGH, JACK O CONNOR, general president, Siptu; Dr FINTAN LANE, RICHARD BOYD BARRETT, IAWM; KIERAN ALLEN, SWP; Dr STEVEN LOYAL, UCD; M.J. NOLAN TD; Dr THERESA URBAIN CZYK; UCD; JOE HIGGINS, SP; MARGARETTA D ARCY; BRIAN O CONNOR, Labour Youth; Prof MARY GALLAGHER, UCD; JOHN WADDELL, CHRIS ANDREWS TD; SHANE CULLEN; Dr SABER ELSAFTY, AILBHE SMYTH, UCD; TREASA NÍ CHEANNABHÉIN; PATRICIA McKENNA MEP; JOHN ARDEN; CHARLIE CULLEN, Senator IVANA BACIK; COLIN COULTER, NUIM; MICHAEL KILEMADE, TERENCE BROWNE, Dr FERGAL GAYNOR, UCC; NINA McGOWAN; TIM REDFERN, UCD; MAIRÉAD NI CHUIG, TG4; EAMON McCANN; MHAIRI SUTHERLAND; MICHAEL MOYNIHAN TD; BRIAN HAND; SEAMUS KEALY; Dr ANDY STOREY, UCD; PAUL MURNAGHAN; KATHARINA PFUETZNER, NCAD; ANNA MacLEOD, DIT; CHRISTY MOORE.

Madam, I disagree strongly with current Israeli policy in Gaza and with most of what the Israeli Ambassador to Ireland, Dr Evrony, has had to say about the topic. I think Israel s recent actions could fairly be described as examples of state terrorism and international war crimes.

But Mr Ó Snodaigh s reported comments to an Oireachtas committee, in which he compared remarks by the ambassador and Alan Shatter TD to Goebbels, are egregious and unacceptable. Mr Ó Snodaigh does not speak for me nor, I hope, for the majority of people opposed to what is happening in Gaza. Moreover, it is a little sickening to

be lectured by a Sinn Féin representative on violence and the impact it has on civilians. They should know more than most about it.

Mr Chris Andrews s call for the ambassador to be expelled is plain silly. The ambassador is there to represent his country s views, whether we like them or not, and to report back on Irish policy and attitudes. He deserves every respect and a courteous hearing no matter how strongly people may disagree with him. Yours, etc,

PIARAS MAC ÉINRÍ,

Model Farm Road,

Cork.

Madam, Has the time come for the whole Israeli war cabinet to be arraigned at the Hague for war crimes? How many more people have to be killed in order to protect the lives of Israelis who are occupying land which is not theirs. When does the rest of the world say stop? Yours, etc,

JOHN BIELENBERG,

Lucan,

Co Dublin.

Madam, I wish to clarify that Steven Corcoran, an Erasmus student whose letter on the Israeli offensive in Gaza you published on Monday, does not in any way represent or speak for the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris.

The views expressed are personal and those of us who represent this historic Irish College wish to explicitly dissociate ourselves from them. Yours, etc,

SHEILA PRATSCHKE,

Directrice.

Centre Culturel Irlandais,

Paris.

Madam, Critics of the ongoing military activity in Gaza seem to be essentially concerned with what is considered Israel s disproportionate response to rocket attacks by *Hamas*.

There are possibly other readers who share my feeling that some letter-writers are long on condemnation and short on constructive proposals. It might be helpful if they could describe, specifically, a response to <u>Hamas</u> that would satisfy the criterion of proportionality and at the same time allow Israel todeter attacks on its citizens.

I share the widely-felt compassion for all the victims of this long-running tragedy, both Palestinian and Israeli, but I confess that <u>Hamas</u> leaves me with the uneasy feeling that it has a somewhat larger agenda than the welfare of the unfortunate Palestinian people. Yours, etc,

LES SERFF,

Calvia,

Islas Baleares,

Spain.

Madam, The Israeli Ambassador to Ireland, Dr Zion Evrony, claimed to the Dáil European Affairs Committee on Tuesday that <u>Hamas</u> were unlike the IRA and wanted to solely live by religious terms and were not open to

change. This is untrue. The <u>Hamas</u> Founding Charter of 1988 is much targeted by Israeli propaganda as proof of <u>Hamas</u> s extremism. And it is true that the charter contains some extreme-sounding rhetoric, such as calling for the destruction of the Israeli state (not, mind you, the Israeli people). At that time of extreme Israeli violence and confrontation, the PLO was in exile and its leaders and members the subject of Israeli assassination, and <u>Hamas</u> was a marginal and radical underground resistance movement.

However, not unlike Sinn Féin and the IRA in Northern Ireland, in 2005 <u>Hamas</u> adopted a political path, called an effective ceasefire and contested the elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council of February 2006. It emerged as the largest party, winning 74 out of 132 seats.

Following their election victory, <u>Hamas</u> spokesmen made it clear they were seeking a long-term truce with Israel, the price being Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. The elected <u>Hamas</u> prime minister, Ismail Haniya, said in an interview with the BBC that <u>Hamas</u> would be prepared to work a two-state solution on the basis of the 1967 borders. This was an opportunity for a more peaceful phase in the Middle East, but was rejected by Israel, which boycotted the elected <u>Hamas</u> government (shamefully supported in this by the EU and US), and launched a ferocious offensive which killed 700 Palestinians that year alone.

Again, in June 2008 a ceasefire brokered by Egypt was put in place, and until November last, as confirmed reluctantly by Mark Regev, spokesman for the Israeli prime minister, not a single <u>Hamas</u> rocket was fired into Israel and <u>Hamas</u> attempted to stop rocket firing by smaller groups.

That ceasefire was cynically broken by Israel on November 4th with a military strike on Gaza which killed six people. The ensuing rocket fire by <u>Hamas</u> provided the casus belli for Israel s long-planned murderous onslaught of December 27th (a <u>Hamas</u> offer of December 23rd for a renewal of the ceasefire was ignored). This offensive has since claimed nearly 1,000 lives and injured and maimed thousands more.

<u>Hamas</u> and Fatah are both partners for peace, and partners for any peaceful and civilised initiative to end the terrible suffering of the Palestinian people. The bloody-mindedness of Israel is the only barrier. Yours, etc,

PHILIP O CONNOR,

Ireland Palestine

Solidarity Campaign,

Dublin 2.

Madam, Brendan Ó Cathaoir (January 13th) would have your readers believe that the one thing Israel has not displayed is a willingness to accept UN Resolution 242 and return to its internationally recognised borders. He suggests that Mr Zion Evrony [Israel s Ambassador to Ireland] is selective with the truth.

However, clearly it is Mr O Cathaoir who is being selective with the truth or has he forgotten Israel s withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula in 1982? And has he, in common with many of your correspondents, forgotten that this resolution called for the application of both the following principles: Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict [but not necessarily to its pre-1967 borders]; and termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for . . . every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force .

The Israeli government, unlike *Hamas*, has demonstrated its willingness to abide by this resolution. Yours, etc,

DAVID M. ABRAHAMSON,

Glenageary,

Co Dublin.

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## Olmert dodging ceasefire meetings

The Australian

January 15, 2009 Thursday

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## **Body**

ISRAELI Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is ignoring a call by Defence Minister Ehud Barak and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni for a week-long ceasefire in Gaza to allow humanitarian assistance into the strip.

As the death toll from the 19-day offensive approaches 1000, reports emerged in Israel yesterday that Mr Olmert was avoiding a meeting with his two key ministers, Mr Barak and Ms Livni, in order to allow the military operation to continue.

Mr Olmert was not planning to convene the war cabinet overnight so as to again avoid confronting the issue with the ministers, both of whom support a ceasefire.

The newspaper Haaretz reported Mr Barak was concerned that when Barack Obama takes office next week, he will demand an immediate ceasefire -- putting enormous pressure on Israel.

It said Mr Barak had accepted the view of one of his commanders, Major General Yoav Galant, that expanding the operation could require a deployment of up to a year.

**UN Secretary-General Ban** 

Ki-moon arrived in Cairo last night at the start of a week-long visit to Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Turkey to find an end to the conflict. He is not scheduled to meet *Hamas* officials.

So far, 970 Palestinians have been killed and an estimated 4400 injured since Israel began the attack on Gaza on December 27. Thirteen Israelis have been killed, including 10 soldiers in the Gaza, and several civilians injured from *Hamas* rockets fired into Israel.

The possibility of a second front for Israel was raised again last night after three rockets were fired from southern Lebanon into northern Israel. They caused no injuries or damage.

Last week, three rockets were fired from Lebanon, but Israeli officials believed they were isolated incidents and not part of any planned new war by Hezbollah.

The UN has estimated that 40per cent of Palestinians killed in Gaza have been women and children.

## Olmert dodging ceasefire meetings

The apparent division between Mr Olmert and his two key ministers came as moderate Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas accused Israel of trying to ``wipe out" Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

On the ground, fighting yesterday was heaviest in the south, near the Rafah crossing on the Egyptian border, and in the outer streets of Gaza City.

Israel has targeted the Rafah area because it believes <u>Hamas</u> has been using an extensive system of tunnels to smuggle weapons into Gaza, which are then used against southern Israel.

Israeli intelligence officials said yesterday Israel has yet to cripple the military wing of <u>Hamas</u> or destroy the group's ability to launch rockets.

Israel has delayed its all-out assault on the heart of Gaza's population centres because it believes that local leaders of *Hamas* have been shocked by the ferocity of Operation Cast Lead and want to end the fighting.

Despite the disagreements in cabinet, Mr Olmert remains determined to launch ``phase three" of the operation, but hopes that the prospect of Israeli troops advancing with overwhelming firepower into Gaza's most built-up areas will deepen the tensions emerging within *Hamas* and force it to accept Egypt's ceasefire plan.

Amos Gilad, Israel's chief negotiator, has stayed away from talks in Egypt until the <u>Hamas</u> position becomes clearer, but the Defence Ministry announced he would go today for ``decisive" talks on a ceasefire.

A senior Israeli military intelligence official said Khaled Mashal, the exiled <u>Hamas</u> chief in Damascus, and the group's Iranian and Syrian backers were determined that <u>Hamas</u> should keep fighting. He claimed, however, that the movement's leaders in Gaza had been so shaken by the offensive that they wanted it to end swiftly.

Claims persisted that Israel was testing new weapons in Gaza: Norwegian doctor Mads Gilbert said that in his 10 days in a Gaza hospital, he had treated patients who he ``strongly suspected" had suffered injuries from a Dense Inert Metal Explosion.

He also pointed to the possible use of white phosphorous shells, which are sometimes used to create smokescreens but are banned for use in warfare.

The Israel Defence Forces Chief of Staff, Gabi Ashkenazi, denied Israel was using illegal weaponry. ``The IDF acts only in accordance with what is permitted by international law and does not use white phosphorous."

But one soldier sent to Gaza recently said that he had handled phosphorous grenades and that tanks equipped with white phosphorous shells were in operation. "We've been using it responsibly ... it's been around the whole time," he said.

For more news on Gaza, go to theaustralian.com.au

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