**1. Military Resources and Capabilities**

**Troop Strength:**

* **Hamas had an estimated 20,000 fighters, including members of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades (military wing).**
* **Other Palestinian militant groups, such as Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and the Popular Resistance Committees, contributed additional fighters.**
* **Many fighters were irregular combatants with limited formal military training.**

**Equipment and Technology:**

* **Small arms included AK-47s, M16 rifles, RPG-7s, and heavy machine guns.**
* **Mortars, homemade explosive devices (IEDs), and anti-tank weapons were widely used.**
* **Rockets ranged from homemade Qassam rockets to more advanced Iranian-supplied Grad and Fajr rockets.**
* **Tunnel networks under Gaza were used for smuggling weapons, ambush operations, and sheltering leadership.**

**Logistics and Supply Chains:**

* **Weapons, ammunition, and supplies were smuggled through underground tunnels from Egypt.**
* **Limited ability to produce weapons domestically, relying on foreign-supplied materials.**
* **Fuel, food, and medical supplies were difficult to maintain due to Israeli blockades.**

**Intelligence and Surveillance:**

* **Hamas had limited intelligence-gathering capabilities compared to Israel.**
* **Use of civilian informants and spotters provided some battlefield awareness.**
* **Electronic surveillance was minimal, relying mostly on human intelligence (HUMINT).**

**Cyber Warfare:**

* **Limited cyber capabilities, mostly used for propaganda, social media influence, and psychological warfare.**
* **Some hacking attempts targeted Israeli websites and media channels.**

**Nuclear Capabilities:**

* **Hamas had no nuclear weapons or related infrastructure.**

**2. Economic Resources**

**Defense Budget:**

* **Hamas had a much smaller budget compared to Israel, relying on foreign funding from Iran, Qatar, and private donors.**
* **Budget constraints limited the ability to develop advanced military technology.**

**Industrial Base:**

* **No formal arms industry; most weapons were smuggled or assembled using improvised methods.**
* **Rockets were produced in small underground workshops.**

**Resource Availability:**

* **Access to fuel, food, and building materials was heavily restricted by Israeli blockades.**
* **Tunnels provided some means of obtaining essential supplies, but shortages were frequent.**

**Economic Resilience:**

* **The Gaza economy was weak due to blockade restrictions and damage from past conflicts.**
* **International aid played a significant role in sustaining civilian populations.**

**3. Geographic and Environmental Factors**

**Terrain:**

* **Dense urban environment in Gaza favored guerrilla tactics and close-quarters combat.**
* **Narrow streets and densely populated areas limited Israel’s ability to maneuver heavy armor.**
* **Tunnels provided a significant tactical advantage for ambushes and supply movement.**

**Climate and Weather:**

* **Weather conditions did not significantly impact military operations.**
* **Dry and moderate climate allowed continuous fighting throughout the operation.**

**Strategic Location:**

* **Gaza’s position allowed for rapid strikes against Israeli cities but also made it highly vulnerable to Israeli air and artillery attacks.**
* **Border with Egypt provided a crucial smuggling route, but Egypt increased border security under Israeli pressure.**

**4. Political and Diplomatic Resources**

**Alliances and Partnerships:**

* **Hamas received financial and military support from Iran, Hezbollah, and Qatar.**
* **Relations with Egypt were strained, as Egypt cooperated with Israel in restricting Hamas’ access to weapons and resources.**

**International Law and Norms:**

* **Hamas justified its actions as resistance against Israeli occupation.**
* **International reactions were divided, with some countries condemning Hamas as a terrorist organization, while others supported the Palestinian cause.**

**Domestic Political Support:**

* **Hamas maintained control over Gaza and had support among its political base.**
* **Public sentiment was influenced by anger over Israeli blockades and military operations.**

**5. Human and Social Resources**

**Population Size and Demographics:**

* **Gaza had approximately 1.5 million residents at the time, with a high percentage of young men eligible for combat.**
* **Civilians were often caught in the conflict, leading to international concerns over human rights.**

**Morale and Cohesion:**

* **Hamas fighters were ideologically motivated and willing to engage in long-term resistance.**
* **However, prolonged conflict and high civilian casualties affected overall morale.**

**Education and Skills:**

* **Limited access to advanced military training.**
* **Some fighters received training from Iran and Hezbollah operatives.**

**6. Technological and Scientific Capabilities**

**Research and Development (R&D):**

* **Hamas had a limited R&D capability, focusing on improving homemade rockets and tunnel infrastructure.**
* **No significant advancements in electronic warfare or precision-guided weapons.**

**Space Capabilities:**

* **No military satellites or space-based reconnaissance capabilities.**

**Artificial Intelligence (AI):**

* **Not applicable.**

**7. Energy and Infrastructure**

**Energy Security:**

* **Severe energy shortages due to Israeli restrictions on fuel imports.**
* **Smuggling tunnels provided limited fuel supplies.**

**Transportation Networks:**

* **Road networks in Gaza were highly vulnerable to Israeli airstrikes.**
* **Tunnels were the primary means of moving fighters and supplies.**

**Communication Systems:**

* **Relied on underground command centers, couriers, and mobile phone networks.**
* **Israeli electronic warfare disrupted Hamas' communications at times.**

**8. Cultural and Psychological Factors**

**National Will:**

* **Hamas presented itself as the defender of Palestinian resistance, maintaining strong ideological commitment.**
* **Public support varied, with some civilians resenting the consequences of war.**

**Psychological Resilience:**

* **Civilians and fighters endured harsh conditions, but prolonged airstrikes and blockades took a psychological toll.**
* **Propaganda efforts were used to boost morale and maintain recruitment.**

**9. Legal and Ethical Considerations**

**Compliance with International Law:**

* **Hamas was accused of violating international law by targeting Israeli civilians with rockets.**
* **Use of human shields and combat operations in civilian areas led to condemnation by human rights organizations.**

**Ethical Implications:**

* **Tactics such as using schools, hospitals, and mosques for military operations were controversial.**
* **Civilians faced dire humanitarian consequences due to prolonged fighting.**

**10. Adversary Analysis (Specific to the Israel Defense Forces)**

**Enemy Capabilities:**

* **The IDF had overwhelming military superiority in firepower, technology, and intelligence.**
* **Israel’s Iron Dome missile defense system neutralized many Hamas rocket attacks.**

**Enemy Alliances:**

* **Israel had strong support from the United States and Western allies.**
* **Cooperation with Egypt restricted Hamas’ ability to smuggle weapons.**

**Enemy Strategy and Tactics:**

* **The IDF used airstrikes, precision artillery, and ground incursions to dismantle Hamas infrastructure.**
* **Israel’s military doctrine focused on rapid dominance and minimizing risks to its own forces.**

**Key Questions Before Engaging in War (For Hamas in Operation Cast Lead)**

**Objectives:**

* **Maintain control over Gaza and continue armed resistance against Israel.**
* **Inflict as much damage as possible on Israeli cities to deter future offensives.**

**Cost-Benefit Analysis:**

* **Prolonging the conflict strengthened Hamas’ political image among some supporters.**
* **Massive destruction and high civilian casualties hurt Hamas’ credibility internationally.**

**Exit Strategy:**

* **Ceasefire agreements were pursued to de-escalate hostilities when losses became unsustainable.**
* **Hamas aimed to negotiate from a position of strength by demonstrating resilience.**

**Risk Assessment:**

* **Severe risk of infrastructure destruction and leadership losses.**
* **High civilian casualties risked turning public opinion against Hamas.**