



Behind the Headlines: Operation Pillar of Defense

14 Nov 2012

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The civilians of southern Israel have been under sustained attack from Gaza since last Saturday, November 10th. More than 120 rockets were fired before Israel launched Operation Pillar of Defense this afternoon (November 14).

The toll the rockets have taken on Israeli citizens is heavy. Over one million civilians live in range and their lives are threatened with every launch. Approximately 800 rockets and mortar shells have launched since the start of the year. Daily life in southern Israel has been totally disrupted.

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Accordingly, Israel targeted [Ahmed Jabari](#), Hamas' military chief in Gaza and an arch-terrorist. Jabari was responsible for all Hamas terrorist activity emanating from the Gaza Strip in the past decade. He was also directly involved in the abduction of IDF soldier [Gilad Shalit](#) in 2006. In addition, Israel targeted the Fajr rocket sites in Gaza, reducing Hamas' ability to launch these long-range missiles which are capable of hitting Tel Aviv.

The aim of Operation Pillar of Defense is to remove a strategic threat to Israeli citizens. To accomplish this, the IDF will act to protect the lives of Israeli citizens, including by reducing the capabilities of Hamas' long and short range rocket forces. Additionally, Israel is acting to impair Hamas' command and control system.

All of Israel's actions have been taken in self-defense. It is the duty and right of every state to protect its civilian population from attack. No other state would allow a million citizens to be targeted by terrorist organizations without responding.

The targets of Israeli operations are all military. Israeli strikes are conducted in a precise surgical manner, in order to reduce to a minimum any effect on the civilian population of Gaza. Israel regrets any injury that may nevertheless be caused to civilians in the Gaza Strip.

In sharp contrast, Hamas and the other terrorist organizations hide among the civilian population of Gaza. They also direct their fire at the civilian population of Israel. These actions constitute a double war crime.



IDF Spokesperson



Underground Fajr 5 rocket launching site owned by Hamas in Zeitoun.

Photo: IDF Spokesperson



Hamas fires rockets from residential area in Gaza, Oct 29, 2012

Despite [Israel's total disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005](#), Hamas continues to attack Israel, proof of the fact that they are not fighting against Israel's (non-existent) presence in Gaza but against Israel's very existence.

The international community should act to stop the attacks on Israel from the Gaza Strip. Hamas and the other terrorist organizations cannot be allowed to act with impunity against the civilian population of southern Israel.

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