

May 14, 2021

## Israel-Hamas Military Collision An Update as of Friday May, 14<sup>th</sup> 2021

This short report is a review of the major events that have happened since the outbreak of the current military round which began after Hamas shot missiles and rockets at Jerusalem on the evening of Monday, May 10, 2021.

To date, Palestinian organizations in Gaza (Hamas, Islamic Jihad in Palestine (IJIP), and other militant organizations) have fired over 2,000 missiles and rockets on Israeli cities. They have launched missiles, rockets, and mortar shells towards Jerusalem, Beer Sheva, Gush Dan (Israel's largest urban center), and the city of Tel Aviv. On the evening of Tuesday, May 11, 2021, Palestinians fired a barrage of about 140 rockets to Tel Aviv and the suburbs and cities around Tel Aviv. However, they have particularly focused on coastal cities in southern Israel (Ashkelon, Ashdod) and Israeli communities close to Gaza. They have killed 15 Israeli civilians so far. Today, about 4 million Israelis are currently under rocket fire.

The Israeli Iron Dome system has successfully intercepted about 90% of the rockets that threatened to hit populated areas. One-third of the rockets fired by Palestinians in Gaza have landed inside Gaza. The rockets that have fallen in Gaza have killed an unconfirmed number of Palestinian citizens including children.

The IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) are operating according to a prepared plan of action. The operations plans have been approved by the Israeli government.

**For the time being there is a consensus among analysts that the Israeli military has been very effective. There are two primary reasons for this assessment:**

The Israeli military campaign is causing severe and widespread damage to the military assets of Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Palestine - IJIP (the two largest military forces in Gaza) including:

- Using high precision weapons and exceptional real time intelligence to destroy much of:
  - Hamas and IJIP's missile and rocket manufacturing infrastructure.
  - Hundreds of subterranean missile and rocket launching platforms.
  - Military command operation rooms above and underground.
  - Buildings and houses used by Hamas's commanders.
  - 14 High-rise buildings in Gaza that are part of Hamas' infrastructure including the Hamas Broadcasting Building and the Hamas Central Bank.
  - Successfully intercept Palestinian "suicide" attack drones.
  
- Eliminating dozens of senior officers of Hamas and IJIP.

On the night of May 13-14, Israel carried out a powerful attack that reportedly killed hundreds of Hamas militants inside the tunnels dug by the organization throughout Gaza. The attack was a combined attack including Israeli the Air Force, ground, artillery specialists, and intelligence entities. Disinformation about the beginning of an Israeli ground invasion into Gaza caused Hamas militants to go into their tunnel network. Following the information,

Hamas fighters rushed into a network of huge tunnels dug by Hamas throughout Gaza. This network is dubbed the "Gaza Metro." After Hamas militants entered the tunnels, an Israeli attack orchestrated with extraordinary precision targeting the tunnels created a death trap for Hamas militants.

➤ Thus far, Israel's very intense and wide-scale military campaign have recorded almost no collateral damage.

### **Reactions in the regional and global arena to the current round of fighting:**

In the Arab world, thus far, there has been very little response to what is happening in Gaza. I attribute this to several factors:

1. The low number of civilian casualties on the Palestinian side.
2. The fact that the month of Ramadan ended on Thursday. And on the same day, Muslims began celebrating the holiday of Eid al-Fitr. This celebratory holiday will last until the beginning of next week.
3. The increasingly open and escalating criticism in the Arab world towards Hamas and its policies.

One of the interesting aspects of the minor response is the almost complete silence in the areas that are under the Palestinian Authority's control in the West Bank until Friday May 14. The explanation for this is:

1. The small number of civilian casualties in the Gaza Strip.
2. The fact that for the Palestinian Authority, the destruction inflicted on Gaza and Hamas serves the Palestinian Authority because it strengthens the PA's argument that Hamas and Hamas' policy inflicts disaster on the Palestinians.

However, on Friday afternoon the picture in the West Bank changed. At the time this update is being written (6 pm Israel time on Friday, May 14<sup>th</sup>) clashes between Palestinian protestors and Israeli forces in parts of the West Bank have occurred, resulting in 7 Palestinians being killed.

Turkey and Iran, both supporters of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad overtly and loudly condemn Israel.

It is worth noting that Hezbollah, Iran's most important and powerful proxy is silent.

In the international diplomatic arena, at this juncture, the Biden administration, and major European factors clearly back Israel. This can be attributed to the following:

1. Hamas initiated the flare-up when it shot missiles and rockets at Jerusalem on the evening of Monday, May 10, 2021.
2. The massive and indiscriminate firing of thousands of missiles and rockets at Israeli cities.
3. The low number of Palestinian civilians killed thus far.

It is also worth noting that for now - unlike previous rounds - the current round has received little coverage by the international press.

## What next ?

Will there be a ceasefire?

1. Hamas wants to end the current round as soon as possible.
2. Israel is currently refusing to discuss a ceasefire.
3. It looks like the fighting will continue into next week.

Although there are currently no signs of an imminent ceasefire initiative, I identify three very recent developments which likely speed up the start of a talks towards a ceasefire:

1. The Palestinians are intensifying a - mostly false - propaganda campaign. The campaign alleges that Israel is massacring civilians and killing children. For example, Palestinians have posted and widely distributed a picture of a girl who was severely burned. The child is presented as a Palestinian, but she is a victim of the war in Afghanistan.
2. There is beginning to be signs of unrest in the West Bank.
3. There is unrest in Jordan - where most of the population is Palestinian.

\*End of Report\*

### For More Background:

For an explanation of how this current military round has evolved please see my May 12<sup>th</sup> article: [The Israel-Gaza War of 2021 | What Really Led to the War?](#) As well as videos on my [YouTube Channel](#).

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