

Hamas Admits the Truth About Israel and Those 'Civilian' Casualties

by Hugh Fitzgerald



On the first day, May 10, of Operation Guardian of the Walls, Hamas claimed that Israel had been killing civilians. Here is the report: “Hamas Tacitly Admits That Israel Is Only Hitting Military Targets,” [Algemeiner](#), May 24, 2021:

Mark Regev, senior adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, said in a Sunday interview that “many” of the Gaza casualties in the recent conflict between Israel and Hamas were caused by rockets fired by the Palestinian militant group that fell short in the Gaza Strip, rather than by Israeli military strikes.

“We tried ... to hit the terrorists and not to see innocent people caught up in the crossfire,” Regev said on “Fox News Sunday” to host Chris Wallace. “And while our goal was to

avoid civilian casualties, Hamas had actually the exact opposite goal ... They were brutally abusing Gaza civilians as a human shield for their war machine. We know for a fact that many of the casualties in this operation were caused by Hamas munitions. Almost 20% of their rockets fell short, landing in Gaza, killing Gaza civilians."

Since the conflict began on May 10, about 4,340 rockets were fired by Hamas from the Gaza Strip toward Israel, with at least 640 falling within Gaza, according to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). The clashes claimed the lives of 12 Israelis, including one IDF soldier. According to the Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry, about 240 Palestinians were killed, a count that Israeli officials have called into question.

"We don't know if these figures are reliable and include only civilians," said a senior IDF official on Friday. "Past experience has shown that Hamas takes great effort to conceal numbers and the identity of the casualties for example by removing militant insignia from the dead bodies when they are being evacuated."

After 11 days of fighting, Israel and Hamas entered into an unconditional ceasefire that took effect Friday 2 a.m. local time.

"Ultimately, in the operation we gave Hamas a heavy blow," said Regev in the Sunday interview. "We dismantled a large part of their terrorist-military machine. We took out part of their leadership. We hit their command and control. Hopefully they will think twice even three times before they strike at Israel again."

Hamas has not yet admitted how many – Israel says 640 – of its rockets fell short and landed in Gaza, killing dozens of civilians. Perhaps it has decided not to admit to such massive malfunctioning. It also is careful to remove insignia from the uniforms of its dead fighters before showing them to the

foreign media. Thus do Hamas fighters metamorphose into dead civilians. The foreign press, already so biased against Israel, allows itself to be deceived.

The data so far suggest the following casualties: on one side, 12 Israelis were killed, of whom 11 were civilians, which certainly suggests Hamas was trying to harm Israeli civilians; 700 Israeli civilians were also wounded. On the other side, Israel reports having killed 200 Hamas and PIJ fighters, including 25 senior commanders of both Hamas and PIJ. The IDF believes, according to Mark Regev, that about 60 Palestinian civilians were victims of Hamas' own malfunctioning rockets that fell in Gaza. Hamas says that 243 Palestinians, civilians and fighters, were killed. Even if the figures given are not exact, needing slight corrections up or down, the overall picture is clear. If we accept Israel's figure about the number of Hamas figures it killed – 200 – and Hamas' claim that 243 Gazans had died, that means there were only 43 civilian casualties. In 11 days of fighting, with more than 1,600 targets hit by Israeli airstrikes in the thickly-populated Gaza Strip, with Hamas' weapons, Hamas intelligence offices, command and control centers, hidden among and in civilian buildings, to result in a total of only 43 civilian dead – or of twice, or even three times that number – is an astonishing feat of precision bombing, likely never before equalled in the history of modern warfare.

When you are pressed by enemies of Israel to justify “all those civilian casualties” to which they so airily refer, provide them with both the Israeli and Hamas estimates of fighters and civilians killed, mention how many – 640 – of those Hamas rockets that were aimed at Israel instead fell on civilians in Gaza, explain what our experience with the data provided by each side after the three previous Gaza wars has taught us about the relative trustworthiness of the IDF's figures, as compared to those dispensed by Hamas. And then quote to them what the head of UNRWA in Gaza, Matthias

Schmale, has said about Israel's airstrikes: "I have the impression there is a huge sophistication in the way the Israeli military struck over the 11 days," Schmale said. "Yes they didn't hit, with some exceptions, civilian targets, but the viciousness, the ferocity of those strikes were heavily felt." Naturally, his pointing out the "sophistication" – i.e., precision – of the IAF attacks, and that the IAF "didn't hit, with some exceptions, civilian targets" has caused the Palestinians to erupt in fury. They want Schmale fired. How dare someone working for UNRWA admit even once that Israel was not targeting civilians? Clearly, Palestinians cannot bear too much reality. And they needn't worry: having, in a single explosion of candor, told the truth, Schmale has now been asking forgiveness from the Palestinians who want his scalp, by returning to the usual anti-Israel boilerplate. But for one brief shining moment, he managed, nolens-volens, to tell the truth about the Gaza war.

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