

14 November 2012

Israel under Fire – November 2012
Talking Points

Background:

For the third time in a month, the civilians of southern Israel are under rocket attack from the Gaza Strip.

The current attacks began on Saturday night (Nov.10) when an anti-tank missile was fired at an army jeep traveling on the Israeli side of the border fence. Four IDF soldiers were injured. Since then, over 120 rockets have been fired at Israeli civilians.

The lives of 1million Israeli civilians are being threatened and daily life in southern Israel has been totally disrupted.

The residents of communities near the Gaza border suffer constantly from rocket and mortar shell attacks. These attacks occur almost on a routine basis, as do escalations of other types of terrorist activities carried out by Hamas and the other terrorist organizations that operate under Hamas' protection.

The pauses between the waves of rocket attacks are shortening. In the past month, Israel has been subjected to three separate periods of escalation. Since the beginning of the year, more than 800 rockets and mortar shells have been fired at Israel, a record amount since the end of Operation Cast Lead (January 2009). This peak is similar to the attacks that occurred in 2007-8.

Main Messages:

- The goal of Israel's operation is clearly defined and is aimed at removing a strategic threat to Israeli citizens. Israel is not interested in a deterioration of the situation.
- Israel has demonstrated great restraint for a long period but cannot stand for the recurring attacks on its citizens. No other state would accept a similar reality.
- Israel is acting in self-defense and out of its duty to protect its civilians from terrorist attacks.

- Hamas rules the Gaza Strip and is responsible for all that occurs in Gaza and all that is launched from there.
- It must be noted that Israel disengaged completely from the Gaza Strip in 2005. The result of Israel's disengagement is that Gaza has become a giant ammunition dump. In addition, it provides a breeding ground for terrorist groups to organize and to operate, including groups associated with al-Qaeda and Global Jihad. All this under the rule, responsibility and sponsorship of Hamas.
- Weapons smuggled from Libya, Iran and Sudan accelerated the process of Gaza turning into a terror base. These weapons also increased the danger posed to the Israeli population.
- Hamas and the other terrorist organizations hide among the civilian population of Gaza. They also deliberately direct their fire at the civilian population of Israel. These acts constitute a double war crime.
- The targets of the Israeli operation are all military. Israel will make every effort to prevent harm to the civilian population of Gaza, and regrets any injury to civilians.
- The border crossings from Israel to the Gaza Strip remain open, allowing for the routine passage of goods and humanitarian aid.
- The international community must act to stop the attacks on Israel from the Gaza Strip and should not wait for an Israeli reaction to act. Time and again, Israel has warned that it would not tolerate these attacks.