

Operation Protective Edge

Operation Protective Edge was a legitimate response to terrorist attacks from Hamas in Gaza. In addition to Israel's moral and reasonable response to the impending threats, Israel held legal justification in its defense.

State Department designated terrorist organization Hamas perpetrated horrific terror attacks against Israel, cementing its terror status.¹

- In the summer of 2014, the terror group intensified its constant hostile activity against Israel. **About 80 rockets and mortar shells fired from Gaza struck southern Israel in a single day, July 7, 2014.²**
 - 48 hours later, this number rose to over 140 projectiles, striking as far north as Hadera. By the end of the 50-day conflict, **over 4700 rockets, missiles, and mortars had been fired by Hamas** from Gaza into Israel.³
- In an effort to dismantle Hamas' dangerous terror infrastructure and stop the attacks, the Israel Defense Forces launched Operation Protective Edge.⁴
 - By the end of the operation, the IDF had discovered and destroyed over **36 sophisticated terror tunnels** stretching over to Israel that were used by Hamas to carry out kidnappings and terrorist attacks.⁵
- During Operation Protective Edge, **Hamas knowingly violated 11 ceasefires.⁶**
 - President Barack Obama, alongside the U.N., "unequivocally condemned Hamas" for its terror operations and utter disinterest in reaching a lasting agreement.⁷

Israel ethically responded to terror attacks by protecting itself through reasonable and necessary means, while Hamas perpetrated war crimes against Gazan civilians.

- With the utmost regard for the lives of millions of innocent Palestinians living under Hamas' rule, **Israel's army and air force warned the Palestinians of impending defense measures** by phone, loudspeakers, fliers, and radio - an unprecedented ethical standard by a professional military.⁸
 - Israel's above and beyond measures were a direct response to Hamas' criminal attempts to fabricate sympathy from the international community.

¹ U.S. Department of State. *Foreign Terrorist Organizations*.

² The New York Times. *Israel Calls Up 1,500 Troops as Tensions Mount With Hamas*. July 7, 2014

³ The Times of Israel. *Israel hits Hamas, Islamic Jihad leaders after rockets land north of Tel Aviv*. July 8, 2014.

⁴ Consulate General of Israel in Houston Official Website. *Israel under fire - IDF responds*. July 29, 2014.

⁵ The Washington Post. *How Hamas uses its tunnels to kill and capture Israeli soldiers*. July 21, 2014.

⁶ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *Protective Edge: Hamas' violations of ceasefires - A chronology*. August 19, 2014.

⁷ The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. *Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Shinawatra in a Joint Press Conference*. November 18, 2012.

⁸ CNN.com. *Israel drops leaflets warning Gaza residents to evacuate ahead of strikes*. July 13, 2014.

- **Hamas forced civilians of Gaza to act as humans shields** during Operation Protective Edge.⁹ This abominable tactic is still employed today.
 - **Hamas provoked casualties amongst its own population in Gaza** while protecting military infrastructure designed to kill Israelis.
- While Israel takes serious efforts to protect itself and its people, **Hamas terrorists are rewarded for killing or injuring Israeli Jews**,¹⁰ deeming these terrorists “innocent martyrs who have given their lives cheaply,” and inciting further terror attacks.¹¹

Israel maintained full legal justification for its defense measures against Hamas’ terror.

- Even while under heavy rocket fire in early July 2014, Israel sought a ceasefire and de-escalation, which was confirmed by the Arabic news outlet Al-Hayat.¹²
 - When Hamas proved unwilling to engage in diplomacy with Israel, Israel was forced to resort to military action in order to defend itself. This necessary act was in **full compliance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter**, which reserves the right to every nation to engage in **self-defense** against armed attacks.¹³
- According to *HLMG*, an independent military consulting group, Israel effectively distinguished between civilians and combatants with unmatched accuracy.¹⁴
 - The civilian-combatant kill ratio for Operation Protective Edge was an unprecedented 1:1, proving Israel’s keen differentiation ability and respect for all life.¹⁵ Including this operation, the IDF maintains **one of the lowest civilian-to-terrorist death ratios in the world**.¹⁶ In contrast, the 2003-2013 Iraq War civilian-combatant kill ratio lands at 1:3.¹⁷
 - According to **Geneva Conventions**, which prohibits excessive military force, **Operation Protective Edge was well within its parameters** given the exclusive targeting of Hamas’ terror infrastructure.¹⁸
 - The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff later commended the operation, in which **“Israel went to extraordinary lengths to limit casualties and collateral damage.”**¹⁹

⁹ Jewish Virtual Library. *Operation Protective Edge: Maps of Hamas Human Shield Use*.

¹⁰ The Jerusalem Post. *Documents Reveal Palestinian Authority Paying Convicted Hamas Terrorists*. October 6, 2015.

¹¹ The Washington Free Beacon. *Hamas Refuses to Stop Killing Jews*. May 16, 2014.

¹² The Times of Israel. *Israel hits Hamas, Islamic Jihad leaders after rockets land north of Tel Aviv*. July 8, 2014.

¹³ United Nations Official Website. *Charter of the United Nations*.

¹⁴ High Level Military Group. *An Assessment of the 2014 Gaza Conflict*. Page 34. October 2015.

¹⁵ The Algemeiner. *Israel Says Gaza Death Toll 1:1 Combatant-Civilian Kill Ratio, Same as in Previous Hamas Wars*. August 6, 2014.

¹⁶ FLAME. *What Is Disproportionate Force?* 2014.

¹⁷ Iraq Body Count. *The War in Iraq: 10 years and counting*. March 19, 2013.

¹⁸ International Committee of the Red Cross. *Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions*. Page 38. May 2010.

¹⁹ Youtube. *Joint Chiefs Chairman Dempsey: “Israel Went to Extraordinary Lengths” to Limit Civilian Casualties*. November 16, 2014.