

## Gaza Ceasefire: Hold the Cheers

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In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

On Monday, both sides agreed to open-ended ceasefire terms. Peace talks will resume in Cairo within a month.

Terms agreed on include opening border crossings, “enabl(ing) the rapid entry of humanitarian aid,” as well as construction supplies for rebuilding.

Monitoring will ensure reconstruction is solely for civilian purposes.

Effective immediately, coastal fishing waters will expand from three to six nautical miles. They’ll gradually increase to 12 miles by year end.

Israel agreed to halt targeted assassinations. Days earlier, Netanyahu called Hamas leaders legitimate targets.

Israeli hardliners want Hamas and other resistance groups entirely crushed. They reject peace out of hand.

Terms largely replicate how both sides ended Israel’s November 2012 Pillar of Cloud aggression.

Hamas stuck to the letter of the deal. Israel violated it straightaway. It blamed Hamas for its crimes. Expect nothing different this time.

Israel’s agenda excludes good faith. Decades of conflict, repression and occupation harshness attest to its dark side.

Expect no change enough to matter this time. Promises made are broken. It’s longstanding Israeli policy. Major issues remain unresolved.

They include Hamas wanting Gaza’s siege entirely lifted, permitting an airport and seaport to facilitate imports and exports, and releasing Palestinian political prisoners.

Israel wants Gaza demilitarized. It wants resistance groups defenseless against certain future IDF onslaughts.

It wants overall siege harshness maintained. It largely prohibits Gazan product sales to its two primary markets – the West Bank and Israel. They amount to 2% of pre-2007 levels.

It permits minimal exports overall. It restricts imports. Israeli policy perpetuates dependency on outside aid.

It prevents economic development. It leaves almost half the working-age population

unemployed. Youth unemployment tops 60%.

Free movement of people is more myth than reality. Restrictions are unrelated to security.

Exit permits are hard to get. Adults with them can bring children under age six. Older ones are excluded.

Israel's blockade has nothing to do with security. In June 2010, [McClatchy](#) newspapers headlined "Israeli document: Gaza blockade isn't about security," saying:

"McClatchy obtained an Israeli government document that describes the blockade not as a security measure but as 'economic warfare' against the Islamist group Hamas, which rules the Palestinian territory."

In response to a Gisha Legal Center for Freedom of Movement lawsuit, documents obtained said Israel called blockading Gaza "economic warfare." According to a government statement:

"A country has the right to decide that it chooses not to engage in economic relations or to give economic assistance to the other party to the conflict, or that it wishes to operate using 'economic warfare.' "

Nations may indeed decide whether or not to have relations with other states. It may not interfere in their internal affairs. Doing so violates core international law.

Blockading Gaza is illegal. Doing so is an act of war. It's a crime against humanity. Israel remains unaccountable.

Monday's ceasefire is a temporary respite. Hold the cheers. Expect no substantive change in Israeli policy.

It prioritizes violence and instability. It excludes peace and good will.

It's just a matter of time before more conflict. Pretexts are easy to invent. Blaming victims is longstanding Israeli policy.

Washington supports its worst crimes. It doesn't give a damn about Palestinian rights. It never did. It doesn't now.

On August 26, John Kerry lied saying Washington is "fully committed...to work with our international partners on a major reconstruction initiative...to ensure (it's) for the benefit of the civilian population in Gaza..."

He turned truth on its head calling Hamas and other legitimate resistance groups "terrorist organizations."

Throughout 50 days of conflict, Washington supported Israel's killing machine. According to Gaza's Health and Interior ministries, one of its many high crimes included murdering 89 entire families.

Israel bears full responsibility for well-planned naked aggression.

Launching it had nothing to do with Hamas rockets. It had everything to do with maintaining business as usual.

On the day both sides halted hostilities, Israeli forces terrorized West Bank and East Jerusalem residents.

Twelve Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) activists were arrested. Their whereabouts remains unknown.

Days earlier, Israeli soldiers targeted Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) member Khalida Jarrar in Ramallah.

They ordered her deported to Jericho for six months. They gave her 24 hours to leave.

Nonexistent secret information claims she “poses a threat to the security of the region, so she must be put under special monitoring.”

Jarrar is a senior Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) member. She’s an Addameer Prisoner Support group board member.

She’s banned from traveling abroad. Freedom fighting comes with a price.

During Monday ceasefire discussions, Israel kidnapped two Palestinians in Hebron, three in Bethlehem, six in Nablus, nine in Jenin, and one in Jerusalem.

Homes were invaded, searched and ransacked. Property was damaged or stolen.

Amjad Abu ‘Asab heads the Jerusalemite Family Committee of Palestinian political prisoners. He said Israeli soldiers went on a rampage.

Former political prisoner En’am Qalanbo was arrested for participating in a solidarity with Gaza march.

‘Asab expects many arrests following Monday’s ceasefire deal. He believes Israel wants Jerusalem and other West Bank Palestinians punished for supporting Gazans and resisting occupation harshness.

According to the Silwan-based Wadi Hilweh Information Center, Israeli police attacked Palestinians marching for liberation with tear gas, concussion grenades and rubber-coated steel bullets.

On Tuesday, other marches and demonstrations occurred in Shu’fat refugee camp, al-Eesawiyam, Wad al-Jous, al-Jabal, Silwan, al-Mokabber Area, Hizman and East Jerusalem.

Israeli soldiers and police responded violently. Scores were injured. Arrests were made. Israel prohibits public demonstrations. It calls legitimate resistance terrorism.

On August 27, [Maan News](#) said “Palestinian communities in Jerusalem are experiencing the largest upsurge in detentions since the Second Intifada, with a marked increase in Israeli police brutality and the collective punishment of entire neighborhoods, local organizations say.”

Since Israel murdered teenager Muhammad Abu Khdeir, over 770 East Jerusalemites were arrested.

After three Israeli youths were abducted on June 12, up to 1,000 West Bank Palestinians were detained.

Collective punishment is official Israeli policy. Hamas leaders were unjustifiably blamed for the June kidnapping/murder of three Israeli youths.

Operation Protective Edge followed preemptively. It bears repeating. It had nothing to do with Hamas rockets. Firing them responded to Israeli aggression.

[Jeff Halper](#) heads the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD). He calls motivation for Operation Protective Edge twofold.

It was an effort to “get Israel off the hook for massive” human rights and international law violations.

It sought to “help other governments overcome similar (‘asymmetrical warfare,’ counterinsurgency’ and ‘counter-terrorism’) constraints...against peoples resisting domination.”

Israel calls it “lawfare.” It followed “notable legal setbacks and challenges Israel incurred” since 2001.

For his involvement in the Sabra and Shatila massacres, Ariel Sharon was indicted. It didn’t matter. He wasn’t tried.

In 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled Israel’s Separation Wall illegal. Enforcement didn’t follow. Construction continues.

Israel considers civilians legitimate targets. Its policy violates core international humanitarian law.

Israel circumvents it by “creat(ing) new categories of combatants.” They call them “non-legitimate actors.”

They include anyone Israel calls “terrorists,” “insurgents,” or “non-state actors.” An entire population is held hostage.

Israel claims it warrants no protection and other fundamental rights for resisting repression.

Obama and other Western leaders support Israel’s right to self-defense. Victimized Palestinians are denied the same right.

Israel’s lawfare strategy considers them villains. It’s a “new doctrine of military ethics.” It’s based on a “Just War Doctrine of Fighting Terrorism.”

It bears repeating. Terrorists include adversaries and others legitimately resisting Israeli repression.

Its lawfare strategy uses “new military ethics” to justify lawlessness.

It's based on the notion that wrongdoing repeated often enough unaccountably will get nations worldwide to accept it or do nothing to stop it.

It lets Israel get away with high crimes against peace. It assures business as usual.

It's just a matter of time before Israeli rampaging repeats. Expect Palestinians to be blamed for its crimes like always.

Expect Western leaders to support them. Expect no change in long denied justice. Palestinians remain isolated on their own.

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*His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."*

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