

# Gaza: Victimized by Israeli Terror Bombing

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, November 22, 2012

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#)

In-depth Report: [CRIMINALIZE WAR, PALESTINE](#)

Tuesday night, Israel and Hamas agreed to halt hostilities. Midnight local time was chosen. Hamas didn't want conflict in the first place.

Israel is a rogue state. It's a serial provocateur. Multiple attacks were launched. Hamas responded defensively. It's their right and responsibility under international law. It had no other choice.

It was wrongly accused of terrorism. Israel planned Operation Pillar of Cloud months ago.

Choosing target sites, overall tactics, and strategic aims require extensive planning. Killing Qassam Brigades leader Ahmed Jabari enraged Gazans justifiably. Israel did it to subvert a peace agreement he helped negotiate. Hamas responded.

Conflict rages into day 8. Israel has lots of killing and destruction left to do. It bears full responsibility for hostilities. It's guilty of grievous crimes of war and against humanity.

Who knows when conflict will subside. Truce or not truce, it won't end. Israel won't let it. Israeli ceasefires and other agreements aren't worth the paper they're written on.

Duplicity, state terror, institutionalized racism, and belligerence as a way of life define Israel. It menaces the region and humanity. It's worse than ever under Netanyahu. He can't wait to kill again. Children and other civilians are his favorite targets.

A previous article expressed doubts about an announced truce. Netanyahu gave it away saying Israel "will not hesitate to do what is necessary to defend our people."

In other words, Israel will enforce occupation harshness, continue targeted assassinations after agreeing not to, bomb and shell at will, accost fishermen at sea, kill farmers in their fields, shoot children for target practice, and maintain Gaza's siege.

Mossad-connected [DEBKAFfile](#) (DF) explained. It headlined "For Israel, a truce is the worst of all worlds: Tied hands, Hamas unbowed," saying:

Ending current hostilities prevents Israel from winning Operation Pillar of Cloud decisively. Cast Lead was inconclusive. Invasion remains possible. Air operations aren't enough.

Defeating Hamas requires full-scale war. In other words, Israel has lots of killing left to do. Terror bombing is a favorite tactic. It's done against civilians to break their morale, cause panic, weaken an enemy's will to fight, and inflict mass casualties and punishment.

Geneva and other international laws forbid targeting civilians. The Laws of War: Laws and Customs of War on Land (1907 Hague IV Convention) states:

- Article 25: “The attack or bombardment, by whatever means, of towns, villages, dwellings, or buildings which are undefended is prohibited.”
- Article 26: “The officer in command of an attacking force must, before commencing a bombardment, except in cases of assault, do all in his power to warn the authorities.”
- Article 27: “In sieges and bombardments, all necessary steps must be taken to spare, as far as possible, buildings dedicated to religion, art, science, or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals, and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided they are not being used at the time for military purposes.”

Fourth Geneva protects civilians in time of war. It prohibits violence of any type against them. It also requires treatment for sick and wounded victims.

In September 1938, a League of Nations unanimous resolution prohibited the:

“bombardment of cities, towns, villages, dwellings or buildings not in the immediate neighborhood of the operations of land forces.”

“In cases where (legitimate targets) are so situated, (aircraft) must abstain from bombardment” if this action indiscriminately affects civilians.

The 1945 Nuremberg Principles prohibit “crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

These include “inhumane acts committed against any civilian populations, before or during the war.”

Indiscriminate killing and “wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity” are absolutely prohibited.

The 1968 General Assembly Resolution on Human Rights prohibits launching attacks against civilian populations. Israel and America do it repeatedly by land, sea and terror bombings.

Guernica, Spain (1937) reflects Cast Lead and Operation Pillar of Cloud.

On April 26, 1937, German and Italian aircraft fire-bombed the small Basque town. It was done for their fascist ally, General Francisco Franco.

Guernica was destroyed. An estimated 1,650 people were killed. Many hundreds more were injured. Hitler was practicing for bigger fish to fry. Air force head Goring called the attack an “opportunity to test under fire whether (munitions) had been adequately developed.”

Joachim von Richthofen’s later revealed secret document described a planned operation, saying:

“First came the incendiary bombs which set a number of roofs on fire.” They were “followed

the 250-kilogram heavy explosives” in order to “destroy water pipes thus hindering the extinguishing of the fires.”

He complained that direct hits weren't high enough. Improved precision was needed. Numerous bridges and factories weren't struck.

An eyewitness said:

“The only things left standing were a church, a sacred tree, the symbol of the Basque people.”

“There hadn't been a single anti-aircraft gun in the town. It (was) mainly a fire raid.”

“A sight that haunted me for weeks was the charred bodies of several women and children huddled together in what had been the cellar of a house.”

Civilian sites were fair game. Guernica had no military significance. Terror-bombing leveled the town. It was in flames. It wasn't the first civilian air attack.

Germans did it in WW I. So did Britain against Iraq in the 1920s. Poison gas was used. Then Secretary for Air and War Winston Churchill's secret memo recommended it.

In a May 12, 1919, he wrote: “I do not understand the squeamishness about the use of gas....I am strongly in favour of using poisoned gas against uncivilised tribes.”

In 1937, Hitler used explosives, fragmentation bombs and incendiaries. Basque Autonomous Republic president Jose Antonio de Aguirre called the attack more brutal than ever before seen. Fascism revealed its ugly face.

“They scorched the city and fired machine guns at the women and children who fled in panic, resulting in numerous deaths,” he said.

Bombing began at the busiest time of day, around 4:30PM. It was Monday, market day.

One account said “streets were jammed with townspeople and peasants from the countryside. Never before in modern warfare had noncombatants been slaughtered in such numbers, and by such means.”

Another account said, “Villagers who were not immediately killed fled to the fields to take refuge, only to be ravaged by plunging machine gun fighters.”

British author/journalist George L. Steer wrote for The Times:

Up to that time, attacking Guernica was “unparalleled in military history.” Heavy bombing panicked people. Machine gun strafing drove them underground. Incendiary bombs destroyed their hiding places. Everything going on was horrifying.

“When I entered Guernica after midnight, houses were crashing on either side, and it was utterly impossible even for firemen to enter the center of the town.”

“The hospitals of Josefinas and Convento de Santa Clara were glowing heaps of embers. All the churches except that of Santa Maria were destroyed, and the few houses which still

stood were doomed.”

“When I revisited Guernica this afternoon most of the town was still burning, and new fires had broken out. About 30 dead were laid out in a ruined hospital.”

Guernica was history’s first city destroyed by terror bombing. Civilian men, women, and children were deliberately targeted. Military expert Wolfgang Schmidt told [Der Spiegel](#):

“For the German air force, Guernica was a trial run on how one can spread horror and distress through attacks on cities and towns.”

“Of course,” bombing the city “was a blatant violation of human rights and had a terrorist character. It was accepted that civilians would be harmed.”

It was worse than that. They were deliberately targeted to inflict mass casualties.

A third or more of the population of 5,000 was either killed or wounded. Almost three-fourths of Guernica’s buildings were destroyed or heavily damaged. Fires engulfed the city. They burned for three days. Area farms were bombed.

A survivor said:

“The air was alive with the cries of the wounded. I saw a man crawling down the street, dragging his broken legs.”

“Pieces of people and animals were lying everywhere.”

“In the wreckage there was a young woman. I could not take my eyes off her. Bones stuck through her dress. Her head twisted right around her neck. She lay, mouth open, her tongue hanging out. I vomited and lost consciousness.”

Guernica had no strategic significance. Hitler’s bombed it for target practice. It was dress rehearsal for WW II. Wehrmacht generals flexed their muscles. They signaled what lay ahead.

On the attack’s 70th anniversary, [Der Spiegel](#) called Guernica’s destruction “practicing blitzkrieg in Basque country.” For Hitler’s Condor Legion, “it was little more than a training run.”

Commander Wolfram von Richthofen said Guernica was “literally razed to the ground. Bomb craters (were) seen in the streets. Simply wonderful.” He ignored how many people were slaughtered.

Pablo Picasso’s famous painting portrayed what happened. In stark black, white and gray, he depicted terror-bombing civilian men, women and children.



Twisted, writhing forms showed images of a screaming mother holding a dead child, a corpse with wide-open eyes, and a gored horse. Art historian Herbert Read called the work “a cry of outrage and horror amplified by a great genius.”

Guernica signaled what lay ahead. Both sides used terror bombing in WW II. It’s been used ever since. Intensity, kill count, and destructiveness increased.

The London blitz, fire-bombing Dresden and Tokyo, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and numerous other examples show its savagery. Palestinians know its ferocity.

Cast Lead inflicted 23 days of slaughter and mass destruction. Terror weapons were used. Illegal ones. Gaza was blanketed with cluster bombs. They’re illegal. On impact, submunition bomblets are released over a wide area. They kill, maim, destroy or disable targeted sites.

Flechette metal darts penetrate human bones. They cause horrific injuries. Artillery shells contain thousands of them. Explosions release them at high speed over a range of about 300 meters.

Depleted uranium munitions spread toxic radiation. Chemical and biological agents were used. White phosphorous bombs and shells burned flesh to the bone. Water can’t extinguish it. Victim muscles and cells were completely destroyed.

Thermobaric bomb blasts sucked oxygen from spaces and human lungs. Norwegian Dr. Mads Gilbert traveled to Gaza in January 2009. He performed humanitarian surgeries.

His book [“Eyes in Gaza”](#) explained the horror. He treated children with legs blown off, abdomens sliced open, and various injuries never seen before. Terror weapons caused them.

Gaza during Cast Lead was the “most horrific experience” of his life. He spent two weeks at Al Shifa Hospital. He said Gaza today remains in ruins. Siege causes disease, deaths and human misery.



Israeli attacks terrify people. Gaza's tunnel economy provides minimal help. Israel and Egypt target it for destruction. People struggle on best they can.

Operation Pillar of Cloud picked up where Cast Lead left off. Conflict rages. Agreed truce so far is a mirage. Israel has unfinished business. On day 8, slaughter and destruction continue.

On November 20 and 21, the Kuala Lumpur Foundation to Criminalise War ([KLFCW](#)) held hearings on Israeli crimes of war and against humanity.

A November 20 [press release](#) said in part:

"Palestine witnesses relate(d) acts of 'genocide.' " Salah Al Sammouni testified. On January 5, 2009, Israel murdered 21 family members. He lost his father, mother, and infant daughter.

Dozens of other family members were injured. Salah's home was bombed three times. Doing so had no military significance. It was done to terrorize civilians.

He recounted "screaming, shouting and crying. Blood was everywhere. I lifted my daughter and she had wounds on her neck and stomach."

"She was dead. Then I heard my wife calling my name. I went to her. There were a lot of dead bodies on top of her. Then, I slowly pulled her out. She was injured and she was covered in blood. Three of my sons were badly injured and the other one had difficulties in breathing even now."

Mahmoud Al Sammouni was aged 12 during Cast Lead. He saw Israeli soldiers shoot his father in cold blood. F-16s were terror bombing. Israeli soldiers shot everyone in sight.

His four-year old brother was shot "twice in the chest and once in the head." Four of his older brothers were shot "in their legs and behind the ear."

He "walked barefooted" to Al Shifa Hospital for help.

"We went to the main road. Along the way we saw a lot of blood on the street, spent bullet shells, shoes. Iron and metal pieces were all across the street so that no one could pass."

"The soldiers were shooting randomly and people were scared. As we walked along the road, we saw a tank at the side of the road. It was facing the other way."

"When the soldiers saw us, the tank was turned in our direction and they shot right above our heads."

Other testimonies were riveting. Israel again is terrorizing Gaza. So far it's short of invasion. Eight days of terror bombing struck over 1,500 sites. Death and injury tolls keep mounting. Mass destruction was caused.

Israel bears full responsibility. Gaza again is its terror bombing victim. Who knows when this will end. Palestinians know what ebbs will again flow whenever Israel wishes. That's how rogue states operate. Israel is one of the worst.

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago and can be reached at [lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net).

His new book is titled "How Wall Street Fleeces America: Privatized Banking, Government Collusion and Class War"

<http://www.claritypress.com/Lendman.html>

Visit his blog site at [sjlendman.blogspot.com](http://sjlendman.blogspot.com) and listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network Thursdays at 10AM US Central time and Saturdays and Sundays at noon. All programs are archived for easy listening.

<http://www.progressiveradionetwork.com/the-progressive-news-hour>

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Stephen Lendman](#), Global Research, 2012

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Stephen Lendman](#)

#### About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at [lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net). His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."  
<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at [sjlendman.blogspot.com](http://sjlendman.blogspot.com). Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)