

Israeli Home Strikes Claimed More than 800 Palestinian Lives

Associated Press analysis shows that more than 60 percent of the dead were children, women, or the elderly

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A Palestinian searches through rubble of his destroyed home hit by Israeli strikes in Towers Al-andaa—the northern Gaza Strip. (Photo: [UN Photo/Shareef Sarhan/flickr/cc](#))

At least 844 Palestinians were killed as a result of airstrikes on homes during Israel's summer attack on Gaza, an *Associated Press* [exclusive analysis](#) has revealed.

The review published Friday found that 508 of the dead—just over 60 percent—were children, women, and older men, all presumed to be civilians. “ Hamas says it did not use women as fighters in the war, and an Israel-based research group tracking militants among the dead said it has no evidence women participated in combat,” *AP* notes.

Among the additional findings:

- Children younger than 16 made up one-third of the total: 280 killed, including 19 babies and 108 preschoolers between the ages of 1 and 5.
- In 83 strikes, three or more members of one family died.
- Among those killed were 96 confirmed or suspected militants—or just over 11 percent of the total—though the actual number could be higher since armed groups have not released detailed casualty lists.
- The remainder of the 240 dead were males between the ages of 16 and 59 whose names did not appear in connection with militant groups on searches of websites or on street posters honoring fighters.

“Either they have the worst army in the world that constantly misses targets and hits civilians, or they are deliberately killing civilians,” Hanan Ashrawi, a Palestinian spokeswoman, told the *AP*. If most of those killed are civilians, “you cannot call them collateral damage,” she said.

The results of the *AP* count, which looked at 247 airstrikes on homes, come on the heels of [similar findings](#) released at the end of January by Israeli human rights group B'Tselem. That report pointed to three factors behind the high numbers of Palestinian civilian casualties in the more than 70 incidents they investigated: Israeli forces' overly broad definitions of legitimate military targets, their repeated violations of the “principle of proportionality,” and a lack of or ineffective warnings to civilians that the homes would be targeted.

The organization sent the report to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for his response. In a letter, B'Tselem Executive Director Hagai El-Ad wrote: "Senior officials, with you at the helm, backed the strikes, reiterating the argument that the attacks conform to international humanitarian law and eschewing any responsibility for harm to civilians."

The United Nations [reports](#) that in all, 2,205 Palestinians died during Israel's Operation Protective Edge, including at least 1,483 civilians of which more than 500 were children. The 2014 conflict also resulted in the deaths of 67 Israeli soldiers and 5 Israeli citizens.

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