

Resistance to the Occupation of Palestine Heats Up the Egyptian-Israeli Border

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Egypt and Israel are jointly covering up the true story of how three Israeli soldiers were killed near their shared border on June 3. Just like their 1979 joint [peace treaty](#), they are jointly spinning a media story to distract attention from the real issue behind the deaths: the brutal Israeli military occupation of Palestine.

The border between Egypt and Israel is usually safe. The last terrorist act was in 2011, and it was an organized group responsible, not an individual acting alone.

In this new incident, there is an Egyptian policeman who carried out the killings, and drug smuggling had nothing to do with it. The Israeli side immediately called the attack an act of terror. [The Egyptian side said it was a drug smuggling case gone wrong](#), but the facts do not support that media spin.

Before I recount the facts in the case, let's look at what this means for Israel and Egypt, who have tried to maintain an image of peace and calm amid constant pressures on Israel caused by 70 years of brutal military occupation of Palestine, and the refusal to grant even the most basic of human rights to Palestinians. The UN reported that Israel conforms to the definition of an Apartheid state.

Israel is now led by the most extremist leadership in its history. The rapid expansion of illegal settlements on Occupied Palestinian territory is one of the Benjamin Netanyahu administration's main goals. His second most important goal is to normalize ties with Saudi Arabia, which has always maintained support for the Palestinian people's rights to a homeland and full human rights.

How can Netanyahu make friends with Arabs while the resistance to the Israeli occupation grows stronger?

We have seen consistently growing tensions in Gaza and the Occupied West Bank. The various resistance groups have gotten stronger and have more support from their communities and international groups than ever before.

Countries such as Qatar, Iran, and Syria have always maintained their support for resistance. While Egypt, Jordan, UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan have Israeli [normalization agreements](#); Saudi Arabia and others have expressed their stance of holding out for a comprehensive Palestinian peace treaty first. The Egyptian policemen may be a representative of the prevailing Arab support of resistance to occupation regardless of the peace treaties.

In the wee hours of June 3, Staff Sgt. Ori Yitzhak Iluz, 20, and Sgt. Lia Ben Nun, 19, were at their guard post on the Israeli-Egyptian border. At 2:30 am, Iluz and Ben Nun had foiled an attempt on the border to smuggle drugs. Commonly, a smuggler on the Egyptian side will throw a bag of drugs over the border security fence, and a person on the Israeli side would take the bag and leave. This situation occurred three kilometers (1.8 miles) north of their guard post. By 3 am the drug smuggling case was over with the drugs confiscated, and by 4:15 am the pair had radioed they were at their post as usual.

Mohamed Salah Ibrahim, 22, from Cairo, was an Egyptian policeman who left his post, walked five kilometers (3 miles) to an emergency border gate of Israel, used his knife to cut the zip-ties which held the gate shut, and entered into Israel. He was alone, and then walked 150 meters to the Israeli guard post manned by Iluz and Ben Nun and shot and killed them both sometime between 6 am and 7 am. The Israeli soldiers never fired their weapons, which indicates they were surprised by the attacker. When superiors had radioed the pair at about 9 am and they did not respond, an officer went to the post and found them dead.

Shortly after 11 am, an Israeli army drone identified Ibrahim hiding behind a rock formation some 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) from the border. Ibrahim opened fire at the Israeli soldiers and killed Staff Sgt. Ohad Dahan, 20. Just minutes later, another group of soldiers closed in on Ibrahim where he was killed, and one Israeli officer was wounded before noon.

When Ibrahim was examined, he was found to be carrying two combat knives, food, a Quran, and six magazines for his assault rifle, which may indicate he had a larger attack planned.

In a May 2021 Facebook post, Ibrahim wrote: "Allah stands with Palestine," with a hashtag reading: "#GazaUnderAttack." Thousands of Palestinians and their international supporters around the globe had written similar sentiments on social media during the brutal Israeli air attacks on defenseless civilians in Gaza, who are the victims of collective punishment, which is a war crime.

The Israeli security border was easily cut on June 3. The thin veil of a peace treaty does not ensure security while one side is brutalizing the Palestinian people and refuses to negotiate for an end to occupation and restoration of human rights to 6 million people who live in an open-air prison.

Media can be used to spin a scenario that looks like all is well between Egypt and Israel, but there is a constant boiling of emotions below the surface of the 109 million Egyptian citizens who have had to shoulder a peace treaty not all have embraced or seen any benefit from.

There is no defense of occupation. The wall must fall.

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