

## Targeting Civilians: Israel's Specialty

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

*Bullies choose easy adversaries to pummel. Equal fights are shunned. It's the same in schoolyards or battlefields.*

*America and Israel operate this way. They avoid foes able to give as much as they take. Rogue governments never say they're sorry.*

*During Cast Lead in January 2009, Professor [Jeremy Salt](#) wrote "A Message to the brave Israeli Airmen." His comments apply to what's now ongoing.*

What's it like firing missiles at people you can't see, he asked?

Does it help being unable to see who you're killing?

Is your conscience eased by inflicting disproportionate force on people unable to fight back and civilian infrastructure?

Are you comfortable about slaughtering civilian men, women, children, and infants?

Does this weigh on your conscience, or are you at ease?

Do you sleep well or have nightmares about men, women and children you killed at home, in beds, kitchens, living rooms, schools, mosques, at work, or at play?

Do farmers in their fields, mothers with children, teachers in classrooms, imams in mosques, children at play, the elderly, frail or disabled threaten your security?

Do you ever question what you've done and why?

Have you no shame, no sense of decency, no idea of the difference between right and wrong?

Do you know the law? If so, why do you violate it? Doing so makes you complicit in crimes of war and against humanity? Do you know that?

Do you blindly follow orders or have a mind of your own?

Have you murdered civilians before?

Will you do it again if ordered?

Will you keep following orders blindly or do the right thing?

"Brave" Israeli airmen, soldiers, sailors, and other security force personnel are cowards.

They've acted lawlessly for decades.

Palestinian suffering is a way of life. Imagine living every day not sure if you'll live or die. Imagine young children growing up this way. Do Israeli children know what Palestinian ones endure? Are they told? Do they care? Do their parents?

Israel's moving thousands of troops and heavy weapons to Gaza's border. Mossad-connected [DEBKAF](#) said:

"Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz and the high IDF command are pushing for the ground operation, Stage B of the Pillar of Cloud operation, to start without delay. The prime minister and defense minister prefer to wait."

Another potential holocaust looms. Civilians always suffer most. Israel and America willfully target them. It part of the imperial strategy of both countries. Human lives don't matter, just conquest, dominance, and exploitation.

Cast Lead took a terrible toll. Missiles, bombs, shells, and illegal weapons were used against defenseless people. Mass slaughter and destruction followed.

Horrific crimes of war and against humanity were committed. Responsible officials remain unaccountable. Security Council no-fly zone protection wasn't ordered.

Over 1,400 Gazans perished. More than 80% were civilians. Over 300 were children. Around 5,300 were injured. Over 1,600 were children or infants. Israel willfully targeted them.

Neighborhoods, schools, universities, mosques, hospitals, UN facilities, fishing boats, civilian factories and workshops, municipal buildings, charitable foundations, civilian infrastructure, and other noncombatant sites were bombed and shelled.

Farmland was bulldozed. Power facilities and irrigations systems were destroyed. International leaders were indifferent about human slaughter and suffering. Only three low-level Israeli soldiers received punishments too minor to matter.

The al-Samouni family lost 27 members. Salah Talala al-Samouni saw his mother blown apart. Rocket and shell fire killed his two-year old daughter, father, aunt, cousin, and entire family. Media scoundrels said nothing. They support Israel's worst crimes.

Under siege, Gazans haven't recovered from Cast Lead. Now they face the prospect of more war perhaps worse than 2008-09.

International leaders share culpability through silence, indifference, and/or complicity. Washington is involved in all Israeli wars. Weapons, munitions and funding are supplied. Political support is given.

Obama told Netanyahu, go ahead and bomb and shell at will. Call it "self-defense" and pretend no one knows it's not. On November 15, the Senate unanimously passed a non-binding supportive resolution. Not a single profile in courage expressed opposition.

AIPAC thanked Obama and Senate members for supporting Israel. Gazan civilians and resistance fighters are maliciously called terrorists. They're heroes, not criminals.

On November 14, Anti-Defamation League ([ADL](#)) national director Abe Foxman expressed support for Israeli bombing and shelling, saying:

“Israel has shown tremendous restraint in the face of the unceasing rocket and mortar fire launched from Gaza. This operation is directly targeting the leadership responsible for these attacks, as well as the warehouses and facilities housing their weapons.”

“No country in the world would stand by and tolerate such attacks on more than a million civilians.”

“The international community has a clear obligation to condemn these attacks and to support the actions taken by Israel against Hamas and other terror organizations operating in Gaza as Israel carries out its basic duty to defend its civilian population.”

For almost a century, ADL fronted for Jewish supremacy. It backs occupation harshness. It's mindless about Palestinian suffering. It conducts smear campaigns against critics.

Its entire history is loathsome. Israeli crimes are called self-defense. It plays the same blame the victim game as Israel, Washington, AIPAC, and other Zionist organizations. Only Jewish rights matter. Palestinians are criminalized for defending themselves.

Israel agreed to halt military operations during Egyptian Prime Minister Hershaf Kandil's visit. He and Egyptian cabinet ministers arrived in Gaza Thursday. He'll return Friday. Israeli attacks continued.

At Al Shifa Hospital, Kandil visited victims. He denounced Israeli attacks, saying: “This tragedy cannot pass in silence, and the world should take responsibility for stopping this aggression.” Cairo will try to mediate a truce, he added.

Since Saturday, over 40 Palestinians were killed. Hundreds more were injured. Many are in serious condition. Dozens of air strikes continue. Death and injury numbers may rise exponentially. Current figures underestimate the toll because some victims lie beneath rubble.

The International Middle East Media Center (IMEMC) said Israel conducted 30 sorties in less than 30 minutes on Friday. At 10PM Thursday, the IDF said it struck 70 targets in the previous hour.

Civilian sites and government buildings were bombed and shelled. Two UN schools were struck. Heavy damage was reported. The Ahrar Center for Detainees' Studies said a church under construction was targeted.

#### [IMEMC](#)

said, “Children, infants, women and elderly are among the casualties, including children whose bodies were severely mutilated and burnt due to Israeli shells. A pregnant woman and her unborn fetus are among the killed.”

Gazan resistance fighters said they won't honor truce conditions as long as Israel keeps killing Palestinian men, women, children, infants, and the elderly. On Thursday evening, a Beit Hanoun home was bombed. Three children died. One was nine years old.

A 10-month old infant was killed when another home was struck. Through early Friday

morning, at least eight children, a pregnant woman, and two elderly men died.

Thirty thousand IDF reservists were called up. Military leaves were cancelled. Tanks, armored vehicles, and troops are mobilizing on Gaza's border. Invasion looks ominously likely.

On November 16, [Mathaba](#) said the Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) War Crimes Commission (KLWCC) "received numerous complaints on the atrocities and possible war crimes committed against the Palestinian people."

On November 20 and 21, two days of open hearings will be held.

Commission members include former Magistrate Musa Ismail, former Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Dean Zulaiha Ismail, Center for Global Research Director Michel Chossudovsky, and two former Iraq UN humanitarian coordinators - Hans von Sponeck and Denis Halliday.

On November 16, [Alternative News.org](#) headlined "No safe haven: Civilians under attack in the Gaza Strip." An eyewitness visited Al Shifa Hospital. Many injured Gazans are in serious condition.

Forty-year old Salem Waqef suffered brain injury. He's in a coma on a ventilator. It's unclear if he'll survive.

Ten-month old Haneen Tafesh was admitted unconscious. She suffered a skull fracture and brain hemorrhage. She's also in a coma on a ventilator. Doctors said her condition deteriorated since admitted. Hours later she died.

Ahmed Durghmush suffered brain trauma. Shrapnel penetrated his skull. Brain matter protruded from his head wound. His condition also deteriorated after surgery.

Throughout Thursday, emergency room staff were handling numerous arrivals. Injuries range from easily treatable to severe to life threatening.

Justice Ministry public information director, Khalid Hamad, was at home when shelling targeted a neighbor's house. Israel "targeted civilians deliberately," he said. "The Israeli forces don't make mistakes."

Thirteen-year old Duaa Hejazi was brought in "bleeding a lot." She sustained upper body shrapnel wounds. Pieces are still embedded in her chest. She sent a message to other Gazan children, saying:

"I say, we are children. There is nothing that is our fault to have to face this. They are occupying us and I will say, as Abu Omar said. If you're a mountain, the wind won't shake you. We're not afraid. We'll stay strong."

Al Shifa director general Dr. Mithad Abbas explained the dire conditions under which hospital staff must cope, saying:

"When those cases arrive at our hospital, it is not under normal circumstances. They come on top of the siege, the blockade, which has resulted in a lack of vital medicines and required medical supplies."

Al Shifa lacks essential medicines, some equipment and supplies. They include antibiotics, IV fluid, anesthesia, gloves, catheters, external fixators, Heparin, sutures, detergents and spare parts for medical equipment.

Power outages exceed 12 hours daily. Small amounts of fuel maintain operations at those times. Dr. Abbas said his supply will be exhausted in days if current conditions continue.

He doesn't know where the next missile or shell will strike. Perhaps Al Shifa will be targeted. Israel considers all civilian sites fair game.

On November 15, the Global [BDS Movement](#) issued the following statement in part:

“Stop a New Israeli Massacre in Gaza: Boycott Israel Now!”

Despite biased Western media reports, Israel “initiated and escalated this new assault on the eve of its upcoming parliamentary elections, underlining the time-honored Israeli formula of Palestinian bodies for ballots.”

“Israel will continue its belligerence, aggression and state terrorism unless it is made to pay a heavy price for its crimes against the Palestinian, Lebanese and other Arab peoples.”

“It is high time for BDS against Israel. This is the clearest path to freedom, justice and equality for Palestinians and the entire region.”

At issue also is a pending November 29 vote on Palestinian UN non-member observer status. Israel and Washington have gone all out to subvert it. Member States have all the more reason to support Palestine. In less than two weeks we'll know.

[Hezbollah](#) leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah urged Arab leaders to use all means to halt Israeli attacks on Gaza.

“No one is telling Arab countries today, ‘Please go open your borders and begin the operation to liberate Palestine.’ What we want is to end the attack on Gaza.”

This is everyone's battle...We're not asking you for a solution. We're asking for effort.”

“Some say the Arabs don't have the courage to stop oil production. Decrease your oil exports or raise the price a little and you will shake the United States. You will shake Europe.”

“Brothers, if you can't cut off oil, decrease your production or raise the price. Put on some pressure. No one is calling for armies or tanks or planes.”

Nasrallah called Israel's Gaza attack “criminal aggression.” Multiple crimes of war and against humanity are committed.

Much is at stake in Palestine, the region and beyond. Washington's aggressive wars continue. New ones are planned. Israel's a key partner. Both countries have imperial agendas. War features prominently in achieving them.

Michel Chossudovsky calls attacking and invading Gaza “part of the broader US-NATO-Israel military agenda.” Based on what's happened post-9/11, expect the worst ahead.

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