

MEMMO

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Rocket Attacks Terrorizing Israeli Civilians

Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist groups have increased their attacks against Israeli civilians. During the past several weeks, they have indiscriminately fired nearly 300 rockets that have hit homes, synagogues and schools, injured dozens and killed three people. Since Israel withdrew from Gaza in the summer of 2005 as a step toward peace, terrorists have fired more than 2,000 rockets into Israel and amassed tons of increasingly advanced explosives and weaponry. Israel has demonstrated extreme restraint, but is now being forced to take stronger steps to forestall the growing threat to its citizens.

Hamas and other Palestinian terrorists have increased their indiscriminate rocket attacks against Israeli civilians.

- Palestinian terrorists during the past week alone have launched nearly 300 rockets at Israel, injuring dozens and killing a 32-year-old woman, a 36-year-old man and a 13-year-old boy in Sderot, a city of 20,000 people located less than three miles from the border with Gaza.
- Eleven civilians have been killed and hundreds injured since 2000 by the indiscriminate rocket fire.
- Rockets have hit schools, synagogues, residential homes, electrical facilities, public buildings, commercial areas, sporting facilities and vehicles.
- The International Committee of the Red Cross stressed that using rockets deliberately to target civilians was a “serious violation of international law that cannot be justified in any circumstance.”



An Israeli firefighter examines a high school classroom hit by a rocket.

Hamas and other terrorists are amassing tons of sophisticated weaponry and preparing to escalate attacks on Israel.

- Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh made clear that Hamas will continue to use violence, saying, “We will keep to the same path until we win one of two goals: victory or martyrdom.”
- Hamas spokesman Abu Obeida said Hamas will “strike at the enemy anywhere in Palestine, whether with suicide attacks or operations against soldiers.” Since 2000, Hamas has carried out dozens of suicide bombings in Israel, killing more than 250 people.
- Hamas and other terrorist groups are smuggling weapons and constructing fortifications in preparation for attacks against Israel. According to Palestinian and Israeli security sources cited

recently by *Ha'aretz*, terrorists are operating 15 weapons smuggling tunnels between Egypt and Gaza.

- Last year, according to the IDF, terrorists smuggled into Gaza significant amounts of weaponry, including 33 tons of military-grade high explosives, 20,000 assault rifles, 38 long-range Qassam missiles, 12 anti-aircraft guided missiles, 95 anti-tank rocket launchers, 410 anti-tank rockets and 20 precision-guided anti-tank missiles.

Israel has demonstrated tremendous restraint in the face of continuing attacks, but must take action to defend its civilians.

- Like every other sovereign nation, Israel has the right and duty to defend its citizens from terrorist attacks.

- Israel has demonstrated extreme restraint in the face of ongoing rocket attacks, and only in recent days has it started to take additional measures to forestall the growing threat posed to its citizens.



Israeli police officers inspect the remains of a Qassam rocket fired by Palestinian terrorists.

- Israel's military response has been carefully calibrated to reduce rocket fire and ensure the safety of Israeli citizens while at the same time making every effort to limit Palestinian civilian casualties.

- The United States has consistently backed Israel's right to defend itself against Palestinian attacks. "Israel has the right to defend itself and it has exercised great restraint in the face of these rocket attacks," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack told reporters on May 17.

Basic Facts Summary

- Hamas and other Palestinian terrorists have increased their indiscriminate rocket attacks against Israeli civilians.
- Hamas and other terrorists are amassing tons of sophisticated weaponry and preparing to escalate attacks on Israel.
- Israel has demonstrated tremendous restraint in the face of continuing attacks, but must take action to defend its civilians.