

# MEMMO

July 17, 2008

## Hamas Must End All Violence to Preserve Calm

**Terrorist rocket fire from Gaza into Israel represents a serious violation of the Egyptian-mediated effort to reduce hostilities from and around Gaza. Israeli efforts to maintain calm depend upon Hamas halting all rocket and mortar attacks from Gaza—which have totaled more than 4,000 since Israel’s withdrawal from the territory in 2005—and ending its weapons smuggling. Unless these conditions are met and captured Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit is released, Israel may be forced to take increased measures to defend its citizens.**

The Egyptian-mediated effort to reduce hostilities from and around the Gaza Strip is dependent on a total halt of terrorist activity.

- Egypt’s efforts to reduce hostilities in Gaza are dependent on a total cessation of terrorist activity directed at Israel by all terrorist groups in Gaza.
- This includes an end to the firing of rockets and mortars, weapons smuggling, attacks on border crossings, shooting incidents across the Gaza fence and attempts to infiltrate Israel.
- Hamas must act to stop other groups in Gaza from undermining Egypt’s efforts to bring calm. While rocket fire has significantly declined since the calm took effect, 20 rockets and mortars have been fired at Israel by various groups in Gaza.
- Though Egypt has made increased efforts to curtail smuggling, weapons continue to enter the Gaza Strip through the sea and tunnels. A day after Egypt’s efforts went into effect, Hamas’ leader in Gaza, Ismail Haniyeh, declared, “We cannot talk about stopping smuggling.”
- The Egyptian-mediated calm is limited to Gaza, leaving Israel to continue counter-terror operations in the West Bank. On June 23, Israel acted in Nablus against the leader of a squad planning a car bomb attack inside Israel. Israeli forces uncovered large stores of weaponry in the man’s apartment, including explosive devices, an AK-47 assault rifle and ammunition.



**Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh said the terrorist group will not stop efforts to build up its military capabilities.**

Hamas must not be allowed to use this period to rebuild and train for future terrorist attacks against Israel.

- Damascus-based Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal said recently that Hamas would agree to Egypt’s efforts, but only as a temporary “tactic” in its long-term war against the Jewish state. “It is normal

for any resistance... to sometimes escalate, other times retreat a bit. Hamas is known for that,” Mashaal told Al-Jazeera in April.

- Osama Hamdan, Hamas’ representative in Lebanon, said Israel is mistaken if it thinks that a truce with Hamas would mean that the “resistance operations” would end. “The confrontation with the [Israeli] occupation will continue despite the talk about a tahdiyah [calm]... As far as Hamas is concerned, all options remain open,” he said.
- Mahmoud Zahar, a top Hamas leader in Gaza, recently pointed out that Hamas had benefited from a truce with Israel in 2005. “Hamas benefited from that ... and no one can deny this,” he said.
- Congruent with Hamas leaders’ statements, preparations for future conflict are still underway, as exhibited by the accidental explosion that occurred at a Hamas training base in Gaza on July 8.

Israel remains committed to providing humanitarian assistance to Gaza, but will act to defend its citizens against terrorism.

- Israel is committed to negotiations with the PA and is taking steps to help Palestinians by beginning to allow the flow of additional aid into Gaza.
- Israel has always facilitated the delivery of humanitarian aid, and has committed itself to further opening crossing points as terrorist activity ceases. Israel has increased the flow of goods into Gaza by more than 44 percent and the amount of fuel into Gaza by 30 percent in the last several weeks, according to Reuters.
- Like every other sovereign nation, Israel has the right and duty to defend its citizens. If Hamas or other terrorists in Gaza continue their terrorist activities, Israel may have to take military action.

The Palestinian Authority, Arab states and international community must continue to isolate Hamas.

- The United States has repeatedly made clear that the PA must reject Hamas and take concrete action against terrorism to move forward in peace negotiations with Israel.
- The international community must continue to isolate Hamas until the terrorist group meets the internationally backed conditions outlined by the Quartet: recognizing Israel’s right to exist, renouncing violence and terror, and accepting previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements.
- The PA under President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad must reject any accommodation with an unreconstructed Hamas that opposes peace with Israel.
- Arab states need to take concrete steps to support ongoing Israeli-Palestinian talks by providing Abbas the political support he will need to fight terrorism, isolate Hamas and make the tough compromises necessary to reach an agreement with Israel.