

MEMMO

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Hamas: Rearming and Rebuilding for Future Conflict

Recently, a rocket fired from Gaza landed in Israel. The attack is a stark reminder that the situation in Gaza remains perilous. After provoking three conflicts in the past seven years, Hamas is gearing up for another attack on Israel. Today, Hamas is restoring and enhancing its capabilities by rebuilding and expanding its tunnel network, increasing its domestic rocket and missile production and relentlessly smuggling banned goods into Gaza. Hamas' actions could easily precipitate renewed hostilities at any time.

Hamas is rebuilding and expanding its network of tunnels.

- Shortly after last August's cease-fire, Hamas renewed its underground construction projects – rebuilding both offensive and defensive tunnels.
- Hamas increased its investment in the tunnels, and now employs over 1,000 diggers, according to [Israeli military officials](#). Hamas is using cement diverted from Gaza reconstruction projects and cement purchased on the black market to fortify [tunnel walls](#) where cement is unavailable. Hamas has recently begun using lumber – meant for civilian reconstruction – to buttress its tunnels.
- [Video footage](#) shows Hamas preparing for the next round of fighting against Israel by building fortifications near the Israel-Gaza border. Only dozens of meters from the border, Hamas terrorists have been seen digging and setting up outposts and training facilities.



Israel has discovered over 100 smuggling attempts of banned goods in Gaza.

Hamas is increasing its domestic production of advanced missiles and rockets.

- In the wake of the summer war with Israel, Hamas refurbished its weapons production facilities – in particular, for rocket manufacturing. [Israeli military intelligence officials](#) have assessed that Hamas' could complete replenishing its arsenal as early as this summer.
- Military intelligence officials estimate that Hamas is assembling hundreds of rockets each week. Officials say Hamas uses steel and other commercially available materials – brought into the Gaza Strip for civilian reconstruction – to produce advanced weaponry.
- [According to a senior Israel Navy commander](#), Hamas fires rockets into the Mediterranean Sea every few days to test their range and accuracy. In January 2015 alone, military intelligence tracked at least 20 launches.
- [Marwan Issa](#), a senior commander of Hamas' military wing, has asserted that Hamas wants to double its arsenal of rockets and missiles in preparation for the next round of fighting with Israel. He added that Hamas continues to forge alliances with whoever can assist its cause.

Hamas is smuggling goods to rebuild its capabilities for future attacks.

- Over the past several months, [Israeli security forces](#) have detected an increase in Hamas' efforts to smuggle materials for building tunnels and manufacturing weapons into Gaza.
- According to [the Defense Ministry](#), Israel has thwarted over 100 smuggling attempts of banned goods into Gaza since January.
- In January, [the Shin Bet and Israel Defense Forces \(IDF\)](#) uncovered tons of materials, including liquid fiberglass, aboard a fishing boat off the coast of Gaza. The materials, used to manufacture rockets and mortars, were concealed under fishing gear.
- In February, Israel exposed a Hamas network to acquire and smuggle materials to strengthen its Gaza military infrastructure. Through this network, Hamas purchased and brought into Gaza thousands of tons of raw materials for tunnels, training facilities and weapons manufacturing, according to the [Shin Bet](#).
- On April 6, security guards from [Israel's Defense Ministry](#) intercepted advanced electronics – including a number of infrared cameras, communication devices and remote control security cameras – hidden in a truck at the Kerem Shalom Crossing.
- On April 20, [the Israel Tax Authority and the General Security Service \(GSS\)](#) foiled an attempt to smuggle 18 tons of coal – used for manufacturing weapons – into Gaza. Several trucks en route to Gaza, laden with the coal, were stopped at the Nitzana Crossing.