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Rocket Fire Casts Doubt on Truce in Gaza

Palestinian leaders said early Thursday that in the last moments before the midnight expiration of their cease-fire with Israel in Gaza, the two sides had agreed to hold their fire for an additional five days to continue talks about a more durable truce. But an exchange of rockets and missiles around the end of one cease-fire and the beginning of the next, cast immediate doubt about whether it would even last. Hamas, denied responsibility for the rockets, suggesting that other militants outside its control had carried them out. Israel had initiated a unilateral cease-fire, declaring that the country's most recent military campaign in Gaza had met its goals of weakening Hamas, so the commitment of the Palestinian militants to hold their rocket fire was always the key to renewing the cease-fire. President Obama had talked by phone with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel on Wednesday night and discussed "the ongoing negotiations in Cairo to achieve a sustainable cease-fire agreement."