

# “Forbidden Weapons” Used Against Gaza Strip Palestinians. Israel Deliberately Targets Palestinian Civilians

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*The following research article will explore three forbidden weapons that were and are still being used against the Palestinian civilians of the besieged Gaza Strip. These weapons are the DIME, the Flechette Shells and the Vacuum Bomb. Furthermore, this research article will attempt to answer an important question: Why does Israel deliberately target Palestinian civilians?*

## The DIME Components

DIME shell stands for Dense Inert Metal Explosives, is supposedly a “low collateral damage” weapon that was developed by the US Air Force.[1] Already in 2006, the DIME weapon has been used by the Israeli army in the Gaza Strip. It has been dropped by Israeli drone aircraft.[2]

It should be pointed out that the chemical components of the DIME shell could not have become known to Palestinian physicians because Israel had destroyed Gaza’s only criminal laboratory on June 27, 2006, the first day of the siege.[3] This is indicative of the Zionist sinister future plans to use forbidden weapons against the Palestinian civilians and to keep the world in the dark including the Palestinians. However, after acquiring help from a group of Italian scientists and investigators, Palestinian physicians became aware of the chemical structure of the DIME shell whose extreme dangerous toxicity Israel was trying to conceal.

On October 19, 2006, a group of

“... Italian investigators had tissue samples from the victims in Gaza analyzed by Dr. Carmela Vaccaio at University Parma. Dr. Vaccaio reportedly found “a very high concentration of carbon and the presence of unusual materials, such as copper, aluminum and tungsten.” The doctor concluded that her “findings could be in line with the hypothesis that the weapon in question is DIME.”[4]

According to the spectrometry analyses of biopsies taken from amputation injuries of Palestinian patients from the Gaza Strip, and carried out by a group of Italian scientists affiliated with the New Weapons Research Committee (NWRC), the DIME shell included a combination of the following seventeen metals: “...aluminum, titanium, copper, strontium, barium, cobalt, mercury, vanadium, caesium, tin, arsenic, manganese, rubidium, cadmium, chromium, zinc and nickel...”[5] The combination of that many metals, including heavy

metals, makes the DIME shell an extremely toxic chemical weapon and a highly dangerous one.

It should be pointed out that the “DIME weapons consist of a [carbon fiber](#) casing filled with a mixture of explosives and very dense microshrapnel, consisting of very small particles (1-2 mm) or powder of a heavy metal...”[6] When it explodes, DIME bombs blast a superheated “micro-shrapnel” of powdered heavy metal tungsten alloy.[7]

### The DIME Health Hazards



The initial reports on the health hazards of the DIME bomb came out few months after Israel began to use it in the summer of 2006. Dr. Jom’a Al-Saqqa, chief of the emergency unit at Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza, observed that the DIME was “a new ‘chemical’ weapon” and Israeli siege was “a live exercise on a new ammunition that, so far, has resulted in killing 50 Palestinians and injuring 200.” He added that, “despite the damage in internal soft tissue in the bodies of injured people, the fragments were not detected by X-ray. In other words, they had disappeared or dissolved inside the body.”[8]

Dr. Al-Saqqa, a surgeon by profession, continued his observation by adding that “There were usually entry and exit wounds. When the wounds were explored no foreign material was found. There was tissue death, the extent of which was difficult to determine. ... A higher deep infection rate resulted with subsequent amputation. In spite of amputation there was a higher mortality.”[9]

Moreover, Dr. Al-Saqqa, added the following observation on the death-causing health impact of the DIME weapon.

“When the shrapnel hit[s] the body, it causes very strong burns that destroy the tissues around the bones...it burns and destroys internal organs, like the liver, kidneys, and the spleen and other organs and makes saving the wounded almost impossible. As a surgeon, I have seen thousands of wounds during the Intifada, but nothing was like this weapon.”[10]

Dr Joma Al-Saqqa, chief of the emergency unit at Gaza’s largest hospital, Al-Shifa added that, “despite the damage in internal soft tissue in the bodies of injured people, the fragments were not detected by X-ray. In other words, they had disappeared or dissolved inside the body.”[11]

Another witnessing surgeon is Dr. Habas al-Wahid, the Palestinian head of the Emergency Unit at Gaza's Shuhada al-Aqsa hospital. He made the following shocking observation. "Israel's new weapon "slices" off its victims' legs, leaving "signs of heat and burns near the point of the amputation". It's "as if a saw was used to cut through the bone..."[12]

Due to the penetration of the body by a number of heavy metals, this situation produces "[m]ultiple syndromes of heavy metal poisoning ..." in addition it produces "...polycythemia, which can be induced by cobalt overdose."[13] Polycythemia is "... a type of blood cancer that causes the bone marrow to make too many red blood cells, a health case that thickens the blood, slowing its flow, and a development which may cause serious problems, such as blood clots. Furthermore, Polycythemia produces cancer of the blood and bone marrow, namely acute leukemia.[14]

It should be pointed out that "[t]he whole Gaza population and their environment, including generations yet to be conceived, have been put at risk of serious long-term injury from heavy metal pollution of the air, soil and groundwater (and possibly the seawater too), while the causal pollution is likely to cross state borders into Egypt and even into Israel..."[15]

As a direct result of use by Israel of forbidden chemical weapons, all sorts of cancer cases have increased in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Ministry of Health has revealed that in the beginning of 2019, there were 8,515 cancer patients inside the Gaza Strip, including 4,705 women and 608 children. Cancer "Patients' in the Gaza Strip suffer from the permanent shortage of equipment, drugs and medical supplies as a result of Israel's stifling [12-year siege](#) of the enclave."[16] They also suffer from denial of exit permits to children cancer patients and their companions for treatment abroad.[17] Other cancer patients are denied any medical treatment. According to the World Health Organization "Getting a permit to access the health care needed outside can be a stressful and unpredictable process, and many apply multiple times before being able to exit. Even then, some patients are never able to secure the permits they need to access care"[18]

These health hazards caused by the use of DIME shells by Israel constitute war crimes. The Israeli generals who were responsible for them are among others, Beni Gantz and Gabi Ashkenazi, the leaders of the Blue White Israeli party. Ex-prime minister Ehud Olmert and Ehud Barak, his defense minister are also war criminals. Due to the fact that these war crimes have continued to take place also under the present Israeli government, Benyamin Netanyahu and his defense minister Beni Gantz are also war criminals.

### The Flechette Shell Components

The Flechette shell is "...made out of steel and had a very sharp pointy end... For increased aerodynamics, they featured fins on their other end - most likely to increase the speed of descent."[19] It explodes in the air and releases approximately 2,200 flechettes.[20] The metal darts disperse in a conical arch three hundred meters long and about ninety meters wide. It is considered an anti-personnel weapon that is generally fired from a tank.[21] On impact, the Flechette darts are "... capable of penetrating a combatant from head to foot and creating an instantly incapacitating wound..."[22]

One of the hazardous developments that take place is that the "... head of the dart is designed to break away. Having penetrated inside a person, this breakage inflicts a second wound per single dart entry, multiplying the amount of internal damage done by the razor-like darts..."[23]

## The Health Hazards of the Flechette Shell

Israel has, numerous, used the Flechette shells in the Gaza Strip. During the war of 2008-2009, Israeli tanks assaulted Palestinian civilians with Flechette shells. There were a number of Palestinian victims of the Flechette shells. The following is the story of two Palestinian medics who were victims of the Flechette shell.

... In the initial shelling that day, Hammad lost his foot when Israeli tanks fired at, according to Hammad, a region filled with terrified civilians fleeing Israeli bombing. His friend Ali was shot in the head while trying to evacuate Hammad. The medics then arrived. Abd al-Dayem and Sarhan had loaded Hammad into the ambulance and were going to retrieve Ali's body when the flechette shell was fired at the medics and fleeing civilians. Ali was decapitated...[24]

According to Palestinian traditions, parents and relatives of a deceased person usually hold two mourning houses, one for men and another for women. These mourning ceremonies are held outside the house so they can accommodate the largest possible gathering of mourners.

The Palestinian medic Jamal Abd al-Dayem explained what happened at the mourning ceremonies that were held for his late cousin Arafa Abd al-Dayem, the 35-year-old paramedic who died as a result "... of slashes to his lungs, limbs and internal organs." [25]

After my cousin Arafa was martyred on 4 January, we immediately opened mourning houses, with separate areas for men and women. The next day, at 9:30am the Israelis struck the mourning area where the men were. It was clearly a mourning house, on the road, open and visible. Immediately after the first strike, the Israelis hit the women's mourning area." Two strikes within 1.5 minutes, he reported.[26]

The former four Flechette shelling incidents clearly show that the Israeli army is systematically and deliberately targeting Palestinian civilians. They cannot be dismissed as misguided targeting or mistakes. These are repetitive similar shellings of Flechettes that targeted civilians. We should pose the following question. If the Israeli army have on numerous occasions, deliberately targeted civilians, there should be reasons for that.

According to Dr. Bassam al-Masari, a surgeon at Beit Lahiya's Kamal Adwan hospital, Flechette darts have caused "... more injuries than other bombs precisely because they spread in a larger area. And while the darts appear innocuously small, their velocity and design enable them to bore through cement and bones and "cut everything internal..." [27] Al-Masri added that "... their velocity and design enable them to bore through cement and bones and "cut everything internal..." Accordingly, the prime cause of death is severe internal bleeding from slashed organs, particularly the heart, liver and brain. Brain injuries are the most fatal... [28]

They Target Schools, don't they?

It is noticeable that, during the past twelve years, Israeli air raids and shelling have targeted a number of civilian facilities inside the Gaza Strip. These facilities included schools, universities, hospitals, medical clinics, mosques, markets, shopping centers, factories, farms, banks, mourning sites, warehouses, a power station, and other essential civilian infrastructure. The following is a partial review of actual incidents.

Hundreds of Palestinian civilians who were forced out from their apartments and houses by the Zionist army, sought refuge inside UNRWA schools thinking that they would be in a safe haven. Nevertheless, Zionist criminal generals thought otherwise.

Author Mike Head reported that, "At least 20 Palestinians were killed and about 90 injured early on Wednesday, including UN workers, when Jabalia Elementary Girls School in Gaza City, which was sheltering 3,300 families, was hit by three artillery shells." [29] Was it a mistake?

What happened to one UNRWA school was revealed by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon who reported that "... the exact location of this elementary school has been communicated to the Israeli military authorities 17 times..." [30] yet the Israeli army attacked the school and a number of Palestinians were killed and wounded.

Despite this evidence and during the 2014 war, US President Barak Obama claimed to be "extremely concerned" about the killing of people in UN designated shelters. At the same time Obama accused Hamas of hiding weapons in UN facilities. [31] By accusing Hamas of "hiding weapons in UN facilities" he reiterated Zionist lies and provided a justification for Zionist criminal bombing of UNRWA schools.

Author Vincent Di Stefano reported that until Dec 2010, "Seven schools in Gaza were totally destroyed, and 135 were substantially damaged. The Al-Azhar University of Gaza was reduced to rubble. Hospitals, medical clinics and Red Crescent warehouses were all targeted..." [32]

The author added that

"It was the second attack, and the sixth strike, on a UN school since Israel's military offensive in Gaza began on July 8. Last week, 15 people died and about 200 were wounded when another UN school, in Beit Hanoun, was hit as the playground was filled with families awaiting evacuation." [33]

Author Vincent Di Stefano concluded that "...By deliberately targeting UN schools, [Israel] is sending a chilling message: no one in Gaza is safe from 'Operation Protective Edge.'..." [34]

In another criminal incident, "... three air strikes killed 15 people and injured 150 in a market area on the outskirts of Shujaiyah. As smoke billowed from the initial air strike, witnesses said emergency services and civilians rushed to help the victims, only to be hit by a further two air strikes minutes later. [35] Was this incident a mistake?

In another criminal assault that was reported by the British *Guardian*, we quote the following.

During the 2009 war, Mounir a Palestinian from the Gaza Strip reported the following story. While he was sitting around with his family drinking tea in their small courtyard, he heard the loud buzzing of an Israeli drone, clearly visible in the sky above. "He went inside for a moment and, as he returned, he saw a ball of light hurtling down toward him. There was a loud explosion and he was thrown backward. He gathered himself and stumbled out into the courtyard, where he saw the scene he says will never leave him." [36] In his own words, Mounir described what happened to members of his family by saying: "We found

Mohammed lying there, cut in half. Ahmed was in three pieces; Wahid was totally burnt – his eyes were gone. Wahid’s father was dead. Nour had been decapitated. We couldn’t see her head anywhere.”[37] Mounir continued by relating. “You cannot imagine the scene: a family all sitting around together and then, in a matter of seconds, they were cut to pieces. Even the next day we found limbs and body parts on the roof, feet and hands,” Mounir says.[38] Was this incident a mistake?

Despite these deliberate criminal incidents, the Israeli colonial army, as well as, Israeli colonial politicians claim that “... the IDF ... intensively trained its personnel on the requirements of the Law of Armed Conflict. It delayed, diverted, or refrained from attacks to spare civilian life. It provided numerous and varied types of concrete warnings before launching attacks.”[39] As reported earlier, concrete evidence points to the contrary.

In addition to schools, Israeli military strikes targeted residential and public structures thus producing utter destruction. Author, Patrick O’Conner reported that “...At least 5,000 homes have been destroyed and more than 20,000 damaged, with many urban centers reduced to nothing more than rubble...”[40]

Moreover, Israeli military assaults targeted public structures. “... The parliament and cabinet buildings in Gaza City were destroyed, as was the city’s police headquarters, the Bank of Palestine building, the main university, several mosques...”[41], and six major water wells were damaged or destroyed.[42] In addition, Gaza’s water and electricity networks were destroyed by the Israeli army.[43]

Israeli war crimes that took place in the Gaza Strip during the last three wars was an election issue adopted by former Israeli army chief, Benny Gantz. He produced an election video for his party in which he bragged about killing 1,364 Palestinians and returning parts of the Gaza Strip to the stone ages.[44] Gantz admits responsibility for these war crimes but is ready to use his crimes as means to win the votes of racist Israelis.

Moreover, on Thursday, August 9, 2018 the Said al-Mishal Centre, a cultural center in Gaza housing the region’s second-largest theater, was bombed by Israeli military forces. The five-floor edifice housed a library, an Egyptian community center, offices for cultural associations, and a theater for arts and [dabkeh](#). [45]

As usual, the Zionist army claimed that the center “... was being used by “the Hamas terror organization for military purposes”[46], an evidence that has never been proved.

Moreover, during the war against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, Zionist President Shimon Peres met with a delegation from AIPAC, the American Zionist lobby. In his speech to the delegation, Peres admitted that “... Israel’s aim, ... was to provide a strong blow to the people of Gaza so that they would lose their appetite for shooting at Israel...”[47] That was a clear admission that the Zionist army deliberately and systematically targets Palestinian civilians.

One here should pause and ask the following question: Why the Israeli military, target Palestinian civilians in its aggressive wars? This is an attempted answer.

In the last three Israeli wars against the Gaza Strip, Israeli shelling deliberately targeted schools including UNRWA schools, market places, mourning houses and packed houses. This policy has been also implemented in Lebanon, and in Egypt during the Israeli

bombardments in the seventies. The Israeli sinister logic behind this criminal policy is this: if you maximize civilian losses, civilians will stop backing Hamas or Hizballah. This faulty logic produced a systematic and deliberate policy of “mini” Zionist massacres. The shelling of civilian structures that are fully packed with people cannot be dismissed as mistakes nor as acted out in self-defense. So, the final aim of the Zionist aggressive colonial policy of choosing these targets, is to maximize civilian killings and terrorize the civilian population in order to force civilians to submit to Zionist colonial policies.

### Components of the Vacuum Bomb

The Vacuum Bomb, named also the fuel-air explosive (FAE) is a type of [explosive](#) that depends on the use of two highly toxic fuels [ethylene oxide](#) and [propylene oxide](#).<sup>[48]</sup> Once they detonate, they use the oxygen from the “... surrounding air to generate a high-temperature explosion. In practice, the [blast wave](#) typically produced by such a weapon is of a significantly longer duration than that produced by a conventional condensed explosive...”<sup>[49]</sup>

Once the Vacuum Bomb explodes,

“... the area around the explosion becomes overpressurized, resulting in highly compressed air particles that travel faster than the speed of sound. This wave will dissipate over time and distance and will exist only for a matter of milliseconds. This initial blast wave inflicts the most damage...”<sup>[50]</sup>

After explosion,

“... the bomb casing, as well as any additional shrapnel (nails, screws or other items included in the bomb), will be violently thrown outward and away from the explosion. When these fragments strike buildings, concrete, masonry, glass and even people, they may fragment even further — and cause even more damage...”<sup>[51]</sup>

The developments that immediately take place after the explosion are extremely dangerous because of the intensity in the creation of the vacuum and its immediate refill by the surrounding atmosphere. They were described by the author Tom Scheve in the following manner:

At the explosion site, a vacuum is created by the rapid outward movement of the blast. This vacuum will almost immediately refill itself with the surrounding atmosphere. This creates a very strong pull on any nearby person or structural surface after the initial push effect of the blast has been delivered. As this void is refilled, it creates a high-intensity wind that causes fragmented objects, glass and debris to be drawn back in toward the source of the explosion.<sup>[52]</sup>

It should be pointed out that chemical structure, the explosions, the consumption of the surrounding oxygen, and the vacuum creation, all lead to a number of health hazards.

### Health Hazards of Vacuum Bombs

When it explodes, the Vacuum Bomb, “... predominantly affects the pulmonary,

cardiovascular, auditory, gastrointestinal, and central nervous systems...”[53]

Moreover, there are a number of internal injuries that are caused by the health hazards of the vacuum bomb explosion. They could be showed as follows:

...”the effect of an FAE explosion within confined spaces is immense. Those near the ignition point are obliterated. Those at the fringe are likely to suffer many internal, and thus invisible injuries, including burst eardrums and crushed inner ear organs, severe concussions, ruptured lungs and internal organs, and possibly blindness.”[54]

In short, Vacuum Bombs are highly dangerous weapons that should be treated as forbidden weapons that should not be dropped on highly populated localities like the Gaza Strip. Despite this, the consecutive Israeli governments have been using these dangerous weapons against the Palestinian civilians since 2006.

Could It Be Genocide?

Al-Dameer, a Palestinian human rights organization, had published on 20 December 2009 “... another paper in Arabic on the increase in the number of babies born in Gaza with birth defects, thought to be the result of radioactive and toxic materials from Operation Cast Lead. The birth defects included incomplete hearts and malformations of the brain...”[55]

The conglomeration of Zionist war crimes caused by the use of forbidden weapons, the colonial siege of the Gaza Strip, the deliberate undernourishment of the Gazan Palestinians to the point of severe hunger, the criminal colonial Israeli policy of denying medical permits and restricting the importation of medicines to Gaza, the policy of shoot to kill at Gaza’s borders with the Zionist entity – all these policies and war crimes might very likely lead to genocide. But what is genocide according to International Law?

Article II of the [Genocide Convention](#) contains a narrow definition of the crime of genocide, which includes two main elements[56]:

- A. *A mental element*: the “intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such”; and
- B. *A physical element*, which includes the following five acts, enumerated exhaustively:
  2. Killing members of the group;
  3. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
  4. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
  5. Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
  6. Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Throughout this research article, we have clearly encountered evidence of war crimes in the first four categories. However, the fifth category has not been so far committed by Israel. So, based on this evidence, the Palestinian civilian authorities can submit a demand to the United Nations relevant bodies to force Israel to become accountable for committing these war crimes.

Israel has violated a number of international laws and has violated a number of UN conventions, and resolutions. Due to American hegemony on the Security Council and the use of the veto power Israel was not held accountable for its violations. The Israelis actually admit these violations but they have a criminal way of looking at them. According to the Israeli violators:

If you do something for long enough, the world will accept it. The whole of international law is now based on the notion that an act that is forbidden today becomes permissible if executed by enough countries. ... International law progresses through violations. We invented the targeted assassination thesis and we had to push it. At first there were protrusions that made it hard to insert easily into the legal molds. Eight years later, it is in the center of the bounds of legitimacy.[57]

This is the sick logic of settler colonialists that are armed and supported by Western imperialism. The American imperialists not only do that but they obstruct the work of the Security Council to prevent it from holding Israel accountable for its war crimes. However, this misconduct does not make Israel innocent because its war crimes cannot be hidden, forgotten, permitted or deleted. Israeli war crimes are strongly imprinted in the black annals of human history.

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