

IDF Knee-Capping Besieged Gazans. Hundreds of Palestinians Killed

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Global Research, March 10, 2020

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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Live fire by Israeli soldiers, police, and other security forces against defenseless Palestinians threatening no one is official Jewish state policy.

What was instituted on the pretext of preventing harm to Israelis is systematically and repeatedly breached by IDF and other security forces, ordered by commanders to attack peaceful Palestinian demonstrators.

It goes on throughout the Occupied Territories, mostly against nonthreatening Gazan demonstrators.

On March 31, 2018, an IDF statement said “nothing (is) carried out uncontrolled. Everything (is) accurate and measured, and we know where every bullet land(s)” – the statement later deleted.

Israel consistently breaches international law principles of distinction and proportionality.

The former allows attacks against combatants, not nonthreatening civilians.

The latter prohibits attacks against combatants if harm to civilians may be greater than any military objective achieved.

In persecuting and otherwise mistreating Palestinians abusively, Israel operates extrajudicially, ignoring rule of law principles, doing whatever it pleases, knowing it can get away with murder and much more unaccountably.

Israeli rules of engagement are like Washington’s – permitting anything goes, civilians considered legitimate targets, the human toll of no consequence, accountability for high crimes of war and against humanity never forthcoming.

Last weekend, [Haaretz](#) published an account by Israeli snipers ordered by commanders to use live fire on nonviolent Gazan demonstrators, including members of the IDF Golani brigade.

Once commanded by Ariel Sharon, it’s infamous for committing crimes of war and against humanity.

A former anonymous brigade member said the most criminal elements of Israeli society are recruited into its ranks.

They include “psychopaths, the poor, orphans, Israelis who live in small towns, immigrants, illiterates, people with mental problems, drug and alcohol abusers, and people with criminal records.”

Former IDF head General Gabi Ashkenazi served with Golani during Israel’s 1973 Yom Kippur war.

Critics accuse brigade members of home invasions, unprovoked violence, inflicting physical injuries, arbitrary arrests and detentions, assaulting women and children, and numerous other human rights violations.

According to Haaretz, a former Golani soldier said “I know exactly how many knees I’ve hit.”

“I kept the casing of every round I fired. I have them in my room. So I don’t have to make an estimate. I know: 52 definite hits,” adding:

“There were incidents when the bullet didn’t stop and also hit the knee of someone behind (the person targeted). Those are mistakes that happen.”

“From the point of view of hits, I have the most. In my battalion they would say: ‘Look, here comes the killer.’ ”

“When I came back from the field, they would ask, ‘Well, how many today?’ You have to understand that before we showed up, knees were the hardest thing to rack up.”

“There was a story about one sniper who had 11 knees all told, and people thought no one could outdo him. And then I brought in seven-eight knees in one day. Within a few hours, I almost broke his record.”

How many more Golani brigade members are involved in using live fire on nonthreatening Gazans?

How many others like them throughout the Occupied Territories against nonviolent Palestinian resistance for equity and justice denied them?

Friday Great March of Return demonstrations began on March 30, 2018, continuing weekly until reduced to once monthly in January.

Hundreds of Palestinians were killed, over 20,000 injured, around 8,000 from live fire, countless numbers maimed for life.

The world community response has been largely muted. Gaza is a microcosm of Israeli mistreatment of Palestinians throughout the Territories since its 1947-48 war of aggression against its people.

Britain’s infamous 1917 Balfour Declaration marked the beginning of the end of historic Palestine by calling for establishment of a nation for Jews on their land.

For over 100 years, Palestinians endured virtually every form of indignity, degradation, and crime against humanity imaginable, including land theft, political imprisonments, brutal torture in detention, and cold-blooded murder, among other serious offenses.

Israel gets away with murder and much more because the world community fails to hold it accountable, largely turning a blind eye to its high crimes of war, against humanity, and daily apartheid persecution of a long-suffering people – illegally blockaded Gazans harmed most of all.

Endless conflict, occupation, dispossession, and repression, along with social and cultural fragmentation define conditions for all Palestinians.

Haaretz interviewed former IDF soldiers who served as snipers along the Gaza border, saying:

“They are not out to ‘break the silence’ or to atone for their deeds, only to relate what happened from their point of view” — their identities concealed.

From pre-school to higher education, Israeli children, youths, and adults are brainwashed to hate Arabs and become warriors for the state — military service mandatory, including for young women.

Arabs are considered hostile, violent, deviant, cruel, immoral, bloodthirsty, vengeful and unfair — Jews called industrious, righteous, trustworthy and brave.

One soldier interviewed by Haaretz claimed knee-capping Gazans was “the right thing” to do, adding:

(B)ecause if not for us, the terrorists (sic) would try to cross the fence.”

These and similar remarks by interviewed Israeli snipers reflects years of state-sponsored brainwashing — despite no threat by Gazan demonstrators to Israeli soldiers or civilians.

Throughout many months of weekly demonstrations, no deaths or injuries of Israelis were reported, only Palestinians.

In its yearend 2019 report on Israeli human rights violations, the Gaza-based Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) said the following:

The Strip continues to “suffer the worst closure in the History of the Israeli occupation of the oPt as it has entered the 14th consecutive year, without any improvement to the movement of persons and goods, humanitarian conditions and bearing catastrophic consequences on all aspects of life.”

What continues unabated is what Fourth Geneva, Nuremberg principles, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court consider crimes against humanity — unpunished because of world community dismissiveness toward fundamental Palestinian rights.

For 86 consecutive Great March of Return/Breaking the Siege protests, Israel has been and continues to in “violation of the right to life and to bodily integrity” of Gaza, the PCHR stressed, adding:

The Israeli regime continues “excessive use of force against protests in the Gaza Strip.”

According to Haaretz columnist Gideon Levy, the IDF “doesn’t have snipers on the Gaza border. It has hunters,” adding:

Since Great March of Return protests began, “8,000” Gazans were “permanently disabled” by IDF soldiers.

None interviewed by Haaretz expressed regret for their actions. None witnessed the misery endured by knee-capped or other seriously injured Gazans.

Nor do most Israelis express any concern for around two million Gazans who’ve been virtually imprisoned in the Strip since 2007 — cut off from the outside world for political reasons, not for any threat they pose.

Humanitarian crisis conditions grip the Territory. Nearly all of its water is unsafe to drink because of raw sewage pollution, high salinity levels, and sporadic electricity.

In the last decade, three preemptive Israeli wars of aggression devastated Gaza and its vital infrastructure.

Israeli terror-bombing and cross-border incursions occur at its discretion.

Yet the world community remains largely indifferent to what continues endlessly, doing nothing to help long-suffering Gazans, letting Israel get away with murder and much more.

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Featured image: Palestinian take cover as Israeli forces fire at protesters at the Gaza border on 14 December 2018 [Mohammed Asad/Middle East Monitor]

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