

# Israel Dragging Gaza to New War

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, January 12, 2010

[IslamOnline](#) 12 January 2010

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GAZA CITY -- With its recent aggressions, Israel is trying to provoke the Palestinian resistance factions into retaliatory attacks that could be used as a pretext for launching a new deadly offensive on the war-ravaged Gaza Strip, analysts believe.

"The message in the recent attacks is very clear, and the resistance should read it carefully," Talal Okal, a political analyst, told IslamOnline.net.

Israel has mounted several deadly strikes over the past ten days killing more than 12 Palestinians in the coastal enclave.

In response, a Qassam rocket was fired by Palestinian groups from Gaza on Monday, landing at an empty zone in the western Negev area in southern Israel.

In a meeting with military officials later, Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak warned Hamas, which is the ruling party in Gaza, to "watch their steps" and do not force Israel to take action.

"Israel won't hesitate to launch another war if the situation required so," he threatened.

But analysts believe Israel is actually hoping Hamas and other resistance groups would be provoked into launching rockets.

"Once this happens, Israel would have the perfect pretext to wage a new onslaught," contends Okal.

He noted that though Israel usually does not need reason to attack Palestinians, but international sympathy with the people of Gaza, which was ravaged by an Israeli war in 2008-2009 and has been under crippling siege for years, requires justifications this time.

"This time, Israel needs a good pretext to offer to the world and wants Palestinians to give it that pretext."

More than 1,400 Palestinians, mostly civilians, were killed and 5,450 wounded when Israel unleashed a three-week Gaza war on December 27, 2008.

The onslaught, co-named Operation Cast Lead, was the bloodiest ever against the densely-populated coastal enclave.

Three weeks of air, land and sea attack left some 20,000 homes and thousands other buildings in ruins.

Unify

Dr. Hani Albasoos, professor of political science in Gaza's Islamic University, notes that the Israeli circles and media are rife with the talk about an Operation Cast Lead.

"This means the threat is real. Israel is already readying for the new war."

Analysts concur that a unified Palestinian plan is the only way to beat the Israeli war plot.

"The resistance needs to forge a unified strategy," stresses Mustafa Al-Sawwaf, a political expert and veteran journalist.

"It is in the best interests of all Palestinians."

Sawwaf says targeting and isolating Gaza is made easy for Israel because the West Bank is left out of the picture.

"It does not make sense that the resistance is restricted to the Gaza Strip, while there are no resistance attacks from the West Bank. Resistance should be activated there too."

Albasoos believes it is very crucial for resistance factions to coordinate before reacting to any Israeli provocations.

"They must come up with a proper unified response."

Okal, a member of the board of trustees of Al-Azhar University, which is affiliated with Fatah, hopes the resistance groups would not fall to the Israeli trap.

"It is very important not to let provocations lead us to rash reactions," he warned.

"We need to decide the right way of responding to the aggressions. Rockets are not necessarily the answer. There has to be a well-calculated, unified response."

The Hamas government announced Monday taking measure to preserve the highest interests of the Palestinian people, which many understood as an implication of halting rocket attacks.

A fragile ceasefire between Hamas and Israel is still valid since the end of the Gaza war.

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