

# Israeli General Likens Israel's Attack on Gaza Towers to 9/11 Attack: The Significance of Destroying a 'Symbol'

By [Dan Cohen](#)

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

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Image: Italian complex, following the attack last August

*An Israeli general likened Israel's bombing of three landmark towers in the Gaza Strip last year to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. Speaking at the Future Forces for Homeland Security conference in Herzliya last week, Major General (ret.) Gershon Hacohen said:*

*"I need symbols, I'm talking about symbols. It is no simple matter. Because if I destroyed three towers in Gaza towards the end of Operation Protective Edge, and inflicted not only pain in the economic sense but also a symbol, and like the Twin Towers in New York were a symbol, what is significant is not only the physics but the significance of the matter."*

During the final two nights of the 51-day war on Gaza last summer, Israeli warplanes dropped American-supplied bombs on the Zafer Four tower, the Italian Compound, the Basha tower, and a four-story mall in Rafah. The mass destruction left hundreds of families homeless and struck a heavy blow to Gaza's already crippled economy. These attacks were carried out when the ceasefire was imminent. The Italian Compound and Basha tower were destroyed only a few hours before the announcement of the ceasefire agreement.

Contrary to Israeli [propaganda](#) which claimed that the towers housed Hamas "command centers," the general's statement confirms [my reporting from Gaza](#): the Israeli military chose these targets so as to attack the professional class, which is considered unsympathetic to the political goals of Hamas. These attacks are part of Israel's continued strangulation of Gaza's economy. [Unemployment is now at 55%](#), the highest in the world.

Hacohen's speech to a crowd of military and weapons industry figures was entitled, "Future battlefields and functions of the future soldiers in future military tactics." Hacohen [retired last fall](#).

Meanwhile, the Gaza Strip remains covered in rubble. The eight-year Israeli/Egyptian siege continues unabated and has prevented the delivery of reconstruction materials that were promised in Cairo. While indirect negotiations for a long-term ceasefire drag on, it is abundantly clear that another major Israeli attack on Gaza is a matter of when, not if.

*Dan Cohen is an independent journalist based in Palestine. He tweets at [@dancohen3000](#).*

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