

October 7 Testimonies Reveal Israel's Military 'Shelling' Israeli Citizens with Tanks, Missiles

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Israel's military received orders to shell Israeli homes and even their own bases as they were overwhelmed by Hamas militants on October 7. How many Israeli citizens said to have been "burned alive" were actually killed by friendly fire?

Several new testimonies by Israeli witnesses to the October 7 Hamas surprise attack on southern Israel adds to growing evidence that the Israeli military killed its own citizens as they fought to neutralize Palestinian gunmen.

Tuval Escapa, a member of the security team for Kibbutz Be'eri, set up a hotline to coordinate between kibbutz residents and the Israeli army. He [told the Israeli newspaper Haaretz](#) that as desperation began to set in,

"the commanders in the field made difficult decisions - including shelling houses on their occupants in order to eliminate the terrorists along with the hostages."

A separate [report](#) published in Haaretz noted that the Israeli military was "compelled to request an aerial strike" against its own facility inside the Erez Crossing to Gaza "in order to repulse the terrorists" who had seized control. That base was filled with Israeli Civil Administration officers and soldiers at the time.

These reports indicate that orders came down from the military's high command to attack homes and other areas inside Israel, even at the cost of many Israeli lives.

An Israeli woman named Yasmin Porat confirmed in an interview with Israel Radio that the military "undoubtedly" killed numerous Israeli noncombatants during gun battles with Hamas militants on October 7.

“They eliminated everyone, including the hostages,” she stated, referring to Israeli special forces.

As David Sheen and Ali Abunimah [reported](#) in Electronic Intifada, Porat described “very, very heavy crossfire” and Israeli tank shelling, which led to many casualties among Israelis.

While being held by the Hamas gunmen, Porat [recalled](#),

“They did not abuse us. We were treated very humanely... No one treated us violently.”

She added,

“The objective was to kidnap us to Gaza, not to murder us.”

According to [Haaretz](#), the army was only able to restore control over Be’eri after admittedly “shelling” the homes of Israelis who had been taken captive.

“The price was terrible: at least 112 Be’eri residents were killed,” the paper chronicled. “Others were kidnapped. Yesterday, 11 days after the massacre, the bodies of a mother and her son were discovered in one of the destroyed houses. It is believed that more bodies are still lying in the rubble.”

Much of the shelling in Be’eri was carried out by Israeli tank crews. As a reporter for the Israeli Foreign Ministry-sponsored outlet [i24 noted](#) during a visit to Be’eri,

“small and quaint homes [were] bombarded or destroyed,” and “well-maintained lawns [were] ripped up by the tracks of an armored vehicle, perhaps a tank.”

Apache attack helicopters also figured heavily in the Israeli military’s response on October 7. Pilots have told Israeli media they scrambled to the battlefield without any intelligence, unable to differentiate between Hamas fighters and Israeli noncombatants, and yet determined to “empty the belly” of their war machines.

“I find myself in a dilemma as to what to shoot at, because there are so many of them,” one Apache pilot commented.

[Video filmed by uniformed Hamas gunmen](#) makes it clear they intentionally shot many Israelis with Kalashnikov rifles on October 7. However, the Israeli government has not been content to rely on verified video evidence. Instead, it continues to push discredited claims of “beheaded babies” while distributing photographs of [“bodies burned beyond recognition”](#) to insist that militants sadistically immolated their captives, and even raped some before torching them alive.

The objective behind Tel Aviv’s atrocity exhibition is clear: to paint Hamas as “worse than ISIS” while cultivating support for the Israeli army’s ongoing bombardment of the Gaza Strip, which has [left over 7000 dead](#), including at least 2500 children at the time of publication. While hundreds of wounded children in Gaza have been treated for what a surgeon described as [“fourth degree burns”](#) caused by novel weapons, the Western media’s focus remains trained on Israeli citizens supposedly “burned alive” on October 7.

Yet the mounting evidence of friendly fire orders handed down by Israeli army commanders strongly suggests that at least some of the most jarring images of charred Israeli corpses,

Israeli homes reduced to rubble and burned out hulks of vehicles presented to Western media were, in fact, the handiwork of tank crews and helicopter pilots blanketing Israeli territory with shells, cannon fire and Hellfire missiles.

Indeed, it appears that on October 7, Israel's military resorted to the same tactics it has employed against civilians in Gaza, driving up the death toll of its own citizens with the indiscriminate use of heavy weapons.

Israel Bombs Its Own Base, Nerve Center of the Gaza Siege

Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) launched Operation Al-Aqsa Flood at 6 AM on October 7, quickly overwhelming the military bases from which Israel maintain its siege of the Gaza Strip. Chief among the objectives outlined by Hamas and PIJ was the release of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel, including as many as [700 children](#) passing through the system each year along with [1264 Palestinians currently being held without charges](#).

The 2011 swap for Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier captured five years prior and released in exchange for 1027 prisoners, provided clear inspiration for Al-Aqsa Flood. By storming military bases and kibbutzes, the Palestinian militants aimed to capture as many Israeli soldiers and civilians as possible, and bring them back to Gaza alive.

The lightning assault immediately overwhelmed Israel's Gaza Division. Video recorded from GoPro cameras mounted on the helmets of Palestinian fighters shows Israeli soldiers cut down in rapid succession, many still dressed in underwear and caught off guard. At least 340 active soldiers and intelligence officers were killed on October 7, accounting for close to 50% of [confirmed Israeli deaths](#). The casualties included high ranking officers like [Col. Jonathan Steinberg](#), the commander of Israel's Nahal Brigade. (Many first responders and armed Israeli civilians were also killed).

The Erez Crossing is the home of a massive military and Coordination of Government Activities in the [Occupied] Territories (COGAT) facility which functions as the nerve center of Israel's siege on Gaza. When it was [overrun](#) by Palestinian fighters on October 7 with droves of army bureaucrats inside, the Israeli military flew into a panic.

According to [Haaretz](#), the commander of the Gaza Division, Brig. Gen. Avi Rosenfeld,

“entrenched himself in the division's subterranean war room together with a handful of male and female soldiers, trying desperately to rescue and organize the sector under attack. Many of the soldiers, most of them not combat personnel, were killed or wounded outside. The division was compelled to request an aerial strike against the [Erez Crossing] base itself in order to repulse the terrorists.”

Video released by Israel's COGAT ten days after the battle – and the Israeli airstrike – shows severe structural damage to the roof of the Erez Crossing facility.

□ Israeli officials returned to the Erez Crossing on Israel's border with Gaza today for the time since the war's outbreak

Ministry of Defense personnel assessed the damage caused by Hamas terrorists to the crossing's infrastructure pic.twitter.com/Ax5t0UDGNR

— i24NEWS English (@i24NEWS_EN) [October 17, 2023](#)

Israeli Apache Helicopters Attack Inside Israel: “I find myself in a dilemma as to what to shoot at”

By 10:30 AM, according to [an account](#) the military gave to the Israeli news outlet Mako, “most of the [Palestinian] forces from the original invasion wave had already left the area for Gaza.” But with the rapid collapse of the Israeli military’s Gaza Division, looters, common onlookers and low-level guerrillas not necessarily under the command of Hamas flowed freely into Israel.

By this point, Israel’s two Apache helicopter squadrons had 8 choppers in the air, “and there was almost no intelligence to help make fateful decisions,” Mako reported. The squadrons did not reach full strength until noon.

As the wave of infiltrations from Gaza drove chaos on the ground, discombobulated Israeli pilots unleashed a frenzy of missile and machine gun salvos: “The Apache pilots testify that they fired a huge amount of munitions, emptied the ‘belly of the helicopter’ in minutes, flew to re-arm and returned to the air, again and again. But it didn’t help and they understand it,” Mako reported.

The Apache helicopters appear to have focused on vehicles streaming back into Gaza from the Nova electronic music festival and nearby kibbutzes, attacked cars with apparent knowledge that Israeli captives could be inside. They also fired on unarmed people exiting cars or walking on foot through the fields on the periphery of Gaza.

🇮🇱🇺🇸 Israeli AH-64 Apache attacking Hamas fighters with it's cannon and missiles. pic.twitter.com/flzwHYP7dg

— Heyman_101 (@SU_57R) [October 9, 2023](#)

In an [interview](#) with Israel’s Mako news outlet, one Apache pilot reflected on the tortuous dilemma of whether to shoot at people and cars returning to Gaza. He knew that many of those vehicles may have contained Israeli captives. But he chose to open fire anyway.

“I choose targets like that,” the pilot reflected, “where I tell myself that the chance that I am shooting here on hostages as well is low.”

However, he admitted that his judgment “was not 100%.”

“I understand that we have to shoot here and quickly,” the commander of the Apache unit, Lt. Col. E., told Mako in a [separate report](#). “Shooting at people in our territory – this is something I never thought I would do.”

Lt. Col. A., a reserve pilot in the same unit, described a fog of confusion:

“I find myself in a dilemma as to what to shoot at, because there are so many of them.”

A report on the Apache squadrons by the Israeli outlet [Yedioth Aharanoth](#) noted that

“the pilots realized that there was tremendous difficulty in distinguishing within the

occupied outposts and settlements who was a terrorist and who was a soldier or civilian... The rate of fire against the thousands of terrorists was tremendous at first, and only at a certain point did the pilots begin to slow down the attacks and carefully select the targets.”

A squadron commander explained to Mako how he nearly attacked the home of an Israeli family occupied by Hamas militants, and wound up firing next to it with cannon rounds.

“Our forces hadn’t had time to reach this settlement yet,” the pilot recalled, “and I’ve already run out of missiles there, which is the more accurate weaponry.”

With the family inside a fortified bomb shelter,

the pilot “decided to shoot a cannon 30 meters from this house, a very difficult decision. I shoot so that if they are currently there, they will hear the bombs inside the house, that they understand that it is known they are there, and with the hope that they will leave that house. I am also telling you the truth, it crossed my mind that I was shooting at the house.”

Ultimately, the Israeli helicopter pilots blamed clever Hamas tactics for their inability to distinguish between the armed militants and Israeli non-combatants.

“The Hamas army, it turns out, deliberately made it difficult for the helicopter pilots and the operators of the UAVs,” Yedioth Aharanoth claimed.

According to the Israeli paper,

“it became clear that the invading forces were asked in the last briefings to walk slowly into the settlements and outposts or within them, and under no circumstances to run, in order to make the pilots think they were Israelis. This deception worked for a considerable time , until the Apache pilots realized that they had to skip all the restrictions. It was only around 9:00 a.m. that some of them began to spray the terrorists with the cannons on their own, without authorization from superiors.”

And so, without any intelligence or ability to distinguish between Palestinian and Israeli, the pilots let loose a fury of cannon and missile fire onto Israeli areas below.



One of many homes in Kibbutz Be'eri which appears to have been shelled with heavy weapons

Israel's Military "Eliminated Everyone, Including the Hostages," Firing Tank Shells Into Kibbutz Homes

Photos of the aftermath of the fighting inside kibbutzes like Be'eri – and of the Israeli bombardment of these communities – show rubble and charred homes that resemble the aftermath of Israeli tank and artillery attacks inside Gaza. As Tuval Escapa, the security coordinator at Kibbutz Be'eri, told Haaretz, Israeli army commanders had ordered the "shelling [of] houses on their occupants in order to eliminate the terrorists along with the hostages."

Yasmin Porat, an attendee of the Nova music festival who fled into Kibbutz Be'eri, [told Israeli Radio](#) that when Israeli special forces arrived during a hostage standoff,

"They eliminated everyone, including the hostages because there was very, very heavy crossfire."

"After insane crossfire," Porat continued, "two tank shells were shot into the house. It's a small kibbutz house, nothing big."



Destroyed homes in Kibbutz Be'eri following the fighting on October 7, which included Israeli tank shelling of residences

A video posted by the Telegram account of Israel's [South Responders](#) shows the bodies of Israelis discovered below the rubble of a home destroyed by a powerful explosive blast – likely a tank shell. The right-wing New York Post [ran a report](#) on a similar incident about a boy's body found scorched beneath the ruins of his home in Be'eri.

The phenomenon of charred corpses whose hands and ankles had been tied, and who were found in groups beneath the rubble of destroyed homes, also raises questions about “friendly” tank fire.

Yasmin Porat, the hostage who survived a standoff at Be'eri, described how Hamas militants tied her partner's hands behind his back. After one militant commander surrendered, using her as a human shield to ensure his safety, she saw her partner lying on the ground, still alive. She stated that Israeli security forces “undoubtedly” killed him and the other hostages as they opened fire on the remaining militants inside, including with tank shells.

Israeli security forces also opened fire on fleeing Israelis whom they mistook for Hamas gunmen. A resident of Ashkelon named Danielle Rachiel described nearly being killed after escaping from the Nova music festival when it was attacked by militants from Gaza.

“As we reached the roundabout [at a kibbutz], we saw Israeli security forces!” Rachiel recalled. “We held our heads down [because] we automatically knew they'd be suspicious of us, in a small beat-up car... from the same direction the terrorists were coming from. Our forces began shooting at us!”

“When our forces fired at us, our windows shattered,” she continued. It was only when they shouted in Hebrew, “We're Israelis!” that the shooting stopped, and they were taken to safety.

Some Israelis were not as lucky as Rachiel. Adi Ohana was shot dead by Israeli police near his home after being mistaken for a Palestinian guerrilla.

“An innocent man was killed in the most negligent way possible,” his niece [complained](#).

Israeli media is now filling up with reports of the military [gunning down](#) fellow Israelis, even [as they were defending their homes](#) from Palestinian gunmen.

Did Israel's Now-disappeared " Hamas Atrocity " Photos Depict Dead Hamas Fighters?

Among the most [gruesome videos](#) of the aftermath of October 7, also published on the Telegram account of South Responders, shows a car full of charred corpses (below) at the entrance of Kibbutz Be'eri. The Israeli government has portrayed these casualties as Israeli victims of sadistic Hamas violence. However, the melted steel body and collapsed roof of the car, and the comprehensively scorched corpses inside, evidence a direct hit from a Hellfire missile.

It is also possible that the male occupants of the car were Hamas activists who had streamed in after the fences were breached. They may have also been returning to Gaza with Israeli captives inside their car.



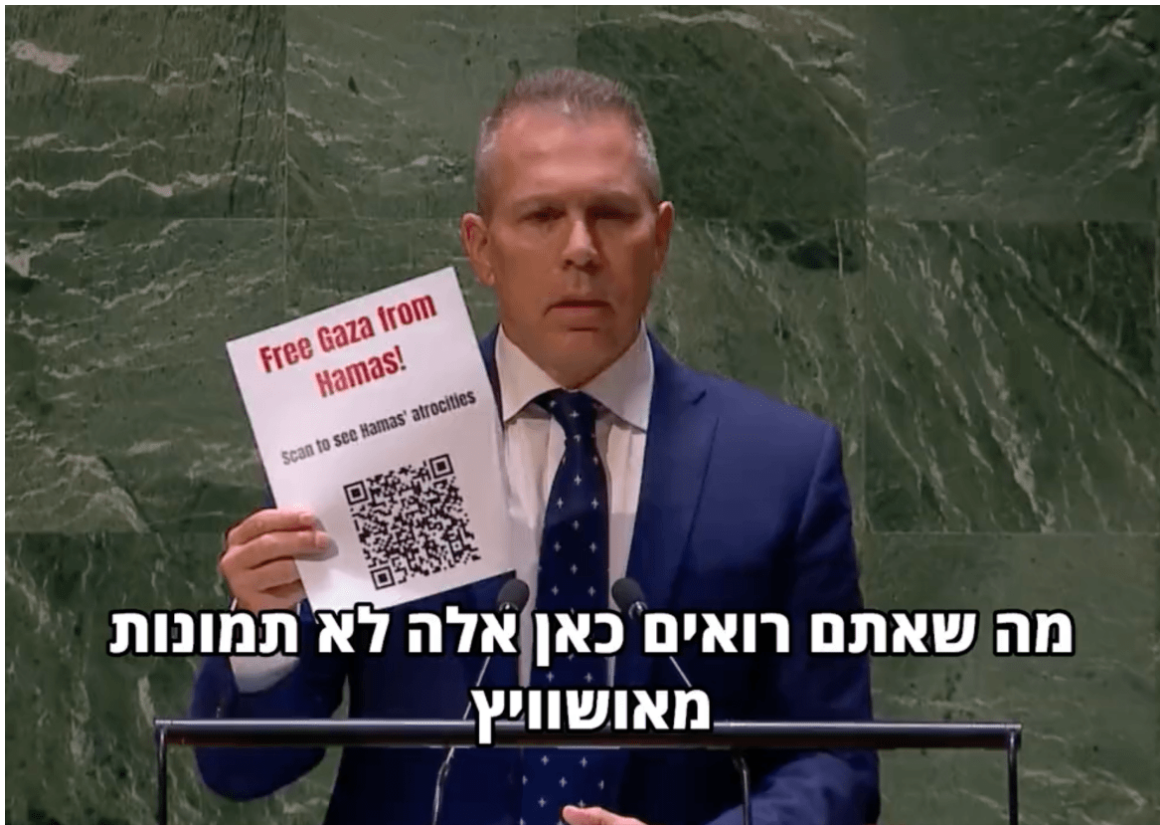
Israel's UN ambassador, Gilad Erdan, appears to have promoted photos showing dead Hamas fighters during his [October 26 tirade](#) at the United Nations. Erdan gesticulated angrily at the podium, bellowing that "we are fighting animals" before whipping out a paper displaying a QR code captioned, "Scan to see Hamas' atrocities."

When I scanned the code that day at noon, I found around 8 grisly images of burned bodies and blackened body parts. One [showed a pile](#) of completely charred male corpses piled into a dumpster. Would Israeli rescuers and medics have disposed of dead Jewish Israelis in such a fashion?

All Israelis killed on October 7 appear to have been collected in individual body bags and transported to morgues. Meanwhile, numerous videos recorded by Israelis showed them [defiling the corpses](#) of Hamas gunmen killed by security forces - stripping them naked,

urinating on them, and mutilating their bodies. Throwing their bodies in a dumpster would seem to be a part of the de facto policy of corpse abuse.

Just over twelve hours after Ambassador Erdan promoted the supposed Hamas atrocity photos at the UN, the [Google Drive file](#) contained only one brief video. Among the mysteriously disappeared photos was the image of the dumpster filled with burned bodies. Had it been deleted because it [showed Hamas fighters torched by a Hellfire missile, and not Israelis](#) “burned to death” by Hamas?



Israeli ambassador Gilad Erdan at the UN, October 26. The QR code he displayed currently leads to a 404 notice.

Destruction Reminiscent of Israeli Attacks on Gaza

Some rescuers who arrived at sites of carnage in southern Israel after October 7 said they had never seen such destruction. For those who have borne witness to Israel's bombardment of the Gaza Strip, however, the images of bombed-out homes and burned cars should have been familiar.

While reporting on Israel's 51 day-long assault on Gaza in 2014, I came across a destroyed vehicle in central Gaza City belonging to a young taxi driver named Fadel Alawan who had been assassinated by an Israeli drone after he unwittingly dropped a wounded Hamas fighter off at a nearby hospital. Inside the car, the remains of Alawan's sandal could still be seen melted into the gas pedal.

By the afternoon of October 7, placid settlements and desert roads across southern Israel were charred and lined with bombed-out cars that looked much like Alawan's. Were the lightly-armed Hamas fighters actually capable of exacting destruction on such a comprehensive scale?

Fadel Alawah drove a wounded man to a hospital, not knowing he was a fighter. Here's what a drone did to his car: pic.twitter.com/84GTpgPxSo

— Max Blumenthal (@MaxBlumenthal) [August 16, 2014](#)

Is the Israeli Government Distributing Photos of Friendly Fire Casualties?

This October 23, Israel's government gathered members of the international press for an off-the-record propaganda session. Inside a closed military base, officials bombarded the press with snuff films and a collection of lurid allegations of "harrowing scenes of murder, torture and decapitation from Hamas's October 7 onslaught," according to the [Times of Israel](#).

Hundreds of journalists and photographers from media companies all over the world attended today the screening of a film of assorted footage showing the extent of the horrors committed by Hamas.

Footage was taken from numerous sources, including from bodycams worn by the... pic.twitter.com/c2HRdl98Lh

— (((Emanuel Miller))) אֶמָנוּאֵל מִילֶר (@emanumiller) [October 23, 2023](#)

In perhaps the most unsettling document presented by the Israeli government, reporters were treated to video showing "a partially burned woman's corpse, with a mutilated head... The dead woman's dress is pulled up to her waist and her underpants have been removed," according to the Times of Israel.

Daniel Amram, the most popular private news blogger in Israel, tweeted the video of the woman's burned corpse, claiming that "she was raped and burned alive."

Dear [@GretaThunberg](#), please watch this family who just found her sister after she was raped and burned alive, they can't even recognize her. their own sister. They do it in the name of "free palestine" today you gave them a reason and justification to continue. Be proud. pic.twitter.com/UDh1a1pz9g

— daniel amram - דניאל עמרם (@danielamram3) [October 20, 2023](#)

In fact, the young woman appeared to have been killed instantly by a powerful blast. And she seemed to have been removed from the car in which she was seated – and which may have belonged to a captor from Gaza. The vehicle was comprehensively destroyed and situated on a dirt field, as many others attacked by Apache helicopters were. She was scantily clad with her legs spread apart.

Though she had attended the Nova electronic music festival, where many female attendees dressed in skimpy attire, and her bent limbs were typical of a body that had been seated in a car after rigor mortis, Israeli pundits and officials ran with the claim she had been raped.

But the allegations of sexual assault have so far proven baseless. Israeli army spokesman

Mickey Edelstein insisted to reporters at the October 23 press briefing that “we have evidence” of rape, but when asked for proof, he told the Times of Israel, “we cannot share it.”

Was this young woman yet another casualty of the Israeli military’s friendly fire orders? Only an independent investigation can determine the truth.

Israel’s Military Kills Israeli Captives Inside Gaza, Grumbles About Their Release

Inside Gaza, where some 200 Israeli citizens are held hostage, there is little doubt about who is killing the captives. On October 26, the Hamas armed wing known as the Al-Qassam Brigades [announced](#) that Israel had killed “almost 50 captives” in missile strikes.

If Israel’s military had intentionally targeted areas where it knew the captives were held, its actions would have been consistent with Israel’s [Hannibal Directive](#). The military procedure was established in 1986 following the Jibril Agreement, a deal in which Israel traded 1150 Palestinian prisoners for three Israeli soldiers. Following heavy political backlash, the Israeli military drafted a secret field order to prevent future kidnappings. The proposed operation drew its name from the Carthaginian general who chose to poison himself rather than be held captive by the enemy.

The last [confirmed application of the Hannibal Directive](#) took place on August 1, 2014 in Rafah, Gaza, when Hamas fighters captured an Israeli officer, Lt. Hadar Goldin, prompting the military to unleash more than [2000 bombs, missiles and shells](#) on the area, killing the soldier along with over 100 Palestinian civilians.

Whether or not Israel is intentionally killing its captive citizens in Gaza, it has proven strangely allergic to their immediate release. On October 22, after [refusing an offer](#) from Hamas to release 50 hostages in exchange for fuel, Israel rejected an offer from Hamas to free Yocheved Lifshitz, an 85-year-old Israeli peace activist, and her 79-year-old friend, Nurit Cooper.

When Israel agreed to their release a day later, video showed Lifshitz clasping hands with a Hamas militant and intoning “Shalom” to him as he escorted her out of Gaza. During a press conference that day, she recounted the humane treatment she received from her captors.

Following her release from Gaza by Hamas, 85 year old Yosheved Lifshitz is interviewed about her experience in captivity. pic.twitter.com/MOTEJ82BmB

— The Cradle (@TheCradleMedia) [October 24, 2023](#)

The spectacle of Lifshitz’s release was treated as a [propaganda disaster](#) by the Israeli government’s spinmeisters, with officials grumbling that allowing her to speak publicly was a grave “mistake.”

The Israeli military was no less displeased by her sudden freedom. As the Times of Israel [reported](#),

“The army is concerned that further hostage releases by Hamas could lead the political

leadership to delay a ground incursion or even halt it midway.”

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