

Seven “Deadly Lies” about Gaza

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Once again an extraordinary display of human destruction and slaughter is taking place in the Gaza strip, courtesy of Israel. Israeli bombs have murdered almost 2000 civilians so far [updated, August 7],[1] with the number rapidly climbing every day. Those maimed and dismembered in the blasts number in the thousands, with over a third of them innocent children who can never again lead normal lives. Israel’s crimes against humanity need no analysis; they are barefaced and plain for all to see.

For over eight years, Gaza’s population of 1.8 million has been subjected to a cruel siege. In times of ‘peace’ basic necessities like wheat, grain and powdered milk for children have had to be smuggled in through tunnels. And in the-all-too-frequent surges of war, children, women and innocent civilians have been seen as legitimate targets by Israeli jets as hospitals, schools and apartment blocks are obliterated. More than a dozen health facilities have been deliberately targeted including al-Wafa hospital, forcing staff to relocate incapacitated patients to central Gaza.[2]

Yet as the world looks on in horror at this apparently limitless capacity for brutality and violence, Western media outlets continue to justify and rationalise Israeli barbarism. Zionist-backed media conglomerates paint a picture of an innocent, peace-loving nation surrounded by bestial Arabs who want nothing but blood. “Israel has the right to defend itself,” we are told time and time again, as politicians and newscasters dutifully recite from the same hymn sheet. Often the Palestinian resistance is labelled as illegitimate or even ‘terrorist’; the good-old-fashioned justification for so much death. In the very best cases, the conflict between Gaza and Israel is represented as a mutual struggle between two sides, both equally at fault. Well if you believe that, I’ve got a bridge to sell you.

Here are seven deadly lies about the Gaza conflict that tirelessly circulate in the media and the statements of political puppets, complemented with the inconvenient truths that are so often overlooked.

1 – Israel is the victim

Astute readers will notice that the lies circulated around the Palestine-Israeli conflict tend to follow general central themes or narratives. These narratives reflect how the state of Israel would like to be seen, and they are derived as part of a meticulous and emotional PR campaign, rather than having any factual basis. One of the key overarching themes which the world is expected to buy into, is that ‘Israel is the victim.’

Israel is consistently represented as the single enclave of democracy in the Middle East; a civilised nation surrounded in every direction by merciless enemies who hate freedom and

rationality. In reality Israel is incredibly well supported. It receives billions of dollars in 'aid' from around the world, endless munitions and arms from the United States and others, not to mention the constant pandering and moral justifications for their crimes against humanity from global media and politicians. Meanwhile Palestinians in general enjoy very little genuine political support, and Gaza even less. In fact it is Gaza that is surrounded by besieging enemies which seek its destruction, with a suffocating siege enforced by Egypt and Israel preventing the bare human necessities from reaching its wounded and starving populous.

Israel is equipped with state-of-the-art small arms, tanks, artillery, bombers, fighters, drones, missiles, rockets, battleships and a nuclear arsenal. The majority of Palestinians are unarmed with the exception of resistance fighters in Gaza who are equipped with cold-war era AK47s and whatever weapons they can develop in their homes, smuggle through tunnels or seize from their oppressors.

Furthermore, Israel uses its laser-guided bombs and sophisticated artillery to intentionally target and destroy countless civilian installations, leaving children, women, hospitals and schools as smouldering ruins. Resistance fighters, on the other hand, engage military posts and personnel when targeting is an option, while their unguided, homemade missiles fly as desperate deterrents against the constant, inhuman bombardment of the Gaza strip.

Israel is not a victim. The conflict between Gaza and Israel is a David vs Goliath story, and in this metaphor, Israel is Goliath. It is the 'strongest military force in the Middle-East,'[3] an invading entity, and it uses its weaponry to terrorise, bully and oppress.

2 - Palestinians want to kill all Jews



By reducing the grievances of Palestinians to irrational racial hatred, pro-Israeli media and politicians are able to disregard the rights of Palestinians, their legitimate claim to their land and even their right to defend themselves.

Prior to the existence of Israel, Jews in Europe had suffered persecution. However under Ottoman rule, Muslims, Christians and Jews lived together peacefully for several centuries.^[4] Unlike the Jewish communities in Byzantine or Spain, Jews who lived amongst Muslims were able to govern themselves by their own laws.^[5] During the Spanish conquest of Andalusia, the Ottoman Empire became a safe haven for Jews who fled persecution.^[6]

In Europe anti-Semitism was rife and Jews were often ill-treated and demonised in the media, much as Palestinians and Muslims are today. In the late 19th century Theodor Herzl published '*The Jewish State*' proposing the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine so that Jews could find shelter under the Ottoman Empire "far from the anti-Semitism of Europe."^[7] European hatred peaked with the events of the Holocaust and the killing of millions of Jews while Europe turned a blind eye. Today the guilt for those crimes has been deposited on the very people who once offered sanctuary for the Jews.

Even now after the establishment of the so-called 'Jewish state', the usurping of Palestinian land, and the oppression and ethnic cleansing of its people, Palestinians maintain that their

military resistance to Israel is for the freedom and safety of their people, not an issue of racial hatred. Before his assassination at the age of 67, Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin *rahimahu Allah* said, “We only ask for our right, nothing more. We don’t hate Jews or fight the Jews because they are Jewish. Jews are people of religion and we are people of religion, and we love all people of religion... We love all people even the Jews and we wish the Jews well. The Jews lived with us for years and we never transgressed against their rights.”[8]

After Israel’s bombardment of Gaza in 2012, Hamas’ political bureau chief Khaled Meshaal reasserted Hamas’ readiness for a ‘long-term truce’ in spite of the destruction, provided that Israel ended its occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza—in other words, that it abided by international law.[9] In his speech he confirmed that Hamas is “ready to resort to a peaceful way, *apurely* peaceful way without blood and weapons.” Even now Meshaal is prepared for an immediate truce with Israel if the siege on Gaza is lifted.[10]

In falsely accusing the Palestinian people of racial hatred, Israel and its supporting outlets draw attention away from their war crimes, ethnic cleansing and apartheid, all the while demeaning the integrity of the Palestinian cause.

3 – Gaza started it



The underlying logic of the statement “Israel has the right to defend itself” is actually incredibly juvenile. Israel and its friends justify the flattening of apartment buildings and killing of children as acts of ‘self-defence’ provoked by Hamas rockets. Essentially they are saying ‘he started it.’ Putting aside the utter insanity and inhumanity of Israeli terrorism, let us address whether or not Gazan resistance fighters are indeed responsible for ‘starting it’ as is so often claimed.

Since 2006, the population of Gaza has been subjected to a crippling blockade, and three separate major military operations. In every case, the simple historical fact is that Israel began the hostilities mainly by assassinating Gazan leadership and civil servants (along with their families and other bystanders). The logic behind the blockade is straightforward enough: when the people of Gaza elected Hamas as their legitimate political representatives, the Israeli government decided to prevent all trade and transport of even the most basic, vital requirements in and out of Gaza. For almost a decade, the people of Gaza have slowly starved as their hospitals lose patient after patient due to the lack of medical supplies.

With regards to operation ‘Cast Lead’ of 2008, it was Israel which initiated the violence against a population it had under siege. During her election campaign, the war criminal Tzipi Livni promised in advance that she intended to ‘overthrow Hamas’. By the expiration of a six month cease fire, Israel had already amassed its troops and tanks outside of Gaza and wasted no time before beginning the brutal campaign killing over 1400 Palestinians.

In 2012 Israel killed 15 Gazan policemen, shot a disabled Palestinian to death with snipers, and killed a thirteen-year-old boy in a ground intrusion. In spite of this Hamas’ Ahmed al-Jabari persisted in peace negotiations with Israel, before Israel assassinated him, launching Operation Pillar of Cloud.[11] Israel made sure to boast the precision of their strike against al-Jabari before killing a further 100 or so civilians.

Media outlets often omit the fact that Hamas has been pushing for a substantial long-term peace agreement with Israel for several years.[12] Hamas have continuously offered a cessation of violence for a period of ten years[13] in which both sides can take time to discuss the future. However, Israel are only ever content with ceasefires which are attached to further restrictions on the Palestinian people, and when a fair, long-lasting peace is offered, Israel prefer the path of war.

And now, after Hamas' denial of any involvement in the killing of three Israeli settlers,[14] Israel launched its latest offensive, operation 'Protective Edge' in which thousands of innocent Palestinians have now been maimed or murdered. However this wasn't until after an Israeli lynch mob had burned a Palestinian child to death, and Israeli police beat another child black and blue.[15]

By simply looking at the chronological order of events we can see that every single time, Israel throws the first blow. We are told 'Israel has a right to defend itself,' but it is not 'defence' when time and time again Israel—an occupying force to begin with—is responsible for initiating every offensive against the men, women and children of Gaza.

4 - Hamas hide behind civilians using them as "human shields"



In 2002 Israel assassinated a Hamas leader with a one ton bomb, destroying several adjacent apartment blocks, killing 15 people and injuring 50. Among the dead were the Hamas leader's nine children and his wife.[16] In 2009, two prominent Hamas leaders—along with of course the civilians in the neighbourhood—were assassinated by targeted Israeli attacks. Interior Minister Sa'id Siyam was killed through the obliteration of his entire neighbourhood,[17] and Sheikh Dr. Nizar Rayan was killed along with his family including 11 children.[18] When falling Israeli bombs kill hundreds of innocent women and children, we are promptly reminded that the blame for Israel's murder falls on Hamas. The notion that any blame for Israel's crimes can even be shifted onto anyone else is twisted to say the least; indeed it is Israel that must be held to account for these crimes.

However, are Hamas' actions contributing to civilian deaths?

The Gaza strip is a relatively small plot of land. At 360 square kilometres it houses an incredibly cramped population of 1.8 million people, mostly refugees who were brutally expelled from their homes in Palestine. This means that, on average, any Hamas member walking through the street will be surrounded by over 5000 civilians within that square kilometre. Hamas is not only a military organisation, but it employs ministers, politicians, civil servants and police men, all of whom live and work amongst the population of Gaza. It is unrealistic to expect these individuals to live separately from the population they protect and serve, and targeting them with bombs is in reality targeting the civilians around them.

Israel is not concerned with collateral damage, and in fact it is clear that children are deliberately targeted. On the 16th of July Israel targeted and murdered 4 children playing football on a wide, open beach far from any Hamas members to use them as 'human shields.'[19] Recorded footage time and time again shows that, even with a weapon as precise as a sniper rifle, through which a killer can see his victim clearly, Israel is perfectly ready to murder civilians.[20] The belligerence of Israel against the civilians of Gaza is

irrational and inexplicable. Children in Gaza are not the unfortunate 'collateral damage' of tactical and strategic decisions Israel is forced to make; they *are* the targets for all intents and purposes.

5 – Hamas rocket fire is to blame



It is sad and perplexing to see critics of Israel and supporters of the Palestinian cause, buying into Israeli propaganda lines and blaming Hamas rockets for Israeli aggression. One does not need to be a supporter of the resistance movement to recognise Hamas' right to self-defence on behalf of the people of Gaza.

Every wave of Israeli aggression against Gaza over the past several years has been erroneously attributed to Hamas' launching of rockets. Media outlets and the usual Israeli mouthpieces such as Cameron, Obama, *et al.* tell the world that Israel is reacting defensively to Hamas missiles. The reality, however, is that Israel have been the instigators of every war. Love them or hate them, Hamas have never contravened a treaty with Israel.

In fact, the 30th of June 2014 was the first time Hamas fired rockets into Israel since the agreement was signed, and this was only in response to an unprovoked Israeli airstrike.[21] It is Hamas that is acting in self-defence, as plain, unavoidable facts highlight that Israel doesn't wait for rocket fire before bombing and killing.

Hamas is also condemned for launching these missiles near residential areas. As highlighted above, Gaza is one of the most crowded places on the planet. All resistance to the Israeli onslaught on the besieged strip takes place in the open air prison that is Gaza, inescapably near residential areas. Gaza does not have a sophisticated Iron Dome missile defence system. Hamas' only stated deterrent against Israel's overbearing air-strike capabilities, is the threat of missile launches. To keep that deterrent viable at all times Hamas sets launching sights throughout the Gaza strip. Some may indeed feel that this is an abhorrent military practice; however it is arguably strategically sound and is no different to the British government's deployment of missile launchers throughout London's sky line during the 2012 Olympics with the stated aim of deterrence.[22]

Regardless of one's views on the tactical decisions made by Hamas, the simple truth is that before 2006 Hamas never even had missiles to launch in the first place. Israeli aggression came regardless of the military capabilities of Gaza's resistance movement. It was under siege that these weapons were developed and it is under bombardment that they are launched.

6 – Israel Just wants peace



Let's see what Israel has to say about that. Eli Yishai, former Deputy Prime Minister, said: "We must blow Gaza back to the Middle Ages, destroying all the infrastructure including roads and water;"[23] while Avi Dichter, an Israeli minister of defence believes that Gaza should be "wiped clean with bombs." [24]

As for innocent casualties in Gaza—Israel doesn't seem to believe they exist. "There are no innocents in Gaza... mow them down!" says Michael Ben-Ari, a former member of the Knesset, "There are no righteous men [in Gaza], turn it into rubble! Paint it red!"[25]

Knesset member Ayelet Shaked agrees, warning that Palestinian women, who of course give birth to 'snakes', should be killed and their homes should be destroyed, "Otherwise, more little snakes will be raised there." [26]

Yet in spite of Israelis efficient slaughtering, some feel that Israel still has a lot to learn about mass murder. According to Rabbi Yaakov Yosef, Israeli soldiers must "learn from the Syrians how to slaughter and crush the enemy." [27] Gilad Sharon, the son of Ariel Sharon, feels that the Americans had the correct approach, writing in the Jerusalem Post,

"We need to flatten entire neighbourhoods in Gaza. Flatten all of Gaza. The Americans didn't stop with Hiroshima – the Japanese weren't surrendering fast enough, so they hit Nagasaki, too. There should be no electricity in Gaza, no gasoline or moving vehicles, nothing." [28]

As the old adage goes 'if you hope for peace prepare for war' or as the head of Israeli's National Defence College, Professor Arnon Sofer put it "If we want to remain alive, we will have to kill and kill and kill. All day, everyday." [29] However, an alternative scholarly opinion held by Israeli professor Mordechai Kedar, holds that peace for Israel can be achieved through the raping of Palestinian women. [30]

These statements were not made by the people on the fringes of Israeli society, they were made by high-ranking members of government, elected legislators from the Knesset, prominent Academics and Rabbis.

7 – Resistance achieves nothing



Those who stand by the Palestinian cause are few and governments even fewer. Out of all of the well-armed western nations on earth, many of whom claim to champion humanitarian intervention and human rights, none have stood up to the terror of Israel or taken any action to stop it. Britain and the US even refuse to stop giving weapons to Israel when they can clearly see that they are being used to kill and mutilate children.

The path of no resistance has been attempted by other Palestinian organisations and the results are clear. After endless talks and diplomatic discussions, nothing has been achieved while more of Palestine is wiped out everyday. Without resistance Palestinians become irrelevant and their land is simply absorbed at the rate at which illegal, apartheid settlements can be established and populated, as the international community looks on at Israel's contempt for international law, doing nothing.

Meanwhile Hamas and the Palestinian resistance are the only deterrent on Earth which causes Israel to think twice before bombing, murdering and stealing. The threat of Palestinian armed resistance is the only physical obstacle between Israel and the complete extermination of Gaza. And unlike the PA, Hamas negotiates from a position of strength and ceasefire deals with Israel often bear fruit for the Palestinian cause. [31]

Conclusion

The crimes of Israel are many and plain for all to see. Thanks to citizen journalism and social media, the images of Israeli terror are reaching people around the world. In spite of all the

money Israel spends on sickly sweet PR campaigns and chilling propaganda, Israel's pristine image is suffering. No form of genuine resistance to Israel achieves 'nothing'. Every Facebook post, retweet and public demonstration lets Israel know that more and more people of this world will not tolerate war crimes, apartheid and genocide any longer. Every action we take lets Israel and the governments which support it know: Gaza does not stand alone.

Notes:

[1] As of 25/07/2014 according to <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/07/gaza-death-toll-rises-amid-diplomatic-push-201472512324381298.html>

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[3] <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/176683#.U8szq0CPOko>

[4] Middleton-Edwards, Beverley (2011) Contemporary Politics in the Middle East, Third Edition, Polity Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom page 30

[5] Smith, Charles D. (2007) Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents, Sixth Edition, Macmillan, Boston, United States page 8

[6] Smith, Charles D. (2007) Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents, Sixth Edition, Macmillan, Boston, United States page 11

[7] Lozowick, Yaacov (2003) Right to Exist, A moral defence of Israel's wars, Doubleday, United States page 45[8] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvnXR_X-TX0

[9] <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/12/20121215135432787820.html>

[10] <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/1.606934>

[11] <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/massed-israeli-troops-poised-for-invasion-of-gaza-8316615.html>

[12] Scham and

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[13] Hinder, James and Frenkel, Sheera (2009) Ceasefire shaken as Israel sends in jets after soldier is killed by road-side bomb; Gaza, The Times, News, January 28, 2009 page 29

[14] <http://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-denies-responsibility-for-teens-death-warns-against-israeli-strike/>

[15] <http://news.yahoo.com/palestinian-teen-burned-death-autopsy-shows-133248791.html>

[16] State commission to examine civilian deaths in 2002 Shahade assassination, Haaretz, September 19 2007, available online

via: <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/state-commission-to-examine-civilian-deaths-in-2002-shahade-assassination-1.229532>

- [17] <http://www.btselem.org/statistics/fatalities/2008-12-27-till-2009-01-18/by-date-of-death/gaza/palestinians-killed-during-the-course-of-a-targeted-killing>
- [18] <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2009/01/20091218131371179.html>
- [19] <https://news.vice.com/article/israeli-shelling-kills-4-children-on-gaza-beach>
- [20] <http://www.newsweek.com/graphic-video-allegedly-shows-wounded-civilian-killed-israeli-sniper-260122>
- [21] <http://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-fired-rockets-for-first-time-since-2012-israeli-officials-say/>
- [22] <http://www.theguardian.com/sport/video/2012/may/04/london-olympic-missile-blackheath>
- [23] <http://www.theyeshivaworld.com/news/headlines-breaking-stories/145581/live-blog-day-4-operation-pillar-of-defense-updated-530pm-il.html>
- [24] <http://mondoweiss.net/2014/07/heathcote-williams-young.html>
- [25] <http://www.anphoblacht.com/contents/22462>
- [26] <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/why-im-on-the-brink-of-burning-my-israeli-passport-9600165.html>
- [27] <http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/idf-must-learn-syrians-how-slaughter-enemy-says-prominent-israeli-rabbi>
- [28] <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/A-decisive-conclusion-is-necessary>
- [29] <http://www.jpost.com/Features/I-didnt-suggest-we-kill-Palestinians>
- [30] <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/israeli-professor-rape-hamas-militants-mothers-sisters-deter-terrorist-attacks-1457836>
- [31] <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/11/20121124151832736999.html>

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