

The Siege of Gaza and the Fight for Jerusalem

By [Donald Monaco](#)

Global Research, May 14, 2021

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [United Nations](#)
In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

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Israel's ethnic cleansing of Palestinian families living in East Jerusalem and its invasion of Al-Aqsa Mosque to quell protests against this atrocity escalated tensions in the ancient city that reverberated throughout occupied Palestine.

In response to repeated attacks on Al-Aqsa, Hamas warned the Zionist state to cease its violent repression of protests in Jerusalem. Hundreds of [Palestinians were injured](#) when Israeli police fired steel coated rubber bullets, tear gas canisters, and flash grenades at protesters. When Israel refused, the military wing of Hamas fired a volley of rockets in the city's direction.

Israel counter-attacked by [bombing Gaza](#) leading to the death of 20 Palestinians, including nine children on May 10, 2021. One blast alone killed nine people, including three children, in Beit Hanoun. Hamas responded by firing rockets at southern cities in the settler state [killing two Israelis](#) in Ashkelon. The next day, fighting intensified. Israel bombed an apartment complex in Gaza City and Hamas retaliated by firing rockets that hit Tel Aviv. The toll has risen to 67 Palestinians and 7 Israelis dead.

Israeli attacks on Gaza constitute [war crimes](#). They are intended to crush Palestinian resistance. But the resistance refuses to capitulate.

The message Hamas is sending to Palestinians living under Israeli occupation in Jerusalem is piercingly clear: “you do not face the occupation alone.” The pledge of solidarity is being received enthusiastically as protests spread throughout the West Bank despite a repressive crackdown by occupation forces.

Across Israeli cities, Palestinians are being subjected to vigilante violence. In one attack near Tel Aviv, a Palestinian was pulled from his car and beaten to a bloody pulp by an angry crowd of right-wing fanatics. The horrifying attack was [broadcast live on Israeli television](#) dramatically illustrating the virulent [anti-Arab racism](#) that permeates Israeli society. Palestinians retaliated by burning a synagogue as intercommunal violence spreads across Israel like a malignant wildfire.

The militancy of Hamas' response to Israel's crimes in Jerusalem stands in sharp contrast to the flaccid rejoinder of the Palestinian Authority. Its representatives uttered rhetorical condemnations and requested a meeting of the UN Security Council. This is the same international body that gave the United States a green light to destroy Iraq in 2003. The Security Council will do nothing but talk as dead bodies mount up in Gaza.

The corrupt PA has acted as a collaborator with the occupation since the signing of the [Oslo Accords](#) in 1993. It will not, in time of conflict, effectively oppose it. The Hamas leadership comprehends what the PA does not; Israel speaks only the language of violence and understands no other.

Israel was forced to cancel the annual 'Jerusalem Day March' that typically involves ultra-nationalist Zionists marching through the Arab sector of East Jerusalem 'celebrating' the conquest of the city during the 1967 war. The march is a provocation that routinely witnesses attacks on Palestinians, vandalism of their property, and spewing of racist chants by the Zionist rabble.

Israel also postponed the date its High Court was set to hear appeals involving the legality of evicting Palestinian families living in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem that touched off the Al-Aqsa protests.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stated bluntly that any such forced evictions are illegal under international humanitarian law and "[may amount to war crimes](#)." Leaders of the pariah state routinely violate humanitarian law without consequence.

Israel's repressive policies and its bombing of Gaza provoked an inevitable response from Hamas, bringing the region to what analysts are calling the "brink of war" in the besieged strip of land bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

War is a misnomer. Israel's attack on Gaza is a premeditated slaughter that targets the civilian population in one of the most densely populated areas of the world. Wars are fought between countries. The Palestinians have no modern state or military. Palestine is under occupation. Gaza is besieged.

Hamas is a resistance organization operating in an impoverished ghetto with homemade weaponry and whatever munitions can be smuggled into the strip.

Israel is a modern state with a powerful [military](#) armed with nuclear weapons, Arrow anti-ballistic missile and Iron Dome anti-missile defense systems, sophisticated air and naval forces, Merkava tanks, Atmos howitzers, Micro-Taver assault rifles, and armored personnel carriers.

In this conflict, the Palestinian David faces an Israeli Goliath armed and financed by the American imperialist behemoth. The balance of forces in this 'war' are grossly unequal.

There have been three such recent 'wars'. Operation Cast Lead in 2008/2009, Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012, and Operation Protective Edge in 2014. All three Israeli named operations involved military assaults and massacres in Gaza.

In each attack, the number of Palestinian casualties was appalling. During [Cast Lead](#), 1,398 Palestinians perished. In [Pillar of Defense](#), 167 were killed. During [Protective Edge](#), 2,250 died, 300 of whom were children. Those injured and maimed during each assault number in

the thousands. In the [2014 conflict](#), 11,000 Palestinians were injured and 500,000 displaced. Israel dropped 400 tons of bombs during 6,000 air strikes. The barbaric attack was sadistic and intentional.

During typical Gaza incursions, Israel destroys schools, hospitals, mosques, churches, factories, electrical power plants, water treatment facilities, and civilian homes plunging the Gaza Strip into a pre-industrial age, much the same as the United States did to Iraq in the [1991 Gulf War](#).

Despite its colossal fire power, Israel does not want to commit ground troops to a fourth invasion having suffered very high casualties in the third. Instead, it will bomb Gaza relentlessly murdering a civilian population that is trapped in overcrowded cities. Israeli troops are being massed on the Gaza border. They may be ordered into combat if bombing does not pacify resistance forces in the strip.

The fighters of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine have learned techniques of asymmetrical warfare from the Islamic resistance led by Hezbollah in Lebanon and now make up a formidable fighting force. But they are outnumbered and outgunned and can only fight a war of attrition.

Military warfare supplements economic warfare. Israel's siege of the Gaza Strip began in 2006. The medieval blockade continues, transforming this narrow strip of land into the largest open-air prison in the world.

Gaza is the home of refugees from the wars of 1948 and 1967. The strip was controlled by Egypt until 1967. Gaza has always been ungovernable for the Israelis who took over the territory by defeating Egypt in the 1967 war. As in the West Bank, settlers' colonies were planted in the occupied territory. But the population remained restive. The first Palestinian Intifada began in Gaza in 1987.

In the summer of 2005, Israeli Prime Minister and certifiable war criminal Ariel Sharon pulled the settlers out of Gaza to isolate the strip from the West Bank which he had pacified by launching 'Operation Defensive Shield' in 2002. The misnamed operation was a war on the Palestinian Authority and a refutation of the Oslo Peace Accords negotiated by Labor's Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin.

Not coincidentally, Sharon's brutal assault on the PA followed the neoconservative script outlined in a document titled "[A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm](#)." Authored by Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, David Wurmser, and company, it advocated a break from the 'land for peace' paradigm of Labor Zionism in favor of a policy of 'subjugation and terror'.

Sharon's bloody campaign was supported by Bush, Cheney, and the neocons. Sharon broke what remained of armed resistance of Fatah and the PA. When Mahmoud Abbas succeeded Yasser Arafat, the capitulation was complete. Except for the occupied Palestinian people who have never accepted subjugation.

The fighting spirit of the Palestinian people was evidenced in the 2006 national election where Hamas won a stunning 74 seats in the 132 seat Palestinian Legislative Council with 45 seats going to Fatah. Hamas took effective control of the Palestinian Authority.

The Western response was swift. Led by the bastions of world democracy, economic

sanctions were slapped on the PA. The United States immediately froze \$2 billion in economic aid. Israel imposed a blockade closing off Gaza from the settler state in the north and east, Mediterranean Sea in the west, and Egypt in the South.

It is a [starvation blockade](#). Minimal food and medicine. Minimal fuel. No incubators or dialysis equipment. No sanitary products such as soap, detergent, diapers, or feminine hygiene articles. No school supplies. No building materials such as steel, cement, or metal piping. No agricultural supplies or equipment. No batteries or spare parts for equipment. No exports. No air traffic. No travel.

An Israeli official commented that the idea was “[to put Palestinians on a diet](#)” by just allowing enough food to enter the Gaza Strip so they do not starve.

The results of siege are constant power outages and fuel shortages, food depravation, malnutrition, childhood anemia, poisoned water, and minimal medical care. Gaza could only endure because of construction of an elaborate tunnel system into Egypt.

The U.S. approved [coup d'état](#) of the Morsi government brought the dictator Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to power in Egypt in 2013. Former army chief General Sisi, being a tool of the United States and Israel, immediately flooded the tunnels and closed the Rafah border, cutting Gaza off from Egypt and North Africa.

Forty percent of Gaza's 2 million residents are under the age of 14 and fully 75 percent are under the age of 25, making treatment of the strip's youth the largest case of organized child abuse on earth.

In 2007, war criminals led by President [George W. Bush](#), Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and Deputy National Security Advisor [Elliott Abrams](#) who took part in the infamous [Iran/Contra](#) terrorist affair, [engineered a coup](#) designed to topple Hamas from power. They armed Fatah chieftain Muhammad Dahlan to provoke a civil war in the occupied territories. Guided by Lieutenant General Keith Drayton, Dahlan and Fatah launched a war of attrition against Hamas that culminated in a Hamas victory in Gaza. The Palestinian leadership was split. The Palestinian Authority of Abbas runs enclaves in the West Bank. Hamas under the leadership of Ismail Haniya runs the Gaza Strip.

Palestinians have tried to end the siege of Gaza by peaceful protests and win their rights as refugees under international law. The “[Great March of Return](#)” involved sustained peaceful protests demanding the ‘Right of Return’ of refugees to their ancestral homes and lands stolen from them in 1948 and an end to the blockade of Gaza. The protests were staged every Friday, beginning on March 30, 2018, and continued for two years.

The settler state responded with savage repression murdering 260 protesters, many with a bullet to the head fired by a marksman. An additional 20,000 people were injured. Palestinians who were demonstrating and waving flags behind enclosed barriers in the Gaza Strip were simply shot down by Israel's cowardly military forces.

There was not a whimper of protest uttered by the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Canada, or any member of the ‘international community’ ostensibly committed to defending human rights.

The occupation of Palestine has become normalized. Zionists want the world to forget about Palestine. The project of ethnic cleansing continues unabated with full support of the

Western democracies. The sheer magnitude and duration of the suffering experienced by the Palestinian people is sanitized from political discourse.

The barbaric siege of Gaza and the Judaization of East Jerusalem and the West Bank have proceeded unrelentingly.

The rockets fired by Hamas remind the world that Gaza is connected to struggles in Jerusalem, the West Bank, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen. The fighters in Gaza are part of an "[axis of resistance](#)" to imperialism and Zionism in the region.

Normalization of oppression is only broken by resistance. What is missing in Western media reports that attempt to explain "unrest in the Middle East" by alluding to "periodic clashes", "escalation of tensions", and "outbreaks of violence" is any reference to the daily deprivation, humiliation, oppression, and violence suffered by Palestinians living under occupation and apartheid.

Israel would like the world to forget about Gaza. Try as they might to strangle inhabitants of the strip, an unrelenting struggle for survival and liberation persists, resonating throughout the Arab and Muslim world.

The cynical Prime Minister of Israel may wish to escalate the conflict to save his political career. The self-proclaimed Zionist [Joe Biden](#) supports Netanyahu and allows the massacre in Gaza to proceed by claiming that "Israel has a right to defend itself." Presumably, Palestinians have no right to self-defense in the eyes of America's commander and chief, who recently vowed to support "basic human rights" during his first "[State of the Union Address](#)" to the nation. For Zionists, the enemies of Israel are the enemies of the United States and those enemies have no rights.

The truth is at odds with duplicitous rhetoric. An occupying power that ethnically cleanses peoples from their historic homeland and murders them when they fight back is not defending itself. It is engaging in an act of state sponsored terrorism.

Israel is a terror state that is butchering an occupied population to defend its theft of their land.

Despite all efforts, the settler state has never extinguished resistance in Gaza. The isolated coastal strip remains a symbol of resistance for the people of Palestine who are now more united than any time since the Al-Aqsa Intifada in 2000. That unity, and the international solidarity it inspires, may doom a Zionist project that is desperately trying to prevail by reliance on force and violence.

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Donald Monaco is a political analyst who lives in Brooklyn, New York. He received his Master's Degree in Education from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1979 and was radicalized by the Vietnam War. He writes from an anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist perspective. His recent book is titled, [The Politics of Terrorism](#), and is available at

amazon.com

He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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