



Written by [James Murphy](#) on May 13, 2021

Dozens Dead As Israel Responds to Terrorist Group Hamas Rocket Launches

On Wednesday, both the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) and Gaza militants backed by the terrorist group Hamas escalated some of the worst Jewish-Arab violence in decades. In just three days, dozens have perished in the fighting in the region, recalling scenes of devastation reminiscent of the 50-day war in Gaza in 2014.

A few precious hours of quiet was broken early Thursday morning as air-raid sirens blared in the City of Ashkelon and the surrounding region, just north of Gaza. IDF reports that the sirens have also been heard across the center and south of the country, with sporadic alarms reported as far north as Galilee.



An Israeli firefighter works at the site where a rocket fired from the Gaza Strip, hit the central Israeli town of Holon /AP Images

Retaliatory Israeli air strikes into Gaza have killed dozens, including up to ten senior Hamas military figures. The Israeli air strikes also toppled a pair of high-rise towers in Gaza that housed numerous Hamas members. Hamas installations have been targeted, with many civilian casualties reported because the terrorist group uses civilians — including children — as human shields.

The new fighting appears to have been triggered by weeks of street altercations between Palestinians and Israelis over the Holy City of Jerusalem, which all three major monotheistic religions — Judaism, Christianity and Islam — hold as sacred. Since the beginning of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan begun in mid-April, Palestinians have clashed nightly with Israeli police in Jerusalem.

Much of the current Palestinian angst appears to be over a lawsuit involving a small Palestinian neighborhood in East Jerusalem known as [Sheikh Jarrah](#). Some 40 Palestinians, including 10 children, are in danger of being evicted as Israeli settlers are ready to lay claim to those homes.

On Wednesday night, IDF Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Aviv Kohavi recommended that Israel increase air strikes on Hamas targets in Gaza in retaliation for the ongoing rocket attacks into Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that he will not quietly accept a simple ceasefire in response to the approximately 1,500 rockets that have thus far been fired into his country.

Meanwhile, the current leader of the terrorist Hamas organization Kahled Mashal is angry because his Twitter page has been [restricted](#) following a tweet that celebrated the bombing of Tel Aviv and an oil pipeline between Ashkelon and Eilat saying, “God is great and glory is to God alone.”

In America, the combatants are receiving mixed signals from the political class. Former President Donald Trump blamed the current occupant of the White House for his “weakness,” claiming that not just Israel, but the entire world is less stable with President Joe Biden captaining the American ship of state.



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"Israel's adversaries knew that the United States stood strongly with Israel and there would be swift retribution if Israel were attacked. Under Biden, the world is getting more violent and more unstable because Biden's weakness and lack of support for Israel is leading to new attacks on our allies," Trump wrote in a Tuesday Save America PAC media blast.

Biden himself has been urging de-escalation of hostilities in talks with Netanhyahu. The U.S. president's biggest statement on the issue thus far was: "My expectation and hope is this will be closing down sooner than later, but Israel has a right to defend itself."

A White House [statement](#) summing up Biden's call with Netanyahu read: "(Biden) condemned the rocket attacks by Hamas and other terrorist groups, including against Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. He conveyed his unwavering support for Israel's security and Israel's legitimate right to defend itself and its people."

Besides the Biden administration's milquetoast statement, congressional Democrats are blasting Israel for committing "terrorism" in defense of their nation.

"Israeli airstrikes killing civilians in Gaza is an act of terrorism," "Squad" member and alleged brother-marrier Representative Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) [tweeted](#) on Tuesday. "Palestinians deserve protection. Unlike Israel, missile defense programs, such as Iron Dome, don't exist to protect Palestinian civilians."

Fellow squad member, Representative Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.), who is of Palestinian descent, called on Congress to place conditions immediately on any aid it sends to Israel.

"American taxpayer money is being used to commit human rights violations. Congress must condition the aid we send to Israel, and end it altogether if those conditions are not followed," Tlaib [tweeted](#).

When Trump was in office, tensions between Israelis and Palestinians and the rest of the world were still there but muted somewhat. Even as the United States finally made the long-promised move of its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem things were relatively quiet. In addition, while Trump was president, Israel was able to normalize relations with no less than four predominantly Muslim countries.

Biden has been in office less than four months and suddenly everything is blowing up. We have to wonder if that's simply a coincidence or if, as former President Trump says, it's owing to Biden's "weakness."



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