

Hamas' Attack on Israel

Messages: Swords of Iron - War in the South

9 October 2023, 14:00 Israel time

Background:

On Saturday (7 October), in an act of war, hundreds of terrorists infiltrated Israel at a number of locations and at the same time, massive rocket barrages were launched at Israeli territory.

This constitutes a far-reaching terrorist attack on Israel's civilians in the midst of the Jewish festival of Simchat Torah, when hundreds of thousands of Israelis were on their way to synagogues to celebrate the holiday and Shabbat in their communities with their families.

As part of the attack, which is still ongoing, hundreds of terrorists infiltrated Israeli territory by land, sea, and air, and advanced into Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip. This while indiscriminate firing - of more than 3,500 rockets and missiles so far - was targeting towns and cities in the south, the center of the country, and Jerusalem with the intent of maximizing harm to civilians.

Thus far, more than 700 people have been murdered in Israel and more than 2,600 wounded to varying degrees. It is also reported that over 130 people are classified as missing or captives after being kidnapped and taken to Gaza. There is reason to believe that these figures will continue to rise.

Yesterday (8 October), anti-tank missiles and mortar shells were fired from Lebanese territory, under the auspices of Hezbollah, at IDF positions on Mount Dov. In response, the IDF fired at the sources of the attack, destroying Hezbollah's tent located south of the Blue Line in the Mount Dov area.

As a result of these events, Israel is in a war targeting the terrorist organizations in Gaza. Its security forces are working to protect Israeli civilians on all fronts. The IDF will safeguard the lives of Israeli citizens, while Hamas and all other involved terrorists will pay a heavy price.

Many countries have expressed their identification with Israel and their unequivocal support of the State of Israel. In many cities (including New York, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Brasilia and Kyiv) buildings and important monuments were lit up in blue and white or with the Israeli flag.

In strong contrast, the Iranian regime expressed its support for the terrorist activities of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). Iranian President Raisi held a phone conversation with Ismail Haniyeh, the Head of Hamas' Political Bureau, as well as one with Ziyad Nakhleh, Secretary-General of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), in which he

"congratulated the Palestinian people on the victories of the resistance and emphasized Iran's support for the people and the resistance," and in addition he conveyed his "appreciation for the actions of Hamas' fighters and all the fighters in the battlefields." Raisi added that "Iran supports the resistance and the Palestinian people, and that you bring happiness to the Islamic nation with this initiative."

According to media reports, Ismail Kaa'ni, Commander of the Iranian Quds Force, visited Lebanon on Saturday (7.10) - the very same day of the launch of Hamas' terror attack on Israel - and held meetings with Hamas leaders Ismail Hanyeh and Saleh al-Aroui.

Messages:

- Hamas, an internationally recognized terrorist organization, launched a massive attack on the citizens of Israel by infiltrating terrorists into communities in the south, as well as by launching extensive and indiscriminate missile and rocket fire that targeted Israeli civilians from the south of the country to Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. The terrorists infiltrated southern communities and began a murder spree, killing families and individuals in their homes, in the streets, and on their way to synagogue, in addition to kidnapping to the Gaza Strip anyone – in particular defenseless families, women and children - who crossed their path.
- This is a deadly and barbaric attack initiated by terrorist organizations led by Hamas, one launched with no legitimate pretext or provocative prior action on the part of Israel. Furthermore, this attack came after a long period in which Israel strove to bring calm to the Gaza Strip by making extensive efforts to improve the economic situation of Palestinians, with an emphasis on long-term projects in Gaza. Yet while Israel was working to stabilize the area, Hamas launched a murderous and destructive terrorist operation designed to hurt Israel and undermine stability in the area.
- If anyone still has doubts, this attack reveals once again the true face of these terror organizations: bloodthirsty and uncontrollable groups, devoid of any moral inhibitions, who are motivated by hatred, the desire to hurt Israeli citizens in every way, and to bring about the destruction of the State of Israel. Hamas is not interested in the safety or well-being of civilians in the Gaza Strip, and views them as nothing more than pawns to be exploited in its efforts to harm the citizens of Israel.
- Israel is in a war against the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip. Hamas started this war, and Israel is preparing for a prolonged military response to remove the threat posed by that organization. Hamas is the ruler of the Gaza Strip, controlling all aspects of life there. It is behind this attack, and it will be held accountable for the results of these events. Hamas' leadership bears full responsibility for the current deterioration and for the actions Israel must take in response. Israel will do everything necessary to protect its citizens and its territory.

- The false claims being made by Hamas and other terrorist organizations that "Al Aqsa is in danger" and their absurd attempt to link the terror attack to Jews visiting the Temple Mount (which routinely takes place every year) is a smoke screen that bears no resemblance to reality. This is a fabricated claim designed to fan flames in the sector, to inflame passions, and to gather support from extremists in order to expand the arena of combat in Israel.
- Hamas would not have been able to carry this murderous attack without the financing, logistical support and weapons it received from Iran. Iran bears direct responsibility for Hamas' capabilities, and therefore bears responsibility also for the use Hamas made of these capabilities.
- The terrorist organizations involved are branches of the Ayatollah regime in Iran, which proactively promotes terrorist activity in Israel and against Israeli and Jewish targets around the world. Iranian President Raisi spoke with Ismail Haniyeh, the Head of Hamas' Political Bureau, as well as with Ziyad Nakhleh, Secretary-General of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and expressed his support for the atrocious actions of the terrorist organization.
- Israeli security forces continue to operate to restore full control over all the communities and the security fence area on the border with the Gaza Strip, and are preparing for the next steps.
- Israel will act to free the hostages that were kidnapped to the Gaza Strip, to damage heavily the terrorist infrastructure, and to reach a situation in which no terrorist group in Gaza will be able to harm Israeli citizens again.
- The residents of the Gaza Strip are not Israel's enemies. Yet the terrorist organizations operate knowingly and deliberately from within civilian populated areas and adjacent to humanitarian buildings and institutions, making cynical use of them. Israel is doing, and will continue to do, everything possible to prevent harm to non-involved persons. However, these terrorist organizations which intentionally operate from within the civilian population are committing double war crimes - indiscriminately targeting Israeli civilians while using the residents of the Gaza Strip as human shields.
- The international community should make it clear to the axis states (Iran, Syria, and Lebanon) and to the terrorist organizations in the region that they must refrain from taking part in Hamas' war and stipulate that they should not promote, encourage, or enable the opening of another front against Israel. The expansion of the arena of combat against Israel will be met with a particularly harsh response, including determined and lethal actions by Israel.
- Israel expects the international community to condemn the terrorist attack on Israeli citizens and to express clear support for Israel's complete right to defend itself. Israel will act resolutely against the terrorist organizations and will do all that is necessary to protect its citizens.

