

# ISRAEL AT WAR

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

*Israel is at war in a conflict that it did not start, but which was imposed on it by the terrorist group Hamas, which seeks the destruction of the Jewish State. When confronted by hostile interlocutors spouting vicious anti-Israel propaganda and blatant lies, here's what you need to know to make Israel's case. We encourage you to use the messaging below in your conversations with fellow students, colleagues at work, family or friends, in order to better equip them and yourself to represent Israel's position, whether on campus, at the workplace, and to the public at large.*

- Hamas is a terrorist organization. It is the obstacle to peace between Israel and the Palestinians. There can be no peace in the region while Gaza is in thrall to a terror group, masterminded by Iran, which is bent on Israel's destruction.
- Israel has the duty and obligation to protect its citizens who are specifically targeted by Hamas rocket attacks. If Al-Qaeda were to fire rockets into Canada, targeting Canadian schools and homes, how do you think Canada would react? No country in the world would allow a terror group to launch rockets against its population with impunity, nor allow it the means to rearm and enhance its weaponry capability and range, as has been the case with Hamas ever since Israel unilaterally vacated the area.
- A situation of ceasefire does nothing to guarantee Israel's safety and security. In the lexicon of Hamas, a ceasefire only means a license to continue rocket attacks against Israel's civilian population. It is a hudna, a temporary lull that gives the terror group the opportunity to regroup and re-arm. This is what happened during the last so-called ceasefire, with hundreds of rockets raining down on Israel on an ongoing basis.
- Israel left Gaza in 2005, hoping for peace. There was no reason for Hamas to continue to escalate rocket attacks against Israel, except as a means of provoking a response and creating instability and chaos in the region.
- Israel targets Hamas strongholds and military facilities, but takes great pains to avoid the unintentional loss of civilian life caused by the fact that Hamas positions itself in densely civilian areas using its own people as human shields. Hamas, on the other hand, intentionally targets civilians, publicly rejoicing in each Jewish loss.
- Palestinians themselves are prisoners of Hamas. This is a group that ruthlessly crushes any opposition from its own people. Furthermore, it is a group that seeks to rule Palestinians under the strictest interpretation of sharia law, which can only lead to massive human rights abuses against women, non-Muslims and other vulnerable Palestinian groups.
- Israel is mindful of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and has made aid to innocent Palestinian civilians a top priority. Israel has taken steps to ensure that Gaza Strip residents receive food, medicines, fuel, cooking gas, and other humanitarian necessities, even as Hamas and other terrorist groups launch dozens of missiles daily at Israeli communities. Since the beginning of Operation Cast Lead, 10,000 tons of aid has to date been transported into Gaza, with arrangements being made for additional ongoing shipments.
- President Mahmoud Abbas, elected leader of the Palestinians, but thrown out of Gaza by Hamas, has a responsibility to step in and take back the leadership role he has abdicated. The Palestinians have an opportunity to free themselves of their Hamas overlords and work towards true peace and stability in the area.



## THE NUMBERS

### SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

**28**

deaths caused by rockets and mortars fired from Gaza into Israel since 2001

**1,000+**

people in Israel injured by rockets and mortars fired from Gaza since 2001

**3,200**

rockets and mortars fired from Gaza in 2008

**543**

rockets and mortars fired from Gaza into Israeli territory during the so-called ceasefire with Hamas from June 19 to Dec. 19, 2008

**480**

rockets and mortars fired from Gaza into Israel in the first week of Operation Cast Lead

**60**

rockets and mortars fired from Gaza into southern Israel on December 24 alone

**6,500**

rockets and mortars fired from Gaza since Israel withdrew in 2005

**9,400**

rockets and mortars fired from Gaza since 2003

**15**

seconds Israelis have to get to a bomb shelter once a warning siren has sounded

**900,000**

Israeli residents are currently under immediate threat

Figures as of January 5, 2009

*With files from the Israel Project, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israeli security sources.*