

Posted:

IDF hit 100 Gaza targets after Tel Aviv missile attack; - 2 New Zealand Mosques attacked

Israel Hayom Friday Mar 15, 2019

Israel hits 100 Hamas targets after Tel Aviv missile attack

Following late-night missile attack on Tel Aviv, warplanes hit Hamas command center, rocket and drone production sites • Growing assessment in IDF is that missiles were fired mistakenly • U.S. envoy: Gaza terrorist groups continue to fail their people."

Lilach Shoval, Gadi Golan, News Agencies and Israel Hayom Staff // published on 15/03/2019

An explosion caused by Israeli airstrikes is seen over Gaza City, early Friday | Photo: AP

Israeli warplanes on Friday struck some 100 Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip in response to a rare rocket attack on the Israeli metropolis of Tel Aviv. Rocket fire persisted throughout the morning, setting the stage for additional possible reprisals.

The Israel Defense Forces said that its targets had included an office complex in Gaza City used to plan and command Hamas terrorist activities, an underground complex that served as Hamas' main rocket-manufacturing site, and a center used for Hamas drone development. There were no reports of casualties.

The late-night attack on Tel Aviv, Israel's densely populated commercial and cultural capital, marked a dramatic escalation in hostilities. It was the first time the city had been targeted since a 2014 war between Israel and Gaza-based terrorists.

Hamas denied responsibility for the initial rocket attack, saying it went against Palestinian interests. But after a preliminary investigation, Israel said it had concluded that the terrorist group was behind the attack and had most likely fired the missiles by mistake.

"This [attack on central Israel] was basically a surprise," IDF spokesman Brig. Gen. Ronen Manelis told Israel Radio.

Another IDF spokesman laid the blame on Hamas on Friday.

"Hamas carried out the rocket fire against Tel Aviv yesterday evening," Lt. Col. Avichay Adraee said.

The latest flare-up drew a U.S. statement of support for Israel.

" Hamas and other terror orgs in Gaza continue to fail their people day after day & drag Gaza further & further down by constantly choosing violence," Jason Greenblatt, the White House's Middle East envoy, said on Twitter. "This method will never work. Ever!"

Witnesses said powerful explosions from the air strikes rocked buildings in Gaza and lit the skies over targeted sites. Following the Israeli airstrike, several rockets were launched into Israel from Gaza. The IDF said several rockets were intercepted by the Iron Dome air-defense systems, and there were no reports of injuries.

The fighting broke out as Egyptian mediators were in Gaza trying to broker an expanded cease-fire deal between the sides. Late Thursday, Gaza media outlets said the mediators had left the territory.

The initial blasts from the Israeli airstrikes in southern Gaza were so powerful that smoke could be seen in Gaza City, 25 kilometers (16 miles) to the north. The Israeli warplanes could be heard roaring through the skies above Gaza City.

The sudden outburst of fighting comes at a sensitive time for both sides. Israel is holding national elections in less than a month. Netanyahu is locked in a tight fight for re-election and could face heavy criticism from his opponents if he is seen as ineffective against the terrorists in Gaza.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett of the New Right party called on the prime minister to convene a gathering of his security cabinet and demand the army "present a plan to defeat Hamas once and for all."

Likewise, Hamas has come under rare public criticism in Gaza for the harsh conditions in the territory. An Israeli-Egyptian blockade, combined with sanctions by the rival Palestinian Authority and mismanagement by the Hamas government have fueled an economic crisis in the territory. Residents have little desire for another war with Israel.

Hamas announced that due to the sensitive security situation it had canceled the "March of Return" border demonstrations it holds every Friday, in which Palestinians routinely clash with IDF soldiers along the border with Gaza.

In an unusual step that further indicated Hamas was attempting to prevent further escalation, the Hamas Interior Ministry said the rocket fire went "against the national consensus" and promised to take action against the perpetrators.

Earlier Thursday, meanwhile, Hamas police violently broke up a small protest over the harsh living conditions in the Strip.

Earlier this week, Israel struck Hamas targets in Gaza in response to rocket fire on southern Israel, near the border.

Following those strikes, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu issued a warning to Hamas, rejecting suggestions that Israel would be reluctant to take tough action in Gaza ahead of national elections next month.

"I suggest to Hamas, don't count on it," he told his cabinet. "We will do anything necessary to restore security and quiet to the area adjacent to the Gaza Strip and to the south in general."

Israel Hayom Friday Mar 15, 2019

49 killed, many wounded in New Zealand mosque shootings; 4 held

Three men, one woman in custody in Christchurch • Australian man claims responsibility, says he acted alone to show that even the most remote parts of the world were not free of "mass immigration" • PM Ardern laments "one of New Zealand's darkest days."

News Agencies and Israel Hayom Staff // published on 15/03/2019

A man rests on the ground as he speaks on his mobile phone across the road from mosque in central Christchurch, New Zealand, Friday | Photo: AP

New Zealand police detained four people on Friday after mass shootings at two mosques in the city of Christchurch.

Videos shared with Reuters show an apparent suspect being detained by police officers from an SUV which was rammed by a police car.

The New Zealand Police Commissioner told reporters in Wellington that three men and one woman were in custody and added that they were able to secure improvised explosive devices strapped to vehicles.

New Zealand media have reported that at least 49 have been killed.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern described it as "one of New Zealand's darkest days" and said the events in the city of Christchurch represented "an extraordinary and unprecedented act of violence."

Authorities have not said who they have in custody. But a man who claimed responsibility for the shootings left a 74-page anti-immigrant manifesto in which he

explained who he was and his reasoning for his actions. He said he considered it a terrorist attack.

Ardern at her news conference alluded to anti-immigrant sentiment as the possible motive, saying that while many people affected by the shootings may be migrants or refugees "they have chosen to make New Zealand their home, and it is their home. They are us. The person who has perpetuated this violence against us is not."

Authorities have not yet said how many people were killed and wounded. "It's a very serious and grave situation," Bush said.

The deadliest shooting occurred at AlNoor mosque in central Christchurch at about 1:45 p.m.

Witness Len Peneha said he saw a man dressed in black enter the mosque and then heard dozens of shots, followed by people running from the mosque in terror.

Peneha, who lives next door to the mosque, said the gunman ran out of the mosque, dropped what appeared to be a semiautomatic weapon in his driveway, and fled.

Peneha said he then went into the mosque to try and help.

"I saw dead people everywhere. There were three in the hallway, at the door leading into the mosque, and people inside the mosque," he said. "It's unbelievable. ... I don't understand how anyone could do this to these people, to anyone. It's ridiculous."

He said he helped about five people recover in his home. He said one was slightly injured.

He said the gunman was white and was wearing a helmet with some kind of device on top, giving him a military-type appearance.

Police said there was a second shooting at Linwood mosque.

Mark Nichols told the New Zealand Herald he heard about five gunshots and that a Friday prayer-goer returned fire with a rifle or shotgun.

The man who claimed responsibility for the shooting said he was a 28-year-old white Australian who came to New Zealand only to plan and train for the attack. He said he was not a member of any organization, but had donated to and interacted with many nationalist groups, though he acted alone and no group ordered the attack.

He said the mosques in Christchurch and Linwood would be the targets, as would a third mosque in the town of Ashburton if he could make it there.

He said he chose New Zealand because of its location, to show that even the most remote parts of the world were not free of "mass immigration."

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison confirmed that an Australian citizen had been arrested in the shootings.

Mass shootings in New Zealand are exceedingly rare. The deadliest in modern history occurred in the small town of Aramoana in 1990 when gunman David Gray shot and killed 13 people following a dispute with a neighbor.

Posted

US Senate votes to end support for Saudi war in Yemen; Vetoed by Trump

Israel Hayom Thursday Mar 14, 2019

US Senate votes to end support for Saudi war in Yemen;

Lawmakers poised to invoke the War Powers Resolution to stop a foreign conflict for the first time • U.S. President Trump has vowed to veto the measure • Sen. Bernie Sanders: U.S. should not be supporting a "catastrophic war led by a despot."

Associated Press and Israel Hayom Staff // published on 14/03/2019

Sen. Bernie Sanders, Sen. Chris Murphy and Sen. Mike Lee meet before holding a news conference on the Senate vote on ending U.S. support for the Saudi Arabian-led coalition fighting in Yemen, Wednesday | Photo: AP

The Senate voted Wednesday to end U.S. support for the Saudi Arabian-led coalition's war in Yemen.

Lawmakers have never before invoked the decades-old War Powers Resolution to stop a foreign conflict, but they are poised to do just that in the bid to cut off U.S. support for a war that has triggered a humanitarian catastrophe.

The vote puts Congress on a collision course with U.S. President Donald Trump, who has already threatened to veto the resolution, which the White House says raises "serious constitutional concerns."

The measure was co-sponsored by Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vermont, and Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah. Next, it will move to the Democratic-controlled House, where it is expected to pass.

The resolution passed by a vote of 54 to 46, with seven Republicans breaking with Trump to back the resolution: Sens. Susan Collins of Maine, Steve Daines of Montana, Mike Lee of Utah, Jerry Moran of Kansas, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Rand Paul of Kentucky and Todd Young of Indiana.

"The bottom line is that the United States should not be supporting a catastrophic war led by a despotic regime with an irresponsible foreign policy," Sanders said on Wednesday from the Senate floor.

He said a vote in favor of the measure would "begin the process of reclaiming our constitutional authority by ending United States involvement in a war that has not been authorized by Congress and is unconstitutional."

In its statement threatening a veto, the White House argued the premise of the resolution is flawed and that it would undermine the fight against extremism. U.S. support for the Saudis does not constitute engaging in "hostilities," the statement said, and the Yemen resolution "seeks to override the president's determination as commander in chief."

"By defining 'hostilities' to include defense cooperation such as aerial refueling," the White House statement said, the Yemen resolution could also "establish bad precedent for future legislation."

Trump's support for Saudi Arabia has been a point of tension with Congress since the killing of U.S.-based journalist Jamal Khashoggi last year. Lawmakers from both parties have criticized Trump for not condemning Saudi Arabia strongly enough for the killing.

Sen. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, addressed those tensions when he urged his colleagues to oppose the measure.

"We should not use this specific vote on a specific policy decision as some proxy for all the Senate's broad feelings about foreign affairs. Concerns about Saudi human rights issues should be directly addressed with the administration and with Saudi officials," McConnell said from the Senate floor.

McConnell argued the Yemen resolution "will not enhance America's diplomatic leverage" and will make it more difficult for the U.S. to help end the conflict in Yemen and minimize civilian casualties.

Sen. James Risch, R-Idaho, who chairs the Foreign Relations Committee, argued that U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition helps facilitate peace talks and withdrawing from the conflict would delay an eventual political settlement.

"We need to stay engaged [in Yemen] with the limited engagement we've had," Risch said.

A similar resolution to end support for the Yemen war passed the Senate in December, but it was not taken up by the then-Republican-controlled House.

Approaching its fifth year, the war in Yemen has killed thousands and left millions on the brink of starvation, creating what the United Nations called the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Connecticut, said before the vote that the resolution "will be seen as a message to the Saudis that they need to clean up their act."

"We are made weaker in the eyes of the world when we willingly participate in war crimes, when we allow our partners to engage in the slaughter of innocents," Murphy said.

Posted

Secret Hezbollah Military unit "the Golan file" exposed at Syria border

Israel Hayom Wednesday Mar 13, 2019

Police shutter Temple Mount after Palestinian firebombing [Posted for Tuesday](#)
Rare closure draws angry reactions across Muslim world • PA president denounces "dangerous Israeli escalation," warns of "serious repercussions" • Turkish FM decries Israeli "recklessness" • [Holy site reopened to worshippers, visitors](#) [Wednesday morning](#).

Associated Press and Israel Hayom Staff // published on [13/03/2019](#)

Palestinians pray as Israeli border police guard the entrance to the Temple Mount, Tuesday | Photo: Reuters

Israeli police closed the entrances to Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site after [Palestinian suspects threw a firebomb at a police station on Tuesday](#). The rare closure drew angry reactions across the Muslim world.

Police later announced that the Temple Mount would reopen to worshippers and visitors Wednesday morning.

There were no injuries reported from the firebombing. Police quickly deployed across the hilltop compound in search of the assailants. Two Palestinian minors were arrested in ensuing scuffles with police.

The incident further heightened tensions at the flashpoint site, home to Al-Aqsa mosque and the gold-topped Dome of the Rock.

Police also restricted entrance to the Old City, home to Jerusalem's most important religious sites, allowing only residents to pass through certain entrances to the Muslim and Christian quarters.

Firas Dibs, spokesman for the waqf, the Jordanian-appointed Islamic body that administers the site, said police had cleared nearly all worshippers from the compound. "All doors are closed and no one is allowed in," he said.

Several dozen worshippers gathered just outside the compound for impromptu prayers as Israeli police stood watch.

Police confirmed two arrests, while Dibs said six people had been arrested and 10 others injured in scuffles with police.

The United Nations Mideast envoy, Nickolay Mladenov, urged both sides to "respect the status quo" at the holy esplanade and exercise restraint "to avoid inflaming an already tense situation."

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas denounced the "dangerous Israeli escalation" and warned of "serious repercussions." In a statement, he called on the international community to intervene.

The closure of the sacred compound also drew censure from Jordan, the custodian of Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. Abdul Nasser Abu Basal, Jordanian minister of Islamic affairs and holy sites, described the barring of Muslim worshippers from the site as "a flagrant assault on all religious values, rights and freedom," and "an attack on all Muslims that touches the entire Islamic nation."

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu lashed out at Israel over the incident, saying it was time to end the country's "recklessness."

"We cannot accept such reckless attacks on holy sites and the whole world needs to react against it," the Turkish state-run Anadolu Agency quoted Çavuşoğlu as saying.

The holy site has experienced a series of tense standoffs in recent weeks after Muslim worshippers reopened an area known as the "Gate of Mercy," closed by Israel in 2003 because it was being used by a heritage group with Hamas affiliations.

The waqf contends that because the heritage group is now defunct, the council should regain full access to the building like any other in the holy esplanade.

Demonstrations have devolved into standoffs with police in recent weeks. Israel has barred several high-ranking waqf officials from the site and police have arrested dozens of Palestinians under suspicions of inciting violence at the site.

Officials in Jordan have confirmed that they are in negotiations with Israel to resolve the dispute. Abbas' office said the Palestinians also were in touch with various sides, including Jordan.

Israel Hayom Wednesday Mar 13, 2019

IDF: Clandestine Hezbollah unit operating on Golan

Unit has been building a terrorist network near the Israel-Syria border since last summer without the knowledge of Syrian President Bashar Assad • IDF officials hope that exposing its existence will force Assad to terminate the threat in its infancy.

Lilach Shoval, News Agencies and Israel Hayom Staff // published on 13/03/2019

Hezbollah fighters march in southern Lebanon. Inset: Ali Mussa Daqduq | Photo: AFP

A secret Hezbollah unit, which it calls "the Golan file," has been building a terrorist network near the Israeli-Syrian border on the Golan Heights, the IDF revealed on Wednesday.

At this stage, the unit focuses primarily on gathering intelligence on the IDF, but intelligence officials say it could also carry out operations against Israel in the future.

The network includes dozens of operatives and is headed by Ali Mussa Daqduq, who joined Hezbollah in 1983 and served in a number of operational positions in southern Lebanon during the IDF presence in the area, as well as other parts of the Middle East.

In Iraq, Daqduq, also known as Abu Hassin Sajd, was imprisoned by American forces after an operation he commanded led to the kidnapping and execution of five American soldiers. Daqduq's fate had vexed American officials after they were forced to hand him over to Baghdad after failing to secure a custody deal ahead of the U.S. military's withdrawal from the country.

At the time, the White House said it had received assurances from Baghdad that Daqduq would be tried for allegedly orchestrating the 2007 kidnapping. But an Iraqi court cleared him of the charges, citing a lack of evidence.

Last summer Daqduq was sent by Hezbollah to Syria to establish the "Golan file."

According to Israeli intelligence officials, Daqduq's unit has been so heavily compartmentalized that even the Assad regime in Syria, and even many elements within Hezbollah itself, were unaware of its existence.

The hope in the IDF is that exposing the unit's existence will lead the Damascus regime to terminate its activities in Syria.

This is not Hezbollah's first attempt at establishing a terrorist network on the Golan Heights. In May of 2013, Syrian President Bashar Assad opened the Golan frontier to Hezbollah to act against Israel, in an effort to divert attention from raging Syrian civil war. Consequently, the Shiite terrorist group initiated campaigns to build terrorist networks in the area, and by 2015 had carried out several terrorist attacks against Israeli forces. According to foreign reports, the men tasked with spearheading these operations, Samir Kuntar and Jihad Mughniyeh, were both assassinated by Israel.

With the end of the civil war in Syria and the return of Assad's forces to the Golan frontier, Hezbollah had lost its legitimacy to maintain a presence there. The organization's leadership, however, decided to establish the secret unit regardless, with better operational capabilities than before, to act against Israel when ordered.

The assessment within the IDF is that the unit's operatives, many of whom formerly served under Kuntar and Mughniyeh and live in villages near the Israel border, are well equipped and could try transferring additional weapons from Lebanon or use Iranian stockpiles already in Syria.

As stated, the Syrian president was unaware of the unit's existence until now, and IDF officials believe he will view it unfavorably, to say the least, as it undermines his authority.

It is important to note that currently there are no concrete warnings of terrorist attacks emanating from the Golan Heights frontier, and one of the main reasons the IDF chose to expose the unit's existence now was to nip the threat in its infancy.

"We are revealing the [terrorist] infrastructure] in such a manner that will knock [Hezbollah] off its chair," a senior IDF officer said.

Posted:

Police shut Temple Mount after firebombing; reopened Wednesday

Israel Hayom Tuesday Mar 12, 2019

Al-Qaida commander warns Arab states over ties with Israel

Senior commander of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula accuses Arab, Persian Gulf states of trying to please Jews and Christians in support of U.S. peace deal he says will finalize "sale of Palestine to the Jews," displace Muslims to Sinai Peninsula.

JNS and Israel Hayom Staff // published on 12/03/2019

Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen in 2014 | Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula senior commander Khaled Batarfi has accused Arab states of rushing to normalize relations with Israel, according to a report by the Middle East Media Research Institute.

In a video published on the Telegram channel of the terrorist group's media arm, Monday, Batarfi called on Muslims to confront their governments militarily and intellectually.

Batarfi accused the governments of Arab and Persian Gulf state government of acting to please Jews and Christians, saying they have "diligently tried to promote the so-called 'deal of the century.'"

He said Egypt's transfer of Tiran and Sanafir Islands to Saudi Arabia and the kingdom's multibillion-dollar Neom City project had been planned "to boost the deal and finalize the sale of Palestine to the Jews and the displacement of the Muslims to the Sinai [Peninsula]."

Batarfi condemned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to Oman and U.S. President Donald Trump's praise of Saudi Arabia in the wake of the murder of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, as well as Trump's acknowledgment of the important role Riyadh plays in the region.

Batarfi asserted that the leaders of the Christians of the Jews "have become lawyers defending Al-Saud" because they are the ones who benefit the most from the Saudi royal family.

He accused Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of "secularizing" Saudi Arabia and promoting "debauchery" by creating the General Entertainment Authority. He condemned the imprisonment of religious clerics and reformers, as well as the hosting of Western priests and rabbis.

Addressing Muslims, Batarfi accused the Saudi crown prince and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed of secularizing their societies in order to "facilitate the

normalization, promote co-existence with the West and Israel ... and to please their Crusader master Trump to keep them in their thrones."

He cited Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirate's position against political Islamist groups and their support of regimes and groups that oppose the Arab Spring as proof that Riyadh and Abu Dhabi intend to "thwart all the attempts at Islam-inspired projects."

He then condemned the UAE and Bahrain's reopening of their embassies in Syria, as well as Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir's visit to Damascus, saying that these actions prove that Arab governments are not concerned about those the Syrian regime killed and that all they care about is "pleasing the Jews and the Christians to secure their thrones."

Batarfi urged Muslims not to remain silent on "this major crime" and to prepare to act to remove these governments from power.

"Remember," he said, "We have scholars, men and women languishing in the prisons of those tyrants, whose crimes were refusing to remain silent against the falsehood of these rulers, and they are awaiting our support for them, and we will be asked if we have let them down."

Posted:

PA cuts High-Level wages to continue terrorist stipend & gather Media Attention

Newsletter Monday March 11, 2019

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PA cuts back wages in terrorist stipend dispute with Israel

Palestinian Authority Finance Minister Shukri Bishara says only the PA's lowest-earning employees, or 40% of its workforce, along with terrorists and their families will continue to be paid in full • "No force on earth can alter that," Bishara says.

Reuters and Israel Hayom Staff

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas | Photo: AFP

The Palestinian Authority is scaling back wages paid to its employees in response to a cash crunch deepened by a dispute with Israel over payments to families of jailed or killed terrorists, it said on Sunday.

Under the 1994 Paris Agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, duties on PA-bound imports are collected by Israel and then transferred to Ramallah. But Israel has recently announced that it would deduct about 5% of the tax revenues it collects on behalf of the PA to punish it for rewarding terrorism.

Israel said the sum represented the amount the PA pays to families of Palestinian terrorists jailed in Israel or killed while carrying out attacks or other security offenses.

Israeli and U.S. officials say the stipends fan Palestinian violence and are scaled so relatives of prisoners serving longer sentences receive larger payments.

After Israel's deduction announcement, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said the PA would not accept any of the tax revenues, which totaled 700 million shekels (\$193 million) in January and account for about half of the authority's budget.

As a result, Palestinian Finance Minister Shukri Bishara said the PA would pay full salaries – which had been due on March 1 – only to its lowest-earning employees, or the 40% of its workforce that takes home 2,000 shekels (\$550) or less a month.

Civil servants earning more than that, including cabinet ministers, will have their wages cut by half, he told a news conference.

However, Bishara said prisoners' families will continue to be paid their full allocations.

"No force on earth can alter that," he told a news conference.

Bishara said the PA will have to take bank loans of between \$50 million to \$60 million for the coming five to six months to weather the crisis.

An Israeli official, commenting on condition of anonymity, said the PA had a cash-flow problem as a result of U.S. cuts in aid to the Palestinians and the tax revenues dispute but that the situation would not spiral out of control.

"The nightmare scenario of the PA collapsing, or of PA security coordination with Israel ceasing, won't happen," the official said. "No one, including us and the United States, would allow that. If need be, we'll look for ways of preventing this."

The U.S. has cut all aid to the Palestinians, including \$360 million it used to give to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinians.

Newsletter Sunday March 10, 2019

Many in UN oppose Israel cutting terror salaries from PA taxes'

U.S. Mideast envoy Jason Greenblatt tells U.N. Security Council PA's decision to reject latest tax transfer only hurting Palestinians • Kuwait's U.N. envoy Mansour Al-Otaibi: Palestinians "have the right ... to do whatever they want with their money."

Associated Press and Israel Hayom Staff // published on 10/03/2019

Kuwait's Ambassador to the U.N. Mansour Al-Otaibi | Photo: AP

An "overwhelming" number of U.N. Security Council members oppose Israel's decision to deduct money that Palestinians transfer to the families of terrorists who carried out attacks on Israel from their monthly tax revenue, Kuwait's U.N. ambassador said Friday.

Mansour Al-Otaibi told reporters after a closed-door council meeting that Israel's action was "in violation of existing bilateral agreements."

U.S. Special Representative for International Negotiations Jason Greenblatt came to New York from Washington to defend close ally Israel.

He told the council that the Palestinian Authority's decision to reject the latest tax transfer was only hurting the Palestinian people because they were rejecting the 95% of the tax revenue that Israel is not withholding, according to a diplomat at the meeting.

Greenblatt said it was "inappropriate" to focus on Israel, which was withholding 5-7% of the monthly tax revenue because of Ramallah's "abhorrent practice" of paying that money "to terrorists and their families," the diplomat said.

Kuwait's Mansour, who called for the Security Council consultations along with Indonesia's U.N. Ambassador Dian Djani, said the Palestinians "have the right ... to do whatever they want with their money."

He said U.N. Middle East envoy Nikolay Mladenov, who briefed the council by video, said "there is a need for mediation on this to solve it."

Mansour said an "overwhelming" number of members of the 15-nation Security Council "think that this is a unilateral decision, it's not acceptable, it's a violation of the Oslo agreement and Paris protocol, and this is Palestinian money."

Indonesia's Djani said Israel's suspension of international observers in Hebron coupled with the withholding of tax revenue were making things "more and more difficult once again for the Palestinian people, so that's why we are raising this issue, because we don't want to continue to escalate an issue."

Djani said Greenblatt told the council that members who disagreed with Israel's decision to withhold the customs revenues were free to discuss it with the Israeli government.

But in the meantime, the diplomat said, Greenblatt asked the Security Council to send a united message to the PA to stop "its irresponsible decision to reject the transfer of the remaining funds."

Posted:

IDF attacks targets in Gaza and two naval vessels in response to rocket fire

Newsletter Sunday March 10, 2019

IDF attacks targets in Gaza in response to rocket fire

Israeli warplanes attack several targets in northern Gaza early Sunday, including a military compound and two naval vessels belonging to Hamas • Soldiers detain two Palestinians hiding a grenade and a knife after they cross the border from Gaza.

Nikki Guttman, News Agencies and Israel Hayom Staff// published on 10/03/2019

An IDF airstrike in Gaza | Photo: EPA

Amid rising tensions, Israeli Air Force jets and other aircraft attacked several targets in the northern Gaza Strip early Sunday, including a military compound in the north of the Strip and two naval vessels belonging to the Hamas terrorist organization.

There was no immediate word on casualties from the strikes, which came after Palestinian terrorists in Gaza fired a rocket at the Eshkol region in southern Israel on Saturday night.

Palestinian media reported several Israeli strikes around 1:30 a.m. in the northern Strip near Beit Lahia, including on a seaside site known as al-Waha.

The IDF said the strikes were in response to the rocket attack, as well as "continuing terror activities from the Strip, including balloon explosives and causing harm to security infrastructure in the last several days.

"Hamas is responsible for everything that happens in and comes out of the Gaza Strip," the IDF said.

Also Saturday, sappers were summoned after a cluster of balloons suspected to be carrying an explosive device, possibly an anti-tank warhead, landed on the Israeli side of the border fence.

Posted For Saturday: March 9

42 wounded in weekly riots along the Gaza border trying to breach the border fence

Meanwhile, residents of the Hof Ashkelon region north of Gaza said Saturday they found a spent bullet shell, possibly from a Kalashnikov rifle, in their living room, seemingly confirming that a large hole torn through an outside wall on Thursday had been caused by gunfire from Gaza.

On Friday, one Palestinian was killed and 42 were wounded while taking part in weekly riots along the Gaza border, the Hamas-run health ministry in Gaza said.

The IDF said over 8,000 Palestinians took part in the demonstration, during which rocks and improvised explosives were thrown at soldiers on duty. Some of the rioters tried to breach the border fence.

An IDF spokesman said soldiers "responded with riot dispersal means and fired in accordance with standard operating procedures."

The IDF also said it detained two Palestinians shortly after they crossed the border from Gaza. They were hiding a grenade and a knife in their clothes, the military said.

Egyptian officials, who have frequently brokered cease-fires between Israel and Hamas, have been shuttling between the sides to try to restore calm, a Palestinian official told Reuters.