

By contrast, Hamas targets Israeli civilians from within its own civilian areas, thus committing a double war crime.

To equate the necessary, responsible and measured actions of a democratic nation to protect and defend its citizens, with the actions of a terrorist organization to murder civilians is morally reprehensible.

There can be no justification for the wanton murder and torture of Israeli civilians as witnessed over recent days; the ISIS style slaughter of babies, children, women, and the elderly, the raping of women, the degradation and desecration of bodies, kidnappings and beheadings.

Israel has sought to establish lasting peace with the Palestinians numerous times but the Palestinian leadership in the West Bank and Gaza has been unwilling.

The true situation in Gaza needs to be understood. Hamas has powerful forces behind it - it is backed by Iran and funded by Qatar. They are part of a wider network of terrorists in the Middle East and Israel is but one front in a broader conflict.

Israel is a small democratic nation that cherishes life and freedom. Civilized societies must recognise Israel's struggle as a fight for survival against a barbaric genocidal foe.

Those of goodwill, decency and western values must stand with Israel as she responds to an attack by radical Islamist aggressors who seek her annihilation.

Put together by Dr Sheree Trotter
Indigenous Coalition for Israel

Vigil for Israel in Hastings

Spokesperson:

Pastor Nigel Woodley

nigel@fortheProtectionofzion.com

FAQs on the current situation in Israel - Oct. 2023

How did the latest fighting start? The missiles started in the early hours of Saturday 7th of October Israel time. It was Shabbat, Simchat Torah, and the end of the Jewish festival of Succot. Most Israeli's were asleep at home, on holiday, or getting ready to celebrate. Terrorists from the Hamas terrorist organisation (who control the Gaza strip) fired missiles into Israel and within just a couple of hours, over 3000 rockets had been launched and hit residential areas of the country. Following this, an invasion began with individuals from Gaza crossing over the border to attack, murder, and take hostages. This unprovoked attack was designed to take Israel by surprise on a Holy day in the Jewish calendar in order to kill and take hostage as many Israelis as possible.

Hamas have shown little interest in peace and instead promote the end of Israel and the death of Jews.

Who is fighting against Israel? There are several terrorist organisations fighting against Israel. The main one is Hamas, the ruling party in the Gaza Strip and the main group behind the recent attacks. Hamas charter calls for the destruction of Israel and death to Jews. Hamas do not also represent all Palestinians.

How did this all start? The Palestinian – Israeli conflict has been going on for over 75 years, since before the re-birth of Israel. Israel has on many occasions offered the Palestinians the opportunity for their own country, but each time the Palestinians have said no. The Gaza Strip (a small piece of land near bordering both Israel and Egypt) was under Israeli control from 1967 – 2005 when Israel withdrew from the land. In 2007, Hamas took over after a bloody coup (overthrow) of the Palestinian Authority. Since then, Hamas and Israel have had several mini wars usually resulting from Hamas sending over rockets and missiles to Israel.

Hamas does not accept the right of Israel to exist and this is their latest and most extreme attempt to overthrow Israel.

Does Israel have a right to respond? All countries and people have a right to defend themselves when experiencing an unprovoked and unexpected attack. Hamas has attacked Israel on several occasions since taking control of Gaza. However, nothing has been on this scale with over 300 Israelis murdered and over 150 kidnapped and taken hostage back in Gaza.

Nearly every democratic country in the world, including New Zealand, has condemned Hamas's actions and have agreed that Israel has the right to defend itself and its people.

Should we care from New Zealand about what happens in Israel? Yes, many of us in the Jewish community have family and friends in Israel. There are also many similarities between Israel and New Zealand. Both are relatively small countries. Both are democracies and like Israel, New Zealand has experienced a bloody terrorist attack. Israel is fighting a war against terrorism which could affect anyone at any time across the world. Not only this, but whether it is Israel, NZ, Ukraine, or even in Gaza, no one deserves to face the horrors and atrocities that have occurred and have their democratic right to security and safety taken away from them. Having empathy for anyone in such a situation is important to ensure situations such as this do not go unnoticed.

I've often heard that Israel is an apartheid state and responsible for the genocide of the Palestinians. Is there any truth in this? No, this is a slur to try and create hatred against the world's only Jewish State. Everyone who is a citizen of Israel, regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, sexual persuasion etc has full rights in Israel. No one is excluded from voting or excluded from education or jobs. There is no segregation and in general people get along with each other. Like all countries, Israel is not perfect, but it is not apartheid.

What about the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip or Judea and Samaria (also known as The West Bank)? Israel has no presence in Gaza and the Palestinians who live there are under the rule of Hamas. In Judea and Samara/ The West Bank, the large majority of the Palestinians largely live under the rule of the Palestinian Authority. They are not Israeli therefore they are not entitled to vote in Israeli elections just like Israelis are not entitled to vote in their elections. Whilst the Hamas do not allow for elections, the same rule would apply if they did. This is no different to other countries like here or in England.

Put together by Rob Berg
Zionist Federation of New Zealand

The Islamic Women's Council of New Zealand issued a statement on 9 October 2023 in response to the Hamas attack on Israel on 7 October during the Jewish festival, Simchat Torah. We are dismayed by the falsehoods and moral confusion of the IWCNZ statement and must respond to some of the claims.

Gaza is not occupied by Israel:

In 2005, Israel unilaterally withdrew from ALL of Gaza, leaving the entire area for the Palestinian Arabs to self-govern. All political and military presence was withdrawn and all Jewish people with Israeli citizenship were uprooted from their homes. Israel left behind thriving businesses hoping they would benefit the Gazans. All such infrastructure was immediately destroyed.

Within less than a year of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, the Palestinian Arabs elected Hamas, a radical Islamist organisation, whose charter unequivocally calls for the annihilation of Israel. Gaza became a terror outpost. Hamas invested much of their resources *NOT* into building schools, highways, or hospitals for the benefit of their own people, but into methods for killing Jews: from rockets to terror tunnels.

In response, Israel established a blockade in order to prevent the flow of weapons. Former NZ PM Geoffrey Palmer, in a UN Security Council report, deemed the blockade a justifiable defensive measure. However, Israel has facilitated the free flow of the necessary material supplies into Gaza and Israel has for many years supplied water and electricity to its people. In recent years Israel has issued many thousands of work permits to allow Gazans to work inside Israel.

Stated or implied moral equivalence between the IDF and Hamas is reprehensible:

The IDF has been called "the most moral army in the world" for the reason that it goes above and beyond in order to protect civilian life. It even sends warnings before bombing terrorist infrastructure. Colonel Richard Kemp, former commander of the British forces in Afghanistan, stated that during Operation Cast Lead for example, the Israeli Defence Forces "*did more to safeguard the rights of civilians in a combat zone than any other army in the history of warfare*".