



ISRAEL MATTERS!

Publication of the Israel Affairs Committee of Temple Beth Sholom
1809 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT 06517-1401



Special Issue: Pillar of Defense
Updated through: November 20, 2012

Special Issue: Israel - Operation Pillar of Defense



www.aipac.org



UPDATE THROUGH TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2012 [Blue text and pictures are clickable links]:

- ◆ [New Haven area holds rally in support of Israel](#) [New Haven Register]



ABOVE: Shael Glazier, left, and her son, Jeffrey-Zion, 11, of New Haven listen to U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal speak at the We Stand With Israel: Freedom From Fear rally Tuesday at the Jewish Community Center of Greater New Haven. BELLOW: Blumenthal, D-Conn., speaks at Tuesday's rally in Woodbridge.



- ◆ [Media "Wall of Shame"](#)

- ◆ [Iron Dome continues to draw praise](#)

- ◆ [AIPAC](#) update: Today (11/20/12) saw more violence and bloodshed in Israel. [Rocket and mortar fire from Gaza killed an IDF soldier and a Bedouin civilian](#), as over 140 rockets rained down on Israel throughout the day. Six people were injured after an apartment building was struck in the central city of Rishon Letzion, and another eight people were wounded when rockets hit buildings in Ashkelon and Ashdod.

Also today, Hamas once again [fired rockets toward Jerusalem](#), a city not only holy to Jews and Christians, but also

- ◆ [Donate: New Haven Jewish Federation — Israel Terror Relief Fund](#)



- ◆ [Image of injured Israeli child used by Palestinian propagandists:](#)



the third holiest city in Islam. One of the rockets hit an open area of a Palestinian village in the West Bank—yet another reminder of Hamas' general disregard for innocent civilians, whoever they may be.

In the past few years, the range of Hamas' rockets has increased dramatically, enabling the group to target both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, Israel's two most populous cities. Making matters worse, the culprit behind this frightening development is none other than Iran.

Iran has supplied Hamas with [sophisticated weapons like Fajr-5 rockets](#), which have a range of about 45 miles and are fired by trained crews from underground launching pads. [Assembled locally after being shipped from Iran to Sudan](#), the rockets are trucked across the desert through Egypt, broken down into parts and moved through Sinai tunnels into Gaza.

Of course, Tehran's involvement is no surprise. Iran has been Hamas' main patron for years, just as it has been the primary sponsor of other terrorist organizations throughout the Middle East and beyond. From the supply of funding and weaponry to Hizballah in Lebanon to its direct involvement in the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, there are ample reasons why Iran has been defined for years as the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. The current situation is just a small sample of what the region and the world will face if the Iranian regime is allowed to obtain a nuclear weapons capability.

- ◆ [Statement from the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs explaining Operation Pillar of Defense](#)
- ◆ [News from the Israel Defense Forces](#)
- ◆ [White House condemns Hamas over rocket attacks into Israel \(with embedded video\)](#)
- ◆ [Video: Young Girl from Ashkelon Explains Emergency Situation to Foreign Diplomats](#)
- ◆ [Video: IDF Pinpoint Strike on Ahmed Jabari, Head of Hamas Military Wing \(Source: Israel Defense Forces\)](#)
- ◆ [Video: Exposing faked propaganda video from Gaza](#) and [UPDATE: BBC and CNN React to Pallywood Video Footage](#)
- ◆ [Videos \(4\) of Israel's "Iron Dome" anti-rocket defense system in action](#)

For those wishing to donate to support Israel during the current crisis, the following charities are worthy of your consideration:

- [American Friends of Magen David Adom](#)
- [Friends of the IDF](#)
- [The Libi Fund](#)
- [Zaka](#)
- [The Lone Soldier Center](#)

Information provided by The Jewish Federations of North America:

The Israel office of The Jewish Federations of North America continues to follow closely the continued severe violence in the South of Israel as Operation Pillar of Defense enters its third day.

In the last twenty four hours, over 250 rockets have been fired at the State of Israel, landing in the South and in the greater Tel Aviv area. The Israel Air Force has targeted over 450 terror activity sites in Gaza with the aim of impairing terrorists' rocket launching capability.

Homefront Security Minister, Avi Dichter warned Thursday evening "We're on our way to a night that won't be quiet" and that "This is no time for indifference." He expects hundreds of rockets to be fired from Gaza to Israel over the next days.

Rockets have been hitting Southern Israel since Saturday, with over 250 rockets on Thursday alone. The Iron Dome Defense system has intercepted more than 130 rockets headed towards populated areas and the IDF is readying to deploy a fifth battery. Intended for use starting 2013, the fifth, more advanced, battery of the Iron Dome is needed earlier.

Thursday night, a rocket hit near Bat Yam, landing in the sea. The sirens sounded in Tel Aviv, for the first time since the 1991 Gulf War, bringing home to Tel Aviv the immediacy of the violence inflicted on the periphery. Sirens were also heard in Rishon Letzion, Israel's fourth largest city, and in Holon, cities both very close to Tel Aviv.

Defense Minister Ehud Barak said in reference to the continued rocket fire that “From our experience there is no ‘quick fix’, and this test will continue, a test which we must face with resilience and composure. We are all family. And today in Tel Aviv, we are feeling something that over one million Israelis have been feeling for a long time, especially in these days.”

The IDF suspended strikes over Gaza for three hours during Egyptian Prime Minister Hisham Kandil’s visit to Gaza today. Kandil was sent by President Morsi and condemned Israel’s airstrikes on Gaza.

Rockets have scored direct hits on homes and vehicles today and the emotional trauma suffered by the besieged Israeli citizens is severe. 25 Israelis were rescued after the building they were in collapsed on top of them. Yesterday, Aharon Smadga, 49, Itzik Amsalem, 24, and Mira Sharf, 26 were killed after a rocket attack directly hit their apartment in Kiryat Malachi.

Mira Sharf was visiting Israel from New Delhi where she served as a Chabad emissary with her husband. She came with her husband and three children to mark the anniversary of the 2008 attack on the Mumbai Chabad House which killed nine, including Rabbi Gavriel and Rivka Holtzberg and was due to give birth in a few weeks. Her husband and 4-year-old son were seriously injured.

Hundreds of soldiers from the Paratroops, Golani, and Givati Brigades and Armored Corps units, have been transferred to the Gaza border in preparation for a possible wide ground offensive. Right now 16,000 reservists have been called up in response to a “Tsav 9” call-up of reservists. Tsav 9 is a limited emergency call up, similar to a “Tsav 8” but smaller in number. 14,000 more reservists may be called up in addition. Families are adapting to the anxiety and pressures this demands.

Operation Pillar of Defense is working to reduce Hamas’ ability to launch Fajar-5 rockets. Fajar-5 rockets are able to strike further across the country and target more people.

The IDF continues to distribute leaflets to Gazan citizens advising them to distance themselves from terrorists in the coming days.

President Peres addressed the targeting of Ahmed Jabari yesterday by the IDF and the strikes against Hamas’ weapons and said, “The IDF operated with the utmost effort to avoid civilian casualties. Jabari was an arch-murderer and responsible for terror attacks and the killing of many. I salute the IDF and the security services for their accurate, surgical, and strategically important operation.”

Despite Operation Pillar of Defense and the onslaught of rockets pounding the millions of Israelis, Israel has not stopped providing electricity and water to Gaza as well as medical care for Palestinians who need it.

President Peres said, “There is no nation that loves peace and hates bloodshed like Israel, our enemies are not the people of Gaza, our enemies are not the Muslim people. Our enemies are the terrorists who operate without reason and without thought.” The President stressed that Israel’s hand is outstretched for peace but that Israel will do whatever is necessary to protect her citizens, “The world is beginning to understand that we are operating with responsibility and we do not take human life lightly. I don’t know any country that would show restraint for as long as Israel did during the attacks on the south.”

The Jewish Agency for Israel is preparing relief for a thousand new immigrant youth living in Jewish Agency absorption centers and 23,500 students between 1st and 12th grades throughout Beersheva, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Kiryat Gat, Ibim, and Arad, the center of the conflict, who will be in dire need of a break from the escalating security situation. The Jewish Agency for Israel is also preparing special group psychological interventions for parents and children for those suffering from emotional trauma.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) is preparing emergency kits for elderly and the disabled in the afflicted regions, in addition to working with emergency case workers who provide elderly and disabled with emotional and physical support so that they can stay in their homes during the sirens. The JDC is also delivering food to the elderly as day care centers are not able to run currently, running activities for children in shelters and settling in place post trauma interventions for children.

The Israel Trauma Coalition is running phone hot-lines, setting in place group workshops for children and parents, team training and support for those in the field, direct care for those in need in coordination with local councils.

Radio stations are announcing rocket attacks and on some stations the broadcasting is interrupted constantly by sirens and alerts. The Israel Broadcasting Authority will operate a radio frequency (531 AM) during Shabbat house that will be silent except for emergency announcements. This arrangement is used only in times of severe national emergency.

Israeli social media has been put to good use in aiding citizens in finding alternative accommodations, offering their homes and even locations for weddings. Israel's center for coordinating public diplomacy efforts continues to fight against propagated falsehoods on Facebook, Twitter, and other media avenues.

The Jewish Federations of North America have donated \$5 million to the Fund for the Victims of Terror in Israel to assist those Israeli citizens currently living under a constant threat of danger and also have set up an SMS system for donating via your cellphone. You can text ISRAEL to 51818.

JFNA and JCPA held a call Thursday with Lt. Col. Avital Leibovich, head of the International Media & Communications Branch of the IDF Spokespersons Unit who explained the situation and encouraged all abroad to fight Israel's media battle by combating the falsehoods and misconceptions in the press.

More information on Operation Pillar of Defense can be found at:

- <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4306430,00.html>
- <http://www.timesofisrael.com/southern-israel-under-fire-air-force-strikes-terrorist-targets-in-gaza/>
- <http://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-forces-pound-gaza-strip-from-the-air-after-missiles-threaten-tel-aviv-region/>