



Genocide Watch
The Alliance Against Genocide

Genocide Warning: Israel-Palestine 18 May 2021

The current conflict between Israel and Hamas militants in Gaza has caused hundreds of civilian deaths. The threat is compounded by an eruption of religious violence between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel.

Both the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and Hamas are committing war crimes. Since May 10, Hamas has launched [more than 3,700 rockets](#) into Israel. Hamas rockets have killed 12 Israeli civilians, including two children. Hamas targets civilian areas, a war crime under the Geneva Conventions, Additional Protocol II, Article 13.

Israel was created by the United Nations and has a right to defend itself. Israel has responded to Hamas rockets with bombing that targets Hamas leaders and tunnels. Nighttime bombing without evacuation warnings to civilians violates Geneva Conventions, Additional Protocol I, Article 51 (5b). Despite IDF claims that it seeks to minimize civilian casualties, the civilian death toll in Gaza has now [reached 212](#) in May 2021, including over 100 women and children. IDF airstrikes have destroyed civilian infrastructure in Gaza and displaced over [52,000 Gazans](#).

Since 2006 when Hamas won elections in Gaza, the IDF has killed more than [4,000 Palestinians](#) in military campaigns in Gaza. Israel has imposed a suffocating [15-year blockade](#) on the two million residents of Gaza.

Hamas rockets and Palestinian terrorist attacks have killed over 1000 Israelis since 2000. Hamas leaders and the Hamas covenant express genocidal intentions, explicitly calling for the [destruction of the state of Israel](#). Since 2000, Israeli forces have killed [over 10,000 Palestinians](#) in the West Bank and Gaza.

The latest Israel-Gaza conflict erupted over eviction of Palestinian families from East Jerusalem's [Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood](#). Palestinian protests were met by Israeli restrictions on access to Muslim holy sites during Ramadan. Israeli police and ultra-nationalist groups, including the [Jewish extremist organization Lehava](#), clashed with Palestinians, and chanted "Death to Arabs." This incitement was [supported by right-wing parliamentarian](#), Itamar Ben-Gvir, who called for "disloyal Arabs" to be "[thrown] out of the country."

Israeli police [stormed the Al-Aqsa mosque](#), injuring hundreds of Palestinians during evening Ramadan prayers. This Israeli invasion of the third-holiest site in Islam provoked the first round of May Hamas rocket fire.

[Riots in Jewish-Arab cities](#) such as Lod, Haifa, and Bat Yam, long hailed as centers of Jewish-Arab coexistence, caused destruction of property, including "Jewish" and "Arab" shops and [attacks on synagogues](#). The IDF responded to protests in the West Bank with live fire, [killing at least 20 Palestinians](#).

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Jewish nationalist partners have [systematically discriminated](#) against Israel's Arab population. The [2018 "Basic Law"](#) removed Arabic as an official language of Israel. It defines Israeli self-determination as uniquely for the Jewish people, excluding Israel's 21 percent Arab minority.

Genocide Watch recognizes the situation in Israel-Palestine to be at **Stage 3: Discrimination, Stage 6: Polarization, and Stage 8: Persecution**.

To prevent further violence in Israel and Palestine, Genocide Watch recommends:

- The Israeli government and Hamas must seek an immediate ceasefire to prevent the further loss of civilian life and destruction of civilian infrastructure in Israel and in Gaza.
- Israeli and Palestinian officials must relaunch direct talks in a peace process that seeks a just resolution to their conflict based on the national, political, and human rights of both Israelis and Palestinians.
- Israel must halt the expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and stop the dispossession of Palestinians, including those in Sheikh Jarrah.
- The United States should condition its annual \$4 billion in military aid and weapons sales to Israel on Israeli adherence to a ceasefire, peace talks, and a halt to new Jewish settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.