



Israel's Operation Swords of Iron Update December 1, 2023

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JINSA's [Israel at War](#) webpage is a dedicated resource for analysis, commentary, webinars, and media coverage about the 10/7 attacks and the ensuing Israel-Hamas conflict. Yesterday, JINSA hosted a [webinar](#) with JINSA Vice President for Policy Blaise Misztal and two JINSA Distinguished Fellows, IDF MG (ret.) Amikam Norkin and IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, about the developing situation in Israel and Gaza and the latest in the pause in combat negotiations. An update with the latest information and analysis about the war is below.

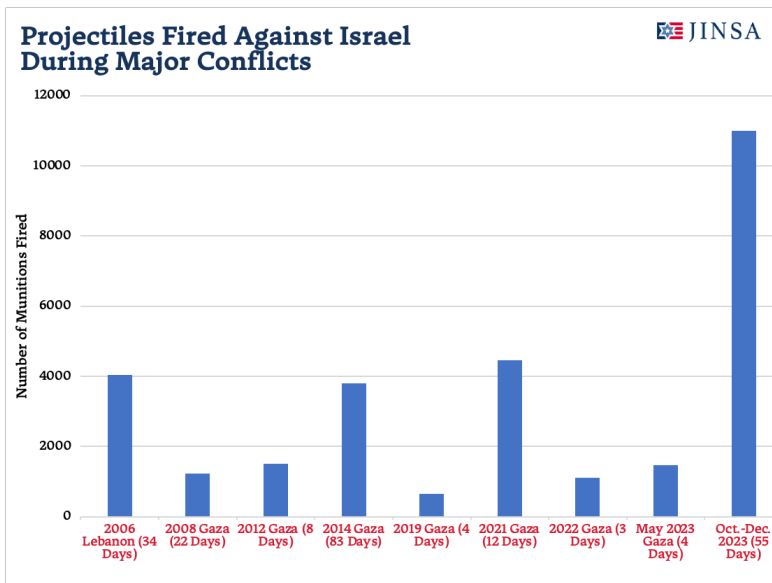
Analysis

- After being extended twice despite repeated violations of the deal by Hamas and other Iran-backed groups, rocket fire from Gaza and Hamas's failure to provide a list of hostages it planned to release during the eighth round of swaps ended the seven-day pause in combat on December 1.
 - » JINSA Distinguished Fellow and former Israeli national security advisor IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror had argued during JINSA's [webinar](#) on November 30 that "it is towards the end of the ceasefire ... it is in the next 48 hours that it will be the end of the present agreement ... [and] it is clear that [southern Gaza] is a place to which we have to go because part of [Hamas] leadership and for sure part of [its] infrastructure is there."
- Israel's combat operations will reportedly soon focus on the southern part of the Gaza Strip in the coming days, which may create tension with senior U.S. officials who have cautioned Israel against full-scale operations in the south over humanitarian concerns.
 - » U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken [reportedly](#) said during a November 30 meeting with Israeli war cabinet members that "you can't operate in southern Gaza in the way you did in the north. There are two million Palestinians there," and added that the Israeli government does not have the "credit" to continue combat operations for months in order to dismantle Hamas.
 - » On JINSA's November 30 [webinar](#), MG (ret.) Amidror noted that Israel is open to suggestions about how to conduct combat operations, stating "we are ready to listen and to learn [from the United States]. If it [is] a good idea, we will adopt it. Up to now, we did not hear anything that should change the way we are conducting the war in Gaza."

Last 24 Hours

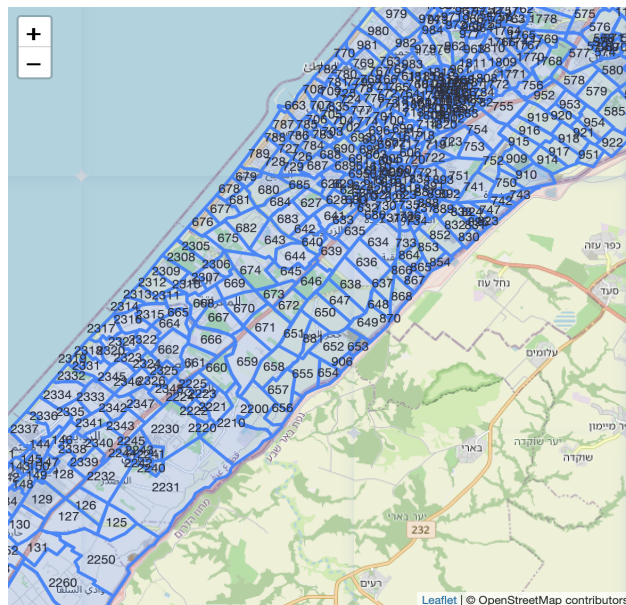
Attacks Against Israel

- At least [11,000](#) rockets, mortars, drones, and other projectiles have been fired from Gaza during the war.
- Terrorists [fired](#) several rockets from Gaza at roughly 6 am local time on December 1, violating the deal, which was still in place until 7 am local time (12 am EST). Rocket attacks on Israeli cities then resumed approximately an hour later, with terrorists launching roughly [50 rockets](#) at Israel during the morning of December 1.
 - » These were the first rocket attacks from Gaza since the pause went into effect on November 24.
 - » Previously, terrorists in Gaza had violated the pause in combat by attacking Israeli ground troops, and other Iran-backed terrorists, namely Hezbollah in Lebanon, had attacked Israel during the last week.
 - » Rockets struck Mefalsim, and sirens [sounded](#) in [Netivot](#), Ashkelon, Holit, and Sderot.
 - On December 1, a rocket [launched](#) from the Gaza Strip struck the town of Mefalsim, causing property damage.
 - » On December 1, five IDF soldiers were [injured](#) by a mortar strike near the town of Nirim. Three were listed in moderate condition and two others suffered minor injuries.
- On December 1, sirens [sounded](#) in Shear Yeshuv, HaGoshrim, Dafna and Beit Hillel in the Upper Galilee, and the IDF said that it [intercepted](#) a “suspicious aerial target” that was fired from Lebanon.
- On November 30, *the New York Times* [reported](#) that it had reviewed a Hamas battle plan for October 7 that Israel had obtained over a year in advance of the attacks.
 - » The roughly 40-page Hamas blueprint was followed extremely closely on October 7, and called for storming IDF outposts and bases around the Gaza Strip, using drones to knock out automated machine guns and security cameras around the border, and for terrorists to enter Israel using motorcycles, paragliders, and on foot.
 - » The document, which did not set a date for the attack, also had extensive details about Israeli military communications and the locations of IDF forces and assets, including sensitive information, reportedly raising questions of whether there were leaks in the Israeli security establishment.
 - » The battle plan was circulated widely among top Israeli intelligence and military leaders, but was dismissed as too ambitious and sophisticated for Hamas to carry out.
 - An Israeli military assessment of the document from earlier in the year reviewed by *the New York Times* said it was unclear whether the plan was a real objective of Hamas.
 - The report stated that in July, a number of Israeli intelligence experts were alerted by an analyst that dozens of Hamas operatives had conducted training simulating the storming of kibbutzim and IDF bases, but a colonel in the Gaza division said it was “imaginative” and unlikely Hamas could pull off such an attack.



IDF Operations

- After terrorists in Gaza launched rockets against Israel early on December 1, the IDF [resumed](#) its combat operations in Gaza at 7:00 am local time and indicated that civilians should leave Hamas's strongholds in southern Gaza.
 - » On December 1, the IDF's ground, air, and naval forces [struck](#) over 200 targets in the northern and southern parts of the Gaza Strip, including Khan Yunis and Rafah.
 - » The IDF [published](#) a map on its Arabic-language X account on December 1 showing the Gaza Strip being split up into hundreds of combat zones, which it said it would use to notify civilians of active combat areas. The post asked civilians to regularly check for IDF updates about the map.
 - » The IDF [dropped](#) leaflets across Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on December 1 asking civilians to move south to Rafah and stating that Khan Yunis is dangerous.



Source: [Israel Defense Forces](#)

- The IDF said that overnight it [arrested](#) 23 suspects, including 10 Hamas members, and seized military equipment, Hamas flags, and NIS 250,000 dedicated to terrorist activities.
- On November 30, the IDF [fired](#) an interceptor missile at a “suspicious” aerial target in southern Israel, likely a drone.

Humanitarian Efforts

- After [reports](#) that Israel and Hamas had agreed to extend the deal to swap hostages and prisoners for another day, Hamas failed to provide a list of hostages it planned to release during the eighth round of swaps that would have taken place on December 1. Rocket attacks from Gaza ended the pause.
 - » Prime Minister Netanyahu’s office released a [statement](#) that Hamas “violated the framework, did not meet its obligation to release all hostage women, and fired rockets at Israel ... Amid the return to combat, we stress the government of Israel is committed to achieving the goals of the war—releasing our hostages, eliminating Hamas, and ensuring that Gaza can never again threaten the people of Israel.”
 - » Khalil al-Hayya, a member of the terror group’s politburo in Qatar [claimed](#) that Israel had wanted “female recruits” released as part of the next hostage and prisoner swap, a likely reference to civilians.
- During the seventh round of swaps on the evening of November 30, Hamas [released](#) eight hostages and Israel released 30 Palestinians from Israeli prisons.
 - » Hamas released Ayesha Alzyadna, 17; Bilal Alzyadna, 18; Nili Margalit, 41; Mia Schem, 21; Ilana Gritzewsky, 30; Shani Goren, 29; Amit Soussana, 40; and Sapir Cohen, 29.
 - » Hamas had indicated that it would [release](#) two Russian-Israeli citizens, as it had done on November 29, as a gesture of goodwill to Russian President Vladimir Putin. However, it failed to do so.
 - » According to the Qatari foreign ministry, Israel [accepted](#) the release of eight, rather than 10 hostages as the pause in combat deal required, because Hamas had previously released two additional hostages on November 29.
- The [pause](#) in combat was extended two times and lasted seven days, during which Hamas released [105 civilian](#) hostages, including 81 Israelis, 23 Thai nationals, and 1 Filipino national, in exchange for 210 Palestinian prisoners.

Casualties and Hostages

- Over 1,200 people in Israel have been [killed](#) and another 6,900 have been injured in the war.
 - » 395 Israeli soldiers have been [killed](#).
 - 77 IDF soldiers have been [killed](#) during ground combat in Gaza so far.
 - » 2,005 Israeli soldiers have been [injured](#) in the war
 - » Numerous foreign nationals have been killed in the war, including at least 31 [American](#) nationals, 34 [Thai](#) nationals, 39 [French](#) nationals, 19 [Russian](#) nationals, 12 [British](#) nationals, 10 [Nepalese](#) nationals, 9 [Argentinian](#) nationals, 6 [Canadian](#) nationals, 4 [Philippines](#) nationals, 4 [Austrian](#) nationals, 4 [Romanian](#) nationals, 4 [Portuguese](#) nationals, 4 [Chinese](#) nationals, 3 [Brazilian](#) nationals, 3 [Belarusian](#) nationals, 3 [Italian](#)

nationals, 3 [Peruvian](#) nationals, a [Cambodian](#) national, a [Chilean](#) national, an [Irish](#) national, a [Spanish](#) national, an [Australian](#) national, an [Azeri](#) national, a [Honduran](#) national, a [Swiss](#) national, and a [Turkish](#) national.

- According to unverified figures from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Health Ministry, over 15,000 people have been [killed](#) in Gaza and 6,900 have been injured during the war.
- On October 25, President Biden [cautioned](#) against trusting Gaza Health Ministry casualty figures, stating: “I have no notion that the Palestinians are telling the truth about how many people are killed ... I have no confidence in the number that the Palestinians are using.”
- According to the Palestinian Authority-run Palestinian Ministry of Health, 241 people have been [killed](#) and an additional 3,283 have been wounded in the West Bank.
- The IDF [claims](#) that it has killed at least 1,500 infiltrators from Gaza since the start of the war.
- So far, [105](#) hostages in Gaza have been released, [one](#) has been rescued by the IDF, and [seven](#) have been [found](#) dead.
 - » 81 Israeli hostages have been released.
 - » 46 hostages with foreign nationalities—some also holding Israeli citizenship—have been released.
 - Thus far, 23 [Thai](#) nationals, 6 [Argentinian](#) nationals, 5 [German](#) nationals, 3 [French](#) nationals, 4 [Russian](#) nationals, 1 [Dutch](#) national, 1 [Filipino](#) national, 1 [Mexican](#) national, 1 [Uruguayan](#) national, and 1 [American](#) national have been released.
 - Hamas has released [36 children](#) and still holds two as hostages.
- Terrorists in Gaza currently [hold](#) roughly 137 hostages, including 115 men, 20 women and two children, according to Israeli government spokesperson Eylon Levy. 10 hostages are 75 and older, 126 are Israeli, and 11 are foreign nationals, including eight from Thailand.
 - » Many of the hostages are foreign or dual nationals, including up to 9 [American](#) nationals, 6 [German](#) nationals, 13 [Thai](#) nationals, 4 [Portuguese](#) nationals, 3 [British](#) nationals, 2 [Italian](#) nationals, 4 [Romanian](#) nationals, and 2 [Mexican](#) nationals.
- On November 30, Hamas [released](#) a propaganda video of hostage Yarden Bibas, who Hamas abducted along with his family on October 7.
- According to the uncle of brothers Yagil and Or Yaakov, who Hamas released earlier this week, Hamas [burned](#) children on the exhaust of a motorbike to brand them so that they were recognizable if they tried to escape.

Iranian Involvement and Response

- During Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani [posted](#) on X that “the political and legal responsibility for the continuation of the aggression and massacre” is on Israel, the United States, and “a few governments that support this apartheid regime,” a reference to Israel.

U.S. and International Response

- During a November 30 press conference in the U.S. Embassy to Israel in Jerusalem, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken [said](#) the Biden administration’s “immediate focus is on

working with our partners to extend the pause” in the Israel-Hamas war to enable the release of additional hostages and entrance of more humanitarian aid to Gaza.

- » He insisted that “we will not stop working until we get every hostage back home with their families and loved ones,” noted that the quantity of aid entering Gaza is “significantly” up, and said that the United States still backs Israel’s goal to topple Hamas, arguing that the November 30 deadly shooting in Jerusalem targeting Israelis “underscored” Hamas’s intentions.
- » Blinken said further that Israel should create safe areas that Palestinians in southern Gaza can utilize to avoid Israel’s presumably forthcoming military operations.
- » He argued, “the way Israel defends itself matters,” and “as I told the prime minister, intent matters, but so do results.”
- Secretary Blinken [reportedly](#) said during a November 30 meeting with Israeli war cabinet members that “you can’t operate in southern Gaza in the way you did in the north. There are two million Palestinians there. You need to evacuate fewer people from their homes, be more accurate in the attacks, not hit UN facilities, and ensure that there are enough protected areas [for civilians]. And if not? Then not to attack where there is a civilian population. What is your system of operation?”
 - » According to the leaked remarks, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzl Halevi responded, “we follow a number of principles—proportionality, distinction, and the laws of war. There were instances where we attacked on the basis of those principles, and instances where we decided not to attack, because we waited for a better opportunity.”
 - » Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said, “the entire Israeli society is united behind the goal of dismantling Hamas, even if it takes months,” but Secretary Blinken retorted, “I don’t think you have the credit for that.”
 - » Secretary Blinken also said, “you don’t want the Palestinian Authority on the day after. We understand that. The best way to kill an idea is to bring a better idea. The other states in the region need to know what you are planning,” to which Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, “as long as I’m sitting in this chair, the Palestinian Authority, which supports, educates and finances terror, will not rule Gaza on the day after Hamas.”
 - » During JINSA’s [webinar](#) on November 30, JINSA Distinguished Fellow IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror: “we are ready to listen and to learn [from the United States]. If it [is] a good idea, we will adopt it. Up to now, we did not hear anything that should change the way we are conducting the war in Gaza.”
- On November 30, Secretary Blinken met with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, where they [discussed](#) the “urgent need for measures to improve the security and freedom of Palestinians in the West Bank,” according to the U.S. readout.
- On November 30, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby [said](#), “we continue to believe that Israel has a right and responsibility to go after Hamas. They have said very clearly that when these pauses are over, they intend to go back at it. As they make that decision, they’ll continue to find support from the United States in terms of the tools and capabilities, the weapons systems that they need as well as the advice and the perspectives that we can offer in terms of urban warfare.”
 - » However, Kirby also said, “we have been very consistent and clear with our Israeli counterparts that we do not support a move to the south unless or until they have adequately accounted for the protection of innocent human life, civilian life in southern

Gaza, with the understanding that there's a whole heck of a lot more innocent civilians in southern Gaza than there were a week or two ago ... What we're urging Israel to do is to make sure there's appropriate accounting for that and additional safety measures in place."

- » He clarified that the United States supports further fighting pauses but not a permanent ceasefire. He also surmised that the November 30 shooting in Jerusalem was not a violation of the pause but a reminder of the threat that Israel faces.
- On November 30, Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen [announced](#) that Israel would be recalling the Israeli ambassador to Spain after Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez [said](#) on November 29 that he has "serious doubt [Israel] is complying with international humanitarian law" and that "what we are seeing in Gaza is not acceptable."

Rising Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and Protests

- On November 30, *The Times of Israel* [reported](#) that a federal grand jury had indicted a Las Vegas man after he made antisemitic threats against Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV) and her family and the family of another senator.
- On November 30, local news [reported](#) that the NYPD was seeking information in connection to a string of antisemitic assaults that occurred on November 25 in Brooklyn, New York. In the span of an hour, three young men punched and kicked three victims in separate attacks.
- On November 30, Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascón [announced](#) that 44-year-old Daniel Garcia had been charged with threatening to kill a Jewish family in their home in an antisemitic attack. At approximately 5:20 AM on October 25, Garcia had attempted to break into the family's house, shouting antisemitic slurs and threatening to "kill Jews."
- On November 30, police in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, [responded](#) to an online threat to "shoot up" the Tree of Life synagogue in what was later determined a hoax. The Tree of Life was the site of the deadliest antisemitic attack in U.S. history, when in 2018, a gunman opened fire and killed 11 congregants.
- On November 30, *the Washington Free Beacon* [reported](#) that Bishop Talbert W. Swan II, president of the NAACP's chapter in Springfield, Massachusetts and member of the Massachusetts Task Force on Hate Crime, posted on social media, "who would've thought that in 2023 Jewish soldiers would be the Nazis carrying out ethnic cleansing?" and, "this isn't a WAR, it's a HOLOCAUST."
- On November 29, pro-Palestine protesters in Melbourne, Australia, [forced](#) an Israeli delegation of relatives of Israelis killed or abducted by Hamas to seek shelter in a police station. The protesters had followed the delegation back to their hotel.

Recent and Relevant JINSA Products About Israel at War

- Webinar: [Gaza War Update](#), with JINSA Vice President for Policy Blaise Misztal and two JINSA Distinguished Fellows, IDF MG (ret.) Amikam Norkin and IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, November 30, 2023
- Webinar: [Flying Blind? Electronic Warfare's Impact on Civilian Planes](#), with JINSA Vice President for Policy Blaise Misztal, Former Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command Lt

Gen Thomas Bergeson, USAF (ret.) and Former Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, U.S. Air Force Lt Gen Joseph Guastella, USAF (ret.), November 29, 2023

- Webinar: [Britain's Reaction to Israel-Hamas War](#), with JINSA President and CEO Michael Makovsky, Editorial Board Member and Opinion Columnist at The Wall Street Journal Joseph Sternberg, and former president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews Jonathan Arkush, November 27, 2023
- Michael Makovsky, "[What Israel Needs](#)," *The National Interest*, November 24, 2023
- Ari Cicurel, [First U.S. Strikes in Iraq Amid Iran-backed Escalation](#), November 22, 2023
- Zac Schildcrout, [U.S. Iran Policy Unchanged Despite Iranian Involvement in 10/7](#), November 21, 2023
- Gabriel Noronha, [United States Permits Iran to Receive Billions in Iraqi Payments](#), November 21, 2023
- Jacob Olidort and Yoni Tobin, [Israeli Precautions Save Palestinian Lives](#), November 16, 2023