

## JFNA Fact Sheet on Gaza Protests, May 15, 2018

- 40,000 people protested along the border between Israel and Gaza yesterday, resulted in the death of at least 61 Palestinians and injuring 2,400 others.
- The Israeli government, and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) strongly defended Israel's response to the rioting, pointing out that the Jewish state has nothing to gain – and so much to lose – from every Palestinian injured or killed. The IDF, they say, is doing everything in their power to avoid harming Palestinians, but must defend the border from infiltrators.
- Hamas, on the other hand, gains increased international support for every casualty and continues to coordinate and encourage violent protests.
  - A call by Hamas to Gazans to storm the border fence and kidnap Israelis can be seen [here](#).
  - As the Washington Post [reported](#), “At a gathering point east of Gaza City, (Hamas) organizers urged protesters over loudspeakers to burst through the fence, telling them Israeli soldiers were fleeing their positions, even as they were reinforcing them.”
  - A video of Palestinians breaking through the border fence armed with meat cleavers can be seen [here](#).
  - A timeline of yesterday's violence can be seen as part of [this summary](#).
- Major General Amos Yadlin (ret), Director of Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies is one of Israel's leading center-left military experts. In [this](#) piece from Ynet, he explains that Israel acted responsibly, arguing that, “the IDF has operated with exceptional professionalism, and despite the fog of war it has achieved three important aims: protected the integrity of its border and avoided Israeli civilian and military casualties, minimized the number of Palestinian civilians killed to the extent possible, and prevented escalation to a broader conflict.”
- While countries such as the United States and Australia have condemned Hamas for what took place, other countries have condemned Israel.
  - U.S. deputy White House press secretary Raj Shah said: “The responsibility for these tragic deaths rests squarely with Hamas. Israel has the right to defend itself.”
  - Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull stated, “Any loss of life like this is tragic in circumstances like this, but Hamas' conduct is confrontational. They're seeking to provoke the Israeli defense forces.”
  - On the other hand, in protest at Israel's actions, both Turkey and South Africa have recalled their ambassadors to Israel for consultations.
  - Kuwait has called for an emergency UN Security Council discussion.
  - Many European countries expressed understanding of the situation facing Israel, but also questioned the “proportionality” of Israel's response.
  - The German Foreign Office released a statement saying, “Israel has the right to defend itself and to secure the fence against violent incursion. However, the principle of proportionality applies. That includes only using live ammunition when other, less forceful methods of deterrence do not work and in cases of concrete threats.”
- An excellent background piece by Yossi Klein Halevi in The Atlantic can be seen [here](#).

Source: [Jewish Federations of North America \(JFNA\)](#).