

Understanding the Crisis in Gaza

Important Facts and Context

Israel was created in 1948 through a political movement that had begun in Europe in the late 1800s. Known as Political Zionism, the goal of this secular movement was to create a Jewish state in Palestine, even though at that time the population of Palestine was just 4% Jewish, with 80% Muslim, and 15% Christian.

As some Jews immigrated to Palestine (the majority of Jews around the world did not wish to do so), their numbers grew, reaching 33% by 1947. Zionism achieved its goal in 1948 with Israel's founding war, termed its "war of independence." Three-quarters of a million Palestinians were violently pushed out of their land and Israel was established on 78% of mandatory Palestine.

In 1967, Israel launched a war against its neighbors, conquered the rest of Palestine — the West Bank and the Gaza Strip — and commenced a decades-long military occupation. Israel began confiscating large swaths of Palestinian land and moving Israeli Jews onto that land. The colonies, called "settlements," are illegal under international law.

Gaza: An Open-Air Prison

In 2005, Israel removed its settlements from Gaza, resettling the inhabitants in Israel and the West Bank, but continued to control all exits and entrances, Gaza's air space, and its seaports. In effect, Gaza became an open-air prison for its 1.8 million inhabitants (75% of whom are from families expelled from their land by Israel in its founding war to create a Jewish state).

In 2007, Israel instituted a strangling blockade of Gaza, which is still in place 12 years later. This has created a humanitarian disaster. (See reverse for some statistics.)

Israeli invasions & Palestinian rockets

Israel has invaded, shelled, and/or otherwise attacked Gaza nearly every week for the past 20 years. Resistance groups in Gaza attempted to fight back, and some Palestinian fighters began launching rockets against Israeli towns. The first one was launched in October 2001.

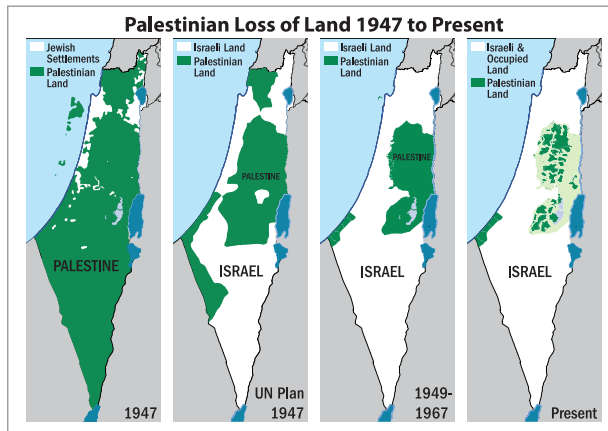
Most of these are small, homemade projectiles that normally kill no one and only rarely cause damage. Since 2001, they have killed a total of 52 in Israel. Many of the casualties have been in the Israeli town of Sderot, which was created on the rubble of Najd, a Palestinian town that had been ethnically cleansed in 1948.

Since September 2000, Israeli Defense Forces have killed at least 9,560 Palestinians, the majority of them in Gaza. Below are Israel's three major invasions during recent years:

Israeli ceasefire violations

After 2 years of Israel's strangling blockade and incursions — and Palestinian resistance — on June 19, 2008 a truce went into effect between Israel and fighters in Gaza: Israel was to stop all invasions into Gaza and ease the blockade; Palestinians would stop all rocket attacks.

Although Hamas complied with the terms of the truce, Israel never eased the siege, in spite of appeals from human rights orgs and the United Nations.



While Gazan resistance maintained the ceasefire, Israeli forces abruptly killed two Palestinian farmers — the first only a few hours after the ceasefire went into effect — and shot a child. Then on November 4th — while the world's attention was on Barack Obama's election as President — Israel killed 6 more Gazans. Hamas retaliated by shooting rockets toward Israel.

While US media virtually always blame Palestinians for violating ceasefires, in reality a study conducted of all the ceasefires, truces, and periods of calm during 2000-2008 concluded:

"Overwhelmingly Israel, not Palestine, kills first following a lull. Indeed, it is virtually always Israel that kills first after a lull lasting more than a week."

2008 - 2009 Israeli Invasion of Gaza

On December 27th, 2008 Israel began a premeditated air, land, and sea assault on Gaza that reduced large areas to rubble. After ignoring calls for a ceasefire for 3 weeks, Israel finally declared a ceasefire on January 18th. Palestinian factions called a ceasefire as well a few hours later. During the assault, 9 Israelis and 1400 Palestinians were killed, at least 300 of them children.

2012 Israeli invasion of Gaza

In 2012, Hamas leader Ahmed al-Jabari was known to be in the final stages of negotiating a permanent ceasefire with Israel. Rather than pursuing peace, Israel assassinated him. In the ensuing 8-day invasion of Gaza, 6 Israelis and 174 Palestinians were killed.

2014 Israeli invasion of Gaza

In the summer of 2014, Israel launched another invasion, killing 185 Palestinians in 8 days before the first Israeli was killed. By the end, 67 Israeli soldiers and 6 civilians were killed; 2250 Palestinians were killed, 65% of them civilian.

The Great Return March

On March 30th, 2018, an estimated thirty thousand Palestinian civilians organized along the Gazan border fence for a massive unarmed protest against the Israeli occupation and to call attention to their right to return to their land. The protest was dubbed "The Great Return March." It has continued every week since.

Israel responded to the Great Return March by stationing over 100 snipers along the border with 'shoot to kill' orders. As of this printing, over 300 Palestinians have been killed and approximately 30,000 have been injured in this nonviolent demonstration.

Americans are Involved: We Can Help

The US has frequently vetoed UN resolutions to restrain Israeli violence, alienating our country from most of the world. US policies have been driven by pro-Israel lobbying, with politicians from both parties voting for massive aid to Israel, resulting in more than \$10 million per day in military aid. This is far more than we've given to any other country, making us contributors to Israeli violations of human rights.

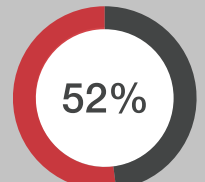
It is time that Americans demand an end to the use of our taxes for this immoral conduct.

If Americans Knew

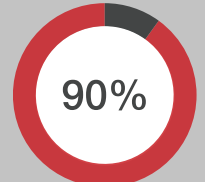
FACTS ABOUT GAZA



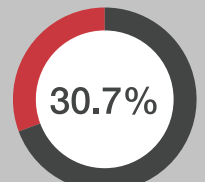
2019 Statistics



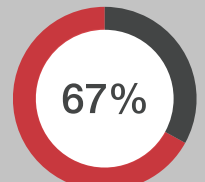
Unemployment Rate



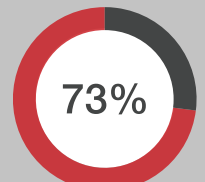
Lack Direct Access to Safe Drinking Water



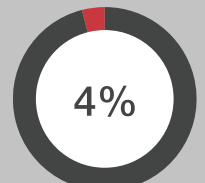
Children Under 5 Suffering from Anemia



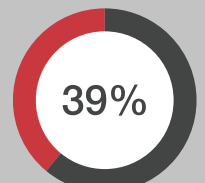
Schools with Severely Reduced Resources



Shoreline Contaminated by Sewage

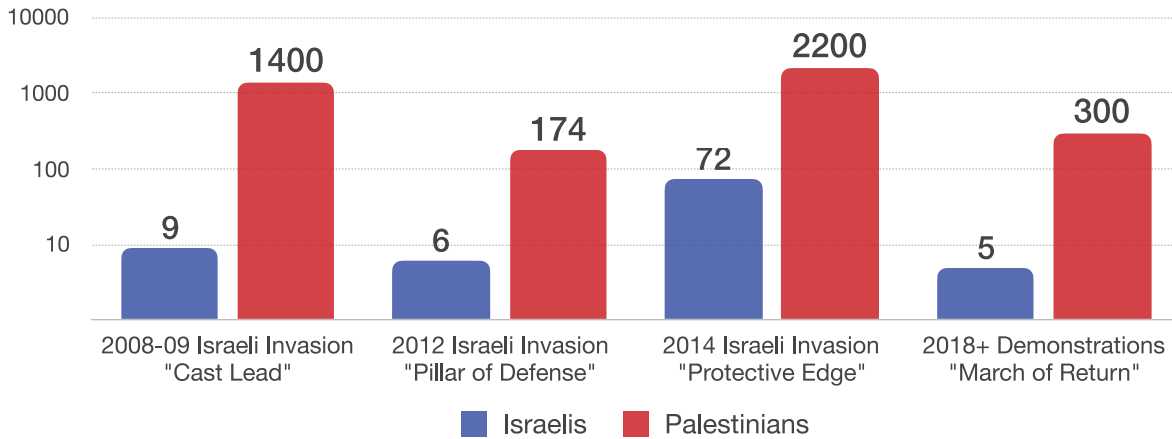


Potable Water in Gaza Aquifer



Population Below Poverty Line

Number of People Killed by the Opposing Side



Structures Damaged or Destroyed in 2014



15 Israeli Homes
96,000 Gazan Homes



3 Israeli Schools
216 Gazan Schools



0 Israeli Hospitals
67 Gazan Hospitals

Injuries Suffered in 2014 "Operation Protective Edge"



11,000 Gazans Injured



3,300 were Children



1,000 Permanently Crippled



1,500+ Children Orphaned

Please view the article online at: iakn.us/GazaFacts to see citations for all the statistics.