



The Sabra Report

ISRAEL AT WAR

Recap:

More than 1,300 Israelis have died since Hamas' surprise attack on October 7th. Hamas have also taken up to 150 hostages, including children and the elderly. With 360,000 reservists mobilized, a ground invasion into Gaza to "crush and destroy" Hamas is imminent [1]. The attack, much like the Yom Kippur War that occurred 50 years and one day before, is already being framed as a massive intelligence failure.

The Context:

- ✦ Israel unilaterally exited the Gaza Strip in 2005. In the 18 years since, Israel invaded Gaza in response to Hamas provocations on two occasions. The first was Operation Cast Lead, which involved a 15-day ground incursion in 2009. The second was 2014's Operation Protective Edge, in which the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) spent 19 days in Gaza.
- ✦ On Saturday, Hamas militants infiltrated Southern Israel by land, sea, and air. In Kfar Aza, Hamas massacred women, children, toddlers, and the elderly. Be'eri was among the worst-hit communities, with more than 100 bodies recovered and eyewitnesses describing assailants going door to door and executing civilians. Over 250 civilians were killed at a music festival outside of Re'im.
- ✦ In response to the atrocities, Israeli jets pounded Gaza with hundreds of airstrikes, reducing homes and neighborhoods to rubble [2], leaving 300,000 Gazan's homeless and 1,500 dead. Israel halted supplies of electricity, food, water, and fuel with Energy Minister Israel Katz saying that nothing will be supplied to Gaza until those abducted are returned home. "Humanitarianism for humanitarianism." Beyond Gaza, violence flared in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and with Hezbollah on the Lebanese border.
- ✦ Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Opposition Leader Benny Gantz agreed to form a "war management cabinet" to deal with the conflict. The announcement follows months of acrimony over the government's push to overhaul Israel's judiciary. Hundreds of military reservists had threatened to refuse service, leading to warnings that Israel's military capabilities would be impaired [3]. The government and military stand accused of gross negligence in failing to prevent and counter the attacks. US House Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Michael McCaul told reporters that Egypt had warned Israel three days before Hamas' assault that "an event like this could happen." Israel called the reports "absolutely false. [4]"
- ✦ US President Joe Biden promised to ensure Israel would have what it needed to respond [5] and the US has already started delivering military equipment. A US Aircraft Carrier arrived in the Eastern Mediterranean to deter other countries, namely Iran, from broadening the situation into a wider regional conflict [6]. British, French, German and Italian leaders also reaffirmed their support for Israel [7].

Conversation Points:

- ✦ What would happen if Israel were to successfully remove Hamas from power?
- ✦ What effect will an extended ground incursion have on Israeli society?
- ✦ How has the past year of political turmoil impacted the current situation?
- ✦ How will the Abraham Accords factor into the responses from Arab states?
- ✦ How do the Israeli hostages complicate the situation in Gaza?
- ✦ How is Israel as of today different than Israel as of October 6th?

Notes:

1. [Brutal urban warfare awaits Israel's army in Gaza](#), The Economist, October 11th, 2023.
2. [Israel forms emergency government and steps up Gaza offensive as brutality of Hamas attacks laid bare](#) Eyad Kourdi, Amir Tal, Abeer Salman, Celine Alkhalidi and Helen Regan, CNN, October 12th, 2023.
3. [Netanyahu forms emergency Israel government and war cabinet](#), BBC, October 12th, 2023
4. [Egypt warned Israel three days before Hamas massacre - US congressman](#), JERUSALEM POST, October 11th, 2023.
5. [Horrified Biden details Hamas's 'sheer evil,' vows to ensure Israel can defend itself](#), JACOB MAGID, Times of Israel, October 12th, 2023.
6. [Ibid.](#)
7. [Brutal urban warfare awaits Israel's army in Gaza](#), The Economist, October 11th, 2023.

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