

## Israel Defends Itself from Rocket Attacks, Strikes Gaza Terrorist Training Camp (ISRAEL)

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(09.06.2006)

After almost daily barrages of rocket attacks aimed at Israeli civilians during the past year, Israel launched a strike today on suspected rocket launching sites in Gaza. The strike mistakenly killed six civilians. [1]

Israeli military officials immediately apologized for the deaths and offered medical assistance as well as transport to an Israeli hospital. "We regret any harm caused to innocent civilians," Israeli army Capt. Jacob Dallal said. [2]

Terrorists in Gaza have fired rockets into Israel almost every day since Israel voluntarily withdrew from the area in Aug. 2005, removing all 9,000 Israelis living there to pave the way for a Palestinian state.

Some of those rockets have landed near the home of Defense Minister Amir Peretz, who lives in Sderot. Israel has repeatedly asked the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority (P.A.) to stop the attacks, but Hamas continues to call for the destruction of Israel and refuses to recognize its existence.

Yesterday, Jamal Abu Samhadana, the security chief for the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority who was responsible for the deaths of several American and Israeli civilians -- including a pregnant woman and her four children -- was killed during an Israeli airstrike on a terrorist training camp. [3]

Samhadana was wanted by Israel for his terrorist ties and his involvement in several terrorist attacks including the Oct. 15, 2003 bombing in which three American private security contractors were killed in an attack on a U.S. Embassy convoy in Gaza. [4]

In 2004, he was an accomplice in the shooting deaths of Tali Hatuel, a pregnant woman, and her four daughters as they were driving in Gaza before Israel removed all of its citizens from the area and turned it over to the Palestinians last summer. [5]

Samhadana also was responsible for killing two children in an attack on a bus carrying Israeli children in Gaza prior to Israel's voluntary withdrawal from the area. [6]

Samhadana told the Sunday Telegraph in a recent interview that the Jewish people are his sole enemy and that he would assemble a paramilitary force that would be the "nucleus of the future Palestinian army." [7] Speaking on behalf of the Palestinian militias, Samhadana said, "We have only one enemy. The Jews. We have no other enemy. I will continue to carry the rifle and pull the trigger whenever required to defend my people." [8]

Israel Defense Force officials said they were not targeting Samhadana, but were responding to rocket attacks fired from Gaza into Israel earlier the same day. Samhadana and three of his bodyguards, who were also killed in the attack, were visiting the training camp at the time of the strike. [9] Israeli officials also said militants were planning a major attack on Israel. [10]

Samhadana was appointed by Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh in April to his position, which included leading a new Palestinian police force. In Sept. 2000, Samhadana founded the Popular Resistance Committees (PRC), a Gaza-based terrorist group that rejects the authority of P.A. Chairman Mahmoud Abbas and his security services. [11] Violent clashes have erupted in recent months between the PRC and the Palestinian Authority Police. One such incident includes the PRC's recent murder of presidential security advisor Moussa Arafat, the cousin of former P.A. Chairman Yasser Arafat. [12]

To date, at least six Israelis have been killed and more than three dozen injured in PRC terrorist attacks, and numerous Palestinians have been injured by factional PRC civil warfare in Gaza.

The PRC has procured its weapons by smuggling them in through underground tunnels on the Gaza/Egypt border as well as purchasing them locally and making them by hand. [13] They include small arms, explosives, mines, hand grenades, anti-tank missiles and mortars. On three different occasions in Feb. 2006, PRC militants launched a number of mortars and missiles in collaboration with the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade into Israeli territory.

Samhadana, a 43-year-old explosives expert, also is a former member of the armed Fatah faction, Tanzim. [14]

This radical militant group operates from its base in Gaza, targeting Israeli civilians and military personnel in its vicinity. Militants in the PRC ranks include ex-Palestinian Preventative Security (PPS) officers, as well as affiliates of Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Fatah-Tanzim/Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

### Footnotes

[1] El Deeb, Sarah, "Palestinians: Israeli Artillery Kills 6," Associated Press, June 9, 2006, [hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/I/ISRAEL\\_PALESTINIANS](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/I/ISRAEL_PALESTINIANS)

[2] Ibid.

[3] Greenberg, Hanan, "Who are you Jamal Abu Samhadana," Ynetnews, June 9, 2006, [www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3260716,00.html](http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3260716,00.html)

[4] Wilson, Scott, "Israeli Airstrike Kills Hamas Official in Gaza," The Washington Post, June 9, 2006, [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/08/AR2006060801605.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/08/AR2006060801605.html)

[5] Greenberg, Hanan, "Who are you Jamal Abu Samhadana," Ynetnews, June 9, 2006, [www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3260716,00.html](http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3260716,00.html)

[6] Ibid.

[7] Haaretz Service, "New PA police chief marks Jews as 'only enemy' of Palestinians," Haaretz, April 23, 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/724811.html>

[8] Flanagan, Jane, "Jews are our enemy. I will pull the trigger whenever required," Daily Telegraph, April 23, 2006, [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml)

[9] Wilson, Scott, "Israeli Airstrike Kills Hamas Official in Gaza," The Washington Post, June 9, 2006, [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/08/AR2006060801605.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/08/AR2006060801605.html)

[10] Harel. Amos and Issacharoff. Avi. "7 Palestinians killed when IDF shell hits Gaza beach." Haaretz Service and Agencies. June 9.

[10] Harel, Amos and Issacharoff, Avi, "7 Palestinians killed when IDF shell hits Gaza beach," Haaretz Service and Agencies, June 9, 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/724811.html>

[11] Greenberg, Hanan, "Who are you Jamal Abu Samhadana," Ynetnews, June 9, 2006, [www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3260716,00.html](http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3260716,00.html)

[12] Butcher, Tim, "Brutal murder of Arafat's cousin endangers Gaza peace pact," Daily Telegraph, Sept. 8, 2005, [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml)

[13] "The Leading Palestinian Terrorist Organizations," Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Aug. 2004, [www.intelligence.org.il/eng/sib/8\\_04/pto.htm](http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/sib/8_04/pto.htm)

[14] Harel, Amos and Issacharoff, Avi, "7 Palestinians killed when IDF shell hits Gaza beach," Haaretz Service and Agencies, June 9, 2006, [www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/724811.html](http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/724811.html)

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