



## The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip exploit the civilian infrastructure for terrorist activities

August 11, 2024

### Overview<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ On August 10, 2024, the Israeli Air Force attacked the headquarters of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in the al-Tabi'in school complex in Gaza City. Despite false Hamas claims of intentional IDF attacks on civilians, the IDF spokesperson reported that Hamas had turned schools, where civilians took shelter, into command and control centers, sites for storing weapons and carrying out terrorist activities against IDF forces in the Gaza Strip and against the territory of the State of Israel.
- ▶ Since the beginning of the war on October 7, 2023, a substantial amount of evidence has accumulated about the use the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, especially Hamas, make of civilian facilities and the civilian population for the purpose of waging war.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of the fighting, the IDF forces found that the terrorist organizations had situated a significant part of their command network, tunnel system and munitions warehouses in the heart of the civilian infrastructure, especially in hospitals, schools, mosques and private homes.
- ▶ The ongoing fighting and the expansion of the IDF's activity to areas such as Rafah and Khan Yunis caused the terrorist organizations to forfeit military assets, and the use civilian facilities gained momentum, as did carrying out terrorist activity from within the population. The terrorist organizations use UNRWA facilities, shelters and humanitarian areas where displaced residents are located for terrorist activities.
- ▶ The use of civilian institutions and facilities for terrorist purposes is not new and has long been a deliberate strategy of Hamas and the other terrorist organizations, after previous events and operations showed that fighting in populated areas and using the civilian

<sup>1</sup> Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

<sup>2</sup> For further information, see the January 2024 ITIC report, "[Evidence of the terrorist organizations' use of civilian facilities in the Gaza Strip.](#)" and the November 2023 report, "[Hamas use of the civilian population as human shields and Gaza's civilian facilities for terrorism.](#)"

population as a human shields proved themselves both on the operational level and in the battle for hearts and minds.

► **The strategy of constructing terrorist assets within the civilian space enables the terrorist organizations to reduce damage to themselves, knowing they will have a kind of immunity from IDF operations, including counterterrorist activities, since insofar as is possible the IDF will not harm civilians or attack institutions such as hospitals, schools and civilian shelter areas. The strategy also enables the terrorist organizations to spread incitement and false propaganda as part of their regional and international battle for hearts and minds by representing Israel as attacking civilian institutions and innocent civilians.**

► **The cynical and deliberate exploitation of a civilian population is a war crime and a crime against humanity and a flagrant violation of the basic principles of international laws of armed conflict, which require distinguishing between civilians and combatants and endanger the forces.** The IDF knows the terrorist organizations situate military assets within the civilian population, and has reiterated that in attacks on such sites, steps have always been taken to reduce the chance of harming civilians, including by using weapons specifically adapted to the type of attack, precise imagery intelligence and intelligence information.

## Using UNRWA Facilities for Terrorist Activities

► The use of UNRWA facilities by Hamas and the other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip is not new.<sup>3</sup> The terrorist organizations have extensively used UNRWA schools and other civilian facilities, including ambulances, to store weapons, hide tunnel shafts and shelter terrorist operatives. They hide weapons and situate terrorist operatives and headquarters in schools, and fire rockets from areas adjacent to the facilities. Hamas and the other terrorist organization use UNRWA civilian facilities for terrorist purposes because they know Israel will refrain from attacking them, making it more likely their operatives will survive and their weapons will remain intact.

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<sup>3</sup> UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) was established to help the Arab refugees who fled from their homes in Israel's 1948 War of Independence, and their descendants.



**IDF forces near the UNRWA headquarters in Gaza (IDF spokesperson, July 12, 2024)**

## UNRWA headquarters and other sites

► In July 2024, IDF forces raided UNRWA headquarters in Gaza City after receiving intelligence that Hamas and PIJ operatives used the site for terrorist operations. IDF forces clashed with armed terrorists and found components for the assembly of UAVs, operational observation rooms and large quantities of weapons, including bomb-dropping drones, rockets, machine guns, mortars, IEDs and grenades (IDF spokesperson, July 12, 2024). Philippe Lazzarini, the UNRWA commissioner general, claimed UN facilities had to be protected and should not be used for military purposes or for fighting, but did not directly admit Hamas was using the agency's facilities (Philippe Lazzarini's X account, July 15, 2024).<sup>4</sup>



**Right: UAV components discovered at UNRWA headquarters. Left: Weapons found at the headquarters (IDF spokesperson, July 12, 2024)**

► In February 2024, IDF soldiers located a tunnel shaft situated near an UNRWA school in Gaza City. The shaft led to a tunnel used by the Hamas military intelligence and the soldiers found computer servers and various intelligence devices. The tunnel passed directly under the UNRWA headquarters building in the Gaza Strip and its electrical system was connected to that of the building. The soldiers searched UNRWA headquarters offices and found large

<sup>4</sup> On August 5, 2024, an internal UN investigation determined that there was evidence indicating that nine UNRWA employees "might have been involved" [sic] in the Hamas terrorist attack and massacre on October 7, 2023, and they were fired.

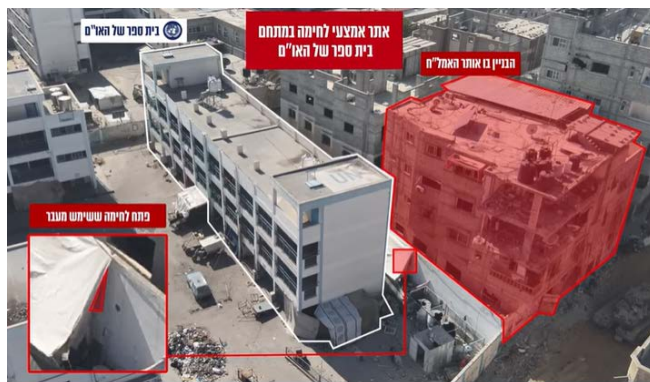
quantities of weapons, intelligence equipment and documents indicating that the offices were used by Hamas operatives (IDF spokesperson, February 10, 2024).



**The tunnel under UNRWA headquarters (IDF spokesperson, February 10, 2024)**

► Other examples of Hamas' use of UNRWA facilities:

- ◆ In February 2024 IDF forces raided a building in western Khan Yunis where large quantities of weapons and ammunition were found. The building was located next to an UNRWA school which served as a shelter. The terrorists passed rapidly through a hole in the school wall to the adjacent building where the weapons were stored, and from there left to carry out attacks. (IDF spokesperson, February 20, 2024).



**Sketch of the passage between the building and the school, and the hole in the wall (IDF spokesperson, February 20, 2024)**

- ◆ During an IDF operation in the Shejaiya area, east of Gaza City, weapons were found inside an UNRWA school (IDF spokesperson, June 27 to July 2, 2024).
- ◆ On July 16, 2024, fighter jets attacked terrorist operatives in an UNRWA school in the Nuseirat refugee camp in Deir al-Balah. The site was used for attacking IDF forces in the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, July 16, 2024).
- ◆ On July 18, 2024, an Israeli Air Force fighter jet attacked an UNRWA compound in the Zeitoun neighborhood of Gaza City which served as the headquarters of the Gaza City Brigade of the Hamas military wing. The attack killed a number of terrorist operatives, including Adel Hamdiya, the military intelligence officer of the Gaza City Brigade, who



was responsible for constructing an intelligence picture for the brigade in preparation for the attack and massacre on October 7, 2023, and later was responsible for directing terrorist attacks on IDF forces in the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson July 18-19, 2024).

◆ Fighter jets destroyed rocket launch sites situated near two UNRWA warehouses in the southern Gaza Strip, which were used to distribute humanitarian aid to the civilian population. The sites were used to launch rockets at Israeli territory (IDF spokesperson, August 7, 2024).

## Educational Institutions

► The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, especially Hamas, also exploit educational institutions, most of which belong to UNRWA, for terrorist purposes. In the past IDF forces provided evidence proving the schools were used for storing weapons, as command centers, as sites for launching rockets and mortar shells, as hidden entrances to tunnels and as hiding places for terrorist operatives. As the Gaza Strip fighting continues, ever larger numbers of terrorist operatives have been found hiding in educational institutions, most of which are currently used as shelters for displaced residents.

### Schools

► IDF forces located several rocket launchers situated near an UNRWA school in the al-Bureij area in central Gaza Strip (January 2, 2024).



**Rocket launchers situated near an UNRWA school (IDF spokesperson, January 2, 2024)**

► During IDF activities in the Nuseirat refugee camp, the forces entered the Ibrahim al-Maqadmeh School, where they found a combat simulator and an observation post. They also found large quantities of powerful explosives prepared for use and hidden in the classrooms and school yard (IDF website, April 12, 2024).



**Weapons found at the school in Nuseirat (IDF spokesperson, April 12, 2024)**

► IDF forces located and destroyed a number of rocket launchers ready for use and dozens of rockets, some of which were stored by Hamas inside schools in the Jebalya refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, May 23-25, 2024). According to reports, Hamas operatives fired at IDF forces from nearby shelters and schools and set up underground facilities in civilian buildings (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, May 30-31, 2024).



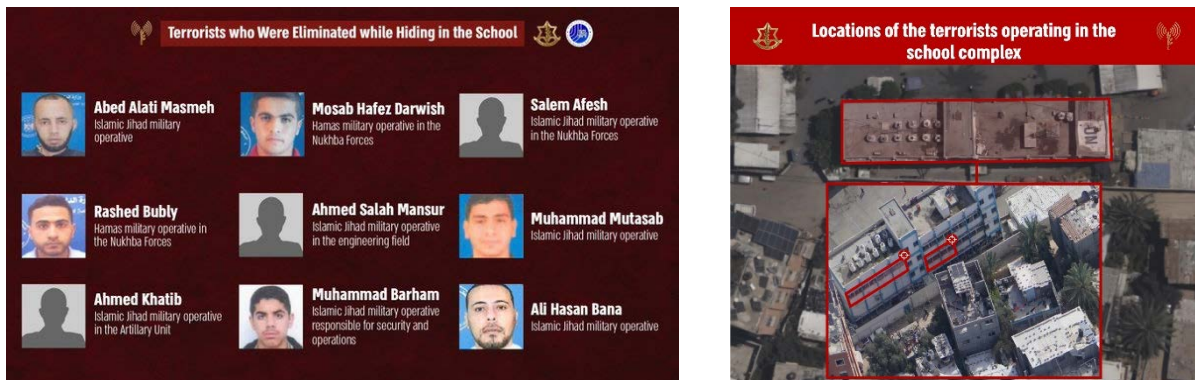
**Shoulder-launched, surface-to-air missile launch tubes found in a school in Jebalya (IDF spokesperson, May 26, 2024)**

► During the IDF's activity in Rafah, the forces were attacked with an anti-tank missile fired from an UNRWA school. The forces then operated in the school compound, where a mosque and a clinic were also located, and located weapons, grenades, uniforms and shafts inside the classrooms which led to an extensive tunnel network. Three IDF soldiers were killed when a mined shaft in a clinic exploded (IDF spokesperson, May 30, 2024).

► Beginning in June 2024, the Israeli Air Force increased its attacks on compounds that Hamas and the PIJ established in schools for command and control, for concealing terrorist operatives and attacking IDF forces in the Gaza Strip. Preliminary measures were taken before all the attacks to prevent harm to civilians, including the use of precision weapons:

- ◆ Before dawn on June 6, 2024, Israeli Air Force planes attacked a compound used by Hamas inside an UNRWA school in Nuseirat, where there were Hamas nukhba operatives and PIJ operatives who had participated in the attack and massacre on

October 7, 2023. The terrorist operatives attacked from inside the school and planned additional attacks on IDF forces. The IDF identified at least 17 Hamas and PIJ operatives who had been killed in the attack (IDF Telegram channel, June 6, 2024).



**Right: The areas in the school compound where the terrorists were located. Left: Hamas and PIJ operatives killed in the attack (IDF Telegram channel, June 6, 2024)**

- ◆ On July 4, 2024, the IDF attacked the al-Qahera school in al-Furqan and the Musa school in Daraj and Tufah. They were used as hideouts by terrorist operatives who planned and carried out attacks on IDF forces in the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, July 4, 2024).
- ◆ On July 6, 2024, an Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked buildings used as a hideout and activity site by terrorist operatives in the al-Ja'ouni school complex in the central Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, July 6, 2024). The Hamas government information office claimed that 16 Palestinians had been killed and more than 75 injured in the attack on the al-Ja'ouni school in the Nuseirat refugee camp, where there were about 7,000 displaced persons (Hamis government information office Telegram channel, July 6 2024). Hamis denied that there were "resistance operatives" at the school and said the IDF's claims were intended to justify the continuation of Israel's "war crimes" (Hamis website, July 6, 2024).
- ◆ On July 8, 2024, Fighter jets attacked Hamis and PIJ operatives engaged in terrorist activities in a school compound in the Nuseirat area (IDF spokesperson, July 9, 2024). Palestinian media reported an attack on the security room at the main gate of the UNRWA elementary school in the new camp in Nuseirat (Nuseirat camp Telegram channel, July 8, 2024).
- ◆ On July 14, 2024, an Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked a number of terrorist operatives at UNRWA's Abu-Ariban school in the Nuseirat refugee camp. The building was used by terrorist operatives as a hiding place and as a point of departure to attack IDF forces

operating in the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, July 14, 2024). The Hamas government information office claimed that 15 people had been killed and 80 injured in the attack and accused Israel of carrying out a "horrific massacre of displaced persons" who were staying at the school (Filastin al-Yawm Telegram channel, July 14, 2024).

◆ On July 27, 2024, Fighter jets attacked the Khadijah school in Deir al-Balah, where there was a Hamas command and control complex, destroying large quantities of weapons (IDF spokesperson July 27, 2024). The Hamas government information office claimed that three missiles had been used and at least 36 people were killed, including women and children (Hamas government information office, July 27, 2024).

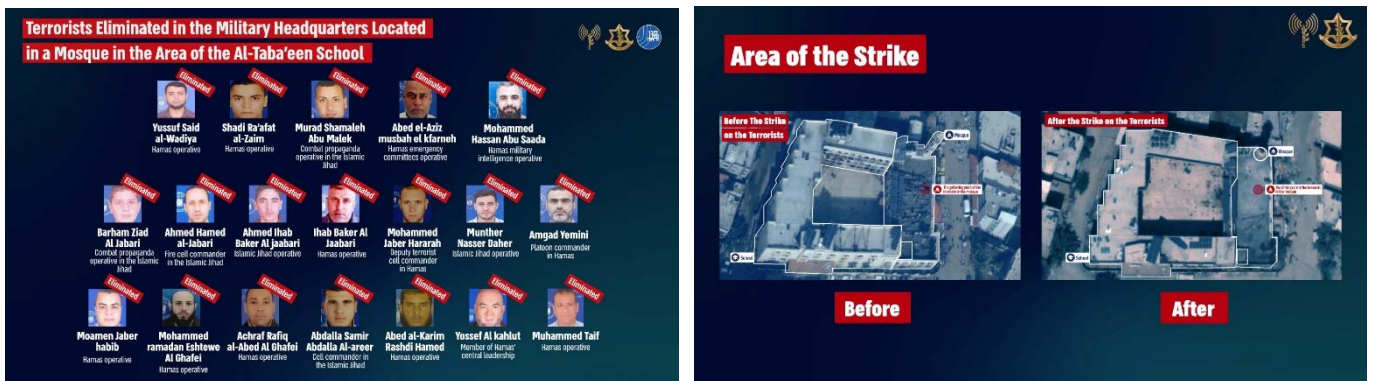
◆ On August 1, 2024, terrorist operatives in the Dalal al-Mughrabi school complex in the Shejaiya neighborhood of Gaza City were attacked from the air. Hamas terrorist operatives and commanders used the complex as a hideout and as a focal point for planning attacks (IDF spokesperson, August 1, 2024). Palestinian media reported that the school was used as a place of refuge for the displaced and that part of the building collapsed during rescue operations (Filastin al-A'an Telegram channel, August 1, 2024; al-Jazeera, August 1, 2024).

◆ On August 3, 2024, a Hamas command and control complex at the Hamama school in Gaza City was attacked from the air. Hamas terrorist operatives used the compound as a hideout and as a base of departure for attacking IDF forces. Weapons were manufactured and stored at the site, and training in their use was also carried out (IDF spokesperson, August 3, 2024).

◆ On August 4, 2024, Hamas command and control complexes located in the Hassan Salama and Nasr schools in Gaza City were attacked from the air. According to the IDF spokesperson, the schools were used by Hamas's al-Furqan Battalion as a base for launching attacks and as a hideout for its operatives. According to reports, Jabr Aziz, commander of the al-Furqan Battalion, was killed in the attack on the Hassan Salama school. He had been involved in preparing and training the battalion for the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre and participated in attacking the cities, towns and villages surrounding the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, August 4-5, 2024). Hamas claimed that the schools were populated by displaced persons and accused Israel of committing a "massacre" (Hamas website, August 4, 2024).



- ◆ On August 8, 2024, Israeli Air Force fighter jets attacked Hamas command and control complexes operating at the Abd al-Fateh Hamouda and al-Zahraa schools in the Daraj and Tufah neighborhoods of Gaza City. The compounds were also used for planning and carrying out attacks on IDF forces and Israeli territory (IDF spokesperson, August 8, 2024). Civil defense personnel in the Gaza Strip claimed that 16 people were killed in the attack (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, August 8, 2024).
- ◆ On August 10, 2024, an Israeli Air Force aircraft used three precision weapons to attack the Hamas-PIJ military headquarters in a mosque in the al-Tabi'in school complex in Daraj and Tufah, which was also used as a shelter for the residents of Gaza City. Hamas and the PIJ used the headquarters to promote terrorist attacks on IDF forces and Israeli territory. According to the IDF, at least 25 Hamas and PIJ terrorist operatives were killed in the attack, including company and squad commanders, and in IDF assessments Ashraf Joua, the commander of the PIJ's Central Camps Brigade, who was in the headquarters at the time, was also killed (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 10-11, 2024). According to Hamas, at least 100 civilians were killed in the attack, including non-combatant children, public servants, clerics and professors (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, August 10, 2024).



Right: The compound in the al-Tabi'in school. Left: The 19 terrorist operatives who were killed (IDF spokesperson, August 10, 2024)

## Universities

► Although the universities in the Gaza Strip call themselves "academic institutions," they are known for the terrorist activity that takes place on their campuses. Prominent among them is the Islamic University in Gaza City, known for its radicalism, and which has been a Hamas stronghold since its establishment. Hamas operatives have been carrying out extensive activity within the university for years, including ideological activity with the students as well

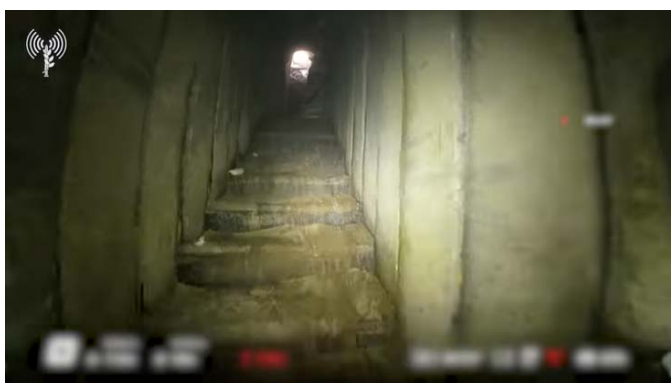
as military activity which includes weapons development in the university's laboratories and weapons storage.

► During the war IDF soldiers, guided by intelligence, operated in the Islamic University. Large quantities of weapons were found in the classrooms, including ammunition and ammunition magazines, Hamas flags, and safes containing money to finance terrorist activities, mortar shells, IEDs ready for detonation, grenades, combat equipment and maps used by Hamas operatives (IDF spokesperson, January 9, 2024).



**Weapons found on the university grounds (IDF spokesperson, January 9, 2024)**

► The IDF located a system of tunnels connecting the Turkish Hospital, which borders the refugee camps in the center of Gaza City, to an al-Isra University building in the south of the city and which reaches as far as the Zeitoun region, used by terrorist operatives of various divisions in the Gaza Strip. The tunnels connect Central Brigade to the Gaza City Brigade, including the Nuseirat, Sabra, and Zeitoun battalions (IDF spokesperson, February 26, 2024).



**The route of the tunnel and part of the tunnel itself (IDF spokesperson, February 26, 2024)**

► IDF forces operated in the university which served as a Hamas headquarters and from which shots were fired at the forces. Weapons and explosive barrels were found, and the forces killed a terrorist operative who fired an RPG from the compound (IDF spokesperson, June 21, 2024).



**Weapons discovered at the university (IDF spokesperson, June 21, 2024)**

- ▶ On June 24, 2024, a fighter jet attacked a structure at the Islamic University in the Sabra neighborhood of Gaza City. Terrorist operatives used it for firing anti-tank missiles, observations and attacking IDF forces in the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, June 25, 2024).

## Mosques

- ▶ Many mosques in the Gaza Strip are used by Hamas and the other Palestinian terrorist organizations for terrorist purposes as well as religious purposes. Mosques are used to hide terrorist operatives, store weapons, as bases for launching rockets and mortar bombs, bases from which to attack and fight and places for training terrorist operatives. Using religious sites for military-terrorist purposes constitutes a blatant violation of the international laws of war and an abuse of the special protection provided by international law to houses of worship. Large amounts of evidence were found of such violations in IDF operations in the Gaza Strip, as well as in the current war.
- ▶ According to reports, on January 2, 2024, IDF forces operating in the Daraj and Tufah neighborhoods in the northwest of Gaza, took over a terrorist facility located in the house of the commander of the Hamas' Gaza City Brigade. The fighters located weapons and intelligence materials linking the area's most important mosque to the terrorist attack and massacre on October 7 (IDF website, January 2, 2024).



**Weapons found in the area of the mosque (IDF spokesperson, January 2, 2024)**

## Hospitals and Clinics

- ▶ During the war terrorist facilities have been regularly discovered in hospitals and clinics throughout the Strip.<sup>5</sup> Hamas and other terrorist organizations make various terrorist uses of hospitals and medical institutions, knowing that insofar as is possible, the IDF will not attack medical facilities, and that gives a kind of immunity to the terrorist facilities located in them. During IDF activities in some hospitals, evidence was found that the Israeli hostages had been held there.
- ▶ Shifa Hospital, in the west of Gaza City, the largest and most important hospital in the Gaza Strip, stands out as the most significant medical institution where Hamas established a terror facility; Hamas also used Shifa Hospital for terrorist purposes during Operation Cast Lead (2008/2009) and Operation Protective Edge (2014). Senior Hamas terrorist operatives turned some of the wards into closed areas and stayed there. In the current war the hospital compound was used in a variety of ways, and it was one of the centers of IDF activity, whose forces raided the hospital compound several times. During the IDF's activity at the hospital, significant evidence was found of its terrorist use, including holding Israeli hostages.
- ▶ On the night of March 18, 2024, IDF forces launched a targeted operation (the second since the beginning of the war) at Shifa Hospital after intelligence was received that Hamas operatives, including senior terrorists, had fled to the hospital and turned it into a headquarters from which to attack IDF forces (IDF spokesperson, March 21-25, 2024). During the operation, the forces located large quantities of weapons, some hidden inside hospital beds, in air conditioning ducts and behind false plaster walls. In addition, they seized about

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<sup>5</sup> For further information, see the December 2023 ITIC report, "[Hamas Exploitation of Hospitals for Military-Terrorist Purposes – Shifa Hospital as a test case.](#)"



\$3 million in dollars and Jordanian dinars earmarked for financing terrorist activity (IDF spokesperson, March 28-30, April 1, 2024).



**Weapons and money found in the office of the director of Shifa Hospital in Gaza (IDF spokesperson, March 18, 2024)**



**Right: Weapons found at Shifa Hospital (IDF spokesperson, March 20, 2024). Left: Detained terrorist operatives (IDF spokesperson, March 21, 2024)**

► IDF forces operated in the Nasser Hospital compound in Khan Yunis, following on intelligence information that Hamas was carrying out terrorist activity there. During searches they found mortars, grenades and other weapons, some hidden in vehicles used by Hamas operatives to carry out the attack and massacre on October 7, 2023. Medicines were also found with the names of Israeli hostages on them. During the operation, the forces detained hundreds of terrorists and Palestinians suspected of terrorist activities who were hiding in the hospital. Among the detainees were terrorist operatives who took part of October 7, 2023 attack and dealt with hostages (IDF spokesperson, February 18, 2024).



**Right: Weapons found at Nasser Hospital (IDF Spokesman, February 16, 2024). Left: Closed medicine boxes found at Nasser Hospital which were not given to the hostages (IDF spokesperson, February 18, 2024)**

► Weapons were also discovered in various clinics and medical facilities throughout the Gaza Strip:

- ◆ IDF forces operating in a clinic in Gaza City found UNRWA sacks used for food distribution in which Hamas operatives had hidden nakhba force operatives' military vests (IDF spokesperson, January 6, 2024).



**Hamas military vests hidden in UNRWA bags (IDF spokesperson, January 6, 2024)**

- ◆ In the Abasan neighborhood east of Khan Yunis, IDF forces located a rocket launcher and a long-range rocket hidden inside a refrigerator in a medical laboratory (IDF spokesperson, February 25, 2024).



**The rocket launcher found inside the refrigerator (IDF spokesperson, February 25, 2024)**



- ◆ During an operation in a clinic in the Zeitoun neighborhood in Gaza City, IDF forces located large quantities of weapons (May 9 and 11, 2024).
- ◆ In a clinic in Shejaiya in Gaza City, large quantities of weapons were found alongside UNRWA equipment (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, July 2-9, 2024).



**Right: Weapons found in the clinic in Shejaiya (July 8, 2024). Left: Weapons found in a clinic in the Zeitoun neighborhood (IDF spokesperson, May 11, 2024)**

## Hotels

- The terrorist organizations have also turned hotels into terrorist facilities. At the Blue Beach Hotel, on the al-Rimal seashore of Gaza City, IDF forces fought against dozens of terrorist operatives who had barricaded themselves in the hotel and fired anti-tank missiles. A Hamas facility was located inside the hotel which had seven shafts leading to tunnels and rooms where terrorist operatives lived. Large quantities of weapons and UAVs were found inside the tunnels (IDF spokesperson, January 5, 2024).



**Weapons found in the Blue Beach Hotel (IDF spokesperson, January 5, 2024)**

## Civilian Homes

- The concept of combat used by Hamas and the other terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip emphasizes the extensive use of civilians as human shields to protect the terrorist operatives from air and ground attacks. The concept was applied on a large scale by the terrorist organizations in the previous IDF operations in the Gaza Strip. The terrorist

organizations hide operatives and weapons in civilian homes, launch rockets from near and within populated areas and prevent the civilian population from leaving their homes. The widespread use of the population as human shields is intended to make the operational activities of the IDF more difficult and to make political, propaganda and legal use against Israel of injuries caused to civilians.

► In the current war, terrorist organizations have made extensive use of clearly designated civilian areas for terrorist activity:

- ◆ During the operation in Khan Yunis, the fighters located weapons found in a children's closet (IDF spokesperson, January 14-15, 2024).
- ◆ During the operation in west Rafah, the forces located and destroyed tunnel shafts and terrorist infrastructure along with many weapons and captured explosives found in civilian homes (IDF spokesperson, May 23-26, 2024).



**Right: Weapons found in a children's closet (IDF spokesperson, January 15, 2024).  
Left: Weapons discovered in a house in Rafah (IDF spokesperson, May 26, 2024)**

- ◆ During the operation in Rafah, the forces located weapons hidden in a baby's crib (IDF spokesperson, June 7-9, 2024).
- ◆ The IDF located passages which terrorist operatives had created by breaking through the walls of homes in Rafah in order to pass between the buildings to ambush IDF forces, using civilians as human shields. In one residence, a tunnel shaft was located in a bathroom. An Israeli Air Force fighter jet attacked a terrorist squad hiding in an apartment that was used as a terrorist facility, and the attack eliminated the deputy commander of the Rafah Brigade's air array (IDF spokesperson, August 8, 2024).

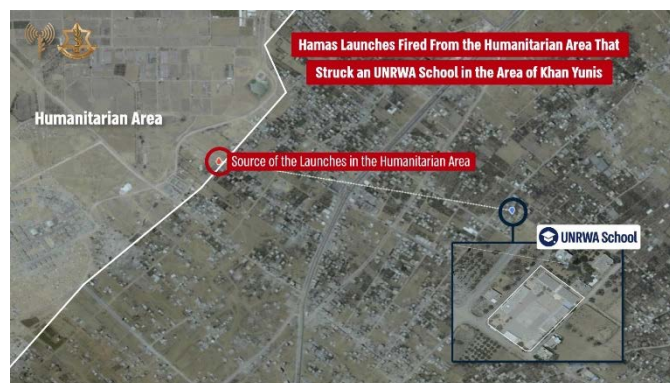




**Right: Weapons discovered in a baby's crib (IDF spokesperson's website, June 7, 2024).  
Left: A passageway discovered inside a closet (IDF spokesperson, August 8, 2024)**

## Humanitarian Enclaves

- ▶ The humanitarian enclaves to which the population from the north and south of the Gaza Strip were directed are also used by the terrorist organizations to hide terrorist operatives, including senior commanders, among civilians and to fire rockets and carry out terrorist attacks with the objective of causing the IDF to respond and harm civilians.
- ▶ On July 13, 2024, the Israeli Air Force eliminated Muhammed Deif, the commander of Hamas' military wing, Rafe' Salama, the commander of Hamas' Khan Yunis Brigade, and other terrorist operatives in an attack on a compound where they were hiding in Khan Yunis. The compound was an open area with several buildings and sheds, near the humanitarian area where there were many displaced persons (IDF spokesperson, July 13-14, 2024).
- ▶ On July 24, 2024, several rockets were fired from the humanitarian region in Khan Yunis. The rockets did not cross into Israeli territory and fell in the area of UNRWA's al-Qarara school in Khan Yunis. Representatives from international aid organizations reported that two civilians were killed and several civilians had been injured when the rockets fell (IDF spokesperson, July 25, 2024).



**Launching rockets from the humanitarian area which hit a school in Khan Yunis (IDF spokesperson, July 25, 2024)**

- ▶ On August 6, 2024, the Israeli Air Force attacked a Hamas-PIJ weapons manufacture workshop in the humanitarian region in Deir al-Balah (IDF spokesperson, August 7, 2024).
- ▶ On August 7, 2024, IDF forces located rocket launch pits on the Philadelphia Axis, on the Gaza Strip-Egypt border, tens of meters away from the largest fuel tank in the Gaza Strip. Damage to the fuel facility as a result of a failed launch of rockets would have endangered the lives of tens of thousands of civilians near the tank (IDF spokesperson, August 8, 2024).



**The rocket launch pits near the fuel tank (IDF spokesperson, August 8, 2024)**

## Public Buildings

- ▶ The terrorist organizations also used public buildings and government institutions. On the night of July 6, 2024, Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked the Khan Yunis municipality building, which Hamas used for terrorist activity. Inside the building there was a shaft leading to a tunnel used as a hideout and assembly area by Hamas military wing operatives (IDF spokesperson, July 7, 2024).

## Cemeteries

- ▶ The terrorist organizations also made use of cemeteries, often as a base for situating rocket launchers, and as part of the tunnel route. In January 2024, IDF forces entered a tunnel located under the Bani Suheila cemetery east of Khan Yunis. Inside the tunnel, where several terrorists had been staying, the forces located the office of the commander of the eastern battalion of the Khan Yunis brigade, from where he directed the attack and massacre on October 7, 2023. Battalion operations rooms, combat management rooms and bedrooms of senior terrorist operatives were also located. The tunnel was part of a branching labyrinth about a kilometer long and about twenty meters deep, and it included several areas (IDF spokesperson, January 29, 2024).



Right: The route of the tunnel (IDF website, January 29, 2024). Left: Part of the tunnel (IDF spokesperson, January 29, 2024)