



# Commemorating 10 Years Since Israel's 2014 Attacks on Gaza

July 2024



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London | Washington

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## July 2024 marks 10 years since Israel's 2014 attacks on Gaza, which were at that time the most devastating Israeli attacks on Gaza since 1967.

Ten years on, we are witnessing a systematic Israeli campaign of genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza, which has numerous parallels with Israel's 2014 attacks. The Israeli war machine playbook has not changed a decade on:

**The current genocide is not the first time** that Israel intentionally targeted civilians, their homes, hospitals, schools, or healthcare workers.

**The current genocide is not the first time** that Israel has been accused of war crimes and genocidal intent towards Palestinians in Gaza.

**The current genocide is not the first time** Israel has refused to cooperate with UN investigations into war crimes.

**The current genocide is not the first time** Israel used Palestinian resistance as a justification for massacres and war crimes.

The current genocide is part of an ongoing cycle of Israeli violence towards Palestinians in Gaza, with the only difference being the genocidal intensity of this cycle of violence.

We dedicate this insight to the Palestinian martyrs of Israel's 2014 attacks on Gaza, and all Palestinians martyred since, in hauntingly repetitive ways.

**“It was 3pm and I was working in the emergency unit [of Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital]. I heard bombing that shook the hospital. It was a shelling that had hit the fourth floor, the pregnancy and caesarean unit.**

**Then there were a few more hits. People were terrified, patients ran out, doctors could not enter to help the injured and remove the dead. Then the third floor was hit and four people were killed. I saw one woman come running with the child she just gave birth to. Some women gave birth during the shelling.”**

**Jaber Khalil Abu Rumileh**  
*describing an Israeli attack on  
the hospital on 21 July 2014<sup>1</sup>*

Supervisor, Ambulance Services  
Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital



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# Overview of Israel's 2014 Attacks on Gaza



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01

# Overview of Israel's 2014 Attacks on Gaza

From 8 July to 26 August 2014, Israel conducted its then most devastating attack on Gaza since 1967, which the Israeli army codenamed 'Operation Protective Edge'.<sup>2</sup>

Israeli officials stated their 2014 attack on Gaza was retaliation for the disappearance of three Israeli settlers in the West Bank – which Netanyahu blamed Hamas for, despite no evidence linking their disappearance to Hamas, and Hamas officials denying any involvement.<sup>3</sup>

Over 50 days, the Israeli army relentlessly attacked Gaza, killing 2,251 Palestinians, of which 551 were children.<sup>4</sup> Israel also injured 11,231 Palestinians, including 3,436 children.<sup>5</sup>

Most infamously, the Israeli navy killed four Palestinian boys aged between 9- and 11-years years old, all from the same family, whilst they played football on the beach.<sup>6</sup>

Over 12,600 Palestinian homes were destroyed, and a further 150,000 were damaged, in addition to 118 UNWRA buildings, of which 83 were schools and 10 were health centres.<sup>7</sup>

The scale of Israel's destruction displaced 500,000 Palestinians, with almost 293,000 people being forced to seek humanitarian assistance in just 85 UNWRA schools on 23 August 2014.<sup>8</sup>

Amnesty International stated there was evidence that the Israeli army had deliberately targeted health facilities and healthcare workers.<sup>9</sup> Israel's bombardment killed 23 medical workers, injured 78, and damaged or destroyed 73 hospitals and medical facilities and 45 ambulances.<sup>10</sup>

UN investigators found Israel may have committed war crimes, however these have gone unprosecuted thus far.<sup>11</sup>

**“I never blame Hamas or our Palestinian resistance factions. The destruction we live in is caused by Israel on this ground and Arab silence on the other end. I am homeless today because my home was bombed. A war that struck civilians for a whole month can happen only because of the silence of Arab leaders. It’s a choice we have to make – either we die, or we live a dignified life.”**

**Abdullah El Hageen**  
Palestinian living in Gaza<sup>12</sup>



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# Key Events During Israel's 2014 Attacks



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## 02

# Key Events During Israel's 2014 Attacks

## Aerial Attacks

Israel's 2014 attack on Gaza began with the Israeli air force launching more than 1,700 strikes in one week, from 8 to 16 July.<sup>13</sup>

## Ground Invasion

On 17 July 2014, the Israeli army began a ground invasion of Gaza, following a successful Palestinian resistance operation directed against Israeli soldiers outside Gaza the same evening.<sup>14</sup>

On 19 July, the Israeli army attempted a ground invasion of al-Shuja'iyya neighbourhood in Gaza City, which failed due to Palestinian resistance.<sup>15</sup> As a result, the Israeli army carpet bombed the neighbourhood with over 7,000 explosive shells – killing over 65 Palestinians and injuring 288.<sup>16</sup>

## Siege of Khuza'a

On 20 July, the Israeli army ordered the population of Khuza'a, a village near Khan Younis, to evacuate.<sup>17</sup> However, the next day, Israel bombed all roads into the village and troops began to invade before most people were able to evacuate.<sup>18</sup>

Khuza'a was besieged by the Israeli army: Palestinians were not allowed to leave, and food and water was not able to enter the village, creating a shortage.<sup>19</sup> Israeli soldiers committed war crimes such as killing civilians, including those waving white flags.<sup>20</sup>

## Use of the Hannibal Directive

On 31 July 2014, the Palestinian resistance successfully captured an Israeli soldier.<sup>21</sup> Israel engaged the 'Hannibal Directive', which allows the Israeli army to prevent – by all means necessary – the capture of Israeli soldiers by Palestinian resistance fighters, even at the cost of captured soldiers' lives.<sup>22</sup>

Israel soldiers dropped 2,000 missiles on neighbourhoods surrounding the area where the soldier was captured, killing 160 Palestinians and resulting in the death of the Israeli soldier.<sup>23</sup>

## Israeli Withdrawal

In early August, Israel withdrew its ground troops from Gaza but continued its aerial attacks.<sup>24</sup> On 26 August 2014, a ceasefire was agreed.<sup>25</sup>

**“And I say to the resistance: Go ahead, we are behind you. I say this despite losing my home and some family members being injured. I say this despite my pain and deep wounds. If I were to describe this last month: It was a war of terror. This war made me believe only in the resistance, and the resistance will bring an end to this occupation. It is the resistance which defends us and our souls – the world is watching us, but they are doing nothing for us.”**

**Umm Salam Abuelbayed**  
Palestinian homemaker  
living in Gaza<sup>26</sup>



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# Ongoing Legacies of the 2014 Attacks



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# Ongoing Legacies of the 2014 Attacks

One third of the 3,436 Palestinian children injured by Israel's 2014 attacks have suffered from permanent disabilities as a result.<sup>27</sup>

Around 20% of Palestinians in Gaza developed mental health problems after Israel's 2014 attacks on Gaza.<sup>28</sup>

In 2022, the Israeli Supreme Court rejected a request by the family of the four Palestinian boys killed by the Israeli navy whilst playing football on the beach to reopen an investigation into their deaths.<sup>29</sup>

It was estimated that the cost of rebuilding the buildings destroyed by Israel's attacks on Gaza would exceed \$6 billion (£4.6 billion), and reconstruction would take more than 20 years – notwithstanding future Israeli attacks which have undoubtedly set this date back.<sup>30</sup>

**“We were on our way back to Nasser hospital, driving with the lights and sirens on as always. The ambulance was clearly marked as such. The doctor, nurse and I were all wearing medical uniforms. When we reached the Islamic University, I heard an explosion right next to us and the front and back windows of the car fell out. As I was turning another missile hit next to us, and then a third one. When the fourth missile hit, I lost control and we crashed, so we ran out of the car and found shelter in a building. Then there were two more missiles fired and some people were injured.”**

**Mohammad Abu Jumiza**  
Ambulance Worker

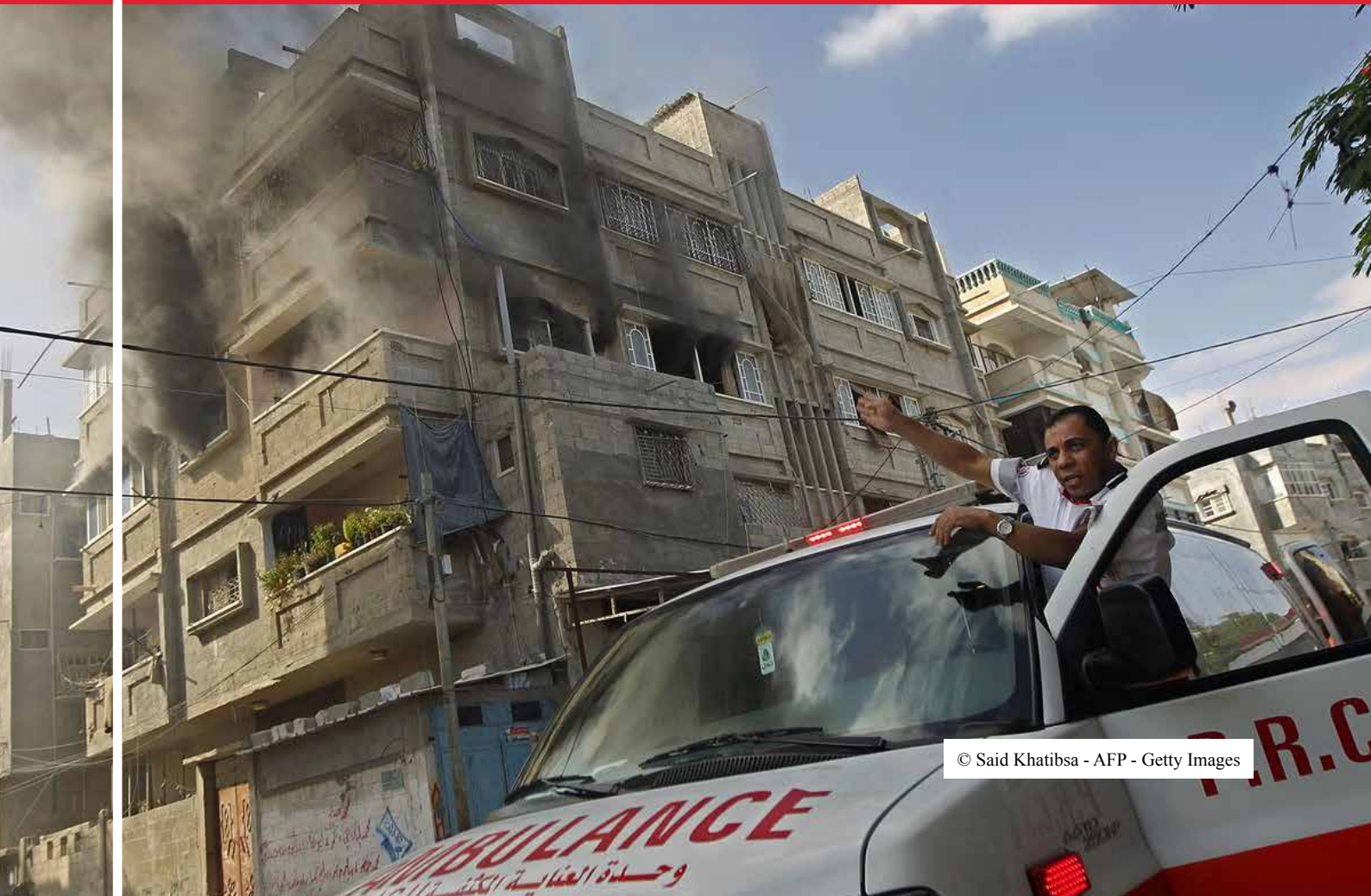
*Mohammad became partially deaf as a result of head injuries caused by an Israeli attack in Khan Younis on 24 July 2014<sup>31</sup>*



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# Parallels with the Ongoing Genocide in Gaza



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## 04

# Parallels with the Ongoing Genocide in Gaza

The 10-year anniversary of Israel's 2014 attacks in Gaza coincides with nine months of Israel's current genocide in Gaza, beginning 7 October 2023.<sup>32</sup> There have been many similarities between the two Israeli assaults on Gaza, including:

- Intentional Israeli attacks on civilian infrastructure, including residential buildings, schools, and hospitals.<sup>33</sup>
- Intentional Israeli attacks on healthcare workers.<sup>34</sup>
- UN issued statements expressing concern about Israeli war crimes and dehumanising rhetoric towards Palestinians which incites genocide.<sup>35</sup>
- Holocaust survivors accused Israel of committing genocide against the Palestinian people.<sup>36</sup>
- Israeli attacks on Gaza coincided with the increased murder of Palestinians in the West Bank.<sup>37</sup>
- Israel re-arrested Palestinian prisoners previously freed in previous prisoner exchange deals.<sup>38</sup>
- Israel rejected proposed ceasefire conditions which Hamas accepted.<sup>39</sup>
- Israeli officials repeatedly used Hamas tunnels as justification for attacks on civilian infrastructure.<sup>40</sup>
- Israel refused to cooperate with UN investigations into accusations of war crimes.<sup>41</sup>

**“It is normal in life under Israeli occupation. [Israel] commits a crime and then denies it completely. The world talks about children and their rights. Where are the rights of our Palestinian children?”**

**The killing of our children is a stain on Israel’s forehead. Israel has all the modern capabilities and advanced weapons. Was it difficult for them to determine that they were children?**

**The hardest moment in my life ever was seeing my child cut into shreds in the morgue along with my nephews. They were all cut to pieces.**

**If this is not a war crime, what are war crimes?”**

**Mohammed Bakr, 60**  
Father of one of the four boys  
killed whilst playing football<sup>42</sup>





# Footnotes

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- <sup>27</sup> ‘2014 Gaza Conflict’ UNWRA
- <sup>28</sup> ‘Israel’s war crimes fuel mental illness in Gaza’ *The New Arab* (22 March 2019) available at <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/israels-war-crimes-fuel-mental-illness-gaza>
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- <sup>30</sup> ‘Housing Group: 20 Years to Rebuild Gaza After Fighting With Israel’ *Haaretz* (30 August 2014) available at <https://www.haaretz.com/2014-08-30/ty-article/20-years-to-rebuild-gaza/0000017f-e83e-dc91-a17f-fcbf0d100000>
- <sup>31</sup> ‘Mounting evidence of deliberate attacks on Gaza health workers by Israeli army’ Amnesty International

## Footnotes continued...

- 32 'Israel war on Gaza updates: 'Another day, another school hit' *Al Jazeera* (7 July 2024) available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2024/7/7/israel-war-on-gaza-live-hospitals-in-gaza-overwhelmed-by-israeli-strikes?update=3030885#:~:text=Israeli%20activists%20stage%20%E2%80%9Ca%20day,on%20Gaza%20since%20October%207>.
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