

Executive Summary: Israeli Military Campaigns Against Palestinians (1948–2025)

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Abstract

This report, drawing on open-source intelligence (OSINT), meticulously documents Israeli military campaigns against Palestinians from 1948 to 2025. It reveals a consistent pattern of extensive civilian harm, mass displacement, and widespread destruction across Palestinian territories. Key historical flashpoints—including the 1948 Nakba, the 1967 Occupation, and major Gaza conflicts (2008–09, 2014, 2021, and 2023–25)—demonstrate overwhelmingly higher Palestinian casualties compared to Israeli losses. By early 2024, satellite analyses estimated over 157,000 Gazan structures destroyed, and independent investigations by entities such as Amnesty International and UN Commissions have documented attacks on civilian infrastructure, often categorizing them as indiscriminate or unlawful. Humanitarian data from mid-2025 indicate Gaza is on the brink of famine, with a six-fold increase in malnutrition admissions and thousands of Palestinians killed while seeking food. Israel's advanced arsenal, heavily supported by substantial U.S. military aid, significantly overmatches Palestinian capabilities. International bodies, including the ICJ and ICC, have invoked the Genocide Convention and war crimes laws in this context, with arrest warrants issued for high-ranking Israeli and Hamas officials. In essence, available OSINT rigorously documents extensive Israeli offensives combined with a protracted blockade, collectively devastating Palestinian civilian life and raising profound legal and humanitarian concerns.

This report compiles open-source intelligence on Israeli military campaigns against Palestinians (1948–2025). It finds a pattern of repeated large-scale civilian harm, displacement, and destruction in Palestinian territories. Historical flashpoints—from the 1948 Nakba and 1967 Occupation to the Gaza wars (2008–09, 2014, 2021) and the 2023–25 escalation—show overwhelmingly higher Palestinian casualties than Israeli losses. Satellite analyses estimate over 157,000 Gazan structures destroyed by early 2024. Independent investigations (Amnesty, UN Commissions) document attacks on whole families, hospitals, and food convoys, calling many “indiscriminate”

or unlawful,. Humanitarian data reveal Gaza on the brink of famine: malnutrition admissions skyrocketed six-fold by mid-2025, and nearly 1,900 Palestinians were recorded killed while seeking food (May–Aug 2025). Israel's arsenal (U.S.-made jets, bombs, drones, etc.) far outmatches that of Hamas, underpinned by massive U.S. aid (\$3.8B/yr),. International bodies (ICJ, ICC, UN Commissions) have invoked the Genocide Convention and war crimes laws in this context,. In short, available OSINT documents extensive Israeli offensives coupled with a blockade that have devastated Palestinian civilian life, raising serious legal and humanitarian alarms.

Historical Timeline and Key Flashpoints

A chronological overview underscores recurring crisis phases. The table below highlights major events, casualty estimates and displacements by data from UN/NGO reports.

Year(s)	Event	Palestinian Impact	Israeli Impact	Notes
1948–49	Nakba – 1948 Arab–Israeli War	~13,000–16,000 killed; 750,000+ displaced,	Several thousand military casualties (e.g.~6,000 Arab)	Creation of State of Israel; ~700,000 Palestinians became refugees.
1967	Six-Day War – Israel captures West Bank, Gaza	“Hundreds of thousands” newly displaced; 1,000,000+ Palestinians under occupation	~700 IDF soldiers killed (Arab losses ~18,000)	UN Resolution 242 post-war called Israel's withdrawal for peace.
2008–2009	Operation Cast Lead (Gaza)	1,387 killed (773 non-combatants); heavy housing & infrastructure damage; tens of thousands displaced	13 killed (3 civilians, 6 security)	Israeli air/ground offensive. B’Tselem found ~56% of Palestinian dead were civilians.

2014	Operation Protective Edge (Gaza)	2,251 killed (1,462 civilians); 73 medical facilities damaged; 500,000 IDPs (28% of Gaza)	6 civilians + 67 soldiers killed	Intense urban warfare; UN inquiry documented indiscriminate attacks.
May 2021	Gaza War (Guardian of the Walls)	256 Gazans killed (66 children)	13 Israelis killed (2 children)	Triggered by Jerusalem tensions; temporary ceasefire.
Oct 7, 2023	Hamas attack on Israel	–	~1,400 Israelis killed; 240 hostages taken	Hamas rockets/incursions prompted major Israeli retaliation.
Oct 2023 – Aug 2025	Ongoing Gaza War (Al-Aqsa Flood)	62,122 killed (per Gaza Ministry of Health); vast displacement (~95% of Gaza's 2.3M population); ~157,200 buildings destroyed	454 IDF soldiers + 1,654 civilians/hostages killed	Massive Israeli bombardment and siege of Gaza. 13,000+ humanitarian/malnutrition admissions (6× Feb).

Key casualty figures: Throughout these conflicts, Palestinian fatalities and injuries far exceed Israeli losses. UN OCHA notes “a large number of civilian casualties” and a chronic lack of accountability. For example, OCHA reported ~2,251 Gazan deaths (1,462 civilians) in 2014 versus 73 Israeli dead. In May 2021, 256 Palestinians (66 children) died compared to 13 Israelis. By Aug 2025, Gaza’s health ministry tallied ~62,000 Palestinian dead from Oct 2023 onward (including casualties from starvation), while Israeli military reported ~454 soldier fatalities plus ~1,654 killed during Hamas’s Oct 7 attack. (Note: casualties vary by source; quoted figures are from UN/NGO reports or official tallies.)

Displacement: These wars have repeatedly displaced Palestinians. The Nakba made ~750,000 refugees; 1967 added hundreds of thousands more. The 2014 Gaza war left ~28% of Gazans (500,000 people) in UN shelters. During 2023–25, nearly the entire population of Gaza (an estimated 1.9 million) was forced from homes. Such mass movements occur under bombardment, often with UNRWA camps overflowing. International agencies note Gaza is “fast running out” of water, medicine and fuel under this siege.

Civilian Harm and Humanitarian Impact

Repeated independent investigations document massive civilian suffering:

- **Casualties:** Many thousands of non-combatants have been killed. For example, B’Tselem found that in 2008–09 Israeli strikes killed 1,387 Gazans, of whom 773 had not fought (including 320 minors). In 2014, OHCHR/OCHA reported 1,462 civilian deaths (551 children) among 2,251 Gazan dead. In 2021, 66 of 256 Gazans killed were children. By mid-2025, Gaza’s Health Ministry counted ~62,000 war dead, mostly civilians. In contrast, Israeli casualties are far lower (e.g. 67 soldiers +6 civilians in 2014; 13 total in 2008–09).
- **Infrastructure Damage:** Gaza’s built environment has been devastated. Satellite analysts estimated 157,200 buildings destroyed or damaged (by March 2024) – over half of all structures in the Strip. In some towns (e.g. Khuza’a) imagery shows entire neighborhoods “completely razed”. Thousands of homes, schools and clinics have been hit. The 2014 war alone destroyed 18,000 housing units and damaged 73 medical facilities. OSINT teams using high-resolution imagery confirm repeated strikes on civilian sites: one NGO mapped 63 incidents of damaged schools and 50 incidents of damaged hospitals in Gaza.
- **Blockade Effects:** Israel’s long-running blockade of Gaza, tightened since 2007, contributes heavily to civilian suffering. Humanitarian reports note the blockade and siege amount to “collective punishment” (a war crime). Gaza now faces dire shortages: 97% of its water is unfit to drink, power cuts are chronic (often only hours per day), and 70% of water/sanitation equipment imports are blocked. United Nations agencies warn of severe famine: in summer 2025 malnutrition cases spiked (13,000 admissions, 6× the Feb level), and many children are dying of starvation. OHCHR recorded at least 1,889 Palestinians killed while seeking food between May–August 2025 (almost all by Israeli forces, none combatants). Aid convoys have been repeatedly delayed or restricted by Israeli controls, exacerbating shortages of food, medicine, fuel and shelter.
- **Witness Accounts:** Verified testimonies from aid workers and observers describe collapsing hospitals, people eating grass or goat heads, and dire sanitation. A senior UN official remarked on finding “starving children” in

Gaza. Reporters Without Borders reports at least 130 Palestinian journalists killed and Gaza's media infrastructure destroyed,. Survivors recount entire families wiped out in strikes, sometimes leaving "nothing but rubble". Such firsthand accounts, cross-checked by investigators, reinforce the picture of a humanitarian catastrophe under way.

Israeli Military Operations and Weaponry

Israeli forces have conducted large-scale military campaigns using advanced weapon systems (mostly supplied or coproduced by allies):

- **Air and Artillery Campaigns:** Israel employed extensive airpower in all Gaza conflicts. For example, in 2014 the IDF reported firing 14,500 tank shells and 35,000 artillery shells in Gaza. Thousands of high-explosive bombs (including American JDAM "bunker busters" and GBU-39s) were dropped. Unmanned drones (Israeli models like Hermes and Harop) launched missiles at targets. Coastal and ground offensives (e.g. 2023 "Gaza Summer Rain") have used Merkava tanks and armored vehicles. Such use of heavy ordnance in densely populated areas has led to wide destruction of civilian structures.

Foreign-Supplied Systems: Israel's arsenal is heavily bolstered by foreign arms. The U.S. is by far the largest supplier: it accounts for ~69% of Israel's arms imports (2019–23), including all its combat aircraft. Under a 2016 Memorandum of Understanding, the U.S. provides

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- 12.5 billion in emergency aid (plus an estimated \$5.4 billion to replenish U.S. stocks). American contractors help produce Israel's Iron Dome interceptors and supply bombs and missiles. For instance, the U.S. airlifted 1,000 GBU-39 bombs to Israel by Oct 10, 2023. Other suppliers include Germany (submarines, derivatives of tanks) and Italy (joint-development jets); Israel itself ranks among the world's top 10 arms exporters.
- **Technology and Surveillance:** Beyond weapons, Israel employs sophisticated surveillance and cyber tools. In Gaza the military has deployed long-range drones and intelligence units. A 2025 exposé revealed that Israel's Unit 8200 stored recordings of millions of Palestinians' phone calls on Microsoft's Azure cloud. Internet blackout measures – strikes on telecom towers and power – effectively blinded Gazans and external monitoring (internet traffic fell ~80% by late Oct 2023). On the ground, Israeli forces use facial recognition, border cameras, and drone scans to track Palestinians. These digital capabilities, combined with restrictions on network access, severely limit civilian communications and exacerbate repression.

- **Palestinian Armaments (for context):** Palestinian armed groups in Gaza (primarily Hamas's Al-Qassam Brigades) have comparatively limited weapons. They have fired thousands of unguided rockets (e.g. ~4,881 rockets in 2014) and deployed small anti-tank missiles or machine guns. No independent air force or advanced missiles. Nevertheless, the asymmetry in firepower means even minor Palestinian attacks have drawn massive Israeli retaliation.

Economic Blockade and Deprivation

The Israeli economic blockade of Gaza (land, sea, and air) has created a chronic humanitarian crisis even before recent wars. Key impacts include:

- **Energy Shortage:** Gaza has struggled with severe power cuts for years. Before 2023, generators or partial Israeli supply gave only hours of electricity per day. The blockade restricts fuel imports and spare parts, so hospitals and water treatment plants often run only on emergency generators. This magnifies wartime suffering (e.g. sewage pumps fail, medical equipment goes offline).
- **Water and Sanitation:** Over-extraction and pollution have left Gaza's coastal aquifer nearly exhausted. OCHA reports "97 percent of this water is unfit for human consumption". Blocked infrastructure imports (70% of water/sanitation equipment are declared "dual-use" and banned) mean pipelines and pumps are irreparable. Residents buy expensive trucked water, but even desalination plants run at low output due to fuel shortages. The UN warns disease outbreaks are imminent under these conditions.
- **Food Insecurity:** Gazans depend heavily on imports for food. Israel's closure of border crossings and restricted aid convoys have caused widespread food shortages. Humanitarian agencies report acute food insecurity: many people have gone several days without a proper meal. Official data (when available) show rising malnutrition among children. Denial of fuel has also halted bakeries and freezing facilities. In 2025, UNRWA warned that Gaza risked becoming a "giant graveyard" without lifting the siege.
- **Economic Blockade:** Beyond essentials, the overall blockade (since 2007) has stifled Gaza's economy and prevented rebuilding. Combined with recurrent bombing, most businesses and factories are shuttered. Unemployment and poverty rates have been the world's highest for years. Aid agencies note that these economic restrictions constitute de facto collective punishment, severely degrading Gazan civilian life.

Digital Repression and Media Control

The conflict also plays out in cyberspace and media. OSINT sources document a systematic information blackout on Palestinian perspectives:

- **Internet Censorship:** Reports by digital-rights groups show that Israel's strikes on communication infrastructure have intentionally severed Gaza's internet. By October 2023, connectivity dropped 80%, with entire neighborhoods cut off. Access Now observed that these outages provide "cover for human rights atrocities". Schools and hospitals looted or bombed often occur during blackouts.
- **Surveillance:** Israel uses advanced cyber tools to monitor Palestinians. The 2025 Guardian exposé revealed that Israeli intelligence harvested and stored vast call records of Gazans. Israeli agencies also reportedly block or filter Palestinian websites and social platforms. Conversely, Hamas maintains a propaganda presence online but lacks the infrastructure to counter Internet blackouts.
- **Press and Censorship:** Independent journalism in Gaza is nearly extinct. Reporters Without Borders notes 130+ Palestinian journalists killed since Oct 2023, newsrooms destroyed, and foreign press barred from entering Gaza. Surviving Gaza journalists are frequently displaced or exiled. Those who publish often face propaganda smear campaigns (accusations of aiding combatants) by authorities. This has significantly hindered credible on-ground reporting.
- **Social Media Propaganda:** Both sides wage information warfare online. Analysts observe that Israel launched a coordinated digital propaganda effort ("Hasbara"), ensuring "the Israeli viewpoint dominates" on social media. Hashtags, official Army accounts, and diaspora networks amplify Israel's narrative of self-defense. In contrast, Palestinians struggle for visibility: Al Jazeera reports Gaza residents face power outages and movement restrictions that hamper their digital voice. Major platforms have also censored pro-Palestinian content: Human Rights Watch found 1,050+ incidents in Oct–Nov 2023 where Facebook/Instagram removed or suppressed peaceful Palestinian posts. Meta's inconsistent policy enforcement (often citing anti-terror rules) has disproportionately targeted Palestinian expressions.
- **Misinformation:** Competing narratives are rampant. Videos and images circulate (e.g. allegedly doctored footage of events), and each side accuses the other of fabrication. Independent fact-checkers document many false claims (e.g. misattributed photos of casualties, false reports of atrocities). OSINT investigators stress the need to verify geolocation and timestamps to counter propaganda.

Satellite and Geospatial Intelligence

Geospatial analysis has been crucial to corroborate on-the-ground reports:

- **Damage Assessment:** Public satellite imagery (from ESA, Planet, and MAXAR) has been used to systematically map devastation. Oregon State researchers published weekly updates showing tens of thousands of wrecked

buildings. UNOSAT (UN's satellite arm) also releases damage assessments for humanitarian responders. These analyses have publicly documented the geographic extent of firepower effects (e.g. area maps of rubble vs standing buildings).

- **Forensic Verification:** Analysts geolocate video footage by matching landmarks to satellite imagery. This method has confirmed dozens of strikes. For instance, videos of destroyed schools or markets have been matched to their satellite coordinates and timestamps, verifying when and where strikes occurred. This counters misinformation (fake or misdated videos) and provides concrete evidence of events.
- **Open Satellite Radar:** Some teams use Synthetic Aperture Radar (e.g. from Sentinel-1) to detect ground disturbances even when optical imagery is obscured by dust or at night. This reveals shell craters and debris fields. While raw images are usually proprietary, aggregated data and analysis results have been cited in news reports to substantiate claims of “wipe-out” zones.

These geospatial methods have been critical given limited journalist access to Gaza. They allow investigators to independently confirm patterns of destruction (residential zones, agricultural lands, refugee camps) and counter state narratives. For example, Amnesty and others have released annotated satellite comparisons (before/after) showing total leveling of villages,. Such OSINT evidence bolsters accountability by tying abstract casualty figures to visible landscape damage.

International Law and War Crimes Allegations

Numerous international legal mechanisms have been triggered by these events:

- **Genocide Convention:** The language of genocide has entered official discourse. In January 2024, South Africa filed a case at the International Court of Justice under the 1948 Genocide Convention, seeking to compel Israel to prevent “acts of genocide” and allow aid into Gaza. The ICJ ordered provisional measures for Israel to take “all measures within [its] power” to prevent genocide and to halt the Rafah offensive. Amnesty International and others note that Israeli actions (death of civilians, blockade) reflect “conditions of life designed to bring about [Palestinians’] physical destruction, in whole or in part” – a direct quote from the Genocide Convention.
- **War Crimes Documentation:** A UN Commission of Inquiry (established 2021) found evidence of war crimes by both Israeli forces and Hamas during the 2023 conflict. It cited indiscriminate attacks and violation of IHL by both sides. Human rights NGOs (Amnesty, B’Tselem, HRW) have gathered detailed case studies: for instance, Amnesty documented multiple strikes (Oct–Dec 2023) that “wiped out entire families” when no combatants were present, calling for war crimes investigations,. Another report highlighted the bombing of a Gaza cemetery where children played. These findings

emphasize repeated failures to distinguish civilians from military targets or provide warnings.

- **International Criminal Court (ICC):** After Palestine acceded to the ICC in 2015, the Court's prosecutor launched an investigation in March 2021 into alleged crimes in the occupied territories (going back to June 2014). In November 2024, the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber issued arrest warrants for Israeli officials (Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant) and for Hamas military leader Mohammed Deif. This unprecedented move indicates serious allegations of war crimes or crimes against humanity by both state and non-state actors.
- **Other Legal Frameworks:** UN resolutions (e.g. 242, 338, 1860) and the Fourth Geneva Convention are frequently cited by critics. Many analysts note that forcible displacement orders (e.g. evacuation of northern Gaza) breach Article 49 of GCIV. Allegations of apartheid and ethnic cleansing have also been made in UN reports. (Israel rejects these labels.) U.S. law (Leahy Law) theoretically restricts aid to violators of human rights; some experts argue the U.S. has effectively waived this for Israel.

In summary, the conflict has seen extensive legal scrutiny. While Israel cites its right to self-defense, the scale of civilian harm has led the UN and international NGOs to label many actions as illegal under international humanitarian law. The term "genocide" remains legally contentious, but its invocation by courts and watchdogs underscores grave international concern.

Foreign Support and Political Dynamics

Foreign governments play a critical role in this conflict, especially the United States:

- **United States:** The U.S. provides Israel with unparalleled military and political backing. Under the current aid deal, Washington commits \$3.8 billion per year in military grants. After the Oct 2023 war began, Congress swiftly approved at least \$12.5 billion more in direct military aid (plus another \$5–6 billion for resupply). The U.S. also fast-tracked arms deliveries: emergency shipments of bombs, missiles, tank rounds, and Iron Dome interceptors were flown to Israel in late 2023. While U.S. law technically forbids aiding human-rights violators, the Biden administration has largely continued support; only in May 2024 did it briefly pause an advanced bomb shipment over concerns about civilian deaths. The U.S. has vetoed major UN sanctions on Israel and lobbies against ICC actions. Meanwhile, domestic debate in Washington has heated up, with some lawmakers demanding stricter conditions (e.g. respect for international law) while others defend unconditional aid.
- **Other Western Allies:** Europe has been more divided. Germany (Israel's second-largest arms supplier) abruptly announced in August 2025 that it would halt new approvals for arms exports to Israel that could be used in

Gaza. This came after approving €485 million in Israeli arms exports between Oct 2023–May 2025. Nevertheless, Germany has so far resisted broader sanctions, often citing historic ties. The UK also paused certain export licenses, but critics note that a large volume of weapons (e.g. missiles, ammunition) still flows to Israel.

- **Regional Players:** Iran, Qatar and Turkey provide political and financial support to Palestinian factions. Iran is the main backer of Hamas (rocket technology, funds). Arab states (Egypt, Jordan) have had complex roles: Egypt enforces the Rafah blockade and mediates ceasefires. UNRWA's funding comes largely from Western and Gulf donors; the U.S. controversially cut off UNRWA funding in 2018–22, straining relief efforts.

Overall, Israel's military advantage is heavily underwritten by the U.S., with additional aid or diplomacy from select allies. Most of the global south and Muslim-majority countries have been highly critical of Israel's actions and some have called for investigations or arms embargoes. U.S. support in particular has enabled Israel's extensive military operations despite international protests and potential legal ramifications.

Appendix A: OSINT Methodology and Source Validation

This report draws exclusively on publicly available information, rigorously cross-referenced for credibility. Key methods include:

- **Open-Source Data Gathering:** We surveyed official publications (UN agencies' reports, government statements, NGO reports), reputable media investigations, and academic studies. Sources include the UN OCHA, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty, B'Tselem, OCHA database "Protection of Civilians", CFR analyses, and journalistic outlets (e.g. Reuters, BBC, New York Times). All cited documents are downloadable or viewable online. When figures vary, we cite multiple sources or clearly indicate the origin (e.g. Palestinian MoH vs. Israeli MoH counts).
- **Satellite & Geolocation Verification:** We incorporated findings from satellite imagery analysts who make data public (e.g. Oregon State/GGE, Amnesty geospatial team, UNOSAT). These analyses were typically reported in news articles or NGO releases. Where possible, we quote from their published findings. For example, the 157,200 building damage figure comes from a peer-reviewed science news story based on satellite data. We did not perform original geolocation ourselves, but relied on expert reports.
- **Eyewitness and Testimonial Corroboration:** Testimonies included are drawn from documented interviews or press briefings by humanitarian workers and journalists (e.g. UN spokespersons, NGO field staff, medical personnel). We avoid raw social media unless also reported by a credible outlet. When quoting individuals (e.g. Amnesty's Secretary-General or UN

officials), we ensure their statements appear in published reports or verified press releases (as with).

- **Cross-Checking and Triangulation:** Critical figures (casualty counts, displacement numbers) are cross-checked across multiple sources. For instance, Gaza casualty totals were compared among UN OCHA updates, Palestinian MoH reports (cited by NGOs), and independent trackers. Discrepancies are noted; where consensus exists (e.g. 2023 fatalities), we report the figure with attribution.
- **Source Validation Criteria:** We prioritized sources with transparent methodologies. UN and ICRC reports often detail how data is gathered. NGO investigations cite field verification (e.g. Amnesty's five-case strike analyses). We exclude sensationalist outlets or unverifiable claims. Peer-reviewed studies and major news media served as supplementary sources. If any information could not be corroborated by at least two credible sources, it was omitted.
- **Data Provenance:** Each key claim is referenced. Users can trace statements back to the original document via citations (e.g. for 2014 casualties). When citing secondary summaries (like a news story interpreting a report), we ensure it references the primary data. Visual or satellite evidence is used as reported by specialists; for example, Amnesty's geospatial quote is drawn directly from their published analysis.
- **Transparency and Neutrality:** We have aimed for neutrality in language, attributing all charged terms (e.g. "genocide," "ethnic cleansing") to their sources rather than making unsupported accusations. Our selection of details focuses on verifiable facts (numbers, documented events) rather than rhetoric. Where the term "genocide" or "war crimes" is used, it is in the context of legal accusations or definitions by international bodies,.

In summary, this report synthesizes diverse open sources under rigorous validation standards. Claims are evidence-based and sourced; contested data is flagged with citations. The aim is an accurate, comprehensive intelligence-style briefing grounded in publicly verifiable information.

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Note: The following bibliography provides illustrative entries based on the organizations and types of sources mentioned in the report. Specific URLs or exact titles for each numbered citation were not provided in the original text, as the [OBJ] markers functioned as placeholders for a pre-existing internal citation system. For a full, verifiable bibliography, the original source documents for each claim would be required.

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