

October 17, 2023

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Israel/Palestine: Videos of Hamas-Led Attacks Verified



ICC Has Mandate to Probe Attacks as War Crimes

Transcript

Transcript

Israel/Palestine Digital Investigation Transcript:

On the morning of October 7, 2023, heavily-armed Hamas-led fighters breached the fences with Gaza and entered southern Israel.

They killed at least 1,400 people, many of them civilians, including children, according to the Israeli military in their homes, in bomb shelters, and on roads as they fled.

Since October 7, Israel has responded with thousands of airstrikes on Gaza, killing thousands of people, including hundreds of children, according to officials.

Armed groups in Gaza have fired thousands of rockets into civilian areas of Israel, further inflicting casualties.

Since 2007, Israel has maintained a closure on the Gaza Strip and, for decades, systematically repressed Palestinians.

Under international law, there can be no justification for targeting civilians.

Human Rights Watch investigations into grave abuses in Israel and Palestine are ongoing.

The Digital Investigations Lab at Human Rights Watch is reviewing hundreds of photos and videos showing unfolding abuses.

As part of this work, the research team has verified a series of videos dashcam and security camera footage from October 7 shared on Telegram by The South First Responders.

The videos show gunmen targeting people in the vicinity of the Supernova music festival, near Re'im in Southern Israel, and in Israeli border communities.

Human Rights Watch is investigating these attacks and others as war crimes.

The first video, taken at 7:55 am, according to the timestamp, shows seven gunmen, including several who scream in Arabic and kick a shirtless man near the Re'im Junction bus stop, a few minutes' walk south from the festival grounds.

All four videos analyzed by researchers include coordinates or a description of the location, in addition to a time and date stamp.

The Digital Investigations Lab used this information, analyzing satellite imagery and open source data as well as the shadows in each video, to verify the location and timing.

In the first video, one gunman shouts, "guys, inside, inside here," and they appear to argue about the inside of a shelter.

Another gunman throws a device into the shelter. A man dressed in civilian clothes dashes out

The gunmen scream, take aim, and shoot at him as he tries to flee.

Seconds later, there is an explosion inside the shelter.

It is unclear from the footage if either man in the video survived.

In a second video, captured around 8:43 am, a fatally shot man in civilian clothing bleeds on the ground in front of Kibbutz Mefalsim, some 24 kilometers from the bus stop in Re'im.

A group of gunmen congregate in front of a structure close to the dead man, and one throws a device towards the structure.

15 seconds later, there is an explosion and a gunman drags out an individual shoots them at close range, and beats them with the butt of his rifle as the other gunmen look on.

In a third video, taken at 9:23 am that same day, footage shows a dusty parking lot next to the Supernova festival grounds,

A gunman shoots towards a bloodied man in civilian clothing crouching next to a car before leading him off camera.

Another man, who briefly looks up and moves his leg before lying still, is on the ground behind a vehicle.

He does not appear armed.

A gunman runs up to him, aims the rifle at his head, and shoots him at close range.

His body jolts from the impact, and then goes limp.

In a fourth video, captured by the same dashcam just over two and a half hours later, at 12:12 pm, the victim is seen lying on the ground in the same position, unmoving, indicating he may be dead.

Men with the gunmen are seen taking small items out of his pockets before looting the car, where they find a woman hiding inside.

They lead her away, off camera.

Her fate is unknown.

Intentionally targeting and killing civilians are war crimes under international humanitarian law.

Over the coming weeks and months, Human Rights Watch will share additional research findings, building out a body of evidence of grave abuses in Israel and Palestine, and calling for perpetrators to be held to account.

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