Hamas Orders Civilians to Die in Israeli Airstrikes

July 10, 2014

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The Washington Free Beacon

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/jul/10/hamas-orders-civilians-die-israeli-airstrikes/?page=all>

[Hamas' Interior Ministry](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas-interior-ministry/) has ordered residents of the [Gaza](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/gaza/) Strip to remain in their houses if they are about to be bombed by the Israelis, a move that effectively turns citizens into human shields and is intentionally meant to boost the casualty rate, according to a copy of the order published by [Hamas](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas/).

[Israel](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/israel/) warns [Gaza](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/gaza/) residents of air strikes before they take place so innocent civilians have time to flee and seek shelter.

The latest [Hamas](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas/) order that citizens ignore [Israel](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/israel/)’s warnings and stay put is a clear effort by the terror group to increase the death count and apply pressure on [Israel](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/israel/) to cease its military campaign meant to end [Hamas](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas/)’s attacks. “The [interior ministry](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas-interior-ministry/) warned citizens about [Israel](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/israel/) sending messages telling them to leave their houses,” according to translations of the official Arabic statement provided by [Oren Adaki](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/oren-adaki/), an Arabic language specialist at Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD).

“The goal of these actions is to create confusion among the citizens,” the [Interior Ministry](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas-interior-ministry/) said, instructing “all citizens to not heed these messages from [Israel](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/israel/).”

“The goal of these messages is terrorizing citizens and to cause panic among them,” read the statement, which instructs Palestinians to “not do what the messages instruct them to do,” [Adaki](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/oren-adaki/) explained.

“The ministry [is] calling all our people not to deal or pay attention to the psychological warfare carried out by the occupation through rumors that broadcast across his media and delivering publications and communications on the phones of citizens, and the lack of response for each of these means, which aims to weaken the domestic front in light of great steadfastness of our people to face the aggression,” the Hamas Interior Ministry for National Security stated on Thursday in an order published in English and Arabic.

The Israeli military attempts to communicate with Palestinians and warn them of upcoming attacks via paper leaflets, text messages, and phone calls, among other means.

[Hamas](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas/) is notorious for intentionally putting citizens in harms way in order to maximize body counts and portray [Israel](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/israel/) as an aggressor.

The terror group often fires rockets from heavily populated civilian areas and uses schools, mosques, and hospitals as bases for their military operations.

The [Interior Ministry](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas-interior-ministry/) also demanded that Egypt fully open its border crossing with the [Gaza](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/gaza/) Strip and allow the free flow of people and good.

“The [Interior Ministry](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas-interior-ministry/) [is] demanding Egyptian authorities to urgent [sic] open of the Rafah crossing to deal with humanitarian cases and to alleviate the difficult conditions in the strip,” the statement reads.

Israeli Ambassador to U.S. Ron Dermer criticized [Hamas](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas/)‘ disregard for innocent life during a speech on Capitol Hill Wednesday.

“We are dealing with an enemy that not only has no respect for our civilians,” Dermer said, explaining that the terror group is “hoping to kill as many Israeli civilians as possible.”

“They also have no respect for their own civilians,” Dermer added, criticizing the group for putting its people in harms way.

[Hamas](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/hamas/) has fired more than 450 rockets at [Israel](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/israel/) in the past several days. One-hundred rockets have been launched since midnight, one every ten minutes. This includes advanced long range missiles provided to the terror group by Iran.

[Israel](http://www.washingtontimes.com/topics/israel/) has sought to destroy these weapons caches and missile factories with targeted strikes.