**4 killed as terrorist plows truck into troops in Jerusalem**

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A truck rammed into a group of soldiers on a promenade in the Armon Hanatziv neighborhood of Jerusalem, killing at least four of them, in a vehicle-ramming attack on Sunday afternoon, police said.

Police chief Roni Alsheich called the incident a vehicular terror attack.

The soldiers were getting off a bus at the promenade, a popular tourist spot in southern Jerusalem, when a large flatbed truck ran into them.

At least 16 more people were injured, two of them very seriously, according to Jerusalem hospitals.

The four soldiers — three women and one man — who died were in their 20s, the Magen David Adom rescue service said. The male soldier was named later Sunday as Erez Orbach.

According to police, the terrorist accelerated as he struck the group.

Eyewitnesses said that after the driver hit the soldiers with his truck, he put the vehicle in reverse and ran over them a second time.

Footage of the incident taken from a security camera showed the truck run into the group of soldiers as they stood next to a bus. The driver then attempts to turn the truck around and run over the group again as people scramble for cover.

The driver of the vehicle was shot by both soldiers and by a civilian guide, police said. He died of his wounds.

“In a fraction of a second during which I was speaking with one of the officers, I saw the truck plowing into us. After a few rolls on the grass I saw the truck start to reverse and then I already understood that this was not an accident. I felt that my pistol was still on me, so I ran up to him and started emptying my clip. He went in reverse and again drove over the injured,” the guide, Eitan Rund, said.

Speaking to Israeli television, Rund questioned why soldiers hesitated, he said, before turning their own weapons on the driver. “I have to ask why it took a 30-year-old civilian to fire first,” he said, “when there were well-armed officers” present. He asserted that last week’s conviction for manslaughter of soldier Elor Azaria, who shot dead a disarmed, injured Palestinian assailant, was “definitely” a factor in the ostensible hesitation.

An initial IDF inquiry showed at least two to three soldiers opened fire from close range, and are thought to be the ones who killed the terrorist.

Moshe Aharon, the driver of the bus, told Army Radio that “a group of soldiers was standing with their bags near the bus. I had just let them off. The truck drove into the group of soldiers, ran over them and kept going. The soldiers shot at the driver. He reversed and ran over them again.”

Leah Schreiber, one of the guides for the group of soldiers, told reporters that the driver had reversed and run over the bodies again.

“I was explaining about the view of Jerusalem. I saw soldiers shouting and screaming. Some of the soldiers started shooting. It took some time to kill [the driver] so he was able to reverse. The whole thing took maybe a minute and a half,” Schreiber said.

At first, it was not clear if this was an accident or a deliberate attack, but Schreiber said she “understood it was a terror attack when they started shooting at him.”

A number of victims were trapped under the truck after the incident, according to a Magen David Adom paramedic on the scene.

The soldiers were visiting the capital as part of the army’s “Culture Sundays,” in which troops are taken to important historical and national sites at the beginning of the week.

According to the Ben Zvi Institute, which led the trip for the army, the soldiers were cadets from the IDF’s officer’s training course, but from non-combat units.

The driver of the truck was identified as Fadi al-Qanbar, a resident of the capital’s Jabel Mukaber neighborhood, according to Arab media. The truck, with Israeli license plates, came from the direction of that neighborhood, which is adjacent to the promenade.

He was in his late 20s, married with four children, and had served time in Israeli jail, Channel 2 said. He bought the truck last year.

One seriously injured soldier was sent to Shaare Zedek hospital. She was unconscious and doctors were attempting to stabilize her condition, a spokesperson for the hospital said.

Another four victims who were lightly injured were also sent to Shaare Zedek, the hospital said.

Nine victims were sent to Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem, one in serious condition, two in moderate condition and six lightly wounded.

Two victims who were lightly injured were sent to Hadassah Hospital Mt. Scopus, the hospital said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility but the Hamas terror group praised the attack as “heroic.”

Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem lauded the attack on his Facebook page, saying, “These operations demonstrate that all attempts to bypass the resistance or to thwart it will fail every time.”

Palestinian assailants have used vehicle rammings as a method for terror attacks for years, and the method seemed to have been adopted by European jihadists in recent months, including in an attack in Berlin last month that left 12 dead, including an Israeli woman.

Less than an hour after the attack, a Jerusalem court imposed a gag order on the investigation.

The Haas-Sherover Promenade promenade is a southern location that offers a panoramic view over Jerusalem and the Old City. In May, two elderly women were stabbed and moderately injured in a park below the promenade in what police said was a terror attack.