# ‘The rocket fell through the living room’: Israelis describe terror of barrage

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A woman whose Ashkelon home was hit by a rocket from the Gaza Strip on Monday night described the moments of fear as the projectile came through her living room roof with an “unforgettable” blast, as some residents of southern Israel fumed over what they described as a weak Israeli response to the spiraling violence emanating from the coastal enclave.

According to the Israel Defense Forces, more than 300 projectiles were fired at Israel on Monday afternoon and evening, triggering sirens in Israeli communities close to the Gaza Strip, in the city of Beersheba and even as far away as the Dead Sea and the West Bank’s Hebron Hills.

Some 60 incoming rockets and mortar shells from Gaza were intercepted by the Iron Dome air defense system, the military said, while several others struck homes and buildings in Israeli communities near the border, causing light injuries and severe damage. Most of the projectiles fell in open areas, causing neither casualties nor damage, the IDF said.

An IDF soldier was seriously wounded when an anti-tank missile was fired at an Israeli bus near the Gaza border.

Rockets struck homes in the coastal city of Ashkelon and the southern Israeli towns of Sderot and Netivot, sparking fires. A mortar shell also hit a powerline in the Sdot Negev region of southern Israel, according to local government officials.

“I was sitting and watching television, there was a siren and I went into the fortified room,” Ruti Mozgorshvili, whose Ashkelon home was hit, told the Walla news site. “The rocket fell through the living room, I didn’t even get a chance to close the safe room’s window.

“There was total darkness because of a power outage,” she said. “I heard a strong boom, which was unforgettable.” When she exited the room, “I heard people yelling, ‘get outside, get outside,'” Mozgorshvili said.

“Afterward, I understood that my home was damaged,” she said.

In Sderot, six people were lightly wounded by shrapnel. A seventh victim in the southern town, a 16-year-old girl, was lightly wounded when a heavy metal bomb shelter door closed on her hand, medics said.

“It doesn’t matter that I’ve lived here for 19 years, it was nerve-wracking,” 19-year-old Dvir Sasi from Sderot told Army Radio. “I felt like they were trying to kill me. It was a full half hour of explosions.”

“Do I need to die for there to be a response?” he continued angrily. “Does someone need to get hurt for [the government] to wake up? I expect a sharp response from the government.”

“The emotional harm is too much to bear,” Sderot resident Bilha Maman told the radio station. “We keep trying to rebuild and it keeps on being set back [by another war]. It is unacceptable that Hamas is running this country.”

In response to the heavy barrage from the Gaza Strip — one of the largest attacks since the 2014 war — Israeli fighter jets launched a series of air and ground strikes. At least three Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire in the retaliatory attacks and three others were wounded, the Hamas-run Gaza health ministry said.

But Sderot Mayor Alon Davidi demanded more forceful action.

“We must destroy the murderous regime of Hamas,” he said in an interview with Army Radio. “They won’t suddenly don Dutch dress and give out chocolates.”

After a rocket directly struck a house in Netivot, one resident told the Kan public broadcaster that he wanted to send a message to the Israeli leadership: “Instead of sitting and having cabinet meetings, start moving. Wake up, they hate us.”

In total, at least nine people were taken to Ashkelon’s Barzilai Hospital for treatment, with more receiving first aid on the scene.

The barrage triggered incoming rocket sirens throughout southern Israel, sending hundreds of thousands of Israelis rushing to bomb shelters for cover.

In light of the barrage from the Gaza Strip, which began shortly after 4:30 p.m., the Israeli military ordered residents of communities near the Gaza Strip to remain inside bomb shelters until further notice. That included residents of the towns of Netivot and Ofakim, which are not typically as affected by Gaza rockets as communities closer to the border.

Residents of the cities of Beersheba, Ashkelon and Ashdod were told to stay within close proximity of bomb shelters and protected spaces.

The military also preemptively canceled school for Tuesday in the Gaza border region. In addition, businesses are ordered closed, along with government offices, unless they are considered essential, the army said. No large gatherings are allowed in southern Israel on Monday night and Tuesday, it said.

The attacks from Gaza came less than a day after an IDF special operations officer was killed in an operation gone awry that also killed seven Palestinian gunmen in the Strip. Following Sunday night’s incident, the Gaza-ruling terror group Hamas said “the blood of our righteous martyrs will not be wasted.”

Hamas took credit for the rocket barrage and threatened to strike deeper into Israeli territory.

Hours before the flareup, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sunday that he was doing his utmost to avoid “unnecessary wars.”