Rockets fired from Gaza for 3rd night, 4 lightly hurt running for shelter

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<https://www.timesofisrael.com/rocket-fired-from-gaza-for-3rd-night-in-a-row-no-injuries-or-damage/>

Terrorists in Gaza fired rockets toward Israel for the third night in a row on Sunday and early Monday, with the Iron Dome system intercepting two of the five projectiles.

Four people, including a pregnant woman, were lightly wounded after falling while running to bomb shelters early Monday, medics said.

A first projectile was detected by the Israel Defense Forces, which said it only set off red alert sires in an open area where it evidently fell. A second rocket landed inside Gaza near the security fence.

Just after 3. a.m, three more rockets were fired, with the Iron Dome system intercepting two of them. A third fell inside Gaza, the army said.

The launches came hours after the Gaza-ruling Hamas issued a statement calling on “our noble resistance in Gaza to keep their fingers on the trigger, to keep their rockets on standby to target the enemy’s fortresses and military and vital structures.”

Just after midnight Sunday, the Israeli military announced that it would be restricting the fishing zone off the Gaza coast from 15 to 9 nautical miles, starting at 6 a.m. Monday until further notice.

“The decision was made in light of repeated terrorist acts from the Gaza Strip against the citizens of the State of Israel during the recent days, which constitute a violation of  Israeli sovereignty,” said a statement from the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, which is the branch of the Defense Ministry responsible for liaising with the Palestinians.

“Hamas is held accountable for all that is done in and from the Gaza Strip towards Israel, and it will bear the consequences for the violence committed against the citizens of the State of Israel, the statement said.

Fishing is a significant source of revenue for the enclave. The size of the fishing zone has varied over the years. It was set at 20 nautical miles by the Oslo peace accords in the 1990s before being reduced to six miles under the joint Israeli-Egyptian blockade imposed after Hamas took over the Strip in a violent coup against the Fatah-controlled Palestinian Authority in 2007.

Israel has raised and lowered the limit several times in recent years in a bid to pressure Hamas.

Gazan armed factions have launched over 40 rockets into Israel over the weekend. On Saturday, a number of Palestinian terror groups fired experimental rockets toward the Mediterranean Sea as a show of force.

Palestinian terror groups have said that the weekend’s rocket attacks were in response to ongoing unrest in Jerusalem, where Arab residents have demonstrated for several days against Ramadan restrictions on congregating near Jerusalem’s Damascus Gate. Those restrictions were [lifted by police](https://www.timesofisrael.com/after-violent-protests-police-lift-policy-barring-crowds-at-old-city-gate/) just over an hour before the rocket was fired, leading to some speculation that the launch had been a “celebratory” measure.

Two Gaza factions, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and a branch of Fatah’s Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades, claimed responsibility for the Friday-Saturday rocket fire. But Israel holds Hamas directly responsible for all fire from the enclave into Israeli territory, charging that it takes place with the terror group’s consent.

The Hamas leadership earlier Sunday called East Jerusalemites to continue “mobilizing in the Old City and at its gates.” Hamas also said night patrols of Palestinians ought to be formed to protect East Jerusalem residents from assaults by Jewish extremists.

The widening circle of clashes has sparked concerns in Israel that the situation could escalate across the West Bank and Gaza.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called on Saturday for the military to “prepare for any scenario” with Gaza. Defense Minister Benny Gantz similarly said that the Israel Defense Forces “will do what is necessary so the calm is preserved,” following security consultations at defense headquarters in Tel Aviv.

The Israeli military notably refrained from conducting retaliatory strikes in the Gaza Strip on Saturday night, in an apparent bid to ease tensions. Israel normally adopts a tit-for-tat strategy, responding to Gazan rocket fire by shelling Hamas observation posts or imposing restrictions on the Gaza Strip.