# Gaza tensions high as Palestinian machine-gun fire hits Sderot for 1st time

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By [Tovah Lazaroff](https://www.jpost.com/Author/Tovah-Lazaroff)

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Palestinian machine-gun fire from Gaza struck Sderot on Wednesday evening for the first time in the history of the southern city, which has lived under intermittent rocket fire from the Strip for the past 17 years.

Bullets hit about five homes, shocking residents but causing no injuries.

“This is a serious incident,” the IDF said, adding that Hamas is responsible for everything that happens in the Gaza Strip.

The IDF responded fairly quickly with tank fire against two observation posts in southern Gaza. No casualties were reported.

Sderot Mayor Alon Davidi said the response was insufficient. He called for a much sharper strike on the Hamas-controlled territory.

“The response for a bullet must be the same as the response for a rocket,” Davidi said.

“This is the first time machine-gun fire has hit the city,” he said, adding that Sderot cannot enter a new reality where this becomes accepted and commonplace.

“We cannot allow this to happen,” Davidi said.

Wednesday’s attack on the city was just as serious as when Hamas fires a rocket, builds an attack tunnel under the border or attempts to infiltrate Israel by cutting through the security fence, he said.

“You can’t brush it off because no one was hurt,” Davidi said. “It was not a good feeling to see the bullets in the walls and the window shutters.”

Among those whose home was hit by bullets was former Sderot mayor Eli Moyal, who for many years was the face of the battle the city waged with the government to take Palestinian rocket fire seriously.

“I was at home when I heard a huge boom, and the house shook,” he said.

“I thought it was a Kassam rocket,” Moyal told Channel 2, adding that then he saw shrapnel in his yard, and he understood that this was not the usual attack.

Another Sderot resident, Sami Moyal, told Army Radio he was home studying Torah for the upcoming Shavuot holiday and sipping coffee when bullet fragments and shrapnel broke a window and hit his garden.

Earlier on Wednesday, shots were fired from Gaza at IDF soldiers. In response, a tank struck a Hamas position in the northern Strip, according to the IDF Spokesperson’s Unit. No casualties were reported as a result of the exchange.

Two months ago, a heavy barrage of Palestinian machine-gun fire from Gaza triggered the Iron Dome missile-defense system, but it did not cause any damage in Israel.