Soldier from Operation Protective Edge Responds to UN Report: 'We Have Paid for Morality in Blood'

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I served in the Shejaiya rescue force. Certain rules of engagement were made clear for our six days there. The night before the ground incursion, a Shin Bet officer came to us and explained that there was a large civilian population in the direction that we were headed. Because of this, we did not enter Shejaiya at that time, although that was what we had practiced and it was the correct tactical maneuver.

After consideration, we went the following day in the anticipated direction, where Hamas gunmen were awaiting our arrival. Hamas understood our strategies, and how each of our operations had humanitarian and moral considerations, and because of this they were ready to receive us. They had set up observation posts in the surrounding areas, and they anticipated our arrival because of the previous decision not to enter into a civilian population.

On the first night we went in, we were attacked. Five of our soldiers were killed and 20 others were injured. In spite of the claims made against the IDF that they have gone against international law, in this instance it is understood that our morality cost us our lives.

It is important that organizations like Breaking the Silence exist. The problem is that the organization presents its evidence from the sidelines. If their information was presented  through the proper institutions and investigations would take place, then that's fine, and wrongdoings should be explored. But once they bypass this system and take this information abroad, what they are presenting to the public becomes asymmetrical and they are spoon-feeding the hatred that already exists.

They claim to represent the truth, yet they show only a small sample of cases that are not representative of the whole story.

They presented only 68 testimonies out of 40,000 soldiers who served in combat. That is a great injustice to a lot of soldiers. The UN relies on the testimonies of Breaking the Silence and other similar organizations.

The report which was published disregards my friends who were killed in battle. The claim that the IDF acted immorally is an untrue statement, and our situation in Shejaiya is the best example of of this. Hamas operatives were waiting for us there, and we were sent into a carefully laid trap because of our considerations in harming the Palestinian population. We saw the infrastructure, the trails, the tunnels, and the booby-trapped houses. The claims that this neighborhood was a civilian neighborhood? This was a Hamas military outpost in disguise.

It is not a matter of right-wing versus left-wing. There are no politics here. It is a matter of being anti-Israel, and speaking out against the state. The Left needs to speak out against an organization like Breaking the Silence. We are allowed to disagree on our political views, but it is our duty to condemn the actions that were taken against us.