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This Is Not Another Round of Violence

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Readers of headlines over the past two days might be mistaken to think that the world now witnesses yet another round of violence between Hamas and Israel, the former firing rockets from Gaza, the latter responding in air raids. That much has been implied, over and over again, in stories, on [the front page of the United Nations](#), and even an email that a Harvard Dean sent to her entire school, referring to "more than 1,100 people [who] have been killed and hundreds more wounded by the actions taken by Hamas and the Israeli government."

Nothing is further from the truth.

The horrors that Hamas unleashed on Israel at the dawn of October 7th, 2023, almost 50 years to the date of the Yom Kippur war, are nothing like Israel and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict itself has ever encountered. Indeed, it started out with thousands of rockets being fired toward the southern and central regions of Israel. But it soon transpired that the rockets were a distraction to divert Israel's attention from the main attack on the ground, inside Israeli borders. [Approximately a thousand terrorists](#) invaded the southern region of Israel from the ground, sea and the skies, raiding towns and villages, reaching as deep into the country as Sederot and Ofakim. Their coordinated mission: slaughter and incinerate civilians. Hamas terrorists invaded house after house, street after street, and executed civilian residents, in some cases murdering entire families. Houses whose residents tried to lock themselves into safety [were set on fire. Inhabitants who got out](#) were slaughtered outside.

And this does not sum up the list of horrors. More than 150 Israelis—the official numbers have not yet transpired—including elderly women and men, youngsters, mothers, children and even babies, were forcibly kidnapped to Gaza.

In Holit, a tiny Kibbutz of 150 residents just south of the border, [thirteen people were murdered and two are still missing](#). A 33-years old young mother, [Adi Kopalon, was kidnapped with her children, a four years old toddler and 6 months old baby](#). At the border, she was separated from her children who were left on the ground alone at night, while their mother was hailed away to Gaza. The children were later found by a woman who managed to escape a similar fate and carried them on her hands to safety. In kibbutz Nir Oz, [Doron Asher and her two girls, 3 and 5 years old, were kidnapped to Gaza along with the grandparents](#). And it goes on and on. Young couples. Elderly men and women, some [older than 80 years old, on wheelchairs](#), all forcibly transported beyond enemy lines.

Simultaneously, [Hamas raided an outdoors festival near Kibbutz Re'im,](#) killing more than 260 of the party's participants and the numbers still go up. [They executed those who fell to the ground](#) and threw a grenade into a protective vehicle were festival-goers tried to hide, burning it to the ground. Dozens of the participants, [among them Noa Argamani and her partner Avinatan Or](#) were taken hostage, [their kidnapping documented and circulated through social media.](#)

There is still no official information about the whereabouts of [those who were kid](#)napped. But in social media videos abound, in scenes that are taken directly from the ISIS playbook:

Hamas brutalizing and tormenting Israeli civilians, [parading with their bodies](#) around Gaza to the cheers of a rapturous, massive crowd. [Elderly people forced to pose to the camera holding rifles](#). [Young women stripped naked and presented as trophies](#) to chants of Allah Akbar. An Israeli [child being brutalized](#), screaming for his mom.

As we write, the numbers of the dead continue to rise, estimated currently at more than [800 murdered Israelis](#), more than 2300 wounded, and more than [150 taken hostage,](#) the majority of all of whom civilians. ***With Israel's population being roughly 9.5 million people, these numbers are equivalent to roughly 30,000 Americans murdered on American soil and 5000 taken hostage by terrorists, on a single day.***

As this devastating moment, when Israel still fights to clear its territory of terrorist assassins and is yet to retrieve those who were kidnapped, one thing should be clear: Hamas has defied any measure of humanity and exceeded every form of cruelty. While a lot can be said about the complexity of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the share of blame of each side, what the world is now witnessing is a manifestation of pure evil and horror.

Don't shut your eyes to this truth.

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