



**This morning Hamas operation in towns surrounding Gaza  
“Operation al-Aqsa”**

On 7/10/2023, Hamas initiated a surprise attack, deploying thousands of rockets and sending dozens of gunmen to infiltrate towns surrounding Gaza. This operation has been named 'Operation al-Aqsa Flood.' Many Israeli soldiers and civilians were killed, and many others were abducted to Gaza.

Mohammad Deif, the Hamas military commander, released a statement asserting that these ongoing attacks are in direct response to Israel's perceived 'desecration' of the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. He also emphasized that Israel has been responsible for the deaths and injuries of hundreds of Palestinians this year, and that Israel has rebuffed offers for prisoner exchange agreements.

In response, Israel formally declared a 'state of war' and launched missiles towards Gaza. Currently, all the West Bank check points are closed even all the gates leading to the old city of Jerusalem are closed only letting in civilians over the age of 30. As a precautionary measure, Caritas Jerusalem has suspended its operations in Gaza to ensure the safety of its staff, and has temporarily closed the health center. Our emergency plan, which equips our medical teams with first aid kits and essential medicines, is poised to provide assistance as the situation clarifies.

We hold in our prayers the safety and well-being of all involved. It is evident that this operation from Gaza marks one of the most significant in decades, and unfortunately, the situation is expected to escalate further.

End.

October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

sg 275-10/23