

Presentation to

Portfolio Committee on International Relations & Cooperation

by



SOUTH
AFRICAN
ZIONIST
FEDERATION



ISRAEL



We recognise the right of both Israelis and Palestinians to live in their own independent states, living side by side with mutual recognition. We respect the Palestinian right to choose their own government and live according to their own laws and religion.

Israel desires the same. Moreover Israel's Declaration of Independence protects the rights of minorities and of all religions.

These rights are also protected by the government and its supreme court. While we support the notion of Palestinian independence, we do not support the way they are going about it at the UN. By not resolving and discussing any of the core issues; the borders, the refugees on both sides, mutual recognition and the right for Jews to live in Palestine, the conflict will not be resolved and may in fact intensify.

Democratic & Multi-cultural Israel

Home to a widely diverse population from many ethnic, religious, cultural, and social backgrounds.

7.8 million people - 75.5 percent are Jews, 20.2 percent are Arabs (mostly Muslim) and the remaining 4.3 percent comprise Druze, Circassians, and others not classified by religion.

Pluralist society characterized by social, religious and political freedom, all contribute momentum to its continuing development.

Democratic & Multi-cultural Israel

Ethiopian Jews in
prayer and holding
the sacred Torah.



Democratic & Multi-cultural Israel

Jews and Arabs
swimming in the
Dead Sea.



Democratic & Multi-cultural Israel

Walid Badir - Arab
Israeli football star.
Captain of HaPoel
Tel Aviv.



Democratic & Multi-cultural Israel

George Kara - Arab

Led a three-judge panel that convicted a former President of Israel of sex crimes and obstruction of justice.



Democratic & Multi-cultural Israel

Reda Mansour –
Druze

Israeli historian, poet
and onetime
ambassador to
Ecuador.



Democratic & Multi-cultural Israel

Jamal Zahalka - Arab

Received his Phd
from Hebrew
University. Three
term member of
Israel's Knesset.
Current leader of the
Balad political party.



Saving Lives: Israel's Security Fence

- Anti-terrorist fence a vital, urgent and critical imperative, in order to save civilian lives of both Israelis and Palestinians.
- Dramatically reduced the number of successful terrorist attacks in those areas in which it has been complete.
- The security fence is a direct response to terrorist attacks, targeting civilians on public transportation, coffee shops, shopping centres, dance clubs, local pubs, and public places.
- Mass terrorism was destroying the country on many levels, including the economy. The government determined that it must stop the infiltration of Palestinian terrorists, and protect innocent civilian lives.

Saving Lives: Israel's Security Fence

- Does not establish a border, which is to be determined by direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.
- Will not legally annex Palestinian lands or change the legal status of the Palestinians who live near or adjacent to it.
- 451 miles of the security fence 95% is comprised of chain-link fence, electronic and human surveillance.
- Only 5% is made from concrete and that is only because of very specific security demands.

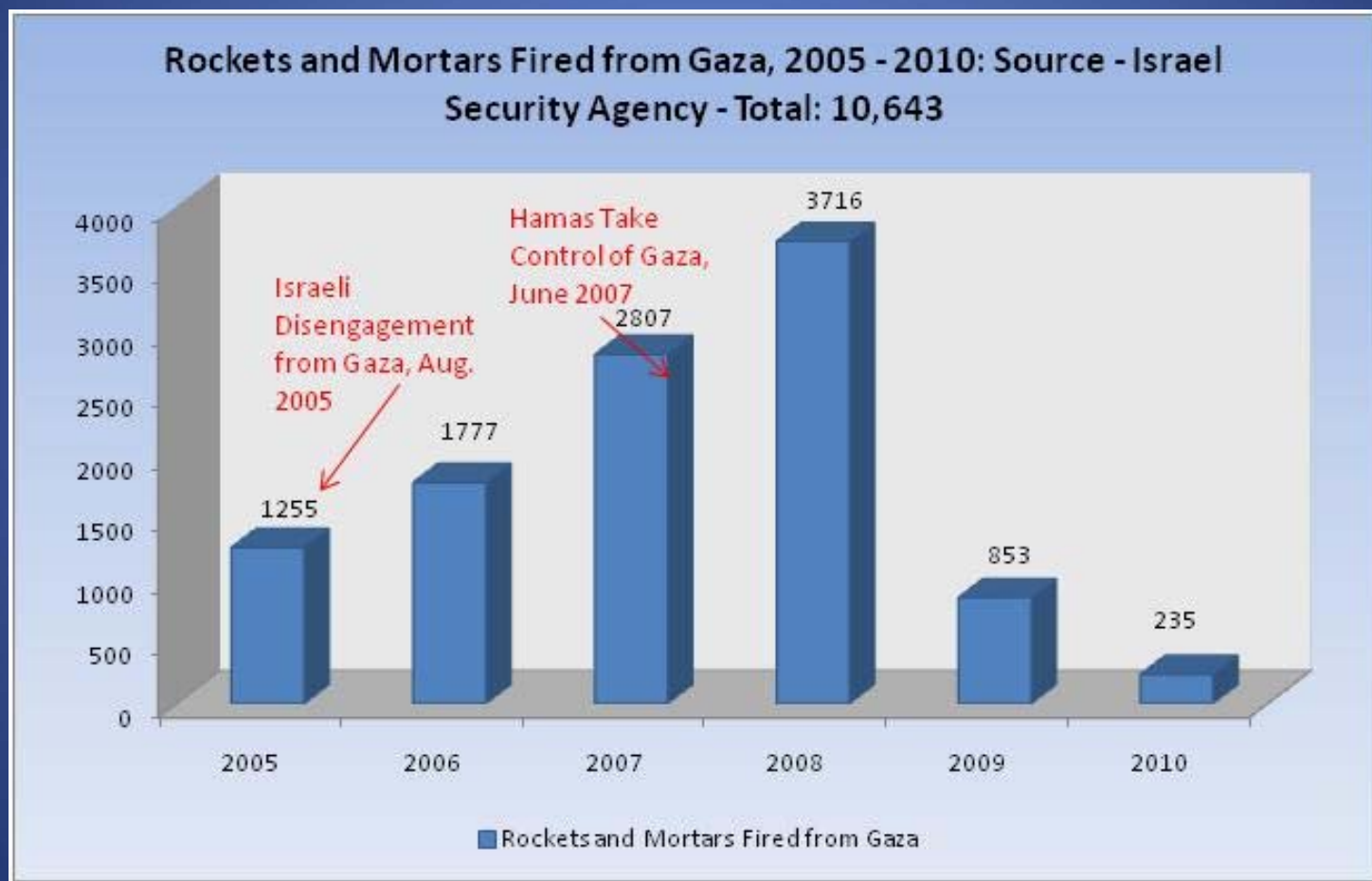
Israel's withdrawal from Gaza

- Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005 in the hope that a civil society would develop and that it would lead to a two-state peace agreement.
- Unfortunately, Hamas, a political party sworn to the destruction of Israel, were subsequently elected into power. Since then thousands of rockets fired from Gaza have been targeted at Israel to cause maximum civilian casualties.
- Iran-backed Hamas is building up its military capability, particularly through weapons smuggling via Sinai. Hamas has extended the range of its rockets.

Israel's withdrawal from Gaza

- Joint Israeli and Palestinian cooperation is one of the reasons for the reduction in violence. Israel's preventive security measures, coupled with the Palestinian Authority (PA)'s increased leadership and training of its own police force has also helped.

Israel's withdrawal from Gaza



2009 operation "Cast Lead"

Israel's withdrawal from Gaza

- 50,000 tons of goods, including humanitarian aid, medicine and medical supplies transferred via 538 trucks to Gaza biweekly in 2010. Exceeding the 40,000 Israel told Quartet on the Middle East Envoy, Tony Blair, it would transfer.
- Israel has also built new platforms for grains, wheat, raw materials and other aggregates at the Kerem Shalom border-crossing despite the fact that it is a Hamas-target.
- In addition to accelerating the flow of construction materials to Gaza, Israel received 1,500 applications from Gazans for healthcare in Israel since the start of 2011, representing a 63 percent increase from 2010. Eighty percent of the applicants were approved.

Israel's withdrawal from Gaza

- The Palestinian Authority (PA) sets the priority of what goods Gaza needs and the list is sent to Israel daily. There are dozens of weekly meetings between PA and Israeli officials at Erez in order to improve the transfer of goods to Gaza.
- Israel also provides electricity and water to Gaza's civilians. Thirty-seven educational facilities and new housing units, 14 health centres and 13 agricultural units are currently being developed in Gaza.
- Iran-backed Hamas profits from trade through the tunnels. Because Hamas does not benefit financially from goods Israel supplies through these crossings, it targets them. Hamas therefore, makes it difficult for Israel to deliver items to Gaza's civilian population.

Israel's Efforts to Enable Palestinian Mobility

- In order to protect all of its citizens – Muslims, Christians and Jews from decades of attacks by Palestinian terrorists, Israel has implemented a system of security checkpoints and roadblocks to prevent terrorists from infiltrating Israel.
- While checkpoints do pose inconveniences to Palestinians, they have succeeded in saving the lives of innocent citizens from suicide bombings and other attacks carried out by Palestinian terrorists.
- Checkpoints have helped reduce the number of deaths from suicide bombings from 142 deaths in 2003 to a total of 3 in 2007.

Israel's Efforts to Enable Palestinian Mobility

- Despite the risks, Israel recently removed numerous roadblocks and security checkpoints to improve freedom of movement.
- In the past 18 months, the IDF improved Palestinians ability to move freely in the West Bank. Examples include:
- Removal of more than 140 temporary roadblocks placed in strategic locations due to security threats in the past year.
- Removal of 19 manned checkpoints in the last year and a half, according to the IDF.

Israel's Efforts to Enable Palestinian Mobility

- Israel has also undertaken a number of security measures aimed at limiting the IDF presence in the West Bank and placing greater responsibility for security on the Palestinians. Examples include:
- IDF has decreased its presence in four Palestinian cities: Bethlehem, Jericho, Qalqiliya and Ramallah and give Palestinian security services more responsibility for stopping terrorist activity.
- Security cooperation between the IDF and the Palestinian security services increased in 2008. More than 240 coordinated meetings took place between the two sides at the division, brigade and liaison office levels.