



# Israel's 'Operation Breaking Dawn'

## An Impetus For Instability In The Region?

### Summary

Israel's pre-emptive military operation in Gaza Strip has undoubtedly fanned the flames for further escalation, possibly leading to the coalition of other non-state actors, including militant outfits in the region. Widespread destruction to infrastructure and heavy casualties is expected if the conflict escalates. This crisis could invariably lead to instability in the region—at least for the short term—with state actors scurrying to pick sides.

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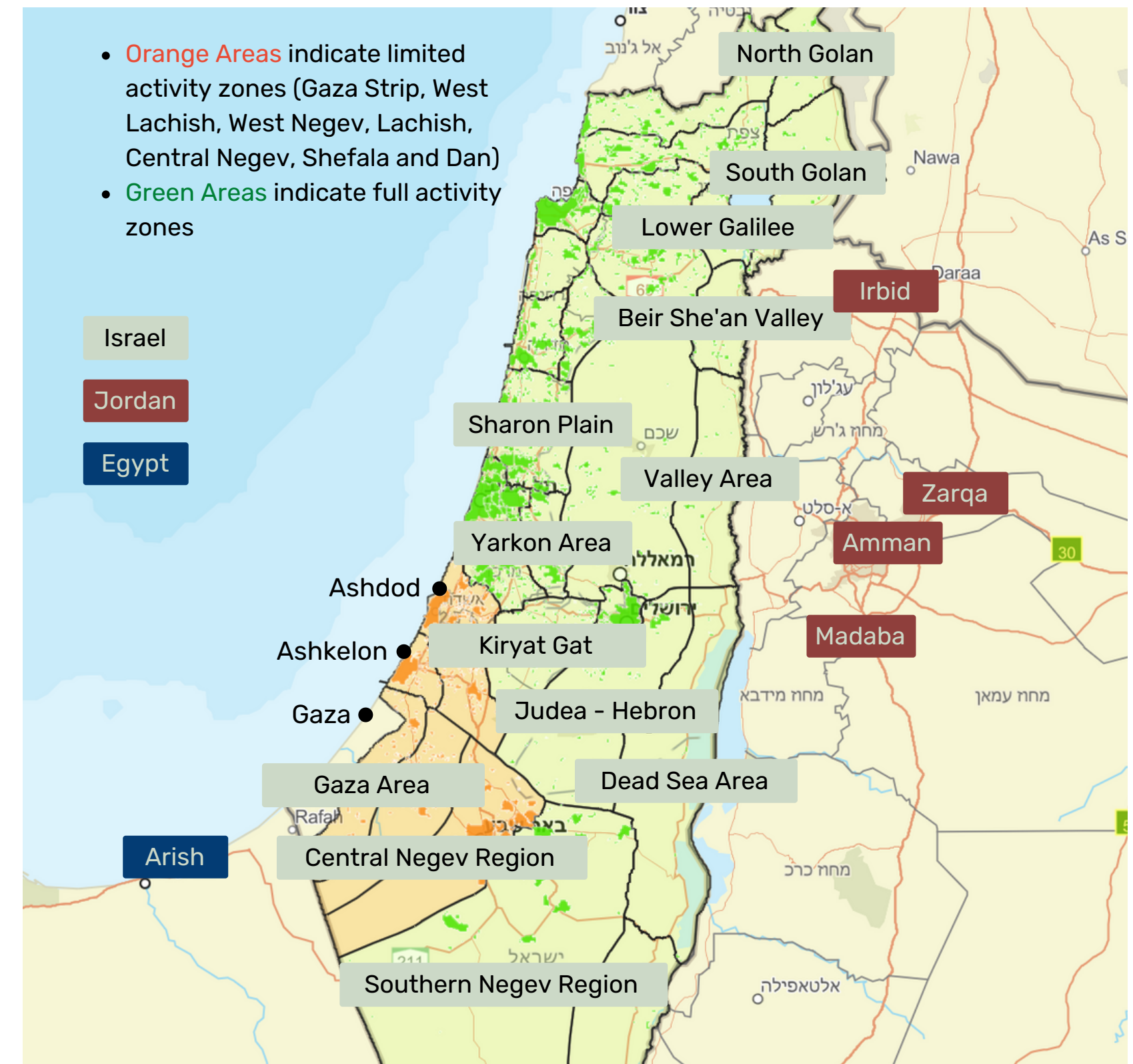
**06 Aug 2022**



# What is 'Operation Breaking Dawn'?

- On 05 Aug, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), and Israel Securities Authority initiated 'Operation Breaking Dawn' which targeted the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) Terrorist Organization's Northern Gaza Division Commanding Officer.
- According to reports, approximately 10 PIJ terrorist operatives were targeted, including a terrorist squad who were on their way to carry out an anti-tank missile and sniper attack.
- Military bases and buildings used by the terrorist operatives were also targeted.
- The operation eliminated Tayseer Jabari, the senior PIJ Commanding Officer of the Northern Gaza Division.
- A 'special' situation was declared on the Israeli Home Front Command within 80 km of the Gaza Strip.
- The Israeli Army later mobilised the 36th Armoured Division, along the Gaza border following the attack.
- The Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz has ordered the mobilisation of 25,000 reserve troops, in hopes to withstand a retaliation.
- The Palestinian Ministry Of Health reported that 10 civilians have been killed following the attack and 55 civilians have been injured.

Map by Israel's National Emergency Service



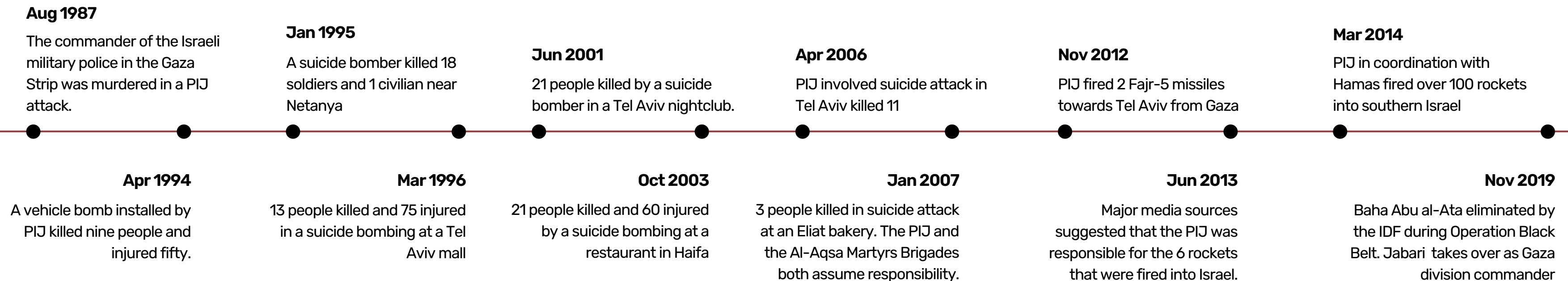
# Who is the Palestinian Islamic Jihad?



- The Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine aka Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), is a Damascus-based Palestinian Islamist organization formed in 1981. PIJ rejects the two-state solution and promotes the military destruction of Israel.
- PIJ was formally established in Gaza in 1981 by two Palestinian activists: Dr Fathi Abd al-Aziz Shaqaqi and Shaykh Abd al-Aziz Awda, Ramadan Shalah
- As per reports, Iran is a major financial supporter of the PIJ. Its financial backing is believed to also come from Syria. PIJ has been designated a terrorist organisation by the United States, the EU, the UK, Japan, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Israel.
- The organization is responsible for a number of attacks including more than 30 suicide bombings. The al-Quds 101 Rocket is a homemade rocket made which is used by the PIJ for attacks against Israel.



**Official Emblem**





# Other Non-State Stakeholders In The Region



## Hamas

- Hamas was established following the first Palestinian intifada (uprising) began in late 1987.
- It has its origins in the Muslim Brotherhood's Palestinian branch, and a formidable sociopolitical system exists within the Palestinian territories to support it.
- The group's charter rejects all agreements signed between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel and calls for the creation of an Islamic Palestinian state in place of Israel. The Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank are where Hamas has a stronghold.
- Since the 1990s, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, a military wing of Hamas, has carried out several anti-Israel attacks in both Israel and the Palestinian territories.



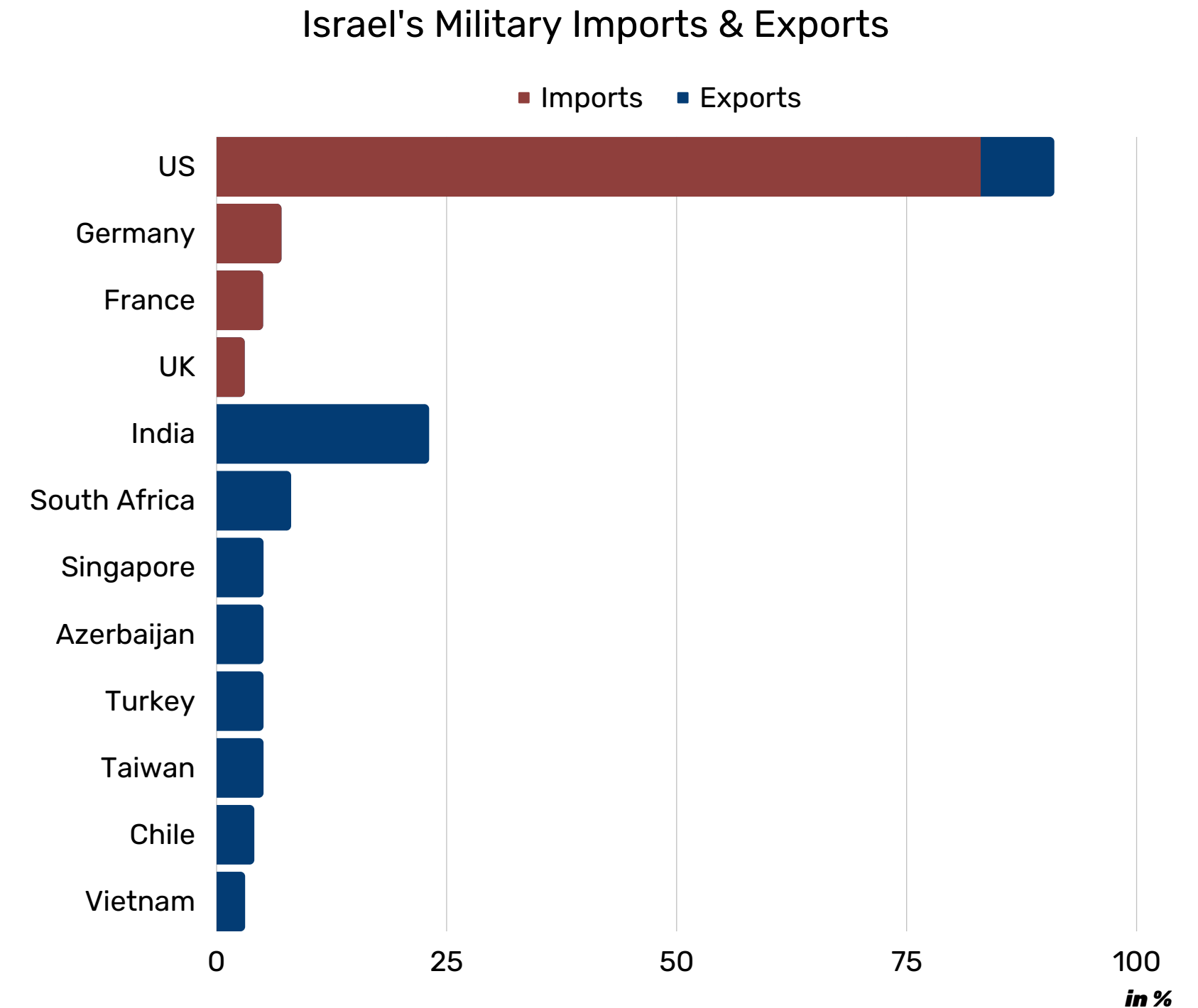
## Hezbollah

- Hezbollah was formed during the 15-year civil war that erupted in Lebanon in 1975 as a result of long-simmering unrest over the overpowering presence of armed Palestinians.
- The Iran-backed organisation is motivated by its enmity toward Israel and its rejection of Western dominance in the Middle East.
- It is a Shiite Muslim political party and militant organisation with headquarters in Lebanon, earning the moniker "a state within a state" owing to its defence-in-depth system, political structure, and social services network.
- Israel has been Hezbollah's principal adversary ever since it occupied southern Lebanon in 1978.



# Iron Dome and Israel's Military Capability

- The Iron Dome air defence system has been deployed around Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Beersheba as part of the most recent preemptive Operation Breaking Dawn.
- According to various sources, over 2,500 incoming targets have been successfully intercepted by the system with a success rate of over 90%, since its induction.
- According to a database published by SIPRI, the country spent \$22 billion on its military in 2020.
- Israel is a significant supplier of advanced weaponry systems around the world, including drones, missiles, radar, and other types of weapons. The Israeli Air Force (IAF) deployed the system in March 2011. According to the SIPRI database, it sold weapons worth more than \$345 million to 16 different countries in 2020, making it the 12th-largest arms exporter globally.
- A variety of inbound threats, including precision-guided missiles, cruise missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, and air-breathing threats, are detected, analysed, and intercepted by the Iron Dome.



According to the Global Fire Power Index, Israel ranks 18 out of 142 countries compared to its neighbours, such as Jordan, ranking 75, and Lebanon, 114



## Present Scenario

- Israeli leaders said the airstrikes were necessary after PIJ refused to back down from its threats.
- PIJ had been threatening to attack the Israel mainland since 02 Aug reinforcing its demand that Israel releases its West Bank commander, Bassem Saadi, who was arrested in an IDF raid in Jenin on 01 Aug causing days of road closures and community lockdowns in areas near the border under immediate threat.
- As per reports, public bomb shelters have been opened across major cities in southern Israel, especially in Jerusalem, Beersheba, Ashdod, Yavne, Rishon Lezion, Zikhron, Yaakov, Tel Aviv, Petah Tikva, and Ramat Gan.
- As of this report, the official death toll has reached 10, with 55 injuries.
- Rocket sirens warning of incoming fire are sounding intermittent overnight 05 Aug & 06 Aug across southern Israel, as the Israeli military has continued to carry out airstrikes in the Gaza Strip targeting Palestinian Islamic Jihad weapons sites and launching positions.

## Who was Tayseer Jabari?



Tayseer al-Jabari served as the military council member and leader of Islamic Jihad's al-Quds Brigades in the northern Gaza Strip. Jabari advanced in his ranks after Majed Harazin was killed in Dec 2007. Eventually, after Baha Abu al-Ata was targeted by the IDF in Operation Black Belt in Nov 2019, he took over as the Commanding Officer of the PIJ's Gaza Division. Jabari was the mastermind of a PIJ attack during Operation "Guardian of the Walls" in which a civilian was injured and a large number of rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip towards Israeli territory.

# International Response to the Israeli Operation



## Turkey

Turkey has condemned Israel's airstrikes in the Gaza Strip and says it's "deeply concerned" about the latest rounds of violence



## Egypt

According to reports, Egyptian mediators have asked Israel to stop targeting senior terror leaders from the PIJ



## US

Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz held a phone call with US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and updated him on the IDF's efforts in Operation Breaking Dawn.



## Jordan

Jordan has condemned Israeli airstrikes in the Gaza Strip on 05 Aug, and has called on the international community to act in order to bring an end to the escalation



## Qatar

Qatar has issued a strong condemnation of the attack and has called on the international community to stop the attacks by Israel along the Gaza Strip. It has reiterated its support to the Palestinian cause.



## Lebanon

The Lebanese Foreign Ministry has condemned the Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip and has called on the international community to intervene quickly to stop this aggression immediately.



## UN

UN Special Coordinator For the Middle East Process, Tor Wennesland, has issued for an immediate ceasing to the launching of rockets along the Gaza strip and has urged both sides to exercise restraint

# Assessment



## **Non-State Actors** *High to Extreme Risk*

- High likelihood of other non-state actors joining arms with PIJ, such as Hamas and Hezbollah, in retaliation to the Israeli operation.
  - High likelihood of Palestinian authorities losing their control over the area, and non-state actors usurping more public prominence, owing to the strained relations between Hamas and Palestinian authorities.
  - High likelihood of PIJ's revised attacks targeting Israel mainland in cohort with Hamas.
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## **State Actors** *Medium to High Risk*

- High likelihood of countries condemning the actions of Israel on international platforms, including the UN, which could hinder already weak diplomatic ties with neighbours.
  - Medium likelihood of various diplomatic partnerships including the Abraham Accords (with UAE and US) and I2U2 (US, India, and UAE) facing pressure to condemn the military operation.
  - Medium likelihood of a quasi-alliance between Israel's unhappy neighbours (including Lebanon and Jordan) and countries such as Turkey and Qatar.
  - High likelihood of further attacks by Israeli forces on the Gaza Strip to eliminate strongholds of the PIJ.
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## **Disruptions** *High to Extreme Risk*

- High likelihood of travel disruptions, including the cancellations and re-routing of flights from Israeli airspace in fear of possible retaliatory attacks
- High likelihood of continued citizen movement (community lockdown) and travel disruptions (road closures) in various parts of the country, especially cities bordering the Gaza Strip, as a precautionary measure.
- High likelihood of supply chain disruptions to continue, due to high alert in various conflict zones.



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