

Israel Demands Palestinian Disarmament, Hamas Refuses

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As Palestinians breathe a small sigh of relief in the second day of a 72-hour humanitarian ceasefire, Israeli and Palestinian officials are in Cairo to create a longer lasting truce after nearly a month of Israeli attacks on Gaza.

Israeli officials have said that they are willing to permit the rebuilding of infrastructure in the Gaza Strip as long as there is full disarmament of Palestinian resistance forces. Mark Regev, spokesperson for Israel said, "for Israel the most important issue is the issue of demilitarization. We must prevent Hamas from rearming, we must demilitarize the Gaza Strip."

U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, said, "What we want to do is support the Palestinians and their desire to improve their lives and to be able to open crossings and get food in and reconstruct and have greater freedom...But that has to come with a greater responsibility towards Israel, which means giving up rockets, moving into a different plane."

Hamas and Islamic Jihad, two of the key political parties in Gaza have made it clear that they refuse to give up their weapons, given the long history to Israeli aggressions on Palestinians.

Last weekend the Palestinian parties met and agreed upon a list of demands for a ceasefire, these include an end to the blockade by Israel and Egyptian, the release of Palestinian prisoners, and the granting of fishing rights 12 nautical miles off the Gazan coast.

Over 1,800 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces during "Operation Protective Edge",

the Israeli offensive that began July 8th. Israeli aggression has wounded at least 9,500 Palestinians and internally displaced 400,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

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