

Israeli troops have plans for ground invasion of Gaza

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Tev Aviv, May 13 (RHC)-- The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have drawn up plans to invade Gaza from the ground in response to the rocket barrage by Hamas. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reportedly approved the invasion plan as he dismissed an offer by Hamas to end hostilities "on a mutual basis."

According to reports, additional troops have been moved to the Gazan border, including soldiers from the Paratroopers Brigade, the Golani Infantry Brigade, and the 7th Armored Brigade.

Israeli Army spokesman Brigadier General Hidai Zilberman told reporters on Thursday that the plan for a possible invasion into Gaza would be presented to IDF Chief of Staff General Aviv Kochavi later on Thursday. "We are ready to maneuver and, in principle, the IDF had approved several different plans for a ground offensive," he said, noting that the final decision to cross the border had not yet been made by the government.

Israel has bombed over 650 targets in Gaza, destroying several high-rise buildings in the densely populated Palestinian enclave. Israel's armed forces reportedly killed dozens of Hamas operatives, including several of the group's top commanders. Gazan health officials, meanwhile, said that 69 Palestinians, including 17 children, were killed in the airstrikes as of Thursday.

In response, the Palestinian militant group Hamas launched more than 1,500 rockets into the cities of southern and central Israel since May 10, forcing many to hide in bomb shelters and killing six civilians, including a six-year-old boy, and an IDF soldier.

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