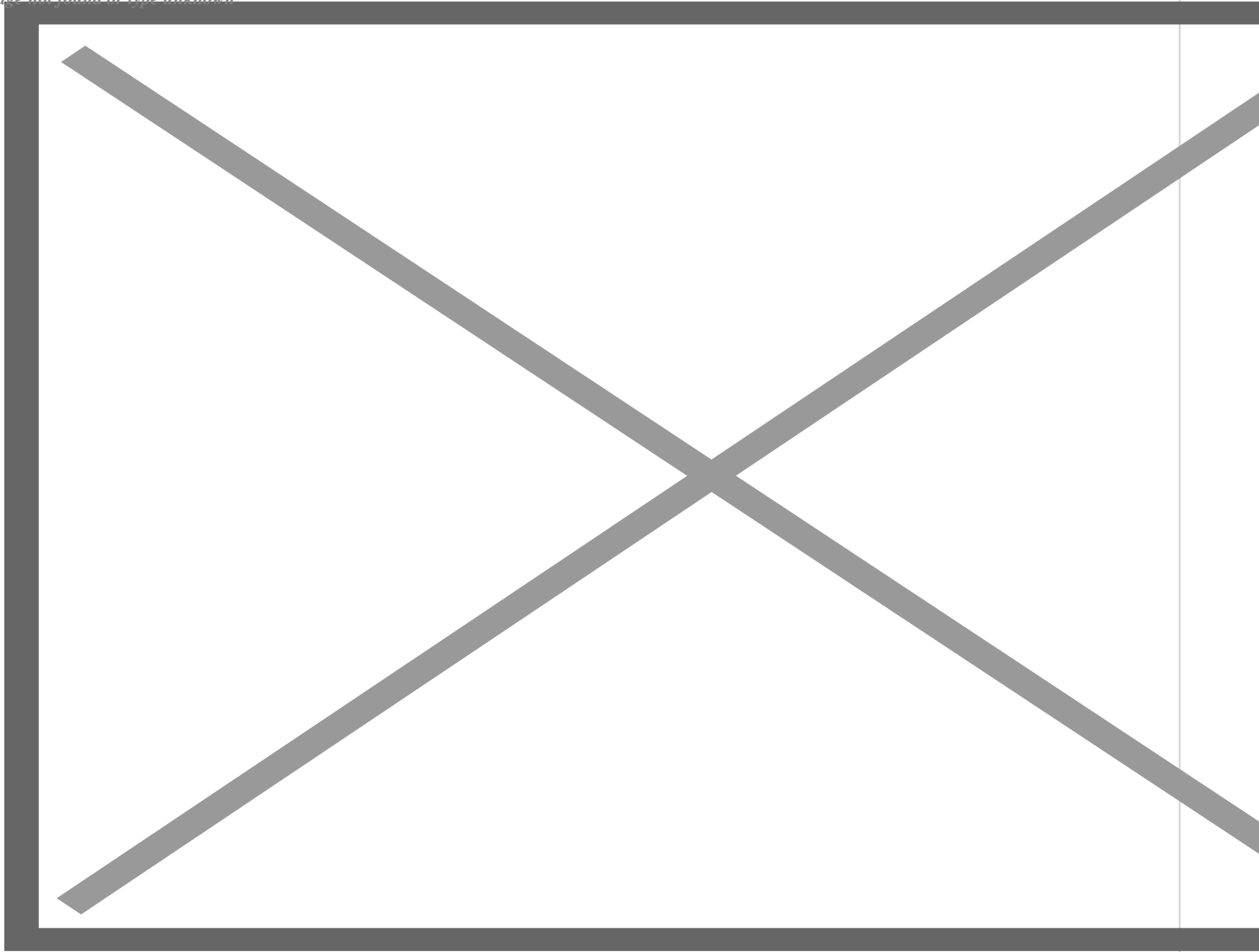


Israel continues devastating air strikes on Gaza

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Israeli bombing destroy Gaza's infrastructure?

Gaza City, May 14 (RHC)-- On Friday, Israel continued its campaign of death and destruction against Gaza, mounting more air strikes against Palestinians in the besieged enclave, as confrontations entered their fifth consecutive day.

In a statement after midnight, the Israeli military said that its air and ground forces were attacking Gaza, without giving further details. Israel, however, later retracted the claim, saying it was not a ground invasion... yet. Palestinians in Gaza also said they had seen no sign of Israeli ground forces inside the enclave but reported heavy artillery fire and dozens of air strikes.

On Friday morning, the Israeli military said some 160 aircraft flying simultaneously conducted a massive attack on what it claimed was a network of tunnels dug by Hamas under Gaza, marking the largest Israeli onslaught since the outbreak of the fighting.

During the aerial bombardment, which lasted nearly 40 minutes, some 450 missiles were dropped on 150 targets in northern Gaza, the military said. It added that in addition to the aerial aggression, Israeli tanks, artillery cannons and infantrymen on the Gaza border conducted accompanying barrages at Hamas targets, but again clarified that Israeli ground forces remain outside of Gaza. Later in the day, Israeli warplanes bombed a residential building in northern Gaza.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the attacks against Gaza “will continue as long as necessary.” “The last word has not been said and this operation will continue as long as necessary in order to restore the quiet and security to the State of Israel,” Netanyahu claimed in remarks on Friday morning.

The UN Security Council is scheduled to publicly discuss the issue on Sunday, as the United States objected to a request by China, Norway and Tunisia for a public, virtual meeting of the Council on Friday.

The U.S., a close ally of Israel, has repeatedly supported the Israeli regime’s atrocities as its “right to self-defense.” US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Thursday he hoped waiting a few days would allow for “diplomacy to have some effect and to see if indeed we get a real de-escalation,” despite the continued onslaught adding to the death toll in Gaza each day.

The United States also blocked an emergency Security Council meeting and Blinken's remarks appeared to be coordinated with Israel in order to give the regime enough time to carry out its attacks on Gaza.

Other areas in the occupied territories have been going through atrocities committed by Israeli forces and settlers. On Thursday night, far-right Israeli groups were planning to mount further attacks against Palestinians in the occupied territories, citing chat messages obtained by the news agency.

“Bring everything, knives, gasoline,” the Middle East Eye quoted one message in a group chat named “The Underground Unit” as saying. “Don't be afraid. We are the chosen ones.”

“Good job at Bat Yam yesterday,” another message read, pointing to a violent attack against a Palestinian man. “Today we'll go back to make some mess at 6 p.m.. Let's meet at the seafront.”

Another message on WhatsApp, on a group called Israel People Alive Haifa, gave the location of a Palestinian march in Tel Aviv. “Any Arab you see - you stab,” it read. “Please come equipped with flags, bats, knives, guns, brass knuckles, wooden boards, pepper spray, anything that would hurt them. We will restore the honor of the Jewish people,” it added.

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