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US Involved in Israeli Massacre of 274 Palestinians

Robert Inlakesh goes over press evidence countering U.S. government denials that its forces were directly involved in Israel's deadly operation in Gaza's Nuseirat refugee camp.



Israeli forces with hostages they rescued during the Nuseirat refugee camp massacre in Gaza on June 8, 2024. (IDF, Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)

Officials in Washington praised Israel's military operation that freed four Israeli captives from the Gaza Strip but refrained from commenting on the approximately 274 Palestinians killed during the mission, which involved U.S. collaboration.

While Israelis celebrated the extraction of the captives from Gaza's Nuseirat, Palestinian refugees in the area were left to collect the remains of their loved ones. An eyewitness described seeing "mangled bodies of men, women, and children strewn around a marketplace and a mosque," while a paramedic likened the scene to "a horror movie."

A headline in *The Washington Post* read, "For Israel, a rare day of joy amid bloodshed as 4 hostages are rescued alive," referring to the event that resulted in the deaths of 274 Palestinians and hundreds of others wounded. Meanwhile, U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan praised the operation as "daring," and President Joe Biden expressed his joy over the rescue without addressing what was one of the largest civilian massacres in Gaza since October.

During the Israeli military operation, which successfully extracted four captives, three others were reportedly killed, including a U.S. citizen, according to a statement from Hamas. Shortly after, information surfaced that the U.S. had played a significant role in the operation, which was hailed as a great success.

A *New York Times* article reported that "a team of American hostage recovery officials stationed in Israel assisted the Israeli military's effort to rescue the four captives by providing intelligence and other logistical support."

Another report from *Axios* cited an unnamed U.S. official claiming that a "U.S. hostage cell in Israel supported the effort to rescue the four hostages" but did not provide details on the support provided.

Compounding issues for the American government, a video seemingly filmed by Israeli soldiers was widely shared on social media, showing a helicopter taking off next to the U.S.-built temporary pier meant to facilitate the transfer of much-needed aid to Gaza. The aircraft was used in Israel's military operation to transport the four freed captives.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) quickly released a statement on the issue, claiming: "The humanitarian pier facility, including its equipment, personnel, and assets, was not used in the operation to rescue hostages today in Gaza. An area south of the facility was used by the Israelis to safely return the hostages to Israel. Any such claim to the contrary is false."

However, contrary to the spirit of CENTCOM's statement, the video of the helicopter used to evacuate the Israeli captives shows it clearly next to the pier. The vehicles used to transfer the four released detainees likely used the nearby causeway attached to the pier.

Following further denial from the U.S. government that its forces were directly involved, the Pentagon released a statement describing the area used by the helicopter as “near” the pier. This contradicts reports from *The New York Times*, *Axios*, and CBS, which cited American officials claiming that U.S. and U.K. intelligence information was used by Israel to conduct the military operation.

Additional reports indicated that U.S.-operated drones were used for surveillance to support the operation. While there are no allegations that U.S. forces were on the ground or participated in armed action, they were clearly involved in other ways.

Despite Washington’s insistence of innocence, the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) remained unconvinced that the close proximity of the Israeli-operated aircraft did not imply the pier’s use in the military operation. WFP Executive Director Cindy McCain announced the organization had “paused” its planned distribution of aid from the pier due to security concerns for its staff. This decision came after two of its sites were attacked during the Nuseirat massacre.

The U.S.-built temporary pier was initially estimated to cost American taxpayers \$320 million. Contributions from the United Kingdom and lower rates for contractors allegedly reduced that figure to \$230 million. However, the pier suffered damage after U.S. forces failed to account for sea conditions, adding another \$22 million in damages to the bill.

The U.S. only managed to reconnect the floating pier to Gaza on June 7, less than a day before the Israeli military operation. This has sparked speculation about the true intended nature of the pier, as it is only operable in conditions with waves smaller than 1.25 meters and has delivered minimal aid for such a costly project.

Robert Inlakesh is a political analyst, journalist and documentary filmmaker currently based in London, UK. He has reported from and lived in the occupied Palestinian territories and hosts the show ‘Palestine Files’. Director of ‘Steal of the Century: Trump’s Palestine-Israel Catastrophe’. Follow him on Twitter @falasteen47

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