

# **Hamas attack on Israel: key aspects of the conflict and its consequences**

## **Background**

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On October 7, 2023, Hamas announced the start of Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, during which more than 5,000 rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel<sup>1</sup>.

The Israeli Security Cabinet announced that the country had been placed in a state of war. The Israeli army launched the counter-terrorism operation "Iron Swords" in the Gaza Strip. Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Galant announced a massive call-up of reservists<sup>2</sup>.

The conflict between Hamas and Israel has resulted in significant casualties and losses on both sides. Hamas has launched numerous attacks on Israel, including rocket fire and suicide bombings. These attacks have led to the loss of lives among both Israeli civilians and military personnel.

The Gaza habitants have also suffered casualties during Israeli military operations aimed at neutralising their capabilities and infrastructure. The exact number of casualties is difficult to determine, as the group often operates from densely populated areas, making it challenging to differentiate between combatants and civilians.

## **Ceasefire and prisoner exchange**

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Amidst this turmoil, there have been some significant developments that offer a glimmer of hope for peace. One such development is the establishment of ceasefire agreements between Hamas and Israel. These agreements aim to halt the hostilities and provide a temporary respite from the violence. Ceasefires are crucial as they allow for humanitarian aid to reach affected areas, facilitate the evacuation of injured individuals, and create an opportunity for diplomatic negotiations to take place.

Another recent development in the conflict between Hamas and Israel is progress made in the prisoner exchange. Both sides have been engaged in negotiations to secure the release of

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<sup>1</sup> South China Morning Post. (2023, October 8). Around 1,000 dead in Israel-Hamas war, as Lebanon's Hezbollah also launches strikes. <https://www.scmp.com/news/world/middle-east/article/3237210/hundreds-dead-israel-hamas-war-lebanons-hezbollah-launches-attacks>

<sup>2</sup> The Times of Israel. (2023, October 8). Massive IDF call-up as gunfights continue in towns; 300 Israelis dead, rockets persist. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/massive-idf-call-up-as-gunfights-continue-in-towns-250-israelis-dead-rockets-persist/>

prisoners held by each party. Prisoner exchanges have been a common occurrence in the past, serving as a confidence-building measure and a way to address the humanitarian aspect of the conflict.

*The progress made in this regard indicates a willingness from both Hamas and Israel to engage in dialogue and find common ground.*

These recent developments, namely the ceasefire agreements and prisoner exchange progress, signify a potential shift towards de-escalation and a desire for a peaceful resolution. While these steps are positive, it is important to acknowledge that they are just the beginning of a long and complex process. The conflict between Hamas and Israel is deeply rooted in historical, political, and ideological factors, and resolving it will require sustained efforts from all parties involved. Nevertheless, the recent developments offer a glimmer of hope and provide an opportunity for further dialogue and negotiation to address the underlying issues and work towards a lasting peace in the region.

## **US support for Israel**

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The United States has historically maintained a strong alliance with Israel, and this support has continued since the last Hamas attack. The US government has consistently expressed its commitment to Israel's security and has provided various forms of assistance to help Israel defend itself against threats. One key aspect of US support for Israel is military aid.

Immediately after the conflict began, the United States sent an aircraft carrier to the shores of Israel and this became a sign of an important partnership between the two countries. Such measures demonstrate the United States' readiness to support its ally in the region and ensure Israel's security in times of increasing tension.

On October 17, it became known that Israel had requested \$10 billion from the United States in the form of military assistance. Israel's request for military-related financial assistance represents an important point in this context. This assistance could be used to upgrade weapons and military infrastructure, ensure Israel's security and support military operations<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> The Times of Israel. (2023, October 17). Israel has asked the US for \$10 billion in emergency military aid - report. The Times of Israel. [https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/israel-has-asked-the-us-for-10-billion-in-emergency-military-aid-report/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/israel-has-asked-the-us-for-10-billion-in-emergency-military-aid-report/)

However, the decision to provide such funding has important political and budgetary implications and is therefore pending before the US Congress. This underscores the need for such requests to be discussed and approved to ensure they are consistent with United States interests and strategy.

*The US is expected to continue supporting Israel in the near future, highlighting the strong diplomatic and military ties between the two countries.*

The US government has consistently defended Israel's right to self-defence and has used its influence in international forums to counter condemnations against Israel. This diplomatic backing has been crucial in ensuring that Israel's actions are not criticised on the global stage.

Furthermore, the US has been actively involved in brokering peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. While the last Hamas attack may have strained the peace process, the US has continued to encourage dialogue and work towards a peaceful resolution. This support includes diplomatic efforts, mediation, and financial assistance to promote stability and economic development in the region.

Overall, US support for Israel since the last Hamas attack has remained steadfast. Through military aid, diplomatic backing, and peace-building initiatives, the US continues to demonstrate its commitment to Israel's security and its efforts to achieve lasting peace in the region.

## **Reactions in Europe**

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Recent attacks by Hamas on Israel have caused a wave of concern and controversy in European countries. This conflict has pitted the population against differing viewpoints, dividing it between supporters of Israel and supporters of Palestine. These diametrically opposed positions have become a significant aspect of public debate and may influence the upcoming European elections.

The European Union as a whole maintains an official position supporting Israel, condemning Hamas attacks and insisting on Israel's right to its own security. However, despite this official line, many countries in Europe have their own national interests and internal political factors that may influence their position in this conflict.

Since the beginning of the conflict, there has been information work in the European media aimed at separating the concepts of “ Hamas ” and “ Palestine ”. This is because Hamas, as an organisation, is recognized by many countries around the world as a terrorist group, and separating these terms helps to discuss the conflict more clearly and analyse its sides.

The complexity of the situation lies in the fact that this dual reaction of the population and information work in the media can influence political processes in Europe. Candidates and parties may feel pressured by divisions in society, and positions on the conflict in the Middle East could be a factor in the outcome of the upcoming European elections in 2024.

The conflict between Palestine and Israel raises serious security concerns not only in the region but also in other parts of the world, including Europe. This becomes obvious if we consider the example of the terrorist attack in Brussels, which occurred on October 16, 2023. The criminal saw the Israeli flags of his victims and decided to open fire on them. As a result, two Swedish citizens died from serious injuries<sup>4</sup>.

Thus, the present conflict between Israel and Hamas could cause radicalization and violence in other parts of the world. The incident highlights how events in the region can fuel tensions and provoke attacks in other countries.

As the conflict between Israel and Hamas continues, there is a risk that similar incidents will occur again. The growing tension and hostility associated with this conflict may motivate radical elements to violence, including attacks on Israeli representatives or symbols, as was the case in Brussels.

Extremist organisations inspired by or associated with the ideology of Hamas or similar groups may use this conflict as an excuse to carry out terrorist attacks outside the Middle East region. This can include both coordinated attacks and the actions of individual extremists, often acting independently.

Terrorist groups have always sought reasons to recruit and radicalise new members. The current conflict between Israel and Hamas serves as a powerful catalyst for propaganda and recruitment, especially through the Internet and social media. This means that the risk of terrorist attacks outside this region exists and continues to grow.

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<sup>4</sup> The Brussels Times. (2023, October 17). Brussels terror attack: What do we know so far? <https://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/746919/brussels-terror-attack-what-we-know-so-far-tbtb>

## **Netanyahu can strengthen his position**

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The recent conflict between Israel and Hamas has once again raised questions about the future of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Rapid events and unexpected turns have led to speculation about Netanyahu's possible departure from office, but rather than weakening his position, the conflict appears to strengthen his leadership role in the government.

Netanyahu, who is at the centre of allegations of corruption and fraud, is currently under intense public and judicial scrutiny. The recent attack only intensified criticism of him. However, despite this, the conflict with Hamas led to a change in the dynamics of the political situation.

The situation in the country in the context of a military conflict rarely gives rise to calls for a change of leaders. Stability in governing the country during war is considered a priority for most citizens. This creates a favourable environment for Netanyahu, allowing him to strengthen his position as the main focus becomes managing the current situation.

*Netanyahu will likely try to use this conflict to his political advantage by prolonging or actively supporting military action.*

This can serve not only to strengthen its role, but also to demonstrate decisiveness in responding to external threats. For Netanyahu, the conflict is not merely a military engagement but a political manoeuvre. By aligning himself with decisive military actions and projecting an image of strength in the face of adversity, he aims to sway public opinion in his favour. Moreover, as the conflict persists, it offers a distraction from the internal political dynamics that could otherwise threaten his tenure.

Thus, although rumours about Netanyahu's possible resignation amid accusations of corruption and inefficiency are becoming increasingly louder, the conflict with Hamas, on the contrary, is becoming the basis for strengthening his position in the Israeli government.

## **Implications for South Korea**

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The recent conflict between Hamas and Israel has several implications for South Korea. Firstly, South Korea is heavily dependent on oil imports, and any disruption in the global oil market

due to the conflict can have a direct impact on the country's economy. As Israel is a major player in the Middle East, tensions in the region can lead to increased oil prices and supply uncertainties, which can affect South Korea's energy security and overall economic stability.

Secondly, South Korea has a significant presence in the Middle East in terms of trade and investment. The region is a major market for South Korean exports, particularly in sectors such as construction, infrastructure, and defence. The conflict can disrupt ongoing projects and create uncertainties for South Korean businesses operating in the region. It may also lead to a decline in demand for South Korean goods and services, impacting the country's export-oriented economy.

Thirdly, South Korea has been actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to promote peace and stability in the Middle East. The conflict between Hamas and Israel can complicate South Korea's diplomatic relations with both parties. South Korea has maintained diplomatic ties with Israel and has also sought to engage with Palestinian authorities. The conflict can strain these relationships and pose challenges for South Korea's diplomatic initiatives in the region.

Lastly, the conflict can have indirect implications for South Korea's national security. The Middle East is a volatile region with various geopolitical tensions, and any escalation in the conflict can have broader implications for regional stability. South Korea has a vested interest in maintaining peace and stability in the Middle East to ensure the safety of its citizens and protect its strategic interests. Therefore, the conflict can indirectly impact South Korea's security considerations and necessitate a careful assessment of potential risks and responses.

In conclusion, the recent Hamas-Israel conflict has several implications for South Korea, ranging from economic and trade impacts to diplomatic and security considerations. The South Korean Government should closely monitor the developments in the conflict and assess the potential implications for the country's energy security, economy, diplomatic relations, and national security. This understanding can help inform policy decisions and strategies to mitigate any adverse effects and promote South Korea's interests in the region.

## Forecast

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The complexity and duration of the conflict between Israel and Palestine does leave questions unanswered and requires in-depth research to find a sustainable solution. In the context of the events described, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Ambiguous resolution of the conflict: The conflict between Israel and Palestine remains one of the most complex and long-lasting international problems. None of the described methods, be it military intervention or blockade, will lead to a final solution to the conflict.
- Strengthening Benjamin Netanyahu's position: It is possible that crisis management and determination regarding Israel's security could strengthen the position of Benjamin Netanyahu and his government.
- Rise of right-wing sentiment: Decisions made in response to the conflict may strengthen right-wing politics in Israel. This may affect relations with international partners and negotiations with Palestine.
- Western allies will continue to support: Western allies, in particular the US and the EU, will continue to support Israel in the context of the current conflict. However, they may impose conditions to prevent the escalation of the conflict or the development of a humanitarian crisis.
- Information problem: An important aspect of the conflict is the information war and attempts to separate the concepts of Hamas and Palestine. Western allies will have to grapple with this problem to prevent widespread unrest.

## References

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