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# On Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel there are doubts about 'never again'

*Holocaust remembrance has taken on even deeper meaning since October 7 for many Israelis.*

By [Bryan Passifiume](#)

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Kibbutz Kfar Aza resident Eilon Kutler, speaking to a group about how Hamas killed his best friend.  
PHOTO BY BRYAN PASSIFIUME /Postmedia

SDEROT, Israel — Almost as soon as the sirens started, so did the artillery fire.

At 10 a.m. Monday, Israeli officials sounded air raid sirens across the country to commemorate Yom HaShoah — Holocaust Remembrance Day — a day on which virtually the entire country of Israel comes to a halt

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People stand in silence on a main road in the heart of Jerusalem on May 6, 2024 as sirens blared across Israel bringing it to a standstill to mark the annual day of remembrance for the six million Jewish victims of the Nazi genocide. PHOTO BY RONALDO SCHEMIDT /AFP via Getty Images

Near the southern Israeli city of Sderot — just a kilometre from Gaza — the sirens were accompanied by a barrage of artillery and heavy guns, reportedly an effort to suppress impending Hamas rocket attacks. Hamas has been known to take advantage of moments like these to carry out attacks.



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The day before, a deadly Hamas rocket attack at the Gaza border crossing at Kerem Shalom,


used for aid deliveries to Palestinians, killed four Israeli soldiers. It brought the total number of Israeli soldiers killed in this war to 267. Israel has closed the crossing.

As Monday dawned, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) urged Gazans to evacuate parts of Rafah, at the south end of the Gaza Strip, to safe areas to the north in Khan Younis ahead of a planned military operation in Rafah. Israel has said that Rafah is the last major stronghold for Hamas's brigades.

“In accordance with the approval of the political echelon, the IDF calls on the population, which is under the control of Hamas, to temporarily evacuate from the eastern neighborhoods of Rafah to the expanded humanitarian zone,” read a statement issued by the Israeli military.

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Hamas had reportedly accepted unreleased terms for a ceasefire on Monday, but it was a ceasefire offer Israel rejected as the terms did not include the release of hostages, reported The Times of Israel.

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Fighter jets screamed overhead in southern Israel Monday.

National Post witnessed midday artillery and tank strikes against Hamas positions near Kfar Aza, that sent large plumes of smoke and dirt nearly a hundred metres into the air.

Hours after National Post left Sderot, Palestinian Islamic Jihad launched a barrage of rockets into the city from Gaza.

Two of the three rockets were intercepted by Iron Dome, while a third landed harmlessly in an open area.

Shrapnel from the falling rockets damaged a home, said an IDF spokesperson.



The aftermath of the carnage at Kfar Aza, left by Hamas. PHOTO BY BRYAN PASSIFIUME /Postmedia

Kfar Aza is a Gaza-adjacent kibbutz that was one of the hardest-hit communities in the Hamas terrorist attack against Israel on October 7. It is deserted now. The burned out and bullet-ridden homes are left to tell the ghastly story of what happened here.

Hamas entered through the community's security fence, and knew exactly where to go, survivors of the attack have said.

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The community's civil security officers were murdered before the terrorists began going door to door, setting houses ablaze and executing residents in their own homes.

This is the first Yom Hashoah since the massacre in which Hamas terrorists invaded Israel, killed about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and kidnapped 252 people (132 still remain after some were returned in ceasefire deals and others were killed). Next week will be the first Yom HaZikaron, the holiday remembering the country's fallen soldiers. Then Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day.

Holocaust remembrance has taken on even deeper meaning since October 7 for many Jewish Israelis.

Geoff Winston, an American-born Israeli, had grandparents, Hungarian Jews, who survived Nazi death camps.

"Today when we talk about what happened on October 7, we talk about 'never again,' but for the past 80 years we've been talking about 'never again,'" Winston said.

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“And yet ... ‘never again’ is today.”

The anti-Israel, pro-Hamas protesters around the world are dismissing the mass violence against Jews on October 7, Winston said.

“People are denying what was recorded live by Hamas, live-streamed to the victims’ friends and family on Facebook — it was all there live, and yet the denial is still there,” he said.

National Post

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*National Post is independently reporting in Israel as part of a sponsored fact-finding tour for Canadian journalists organized by businessman Larry Maher on behalf of community leaders partnered with Toronto’s Temple Sinai Congregation.*



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