



Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center  
at the Israel Intelligence Heritage  
& Commemoration Center (IICC)

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## Hamas hides the casualties suffered by its operatives: Hamas's main online forum censors the publication of names and photographs of operatives killed in Operation Cast Lead

1. On January 10, at 21:41, all web surfers on Hamas's **PALDF forum** (the movement's main message board) received a message from a user nicknamed "Samed" ("He who stands firm"). He is one of the forum's **moderators** (the user was said to be a *muraqib*, Arabic for "inspector"). The message said that **according to the policy** of the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip ("the jihadist resistance"), **it was forbidden to publish photographs, names, or details of those members of the resistance** (i.e., terrorist organizations) **killed or injured in the fighting** until the end of the "Israeli aggression" in the Gaza Strip. The moderator said that any message violating those principles would be removed from the forum. He added that they were all "soldiers of the resistance" who should avoid providing assistance to the enemy (see **Appendix** for the complete message and its translation).

2. The message reflects **the policy of Hamas**, which has refrained from publishing the names of its operatives who were killed or injured since the beginning of the ground phase of Operation Cast Lead. As part of that policy, almost no names or photographs of killed operatives have been published on PALDF in the course of the past week (unlike in the first week of the operation, in which the names and photographs of scores of killed Hamas operatives were published). It should be noted that a similar policy was followed by Hezbollah in the second Lebanon war, when it purposefully did not publish the names of killed operatives, preferring instead to bury them in secret, without media coverage, to reinforce the "divine victory" myth it sought to create.

3. It is our assessment that such a policy is designed to achieve three goals:

a) to avoid undermining the morale of Hamas operatives as a result of the death of many terrorists during the IDF's ground operations (according to IDF reports, more than 200 operatives were killed). With that in mind, and possibly owing to the difficulty of evacuating many bodies from the battlefield, it was reported that Hamas was not holding proper funerals for its fatalities.

b) to deliver to the Palestinian target audience (and to other target audiences worldwide) the message that Israel has no achievements in its ground operation and thus strengthen Hamas's status and bargaining power when the fighting comes to an end.

c) to confirm (through Al-Jazeera and other media) the false propaganda message that Israel's military operations are aimed against Gaza Strip residents and that only the civilian population is being hit by the IDF and is paying the price.

# Appendix

1 #	10-01-2009, 20:41
...تنبيه هام بخصوص أخبار وصور شهداء المقاومة ...:	<b>صامد</b> مراقب
<b>الإخوة الكرام</b>	تاريخ الانتساب: 2005 09 الجنس: ذكر مشاركات: 542
<b>تماشياً مع سياسة فصائل المقاومة المجاهدة في غزة..</b>	
<b>نفيدكم بأنه يمنع منعاً باتاً نشر أخبار عن أعداء أو أسماء أو صور أو أي تفاصيل عن شهداء المقاومة وجرحاها ، وذلك حتى انتهاء العدوان الصهيوني بالنصر المبين لنا ولأمتنا بإذن الله تعالى وسيحذف كل ما يمس هذا الموضوع مع تنبيه ناشره</b>	
<b>فلنكن جميعاً جنوداً للمقاومة .. فإن لم نستطع أن نعينها .. فلا أقل من ألا نعين العدو عليها</b>	
وإن تركوك في وجه المنايا = فمت في العز لكن لا تساوم وإن سكتت حكومات الدنيا = كفاك الله يا رجل العزانم	

## Important announcement about information and photographs about the martyrs of the resistance

"Dear brothers, **according to the policy of the factions of the jihadist resistance in Gaza... we are informing you that publishing the numbers, names, photographs, and any [other] details about the martyrs** [originally: *shuhadaa*] and injured members of the resistance is completely forbidden until the Israeli aggression ends with a clear victory for us and for our nation, Allah willing. Any [messages] violating this principle will be removed and a warning will be sent to the poster. **Let us all be soldiers of the resistance**, and if we cannot help it, the least we can do is not help the enemy [in fighting] against it".