Video shows IDF delaying strike on PIJ commander due to kids playing nearby

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The Israel Defense Forces said Sunday evening it delayed a deadly strike on senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) commander Khaled Mansour several times on Saturday, after identifying children playing in the area.

The military issued a video depicting the repeated decisions to delay the key operation.

“Children were identified in the area so the attack was delayed several times,” a statement issued by the Israeli military read. “Later, when the kids were no longer in the area, the attack was successfully carried out.”

The video and statement were released as part of the military’s bid to show its efforts to avoid harming civilians, even when confronted with the opportunity to hit a top-tier target.

The video shows aerial surveillance of the home, as Israeli officers are heard speaking. Circles mark the children playing around the house where Mansour was staying.

“I see kids running in the trees over there,” one military officials can be heard saying. “Abort the mission,” a second officer is heard answering after a few seconds.

According to the military, the strike was delayed two more times, due to the presence of children, footage of which was included in the video.

The targeted killing of Mansour took place in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, according to officials. The PIJ confirmed his death in a statement on Sunday morning.

He was the southern Gaza counterpart of Tayseer Jabari, the terror group’s commander in northern Gaza, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike on Friday.

The killing of Jabari was the opening strike of the IDF’s Operation Breaking Dawn. Since then, the PIJ has launched over nearly 1,000 rockets at Israel, according to IDF estimates.

The military said it had eliminated much of the PIJ’s top brass in the first two days of combat.

Throughout the operation, the IDF has sought to shore up the legitimacy of its campaign.

Earlier Sunday it issued another video showing the delay of a strike on a military target to avoid harming a nearby civilian.

On Saturday, a rocket hit a Palestinian home in the Jabaliya refugee camp, killing at least seven civilians, including four children. Palestinian media initially blamed Israel for the strike, a narrative that was quickly adopted by many international news outlets.

The Israeli military quickly said it has video and radar evidence that proved the blast was caused by a failed Islamic Jihad rocket launch.

It also issued a video showing a barrage of rockets launched from the coastal enclave at Israel, and one which falls short.

Palestinian terrorists have launched over nearly 1,000 rockets at Israel since Friday, as part of a flare-up between the sides. According to the IDF, some 160 rockets have fallen short in the Gaza Strip.

On Sunday night, the sides announced that a ceasefire was set to take effect.