**Hamas belligerent as 3 Jewish students found murdered**

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As Israel confirms the deaths of three Jewish seminary students, one of whom also held U.S. citizenship, Hamas is warning it will deliver a “crushing response” if the Jewish state continues attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has blamed Hamas for the deaths of the students and declared Islamic terrorist organization that ruled Gaza “will pay.” Israel Defense Forces found the bodies of Eyal Ifrach, Gilad Shaer and Naftali Frankel in a field north of Hebron.

Confirming their deaths, Israeli Deputy Defense Minister Danny Danon indicated retaliation was in the works, vowing “we will not stop until Hamas is completely defeated.”

“The homes of the terrorists must be demolished and their arms caches destroyed,” he said.

“Our mission will not be complete until all the terror organizations are deterred from attacking Israelis and understand once and for all that the people of Israel will not be threatened.”

Hamas has denied any involvement in the kidnapping and subsequent murder of the three Jewish students, warning any Israeli retaliation will open “the gates of hell.”

Hamas also told the Israelis to stop attacks on Palestinians or “wait for a crushing response.”

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, claims responsibility for the disappearance of the three Jewish teens, according to the Jewish newspaper Algemeiner, quoting Israeli media.

Reuters’ Jerusalem bureau had received a call from Dawlat al-Islam, an ISIS branch operating in Hebron, claiming responsibility in retaliation for the killing of three of its members. Flyers apparently signed by the group with that claim were distributed near Hebron.

In Arabic, the flyer said:

Thanks to Allah, our holy warriors were able to kidnap three Zionist aggressors in the city of Hebron in the occupied West Bank.

That comes as part of the initial response to the assassination of our heroic holy warriors in Hebron, Muhammad Nairoukh, 29 years old, Mahmoud Al-Najjar, 23 years old, and Musi Makhamreh, 22 years old. And that [also] comes as part of the pursuit to liberate our prisoners from the occupation forces’ prisons.

And it is [either] a jihad [for] victory or martyrdom

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, Palestine – the West Bank, Friday, 15th of Sha’ban 1435, June 13, 2014.

Hamas said Israel’s allegation that the resistance group was responsible for the kidnapping of the three Jewish teens was aimed at “torpedoing the recent reconciliation deal” between Hamas and Fatah, which governs the West Bank.

As a result of the Hamas-Fatah union last April, Netanyahu suspended peace talks with the Palestinians.

Hamas has been concerned about the recent detention of more than 60 of its members, including senior figures. Israel recently killed Hamas activist Mohamed Zayed Obeid and injured three Palestinian civilians due to aerial attacks on different areas of the Gaza Strip.

Israeli warplanes reportedly targeted three Hamas sites in Khan Younis district, two of them belonging to Al-Qassam Brigades of Hamas and Al-Quds Brigade of the Islamic Jihad.

In targeting various Hamas sites, Palestinian homes were damaged in air raids.

According to Palestinian officials, Israel also arrested approximately 300 people in 200 towns, refugee camps and cities in the West Bank, as well as 240 from Hamas.

“Netanyahu will implement his threats, but he should know that if today he decides to deteriorate the situation, tomorrow the decision to stop it won’t be made by him, Palestine Today quoted senior Hamas leader Ezzat Al-Rashq as saying.

In what could be construed as belligerent comments, al-Rashq reminded Netanyahu of what he termed “humiliating results” of Israel’s previous wars on Palestinians in Gaza and said there would be similar humiliation and suffering if Israel continues with its “present aggressions.”

While the students were still missing, Hamas promised to “open the gates of hell” if Israel expelled its leaders from the West Bank to Gaza in response to the kidnapping.

“These revenge tactics are tantamount to collective punishment under international law,” Fuad al-Khufash, director of the Palestinian rights group Ahrar, told Al Jazeera.

Meanwhile, Hamas has called on Iran for support against what it called intensified aggressive moves made by Israel.

“Given the tragic situation in the Middle East region, unfortunately at present the situation of Palestine is not under the focus of the political circles and is no more a priority for the region and the world media,” Khalid al-Qoddoumi, Hamas’ representative in Iran, wrote in a letter to Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani.

“Misusing the situation, the Zionist enemy has intensified its attacks against the Palestinians under different pretexts and is attempting to take advantage of the regional situation to its interests in the best possible form,” he said.

Similarly, Hamas Politburo Chief Khalid Mashaal, in a letter to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, strongly criticized Israel for the “atrocities” against “defenseless Palestinian civilians.

He called on the Iranian president to continue support for the Palestinians to enable them to continue resistance against Israel.