

The Virgin Islands Consortium

'There's No Justification for Terrorism,' Plaskett Says as She Condemns Hamas's Attack on Israel

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Debris covers the roads following Israeli airstrikes in Rafah, located in the southern part of the Gaza Strip. By. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGE

USVI Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett has issued a statement condemning the latest attacks on Israel by Hamas, the most devastating in decades. "I strongly condemn the horrific attacks against Israel by Hamas. There is no justification for this terrorism, and my heart goes out to the innocent civilians suffering from this violence," said Ms. Plaskett. She expressed her support for Israel's defensive actions against terrorism.

The escalation began with Hamas militants flooding into areas of southern Israel from Gaza on Saturday. Intense fighting ensued as Israeli troops battled to regain control. The Israeli cabinet approved a declaration of war, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announcing a significant call-up of military reservists.

Tensions heightened as another Iran-backed militant group, Hezbollah, launched mortar shells and a missile at Israeli targets from southern Lebanon. The situation complicated further when late Sunday, Gaza militants released another barrage of rockets. Israel responded with airstrikes in Palestinian territory, and announced the capture of a deputy commander from Hamas's naval force.

The impact has been profound. According to Israel's Army Radio, over 700 Israelis are confirmed dead, and 2,408 wounded. Palestinian Health Ministry reports indicate that at least 413 Palestinians have been killed and around 2,300 injured due to Israeli counterstrikes in Gaza.

A tragic incident was reported at a music festival in southern Israel where over 250 attendees were killed by gunmen. Israeli soldiers are now working to expel Hamas fighters from towns and military bases that were infiltrated during the initial attack.

Hamas's initial attack penetrated deep into Israeli territory, surprising the country's security establishment. The future for the region seems uncertain and will largely depend on the scale of the Israeli military response and potential involvement from other Palestinian militant groups.

Richard Hecht, a military spokesman, emphasized the long road ahead, saying, "This is going to be a long, long haul."

In addition to the military confrontations, civilians have also been affected significantly. Scores of hostages were reportedly taken during the raids, with militant group leaders claiming they have captives. The Israeli government has not disclosed how many of its citizens have been taken hostage.

Internationally, concerns have been raised about citizens affected by the conflict. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is currently working to verify reports of Americans killed or gone missing in the Hamas attack. Israel Minister for Strategic Affairs, Ron Dermer, confirmed reports of American hostages. There are also reports of missing or deceased nationals from the U.K., France, Ukraine, and Mexico. In one distressing incident, a German-Israeli woman was reportedly kidnapped, and her body later displayed by Hamas militants.