

Israel military says 2 civilians killed for every Hamas militant is 'tremendously positive' ratio given combat challenges

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CNN — none

A ratio of two Palestinian civilians killed in Gaza for every Hamas militant is "tremendously positive", a spokesperson for the Israeli military told CNN on Monday, describing the challenges of urban combat.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) believes that about two civilians have been killed in Gaza for every Hamas militant, the AFP news agency reported Monday, citing a briefing for foreign media by senior Israeli military officials.

Asked by CNN's Erin Burnett about that details of that report, IDF spokesperson Jonathan Conricus said: "I can confirm the report."

Conricus added: "I can say that if that is true – and I think that our numbers will be corroborated – if you compare that ratio to any other conflict in urban terrain between a military and a terrorist organization using civilians as their human shields, and embedded in the civilian population, you will find that that ratio is tremendous, tremendously positive, and perhaps unique in the world."

More than 15,000 Palestinians have been killed as a result of Israeli attacks since October 7, according to the Hamas-controlled Ministry of Health in Gaza. It does not distinguish between civilians and militants.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant told journalists during a press conference on Saturday that the military has killed "thousands of

terrorists." The Israeli military has not officially published any estimates of those killed.

AFP reported that the unnamed Israeli military official, when asked to confirm reports that around 5,000 Hamas militants had been killed, replied: "The numbers are more or less right."

A top U.S. State Department official [told Congress last month](#) that while it was difficult to assess casualty figures while conflict was ongoing, she believed that the true death toll could be even higher than what is being publicly discussed.

"It is very difficult for any of us to assess what the rate of casualties are," said Barbara Leaf, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs.

"We think they're very high, frankly. And it could be that they're even higher than are being cited. We'll know only after the guns fall silent."

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