

# Israel is a Terrorist State

## Introduction

The State of Israel, birthed through the violent campaigns of Zionist militias like Irgun, Lehi, and Haganah, carries a legacy of bloodshed that mirrors the tactics of modern terrorist organizations when judged by the standards applied to non-state actors today. From early assassinations and massacres to contemporary airstrikes on diplomatic facilities and targeted killings of political figures, Israel's actions reveal a consistent pattern of violence designed to intimidate, coerce, and displace for political ends. If committed by a non-state actor, these acts—spanning a century—would unequivocally be labeled terrorism. Yet, Israel, rooted in this brutal history, hypocritically brands Palestinian women, children, aid workers, and journalists as terrorists, often without evidence, to justify its aggression. This essay defines terrorism, catalogs Israel's violent acts with casualty details and terrorism classifications, and exposes the hypocrisy of its terrorist labeling, arguing that Israel's actions, from its founding to its 2024 attacks on diplomatic targets, mark it as a terrorist state.

## Chapter 1: Defining Terrorism

Terrorism, as defined by the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), is “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation, typically targeting civilians or non-combatants.” Key elements include intent (coercion through fear), targets (civilians, infrastructure, or symbolic figures), and actors (non-state entities). While state actions are typically judged under international humanitarian law (e.g., Geneva Conventions), applying this terrorism framework hypothetically to state actions reveals whether they align with terrorist tactics. Indicators include deliberate civilian harm, disproportionate force, or actions to intimidate or displace populations. For Israel and its Zionist predecessors, this lens exposes a strategy of violence to secure statehood, territorial control, or regional dominance, akin to tactics used by groups like al-Qaeda or ISIS. This definition frames the analysis of Israel's actions as terrorism, holding it to the same standard as non-state actors.

## Chapter 2: Chronological List of Terrorist Acts by Israel and Its Predecessors

Below is a comprehensive, chronological list of actions by Zionist groups (Irgun, Lehi, Haganah) and the State of Israel, including the 2024 attack on the Iranian embassy in Damascus and the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, with casualty details and explanations for their terrorism classification under modern standards. Each act is assessed

as if committed by a non-state actor, drawing from historical records, UN reports, and credible media sources.

- **June 1924: Assassination of Jacob Israël de Haan (Jerusalem)**

- **Details:** Haganah, under Yitzhak Ben-Zvi's orders, assassinated Dutch Jewish anti-Zionist Jacob Israël de Haan in Jerusalem for his political activities and Arab contacts, aiming to silence dissent.
- **Casualties:** 1 killed.
- **Source:** Institute for Palestine Studies.
- **Terrorism Label:** Assassinating a civilian for political beliefs to intimidate dissenters is terrorism, akin to Red Brigades' targeted killings. The ideological targeting fits modern definitions.

- **November 1944: Assassination of Lord Moyne (Cairo)**

- **Details:** Lehi assassinated Lord Moyne, Britain's Minister of State for the Middle East, and his driver in Cairo, viewing him as an obstacle to Jewish immigration and statehood.
- **Casualties:** 2 killed.
- **Source:** Lord Moyne Assassination.
- **Terrorism Label:** Assassinating a civilian official abroad to coerce a colonial power is terrorism, comparable to Black September's diplomatic killings.

- **August 1944: Attempted Assassination of Sir Harold McMichael**

- **Details:** Lehi attempted to assassinate Sir Harold McMichael, British High Commissioner in Palestine, to disrupt colonial governance. The attack failed.
- **Casualties:** None.
- **Source:** Zionist Political Violence.
- **Terrorism Label:** Attempting to assassinate an official to intimidate a government is terrorism, akin to failed IRA plots, despite no casualties.

- **February 1946: Attack on British Airfields**

- **Details:** Irgun and Lehi destroyed 15 aircraft and damaged 8 at three British airfields (Lydda, Qastina, Kfar Sirkin), weakening military control.
- **Casualties:** 1 killed (perpetrator).
- **Source:** Jewish Terrorism under the British Mandate.
- **Terrorism Label:** Targeting military assets to coerce British withdrawal aligns with terrorism, similar to IRA attacks on military infrastructure.

- **June 1946: Destruction of Nine Bridges**

- **Details:** Haganah, Irgun, and Lehi demolished nine of eleven bridges connecting Palestine to neighboring countries, disrupting British logistics.
- **Casualties:** None directly reported, but significant economic disruption.
- **Source:** Palmach Archives.
- **Terrorism Label:** Destroying infrastructure to paralyze governance and intimidate is terrorism, comparable to the 2004 Madrid train bombings.

- **July 1946: King David Hotel Bombing (Jerusalem)**

- **Details:** Irgun bombed the British administrative headquarters, killing 91 (41 Arabs, 28 British, 17 Jews) and injuring 45. Warnings were disputed.
- **Casualties:** 91 killed, 45 injured.
- **Source:** King David Hotel Bombing.

- **Terrorism Label:** Bombing a mixed civilian-administrative building is terrorism, akin to the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. UN condemned it as terrorism.
- **October 1946: British Embassy Bombing (Rome)**
  - **Details:** Irgun detonated 40 kilos of TNT at the British Embassy in Rome, injuring two and damaging the building.
  - **Casualties:** 2 injured.
  - **Source:** Zionist Political Violence.
  - **Terrorism Label:** Bombing a diplomatic target abroad to intimidate is terrorism, similar to the 1983 US Embassy bombing in Beirut.
- **1946–1947: Bombings of Arab Markets (Haifa, Jerusalem)**
  - **Details:** Irgun bombed Arab markets, killing dozens of Palestinian civilians, escalating communal tensions.
  - **Casualties:** Dozens killed (exact numbers vary).
  - **Source:** Institute for Palestine Studies.
  - **Terrorism Label:** Targeting civilian markets to instill fear is terrorism, akin to al-Qaeda's marketplace bombings.
- **July 1947: Abduction and Hanging of British Sergeants**
  - **Details:** Irgun abducted and hanged British Sergeants Clifford Martin and Mervyn Paice, booby-trapping their bodies, in retaliation for executed members.
  - **Casualties:** 2 killed, 1 injured.
  - **Source:** The Sergeants Affair.
  - **Terrorism Label:** Kidnapping, executing, and booby-trapping non-combatants is terrorism, comparable to ISIS's hostage executions.
- **August 1947: Suitcase Bombs at Hotel Sacher (Vienna)**
  - **Details:** Irgun detonated suitcase bombs at the British headquarters in Vienna, causing light damage for propaganda.
  - **Casualties:** None reported.
  - **Source:** Zionist Political Violence.
  - **Terrorism Label:** Bombing a government facility abroad to intimidate is terrorism, akin to Red Brigades' symbolic attacks.
- **April 1948: Deir Yassin Massacre**
  - **Details:** Irgun and Lehi massacred over 100 Palestinian villagers, including women and children, in Deir Yassin, triggering the Nakba.
  - **Casualties:** 100–120 killed.
  - **Source:** Deir Yassin Massacre.
  - **Terrorism Label:** Massacring civilians to intimidate and displace is terrorism, akin to Bosnian ethnic cleansing. Ilan Pappé labels it ethnic cleansing.
- **September 1948: Assassination of Folke Bernadotte (Jerusalem)**
  - **Details:** Lehi assassinated UN mediator Folke Bernadotte, opposing his partition plan.
  - **Casualties:** 1 killed.
  - **Source:** Folke Bernadotte Assassination.
  - **Terrorism Label:** Assassinating a neutral UN figure to disrupt peace is terrorism, comparable to attacks on UN personnel.

- **October 1953: Qibya Massacre**
  - **Details:** Israeli Unit 101, led by Ariel Sharon, killed 69 Palestinians, mostly civilians, in Qibya, demolishing homes.
  - **Casualties:** 69 killed.
  - **Source:** Qibya Massacre.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, massacring civilians to punish and intimidate would be terrorism, like Boko Haram's village attacks. UN condemned its disproportionality.
- **October 1956: Kafr Qasim Massacre**
  - **Details:** Israeli Border Police killed 49 Palestinian citizens, including 23 children, for violating an unannounced curfew.
  - **Casualties:** 49 killed.
  - **Source:** Kafr Qasim Massacre.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, massacring civilians for non-compliance would be terrorism, like paramilitary purges.
- **December 1968: Beirut International Airport Raid**
  - **Details:** Israel destroyed 13 civilian airplanes at Beirut Airport in retaliation for a PLO attack.
  - **Casualties:** None, but major disruption.
  - **Source:** 1968 Israeli Raid.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, destroying civilian infrastructure would be terrorism, like the 1985 Rome airport attack. UN condemned it.
- **February 1973: Libyan Arab Airlines Flight 114**
  - **Details:** Israeli jets shot down a civilian airliner, killing 108, claiming a mistake.
  - **Casualties:** 108 killed, 5 survived.
  - **Source:** Libyan Arab Airlines Flight 114.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, downing a civilian plane would be terrorism, like Malaysia Airlines Flight 17. UN labeled it a war crime.
- **1972–1988: Operation Wrath of God**
  - **Details:** Mossad assassinated PLO leaders, with civilian casualties (e.g., Ahmed Bouchiki).
  - **Casualties:** 20+ killed, including civilians.
  - **Source:** Operation Wrath of God.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, extrajudicial assassinations abroad with collateral damage would be terrorism, like Black September's actions.
- **September 1982: Sabra and Shatila Massacre**
  - **Details:** Israel facilitated the Phalangist militia's massacre of 460–3,500 Palestinian and Lebanese civilians in Beirut.
  - **Casualties:** 460–3,500 killed.
  - **Source:** Sabra and Shatila Massacre.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, enabling a civilian massacre would be terrorism, akin to complicity in genocide. Kahan Commission held Israel responsible.
- **October 2001: Yasser Arafat International Airport Destruction**
  - **Details:** Israel bombed Gaza's airport, rendering it inoperable, claiming military use.

- **Casualties:** None direct, major disruption.
- **Source:** Yasser Arafat International Airport.
- **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, destroying civilian infrastructure would be terrorism, undermining statehood.
- **2008–2024: Gaza Military Operations (Cast Lead, Protective Edge, etc.)**
  - **Details:** Operations killed thousands (e.g., 1,166–1,417 in Cast Lead, 926 civilians; 2,125–2,310 in Protective Edge, 1,617 civilians).
  - **Casualties:** Thousands killed, mostly civilians.
  - **Source:** B'Tselem, Goldstone Report.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, bombing urban areas with massive civilian casualties would be terrorism, like al-Qaeda's city attacks.
- **2010–2022: Covert Operations in Iran**
  - **Details:** Mossad assassinated nuclear scientists (e.g., Mohsen Fakhrizadeh) and launched cyberattacks (e.g., Stuxnet).
  - **Casualties:** 5–7 scientists killed.
  - **Source:** Assassination of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, targeted killings and cyberattacks abroad would be terrorism, like Hezbollah's assassinations.
- **April 1, 2024: Attack on Iranian Embassy in Damascus**
  - **Details:** An Israeli airstrike targeted a building next to Iran's embassy in Damascus, described as a consular annex, killing seven IRGC members, including senior commander Mohammad Reza Zahedi and Brig. Gen. Mohammad Hadi Haj Rahimi, plus five other officers. The strike demolished the building, violating diplomatic immunity under international law. Iran accused Israel, which did not comment, and vowed retaliation.
  - **Casualties:** 7 killed.
  - **Source:** Washington Post, NPR.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, bombing a diplomatic facility, killing officials, would be terrorism, akin to the 1998 US embassy bombings. The violation of sovereignty and civilian-protected status confirms its terrorist nature.
- **July 31, 2024: Assassination of Ismail Haniyeh (Tehran)**
  - **Details:** Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas's political leader, and his bodyguard were killed in a military-run guesthouse in Tehran during a diplomatic visit for Iran's presidential inauguration, using a diplomatic passport. Reports suggest a remotely detonated bomb or missile strike, attributed to Israel's Mossad. Iran and Hamas blamed Israel, which did not confirm. The attack embarrassed Iran's security apparatus, prompting arrests and vows of retaliation.
  - **Casualties:** 2 killed.
  - **Source:** New York Times, Al Jazeera, Jerusalem Post.
  - **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, assassinating a political leader on a diplomatic visit in a foreign capital would be terrorism, akin to Black September's Munich killings. The violation of diplomatic protections and intent to disrupt peace talks confirm its terrorist status.
- **May 2025: Sanaa International Airport Attack**

- **Details:** Israel disabled Sanaa Airport, damaging 3 civilian planes and killing 3+, in retaliation for a Houthi strike.
- **Casualties:** 3+ killed.
- **Source:** BBC.
- **Terrorism Label:** If non-state, attacking civilian infrastructure with deaths would be terrorism, like 9/11's disruptions.

This catalog—from 1924 assassinations to 2024 diplomatic attacks—demonstrates Israel's reliance on violence to coerce, intimidate, and displace, aligning with terrorism if committed by non-state actors. The civilian toll (e.g., Deir Yassin, Gaza) and targeting of diplomatic sites (e.g., Damascus, Tehran) cement its terrorist legacy.

## Chapter 3: The Hypocrisy of Israel's Terrorist Labeling

Israel's century-long record of violence—killing civilians in Deir Yassin, bombing embassies in Damascus, and assassinating diplomats like Haniyeh—stands in stark contrast to its reckless labeling of Palestinian women, children, aid workers, and journalists as terrorists, often without evidence. In Gaza (2008–2024), Israel branded entire communities as “terrorist strongholds,” bombing schools, hospitals, and UN shelters, killing thousands (e.g., 926 civilians in Cast Lead, 1,617 in Protective Edge, per B'Tselem). The 2024 World Central Kitchen strike (7 aid workers killed) and the 2022 killing of Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, dismissed as a “terrorist affiliate” without proof, exemplify this pattern. The 2024 Damascus embassy attack and Haniyeh's assassination, targeting protected diplomatic figures, further expose Israel's disregard for international norms while accusing others of terrorism.

This hypocrisy is rooted in Israel's refusal to confront its terrorist origins. Leaders like Menachem Begin (Irgun, King David bombing) and Yitzhak Shamir (Lehi, Bernadotte assassination) became prime ministers, their crimes rebranded as “freedom fighting.” Meanwhile, Palestinian resistance, even non-violent, is labeled terrorism, dehumanizing victims to justify atrocities. Israel's 2021 designation of six Palestinian NGOs as “terrorist organizations” lacked evidence, drawing UN condemnation. By projecting the terrorist label, Israel deflects scrutiny from its own actions—massacres, embassy bombings, and assassinations—perpetuating a cycle of violence where civilian deaths are dismissed as collateral. This double standard, shielding a state built on terrorism while criminalizing others, underscores Israel's identity as a terrorist state.

## Conclusion

Israel's history, from the Zionist militias' assassinations in the 1920s to its 2024 attacks on diplomatic targets in Damascus and Tehran, is a relentless campaign of violence that would be branded terrorism if committed by non-state actors. From massacring civilians in Deir Yassin to bombing the Iranian embassy and killing Ismail Haniyeh on a diplomatic visit, these acts—targeting civilians, infrastructure, and protected figures—mirror the tactics of notorious terrorist groups. Yet, Israel shamelessly labels Palestinian civilians, aid workers, and journalists as terrorists without evidence, exposing a grotesque hypocrisy.

rooted in its unacknowledged terrorist origins. This double standard, coupled with a century of documented atrocities, marks Israel as a terrorist state, cloaking its violence in the guise of self-defense. The international community must hold Israel accountable, applying the same standards to its actions as to any terrorist organization, to end this cycle of violence and hypocrisy.