



The case of Iman Al-Hams: October 2004 shooting in Gaza

Izvor: <https://minbarlive.com/videos/the-captain-who-emptied-his-rifle-into-a-schoolgirl>

In October 2004, 13-year-old Iman Al-Hams was shot and killed by Israeli soldiers in Gaza while walking to school near the Philadelphia route. Military radio recordings contradicted the soldiers' claim that she posed a threat, and a captain subsequently fired multiple rounds into her body at close range.

SAŽETAK

This account documents the October 5th, 2004 shooting death of Iman Al-Hams, a 13-year-old Palestinian girl, near an Israeli military outpost in Gaza. Soldiers opened fire on her as she walked to school along the Philadelphia route, claiming to suspect she was carrying explosives in her school satchel—later found to contain only books. Radio traffic recorded at the time explicitly identified her as a frightened child before the shooting escalated. After she was wounded and lay on the ground 70 metres from the outpost, an Israeli army captain approached her and fired two rounds into her head at close range, then returned and fired the remainder of his magazine into her body on automatic. CCTV footage documented the entire sequence. An autopsy found between 17 to 20 bullets in her body, with multiple shots to her head. The soldiers' initial justification—that she posed an explosive threat—was contradicted by military radio transmissions played during court proceedings, which contained no description of her as a threat or engaged in any suspicious activity. The captain's court martial followed public outrage, though he expressed no remorse and stated he would have acted identically even if she had been three years old.

KLJUČNE PORUKE

Iman Al-Hams, aged 13, was shot by Israeli soldiers on October 5th, 2004, near the Philadelphia route in Gaza on her way to school; her school satchel contained only books, not explosives.

Military radio recordings revealed soldiers explicitly identified her as a frightened child before the shooting escalated, contradicting later claims that she was suspected of posing a threat.

After being shot and wounded 70 metres from the outpost, Iman was approached by an Israeli army captain who fired two rounds into her head at close range, then switched to automatic fire and emptied his magazine into her body.

CCTV footage documented the entire shooting sequence, and an autopsy identified between 17 to 20 bullets in her body, including multiple shots to her head.

During court martial proceedings, the captain displayed no remorse and testified he would have acted the same way had she been three years old, demonstrating an absence of acknowledgment of wrongdoing.

The soldiers' original justification that Iman was planting an explosive device was exposed as false by the radio transmissions presented in court, which contained no evidence supporting the threat narrative.

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The incident

Iman Al-Hams was a 13-year-old Palestinian girl who, on the morning of October 5th, 2004, was on her way to school. She was walking along the Philadelphia route, which has a nearby Israeli military watchtower. Soldiers at the outpost opened fire, suspecting she might be carrying explosives in her school satchel. The satchel was later found to contain only books. An audio recording of the military radio traffic revealed that a soldier in an observation post had explicitly identified her as a little girl who was scared to death before the shooting escalated.

The shooting sequence

After she was hit and wounded, Iman lay on the ground roughly 70 metres from the outpost. She was then approached by an Israeli army captain whose identity is withheld. The captain fired two more rounds into her head at close range. He stepped away from her body briefly, then came back, switched his rifle to automatic, and fired the rest of his magazine into her. The entire sequence was recorded by a CCTV camera. A subsequent autopsy found between 17 to 20 bullets in the child's body, including multiple shots to her head.

The investigation and court proceedings

The soldiers' initial claim was that they had opened fire because they suspected she was planting an explosive device. However, radio transmissions played in court later exposed this account as false. Nowhere in those recordings does any soldier describe her as a threat or say she was doing anything besides walking to school. Public outrage led to the captain's temporary suspension and a court martial. During the

proceedings, he showed no remorse for what he had done. He told the court he would have acted the same way, even if she had been three years old.

#Gaza conflict

#extrajudicial killing

#civilian casualties

#use of force

#military accountability

#child victims

#October 2004