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## Israeli Medical Teams Provide Details of Hamas Massacre for War-crimes Probes

Zaka Identification, Extraction and Rescue volunteers were among the first on the ground in the Gaza border region after the October 7 Hamas attack, and their testimony could be used in criminal cases against the terrorists in Israel and abroad

Ofer Aderet, Ido Efrati / Oct 23, 2023

Israeli authorities have begun collecting testimony from civilian Zaka volunteers in connection with October 7's Hamas massacre of residents of Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip. The information from the Zaka volunteers is being gathered with an eye to it being used in criminal legal proceedings in Israel and abroad.

[...]

A pilot project began days after the massacre, carried out by six civilian volunteers who collected testimony from 20 Zaka personnel. To save valuable time, and because Zaka is still at work in the field, the testimony was collected remotely. The researchers were equipped with information compiled in consultation with experts on international law. They were instructed to ask the witnesses to stick to the facts and refrain, as much as possible, from expressing emotions, opinions or beliefs. Interviewers were told to ask direct questions but avoid leading questions, so that the evidence would come directly from the interviewees.

The recorded testimony will be part of an array of evidence – including visual and forensic evidence – that the state will be able to use in court against Hamas members, both perpetrators and their dispatchers. Last week, Pnina Sharvit Baruch, who previously headed the international law department in the Military Advocate General's Office, published an article with **Tammy Caner of Israel's Institute for National Security Studies** stating that the crimes committed by Hamas members against Israeli citizens – including murder, torture, rape, looting and hostage-taking – meet the international legal criteria for war crimes, crimes against humanity and even genocide.

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