

## Hamas tests long-range rocket

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The Palestinian militant group Hamas has test-fired a rocket capable of reaching Tel Aviv from Gaza, according to BBC News, Israeli head of military intelligence said

Maj-Gen Amos Yadlin told a committee in parliament that the rocket was believed to be of Iranian origin and had been successfully fired out to sea.

There was no immediate comment by Hamas and it is not clear what evidence there is that the rocket came from Iran.

The new rocket has a range of about 60km (37 miles).

Militants have in recent years fired thousands of rockets into southern Israel, many from Beit Hanoun in the north of the strip.

Most have a range of just a few kilometres and land without causing injury or damage, though the rockets cause widespread fear and disruption.

Since 2001, 18 people in Israel have been killed by rockets from Gaza.

The furthest Palestinian militants have managed to fire rockets into Israel is approximately 46km (28 miles), hitting the city of Beersheba.

Long-range Grad-style rockets have hit the city of Ashkelon since 2006.

Hamas has controlled the interior of the Gaza Strip since it drove out forces loyal to the Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas in 2006.

Israel withdrew its forces and settlers from Gaza in 2006 but continues to control the strip's border, coastline and air space. Israel and Egypt maintain a crippling blockade on the territory.

Israel launched a devastating assault on Gaza in December and January aimed, it said, at stopping rocket fire by Palestinian militants. Rocket fire since the assault has diminished dramatically.

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