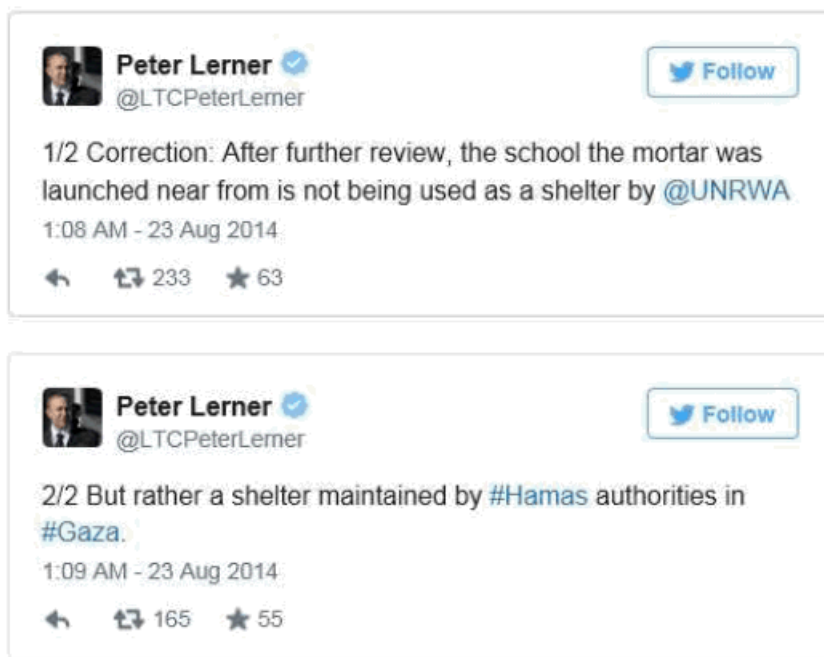


FORMER HEAD OF ISRAELI ARMY MAKES FALSE ALLEGATION AGAINST UNRWA

05 May 2015

Jerusalem

The head of the Israeli army during the summer war in Gaza has reportedly made the allegation that a weapon fired from an UNRWA school in Gaza killed an Israeli child in a kibbutz in southern Israel. This allegation was made by the Israeli Army in August 2014. However, it is false. Less than 2 hours after it was first made by the Israeli army, the Israeli army itself officially retracted the claim and issued a correction through the Twitter account of its Spokesperson (see "screen cap below"). It is extremely disappointing that a former head of the Israeli army should repeat an allegation publicly retracted by his own spokesperson. It is unfortunate and creates a hostile environment for humanitarian agencies. Officials should ensure accuracy of their public statements.

**Screen cap of Israeli army spokesperson twitter account****BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, and microfinance. Financial support to UNRWA has not kept pace with an increased demand for services caused by growing numbers of registered refugees, expanding need, and deepening poverty. As a result, the Agency's General Fund (GF), supporting UNRWA's core activities and 97 per cent reliant on voluntary contributions, has begun each year with a large projected deficit. Currently the deficit stands at US\$ 100 million.

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