MPC MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER

Pillar of Defense: Using Social Media to Manage Impressions of Conflict
A Case Study of the November 2012 Israel-Hamas conflict

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ABSTRACT

Threats to reputation can destroy a brand. Communicating effectively during a conflict can help to manage negative impressions that expose brands to reputation risk. This is important now more than ever as organizations—and nations—turn to Twitter to address various publics. The rigid 140-character structure of Twitter thus necessitates the creation of sound bites that act as productive texts to address multiple rhetorical objectives simultaneously. An examination of the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) Twitter account through sentiment and content analysis shows evidence that the Force took a significantly defensive approach to impression management of Operation Pillar of Defense in November 2012. There is evidence that Israel sought to re-frame public impression of its military involvement from aggressor to defender in the armed conflict. Codes discovered in the analysis suggest that the IDF tried to justify force, avoid responsibility and establish legitimacy of its operations.

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Introduction

*"This was the first time the foreign media asked more questions about
our Twitter activity than about our bombings in Gaza."*
—Israel Defense Forces director of new media, Sacha Dratwa (Shamah, 2013)

On November 14, 2012, Israel's national military force released a graphic of Ahmed Jabari, military chief of the Palestinian militant group Hamas, on its Twitter with the word "Eliminated" stamped across his face. A swift assassination of Jabari preceded the dramatic graphic and sparked a new series of rocket exchanges between Hamas and Israel in the Gaza Strip. Subsequently, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launched an eight-day military operation, Operation Pillar of Defense, against the Palestinian group. What distinguished this incident from previous altercations between the two factions is the way in which the armed conflict was communicated to the public. The IDF released Jabari's image on its official Twitter account mere hours after the strike and chronicled the entire military campaign in real-time. The IDF went as far as to announce the operation on the social media platform before a live press conference was held. This received widespread media attention as the world's first announcement of a military campaign on Twitter (Hughes, 2012; Visser, 2012).

The IDF is a central institution in Israeli society and history. Established in 1948, the IDF has fought in seven wars, two intifadas and a number of armed clashes in the broader Arab-Israeli conflict. Virtually all Israelis serve in the military and most men stay in the reserves well into middle age. The country also has a strong high-technology sector fed by military research that accounts for 43 per cent of its exports (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013). The IDF thus has a dynamic social and economic function in Israel and contributes strongly to its nation brand on both the domestic and international fronts.

The term *nation brand* refers to the intentional and systemic attempts by a country to

improve its reputation (Anholt, 2007). Israel has a predominately negative image globally, one that is most associated with both historical and recent conflicts ("Anholt nation brands index," 2006). Israel is also characterized as the aggressor in the Arab-Israeli debate in news media and scholarly research because of its scope and military power (Kalb & Saivetz, 2007; Bloomfield, 2012). What complicates Israel's image even further is its alliance with powerful Western nations such as the United States. When designing an image for international audiences, the country must continuously balance its positions as both a sovereign pro-democratic state and a nation embroiled in divisive turmoil.

Nation branding acts as an "'insurance policy' against events that might threaten [a country's] international standing in the future" (Anholt, 2010, p. 266). Building a nation brand— whether holistic in scope or tailored around key areas such as technological superiority— potentially helps to improve a country's capability to mitigate reputation risk during threatening events, such as a military conflict (Anholt, 2010). Israel therefore has a strong motivation to construct and project a more nuanced national identity to control public impression of its military campaigns. While Israelis and Palestinians have battled over land in Gaza for decades (Jones, 2012), the use of Twitter during this latest conflict reveals a new frontier in communicating a nation brand for the purpose of impression management.

A military force is like any other organization; it seeks to manage reputation risk. The possibility of losing reputation presents various threats for an organization, especially in times of crisis. Reputation loss can affect positioning, competitiveness, stakeholder loyalty and even legitimacy of operations (Aula, 2010). For military organizations in particular, establishing legitimacy of a conflict is crucial for managing positive impressions of an operation. These impressions are important in that they have implications for how audiences perceive, evaluate

and treat the author in the future (Crane & Crane, 2002). Therefore, organizations aim to manage risk through portraying favourable images to the public. This process can be explored through impression management theory, which analyzes how individuals or groups attempt to influence the image(s) audiences form of them (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

In this study, I examine how social media can aid an organization in strategically re-framing its identity during a high-risk communication campaign. Using Twitter as a research site, I examine the strategies used by the IDF on its Twitter account for the purpose of managing public impression and reputation risk. Broad questions guiding the research and analysis include: Why would a military force openly chronicle a military campaign? How can Twitter be used to frame public impression of a conflict? Do sociotechnical affordances of Twitter enhance impression management? First, a review of literature offers insight into impression management and communicating a brand online.

Literature Review

The literature review is divided into three sub-sections: 1) impression management theory, 2) the process of impression management in online spaces and 3) the sociotechnical affordances of Twitter. I will first review relevant scholarly works in impression management and then explain how the theory is applicable to examining an online communication campaign.

Impression management

Broadly defined, impression management is the process by which an actor attempts to influence the image(s) audience forms of them (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Rooted in social psychology, the theory is traditionally used to analyze behavioural tactics employed by an individual to create and maintain a specific desired identity (Goffman, 1959). While *impression management* and *self-presentation* are used interchangeably in existing literature, self-presentation is generally used in reference to an individual's control of impressions rather than the control of impressions by entities or third parties (Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Bolino, Kacmar, Turnley, & Gilstrap, 2008). Schlenker (1980) most notably distinguished between the two, defining self-presentation as the projection of images that are "self-relevant" (p.6) while impression management is more useful as a broader term for attempts to influence impressions of an organization, object, event or idea (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Noting this differentiation is important as this study extends impression management to an understudied context—a communication campaign by a military force.

At its core, the aim of impression management is to maximize rewards and to minimize punishments (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Sociologist Erving Goffman first applied the concept in his exploration of behaviour in face-to-face interactions. He theorized people as "performers"

who strategically divulge or hide dimensions of themselves in "performances" based on situation and audience. He defined these two domains as *region behaviour* (behaviour specific to a social situation) and *audience segregation* (behaviour specific to an audience) (Goffman, 1959). Goffman argued that public failures or negative events often drive an actor to engage in impression management to repair a damaged image. This dramaturgical approach to impression management informs much of the research on the topic that followed Goffman.

Traditional scholarship related to the theory has largely settled into two streams of focus: individual and organization-level impression management. Studies on individual behaviour have focused on the dyadic use of impression management in the context of interviews and performance appraisals while studies on the organization level have linked an individual's use of impression management in the workplace to organizational goals and outcomes (Bolino et al., 2008). Organizational impression management studies have largely remained scattered and micro in focus, ranging from the analysis of defensive tactics used during crises to strategies used to achieve broad corporate objectives, such as reaffirming a company's commitment to environmentally-friendly business practices (Bansal & Kistruck, 2006). Little attention has been paid to whether impression management tactics differ when employed in one-on-one interactions between internal stakeholders and interactions between organizations and external stakeholders.

Both individuals and organizations share social objectives in using impression management to control reputation of their brand (Highhouse, Brooks, & Gregarus, 2009). Furthermore, organizations themselves can be conceptualized as social actors, with motives and intentions behind their communication campaigns (King, Felin, & Whetten, 2010). In general, organizations may use impression management for deliberate and strategic purposes such as gaining power and influencing audiences as they risk not only reputation loss but financial

consequences during conflicts. A measured approach to impression management, one that is strategically developed to project a specific image, is imperative when communicating about their public activities.

Researchers have suggested two basic distinctions in impression management behaviours: assertive and defensive tactics (Tedeschi & Lindskold, 1976; Tedeschi & Norman, 1985; Schutz, 1998). Assertive strategies involve creating impressions aimed at establishing particular identities while defensive strategies aim to re-establish a positive identity or remove a negative identity. Schutz (1998) suggested that an actor commonly uses defensive tactics when there is potential for a situation to be negatively evaluated by the public if that actor is involved. In this type of situation, if an actor accepts responsibility for a situation, the implications regarding his or her public image are likely to be more negative. Therefore, actors tend to resort to defensive rhetorical maneuvers such as denial, dissociation, excuses and justification for actions (Schutz, 1998).

It is important to note that while behaviours can be deliberately managed, they also consist of communication both *given* (verbal) and *given off* (non-verbal) (Goffman, 1959). That is, performers cannot control certain impressions formed by the audience. In face-to-face interactions, body language or eye contact may reveal an attitude or state of mind that is different from what an actor verbally conveys to the audience. In the context of computer-mediated communication, impressions given off can consist of those gained by an audience through interpretation of tone and meaning from a text. This study does not include an analysis of audience reactions to the IDF's Twitter campaign but aims to understand the rhetorical maneuvers that may be present in the tweets.

The attempt to manipulate an impression does not itself explain motivation for engaging

in impression management. Leary & Kowalski (1990) address this gap in impression management studies by conceptualizing the process as consisting of two distinct stages: impression motivation and impression construction. Leary and Kowalski identified three factors that can motivate impression management: 1) the goal-relevance of impressions, 2) the value of the desired outcomes and 3) the discrepancy between one's desired and present image. Through this analysis, the authors create a model for identifying motivation factors. This marks a move from research on what strategies are used to what motivates the use of impression management strategies.

Goal-relevance refers to motivations to impression-manage that are relevant to the fulfillment of a goal. For example, the more public an actor's behaviour, the more likely he or she is to be concerned with how that behaviour will appear to others. Motivation for impression management also rises when the value of a desired outcome is high. For example, a job applicant will be more motivated to use impression management tactics in a job interview if he highly desires the job. Finally, the third factor that motivates impression management involves the discrepancy between the image an actor has and the image he wants. If all three factors are high, Leary and Kowalski argue, the actor will have a high motivation for using impression management.

This conceptual shift is useful for establishing the possible motivation behind the IDF's use of Twitter for impression management during the conflict period. The long-term nature of Arab-Israeli contention may necessitate a new way of addressing public opinion about the conflict. In fact, Israeli efforts with "digital diplomacy" (p. 896) have grown substantially in the last two decades, indicating a desire by Israel to manage its reputation and disseminate official stances through non-traditional online channels (Stein, 2012). In 2005, Israel's Foreign Ministry

of Affairs launched a public relations campaign under the name "Brand Israel" to improve the image of the country with external stakeholders (Funk & Wang, 2011). The initiative aims to win supporters internationally by changing Israel's brand, mostly associated with fighting and religion, to a more relevant and modern image (Funk & Wang, 2011). The IDF launched its Twitter account in July 2011 to provide Internet users with real-time information on events in the field. In a quote in the press release issued on the day of launch, an Israeli spokesperson said the launch was a result of the growing "influence social media networks have [during conflict] on the Arab world. We live in the Middle East; we must speak its language" (Israel Defense Forces, 2011). The public nature of fighting between Hamas and Israel would make motivation to impression-manage Israel's role in the conflict high. The goal-relevance therefore of using Twitter to address external audiences would be high.

Leary and Kowalski also argue that motivation increases as a function of the value of a desired goal. In a long-term dispute that is as controversial as the Arab-Israeli conflict, changing the identity of Israel within that conflict would be of great importance to potentially increasing support for Israeli operations. Arguably, the IDF was therefore highly motivated to engage in impression management on its Twitter account to establish a new identity—as a defensive victim in the conflict. That is, shifting responsibility to Hamas as the initiator of conflict would be important for framing Pillar of Defense to the public as a needed defensive operation against an attacking force.

The IDF's use of Twitter received more attention in media commentary on the conflict than any other social media account used by the Force during Pillar of Defense—including YouTube, Flickr and its blog (Alterman, 2012). Tweets during the conflict period appeared in numerous reports by international media outlets such as The New York Times, BBC and al-

Jazeera English. Many articles quoted complete tweets by the IDF; for example, one CNN article included the following tweet: "*Terrorists put an underground launch site next to a mosque. We targeted the site. The mosque was unharmed*" (Alterman, 2012). The IDF may consider the republication of tweets by the media as beneficial because it reinforces strategic, preapproved messaging without the need for solicitation of media by the IDF to cover the Israeli perspective. Furthermore, researchers like Macnamara and Zerfass (2012) suggest that the "newness of social media" (p. 303) often attracts increased coverage as various actors increasingly use it for communication.

Much of the coverage during the first days of Pillar of Defense focused on the IDF's use of social media (Hughes, 2012; Perugini, 2012; Mackey, 2012). In the CNN example, the re-posted tweet's message was strategically positive for the IDF. It pulls Pillar of Defense away from the Arab-Israeli debate and rhetorically focuses the objective of the IDF's mission as countering terrorism. For Israel, this type of coverage offers free distribution of messaging that rhetorically depicts the IDF as an ethical defender of civilians against terrorists. The tweet positions Hamas as a group willing to defile a place of worship by using it for warfare. It then positions the IDF as a Force that was able to surgically remove the launch site and yet preserve the mosque. This complexity and multi-purpose layering of messaging in tweets makes it a powerful rhetorical device for addressing the identity of a nation brand.

Since a Twitter account feed is public and, in this case, was used during a military conflict that received considerable media coverage, it could be argued that the IDF was highly motivated to engage in impression management in order to fulfill Israel's goal of changing its brand. Motivation would be high to increase the profile of Israel's desired identity and remove an undesirable identity that it already has (from aggressor to defender).

Recent international relations studies have incorporated impression management into examinations of nation branding. Mor (2007) conceptualized public diplomacy as a form of impression management used to affect social influence internationally. He applied Goffman's theory to an examination of the Israeli and Palestinian official websites during the Al Aqsa intifada in 2000. Mor argued that the use of impression management could aid nations in defining their foreign public image beyond a simplified good versus bad binary (Mor, 2007). That is, different impression management tactics such as re-framing allow nations to take ownership of specific traits or actions related to their international reputation. For example, nations often use the "rhetoric of justification" (p. 664) to craft a specific impression of foreign policy actions (Mor, 2007). Asserting that one is a victim in a conflict, for instance, may be a way to re-frame justification for militarized involvement.

Impression management in the context of countries is further affected by the "complex interaction of motive, cognition and morality [which] determines the choice of self-presentational strategies" (Mor, 2007, p. 667). Jones and Wortman (1973) emphasized that power, status, and size of an audience affect the process of impression construction, potentially encouraging or discouraging the use of specific impression management tactics. This may be even more relevant when impression management is used to influence impressions during computer-mediated communication. Mor further emphasized the role the Internet has played in giving nations access to foreign public spheres. An online public sphere is often comprised of large and multiple potential audiences. This expansive domain, consisting of various access points (Twitter can be accessed from an array of websites and platforms such as HootSuite and mobile phones) and simultaneous audiences, may motivate an actor to alter the strategies used to present himself. To use Goffman's terminology, the specific *region* and *audience segregation* in

which communication takes place may promote the use of some strategies over others. Online impression management by a nation may thus necessitate a blend of tactics—both assertive and defensive in nature.

This application of impression management theory beyond individual and organizational contexts sets the stage for questioning the possible incentives and conditions afforded to a military force by social media for impression management. The next section further explores impression management in the context of computer-mediated communication. I will review how previous studies have applied impression management theory to the examination of online spaces. I will then propose why Twitter forms a rich linguistic environment that can enable the construction of a desired identity. First, a general overview of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) will investigate the production of online identities that are designed for consumption.

Impression management in online spaces

While impression management as a theory was developed prior to the digital age, it is useful for analyzing impression management tactics online. SNSs can be conceptualized as one of Goffman's regions—a site for social interaction that may warrant its own unique behaviours for constructing a desired identity (boyd & Ellison, 2008). Scholarship on online impression management has mainly focused on self-presentation of individual profiles on SNSs such as Facebook, MySpace and online dating websites, with emphasis on authenticity of identity and the creation of friendship networks (Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006; Kramer & Winter, 2008). Impression management strategies used by institutional Twitter accounts, however, have not been studied extensively. Even rarer are studies of a nation's use of the platform, especially during complex political struggles such as the Arab-Israeli conflict.

SNSs have become a powerful means of communication and connection among online users. Anyone with an Internet connection can join and take part in a networking community. In this context, actors in online spaces have come to assume that profiles are available for access by both familiar and unfamiliar audiences. Actors thus increasingly create public profiles with an emphasis on construction of an identity as a product to be consumed by others (Page, 2012). This shift in online communication signals a move from SNSs as "broadcaster[s] of cultural identities to author[s] of identities" (Murthy, 2012, p.1064). That is, actors can now tailor their own unique identity for online consumption rather than simply reaffirm an already established offline identity. While the average user may post random tweets without regard to reputation risk, organizations have more to lose without a strategic campaign.

It is therefore no surprise that the speed, public nature and potential for linking information to other users, external content and popular topics have attracted a range of actors. Corporations, politicians and public figures are increasingly using social media. McCorkindale (2010) found that 69% of Fortune 50 (also referred to as Fortune 500) companies are using SNSs for corporate communication and public relations. Managing impressions of an online identity thus is becoming more important as the popularity of SNSs for self-branding continues to increase.

Twitter is a popular microblogging SNS that disseminates more than 340 million tweets—short text messages comprised of 140 characters—every day (Twitter, 2012). Used as both an information-sharing site and as a direct communication tool between users, Twitter constitutes a prime environment for managing impressions of identity. Online impression management studies that focus beyond individual-level case studies are just beginning to use Twitter as a research site. Much of the literature has concentrated on individual use of

performative approaches such as self-branding and self-commodification (Page, 2012;

Papacharissi, 2012). Studies such as these suggest that there is a link between the platform that is

used for communication and the way in which users craft their self-brand. Because profiles are

automatically public on Twitter, users balance multiple audiences by crafting "polysemic

messages, encoded with meanings that are decoded differently by each potential audience

member" (Papacharissi, 2012, p. 1994). Papacharissi coined the term *context collapse* to address

this phenomenon, arguing that users must be aware of the multiple audiences who can access

their content.

The choices of strategies for the construction of a desired identity may thus be affected

because the platform collapses multiple audiences into a single context (Marwick & boyd, 2008).

Numerous audiences are able to consume the same content. For example, an actor may have

public audiences he or she is not aware of on Twitter, whereas content posted on Facebook, in

theory, is more likely to be limited to the actor's chosen network. Impression management on

Twitter is not limited to one interaction partner. The possibility of having a range of audiences

may also force the user to balance numerous impression management goals by using certain

strategies over others (Kramer & Winter, 2008). That is, rather than creating an audience-specific

campaign, actors are more likely to construct a broader desired image that can easily be

consumed by a range of audiences.

The advantage of online environments for impression management, however, is the

availability of time to control and present behaviour compared to traditional face-to-face

impression management. Linguistic cues can be controlled with more care in an asynchronous

environment (Ellison et al., 2006). In doing this, actors can be more strategic in attempting to

control impressions made by audiences. More expressions of self are "'given' rather than 'given

off'" (Ellison et al., 2006, p. 418). Therefore, organizations that use social media for communication are more likely to be strategic in their presentation of an organizational identity.

It is important to note that few researchers have distinguished between how the definition of impression management may be different online and whether online delivery of tactics enhances or detracts from rhetorical strategies. Hogan (2010) provides a useful starting point for this task. Hogan described self-presentation online as *exhibitions* compared to earlier conceptualizations of self-presentation as *performances*. He suggested that when an actor presents an identity on an SNS, he or she leaves behind *artifacts* (such as status updates or images) that are not bound by time (Hogan, 2010). These exhibitions differ from performances in that they continue to exist when the original actor is not present. Other actors are able to react to the data. Individuals cannot access a face-to-face conversation if they are not present for the performance. Individuals on Twitter, however, can see conversations between other users on an account feed (exhibition) without being part of the original conversation. The tweets remain as digital artifacts of the conversation (Hogan, 2010).

Impressions by audiences can thus be made not only by people involved in an interaction, but also by people who access the exhibition after the interaction has passed. This reconfiguration of impression management creates an important theoretical repertoire for explaining processes and tactics unique to online environments. The IDF may have been highly motivated to leave an artifact of the operation by using Twitter. Having already invested the time to create, approve and release strategic messaging about Pillar of Defense, the IDF may have considered this feature of Twitter as advantageous—a way to chronicle and catalogue the operation. An exhibition could be used by audiences to access official stances beyond the days of the conflict. It also promotes the image that the IDF is a transparent organization that believes in

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its mission and is unafraid to leave evidence of the operation online. Hogan's re-

conceptualization of performance in an online context is important in acknowledging the

implications of engaging in impression management online.

The unique characteristics of an SNS may thus have a role to play in the process of

impression management online. The delivery of tactics can be affected by the SNS' architecture

and how the site is structurally organized (boyd, 2010). The next section discusses the

sociotechnical affordances of Twitter and the potential for affordances to aid actors to manage

impressions. I will explore four key sociotechnical affordances of the SNS that may influence

how actors construct and disseminate a desired identity.

Sociotechnical affordances of Twitter

SNSs have gained tremendous popularity as spaces of social interaction. The result of this

movement is the growth of online publics—collectives of people—organized around and defined

by the characteristics of a specific SNS. boyd (2010) suggests that the architecture of these

networked publics not only defines the types of interactions that are possible on the site, but

shapes how actors engage with others. She created a taxonomy of affordances—properties of an

SNS that suggest how content should be constructed. Technical affordances consist of elements

embedded in the SNS' structure that allow users to perform certain functions. Social features of

these affordances consist of the social acts technical features enable users to perform.

The distinctive properties of an SNS do not necessarily dictate behaviour but encourage

variations of practice by reconfiguring information flow (boyd, 2010). These elements are both

technical and social in nature in that they affect how users can interact with the technology and,

as a result, how users can interact with others through the technology. In essence, sociotechnical

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affordances of an SNS help form the context of social interaction and creation of identity. This basic assumption raises questions of whether affordances can be used to enhance impression management tactics.

Boyd (2010) identified four key elements of communication on networked publics such as Twitter: searchability, scalability, replicability and persistence. In the following sub-sections, I first define each affordance and then delve into the potential of each for enhancing a communication campaign on Twitter.

Searchability

Searchability refers to the way in which users are able to find content and people relevant to their interests (boyd, 2010). On Twitter, users have a personal space (account feeds signaled by the prefix '@' in which to post content). Profiles include an avatar, a profile description and a text box to post content (referred to as a status update and limited to 140 characters). Users can follow a feed to receive all updates posted by another user, although content is public to all. Status updates, including any photographs, hyperlinks and videos posted on the account feed, are publicly accessible and remain as public artifacts unless deleted by the user. Twitter also supports an annotation format (hashtags signified by a # sign) with which users can indicate and search the topic of a tweet. For example, #ArabSpring and #Egypt were popular hashtags in 2011 used in posts about uprisings in the Middle East ("Year in hashtags," 2011).

Hashtags have therefore become a major sociotechnical part of the Twitter experience, allowing users to browse and potentially participate in various synchronous and asynchronous conversations. This affordance may be part of a wider trend in which online discourse and in particular, "searchable talk" (p. 789), have become valuable commodities (Zappavigna, 2011).

Tweets posted with a widely used hashtag are associated with a larger pool of tweets, forming one large communication stream. Twitter's 'trending topics' feature is a direct result of hashtag adoption by users as it summarizes the most used hashtags (most popular topics of conversation) on an hourly basis. By leveraging this sociotechnical affordance in a communication campaign, actors can "display connection with others or signal influence" (p. 183) in the online public sphere (Page, 2012). This searchability of content therefore expands rhetorical meaning, with hashtags functioning as "linguistic markers" (p. 789) for forming online communities (Zappavigna, 2011). Also integral to Twitter's architecture is the ability to link to internal (hosted on Twitter) and external (hosted on other sites) content. Users can include hyperlinks within tweets to fill information gaps or simply share content with others. This affordance expands the depth of conversation online. It allows users to import outside sources of information into text as a means of strengthening claims posted by the user. It also permits users to bring in new topics that are not popular subjects of conversation on Twitter. Furthermore, users can directly mention other users with the direct reply function, urging them to engage in a conversation. This ability to search for both people and content may thus play an intriguing role in the process of impression management.

Scalability

The second affordance distinguished by boyd is scalability, which refers to the components of Twitter that allow for broad distribution of content (boyd, 2010). Public tweets are part of an expansive pool of open information that is accessible by multiple audiences and that is unrestricted by proximity to the creator. Users can access content in real time or find it at a later date through the SNS' search options. Users can also re-post another user's content on their

account feed by selecting the retweet button embedded in the site. Reposting content extends its reach beyond the network of one account. Content posted on networked communities can thus scale and be seen by large audiences. This scalability gives rise to the potential for multiple, co-existing audiences reading the same content (Marwick & Ellison, 2012). While this is beneficial to increasing the bandwidth of content, it may also pose challenges for actors constructing online communication campaigns. Audiences with conflicting understandings of or opinions about a topic can also engage with campaigns. This may result in negative feedback against the original author. Actors must thus incorporate unintended audiences into the impression construction stage to better control feedback once a campaign is launched.

It is important to note that while SNSs can enable scalability, they do not guarantee it (boyd, 2010). Users can attempt to increase scalability by incorporating performative practices such as inserting hashtags into their feed or asking popular users to retweet to their networks. As well, users may not always achieve the scale they want (boyd, 2010). Often, content that is humourous, bizarre or unique in some way is amplified on networks (boyd, 2010). Users can, however, capitalize on these trends by creating content that is easily shareable. This includes short sound bite statements, eye-catching graphics or videos that capture unique situations. By employing rhetorical strategies that address scalability, users can potentially increase the reach of information campaigns.

This is particularly useful for actors who have broad objectives such as addressing international audiences for the purpose of building or protecting reputation. There may be concerns, however, about the implications of intentionally manipulating content in order to shock, disturb or grab attention. The establishment of a reputation, one that exudes credibility and legitimacy, can mitigate this concern. Generally, the more tweets are able to scale in

popularity, the higher the perceived status of the actor's prowess at using the site. Therefore, incorporating scalability into content may be a way to enhance and amplify impression management themes.

Replicability

The third sociotechnical affordance described by boyd refers to the potential for replication of content. Replicability is highly connected to scalability in that content on Twitter can be shared and reposted multiple times, increasing the reach of an actor's self-brand. Posted messages are attributed to the user, unless signified as a re-posting (using RT to indicate retweets or quotation marks for quotes). Users can see who has re-posted their tweets and can reply to messages using the @reply function. Sharing options that are integrated into the architecture of Twitter encourage users to engage with content and to spread information to their networks. Replicability thus has a social function that promotes potential for conversation among Twitter users. By harnessing this affordance, users may expand the reach of their content.

The sharing of content, however, complicates the legitimacy of content. Photographs, graphics and text can easily be re-appropriated, reproduced and remixed without attribution to the original creator. Ownership is lost and, with it, legitimacy of the content. However, the popularity of remixing multiple texts also suggests a public desire to engage with external artifacts. Mash-up culture is an example of this form of engagement, where creators splice songs or videos together to create a new product (Shiga, 2007). Credibility is most gained when users have a "sense that they are developing reputations, skills, and roles within a community, rather than investing time in a passing scene" (Shiga, 2007, p. 111). Parodies or tributes usually point to the original product as a means of providing context. For the IDF, the potential drawbacks of

having content re-appropriated by anti-Israel forces may not have been a sufficient threat. The possible high visibility of its tweets through the use of Twitter may have served a higher priority. Twitter inherently mandates a 140-character limit. It is characterized by an informality of language (Stein, 2012). This informality acts as a discursive marker between authentic, user-generated content and corporate messaging. Adopting a casual and personal approach to communicating with audiences can improve reputation because the content is more readily seen as authentic. Therefore, when users conform to the discursive norms of an SNS—whether for establishing legitimacy or enhancing reach—they are also building a reputation within that community.

Persistence

Finally, boyd defined the affordance of persistence as the automatic recording and archiving of content on SNSs. Unless deleted by users, content remains on account feeds. This affordance addresses Hogan's conceptualization of online impression management as exhibitionist rather than performative. Content is automatically captured and archived on Twitter, making it persistent beyond the initial performance (boyd, 2010). This creates a record of conversation or a chronicle of an event that can be accessed at a later time. This feature may transform how people communicate on the site. Authors aware of the persistence of content may be strategic in its construction, avoiding rhetoric that may be libelous or damaging to their identity if accessed in the future. For example, politicians may want to avoid posting hard stances on controversial issues as a defensive maneuver in case they change their platform in the future. This affordance therefore actively transforms the act (the tweet) that it is capturing for audiences on the site.

While boyd does incorporate temporal issues in the definition of persistence, it may be useful to flesh out references to time as a key affordance. Twitter is known for breaking news. It has been used as a conversation stream during events or to break new stories before they are posted on official news sites. For example, in 2013, Stephen Harper, Canada's prime minister, live-tweeted a cabinet reshuffle, announcing new members of parliament on his Twitter account (Coyne, 2013). Organizations have also used the medium to announce initiatives before press releases are issued. The ability to receive and post information in real-time is one of the hallmarks of the SNS. Tweets are presented with a time stamp indicating when they were posted to the user's feed. This may serve an important discursive function during breaking news stories. It distinguishes which actors were present during an event and allows audiences to follow events in real-time. Quick reactions or in-the-moment reporting can confer status on an actor and increase his followers. When posting at such quick speed, however, an actor must also be careful to avoid errors as this increases the potential for reputation loss.

The increasingly widespread adoption of SNSs for communication may be one reason why the IDF would embrace Twitter as a communication tool, allowing it to increase the reach of its media campaign. Sociotechnical affordances of searchability, scalability, replicability and persistence have a role to play in the user experience. These affordances can shape publics and the practices that users develop to account for them. Success is not guaranteed; however, actors have the opportunity to address multiple and large audiences by creating content that is scalable, replicable and searchable. It is therefore important to analyze whether these affordances were used by the IDF to enhance themes found in the tweets. The following section presents the research questions that informed the analysis of the IDF's Twitter account.

Research Questions

Three research questions guide my inquiry into the IDF Twitter account as a form of impression management:

RQ1: Are the tweets posted by the Israel Defense Forces' official Twitter account characterized by assertive and/or defensive themes, or are they predominately neutral?

RQ2: To what extent do impression management tactics appear in the tweets posted by the Israel Defense Forces' official Twitter account?

RQ3: Do sociotechnical affordances of Twitter as a communication medium enhance themes laid down in the tweets?

Method

For this study, the IDF Twitter account (@IDFSpokesperson) was examined for possible impression management themes. Only tweets posted during the conflict period (between November 14 and November 21, 2012) were used in the analysis. To conceptualize the Twitter account as a strategic impression management campaign and to specifically address whether the strategies changed over the course of the operation, it was imperative to analyze all the tweets posted. As an account feed acts as a reverse chronicle of information with potential for tweets to refer to each other, examining the full campaign rather than an isolated sample is more conducive to understanding the tweets posted during the conflict period as a form of impression management. In total, I examined 344 tweets. Accompanying images, videos and hyperlinks were included in the coding for contextual meaning.

Three types of analysis were conducted on the data: a sentiment analysis and both a qualitative and quantitative content analysis. Because this study explores rhetorical and linguistic maneuvers by the IDF, these methods were used to contextualize quantitative data using qualitative data. Conclusions are drawn primarily from the qualitative analysis and supported by the results of the quantitative content analysis. The combined approaches sought to expand validity of results. The findings of both the quantitative and the qualitative methods are integrated in response to the research questions.

To assess the general attitude of the tweets posted by the IDF regarding the conflict, a basic quantitative sentiment analysis was first conducted on the tweets. Sentiment analysis is a type of subjective analysis that concentrates on identifying positive and negative emotions, opinions and evaluations expressed in language (Wilson, Wiebe, & Hoffmann, 2009). Each tweet was used as a recording unit and categorized as "assertive", "defensive" or "neutral" based on

working definitions created prior to the analysis (See Table 1). Mixed was not a category. Tweets with potential for having a mix of themes were categorized by the predominant theme.

Statements characterized as assertive were defined based on whether the IDF is positioned as the primary agent of action related to the activity mentioned in the tweet. Statements characterized as defensive position the IDF as a Force countering actions first caused by Hamas. Tweets designated as neutral included statements that did not fall within defensive nor assertive definitions. Content under this category is predominately informational in nature, such as the following: "*For live updates in French, follow @Tsahal_IDF. For updates in Spanish: @FDIonline*". The sentiment analysis was conducted to establish the overall sentiment of the Twitter campaign.

For the qualitative content analysis, a grounded theory approach was used to identify patterns and behaviours in the data. Themes emerging from claims and evidence used to justify, characterize or describe Israel's involvement in the conflict were identified. Open coding was used to organize the data and allow themes to emerge from the data rather than having predetermined categories. Codes were developed using the constant-comparative method—an ongoing process of comparing data units—to define repetitive attributes found in the data (Lindolf & Taylor, 2011). Dimensionalization and integration of the codes were used to construct the final codebook for analysis.

A quantitative content analysis was also performed on the same data to find evidence of sociotechnical affordances in practice. Tweets were used as recording units. Twitter features recorded included number of hashtags, number of @ replies, and inclusion of hyperlinks. The aim of this content analysis was to examine whether the IDF used features of Twitter in an attempt to enhance its communication campaign.

This case study was chosen as a research site for the following reasons. In 2008, Operation Cast Lead—a three-week conflict in the Gaza Strip—marked one of the first attempts by the IDF to use social media to influence public opinion. The IDF created a YouTube account and blog several days into the conflict. A week later, the @IDFSpokesperson Twitter account was activated. Operation Cast Lead was, however, criticized as a public relations failure. Two incidents constituted the majority of the criticism: the IDF did not supply a press release or video of a major and controversial flotilla raid for twelve hours after the incident, and it closed off conflict areas to international media, limiting event coverage (Salloum, 2012). The IDF now maintains an active social media portfolio including new accounts on Facebook and Flickr and a new, user-friendly blog. This move suggests a deliberate expansion of communication tools for branding the IDF. Therefore, the @IDFSpokesperson Twitter account can be conceived as a strategic tool for managing public impression of the Force's operations.

Findings & Discussion

This section presents the findings of the analysis and discusses the implications for the IDF's nation brand during the conflict. The analysis results are divided into three sub-sections: 1) sentiment analysis, 2) qualitative content analysis and 3) quantitative content analysis. I will begin by delving into the range of sentiments identified in the Twitter campaign and address the first research question surrounding primary themes found in the IDF's tweets.

Sentiment Analysis

The table below summarizes the range of attitudes identified in the IDF's Twitter account.

TABLE 1: SENTIMENT DEFINITIONS			
Sentiment	**Definition**	**Examples**	**Number of Occurrences**
Assertive	Statements that position the IDF as the primary agent of action related to the activity mentioned in the tweet.	*Minutes ago, the IDF targeted the site in Gaza from where the rocket was fired at Tel Aviv.* *This morning in #Gaza, the IDF targeted 43 tunnels and an underground rocket launcher. The Israeli Navy also targeted a terror operative.*	93
Defensive	Statements that position the IDF as a Force countering actions first caused by Hamas.	*Some numbers from the last 5 days: 546 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel + 302 Iron Dome interceptions = 848 rockets fired at us.* *The Hamas terrorists weren't in the media building to be interviewed. They were there to communicate with field operatives and plan attacks.*	215
Neutral	Statements that did not fall within defensive or assertive definitions and were informational in nature.	*For updates and analysis, visit the official Israel Defense Forces blog: http://t.co/WXZKNot4* *Official #IDF announcement about the ceasefire that came into effect today: http://t.co/Y3tTHRL9*	36

A sentiment analysis categorizing tweets into assertive, defensive or neutral in attitude was conducted on all tweets posted during the conflict period. The purpose was to address the first research question: *Are the tweets posted by the Israel Defense Forces' official Twitter account characterized by assertive and/or defensive themes?* The analysis revealed that the IDF's tweets were significantly defensive in nature. Out of 344 tweets, 215 were categorized as defensive, 93 as assertive and 36 as neutral.

Defensive tweets were defined as statements that positioned Hamas as the instigator of an IDF action. Tweets of this nature suggested that the IDF was acting in response to an act already perpetrated by Hamas. An example of a common defensive tweet is the following: "*Some numbers from the last 5 days: 570 rockets fired from #Gaza hit Israel + 307 Iron Dome interceptions = 877 rockets fired at us*". In this tweet, rocket exchanges are framed as originating in the Gaza Strip. In the context of the Twitter feed, Hamas is assumed to be launching these rockets. Israel is characterized as being forced to intercept rockets as a means to thwart destruction. In this example, the IDF also makes explicit reference to its defensive position ("fired *at us*") and use of its defense technology (the Iron Dome is an air defense system that intercepts and destroys short-range rockets and artillery shells).

Schutz (1998) asserts that defensive impression management involves an attempt to re-establish a positive identity or remove a negative one. As discussed earlier, Israel has a largely negative international image that is connected to its aggressive military history. The high number of defensive sentiments found in the data suggests an attempt by Israel to re-brand its reputation from aggressor to defender. Furthermore, many tweets categorized as defensive evoked language that aligns Hamas operatives alongside terrorism and refers to the militant group as a terrorist organization. Some were explicit in equating Hamas with terror: "*#Hamas is terrorizing Israeli*

civilians – over 760 rockets fired from #Gaza hit Israel in 2012 alone. http://t.co/1ECutF0t."

Other tweets implicitly suggest that Hamas, which operates out of the Gaza Strip, is linked to

terrorism: "*Video: Today, #Gaza terrorists targeted Ashdod again. This happened 2 days ago*

https://t.co/bddSskpKo". In total, tweets referred to terror 39 times.

There were also instances when the IDF not only attempted to align Hamas with

terrorism, but also to alert readers to the threat of terrorism in their own lives. Defensive tweets

such as "*Terrorist groups in Gaza fire rockets from residential areas. Would you raise your child*

in such a neighborhood? http://t.co/cVSIfV8L #Hamas" place readers in the conflict, asking them

to imagine themselves (and their children) living amidst terror. This tweet does not question

whether the reader agrees or disagrees with the conflict. Instead, it asks the reader to empathize

with the fear and danger of living under the threat of terrorism. This then translates into a moral

position after the reader imagines the scenario in the context of their life. By imagining life under

terror threat, the tweet rhetorically positions Pillar of Defense as a necessary counter measure

against a terror force. The subtle inclusion of the hashtag #Hamas after the hyperlink (which

sends the reader to a blog with videos of rocket fire against Israel) reinforces the connection

between the militant group and terror.

It is also important to note that several defensive tweets situate Hamas' actions in the

context of a prolonged attack on Israel: "*Terrorist groups in #Gaza have been firing rockets at*

Israelis for more than a decade. In last 12 years, over 12,000 rockets hit #Israel." By referencing

the long-term nature of terror attacks against Israel, the communication campaign fortifies the

need for defensive action. It asks readers to approve of defensive operations against Hamas

because of the length of the conflict, and presumably the high potential for threat, damage and

death on both sides. Tweets attempt to wear away at the negative militarized image of Israel that

stems from previous conflicts. The IDF asks the readers to reevaluate Israel's reputation as an offensive force. The tweets dismiss notions of Israel as aggressor in the present by positioning Pillar of Defense as a defensive mission, suggesting that the Twitter campaign aims to address its long-term reputation. Therefore, tweets that reference time enforce messaging that positions Hamas as the continual aggressor of the broader Arab-Israeli conflict.

This unusual development in moving the conflict beyond national borders by linking Hamas to a global threat, terrorism, draws on the visibility that Twitter affords to tweets. Messaging is able to reach a more global public sphere and potentially be seen by audiences that may not regularly follow the Arab-Israeli conflict but do follow trending topics on Twitter. (The conflict was trending predominately under two hashtags, #PillarofDefense and #GazaUnderAttack, during the conflict period. The IDF used the first in their tweets while Hamas used the latter). Whether #PillarofDefense was a successful hashtag campaign is beyond the scope of this study. By capitalizing on the searchability affordance of Twitter through the creation and use of hashtags, however, the IDF encourages a larger potential public viewing for its impression management campaign. Aligning Hamas to terrorism, on an English language account, further suggests that the IDF intended to target non-Hebrew speaking, Western audiences outside Israel that would be concerned about a terrorist organization (English is not an official language in Israel).

Evidence of assertive attitudes was also found in the sentiment analysis. Assertive impression management tactics are generally useful for raising one's social profile by stressing certain qualities that may be seen as positive (Schutz, 1998). For a military institution, appearing as a strong, aggressive and competent force through rhetoric about superior weaponry and ability is arguably considered a positive quality for its legitimacy. With a reputation as the most

militarized country in the world (Bonn International Center for Conversion, 2012), Israel may also have had a strong desire to portray the precision of its military strikes as an achievement. Therein lies a challenge for the IDF: it must be both assertive and defensive rhetorically to satisfy different impression management objectives. While defensive statements may attempt to improve the image of Israel as a defensive force against terror, assertive statements may endeavour to remind readers (and perhaps, Hamas) of the IDF's military prowess.

Ninety-three of the 344 tweets examined contained assertive sentiments. Tweets that were coded as assertive primarily chronicled offensive achievements by the IDF. Two examples of typical assertive tweets are: *"This morning, the IDF targeted Mohammed Kaleb, a senior member of #Hamas' air defense unit in #Gaza"* and *"The IDF has destroyed Hamas' nascent UAV program. Watch an aerial video showing what that program once looked like: http//t.co/05zaicsY"*. The first example is indicative of assertive tweets that highlighted direct strikes by the IDF against enemies. Details such as names, occupations and/or locations of targets were included, likely to show precision of strikes. These details act as evidence of actions and as announcements of military activities. Little information, however, is presented about the reasoning for actions, unlike in tweets coded as defensive. Tweets such as this one were often posted within a short time period after the IDF's attack (within hours or the next morning). In a sense, these tweets rhetorically act as identifiable pillars in the Twitter campaign, denoting and reminding readers of Israel's military aptitude—strong and unbroken. They break up sequences of activities that are responsive in nature and show military might in acting upon intelligence on enemy movement and location.

The two sentiment or attitude themes contrast not only in handling of detail, but also in the use of temporality, for example: *"Targeted overnight in #Gaza: Underground rocket*

launchers, terror tunnels, training bases, #Hamas common posts&weapon [sic] storage

facilities." In this context, references to time show not only command of the platform—

especially for its popularity in breaking news—but also a strong ability to react to Hamas

operations. The inclusion of a detailed list of diverse targets rhetorically suggests that the IDF is

both practiced and methodical in its approach to military strikes. It has strategic objectives and is

swift in its strikes when not in defensive mode.

Finally, 36 tweets were coded as neutral during the sentiment analysis. They comprised

statements that did not fall within the defensive or assertive working definitions and/or were

informational in nature. Tweets in this category were largely used to alert readers to other IDF

sources of information and summaries of events. Many hyperlinks in tweets that were designated

as neutral link the reader to other IDF social media accounts. This move was likely strategic in

that it reinforces messaging found on the Twitter account by presenting it another platform.

"Video: Here's a recap of 6th day of #PillarOfDefense http://t.co/tdGKcyIQ" is an example of

how the IDF employs the linkability affordance of Twitter, which allows it to hyperlink to

external content. Even though a follower of the account may already have read tweets about all

the days of the campaign, the recap serves as another way of reinforcing the IDF's messaging.

Furthermore, while tweets such as the example above are neutral in tone, summaries of

events do rhetorically position the IDF as an active communicator. Tweets that include

summaries encourage readers and followers to stay within the IDF media campaign rather than

go to other information sources. Hence, the IDF is able to reiterate messaging in different modes

(such as information graphics on Flickr, videos on YouTube and longer posts on its blog) and

arguably craft specific impressions of its campaign. As well, while not measured within the

scope of this study, reiteration of content not only repeats key messages but may fill in gaps of

knowledge that were missed within the first exposure to messaging. That is, if a reader did not

sense the defensive positioning of the IDF during an incident expressed in the tweets, he may do

so after watching an IDF video or seeing photographs related to the same event. Therefore,

tweets that appear to be neutral in attitude still have a strategic purpose within the Twitter

campaign.

The next part of this section presents attitudes changed during the campaign and the

assumptions that are drawn from the data. Table 2 below presents the breakdown of assertive,

defensive and neutral statements coded in the sentiment analysis. Letters highlighted in red

reflect tweets coded as assertive, green as defensive and yellow as neutral.

TABLE 2: SENTIMENTS FOUND IN THE IDF TWITTER BY DATE	
Date	Sentiment
November 14	NDNAAADDDAAADANDADADAADDDDDNNDDDDNDD
November 15	DDDDNADDADDDDDDDDDDDDDNADDDADDDADDDDDDNDDADNDDADNADADDANADDDD
November 16	DDNDDDDDDDDAAANDDNDDDDDDDADDADNDAADADADDNNND
November 17	ADDDDAADDDDADADANDNDDNNDDDAAADDDDDD
November 18	ADAAANDDDDNDDDDDDANNANDDADDDAAADDDADDDDADDDDDDDDDDDD
November 19	DDDDDDNDDAAADDDDDDDDDDDAAAAAADADADDDNDDDDD
November 20	DDDDADDAAANDDDDDDDDDDDDADDADDDDDDDNDAAAAADDAAAADD
November 21	ADDAAAADAADADDDADDNNAANDAAAADNN

Interestingly, the use of assertive sentiments varies during the length of the campaign. In

the first three days (November 14 – 16), 31 assertive statements were found. Thirty-three per

cent of all assertive statements identified in the campaign were posted in the first three days.

From November 17-18, 21 tweets were coded as assertive. During the last three days, 41

statements (44% of all assertive statements found during the conflict period) were counted as

assertive. Only three out of seven days began with an assertive statement. This occurred on the

last days of the campaign. Arguably, this positioning of assertive statements implies a strategic

maneouver to remind readers of the IDF's military ability and power during the beginning of the conflict (when readers—likely supporters—may want assurance of Israel's ability to defend its people). This positioning also occurred on the last day of the operation (when the IDF may have wanted to reassert its reputation as a confident military force). The first tweet of the first day of the campaign was coded as neutral. In this instance, Twitter was already in use by the IDF during that day for regular communication activity before the strike against Jabari was announced. Therefore, the fact that the first tweet was neutral is likely not rhetorically significant.

It is noted that the IDF may not have known that November 21 would be the day a ceasefire was announced, ending the conflict. Therefore, it is possible that the positioning of the first tweet as assertive on November 21 is coincidental. However, if we conceptualize the account as an exhibition, as defined by Hogan (2010), the feed is still left intact for other readers to read and interpret after the conflict. Pairing assertive statements with predominately defensive attitudes found in the data reaffirms the IDF's reputation as a competent, strong, and technologically advanced military force that also has justification—targeting terrorist cells—for its offensive actions.

The data did reveal some unexpected questions. How much does the quantity of any given attitude present in a campaign shape impression management? Do defensive and assertive count equally? Furthermore, does the distribution of attitudes affect impressions? These questions may be sites of future research that examine audience reactions during impression management campaigns. The mix of assertive, defensive and neutral sentiments found on the IDF account feed in the context of this study, however, may signal an attempt by the Force to balance its established and desired identity. Without a communication campaign, news coverage and public discourse on Pillar of Defense could have exposed Israel to future reputation as an

aggressor nation. The sentiment analysis suggests that the IDF's use of Twitter as a communication channel is a strategic move towards establishing the image of a competent, informed military force. Its role in the conflict is positioned as reactive to Hamas. In the Pillar of Defense and the broader Arab-Israeli conflict, Hamas is rhetorically placed in the role of aggressor.

The sentiment analysis aimed to identify the attitudinal orientation that characterized the IDF's Twitter feed during the seven days of the conflict. Results revealed a predominately defensive construction of tweets, aligning Hamas to terror and positioning Israel as a defensive participant in the conflict. The following section presents the primary rhetorical strategies found in the qualitative content analysis.

Qualitative Content Analysis

Content analysis is a technique for extracting "information from a body of material...by systematically and objectively identifying characteristics of the material" (Smith, 2000, p. 313). This qualitative analysis aimed to answer RQ2 by identifying the extent to which impression management strategies appeared in the tweets posted by the IDF's Twitter account. It aimed to examine content and possible motives behind the content. Three primary categories emerged in the data: Blame Avoidance, Legitimacy Claim and Rhetorical Intimacy. I will first define Blame Avoidance and examine the results that emerged in the data. I will then explore Legitimacy Claim and Rhetorical Intimacy. Table 3 on page 35 summarizes the major rhetorical themes and the various strategies within themes that were identified in the IDF's Twitter account.

TABLE 3: QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS CODING SCHEME			
Category	**Strategy**	**Definition**	**Examples**
Blame Avoidance		This category encompasses positioning statements related to issues of responsibility and action. Tweets under this category address reasons for military action against Hamas.	
	Opponent Action	Statements that situate Hamas as the initiator of current operation.	*Infographic: With the Fajr-5, #Hamas' rockets now threaten over 3.5 million citizens in #Israel http://t.co/YMlJRrUf*
	Right to Defend	Explicit references to the need for or right to self-defense against attacks.	*What would you do if rockets were striking your country? RT if you agree that #Israel has the right to self-defense. http://t.co/OvnPKErQ*
Legitimacy Claim		This category encompasses statements that lend credibility to the IDF as an organization, are directly related to IDF's own force management, and strengthen its reasoning for actions against Hamas.	
	Ally Association	Associates Israel with other pro-democratic, anti-terror nations.	*Fact: Hamas is defined as a terrorist group by USA, EU, Canada, Australia, Israeli, Japan & others.*
	Fact-checking Act	Attempts to clarify or confirm information sources	*#Hamas has a long history of misinformation. Let's take a look at yesterday's most recent examples http://t.co.XTnJmlto*
	Operation Highlight	Statements about specific operation tactics and highlights.	*The IDF targeted an Islamic Jihad site in*

			#Gaza. Yunis Shaluf, who was responsible for rocket fire on Eilat several months ago, was killed.
	Ethos Appeal	Claims of ethical actions to prevent harm during operation actions.	*As part of effort to minimize civilian casualties in Gaza, IDF dropped 1000s of leaflets in Arabic with this message. http://t.co/yxux0GdI*
Rhetorical Intimacy		This category encompasses statements that connect the reader on a person and/or emotional level.	
	Pathos Appeal	Statements that appeal to concept of innocence/children.	*A rocket fired from #Gaza fell near a kindergarten in Ashkelon a few minutes ago. It's a good thing that school was canceled for the day.*
	Questions	Questions that ask the reader to associate himself or imaginatively inhabit the everyday Israeli experience.	*135 rockets have been fired at #Israel from #Gaza in the last 11 hours alone. What would you do if your country was under attack?*
	Invitations	Directing readers to investigate further information sources in an educative/guiding role.	*@tbombtrev Here's all the info about the Iron Dome system: http://t.co/MNFb3ETA*

1. Blame Avoidance

Blame Avoidance, the first major category identified in the tweets, subsumes statements related to the positioning of responsibility in the conflict. Tweets in this category addressed reasons for military action against Hamas. Content evoked reasoning that characterized the conflict as the result of Hamas' actions rather than the IDF's actions. That is, the IDF positioned

itself as a passive actor in the conflict, forced to respond to Hamas' attacks. In this way, the IDF

is able to remove responsibility as primary aggressor and promote a desired identity as a

defensive actor. Table 4 below shows the number of occurrences of the category as well as the

other major categories and code found in the data. Of 344 tweets, 92 were coded with Blame

Avoidance as the primary impression management theme. Under this category, two strategies

were identified: Opponent Action and Right to Defend.

TABLE 4: NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES OF CATEGORIES BY CODE	
Category and Code	**Number of Occurrences**
Blame Avoidance	92
Opponent Action	85
Right to Defend	7
Legitimacy Claim	162
Ally Association	7
Fact-checking Act	32
Opponent Highlight	95
Ethos Appeal	28
Rhetorical Intimacy	90
Pathos Appeal	34
Question	20
Invitation	36

1.1 Opponent Action

Opponent Action was defined as statements that situate Hamas as the aggressor in the

current operation. Out of 92 tweets categorized as Blame Avoidance, 82 were coded as Opponent

Action. Tweets with this code attempt to rationalize the decision to target Hamas. An example of

Opponent Action was found in tweets such as the following: "*VIDEO: Hamas hides Fajr-5*

rockets, capable of endangering 3.5 million Israelis. These were targeted earlier today.

http://t.co/OvrBAgO9." The tweet contains an action-threat-consequence structure, in which the

IDF discursively establishes its opponent's action (hiding the rockets), specifies the threat this

poses to Israel (endangering lives), and frames its retaliation as a consequence of Hamas' action

(the sites were attacked because of the hidden rockets).

This example also highlights the use of passive voice by the IDF ("were targeted"). Verb voice can be used as a rhetorical device to reinforce the causal roles of different actors in a sentence (Henley, Miller & Beazley, 1995). That is, passive voice positions subjects in a sentence as being acted upon. This rhetorical technique removes the performer—the IDF in this example—as an agent of action. Passive voice may also be used to "hide the agency of dominant groups for negative acts" (Henley, Miller & Beazley, 1995, p. 63). This passive construction may thus affect how the reader experiences the action in that the passive tweet displaces the IDF from the action. Through the effort to strategically re-frame Israel's side of the conflict as defender rather than aggressor, the Force is able to insinuate blame without repeatedly stating it.

Re-framing the conflict in this roundabout way suggests a strategic move on behalf of the Force. The IDF does not bombard audiences with claims that it has no responsibility for or is completely innocent in strikes or casualties in the conflict. These claims would be invalid and would likely elicit a negative impression of Israel by audiences. By altering the sequence of responsibility, the IDF's communication campaign has the prospect of being more persuasive and credible. It does not dismiss its involvement in the conflict but instead suggests attempts to manipulate the public impression of it.

1.2 Right to Defend

The second strategy found under Blame Avoidance was coded as Right to Defend, which refers to explicit references to Israel's need for or right to self-defense against attacks. An example of Right to Defend is: "*What would you do if rockets were striking your country? RT if you agree that #Israel has the right to self-defense. http://t.co/OvnPKErQ.*" This type of statement asks readers to assign responsibility in the conflict based on the right to self-defense.

Seven tweets were coded as Right to Defend out of 92 tweets in this category. Essentially, in the tweet above, the IDF asks the reader not to decide whether Israel is justified in firing rockets at Palestinians but if it has the right to defend itself against an attack by *anyone*. The following example highlights an alternative occurrence of Right to Defend: "*1000s of IDF reservists were called up a few days ago. They left their families for 1 purpose: to defend their homes. http://t.co/a4ugowWM*". This code removes the context of the November 2012 conflict and questions readers' overall beliefs on self-defense. It maneuvers the IDF as a defensive participant in the conflict and helps to support less explicit tweets found in the tweets coded as Opponent Action. The tweet also personalizes the right for self-defense by evoking concepts of family and homes.

2.0 Legitimacy Claim

The second major theme found in the content analysis refers to claims of credibility. This category, coded as Legitimacy Claim, was defined as comprising statements that lend credibility to the IDF as an organization and/or that are related to IDF's management as an organization. Of 344 tweets, 162 were coded with Legitimacy Claim as the primary impression management theme. Four main strategies emerged in the data: Ally Association, Fact-checking Act, Operation Highlight and Ethos Appeal.

2.1 Ally Association

The first strategy under this theme, Ally Association, was defined as statements that associate Israel with other pro-democratic, anti-terror nations. Seven tweets were coded with this strategy. An example of this type of tweet is the following:"*Fact: Hamas is defined as a terrorist group by USA, EU, Canada, Australia, #Israel, Japan & others. #Gaza.*" This strategy attempts

to aggregate the influence these countries hold and associate Israel with pro-democratic countries. Other examples are: "*#US Dept of State: Hamas is a terrorist organization. http://t.co/THzqn58k #Gaza*" and "*Former Commander of British Forces in Afghanistan: IDF protects civilian rights http://t.co/UvpUZy68 @ColRichardKemp #Gaza*". In each tweet, the IDF attempts to align its mission with those of other Western countries. It is noted that six out of seven tweets coded as Ally Association appeared in the latter parts of the conflict. This suggests a possible move by the IDF to jog reader memories regarding the reasoning for Pillar of Defense.

Aligning the IDF and the Israeli nation brand with Western nations constructs a more nuanced national identity. That is, it rhetorically brings Western audiences in those countries who may be following the Twitter feed into the conflict. The country already has diplomatic ties to countries such as the United States. Incorporating the U.S. into the campaign associates Israel's rhetoric with the foreign policies of those countries. In fact, the IDF uses the hashtag function to single out (and even coerce into action) several places: #America, #Australia, #LA, #US. Anyone searching these annotations on Twitter, whether in the context of Israel or not, would be exposed to the IDF campaign.

As well, it is interesting to note the U.S. and/or U.S. cities are predominately mentioned in the hashtags. Whether Israel is successful in this attempt to relate to Western audiences is beyond the scope of this study; however, the references to other countries suggest an attempt to realign the nation brand away from the Middle East. This may be a way to dissociate from the connotations that the region brings to mind, including instability and constant conflict—much of which stems from Israel's own nation brand. Dissociation of Israel from the customary connotations of being at the centre of constant conflict and instability would help reconstitute its nation brand.

2.2 Fact-checking Act

The third code identified in the analysis found that in addition to associating Israel with other countries, the IDF also uses external content as evidence to support its claims found in categories such as Blame Avoidance. Out of 162 tweets, 32 were coded as Fact-checking Act. These tweets were defined as attempts to clarify or confirm information, many in reference to content outside of Twitter. Some even pull information from Hamas or other Palestinian sources to support IDF messaging. Examples of this type of tweet include the following: "*Hamas Charter: '#Israel will exist and continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it'* http://t.co/G9gSG0P7 *#Gaza*." Here, the IDF used a quote from Hamas that depicts the Palestinian group as an aggressive force concentrated on destroying Israel and its people in the name of Islam. It endeavours to use 'direct' content from its opponent as evidence of justification for Pillar of Defense. This tweet suggests that in addition to re-framing its own position, the Force was also trying to manage its opponent's impression. This may have been a secondary objective of the campaign when explored in conjugation with the Ally Association code. Convincing allies of the brutality of Hamas' intentions (harming Israel and its people) may be a way to attract support from allies, especially when news coverage covered the diplomatic associations ("Shapiro: US support was crucial," 2012).

The rigid 140-character structure of Twitter further necessitates "packaging thoughts into crisp sound bites" (Alterman, 2012, p. 84). When deployed for rhetorical purposes, the communication tool asks creators to layer messaging in each tweet, especially when used for the purpose of strategic impression management. This is the hallmark of Twitter, necessitating productive texts that can achieve, or at least address, multiple rhetorical objectives simultaneously. It may be because of this that tweets have been adopted by traditional media as

direct quotes. Tweets are consumed as reliable mini press releases. The technology thus has the power to influence media coverage of events. (Throughout the campaign, the use of Twitter by the IDF itself became a major focus of media attention.) By using Twitter, the IDF is able to remove a 'middle man' narrator—the media—and directly dictate the story of the conflict. Indeed, the Twitter account acted as a live commentary on both the IDF and Hamas' actions. The IDF was able to generate its own media attention. By attempting to become the go-to source for information on the conflict, the IDF also magnifies its desired identity in the coverage of the conflict.

Other tweets posted by the IDF seek to directly fact check Hamas' actions for errors or false claims. One tweet in the data reads, "*Fact: 100+ rockets fired from #Gaza have crashed back into Gaza in last 5 days. Hamas fires from civilian areas...and hits its own people.*" Here, the IDF moves into exploring the ethics and competence of Hamas. It acts as an insider, rhetorically proposing to audiences that Hamas not only takes the lives of Palestinian civilians but also that it is hiding this fact, which the IDF has uncovered and exposed. The inclusion of "Fact:" at the beginning of the sentence linguistically directs readers to believe that the content that comes after the colon is verified and thus believable. This further supports Israel's portrayal of itself as a precise and powerful Force. The tweets act as documentation of its military power, and its ability to keep track of both its actions and opponent actions. By tracking the number of rockets fired from Gaza, tweets such as the example above help to support the IDF's claims that Hamas is a disruptive force and aggressor in the conflict, prepared to kill its own people. The implication that Israel does not kill Israelis by accident ties back to the IDF's organizational management as a strong military force with precision weaponry. This move into arguing the ethical implications of the competing side becomes prominent in the next code.

2.3 Operation Highlight

The third code that emerged in the data consisted of tweets that discussed specific operation tactics. Operation Highlight was an identified code employed 95 times by the IDF on its Twitter account. The tweets did not focus on the responsibility for actions but rather detailed the actions the IDF was pursuing in the conflict. The statements lend credibility to the IDF as organization that is transparent about its operations and strengthen its reasoning for actions against Hamas. Some tweets consist of updates about field action, "*The IDF targeted an Islamic Jihad site in #Gaza. Yunis Shaluf, who was responsible for rocket fire on Eilat several months ago, was killed,*" while others refer to military strikes: "*A short while ago in #Gaza, the IDF targeted an underground rocket launcher as well as 5 terror operatives preparing to launch rockets.*" The purpose of tweeting out operation highlights may not only be to display Israel's military might but also to act as a public chronicle. Similar to Fact-checking Act, documenting operation highlights and leaves a record of the conflict for readers to access—an exhibition of the conversation and commentary surrounding the conflict. In this way, the IDF can argue it is a transparent organization that has specific reasoning for its actions (e.g., destroying terrorist rocket launchers) and that it attacked in a measured, time-sensitive way (e.g., right when enemies were about to launch the rockets).

In fact, in a press release issued three months later, the IDF stated that, "we faced numerous situations in which we could have legally acted in a more aggressive way than the way we chose to act, and would have realized a significantly better operational achievement. However, on our own initiative we chose a more moderate path" (Barzilai, 2013). In the press release, a major military figure goes on to acknowledge the need to be conscious of public opinion when choosing military strikes. This supports the argument that the IDF was

strategically using ethical appeals at the time of Pillar of Defense to gain legitimacy of the conflict among audiences, including international media and nations.

2.4 Ethos Appeal

Tweets coded under Ethos Appeal involved claims of ethical actions by the IDF to prevent harm during operations. An example of this type of tweet is: "*As part of effort to minimize civilian casualties in Gaza, IDF dropped 1000s of leaflets in Arabic with this message. http://t.co/yxux0GdI.*" Ethical appeals lend legitimacy to the organization and help to strengthen potential audience views on its operations as justified. The IDF shows itself as having taken precautions to avoid civilian harm while still decisively targeting enemy operatives in the field. In this way, it demonstrates an ethical adherence to international law and rules of warfare.

The IDF may have used Ethos Appeal to address previous media criticism that its approach disregards civilian casualties (Yamao, 2013). The following tweets are variations of the same messaging: "*The IDF is committed to ensure the safety of Israeli civilians. Hamas is responsible for every rocket fired from #Gaza. #IsraelUnderFire*" and "*How does the IDF attempt to minimize harm to Palestinian civilians in #Gaza? Read our answers and then RT: http://t.co/4H8xWxcc*". Here, concerns about both Palestinian and Israeli civilians are addressed. In the first tweet about Israel civilians, the theme of self-defense is also implicit in the IDF's claim that Hamas is responsible for rocket attacks and, by extension, any civilian harm caused by the IDF. The appeal to ethics thus attempts to address Israel's own force management and the credibility of its actions during Pillar of Defense.

3.0 Rhetorical Intimacy

Rhetorical Intimacy was identified as the third impression management theme in the data.

Out of 344 tweets, 90 were coded under this category. Tweets in this category encompass statements that attempt to connect to the reader in a personal and/or emotional way. The purpose of this strategy is to help frame the conflict in an intimate way that asks the reader to identify with everyday Israelis. Readers are invited to embed themselves into the campaign. This may help to strengthen Israel's reasoning for participating in the armed conflict as a way to defend itself and, by extension, Israeli citizens. The three strategies identified and coded under this category were Pathos Appeal, Questions and Invitations.

3.1 Pathos Appeal

Tweets that were narrative in nature and appealed to users' emotions qualified as appeals to pathos. These tweets evoked references to childhood and innocence. Out of 90 tweets in the category of Rhetorical Intimacy, 34 tweets were coded as Pathos Appeal. An example of a tweet with Pathos Appeal is "*A rocket fired from #Gaza fell near a kindergarten in Ashkelon a few minutes ago. It's a good thing that school was canceled for the day.*" These types of tweets attempt to place the reader in the shoes of ordinary Israelis dealing with the conflict. Readers who may not have knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could relate to the general devastation of innocents. Imagery of injured or dead children would be morally unacceptable to most people. Furthermore, tweets such as the example above use personalized language and informality ("It's a good thing that school was canceled..."). The use of informal syntax such as contractions helps to situate the IDF account within the informal tenor of communication that social media mandates. Language must be intelligible to the public.

Other tweets shift focus away from the current conflict and speak to the long-term implications of the broader Arab-Israeli conflict: "*75% of children in Sderot, Israeli town bombarded by rockets, suffer from PTSD. http://t.co/ddcyt0X2 RT to show their reality.*" This

may have been a tactic to present the IDF's key messages in a new way. More specifically, it may have been a new route for engaging audiences who are not necessarily interested in the military details of the Operation or are not supporters of the conflict but that are affected by the imagery of children during warfare.

3.2 Questions

The data also revealed engagement with questions to the reader. Questions ask readers to associate themselves with Israeli citizens. Out of 90 tweets in this category, 20 were coded as questions. The following is an example of a typical tweet coded with this strategy: "*135 rockets have been fired at #Israel from #Gaza in the last 11 hours alone. What would you do if your country was under attack?*" More explicitly than the previous code discussed, using questions removes the reader from the present conflict and shifts focus from a debate on the IDF's role in the conflict to a debate on civilians living in fear.

Questions also act as rhetorical reflection points for readers. Rather than allowing readers just to consume the text and move on, this strategy asks readers to reflect on the text. The following is an example: *"Ever wondered what life under fire feels like? This has been the life of a southern Israeli for the past 12 yrs.* http://t.co/VL9kvTvf". In this tweet, the hyperlink directs readers to a video on the IDF's YouTube account labeled "Israel Under Fire: Life in the South". The video is a composite of many videos, seemingly filmed by everyday Israelis, as they hear and run from rocket sirens. In this tweet, the IDF not only asks readers to reflect through a question about living under fire, but also provides an answer for the reader.

It is important to note that in tweets such as this one, nothing is directly mentioned about the conflict or Hamas. Arguably, these tweets thus act to bolster Israel's credibility about self-defense by showing images and asking questions of the reader to associate with Israelis who

must live under the threat of attack. By removing Hamas as the identifiable threat, the IDF may have attempted to use fear as an abstract principle to win support for its cause.

3.3 Invitation

The last strategy identified was coded as Invitation. Thirty-six tweets were coded with this strategy. Content in these tweets directs readers to investigate other information sources outside of the Twitter account in an educative or guiding role. What separates tweets within this code is the lack of rhetorical functions. Tweets had a decidedly information-sharing purpose. The tweets invite readers to continue exploring information about the campaign or related activities to the IDF's campaign. The following is an example: "*@tbombtrev Here's all the info about the Iron Dome system: http://t.co/MNFb3ETA.*" In this case, the IDF directly responded to a user, and asked him or her to move to another IDF source. A majority of the tweets coded in this category were coded as neutral in attitude in the sentiment analysis. Tweets largely oriented readers to summaries of events or other social media accounts run by the IDF (such as Flickr, French and Spanish Twitter accounts, and the IDF blog). While neutral in attitude, these tweets support intimacy in that they help lead readers on a journey through the IDF's information campaigns, acting as directional signs for finding specific content. Tweets under the broader category of Rhetorical Intimacy ask readers to become personally or emotionally involved with the conflict. This strategy may help to support the IDF's attempts to re-frame its involvement in the conflict.

Three thematic categories, Blame Avoidance, Legitimacy Claim and Rhetorical Intimacy, were identified in the 344 tweets posted during Operation Pillar of Defense. Each category identified features of the campaign that helped to support IDF messaging around its military involvement in Pillar of Defense. An examination of the Twitter account through the qualitative

content analysis shows that the IDF took a significantly defensive approach to its impression management of the conflict. There is evidence that Israel tried to re-frame public impression of its military involvement from aggressor to defender in the armed conflict. Codes discovered in this analysis suggest that the IDF tried to justify force, avoid responsibility and establish legitimacy of Pillar of Defense. The following section reveals the results of the quantitative content analysis to reflect on RQ3 surrounding whether the sociotechnical affordances of Twitter were used to enhance rhetorical strategies.

Quantitative Content Analysis

Quantitative content analysis produced evidence of sociotechnical affordances and the possible implications of use on themes laid down in the tweets. Table 5 summarizes the sociotechnical affordances found in the data and the number of occurrences.

TABLE 5: SOCIOTECHNICAL AFFORDANCES BY OCCURENCE	
Affordance	**Number of Occurrences**
Searchability	
Hashtags (#)	248
Direct reply (@ reply)	16
Scalability (Inclusion of a hyperlinks)	163
Replicability (Calls to action)	13
Persistence (References to time)	195

The quantitative content analysis found evidence of the IDF's use of sociotechnical affordances in the Twitter account. The affordance, searchability, was present in the tweets in two ways: the use of direct replies and hashtags. Sixteen tweets featured a direct reply to individual Twitter users (marked by a '@' sign). The analysis did not examine whether each reply was to a

question or a general comment post by a user. An example of a direct reply consists of the following: "*@y_alkhalid We guarantee that the hundreds of rockets hitting #Israel since March have all sounded similar.*" By using an affordance of Twitter that allows an actor to engage directly with other users, however, the IDF may have attempted to portray an appearance of a well-rounded Twitter campaign that is responsive and constantly evolving to answer to its audience demands. Other direct replies posted hyperlinks for users to follow to find answers to questions or information gaps. These were often other IDF sources of information. Replying to users shows not only accessibility and connection to audiences but also helps to reinforce messaging that the IDF is responsive to civilian concerns. This ties into impression management strategies such as Ethos Appeal, which reflected on the IDF's ethics during warfare.

Evidence of searchability was also found through the inclusion of hashtags in the tweets. Table 6 below summarizes the hashtags used by the IDF and the number of occurrences of each.

TABLE 6: HASHTAGS USED BY OCCURENCE	
Hashtag	**Number of Occurrences**
#Gaza	168
#Israel	76
#Hamas	66
#IsraelUnderFire	46
#PillarofDefense	25
#IDF	2
#America	1
#Australia	1
#Iran	1
#LA	1
#US	1
Total Hashtags	388

Particularly when used in conjunction with rhetorical purposes, hashtags highlight the move

toward adopting the discursive and esthetic norms of Twitter as a way to engage with audiences. A broad guiding inquiry in this study surrounds motivation for a military force to communicate so openly about its operation. By adopting discursive norms and vocabulary of the medium, its digital credibility is likely to be perceived as high. A total of 388 hashtags were found in 344 tweets. The most widely used hashtag was #Gaza with 168 occurrences. This was at first an unexpected finding in that the use of #Israel or #PillarofDefense would be more directly related to the IDF. The use of #Gaza, however, makes sense because it would be a popular search term for the conflict. As well, by constantly referencing the hashtag, the IDF's tweets would show in the public feed on the subject, exposing its campaign to potential new audiences that do not regularly follow the IDF's Twitter account.

There was also evidence of scalability found in the data through the inclusion of hyperlinks to external content. There were 163 tweets that had a hyperlink to external content. When used, hyperlinks often directed users to other IDF social media platforms. Links to videos showing Israeli life under fire, infographics about the number of rockets fired from Gaza and blog posts about Hamas' misinformation campaigns were frequent content themes. The use of external content to bolster the tweets may have helped to enhance the IDF's messaging through repetition of content in multiple modes. However, because this study did not delve into audience reactions, it is hard to assess whether scalability conclusively enhanced or detracted from impression management themes.

Out of 344 tweets, only 13 had explicit references to replicability. This code speaks to the ease with which other users can disseminate tweets to their networks. This was a surprising find, as one would expect the IDF to be inclined to ask its audience to share its messaging on the platform. There may be several reasons why the IDF did not make use of this affordance as much

as others. It could have been a technical decision in that calls to actions (to RT or to share tweets) use up the rigid 140-character limit for tweets. On the other hand, it could have also been distracting from the immediacy of the conflict. As the account chronicled Pillar of Defense in real-time, including its opponent operations as well as its own, calling on readers to share information may have had less priority than engaging with readers by posting new tweets. Or, perhaps, the IDF used its other social media accounts such as Facebook to encourage sharing amongst networks. It is not possible to understand fully the lack of use of replicability within the scope of this study; however, it may be a research site for future studies.

Finally, the IDF also made extensive reference to time during the conflict period. Temporal references were coded under the affordance, Persistence. Since Twitter is designed to share information in real-time, making reference to the speed of tweets in relation to real-time reporting shows evidence of a modern, web-savvy organization. The time and date of the tweet are prominently displayed on the account feed. About 47% of tweets (163) make discursive references to time. Language used includes "breaking" and "minutes ago" such as in the following: "*Breaking: Rocket fired from #Gaza exploded in southern #Israel minutes ago.*" By associating the IDF Twitter account to breaking news, the IDF may be attempting to establish itself as a go-to source for news on the conflict. Tweets also refer to periods beyond the current conflict.

These practices may be attempting to establish Israel beyond its historical and Biblical past, but also as a modern, ethical and transparent nation. Several tweets make reference to actions outside the conflict period such as the following: "*Hamas is terrorizing Israeli civilians— over 760 rockets fired from #Gaza hit Israel in 2012 alone http://t.co/IECutF0t."* In this way, references to time beyond the present conflict allow the IDF to chip away at its long-standing

negative image that is rooted in historical context. The high frequency of time references

indicates a possible desire to establish military prowess in reacting to and leading military

activities.

The content analysis revealed the inclusion of sociotechnical affordances of Twitter.

Searchability, scalability, replicability and persistence were evident in the tweets posted by the

IDF. The affordances may have been used to enhance rhetorical themes in the tweets, pointing to

the credibility of the IDF through the adoption of the modes of communication (such as

hashtags) and informal language that Twitter demands.

Limitations & Directions for Future Research

Limitations of this study result primarily from the micro focus of the case study. The particular circumstances of the Arab-Israel conflict, as well as Israel's own unique foray into social media, make this an insular study. Furthermore, the IDF is one of the first military forces to use Twitter as public relations tool. This new foray into social media is ripe for examination through other studies as well as other research sites such as Facebook. Future research should employ other nation brands to test this study's application of impression management as well as Twitter as a site for identity re-branding. Studies may also want to pursue questions of whether defensive and assertive impression management tactics count equally towards creating impressions. Does the repetition of one over another produce a stronger impression? Crisis communication campaigns may also benefit from applying impression management theory and studying the role that Twitter has to play in handling crisis of reputation.

Conclusion

Threats to reputation can destroy an image or brand. Public perception of risk is therefore itself a constant threat to reputation. Communicating effectively during a crisis can help to gain support and trust among supporters of an entity. This is important now more than ever as organizations—and nations—are accessible to a vast online public sphere made up of multiple audiences. When a desired identity is under threat, an actor may employ various rhetorical tactics to deny responsibility and establish legitimacy of a desired identity.

An examination of the IDF's Twitter account through sentiment and content analysis shows that the IDF took a significantly defensive approach to its impression management of Operation Pillar of Defense. There is evidence that Israel tried to re-frame public impression of its military involvement from aggressor to defender in the armed conflict. Blame Avoidance, Legitimacy Claim and Rhetorical Intimacy were three major themes found in the data. These suggest that the IDF tried to justify force, avoid responsibility and establish legitimacy of Operation of Pillar Defense. Its message, in short, was that terrorists were attacking Israelis and that the IDF was defending Israelis by targeting key assets of the terrorist group while avoiding civilian harm. The IDF used polysemic messaging to buttress an overall brand strategy, supported by evidence of its other recent forays into digital diplomacy.

There is also evidence that the IDF employed sociotechical affordances in an attempt to enhance the themes laid down in the impression management campaign. The use of hashtags and direct replies, links to external content, calls to action to share information and references to time were also present in the data. An IDF-commissioned study on the Israeli military's connection to the media admitted that the IDF has its own military agenda in any communication act, with the explicit intention of "gain[ing] legitimacy for its actions and influenc[ing] the perspective from

which the narrative itself is told" (Nevo & Shur-Shmueli, 2003, p. 22). In this conflict, the IDF was able to directly release and control a narrative about its role in the conflict without an intermediary (such as traditional news outlets).

Perhaps integral to the choice of Twitter to communicate the morality of war and the IDF's participation in it is the ability social media grants for establishing context. Posting videos, photographs and linking to other content gives more context than a press release. This study thus expands the political repertoire for using digital communication tools—from monitoring to the role of nations as producers of context, able to generate their own content to advance public relations aims. The use of Twitter for nation branding thus encourages a new set of rhetorics that aim to personalize the state during unpopular military campaigns.

What is pivotal to this new model of state communication is the inherent disconnect between the social media conventions of informality and the traditional closed-door information policies of the military. By adhering to the emerging protocols and vocabularies of these platforms (such as using hashtags or employing informality of language), however, states can increase the potential impact of their online communication campaigns. Indeed, personalizing the state can contribute to challenging a nation brand, especially when addressing brands rooted in conflict. At the same time, it is important to remember this new form of digital diplomacy also carries risks that stem from greater state involvement on a platform where many anti-occupation voices are present. Twitter has been instrumental in recent years during political upheavals to broadcast political injustices directly through the mobile phones and computers of civilians, such as during the Arab Spring. The use of the platform by states themselves during military occupations is a relatively new phenomenon. States expose themselves to scrutiny in a medium the occupation is taking place, and to amplify it through various networked publics. Forces such

as the IDF must be careful to mitigate potential backlash to tweets by activists by incorporating a strategic response strategy into their impression management campaigns.

The use of social media in warfare is new territory. As more nations enter the Twittersphere, it will be interesting to see how state rhetoric changes to adapt to the platform and whether nations adopt any of the impression management strategies used by the IDF in their campaigns. The adoption of digital diplomacy has certainly yielded some positive results. The @IDFSpokesperson Twitter account increased its followers to more than 200,000 from roughly 60,000 by the end of the eight-day conflict (Biddle, 2012). Furthermore, the IDF's use of social media received significant media coverage and momentarily took the spotlight away from the Palestinian cause. This, for the IDF, may have been a victory in itself.

The metrics of social media and the newness of its use in warfare, however, must not disguise the fact that behind the narration of attacks on Twitter, there are real soldiers and civilians in the streets of Israel and the Palestinian territories. The political effects of the IDF's Twitter campaign during the November 2012 conflict are thus still unclear. The process of reestablishing a nation brand will likely involve a lengthy engagement with social media to change representation of Israel and its military occupations. Counter to the fast-paced nature of communication on Twitter, perceptions of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the success of Israel's own social media strategy during Pillar of Defense, may only change with time.

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war-with-hamas-on-social-media-live-tweets-assassination-posts-proof-on-youtube/

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Appendix A: IDF (@IDFSpokesperson) tweets posted during the conflict period

Text: After eight days of fighting, the IDF has ended Operation Pillar of Defense. http://t.co/nY610vig
Created At: Wed Nov 21 23:36:00 +0000 2012

Text: Official #IDF announcement about the ceasefire that came into effect today: http://t.co/Y3tTHRL9
Created At: Wed Nov 21 21:58:50 +0000 2012

Text: Over the past 8 days, 152 rockets fired from #Gaza landed in the Strip - nearly 3 times the amount that hit populated areas in #Israel
Created At: Wed Nov 21 21:43:29 +0000 2012

Text: Over 1,500 terror sites were targeted during Operation Pillar of Defense. The Iron Dome system intercepted 421 rockets fired from #Gaza.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 20:35:14 +0000 2012

Text: After 8 days, the IDF has accomplished its goals in Operation Pillar of Defense. A cease-fire agreement has come into effect.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 19:40:33 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, the IDF targeted a squad of terrorists preparing to fire rockets at #Israel. #Hamas lookout positions were also targeted.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 18:59:16 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago in #Gaza, the IDF targeted 3 tunnels used for terrorist activity and 2 underground rocket launchers.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 18:37:41 +0000 2012

Text: Photos of life in #IsraelUnderFire http://t.co/1lVANNTm
Created At: Wed Nov 21 17:16:55 +0000 2012

Text: Erez Crossing was opened today for medical supplies. Such items usually enter via Kerem Shalom, which was shut yesterday due to rocket fire.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 16:51:36 +0000 2012

Text: Today the IDF also targeted a number of #Hamas & Palestinian Islamic Jihad terrorist squads that were coordinating attacks against #Israel.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 16:47:33 +0000 2012

Text: Today the IDF has targeted 50+ terror sites, including tunnels, underground rocket launchers & #Hamas command centers.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 16:45:32 +0000 2012

Text: For updates and analysis, visit the official Israel Defense Forces blog: http://t.co/WXZKNot4 #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Wed Nov 21 15:41:04 +0000 2012

Text: Nuestra nueva página de FB http://t.co/bvWkDJ0R y Twitter @FDIonline. En français sur FB https://t.co/Khsd7smc et sur Twitter @Tsahal_IDF
Created At: Wed Nov 21 15:39:38 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO - #Hamas TV After Tel Aviv Bus Bomb: "God Willing, We Will Soon See Black Body Bags" http://t.co/mCrqk5ZW RT so that everyone sees.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 14:37:11 +0000 2012

Text: Photo from the scene of the bus bombing in Tel Aviv this afternoon http://t.co/I8bdTwCT
Created At: Wed Nov 21 14:11:18 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago in #Gaza, the IDF targeted an underground rocket launcher as well as 5 terror operatives preparing to launch rockets.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 13:01:44 +0000 2012

Text: Some numbers from today: 42 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel + 20 Iron Dome interceptions = 62 rockets fired at us #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Wed Nov 21 12:43:38 +0000 2012

Text: We are seeing reports out of Gaza that Hamas is celebrating the fact that a bomb exploded on a bus this afternoon in Tel Aviv.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 11:12:29 +0000 2012

Text: BREAKING: A bus has exploded in Tel Aviv. Possibly due to a bomb or suicide bomber. Many ambulance sirens. Stay tuned for updates.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 10:26:08 +0000 2012

Text: This morning in #Gaza, the IDF targeted 43 tunnels and an underground rocket launcher. The Israeli Navy also targeted a terror operative.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 09:41:20 +0000 2012

Text: Watch IDF Home Front Command inspect building hit by rocket yesterday in Rishon LeZion. Note the safe room at 0:38 sec http://t.co/TJeinRH3
Created At: Wed Nov 21 09:26:46 +0000 2012

Text: Earlier today in #Gaza, the IDF targeted an underground rocket launcher and a #Hamas operative who was preparing to fire rockets at #Israel.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 08:59:22 +0000 2012

Text: This morning, the IDF targeted #Hamas operatives in their hiding place in #Gaza where they were building rockets. Direct hit was confirmed.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 07:03:34 +0000 2012

Text: @squeeko639 Every Iron Dome missile shots down a rocket fired from #Gaza, therefore added to the count. More info: http://t.co/l8URVnZ6
Created At: Wed Nov 21 05:43:21 +0000 2012
In Reply To: squeeko639

Text: Overall, more than 100 terror sites were targeted, of which approximately 50 were underground rocket launchers
Created At: Wed Nov 21 05:20:02 +0000 2012

Text: A senior Hamas operative responsible for aerial defense operations was targeted, as well as several other terrorist squads.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 05:17:30 +0000 2012

Text: Also targeted: Police compound, military hideout used as a senior operatives' meeting place, communications center & rocket launching sites
Created At: Wed Nov 21 05:14:47 +0000 2012

Text: Overnight, we targeted the Ministry of Internal Security in Gaza, which served as one of the Hamas' main command & control centers
Created At: Wed Nov 21 05:13:36 +0000 2012

Text: Update: Over 800 rockets fired from #Gaza hit Israel in the past week - 162 during the last day alone.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 03:23:04 +0000 2012

Text: 2 rockets headed towards densely populated areas intercepted by the Iron Dome system in the last five hours.
Created At: Wed Nov 21 02:52:10 +0000 2012

Text: Video: IDF targets house of Hamas commander in charge of central #Gaza training bases, Azi Abudama http://t.co/RyTBBjVJ
Created At: Wed Nov 21 00:42:50 +0000 2012

Text: Warning to reporters in Gaza: Stay away from Hamas operatives & facilities. Hamas, a terrorist group, will use you as human shields.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 22:34:18 +0000 2012

Text: The Hamas terrorists weren't in the media building to be interviewed. They were there to communicate with field operatives and plan attacks.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 22:31:24 +0000 2012

Text: Minutes ago, we surgically targeted a Hamas intelligence operations center on 7th floor of a media building in #Gaza. Direct hit confirmed.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 22:30:19 +0000 2012

Text: #Israel Air Force targeted: terror operatives, rocket launching sites, 7 underground rocket launchers. #Gaza
Created At: Tue Nov 20 21:13:09 +0000 2012

Text: Also targeted: smuggling tunnels containing explosives, 4 weapon storages, 2 weapon factories, Hamas system of tunnels used to transport gas

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Text: Targeted in #Gaza over evening: bank used to finance Hamas operatives, command & control center, Hamas hideout & operatives' meeting place
Created At: Tue Nov 20 21:10:47 +0000 2012

Text: Watch: Rocket from #Gaza strikes the Israeli city of Rishon LeZion earlier today http://t.co/GuOCqR2Q
Created At: Tue Nov 20 20:54:57 +0000 2012

Text: 809 rockets fired from Gaza hit #Israel + 389 Iron Dome interceptions = 1,198 rockets fired at us #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Tue Nov 20 20:03:15 +0000 2012

Text: Over the past 2 hours we've targeted 20 terror operatives.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 19:47:28 +0000 2012

Text: In the past 30 minutes we targeted 13 terror sites, mainly underground rocket launchers.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 19:34:43 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, we targeted 2 terror operatives in the central Gaza Strip
Created At: Tue Nov 20 19:04:21 +0000 2012

Text: Over the past hour, we targeted 20 terror sites in the #Gaza Strip
Created At: Tue Nov 20 18:57:40 +0000 2012

Text: The IDF targeted an Islamic Jihad site in #Gaza. Yunis Shaluf, who was responsible for rocket fire on Eilat several months ago, was killed.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 18:28:39 +0000 2012

Text: Cpl. Yosef Fartuk, 18, from Emmanuel, was killed earlier today by a rocket fired from Gaza into Israel. His family has been notified.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 18:09:36 +0000 2012

Text: "Like" the Israel Defense Forces on Facebook: https://t.co/WZAvysUJ
Created At: Tue Nov 20 17:56:37 +0000 2012

Text: Why is the number of Israeli casualties so low? Answers on our blog: http://t.co/19T0U3XI #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Tue Nov 20 17:43:45 +0000 2012

Text: How long has #Hamas been shooting rockets into #Israel? Here's a sample of our previous tweets announcing rocket fire: http://t.co/92trndMu
Created At: Tue Nov 20 17:16:42 +0000 2012

Text: PHOTO - Residential building in the central Israeli town of Rishon LeZion hit tonight by rocket fired from #Gaza http://t.co/MWpwmBrt
Created At: Tue Nov 20 17:11:55 +0000 2012

Text: BREAKING: A rocket fired from #Gaza directly hit a building in the central Israeli city of Rishon LeZion. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Tue Nov 20 16:22:07 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas spokesman urges Palestinians in #Gaza to ignore IDF warnings. We got the radio transcript from IDF Intelligence: http://t.co/T9hjORGu
Created At: Tue Nov 20 16:01:20 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, 5 IDF soldiers were wounded by a rocket fired from #Gaza into #Israel.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 14:22:49 +0000 2012

Text: We are dropping flyers over #Gaza right now, warning civilians to stay away from #Hamas operatives and facilities.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 14:06:09 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, the IDF a targeted a terrorist squad in #Gaza that was preparing to fire rockets at #Israel.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 13:11:23 +0000 2012
Name: IDF

Text: Update: The rocket fired toward Jerusalem missed the city but hit an open area in a Palestinian village.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 12:46:36 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: Rocket siren heard in Jerusalem, #Israel's capital city. Stay tuned for updates. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Tue Nov 20 12:16:56 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, the IDF targeted two terrorists in the northern #Gaza Strip. A direct hit was confirmed.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 12:12:53 +0000 2012

Text: 39 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel today. Some of them hit Beersheba, one of #Israel's largest cities. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Tue Nov 20 11:59:05 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas' goal is to kill Israeli civilians. Everybody needs to know. RT so they will. #IsraelUnderFire
http://t.co/td5XP3az
Created At: Tue Nov 20 11:29:16 +0000 2012

Text: 120 trucks of goods were ready to enter #Gaza from #Israel today. #Hamas fired rockets at the crossing. Only 24 entered. Crossing is closed.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 10:19:41 +0000 2012

Text: Earlier today, an IDF soldier was moderately wounded in a rocket attack in southern #Israel.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 09:50:46 +0000 2012

Text: PHOTO: Yesterday, this was a kid's clean room in Beersheba. This morning, #Hamas fired a rocket at it. Look at it now. http://t.co/clOK2uj9
Created At: Tue Nov 20 09:07:15 +0000 2012

Text: PHOTO: Rocket fired from #Gaza hit car in Beersheba this morning, destroying it completely. 1 bystander injured. http://t.co/fVms8A8v
Created At: Tue Nov 20 08:51:04 +0000 2012

Text: 120+ trucks of supplies from #Israel are waiting at #Gaza border crossing. #Hamas is firing rockets at the crossing. Trucks can't enter now.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 08:35:25 +0000 2012

Text: Listen to IDF spokeswoman @AvitalLeibovich interview w/ @wolfblitzer last night about #PillarOfDefense http://t.co/ik7brdg7 #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Tue Nov 20 07:21:51 +0000 2012

Text: 1000s of IDF reservists were called up a few days ago. They left their families for 1 purpose: to defend their homes. http://t.co/a4ugowWM
Created At: Tue Nov 20 07:14:07 +0000 2012

Text: Video: Voices from the Home Front: How Israelis Live Under Fire http://t.co/sbR3fY7D #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Tue Nov 20 06:35:51 +0000 2012

Text: How long has #Hamas been shooting rockets at #Israel? For more than 10 years. http://t.co/92trndMu
Created At: Tue Nov 20 05:58:19 +0000 2012

Text: For updates on #PillarOfDefense, with photos & videos all in one place, check out this blog post: http://t.co/caYYddAW
Created At: Tue Nov 20 05:32:02 +0000 2012

Text: Also targeted: #Hamas financial institution, 10 tunnels used as hideouts by terror operatives.
Created At: Tue Nov 20 04:52:13 +0000 2012

Text: Targeted overnight in #Gaza: Underground rocket launchers, terror tunnels, #Hamas command posts & weapon storage facilities
Created At: Tue Nov 20 04:49:31 +0000 2012

Text: Video: Ystrdy, IDF targeted a building in Gaza. See the abnormally large explosion? That's the hidden weaponry http://t.co/CIMW3HDx
Created At: Tue Nov 20 04:30:36 +0000 2012

Text: Myth: Israeli Air Force pilots target civilians in #Gaza indiscriminately if they're near terrorists. http://t.co/d1GnMzmc #debunked
Created At: Tue Nov 20 03:42:27 +0000 2012

Text: +600 rockets were fired at 3.5 million civilians. So why are Israeli casualties so few? http://t.co/19T0U3XI
Created At: Tue Nov 20 03:05:19 +0000 2012

Text: Why did we target smuggling tunnels? http://t.co/nme7ju0L #Gaza #Hamas
Created At: Tue Nov 20 02:19:57 +0000 2012

Text: What gives Israel the right to defend itself? Here are our answers: http://t.co/rxWg3IcN #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Tue Nov 20 01:46:55 +0000 2012

Text: 'Harmless' rockets? Meet 9 year old Osher Twito, who lost a leg due to a rocket strike in 2008 http://t.co/hGvkelxT
Created At: Tue Nov 20 01:04:38 +0000 2012

Text: Video: "I dropped my daughters off at my parents' and went down [to the #Gaza border]" http://t.co/PmhuObbq
Created At: Tue Nov 20 00:25:19 +0000 2012

Text: Video: Here's a recap of 6th day of #PillarOfDefense http://t.co/tdGKycIQ 67 rockets hit #Israel today
Created At: Tue Nov 20 00:03:07 +0000 2012

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Text: Hamas has been firing rockets at #Israel for over a decade. Months & years ago, rockets from #Gaza were still a regular occurence
Created At: Mon Nov 19 23:30:31 +0000 2012

Text: Video: IDF pilots wait for area to be clear of civilians before striking target http://t.co/D9K5nRGo #Gaza
Created At: Mon Nov 19 22:53:47 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO: Hamas PM Haniyeh: "We will not recognize #Israel" http://t.co/D2QqIUmf
Created At: Mon Nov 19 22:34:45 +0000 2012

Text: Why is the number of Israeli casualties so low? Read more: http://t.co/1c2BJtCo #Gaza #Israel
Created At: Mon Nov 19 22:00:25 +0000 2012

Text: 75% of children in Sderot, Israeli town bombarded by rockets, suffer from PTSD. http://t.co/ddcyt0X2 RT to show their reality
Created At: Mon Nov 19 21:16:34 +0000 201217

Text: @AbsoluteFury @deepbluesealove @sandstock @twitterapi @iResistAll We're a verified account. @IDFSpokesman, @IDFSpokeperson are fakes.
Created At: Mon Nov 19 19:55:07 +0000 2012
In Reply To: J1ng01st

Text: Today 67 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel. Overall, more than 650 rockets hit Israel in the last six days.
Created At: Mon Nov 19 19:53:45 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, a rocket fired from #Gaza was intercepted by the Iron Dome over Ashkelon. Pieces of the rocket then crashed on a school.
Created At: Mon Nov 19 18:18:40 +0000 2012

Text: Voices from the Home Front: How Israelis Live Under Fire http://t.co/DOuycSES #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Mon Nov 19 18:11:47 +0000 2012

Text: 3 days ago, Palestinian terrorists used a stadium to fire rockets to Tel Aviv & Jerusalem. We targeted site this morn. http://t.co/8nhqsC9T
Created At: Mon Nov 19 17:23:40 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO: #Israel Air Force Calls Off Airstrike When Civilians Seen Near Target in #Gaza http://t.co/x0R7nJfm
Created At: Mon Nov 19 16:43:37 +0000 2012

Text: We targeted only the 2nd floor, which is where the senior terrorists were. The rest of the building was unharmed. Direct hit confirmed.
Created At: Mon Nov 19 15:52:20 +0000 2012

Text: The senior PIJ cadre was operating in a media building. They were't there to be interviewed. They were using reporters as human shields.
Created At: Mon Nov 19 15:50:12 +0000 2012

Text: 4. Ramaz Harab, responsible for propaganda in PIJ #Gaza City Brigade, aide to Tissir Jabari, former head of Sheikh Rajuan Division
Created At: Mon Nov 19 15:37:50 +0000 2012

Text: 3. Halil Batini, PIJ senior operative, a key figure in org's long-range rocket launching operations, responsible for internal security
Created At: Mon Nov 19 15:34:09 +0000 2012

Text: 2. Tissir Mahmoud Mahmed Jabari, senior PIJ operative, responsible for training within org & approving terrorist attacks against #Israel
Created At: Mon Nov 19 15:31:56 +0000 2012

Text: 1. Baha Abu al-Ata, commndr. of PIJ #Gaza City Brigade, involved in planning attacks against #Israel, arms manufacturing, long-range rockets
Created At: Mon Nov 19 15:29:06 +0000 2012

Text: A direct hit was identified on the target. Four senior members of Palestinian Islamic Jihad were known to have been in the media building.
Created At: Mon Nov 19 15:24:05 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, the IDF targeted a cadre of senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad operatives who were hiding in a media building in #Gaza.
Created At: Mon Nov 19 15:20:15 +0000 2012

Text: Some numbers from the last 5 days: 570 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel + 307 Iron Dome interceptions = 877 rockets fired at us
Created At: Mon Nov 19 11:57:46 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, a rocket fired from #Gaza hit a house in the Israeli city of Ashkelon. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Mon Nov 19 11:35:07 +0000 2012

Text: #Hamas is firing most of its rockets from inside #Gaza City, a densely populated area. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Mon Nov 19 11:33:28 +0000 2012

Text: We continue to transfer goods & gas to #Gaza. Truckloads entered yesterday. RT if you think more people should know. http://t.co/yeWiYKxV
Created At: Mon Nov 19 10:43:05 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO - Voices from the Home Front: How Israelis Live Under Fire http://t.co/sbR3fY7D #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Mon Nov 19 10:22:17 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, a rocket fired from #Gaza hit a school in the Israeli city of Ashkelon. School was canceled in morning. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Mon Nov 19 09:39:33 +0000 2012

Text: How long is #15seconds? That's all some residents of southern #Israel have before the rocket hits. http://t.co/AWaqaHYE
Created At: Mon Nov 19 08:40:04 +0000 2012

Text: Fact: 100+ rockets fired from #Gaza have crashed back into Gaza in last 5 days. Hamas fires from civilian areas...and hits its own people.
Created At: Mon Nov 19 08:04:39 +0000 2012

Text: This is what it looks like after #Hamas fires rockets indiscriminately at a major Israeli city: http://t.co/H2YcrXDA #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Mon Nov 19 07:05:46 +0000 2012

Text: Some numbers from the last 5 days: 546 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel + 302 Iron Dome interceptions = 848 rockets fired at us
Created At: Mon Nov 19 06:44:47 +0000 2012

Text: Since the start of Operation #PillarofDefense, the IDF has targeted 1350 terror sites throughout the Gaza Strip
Created At: Mon Nov 19 05:41:32 +0000 2012

Text: Also targeted: #Hamas police HQs, several rocket launching squads in the action of firing, buildings owned by chief operatives
Created At: Mon Nov 19 05:18:48 +0000 2012

Text: Targeted overnight in #Gaza: Underground rocket launchers, terror tunnels, training bases, #Hamas command posts&weapon storage facilities
Created At: Mon Nov 19 05:15:57 +0000 2012

Text: .@ColRichardKemp: "The use of the civilian population by #Hamas is undoubtedly a war crime" http://t.co/UvpUZy68 #Gaza
Created At: Mon Nov 19 04:27:34 +0000 2012

Text: Video: Compilation of Palestinian terrorist groups launching rockets from #Gaza into #Israel. All from populated areas. http://t.co/Z48llEAR
Created At: Mon Nov 19 04:27:09 +0000 2012

Text: @misslenabadr Tweeted from a fake account impersonating the IDF.
Created At: Mon Nov 19 03:59:06 +0000 2012
In Reply To: misslenabadr

Text: Think #Hamas is just a political party? Think again. http://t.co/iqLbyY4G #Gaza
Created At: Mon Nov 19 03:32:06 +0000 2012

Text: Fact: Hamas is blacklisted as a terrorist group by #Australia. http://t.co/6F9tJ2ef #Gaza
Created At: Mon Nov 19 02:44:20 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas Charter: "#Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it"
http://t.co/G9gSG0P7 #Gaza
Created At: Mon Nov 19 02:05:35 +0000 2012

Text: Photo: Israeli children and parents sleeping in a bomb shelter in Ashkelon yesterday. Photo by Dima
Vazinovich http://t.co/LvIMhS8e
Created At: Mon Nov 19 01:37:45 +0000 2012

Text: #US Dept of State: Hamas is a terrorist organization. http://t.co/THzqn58k #Gaza
Created At: Mon Nov 19 00:58:31 +0000 2012

Text: Video: Today, #Gaza terrorists targeted Ashdod again. This happened 2 days ago https://t.co/bddSspKo
Created At: Mon Nov 19 00:26:42 +0000 2012

Text: Former Commander of British Forces in Afghanistan: IDF protects civilian rights http://t.co/UvpUZy68
@ColRichardKemp #Gaza
Created At: Sun Nov 18 23:40:33 +0000 2012

Text: 'Harmless' rockets? Staggering number of kids in southern #Israel have PTSD http://t.co/08cplAUp #Gaza
Created At: Sun Nov 18 23:12:33 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas leader: "To hell with you all" after German Chancellor Merkel called Hamas to recognize #Israel, 2006
http://t.co/giTbaeoL #Gaza
Created At: Sun Nov 18 22:56:34 +0000 2012

Text: Video: Here's a recap of 5th day of #PillarOfDefense http://t.co/YrycdGRq 105 rockets hit #Israel today
Created At: Sun Nov 18 22:28:19 +0000 2012

Text: Fact: Hamas is defined as a terrorist group by USA, EU, Canada, Australia, #Israel, Japan & others. #Gaza
Created At: Sun Nov 18 22:02:10 +0000 2012

Text: Update: Iron Dome just intercepted 3 more rockets fired from #Gaza aimed at major Israeli population centers
Created At: Sun Nov 18 21:20:46 +0000 2012

Text: Our goal is one: improving the reality of life for Israeli civilians #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Sun Nov 18 21:03:47 +0000 2012

Text: And once again, #Hamas has made a number of extraordinary claims in the past day. Let's go through some of them: http://t.co/pkX5JFjh
Created At: Sun Nov 18 19:34:36 +0000 2012

Text: Some numbers: 76 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel + 38 Iron Dome interceptions = 114 rockets fired at us just today
Created At: Sun Nov 18 18:57:25 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO - Watch an IDF officer explain why we ensure the passage of supplies from #Israel to #Gaza: http://t.co/PTfjEqH5
Created At: Sun Nov 18 18:02:41 +0000 2012

Text: @JonDonnison 76 rockets fired from Gaza hit Israel today. 37 rockets fired from Gaza were intercepted by the Iron Dome today.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 16:57:34 +0000 2012
In Reply To: JonDonnison

Text: Breaking: A few minutes ago, the Iron Dome intercepted a rocket fired from Gaza toward Tel Aviv. City residents ran for shelter after siren.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 16:48:33 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO: Terrorists put an underground launch site next to a mosque. We targeted the site. The mosque was unharmed. http://t.co/TEqTnwNU
Created At: Sun Nov 18 15:22:49 +0000 2012

Text: Fact: 99 rockets fired from #Gaza have crashed back into Gaza in the last 4 days. Hamas fires from civilian areas...and hits its own people.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 14:26:06 +0000 2012

Text: Some numbers from the last 4 days: 544 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel + 302 Iron Dome interceptions = 846 rockets fired at us
Created At: Sun Nov 18 14:24:24 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, a rocket fired from #Gaza hit the Israeli town of Ofakim, directly hitting a car. Reports of injuries. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Sun Nov 18 14:14:50 +0000 2012

Text: Check out this compilation of Palestinian terrorist groups launching rockets at #Israel from populated areas in #Gaza: http://t.co/Z48llEAR
Created At: Sun Nov 18 13:23:38 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO - IDF Pinpoint Strike on #Hamas Operational Communications Infrastructure in #Gaza http://t.co/N0Sar2Zm
Created At: Sun Nov 18 12:58:30 +0000 2012

Text: Advice to reporters in #Gaza, just like any person in Gaza: For your own safety, stay away from #Hamas positions and operatives.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 12:28:25 +0000 2012

Text: If Hamas commanders in #Gaza can communicate with each other, then they can attack us. This is the capability that we targeted.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 12:17:15 +0000 2012

Text: This is what we mean by precision strikes in #Gaza. We targeted a specific point on the building. We did not target any other floors.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 12:14:13 +0000 2012

Text: Site 2: Hamas comms equipment on building where several international news orgs are located. Roof antenna hit - rest of building untargeted.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 11:44:19 +0000 2012

Text: Site 1: Hamas comms center, which was in civilian building. IDF only targeted devices on roof & left Hamas offices on 8th floor untouched.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 11:42:04 +0000 2012

Text: The following are a series of tweets about the IDF targeting of Hamas communications centers in Gaza last night.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 11:37:25 +0000 2012

Text: A rocket fired from #Gaza fell near a kindergarten in Ashkelon a few minutes ago. It's a good thing that school was canceled for the day.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 10:22:07 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas' strategy is simple: Use civilians as human shields. Fire rockets from residential areas. Store weapons in mosques. Hide in hospitals.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 10:09:28 +0000 2012

Text: Fact: We coordinated the transfer of 124 trucks of goods & gas to #Gaza today, including medical supplies & dairy products.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 09:59:40 +0000 2012

Text: Minutes ago, the IDF targeted the site in Gaza from where the rocket was fired at Tel Aviv.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 09:39:15 +0000 2012

Text: When the siren sounded earlier, everyone ran for cover. Our photographer took this photo on a train. #IsraelUnderFire http://t.co/rX9WTn5j
Created At: Sun Nov 18 09:31:52 +0000 2012

Text: Update: The Iron Dome intercepted the rocket fired from #Gaza toward Tel Aviv a few minutes ago. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Sun Nov 18 08:42:20 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: Rocket sirens heard in Tel Aviv. Stay tuned for updates.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 08:31:46 +0000 2012

Text: The sites that we targeted overnight were all positively identified by precise intelligence over the course of months.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 06:04:48 +0000 2012

Text: For a summary of IDF activity overnight: http://t.co/1hXChmAY #Gaza
Created At: Sun Nov 18 05:35:50 +0000 2012

Text: Correction: Overnight, a communications antenna was targeted, not a communications facility.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 05:30:49 +0000 2012

Text: Targeted overnight in #Gaza: Hamas' Saraya primary training&command base, communications facility, underground rocket launchers & operatives
Created At: Sun Nov 18 05:17:41 +0000 2012

Text: @bartonbickle Iron Dome system is activated only when rockets are aimed at major civilian population centers.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 04:20:34 +0000 2012
In Reply To: bartonbickle

Text: In last four days, nearly 500 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel - another 267 were intercepted by the Iron Dome system.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 04:16:44 +0000 2012

Text: Video recap of the fourth day of fighting. https://t.co/mw0uq2dW 5 Israeli civilians injured today
Created At: Sun Nov 18 03:20:50 +0000 2012

Text: This missile means #Hamas' rockets can reach over 3.5 million Israelis. http://t.co/9Rr9se55 Like the one aimed at #TLV today
Created At: Sun Nov 18 02:57:19 +0000 2012

Text: Photo: Iron Dome missile being launched to intercept a rocket from #Gaza. Same system to intercept today's #TLV missile http://t.co/CsLl9LFc
Created At: Sun Nov 18 02:35:39 +0000 2012

Text: @RAULBULLA2 For updates in Spanish, follow @FDIonline
Created At: Sun Nov 18 01:59:00 +0000 2012
In Reply To: RAULBULLA2

Text: Short while ago, Israeli Navy targeted several #Hamas terror sites in the #Gaza Strip.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 01:05:51 +0000 2012

Text: Video: These are the kind of underground rocket launchers the IDF has been targeting in the past few days. http://t.co/sZ04Pl0P
Created At: Sun Nov 18 01:02:32 +0000 2012

Text: When IDF targeted house of #Hamas military chief, secondary explosions belied massive amounts of ammo stored there http://t.co/Bd2NK2s5
Created At: Sun Nov 18 00:55:04 +0000 2012

Text: #Hamas has a long history of misinformation. Let's take a look at yesterday's most recent examples http://t.co/XTnJmlto #Gaza
Created At: Sun Nov 18 00:48:10 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, the IDF targeted two smuggling tunnels belonging to terrorist groups in the #Gaza Strip.
Created At: Sun Nov 18 00:00:27 +0000 2012

Text: Interactive map: 3.5 million Israelis are at risk due to #Hamas rocket fire http://t.co/kWGQgMer #IsraelUnderFire via @WashingtonPost
Created At: Sat Nov 17 23:34:44 +0000 2012

Text: Video: Here's a recap of the fourth day of #PillarOfDefense http://t.co/48wAfCqC #Gaza
Created At: Sat Nov 17 23:17:53 +0000 2012

Text: Today's rocket aimed at Tel-Aviv proves it: over 3.5 million Israelis are under fire. #IsraelUnderFire http://t.co/4vw2ZwxB
Created At: Sat Nov 17 22:59:05 +0000 2012

Text: Terrorist groups in #Gaza have been firing rockets at Israelis for more than a decade. In last 12 years, over 12,000 rockets hit #Israel
Created At: Sat Nov 17 21:59:40 +0000 2012

Text: Video: Rocket fired from #Gaza striking the city of Ashdod, filmed yesterday. http://t.co/XhZDGhjW This has been going on for 12 years.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 21:18:22 +0000 2012

Text: GOC Southern Command Maj. Gen. Russo: "Most of #Gaza terror groups' weapon arsenal is hidden in civilian homes"
Created At: Sat Nov 17 20:39:55 +0000 2012

Text: Video: These are the tactics #Hamas uses in the #Gaza Strip http://t.co/ARzvs3vf
Created At: Sat Nov 17 20:16:48 +0000 2012

Text: Video: #15seconds to save your life. RT this to show what Israelis are experiencing: http://t.co/2hizSG6a #Gaza
Created At: Sat Nov 17 19:29:09 +0000 2012

Text: Since Nov 14, Iron Dome intercepted over 240 rockets fired at major Israeli population centers, including #Israel's biggest city, #TLV
Created At: Sat Nov 17 18:36:06 +0000 2012

Text: Once again, #Hamas has made a number of extraordinary claims in the past day. Let's go through some of them: http://t.co/nbqjE9go
Created At: Sat Nov 17 18:07:59 +0000 2012

Text: Some numbers from the last 3 days: 492 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel + 245 Iron Dome interceptions = 737 rockets fired at us
Created At: Sat Nov 17 17:29:22 +0000 2012

Text: What kinds of weapons has #Hamas been trying to smuggle into #Gaza in recent years? Video: http://t.co/n3KzhNXy
Created At: Sat Nov 17 16:53:21 +0000 2012

Text: This morning, the IDF targeted Mohammed Kaleb, a senior member of #Hamas' air defense unit in #Gaza.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 16:42:10 +0000 2012

Text: A short while ago, the IDF targeted a senior #Hamas operative in #Gaza who was in charge of the group's weapons smuggling operations.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 16:40:16 +0000 2012

Text: Watch this video of an IDF pinpoint strike earlier today on a #Hamas commander's explosives-laden house in #Gaza: http://t.co/DUjoRZWx
Created At: Sat Nov 17 15:28:11 +0000 2012

Text: Video: The Fajr-5 rocket in Hamas' arsenal threatens millions of Israelis http://t.co/smsop1nv #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Sat Nov 17 15:06:09 +0000 2012

Text: The Iron Dome battery that intercepted the rocket heading to the Tel Aviv area moments ago was the same battery deployed earlier today.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 14:59:49 +0000 2012

Text: Update: The rocket fired from Gaza toward the Tel Aviv area was intercepted by the Iron Dome. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Sat Nov 17 14:49:47 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: Rocket siren sounds in Tel Aviv. Stay tuned for updates.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 14:36:27 +0000 2012

Text: Thanks to our followers worldwide for sharing our infographics. Let's see how many RTs you can get for this one... http://t.co/s50rb1fI
Created At: Sat Nov 17 14:17:35 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO - Hamas has made a number of extraordinary claims in recent days. Let's go through some of them: http://t.co/p5eruZve
Created At: Sat Nov 17 13:41:08 +0000 2012

Text: Some numbers from last 3 days: 410 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel + 230 Iron Dome interceptions = 640 rockets fired at us.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 13:08:22 +0000 2012

Text: For our native Hebrew speakers, don't forget to follow our official Twitter feed in Hebrew for updates: @idfonline
Created At: Sat Nov 17 12:44:24 +0000 2012

Text: BREAKING: A few minutes ago, 4 rockets fired from #Gaza struck Ashdod: 1 on a house, 1 on a car, 1 near a kindergarten & 1 in an open area.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 11:33:51 +0000 2012

Text: Have you seen our Tumblr? It's here: http://t.co/DCCHGnH5
Created At: Sat Nov 17 11:23:40 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas Fajr-5 Missiles and UAV Targets Severely Damaged http://t.co/L2USjSBN
Created At: Sat Nov 17 11:18:23 +0000 2012

Text: When #Hamas members need a place to hide, they run to hospitals. Hamas uses civilians as human shields. http://t.co/dn3tij76
Created At: Sat Nov 17 09:44:25 +0000 2012

Text: 5th Iron Dome battery now deployed. It's in greater Tel Aviv area. Since Nov 14, Iron Dome interceptors hit 90% of their targets in sky.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 08:51:18 +0000 2012

Text: 3 IDF soldiers in southern #Israel were injured by a rocket fired from #Gaza a short while ago. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Sat Nov 17 08:33:08 +0000 2012

Text: Targeted overnight in #Gaza: Ismail Haniyeh's HQ, Hamas Ministry of Interior, police compound, training facility, rocket launching squads
Created At: Sat Nov 17 07:11:08 +0000 2012

Text: PHOTO: This is the house in Kiryat Malachi damaged by direct rocket hit two days ago. 3 civilians were killed. http://t.co/ka8cz088
Created At: Sat Nov 17 06:49:19 +0000 2012

Text: Mortar fired by #Gaza terrorists damaged electricity cable in southern #Israel. As a result, power is out in areas of northern Gaza Strip.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 05:13:17 +0000 2012

Text: In 2012 alone, terror organizations in #Gaza have fired over one thousand rockets into #Israel. It's been going on for the past 12 years.
Created At: Sat Nov 17 04:45:06 +0000 2012

Text: Video: The Fajr-5 missile has a range of 75km - this means #Hamas places 3.5 million Israelis at risk http://t.co/9Rr9se55 #Gaza
Created At: Sat Nov 17 04:32:35 +0000 2012

Text: Over the past 6 hours, the IDF targeted 85 more terror sites. This is how accurate the we have to be. http://t.co/8r2hi3Oi
Created At: Sat Nov 17 03:53:29 +0000 2012

Text: Video: Aerial footage showing the #Hamas UAV program destroyed by the IDF http://t.co/05zaicsY #Gaza
Created At: Sat Nov 17 03:10:15 +0000 2012

Text: The Israeli Experience: Photos documenting the reality of Israeli citizens since Nov 14 https://t.co/TDz8iChV #IsraelUnderFire #Gaza
Created At: Sat Nov 17 02:26:16 +0000 2012

Text: Infographic: With the Fajr-5, #Hamas' rockets now threaten over 3.5 million citizens in #Israel http://t.co/YMlJRrUf
Created At: Sat Nov 17 01:53:46 +0000 2012

Text: PHOTO: Damage caused to home that suffered direct rocket hit in Be'er Tuvia Regional Council yesterday http://t.co/hLXss4Iw
Created At: Sat Nov 17 01:27:30 +0000 2012

Text: The #Hamas' Fajr-5 missile can reach 3.5 million Israelis http://t.co/9Rr9se55 Imagine the entire population of #LA under threat
Created At: Sat Nov 17 00:35:50 +0000 2012

Text: Recap of major #Hamas targets damaged by the IDF over the past day: http://t.co/ywakeLXv #Gaza
Created At: Sat Nov 17 00:09:42 +0000 2012

Text: In case you missed it - today terrorists in #Gaza fired rockets aimed at 2 major cities, Tel-Aviv and the Israeli capital, Jerusalem
Created At: Fri Nov 16 23:44:03 +0000 2012

Text: @brindusab1 We've experienced some technical difficulties but it should be up now.
Created At: Fri Nov 16 23:10:09 +0000 2012
In Reply To: BrindusaB1

Text: VIDEO: Here's a recap of the third day of #PillarOfDefense http://t.co/6hzHGIDr #Gaza
Created At: Fri Nov 16 23:02:53 +0000 2012

Text: How does #Hamas acquire its weapons? http://t.co/cyABk1iG #Gaza
Created At: Fri Nov 16 22:18:56 +0000 2012

Text: We've targeted 2 senior Hamas operatives: Muhammad Abu-Jalal, company commander in central #Gaza, & Khaled Shah'yer, chief missile operator
Created At: Fri Nov 16 21:34:27 +0000 2012

Text: PHOTO: Kids running to shelter during a siren in Kiryat Malachi, where 3 civilians were killed by a rocket yesterday http://t.co/OHAXD6sM
Created At: Fri Nov 16 21:24:32 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO: The Fajr-5 missile, a primary target of the IDF's air strikes. http://t.co/9Rr9se55 Range of 75km - millions under threat
Created At: Fri Nov 16 20:04:34 +0000 2012

Text: Update: 97 rockets fired from Gaza hit #Israel today (388 since Nov. 14), and Iron Dome intercepted 99 rockets #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Fri Nov 16 19:49:36 +0000 2012

Text: Photo: IDF CoS Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz & senior commanders in a situation assessment regarding Operation #PillarOfDefense http://t.co/PHdKRmqh
Created At: Fri Nov 16 19:30:31 +0000 2012

Text: The IDF has destroyed Hamas' nascent UAV program. Watch an aerial video showing what that program once looked like: http://t.co/05zaicsY
Created At: Fri Nov 16 18:52:49 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO - Hamas has made a number of extraordinary claims in recent days. Let's go through some of them: http://t.co/32PNFZNG
Created At: Fri Nov 16 17:43:46 +0000 2012

Text: For a recap of today's events: http://t.co/1hXChmAY
Created At: Fri Nov 16 17:00:27 +0000 2012

Text: During Operation Pillar of Defense, the IDF has called off airstrikes when civilians were spotted near a target. http://t.co/ATeCXdbQ
Created At: Fri Nov 16 16:19:00 +0000 2012

Text: Photo from the field: IDF Chief of Staff Benny Gantz & senior commanders discuss #PillarOfDefense in southern #Israel. http://t.co/jqaDw9bF
Created At: Fri Nov 16 15:54:13 +0000 2012

Text: Confirmed: A rocket fired from Gaza struck outside Jerusalem, Israel's capital city. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Fri Nov 16 15:11:35 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: Sirens heard in Jerusalem. Stay tuned for updates. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Fri Nov 16 14:57:43 +0000 2012

Text: During Operation Pillar of Defense, IDF has targeted 600 terror sites in Gaza, including underground rocket launchers & infrastructure.
Created At: Fri Nov 16 14:21:28 +0000 2012

Text: The Iron Dome has intercepted 86 rockets fired from #Gaza into #Israel today. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Fri Nov 16 14:02:51 +0000 2012

Text: A glimpse of life in southern #Israel - A rocket fired from #Gaza struck a family's backyard today. #IsraelUnderFire http://t.co/1rRTWZ4V
Created At: Fri Nov 16 13:35:54 +0000 2012

Text: 3 IDF soldiers in southern #Israel were injured by a rocket fired from #Gaza a short while ago. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Fri Nov 16 13:24:51 +0000 2012

Text: Update: No rocket hit Tel Aviv. Fact: 340 rockets have hit Israel since Operation Pillar of Defense began. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Fri Nov 16 12:40:40 +0000 2012

Text: What would you do if rockets were striking your country? RT if you agree that #Israel has the right to self-defense. http://t.co/mNfY0Smx
Created At: Fri Nov 16 12:40:10 +0000 2012

Text: What would you do if rockets were striking your country? RT if you agree that #Israel has the right to self-defense. http://t.co/OvnPKErQ
Created At: Fri Nov 16 12:40:07 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: Sirens heard in Tel Aviv. Stay tuned for updates.
Created At: Fri Nov 16 11:41:04 +0000 2012

Text: Afternoon update: 67 rockets fired from Gaza hit #Israel today (335 since Nov. 14). Iron Dome intercepted 55 rockets today. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Fri Nov 16 10:29:24 +0000 2012

Text: Update: Over the past two hours, more than 50 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Fri Nov 16 08:53:36 +0000 2012

Text: For updates on #PillarOfDefense, with photos & videos all in one place, check out this blog post: http://t.co/caYYddAW
Created At: Fri Nov 16 08:19:37 +0000 2012

Text: Since #PillarOfDefense began: 500 terrorist sites targeted by IDF (250 last night), 300+ rockets hit #Israel, 100+ Iron Dome interceptions
Created At: Fri Nov 16 08:04:58 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO - IDF targets underground rocket launchers in Gaza. See the secondary explosions? That means we hit explosives. http://t.co/BinbcLdJ
Created At: Fri Nov 16 06:57:33 +0000 2012

Text: As part of operation #PillarOfDefense, the #IDF will begin recruiting 16,000 reservists. #Gaza
Created At: Fri Nov 16 06:02:53 +0000 2012

Text: Correction: 300 rockets fired from #Gaza hit Israel.
Created At: Fri Nov 16 05:30:27 +0000 2012

Text: Ever wondered what life under fire feels like? This is has been the life of a southern Israeli for the past 12 yrs. http://t.co/VL9kvTvf
Created At: Fri Nov 16 03:51:44 +0000 2012

Text: Over 420 rockets fired from the #Gaza Strip hit southern #Israel in the past two days.
Created At: Fri Nov 16 02:58:17 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas PM Haniyeh: "Hamas will lead intifada after intifada until we liberate Palestine" http://t.co/5uNEavHo How is this not terrorism?
Created At: Fri Nov 16 02:51:37 +0000 2012

Text: Before action, the IDF disperses warning leaflets calling all civilians to evacuate the area. This happened yesterday: http://t.co/hNVdVmWs
Created At: Fri Nov 16 02:29:26 +0000 2012

Text: Since the start of the operation on Nov 14, over 300 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel, while Iron Dome intercepted an additional 130
Created At: Fri Nov 16 01:54:22 +0000 2012

Text: Deputy #Hamas Minister: "The Jews, just like a cancer, operate via dormant cells, until the body collapses" http://t.co/Jk4wz23D …
Created At: Fri Nov 16 01:40:50 +0000 2012

Text: Here's how #Hamas shoots its rockets at Israeli civilians: http://t.co/ohE9UtOi Think how many civilians are at risk in that neighborhood.
Created At: Fri Nov 16 01:13:46 +0000 2012

Text: @DiamondbackMac The blog experienced technical difficulties, but is now back online.
Created At: Fri Nov 16 01:02:20 +0000 2012
In Reply To: DiamondbackMac

Text: VIDEO: Since 2000, Israelis suffered +12,000 rockets fired from #Gaza. This is their life for the past 12 years. http://t.co/BIFaMV6H
Created At: Fri Nov 16 00:32:59 +0000 2012

Text: Contrary to #Hamas claims, no Israeli drone was downed. #Gaza
Created At: Fri Nov 16 00:23:39 +0000 2012

Text: Video: #15seconds is a long time... but enough to save your life? This is what Israelis are experiencing now: http://t.co/2hizSG6a #Gaza
Created At: Thu Nov 15 23:53:57 +0000 2012

Text: What is 'human shield'? Hamas's way of endangering #Gaza residents and coming out clean http://t.co/btPwT40O
Created At: Thu Nov 15 23:21:44 +0000 2012

Text: 15 seconds can be a long time. Unless it's all the time you have to save your life. http://t.co/2hizSG6a
Created At: Thu Nov 15 22:54:50 +0000 2012

Text: Did you know? In the last decade, over 12,800 rockets fired from #Gaza exploded in #Israel RT to show #IsraelUnderFire.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 22:36:36 +0000 2012

Text: Since start of the operation: 300 terrorist sites targeted in #Gaza. +300 rockets struck #Israel. +130 missiles intercepted by Iron Dome
Created At: Thu Nov 15 22:15:54 +0000 2012

Text: For a recap of the second day of #PillarOfDefense, check out the updating post: http://t.co/caYYddAW #Hamas #Gaza
Created At: Thu Nov 15 22:03:02 +0000 2012

Text: Video: IDF targeting rocket launching sites in #Gaza http://t.co/hgYvLiuY #Hamas
Created At: Thu Nov 15 21:32:14 +0000 2012

Text: More than 1,000 rockets fired from #Gaza hit #Israel in 2012 alone http://t.co/LqPfjaTj
Created At: Thu Nov 15 20:32:53 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas has turned #Gaza into a frontal base for #Iran, terrorizing residents of Israel&forcing them to live under unbearable circumstances
Created At: Thu Nov 15 20:08:49 +0000 2012

Text: During the past hour, the IDF targeted approx. 70 underground medium range rocket launching sites in #Gaza. Direct hits were confirmed.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 20:03:09 +0000 2012

Text: Terrorist groups in Gaza fire rockets from residential areas. Would you raise your child in such a neighborhood? http://t.co/cVSIfV8L #Hamas
Created At: Thu Nov 15 19:28:01 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas has suffered a severe blow to its underground infrastructure, but it still maintains a capability to fire long-range rockets.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 18:47:14 +0000 2012

Text: To see our videos and infographics in one place, check out our new Tumblr http://t.co/DCCHGnH5
Created At: Thu Nov 15 18:05:17 +0000 2012

Text: This is Hamas' idea of a better world: "Death to the Jews and America." RT so that everybody knows the facts. http://t.co/rxWg3IcN
Created At: Thu Nov 15 17:55:39 +0000 2012

Text: The numbers since yesterday: 250 terrorist sites targeted by IDF in #Gaza. 274 rockets have struck #Israel. 105 Iron Dome interceptions.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 17:48:44 +0000 2012

Text: Since yesterday, 274 rockets fired from #Gaza have hit #Israel.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 17:29:19 +0000 2012

Text: A few minutes ago, sirens in Tel Aviv sent residents running for shelter. We can confirm that no rockets struck in the area.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 17:09:50 +0000 2012

Text: For updates on #PillarOfDefense, with photos & videos all in one place, check out this blog post: http://t.co/caYYddAW
Created At: Thu Nov 15 16:26:04 +0000 2012

Text: This is how Hamas sees Israel. http://t.co/KS3Zo5Lt
Created At: Thu Nov 15 16:19:25 +0000 2012
Name: IDF
Screen Name: IDFSpokesperson
Source: TweetDeck
Id: 2.69112373209E+17

Text: Senior Hamas members & terror operatives are fleeing from the IDF. They still have the ability to attack. We'll continue to act decisively.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 15:37:11 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: A rocket fired from Gaza struck an open area near Rishon LeZion, a city with more than 200,000 people. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Thu Nov 15 15:12:25 +0000 2012

Text: Fact: 14 Palestinians in Gaza who were in need of medical treatment entered Israel today.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 14:43:58 +0000 2012

Text: Nuestra nueva página de FB https://t.co/YSNAp1Ak y Twitter @FDIonline. En français sur FB
https://t.co/zS3G3Y7T et sur Twitter @Tsahal_IDF
Created At: Thu Nov 15 14:08:32 +0000 2012

Text: Our latest count: 245 rockets have been fired from Gaza into Israel since yesterday. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Thu Nov 15 13:53:08 +0000 2012

Text: Good morning to our friends in #America. While you were sleeping, 3 Israelis were killed when a rocket hit
their house.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 13:41:39 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: 3 IDF soldiers injured by a rocket fired from #Gaza into #Israel. They were taken to a hospital for
treatment. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Thu Nov 15 13:22:35 +0000 2012

Text: Since yesterday, the Iron Dome has intercepted more than 80 rockets fired from #Gaza into #Israel.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 13:05:57 +0000 2012

Text: As part of effort to minimize civilian casualties in Gaza, IDF dropped 1000s of leaflets in Arabic with this
message. http://t.co/yxux0GdI
Created At: Thu Nov 15 12:43:52 +0000 2012

Text: Here's a short clip of multiple rockets being fired at #Israel from civilian areas in #Gaza http://t.co/8FFoI4eY
#IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Thu Nov 15 11:50:42 +0000 2012

Text: Photo: IDF Chief of Staff Benny Gantz visited IDF Southern Command today and met with soldiers in the
field. http://t.co/PTbqs2ae
Created At: Thu Nov 15 11:30:15 +0000 2012

Text: 196 rockets fired from #Gaza have hit #Israel since Operation #PillarOfDefense began yesterday. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Thu Nov 15 11:03:54 +0000 2012

Text: @theaggressor These are the ways the IDF minimizes harm to Palestinian civilians http://t.co/0x3mCDNp
Created At: Thu Nov 15 10:36:42 +0000 2012
In Reply To: theaggressor

Text: VIDEO - IDF drops leaflets warning Palestinian civilians to "avoid being present in the vicinity of #Hamas operatives" http://t.co/u4Vba6Ut
Created At: Thu Nov 15 10:22:44 +0000 2012

Text: This is 2nd day of #PillarOfDefense. Here's a video of the #Israel Air Force targeting a rocket warehouse in #Gaza. http://t.co/VOgMjBjd
Created At: Thu Nov 15 09:58:20 +0000 2012

Text: What gives #Israel the right to defend itself? Read our answers and then RT: http://t.co/rxWg3IcN #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Thu Nov 15 09:53:06 +0000 2012

Text: 135 rockets have been fired at #Israel from #Gaza in the last 11 hours alone. What would you do if your country was under attack?
Created At: Thu Nov 15 09:22:57 +0000 2012

Text: @y_alkhalidi We guarantee that the hundreds of rockets hitting #Israel since March have all sounded similar.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 09:13:16 +0000 2012
In Reply To: Y_Alkhalidi

Text: Since beginning of #PillarOfDefense, the IDF has targeted 156 terror sites in the #Gaza Strip.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 09:11:52 +0000 2012

Text: For updates on #PillarOfDefense, with photos & videos all in one place, check out this blog post: http://t.co/UjLmR9Ot…
Created At: Thu Nov 15 08:56:45 +0000 2012

Text: The reality of life in southern #Israel. RT and spread the truth. #IsraelUnderFire http://t.co/3q6gdgRP
Created At: Thu Nov 15 08:28:23 +0000 2012

Text: How does the IDF attempt to minimize harm to Palestinian civilians in #Gaza? Read our answers and then RT: http://t.co/4H8xWxcc
Created At: Thu Nov 15 07:36:28 +0000 2012

Text: The IDF is committed to ensure the safety of Israeli civilians. Hamas is responsible for every rocket fired from #Gaza. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Thu Nov 15 07:18:41 +0000 2012

Text: Correction: Three Israeli civilians killed by the rocket fired from #Gaza. #IsraelUnderFire
Created At: Thu Nov 15 07:17:28 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: Four Israeli civilians killed by rocket fired from #Gaza.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 07:14:08 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: Rocket from #Gaza hits house in southern #Israel. 133 rockets fired during the last 24 hours.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 06:58:28 +0000 2012

Text: Good morning. 132 rockets were fired from #Gaza at Israeli civilians during the last 24 hours. #PillarOfDefense
Created At: Thu Nov 15 06:55:00 +0000 2012

Text: Since midnight, the Iron Dome has intercepted 13 rockets fired from #Gaza into #Israel.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 06:31:50 +0000 2012

Text: Photo: Arabic leaflet dropped over #Gaza urges civilians to "avoid being present in the vicinity of #Hamas operatives" http://t.co/522Ywr7A
Created At: Thu Nov 15 06:20:38 +0000 2012

Text: Short while ago, IDF dispersed leaflets above the #Gaza strip http://t.co/hNVdVmWs
Created At: Thu Nov 15 05:34:54 +0000 2012

Text: This is what kids here wake up to. Good morning from southern #Israel. http://t.co/7Cb9P8eZ #Gaza
Created At: Thu Nov 15 04:50:58 +0000 2012

Text: 1 million citizens in #Israel slept in bomb shelters tonight, barraged by dozens of rockets from #Gaza. http://t.co/LqPfjaTj
Created At: Thu Nov 15 04:37:31 +0000 2012

Text: Since the start of the operation yesterday, IDF forces have struck 105 terror targets in the #Gaza Strip. #Hamas
Created At: Thu Nov 15 03:47:14 +0000 2012

Text: Over 50 rockets fired from #Gaza hit Israel since yesterday -- more than 800 rockets in 2012 alone. RT this. #Hamas
Created At: Thu Nov 15 03:45:29 +0000 2012

Text: Fact: #Hamas is defined as a terrorist group by USA, EU, Canada, Australia, #Israel, Japan & others. http://t.co/hOJiNOMG #Gaza
Created At: Thu Nov 15 02:58:53 +0000 2012

Text: Since beginning of the operation, the IDF has targeted ~100 terror sites in the #Gaza Strip.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 02:29:57 +0000 2012

Text: For live updates in French, follow @Tsahal_IDF. For updates in Spanish: @FDIonline
Created At: Thu Nov 15 02:26:51 +0000 2012

Text: #Hamas cleric: "Annihilation of the Jews here in Palestine is one of the most splendid blessings for Palestine." http://t.co/CoSUiE2r #Gaza
Created At: Thu Nov 15 02:01:31 +0000 2012

Text: Fact: People in southern Israel have 15 seconds to run to shelter every time a rocket alarm sounds http://t.co/tuzu82y0
Created At: Thu Nov 15 01:15:58 +0000 2012

Text: So far, Iron Dome system successfully intercepted 28 rockets fired from #Gaza at major Israeli population centers.
Created At: Thu Nov 15 00:41:13 +0000 2012

Text: Infographic: #Hamas' rockets are threatening more than one million citizens in #Israel. http://t.co/cuQywcAz
Created At: Thu Nov 15 00:29:40 +0000 2012

Text: @malkinsonw Proven false - part of #Hamas propaganda efforts.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 23:33:23 +0000 2012
In Reply To: MalkinsonW

Text: Tonight, more than 1 million Israelis are going to sleep in bomb shelters. This operation will bring a better tomorrow.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 23:29:43 +0000 2012

Text: @tbombtrev Here's all the info about the Iron Dome system: http://t.co/MNFb3ETA
Created At: Wed Nov 14 23:14:41 +0000 2012
In Reply To: tbombtrev

Text: @CSchickova No missiles were fired on Tel-Aviv. It's part of #Hamas propaganda.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 23:08:11 +0000 2012
In Reply To: CSchickova

Text: Clarification: No rockets were fired from #Gaza on Tel-Aviv. #Hamas propaganda is constantly spreading misinformation.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 22:58:48 +0000 2012

Text: Iron Dome system has so far successfully intercepted 25 rockets fired from #Gaza, aimed at major Israeli cities. #Hamas
Created At: Wed Nov 14 22:22:04 +0000 2012

Text: #Hamas is terrorizing Israeli civilians - over 760 rockets fired from #Gaza hit Israel in 2012 alone. http://t.co/lECutF0t
Created At: Wed Nov 14 22:12:05 +0000 2012

Text: For updates on #PillarOfDefense, with photos & videos all in one place, check out this blog post: http://t.co/caYYddAW
Created At: Wed Nov 14 20:38:57 +0000 2012

Text: Photos from #PillarOfDefense in Gaza will be uploaded here throughout the operation: http://t.co/LnO7o3rG #Israel
Created At: Wed Nov 14 20:18:57 +0000 2012

Text: Hamas continues to try to kill Israeli civilians. So far today, the Iron Dome has intercepted 17 rockets fired from #Gaza.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 20:06:50 +0000 2012

Text: Aerial photo: Long-range rocket launch site in Zeitoun neighborhood, meters away from mosque & playground #Hamas http://t.co/xes7g5hF
Created At: Wed Nov 14 19:55:15 +0000 2012

Text: Rocket fired from #Gaza hits shopping center in major southern Israeli city. #Hamas
Created At: Wed Nov 14 19:45:32 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO: Hamas hides Fajr-5 rockets, capable of endangering 3.5 million Israelis. These were targeted earlier today. http://t.co/OvrBAgO9
Created At: Wed Nov 14 19:30:37 +0000 2012

Text: @qpalestine Number of casualties is irrelevant. It doesn't make rocket fire on Israeli civilians any more acceptable.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 19:26:54 +0000 2012
In Reply To: Qpalestine

Text: Ahmed Jabari: Eliminated. http://t.co/sCnQnKkM
Created At: Wed Nov 14 19:21:44 +0000 2012

Text: In case you missed it - VIDEO - IDF Pinpoint Strike on Ahmed Jabari, Head of #Hamas Military Wing http://t.co/kqvKcvfS #PillarOfDefense
Created At: Wed Nov 14 19:12:25 +0000 2012

Text: Iron Dome successfully intercepts 13 rockets fired from the #Gaza Strip. #PillarOfDefense
Created At: Wed Nov 14 18:35:52 +0000 2012

Text: Breaking: Israeli Navy has struck terror sites in the #Gaza Strip. #PillarOfDefense
Created At: Wed Nov 14 18:33:04 +0000 2012

Text: Initial reports indicate that the Iron Dome has intercepted a number of rockets above a major Israeli city. #Gaza #PillarOfDefense
Created At: Wed Nov 14 18:25:55 +0000 2012

Text: We recommend that no Hamas operatives, whether low level or senior leaders, show their faces above ground in the days ahead.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 18:22:19 +0000 2012

Text: More than 12,000 rockets hit Israel in the past 12 years. RT if you think #Israel has the right to defend itself. http://t.co/JfQKshes
Created At: Wed Nov 14 18:06:25 +0000 2012

Text: Who is Ahmed Jabari? Read up: http://t.co/0CGVmA93 #Gaza
Created At: Wed Nov 14 17:47:16 +0000 2012

Text: VIDEO: IDF Pinpoint Strike on Ahmed Jabri, Head of #Hamas Military Wing http://t.co/kqvKcvfS #Gaza #PillarOfDefense
Created At: Wed Nov 14 17:15:36 +0000 2012

Text: The IDF has embarked on an operation against Hamas, an Iranian proxy responsible for terror attacks on Israel. #Iran #Gaza
Created At: Wed Nov 14 16:49:43 +0000 2012

Text: All options are on the table. If necessary, the IDF is ready to initiate a ground operation in Gaza.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 15:49:14 +0000 2012

Text: The IDF has embarked on Operation Pillar of Defense.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 15:45:12 +0000 2012

Text: The IDF has seriously damaged Hamas' long-range missile capabilities (40 km/25 mi range) & underground weapons storage facilities.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 15:36:00 +0000 2012

Text: Since the beginning of 2012, Palestinian terrorists in the #Gaza Strip have fired 768 rockets into #Israel.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 15:26:07 +0000 2012

Text: This IDF operation against terrorist orgs in #Gaza comes after a month of frequent rocket attacks against #Israel. http://t.co/lECutF0t
Created At: Wed Nov 14 15:18:27 +0000 2012

Text: Israelis living near the #Gaza Strip have been living under fire for the past 12 years.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 15:05:34 +0000 2012

Text: There are 2 main goals of this IDF operation: to protect Israeli civilians and to cripple the terrorist infrastructure in the #Gaza Strip.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 14:58:00 +0000 2012

Text: The first target, hit minutes ago, was Ahmed Al-Jabari, head of the #Hamas military wing:
http://t.co/qD5osfwb
Created At: Wed Nov 14 14:31:26 +0000 2012

Text: The IDF has begun a widespread campaign on terror sites & operatives in the #Gaza Strip, chief among them
#Hamas & Islamic Jihad targets.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 14:29:48 +0000 2012

Text: "All good things must come to an end" - Austere Challenge 12 exercise concluded #US #Israel
http://t.co/uTdcUTG4
Created At: Wed Nov 14 12:16:10 +0000 2012

Text: @lost_sophist For information about rockets fired from #Gaza into #Israel: http://t.co/un2y4xnf
Created At: Wed Nov 14 12:03:15 +0000 2012
In Reply To: Lost_Sophist

Text: @thesnake69 On the contrary - every air strike is clearly documented. You're welcome http://t.co/JMps6xBf
Created At: Wed Nov 14 12:02:17 +0000 2012
In Reply To: thesnake69

Text: Yesterday, IDF facilitated transfer of 8,454 tons of goods to Gaza. On Monday, border crossing was closed due
to heavy rocket fire in area.
Created At: Wed Nov 14 07:26:41 +0000 2012