



Israel testing nasty weapons in Gaza, claims Mads Gilbert

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From correspondents in Gaza

January 13, 2009 06:30am

ISRAEL is testing a new "extremely nasty" type of weapon in Gaza, two medics charged as they returned home to Norway after spending 10 days working at a hospital in the war-torn Palestinian territory.

"There's a very strong suspicion I think that Gaza is now being used as a test laboratory for new weapons," Mads Gilbert said at Oslo's Gardermoen airport, commenting on the kinds of injuries he and his colleague Erik Fosse had seen while working at the Shifa Hospital in Gaza.

The two medics, who were sent into the war zone by the pro-Palestinian aid organisation NORWAC on December 31, said they had seen clear signs that Dense Inert Metal Explosives (DIME), an experimental kind of explosive, were being used in Gaza.

"This is a new generation of very powerful small explosives that detonates with an extreme power and dissipates its power within a range of five to 10 metres," Mr Gilbert, 61, said.

"We have not seen the casualties affected directly by the bomb because they are normally torn to pieces and do not survive, but we have seen a number of very brutal amputations ... without shrapnel injuries which we strongly suspect must have been caused by the DIME weapons," he said.

The weapon "causes the tissue to be torn from the flesh. It looks very different (from a shrapnel injury). I have seen and treated a lot of different injuries for the last 30 years in different war zones, and this looks completely different", Mr Fosse, 58, said.

"If you are in the immediate (vicinity of) a DIME weapon, it's like your legs get torn off. It's an enormous pressure wave and there is no shrapnel," he explained.

Mr Gilbert also accused Israel of having used the weapon in the 2006 Lebanon war and previously in Gaza, and referred to studies showing wounds from the explosive could cause lethal forms of cancer within just four to six months.

"Israel should disclose what weapons they use and the international community should make an investigation," he said, stressing the amount of damage apparently caused by the new form of explosive.

"We are not soft-skinned when it comes to war injuries, but these amputations are really extremely nasty and for many of the patients not survivable," he said.

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