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## Lab tests verify white phosphorus in Gaza soil

Wed, 18 Feb 2009 13:23:39 GMT

**Laboratory tests conducted by a Turkish university on Gaza soil have confirmed the use of phosphorus bombs by Israel in the coastal sliwer.**

Istanbul's Yildiz Technical University conducted the tests on soil transferred by the Association of Human Rights and Solidarity for Oppressed Peoples (MAZLUM-DER).

The tests yielded results confirming the existence of white phosphorus particles in the samples, the daily *Vakit* reports.

White phosphorus, classified as a 'chemical weapon' by US intelligence, is an incendiary material that causes horrific burns, severe injuries or death when it comes in contact with humans.

During Israel's 23-day offensive in the Gaza Strip, a fierce controversy broke out over the alleged use of white phosphorus -- also known by the military as WP or Willie Pete -- by the Israeli army.

The legality of the toxic chemical agent is a matter of debate, with many groups recognizing it as an illegal weapon, while international law allows its usage solely for smoke-screening.

Israel maintains that its actions were being conducted under international laws, despite contradictory reports of the Israeli claim.

Following the laboratory results in Turkey, MAZLUM-DER filed a criminal complaint against Israel at Istanbul's Prosecutor's Office on Tuesday.

The Turkish human rights group MAZLUM-DER has also accused Israel of directly attacking civilians "with the aim of annihilating them" and employing internationally-banned weapons in the process.

"The suspects, who wanted to wipe out the Palestinian people through systematic attacks, have committed genocide and crimes against humanity," said a petition by the human rights group.

On Sunday, an international conference in Morocco called for Israeli civil and military officials to be sued for "war crimes and crimes against humanity."

Some 5,700 Iranian lawyers have also filed a compliant against 24 Israeli leaders and commanders over the alleged Israeli war crimes.

International organizations and human rights groups remain concerned over Tel Aviv's use of forbidden arms, such as depleted uranium and white phosphorus, in the Gaza war.

The 23-day Israeli onslaught on Gaza left at least 1,330 Palestinians -- including at least 460 children -- dead and thousands others injured.

MSH/JG/MD

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Note:



Israeli soldiers prepare artillery shells on January 9. The pale blue 155mm rounds, marked with the designation M825A1, are US-made white phosphorus munitions.

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