

## Israeli ground troops pull out of Gaza

by UPI

JERUSALEM -- Israeli troops Monday pulled out of Gaza, prompting Hamas to declare victory in the recent cross-border fighting in which more than 100 people died. The withdrawal from Hamas-controlled Gaza is a reversal of Sunday's recommendations by Israeli military leaders to keep up pressure, Haaretz reported. Even though ground troops left, a government spokesman said, "We will continue with our defensive actions against those who fire lethal rockets at our civilians." Hamas spokesman Taher a-Nunu told the Jerusalem Post Hamas leadership asked several Arab countries to intervene in reaching a cease-fire with Israel. He said Hamas had invited Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa to visit the Gaza Strip as a show of solidarity with the Palestinians. He said Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah II were the only Arab leaders who were actively working toward reaching a cease-fire between Hamas and Israel. A dozen Palestinians died in the Gaza Strip Sunday, some in clashes that day with Israeli soldiers and other from injuries sustained in skirmishes Saturday, Haaretz said.

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