

Olmert warns Hamas against shelling

by UPI

JERUSALEM - A day after Palestinians shelled Israel and claimed a five-month cease-fire was over, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned of a large-scale offensive.

Olmert met for three hours Wednesday with security, defense and military officials in Jerusalem, and officials from his office issued the warning statement afterward, YNetNews reported.

"Due to the sequence of events, Israel will not hesitate to take harsh steps against those attempting to harm its sovereignty by firing missiles at our territory, by attempting to hurt soldiers and through other means," the statement said.

The militant Hamas party claimed responsibility for the attacks and an attempted abduction of an Israeli soldier on Monday, Israel's Independence Day.

Meanwhile in Rome, Palestinian Authority Chairman and Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas met with Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi, the Palestine news agency Wafa reported.

At a joint news conference, Abbas said Palestinians have no choice but peace as negotiations can't work under gunfire, the report said.

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