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## Israeli army suspends officer over live fire in stone throwing incident

Xinhua

June 12, 2012 - 11:00pm

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-06/13/c\\_131650775.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-06/13/c_131650775.htm) [1]

June 13, 2012

**Media Outlet:** Xinhua

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The Israeli army on Wednesday told Xinhua it was probing a recent clash between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians in northern West Bank, in which an Israeli officer fired his rifle towards Palestinian rock-throwers without authorization.

In a Palestinian filmed and edited video about the incident, which took place along a road between the village of Nabi Salah and the settlement of Halamish on June 1, an Israel Defense Forces (IDF) officer is seen firing several warning shots from his semi-automatic rifle, apparently using live rounds, at the feet of two hooded stone-throwing youth.

The soldier, who is seen alternately advancing and retreating from his position on a small hill overlooking the two Palestinians standing on the road below, had previously thrown a stun grenade at the youth, and hurled stones back at them, in an effort to chase them off.

The youths appeared unharmed as they ran away, after the bullet impacts hit near them, raising puffs of smoke off the asphalt.

The army opened an investigation after they saw the video clip posted on YouTube website.

"Initial findings indicate the use of live fire. The involved officer has been suspended pending conclusion of the investigation," the IDF Spokesman said in a statement.

IDF standing rules of engagement allow the use of directed live fire only after non-lethal crowd-control measures such as tear gas or rubber bullets are employed, and then only after firing warning shots in the air.

The Jewish community's residents and the Palestinian villagers have been embroiled in a dispute for the last two years over the use of land and access to a spring situated between the

two towns.

Foreign nationals from pro-Palestinian groups commonly take part in the near-weekly clashes, although this is the first recorded use of live rounds by soldiers trying to disperse rioters.

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