


Journalism in their sights?

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We had our first POLIS public debate on Friday with [Sir Malcolm Rifkind](#), the BBC's [David Loyn](#) and Sky News Foreign Editor [Adrian Wells](#) discussing the state of War Reporting. It was a compelling discussion full of passion and insight which we'll be reporting in full later this week.

But one thing that Adrian Wells mentioned stood out, which shows the pressures that journalists in conflict zones now face.

"Journalists used to think that they operated in a bubble" said Adrian, "but now that bubble has been well and truly shattered and journalists are seen as combatants."

Adrian told how during the recent conflict between Israel and Hezbollah Sky News was able to show live pictures of Hezbollah Katyusha rockets being launched from southern Lebanon and then show live pictures of the same rockets landing in northern Israel. Now were Hezbollah happy to have this show of strength shown live across the world? Were the Israelis keen to have live images of the destruction wreaked on innocent communities beamed instantly around the globe? No, they most certainly were not.

The Israeli military complained in threatening terms to Sky's Israeli team that the TV pictures were effectively acting as a range-finder for Hezbollah gunners watching the coverage on their sets in southern Lebanon.

And Hezbollah officials complained in equally forceful terms to Sky's team in Lebanon that the live pictures of the rockets being fired were the perfect way for the Israelis to spot where the launch teams were and so direct their armed drones to take them out.

In a very real sense the TV live coverage was becoming part of the conflict. It's a classic example of how the new technology that brings events close to home can also raise difficult ethical and editorial issues.

More on that debate later but meanwhile don't forget that Aljazeera's Chief Investigative Correspondent Yosri Fouda is giving our first The News We Deserve lecture of this season tonight, Monday October 2nd at 6.30pm in the Old Theatre, LSE. Details on the main [POLIS](#) website.

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