



**The Meir Amit Intelligence
and Terrorism Information Center**

**News of Terrorism and the Israeli-
Palestinian Conflict
December 29, 2010 – January 4, 2011**



**Mahmoud Abbas meets with Uruguayan President Vázquez Rosas (Wafa News Agency, January 2, 2011).
During his visit to Latin America Mahmoud Abbas worked to promote the recognition of a Palestinian
state within the 1967 borders.**

Overview

- This past week two rocket hits and three mortar shell hits were identified in the western Negev. In response the Israeli Air Force attacked a number of terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip. The Arab media continue to report Hamas' policy of rocket fire restraint. They also reported that a "national consensus" was reached by representatives of the [terrorist] organizations operating in the Gaza Strip regarding a continuation of the lull in the fighting, as long as Israel remains committed to it.
- The Palestinian Authority continues its diplomatic activities for international recognition of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders. Mahmoud Abbas, who visited Latin America, held meetings in the various countries which hosted him. Senior Palestinian figures, including Mahmoud Abbas, have expressed disappointment with the current format of the peace process, and have called for an alternative format.

Important Events

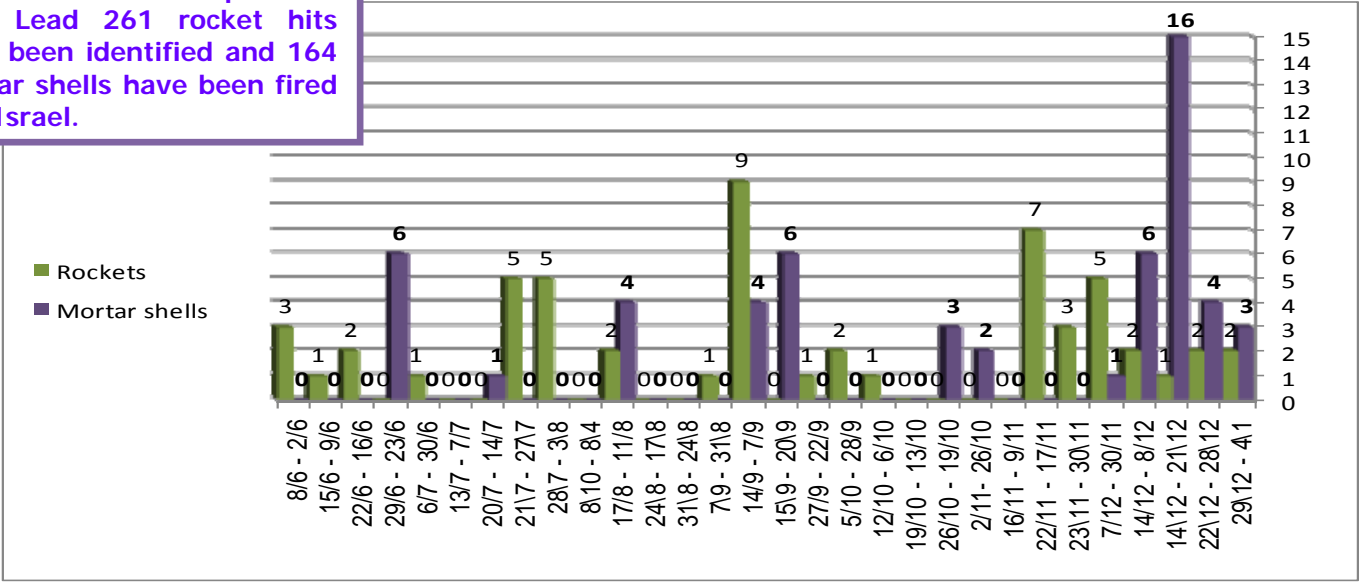
The Gaza Strip

Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire

- This past week two rockets were identified in the western Negev (December 28 and 30). They fell in open areas. There were no casualties and no damage was done.
- This past week three mortar shell hits were identified in the western Negev:
 - On January 1 two mortar shell were fired. One fell in an open area in the western Negev. No damage was done to property. A woman went into shock. The military wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attack (Jerusalem Battalions website, January 1, 2011).
 - On January 2 a mortar shell fell in a open area. There were no casualties and no damage was done. The military wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine claimed responsibility for the attack (DFLP website, January 2, 2011).

Rocket and mortar shells fired into Israeli territory¹

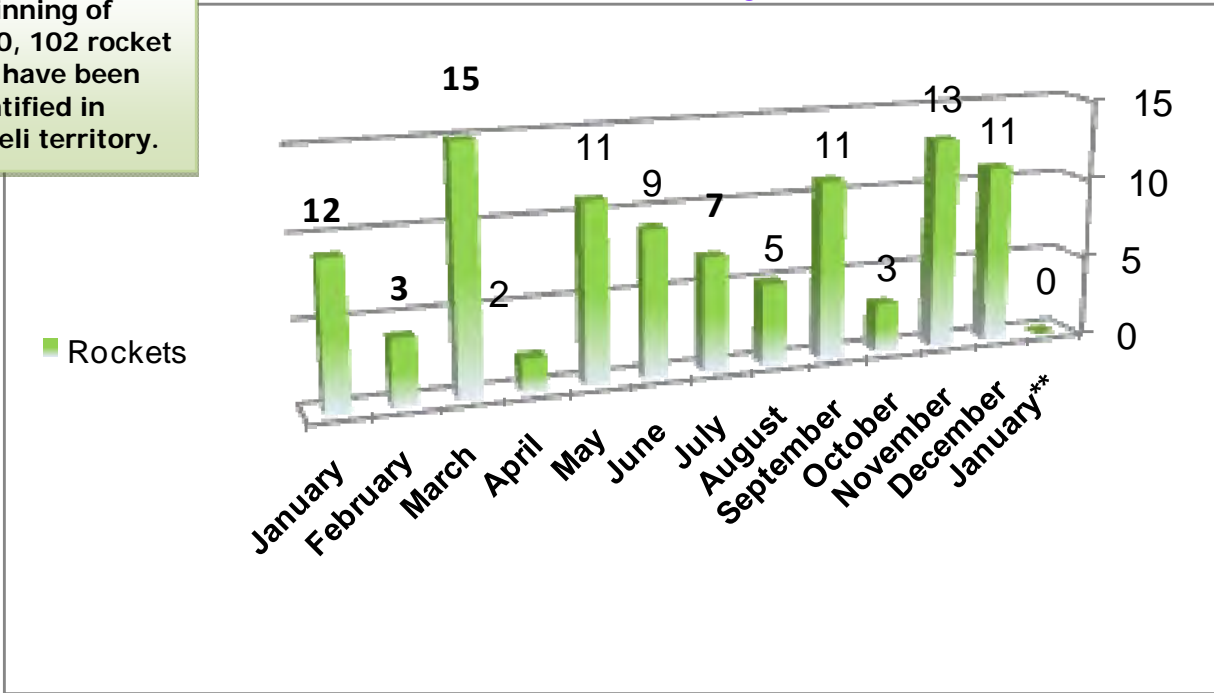
Since the end of Operation Cast Lead 261 rocket hits have been identified and 164 mortar shells have been fired into Israel.



¹ The statistics do not include the mortar shells fired at IDF soldiers patrolling the border fence which fell inside the Gaza Strip.

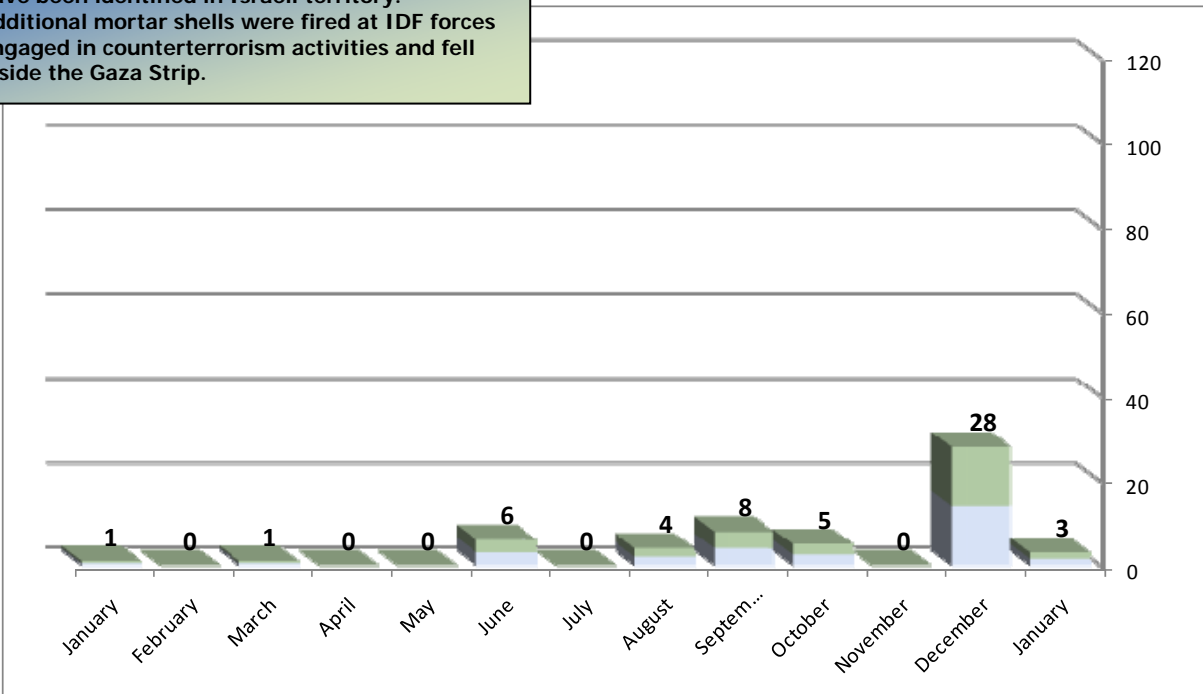
Since the beginning of 2010, 102 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory.

Rocket Fire 2010, Monthly Distribution



Mortar Shell Fire 2010, Monthly Distribution

Since the beginning of 2010, 56 mortar shell hits have been identified in Israeli territory. Additional mortar shells were fired at IDF forces engaged in counterterrorism activities and fell inside the Gaza Strip.



Notes:

* Rocket hits identified in Israeli territory and not in the Gaza Strip.

** As of January 4, 2011.

*** The statistics were recently examined and the graphs were corrected and updated.

Israeli Air Force Response

■ In response to the rocket and mortar shell fire from the Gaza Strip, on January 2 Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked a number of terrorist targets. One of them was a workshop for manufacturing weapons, and the other, according to the Palestinian media, was a post belonging to the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing. The Palestinian media reported that one Palestinian sustained minor injuries and another was seriously wounded (Ma'an and NRG news agencies, January 2, 2011) .

Hamas Continues its Policy of Restrained Fire from the Gaza Strip

■ With the recent increase in mortar shell and rocket fire, on December 28, 2010 the Arab media reported that representatives of the various [terrorist] organizations operating in the Gaza Strip held a meeting to reach a "national consensus" regarding rocket fire. **They agreed to preserve the lull in the fighting as long as Israel was committed to it** (Al-Hayat, December 30, 2010).

■ **Khader Habib**, senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad figure, said that the main conclusions of the aforementioned meeting were that "unity among the factions is required" and that they had to cooperate should "Israel attack." He added that in case of an Israeli attack, "all forms of resistance [i.e., terrorism] will be legitimate." Ziyad Nakhalah, deputy PIJ general secretary, claimed that the current situation was "hot air and not a commitment," not an official lull agreement (Hamas' Felesteen and Al-Hayat, December 30, 2010).

■ Ismail Haniya, head of the de facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip, said (perhaps in response to criticism) that Hamas had not abandoned the path of "resistance" [i.e., terrorism]. As proof **he noted that 58% of its military wing had been killed since Hamas took over the Gaza Strip, and 32% of its activities had been carried out since then** (Filastin al-Yawm, December 30, 2010).

Judea and Samara

Counterterrorism Activities

■ This past week the Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities, detaining Palestinians suspected of terrorist activities and seizing weapons.

The Situation on the Ground

■ This past week there was a sharp drop in the number of stones thrown at Israeli vehicles. On **December 28** stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle west of Ramallah. There were no casualties but the vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman's website, December 28, 2010).

■ On **December 31**, in an exceptional event, hundreds of Palestinians, Israeli civilians and foreigners gathered in the village of **Bila'in**, northwest of Ramallah. The demonstration was attended by Salam Fayyad, the Palestinian prime minister. The demonstrators threw stones at Israeli security forces, who used riot control equipment, including tear gas, to disperse the crowd. Palestinian sources claimed that one of the Palestinian demonstrators, a woman named Jawaher Abu Rahma, inhaled tear gas and later died. Palestinian Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, in Brazil at the time, condemned the so-called Israeli "crime," as did other Palestinians (Haaretz and Safa News Agency, January 1, 2011).

■ The Israeli media reported that **according to the results of an examination carried out by the IDF, Jawaher Abu Rama sustained only minor injuries, was released from the hospital and died at home. They also reported that medical examination showed "essential contradictions" regarding the circumstances of her death and that in recent months she had received treatment for a serious illness [possibly cancer]** (Haaretz, January 1 and 2, 2011). **Rateb Abu Rahma**, vice chairman of the so-called Popular Palestinian Committee for the Struggle against the Fence and Settlements, said that Jawaher's "immune system was very weak" and that led to her death following the inhalation of tear gas (Safa News Agency and Palestine Online, January 1, 2011).



Left: Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad speaking before the demonstrators. Right: Palestinian demonstrators in Bila'in wave flags. Bottom: Masked Palestinian youths use slings to hurl stones at the Israeli security forces during the demonstration (Safa News Agency, December 31, 2010).

■ **On January 1** a demonstration was held in Ni'lin, northwest of Ramallah, another focal point of friction between Israel and the Palestinians. Palestinians, Israeli civilians and foreigners gathered to throw stones at the Israeli security forces. One IDF soldier sustained minor injuries. There was also a demonstration in the village of Beit Ummar (southwest of Bethlehem) (IDF Spokesman, January 2, 2011).

Detention of a Terrorist Squad Which Planned to Attack Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem²

■ This past week it was announced that in November 2010 the Israel Security Agency and the Israel Police Department had detained several Palestinians, residents of East Jerusalem. **The Palestinians had been operatives of Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood in Jerusalem for several years** and were planning to carry out terrorist attacks.

■ The prominent figures detained were:



Musa Hamada

● **Musa Hamada**, a resident of Sur Baher (East Jerusalem). In recent years he went to Saudi Arabia several times, where he met with a Muslim Brotherhood representative. He received money to buy weapons and was asked to collect information about sites in Jerusalem.



Bassam Umari

● **Bassam Umari**, an Israeli citizen (a resident of Beit Safafa).

■ An interrogation of the detainees revealed that **after Operation Cast Lead** (December 2008-January 2009) **they began planning terrorist attacks in Jerusalem. One of the possibilities they examined was firing a missile at Jerusalem's main soccer stadium, Teddy Stadium during a soccer game.** In preparation, they collected information about the area around the stadium and even went to a hill nearby to see if it was a good site for firing the missile. **In the end their plan was not carried out.** In addition, they bought a number of hand guns and tried to buy a rifle and IEDs. It was not the first time residents of East Jerusalem were directed by terrorist organizations, exploiting their Israeli identity cards, which allowed them to move freely throughout the city.

² Based on information from the website of the Israel Security Agency <http://www.shabak.gov.il>.

■ The interrogation also revealed that Hamas carries out extensive activities in Jerusalem, especially around the Temple Mount. Those activities include financing maintenance and bringing groups of children and adult visitors to the Al-Aqsa mosque and the Temple Mount precinct.

The Main Terrorist Trends in Judea and Samaria in 2010³

■ **In 2010 the trend of a decrease in terrorist attacks from Judea and Samaria** continued, compared with 2009 and previous years. There was a certain increase in terrorist attacks in the Jerusalem region and in their seriousness. **There was also a marked increase in the number of public disturbances** in Jerusalem and its environs.

■ **In 2010 a total of 455 terrorist attacks were carried out in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem** (compared with 636 in 2009). Most of the attacks were categorized as "popular terrorism," such as stone- and Molotov cocktail-throwing.

■ **The main trends in terrorist attacks were the following:**

- **Shooting attacks:** During 2010 **there were fewer shootings**. There were 16 shooting attacks (compared with 20 in 2009). Five people were killed. The most serious occurred on August 31 when a car was shot at southeast of Kiryat Arba. **Four Israeli civilians, all passengers in the car, were killed**. Two shooting attacks were carried out in Jerusalem.

- **IEDs:** There was an increase in the number of IEDs attacks, 16 in 2010, compared with 13 in 2009.

- **Molotov cocktails:** In 2010, 402 Molotov cocktails were thrown (88% of the terrorist attacks carried out during the year).

- **Suicide bombing attacks:** **No suicide bombing attacks** were carried out during 2010 (or 2009), a continuation of the decrease in recent years. That was the result of the security fence and the counterterrorism activities of the Israeli and Palestinian security forces.

³ Based on information from the website of the Israel Security Agency <http://www.shabak.gov.il>.

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Crossings

■ This past week between 111 and 289 trucks carrying merchandise entered the Gaza Strip every day. More than thirteen tons of strawberries meant for export left the Gaza Strip through the crossings (Website of the Israeli government coordinator for the territories, January 4, 2011).

The Peace Process

The Palestinian Authority Continues its Political Activity for International Recognition of a Palestinian State within the 1967 Borders

■ **The Palestinian Authority continues its diplomatic activity for international recognition of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders.** Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmoud Abbas visited various Latin American countries where he dealt with the issue. This past week Bolivia joined the countries recognizing the Palestinian state. Uruguay, Chile, Paraguay and Surinam also announced their intention to recognize it (Wafa News Agency and Ynet, December 30, 2010; Palestinian TV, January 2, 2011).

Senior Palestinian Figures Expressed Disappointment with the Current Peace Process Format

■ **This past week senior Palestinian figures expressed disappointment with the peace process in its current format and called for an alternative:**

- Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmoud Abbas, speaking on the occasion of the 46th anniversary of the founding of Fatah, called on the International Quartet to propose an alternative peace plan, one coordinated with international decisions and institutions. He called for a stop to the current process, which had become a tool to manage the conflict instead of resolving it (Reuters, December 31, 2010).

- **Saeb Erekat**, head of the PLO's negotiating team, said that peace with the Palestinians "**would not be [had] at any price.**" The Palestinians, he said, would not be willing to accept a temporary solution or one that did not include a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders with Jerusalem as its capital. He added that they wanted a "just and acceptable" solution for the problem of the Palestinian refugees and the release of

all the Palestinians imprisoned by Israel. He said that the Palestinians were entitled to a strip of land 37 kilometers, or 23 miles, along the western shore of Dead Sea, areas of Jerusalem and Latrun and a geographic link between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Palestinian Authority TV, December 30, 2010).

Convoys and Flotillas – Update

The Asian Convoy Reaches the Gaza Strip; the Libyan Convoy Sets Out⁴

- One hundred twenty members of the Asian flotilla who left India on December 5 **entered the Gaza Strip on January 2, 2011**. Because the receipt of Egyptian authorization was delayed they entered a few days later than originally planned. Eight activists came from the Syrian port of Latakia to El Arish in Egypt on the boat which brought the aid. The other 112 activists arrived from Syria by plane. **The members of the convoy were received by Ismail Haniya, head of the de facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip, and other senior Hamas figures**. They are expected to remain there until January 6.
- **The media reported that Egypt refused to issue entrance visas for 60 activists who joined the convoy, including passengers from Iran and Jordan**. In our assessment, the Jordanians were refused entrance because they belonged to the Muslim Brotherhood. In Iran demonstrations were held in front of the Egyptian embassy to protest the refusal of entry of the Iranians into the Gaza Strip (Hamas' Al-Aqsa TV, January 1, 2011; Al-Ahram, December 25, 2010; Twitter, January 3, 2011).
- The senior Asian convoy organizer, Feroze Mithiborwala, said upon arrival in El Arish that the convoy's objective was "to break the siege of the Gaza Strip, to bring about the establishment of an independent Palestinian state whose capital is Jerusalem, and [to cause] **the economic and political boycott of Israel**" (Al-Dustour, Jordan, January 2, 2011).

⁴ For further information, see the December 12, 2010 bulletin "A convoy from India and other Asian countries left New Delhi to reach the Gaza Strip at the end of December. Among the participants are extreme leftist and Islamic activists who were joined by human rights activists. The convoy has links to FGM, which plays a central role in organizing flotillas" at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/ipc_e146.pdf.



Left: Convoy organizer Feroze Mithiborwala meets with senior Hamas figure Mahmoud al-Zahar (Twitter, January 3, 2011). Right: Feroze Mithiborwala speaks before the members of the convoy who entered the Gaza Strip (Iran's PressTV, January 2, 2011).



Left: The convoy activists present Ismail Haniya with a picture of Mahatma Gandhi (Safa News Agency, January 4, 2011). Right: Signs held by the activists when they entered the Gaza Strip; the picture at the left is of Khomeini (Iran's PressTV, January 2, 2011).

- **A Libyan flotilla:** A Libyan flotilla, nicknamed *Al-Quds 5*, left Libya for the Gaza Strip on December 30, 2011 (Al-Haqiqah Al-Dawliya, December 30, 2010).