Overview

- Sporadic rocket fire into Israeli territory continues. One rocket hit was identified in the western Negev. In response the Israeli Air Force attacked terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip. Violent activities continue in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem as part of the so-called "popular resistance." During an IDF activity to detain a Palestinian terrorist in Jenin shots were fired. In the clash that followed a Palestinian was killed and several were wounded.

- The Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams met for the second round of talks in Jerusalem. According to the Palestinian media, the next round will be held in Jericho in two weeks.

- The Palestinian political rift was manifested by reactions to the events in Egypt. The Palestinian Authority (PA) expressed support for the Egyptian leadership. However, in Judea, Samaria and east Jerusalem demonstrations were held in support of ousted Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi. Most of them were organized by Hamas activists and were forcefully dispersed by the PA's security forces. Hamas spokesman and media condemned the current provisional Egyptian government. Throughout the Gaza Strip demonstrations were held in support of Mohamed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood, and in condemnation of the actions of the Egyptian army.
Rocket Fire

On August 13, 2013, a rocket hit was identified in an open area in the western Negev. There were no casualties and no damage was reported.

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since January 1, 2012\(^1\)

Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), 32 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory, including five rockets fired at the southern...

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire\(^2\)

Since January 1, 2013, 32 rocket hits have been identified.

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\(^1\) As of August 20, 2013. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

\(^2\) The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.
Israeli Air Force Activity

- In response to the rocket fire, on August 14, 2013, Israeli aircraft attacked concealed rocket launchers in the northern Gaza Strip. The Palestinian media reported that there were no casualties but that damage was done to the site (Qudsnet website and Filastin Al-'Aan, August 14, 2013).

Judea and Samaria

Palestinian Killed and Two IDF Soldiers Wounded

- During a joint IDF-Border Police activity in Jenin on the night of August 19, 2013, carried out to detain a Palestinian suspected of terrorist activity, a confrontation developed between the Israeli forces and local residents. The Israeli security forces had come to detain Bassem al-Saadi, a senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) operative who had been released from an Israeli jail a number of months ago. The soldiers were attacked with gunfire, Molotov cocktails, improvised hand grenades and stones, resulting in minor injuries to two soldiers. It was also reported that a Palestinian had been killed and several had been wounded by the Israeli security forces' return fire (IDF spokesman and Ynet, August 20, 2013).

Violence Continues in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

- Violence continues in Judea and Samaria as part of the so-called "popular resistance." Stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown at Israeli vehicles. Confrontations and friction also continued between Palestinians and the Israeli security forces at the weekly demonstrations and riots.

- The main events were the following (Tazpit News Agency, date, 2013):
  - On **August 13, 2013**, stones were thrown at an Israeli bus near the Dung Gate in Jerusalem. One of the passengers sustained minor injuries.
  - On **August 14, 2013**, an IED was used to attack an Israeli Border Police post in Abu Dis (east Jerusalem).
  - On **August 16, 2013**, stones were thrown at an Israeli bus in Samaria on the road between the Jewish settlements of Tapuah and Migdalim. There were no casualties.
- On **August 18, 2013**, a Molotov cocktail was thrown at an Israeli bus as it was leaving Hawara and driving in the direction of Tapuah. There were no casualties but the bus was damaged.

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**Palestinians confront IDF forces in the village of Qadoum (Wafa News Agency, August 16, 2013).**

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### More than a Million Palestinians Enter Israel during Ramadan

- Israel instituted a series of measures to facilitate Palestinian passage through the checkpoints and to access the holy places during the Muslim religious month of Ramadan (July 9 – August 8, 2013). In consequence, during the month **more than a million Palestinians** entered Israel (Website of the Coordinator for Government Activities in the Territories, August 19, 2013).

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### Developments in the Gaza Strip

#### The Rafah Crossing

- On August 15, 2013, the Egyptian authorities again closed the Rafah crossing, and on August 18, 2013, the ministry of the interior of the de-facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip announced the renewal of the crossing’s operations. However, only 50 Palestinians were able to pass through.³ **Maher Abu Sabha**, director of the Hamas crossings authority, expressed dissatisfaction with Egypt's conduct, claiming the Egyptians had given only short advanced notice of the opening of the crossing and had

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³ According to **Ghazi Hamad**, deputy foreign minister of the Hamas administration, before the coup in Egypt between 800 and 1000 people passed through the crossing every day (Felesteen Online, August 19, 2013).
not coordinated with Hamas (Paltoday website, August 18, 2013). On August 19, 2013, in light of the events in the Sinai Peninsula, the Rafah crossing was closed again (Website of the ministry of the interior of the Hamas administration). The disturbance in the orderly operations of the crossing led to a reduction in the number of people using it and to a decrease in the amount of building material entering the Gaza Strip (Felesteen, August 19, 2013).

Senior Hamas figures expressed dissatisfaction with the situation and asked the Egyptians to open the crossing:

- **Ismail Haniya**, head of the de-facto Hamas administration, said that the administration was fully aware of Egypt's security situation, especially in the Sinai Peninsula, but nevertheless demanded that the crossing be opened. That was because, he said, Palestinians would never endanger Egypt's security (Al-Ra'i, August 19, 2013).

- **Sami Abu Zuhri**, Hamas spokesman, used his Facebook page (August 18, 2013), for a great naval campaign to lift the so-called Israeli "siege" of the Gaza Strip. He wrote that Hamas called on all the "forces of freedom" in the Middle East and the world to invest every effort to lift the siege of the Gaza Strip, especially after most of the [smuggling] tunnels had been destroyed and the Rafah crossing had been almost completely closed.
• **Yussuf Rizqa**, who was formerly Haniya's political advisor, said that the Hamas administration would not agree to the Rafah crossing's operating according to the 2005 agreement. He said the crossing had to be under Palestinian and Egyptian sovereignty with no foreign intervention (Alresala.net website, August 18, 2013).

### The Palestinian Authority

#### Receptions for the Released Terrorist Operatives

- In Ramallah and the Gaza Strip there were large turnouts to welcome the first group of 26 terrorist operatives who had been released by Israel as a gesture for renewing the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations:
  - **In Judea and Samaria** a formal reception was held in Mahmoud Abbas' office in Ramallah for 11 released prisoners. Mahmoud Abbas gave the keynote address, saying that soon other prisoners would be released, "until the last one" [was freed] (Al-Ayam, August 14, 2013).

A festive reception, headed by Mahmoud Abbas, held for the Palestinian terrorist operatives in the Muqata'a in Ramallah (Wafa News Agency, August 13, 2013).

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4 In 2005 the Agreement on Movement and Access (the Rafah Agreement) was achieved through American and EU negotiation regulating the operations of the border crossings between Egypt and the Gaza Strip after Israel's unilateral withdrawal. According to the agreement, the Rafah crossing would be operated by the PA and Egypt, and an EU Border Assistance Mission would observe. The Mission, whose work began on November 25, 2005, was in operation for only 12 months.
In the Gaza Strip, despite reports that Hamas had banned events in honor of the 15 released terrorists, it was reported that formal receptions had been held for them. A delegation of members of Fatah's Revolutionary Council, led by Amin Maqboul, council chairman, entered the Gaza Strip through the Erez crossing to congratulate the released prisoners (Wafa News Agency, August 14, 2013). Senior Hamas figures did not attend the events and most of the flags flown were Fatah flags. On August 19 Ismail Haniya met with the prisoners at his home (Safa News Agency, August 19, 2013).

Issa Qaraqa, PA minister of prisoner affairs, said that the next group of prisoners would be released at the end of September 2013, claiming that the list would also be determined by a PA delegation. He said the number of prisoners to be released had not yet been decided. Ziyad Abu Eyn, a representative of the ministry for prisoner affairs, said that this time the Palestinian leadership was determined to participate in deciding the names on the list (Al-Ayam, August 18, 2013).

Second Round of Talks

The Israeli and PA negotiating teams met on the evening of August 14 in Jerusalem for a second round of talks. According to reports, the talks finished shortly before midnight. The meeting was held without media coverage (Ma'an News Agency and Agence France-Presse, August 14, 2013). Another round of talks is expected to be held in Jericho in the next two weeks (Voice of Palestine, August 15, 2013).
Mahmoud Abbas held a joint press conference with UN Secretary General Ban-ki Moon, where he said he hoped Israel's intentions were sincere. Proof, he said, would be stopping construction in the settlements, releasing the Palestinian prisoners and being serious about negotiations. He again called for an end to the Israeli occupation through the implementation of the two-state solution based on the borders of June 4, 1967, a small exchange of territories equal in quality, and on the Arab peace initiative with east Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine (Palestinian National TV, August 15, 2013).

Hamas criticism of the negotiations with Israel continues. Musa Abu Marzouq, deputy head of Hamas’ political bureau, claimed that Israel and the PA had reached secret understandings. Fatah announced in response that the claim was a lie and intended to manipulate Palestinian public opinion (Safa News Agency, August 18, 2013).

Returning Bodies of Terrorist Operatives to the PA
Ziyad Abu al-Eyn, deputy minister for prisoner affairs in the PA, confirmed that negotiations were being held with Israel about returning the bodies of Palestinian terrorist operatives who had been killed and buried in Israel. He said Israel had proposed returning the bodies without determining their identities. He said that was unacceptable to the PA and demanded they be identified. He said negotiations were continuing and the PA was waiting for an answer from Israel (Felesteen Online, August 17, 2013).
Palestinian Government Established

On August 14, 2013, Mahmoud Abbas renewed the appointment of Rami Hamdallah as Palestinian prime minister and charged him with forming an interim government (the validity of the appointment of the current government will expire soon). PA spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeina said that the legal length of time for forming a new government was five weeks (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, August 14, 2013). Azzam al-Ahmad, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, said that the new government would be formed by Rami Hamdallah within two to three weeks, its term of office would not be limited and it would not be changed (Ma'an News Agency, August 14, 2013).

Reactions to the Events in Egypt

Overview

The PA leadership issued an announcement expressing its full support for the Egyptian leadership and its action “to stamp out every attempt to threaten Egypt and harm the security and stability of the Egyptian people.” The announcement also praised Saudi Arabia's support for Egypt (Wafa News Agency, August 16, 2013). Mahmoud Abbas also met with Yasser Othman, the Egyptian representative in the PA, and told him that the Palestinian people and its leadership stood shoulder to shoulder with the people of Egypt and their leadership to resolve the current crisis and restore Egypt's regional and Arab role (Al-Ayam, August 18, 2013).

Judea and Samaria

Contrary to the position of the PA leadership, demonstrations in support of ousted President Mohamed Morsi were held throughout Judea, Samaria and east Jerusalem. Most of the demonstrations were organized by Hamas activists and they were forcefully dispersed by the PA's security forces. For example:

- In Hebron a demonstration was organized to protest the "slaughter" in Egypt. It began after the Friday prayer in the mosques and was dispersed by the PA's security forces. A number of civilians were injured and several were detained (Palinfo website, August 16, 2013).

- In the center of Ramallah a demonstration was organized by Hamas after the Friday prayer. The area was massively secured by operatives of the PA's security forces, some of them in plainclothes (Imama, August 16, 2013).
• In **Al-Bireh** a demonstration was held and dispersed by PA security forces (Al-Aqsa TV, August 16, 2013).

• On the **Temple Mount in Jerusalem** the Islamic Movement in Israel organized a demonstration in support of Mohamed Morsi and a protest demonstration against the Egyptian army. The demonstrations were held after the Friday prayer (Ardh Knaan, August 16, 2013).

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**Left:** Demonstration in support of Mohamed Morsi held in Al-Bireh (Filastin Al-‘Aan, August 16, 2013). **Right:** Hamas demonstration in support of Mohamed Morsi held in Hebron (Palinfo website, August 16, 2013).

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**Demonstration in support of Mohamed Morsi organized by the Islamic Movement in Israel (Ardh Knaan, August 16, 2013)**
According to Adnan al-Dhameri, spokesman for the PA’s security forces, the demonstrations were dispersed because Hamas had exceeded the limits of the "Palestinian resistance" and was trying to entangle the Palestinian people in Egypt's internal conflict. He said the overall Palestinian position of all the organizations throughout the years of the struggle was that the Palestinians did not interfere in the internal affairs of the Arab countries. He said Hamas had unleashed the imams in its mosques and exploited the pulpit for incitement (Mawtini Radio, August 17, 2013).

The Gaza Strip

The Hamas administration continues its harsh criticism of the overthrowing of Morsi's regime. It issued official statements expressing concern over the events, condemning the bloodshed and the "disrespect of the will of the people" [i.e., Morsi's regime], and sent its condolences to the families of the slain. Hamas' information bureau issued a statement condemning the actions of the official Egyptian authorities and the harm done to the demonstrators, and called for an end to the bloodshed (Hamas information bureau, August 14, 2013). Despite the criticism of the current Egyptian administration, senior Hamas figures continued to stress that they were not interfering in Egypt's internal affairs.

On August 14 and 17, mass demonstrations were held throughout the Gaza Strip in support of Mohamed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and condemning the actions of the Egyptian army in suppressing the demonstrations (Filastin Al-'Aan, August 14 and 17, 2013).
Ismail Haniya, in his Friday sermon, said that Hamas was following the events in Egypt and that the bloodshed and use of force were distressing. He said he was surprised by the reports in the Egyptian media accusing Morsi of collaborating with Hamas. He said Hamas’ ties to Egypt had begun long before Morsi came to power (Al-Aqsa TV, August 16, 2013). Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri said that Hamas condemned the “terrible slaughter” and called for bloodshed to be prevented and the actions against the demonstrators to be stopped (Al-Ra‘i, August 14, 2013).

A Salafist jihadist network operating in the Gaza Strip outdid Hamas. Abu Hafez al-Maqdasi, leader of the global jihad-affiliated Army of the Nation, held a press conference in the Gaza Strip where he declared a jihad against Abd Fattah al-Sisi. He also called on the Islamic sages in Egypt to unite and choose a Muslim leader to lead the next stage (Agence France-Presse, August 16, 2013).

Abu Hafez al-Maqdasi, leader of the global jihad-affiliated Army of the Nation (Al-Ra‘i Institute for Communications and Productions, August 10, 2013).

Propaganda Events

Hamas Fair Held at Al-Najah University in Nablus

The (Hamas) Islamic Block faction at Al-Najah University in Nablus organized – for the first time in seven years – a book fair on campus. The fair was opened by Husni al-Bourini and Muna Mansour, both Hamas members of the Palestinian Legislative Council. The theme of the fair was "Knowledge and resistance – words that reject negotiations." Books and other publications by Hamas authors were sale, as were disks, pamphlets, diaries and mugs with Hamas insignia and pictures of its leaders.
The Hamas book fair held at Al-Najah University in Nablus (Ajnad Facebook page, August 18, 2013).