



## News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

May 23-29, 2012



The Israeli security forces apprehended a terrorist squad which on April 19 used sophisticated IEDs to attack an Israeli vehicle in southern Mt. Hebron. The picture shows one of the IEDs used (Israel Security Agency website).

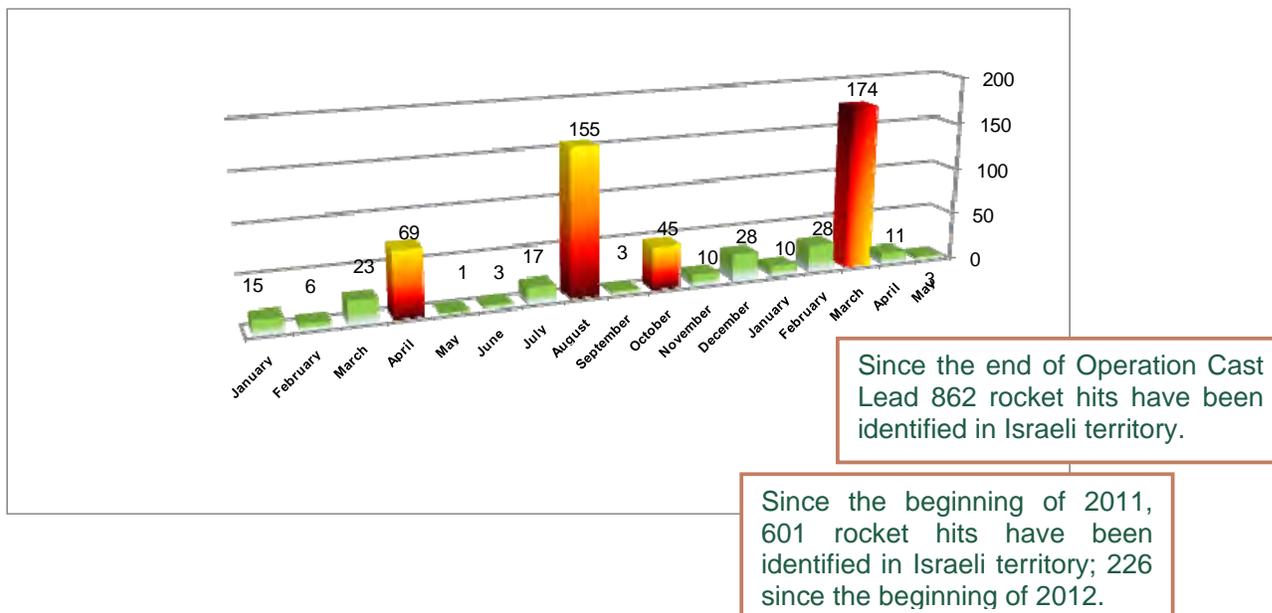
### Overview

- Again this week no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israeli territory. An IDF force was attacked by sniper fire near the border fence in the central Gaza Strip. An officer and a soldier were wounded.
- The Israeli security forces recently exposed a number of terrorist networks operating in the Hebron district. One of the was making preparations to infiltrate Kiryat Arba to abduct or murder a local resident. A terrorist cell which attacked an Israeli vehicle with a ring of IEDs was exposed in southern Mt. Hebron.
- The Turkish media reported that the Turkish attorney general had issued indictments against four IDF commanders who had been involved in the events aboard the *Mavi Marmara*. The indictments falsely claimed that the passengers aboard the ship had been armed with "plastic flagpoles, spoons and forks" [In reality, the IHH operatives aboard were armed with deadly cold offensive weapons and at least one or two guns].

## Israel's South Important Terrorist Events

- This past week no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israel territory.

### Rockets Fired into Israeli Territory<sup>1</sup>



**Notes:** The figures for March include 50 rockets intercepted and destroyed by the Iron Dome aerial defense system during the most recent round of escalation. In April three rockets were fired at Israel's southernmost city of Eilat.

### IDF Force Attacked by Sniper Fire

- On May 23 Palestinian snipers shot at an IDF force engaged in routine counterterrorism activities near the security fence near Kissufim in the central Gaza Strip. The attack wounded one officer and one soldier, who were evacuated to a hospital for treatment. The force returned the terrorists' fire (IDF Spokesman, May 23, 2012).

<sup>1</sup> The statistics do not include rockets fired which fell inside the Gaza Strip. As of May 29, 2012.

## Judea and Samaria

### Events on the Ground

■ This past week violent demonstrations were held at the traditional friction spots throughout Judea and Samaria, especially in the villages of Bila'in, Nili'in and Nebi Saleh. Rioters threw stones at IDF forces, which in certain instances used riot control equipment to disperse the demonstration. The Palestinian media reported that three youths in Nebi Saleh had inhaled tear gas (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, May 26, 2012).

### Another Violent Confrontation between Palestinians and Settlers from Izhar

■ On May 26 there was a violent confrontation between residents of the community of Izhar and local Palestinians. During the confrontation an Izhar resident shot at and critically wounded a Palestinian youth from the village of 'Urif (south of Nablus). The Israeli said he saw the Palestinian had a knife, making him fear for his life. Additional Israeli security forces were deployed to the area following the incident (Ynet, May 26, 2012).

■ Jibrin al-Bakri, governor of the Nablus district, said that the Palestinian Authority was making an effort to recruit world public opinion against the activities of the Israeli settlers in the Nablus region who, he claimed, "have the backing of the Israeli government" (Al-Quds, May 27, 2012).

### Terrorist Cells Exposed<sup>2</sup>

■ In recent weeks the Israeli security forces exposed a number of terrorist networks and cells operating in the Hebron area.

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<sup>2</sup>According to the Israel Security Agency website.

## Hamas Terrorist Cell Operating in the Region of Kiryat Arba Apprehended

■ The Israeli security forces detained three Hamas terrorist operatives, residents of Hebron. The cell was headed by **Muataz Suleiman Muhammad Qawasmeh, a Hamas operative, who has been imprisoned in Israel a number of times.** He aided and abetted his brother Sa'id, who was involved in directing the terrorist squad which carried out the suicide bombing attack in the southern Israeli city of Dimona in February 2008.<sup>3</sup>

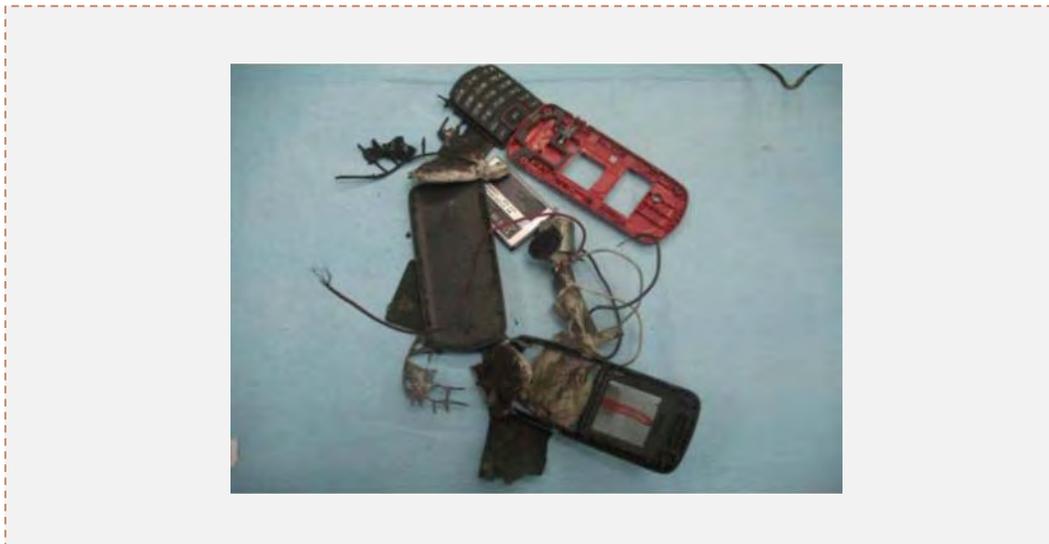
■ **During interrogation the three admitted they had prepared IEDs and detonated them near the fence surrounding Kiryat Arba in order to examine the IDF's response.** They placed the IEDs as part of a plan to **infiltrate the community and abduct or murder a local resident.** In a number of other incidents the three threw Molotov cocktails at the community of Givat Harsina.

## Apprehension of the Terrorist Squad Attacking an Israeli Vehicle

■ On April 19 a ring of IEDs was detonated as an attack on Israeli vehicle near the village of Yattah in southern Mt. Hebron. The attackers laid a number of IEDs which were supposed to be detonated with cell phones. There were no casualties and no damage was done. Following an investigation, two residents of Yattah who had manufactured the IEDs were detained. The two also admitted that they had manufactured many IEDs and had detonated one in 2007. They also participated in a number of stone-throwing attacks.

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<sup>3</sup>The suicide bombing attack, carried out by two suicide bombers in the center of the southern Israeli city of Dimona on February 4, 2008, killed a civilian woman and wounded 38 other Israelis. Sa'id Qawasmeh was one of the terrorists released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal and expelled to the Gaza Strip.



The remains of cell phones used to detonate the IEDs near Yattah (Photo courtesy of the Israel Security Agency).

### **Palestinian Cell Which Threw Stones at IDF Forces and Israeli Civilians Detained**

■ The Israel Security Agency apprehended a four-man Palestinian terrorist cell which had participated in many stone-throwing attacks. The cell had thrown stones from a moving vehicle, targeting IDF forces and Israeli civilians in the region on Halhoul, north of Hebron. One of the terrorists was the son of Muhammad Jamal Natshe, a senior Hamas figure imprisoned in Israel.

## The Situation in the Gaza Strip

### **Egyptian Security Forces Expose a Weapons Meant for the Gaza Strip**

■ The Egyptian security forces exposed a large weapons store in one of the villages near Damietta, a city in the northeastern Nile Delta near the sea. **The weapons came from Libya and were apparently meant for Hamas**, to be smuggled into the Gaza Strip through the tunnels. There were about 100 rockets, hand grenades, mortar shells and automatic weapons (Al-Wafd portal, May 20, 2012).

## The Palestinian Prisoners' Hunger Strike

■ Two weeks after the Palestinian terrorists imprisoned in Israeli facilities ended their hunger strike, the high committee of the hunger strike leadership issued an official report claiming that Israel was delaying the implementation of the agreement. According to the report's claims, the Israel Prison Authority has delayed releasing prisoners from separate facilities into the general prison wings, delayed improvements in the prisoners' conditions and meetings with the leaders of the strike. The committee threatened that if the articles of the understandings were not met, **the hunger strike would be resumed** (Ahrar Waladna website, May 27, 2012).

## Fatah-Hamas Reconciliation

### Attempts to Renew the Reconciliation Process

■ As part of the internal Palestinian dialogue, representatives of Fatah and Hamas met in Cairo on May 28 for consultations regarding the composition of the proposed government of technocrats. In addition, the election committee in the Gaza Strip has begun its activities in accordance with the agreement signed in Cairo on May 20 (Al-Quds, May 25, 2012).

## Israel and the Palestinians

### Remarks Made by Mahmoud Abbas

■ Mahmoud Abbas told a Lebanese newspaper that the Israeli prime minister's answer to the Palestinian Authority's letter had brought the peace process to a dead end. He said that the Palestinians were currently waiting for a response from the American administration, after which they would renew their appeal to the UN for the admission of Palestine to the UN as a full member (Al-Nahar, May 28, 2012).

## Propaganda Events

### Aid Convoy to the Gaza Strip from South Africa

■ The South African Relief Agency (SARA) reported it was organizing an aid convoy to the Gaza Strip. Among its participants, according to the organization, there will be

university professors, clerics, lawyer and doctors. On June 14 they are supposed to fly to Cairo, where they will join a convoy of trucks carrying aid, mostly in the form of medical equipment. The convoy will enter the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing (SARA website, May 29, 2012).

**S.A.R.A.**  
ANNOUNCES  
**"AFRICA TO GAZA"**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> AID CONVOY**  
Departing Durban mid June 2012

The Africa to Gaza Aid Convoy under SA Relief Agency, will be undertaking another convoy to Gaza in June 2012.

We will be taking much needed aid in the form of desperately needed medical equipment - dental chairs, and x-ray machines; wheelchairs; medical air mattresses; 5 containers of diapers; and milk powder among other items.

We will be distributing the aid ourselves, and visiting hospitals, schools, the aged, the disabled, the hungry, as well as establishing ongoing projects.

Accompanying the convoy to Gaza will be Religious Leaders, NGO Directors, University Professors and Doctors, each donating their time and own specialty to the people of Gaza.

**GAZA HERE WE COME SIYAFIKA GAZA**  
**GAZA NAHNU QADIMOON**  
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Reg No: 2010/007796/8

General and contact information for the convoy (SARA website, May 29, 2012)

## Demonstrators Disrupt an Israeli Theater Performance in London

- A small group of pro-Palestinian demonstrators disrupted a Habima performance of "The Merchant of Venice" at the Globe Theater in London. They unfurled banners and waved a Palestinian flag. The police arrested one man who attacked a security guard. Habima was invited to London to participate in an international theatre festival (AP, May 28, 2012). The demonstrators belonged to a group calling itself the Boycott Israel

Network, which is active in the anti-Israel BDS campaign in Britain.<sup>4</sup>



The logo of the organization disrupting the Habima performance

### Marking the Anniversary of the Events Aboard the Mavi Marmara

■ The anti-Israeli pro-Palestinian Turkish organization IHH is organizing events to mark the anniversary of the events aboard the *Mavi Marmara*. Among the events planned are the following (IHH website):

- On **May 30** those who participated in the events two years ago will meet aboard the ship and remain there all night. Among those who will be in attendance are IHH leader Bülent Yildirim, and Raed Salah, head of the northern faction of the Islamic movement in Israel.
- On **May 31** a press conference will be held aboard the ship and will be attended by flotilla participants and family members the operatives who were killed.
- On **the evening of May 31** a rally will be held in Taksim Square in Istanbul, and from there the demonstrators will march along the street.

<sup>4</sup>A previous attempt to sabotage an Israeli cultural event was made in London on September 1, 2011, during a performance of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra at a BBC concert. For further information see the September 19, 2011 bulletin "**Premeditated heckling attempts to disrupt a performance of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra in London**" at <http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/article/17848>.



Announcement for the events marking the anniversary of the Mavi Marmara (IHH website, May 28, 2012).

- It was also announced that **the Turkish attorney general had issued indictments for four Israeli commanders who were involved in the events aboard the Mavi Marmara**. The 144-page indictment accuses them of the killing nine of the ship's passengers, a premeditated attack and the torture of pro-Palestinian activists. The prosecution calls for life imprisonment and other sentences. It falsely claims that the passengers aboard the ship had in their possession "plastic flag poles, spoons and forks"<sup>5</sup> (Antalya News Agency, May 23, 2012).

<sup>5</sup>For information about the weapons in the possession of the operatives aboard the *Mavi Marmara*, see the August 25, 2010 bulletin "Examination of the weapons and equipment found on the Mavi Marmara indicates that preparations had been made in advance for an active confrontation with IDF soldiers. The extreme violence demonstrated by IHH operatives and their supporters in the confrontation with the IDF on board the Mavi Marmara [were] ... prepared in advance, and carried out by a hard core of dozens of violent operatives. It required to prepare in advance standard weapons and to make improvised ones."