



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

July 4-10, 2012



Car at the commercial center at the Yad Mordechai junction hit by machine gun fire from the Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, July 9, 2012)

Overview

- Rocket fire from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory continues. This past week three rocket hits were identified and one mortar shell was fired. In addition, heavy machine guns were fired from the Gaza Strip at the commercial center at the Yad Mordechai junction resulting in property damage. In response Israeli Air Force aircraft struck terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip.
- A report dealing with the economic situation in the Gaza Strip for the first two quarters of 2012, issued by the Coordinator for government activities in the territories, indicated an increase in exports and a slight decline in unemployment. The Kerem Shalom crossing continued functioning even under fire during the escalation, and during the past six months more than 725,000 tons of merchandise and food passed through it. Cooking gas and diesel fuel were also delivered, helping the de-facto Hamas administration cope with the Gaza Strip's energy crisis.

Important Terrorism Events Israel's South

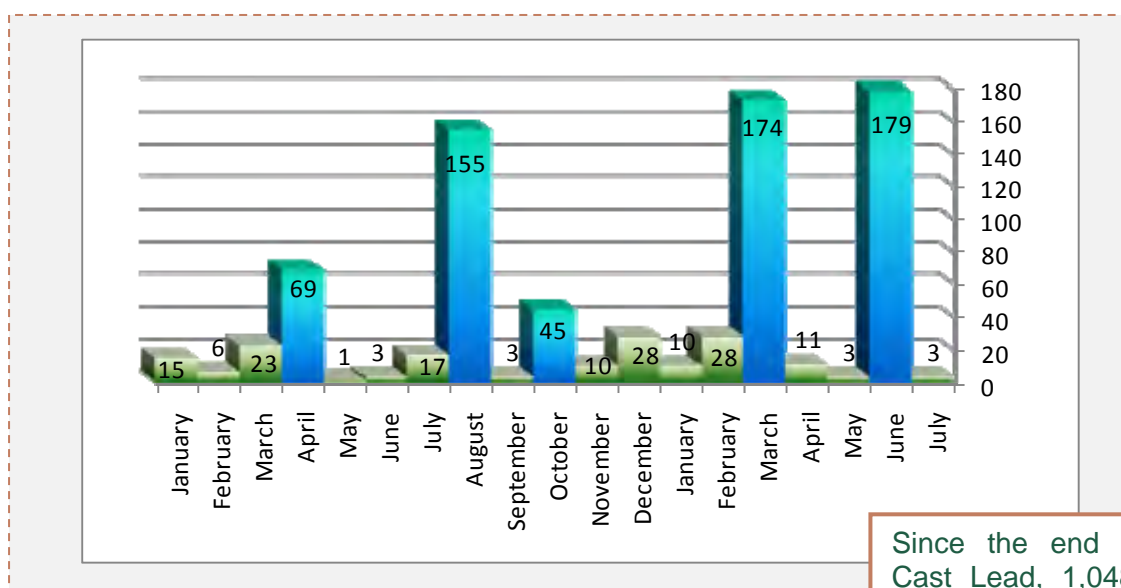
Machine Guns Fired into Israeli Territory

■ On the evening of July 9 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip fired heavy machine guns at the commercial center at the Yad Mordechai junction. There were no casualties but cars in the parking lot and a restaurant wall were damaged. Following the attack communities nearby were put on alert. The IDF returned fire and searched the area (IDF Spokesman, July 9, 2012).

Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire

■ This past week sporadic rocket fire attacks from the Gaza Strip continued. **Three rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory.** The rockets landed in open areas; there were no casualties and no damage was done. On July 9 a mortar shell was fired into the western Negev. There were no casualties and no damage was done.

Rockets Fired into Israeli Territory Since the Beginning of 2011¹



Since the end of Operation Cast Lead, 1,048 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory.

Since the beginning of 2011, 787 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory; 502 since the beginning of 2012.

Note: 162 of the rockets which landed in Israeli territory in June were fired during the round of escalation.

¹As of July 10, 2012.

IDF Response

- In response to the rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip, on the night of July 9 Israeli Air Force aircraft struck a Hamas terrorist base and a terrorist target in the southern Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, July 10, 2012).

Judea and Samaria

Events on the Ground

- This week as well there were riots at the traditional friction points in Judea and Samaria, especially the villages of Bila'in, Nili'in and Nebi Saleh. Rioters threw stones at the IDF forces, who in certain instances used riot control equipment to disperse the demonstrators. Stones were also thrown at Israeli civilian and security vehicles.

Demonstrations in Ramallah

- There have recently been a number of demonstrations in Ramallah, some of them violent, mainly protesting the Palestinian Authority's relations with Israel. Among the issues protested were negotiations with Israel and Mahmoud Abbas' proposed meeting (which was canceled) with Israeli Vice Prime Minister Shaul Mofaz. Several hundred young Palestinians demonstrated, shouting anti-Israeli slogans, such as "the people say 'no' to the Oslo Accord," and calling for an end to the Palestinian Authority's security coordination with Israel. On one occasion the demonstrators reached the entrance to Mahmoud Abbas' office (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, July 4, 2012).
- In view of the demonstrations, Mahmoud Abbas convened a meeting of the commanders of the Palestinian security forces at his office in Ramallah. He said that in addition to enforcing law and order in Judea and Samaria, he felt it was highly important to preserve freedom of speech and the security of the Palestinians (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, July 4, 2012).



Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmoud Abbas chairs a meeting of the Palestinian security forces in Ramallah (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, July 4, 2012).

The Situation in the Gaza Strip

The Economic Situation

■ A report issued by the Coordinator for government activities in the territories which examined the economic situation in the Gaza Strip for **the first two quarters of 2012** indicated the following (Website of the Coordinator for government activities in the territories, July 3, 2012):

- **Agricultural exports increased by 86%** (during the first two quarters 708 tons of agricultural produce left the Gaza Strip, compared with 380 tons for the same period last year).
- **There was a slight decline in unemployment** and a rise in daily wages.
- Fuel was donated and delivered to the Gaza Strip in an attempt to solve the energy crisis, since the de-facto Hamas administration stopped buying fuel from Israel in 2011.
- **The Kerem Shalom crossing continued functioning even under rockets fired by Palestinian terrorists.** In the past six months **more than 725,000 tons** of merchandise and food, as well as 18,000 tons of cooking gas and 15 million liters (about 4 million gallons) of diesel fuel were delivered through the crossing to the Gaza Strip.



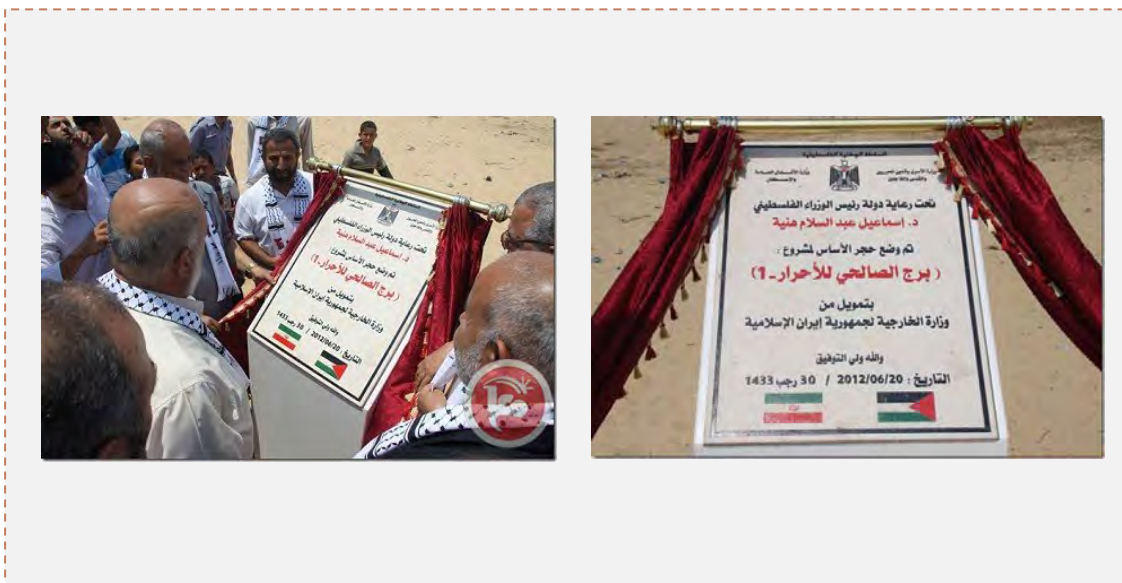
Trucks enter the Gaza Strip through the Kerem Shalom crossing (Coordinator for government activities in the territories , July 5, 2012)

Mohamed Morsi's Victory in the Egyptian Presidential Election

- After Mohamed Morsi won the Egyptian presidential elections, **Ahmed Yousef**, Ismail Haniya's former political advisor, wrote an article enumerating **the Palestinians' expectations from Egypt**. The article included the following: the Palestinians expect Egypt to accelerate the internal Palestinian reconciliation, establish an industrial area along the border at Rafah, allow the Gazans to export goods through the Rafah crossing, **fully open the Rafah crossing** and establish a free-trade zone (Sama News Agency, July 4, 2012).
- **Ismail Haniya** said that Hamas was arranging a visit for him to Egypt (Safa News Agency, July 8, 2012). Egyptian sources said that despite Hamas' hopes, President Morsi would not receive Haniya alone before he had received an official Palestinian delegation headed by Mahmoud Abbas and Ismail Haniya (Al-Hayat, July 8, 2012).

Iranian-Funded Project for Released Palestinian Terrorists

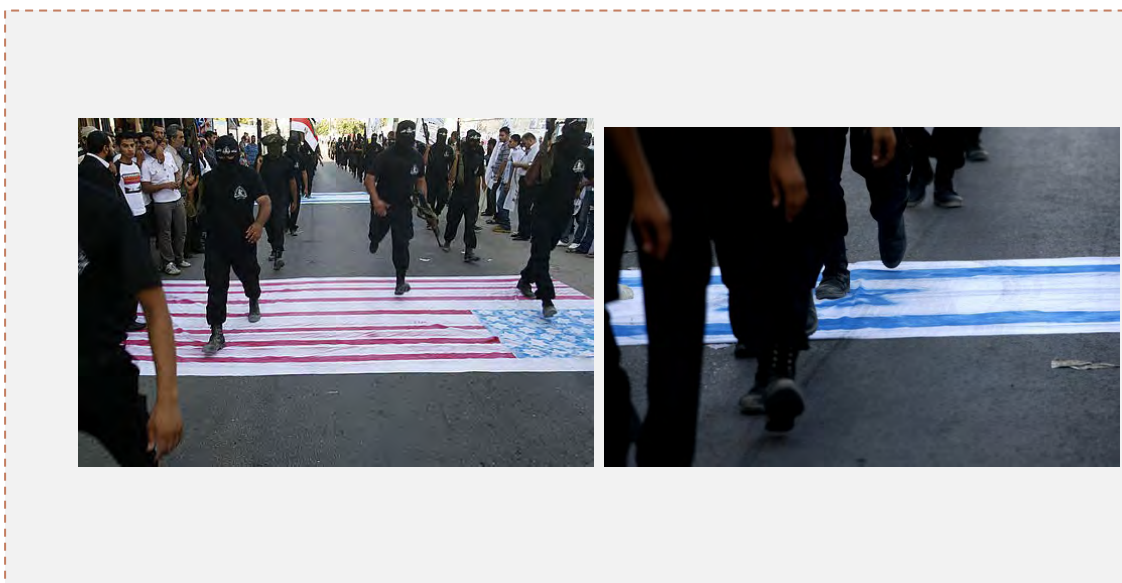
- Palestinian websites reported that **Atallah Abu al-Sabah**, minister of prisoner affairs in the de-facto Hamas administration, and **Yussef al-Munsi**, minister of housing and public works, participated in a ceremony on July 9 to lay the cornerstone for a residence to **house Palestinian terrorists released from Israeli jails**. The residence will be constructed on land formerly belonging to the Gush Katif settlements and will cost \$2 million, **the money provided by the Iranian foreign ministry** (Ma'an News Agency, Paltoday website, Safa News Agency, July 9, 2012).



Laying the cornerstone for housing for Palestinian terrorists released from Israeli jails. According to the plaque the project was financed by Iran; both the Iranian and Palestinian flags appear on it (Paltoday website, July 9, 2012)

The "Palestinian Sons of Freedom" Hold Rally

- A movement called the "**Palestinian Sons of Freedom**," a Hamas-affiliated group established in 2007, held a rally in Rafah on July 7 to celebrate its founding. High-ranking Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad figures attended. Before the rally the group's military-terrorist wing, the **Al-Ansar Brigades**, held a military parade in which its terrorist operatives marched over American and Israeli flags.



Palestinian terrorist operatives march over the American and Israeli flags (PALDF forum website, July 7, 2012)

Hamas Summer Camps in the Gaza Strip

■ As they do every year, Gazan children will participate in summer camps over the vacation. They are organized and conducted by various groups and organizations. The newspaper Al-Quds printed an article about a summer camp organized by Hamas, according to which the children will undergo "strenuous military training," the same as that received by Hamas operatives (Al-Quds, July 10, 2012). **Providing Palestinian children and adolescents with semi-military training is a familiar feature of the summer camps run by Hamas and other terrorist organizations.**

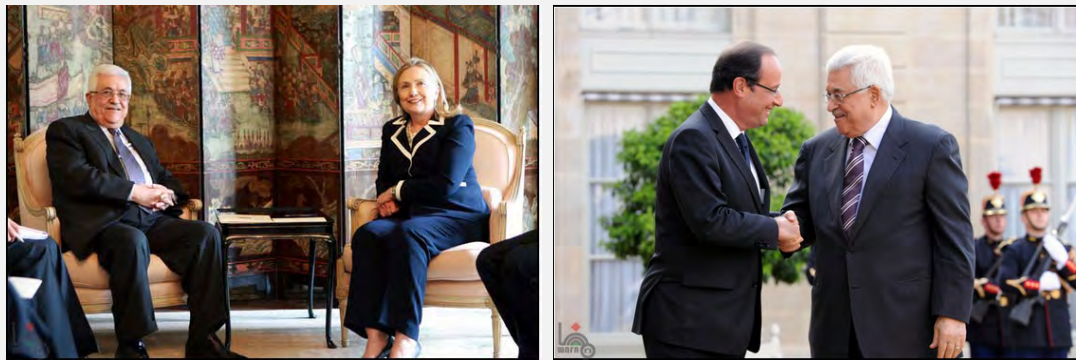


Palestinian children receive military training at a Hamas summer camp
(Al-Quds website, July 10, 2012)

Palestinian Authority Political Activity

Mahmoud Abbas in Paris

■ Mahmoud Abbas, heading a delegation of senior Palestinian Authority figures, paid a visit to Paris. He met with French President François Hollande and high-ranking members of the French government. While in Paris he also met with American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Catherine Ashton (the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security), the secretary of the Arab League and the foreign ministers of Germany, Britain and Tunisia (Wafa News Agency, July 7, 2012).



Left: Mahmoud Abbas meets with American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Right: Mahmoud Abbas with French President François Hollande (Wafa News Agency, July 6, 2012)

■ **Saeb Erekat**, member of Fatah's Executive Committee, said that Mahmoud Abbas' meetings in France focused on the political freeze in the peace process with Israel. He said that concerning the peace process, Mahmoud Abbas stressed that the Palestinian Authority was prepared to negotiate with Israel on the condition Israel met its commitments, especially with regard to halting construction in the settlements and accepting the 1967 borders as the basis for the two-state solution (AKI and Dunya al-Watan, July 6, 2012).

Mahmoud Abbas' Proposed Visit to Iran

■ Mahmoud Abbas received an invitation from Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to participate in a conference of non-aligned nations, expected to take place in Iran at the end of August. The invitation was given to Mahmoud Abbas by the Iranian undersecretary for foreign affairs, who met with him in the Jordanian capital, Amman, on July 8. Mahmoud Abbas thanked him for the invitation and promised to attend. If Mahmoud Abbas does go to Iran it will be his first official visit to that country (Wafa News Agency, July 8, 2012).



Mahmoud Abbas receives an invitation to visit Iran (Wafa News Agency, July 8, 2012)

- According to a source in the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas' acceptance of the invitation did not reflect a change in the PA's policies toward Iran. He said the PA considered it important to participate in a conference of non-aligned nations in view of its planned appeal to the UN General Assembly (Al-Quds, July 8, 2012).

Mahmoud Abbas Interviewed by Israel Channel 2 TV

- Interviewed by Israel Channel 2 TV on July 7, Mahmoud Abbas spoke about the following subjects:
 - **Negotiations with Israel:** Mahmoud Abbas emphasized that without halting construction in the settlements and without Israel's recognition of the two-state solution with the 1967 borders, the negotiations would not be resumed.
 - **Meeting with Benjamin Netanyahu:** Mahmoud Abbas said that he would meet with Netanyahu only after the Palestinian prisoners who had been incarcerated before the Oslo Accords had been released and the Palestinian security forces had been given authorization to provide themselves with special equipment.
 - **Appeal to the UN:** The Palestinian Authority, he said, intended to reapply to the UN for recognition of a Palestinian state, but he did not say when.

Palestinian Authority Responses to the Al-Jazeera Story about the Poisoning of Yasser Arafat

- After items were released by Al-Jazeera on July 3 about an investigation it conducted which indicated that Yasser Arafat died of radioactive poisoning, Fatah's

Central Committee issued an official statement. According to the statement, the Palestinian leadership would be prepared to do whatever it took to find the truth and reveal the circumstances which led to the death of Yasser Arafat in November 2004.

■ ahmoud Abbas ordered the information about Arafat's death to be strictly monitored and to discover why he died. He said that the PA was ready to cooperate fully with the investigators and that there was no religious or political reason that would prevent Arafat's body, entirely or partially, from being exhumed for the purpose of performing an autopsy, in accordance with agreement from the family (Wafa News Agency, July 4, 2012).

■ Hamas responded with a call for the appointment of a national investigative committee:

- **Ismail Haniya**, head of the de-facto Hamas administration, speaking at the graduation of an officers' training course given by the interior ministry in the Gaza Strip, called for a comprehensive investigation to discover those who, he claimed, helped Israel kill Arafat. He said the Palestinian Authority had not functioned properly regarding Arafat's death, and called for his body to be exhumed so that the necessary tests could be performed to discover who was behind the assassination (Al-Aqsa TV, July 5, 2012).

- **Ismail Radwan**, senior Hamas figure, called for a supreme national committee to be appointed to complete the investigation to clarify the circumstances surrounding Arafat's death, claiming that Israel was responsible (Safa News Agency, July 4, 2012).

UN to Investigate the Settlements

■ The Palestinian media reported that the UN had decided to send three "highly distinguished individuals" to Judea and Samaria for a first-hand examination of the construction in the settlements and its influence on the lives of the local Palestinians. The three would begin working based on reports from UN agencies, the European Union and human rights organizations. They might also interview local residents (Ma'an News Agency, July 6, 2012).