



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

January 9-15, 2013



Masked, armed Fatah operatives in the streets of the Balata refugee camp (near Nablus) demonstrate against the security services of the Palestinian Authority, firing the guns into the air (Safa News Agency, January 10, 2013).

Overview

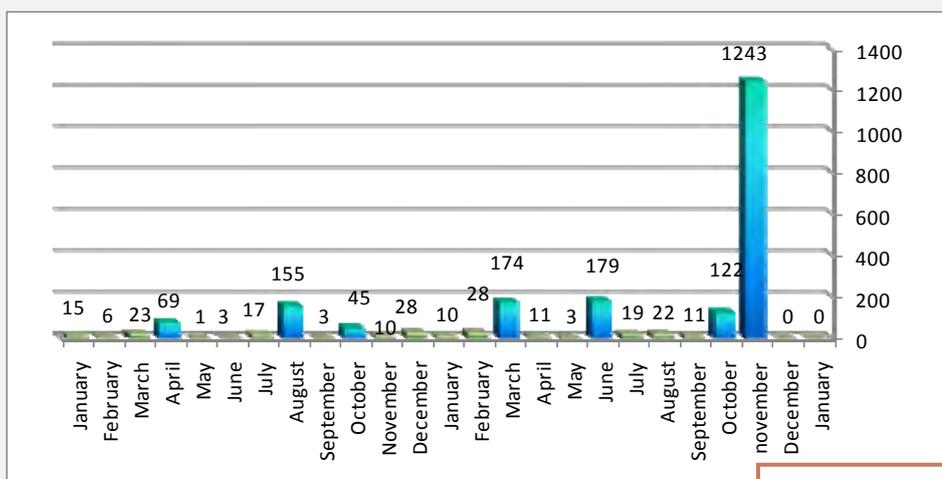
- Since Operation Pillar of Defense no rockets or mortar shells have fallen in Israeli territory. This past week there were two incidents involving IDF forces and Palestinians who gathered near the security fence and provoked IDF soldiers.
- In Judea and Samaria conflicts and friction continued between Palestinians on the one hand and Israeli security forces and settlers on the other, although there was a slight decrease in the scope of events. In the refugee camps of Balata (near Nablus) and Jenin there were conflicts between armed Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades groups and the security services of the Palestinian Authority, presenting a challenge to the PA's ability to govern.
- An estimated 200 Palestinian demonstrators, reinforced by far left activists from abroad, erected a tent camp in Area E1 (between Jerusalem and Maale Adumim). Israeli security forces evacuated the camp without serious incident.

The Situation in the Gaza Strip

Rocket Fire

■ Hamas and the other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip continue to implement the understandings reached at the end of Operation Pillar of Defense. **Since 2300 hours on November 21 no rockets or mortar shells hit Israeli territory.**

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since the Beginning of 2011¹

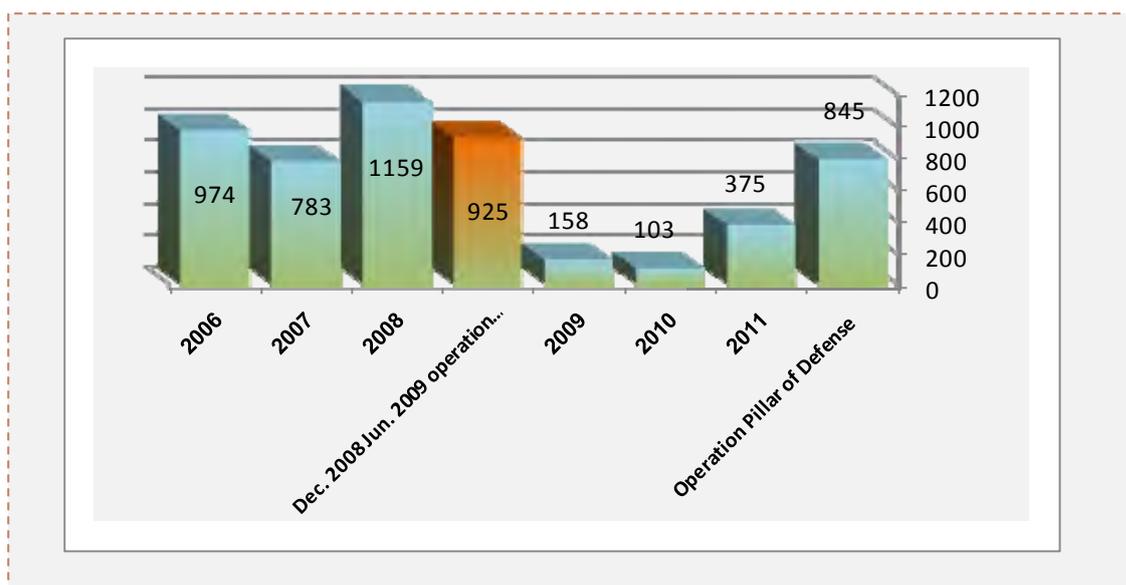


Since the end of Operation Cast Lead, 2,298 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory.

Since the beginning of 2011, 2,197 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory; 1,822 since the beginning of 2012.

¹ As of January 15, 2013. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire²



Events on the Ground

■ This past week there were two instances in which local Palestinians gathered near the security fence to provoke IDF forces. During them the IDF was forced to fire at the Palestinians. According to reports in the Palestinian media, two Palestinians were killed.

■ On **January 11** dozens of Palestinians gathered near the security fence in a closed area. Soldiers who arrived on the scene instructed them to turn back. When they did not, the soldiers fired warning shots to disperse them (Ynet, January 11, 2013). The Palestinian media reported that one Palestinian was killed and another wounded by the IDF fire, claiming that both were farmers and working at the scene (Safa News Agency, Paltoday website, January 11, 2013).

■ On **January 14** the IDF fired warning shots at a group of Palestinians gathered near the security fence in the northern Gaza Strip, near Beit Lahia. The Palestinian media reported that a Palestinian civilian was killed on farmland in northern Beit Lahia (Jerusalem Brigades website, January 14, 2013).

IDF Force Exposes the Shaft of an Attack Tunnel

■ On **January 14** an IDF force engaged in operational activities near the security fence in the southern Gaza Strip exposed **the shaft of a terrorist attack tunnel** near the village of Nir Oz. The IDF is investigating the tunnel, including the date it was dug

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

(IDF spokesman, January 15, 2013). The tunnel apparently collapsed as a result of the strong rains which fell the week before. In the assessment of Israeli security sources, the tunnel would have been used by terrorist operatives for an attack in Israeli territory.



The tunnel shaft (IDF spokesman, January 15, 2013).

Judea and Samaria

The Wave of Violence in Judea and Samaria Continues

■ This past week as well **confrontations and friction continued between Palestinians on one hand and the Israeli security forces and settlers on the other** at various locations in Judea and Samaria. However, there was a slight decrease in the scope of events. The prominent events were the following:

- On **January 12** an IDF force identified an infiltrator attempting to cross the security fence in **the area of the Meitar checkpoint** (south of Mt. Hebron), arriving from the direction of the village of Daharia. The force initiated suspect arrest protocol, and when he tried to escape the force opened fire and wounded him. He later died of his wounds at the hospital in Beersheba (Ynet, January 12, 2013).
- On the night of **January 13** an IDF force detained a Palestinian near the village of Migdal Oz (in the Etzion bloc, southwest of Bethlehem), who was shooting at the village from a distance of a few dozen yards. The Palestinian, who was detained, is a resident of the village of Beit Fajar, not far from Migdal Oz. He

used an improvised gun; it is not known whether he participated in other shooting attacks (IDF spokesman, January 14, 2013).

■ According to an Israeli Security Agency report, during December 2012 **there were reports of 81 attacks in Judea and Samaria and 30 in Jerusalem**. Most of the attacks involved Molotov cocktails (events in which stones are thrown are not counted). The report also stated that **it was the second consecutive month in which the number of attacks rose in Judea and Samaria and Jerusalem** (Israel Security Agency website, January 13, 2013).

Terrorist Cells Detained in Bethlehem and Nablus

■ As part of routine security activity, the Israeli security forces **recently detained two terrorist cells** (IDF spokesman, January 9, 2013).

- The members of one cell, who were detained in November 2012, were **young Palestinians from Bethlehem** who threw stones at Israel vehicles. An Israeli woman was critically wounded in one of their attacks in the Beitar Illit area.
- The members of the other cell came from **the village of Beita** (south of Nablus) and threw stones in drive-by attacks. Some of the cell members were also involved in shooting attacks carried out with improvised weapons.

Political Develops in the Gaza Strip

Appointment of Fatah Secretary General in the Gaza Strip

■ On January 7 Mahmoud Abbas, PA chairman, **formally appointed Ahmed Nasr to the position of Secretary General of Fatah in the Gaza Strip**. He was also appointed as deputy to **Nabil Shaath**, who is responsible for the movement's enlistment and organization. Ahmed Nasr, recommended for the position by Nabil Shaath, will replace **Yahya Rabah**, who temporarily served as Secretary General of Fatah in the Gaza Strip (Shihab website, Ma'an News Agency, Filastin Al-'An and Fatah al-Yawm, January 8, 2013). His appointment was severely criticized by senior Fatah figures in the Gaza Strip, who claimed that it was illegal and that they had not been consulted (Alresala.net website, Al-Sharq in Saudi Arabia, January 9, 2013).

■ **Ahmed Abd al-Fatah Nasr (Abu Nasr) is considered one of the most prominent militant figures in Fatah in the Gaza Strip today, and he has a long history of involvement in terrorism**. He was born on September 27, 1954, in the

Khan Yunis refugee camp and joined Fatah in 1969. In 1970 he was detained by Israel and again in 1975, when he was sentenced to 25 years in prison for **terrorist activity carried out in Israel**. He was released in the so-called "Jibril deal" in 1985.

■ After his release he returned to his position of leader of **Fatah's Shabiba youth movement** in the Gaza Strip. In 1987 he was deported to Jordan on an order issued by the Israeli minister of defense and the head of the southern command. In Jordan he worked in an institution dealing with the families of the PLO's killed and imprisoned terrorist operatives. During the first intifada he was active in the Gaza committee and was in constant contact with Fatah networks in the Gaza Strip. His activities caused him to be continually pursued by Jordanian intelligence. In 1993 he returned to the Gaza Strip, and in 2002 was appointed Secretary General of the Palestinian Legislative Council. Today he is a member of Fatah's Revolutionary Committee. In May 2009 he was detained by the de-facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip and released after 11 days.



Ahmed Nasr (Ajyal Radio website, Ramallah, January 8, 2013).

Hamas Ministry of the Interior Delegation Visits Sudan

■ A delegation from the Hamas ministry of the interior, headed by **Fathi Hamad**, minister of the interior, paid an official visit to Sudan. Most of the visit was devoted to studying civil defense, combat doctrine and the methods used by the Sudanese. It was agreed that Hamas would send a delegation of members of its civil defense service to Sudan for training (Website of the Hamas administration's ministry of the interior, January 8, 2013).



Fathi Hamad and the Hamas delegation meet with senior members of the Sudanese ministry of the interior and civil defense administration (Facebook page of the Hamas administration ministry of the interior, January 9, 2013).

Operation Pillar of Defense – Supplement

Arab and International Delegations Continue Arriving in the Gaza Strip

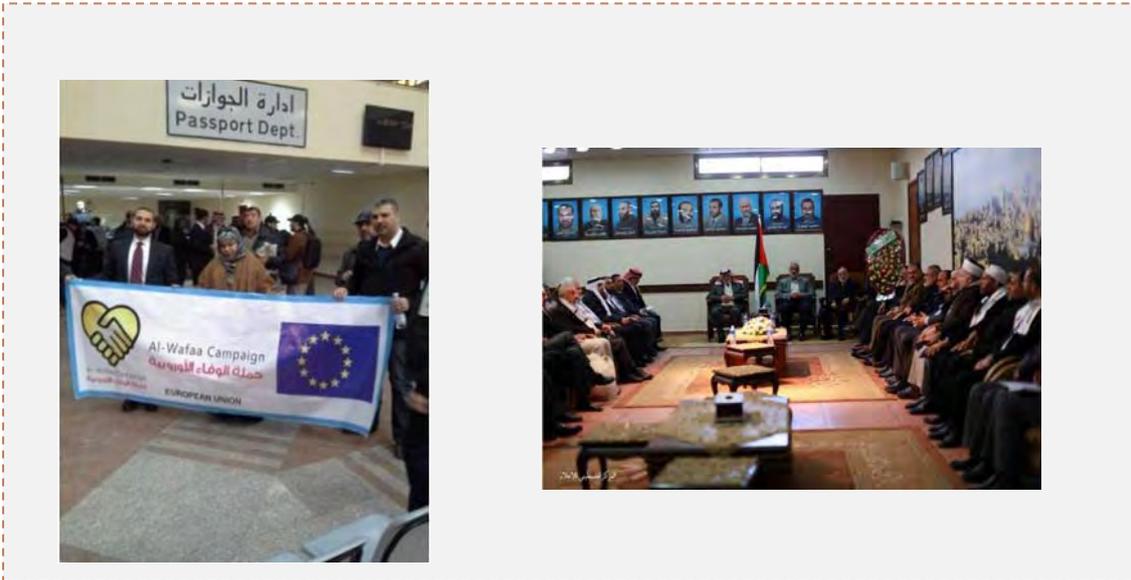
■ Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense, **Arab and international aid and documentation delegations continue to arrive in the Gaza Strip**. According to Alaa' al-Bata, coordinator of the Hamas administration's foreign ministry's governmental committee for receiving foreign delegations, **so far more than 150 delegations have arrived in the Gaza Strip** (Safa News Agency, January 13, 2013).

European-Arab Aid Convoy

■ **On January 8 a European-Arab aid convoy** arrived in the Gaza Strip. It was called Al-Wafa ["loyalty"] 5 and had dozens of activists from 15 countries. It was headed by **Mohammad Hannoun**, chairman of the **Italian** Association of Palestinians in Italy (API). Members of the convoy met with Ismail Haniya, head of the de-facto Hamas administration, who presented them with plaques (Qudsnet website, January 9, 2013).

■ They met with **Ahmed Bahar**, Hamas deputy chairman of the Palestinian Legislative Council, who appealed to them to appoint a committee to bring to trial IDF officers who committed what he claimed were "war crimes" against the Palestinian

people. He also asked for a committee that would work to release Hamas members of the PLC who were imprisoned in Israel to be appointed (Alresala.net website, January 8, 2013).



Left: Ms. Maha al-Fahed, center, a Saudi Arabian woman member of the delegation has her picture taken with the members of the delegation. The banner bears the emblem of the European Union (Saidati magazine, Saudi Arabia, January 7, 2013). Right: Ismail Haniya, head of the de-facto Hamas administration, receives the Al-Wafa 5 delegation (Palinfo website, January 9, 2013).

Delegation from Sudan

- On January 12 Ismail Haniya met with members of a Sudanese delegation that visited the Gaza Strip for a number of hours. It was headed by Qatabi Mahdi Ahmed, advisor to the president of Sudan, and included members of the parliament and clerics. Haniya welcomed the delegation and blessed what he called the historic visit of a delegation of senior Sudanese. He stressed the strong bonds between the Palestinians and the Sudanese, saying that "Sudan was also a partner in the Gazan victory of Operation Pillar of Defense" (Filastin Al-'An, January 12, 2013).
- The Fatah movement condemned the Sudanese visit to the Gaza Strip claiming that it was not coordinated with the PA. Such a visit, claimed Fatah, harmed the PA's legitimacy, especially after the upgrade of its status in the UN, and perpetuated the internal Palestinian schism (Wafa News Agency, January 12, 2013).



Ismail Haniya presents the president of Sudan with a plaque to commemorate Hamas' so-called victory in Operation Pillar of Defense (Palinfo website, January 12, 2013).

Delegation from Turkey

- On January 13 a Turkish delegation arrived in the Gaza Strip representing the International Bar Association. The objective of the visit was to collect evidence of so-called "war crimes" committed by Israel against the Palestinians. The delegation of ten lawyers included seven from Turkey, two from Egypt and one from Saudi Arabia (Filastin al-Yawm, January 13, 2013).
- The delegation met with senior members of the ministry of justice of the de-facto Hamas administration. **Osama Saad**, head of the Hamas administration's documentation authority, Al-Tawthiq, reviewed what he alleged were Israel's alleged "war crimes," committed in Operation Cast Lead and Operation Pillar of Defense. He also reviewed the documentation authority's activities in collecting statements and preparing legal cases. According to the head of the delegation, it will prepare a report on the situation in the Gaza Strip, which **it will deliver to senior figures in Turkey**. If the delegation finds sufficient evidence it will initiate legal proceedings against Israel (World Bulletin, January 14, 2013).



The members of the Turkish delegation of lawyers with senior members of the ministry of justice of the Hamas administration in Gaza (Shihab website, January 15, 2013).

The Internal Palestinian Reconciliation

Reconciliation Talks Renewed in Cairo

■ After a freeze of a year, on January 9, 2013 Fatah and Hamas delegations, headed by **Mahmoud Abbas and Khaled Mashaal**, met in Cairo to discuss the internal Palestinian reconciliation. After the meeting sources in Fatah expressed satisfaction with the renewal of the talks. According to **Azzam al-Ahmed**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee and responsible for the reconciliation portfolio, the sides agreed to renew the implementation of the articles of the reconciliation agreement from the point where they were stopped. They also agreed to renew the activity of the central elections committee in the Gaza Strip and to hold consultations regarding the formation of the government (Ma'an News Agency, January 9, 2013). **Saeb Erekat** reported that the heads of the movements would meet in Cairo again at the beginning of February to continue their activity.

■ Despite the optimistic atmosphere, difficulties apparently emerged in promoting the internal Palestinian reconciliation, primarily over Hamas' lack of agreement to renewing the activity of the election committee in Gaza. Concerns were also raised about a breakdown of the talks in view of security issues and Hamas complaints about the political detentions of its activists in Judea and Samaria (Palinfo website, January 13, 2013). Senior Hamas figure **Salah al-Bardawil** said that remarks made by Mahmoud Abbas contradicted what Fatah and Hamas had agreed on in Cairo and that Fatah was not serious about implementing the reconciliation. He said both

delegations had agreed to implement as a package deal all matters connected to ending the schism (Palestine Online website, January 10, 2013).

The Palestinian Authority

Confrontations of Armed Operatives in the Refugee Camps

- This past week there were confrontations between armed Fatah operatives and the PA's security services in two refugee camps in Judea and Samaria. **The confrontations occurred during protests carried out by masked operatives who also fired their guns into the air.** The protests were directed against the PA's security services, while stressing loyalty to Mahmoud Abbas. Several demonstrators were detained.
- **On December 10 dozens of masked, armed Fatah operatives held a press conference in the Balata refugee camp** (east of Nablus) to announce the founding of the "Association of the Noble Sons of Fatah." They announced that they were loyal to Mahmoud Abbas as president of the Palestinian people and strongly attacked the commander of the national security service for the series of detentions of their operatives. After the press conference armed operatives held a military display where they fired dozens of rifles into the air (Ma'an News Agency, January 10; Alresala.net website, January 12, 2013).

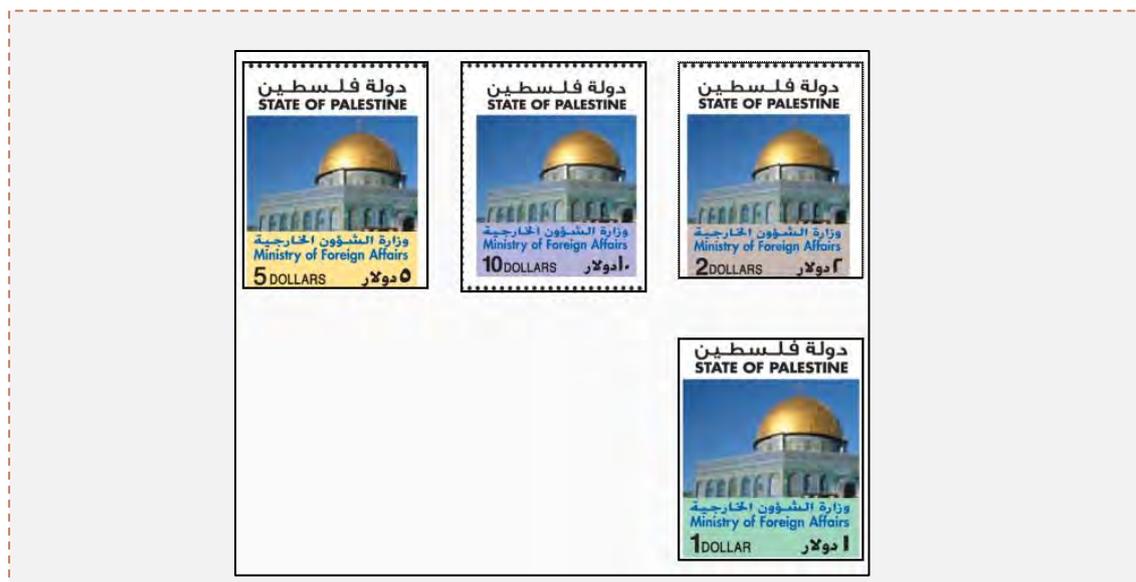


The press conference of Fatah operatives in the Balata refugee camp (Ma'an News Agency, January 10, 2013).

■ **In the Jenin refugee camp on January 13** a group of armed men who identified themselves as Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades operatives fired their guns into the air and protested the activities of the PA's security services directed against them. They expressed support for Mahmoud Abbas and called for a investigative committee to examine the security service attacks on their rights. They also demanded their weapons be returned to them, claiming they were intended "for self defense and to defend Palestinian civilians."

Continued Action to Establish the Status of the Palestinian Authority as a State

■ **Ms. Safa Nasseredin**, minister of information in the PA, announced tax stamps of varying values would be issued inscribed "State of Palestine" instead of "Palestinian National Authority." The stamps, which are being printed in Bahrain, will be used by PA legations around the globe. Nasseredin said that her office and the Palestinian government were prepared for a struggle with Israel to realize the achievements of the Palestinian leadership in promoting the status of the PA to that of non-member observer in the UN (Safa and Ma'an News Agencies, January 8, 2013).



[Pictures] [Caption] Tax stamps issued by the PA bearing the words "State of Palestine" (Wafa News Agency, January 8, 2013).

A Model of an M75 on the Temple Mount

■ In the wake of the stormy weather Israel experienced last week, Muslims made a snow model of a Hamas M75 rocket on the Temple Mount. The M75 is a medium-

range rocket manufactured locally in the Gaza Strip. It was used by the Palestinian terrorist organizations in Operation Pillar of Defense and has become a symbol.



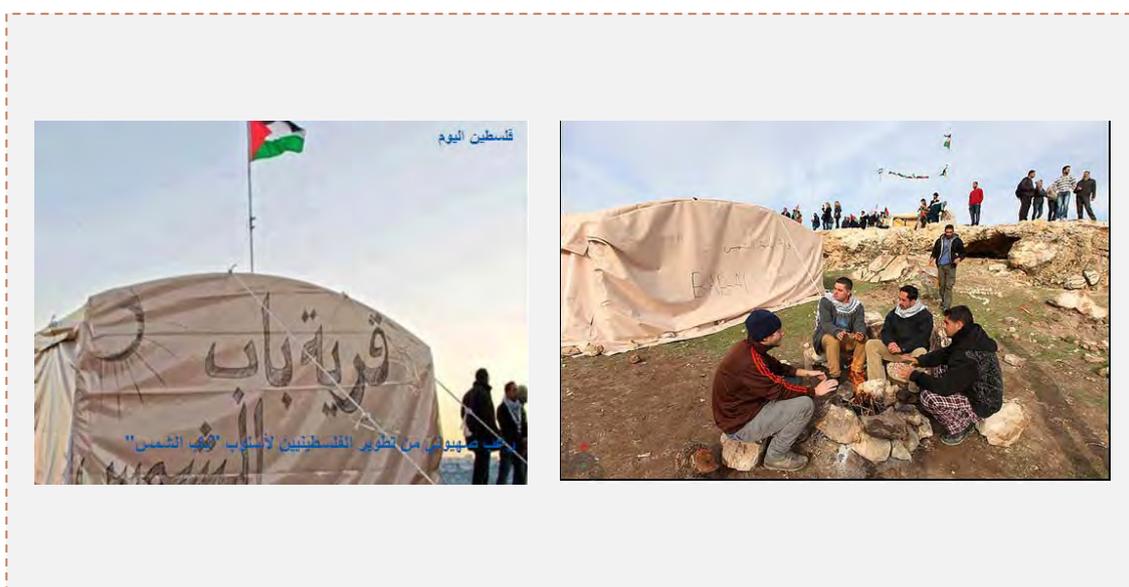
A model of an M75 rocket sculpted in snow on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Filastin Al-'An, January 9, 2013).

Propaganda Events

Illegal Palestinian Outpost Removed

- An estimated 200 Palestinian demonstrators, reinforced by far left activists from around the globe, **erected a tent camp in Area E1** (between Jerusalem and Maale Adumim). The **50-tent camp**, erected on the initiative of the Popular Committees for the Resistance to the [Security] Fence, **was called Bab al-Shams** ("sun gate"). The demonstrators said in a statement they had decided to erect the camp after Israel announced its intention to construct 4000 dwelling units in Area E1. They also said that it was an expression of the "popular resistance" (Ma'an News Agency, January 11, 2013).
- Many senior Palestinians tried to reach to tent camp to show solidarity with the Palestinian activists there but their entry was prevented by IDF forces in the region of the Al-Zaim roadblock. Among the activists whose were not permitted to enter were **Saeb Erekat**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee and head of the Palestinian negotiating team, **Ms. Hanan Ashrawi**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, **Ahmed Majdalani**, PA minister of labor, and **Ms. Majida al-Masri**, PA minister of social affairs (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, January 13, 2013).

■ As soon as the tent camp had been erected, Israel issued an ultimatum to the demonstrators, stating that they had to evacuate the site of their own free will or force would be used to evict them. Arab lawyers lodged an injunction with the Israeli Supreme Court to prevent the eviction. The demonstrators said in an announcement that if they were evicted they would not actively confront the forces evicting them but would respond with passive resistance (Ynet, January 11, 2013). **On the night of January 12 the outpost was evacuated by Israeli security forces.** At the start of the weekly government meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he "would like to praise the Israeli Police, with the support of the IDF, for its rapid and determined operation...As soon as I was updated on the Palestinian gathering, I ordered its immediate evacuation..."³



The Palestinian outpost (Palinfo website, January 13, 2013)

³ <http://www.pmo.gov.il/English/MediaCenter/Spokesman/Pages/spokeStart130113.aspx>