



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict September 11 – 16, 2013¹



On the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur (September 14, 2013), an Israeli Border Patrol force was attacked in the village of 'Anata, near Jerusalem. Palestinian youngsters pelted it with stones and paint buckets. The video was shot by a Palestinian and uploaded to YouTube on September 14, 2013. It can be accessed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=VniKgSFiuNs.

Overview

- This past week Israel's south was quiet. Violent incidents continued in Judea and Samaria. Stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown at Israeli vehicles, security forces, and civilians. Recently there has been an increase in violent incidents in Judea and Samaria refugee camps against both Palestinian security services and Israeli security forces.
- Egyptian security forces continued a large-scale operation against terrorist targets in the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula. The Egyptian army spokesman reported that hundreds of terrorist operatives were arrested and many weapons were exposed. He said that Hamas' weapons and equipment were found in the Sinai Peninsula. On the other hand, two jihadist organizations operating in the Sinai Peninsula claimed responsibility for an attack on the Egyptian intelligence headquarters in Rafah.

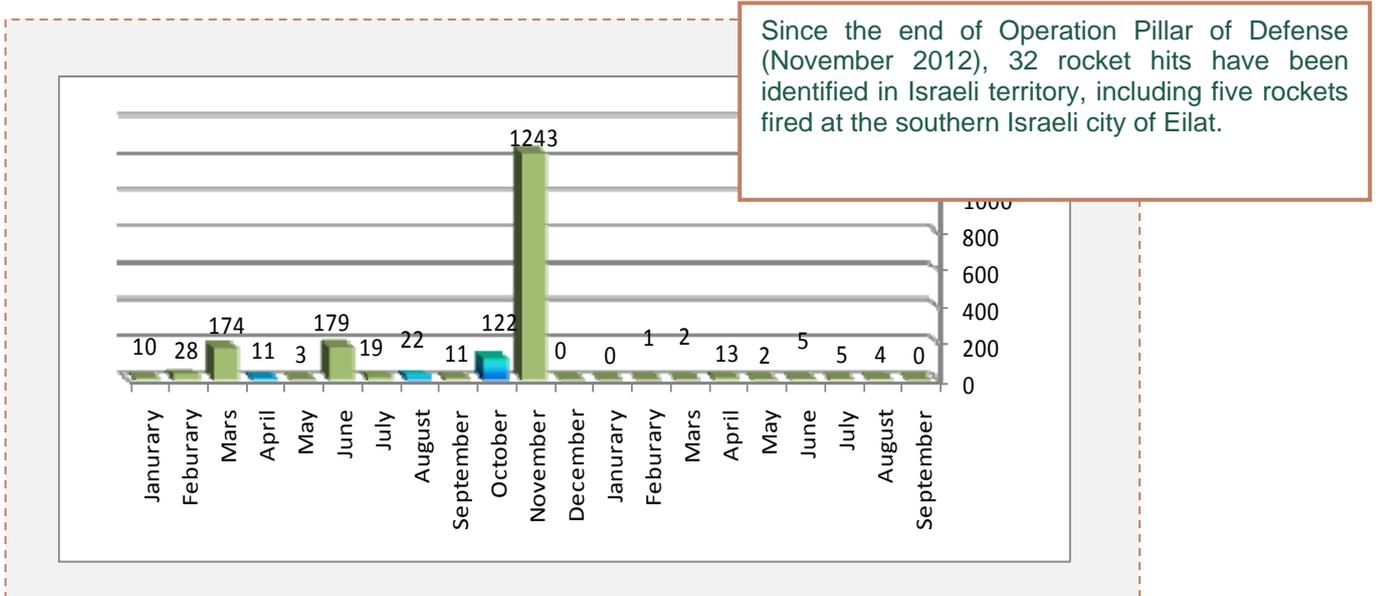
¹ The weekly report will not be posted next week due to the Sukkot Jewish holiday. The next report will be posted on October 1, 2013.

The Situation in Israel's South

Rocket Fire

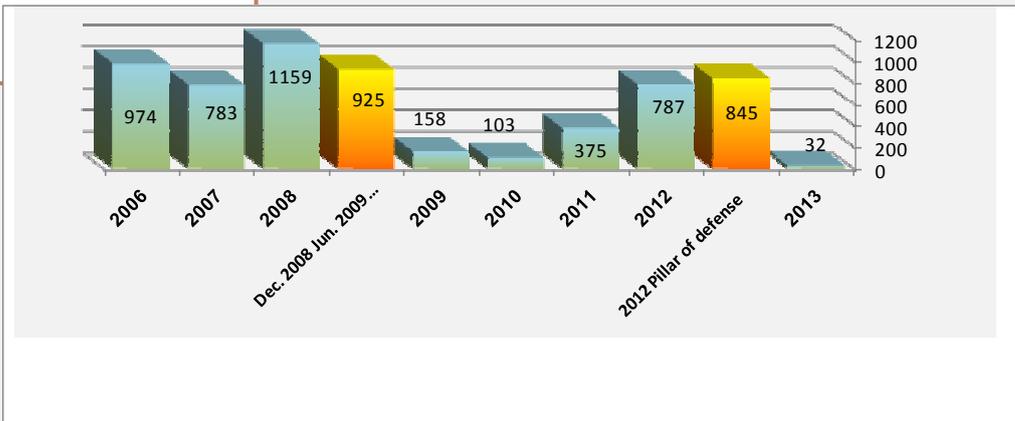
- This past week no rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory.

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since January 1, 2012²



Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire³

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



² As at September 16, 2013. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

³ The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Judea and Samaria

Attack on IDF soldiers at Joseph's Tomb

■ On September 12, 2013 a violent incident took place at Joseph's Tomb, on the outskirts of Nablus. When approximately 1400 worshippers entered the compound, Palestinians began throwing stones at Israeli security forces who secured the scene and the worshippers. One of the Palestinians fired live ammunition. IDF forces returned fire at the Palestinian, injuring him. He started fleeing, shortly after which he was captured by the security forces and evacuated to a hospital in Israel (IDF Spokesman, September 12, 2013).

Violence in Judea and Samaria

■ So-called "popular resistance" activities continued in Judea and Samaria. Dozens of stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown at Israeli vehicles (particularly buses), security forces, and civilians. At the same time, confrontations and violent clashes continued between Palestinians and Israeli security forces as part of the weekly protests and demonstrations.



Palestinian youngsters throw stones at Israeli security forces during the weekly demonstration in the village of Qadum (Wafa, September 13, 2013)

- The following are several events of note (Tazpit Press Service):
 - **September 10, 2013:** a Border Patrol force operating in Qalqilya came under small arms fire. The force returned fire. Stones were then thrown at the force. There were no casualties.

- **September 10, 2013:** stones were thrown at a military ambulance near Beit Hagai (southern Mount Hebron). The stone-throwers were caught .
- **September 10, 2013:** during a security check northeast of Bethlehem, Palestinians were found in the possession of weapons. The weapons were confiscated and the Palestinians were detained .
- **September 11, 2013:** stones were thrown at a vehicle near Beit Ommar (in the vicinity of Hebron). The stones were thrown from both sides of the road. Two women and their babies were inside the vehicle. One of the women was hit in her face and lost consciousness; the other was hit in her arm. They were evacuated to a hospital .
- **September 14, 2013:** at about 10:30 PM a Molotov cocktail was thrown into a Jewish compound in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Abu Tor .



Molotov cocktail thrown at a house in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Abu Tor (Tazpit Press Service, September 14, 2013)

Increased violence in Judea and Samaria refugee camps

■ **Recently there has been a marked increase in violence in Judea and Samaria refugee camps, with many armed Palestinians showing a great deal of daring in confrontations with the PA security services and the Israeli security forces that operate in the refugee camps.** One Palestinian was killed and two were injured on August 20, 2013 during a riot against Israeli security forces in the Jenin refugee camp. Three Palestinians were killed and approximately 15 were injured in the Qalandia refugee camp on August 26, 2013.



PA security vehicles and tires set on fire in the Al-Askar refugee camp, Nablus (Dunya al-Watan, Bukra Net, August 27, 2013)

Statement on the Temple Mount events

■ After last week's violent riots on the Temple Mount,⁵ Israel's police chief Yohanan Danino said that "any Jewish person who wants to pray on the Temple Mount can do so, but at scheduled times and dates" (the daily Israel Hayom, September 10, 2013). The PA Foreign Ministry criticized the statement, defining it as a "call to violence, chaos, conflicts, and a regional war of religion". **Riyadh al-Maleki**, the PA foreign minister, sent letters to top U.N. officials calling on member countries to hold urgent meetings and take action to "stop the violence", as he put it (Wafa, September 10, 2013).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

Large-scale Egyptian operation against terrorists

■ **Egyptian security forces continued the large-scale military operation against terrorist targets in the northeastern part of the Sinai Peninsula.** At a press conference convened by the Egyptian army spokesman, he listed the achievements of the operation. He said that security forces had broken into 601 houses, demolished 152 smuggling tunnels, and destroyed 108 underground fuel tanks. In addition, **309**

⁵ Last week there were calls from radical elements, including Israeli Arabs, "to protect the Temple Mount from Israeli visitors", prompting Israeli security forces to restrict Muslims' entry to the Temple Mount. This led to violent clashes in the Temple Mount compound.

terrorist operatives were captured, and a large quantity of weapons was seized – including mortars, anti-aircraft rockets, heavy machineguns, RPG rockets and numerous guns and pistols, a large quantity of ammunition, and over 10 tons of TNT explosives. According to the spokesman, the Egyptian security forces also **found multiple hand grenades with writing that said “Al-Qassam Brigades”** (the Hamas military wing), **as well as uniform used by Hamas** (Egypt’s official TV channel, September 15, 2013).



Egypt’s army displays weapons seized during the operation in the Sinai Peninsula (Pal Press, September 15, 2013)

- Hamas sources reported that the Egyptian navy opened fire at Palestinian fishing boats off the coast of Rafah and detained two fishermen after Egyptian ships crossed into the Gaza Strip fishing space (Al-Ayyam, September 13, 2013).

Two jihadist organizations claim responsibility for an attack on an Egyptian target in the Sinai Peninsula

- On September 11 a terrorist attack was carried out against the Egyptian intelligence headquarters in Rafah. Responsibility for the attack was claimed by two separate networks based in the Sinai Peninsula and affiliated with the global jihad. The first announcement was released on behalf of **Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis**; an announcement on behalf of a jihadist organization called **Jund al-Islam** was released later that day.



Right: Jund al-Islam’s claim of responsibility for bombing the military intelligence building in the Egyptian part of Rafah (Egyptian Facebook page, September 13, 2013).
 Left: announcement released by Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (Akhbar al-Sa’ah, September 12, 2013).

Rafah crossing remains closed

■ On September 11, following the attack on the Egyptian military intelligence headquarters in Rafah, the Rafah crossing was closed and remains so as of this writing (website of the de-facto Hamas administration Interior Ministry, September 11, 2013). **Ihab al-Ghusein**, the spokesman of the de-facto Hamas administration, lashed out against Egypt, saying that the Palestinian people no longer accept the “security excuse” for closing the Rafah crossing. He added that as a result, some Gazans lost their jobs or were forced to quit school, and patients were denied medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip (Al-Quds, September 11, 2013).

■ **Maher Abu Subha**, head of the Gaza Strip general administration for the crossings and borders, said that the Palestinian side submitted to the Egyptian side a proposal on how to resolve the Rafah crossing crisis. According to the proposal, the Palestinians will provide Egypt with the documents of the passengers waiting to cross. Egypt will be able to check them right away so that the waiting passengers can cross without delay when the crossing opens (Safa, September 14, 2013).

Gaza Strip economic distress escalates

■ The economic distress in the Gaza Strip escalates in the wake of Egypt’s activity to demolish smuggling tunnels and the closing of the Rafah crossing. Particularly evident is the shortage of various kinds of fuel. **Fathi al-Sheikh Khalil**,

head of the Hamas energy authority, warned that the power plant could go offline unless supplied with the diesel fuel required to keep it running. He further added that Hamas could not purchase diesel fuel from Israel due to its high cost compared to the Egyptian fuel. According to Khalil, shutting down the power plant would mean only six hours of electricity per day in the Gaza Strip (Al-Ayyam, September 12, 2013). **Ziyad al-Zaza**, the minister of finance in the de-facto Hamas administration, said that the government is making efforts to ensure the continued operation of the power plant despite the difficulties and high costs involved (Filastin al-'Aan, September 11, 2013).

■ In light of the severe fuel shortage in the Gaza Strip, de-facto Hamas administration chief **Isma'il Haniyah** and Interior Minister **Fathi Hamad** ordered public sector employees to offer Gazans rides in government and military vehicles to make it easier for them to reach their destinations (Shihab, September 10, 2013).



Hamas security services in the Gaza Strip help drive residents (Shihab, September 11, 2013)

■ **Hatem Oweida**, deputy minister of economy in the de-facto Hamas administration, warned about Egypt's demolition of the tunnels leading to a severe crisis in the Gaza Strip and a deterioration of the economic and social situation. He said that the Egyptian operations have led to a shortage in goods whose importation is not allowed by Israel, such as construction materials and raw materials. Oweida added that the Kerem Shalom crossing provides only about 40 percent of the Gaza Strip's needs, and therefore called for the opening of all crossings previously closed by Israel (i.e., Karni and Sufa crossings) (Al-Ayyam, September 10, 2013).

Military parades continue

■ On September 14, 2013 the Hamas military wing held another military parade in Gaza City.⁶ During the parade Hamas operatives presented various weapons, including what they said was a shoulder-fired SAM-7 anti-aircraft missile (Filastin al-'Aan, September 14, 2013). **Abu Obeida**, the spokesman of the Hamas military wing, said that Hamas' military parades in the Gaza Strip this weekend were meant to send a message (of deterrence) to Israel (Shihab, September 15, 2013).



The Hamas military wing presented anti-aircraft weapons, allegedly including SAM-7 missiles (Hamas forum, September 14, 2013).

■ **The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)** held a rally titled “Jerusalem – we will protect it together and liberate it together”. The rally-goers carried posters and pictures of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. **Abu Ahmed**, the spokesman of the PIJ military wing, said that, since the end of Operation Pillar of Cloud, the military wing has been preparing itself for the future battle for Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque (Pal Today, September 13, 2013).

⁶ For more information on previous parades, see our report titled [“News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict \(September 3 – 10, 2013\)”](#).



PIJ rally in Gaza in support of the Al-Aqsa Mosque (Pal Today, September 13, 2013)

The Palestinian Authority

Israeli-PA negotiations

■ In a speech given by **Abu Mazen** to the House of Lords and House of Commons of the United Kingdom, he said that the negotiations with Israel will cover all the issues pertaining to the final status agreement: Jerusalem, borders, settlements, refugees, security, and prisoners. He said that nine months have been allotted to reach an overall agreement that will include all the demands and bring an end to the Palestinian struggle. He added that if all 104 Palestinian prisoners detained prior to 1993 are released, he has made a commitment not to go to the U.N. while the negotiations are underway. As for the issue of incitement, **Abu Mazen** said he suggests resuming the activity of the tripartite committee established in the past, which would include U.S., Palestinian, and Israeli representatives (Wafa, September 9, 2013) .

PA statements on the Oslo Accords

- The 20th anniversary of signing the Oslo Accords was marked recently. A number of top PA officials who were among the signatories made statements on the issue:
 - **Abu Alaa**, member of the PLO Executive Committee and then chief negotiator with Israel, said that the Oslo Accords were not a mistake, and that they were good for five years after being signed. He added that Abu Mazen can

sign a peace treaty with Israel and make historical decisions even if they are unpopular (Al-Hayat al-Jadida, September 14, 2013).

- **Saeb Erekat**, member of the PLO Executive Committee, wrote an article admitting that the Palestinians can't say they have succeeded in their mission. He accused the Israeli government of responsibility for the failure. He said that the international community turned a blind eye to Israel's refusal to honor the Oslo Accords. In addition, he called on the international community to take responsibility and make Israel comply with international law (AKI, September 13, 2013) .

- Hamas launched an online campaign in which it posted an illustration saying “No to negotiations with the occupation [i.e., Israel]” (Facebook page of the Hamas forum, September 12, 2013). Hamas' campaign did not have much media impact .



Right: a Hamas illustration posted online, saying “No to negotiations with the occupation” (Facebook page of the Hamas forum, September 12, 2013).

Left: an illustration posted on Ajnad, the Hamas forum in Judea and Samaria, criticizing the PA's determination to adhere to the Oslo Accords (Hamas' Ajnad forum, September 14, 2013).

Representatives of Palestinian terrorist organizations take part in memorial ceremony for Qods Force commander's mother in Tehran

- On September 14, 2013 a memorial ceremony for Qods Force Commander Qasem Soleimani's mother, who died recently, was held in Tehran. Many Iranian top officials attended the ceremony, as did a considerable number of Palestinian representatives, including PIJ leader Ramadan Shalah and his deputy Ziyad

Nakhala, Hamas Political Bureau member Muhammad Nasr, and PA representative in Tehran Barakat al-Fara (Iran's Al-Alam TV, September 14, 2013).



PIJ leader Ramadan Shalah and his deputy Ziyad Nakhala (behind) offer their condolences to Qasem Soleimani (Al-Alam, September 14, 2013).