



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict December 4 – 10, 2013



American Secretary of State John Kerry visited the Middle East this past week to promote the peace negotiations. Above: A cartoon from the PA-affiliated newspaper Al-Ayam. The caption reads "The objective of Kerry's visit: to resuscitate [the peace process]" (Al-Ayam, December 5, 2013).

Overview

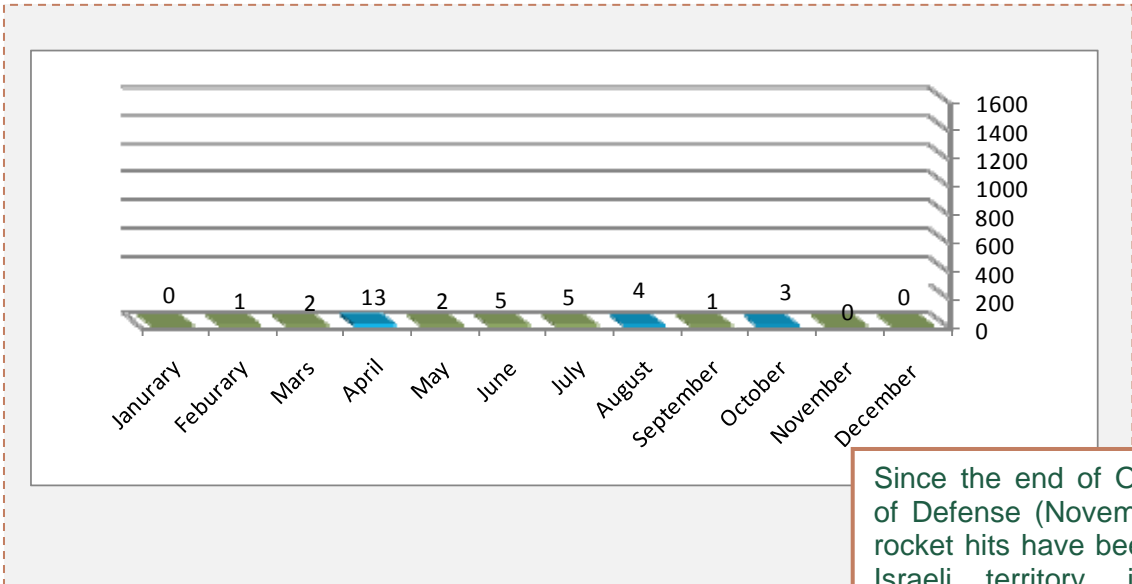
- This past week no rocket hits were identified in Israel's south. In Judea and Samaria violence continued, most of it associated with the so-called popular resistance. According to Israel Security Agency data, there was an increase in terrorist attacks as compared with October. Prominent were stabbing attacks and stone and Molotov cocktail-throwing attacks, leading to the death of an IDF soldier and wounding civilians.
- John Kerry, the American Secretary of State, visited the Middle East. He said he believed some progress had been made in the negotiations. The Palestinians, on the other hand, continue to be pessimist, calling the situation still "difficult and complicated."
- An IED exploded near an IDF patrol on the Syrian side of the Israeli-Syrian border. It was the first time an IED had been detonated on the Israeli-Syrian border since the Yom Kippur War in 1973. The identity of the perpetrators is unknown.

The Situation in Israel's South

Rocket Fire

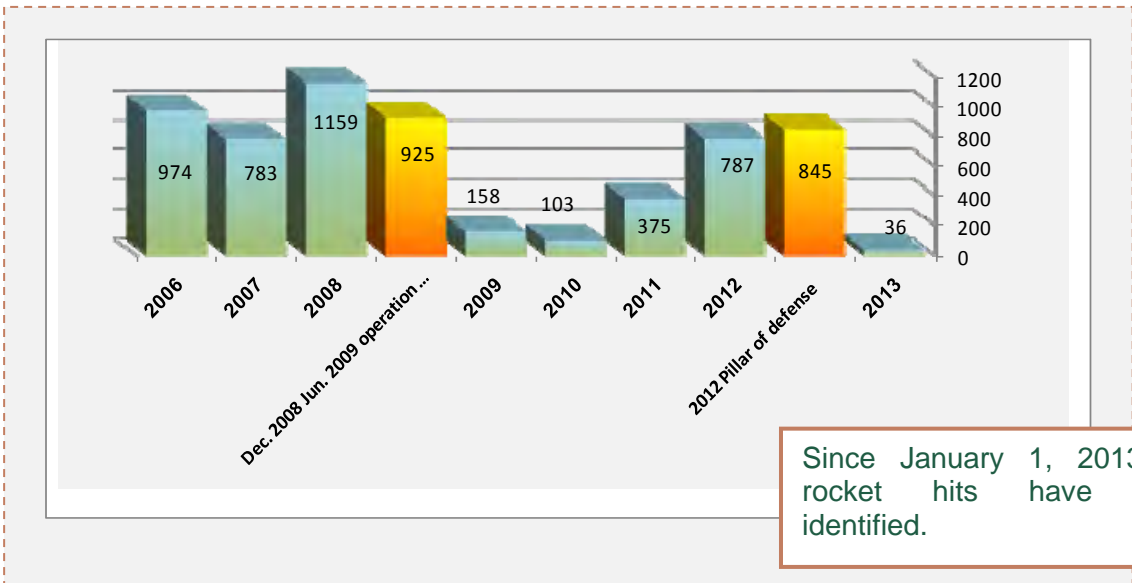
■ This past week Israel's no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israeli territory.

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since January 1, 2012¹



Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), 36 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory, including five rockets fired at the southern Israeli city of Eilat.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire²



Since January 1, 2013, 36 rocket hits have been identified.

¹ As December 10, 2013. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Judea and Samaria

Summary of Terrorist Attacks, November 2013³

■ **During November 2013 the number of terrorist attacks increased in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem, most of them part of the so-called popular resistance. There were 160 terrorist attacks** (compared with 131 in October 2013). Of them, 107 were carried out in Judea and Samaria (99 in October) and 53 in Jerusalem (32 in October). **Most of them involved Molotov cocktails (135 attacks), IEDs (21 attacks) and shots fired from light weapons (2 attacks).**

■ **Prominent were two stabbing attacks carried out inside Israeli territory.** On November 13, 2013, an IDF soldier was stabbed to death in the northern city of Afula. On November 22, 2013, a female soldier sustained minor injuries.⁴ In addition, three civilians were injured: a two year-old baby girl was wounded when a stone was thrown at the family car near the Armon Hanatziv neighborhood in Jerusalem, and a husband and wife sustained minor injuries when a Molotov cocktail set their car on fire near Tekoa (north of the Judean Desert).

Violence and Attempted Attacks Continue in Judea and Samaria

■ Violence continues in Judea and Samaria, part of the so-called popular resistance. Stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown at Israeli civilians and Israeli security forces. In addition, a number of attacks were carried out on the main roads. **This past week Palestinians rioted on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem:**

- On **December 4, 2013**, Israeli security forces broke into the Temple Mount compound after several dozen Palestinians threw stones and tear gas canisters at policemen (Ynet, December 6, 2013).

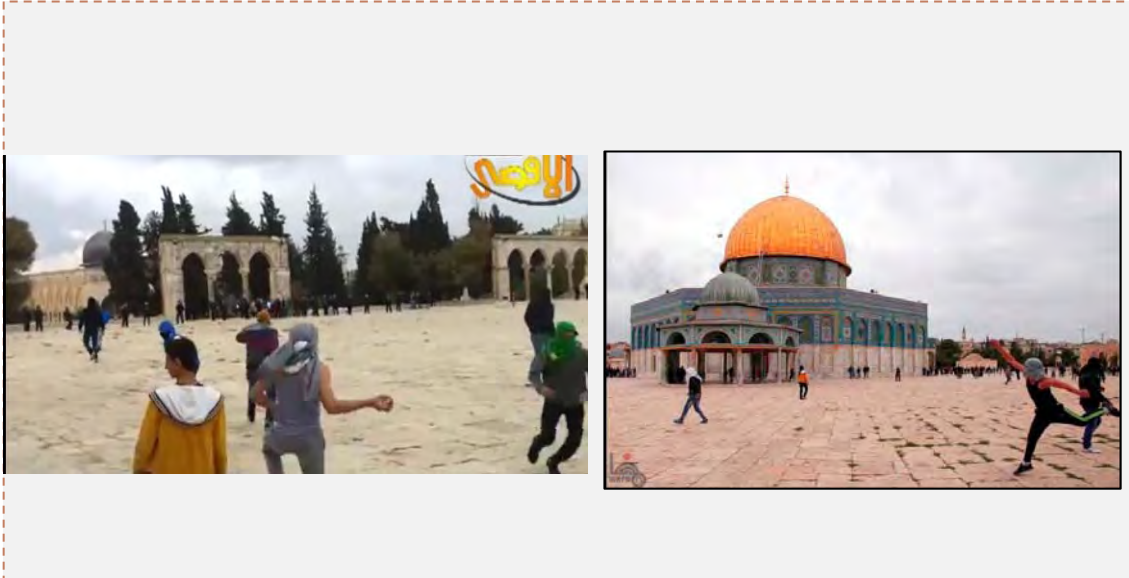
- On **December 6, 2013**, after the Friday prayer, stones were thrown from Al-Aqsa mosque at Israeli policemen stationed at the Mugrabi Gate. The police broke into the Temple Mount and evacuated the Palestinians, some of whom were wounded. Three were detained on suspicion of having thrown stones.

■ Following the confrontations, **Ismail Haniya**, head of the de-facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip, announced that a "new intifada" was about to begin.

³ According to data received from the Israel Security Agency website. The data do not include the scores of stones thrown every month.

⁴ For further information about the stabbing attack in Afula, see November 19, 2013 bulletin "[The Fatal Stabbing Attack of an Israeli Soldier at the Afula Central Bus Station is a Widespread Modus Operandi that is Relatively Easy to Carry Out, Constituting Part of the Palestinian "Popular Resistance" Attacks.](#)"

He said that in his opinion the current situation was similar to that which led to the "intifada of stones" on 1987. He said that worshippers at Al-Aqsa mosque stood together with the [Bedouin] residents of the [Israeli] Negev as a defensive front protecting the Palestinian people (Safa News Agency, December 4, 2013).



Left: Masked Palestinians throw stones at Israeli security forces after the Friday prayer on the Temple Mount (Wafa News Agency, December 6, 2013). Right: From a video posted to YouTube, December 6, 2013.

Palestinian Youth Killed in the Jelazoun Refugee Camp

- According to reports in the Palestinian media, on December 7, 2013, a 15 year-old Palestinian boy was killed during a confrontation with IDF soldiers in the Jelazoun refugee camp, near Ramallah. He was wounded and taken to a hospital in Ramallah, where he died of his wounds. IDF sources reported that forces had been operating in the region of the Jelazoun refugee camp and that a complaint received from the coordination and liaison administration was being examined (Ynet, December 8, 2013).
- The Palestinian Authority (PA) blamed Israel for the death of the boy, saying that the government of Israel was responsible for the so-called "organized terrorism" against children, and that Israel's policies were destroying the peace process (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, December 8, 2013). The funeral of the boy, Waji al-Ramhi, was held in the Jelazoun refugee camp, and armed, masked Fatah terrorist operatives also attended. After the funeral Palestinians rioted at the entrance to the refugee camp (Ma'an and Safa news agencies, December 8, 2013).

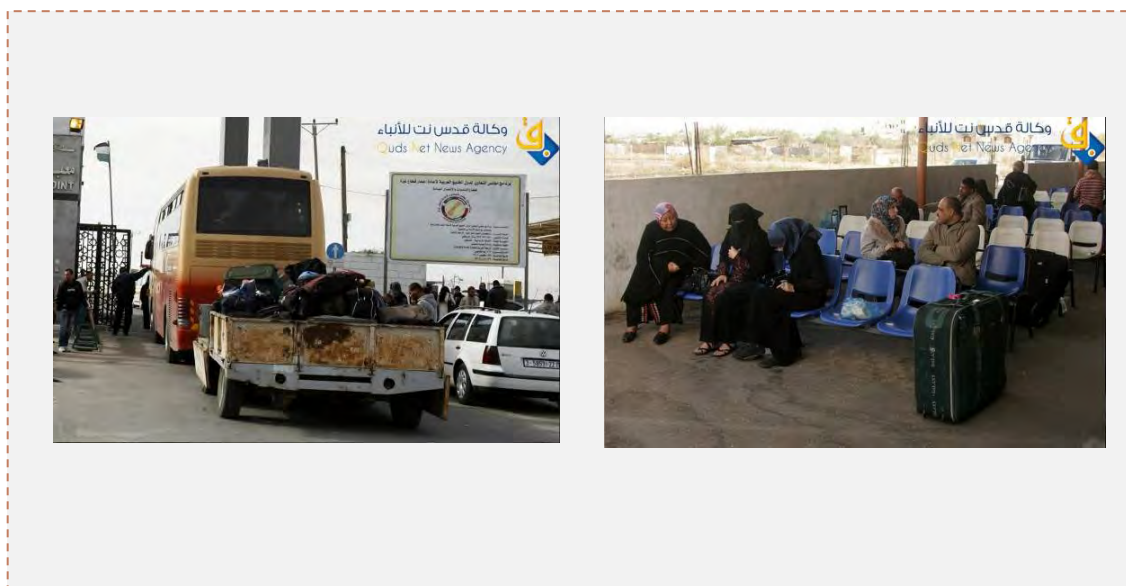


The funeral of the Palestinian boy in the Jelazoun refugee camp. Armed, masked Fatah operatives were also in attendance (Wafa News Agency, December 8, 2013).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Rafah Crossing

■ This past week Rafah crossing continued operating in an intermittent fashion. After it had been closed for nine days, on December 8, 2013, the Egyptian authorities opened it for three days, but exclusively for humanitarian cases. There were reportedly crowds of people who assembled at the crossing to leave the Gaza Strip. **Maher Abu Sabha**, head of the crossings directorate in the de-facto Hamas administration, said that an estimated 500 people use the crossing every day, it is open as compared with 1,200 people daily in the past. He added that the Hamas administration was working with the Egyptian authorities to extend its opening hours. He said that Egypt closed the crossing "for security reason" despite the fact that the security situation in Egypt had stabilized (Quds News, December 8, 2013).



Left: Gazans wait at the Rafah crossing. Right: A busload of passengers exits the Rafah crossing (Qudsnet website, December 8, 2013).

The Energy Crisis

■ The energy crisis in the Gaza Strip continues, with power outages and severely disturbing the basic functions of daily life. **Adnan Abu Hasna**, UNRWA spokesman in the Gaza Strip, said that Israel had agreed to the delivery of building materials for five of ten projects currently being carried out by UNRWA (Sama News Agency, December 2, 2013) **Jamal al-Khudari**, head of the Popular Committee against the Siege, said that the Israeli move did not satisfy the Palestinians and that building materials for all sectors had to be delivered without limitations (Safa News Agency, December 3, 2013). PA prime minister **Rami Hamdallah**, meeting in Ramallah with **Robert Serry**, the UN coordinator for the peace process, said that his government was holding intensive contacts with the relevant factors, especially Qatar, to find a solution for the [energy] crisis in the Gaza Strip (Safa News Agency, December 5, 2013).

Khaled Mashaal Stresses Hamas' Adherence to the "Resistance" [i.e., Violence and Terrorism]

■ **Khaled Mashaal**, currently in Malaysia, delivered a speech at the Islamic University about the "Palestinian resistance." He said that the Gaza Strip's experience during two confrontations with Israel [Operation Cast Lead and Operation Pillar of Defense] showed that "resistance" was the correct path and the "natural right" of the Palestinian people. He added that the solution for the Palestinian cause was not peace or negotiations. That was because comparing the results of the "resistance" with the results of the negotiations clearly showed that the "resistance" had liberated the Gaza

Strip, freed Palestinian prisoners in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal and liberated south Lebanon. As for the "popular resistance," he said that the past had shown that it made Israel use more destructive and murderous means (Safa News Agency, December 4, 2013).

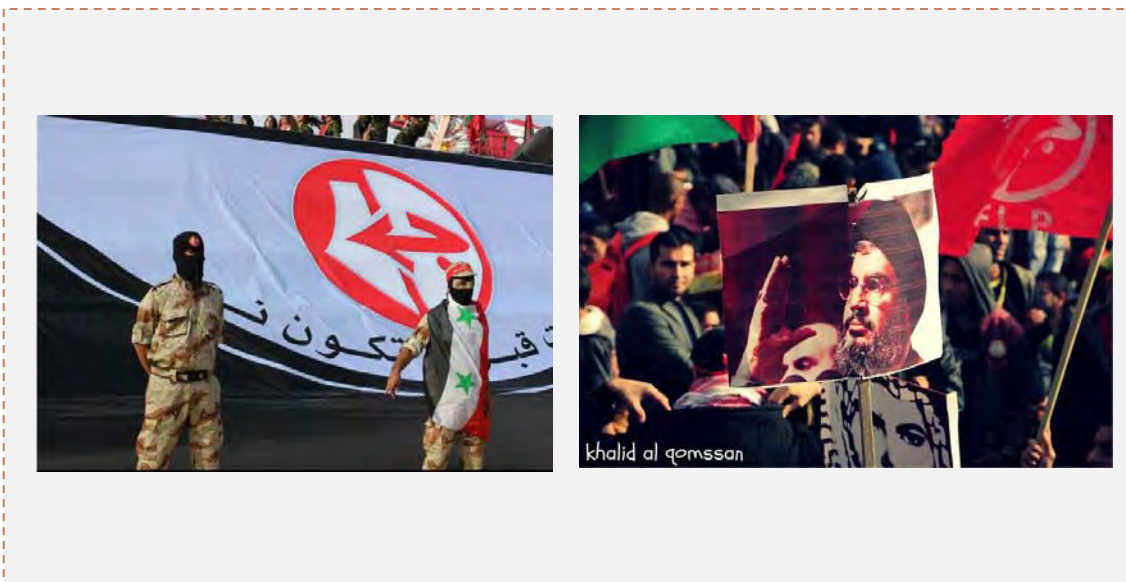
Rally Marks the 46th Anniversary of the PFLP

■ On **December 7, 2013**, a rally was held in the center of Gaza City to mark the 46th anniversary of the founding of the PFLP (the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine). It was attended by senior organization figures and representatives of other terrorist organizations, including Hamas, Fatah and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). The first speaker was senior PFLP figure **Jamil al-Majdalawi**, who called for an end to the internal Palestinian division, which he claimed caused the Palestinian people serious damage, and for the PA to withdraw from the negotiations and instead continue all forms of the "resistance" (PFLP website, December 7, 2013).

■ At the rally **Abd al-Rahim Mallouh**, deputy PFLP secretary general, and other senior organization figures, resigned from the organization's leadership for the sake of "refreshing" it and to give the younger generation a chance (Ma'an News Agency, December 6, 2013). Palestinian sources claimed that the real reason for his resignation was his membership in the PLO's Executive Committee, and the current negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians (Filastin Al-'Aan, December 9, 2013).



Left: The PFLP rally in the Al-Katiba Square in Gaza City. Right: The stairs to the speakers' platform are covered with an Israeli flag.



Left: The Syrian flag and a picture of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah displayed at the rally (Hamas forum website, December 7, 2013). Right: A masked PFLP operative wrapped in the Syrian flag (Official PFLP Facebook page, December 7, 2013)

Attack against Egyptian Forces Prevented

■ A spokesman for the Egyptian armed forces reported that the Egyptian army had prevented an attack by extremists from the Gaza Strip. They were planning to use remote controls to detonate 50 kilograms, or 110 lbs., of explosives to blow up Egyptian border guard observation towers along the Egypt-Rafah border. The ministry of the interior of the de-facto Hamas administration denied the report. According to **Islam Shawan**, spokesman for the ministry, it was a continuation of "the policy of lies organized against the Gaza Strip to justify the closure" (Palinfo website, December 4, 2013).

The Palestinian Authority

The Negotiations with Israel

■ American Secretary of State John Kerry visited the region on December 5-6 to promote the negotiations. He met with Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu and PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas. On leaving **Kerry seemed optimistic**, saying that Israel and the Palestinians were closer to a peace agreement than they had been for years. He also said that he believed the negotiations had made some progress and that both sides were still committed to the final goal. **He added that the issue of Israel's security was a main component in the negotiations** and that security

arrangements would be considered during the process to give Israel comprehensive security (Israeli prime minister's website, December 5, 2013).

■ **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** told Kerry that Israel was ready for a historic peace based on two states for two peoples. He said Israel continued to honor all understandings reached in prior negotiations, and would make an effort to bridge historical divides and provide security. He said Israel was completely committed to the effort and expressed his hope that the Palestinians were committed to it as well (Israeli prime minister's website, December 5, 2013).

■ **Mahmoud Abbas** met with John Kerry in Ramallah, and told him that the objective of the negotiation was to achieve peace based on the two-state concept and the establishment of a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders with east Jerusalem as its capital. He said that the construction in the settlements, especially in Jerusalem, which the government of Israel was determined to carry out, was destroying the efforts made by the American administration and prevented the negotiations from having a positive outcome (Wafa News Agency, December 5, 2013). According to a senior Palestinian figure, the most prominent security issue, and the one discussed by John Kerry and Mahmoud Abbas, was **leaving an Israeli military presence in control of large areas, such as the Jordan Valley**. Mahmoud Abbas demanded recognition of the Palestinian state's borders before a discussion of security arrangements was held (Al-Hayat, December 6, 2013).

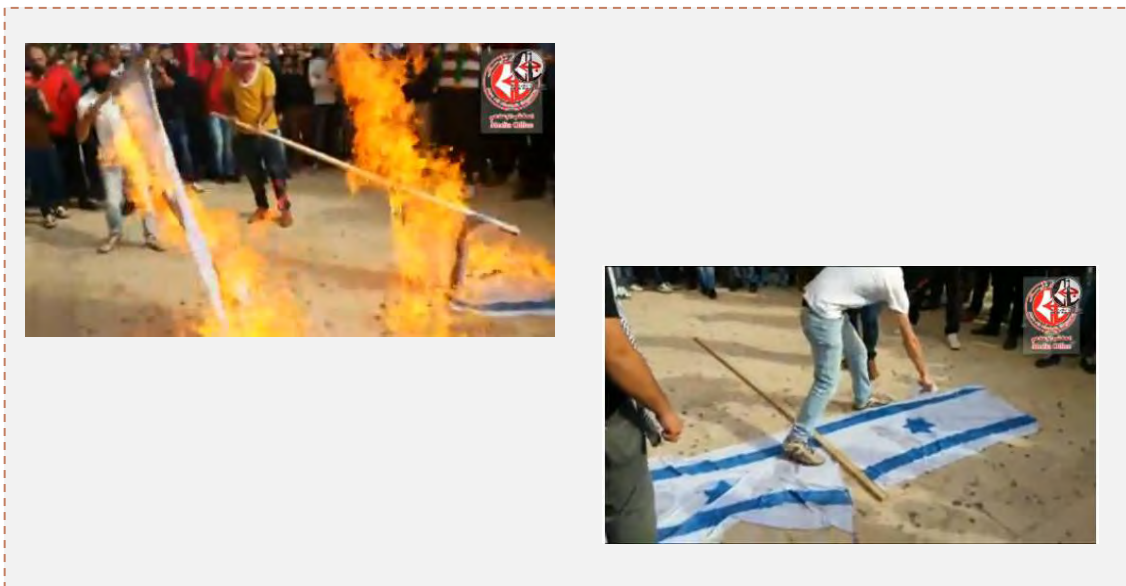


American Secretary of State John Kerry and Mahmoud Abbas meet in his office in Ramallah (Wafa News Agency, December 5, 2013).

■ **Saeb Erekat**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee and head of the Palestinian negotiating team, said that the situation was still "difficult and complicated." He said the United States had not yet formulated a program for security arrangements in Judea and Samaria as part of the final status plan. However, he claimed that news items stating that the Palestinians had rejected Kerry's proposals were not true and that the negotiations were continuing with all the issues under discussion (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, December 8, 2013).

PFLP Demonstrates against the Peace Negotiations

■ On December 1, 2013, during a conference at the Arab-American University in Jenin attended by Saeb Erekat, head of the Palestinian negotiating team, students belonging to the PFLP faction demonstrated against the negotiations with Israel. They burned Israeli flags and shouted anti-Israeli slogans (Official PFLP Facebook page, December 7, 2013).



Video posted to YouTube of students burning Israeli flags (Official PFLP Facebook page, December 7, 2013)

The Situation in the Golan Heights

Bomb Detonated near the Security Fence along the Israeli-Syrian Border

■ On **December 7, 2013**, an IED placed next to the security fence on the Syrian side, was detonated near an IDF patrol carrying out routine security activities. There were no casualties but the rear window of an IDF vehicle was damaged. The bomb was

between Majdal Shams and Post 105, where the IDF operates a field hospital for the Syrian population of the northern Golan Heights (Ynet, December 8, 2013). It was the first time an IED had been detonated along the Israeli-Syrian border since the Yom Kippur War in 1973.