



## News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict January 1 – 7, 2014



Remains of the bomb planted on a bus in Bat Yam. Left: The remains of a metal container in which the bomb was placed. Right: Screws and other metal objects contained by the bomb (Israel Security Agency website, January 3, 2014)

### Overview

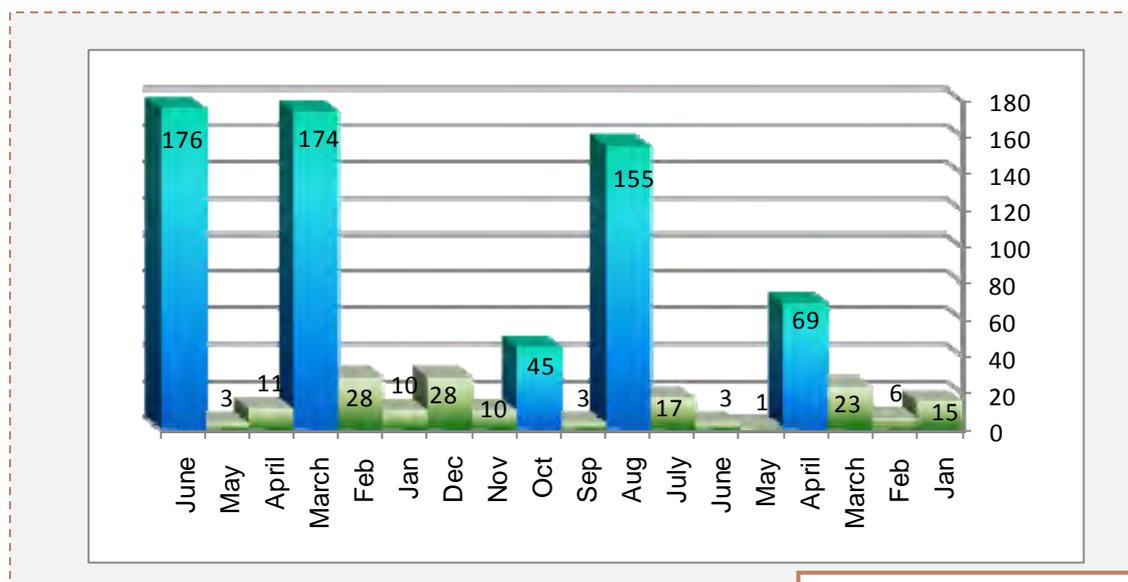
- This past week one rocket hit was identified in the western Negev. In response to the rocket attacks targeting Israel, Israeli Air Force aircraft struck terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip. In Judea and Samaria the terrorist attacks of the so-called "popular resistance" continued (throwing of stones, bombs and Molotov cocktails).
- Israeli security forces exposed the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorist squad that planted a bomb on a bus in the central Israeli city of Bat Yam on December 22, 2013. The detainees, from Bethlehem, also planned to carry out a showcase terrorist attack in Tel Aviv.
- American Secretary of State John Kerry finished a round of talks in which he met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas, chairman of the Palestinian Authority (PA). Kerry attempted to promote what he calls "a framework for a peace deal" between Israel and the Palestinians. The Israeli prime minister condemned the anti-Israeli incitement pursued by the PA during the talks. Senior Palestinian figures continue to be pessimistic about the results of the negotiations.

## The Situation in Israel's South

### Rocket Fire

- On **January 2, 2014**, a rocket hit was identified in the western Negev. The rocket fell in an open area. There were no casualties and no damage was reported..

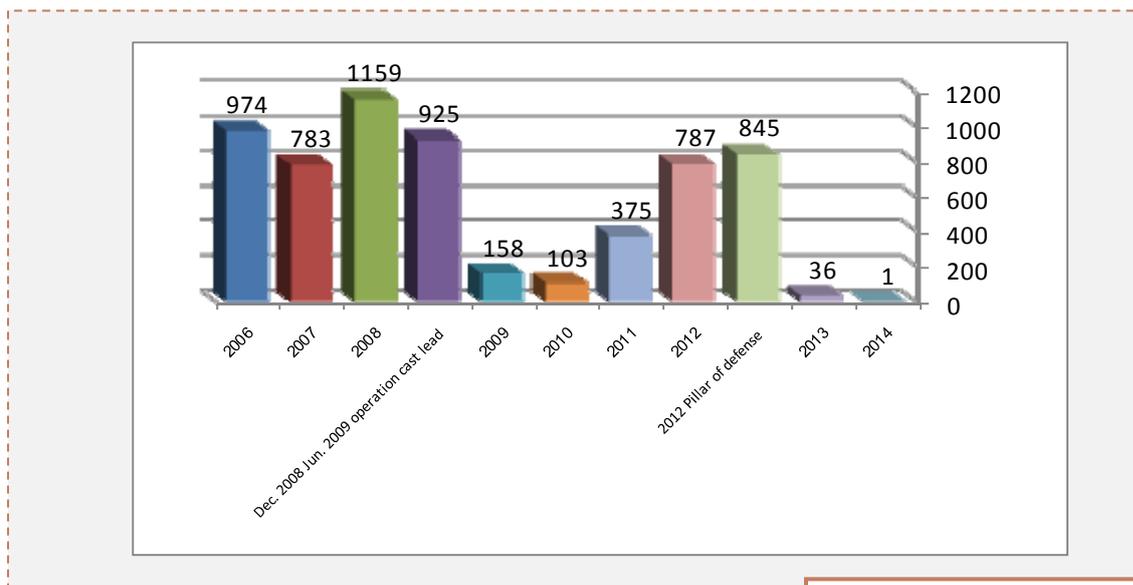
### Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since January 1, 2013<sup>1</sup>



Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), 40 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory, including five rockets fired at the southern Israeli city of Eilat.

<sup>1</sup> As January 7, 2014. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

## Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire<sup>2</sup>



Since January 1, 2013, 40 rocket hits have been identified.

### Israeli Air Force Response

■ In response to the rocket fire, on the night of **January 3, 2014**, the IAF struck three underground rocket launchers in the northern Gaza Strip and terrorist targets in the central Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, January 3, 2014). The Palestinian media reported attacks on three sites, one of which was a post of Hamas' military-terrorist wing, adding that no casualties were reported (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades and Alresala.net websites, January 3, 2014).

## Judea and Samaria

### Terrorist Attack in Israeli Village Prevented

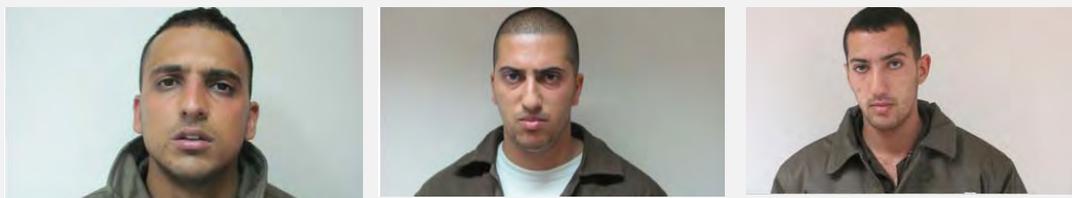
■ On **January 5, 2014**, an IDF force detained four Palestinians near the fence of the village of Migdal Oz in the Etzion bloc (south of Jerusalem). The Palestinians were found to be carrying **knives, tools, improvised weapons and detonators**. The Palestinians are residents of Beit Fajar, a village near Migdal Oz. They were apparently planning to carry out a terrorist attack (IDF Spokesman, January 5, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

### Bat Yam Bus Terrorist Squad Exposed and Detained<sup>3</sup>

■ The Israeli security forces recently detained a terrorist squad accused of planting a bomb on a bus in the central Israeli city of Bat Yam. Thanks to the awareness of a passenger and the quick response of the driver, the device exploded after all the passengers had gotten off the bus. **The members of the terrorist squad detained were PIJ operatives from Bethlehem.**

■ Among the terrorists detained were two brothers, **Shehadeh Muhammed Shehadeh Ta'mari**, born in 1989, previously imprisoned in Israel, and **Hamdi Muhammad Shehadeh Ta'mari**, born in 1992, also previously imprisoned in Israel. **He was a cadet in a PA police officers' training course in Jericho.** Also detained were **Sami Omar Sami Harimi**, born in 1993, who lived in Israel illegally and worked in a restaurant; **Yusuf Nasser Yusuf Salameh**, born in 1991; and ten others.



Members of terrorist squad, from left to right: Sami Harimi, Shahadeh Ta'mari and Hamdi Ta'mari (ISA website, January 3, 2014)

- The initial investigation revealed the following:
- **Making the bomb:** After having decided two months ago that they would **carry out a terrorist attack in Israel**, the two brothers made the bomb. They used **two kilograms**, or 4.4 pounds, of **homemade explosives, screws, nails and ball bearings**. The detonator was attached to a cell phone which would be used as a remote control to explode the bomb.

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<sup>3</sup> According to the Israel Security Agency website.

- **Planting the bomb:** Sami Harimi was given the bomb in a black bag. On the morning of the attack he took it to south Mt. Hebron and from there he entered Israel through a breach in the security fence. He got into a car with an Israeli Bedouin who drove illegal Palestinians into Israel, and asked to be taken to Jaffa. Somewhat later **he got on a bus in the city of Bat Yam**, left the bomb in the center of the bus, got off and a few minutes later called the cell phone which was attached the bomb and supposed to activate the detonator.
- During interrogation Harimi said that **the squad had planned to carry out another showcase attack in Tel Aviv or Jaffa**. He also told his interrogators where they could find about **20 kilos, of 44 pounds, of explosives hidden near his house**.
- In response to the detention of the suspects, **Khaled al-Batash**, a senior PIJ figure, said that while the organization praised and blessed their attack, it did not claim responsibility for it. He added that Israel was continuing its policy of detentions but "the open struggle and resistance will continue" (Paltoday website, January 3, 2014).

### **Suspect Detained, Admitted Stabbing Psagot Village Girl**

- The Israeli security forces detained **Abdallah Shehadeh Abu Qbieta**, born 1992, from El-Bireh, suspected of stabbing a girl in the village of Psagot on October 5, 2013. Investigation revealed that the  **motive for the attack was criminal**, and that Abu Qbeita infiltrated the village to steal a weapon. While in the village he happened to meet the girl, stabbed her in the shoulder and fled in the direction of Ramallah (ISA website, January 6, 2014).

### **Violence Continues**

- This past week violent incidents continued 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.



Rioting Palestinians throw stones at IDF forces in Bil'in during the weekly demonstration against the Israeli security fence (Bil'in Facebook page, January 3, 2014).

- Some of the incidents were the following:
  - On **January 6, 2014**, an IED was thrown at an IDF base near Bethlehem. There were no casualties and no damage was reported.
  - On **January 6, 2014**, a pipe bomb exploded in the area of the Tomb of Rachel near Bethlehem. An Israeli civilian sustained minor wounds.
  - On **January 5, 2014**, Palestinians threw stones at a car and bus near the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron. According to a number of eye witness reports, the attackers hid behind a vehicle belonging to the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) forces (Tazpit News Agency, January 5, 2014).



The site of the attack; the white vehicle belongs to the TIPH forces (Tazpit News Agency, January 5, 2014).

## Another Popular Resistance Attempt to Erect an Illegal Outpost

■ This past week activists from the popular committees against the fence and the settlements tried to erect another outpost, this one near the Dead Sea, called Canaan Village 9. Their motive was to protest the so-called Israeli decision to annex the Jordan Valley. Israeli security forces prevented them from reaching their destination. A spokesman for the committees in south Judea and Samaria attacked an Israeli who prevented them from going to the region and called on the PA to stop the negotiations with Israel immediately (The Safa and Ma'an new agencies, January 1, 2014).



Palestinian activists plant flags in preparation for erecting Canaan Village 9 near the Dead Sea (Palestinian TV, January 1, 2014).

■ **Salah al-Khawaja**, coordinator for the campaign against the fence and the settlements, said in an interview that in 2014 the focus of the popular resistance's activities should **shift from "protest to confrontation."** He said a comprehensive national program should be formulated for all the sectors in coordination with all the official and "popular" elements. He also said that following the Israeli proposal to enact a law annexing the Jordan Valley, **the resistance committees would hold activities "with political influence"** in the region to stress the Palestinian presence there (Voice of Palestine Radio, January 1, 2014).

## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### Blaming Israel for the Humanitarian Distress in the Gaza Strip

■ In the Gaza Strip, Israel continues to be blamed for the humanitarian distress. **Khalil al-Haya**, a senior Hamas leader, threatened that Israel would pay a high price for the siege of Gaza, claiming that "the occupation bears the main responsibility for

the closure and it will pay great price for it." He also said that Egypt was not responsible and appealed to the Egyptians to join in easing the suffering in Gaza and to be part of the solution (Al-Aqsa TV and the Safa News Agency, December 31, 2013).



Israel is behind Egypt's actions against the Gaza Strip ( Hamas' Felesteen, January 4, 2014)

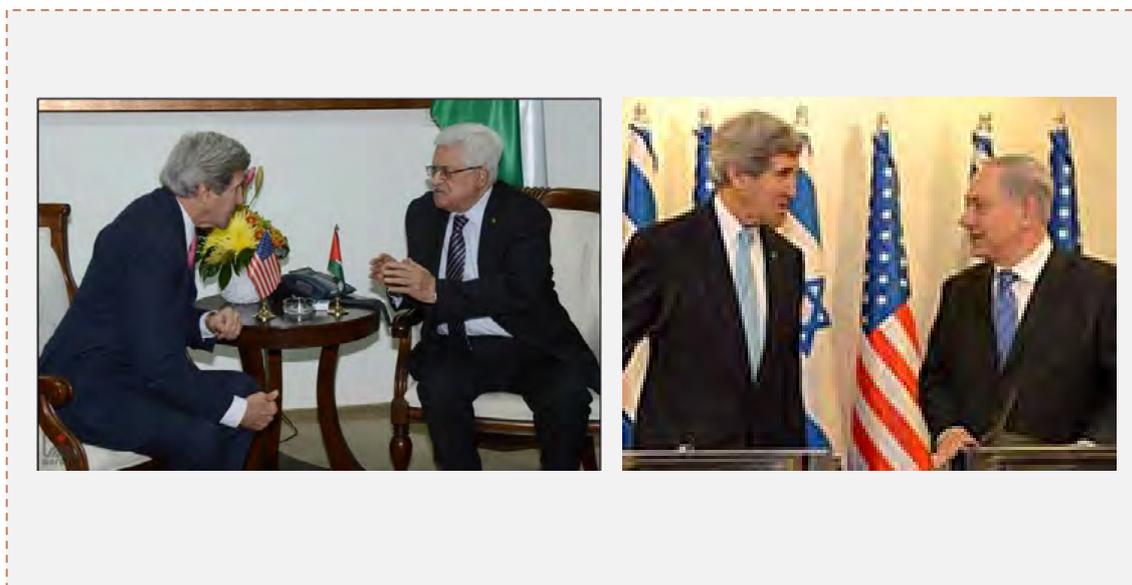
## The Palestinian Authority

### The Peace Negotiations

- **American Secretary of State John Kerry** came to the region for another round of talks, meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas, chairman of the PA, in an effort to promote what he calls "a framework for a peace deal." After the meetings he announced that **progress had been made**, but a lot of work still had to be done (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, January 5, 2014).

- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Kerry that he had great esteem for his efforts to promote the negotiations, and attacked Mahmoud Abbas and the PA for their policy of anti-Israeli incitement, among other things, which has been ongoing in the six months since the negotiations began. He said that "[a] few days ago in Ramallah, President Abbas embraced terrorists as heroes. To glorify the murders of innocent women and men as heroes is an outrage. How can President Abbas say that he stands against terrorism when he embraces the perpetrators of terrorism and glorifies them as heroes? He can't stand against terrorists and with terrorists. And I'm wondering what a young Palestinian would think when he sees the leader of the Palestinian people embrace people who axed innocent men and women, who axed

their heads or blew them up or riddled them with bullets. What's a young Palestinian supposed to think about the future? What's he supposed to think about what he should do vis-à-vis Israelis and vis-à-vis the State of Israel?<sup>4</sup>



Left: Benjamin Netanyahu and John Kerry (Israeli Government Press Office, January 2, 2014).  
Right: Mahmoud Abbas and John Kerry meet in Ramallah (Wafa News Agency, January 4, 2014).

■ Senior figures in the PA continue expressing pessimism about the future of the negotiations. **Saeb Erekat**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee and head of the Palestinian negotiating team, said that the Americans had not given the Palestinians any documents and that the negotiations were still at the stage of proposing ideas (Palestinian TV, January 4, 2014).

■ On another occasion Saeb Erekat said that since November 5, 2013, no bilateral meeting had been held and that the talks were either Palestinian-American or Israeli-American. He said the Palestinians would not agree to extend the negotiation period beyond the allotted nine months. If the negotiations failed, he was of the opinion that the Palestinians had three avenues to work through: to join the Geneva Convention, to have the countries of the world to boycott the settlements, and to have the European Union recognize the state of Palestine (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, January 3 2014).

### **Mahmoud Abbas Makes Strong Speech to Mark Fatah's Founding**

■ To mark the founding of Fatah, Mahmoud Abbas, chairman of the PA, made a strong speech attacking Israel and stressing the adherence of the PA to the principle of

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.pmo.gov.il/English/MediaCenter/Events/Pages/eventkerry020114.aspx>

not giving up territory. He again threatened he would appeal to international institutions. The following were the main points of his speech (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, December 31, 2013):

- **The Palestinians will not agree to the continued spread of the "cancer of the settlements,"** especially in Jerusalem. They will exploit their status as an observer state in the UN for a diplomatic-legal move to halt the settlement construction.
- The PA is negotiating with Israel to achieve a solution that will lead to **the immediate establishment of a Palestinian state with the 1967 borders and a "just solution" for the issue of the refugees.**
- The Palestinian **leadership rejects any Israeli military presence** in the territory of the "independent state of Palestine" and stresses its adherence to full Palestinian sovereignty over all of its territory, natural resources, borders and border crossings.
- The Palestinians are conducting negotiations on the backdrop of Israel's "insane" escalation on every front. The Israeli army has increased its aggression, and continues "acts of aggression" against Al-Aqsa mosque as well as acts of occupation against the Palestinians in "occupied Jerusalem."



Mahmoud Abbas marks the 49th anniversary of the founding of Fatah (Mahmoud Abbas's Facebook page, December 31, 2013).

### **Jibril Rajoub Viciously Attacks Israel**

■ To mark the founding of Fatah, **Jibril Rajoub**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, viciously attacked Israel in a number of interviews. On December 31, 2013,

he was a guest of official Palestinian TV's open studio. He said he hoped that the 50<sup>th</sup> year of the Fatah movement would be the year in which Palestinian sovereignty would be instituted over the state of Palestine and the [Israeli] occupation would be uprooted. The occupation, he said, was a "cancer" threatening to destabilize the entire region. As for the negotiations with Israel, he claimed that it was clear that there was not even a glimmer of hope that peace could be had with "the Fascist occupation...an ugly model of Nazism" (Official Palestinian TV, January 2, 2014).

■ Interviewed on another occasion, **Jibril Rajoub called for the escalation of the so-called popular resistance**. Asked about the news item in the Israeli daily paper Yedioth Aharonot stating that Hamas was planning to abduct Israeli soldiers, he said **"Let them abduct [soldiers]...** I think the Israelis need to understand that abduction is a clear example, **it is the language they understand**. We encouraged [Hamas] and when they abducted [Gilad] Shalit we blessed and praised them, and when the Shalit prisoner exchange deal succeeded, despite the fact that we had our doubts, we still blessed and praised them."



Jibril Rajoub in Palestinian TV's open studio (Jibril Rajoub's Facebook page, January 3, 2014).

## The Northern Front

### Global Jihad Attacks in Lebanon

■ **The Islamic State in Iraq and Greater Syria** claimed responsibility for the car bomb that exploded in Dahia, the Shi'ite suburb in south Beirut, on January 2, 2014

(The Islamic State forum, January 4, 2014). The attack, carried out near a number of Hezbollah's main institutions, killed four people and wounded more than 66. According to reports, the suicide bomber was **Qateiba Muhammad al-Satem**, a 20 year-old student, born in the village of Wadi Khaled on the Syrian-Lebanese border. According to reports, in the past he fought in the ranks of the **Al-Nusra Front** in Syria (Al-Quds Al-Arabi, January 4, 2014). **The attack was another example of how the Sunni-Shi'ite confrontation has trickled into Lebanon from Syria.**

■ **In Beirut the Lebanese army detained Majed al-Majed**, commander of the **Abdullah Azzam Brigades**, for involvement in global jihad attacks in Lebanon including the attack on the Iranian embassy in Beirut. According to reports, Majed al-Majed spent time in the Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp and several months ago left for Syria, where he joined the **Al-Nusra Front** (Al-Monitor and LBC, January 1, 2014). Majed al-Majed died while imprisoned, apparently due to illness. **The Abdullah Azzam Brigades have been involved in attacks on Hezbollah in Lebanon and in attacking Israel with rocket fire.**<sup>5</sup>



Majed al-Majed, commander of the Abdullah Azzam Brigades in Lebanon (CNN Arabic website, January 4, 2014)

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<sup>5</sup> For further information about the Abdullah Azzam Brigades see the November 27, 2013 bulletin "[Mass-casualty double suicide bombing attack carried out at the Iranian embassy in Beirut.](#)" Also see the August 28, 2013 bulletin "[The global jihad-affiliated Abdullah Azzam Brigades claimed responsibility for firing rockets from south Lebanon into the western Galilee on August 22.](#)"

## Propaganda Events

### Israeli Minister of Defense Outlaws the Council for European Palestinian Relations (CEPR)

- On December 16, 2013, Israeli Minister of Defense Moshe Yaalon **outlawed the Council for European Palestinian Relations (CEPR), based on emergency defense regulations** (Israeli Ministry of Defense website, January 6, 2014). That means Israel can confiscate the organization's funds and try its members and/or individuals who provide it with services.
- The Brussels-based CEPR represents itself as an independent non-profit NGO working to improve the dialogue between Europe and the Arab states. In reality, **it serves as Hamas' official representative in Europe**. It is directed by **Arafat Madi Shoukri**, who lives in London and is also one of the heads of the outlawed **Palestinian Return Centre**, a center for anti-Israeli propaganda in London, and one of the leaders of the European Campaign to End the Siege on Gaza (ECESG), **which formerly served as a European network for dispatching flotillas to the Gaza Strip**.<sup>6</sup>
- Another member of the organization's directorate is **Rami Abda**, who lives in the Gaza Strip. He responded to the Israeli minister of defense's announcement by saying it was part of an Israeli campaign based on lies. Israeli, he said, became hysterical every time the rights of the Palestinian people received support (Al-Quds TV, January 4, 2014).

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<sup>6</sup> For further information about the Palestinian Return Centre see the March 8, 2011 bulletin "[The Palestinian Return Centre](#)."



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