



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict January 8 – 14, 2014



Palestinians throw stones at IDF forces and burn tires at the entrance to the village of Silwad, north of Ramallah, part of the so-called "popular resistance."

Overview

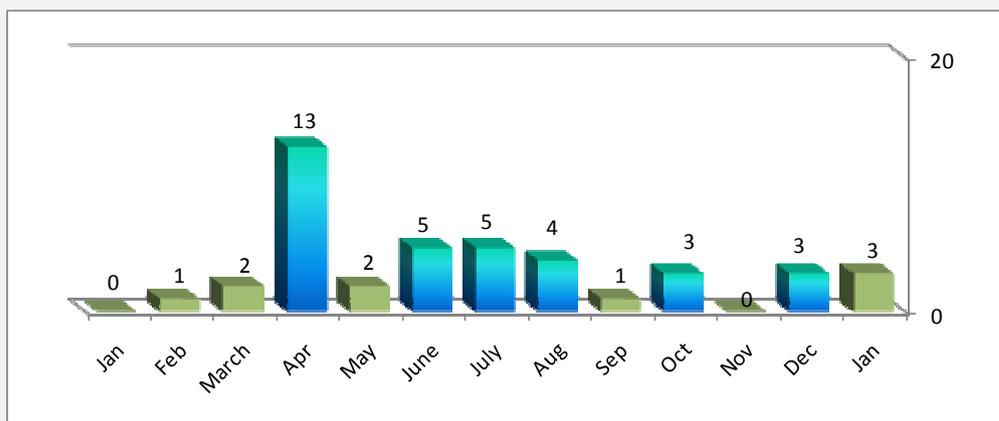
- Two rocket hits were identified in the western Negev a short time after the funeral of former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. In addition, this past week three mortar shells were fired at an area near the security fence where IDF forces were operating. In response Israeli Air Force aircraft struck terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip.
- Joy was manifested in the Gaza Strip this week when the death of Ariel Sharon was announced. The heads of Hamas made bellicose statements to mark the fifth anniversary of Operation Cast Lead. In addition, Hamas held an opening ceremony for an extensive military training program for Gazan youth, aimed at "preparing the next generation for the liberation of Palestine."

The Situation in Israel's South

Rocket Fire

- On **January 13, 2014**, a short time after the funeral of former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon ended and the foreign dignitaries and guests had left the gravesite, **two rocket hits were identified**. The rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip into the western Negev, **falling near the security fence (about 6 kilometers, or less than 4 miles from the site of the funeral)**. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (IDF Spokesman, January 13, 2014).
- On **January 8, 2014**, three mortar shells were fired at an area near the security fence where IDF forces were operating. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (IDF Spokesman, January 8, 2014). After the attack farmers in the towns and villages near the Gaza Strip were warned not to work fields less than one kilometer, or .6 miles, from the security fence, because of the danger of rocket and mortar fire (Ynet, January 8, 2014). The military-terrorist wings of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) separately claimed responsibility for the mortar shell fire (DFLP and PFLP information bureaus and the Ma'an News Agency, January 9, 2014).

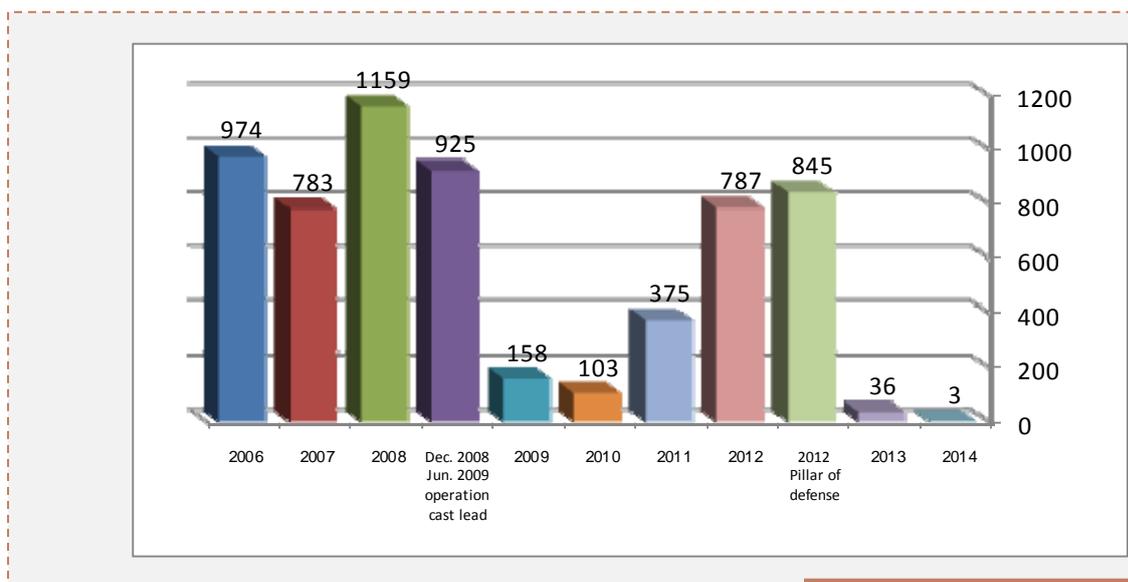
Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since January 1, 2013¹



Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), 42 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory, including five rockets fired at the southern Israeli city of Eilat.

¹ As January 14, 2014. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire²



Since January 1, 2013, 42 rocket hits have been identified.

Israeli Air Force Response

■ In response to the rocket and mortar shell fire **Israeli Air Force (IAF) aircraft struck terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip:**

- On **January 13, 2014**, IAF aircraft struck a military facility in the central Gaza Strip and part of the terrorist infrastructure in the southern Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, January 13, 2014). The Palestinian media reported attacks on two posts, one in the middle of Gaza City belonging to Hamas' military-terrorist wing and the other in Deir al-Balah belonging to the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). According to the Palestinian media, a girl was injured by shrapnel (Safa and Ma'an news agencies, January 13, 2014).
- On the morning of **January 8, 2014**, IAF aircraft struck a terrorist squad in the southern Gaza Strip. The squad was making final preparations for launching mortar shells at an IDF force operating near the security fence (IDF Spokesman, January 8, 2014). Several terrorist targets were struck later in the day. One of them was a PIJ base west of Rafah where the organization had a site for manufacturing weapons and a training facility (Ynet, January 8, 2014). The Palestinian media reported that a PIJ post west of Rafah had been struck (Alresala.net website, January 8, 2014).

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

■ The Palestinian media reported that one Palestinian had been killed and two wounded by IDF fire on January 8. The PIJ reported the dead Palestinian as **Muhammad Salamah al-Ajle**, a terrorist operative reported killed during a "jihad action" (Alresala.net website, January 8, 2014). Following the attack, **Ahmed al-Mudallal**, a senior PIJ figure, said that the "crimes" committed by Israel against the Palestinians every day showed its intention to escalate. He said that the "resistance" [i.e., terrorist organizations] in the Gaza Strip had to immediately evaluate the situation and respond to Israel's violations of the lull agreement (Qudsnet website, January 9, 2014).

Judea and Samaria

Stabbing Attack in Jerusalem

■ On the afternoon of **January 11, 2014**, as a young Israeli man crossed Nevi'im Street in Jerusalem near the Damascus Gate, he was stabbed in the upper part of his body by a Palestinian youth. He was seriously wounded and evacuated to a hospital. The attacker fled. Stabbing attacks are an occasional modus operandi of the popular resistance.³

Incident in the Village of Qasrah

■ On **January 7, 2014**, the Israeli civil administration destroyed an olive grove in the Jewish settlement of Esh Kodesh, which had been planted on private Palestinian land. In response, 11 extremist settlers from Esh Kodesh entered the village of Qasrah (south of Nablus), apparently intending to carry out a so-called "price tag" action. They were attacked by a group of about 30 local Palestinian residents who beat them. The settlers escaped from the village and entered an empty house situated between the villages of Qasrah and Qaryut. The Palestinians surrounded the house but a small group of Palestinians managed to separate the two sides. They also contacted the Israeli security forces, which came and rescued the settlers, who were being protected by the Palestinians from further attack by the angry residents of Qasrah (Ynet, January 7, 2014).

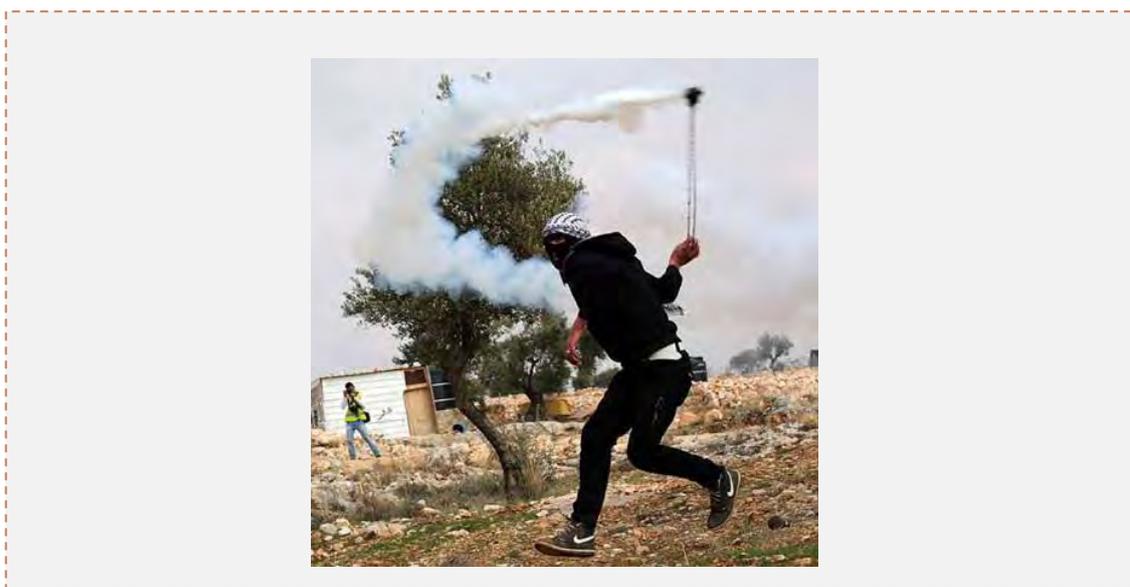
³ For further information see the date bulletin "[The Fatal Stabbing Attack of an Israeli Soldier at the Afula Central Bus Station is a Widespread Modus Operandi that is Relatively Easy to Carry Out, Constituting Part of the Palestinian 'Popular Resistance' Attacks. The PA and Fatah Support the 'Popular Resistance', Presenting it \(Falsely\) as a Non-violent Struggle.](#)"

■ **Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon** strongly condemned "price tag" attacks and the activities of the settlers, calling it "a terrorist attack in every sense of the word." He pledged to "act against its perpetrators with zero tolerance, and with a stern and determined hand to eradicate it."⁴

■ However, **Jibrin al-Bakri**, the governor of the Nablus district, praised the residents of Qasrah for their "firm stance" and demanded that the government of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and international institutions act to help and support the local farmers (Ma'an News Agency, January 7, 2014).

Palestinian 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. On **January 8, 2014**, an Israeli woman sustained slight injuries when stones were thrown at her car near the village of Aqaf (east of Qalqiliya). She was evacuated to a hospital for medical attention (Haaretz, January 9, 2014).



A Palestinian uses a sling to throw a smoke grenade at IDF forces during the weekly riot in Bil'in protesting the security fence (Wafa News Agency, January 10, 2014).

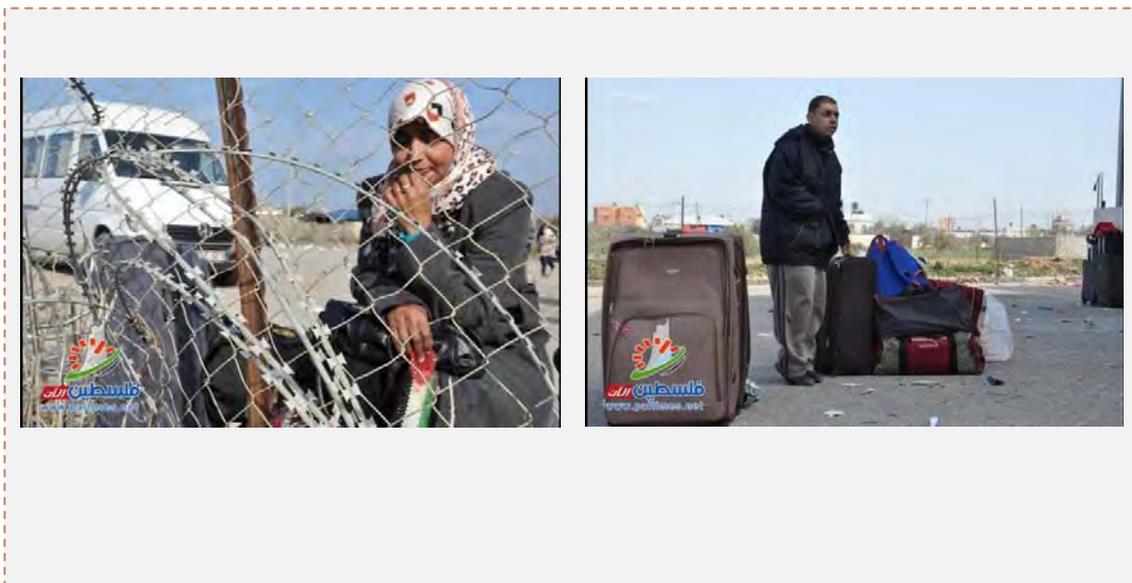
⁴ <http://www.bicom.org.uk/news-article/18157/>; Haaretz, January 9, 2014.

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Crossings

The Rafah Crossing

■ On **January 8, 2014**, the Rafah crossing opened for limited activity after having been closed for two weeks. A short time after the opening the Egyptian authorities announced that a computer problem was disrupting its operation. After two days the crossing was closed again until further notice. The de-facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip called on the Egyptian government to reassess its policy regarding the Rafah crossing (Palinfo website, January 7, 2014).



Palestinians wait to leave the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing (Filastin Al-'Aan, January 9, 2014).

■ The Egyptian authorities expelled to the Gaza Strip 34 Palestinians who had landed in Cairo airport (PalPress website, January 8, 2014). They also refused to allow a Jordanian delegation to enter the Gaza Strip after it had waited in El Arish for ten days (Alresala.net website, January 12, 2014).

The Kerem Shalom Crossing

■ In **December 2013** there was an increase in the number of trucks entering the Gaza Strip through the Kerem Shalom crossing. During December 4,522 trucks entered through the crossing as opposed to 4,172 in November, a rise of 8.3%. The

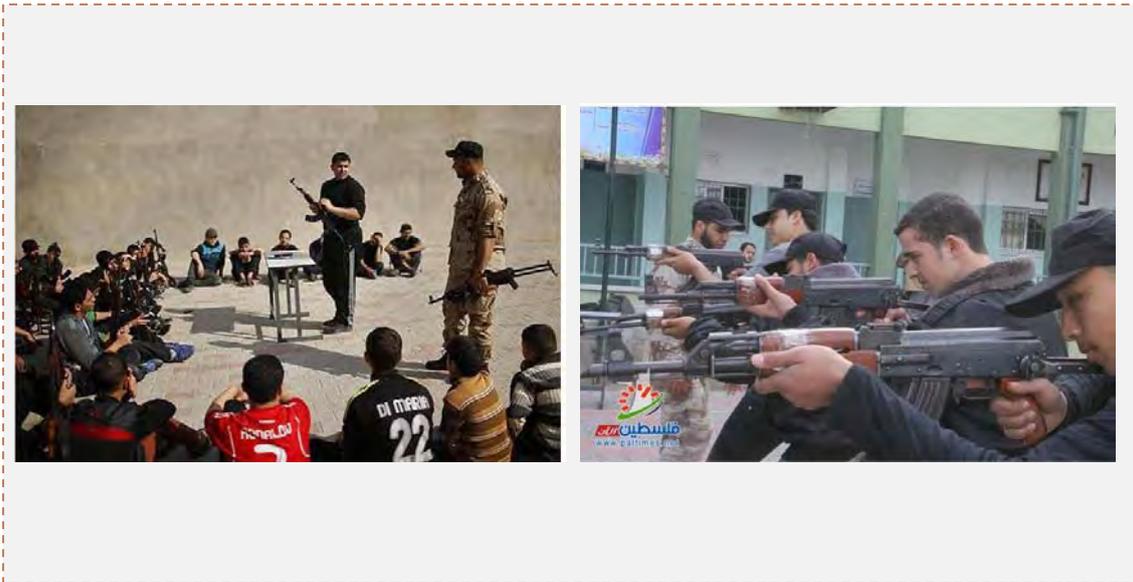
increase was caused by the renewal of the import of building materials into the Gaza Strip, overseen by international agencies. The number of trucks increased despite the fact that the crossing was closed for two days after a Gazan sniper killed an Israeli civilian (Website of the Coordinator for Government Activities in the Territories, January 7, 2014).

■ **Fathi al-Sheikh Khalil**, head of the energy authority in the de-facto Hamas administration, said that contacts were being made with Israel through third parties to increase the amount of electricity Israeli sent to the Gaza Strip. He specified an increase of 100 megawatts, and said that the Hamas energy authority had received positive clarifications. He added that realizing an increase in electricity would significantly improve the energy situation in the Gaza Strip (Alresala.net website, January 11, 2014).

Hamas Broadens its Military Training Program for Gazan Youth

■ On **January 7, 2014**, the ministry of education of the de-facto Hamas administration, in collaboration with the ministry of the interior, announced the second round of the **Al-Futuwwa program** of military training for adolescents in 46 high schools in the Gaza Strip. The program is entitled "Pioneers of Victory 2." According to the organizers, in the coming year **13,000 high school students** will participate in the program. Last year 5,000 students participated (Al-Aqsa TV, January 9, 2014).⁵

⁵ For further information about the program, see the May 5, 2013 bulletin " [Hamas has introduced a program in Gaza Strip schools called Al-Futuwwa, which provides military training for tens of thousands of adolescent boys.](#)"



Left: Palestinian high school students are trained to use guns (Filastin Al-'Aan, January 12, 2014). Right: An operative from the Hamas security forces instructs a class of Palestinian boys in the use of weapons (Filastin Al-'Aan, January 7, 2014).

■ At the opening ceremony **Osama al-Muzeini**, the minister of education in the de-facto Hamas administration, said that the great success of the program in 2013 convinced the ministry to increase the number of participants. He said that its objective was **to train the next generation for "the liberation of Palestine" and to raise the awareness of the nature of the struggle against Israel**. It was also intended, he said, to provide them with fighting skills, including the use of weapons, so that they would be able to confront Israel. **Fathi Hamad**, Hamas minister of the interior, said that the students who had joined the program would have **"the leading role in liberating Al-Aqsa mosque from the pollution of the occupation."** He said that it was worth their while to train and prepare for **"the next stage of liberating Ashdod, Yavne, Jaffa, Acre, Lod, Ramla and every village in Palestine"** (Al-Ra'i and Filastin Al-'Aan, January 7, 2014).

Death of Ariel Sharon Provokes Outpourings of Joy in the Gaza Strip

■ The death of Ariel Sharon, former Israeli prime minister, provoked outpourings of joy in the Gaza Strip. Candy and pastries were distributed to passersby on streets and signs bearing his picture were burned. Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** announced "the death of the criminal" whose hands "dripped with Palestinian blood." He called Sharon's death a "historic moment" for the Palestinian people.

■ On **January 13, 2014**, the security forces of the Hamas administration's ministry of the interior held a military display to mark the fifth anniversary of Operation Cast Lead. **Fathi Hamad**, minister of the interior, said that while "occupied Palestine" was burying the enemy, Ariel Sharon, the Gaza Strip was celebrating the **rebirth of the nation, jihad and liberation**. He said that the chapter of demeaning the honor of the Palestinians had ended and **a new chapter of the spread of Islam and the "resistance" had begun**.



Manifestations of joy at the death of Ariel Sharon. Left: Burning a picture of Sharon. Right: Distributing candy and cake in the Gaza Strip (Qudsnet website, January 11, 2014).

Hamas-Iran Relations

■ According to an article in a British newspaper, **relations between Hamas and Iran are improving** after the rift resulting from their opposing positions on the events in Syria. According to **Taher al-Nunu**, Ismail Haniya's public relations advisor, "relations between us are now almost back to how they were before [the crisis over Syria]. We believe we will soon be back at that point." He said that a Hamas delegation had visited Tehran several previously. **Khaled Mashaal**, head of Hamas' political bureau, met with Iranian representatives a number of times and might visit Iran in the coming months (The Guardian, January 9, 2014).

The Palestinian Authority

The Peace Negotiations

■ On **January 12, 2014**, American Secretary of State John Kerry met in Paris with a delegation of the Arab Monitoring Committee. According to **Riyadh al-Maliki**, PA minister of foreign affairs, the Committee told Kerry that it rejected the Israeli demands to recognize the State of Israel as a Jewish state and to keep Jerusalem out of the negotiations. The Committee also objected to any Israeli presence in the Palestinian state once the agreement had been signed (Al-Ayam, January 13, 2014). **Mahmoud Abbas** has repeatedly stated that the time allotted for the negotiations was nine months, and after that the Palestinians would be free to act. He said that without east Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine there would be no peace (Wafa News Agency, January 14, 2014).

Propaganda Events

Acts of Defiance in the Etzion Bloc

■ Acts of defiance against the Jewish settlements continue. On January 13, 2014, group of Popular Resistance Committees activists from the Bethlehem district led by **Muhammad Breije** tried to block the entrance and roads leading to the Jewish village of Elazar in the Etzion Bloc (south of Jerusalem). They planted trees near the village. Israeli security forces detained a number of activists.



Palestinian activists block the entrance and roads to the village of Elazar in the Etzion Bloc, part of the activities protesting the Jewish settlements (Wafa News Agency, January 12, 2014).

The PA Honors Palestinian Terrorist Operatives Released in the Third Phase

■ On January 8, 2014, the PA held a ceremony to present awards to Palestinian terrorist operatives released from Israeli jails in the third phase of the agreement. The ceremony was held in the auditorium of the Al-Bireh municipality and attended by **Laila Ghanem**, district governor, **Issa Qaraqqa**, Palestinian minister of prisoner affairs, **Qadoura Fares**, chairman of the Palestinian Prisoners' Club, **Fadwa Barghouti**, wife of Marwan Barghouti, and others (Wafa News Agency and the website of the Ramallah district governor, January 8, 2014).



The ceremony where awards were presented to Palestinian terrorists released in the third phase (Website of the Ramallah district governor, January 8, 2014).