



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

June 11 – 17, 2014



Left: The IDF Chief of Staff updates the IDF command. Right: IDF forces search for the three abducted youths in Operation Brothers' Keeper (IDF Spokesman, June 16, 2014).

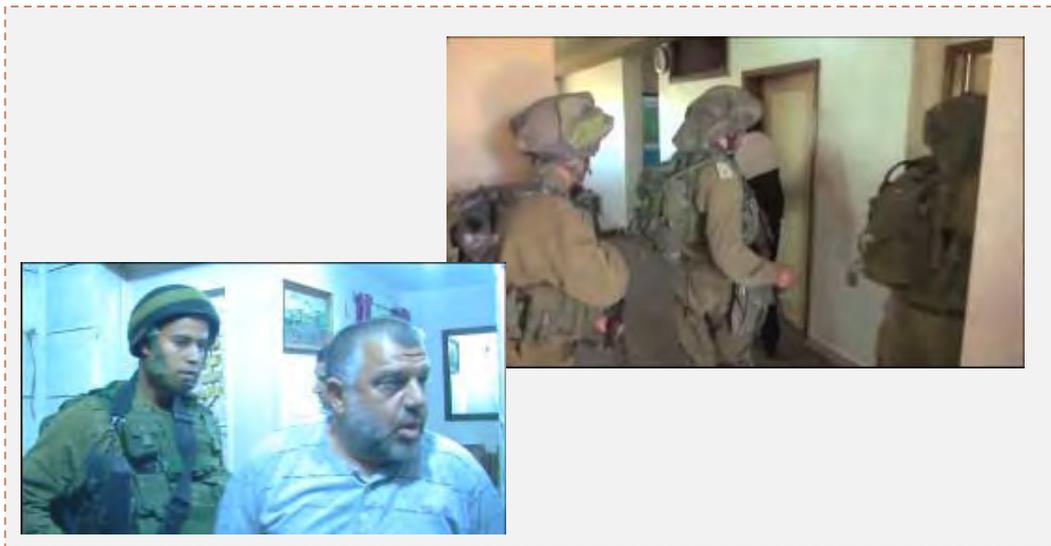
Overview

- The Israeli security forces have been engaged in intensive actions in Judea and Samaria for five days to locate the three abducted Israeli youths (Operation Brothers' Keeper). Six rockets were fired into the western Negev from the Gaza Strip. In response the Israeli Air Force struck terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip.
- During the first days after the abduction, the IDF focused on the region around Hebron, but it has extended its activity to other areas of Judea and Samaria. According to the Israeli media, so far (as of the morning of June 18, 2014) more than 200 Palestinians have been detained, most of them Hamas activists and operatives, about 50 of whom were released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal. In addition to searching for the abducted youths, the Israeli security forces have launched intensive activities to damage the Hamas infrastructure in Judea and Samaria.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that the Israeli security forces had undertaken a complex operation which might continue for a long time.

Efforts to Locate the Three Abducted Youths (Update)¹

The Situation on the Ground

- Israeli security forces continue their efforts to locate the three youths who were abducted in the region of Gush Etzion. Initially the search focused on the region around Hebron but has been extended to other areas of Judea and Samaria.
- Many Palestinians have been detained and weapons and explosives have been seized. Raids have been conducted on **Hamas institutions which recruit terrorists and launder funds** used by Hamas to finance its terrorist activities. So far approximately **150 Palestinians have been detained, most of them Hamas activists**. The detainees include senior Hamas figures, among them **Aziz Dweik**, head of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and other PLC members. Also detained were **Hassan Yussuf**, one of the Hamas leaders in Judea and Samaria; the director of Hamas' Al-Aqsa TV in Judea and Samaria and others (IDF Spokesman, June 16, 2014).



Left: Hassan Yussuf detained by the IDF. Right: IDF forces search for the abducted youths (IDF Spokesman, June 15, 2014).

- The intensive activities launched by the IDF in Judea and Samaria are aimed at acquiring intelligence which would make it possible to locate the abducted youths. The activities are also intended to damage the Hamas infrastructure in Judea and Samaria Hamas, which began to demonstrate its presence when the Fatah-Hamas

¹ Update of the June 15, 2014 [bulletin "Three Teenage Youths Abducted from the Gush Etzion Junction in Judea."](#)

reconciliation agreement was signed. A senior IDF source said that "a great deal of intelligence has been gathered over the past days, allowing the IDF to strike Hamas hard and detain hundreds of its activists, with no connection to the three abducted youths." He added that "Hamas is behind the abduction, responsible for it, and has to pay a high price" (Yedioth Aharonot, June 17, 2014).

■ On June 16, 2014, during an Israeli security force action in the Jelazoun refugee camp (near Ramallah), Palestinians clashed with Israeli forces, apparently during the detention of a wanted Hamas operative. During the action a Palestinian was killed by IDF fire. The Palestinian media reported that he was **Ahmed Arafat al-Sabarin**, 23 years old (Safa.ps, June 16, 2014). He had formerly been imprisoned in Israel and was recently released.

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

■ After a meeting of the PLO's Executive Committee headed by Mahmoud Abbas, a statement was issued claiming that the PA would not shirk its responsibilities and would fulfill its commitments. However, the statement continued, the PA did not agree to be responsible for the "crimes and violations" that Israel [the so-called "occupation"] committed. The statement accused the Israeli prime minister of making the PA responsible for the safety of the three abducted youths "to whitewash the fact that the Israeli public accused him of failure" (Wafa.ps, June 15, 2014).

■ In addition, four days after the abduction the Palestinian presidential office issued a statement **condemning the abduction of the youths and criticizing Israel**. It said that the PA condemned the chain of events, from with the abduction of the three Israeli youths to the "unending series of Israeli violations." The presidential office asked that no violence be employed, adding that steps had to be taken to release the Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails (Wafa.ps, June 16, 2014).

■ **Four days after the youths had been abducted, Mahmoud Abbas spoke to Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu for the first time.** Netanyahu said that "I expect you to assist in returning the abducted youths and in apprehending the kidnapers. The Hamas kidnapers came from territory under Palestinian Authority control and returned to territory under Palestinian Authority control. This incident exposes the true face of the terrorism that we are fighting against. Terrorists abduct innocent Israeli children while we save the lives of ill Palestinian children in our

hospitals...The consequences of the partnership with Hamas must be understood; it is bad for Israel, bad for the Palestinians and bad for the region."²

Hamas

■ The intensive actions carried out by Israel's security forces, especially the widespread detentions, were strongly criticized by Hamas. Its information bureau issued an announcement claiming that the detentions were a "serious escalation" and **warning Israel of the results** (Hamas information bureau, June 15, 2014). Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** said that the detentions of senior Hamas figures were "Israeli aggression" and called on the international community to stop it (Facebook page of Sami Abu Zuhri, June 15, 2014). **Musheir al-Masri**, Hamas spokesman in the PLC, said that the wave of detentions was "savagely Israeli behavior" and a "terrorist crime" (Al-Mayadeen, June 15, 2014). **Ahmed Bahar**, deputy speaker of the PLC, said the detentions violated every international convention and were meant to disrupt the PLC's functioning (Al-Aqsa TV, June 15, 2014).



The three abducted Israelis lead the way to the release of the Palestinian prisoners (Facebook page of Gaza al-'Aan, June 16, 2014).

² <http://www.pmo.gov.il/English/MediaCenter/Spokesman/Pages/spokeabumazen160614.aspx>

IDF kills Gaza Strip Salafist Operative Who Planned Terrorist Attacks against Israel

■ On June 11, 2014, a **Salafist-jihadi terrorist operative** named **Muhammad Ahmed al-'Awar** was killed in a joint Israeli security force action. **He had been involved in firing rockets into Israeli territory.** In recent months his network planned to carry out other terrorist attacks, including shooting down Israeli helicopters. **In addition to membership and activity in a Salafist-jihadi network, he was also an officer in the Hamas police force**³ (IDF Spokesman, June 12, 2014).

■ The Palestinian media reported the death of **Muhammad Ahmed al-'Awar**, 33, who lived Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip. He was struck while **riding a motorbike** in the region of Sudaniya, northwest of Gaza City. Two other Palestinians were reported wounded, one a child who later died of his wounds (Safa.ps, June 14, 2014). A mass funeral was held for Al-'Awar in Beit Lahia (Alresala.net, Paltimes.net, June 11, 2014).

■ The Facebook page of the ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip (controlled by Hamas despite the new national agreement government) **posted a death notice for the "heroic shaheed" Lieutenant Muhammad Ahmed al-'Awar** (June 12, 2014). **The Hamas police force also issued a death notice.** The lower right hand corner of the police death notice featured the insignia of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military-terrorist wing (Facebook page of the Gaza Strip ministry of the interior, June 12, 2014). The Popular Resistance Committees military-terrorist wing also issued a death notice for al-'Awar (Salah al-Din Brigades website, June 11, 2014).

³ For further information about Hamas security force employees who are also terrorist operatives, see the December 16, 2012 bulletin "Members of Hamas' Internal Security Services Who Were Also Operatives in Hamas' Military-Terrorist Wing and Were Killed in Operation Pillar of Defense."



Left: The Hamas police force death notice for Muhammad Ahmed al-'Awar (Facebook page of the Gaza Strip ministry of the interior, June 12, 2014). Right: The death notice issued by the Popular Resistance Committees military-terrorist wing (Salah al-Din Brigades website, June 11, 2014)

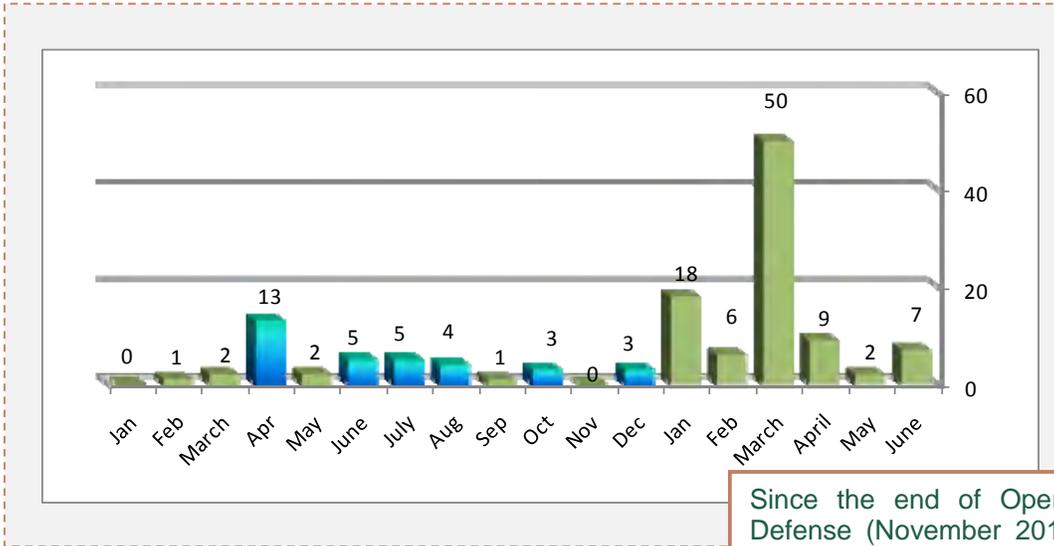
- The PA condemned the killing of al-'Awar and accused Israel of escalation which, it claimed, might lead to a round of violence (Wafa.ps, June 12, 2014). **Yasser Abd Rabbo**, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee, said that targeting killings were routine Israeli policy and warned that the situation would deteriorate (Voice of Palestine, June 12, 2014).

The Security Situation in Israel's South

Rocket Fire into Israel

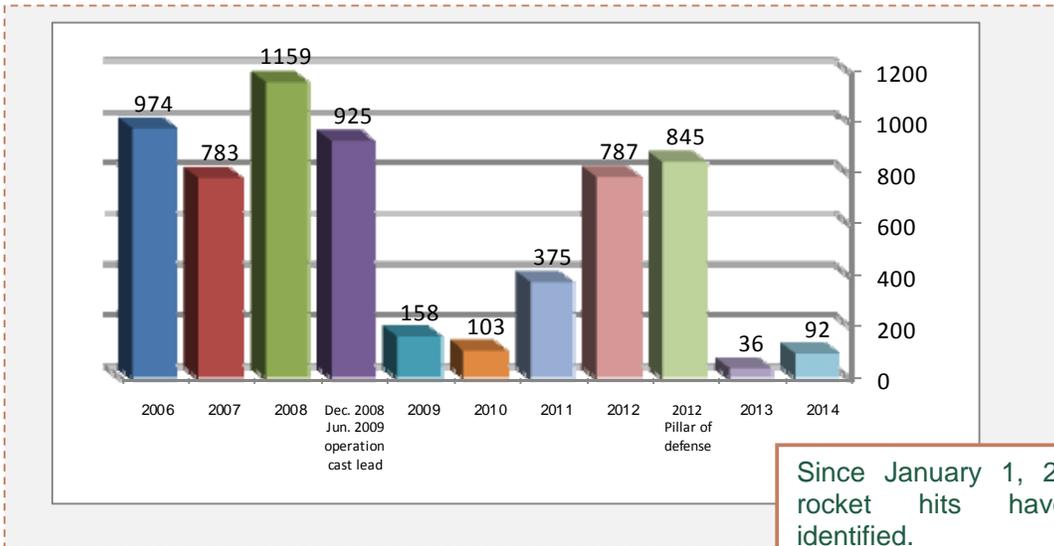
- This past week six rocket hits were identified in the western Negev (two of which were intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system):
 - Early in the morning on **June 14, 2014**, two rocket hits were identified in the western Negev. The remains of one rocket were found near the border security fence. In the afternoon a rocket hit was identified in the yard of village near the southern coastal city of Ashqelon. There were no casualties and no damage was reported.
 - On **June 15, 2014**, two Grad rockets were fired at Ashqelon. They were intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system. Minor damage to the property around a house was reported.
 - On **June 16, 2014**, a rocket hit was identified in the Ashqelon region. There were no casualties and no damage was reported.

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since January 1, 2013⁴



Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), 131 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory, including eight rockets fired at the southern Israeli city of Eilat.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire in Israel's South⁵



Since January 1, 2013, 131 rocket hits have been identified.

⁴ As of June 17, 2014. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire and rocket hits inside the Gaza Strip.

⁵ The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Israeli Air Force (IAF) Response

■ In response to the rocket fire from the Gaza Strip targeting Israel's south **IAF aircraft struck a number of terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip** (IDF Spokesman, June 14, 2014):

- On **June 13, 2014**, a terrorist facility and a weapons storehouse in the southern Gaza Strip were struck.
- On **June 14, 2014**, three terrorist targets and two locations where weapons were manufactured and stored in the southern Gaza Strip were struck, as well as one terrorist facility in the central Gaza Strip. The Palestinian media reported strikes on a post of Hamas' military-terrorist wing in the Khan Yunis area and open areas around Rafah. Hamas spokesman **Fawzi Barhoum** said the attacks indicated the "moral degeneration" of the Israeli leadership and reflected its confusion (Wafa.ps, Fawzi Barhoum's Facebook page, June 14, 2014).
- On **the night of June 15, 2014**, a terrorist target and three locations where weapons were manufactured in the northern Gaza Strip were struck, as well as a terrorist target in the southern Gaza Strip. The Palestinian media reported that among the targets struck were posts of Hamas' military wing and a Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) post. Four Palestinians were reported wounded (Alresala.net, Safa.ps, June 16, 2014).
- On **June 17, 2014**, a number of terrorist targets and one weapons storehouse in the southern Gaza Strip were struck, as well as a weapons storehouse in the central Gaza Strip.

Hamas and Hezbollah Missile and Rocket Threat

■ Brigadier General Itai Baron, head of the Israeli military intelligence's Analysis and Production Department, gave a speech relating to current threats against Israel. He said that as of today there were about **170,000 missiles and rockets threatening Israel from Lebanon, Syria and the Gaza Strip**. He said 160,000 rockets had a range of up to 45 kilometers (about 28 miles). As to rockets in **the Gaza Strip and Lebanon**, he said the following (Haaretz.co.il, Yedioth Aharonoth, June 10, 2014):

- **The Gaza Strip** – Since Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012) the number of rockets in the Gaza Strip has doubled. The terrorist organizations **have several hundred rockets with ranges of up to 80 kilometers (about 50 miles), several thousand rockets with ranges of up to 40 kilometers (about**

25 miles), and several thousand rockets with ranges of up to 20 kilometers (about 12.5 miles). The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip are working to develop locally-produced advanced rockets with ranges of 80 kilometers.

- **Lebanon** – Hezbollah has **hundreds of long-range rockets, thousands of medium-range rockets and about a hundred thousand short-range rockets.** According to Brigadier General Baron, Hezbollah continues acquiring weapons that could offset Israel's aerial and naval superiority (surface-to-surface and shore-to-ship missiles, etc.). In addition, Hezbollah is making an effort to acquire rockets powered by GPS systems and drones with exact targeting capabilities.

Judea and Samaria

Palestinian "Popular Resistance" Violence Continues

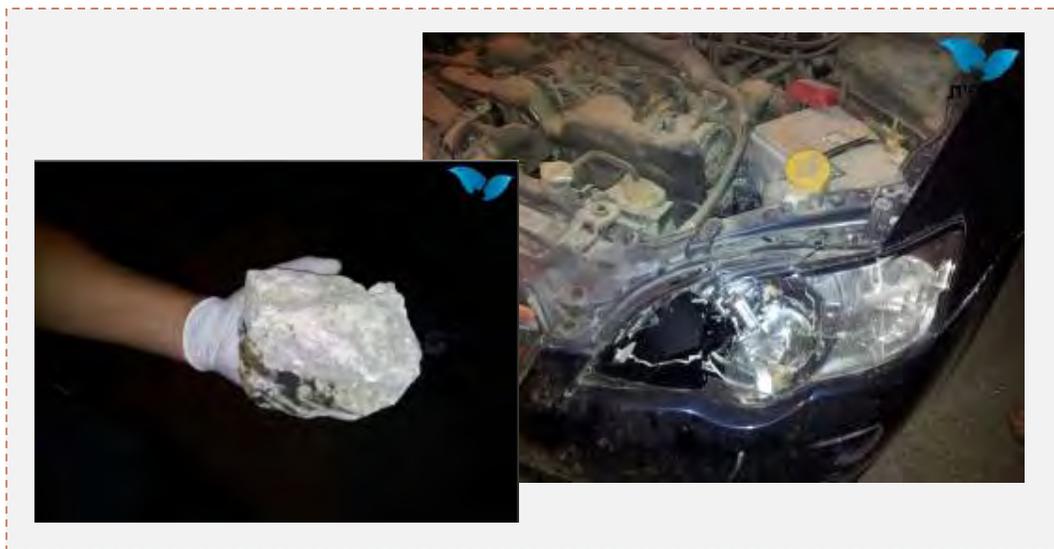
■ Despite the intensive activities of the Israeli security forces, this past week routine violent incidents continued in Judea and Samaria, part of the so-called "popular resistance." Stones were thrown at Israeli civilians and Israeli security forces and Molotov cocktails were thrown at vehicles on main roads. Activities continued to show solidarity with the hunger-striking administrative detainees, including demonstrations and rallies at various locations in Judea and Samaria. There was apparently an increase in the number of activities as a result of the friction between the local population and the security forces searching for the abducted Israeli youths.



Left: A Palestinian throws stones during the weekly riot in Bil'in protesting the security fence. Right: Palestinians throw stones at Israeli security forces after the Friday prayer on the Temple Mount (Wafa.ps, June 13, 2014).

■ This past week terrorist attacks included shooting attacks on the Tunnel Road near Bethlehem, and stones and Molotov cocktails thrown at Israeli vehicles:

- **June 12, 2014** – An IDF force detained a Palestinian from the village of Hawara (south of Nablus) after the threw a Molotov cocktail at an Israeli vehicle near the village of Yitzhar. He was a student at a university in Nablus (IDF Spokesman, June 12, 2014).
- **June 15, 2014** – Palestinians threw stones and rocks at an Israeli vehicle in a drive-by attack on the road near Deir Abu Mash'al (northwest of Ramallah). There were no casualties. One of the rocks penetrated the motor of the vehicle, damaging it. The vehicle from which the rocks and stones were thrown escaped (Tazpit.org.il, June 15, 2014).



Left: The rock thrown at the Israeli vehicle. Right: The damaged motor (Photo by Ehud Amitoun for Tazpit.org.il, June 15, 2014).

- **June 15, 2014** – Shots were fired at the Israeli security forces on the Tunnel Road near Bethlehem, apparently from a moving vehicle which sped away. There were no casualties. A search found five shell casings from a handgun (Tazpit.org.il, June 15, 2014).
- **June 15, 2014** – A Molotov cocktail was thrown at a military guard post in a drive-by attack at the Al-Fawar junction (south of Hebron). The vehicle drove to the village of Dura. A Molotov cocktail was thrown at an IDF patrol near the village of Eshkolot (southern Hebron district) (Tazpit.org.il, June 15, 2014).

- **June 16, 2014** – In the evening rocks and stones were thrown at Israel vehicles at the 'Azoun junction (east of Qalqiliya). A one and a half year-old baby girl sustained minor injuries from broken glass and her mother had to be treated for shock. Seven vehicles were damaged in the attacks (Tazpit.org.il, June 17, 2014).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

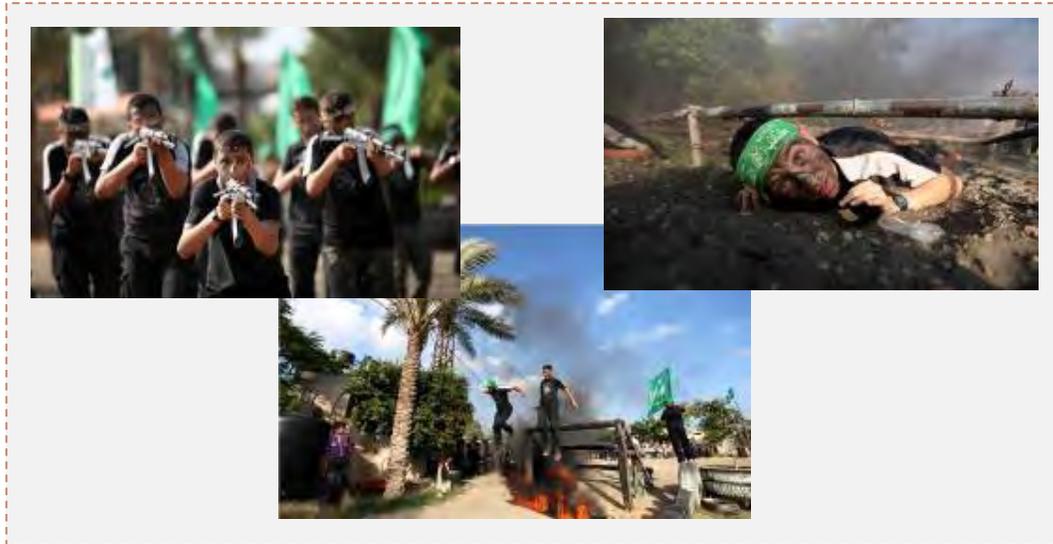
The Rafah Crossing

- The Rafah crossing opens and closes intermittently. On June 15 and 16, 2014 it was open to pilgrims and Palestinians who had been delayed on the Egyptian side of the crossing. More than 100 trucks delivering building materials entered the Gaza Strip.

Summer Camps in the Gaza Strip

- The **Palestinian Islamic Jihad** announced the opening of its summer camps, whose theme this year would be "the rising generation." According to senior PIJ figure **Thaer al-Tawil**, the camps will be "educational and religious," and will including study topics such as PIJ martyrs and the hunger strike of the Palestinian prisoners, along with social and sporting activities. According to **Abu Ahmed**, one of the PIJ heads, the summer camps broaden the campers' knowledge of the suicide bombing attacks carried out by PIJ operatives and encourage them to go to the mosques (Filastin al-Yawm, June 11, 2014).

- On **June 13, 2014**, Hamas held a ceremony in the Al-Tufah neighborhood in the eastern part of Gaza City to mark the end of its summer camp, whose theme was "commitment and loyalty to the martyrs." It was attended by **Ismail Haniya**, deputy head of Hamas' political bureau, and held in a training facility used by Hamas' military-terrorist wing. The children, wearing green Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades headbands, performed a series of military activities (Palestine-info.info, June 13, 2014).

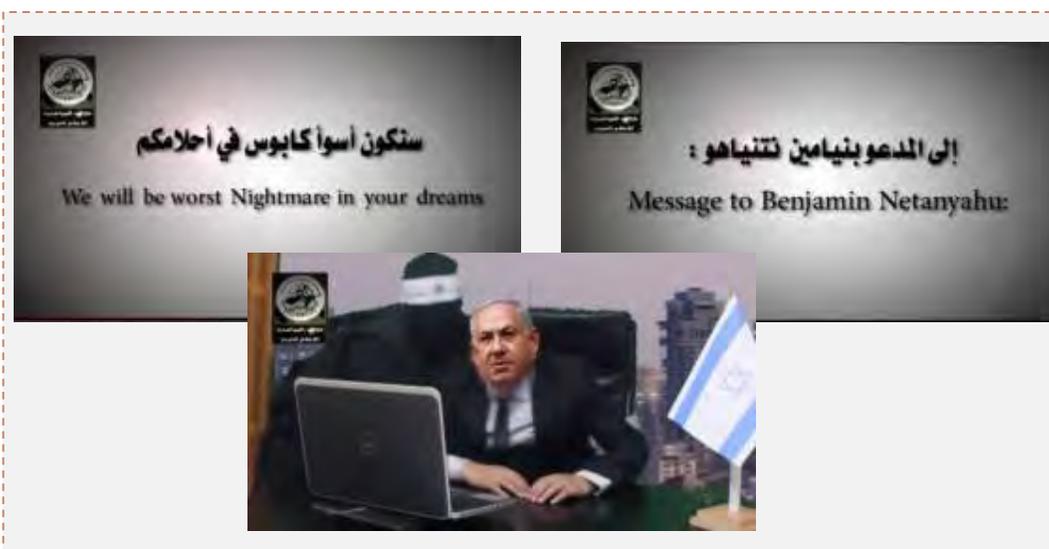


Military exercises during the ceremony marking the end of Hamas' summer camp in the Al-Tufah neighborhood in the eastern part of Gaza City (Palestine-info.info, June 13, 2014)

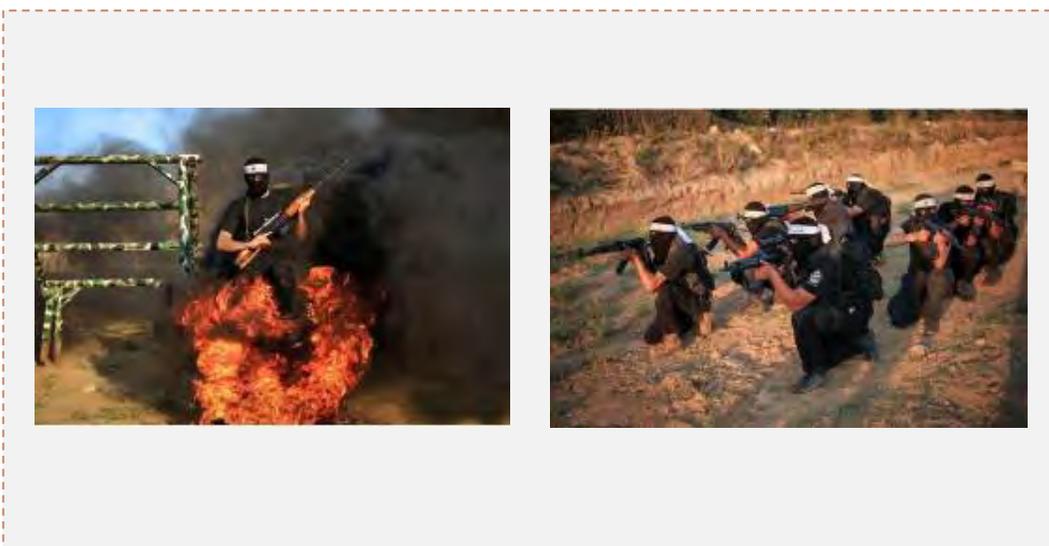
Video Threatening Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

■ In the wake of the Israel's action in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip following the abduction of the three Israeli youths, the mujahideen network⁶ in the Gaza Strip uploaded a video to YouTube threatening the Israeli prime minister. The video shows Benjamin Netanyahu being abducted from his office by the operatives of the network's military-terrorist wing (YouTube, June 16, 2014). The network also posted pictures showing the training camp recently set up by its operatives as part of their preparations for a possible confrontation with Israel (Mujahideen network website, June 11, 2014).

⁶ The **mujahideen network** was established in the Gaza Strip by **Omar Abu Sharia** in 2001. Most of its operatives were formerly in Fatah's military-terrorist wing. The network had close ties with the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, especially the PIJ. The network is headed by As'ad Abu Sharia (aka Abu Sheikh). Its operatives have been involved in a number of incidents of rocket fire targeting Israel (Hebrew Wikipedia and the muhahideen movement website, June 17, ,2014).



The video threatening Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu uploaded to YouTube by the mujahideen's military-terrorist wing (YouTube, June 16, 2014)



Mujahideen operatives in training (Mujahideen network website, June 11, 2014)

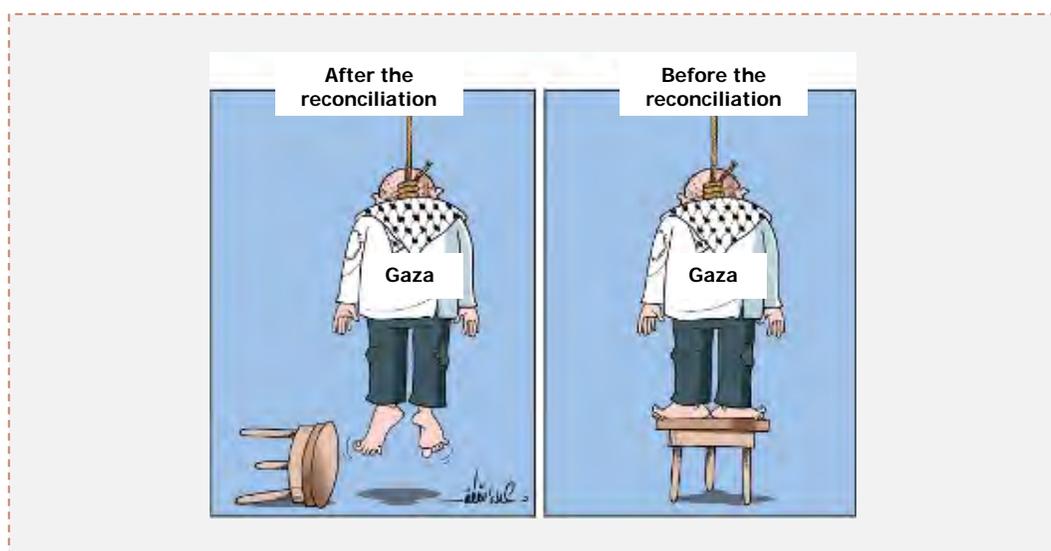
The Fatah-Hamas Reconciliation Agreement

National Agreement Government Difficulties in Controlling the Gaza Strip

■ **Rami Hamdallah**, national agreement government prime minister, admitted that his government "was not in control" of the Gaza Strip (Nytimes.com, June 12, 2014) and would not pay the salaries of the 40,000 former de-facto Hamas administration employees (Nytimes.com, June 3, 2014). He said the reconciliation had been a strategic choice and that the government was collaborating with the Arab states for a

financial security net to help the government with its commitments to the public in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip (Quds.net, June 11, 2014).

■ **On the ground, the new national agreement government is in fact finding it difficult to enforce its control over the Gaza Strip.** According to a Hamas magazine, the various ministries are run differently. Four ministries which were assigned to ministers living in the Gaza Strip have to coordinate their activities with the government in Ramallah. On the other hand, there are ministries headed by ministers living in Judea and Samaria run by employees affiliated with the former Hamas administration (Al-Risala, June 9, 2014).



Hamas: The reconciliation made things worse for the Gazans (Felesteen.ps, June 10, 2014)

The Palestinian Authority

Administrative Detainees Continue Their Hunger Strike

■ The hunger strike of the administrative detainees in Israeli jails, now in its sixth week, continues. According to the Israeli media, **there are 189 administrative detainees in Israeli jails, 125 of whom are on a hunger strike.** Seventy have been hospitalized (Haaretz.co.il, June 13, 2014). **Marwan Barghouti**, currently imprisoned in Israel, issued a press release through his lawyer in which he warned of the danger that the hunger-striking prisoners might die because, he claimed, the Israel Prison Authority was ignoring their conditions. He warned that if Israel continued ignoring the hunger strikers' demands there would be a change in the nature of the struggle (Quds.net, June 11, 2014).

■ **Saeb Erekat**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, sent letters about the hunger strikes to 192 heads of states, as well as to the UN Secretary General and the EU. He called on them to intervene quickly and exert pressure on Israel to end its administrative detentions and to make that a condition for international relations with Israel (Wafa.ps, June 11, 2014).

Sport, Terrorism and Politics

■ It was recently reported that the Israeli security forces had detained **Samah Fares Muhammad Muraba** from Qalqiliya. He went abroad on April 15, 2014 as a **member of the Palestinian soccer team**. While the team was abroad he met with **Talal Ibrahim Abd al-Rahman Shrem in Qatar, a Hamas military-terrorist wing operative who was released from jail in Israel as part of the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal and deported**.

■ Interrogation revealed that before he left for Qatar he was approached by **Muayed Yussuf Hassan Shrem**, a senior Hamas activist from Qalqiliya and chairman of the soccer club to which Muraba belonged. He asked him to meet with Talal Shrem abroad. **The instructions he received made it clear that the meeting had to be kept secret. He met with Talal Shrem and hid the meeting from his teammates**. Upon his return he apparently gave money, a cell phone and messages to Muayed Yussuf Hassan Shrem, his handler, who was also detained (Israel Security Agency website, June 11, 2014).

■ In the realm of politics, **Jibril Rajoub**, head of the Palestinian soccer federation, continues his activities to expel Israel from the **International Football Federation (FIFA)**. To that end he went to Brazil to attend the FIFA conference on June 11, 2014. At a press conference attended by correspondents from around the globe he accused Israel of "crimes" against Palestinian sportsmen. He called on federation members to make an effort to have FIFA issue Israel a "red card" of expulsion (Jibril Rajoub's Facebook page, June 8-10, 2014). It was reported that the FIFA conference then decided to appoint an independent committee to examine the claims (PNN TV, June 12, 2014).



Left: Jibril Rajoub at the Asian Football Organization (AFO) conference in São Paulo. Right: Jibril Rajoub at the São Paulo airport (Jibril Rajoub's Facebook page, June 9-10, 2014).