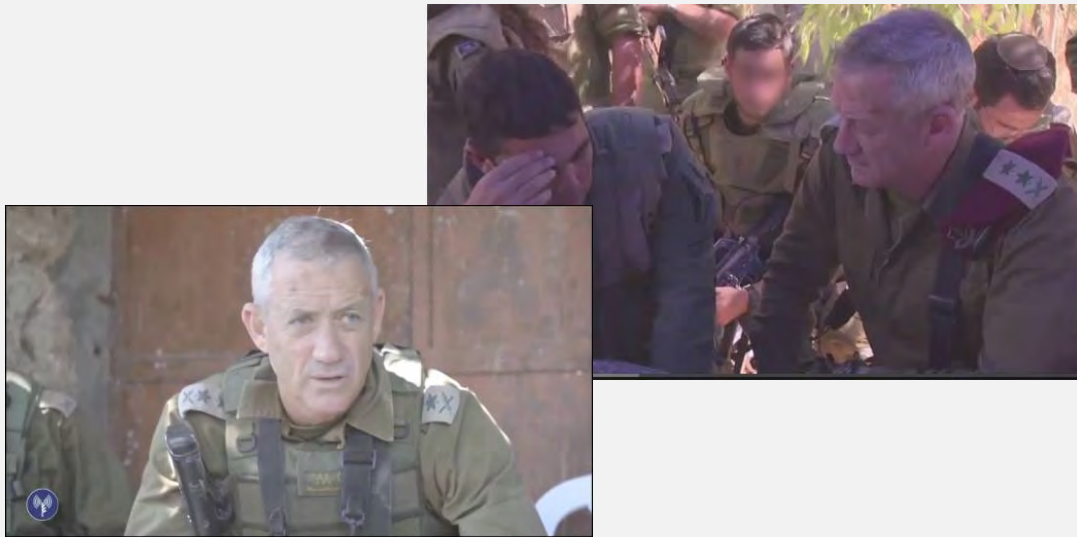




July 28, 2014

Operation Protective Edge – Update No. 14 (As of 1200 hours, July 28, 2014)



The IDF Chief of Staff visits the forces on the ground in the Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, July 27, 2014).

Overview

1. After the humanitarian ceasefire ended on July 26, 2014, its continuation was uncertain. On the morning of July 27, 2014, Israel's Political-Security Cabinet authorized another humanitarian ceasefire, this one for 24 hours. However, rocket fire from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory continued. A Hamas spokesman claimed that an agreement for a humanitarian ceasefire of an additional 24 hours had been reached, but Israel did not accept it because Hamas continued firing rockets. However, the Israeli prime minister agreed to cease firing and attack only in response to attacks carried out by the terrorist organizations.

2. On the ground no significant attacks were recorded on July 27; there were a number of localized incidents. The IDF continued neutralizing terrorist tunnels and the IDF Spokesman made it clear that the humanitarian ceasefire would not prevent such activity. Hamas continued firing rockets and mortar shells into Israel (65 rocket hits on July 27, 2014), although the scope of the rocket fire has declined significantly in the past few days. **Note:** On July 28 ten IDF soldiers were killed. Four of them were killed by a mortar shell near the Gaza border and five others while preventing an infiltration

of a terrorist squad through a tunnel near the village of Nahal Oz in the western Negev.

The Ground Operation

IDF Activity

Overview

3. During the past 24 hours IDF ground activities continued, **focusing on exposing and destroying terrorist tunnels**. IDF Chief of Staff Major General Benny Gantz visited the soldiers fighting in the Gaza Strip. He praised their achievements and said that all the attempts made by the enemy to attack Israeli territory had failed. He also said that **the activity to neutralize the tunnels used for attack purposes had to continue** (IDF Spokesman, July 27, 2014).

4. On the morning of July 27, 2014, the UN Security Council voted for a humanitarian ceasefire of 24 hours. However, rocket fire from the Gaza Strip continued, including rocket fire targeting the center of Israel. In the early afternoon, following an appeal from Robert Serry, the UN envoy to the Middle East, a humanitarian ceasefire of 24 hours was again discussed. Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** claimed that a 24-hour humanitarian ceasefire had been agreed on and was supposed to start at 1400 hours (Al-Aqsa TV, July 27, 2014). However, Hamas continued its rocket attacks and therefore Israel was forced to reject the ceasefire.

5. On the evening of July 27, 2014, after international pressure had been exerted on Israel, especially the demands of American President Barack Obama and the UN Security Council for an immediate end to the fighting, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu complied with the demand for an unlimited ceasefire. He said the IDF would attack only in response to terrorist activity carried out by Hamas and the other terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip. However, the effort to neutralize the terrorist tunnels continues.



Weapons and uniforms exposed by the IDF in the Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, July 27, 2014)

IDF Activity on July 27, 2014

6. On **July 27, 2014**, the IDF's ground operation in the Gaza Strip continued. According to IDF Spokesman Brigadier General Motti Almoz, **the humanitarian ceasefire does not prevent the IDF forces from neutralizing the terrorist tunnels** (IDF Spokesman, July 27, 2014). On July 27, 2014, an IDF force exposed a weapons stockpile which included a bulletproof vest, a Kalashnikov assault rifle, and communications equipment.

7. On **Friday, July 25, 2014**, the IDF carried out a targeted killing, attacking the vehicle of **Ismail Sa'adi Aqluq**, an operative in Hamas' Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades. Ismail Aqluq was an operative in the research, development and manufacture unit of Hamas military-terrorist wing. He participated in developing advanced weapons such as UAVs and rockets (IDF Spokesman, July 27, 2014).

Exposure and Destruction of Terrorist Tunnels

8. During the past 24 hours the IDF activity to expose and destroy tunnels continued. So far about half the tunnels leading from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory have been destroyed. On July 27, 2014, IDF forces destroyed a tunnel in the southern Gaza Strip, and one in the north was almost completely destroyed. IDF forces also exposed three additional tunnel shafts (IDF Spokesman, July 27, 2014).



Left: A tunnel shaft. Right: Heavy equipment for the destruction of tunnels (IDF Spokesman, July 27, 2014)

Air Attacks on Terrorist Targets Continue

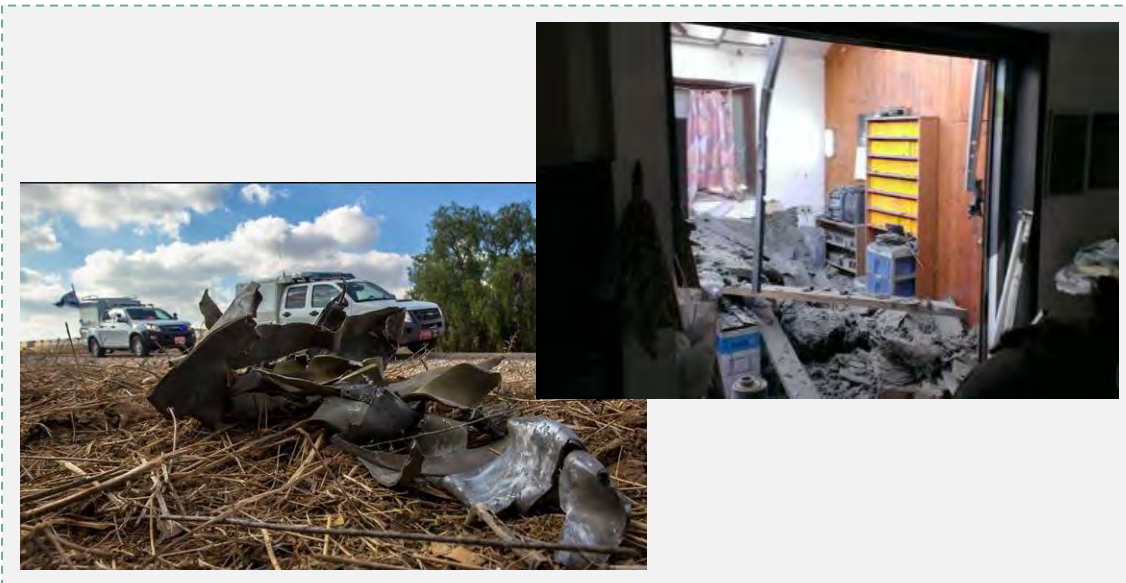
9. In addition to the ground operation, the IDF continued attacking terrorist targets from the air. So far, more than 3,690 terrorist targets have been attacked (IDF Spokesman, July 27, 2014). On July 27, 2014, Israeli Air Force (IAF) aircraft attacked more than 20 terrorist targets, among them terrorist tunnels, concealed rocket launchers from which rockets were fired into Israel, terrorist squads and terrorist facilities.

IDF Losses

10. Forty-three IDF soldiers have been killed in Operation Protective Edge. One hundred and seventeen soldiers wounded in action are being treated in hospitals around the country. One is in critical condition, five are in serious condition, and the rest sustained moderate to minor injuries (Haaretz.co.il, July 18, 2014).

Rocket Fire into Israeli Territory

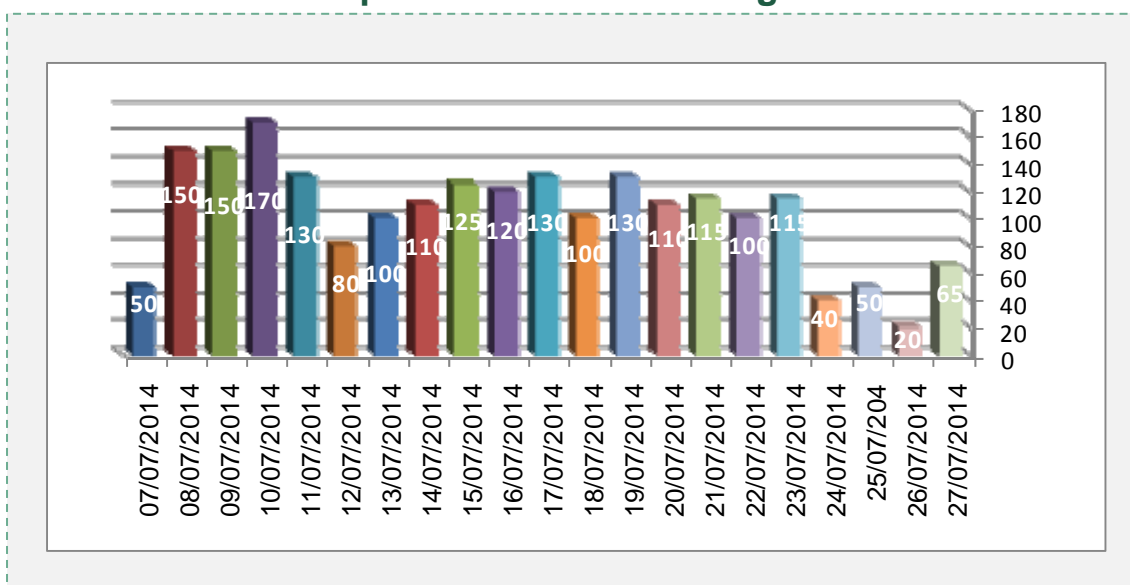
11. Rocket and mortar shell fire continues to attack Israel. Since the beginning of the operation approximately 2,160 rockets have fallen in Israeli territory. The Iron Dome aerial defense system intercepted more than 450.



Left: Fragments of a rocket that fell in Israel (Israel Police Force, July 27, 2014). Right: A residential building in the western Negev hit by a mortar shell. An Israeli woman sustained moderate injuries (Western Negev Regional Council Spokesperson, July 27, 2014).

12. On July 27, 2014, 65 rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory, continuing the trend towards a decline in the number of rockets fired. Most of the rockets fell in southern Israel. One barrage was fired in the morning attacking the coastal plain, Judea and the center of Israel. Rocket fire increased in the afternoon after Israel said it would not comply with the UN request for a humanitarian ceasefire. An Israeli woman sustained moderate wounds when a mortar shell fell on her house in the western Negev.

Daily Distribution of Rocket Fire from the Gaza Strip during Operation Protective Edge¹



¹ The graph indicates rocket hits in Israeli territory and does not include the massive mortar shell fire into the western Negev or rocket launches that failed.

13. The military-terrorist wings of Hamas and the PIJ continue claiming responsibility for most of the rockets and mortar shells fired into Israeli territory and at the IDF forces operating in the Gaza Strip.



A rocket fired from the Abu Nur school in the Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, July 27, 2014)
Click <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-fh-fRs7To#t=11> for the video.

The Use Made of Al-Shifa'a Hospital by Hamas and the Other Terrorist Organizations

14. Raja Abu Daka, a French-Palestinian correspondent, said he was summoned to the Al-Shifa'a Hospital in Gaza by the Hamas security forces. He said he went to the part of the hospital used for administrative purposes where he met with a group of operatives wearing civilian clothing. They were armed with hand guns, and some had walkie-talkies. He was ordered to empty his pockets and remove his shoes and belt. He was then taken to a room in the hospital used, he claimed, as a command center. There he was interrogated by operatives whom he thought belonged to the armed wing of Hamas. After the interrogation he was advised, "for his own good," to leave the Gaza Strip (Libération, July 23, 2014).

15. It was not the first time rooms in the Al-Shifa'a Hospital were used for interrogation purposes. During Operation Cast Lead sources in Fatah reported that Hamas has turned the ground floor of the X-ray department into a jail and interrogation facility (Al-Ahed, a site affiliated with Fatah, January 21, 2009).

The Gazan Population

16. According to ITIC information, **972 Gazans have been killed** since the beginning of the operation (as of noon, July 28). The number should be increased by about 100 to account for those whose bodies have not yet been removed from under the rubble, bringing the total count to **more than 1,000**.

17. The distribution (not final, as of noon, July 28, 2014) of the 972 Palestinians killed is as follows:

- 1) **309 terrorist operatives:**
 - A) **169 Hamas operatives**
 - B) **93 PIJ operatives**
 - C) **47 operatives** from other terrorist organizations
- 2) **307 non-involved Palestinians**
- 3) **356 Palestinians** whose identity is not yet known

18. **Chris Gunness**, UNRWA spokesman in the Gaza Strip, said that **173,123 Palestinians had vacated their houses** and had taken shelter in 82 UNRWA installations throughout the Gaza Strip (about 10% of the Gaza Strip's population). About 200 tons of food are delivered to residents in UN installations every day (Twitter account of Chris Gunness, July 27, 2014).

19. The ministry of public works and housing in the Gaza Strip reported that 23,000 dwelling units have been partially destroyed and 1,960 totally destroyed, 50 mosques have been destroyed and seven hospitals have been attacked (Arn.ps, July 26, 2014).



Gazans leave their houses for the Eid al-Fitr prayer in the mosques (Wafa.ps, July 27, 2014).

UNRWA School Hit

20. On July 27, 2014, the IDF released the findings of the investigation of **the hit on the UNRWA school**. According to the IDF, the investigation revealed that **the school had been hit by a stray IDF shell. According to photographs in IDF possession, the schoolyard was empty at the time and it is unlikely that anyone was killed.** The investigation also revealed that the IDF had fired in the direction of the school in response to anti-tank missiles fired at IDF soldiers by Hamas operatives, either from the building itself or next to it (IDF radio, July 27, 2014).

The Crossings – Update

The Kerem Shalom Crossing

21. **Since the beginning of Operation Protective Edge 1,154 trucks carrying food, medicine and medical equipment have entered the Gaza Strip through the crossing.** Diesel fuel for the Gaza Strip power plant, gasoline and cooking gas have also been delivered. The humanitarian ceasefire was used to repair electrical and water facilities that were damaged or had collapsed (Cogat.idf.il, July 27, 2014).

The Rafah Crossing

22. The Egyptian authorities opened the Rafah crossing for the Eid al-Fitr holiday to receive wounded Gazans and deliver aid to the Gaza Strip. To that end the crossing administration decided to increase the manpower stationed there (Almasryalyoum.com, July 27, 2014). According to **Adel Adawi**, the Egyptian minister

of health, 94 Gazans have received medical treatment in Egyptian hospitals since the beginning of Operation Protective Edge. However, the aid committee of the Egyptian union of pharmacists claimed that the second aid convoy could not leave Egypt because the Rafah crossing was closed.

Support for the Gaza Strip

23. **The minister of health of the Palestinian Authority (PA)** reported the dispatch of 12 trucks of medicine and medical equipment for the warehouses of the ministry of health in the Gaza Strip. He said they were carrying equipment for operating rooms and ICUs (Wafa.ps, July 27, 2014).

24. **The Moroccan embassy in Egypt** said it had sent 155 tons of food as well as medical and humanitarian equipment to the Gaza Strip. The shipment would enter through the Rafah crossing after coordination with the Egyptian authorities (Almasryalyoum.com, July 26, 2014).

Judea and Samaria

25. Throughout Judea and Samaria, Palestinians continue protesting and rioting in support of the Gazans. The Hamas movement in Nablus issued a notice calling on local residents to go to the Al-Nasr Mosque in the center of the city after the Sunday prayer to participate in a march supporting the Palestinian "resistance" [i.e., terrorist organizations] (Facebook page of Islamic Bloc at Al-Najah University, Nablus, July 27, 2014).



The notice issued by Hamas (Facebook page of Islamic Bloc at Al-Najah University, Nablus, July 27, 2014)

Contacts for a Humanitarian and General Ceasefire

26. Speaking with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, American President Barack Obama said that **an immediate, unconditional humanitarian ceasefire was vital**. Such a ceasefire, claimed Obama, would end the fighting and lead to a permanent ceasefire based on the understandings of Operation Cast Lead (November 2012). He said the United States supported the Egyptian initiative as well as regional and international coordination. A number of hours later the UN Security Council, in a presidential statement, called on Israel and Hamas to agree to an immediate, unconditional humanitarian ceasefire during and after Eid al-Fitr (UN.org, July 28, 2014).

Statements from Hamas

27. **Osama Hamdan**, holder of Hamas' international relations portfolio, accused Israel of rejecting the UN Secretary General's proposal to extend the humanitarian ceasefire. He claimed contacts were not being held directly with Israel, but through mediators. He also claimed that any agreement for a ceasefire discussed by Hamas had to include clear, binding guarantees that would not permit Israel to return to its "aggression." He claimed the guarantees demanded by Hamas were currently being discussed with the mediators (Aawsat.net, July 27, 2014).

28. Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** claimed that Hamas did not need a humanitarian ceasefire but because of the dire situation of the Gazan civilians they had accepted the proposal made by Robert Serry, the UN envoy to the Middle East, to hold a 24-hour humanitarian ceasefire. He accused Israel of violating the agreements because in previous ceasefire agreements Israel had not allowed Gazans to return to their houses and evacuate the bodies of the dead and wounded (Al-Jazeera, July 27, 2014).

29. In response to statements made by Obama regarding the disarmament of Hamas, senior Hamas figure **Izzat al-Rishq** wrote in his Twitter account that "for the millionth time we say that anyone who tries to disarm us...we will make his life hell" (Twitter account of Izzat al-Rishq, July 24, 2014).

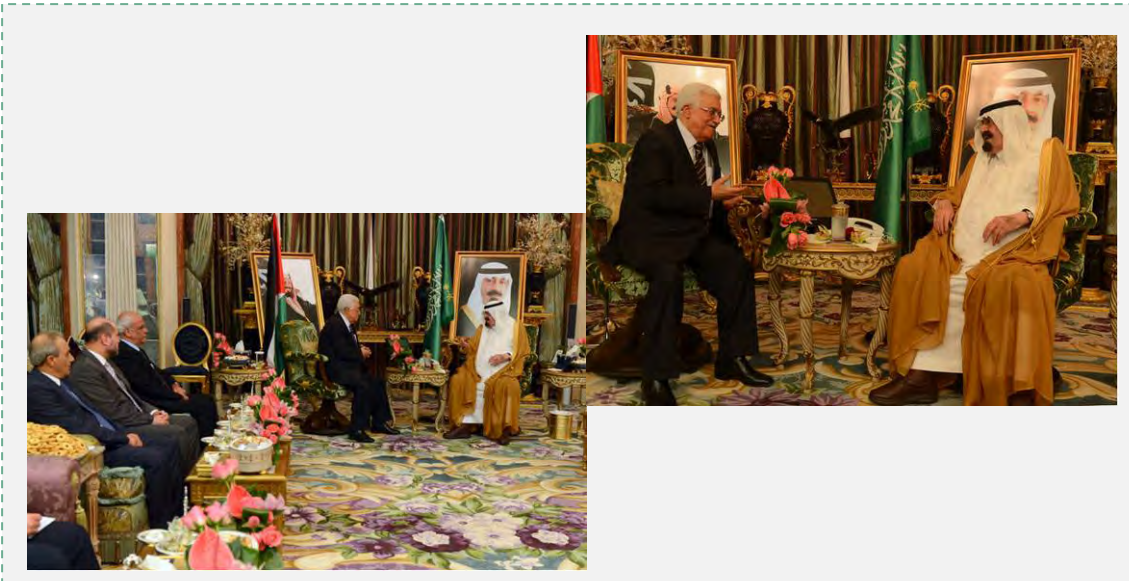
Statements from the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)

30. PIJ secretary general **Ramadan Shallah** said in a speech for Eid al-Fitr that the operatives in the Gaza Strip had created a "new balance of force" between Israel and the Palestinians which would be very influential in the future. He claimed that the

Palestinians would not stop attacking Israel until it met their legitimate demands, which were the end of [so-called] "Israeli aggression" and the lifting of the siege (Paltoday.ps, July 28, 2014).

Statements from the PA

31. PA chairman **Mahmoud Abbas** paid a short visit to Saudi Arabia where he met with King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz al-Saud to discuss the situation in the Gaza Strip. Senior delegations from both sides attended the meeting (Wafa.ps, July 27, 2014).



Mahmoud Abbas meets the king of Saudi Arabia (Wafa.ps, July 27, 2014)

The Political-Lawfare-Propaganda Campaign

Hamas' Propaganda Campaign

32. The following are some of the statements from Hamas' military-terrorist wing and from a Hamas-affiliated Facebook page:

- 1) Hamas' military-terrorist wing released an animated video simulating military-terrorist operatives allegedly shooting down an Israeli F-16 airplane. Once the plane was down the operatives captured the pilot, who had activated the ejection seat. The video ended with a statement in Hebrew reading "Out skies are sacred and your planes cannot fly in them."



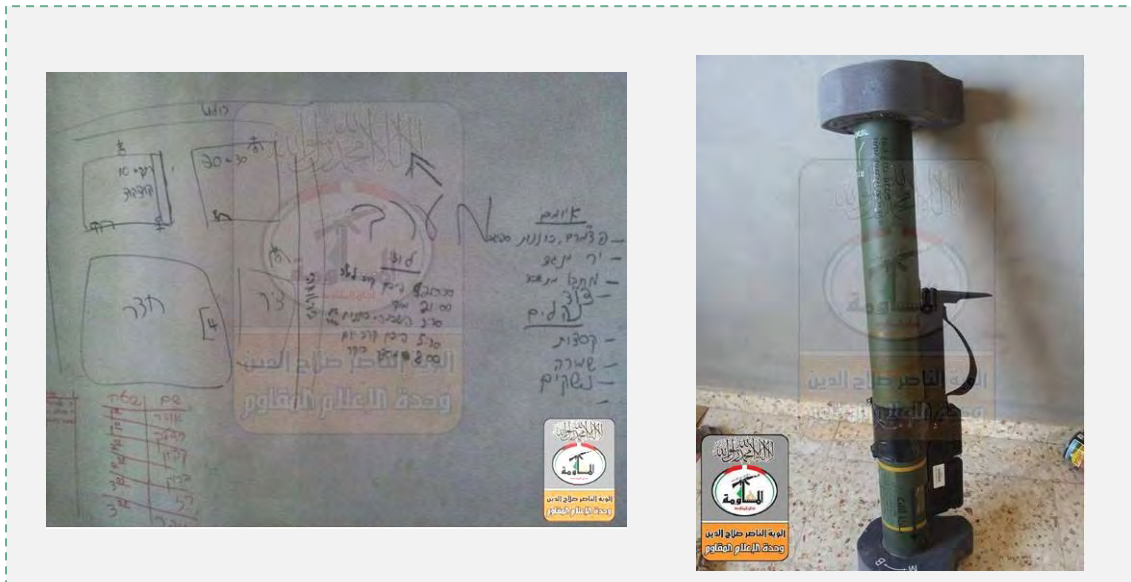
So-called interception of an Israeli plane and capturing the pilot (Qassam.ps, July 27, 2014)

2) The Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades claimed to have shot down an Israeli UAV in the Al-Tufah neighborhood of Gaza City (Qassam.ps, July 27, 2014).



A masked Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades operative holds a UAV claimed to have been shot down in the Al-Tufah neighborhood of Gaza City (Qassam.ps, July 27, 2014)

3) The Facebook page of the Hamas-affiliated Palestinian Communications Center posted pictures claimed to have been taken by Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades operatives of plundered IDF items. The pictures showed an Israeli map, a sketch for guards and a rocket launcher which, according to the claim, were left in Khan Yunis (Facebook page of Palestinian Communications Center, July 27, 2014).



Left: Sketch in Hebrew. Right: Rocket launcher (Facebook page of Palestinian Communications Center, July 27, 2014)

Appointment of a Commission to Investigate the Events in the Gaza Strip

33. The humanitarian ceasefire which revealed the scope of the destruction of Shejaiya and Beit Hanoun, where Hamas and the other terrorist organizations had established extensive facilities, **caused the call** for an international investigatory commission:

1) **The Jordanian Al-Jisser Al-Arabi Center for Human Rights** said in an announcement that it had appealed to the Arab League to appoint an independent committee to investigate "Israel's crimes" against the civilians in the Gaza Strip. The committee will be composed of volunteers from Jordan and other Arab states who serve as observers on the Arab League's permanent human rights committee. They will deliver their findings to the International Criminal Court in The Hague (Wafa.ps, July 26, 2014).

2) **Muhammad Dahlan**, former senior Fatah figure and a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, said that if the PA did not bring Israel to trial, he would form a committee to gather the legal claims of Palestinians who had been injured by IDF attacks and deliver them to international legal institutions (Maannews.net, July 27, 2014).