Events in the internal Palestinian arena focused on the new round of confrontations, deadlier and more extensive than the previous ones. When the dust settled, Hamas had almost completed its takeover of most of the Gaza Strip. Fatah and the Palestinian security forces collapsed and the Gaza Strip is has been turned into radical Islamic “Hamastan” in every respect.

That dramatic development widens the practical and political gulf between the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria, where Fatah has managed to retain the advantage over Hamas. The Palestinian national unity government and the PA are in a state of political paralysis, since Hamas and Fatah cannot function jointly in one political framework. Hamas, drunk with victory, now wants to use its success in the Gaza Strip as a lever to take over PA and PLO institutions. In the meantime, Abu Mazen dissolved the Palestinian national unity government, announced a state of emergency and for the establishment of an emergency government. Hamas rejected the announcement.

On the ground, Hamas has (for the time being) stopped its rocket attacks against Israel. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Fatah continue daily sporadic rocket fire, and at the same time attempt to bring to fruition a grandiose terrorist attack (such as the attack at the Kissufim Crossing or the attempted double suicide bombing attack in Netanya and Tel Aviv, which was prevented.)
Important Events

A terrorist squad attacked an IDF post and patrol near the Kissufim Crossing

- Around noon on June 9 a squad of Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Fatah operatives attacked an IDF post and patrol near the Kissufim Crossing. They may have also been planning to abduct an IDF soldier if the opportunity arose. The four-man squad drove up in a jeep camouflaged as a media vehicle, broke through the gate and entered Israeli territory.

- Once on the Israeli side of the border the terrorists attempted to attack an IDF position near the fence, but it was unmanned at the time. IDF forces which subsequently arrived exchanged fire with terrorists, killing one; three returned to the Gaza Strip.¹

¹ For further information see our Bulletin entitled “A Fatah-Palestinian Islamic Jihad terrorist squad infiltrated Israel near the Kissufim Crossing to attack an IDF force...,” at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/pij_e100607.pdf.
Mortar shells fired at the Erez Crossing

During the past two weeks Hamas fired mortar shells at Israeli security forces stationed at Gaza Strip crossings (the Erez Crossing and the Karni Crossing). The attacks came after the organization ceased firing rockets at western Negev settlements on May 29. Mortar shells are fired to hamper ambushes, kill Israeli security forces in the area and respond to IDF preventive activities in the Gaza Strip.

Prominent attacks were the following:

- On June 3 three mortar shells were fired at the Erez Crossing. Two hit greenhouses in one of the nearby moshavim. Four IDF soldiers were wounded by the shells, three not seriously and one seriously. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack.

- On June 6 eight mortar shells were fired at the Erez Crossing, a few minutes after Ephraim Sneh, deputy defense minister, toured the area. There were no casualties. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack.

Decline in the number of rockets fired at western Negev settlements

During the past two weeks rocket fire at western Negev settlements continued. However, there was a sharp decline compared with May (see the Statistical Data). In our assessment, the decline was caused because Hamas stopped firing rockets on May 29.

During the first two weeks of June there was a total of 59 identified rocket hits in Israeli territory, and during the past few days only sporadic firing was reported (compared with 299 identified rocket hits in May). A number of civilians were slightly wounded in the attacks and property was damaged. On June 13 a rocket landed in the schoolyard of an Israeli settlement. The PIJ and Fatah have claimed responsibility for firing the greatest number of rockets.

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2 As of noon, June 14.
It should be noted that Dr. Moussa Abu Marzouq, Hamas’s deputy political bureau head, candidly admitted to the Hamas daily newspaper Filasteen that Hamas had begun a rocket attack against Israel to end the violent clashes with Fatah. He added that the rocket attacks had relieved the distress caused Hamas by the internal confrontation. In the meantime, the internal confrontation has been renewed full force, and this time Hamas, preferring a showdown with Fatah in the Gaza Strip, has abstained from firing rockets at Israel.

**Daily distribution of rocket attacks**

* Cessation of Hamas rocket attacks (May 29)
** Beginning of Hamas-Fatah battles (June 7)

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Israeli security forces detained two Palestinian women who planned to carry out a double suicide bombing attack in crowded locations in Netanya and Tel Aviv\(^4\)

On May 20 the Israeli security forces detained two Palestinian women at the Erez Crossing, both Gaza residents, who had planned to carry out a double suicide bombing attack in crowded locations in Netanya and Tel Aviv in the middle of the Hamas rocket attack on the western Negev settlements. The attack was planned and directed by the PIJ. The women were supposed to use false entry permits for medical examinations to enter Israel.

**Counterterrorist Activities**

**The Gaza Strip**

The IDF continued its counterterrorist activities in the Gaza Strip: the Israeli Air Force struck targets which served the terrorist organizations: rocket launching squads, weapons stores, lathes for manufacturing weapons, etc. At the same time, ground forces carried out a number of pinpoint attacks in the Gaza Strip which included searches for weapons and tunnels for smuggling weapons, the detention of terrorist-operatives for interrogation, etc.

The Egyptian security forces located five tunnels for smuggling weapons along the Palestinian-Egyptian border. Inside the tunnels half a ton of explosives and about 1000 rifle bullets were found. The explosives and ammunition were impounded by the Egyptian border police.

\(^4\) An English version detailing the incident will appear shortly on the ITIC Website.
The IDF continued its counterterrorist activities in Judea and Samaria, and detained several dozen men suspected of terrorist activity. Among them were the following:

- Fatah operative named Muhammad Farhati was killed by the IDF in Jenin on June 3. He was the commander of a Fatah-PIJ squad called Belt of Fire (Ma’an News Agency, June 3).

- A Hamas operative named Feisal al-Saba Ana was detained with a suitcase full of money in his possession on June 5.
The Lebanese army steps up the pressure on Fatah al-Islam

Since May 20 there has been fierce fighting between the Lebanese army and Fatah al-Islam, a branch of Al-Qaeda in Lebanon. There was an important turn in the battle at the beginning of June, when the Lebanese army initiated a broad attack against the organization’s strongholds in the Nahar al-Bared refugee camp. For the first time, the army entered the camp after many of its residents had fled. At the beginning of June there were also local clashes between the Lebanese army and an organization called Janad al-Islam (identified with the global jihad) on the outskirts of the Ayn al-Hilweh refugee camp near Sidon.

According to reports appearing in the Lebanese and Arab media, the Lebanese army, covered by artillery fire, managed to take over most of the Fatah al-Islam base in the Nahar al-Bared refugee camp. However, the camp has not been completely cleared and Fatah al-Islam operatives, who fight stubbornly, are still barricaded in other strongholds deep inside the camp. During the battles dozens of Fatah al-Islam operatives were killed and many were detained (in both the camp and other places in the Beqaa Valley). Among those detained are Saudi Arabians, Syrians, Palestinians and other non-Lebanese.

Arms shipments from Iran to Hezbollah uncovered

On May 25 a shipment of arms was uncovered by the Turkish army in a boxcar on a train going from Iran to Syria. On the night of June 5 a truck was stopped at a Lebanese army roadblock in the region of Baalbeq. The truck was carrying rockets and ammunition. Six Hezbollah operatives were detained and later released, and the weapons were impounded (Al-Nahar, June 6).
The incidents exposed the routes for smuggling arms for Hezbollah from Iran and Syria. The smuggling directly contravenes UN Security Council Resolution 1701, passed on August 12, 2006. The Resolution stated, among other things, that weapons should not be brought into the area without the agreement of the Lebanese government, and a full embargo was imposed on transferring weapons to Hezbollah.

**Statistical Data**

**Monthly distribution of attacks**

![Chart showing monthly distribution of attacks]
Monthly distribution of identified rocket hits\textsuperscript{5}

Monthly distribution of Israeli casualties

\textsuperscript{5} Forty-two mortar shells should be added to May and 24 to the first half of June.
The Internal Palestinian Arena

Hamas takes over most of the Gaza Strip

The situation on the ground

During the past few days Hamas has completed its takeover of most of the Gaza Strip and its members openly proclaim their victory: “The era of the rule of the Fatah traitors has passed. The shields of Oslo which protected the Zionist enemy no longer exist.” (Al-Aqsa TV, June 13). The confrontations reached their height between June 12 and 13, and during them close to 40 people were killed, most of them Fatah operatives and members of the security forces (a total of more than 100 people were killed during the last round of confrontations, both terrorist-operatives and civilians, and hundreds were wounded).

Street fighting in Gaza (www.palissue.com, June 14)

During the battles most of the bases and headquarters belonging to Fatah and the security forces in the northern and southern Gaza Strip and in Gaza City fell into Hamas hands, and Hamas is currently completing its takeover of the Strip. In many of

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the Fatah and security force bases large quantities of weapons and other military equipment were also confiscated by Hamas.7

The situation on the ground in the various regions is the following:8

- **Gaza City:** After having taken over most of Fatah and security force bases, Hamas is focusing on the compound known as the security square in the Rimal neighborhood in the western part of the city. A number of security force headquarters are located there. At noon on June 14 Hamas completed its takeover of the main building of the Palestinian preventive security headquarters at Tel al-Hawa in the security square, one of the symbols of the Palestinian Authority in the Gaza Strip. Hamas’ TV channel broadcast a display of the weapons and equipment confiscated in the building (jeeps, mortars, bullet-proof vests). Hamas announced that the name of the neighborhood would be changed from Tel al-Hawa to Tel al-Islam (Ynet, June 14).

Left: Hamas operatives taking over Fatah’s preventive security building. Right: Some of the military equipment found in the offices (Al-Aqsa TV, June 14).

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7 Sources in the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades stated that they had found large quantities of weapons in the headquarters they took over, weapons they claimed the security forces had confiscated from operatives of the various organizations (Filastin al-'An Website, June 13).
8 As of 1 p.m., June 14.
The southern Gaza Strip: Most of the Fatah and security force posts in the Khan Yunis and Rafah regions have been taken by Hamas. Hamas media reported that the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades took over security force posts in Rafah and that some of them fell without a shot being fired. They also reported the “cleansing” of the compound where the security force offices were located in Khan Yunis. During the battles Hamas seized a large quantity of military equipment. One of the preventive security posts in Khan Yunis was destroyed when a tunnel full of explosives was detonated; 13 members of the Palestinian preventive security force were killed in the explosion (Reuters, June 13). Approximately 60 members of the preventive security forces crossed the border and gave themselves up to the Egyptians. Hamas operatives took over the security force posts along the border with Egypt (the Philadelphi route) and began patrolling the road.

The northern Gaza Strip: On June 12 and 13 Hamas took over most of the security force posts in Jabaliya, Beit Hanoun and other locations in the northern Gaza Strip. On June 13 the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades issued an ultimatum to the members of the security forces in the northern Gaza Strip, ordering them to hand over their weapons by 7 p.m. on Friday if they wanted to live. Hamas proclaimed the northern Gaza Strip a closed military area.
The Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades attack Palestinian Preventive Security headquarters (Hamas Website).

The crossings: The crossings leading into Israel and Egypt were closed by the Palestinians. Hamas operatives have not yet taken control of them but are located nearby. The crossings in question are:

- **The Erez Crossing:** Hamas operatives captured the customs junction, which is close to the Palestinian side. The crossing itself is manned by Palestinian police.

- **The Karni Crossing:** Closed by the Palestinians since June 10. The presidential guard has stopped going there.

- **The Rafah Crossing:** Hamas has taken over the area near the crossing. The presidential guard has stopped going there.

The situation in Judea and Samaria

- The seeping of the confrontations into Judea and Samaria, where Fatah has the advantage, has so far been local and limited. Fatah initiated local incidents against Hamas operatives and institutions in various regions, but they can do nothing to balance Hamas’ actions in the Gaza Strip.

- The following are the main steps initiated by Fatah and the security forces against Hamas:

  - **Nablus:** In Nablus and the surrounding area Fatah initiated a number of incidents against Hamas operatives and institutions affiliated with the movement (June 13); a senior Hamas figure was abducted; in the Nablus and Tulkarm regions employees,
vehicles and buildings belonging to “charitable societies” and civilian institutions affiliated with Hamas were attacked. In the refugee camp of Al-Ayn, in the western part of the city, there were confrontations between Fatah and Hamas operatives, during which 12 Hamas operatives were wounded (June 13).

- **Ramallah:** A number of actions against Hamas figures and institutions were carried out. Armed men, apparently belonging to the Presidential Guard, broke into the Al-Aqsa TV offices, detained four employees and confiscated computers and other equipment (June 12). Armed Fatah operatives abducted the Hamas-affiliated deputy minister of information from his office in Ramallah (June 12).

- **Jenin:** Zakharia al-Zubeidi, Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades commander in Jenin, said in an interview that Fatah had begun taking over all Hamas’ institutions in Jenin, and that they were now all under Fatah control (June 13). In effect, Fatah operatives took action against Hamas’ civilian infrastructure (da’wah) in the city: armed men ransacked the Islamic Club and then torched it; Hamas operatives attacked a kindergarten and school (Al-Iman) belonging to the Jenin “charitable society.” A Fatah spokesman said that the Al-Razi hospital had been given an extension of two days to evacuate before being closed (Ma’an News Agency, June 13).

- **Extensive detentions of Hamas operatives:** According to a news item, on the night of June 13 the security forces and Fatah initiated a wave of detentions of senior Hamas figures in the West Bank. It was reported that the names of Hamas mayors, university activists and “charitable society” activists appeared on the list of those to be detained (Ali Waked, Ynet, June 14).

### Contacts for a cease fire

- With Hamas’ having taken over most of the Gaza Strip, on June 13 a meeting was held between Hamas and Burhan Hamad, the head of the Egyptian delegation, at which Hamas

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9 In another interview he verbally abused Hamas and blamed its men for being a “burden on Islam” and “demons” disguised as Muslims (Radio Shabab, June 13).
presented its terms for a ceasefire. The meeting took place in one of Hamas headquarters after Hamas representatives found it “difficult” to attend the meeting to which they had been invited by the Egypt delegation. It was clearly an attempt to make a show of strength before contacts regarding a ceasefire began.

At the meeting the Hamas delegation presented a list of 8 points for ending the confrontation. The main points, according to “a Palestinian source” speaking to a correspondent from the Middle East News Agency on June 13, were the following:

- Honoring agreements signed between Hamas and Fatah during the last two years, from the Cairo Accord (2005) to the Mecca Accord (2007).
- Preserving the national unity government and honoring the results of the Palestinian Legislative Council elections.
- Firing “known activists” who try to cause the national unity government to fail; rehabilitating the security forces by getting rid of activists “known for their anti-nationalism, who keep working on and off to light the fires of civil war” [i.e., getting rid of Muhammad Dahlan and those in the security forces and government institutions who oppose Hamas].
- Returning the rights of those who were fired from the security forces for having belonged to Hamas or for having refused to participate in the recent fighting.
- Exposing all the murderers [most likely members of Fatah and the security forces] and bringing them to trial [following the de-legitimization of Fatah and security force members in the Hamas media].

In our assessment, the terms reflect Hamas’ desire to exploit its successes on the ground to severely weaken Fatah and to complete its takeover of the PA’s institutions, especially the security forces. Abu Mazen, however, refused to discuss Hamas’ terms and dissolved the national unity government.
Hamas’ response to the idea of bringing an international force into the Gaza Strip

On June 14 Hamas announced to the press that it absolutely rejected the idea of stationing foreign forces in the Gaza Strip, regardless of their nationality. “Hamas,” said the announcement in a threatening tone, “will consider them an occupation force” (Palestine-info Website)

The tearing of Palestinian society (PIJ Website, June 14).