



June 20, 2007

**Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center
at the Israel Intelligence Heritage
& Commemoration Center (IICC)**

Rockets fired on Kiryat Shmona for the first time since the second Lebanon war

Overview

1. On June 17, 2007, three rockets were fired from the Taybeh-Addayseh region on Kiryat Shmona – the first such incident since the second Lebanon war. There were no casualties; however, some property was damaged. Hezbollah denied any involvement in the attack. It is our assessment that that provocative attack was perpetrated by elements related to Fath al-Islam, the Al-Qaeda offshoot in Lebanon, an organization that for the past month has been under heavy pressure from the Lebanese army in the Nahr al-Bared refugee camp in northern Lebanon. The Lebanese Prime Minister and the Lebanese army strongly condemned the attack and promised they would take the necessary measures to catch the perpetrators.



**A rocket that hit Kiryat Shmona damaged a car and formed a pit in the road
(Al-Arabiyya TV, June 17)**

Details

2. On June 17 in the afternoon (around 5:10 PM), four 107mm rockets were fired from the area between the villages of Taybeh and Addayseh, located in South Lebanon, west of Kiryat Shmona. Two rockets hit Kiryat Shmona (one of which hit the city's industrial zone) and one dropped in Lebanese territory, between the town of Al-Addayseh and Kafr Kila. No casualties were inflicted; however, some property was damaged. A fourth rocket, ready to be launched, was found and taken apart by Lebanese army engineering forces which arrived on the scene. A UNIFIL patrol also arrived at the area.



The remains of the rocket being examined by a UNIFIL soldier (NBN TV, June 17)

3. According to Lebanese media reports, based on Lebanese defense sources and locals' testimonies, the terrorist squad arrived at the launch site in a rented car (others claimed they arrived in two cars). According to our assessment, the squad came from a refugee camp on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Several gunmen were seen launching the rockets, after which they got in their car and drove west towards the Qaqa'iyah bridge on the Litani river. It was reported that the details of the car were released to Lebanese army roadblocks and to UNIFIL forces; however, the perpetrators remain at large.

4. The rockets were launched from a region which falls within the responsibility of UNIFIL's Indonesian battalion, in an area south of the Litani River where the Lebanese army, UNIFIL, and Hezbollah operate. In order to get to the launch site, the

squad must have passed through the Nabatiya region and the area south of the Litani River where both the Lebanese army and UNIFIL have checkpoints. **Nevertheless, the squad managed to reach the Israeli border with its rockets,** launch those rockets and evade all the forces controlling the Nabatiya region and the area south of the Litani.

The identity of the perpetrators

5. **The Hezbollah organization** denied any involvement in the rocket fire (Al-Manar, June 17). **The Fatah Secretary General in Lebanon,** Sultan Abu al-Aynayn, denied that it had been Palestinian elements that fired the rockets (Al-Sharq Radio, June 17). In our assessment, the rockets were fired by elements related to **Fath al-Islam, the Al-Qaeda offshoot in Lebanon, as a provocation designed to create tension or even escalation in southern Lebanon.** Apparently, they sought to alleviate the heavy pressure exerted in the past month by the Lebanese army on Fath al-Islam in the Nahr al-Bared refugee camp, located in northern Lebanon.¹

6. It should be noted that it is not the first time that global jihadists operating in Lebanon fire rockets to provoke Israel. For example, on the night of December 27-28, 2005, about 10 107mm rockets were fired by global jihadists (Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi's organization in Iraq claimed responsibility for the attack). The targets of that attack, launched from two sites in southern Lebanon, were the Israeli towns of Kiryat Shmona and Shlomi. One of the launch sites was the Al-Addayseh region, from which the latest rocket attack on Kiryat Shmona was launched as well. It is our assessment that global jihadists prefer launching rockets from that region due to operative convenience (it is only a short distance away from Kiryat Shmona).

¹ For details on the Fath al-Islam organization, see our Information Bulletin "[The confrontation in northern Lebanon between the Lebanese army and Fath al-Islam, the Al-Qaeda offshoot in Lebanon \(State of affairs and implications\)](#)" (May 31, 2007).

Reactions to the rocket attack on the internal Lebanese scene

7. Following are additional reactions to the rocket attack on the Lebanese scene:

a. **Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora** condemned the rocket attack, saying it was meant to destabilize Lebanon. He promised that Lebanon would spare no efforts to arrest the perpetrators and bring them to justice (Reuters, June 17).

b. **The Lebanese army** released a statement saying that the rocket attack was a severe breach of Security Council Resolution 1701. The statement warned against the destabilization of southern Lebanon and noted that the Lebanese army was taking measures to prevent any more such attacks (Lebanese News Agency, June 17).

c. **A UNIFIL spokeswoman** said that the attack was a severe breach of Security Council Resolution 1701 and called upon all parties to exercise maximum restraint to keep the situation from escalating. The spokeswoman noted that the UNIFIL commander was holding contacts with senior Israeli and Lebanese figures (AP, June 17).

The reaction of the Israeli Prime Minister

8. **The Israeli Prime Minister**, currently on a visit to the US, stated at a meeting with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in New York that Israel chose not to respond to the Katyusha attack for the time being. He added that had there been casualties in the rocket attack, “the Israeli response would have been completely different” (Ynet, June 17).

9. Ehud Olmert called to broaden the mandate of the UNIFIL force deployed in southern Lebanon, saying: “This reminds us all of the need to implement Security Council Resolution 1701. The border between Syria and Lebanon must be closed to prevent smuggling... It is also necessary to go into the towns and villages of southern Lebanon, where the multinational force (i.e. UNIFIL) is not as active” (*ibid.*).