



August 27, 2007

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

On the morning of August 25 two terrorist operatives infiltrated Israeli territory from the northern Gaza Strip by climbing over the security fence. They intended to carry out a killing attack at the settlement of Netiv Ha'asara north of the Gaza Strip.



The knotted rope used by the terrorists

1. On the morning of August 25 IDF forces foiled **an attempted terrorist attack at the settlement Netiv Ha'asara, north of the Gaza Strip**. At approximately seven o'clock in the morning two terrorist operatives, exploiting the heavy fog cover in the region, managed to climb over the

security fence using a rope ladder (on the Palestinian side of the border) and to slide down a knotted rope (on the Israeli side).

2. Once on Israeli soil, the two shot at a soldier in a guard post of the Liaison and Coordination Administration near the Erez Crossing. The soldier returned fire. The terrorists continued in the direction of Netiv Ha'asara. An IDF force which arrived on the scene killed the terrorists a few hundred meters from where they had shot at the soldier. The terrorists were dressed in IDF uniforms. Light arms, hand grenades and two explosive devices were found in their possession. Two IDF soldiers were slightly wounded in the incident.



An IDF robot being used to evacuate the terrorists' bodies in fear that they might be booby-trapped (Amir Cohen for Reuters, August 25, 2007).

3. Three terrorist organizations claimed joint responsibility for the attack: **the Popular Resistance Committees, Fatah and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine**. According to the claim, three terrorist operatives participated in the attack. The two who were killed were Khader Awkal, 20, a resident of Jabalia and Fatah/Salah al-Din Battalions operative; and Muhammad Sakr, 22, a resident of Beit Lahiya, from the PRC. According to a PRC spokesman, **the terrorists intended to enter Netiv Ha'asara, which is close to the border fence**. The Palestinian terrorist organizations ("resistance," according to the announcement) would continue their attacks against Israel, he said.

4. It is noteworthy that the terrorist operatives overcame the security fence by using relatively simple means and exploiting the heavy fog cover.

5. During 2007 two terrorist attacks were carried out in Israel by Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Fatah squads which had infiltrated from the Gaza Strip.¹ In May an attempted suicide bombing attack was foiled.² In addition, a tunnel was recently uncovered in the northern Gaza Strip which was being dug to carry out an attack against Israel.³ The attempted murder attack at Netiv Ha'asara was the first in which a terrorist squad managed to infiltrate Israel since Hamas took over the Gaza Strip. Despite the fact that so far Hamas has maintained a policy of relative restraint regarding terrorist attacks,⁴ **it enables the small terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip to carry out terrorist attacks against Israel**, such as the August 25 infiltration.

¹ On **January 20** an attack was carried out in Eilat by a joint PIJ-Fatah squad (For further information see our January 31, 2007 Bulletin entitled "The Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Fatah elements in the Gaza Strip dispatched a terrorist who carried out a suicide bombing attack in Eilat. He infiltrated through the Israeli-Egyptian border. PIJ spokesmen stated suicide bombing attacks would continue and called upon the other terrorist organizations to aim their weapons at Israel," at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/eilat_290107e.pdf.

On **June 9** there was an attempted attack against an IDF force (For further information see our June 11, 2007 Bulletin entitled "A Fatah-Palestinian Islamic Jihad terrorist squad infiltrated Israel near the Kissufim Crossing to attack an IDF force. The terrorists, who used a jeep camouflaged as a TV vehicle, may have planned to abduct an IDF soldier, if the opportunity arose," at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/pij_e100607.pdf.

² For further information see our June 17, 2007 Bulletin entitled "The Israel Security Agency arrested two female residents of the Gaza Strip who, guided by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, intended to perpetrate a double suicide bombing attack at a crowded place in Tel-Aviv and in Netanya," at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/ct_130607e.pdf.

³ In our assessment, IDF counterterrorist activities in the Gaza Strip foiled previously planned infiltrations. See, for example, our August 19, 2007 Bulletin entitled "An IDF activity in the northern Gaza Strip exposed a tunnel shaft hidden in a hothouse, apparently dug to carry out a terrorist attack in Israel," at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/ct_160807e.pdf.

⁴ As part of its relative restraint it does not launch rockets into Israel, but does fire mortar shells close to the border fence.