



**Intelligence and Terrorism  
Information Center Israel Intelligence  
Heritage and Commemoration Center**

## **News of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict**

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### **April 8-15, 2008**



**Former American president Jimmy Carter examining the remains of a rockets in Sderot (Sderot Media April 14) [www.sderotmedia.co.il](http://www.sderotmedia.co.il)Center,**



**The Nahal Oz fuel terminal where two workers were shot and killed in a combined Palestinian Islamic Jihad-Popular Resistance Committees attack on April 9.**

### **Overview**

- During the past week three Israelis were killed by the Palestinian terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip. Two civilians were shot and killed in an attack at the Nahal Oz fuel terminal and a soldier was killed in an exchange of fire with terrorists during an IDF action in the southern Gaza strip.
- The attack at the fuel terminal was carried out despite the fact that it is the only channel used by Israel to deliver fuel to the Gaza Strip. Before and after the attack Hamas waged a propaganda campaign exaggerating the lack of fuel in the Gaza Strip to exert pressure on Israel and Egypt to lift the blockade and open the Gaza Strip crossings on Hamas conditions.
- The Nahal Oz fuel terminal was closed after the attack. After a week of security analysis it was reopened for the delivery of diesel fuel and crude oil in quantities sufficient to operate the Gaza Strip power station, and of cooking gas and gasoline for emergency vehicles. So far Israel is not supplying gasoline for private vehicles.

## Important Events

### IDF soldier killed in exchange of fire in the Gaza Strip

■ On April 9 during an IDF action in the southern Gaza Strip there was an exchange of fire between IDF forces and terrorist operatives. In the exchange one IDF soldier was killed and two others were slightly wounded. The victim was First Sergeant **Sayef Bisan**, 21, from the village of Jat in the Western Galilee.



Sergeant Sayef Bisan (Picture courtesy of Israeli Channel 10 TV, April 9).

### Two Israeli civilians working at the Nahal Oz fuel terminal killed in a terrorist attack

■ On the afternoon of Wednesday, April 9, a squad of four armed terrorist operatives broke through the security fence in the northern Gaza Strip. They reached the region of the Nahal Oz fuel terminal and began shooting light weapons at the Israeli civilians working there. At the same time **barrages of mortar shells** were also fired at the area. As a result of the terrorist gunfire two Israeli civilians were killed, Oleg Lipson, 38, from Beersheba, and Lev Cherniak, 53, also from Beersheba.

■ **The Palestinian Islamic Jihad's Jerusalem Battalions** and the **Popular Resistance Committees' Salah al-Din Brigades** claimed responsibility for the attack. Their plan was to "lift the blockade" on the Gaza Strip (Sawt al-Hak Website, Muqawamah Website, April 9).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For further information see our April 10 Bulletin entitled "Two Israeli civilians were killed in a terrorist attack at the fuel terminal of Nahal Oz..." at [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/html/ct\\_100408e.htm](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/ct_100408e.htm).

## Rocket and mortar shell fire

- This past week rocket fire was “**routine**.” Nine rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory, the same number as the previous week.
- This past week **52 mortar shells** were fired, compared with **49** the previous week. Most of them were fired at IDF forces operating near the security fence and in the Gaza Strip. In addition, the attack at the Nahal Oz fuel terminal was accompanied by mortar shell fire at villages. On April 13 a number of mortar shells were fired at Yoav Galant, Chief of the Southern Command, who headed the group visiting the Nir Oz fields. One of the shells fell 20 meters (21 yards) away (Ynet, April 13).

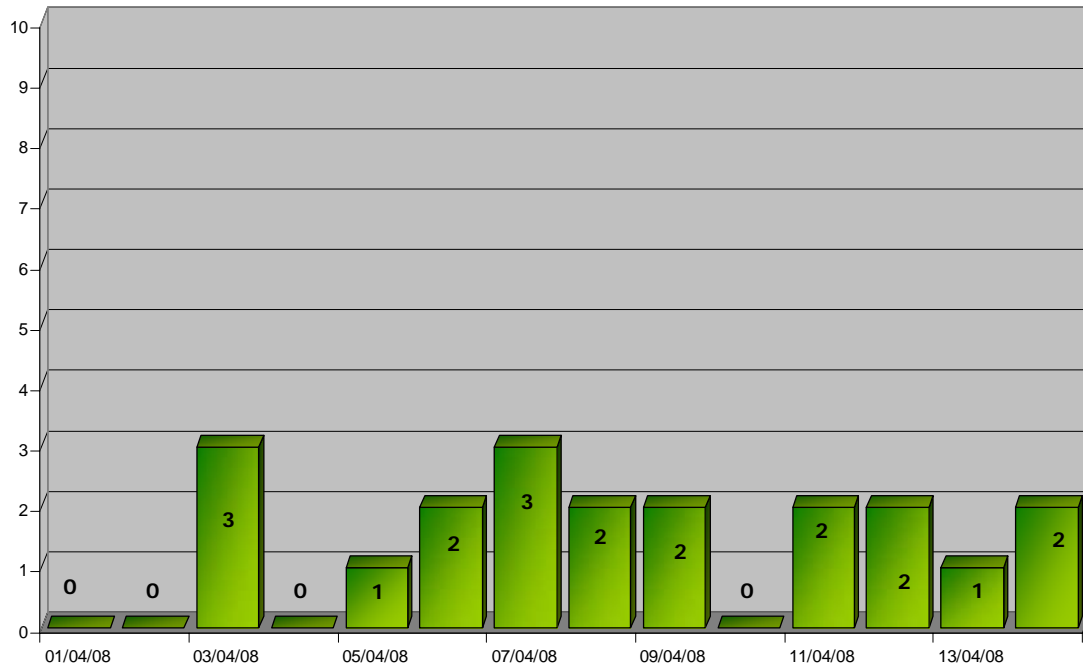


Left: Chief of the Southern Command surveying the fields of Kibbutz Nir Oz (IDF Spokesman, April 13).  
Right: Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades terrorist operative firing a mortar shell (From a video claiming responsibility for rocket fire broadcast by Al-Aqsa TV, April 14).

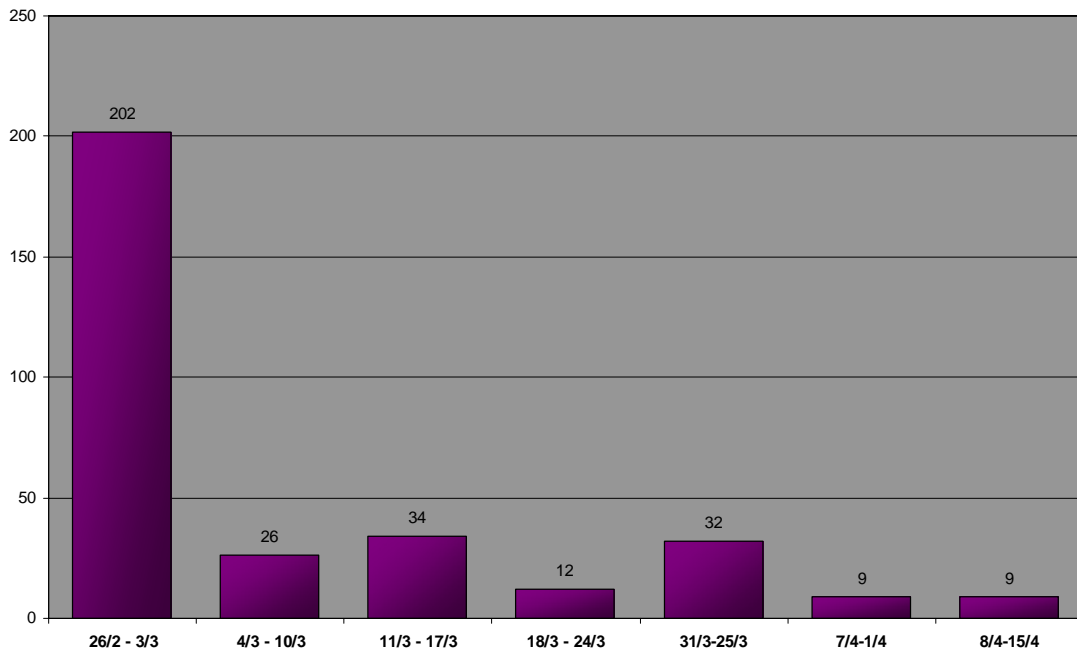
## Terrorist gunfire

- On the afternoon of **April 11** terrorist operatives fired a machine gun at an agricultural worker in the fields of Kibbutz Nir Oz, damaging the bullet-proof glass enclosing the cabin of the tractor he was driving. Lately, sniper and light-arm fire at agricultural workers has become common.

### Daily Distribution of Identified Rocket Hits in Israel



### Rocket Hits during the Past Week Compared with Previous Weeks



## Counterterrorist Activities

### Israeli security forces expose two Palestinians planning to poison restaurant food

- On March 19, 2008, the Israel Security Agency and Israeli police detained Anas Mustafa Sayid Sallum, and Ihab Ahmed Abu Riyal, both 21 and residents of **Nablus**. The two, who were in Israel illegally and who worked at the Express Grill near the stock exchange in Ramat Gan, planned to poison the restaurant's food. **They were detained a few days before they could put their plan into action.**
- **They had planned to use a poison that was tasteless, odorless and colorless and whose influence would be felt four hours after ingestion**, the time lapse enabling them to harm **a large number of restaurant patrons**. They were supposed to receive the poison from two wanted terrorist operatives in the Balata refugee camp in Nablus, who also discussed with them the possibility of **their assisting a suicide bomber to infiltrate into Israel.**<sup>2</sup>



The Express Grill in Ramat Gan where the two planned to poison the food (Picture courtesy of Israeli Channel 10 TV, April 10).

<sup>2</sup> For further information see our April 13, 2008 Bulletin entitled "The Israeli security forces exposed two Palestinians from Nablus who admitted they planned to poison the food in the restaurant in Ramat Gan where they worked illegally" at [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/html/ct\\_130408e.htm](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/ct_130408e.htm).

## The Gaza Strip

### Tunnel shaft uncovered in the northern Gaza Strip

■ IDF forces uncovered a tunnel shaft in the northern Gaza Strip. It was three and a half meters (almost 4 yards) deep, and had been dug inside a building located 700 meters (about 4/10 of a mile) from the security fence. It was apparently intended to be used by a terrorist squad to infiltrate into Israeli territory to carry out a terrorist attack.



Tunnel shaft uncovered by Israeli security forces in the northern Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, April 8).

### Other counterterrorist activities in the Gaza Strip

■ The Israeli security forces continued counterterrorist activities along the security fence and inside the Gaza Strip:

- **April 14:** An Israeli Air Force attack killed **Ibrahim Muhammad Abu Ulba**, commander of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine's military wing in the northern Gaza Strip. At the time of the attack he was driving a vehicle in Jabaliya in the northern Gaza Strip. He had recently been involved in planning attempts to infiltrate terrorist squads into Israel territory, and took part in rocket attacks against western Negev population centers.
- **April 13:** In two separate attacks in the northern Gaza Strip the IAF struck the houses of Mustafa Kahlut and Muhammad Hijazi, two senior Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade operatives. Seven Palestinians were injured in the attacks. Mustafa Kahlut and Muhammad Hijazi were not harmed (Ynet, April 13).

- **April 11:** IDF forces acting in the central Gaza Strip were shot at and attacked with mortar shells. During the operation a number of armed Palestinians were injured.
- **April 9:** The IAF struck the Sajaiya neighborhood in Gaza City and killed three Palestinians. The IDF reported that two of them had been involved in the attack at the Nahal Oz fuel terminal (Ynet, April 9).
- **April 8:** An IDF force killed three terrorist operatives who opened fire on them. Large quantities of weapons were found on the bodies, including anti-tank missiles (IDF Spokesman, April 8).

### Using civilians as human shields

■ The terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip continue making frequent use of civilians as human shields. Another such incident occurred on April 13, when the IDF attacked houses of Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade operatives. A news flash on Hamas's Palestine-info Website brought Palestinian civilians to the area. **Hamas used its Website to ask Gaza Strip civilians to go to the house of the commander of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in the Nasser neighborhood of Gaza City, where an announcement had been received that the IDF was going to blow up the house** (Wafa News Agency, Palestine-info Website, April 13).

### Judea and Samaria

■ The Israeli security forces continued counterterrorist activities in Judea and Samaria:

- **April 13:** IDF forces detained three wanted terrorists north and northwest of Ramallah.
- **April 10:** The IDF uncovered 15 sacks of fertilizer weighing a total of 375 kg (825 lb). It is forbidden to use or possess such fertilizers in Judea and Samaria because they are used in the manufacture of explosives.

- **April 10:** A security force operation in Qalqilya exposed a hiding place used by Hamas operatives. It contained 100 kg (220 lb) of gun powder, 100 kg of fertilizer, detonators and equipment for preparing explosive devices. The cache was detonated in a controlled explosion (Ynet, April 10).

### Surrender of 45 Fatah operatives who escaped from jail in Jenin

■ Forty-five Palestinian terrorist operatives belonging to Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, headed by Zakharia al-Zubeidi, who were imprisoned in the *muqata'a* building in Jenin as part of the amnesty for wanted prisoners agreement<sup>3</sup> escaped and turned themselves in five days later. They explained their escape by saying that the Palestinian Authority did not honor its commitments to them. They returned after contacting the PA chairman and the heads of the security forces, and after they had been promised that their living conditions and those of their families would be improved (Ma'an News Agency, April 14).

### Delivering Fuel to the Gaza Strip

■ The Nahal Oz fuel terminal from which gasoline and diesel fuel is delivered to the Gaza Strip was closed on April 10 after the terrorist attack in which two civilian employees were killed. On April 15, after an appeal from Egypt, and after a security analysis had been performed, Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak ordered the renewal of the fuel supplies. The following day sufficient quantities of diesel fuel and crude oil to operate the Gaza Strip's power station were delivered, as were cooking gas and gasoline for emergency vehicles. The Gaza Strip will receive 2.2 million liters (almost 600,000 gallons) of diesel fuel a week. Gasoline for private vehicles will not be delivered.

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<sup>3</sup> The arrangement went into effect on July 12, 2007. As part of the arrangement operatives committed themselves to abandoning terrorist activities, surrendering their weapons and accepting a series of limitations on their actions for a **trial period** of three months. **The arrangement was coordinated with the Palestinian security forces** to enable them to promote it by persuasion, supervision and enforcement.



## The Internal Palestinian Arena

### The fuel crisis campaign

■ The Hamas government has lately been waging a propaganda campaign around the lack of fuel in the Gaza Strip and the deterioration of humanitarian conditions. **The campaign targets Israel and Egypt** and is intended to exert international and pan-Arab pressure to lift the blockade and open the crossings on Hamas's conditions (while hinting at threats regarding activities on the ground). Israeli spokesmen have reiterated the fact that Hamas is **exaggerating** the fuel crisis to promote its political and propaganda interests. Israeli Colonel Nir Press, head of the coordination and liaison authority, said that even before the attack at the Nahal Oz fuel terminal the **Palestinians left quantities of fuel delivered to them by Israel untouched at the terminal.**

■ The Hamas campaign includes the threat to use the Palestinian population, which is about to erupt, for protest actions. The campaign continued and intensified after the attack at Nahal Oz on April 9. Hamas's media participated in the campaign with the slogan "Gaza is about to erupt" and broadcast many programs dealing with the "situation," exploiting pictures of children, including badly injured children, to drive home the distress of Gaza Strip residents (Daily Al-Aqsa TV broadcasts).



Hamas media campaign: a TV program called "Gaza is about to erupt" (Al-Aqsa TV, April 9)

- Hamas has made the following declarations:
  - **Khaled Mashal**, head of Hamas's political bureau in Damascus said that the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip had the right to erupt if the blockade were not lifted in order to send a message to the world (Al-Aqsa TV, April 13).

- Senior employees working for the Gaza Strip electric company warned that the network would collapse completely in the coming days if the turbines did not receive fuel (PalMedia Website, April 12). Rafiq Maliha, director of the power station, said that only two or three days' worth of fuel was left<sup>4</sup> (Ynet, April 12).
- **Jamal al-Khudari**, chairman of the Popular Committee for the Struggle against the Blockade, said that more than 85% of Gaza Strip transportation, including private and public vehicles, sat idle, that 60% of the ambulances and wells were inoperative. He also claimed that there was only limited use of emergency generators in hospitals (Filastin al-'An Website, April 11).



Gaza police patrolling on horseback and on foot, claiming there is no gas for their cars ( Hamas-affiliated Website, April 7).

- On April 10 rallies were held in the streets of Gaza to protest the blockade. Hundreds of adolescents gathered waving flags and signs. Senior Hamas figures said they would step up the protests, and hold them at the Rafah Crossing as well (Filastin al-'An Website, April 10). The main rally at Jabaliya was attended by thousands of Palestinians. **Musheir al-Masri**, secretary of the Hamas faction in the Palestinian Legislative Council, said that "all the resistance's [i.e., terrorist organizations'] options were open and that a continuation of the blockade would lead to an "eruption." Hamas issued a statement that it would use any and all methods "breach the blockade" (Palestine-info Website, April 14).

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<sup>4</sup> The power station in the Gaza Strip supplies only 30% of the residents' electrical consumption. The rest comes from Israel (60%) and Egypt (10%) and has not been affected by the blockade.



Rally protesting the "blockade" (Al-Jazeera TV, April 11).



Pictures from the abandoned Rafah Crossing (Al-Quds TV, April 13).