



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

January 14, 2008

Operation Cast Lead Update No. 14



IDF soldiers in action in the Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, January 13, 2009).

The Situation on the Ground

Ground combat

- IDF forces continued expanding the ground operation, reaching the outskirts of Gaza City, exposing and destroying terrorist infrastructure facilities. The IDF encountered Hamas squads, killing several dozen armed terrorists and detaining a number of suspects.

- An anti-tank missile was fired at IDF forces in the southern Gaza strip. An Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked the missile-launching squad with the help of the ground force and four terrorist operatives were hit. Later the force identified armed terrorists inside a building, and with armored support shot at them; the hit was verified.

- During searches conducted on the night of January 13, terrorists near the force opened fire, and two officers sustained serious wounds. Another officer and two soldiers sustained minor injuries. The force returned fire; the hit was verified. In another event, an IDF soldier sustained minor injuries and was also evacuated for medical treatment.

Israeli Air Force attacks

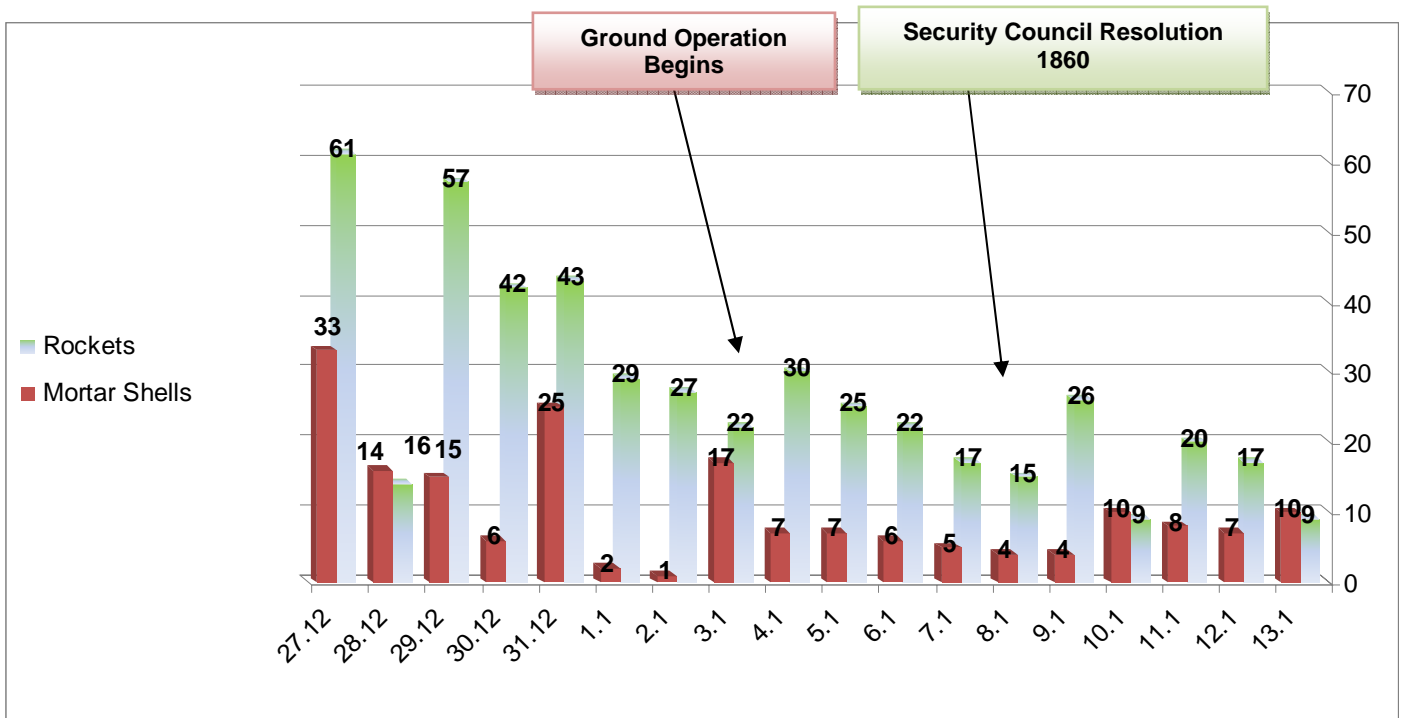
- The Israeli Air Force continues supporting the forces on the ground. In one instance the ground force identified a number of terrorists armed with anti-tank missiles and light arms, and the aircraft attacked the terrorists; the hit was verified.

- During the past 24 hours the IAF attacked **more than 100 targets**, among them:
 - About 40 tunnels in the southern Gaza strip used to smuggle weapons.
 - About ten weapons storehouses and sites for manufacturing weapons, including a store of vehicles and weapons in the house of a Hamas operative in the Gaza City zone.
 - A Hamas police headquarters in Gaza City.
 - IEDs meant to be used to attack IDF forces.
 - A rocket launcher ready for firing. ([Click for video](#))
 - A mortar shell launching squad in the Jabaliya zone. Three armed terrorist operatives were hit.
 - About ten armed terrorist squads.

Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire into Israeli Territory

- The scope of rocket and mortar shell fire into Israel **continues to decline**. On January 13, **nine rocket and ten mortar shell hits were identified**. Most of the rockets fell close to the Gaza Strip. No long-range rockets were fired. Since the beginning of Operation Cast Lead **485 rockets and 183 mortar shells** have been fired.
- During the afternoon one of the rockets fell near a school in **the city of Ashqelon** at a time when children were studying in a fortified area inside. There were no injuries. **Note:** It was the ninth educational institution hit since the beginning of Operation Cast Lead. In all the attacks on schools no students were injured, but in several instances the buildings were damaged.

Rockets and Mortar Shells Fired at Israel during Operation Cast Lead



Humanitarian Aid Delivered to the Gaza Strip

Israel

- At 0900 hours on January 13 there was a three-hour pause in the fighting to make it possible to open a humanitarian corridor for Gaza Strip residents to stock up on food and repair the infrastructure. **Hamas fired three rockets and four mortar shells into Israel during the pause**. During the day 102 trucks carrying humanitarian aid and two fuel tankers entered the Gaza Strip through the Kerem Shalom crossing. In addition, the Erez crossing

was opened for the passage of Palestinians with urgent humanitarian problems. Since the beginning of Operation Cast Lead nearly 1,000 trucks carrying humanitarian aid have entered the Gaza Strip. On January 14 the humanitarian corridor opened between 1300 and 1600 hours.

The humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip

■ On January 13, Dr. Jacob Kellenberger, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, entered the Gaza Strip as part of a three-day visit to the region, during which he is supposed to meet with senior Israeli and Palestinian figures. He is expected to visit Shifa hospital in Gaza City (Agence France Presse, January 13, 2009). The UNRWA director of operations in Gaza said that on January 14, 40 foreign doctors would be integrated into the staff of Shifa, and denied that senior Hamas figures were using the hospital. He said that so far, 35,000 Palestinians had taken shelter in UNRWA schools and that his organization was working to open other centers (Filastin al-Yawm, January 13, 2009).

■ The UNRWA general representative said that the organization received considerable help from the IDF in getting the largest possible number of trucks into the Gaza Strip, but complained that only one crossing was open (AP, January 13, 2009); the trucks use the Kerem Shalom crossing. Note: On January 12 the Karni crossing was also opened and 12 trucks passed through, but during searches in the area a **tunnel was discovered, dug in the direction of the crossing, apparently for the purpose of carrying out a terrorist attack**. The crossing was subsequently reclosed and has not yet been reopened for fear that additional tunnels have been dug.

Additional humanitarian aid

■ Deliveries of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip continue through the Rafah crossing. It also serves to evacuate wounded Palestinians to Egypt: on January 14, about 40 wounded Palestinians and their attendants were taken by Egyptian ambulances to hospitals (Middle East News Agency, January 12, 2009).

■ The **Iranian ship** which set sail on January 9 and passed through the Suez Canal on its way to the port of Gaza changed course after the Israeli Navy used the international naval communication channel to order it not to approach the shore. Ahmed Musawi, secretary general of the Iranian Red Crescent, said that various ways of delivering the ship's cargo to Gaza were being examined. He said that if the ship was unable to unload its cargo in the Gaza port in the next two days, it would unload at an Egyptian port and the cargo would be transferred from there to the Gaza Strip (Mehr News Agency, January 13, 2009).

- The boat of the organization calling itself Free Gaza, which was supposed to set sail for the Gaza Strip from Larnaka on January 12, returned to home port following technical difficulties. It is expected to set sail again on the morning of January 14 (Agence France Presse, January 13, 2009).

Judea and Samaria

- The Israeli security forces continue counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria. On the night of January 13, eight rabble-rousers were detained at demonstrations against the border security fence at Beit Awa, west of Hebron. Another Palestinian was detained after an IDF force found a gun, 20 bullets and an IDF uniform in his house. The weapons and equipment were confiscated.
- On January 13 a Palestinian terrorist tried to steal the weapon of a force patrolling near the village of Tarqumia, south of Hebron. The force responded by shooting at the terrorist, who later died of his wounds.

The Egyptian Initiative to Stop the Fighting – Update

- On January 14, **UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon** arrived in **Egypt** as part of a one-week flying tour to the Middle East. He came to support contacts for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. He expressed hope that the Egyptian initiative for a ceasefire would shortly be implemented, and called on the international community to take steps against smuggling weapons into the Gaza Strip. He also said the Gaza Strip crossings had to be fully opened. He said he hoped the Egyptian-Hamas meetings would achieve an immediate, comprehensive ceasefire (CNN, January 12, 2009). Ban Ki-Moon is supposed to visit **Israel, Jordan** and **Syria**, and said **he would not hold direct talks with Hamas** (Ynet, January 14, 2009).

Responses of Senior Hamas Figures to the Egyptian Initiative

- The Hamas delegation to the talks in Cairo returned to Damascus. The Hamas political bureau in Damascus met to consult about the Egyptian initiative. The bureau confirmed **five principles** for a solution: the end of the Israeli “aggression,” the withdrawal of the IDF from the Gaza Strip, the lifting of the “siege,” the opening of the Rafah crossing and **the refusal to agree to a permanent lull arrangement**. It also mentioned that Hamas was not committed to negotiations concerning the prevention of smuggling and that it agreed to a temporary ceasefire which would make it possible to deliver humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and leave time for negotiations. Palestinian sources reported that one reason for

Hamas's frigid response was the way Egypt blamed it for "every failure" and "responsibility for the holocaust in Palestine" (Al-Watan, January 13, 2009).

- Hamas spokesmen continued commenting on the Egyptian initiative:
 - **Usama Hamdan**, Hamas representative in Lebanon, said **that Hamas refused to agree to a long-term lull**, since such an agreement would harm the "resistance" [i.e., the continuation of Palestinian terrorism against Israel]. He added that Hamas would not let political methods be used to give Israel what it had failed to achieve on the battlefield (Al-Hayat, January 13, 2009).
 - **Muhammad Nizal**, member of Hamas's political bureau, denied that there was an argument between the Hamas "internal" and "external" leaderships regarding the Egyptian initiative. He said that there was agreement on every issue of the general framework of the political moves, and that in principle Hamas had no objection to the deployment of European monitors at the crossings (Al-Shark Radio, January 13, 2009).
 - Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** said that there were other initiatives besides Egypt's (Palestine-info website, January 13, 2009). He also said that if the Egyptian initiative remained in its original form, Hamas would not be able to accept it (Quds Press Agency, January 13, 2009).
 - **Musa Abu Marzuq**, deputy head of the Hamas political bureau, said that the Egyptian initiative was a good opportunity to reach an arrangement, but that Hamas still had not abandoned its basic reservations (Al-Manar TV, January 13, 2009).

Other Responses

Hammas

- **Abu Usama Abd al-Mu'ti**, Hamas representative in Iran, appealed to the Islamic countries to **send military equipment to the Gaza Strip** to support it, since every "observant Muslim" had to help and send weapons to the fighters in Gaza. He said the United States had established an airlift to support Israel and that Muslims also had to support the Palestinians. He also said that more pressure had to be exerted to open the borders to deliver the aid (Islamic Republic News Agency, January 13, 2009).
- Meanwhile, in the Gaza Strip, the Hamas administration attempts to send a message of "business as usual," and issued an announcement regarding the normal functioning of the administration ministries and the security apparatus, and the services they provide for the civilians. According to another announcement, workers would be paid for December (Palestine-info website, January 13, 2009).

Hezbollah

■ According to an article in the Hezbollah-affiliated newspaper Al-Akhbar, senior Hezbollah figures are proud of having transferred their “resistance” {i.e., terrorism} perception to the Gaza Strip. They do not hid the fact that the contacts and supply lines to the Gaza Strip are direct, and say that the contact with the Gaza Strip continues. According to the paper, one particularly prominent example of aid was the ship Karin A, **which transported weapons to Fatah.**¹ One of them even boasted that Hezbollah knows what was happening on the ground, “perhaps even more than what some of the [Palestinian] factions do” (Al-Akhbar, January 13, 2009).

¹ The ship was purchased in Lebanon at the end of August 2001. It sailed from Lebanon to Sudan and anchored outside Port Sudan for 12 days while its name was changed to Karin A. From Sudan it sailed to the Yemenite port of Hodeidah, a journey of four days. In December 2001 it sailed to Iran where it took on many different types of weapons brought from Iranian army warehouses. The weapons were supposed to upgrade the military capabilities of the terrorist organizations. **They were loaded into 83 containers which could be dropped into the water and were invisible on the surface, an Iranian innovation.** The ship left for the Suez Canal to unload its cargo, which was consigned to the naval headquarters of the Palestinian Authority, on the shores of El-Arish and Gaza. On January 1, 2002, it was identified by the Israeli Navy which boarded and took control before it could enter the Suez Canal. The ship was brought to the port of Eilat with crew and cargo intact.

Appendix

Hamas Makes Massive Use of the Civilian Population as Human Shields, Causing Them Harm (Update, January 14)

■ For an article in the Israeli Arab paper **Kul al-Arab**, a telephone survey was held among Gazans asking their opinion about what was happening in the ground. “Khaled” from the Rimal neighborhood in Gaza City said “we are young children, [we go around] in **small groups wearing civilian clothing**, and carry out support missions for the men of the resistance. We report information about movements of army forces or bring them ammunition and food.”² Sending children and adolescents on operational missions is both immoral and violates international law.

Using Mosques as Firing Positions and Weapons Storehouses

■ During the ground operation in the Shati refugee camp on January 13, a mosque was discovered with large quantities of weapons, including an anti-tank missile launcher.



Weapons found in a mosque. Above: An anti-tank missile launcher (IDF Spokesman, January 13, 2009).



² For the use made of children, see pp. 61-64 of “ Hamas Exploitation of Civilians as Human Shields” at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/hamas_e028.pdf.