



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

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**Shaky Ceasefire:
Since the end of Operation Cast Lead, the
terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip have
violated the ceasefire 12 times. In our
assessment, Hamas wants quiet in the Gaza
Strip but so far does not deter the other
organizations.**



**Rocket which fell near a kindergarten in a Negev village
(Photo Roe Idan, courtesy of Ynet, February 1, 2009).**

Overview

1. At 0200 hours on January 18, 2009, the unilateral ceasefire declared by Israel after Operation Cast Lead went into effect. On January 19 the IDF forces began withdrawing from the Gaza Strip, and on January 21 the withdrawal was completed. On January 19, Hamas, speaking for itself and the other terrorist organizations, said that it would maintain a ceasefire for a week (which was later extended), and would use the time to reach an arrangement based on the Egyptian initiative.

2. The short amount of time which has passed since the end of Operation Cast Lead **has illustrated only too well how shaky the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip is, as was illustrated by the 12 violations committed by the terrorist organizations.** Despite Hamas's agreement in principle, and despite the fact that the IDF forces withdrew from the Gaza Strip, the terrorist organizations do not implement the ceasefire. Almost every day, they carry out sporadic rocket and mortar shell fire, or terrorist attacks directed against IDF forces near the border security fence (shooting with light arms, detonating IEDs). The most serious violation occurred on January 27, when an IED blew up north of Kissufim in the central Gaza Strip, killing one IDF soldier and wounding three others. No casualties were incurred in the other attacks. The **IDF** responded by shooting at the sources of fire and with pinpoint Israeli Air Force attacks on terrorist targets.

3. The identification of all the organizations violating the ceasefire is not clear. In several instances responsibility was not claimed. However, some of the attacks were carried out by rogue terrorist organizations such as global jihad networks, Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (the organizations behind the repeated violations of the lull arrangement which preceded Operation Cast Lead).

4. **Hamas movement**, which in our assessment is basically interested in continued quiet in the Gaza Strip (since quiet is vital to rebuilding), does not effectively enforce the ceasefire on the other terrorist organizations. The media reported that General Amos Yadlin, head of Israeli military intelligence, told a government meeting on February 1 that two weeks after Israel held its fire, terrorist operatives who did not belong to Hamas were challenging the movement and carrying out attacks to precipitate a new escalation. Hamas has been deterred. It maintains the ceasefire, but does not sufficiently deter the others, he said (Ynet, February 1, 2009).



Operatives belonging to a global jihad-affiliated network called the Army of the Nation launching a rocket (Al-Alam TV, January 28, 2009).

The Most Serious Violations Since Israel Began Holding Its Fire

5. The most serious violations carried out by the terrorist organizations were the following:
- i) On the afternoon of **January 20** terrorists opened fire on IDF soldiers operating near the border security fence south of the Kissufim crossing. Approximately 40 minutes later, armed Palestinians opened fire at a different IDF force near the border security fence in the central Gaza Strip; the force returned fire. In addition, 11 mortar shells were fired at IDF forces and into Israeli territory. There were no casualties.
 - ii) On **January 25** a **PFLP** squad tried to launch rockets into Israeli territory. One rocket was fired and fell inside the Gaza Strip near Beit Hanoun (PalPress website, January 25, 2009). Hamas operatives shot at the squad and prevented it from continuing the attack. The PFLP issued an announcement denying its squad was attacked and stressing the organization's objection to the ceasefire or any lull arrangement with Israel (Qudsnet website, January 26, 2009).
 - iii) On the morning of **January 27**, an IED, one of a wreath of explosive charges, was detonated in an attack on an IDF patrol moving along the border security fence north of the village of Kissufim. An anti-tank missile was also fired at the force at the same time. The IED explosion resulted in the **death of an IDF soldier** and the serious wounding of an officer; two other soldiers sustained minor injuries. The attack was carried out by **a terrorist network linked to the global jihad**. In response, the Israeli Air Force struck a motorcyclist in the Khan Yunis area who was suspected of being involved in the attack. The terrorist was **Husaym Shamiya**, a Hamas operative from Khan Yunis (Palestine-info website, January 27, 2009). The Israeli Air Force also attacked a number of tunnels under the Egypt-Gaza border used to smuggle weapons.
 - iv) On **January 28**, a rocket landed in Israeli territory across from the central Gaza Strip. There were no casualties and no property damage was reported. It was the first

rocket fired since the ceasefire was declared. **Fatah and the PIJ** claimed responsibility for the attack (Bawwabat Al-Aqsa forum, January 28, 2009). In response, the Israeli Air Force struck a facility for manufacturing weapons in the Rafah area. Various organizations, including Hamas's military-terrorist wing, the **Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades**, claimed responsibility for mortar shell fire. In fact no mortar shell hits or attacks were reported. (Al-Qassam website, January 28, 2009).

v) On **January 29**, a rocket fell in an open area near Sderot. There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.

vi) On **January 31**, a rocket fell south of the city of Ashqelon. The organization behind the attack is not yet known. There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.

vii) On **February 1** there were a number of attacks: During the early morning hours **three rockets** were fired at western Negev villages. One fell between the buildings of a kindergarten and one in an open field. Two hours later, Palestinian terrorists **shot at an IDF force patrolling** the border security fence in the Kissufim area. The soldiers returned fire; there were no Israeli casualties. Two hours after that (at approximately 1100 hours) **four mortar shells** were fired into Israeli territory. At 1730 hours **five mortar shells** were fired at Israel and two soldiers sustained minor shrapnel injuries.

6. **Fawzi Barhoum**, Hamas spokesman in the Gaza Strip, denied his organization was involved in the January 27 IED attack against the IDF patrol which killed a soldier. He also claimed, fallaciously, that the explosion might have been caused by an old mine. He condemned the IDF's response to the attack, saying that "the enemy is escalating [the situation], and that might require the resistance [i.e., the terrorist organizations] to retaliate." He claimed that Israel was not committed to the ceasefire and that the IDF continued its activities within the Gaza Strip (Al-Ghad, Jordan, January 28, 2009). On the ground, Hamas has abstained from responding to the IDF attack following the detonation of the IED.

7. According to a Palestinian media report, the incidents which have occurred after the ceasefire went into effect have raised fears among the residents of the Gaza Strip and the Hamas leadership that Israel might respond with a renewal of the fighting. The heads of the terrorist organizations, especially Hamas, are reported to have gone underground again and that the Palestinians living near the Egyptian border have fled their houses (Filastin al-Yawm, January 29, 2009).

Ceasefire Violations¹

Number	Date	Event	Organization Claiming Responsibility	Israel's Response	Notes
1	Jan. 20	Terrorists opened fire at an IDF force south of the Kissufim crossing.			There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.
2	Jan. 20	Terrorists shot at an IDF force near the border security fence in the central Gaza Strip.		The IDF force returned fire.	There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.
3	Jan. 20	Eleven mortar shells were fired at IDF forces and into Israeli territory.			There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.
4	Jan. 25	A terrorist squad tried to carry out a rocket attack against Israel. One rocket was fired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.	PFLP		The Palestinian media reported that Hamas prevented the rocket fire.
5	Jan. 27	An IED was detonated to attack an IDF patrol north of Kissufim.	A network linked to the global jihad.	The IAF struck a motorcyclist in the Khan Yunis area and weapons smuggling tunnels in Rafah.	A soldier was killed and three were wounded, one of them critically, two sustaining minor injuries.
6	Jan. 28	A rocket fell in Israeli territory near the southern Gaza Strip.	Fatah and the PIJ	The IAF attacked a facility for weapons manufacture in Rafah.	There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.
7	Jan. 29	A rocket fell in an open area near the city of Sderot.			There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.
8	Jan. 31	A rocket fell south of the city of Ashqelon.			There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.
9	Feb. 1	Three rockets were fired at western Negev towns and villages.			There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.

¹ As of 1800 hours, February 1, 2009.

10	Feb. 1	Armed Palestinians shot at an IDF force in the Kissufim area in the western Negev.			There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.
11	Feb. 1	Four mortar shells fell in the western Negev.			There were no casualties and no property damage was reported.
12	Feb. 1	At 1530 hours five mortar shells were fired at towns and villages in the western Negev.			Two IDF soldiers sustained minor shrapnel injuries.