



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

February 22, 2009

On February 21 two rockets were fired into Israel from south Lebanon. One hit a house in a village in the western Galilee, causing slight injuries to three civilians. It was the fourth time rockets were fired from Lebanon since the end of the second Lebanon war. Hezbollah again denied involvement.



Left: Rocket which fell in the village of Mailia in the western Galilee. Right: Damage done to the house (Photos by Shai Vaknin, February 21, 2009).

Events

1. At 8:00 a.m. on February 21, two 122mm rockets were fired from south Lebanon into Israeli territory. One hit the **village of Mailia** in the western Galilee, falling near a house. Three residents sustained slight injuries and two others were treated for shock; damage was done to the house. The other rocket fell in **Lebanese territory**. The IDF returned artillery fire.



Rocket which fell in the village of Mailia in the western Galilee
(Photo by Shai Vaknin, February 21, 2009).

2. Lebanese army and UNIFIL forces searched the region from which the rockets were fired. They found a launcher, batteries, and poles which were apparently used for the launch.



Left: Rocket launchers fired from Qlailé in the western sector of south Lebanon. Batteries and wooden poles can be seen near the launchers. Right: Remains of rockets and batteries
(Al-Manar TV, February 21, 2009).



UNIFIL soldiers conduct a search (Al-Manar TV, February 21, 2009).

3. So far no organization has claimed responsibility for the attack. **Hezbollah** denied involvement (Agence France Presse, February 21, 2009). Lebanese prime minister Fouad Siniora said that the rockets threatened regional security and stability, and violated UN Security Council resolution 1701. However, he also criticized Israel's responsive fire, calling it "Israeli aggression" (Lebanese News Agency, February 21, 2009).

4. It was the second time since Operation Cast Lead and the fourth time since the end of the second Lebanon war that Israel was attacked by rocket fire from south Lebanon (See **Appendix I**). In a separate incident, on the eve of Operation Cast Lead the Lebanese army neutralized eight rockets ready for firing (See **Appendix II**). Hezbollah, which has refrained from attacking Israel through the Lebanon-Israel border, denied involvement in the events, and the Lebanese government again criticized them. In our assessment, the rocket fire was carried out by Palestinian and/or global jihad elements. However, the possibility cannot be ruled out that Hezbollah – which controls south Lebanon – turns a blind eye to such attacks and thereby makes it possible for them to continue.

Rocket fire from south Lebanon since 2006

1. The following is a short summary of rockets launched from Lebanon into Israel since the end of the second Lebanon war (August 2006):

i) **At 7:45 on the morning of January 8, 2009**, in the midst of Operation Cast Lead, 2-3 rockets were fired at the western Galilee from the western sector of south Lebanon. One hit an old-age home in the city of Nahariya. The building was damaged and a number of people sustained minor injuries. Another rocket landed in a village in the western Galilee. **It was the only rocket attack from Lebanon during Operation Cast Lead**, even though throughout the operation Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah gave many impassioned speeches supporting the Palestinians and encouraging Hamas to continue its campaign against Israel.



A Katyusha hits an old age home in Nahariya
(Photo by Hagai Einav, courtesy of Ynet, January 7, 2009).

ii) **On the morning of January 8, 2008**, a dud rocket and the remains of two exploded rockets were found in the town of Shelomi in the western Galilee. Examination showed that they were 107mm rockets fired from Lebanon during the night. One fell in the yard of a private house and parts of it were found on the porch. The remains of the other rocket were found nearby. No one was harmed; trees and street lights were damaged. The stormy weather overnight was probably the reason no one heard the rockets land. The rockets were fired on the eve of president Bush's visit to Israel.



Remains of one of the rockets found in Shelomi
(Nana website, courtesy of Israel Channel 10 TV, January 8, 2008).

iii) **On the afternoon of June 17, 2007**, four 107mm rockets were fired from the region between Taibeh and Adissa across from the Ramim ridge in south Lebanon. Two rockets hit the city of Kiriya Shemonah (one in the industrial zone) and one fell in Lebanese territory between the villages of Adissa and Kafr Qala. There were no Israeli casualties but there was property damage. A fourth rocket, ready for launching, was found and dismantled by Lebanese army engineers. A UNIFIL patrol also arrived on the scene.



Remains of rocket being examined by UNIFIL soldiers (NBN TV, June 17, 2007).

Appendix II

Attempted rocket attack by unidentified terrorist group prevented on the eve of Operation Cast Lead

1. On December 25, 2008, two days before the beginning of Operation Cast Lead, the Lebanese army neutralized **eight rockets** ready for launching into Israel. They were found 1.5 kilometers northeast of the village of Naqura, not far from UNIFIL headquarters. Five were 122mm rockets and three were 107mm rockets. Although not new, they were operational and ready for launching.



Rockets neutralized by the Lebanese army on December 25, 2008.

2. The **Lebanese army** and UNIFIL forces searched the area for other rockets. On December 27, the Lebanese president toured south Lebanon and called on "all the sides" to respect Lebanese sovereignty, expressing his hope that no group would turn Lebanon into "an arena for struggles or settling scores." He added that there would be no patience for attempts to launch rockets into Israel and that Lebanon would not serve as a rocket launching base. **Hezbollah** used unofficial means to deny all responsibility for the event. According to an announcement from Hezbollah headquarters in south Lebanon, Hezbollah did not customarily plan to fire "anonymous rockets," and when it wanted to "bomb the Israeli

enemy, it would issue an announcement claiming responsibility for it" (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, December 27, 2008). **Hamas** and **Fatah** representatives in Lebanon were also quick to deny all responsibility for the rockets.