



**Intelligence and Terrorism  
Information Center**

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

**July 7-14, 2009**



Left: The Israeli government meeting in Beersheba, where Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appealed to Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, suggesting a meeting (Picture courtesy of the Beersheba Municipality, July 12, 2009). Mahmoud Abbas continues to claim that "the ball is in the Israeli court." Right: Mahmoud Abbas at a meeting with the Egyptian envoy (Al-Jazeera TV, July 10, 2009).

### **Overview**

- This past week quiet in the western Negev continued. Mortar shell fire continued against IDF soldiers on routine patrol activities along the border security fence. The Palestinian media reported that Hamas's internal security forces detained two Palestinian Islamic Jihad operatives who fired mortar shells at IDF forces on July 11.
- At an Israeli government meeting, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appealed to Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas for a meeting to discuss "political and economic peace." He also described the steps taken by Israel to ease daily life for the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria. Mahmoud Abbas continues claiming that Israel does not want peace because it does not freeze construction in the settlements, evacuate the outposts or recognize the two-state solution. According to Mahmoud Abbas, "the ball is in the Israeli court."

## Important Events

### Gaza Strip

#### Rocket and mortar shell fire

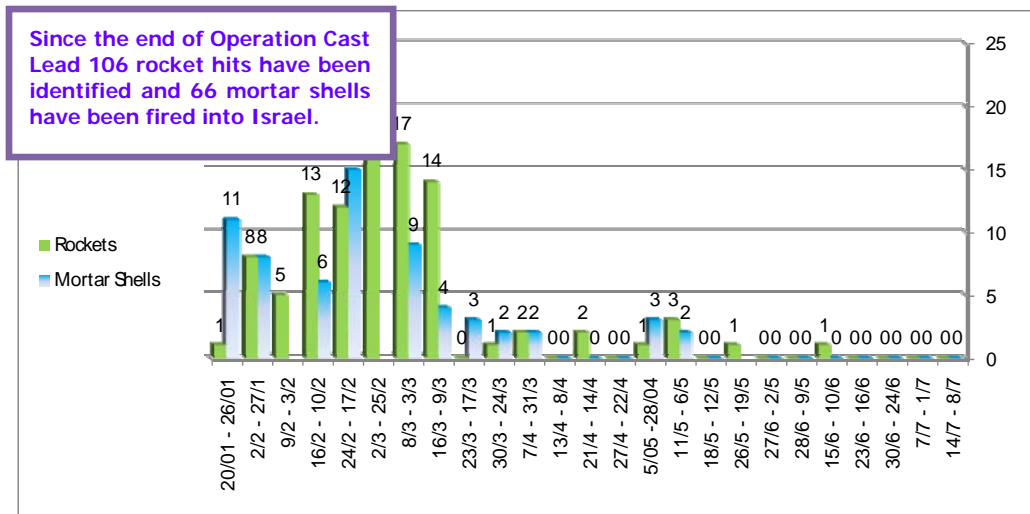
■ During the past week no rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory. On July 7 a mortar shell was fired at an IDF patrol and fell in Israeli territory near the Karni crossing.

■ **Mortar shell attacks continue against IDF soldiers on routine patrol activities along the border security fence.** Two such attacks were reported this past week. There were no casualties and no damage was done.

● On **July 7** a mortar shell was fired at an IDF patrol near the Karni crossing, falling in Israeli territory. Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades and the military-terrorist wing of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine claimed responsibility for the attack (Abu Ali Mustafa website, July 7, 2009).

● On **July 11** a mortar shell was fired near the Karni crossing and fell inside the Gaza Strip. Immediately afterwards the internal security forces of the Hamas de-facto administration detained two operatives of the Jerusalem Battalions, the military-terrorist wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, who had fired the shell. The two were taken for interrogation (PalToday website, July 11, 2009).

## Rocket and mortar shell fire into Israeli territory since the end of Operation Cast Lead<sup>1</sup>



## Molotov cocktails and stones thrown in Judea and Samaria

■ Attacks and attempted attacks involving Molotov cocktails, stones and knives continue in Judea and Samaria. The most prominent were the following:

- **July 13:** A Palestinian who entered Israel through a break in the security fence was detained near a roadblock in the region of the Shuafat refugee camp, north of Jerusalem. A knife was found in his possession. During interrogation he admitted that he intended to reach the roadblock and stab a policeman who earlier in the day had prevented him from crossing the roadblock because he did not have the necessary authorization (Ynet, July 13, 2009).
- **July 9:** A Palestinian woman was detained at a roadblock in northern Samaria. Two commando knives were found in her possession. She was detained after information was received that she intended to carry out an attack at the roadblock (Ynet, July 13, 2009).
- **July 9:** During the morning hours Palestinians opened fire on an Israeli vehicle north of Ramallah. There were no casualties and no damage was done. The IDF searched the area. Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades claimed responsibility for the attack (Qudsnet website, July 9, 2009).
- **July 7:** a Molotov cocktail was thrown at an Israeli vehicle east of Qalqilya. There were no casualties and no damage was done.

<sup>1</sup> The statistics do not include the mortar shells fired at IDF soldiers patrolling the border security fence which fell inside the Gaza Strip.

## The Gaza Strip after Operation Cast Lead

### Egypt prevents a pro-Palestinian delegation from entering the Gaza Strip

- On July 12 Egypt prevented a Viva Palestina delegation headed by British MP George Galway from entering the Gaza Strip. The delegation, which arrived in Egypt on July 5, was composed of several dozen American pro-Palestinian activists. Their convoy of four buses carrying medical equipment was stopped by the Egypt authorities at a checkpoint in the Suez region. After Egypt refused to let it them continue they returned to Cairo (Press TV, Iran, July 12, 2009).
- The Hamas de-facto administration's Committee to Lift the Siege of the Gaza Strip issued a denunciation of the Egyptians' refusal to allow the convoy to enter the Gaza Strip. It called the refusal "a dangerous precedent [caused] by confronting aid convoys trying to lift the siege." The Committee expressed hope that Egypt would change its mind (Hamas's Palestine-Info website, July 12, 2009).

### Egypt acts to prevent smuggling

- The Egyptian security forces continue their activities to prevent smuggling through the Egypt-Gaza Strip border. On July 10 they uncovered a weapons depot in the El-Arish region which contained 700 kilograms of TNT intended for smuggling into the Gaza Strip (Al-Masrawy website, Egypt, July 10, 2009). Palestinian sources in the Gaza Strip reported that market activities have suffered because of the Egypt's preventive activities (*Al-Hayat*, July 7, 2009).
- The smuggling activities continue taking their toll of victims. On July 11 five Palestinians were injured, one critically, when a tunnel in Rafah collapsed (PalToday website, July 11, 2009).

## The Political Arena

### Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appeals to Mahmoud Abbas for a meeting

- During a government meeting held in the southern Israeli city of Beersheba, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu referred to the negotiations with the Palestinians and called for a meeting with Mahmoud Abbas. He said the following:

- "The Palestinian people who live next to us have the basic right to live in security, peace, and prosperity. **In recent weeks, we have made many efforts to ease their lives,**

especially regarding freedom of movement for Palestinians in Judea and Samaria. We have removed many roadblocks and checkpoints...I decided to expand the operating hours of the Allenby Border Terminal in order to facilitate the flow of additional goods and ordered the advancement of a series of projects being led by Minister Shalom in order to promote the Palestinian economy... But I would like to make it clear that all of these efforts are unilateral on Israel's part. All these efforts can only go so far, and the results will multiply many times if only there is cooperation from the other side.

● “Therefore, I call again on the Palestinian leadership in Judea and Samaria, to the leaders of the Palestinian Authority, let us meet. **Let us make peace, diplomatic peace and economic peace.** Let us cooperate on these projects... [T]here is no reason not to meet, Abu-Mazen and I, anywhere in the country” (Israeli Prime Minister's website, July 12, 2009).

■ **Nabil Amru**, Palestinian Authority representative in Cairo, said of Netanyahu's appeal to Mahmoud Abbas that in his assessment Abbas would examine the offer and try to find an appropriate answer which would lead to a meeting. However, he added, that “it is important to make it clear that the Palestinian Authority first needs some kind of commitment from Netanyahu which will lead to the two-state solution and an end to construction in the settlements. Without a clarification of those issues, it will be difficult for Mahmoud Abbas to meet the Israeli Prime Minister.” He added that he had expressed his own personal views and not those of Mahmoud Abbas (Walla! News website, July 12, 2009).

■ Before Netanyahu's public invitation, when asked whether he would meet with the Israeli Prime Minister, **Mahmoud Abbas** answered, “What for? Let's assume Netanyahu comes here, what will he say? He will say, '[the subject of] the refugees, not on the agenda, Jerusalem, united, the '67 borders, not holy.' So what is there to talk about?...He still hasn't stopped the building in the settlements.” Regarding the issue of negotiations with Israel, he said that “everything is already on the table...but I am afraid they [the Israelis] do not want peace at all.” As to the issue of economic peace, Mahmoud Abbas claimed that “[Netanyahu] talks about it to distance political peace. It is true that people in the West Bank are happy now...but that isn't a solution...” (Al-Arabiya TV, July 7, 2009).

■ In an interview held after Netanyahu's invitation, **Mahmoud Abbas** said that Israel had not frozen construction in the settlements, evacuated the outposts, or accepted or recognized the two-state solution. He added that he hoped to achieve peace but that “**the ball is in the Israeli court.**” With veiled criticism directed at the United States he said that the American president “does not exert pressure on the Israeli side, but asks it to meet its obligations, after which we will be able to return to the negotiating table” (Beta News Agency, Serbia, July 8, 2009).

## Contacts for the release of Gilad Shalit

- On July 7 Israeli President Shimon Peres met with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Egypt. Regarding the issue of Gilad Shalit, the Israeli soldier abducted more than three years ago, the Egyptian president said that “there are contacts. Gilad Shalit’s condition is good,” and expressed hope that the issue would shortly be resolved (Middle East News Agency, July 7, 2009).
- Also on July 7, an Egyptian delegation arrived in Damascus for two days and held meetings with senior Hamas figures (*Al-Akhbar*, July 9, 2009). Remaining anonymous, a senior source within Hamas said that negotiations for the release of Gilad Shalit were frozen and that Hamas was waiting for Hagai Hadas, Israel’s envoy, to arrive in Egypt, where he would present the Israeli position. The source added that Hamas “was prepared to hold indirect negotiations with the Israelis and to discuss the issue with an eye to its resolution” (*Al-Hayat*, July 12, 2009). Hadas is expected to leave for Cairo in the near future (Ynet, July 12, 2009).

## Hamas again clarifies its fundamental position regarding the conflict with Israel

- On July 13 **Fathi Hamad**, interior minister for the Hamas de-facto administration, repeated Hamas’s fundamental and traditional positions to an interviewer from the Chinese News Agency. He said that the “Zionist enemy” would leave “occupied Palestine” only through the [actions of the] “resistance” [i.e., terrorist activities]. Hamas, he said, “cannot give up one inch of the soil of the historical land of Palestine because it is the Muslim endowment.” He added that the organizations in the Gaza Strip were **preparing for the next round of confrontations with Israel** with guerilla warfare training, tunnels and faster rocket manufacture. **Ismail Haniya**, head of the Hamas de-facto administration, said that his administration reserved the option of “resistance” [i.e., terrorism] to found a Palestinian state. He said that his administration would try to conduct the daily affairs of its civilians without endangering them by waiving their “rights,” while continuing to foster the “resistance” (Hamas’s *Al-Ra’i*, July 13, 2009).

## The Internal Palestinian Arena

### The internal Palestinian dialogue

- After the failure of the last round of talks in Cairo, Egypt sent a senior security delegation to meet with the Fatah and Hamas leaderships in Damascus in an attempt to bridge the gaps between the two sides. The Egyptian government presented both sides with a document proposing a

compromise, but was unsuccessful. Both sides expressed pessimism regarding an additional round of talks on July 25, one of the Egyptian target dates. From statements made by Hamas activists it can be assumed that the movement does not regard July 25 as obligatory, but it has not ruled out a different date on condition that the issue of the Hamas operatives detained by the Palestinian Authority is resolved, which, according to Hamas claims, is the main obstacle to continuing the dialogue.



Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas and the Egyptian envoy  
(Al-Jazeera TV, July 10, 2009).

■ The Palestinian security apparatuses in Judea and Samaria **continue detentions**. Sources within the Palestinian Islamic Jihad reported that the apparatuses have begun acting against them, focusing on the city of Hebron and detaining activists, including senior activists, who have been interrogated chiefly about their connections with the Gaza Strip and the transfer of funds (PalToday website, July 10, 2009).