



**Intelligence and Terrorism
Information Center**

News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

October 27-November 3, 2009



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton hold a joint press conference (Israeli Government Press Office, October 31, 2009).

Overview

- This past week one rocket was fired into the western Negev from the Gaza Strip, as Hamas maintains its policy of restraint. Another rocket was fired at the Kiryat Shemonah region from south Lebanon, apparently by global jihad elements.
- American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held a joint press conference. Secretary Clinton said that the United States accepted the Israeli position regarding the renewal of negotiations with the Palestinians without preconditions. Mahmoud Abbas and his aides reiterated their position that a relaunching of negotiations would have to be based on the absolute cessation of building in the settlements.

Important Events

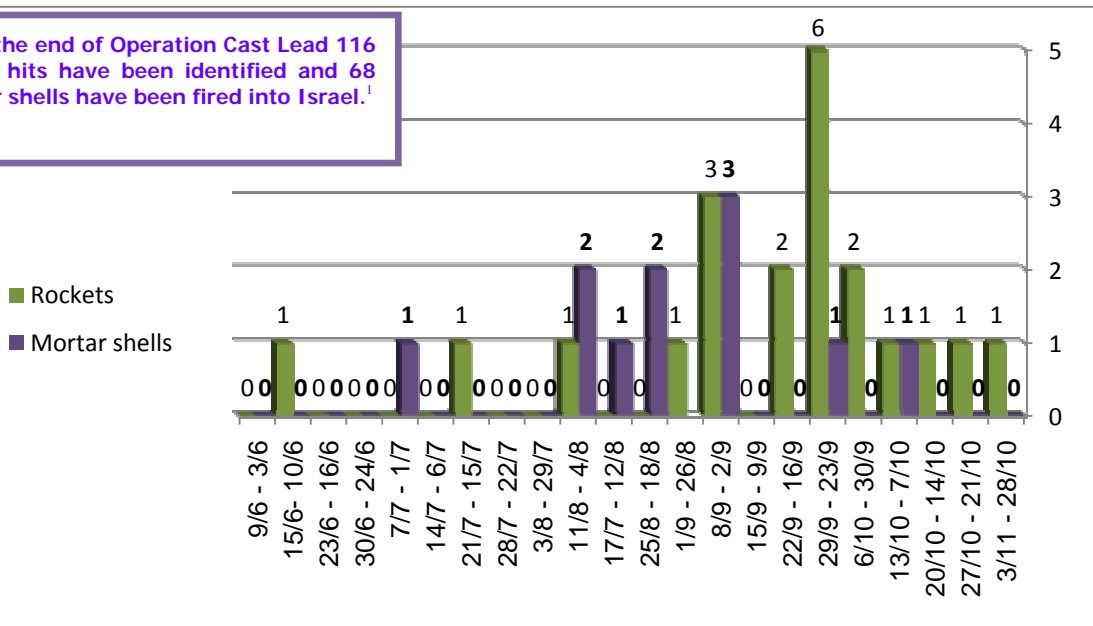
The Gaza Strip

Rocket and mortar shell fire

■ One rocket hit was identified on November 2. It landed in an open area; there were no casualties and no damage was done. Light arms were fired at an IDF force near the Karni crossing on October 28. There were no casualties.

Rocket and mortar shell fired into Israeli territory¹

Since the end of Operation Cast Lead 116 rocket hits have been identified and 68 mortar shells have been fired into Israel.¹



Fatah forums report that Hamas continues operating against rocket launching squads

■ Surfers on various forums, especially those belonging to Fatah, reported that the Hamas security forces continued their operations against squads launching rockets from the Gaza Strip:

- On **October 27** Hamas chased seven members of a Fatah Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades rocket launching squad. According to the report, they were chased after they fired two rockets into Israeli territory (Fatah forum, October 27, 2009).
- On **October 29** Hamas prevented the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades from a firing rocket from the area around the Sufa crossing (Fatah forum, October 29, 2009).

■ In addition, Hamas reportedly uncovered a Palestinian Islamic Jihad lathe for manufacturing rockets and had the owner brought in for interrogation (Fatah forum, October 29, 2009).

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

Judea and Samaria

Counterterrorism Activities

■ The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities this past week, detaining Palestinians suspected of participating in terrorist activities. Throughout the week there were various incidents, primarily the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails. The most prominent were the following:

- **November 1:** Palestinians threw stones at an Israeli bus west of Bethlehem. There were no casualties but the bus was damaged (IDF Spokesman, November 1, 2009).
- **October 29:** Stones and five Molotov cocktails were thrown at the Qalandia checkpoint south of Ramallah. There were no casualties and no damage was done (IDF Spokesman, October 29, 2009).
- **October 29:** Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle west of Bethlehem. An Israeli woman was injured and the vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman, October 29, 2009).

Jewish terrorist detained

■ On November 2 it was reported that Yaakov Teitel, a resident of the settlement of Shvut Rachel, had been detained on October 7 on suspicion of a series of serious crimes. They included the murder of two Palestinians, setting bombs, a grievous attack on a Messianic Jewish family in Ariel and the wounding of Professor Zeev Sternhell. A large quantity of weapons was found in his possession. During interrogation he admitted having committed the crimes attributed to him (*Haaretz*, November 2, 2009).

The Northern Arena

Rocket fire into Israel



Left: Remains of the rocket fired at Kiryat Shemonah. Right: The fire caused by the rocket hit (Photos by Avi Shapira, reproduced courtesy of Ynet, October 27, 2009).

■ At 18:50 on the evening of October 27 a rocket, apparently 107mm, was fired into Israeli territory from the area of Wadi Jamal near the Shi'ite village of Houla in the central sector of south Lebanon. The rocket hit was identified in an open area near the northern Israeli city of Kiryat

Shemonah. There were no casualties but vegetation was burned (IDF Spokesman, October 27, 2009). The IDF responded by firing shells at the area from which the rocket was launched.

■ Immediately after the rocket fire UNIFIL and Lebanese army forces arrived to investigate the incident. According to a statement from the Lebanese army, the following morning **four additional rockets ready for firing were discovered** at the launching site. They were found in the yard of a house under construction on the outskirts of the village of Houla. The house belonged to Houla mayor Feisal Hejazi (Lebanese News Agency, October 28, 2009). Interviewed on television, Feisal Hejazi claimed to have been surprised that the rockets were found in his yard, stating that they were apparently put there during the night (NTV, October 28, 2009).



Searching the yard in Houla (Al-Arabia TV, October 28, 2009).

■ The rocket was the **sixth** fired since the end of the second Lebanon war (2006). On September 11, 2009, three rockets were fired at the western Galilee and north Israel on from the region of the town of Qulaylah. In our assessment, most of the fire was carried out by local networks affiliated with the global jihad in an attempt to challenge the Lebanese government and Hezbollah with attacks clearly violating UN Security Council Resolution 1701.²

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The crossings

■ This past week the crossings between Israel and the Gaza Strip were open and 340 trucks entered the Strip to make deliveries.

■ The Rafah crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip opened for three days on November 1 to allow 3,000 Palestinians with humanitarian issues to leave and 1,500 detained in Egypt to enter. During the past months there was a significant increase in the activity at the Rafah crossing, especially for humanitarian reasons, as an alternative to the crossings between the Gaza Strip and

² For further information see our October 29, 2009 bulletin "Rocket fire from south Lebanon into northern Israel, another violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701" at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/lebanon_e002.pdf.

Israel. The Egyptians allow the crossing to be used as a safety valve and have opened it more frequently than in the past.

Two Popular Resistance Committees terrorist operatives killed in a “work accident”

■ The military-terrorist wing of the Popular Resistance Committees reported the deaths of two of its operatives. Both were residents of Rafah and according to reports from members of the Salah al-Din unit for weapons manufacture, they were apparently killed in a “work accident” (Qawm website, October 27, 2009).

The Peace Process

■ On October 31 Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Secretary Clinton said that the United States accepted the Israeli position regarding **the renewal of negotiations with the Palestinians without preconditions**. She said that what Netanyahu said was “historically accurate” and that there had never been a “precondition.” She added that “[w]hat the prime minister has offered in specifics of a restraint on the policy of settlements, which he has just described – no new starts, for example – is unprecedented in the context of the prior two negotiations.” Referring to the building in the settlements, Prime Minister Netanyahu said that Israel “would not build new settlements, not expropriate land for addition for the existing settlements, and that we were prepared to adopt a policy of restraint on the existing settlements, but also one that would still enable normal life for the residents who are living there.”³

■ The Palestinians reiterated their refusal to relaunch the negotiations with Israel without the following preconditions:

- Palestinian Authority Chairman **Mahmoud Abbas** said that he “completely rejected” the American proposal to renew the negotiations with Israel as stated by Secretary Clinton before a cessation of building activity in the West Bank. He said that most of the meeting with Clinton dealt with Jerusalem, and that without Jerusalem “there will be no peace with the Israeli side.” **He also stressed the problem of the refugees and the so-called “right of return”** (Agence France-Presse, Wafa News Agency, Palestinian Television, October 31, 2009).

- Chief Palestinian negotiator **Saeb Erekat** told the BBC in Arabic that relaunching negotiations with Israel without a complete freeze on building in the settlements and in Jerusalem would be “useless.” That, he said, was because it would “bulldozers and settlements would determine the results of the negotiations regarding Jerusalem, borders and territory” (BBC in Arabic, October 31, 2009).

● Presidential spokesman **Nabil Abu Rudeina** said that Mahmoud Abbas' position was that negotiations had to be based on the complete cessation of building in the settlements. He added that any proposal that did not include a complete cessation of building in the settlements and Jerusalem would not lead to full peace and a genuine peace process (Al-Arabiya TV, October 31, 2009).

The Internal Palestinian Arena

Elections for the Palestinian Authority institutions

■ The Palestinian Authority continues its preparations for general elections in January 2010. The Palestinian elections committee said in an announcement to the media that anyone who had been on the 2005 and 2006 election staffs who wanted to join the 2010 election staff should go to the committee's offices in the various districts of Judea, Samaria and the **Gaza Strip**. The announcement included the addresses and telephone numbers of the offices, including those in the Gaza Strip (*Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda*, October 28, 2009).

■ In response, the interior ministry of the de-facto Hamas administration announced that **Hamas would not allow the elections to be held in the Gaza Strip** because they were illegal and were not going to be held "through national consensus." The ministry also made it clear that it would punish anyone in the Gaza Strip who collaborated with the Palestinian elections committee (Qudsnet website, October 27, 2009).