



**Intelligence and Terrorism  
Information Center**

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

**January 19-26, 2010**



American envoy to the Middle East George Mitchell and Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas meet during a visit to Jordan (Wafa News Agency, January 24, 2010).

### **Overview**

- This past week rocket and mortar shells were fired sporadically from the Gaza Strip into the western Negev.
- The Palestinian Authority maintained its refusal to re-launch negotiations, lowered its expectations and focused its efforts on trying to convince the Europeans to exert pressure on Israel. After a meeting between Mahmoud Abbas and George Mitchell, Nimr Hamad, Mahmoud Abbas' political advisor, reiterated the Palestinian position that there would be no negotiations as long as building continued in the settlements. On January 25 Mahmoud Abbas left for Russia, Britain and Germany to gain support for the Palestinian position.

## Important Events

### Gaza Strip

#### Mortar and Rocket Shell Fire

■ Sporadic rocket and mortar shell fire continued from the Gaza Strip. Two rocket hits were identified in open areas in the western Negev on January 20 and 24. There were no casualties and no damage was done. Responsibility for the rocket fire on January 20 was claimed by a network calling itself the **Tawhed and Jihad Group, Jerusalem** (Al-Mukhtasar website, January 20, 2010).

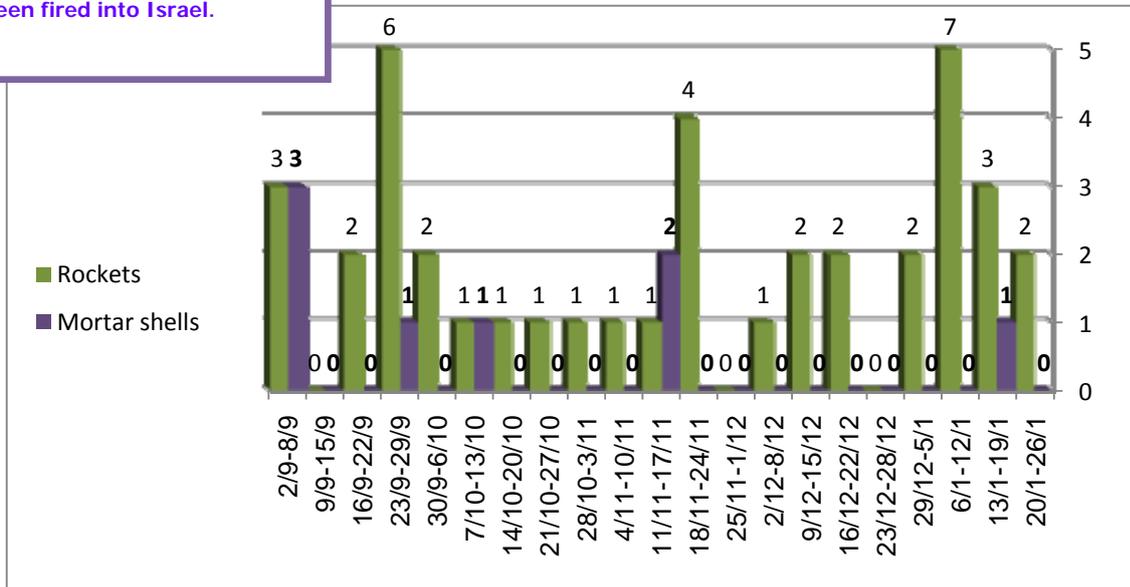


The network officially claims responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Such claims of responsibility are occasionally issued by various Salafist Jihadist networks, some of them minor and some of them existing only on paper.

## Rockets and Mortar Shells Fired into Israeli Territory<sup>2</sup>

Since the end of Operation Cast Lead 141 hits have been identified and 71 mortar shells have been fired into Israel.



## Judea and Samaria

### Counterterrorism Activities

■ The Israeli security forces continued their preventive counterterrorism activities, detaining Palestinians suspected of terrorist activities. The main terrorist attacks this past week involved the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles.

■ The most notable attacks were the following:

- **January 25** – Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle southwest of Bethlehem. There were no casualties but the vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman, January 25, 2010).
- **January 24** – Stones were thrown at two Israeli buses southwest of Bethlehem. There were no casualties but the buses were damaged. Molotov cocktails were thrown at an Israeli vehicle east of Bethlehem. There were no casualties and no damage was done (IDF Spokesman, January 24, 2010).
- **January 22** – Stones were thrown at an Israeli bus southwest of Bethlehem. There were no casualties but the bus was damaged. Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle northeast of Ramallah. There were no casualties but the vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman, January 22, 2010).
- **January 19** – Two Molotov cocktails were thrown at an Israeli vehicle southwest of Ramallah. There were no casualties and no damage was done (IDF Spokesman, January 19, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> The statistics do not include the mortar shells fired at IDF soldiers patrolling the border fence which fell inside the Gaza Strip.

## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### The Crossings between Israel and the Gaza Strip

- The crossings between Israel and the Gaza Strip were open all week, allowing for the passage of **511 trucks**.

### New Aid Convoy Organizes in Greece

- On January 21 a press briefing was held in **Athens** regarding the so-called "siege" of the Gaza Strip. A Greek delegation which had recently returned from the Gaza Strip held the briefing to survey the situation and ask the world to help lift the "siege."
- Greek delegation activists are currently organizing to send more aid ships to the Gaza Strip. One of them told Al-Jazeera TV that so far the activists organizing the convoy had arranged for **one cargo ship and five smaller vessels**. He said that there would be more participants than in the previous convoy which sailed a year and a half ago. He added that in addition to medical equipment and foodstuffs, the ships would carry building materials (Al-Jazeera TV, January 22, 2010).

### Egypt President Hosni Mubarak Attacks Hamas

- **The tension between Hamas and Egypt** continued, following the building of the barrier along the Egyptian-Gaza Strip border and various incidents. One manifestation was a speech given by Hosni Mubarak which contained a veiled criticism of Hamas and **strongly defended Egypt's right to erect the barrier**. Some of his remarks were the following:
  - "Despite Egypt's continued efforts to revive the peace process and Palestinian agreement, **we are under attack from Arab and regional powers** [i.e., Syria and Iran], which never gave Palestinian and its people what Egypt did, and merely trade on the Palestinians' suffering. **Egypt will not surrender to pressure and blackmail and will not endure anarchy on its border or terrorism and incitement on its soil**. We have reliable information about those who are waging the attack against us and organizing rallies attacking Egypt in a neighboring country."
    - **"The facilities and fortifications erected by our engineers on our eastern border were built as a result of full Egyptian sovereignty**. We will not agree to intervention from anyone or that anyone struggle against us or argue with us on this matter. It is the right, duty and responsibility of Egypt as a state and of all states to control their borders and to ensure their security against threats from enemies as well as friends."
    - "We are completing the construction of the facilities and fortifications along our border. They do not harm anyone but **protect our national security from violations we are familiar with and terrorist activities such as those we saw at Taba, Sharm el-Sheik, Dahab and Cairo** (Egyptian TV, January 24, 2010).



Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak: Egypt has the right and the duty to protect its national security (Al-Arabiya TV, January 24, 2010).

### Khaled Mashaal Promises to Continue the “Resistance” until Israel Is Destroyed

■ **Khaled Mashaal**, head of the Hamas political bureau, gave a speech at a Hamas rally in Damascus marking the anniversary of Operation Cast Lead. He promised that “the Zionist entity will be destroyed” and that the “resistance” [i.e., terrorism] would continue:

- **“Hamas will never give up the option of resistance, no matter how long it takes.”** He said only “liberating” the [Palestinian] land, “restoring” Jerusalem and gaining the “right of return” would be the proper response to Hamas’ demands. Hamas, he said, would continue to “oppose the occupation” and refuse to recognize the legitimacy of the “Zionist entity.”
- He said that **“the Zionist entity will be destroyed** the way the Khaybar tribe was destroyed” [Note: The Khaybar was a Jewish tribe living in the Arabian peninsula. They were conquered by Muhammad in 628 A.D.]
- **He praised the foreign aid brought by the convoys and ships to the Gaza Strip, especially George Galloway<sup>3</sup>** (Al-Jazeera TV, January 22, 2010).



Operatives of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad’s military-terrorist wing undergo training (Filastin Al-Yawm, January 21, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> A pro-Hamas member of the British Parliament who led the Lifeline convoy to the Gaza Strip, met with Ismail Haniya and was declared persona non grata by Egypt.

## Member of Hamas Political Bureau Confirms Receipt of Financial Aid from Iran

■ **Khalil al-Hayeh**, a member of the Hamas political bureau, said during a visit to **Iran** that the country **gave Hamas financial, moral and political support**.<sup>4</sup> He also claimed that the support was **unconditional**, and said that Hamas “welcomes and is proud of all types of Islamic and Arabic strategic ties which support the Palestinian people and its uprising” (Asr Iran, January 20, 2010).



Khalil al-Hayeh, a member of the Hamas political bureau, visits Iran (Fars News Agency, Iran, January 17, 2010).

## The Political Struggle

### Mahmoud Abbas' Meeting with George Mitchell and His Prospective Visit to Europe

■ **Nimr Hamad**, Mahmoud Abbas' political advisor, said that the Palestinian chairman and George Mitchell, special American envoy to the Middle East, had discussed several suggestions which would be transmitted to the Israeli prime minister and that the Palestinians were waiting to see what Mitchell and Netanyahu would talk about. He said the Palestinian position was clear and that the Palestinians would not return to the negotiating table as long as building continued in the settlements. **He added that the Palestinians rejected the remarks made by Netanyahu regarding recognition of the State of Israel as a Jewish state.**

■ Hamad also stated that on January 25 Mahmoud Abbas left for a round of visits in **Russia, Britain and Germany** to relaunch the peace process, promote the role of those countries in the International Quartet and **motivate them to support the Palestinian position, according to which building in the settlements had to stop**. He added that the Palestinians wanted those countries to play a greater role with regard to Israel, not just the United States (*Al-Gomhuriyya*, January 25, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Iran give Hamas several hundred million dollars a year. For further information see the January 12, 2009 bulletin, “Iranian Support for Hamas” at [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/pdf/iran\\_e004.pdf](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/iran_e004.pdf).

## Palestinian Authority Incitement: Accusing Israel of Damaging the Al-Aqsa Mosque

■ The Palestinian Authority has exploited the archaeological excavations carried out by the Israeli Antiquities Authorities in Silwan **to defame Israel**. A PA organization calling itself the Islamic-Christian Committee to Save Jerusalem and the Holy Places claimed that excavations had caused cracks in the walls surrounding the mosque (Hamas' Palestine-info website, January 19, 2010).<sup>5</sup>



The excavations at Silwan represented as meant to destroy Al-Aqsa (Al-Ayam, January 20, 2010).

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<sup>5</sup> The Palestinian smear campaign of Israel has echoes in the Arab world as well. The Syrian newspaper *Al-Thawra* printed an article by Ahmed Hamada entitled "An artificial earthquake as well." According to the article, the so-called "occupation authorities" have recently "injected various chemical into the foundations of the Al-Aqsa mosque to cause an artificial earthquake which will make cause it to collapse [sic]." According to the article, "the collapse of streets leading to Al-Aqsa mosque prove it" [sic] (*Al-Thawra*, Syria, January 24, 2010).