



**Intelligence and Terrorism
Information Center**

News of Terrorism and the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict

August 3-10, 2010



The women's ship Mar Iam anchored in the port of Tripoli (NBN, August 5, 2010).

Overview

- This past week there was quiet in the western Negev and along the Israeli-Lebanese border.
- Articles in Egypt's establishment press strongly attacked Hamas, accusing it of responsibility for the rocket fire at Eilat and Aqaba from the Sinai Peninsula and of acting as an Iranian proxy. Editorials stated Hamas had harmed Egypt's national security and interests and demanded that harsh steps be taken against it, to the extent of terminating relations.
- According to media reports the Lebanese women's ship Mar Iam was supposed to set sail from Lebanon to Cyprus on August 8, but it is still in port and it is not clear when it will leave. The voyage coordinator said that the women were determined to reach the Gaza Strip, although it was uncertain whether that would happen. In the meantime, other voyages to the Gaza Strip are being planned, the most important of which is the European Freedom Fleet 2, whose organizers hope will sail this coming October.

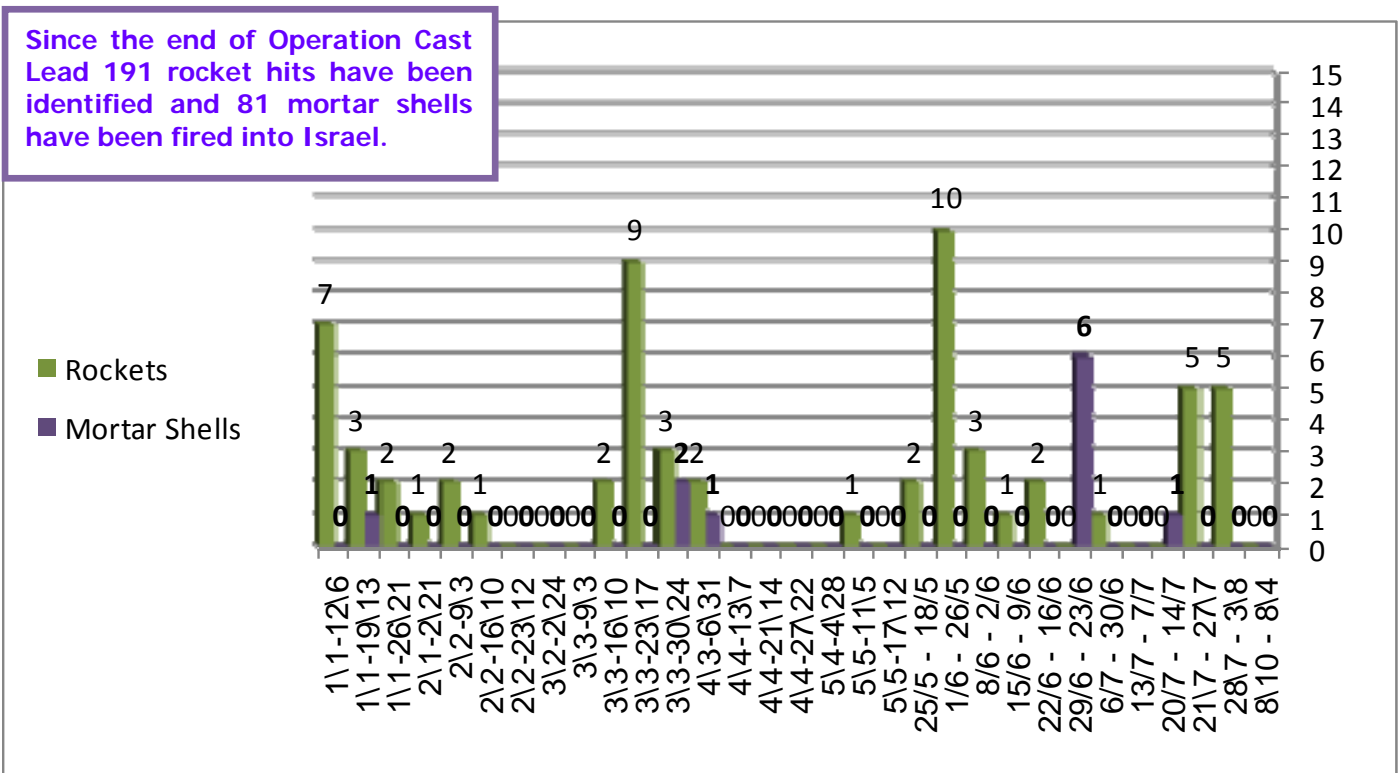
Important Events

The Gaza Strip

Rocket Fire

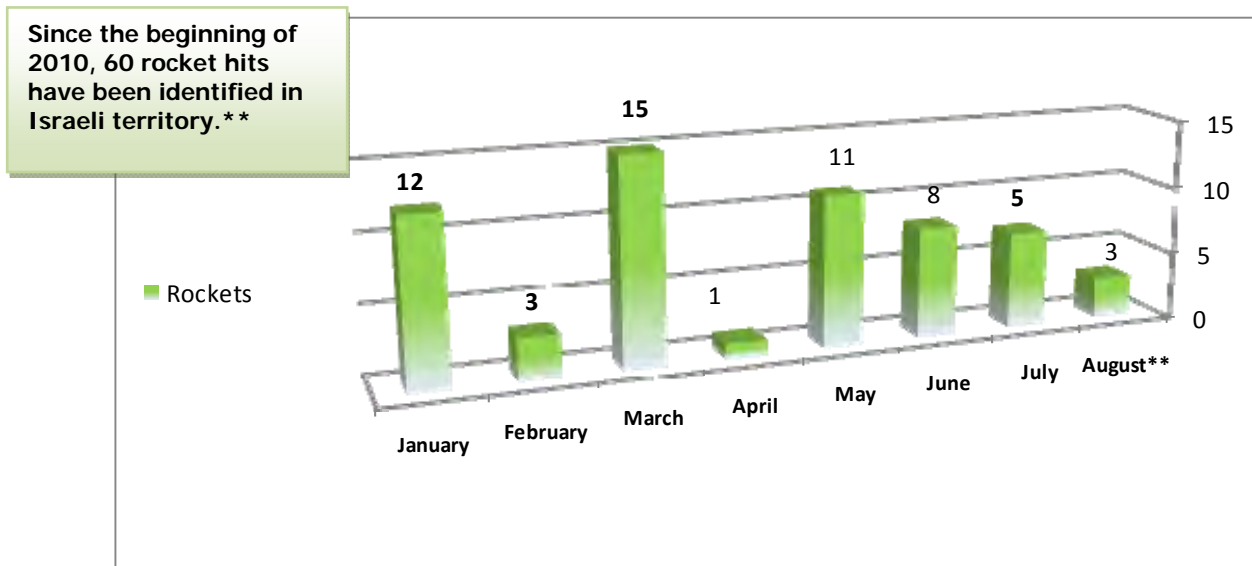
- This past week no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israeli territory.
- On August 4 an IDF force identified a squad of three armed terrorist operatives approaching the security fence. An Israeli Air Force aircraft shot at them (IDF Spokesman, August 4, 2010).

Rockets and Mortar Shells Fired into Israeli Territory¹



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

Rocket Fire 2010, Monthly Distribution*



* Rocket hits identified in Israeli territory. A similar number misfire and customarily land inside the
 ** As of August 10, 2010.

Tension Reported Between the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hamas over Rocket Fire Policy

■ "Palestinian sources" reported that the Palestinian Islamic Jihad leadership in the Gaza Strip ordered its military wing to stop firing rockets into Israeli territory in order to prevent an Israeli response similar to Operation Cast Lead. Another reason for the order was the PIJ's desire to avoid confrontations with Hamas and its military wing (Qudsnet website from Damascus, August 7, 2010). The tension between the military wings of the two organizations was manifested by violent confrontations on August 5, including exchanges of fire and the detention of Palestinian Islamic Jihad operatives (*Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, August 7, 2010).

Strong Egyptian Response to the Rocket Fire at Eilat and Aqaba

■ Strong editorials in Egypt's establishment press attacked Iran and Hamas, accusing them of responsibility for the August 2 rocket fire targeting Eilat and Aqaba. For example:

- **Muhammad Ali Ibrahim, editor of the daily *Al-Gomhuriyya*, attacked Hamas, calling it "an agent of Iran" and accusing it of responsibility for the rocket fire from the Sinai Peninsula and of damaging Egypt's national security and interests. According to the editorial, the rocket fire was a gross violation of Egyptian sovereignty, and "we have the right to strike such despicable people with an iron fist, people who were nurtured in the bosom of treachery and back-stabbing" (*Al-Gomhuriyya*, August 4, 2010).**

- In a two-part editorial, Muhammad Ali Ibrahim **called Hamas "an agent of Iran,"** which was again trying to harm Egypt. The editorial claimed that the rocket fire was meant to embarrass President Mubarak, but in addition, **"Iran wants to force the Arab countries into conflicts and disagreements with Israel so that the region will continue to burn, even at the price of infringing on state sovereignty."** Muhammad Ali Ibrahim expressed his personal opinion that Egypt had to cut off all ties with Hamas because the movement was "a gang of murderers" influenced by extremist ideas inspired by Shi'ite Iran or the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt (*Al-Gomhuriyya*, August 7 and 8, 2010).

- **Osama Saraya, the editor in chief of *Al-Ahram*,** Egypt's most important establishment daily paper, **wrote an editorial on August 6 calling the rocket fire "a great crime" which would doubtless cause Egypt to change the way it related to Hamas.** He said that Hamas did not have the right to "cross the known, agreed-upon lines" and involve Egypt in a new military conflict with Israel. He accused Hamas of responsibility for the rocket fire, assisted by "subcontractors" and Iranian money. He said the time had come to "close the account" with Hamas, adding that accountability would be difficult for Hamas.

Judea and Samaria

Counterterrorism Activities

- The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities, detaining Palestinians suspected of involvement in terrorist activities and seizing weapons. Riots continued at various sites in Judea and Samaria.

- **This past week there was an increase in the number of stone-throwing incidents involving Israeli vehicles. One Israeli woman suffered minor injuries.** Molotov cocktails were also thrown. The most prominent incidents were the following:

- **August 10** – Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle southwest of Bethlehem. There were no casualties but the vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman, August 10, 2010).

- **August 9** – Four Molotov cocktails were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near Ni'lin. There were no casualties but the vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman, August 9, 2010).

- **August 8** – Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle southwest of Nablus. An Israeli civilian woman suffered minor injuries and received treatment at the scene of the attack. Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle southwest of Jenin. There were no casualties but the vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman, August 8, 2010).

- **August 6** – Stones were thrown at IDF soldiers north of Ramallah. Two soldiers sustained minor injuries (IDF Spokesman, August 6, 2010).

- **August 5** – Stones were thrown at a number of Israeli vehicles (including an ambulance) southwest of Bethlehem. There were no casualties but the vehicles were damaged. Stones were thrown at Israeli vehicles east of Qalqilya. There were no casualties but three of the vehicles were damaged (IDF Spokesman, August 5, 2010).
- **August 4** – Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle northeast of Qalqilya. There were no casualties but the vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman, August 4, 2010).

Flotillas and Convoys to the Gaza Strip

The Ships from the Turkish Flotilla Return to Turkey

- Three ships, including the Mavi Marmara on whose deck the violent confrontation with the IDF occurred, left the port of Ashdod for Turkey. The three (the Mavi Marmara, the Defne-Y and the Gazze) are currently anchored in the Turkish port of Iskenderun. With the return of the ships the Israeli government sent a message to Turkey, stating that it expected the ships would not try to sail to the Gaza Strip again (Antalya News Agency and Reuters, August 7 2010).
- **Hussain Orush, a senior member of IHH, said that if the closure of the Gaza Strip were not lifted, many more flotillas to the Gaza Strip could be expected.** He added that if need be, the vessels which returned would be used again because they had been purchased by IHH for the Palestinians. He claimed that Israel had repaired and painted the ship to destroy the evidence of what he called "thousands of bullets which hit the ships all over" (Reuters, August 7, 2010).



The MV Mavi Marmara sails back to Turkey (Hürriyet, August 9, 2010).

More Flotillas and Convoys Planned – Update

■ International initiatives continue to organize flotillas and aid convoys to the Gaza Strip. The updated information is the following:

Lebanon

■ According to reports, the Lebanese women's ship Mar Iam, currently anchored in the port of Tripoli, was supposed to set sail from Lebanon for Cyprus this past Sunday, August 8. The ship is still in port and it is not clear when it will leave. Among the all-women passengers are lawyers, doctors, correspondents, a group of nuns from the United States, a Lebanese singer and one woman in the advanced stages of pregnancy (Guardian, August 6; PressTV, August 7, 2010).

■ **Samar al-Hajj**, coordinator for the committee preparing the ship, said that the women were determined to reach the Gaza Strip but that it was uncertain whether that would actually happen. She also expressed their willingness to sacrifice themselves: "We are not more precious than those who fell as shaheeds and our blood is not more precious, and if it happens we will be the gravel [on which is paved] the path of the next ships." She said the women on board were from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Bahrain, Tunisia, Egypt, Qatar, France, the United States, Canada, Britain, Turkey, Serbia, Australia, Japan and perhaps other countries (Al-Alam TV, Iran, August 5, 2010).



The women's ship Mar Iam anchored in the port of Tripoli (NBN, August 5, 2010).

Other Initiatives

■ Europe

- On August 9 **the European aid convoy Miles of Smiles 2** entered the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing after its ships had anchored and unloaded in the port of El Arish. The convoy included 43 Arab and European activists who brought 46 ambulances and 102 vehicles bearing humanitarian assistance (*Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, August 9, 2010). **Reportedly, before the convoy entered the Gaza Strip, a 60-man British delegation met with senior Hamas figures** to coordinate its entrance (*Al-Risala*, August 6, 2010).
- **Ahmed Yussef**, deputy foreign minister of the de facto Hamas administration, thanked the members of the convoy and expressed hope that other delegations would come to the Gaza Strip to ease the "blockade." **Ahmed al-Kader**, minister of labor in the Hamas administration, called for the closure to be lifted (*Al-Aqsa TV*, August 9, 2010).



The aid convoy enters the Gaza Strip (Miles of Smiles 2 website, August 10, 2010).

- **The Freedom Fleet 2 flotilla: Amjad al-Shawa**, coordinator for the international campaign to lift the so-called "siege" of the Gaza Strip, said he hoped the flotilla would set sail in October 2010 (*Voice of Palestine Radio*, August 5, 2010). **Vangelis Pissiass**, chairman of the Greek campaign participating in the Freedom Fleet coalition, said that those responsible for the flotilla would resist any attempt made by the IDF to take control of the ships. He said that this time taking over ships of Freedom Fleet 2 "will not be easy." However, he said that they would "use what international law permits" and that they would "update the European Union about the equipment they will use to defend themselves" (*Hamas' Palestine-info website*, August 5, 2010).

- **Germany: Amjad al-Shawa** said that the German ship which was supposed to set sail for the Gaza Strip with 12 German Jewish activists and symbolic aid had been delayed. He said it would set sail in the coming weeks.

- **Sweden: Dror Feiler** said that the organizers of the Freedom Fleet intended to send another aid flotilla to the Gaza Strip in 2010 (Agence France-Presse, August 4, 2010).

- **Viva Palestina:** George Galloway, the pro-Hamas former British MP who heads Viva Palestina, announced on his website that he supported a new flotilla "which will be even stronger than the great May achievement" [apparently a reference to Freedom Fleet 2]. He also announced that an aid convoy would leave for the Gaza Strip and arrive on September 18, and would be called "A global lifeline to Gaza – Viva Palestina 5" (Viva Palestina website, August 6, 2010).

■ The Arab Countries

- **The Inter-Arab Parliament** decided to send three aid convoys to the Gaza Strip: one at the beginning of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan (which begins on August 11 this year); the second, called the School Convoy, which would leave toward the beginning of the school year in October to fill the needs of Gazan teachers and students; and the third, the Winter Convoy, which would leave at the end of December 2010 or the beginning of January 2011 (Misr Al-Jadida, August 9, 2010).

- **Syria:** A Syrian aid convoy of five trucks carrying 116 tons of foodstuffs is apparently making its way to the Gaza Strip (Hamas' Paltoday website, August 5, 2010),

- **Algeria:** On August 8, **Amar Talebi**, deputy chairman of the association of Muslim sages, claimed that an aid ship was supposed to set sail from Algeria with 85 containers aboard with foodstuffs, an ambulance and medical equipment. The ship, he said, would anchor in the port of El Arish and from there the equipment would be transported to the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing (Al-Khabar, August 2, 2010).

- **Libya:** The secretary general of Libyan public charities claimed that the Libyan humanitarian assistance convoy Al-Quds 5 would leave for the Gaza Strip at the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan (Misr Al-Jadida, August 4, 2010). The Libyan convoy Al-Quds 4 reached Egypt at the end of last week, and the aid it brought has apparently been transported to the Gaza Strip by the Egyptians (Agence France-Presse, August 5, 2010).

- **Malaysia:** A Malaysian delegation arrived in Cairo on its way to the Gaza Strip bringing medical aid and clothing (*Al-Risala*, August 5, 2010).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

Food and Other Commodities Enter Via the Crossings and the Conditions in the Gazan Markets

■ This past week between 200 and 300 trucks a day entered the Gaza Strip through the Karni and Kerem Shalom crossings, for the most part bringing food, sheep, cattle and electrical appliances (IDF coordinator for the territories, August 4, 2010).

■ As the Muslim holy month of Ramadan approaches, the shelves in the Gaza market are full and prices are very low, but there is a dearth of customers. According to the claims of the Gazans, they cannot allow themselves to buy food for Ramadan because they are unemployed (Safa News Agency, August 3, 2010).

Disruptions Reported in the Operation of the Gaza Strip Power Plant

■ The power plant in Gaza (which provides a third of the Gaza Strip's electricity) stopped working because it lacked diesel fuel, because the Palestinian Authority had not financed its purchase. Sources in Hamas accused the PA of using the issue of funding industrial diesel fuel for the power plant as a means of subverting the stability of the Hamas administration (*Al-Risala* and *Filastin al-'Aan*, August 7, 2010).

Developments in Judea and Samaria

■ **Sheikh Hamad al-Bitawi**, a Hamas activist, chairman of the Palestinian Religious Scholars Association and a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, attacked the Palestinian Authority's policies and its supervision of the mosques in Judea and Samaria. He said the PA prevented the appointment of imams, muezzins and preachers in hundreds of mosques in Judea and Samaria. He said it also prevented clerics who were influential, talented and "protective of their religion and homeland" from delivering sermons in the mosques, while it was recruiting "tens of thousands" to its security services (Hamas' daily *Felesteen*, July 28, 2010).