



**The Meir Amit Intelligence  
and Terrorism Information  
Center**

## **News of Terrorism and the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict (October 13-19, 2010)**



**Supporters wave Hezbollah and Iranian flags to welcome Iranian President Ahmadinejad on his arrival in Lebanon (Jamal Saidi for Reuters, October 14, 2010). Ahmadinejad praised Hezbollah and called Lebanon "a school for the resistance."**

### **Overview**

- This past week the western Negev was quiet.
- Mahmoud Abbas, interviewed by Israeli Channel 1 TV on October 17, again demanded a construction freeze in the settlements, but added that in any case there would not be a new intifada. He said that if an agreement were reached, the Palestinians would be ready to end the conflict and their historical demands from Israel.
- The Viva Palestina convoy has not yet set sail from the Syrian port of Latakia for El Arish. The Egyptians said that 17 activists, including George Galloway, who was declared persona non grata by Egypt, would not be allowed into Egyptian territory. A preliminary examination of the names of the 17 indicated that most of them had been involved in the violent confrontation with the Egyptian security forces last January and/or were activists affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood (some of them were also aboard the Mavi Marmara).

# Important Terrorism Events

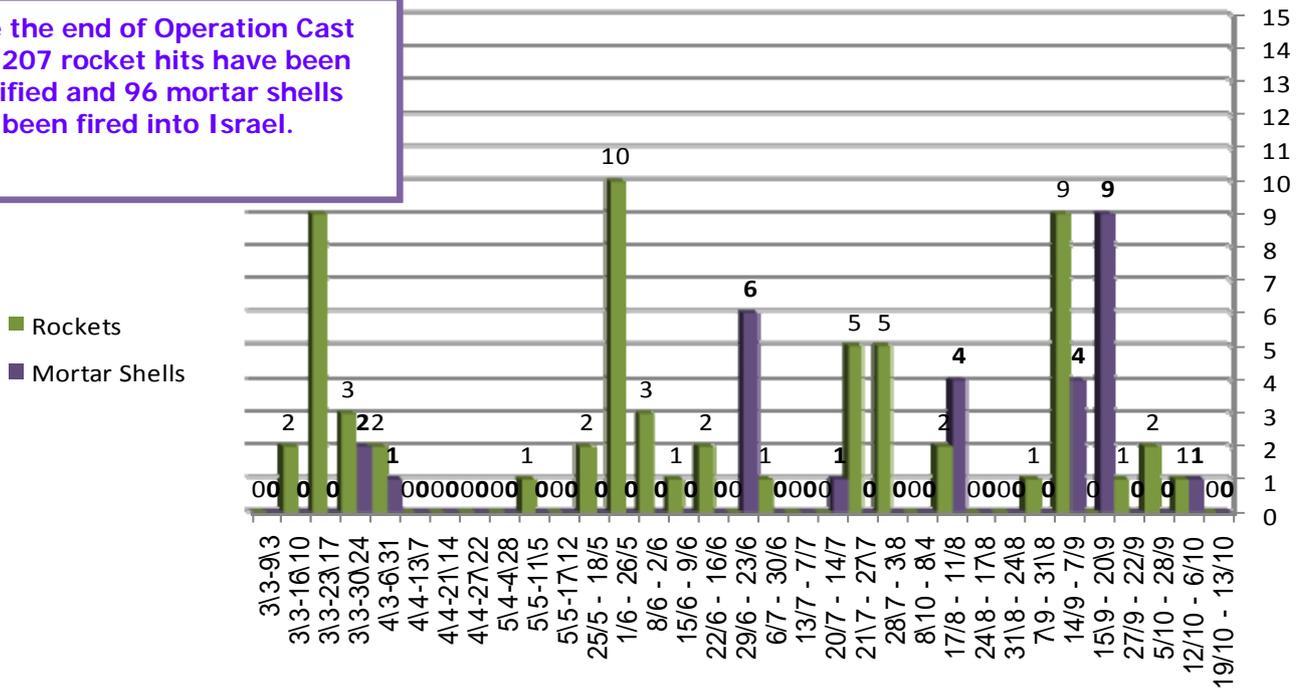
## Gaza Strip

### Rocket Fire

- This past week the western Negev was relatively quiet. No rocket hits were identified and no mortar shells were fired into Israeli territory.
- On October 17 Israeli Air Force aircraft prevented a rocket attack by striking a terrorist squad in the northern Gaza Strip which was preparing to fire rockets (IDF Spokesman, October 17, 2010). The Palestinian media reported that an operative belonging to the military wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad was killed and that several other operatives were wounded (Safa News Agency, Qudsnet, Palpress websites, October 17, 2010).

### Rocket and mortar shells fired into Israeli territory<sup>1</sup>

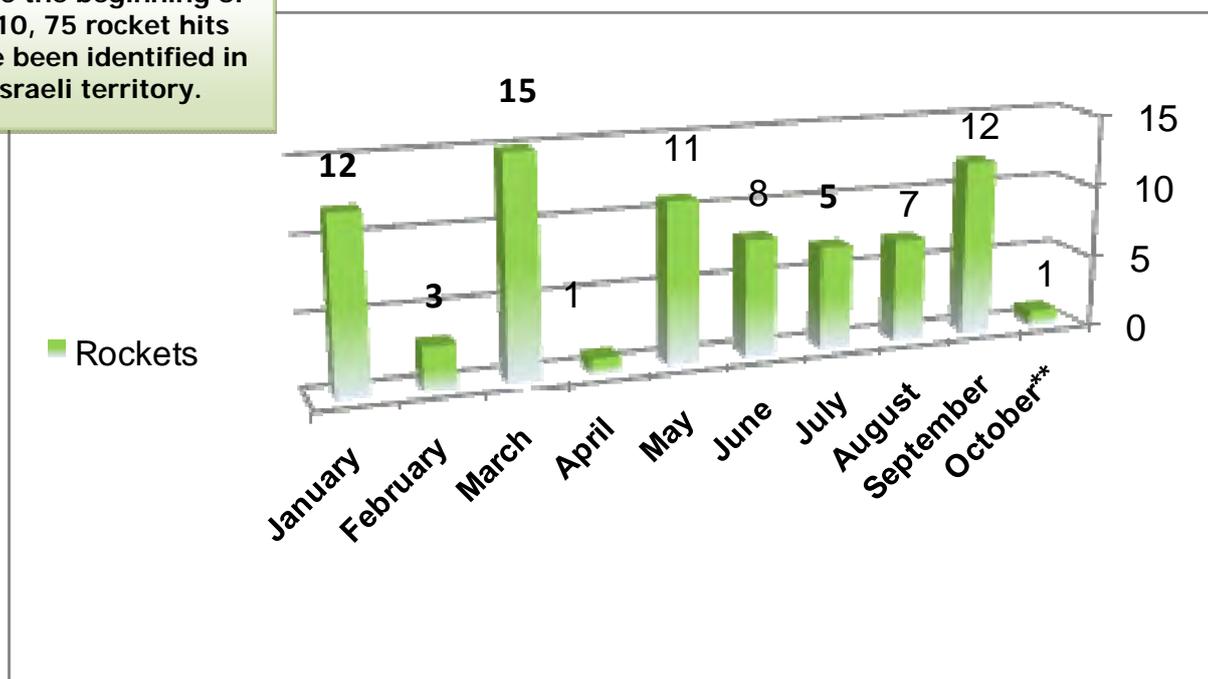
Since the end of Operation Cast Lead 207 rocket hits have been identified and 96 mortar shells have been fired into Israel.



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

## Rocket Fire 2010, Monthly Distribution\*

Since the beginning of 2010, 75 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory.



\* Rocket hits identified in Israeli territory. A similar number misfire and customarily land inside the Gaza Strip.

\*\* As of October 19, 2010.

## Judea and Samaria

### Counterterrorism Activities

■ Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities, detaining Palestinians suspected of terrorist activities and seizing weapons. On October 11 stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle east of Qalqilya. There were no casualties but the vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman, October 11, 2010).

## The Peace Process

### The Construction Moratorium and Relaunching the Negotiations

■ The moratorium on construction in the settlements continues to be an issue. Interviewed by Israeli Channel 1 TV, Palestinian Authority Chairman **Mahmoud Abbas** said that the demand for a building freeze in the settlements was not a precondition for negotiations but a Palestinian and international demand. It was also, he said, a standing Israeli commitment, from the time of the first contacts between Palestinians and Israel when Yitzhak Rabin was prime minister. He

claimed that the American administration promised that Israel would stop building in the settlements, and based on that promise the Palestinians had entered into direct negotiations in September (Israel Channel 1 TV, October 17, 2010).

- Mahmoud Abbas also claimed that American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that all offers would be off the table if the Israeli government did not agree to freeze construction, but according to Mahmoud Abbas, Benjamin Netanyahu was being intransigent because he would "fear for his government" if the freeze continued. Mahmoud Abbas added that **in any case there would not be a new intifada in any case, and that if an agreement were reached, the Palestinians were ready to "end the conflict [and] end their historical claims"** (Israel Channel 1 TV, October 17 2010).

- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in his speech at the opening of the winter Knesset session that he would agree to a construction moratorium if the Palestinians recognized Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people. Following his remarks, **Yasser Abd Rabbo**, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee, said that the Palestinian Authority was prepared to recognize a map based on the 1967 borders, and to recognize Israel "as it calls itself, according to international law." He did not relate to recognizing Israel as a Jewish state (Agence France-Presse, October 13; *Haaretz*, October 14, 2010).

- Yasser Abd Rabbo's remarks were strongly criticized by both Fatah and Hamas:

- **Nabil Shaath**, senior Fatah figure, claimed that the remarks did not represent the Palestinian position, which "is not prepared to pay the price of recognizing Israel as a Jewish state" (xinhuanet.com website, October 13, 2010).

- Hamas and other terrorist organizations denounced Yasser Abd Rabbo's remarks (Hamas' Palestine-info website, October 16, 2010). **Mustafa al-Sawaf**, former editor of the Hamas organ *Felesteen*, claimed that the problem of "people who begin to waive rights which don't belong to them" should be solved by reestablishing "popular courts." In such courts, he said, "sentencing must be done on the spot and the sentence is carried out immediately" (*Felesteen*, October 16, 2010).

## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### The Crossings

- During the past week between 166 and 208 trucks carrying merchandise entered the Gaza Strip every day. Most of them brought food and animal feed, electrical appliances, plumbing

and sewage system equipment and basic humanitarian commodities. Several trucks carried cement (Israeli government coordinator for the territories website, October 13-18, 2010).

### **Egyptian Security Forces Prevent Weapons Smuggling into the Gaza Strip**

■ The Palestinian and Egyptian media reported that on October 18 Egyptian security forces seized a consignment of weapons intended for smuggling from through the tunnels Sinai into the Gaza Strip. It included 150 kilograms (330 pounds) of explosives, bullet-proof vests, 33 mines, 55 automatic rifles, ammunition and 25 hand grenades. The Egyptian security forces also exposed five tunnels used for smuggling merchandise and cars into the Gaza Strip. In one of the tunnels they seized large quantities merchandise and electrical appliances (Al-Quds, Miswari and Ma'an News Agency websites, October 18, 2010).



Egyptian security personnel near a tunnel opening (Ma'an News Agency, October 19, 2010).

### **Announcement Denouncing the Closing of the Headquarters of the Journalists' Union in Gaza**

■ On October 12 the security forces of the de facto Hamas administration raided the headquarters of the journalists' union in Gaza City, which had been under Fatah control, and closed it until further notice (Agence France-Presse, October 14, 2010). Members of the union's directorate were called in for interrogation. **The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) denounced the action, calling it "a violation of journalists' rights and a slap in the face of [the] Palestinians..."** (PNN website, October 13, 2010). **The French Foreign Ministry also denounced the act** (Agence France-Presse, October 13, 2010).

## Flotillas and Convoys to the Gaza Strip

### Egypt Bans Entry of 17 Lifeline 5 Organizers

■ Viva Palestina's aid convoy, Lifeline 5, has not yet left the Syrian port of Latakia, possibly following differences of opinion with the owners of the ship which is supposed to take the convoy to the Egyptian port of El Arish (Al-Jazeera TV, October 18, 2010). As of October 17 the port of El Arish had not yet received notice of the date of the ship's arrival (Misr Al-Jadeeda, October 17, 2010).

■ In addition, the Egyptian authorities said that they would ban 17 members of the Lifeline 3 convoy, including its head, George Galloway, from entering Egyptian territory. According to **Zaher Birawi, a Hamas activist in Britain who serves as the convoy's spokesman** (and whose entrance into Egypt was also banned), the Egyptian authorities did not provide reasons for the ban. A preliminary examination of the list of the banned activists indicates that **they were involved in violent confrontation between the Viva Palestina convoy and Egyptian security forces in January 2010 and/or were affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood or other radical Islamic organizations.**

■ Those banned from entering Egypt include British, Jordan and Turkish citizens, some of whom confronted the Egyptian security forces in January 2010, including the following:

- **George Galloway**, a former British MP, Hamas supporter and convoy organizer. Banned from entering Egyptian, he returned to Britain pleading "political necessity," and was replaced by **Kevin Ovenden, an extreme leftist activist from Britain.** Ovenden, one of the heads of Viva Palestina, **was also aboard the Mavi Marmara** (*Al-Dustour*, October 12, 2010).
- **Zaher Birawi**, a Hamas activist affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood. He lives in England and engages in intensive anti-Israel activity, and serves as Lifeline 5 spokesman. In the past he was involved in organizing land and sea convoys to the Gaza Strip, including the convoy which confronted the Egyptian authorities in January 2010.
- **Ron McKay**, British, Viva Palestina activist. He is team head for the current convoy. He participated in the January 2010 convoy as the head of US Viva Palestina.
- **Wa'el Akram Assa'ad al-Saqa**, engineer from Jordan. He is a long-standing member of the Muslim Brotherhood, and headed the group of Jordanian activists aboard the Mavi Marmara. He was formerly president of the Jordanian engineers' union.

- **Alaa' Abd al-Jawad Omar Burqan**, Jordanian, responsible for the labor unions' public relations. He is apparently linked to Islamic organizations. He was also aboard the Mavi Marmara.
- **Khader Ahmed Ismail al-Mashaih**, Jordanian, correspondent for the Muslim Brotherhood organ *Al-Sabil* (at least until 2007), and was in contact with the Muslim Brotherhood. He was also aboard the Mavi Marmara.



Viva Palestina activists in Latakia, Syria. The Arabic on the banner reads "Lifeline from Britain to the residents of Gaza" (Viva Palestina website, October 19, 2010)

- **The European flotilla:** The sailing date of the upgraded flotilla organized by the Freedom Flotilla 2 coalition has not yet been made public. According to its organizers, it will sail some time during the first six months of 2011. They have emphasized that the flotilla's objective was not to bring humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip but rather to make it clear that the Israeli closure of the Gaza Strip could be broken. **Ahmet Faruk Unsal**, IHH representative to the flotilla's organizing committee, said that his organization was weighing the possibility of sending a ship the same size as the Mavi Marmara to the flotilla.

### **French Activists Who Were Aboard the Mavi Marmara Filed Suit against Israel in the International Criminal Court in the Hague**

- Nine French citizens who were aboard the Mavi Marmara **filed a suit against Israel in the International Criminal Court in the Hague, accusing it of war crimes and crimes against humanity** (rfi.fr website, October 13, 2010). Similar suits were filed in two courts in France by the Comité de Bienfaisance et de Secours aux Palestiniens (CBSP), a fund designated by the American Treasury as a terrorism-supporting organization (ustreas.gov website, October 19, 2010; globaljihad.net website, May 15, 2008). The lawyer representing the plaintiffs in France and in the international court is Liliane Glock, a French human rights activist and lawyer (rfi.fr website, June 4, 2010).

## The Northern Front

### Iranian President Visits Lebanon

■ Iranian President Ahmadinejad visited Lebanon on October 13 and 14. He met with Lebanese President Michel Suleiman, Lebanese Prime Minister Sa'ad Hariri, and the chairman of the Lebanese Parliament Nabih Berri. They signed documents and memoranda of understandings dealing with cooperation on various issues (Fars News Agency, Iran, October 13, 2010).

■ Ahmadinejad participated in a rally in Beirut attended by thousands of Lebanese who waved Iranian flags and signs bearing his picture. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah delivered a speech broadcast on a giant screen. **Nasrallah called Ahmadinejad "the bulwark of the resistance."** He denied claims that Iran had "an Iranian plan" and was contributing to "a regional civil war," and said that "what Iran is doing in our region is fulfilling a divine duty," and that it was in fact preventing civil war. He added that **Iran aspired to have the land of Palestine returned to its true owners "from the [Mediterranean] sea to the [Jordan] river," and for the Palestinian refugees to return to it** (Al-Manar TV, October 13, 2010).

■ Ahmadinejad gave a speech in Lebanon in which he strongly denounced Israel and the United States. **He called Lebanon "the school of the resistance"** and again called (as he had in the UN) for the appointment of an independent committee to investigate the events of September 11, which he claimed were planned to provide the United States with an excuse to intervene in the Middle East. He suggested that the UN prove its worth and recognize the "Palestinian rights," and claimed that time was running out for Israel (nowlebanon.com website, October 13, 2010).



October 14, 2010, Hassan Nasrallah presents Ahmadinejad with a rifle claimed to have been taken from an IDF soldier during the Second Lebanon War (dailystar.com.lb website, October 16, 2010)

■ On his second day in Lebanon Ahmadinejad visited south Lebanon, including the town of Bint Jbeil. He delivered a speech there in which he praised the "Lebanese resistance" (i.e., Hezbollah). He said the "Zionists have no choice but to surrender to the nations of the region and return to their original homes," i.e., to leave the State of Israel (Fars News Agency, Iran, October 14, 2010). He then met with Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and went back to Iran (Al-Manar TV, October 14, 2010).