



**The Meir Amit Intelligence
and Terrorism Information**

News of Terrorism and the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict

September 21-27, 2011



Mahmoud Abbas shows a copy of the appeal to have "Palestine" recognized as a member state during his speech at the UN (Wafa News Agency, September 23, 2011)

Overview

- On September 23 the Palestinian move in the UN culminated with the lodging of an appeal to the Security Council, delivered through the Secretary General, to recognize "Palestine" as a full member. The Security Council has begun deliberations, which are likely to take a number of weeks or even months to complete.
- Mahmoud Abbas later gave a polemic speech in the General Assembly, rife with accusations against Israel. Benjamin Netanyahu, who spoke after him, presented Israel's fundamental positions in the conflict and its desire for peace, and called on Mahmoud Abbas to meet with him immediately for peace talks.
- In the meantime, the International Quartet was quick to provide its own diplomatic path to the move in the UN. On September 23 it issued a statement calling for Israel and the Palestinians to return to direct negotiations within a month. The Palestinians (unofficially) expressed reservations because the call did not

demand a freeze on construction in the settlements and did not state that the negotiations would be based on the 1967 borders. Israel and the Palestinians can be expected to discuss the Quartet's proposal in the near future and to provide their official responses.

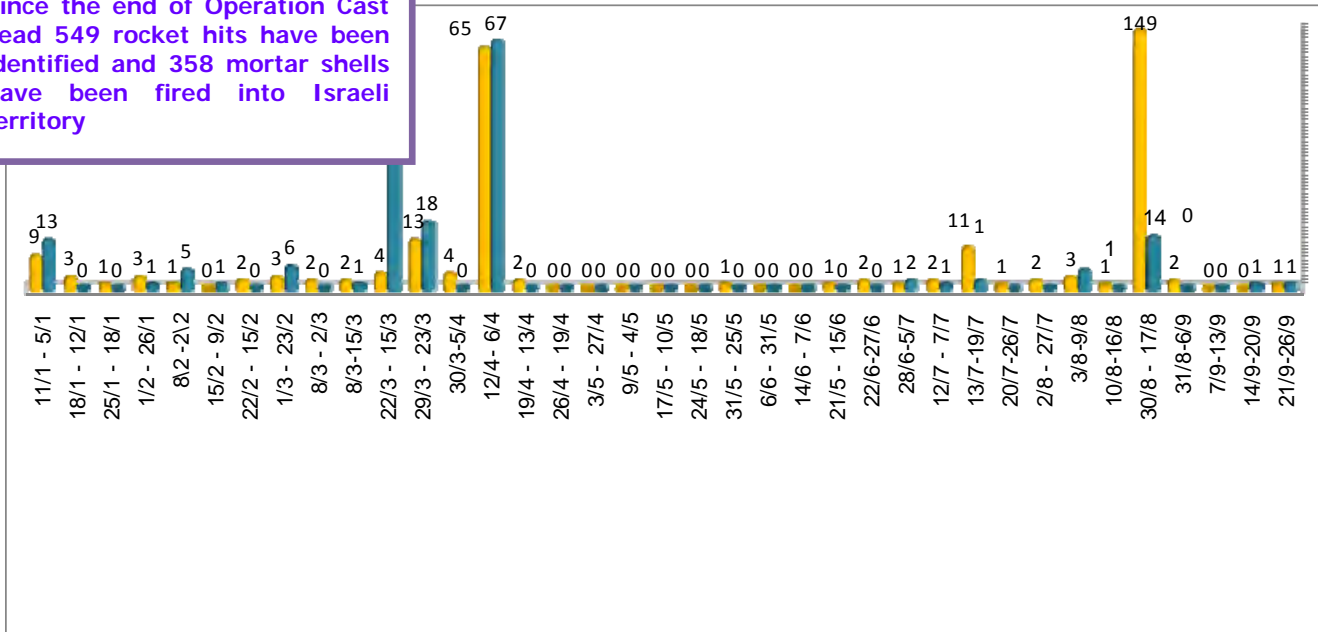
■ Demonstrations and protests were held in Judea and Samaria this past week, climaxing in a mass rally in Ramallah during Mahmoud Abbas' speech. In most cases the events were controlled. An exception was a violent Palestinian demonstration in the region of the village of Qasra (south of Nablus), which ended with the death of a Palestinian during a confrontation between Palestinians and IDF forces. Sporadic rocket and mortar shell fire from the Gaza Strip continues to attack the western Negev.

Israel's South Important Terrorism Events

- On September 26 a rocket hit was identified in an open area in the western Negev. There were no casualties and no damage was done.
- On September 22 a mortar shell hit was identified in an open area in the western Negev. There were no casualties and no damage was done.

Rockets and Mortar Shells Fired into Israeli Territory¹

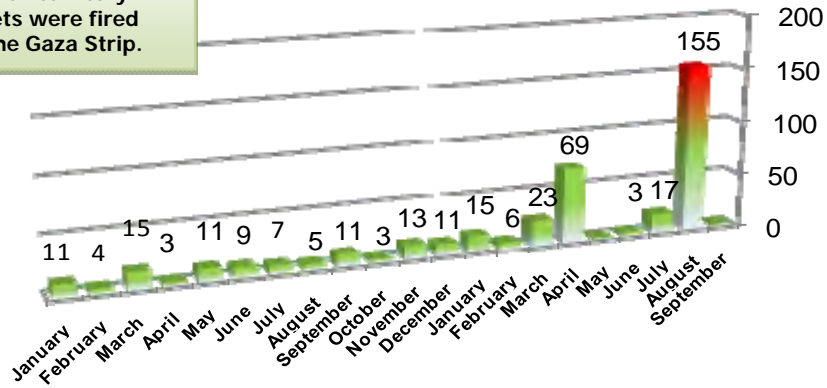
Since the end of Operation Cast Lead 549 rocket hits have been identified and 358 mortar shells have been fired into Israeli territory



¹ The statistics do not include rockets and mortar shells fired which fell inside the Gaza Strip. As of September 26, 2011.

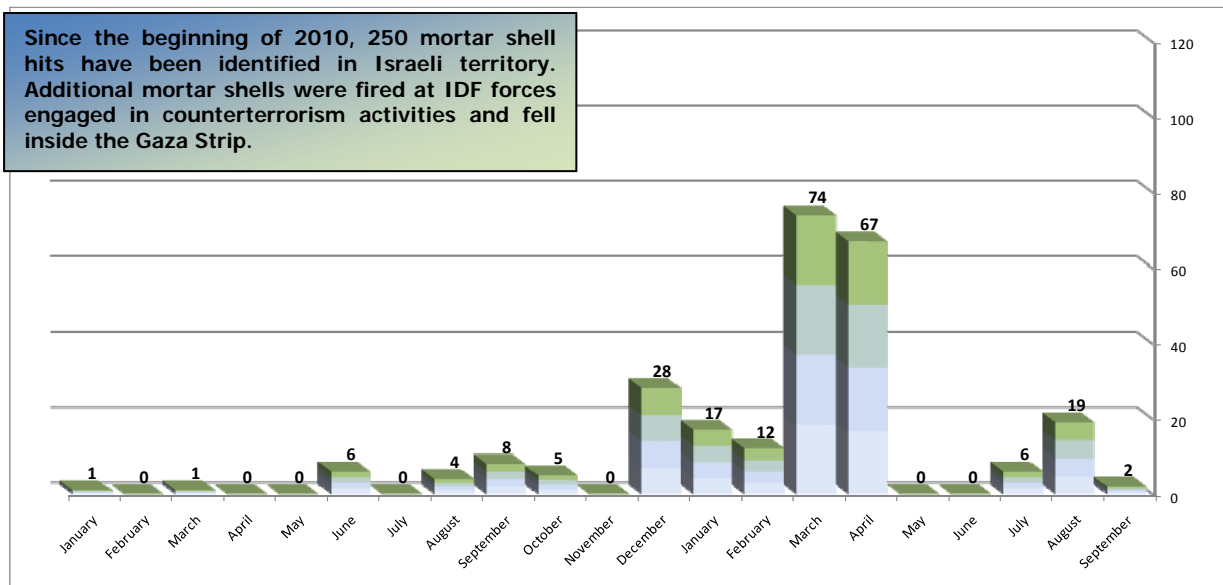
Rocket Fire – Monthly Distribution

Since the beginning of 2010, 504 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory. Additional rockets were fired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.



Mortar Shell Fire – Monthly Distribution

Since the beginning of 2010, 250 mortar shell hits have been identified in Israeli territory. Additional mortar shells were fired at IDF forces engaged in counterterrorism activities and fell inside the Gaza Strip.



Judea and Samaria

The Situation on the Ground

■ As part of the campaign which accompanied and supported the Palestinian move in the UN, during the past week there were many demonstrations and protests throughout Judea and Samaria. They climaxed on September 23, the date of Mahmoud Abbas' speech in the UN. There were also local clashes between Palestinians and Israeli settlers at various friction points. In most instances the demonstrations and protests were kept under

control by the IDF and the Palestinian security forces, which had deployed beforehand.

■ **The main events of September 23 were the following:**

- **The central event was a mass rally in Ramallah organized by the Palestinian Authority during Mahmoud Abbas' speech, which** was broadcast on a giant screen in Clock Square. The rally was attended by tens of thousands of Palestinians who shouted "With spirit and blood we will redeem you, Palestine."



The rally in Ramallah, with Mahmoud Abbas' speech at the UN broadcast on a giant screen (Safa News Agency, September 23, 2011)

- In **Nablus** a march was held where slogans were shouted against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Marches were also held in **Bethlehem and Qalqiliya** (Wafa News Agency and Facebook, September 23, 2011).
- **A violent demonstration of 300 Palestinians was held in the village of Qasra, south of Nablus.** Palestinians threw stones at the Israeli security forces, who responded with riot control measures and finally with light arms fire. **One Palestinian was killed and two were wounded. Five IDF soldiers sustained minor wounds.**The event is being investigated by the IDF and the Palestinian security forces (IDF Spokesman's Website, September 26, 2011).



Palestinians in the village of Qasra throw stones at IDF forces (Safa News Agency, September 23, 2011)

■ **A demonstration of 200 Palestinians was held at the Qalandia checkpoint north of Jerusalem.** The Palestinians threw stones at the Israeli security forces, who responded with riot control measures (IDF Spokesman's Website, September 23, 2011).



Palestinians at the Qalandia checkpoint confront the Israeli security forces and throw stones (Safa News Agency, September 23, 2011)

■ **This past week there were a number of attacks involving stones thrown at Israeli civilian vehicles.** According to the Israeli police and the IDF, **a drive-by attack in which stones were thrown at an Israel vehicle resulted in a car crash near Kiryat Arba, killing an Israeli civilian and his infant son, September 23.** The windshield was found pierced by a stone and a large stone, not indigenous to the area, was found inside the vehicle. The incident is under investigation (Israel Channel 10 TV, September 25, 2011).



The wrecked car in which the father and son were killed (Picture courtesy of Israel Channel 10 TV, September 25, 2011)

Developments in the Gaza Strip

Shipment of Weapons for the Gaza Strip

■ The Egyptian security forces uncovered eight anti-aircraft missiles and their launchers in Ismailia. The missiles were apparently en route to the Sinai Peninsula and from there to be smuggled into the Gaza Strip (Al-Gumhouria, September 25, 2011).



Missiles and launchers seized in Ismailia (Al-Yawm Al-Saba'a, September 25, 2011)

The Political Front

The Palestinian Move in the UN – Update

■ On September 23 Mahmoud Abbas lodged a **formal request** with UN Secretary General Ban-ki Moon, to be delivered to the Security Council, **for the acceptance of the state of "Palestine" as a full UN member state**. Mahmoud Abbas and Palestinian spokesmen repeatedly stated they were giving the Security Council time to deliberate **before they appealed to the General Assembly**. So far, **it is not clear how long the deliberations will take**. Talking to correspondents on the return flight from New York, Mahmoud Abbas said he hoped they would take weeks, not months (Yedioth Aharonoth, September 25, 2011). However, according to various reports in the media, **the Security Council deliberations may take several weeks and possibly several months**.

■ **In the meantime, the International Quartet was quick to provide a diplomatic path of its own to the move in the UN**. Following the Palestinian appeal to the Security Council, on September 23 the Quartet issued a statement calling on Israel and the Palestinians to **return to direct negotiations immediately** (without the preconditions demanded by the Palestinian Authority) and to **hold a preparatory meeting within a month**. The Quartet expects the meetings to be used to present comprehensive suggestions for the issues of borders and security, that significant progress will be made **within half a year and the**

negotiations will be completed within a year. The Quartet also called for **an international conference to be held in Moscow, but did not name a specific date.** An appeal was made to both sides to **refrain from "provocative actions"** which might cause the negotiations to fail, and both sides were reminded of their **commitment to the Road Map.**

■ Israeli and Palestinian leaders are expected to deliberate on the International Quartet's proposal in the near future and to provide an official response. In the meantime, **the Palestinians have expressed reservations concerning the Quartet's proposal,** even though they did not reject it outright. Talking to correspondents on his way back to Ramallah, Mahmoud Abbas said that the Quartet's proposal was unacceptable **because it did not demand a freeze on construction in the settlements and because it did not call for negotiations based on the 1967 borders** (Yedioth Aharonoth, September 25, 2011). However, **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu,** when asked whether he accepted the Quartet's proposal, replied that **he was definitely in favor of entering into negotiations.** He added that the International Quartet's timetable seemed realistic, despite the difficulties involved (Israel Channel 2 TV, September 24; Israel Radio Reshet Bet, September 26, 2011).

■ On September 25 Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas returned to Ramallah and spoke to a crowd of thousands who had come to welcome him. He stressed that he had sent a message to the UN about the **"pressing need" for an independent Palestinian state as part of the "Palestinian spring."** Indirectly referring to the Israeli prime minister's call for unconditional peace talks, he said that "we want to realize our rights peacefully through negotiations, but not negotiations at any cost". He added that the diplomatic process had begun, but there was **still a rocky road ahead** (Palestinian TV, September 25, 2011).

Mahmoud Abbas' Speech in the UN General Assembly

■ **On September 23 Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas gave a speech before the UN General Assembly in New York.** He gave it after he had presented UN Secretary General Ban-ki Moon with the Palestinian request to have "Palestine" join the UN as a member nation. **The speech was polemic and rife with accusations against Israel.** Its main points were the following (ITIC emphasis throughout):

- He said he had come from **Palestine, the Holy Land,** the land of divine religions, the land of the ascension of Muhammad and the birthplace of Jesus Christ [**with no specific mention of Judaism**]. He said he had come to speak on behalf of the Palestinian people, in the "homeland" and the "diaspora," to say that after 63 years of suffering [i.e., since 1948] they had had enough. It was time, he said, for the Palestinian people to have freedom and independence.

● **The Palestinians' goals:** The goal of the Palestinian people, he said, was the **realization of their inalienable national rights in their independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.** It would be located on all the land of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, which Israel occupied in the June 1967 war, in conformity with the resolutions of international legitimacy. Mahmoud Abbas claimed that Palestinian efforts were not aimed at isolating Israel or delegitimizing it, **only aim to de-legitimize the settlement activities, the occupation and apartheid.** The Palestinians, he claimed, were ready to establish an independent state, which had been confirmed by many international institutions.

● **Blaming Israel for the failure of the negotiations:** Mahmoud Abbas stressed what he called the intensive efforts of the Palestinians to renew the negotiations, which crashed because of the positions of the Israeli government. The **core of the problem,** he said, was the refusal of the government of Israel to commit itself to negotiations based on international law and UN resolutions. However, he said that the Palestinians extended their hands to the Israeli people for peace-making.

● **Denouncing Israel's actions against the Palestinians:** Mahmoud Abbas denounced the expansion of the Israeli settlements, the construction in East Jerusalem, the building of the "racist separation wall," and the Israeli "blockade" of the Gaza Strip. He also denounced the 2008 "war of aggression" [i.e., Operation Cast Lead] which resulted in massive destruction of homes, schools, hospitals, and mosques [**Note:** The terrorism from the Gaza Strip and the massive, ongoing rocket fire into Israel territory which preceded Operation Cast Lead were not mentioned.]

● **The Palestinian catastrophe [Nakba] of 1948:** Mahmoud Abbas claimed that the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948, which led to the creation of the refugee problem, was one of the worst operations of uprooting [and] destruction ever seen. However, he said, **the Palestinians only wanted a state on the lands occupied by Israel in 1967.**

● **The problem of the Palestinian refugees:** Mahmoud Abbas said that the Palestinians adhered to the option of negotiations and to all the agreements signed with Israel so far, as part of their goal of reaching a final solution for all the open issues, among them **a solution for the Palestinian "refugee problem" in accordance with UN Resolution 194** (which the Palestinian claim recognizes the refugees' so-called "right of return").

● **A denouncement of terrorism, especially state [i.e., Israeli] terrorism:** The Palestinian people adhere to the renouncement of violence and rejection and condemning of terrorism in all its forms, especially State terrorism. However, he said, the Palestinians would continue their **popular peaceful resistance** to the Israeli occupation and its settlement and apartheid policies.

Hamas' Reaction

■ **Ismail Haniya**, head of the de-facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip, denounced the Palestinian appeal to the UN and made it clear that as far as Hamas was concerned, a Palestinian state would not be achieved by begging for it but rather by "liberation." He called the UN an organization "ruled by America and others," and therefore, he said, there was no point in appealing to it (Ma'an News Agency, September 23, 2011).

Benjamin Netanyahu's Speech in the UN General Assembly²

■ **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke to the General Assembly** after Mahmoud Abbas. **He presented Israel's fundamental positions in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, stressed Israel's aspirations for peace and called on Mahmoud Abbas to meet with him immediately for peace talks.**

■ The main points of his speech were the following (ITIC emphasis throughout):

- **Israel seeks peace:** Netanyahu stressed that Israel had "extended its hand in peace from the moment it was established," and that he was extending it now. He said that Israel was prepared to make "**painful compromises**" **if promised a genuine peace, and called on Mahmoud Abbas to meet with him now, today, in the UN, and to talk directly.** However, he said, "Israel wants peace with Palestinian state, the Palestinians want a state without peace."

- **Lessons learned from the unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip:** Israel, he said, "withdrew from Lebanon in 2000 and from every square inch of Gaza in 2005. That didn't calm the Islamic storm, the militant Islamic storm that threatens us." Whenever Israel withdrew, he said, "**the moderates didn't defeat the radicals, the moderates were devoured by the radicals.**" When Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip to the 1967 borders, he said, "we didn't get peace. We got war. We got Iran, which through its proxy Hamas promptly kicked out the Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian Authority collapsed in a day -- in one day."

- **The need for real security arrangements within a peace agreement:** Netanyahu stressed that to defend itself, Israel needed to "maintain a long-term Israeli military presence in critical strategic areas in the West Bank" and **security arrangements which would prevent threats to its citizens and air space.** Therefore, he stressed that "The Palestinians should first make peace with Israel and then get their state."

² <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/full-transcript-of-netanyahu-speech-at-un-general-assembly-1.386464>. All quotations taken from the Haaretz transcript of the speech.

- **The Jewish nature of the State of Israel:** Netanyahu called on the Palestinians to recognize the Jewish nature of the State of Israel, as the UN did 64 years ago. He also called on the Palestinians "to give up the fantasy of flooding Israel with millions of Palestinians" [i.e., to give up what the Palestinians call the "right of return").
- **The source of the conflict:** Netanyahu said that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had existed for "half a century before there was a single Israeli settlement in the West Bank." **The core of the conflict was not, he said, the Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria:** the settlements were the result of the conflict, not its core.
- **Condemnation of the UN's negative treatment of Israel:** The UN, he said, had an "automatic majority" that could decide anything. He said he hoped that eventually the truth would break through, even in the hostile UN arena.
- **Fear of the rise of Iranian-led "militant Islam," which sought nuclear arms.** He said he feared the "10,000 missiles and Grad rockets supplied by Iran" and the weapons flowing into the Gaza Strip from the Sinai Peninsula. He asked what was to prevent the same thing from happening in the West Bank, with Israeli cities "a few hundred meters" from the edge of the West Bank.
- **Netanyahu mentioned abducted Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit,** held by Hamas in violation of international law and without visits from the International Red Cross, **and called of the UN to effect his release.**

Hamas' Reaction

- High-ranking Hamas figures denounced Netanyahu's speech. **Ismail Haniya**, head of the de-facto Hamas administration, claimed it was "arrogant, intended to market a 'false version' of Israel and defend the 'siege of the Gaza Strip,'" which was the "crime of the era." **Sami Abu Zuhri**, Hamas spokesman, claimed that the speech was "full of lies...and an attempt to make Israeli look like a victim" (Safa News Agency, and Hamas' Palestine-info website, September 24, 2011).

American President Obama's Speech in the UN General Assembly

- **On September 21 President Barack Obama delivered a speech to the UN General Assembly in which he also mentioned the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.** He said that he believed in the Palestinians' right to a state of their own, **adding that a genuine peace could only be realized between the Israelis and Palestinians themselves.** He called on both sides to reach a comprehensive agreement about the issues of **security, borders** [with no mention of 1967], **Jerusalem and the refugees.** He said **there was no "shortcut" to peace, and that it would not be achieved through statements and resolutions at the**

United Nations. He expressed the commitment of the United States to the visions of a Palestinian state and the security of Israel, a state surrounded by neighbors who were threatening to wipe it off the map. He said that **Israel was entitled to recognition from its neighbors and normal relations with them**, and that Israel's friends **had to aspire to a solution of two states for two peoples** (UN website, September 21, 2011).

■ **High-ranking figures in the Palestinian Authority expressed disappointment with Obama's speech.** For example, Yasser Abd Rabbo, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, denounced Obama's demand that the Palestinians begin "vague, unrealistic" negotiations without a clear foundation. Reacting spontaneously to the speech, Palestinians organized protest marches and demonstrations throughout Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, at which they burned American flags and pictures of President Obama (Safa News Agency, September 20; Agence France-Presse, September 21, 2011).



Two anti-American demonstrations on September 23. Left: Palestinians burn the American flag at a demonstration at the Qalandia checkpoint, where they confronted Israeli security forces. Right: Palestinians burn Israeli flags and a picture of American President Barack Obama at a demonstration in the village of Al-Nebi Saleh (Safa News Agency, September 23, 2011)