



**The Meir Amit Intelligence
and Terrorism Information**

News of Terrorism and the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict

June 29-July 5, 2011



Activists aboard the Canadian ship Tahrir confront the Greek security forces
(Tahrir.ca/node/1976 website, July 4, 2011).

Overview

- This past week sporadic rocket fire and mortar shell attacks continued from the Gaza Strip. One rocket and two mortar shells fell in the western Negev.
- The organizers of the flotilla face increasing difficulties, the most consequential of which is the ban Greece placed on their sailing to the Gaza Strip. They made a number of unsuccessful attempts to set sail. The Canadian and American vessels, which tried to leave port without proper authorization, were halted by the Greek Coast Guard and returned to port, and several crew members were detained. According to media reports, the French yacht Dignité slipped away from Greek waters and is sailing to the Gaza Strip. The organizers and Arab and Palestinian sources (among them Hamas) denounced the Greek authorities.

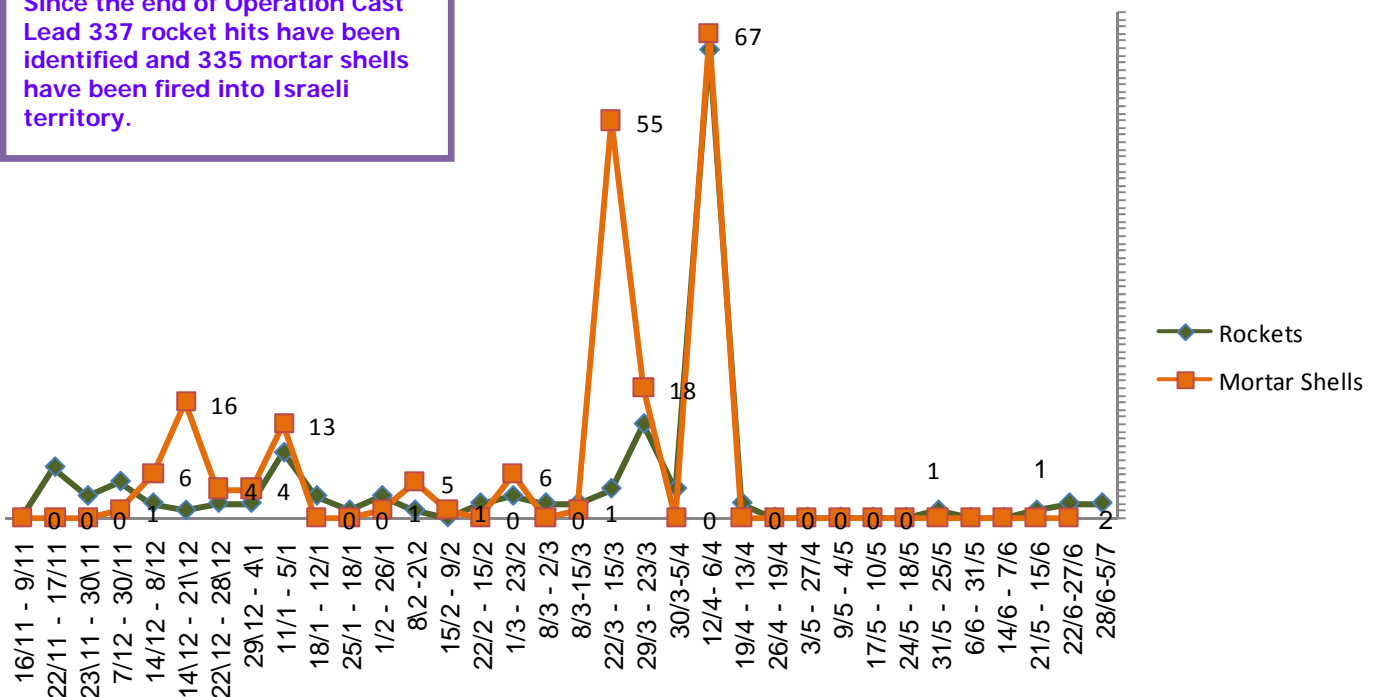
■ Dozens of anti-Israeli organizations and activists, most of them Palestinian and a few of them Western, are planning to hold a mass propaganda display at Ben-Gurion International Airport on July 8. Hundreds of activists and ordinary passengers are supposed to fly to the airport on commercial flights. The organizers are that the participants may be delayed by the Israeli security forces, detained and deported. In addition, they are planning a series of events in Judea and Samaria and Israel itself with the participation of local and foreign activists (A detailed bulletin about the planned events can be found on the ITIC website.)

Important Terrorism Events Israel's South

■ This past week a rocket hit was identified in Israeli territory (July 3). It fell in an open area in the western Negev. There were no casualties and no damage was done. On July 2 two mortar shells fell 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

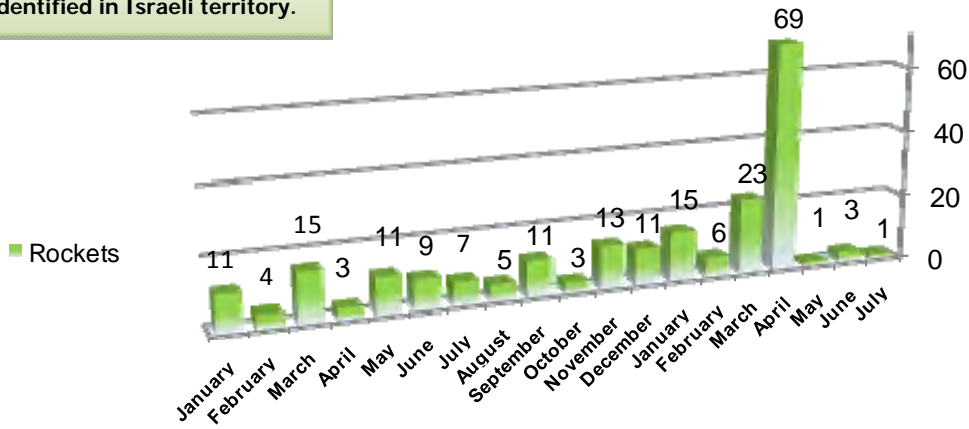
Since the end of Operation Cast Lead 337 rocket hits have been identified and 335 mortar shells have been fired into Israeli territory.



¹ The statistics do not include the mortar shells fired at IDF soldiers patrolling the border fence which fell inside the Gaza Strip. As of July 5, 2011.

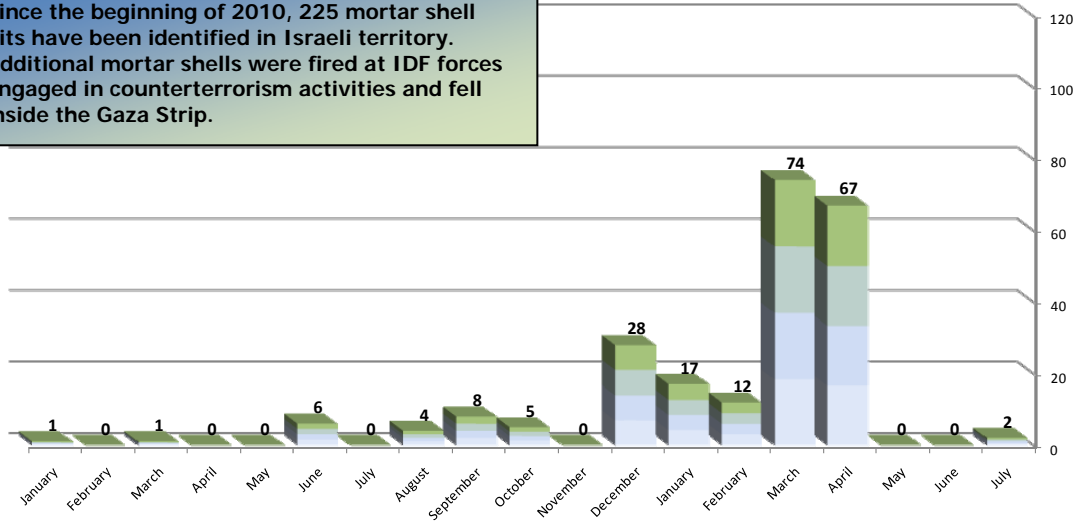
Rocket Fire – Monthly Distribution

Since the beginning of 2010, 221 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory.



Mortar Shell Fire – Monthly Distribution

Since the beginning of 2010, 225 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.



Israeli Air Force Attacks

■ Israeli aircraft attacked a terrorist squad in the central Gaza Strip which was preparing to fire a rocket into Israeli territory. Two of the terrorist operatives were killed and another was wounded (Ynet, July 5, 2011).

Judea and Samaria

The Situation on the Ground

■ This past week the Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities throughout Judea and Samaria, detaining Palestinians suspected of terrorist activities and confiscating weapons.

■ This week many confrontations and violent incidents were recorded between Israeli settlers and Palestinians. There were also a number of anti-Israeli demonstrations at the traditional friction points throughout Judea and Samaria. The demonstrators, among them Palestinians, Israeli civilians and foreigners, confronted the Israeli security forces, who responded with riot control measures.

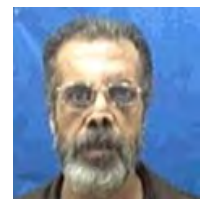
Exposure of a Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine Network in the Ramallah Area²

■ In recent months the Israel security forces **exposed a PFLP network in the Ramallah area**. The network was hierarchical and comprised of a number of cells. Among its members were terrorist operatives who had served sentences in Israeli jails. Some of them were residents of East Jerusalem and carried Israeli identity cards.

■ **The network planned terrorist attacks**, including abducting an IDF soldier, shooting at Israeli settlements and/or soldiers in the Ramallah and Jerusalem regions, placing IEDs in Jerusalem (including one in a hotel in the Sheikh Jarrah area), a terrorist attack at the settlement of Halamish (north of Ramallah), throwing Molotov cocktails and killing a collaborator as practice for killing Israelis. The cell also acquired weapons, including guns and silencers.

■ The network's central operatives were:

- **Nasser Abu Hadir**: Born 1961, resident of Shuafat (North Jerusalem), holds an Israeli identity card, senior PFLP operative, has a history of terrorist activity. Wounded in 1981 while preparing a bomb. Was imprisoned, released 1986. After his release continued terrorist activities and was detained a number of times. Served as cell liaison with the external PFLP headquarters. In February 2011 went to Jordan and met with senior PLFP



² According to the website of the Israel Security Agency.

figures in Syria to acquire funding for the cell's activity and to arrange for its operatives to receive [military-terrorist] training abroad.

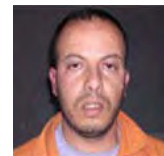
- **Walid Habas:** Born 1980, resident of the village of Aqab (North Jerusalem), holds an Israeli identity card. Was a party to the attack on Israeli soldier Assaf Miara.³ Jailed and released in 2007. After his release recruited operatives for the PFLP. Also acquired weapons for the operatives he enlisted. Abu Hadir discussed Habas' leaving for Iran for military-terrorist training.



- **Fares Barghouti:** Born 1978, resident of Beit Rima in the Ramallah region. Between 2001 and 2005 was imprisoned for PFLP activity. Released early as a gesture of goodwill to Mahmoud Abbas, returned to operational activity and detained again. Was responsible for acquiring weapons for his cell.



- **Nael Tuhi:** Born 1980, resident of Ramallah. Recruited operatives. Suggested manufacturing missiles.



- **Sam Rantisi:** Born 1981, resident of Ramallah. In the past manufactured IEDs. Was imprisoned. Enlisted operatives and planned terrorist attacks.



Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Crossings

■ This past week between 219 and 246 trucks carrying merchandise entered the Gaza Strip every day (Website of the Israeli government coordinator for the territories, July 5, 2011).

Ismail Haniya: Gaza Strip Does Not Need Building Materials

■ **Ismail Haniya**, head of the de facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip, stressed that **the Gaza Strip was currently at the "post-blockade stage," and the stage of "building and projects"** had begun. He said that the era of "five years of blockade" had ended, and that projects were being carried out using "thousands of tons of building materials [which] fill the cities of the Gaza Strip," and that there was no need to import such materials through the crossings (Safa News Agency, July 3, 2011). His remarks directly contradict the false picture of the conditions in the Gaza Strip painted by the organizers of the flotillas and

³ On December 2, 1998, Assaf Miara was standing at the Ayosh junction north of Ramallah, and dozens of Palestinians who were there at the time beat him around the head and stole his weapon. He tried to defend himself and only with the help of a Palestinian student did he manage to get away from his attackers and flee the scene.

convoys, who pretend that there is a humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and a lack of materials and merchandise because of the so-called Israeli "blockade."

Palestinian Islamic Jihad Training Exercises

■ On June 29 Palestinian Islamic Jihad operatives held a military parade in the Zeitoun neighborhood of Gaza City to celebrate the end of a series of courses. Dozens of PIJ operatives participated in the parade holding a variety of weapons, including anti-tank missiles (Jerusalem Brigades website, June 29, 2011).



Palestinian Islamic Jihad operatives train (Website of the PIJ's military wing, June 29, 2011).
The Internal Palestinian Arena

The Internal Palestinian Arena

Raed Salah, Head of the Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel, Arrested in Britain

■ Raed Salah, head of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel, was **arrested in London** in violation of an order banning him from entering the country. It is not clear how he passed through British passport control. He went to Britain to participate in the "Palestine Day" events which took place on July 2 (Israel Channel 10 TV, June 29, 2011).

■ **The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip reacted strongly to his arrest:** an article in the Hamas daily Felesteen claimed that the arrest exposed Britain's "true face" and showed it was not a genuine democracy. According to the article, the current British Prime Minister "was endowed with a large measure of hatred and racism...more than his predecessor...who caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis." It also accused Britain of persecuting "the oppressed," instead of "atoning" for having caused "a cancerous entity [i.e., Israel] to be planted in the heart of the Islamic world" (Hamas' Felesteen, July 4, 2011).

■ **Dozens of Palestinian Islamic Jihad activists demonstrated in front of the British Cultural Centre in Gaza City to express support for Raed Salah after his arrest. Khader Habib**, a senior figure in the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, accused the British government of capitulating to the pressure of the "Jewish lobby," saying that Britain had committed another crime by arresting Raed Salah, after having "given the Jews a 'national homeland' in Palestine." He said that the demonstration was only the first step in the organization's response to the arrest (Safa News Agency, June 30, 2011).



The Palestinian Islamic Jihad demonstrates in support of Raed Salah (Safa News Agency, June 30, 2011).

■ **Raed Salah was invited to Britain by anti-Israeli organizations, among them the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign (PSC).** The PSC is an anti-Israeli organization working to delegitimize the State of Israel and stands at the head of a British campaign to boycott Israel and its products (BDS). Other radical Islamic organizations were involved in issuing the invitation, such as MEMO (Middle East Monitor), headed by Daoud Abdallah, one of the heads of the Palestinian Return Centre (the PRC, an anti-Israeli propaganda center in London, affiliated with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, outlawed in Israel).⁴

The Political Front

Mahmoud Abbas Calls for Israel to Recognize a Palestinian State within the 1967 Borders

■ Palestinian Authority Chairman **Mahmoud Abbas**, speaking before the Dutch Parliament, called on Israel "to recognize an independent Palestinian state within the 1967 borders," because, he claimed, the Palestinian people had recognized Israel's right to exist. He called on Israel to accept the main points of the speech given by American President Barack Obama as the basis for negotiations and to aspire to the two-state solution based on the 1967 borders, with agreed land transfers. He also called on Israel to stop building in the settlements. He said

⁴ See the DarulIsra.org.uk website, June 30; Hurryupharry.org website, July 1; Middleeastmonitor.org.uk website, June 24, 2011. For the Palestinian Return Centre, see the March 8, 2010 ITIC bulletin "The Palestinian Return Centre: London-based center for anti-Israeli propaganda, affiliated with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, outlawed in Israel. It promotes the demand of the Palestinian refugees to return as a way of destroying Israel" at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/ipc_e171.pdf.

that negotiation was the solution to the conflict and that violence should be avoided. He said that the two-state solution did not negate Israel's legitimacy and right to exist (Wafa News Agency, June 30, 2011).

Salam Fayyad, Palestinian Authority Prime Minister, Called on the Palestinians Not to Develop Expectations from the Planned Appeal to the UN

■ **Salam Fayyad**, prime minister of the Palestinian Authority, **was pessimistic about the success of the appeal the Palestinians plan to lodge with the United Nations in September. He claimed it would not have a "dramatic outcome," and called on the Palestinians not to develop expectations.**

■ He was doubtful, he said, about the correctness of the move, because the Palestinians did not need "a symbolic victory" but rather a genuine change in the Israeli "occupation," which, he claimed, would not be achieved by the appeal to the United Nations (AP, June 28, 2011). However, **Nabil Shaath**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, responded to Salam Fayyad by saying that the appeal to the UN was an important step because it would exert pressure on Israel (Al-Jazeera TV, June 30, 2011).

Israel and the Palestinian Authority

Israeli-Palestinian Contacts Concerning the Transfer of Terrorists' Bodies Held by Israel

■ **Hussein al-Sheikh**, minister of civil affairs for the Palestinian Authority, said that the **PA had reached an agreement with Israel over the transfer of the bodies of 84 Palestinians held by Israel**, who, he said, had been involved in attacks against Israel since 1967. He said the Palestinians intended to give them national funerals attended by senior PA members.

■ Israeli sources confirmed that contacts had been made, but claimed that no agreement had yet been reached. **Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak said** on July 5 that **the move had been postponed to examine closely the identities of the bodies to verify exactly whom Israel was transferring**, among other reasons, **because of considerations related to the return of the abducted Israel soldier Gilad Shalit**. He said that the talks had been postponed to make it possible to carry out the examinations (Announcement from the Ministry of Defense, July 5, 2011).

Salam Fayyad: The Nonviolent Struggle in Bila'in Will Continue

■ Following changes in the route of the security fence near the village of Bila'in, Salam Fayyad, Palestinian Authority prime minister, praised the move, calling it "the beginning of victory and the end of the occupation." **He glorified the "nonviolent resistance"** which, he claimed, had overcome "the strongest military power in the region." However, he added that **"the residents of Bila'in will continue their nonviolent struggle" to restore "the rest of their lands"** (Wafa News Agency, June 29, 2011).

■ The Israeli media reported that every Friday the residents of Bila'in plan to build a permanent structure on the lands restored to the village to change the situation on the ground. The building, according to the report, would replace the demonstrations, and **Israeli civilians and foreigners would also participate in the activity**. The Palestinians are of the opinion that Israel will take steps against the building because such construction requires an Israeli permit (Ynet, June 28, 2011).

The Flotilla to the Gaza Strip – Update

Overview

■ After technical and bureaucratic delays which prevented the ships from setting sail on their appointed dates, the Greek government decided to take additional steps to prevent them from departing for the Gaza Strip. On July 1 a Greek minister officially announced that **ships flying the Greek or any other flag were forbidden to sail from Greek waters to the region of the Gaza Strip**. Following the announcement the Greek Coast Guard received orders to take all steps necessary to implement the decision (Palestinesolidarity.org website, July 2, 2011).

■ The Greek foreign minister suggested that **the flotilla be cancelled and the cargos of humanitarian assistance be transferred to the Gaza Strip through the ports of Ashdod or El Arish** in coordination with UN agencies (Greek foreign ministry website, July 4). He said that he had discussed the issue with Mahmoud Abbas. The flotilla activists rejected the suggestion, claiming that Mahmoud Abbas' attitude was a "stab in the back" (Safa News Agency, July 4, 2011). They added that transferring the humanitarian assistance through the two ports mentioned would draw world opinion away from the "siege" of the Gaza Strip. They demanded to sail directly from Greece or Cyprus to the Gaza Strip (Freegaza.org website, July 5, 2011).

■ Despite the difficulties, the organizers of the flotilla have not abandoned their plans to depart for the Gaza Strip (Freegaza.org website, July 3, 2011). **During the week they made a number of (unsuccessful) attempts to depart**. Mustafa Barghouti, one of the flotilla

activists, said in an interview that despite the mishaps and difficulties, another attempt would be made on July 5 (Hamas' Paltoday website, July 4, 2011). **Beforehand, the American and Canadian vessels had attempted to depart without proper authorization from the Greek government, but were halted by the Greek Coast Guard.**

- The ships which tried to set sail or sailed without authorization were the following:

The American Ship

- On July 1 the American ship *The Audacity of Hope* attempted to set sail. The Greek Coast Guard halted it, brought it back to port and arrested the captain for leaving port without permission, endangering the lives of the passengers, and not obeying police orders. The crew was requested to stay aboard the ship. Thirty-six passengers stayed aboard in a show of solidarity with the captain and crew (Ustogaza.org website, June 2, 2011).

- The following day eight passengers announced they would go on a hunger strike in front of the American embassy in Athens. They were arrested by the Greek authorities and released a short time later (Ustogaza.org website, July 3, 2011)



The Greek Coast Guard aboard the American ship (Irishshiptogaza.org website)

The Canadian Ship

- The Canadian ship *Tahrir*, anchored in the port of Agios Nikolaos in Crete, attempted to set sail on the evening of July 4 without official authorization. A short time later it was halted by a Greek Coast Guard vessel and was returned to port. According to one of the activists aboard the ship the coast guard used water cannons. When the ship was tugged back to port it hit a concrete wall and its fuel tank was damaged (Twitter of one of the activists on board, July 4, 2011).

- The passengers set up two wooden boards in front of the wheelhouse to make it difficult to take over the ship. When asked who the captain was, each passenger claimed it was he. When the ship returned to port the passengers refused to disembark. A number of

correspondents were found on board, among them one from Iranian English-language TV and one from the Turkish News Agency (Amira Hass for Haaretz, July 5, 2011).

The French Yacht

■ The French yacht *Dignité (Karama)*, which set sail from Corsica, reached Athens on July 2 (Agence France-Presse, July 2, 2011). **On July 4 it attempted to depart for the Gaza Strip from the port of Salamis, a small port where it had remained hidden for three days.** There were several activists on board, some of them from Tunisia. One of them was Palestinian activist Mustafa Barghouti (Voice of Palestine Radio, July 4, 2011). According to the media, the yacht, carrying nine activists, succeeded in slipping away from Greek territorial waters. It reached international waters on its way to the Gaza Strip (Yedioth Aharonoth, July 6, 2011).

Responses to the Greek Stance

■ Palestinians and Arabs denounced the Greek stance:

- **Senior Hamas figure Ismail Radwan** denounced the Greek stance, which prevented the ships of the flotilla from leaving Greece for the Gaza Strip, and accused it of participating in the "vile Zionist piracy" defending "the Zionist enemy" and in fact of participating in the "siege" of Gaza (Hamas' Palestine-Info website, July 1, 2011). Other Hamas spokesmen called on international organizations to exert pressure on the Greek government to enable the flotilla to set sail (Hamas information bureau, July 1, 2011).
- **The Palestinian NGO network** (PNGO) denounced the Greek government's decision, saying that it was "unfortunate" and calling it surrender to Israeli pressure and the campaign against the flotilla, which included "hundreds of peace activists on a humanitarian mission." The network demanded that the Greek authorities change their minds and allow the ships to sail (Shiptogaza.no website, July 2, 2011).
- The Jordanian LifeLine **committee** denounced the Greek decision. Wael Saqa, committee chairman, said that it proved the strength of the Israeli-American pressure exerted on the Greek government (Al-Ghad and the Kuwait News Agency, July 2, 2011).