



July 13, 2014

Operation Protective Edge – Update No. 3 (As of 1200 hours, July 13, 2014)



Left: Israeli navy ship opposite the Gaza shore after destroying a rocket launcher used to fire rockets at Tel Aviv. Right: A gas station in Ashdod takes a direct hit (IDF Spokesman, July 13, 2014)

Overview of the Situation

Updated to the Sixth Day of Operation Protective Edge

1. **The situation as it stands on the sixth day of Operation Protective Edge**, in ITIC assessment:

1) **The State of Israel** – Israel was dragged into Operation Protective Edge by intensive rocket barrages launched into its populated areas from the Gaza Strip during Operation Brothers' Keeper. So far, Israel has succeeded in hit the terrorist infrastructures of Hamas and the other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip with intensive air strikes (with support with attacks from the sea and land). Israel has also succeeded in significantly limiting harm done to its civilian population, thanks to the effectiveness of its Iron Dome aerial defense system and the appropriate conduct of the home front during rocket attacks. In addition, Israel has prevented Hamas from carrying out showcase attacks. However, Israel is experiencing difficulty in preventing the continuation of intense rocket fire from the Gaza Strip (even though its scope has diminished a bit) and in preventing the disruption of the daily lives of most of its citizens. Therefore, a ground incursion is still considered a possible alternative, as has been repeatedly stated by senior

Israeli political and military figures, although so far Israel is reluctant to use the option because of the high price involved.

2) **Hamas** – Hamas is responsible for the deterioration on the ground during Operation Brothers' Keeper, acting from a position of strategic weakness (loss of support from the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, hostility of the Egyptian regime, difficulties caused to its relations with Iran and the radical camp, financial difficulties in the Gaza Strip). So far Hamas has no significant military achievements to present to the Gazans ("victory pictures" such as massive Israeli casualties, destruction of strategic facilities, "successful" terrorist attacks from the Gaza Strip). Hamas has also not managed to gain sweeping support from the Arab-Muslim world and is isolated in the international arena. However, Hamas has managed to demonstrate its ability to disrupt the lives of most of Israel's citizens for a relatively long period, and to put new areas into the range of its rockets (the outskirts of Haifa in the north, for example). Hamas' military-terrorist capabilities took severe hits but Hamas manages to continue its on-going rocket attacks on Israeli territory and to preserve the survival of its senior operatives, in the face of Israel's intensive military attacks.

3) **The battle for hearts and minds** – At this point Israel (still) enjoys the understanding of the international community, especially the United States, and there is support for its right to defend itself and the lives of its citizens. So far criticism of Israel is low-key, but is liable to increase if Israel launches a land incursion into the Gaza Strip or in view of exceptional civilian casualties. Hamas, on the other hand, is isolated in the international and Arab arenas, where it so far has not managed to enlist significant support. In such circumstances its propaganda is aimed primarily at the Gazans and less at other audiences (including psychological warfare aimed at the Israeli population). Hamas continues its efforts, so far unsuccessful, to create so-called "victory pictures." However, in view of the lack of successes, most of its spokesmen rely on belligerent slogans and declarations of false "victories." As in previous operations, Hamas plans to make the most of the civilian deaths once a ceasefire has been achieved, and to use them as a means of attacking Israeli in the international arena (through the human rights organizations and the international networks operating to delegitimize Israel, which operated against Israel after Operation Cast Lead). Hamas continues its blatant, deliberate use of civilians and the civilian infrastructure as human shields for its terrorist operatives and military infrastructure, which might increase the number of civilian casualties.

4) **The situation in Judea and Samaria and the place of the Palestinian Authority (PA)** – Israel's security activities were intense during Operation Brothers' Keeper and later lessened, but did not end, after the bodies were found of the three Israeli youths who were abducted and murdered. Residents of Judea and Samaria demonstrate solidarity with the Gaza Strip, but the level of rioting and violence is so far relatively low (Israeli Arabs have also stopped rioting). Despite the existence of the national consensus government, it is clear that Mahmoud Abbas has no genuine influence over the conduct and decision-making processes of Hamas and the other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, Hamas may have to give the PA a certain role in a future arrangement, when one is made (for example, having it act as a mediator with the international community; facilitating in opening the Rafah crossing by deploying PA security services and integrating the PA in its operation; and having the PA help in arranging for the salaries of the tens of thousands of employees of the former de-facto Hamas administration).

2. The international community has voiced calls and proposed initiatives for a ceasefire with the same conditions as those that ended Operation Pillar of Defense.¹ Israel and Hamas have not yet expressed public readiness to stop the fighting but in ITIC assessment, statements made by senior figures on both sides make it possible to discern their basic ideas regarding a future agreement. **Israel**, in ITIC assessment, seeks to restore its deterrent capability, to stop rockets from being launched into its territory, and to ensure a ceasefire of long duration, acting from a position of strength after Operation Protective Edge. So far, from statements made by senior Hamas figures, **it seeks to broaden the understandings achieved in Operation Pillar of Defense by adding new components relevant to Israel, Egypt and the PA** (for example, the release of prisoners freed in the Gilad Shalit deal and Hamas activists who were detained during Operation Brothers' Keeper; arrangements for paying the salaries of tens of thousands of employees of the former de-facto Hamas administration; the opening of the Rafah crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip; ensuring for the continued routine opening of the Kerem Shalom crossing, which continued its operations throughout Operation Pillar of Defense).

¹ The understandings regarding the cease fire for Operation Pillar of Defense were achieved under Egyptian aegis and with American intervention, and they went into effect on November 21, 2012. It was agreed that the sides, (i.e., Israel and Hamas) would stop attacking one another and that within 24 hours deliberations would begin about broader agreements. The broader agreement dealt with arranging the passage of people and merchandise in and out of the Gaza Strip, and remove the limitations on the movement of Palestinians in regions near the Gaza Strip's border with Israel.

IDF Activity

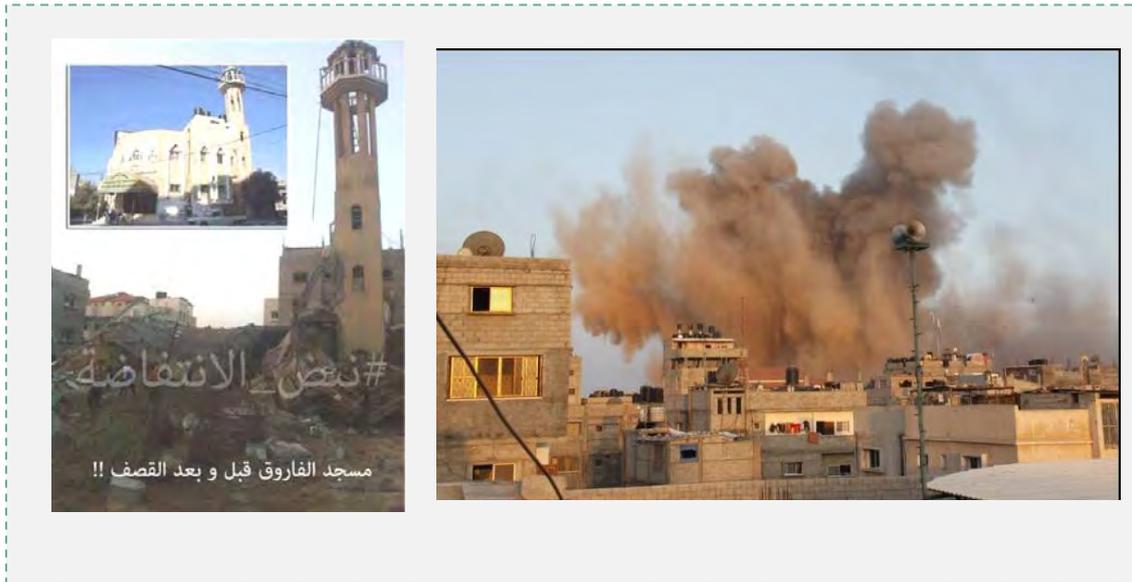
Attacks on Terrorist Targets in the Gaza Strip

3. During the past few days the IDF has continued attacking terrorist targets throughout the Gaza Strip. **During the past three days hundreds of targets were hit**, among them rocket launchers, military-terrorist camps and posts, senior terrorist figures, tunnels used for terrorist purposes, etc. Since the beginning of the operation **there have been 1,320 strikes**. The following attacks were carried out between July 10 and 12, 2014 (IDF Spokesman, July 14, 2014, and Israeli media sources):

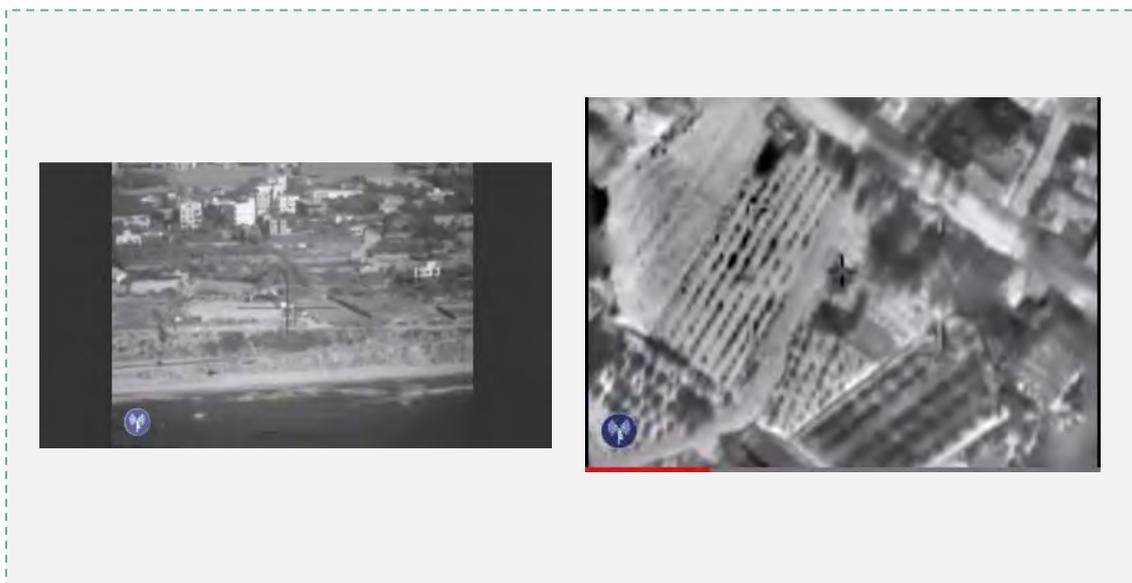
1) **July 12, 2014** – 200 terrorist targets were attacked. Among them were 53 hidden rocket launchers, the houses of nine senior terrorist operatives that were used as command and control centers, 11 sites for the manufacture of weapons and 40 tunnels. In the evening Israeli navy missile ships attacked a region from which rockets had been launched targeting the greater Tel Aviv area. On the night of July 11, 2014, the IDF attacked ten terrorist operatives, six of whom had been involved in firing rockets into Israeli territory. The IDF also attacked the Al-Farouq Mosque in the Nuseirat refugee camp, where rockets and other weapons were stored.

2) **July 11, 2014** – During a 24-hour period there were more than 200 strikes. Among the targets were terrorist operatives, especially those who were involved in firing rockets into Israel. About 30 terrorist tunnels were attacked, as were approximately 40 hidden rocket launchers, the houses of terrorist operatives and approximately ten sites for the manufacture of weapons. During the morning the IDF attacked caches of weapons stored in a school building in the central Gaza Strip, which also had a terrorist tunnel.

3) **July 10, 2014** – During a 24-hour period the IDF attacked more than 200 terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip. Among the targets were long-range rocket launchers, Hamas governmental facilities used for terrorist activities, tunnels used for attack purposes and for smuggling, pipelines for smuggling fuel, military compounds and training camps, communications networks, Hamas' aerial defense system and hidden rocket launchers.



**Left: The Al-Farouq Mosque in the Nuseirat refugee camp, which served as a weapons storehouse, before the attack and after the attack (Website of the Gazan ministry of the interior, July 13, 2014).
Right: The Israeli Air Force attacks a tunnel in Rafah (Paltimes.net, July 11, 2014).**



**Left: The Israeli navy attacks Hamas targets from the sea (IDF Spokesman, July 13, 2014)
Click <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=COhS2v1YXD4> for the video.
Right: Israel attacks rocket launchers in the house of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad's head of its artillery unit (IDF Spokesman, July 13, 2014)
Click <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqDMJAzcqLk> for the video.**

4. On the night of **July 12, 2014**, an IDF special force raided a rocket-launching region from which a large number of long-range rockets had been fired at the center of the country. During the raid the force was shot at and returned fire. The target was damaged. During the exchange of fire four IDF soldiers sustained minor wounds (IDF Spokesman, July 13, 2014).

Leaflets Distributed to the Gazan Population

5. The IDF distributed leaflets to the civilian population in the northern Gaza Strip warning them of attacks the IDF would carry out against terrorist targets. Residents of **Beit Lahia** were instructed to vacate their houses by noon on July 13, 2014, to keep their families safe (IDF Spokesman, July 12, 2014). Many local residents left the region. The leaflet read as follows:

"Residents of Beit Lahia,

The IDF intends to attack terrorist infrastructures and terrorist operatives from the air in the region east of Al-Atatra and Al-Salatin street, and to the north and west of the Jabaliya refugee camp

Israel attacks and will attack any region from which rockets are fired into its territory

Civilians must vacate their houses by 12:00 noon on 13/7/2014 and go to the south via the town of Jabaliya through Al-Fallujah street

The IDF activity will be temporary and short

Anyone who does not obey IDF instructions will endanger himself and the lives of his family

Be careful and be safe"

6. Following the distribution of the leaflets, **Iyad al-Bazam**, spokesman for the ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip, called on the residents **not to pay attention to the IDF's threats, whether in leaflets or telephone calls**. They indicated, he said, "the enemy's failure and frustration," and not to leave their houses (Website of the Gazan ministry of the interior, July 13, 2014).



Left: The announcement of the Gazan ministry of the interior, telling the residents to remain in their houses. Right: The leaflet distributed by the IDF (IDF Spokesman, July 13, 2014).



Residents of the northern Gaza Strip respond to the IDF calls, vacate their houses and seek shelter in a UNRWA school in the Al-Shati refugee camp Gaza City (Paltoday.ps, July 13, 2014).

Statements from Senior Israeli Political and Military Figures

7. On July 11, 2014, **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** said "The pace of attacks in this operation is double that of Operation Pillar of Defense and the military strikes will continue until we can be certain that the quiet has returned to Israeli citizens. I would like to make it clear that no terrorist target in the Gaza Strip is immune but it must be pointed out that Hamas's leaders, commanders and activists are hiding behind the residents of Gaza and they are responsible for any injury to them...We develop defensive systems against missiles in order to protect our civilians and they use their civilians to protect their missiles. And this is the entire difference... We will continue to strongly hit all those who try to attack us and we will continue to take determined and prudent action to protect our home front, the citizens of the State of Israel"² (Website of the Israeli prime minister, July 11, 2014).

8. According to the **IDF Spokesman**, Hamas is showing signs of stress. The situation on the ground indicates that very great damage has been done in the Gaza Strip and there are many questions the Gazans will have to ask Hamas. He said the IDF would continue to attack with every means at its disposal and at the same time preparations were being made for a ground incursion, which would start at a time decided on by the political leadership (IDF Spokesman, July 12, 2014). **General Yoav Mordechai, Coordinator for Government Activities in the Territories**, said that the IDF was acting exclusively according to international law and making every effort to be precise

² <http://www.pmo.gov.il/English/MediaCenter/Events/Pages/eventstate110714.aspx>

and ensure there were no civilians at its targets. However, he said, Hamas was using its civilians as human shields (IDF Spokesman, July 12, 2014).

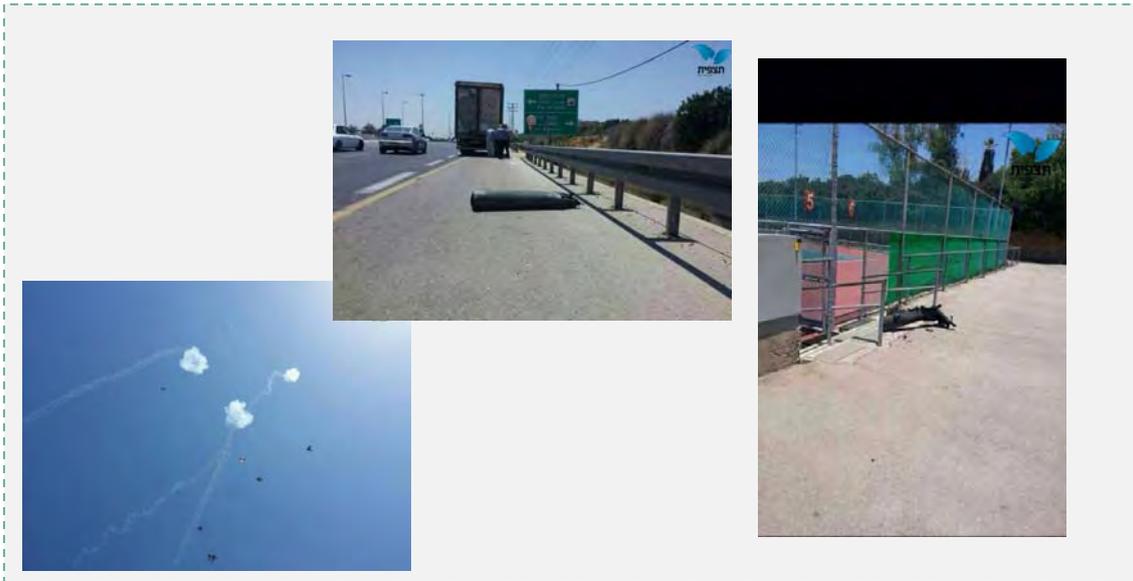
Palestinian Casualties

9. The Palestinian media and ministry of health reported that since the beginning of the operation, **164 people had been killed** and more than 1,000 wounded (Website of the ministry of health, July 13, 2014). So far the ITIC cannot determine how many of those killed and wounded were terrorist operatives and how many were uninvolved civilians.

Rocket Fire

10. During the past few days there has been massive, continuous rocket and mortar shell fire targeting Israel, **although it has lessened somewhat during the past two days**. So far, during the operation **725 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory**. A number of civilians have been wounded, including a man who was critically wounded by a rocket in Ashdod, and extensive damage to property has been reported. One woman died while running to a shelter, apparently from a heart attack.

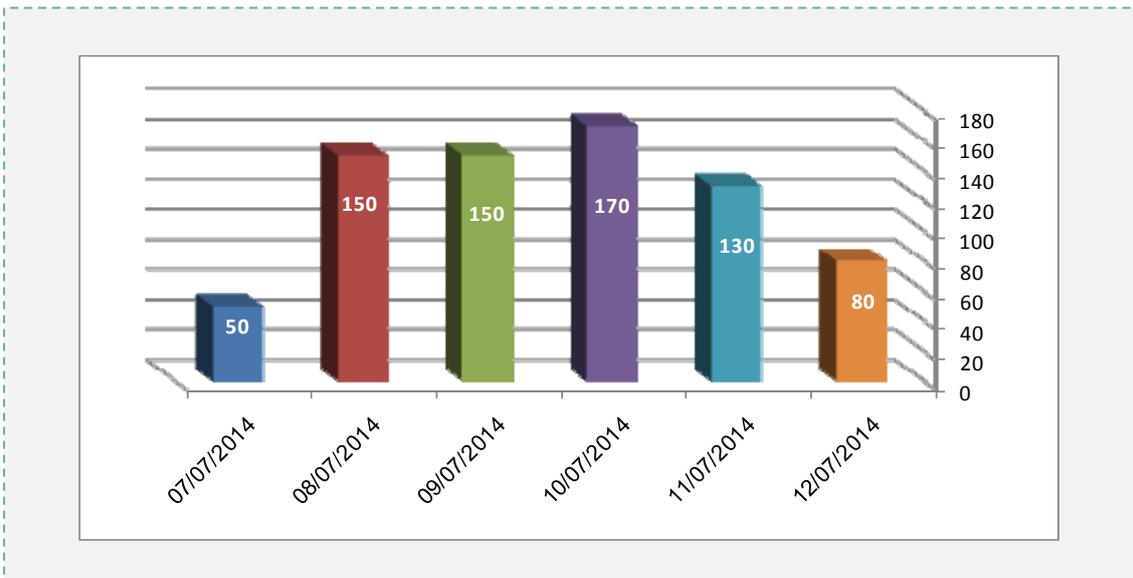
11. In the early evening of **July 12, 2014**, a barrage of rockets was fired at **Jerusalem, Beit Shemesh, Hebron, the Dead Sea and other locations**. One rocket hit **Hebron** and caused extensive damage to several houses. In the evening Hamas' military-terrorist wing announced it planned to fire a barrage of rockets at Tel Aviv at 2100 hours (Al-Aqsa TV, July 12, 2014). The threat was carried out. The rockets were successfully intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system.



Left: The Iron Dome aerial defense system intercepts a rocket. Center and right: Rocket hits (Tazpit.org.il, July 10, 2014).

12. On the morning of **July 11, 2014**, a heavy barrage of rockets was fired at Israel's south. **One of the rockets hit a fuel tanker parked at a gas station in Ashdod.** The tanker caught fire and the fire spread to the gas station. One man was trapped in his car and was critically wounded. Five people sustained minor injuries. Earlier in the day sirens were heard in **Haifa and Hadera**. Residents reported hearing explosions. The Iron Dome aerial defense system intercepted one rocket. A number of buildings in Beersheba were damaged by rocket fire.

Daily Distribution of Rocket Fire from the Gaza Strip during Operation Protective Edge³



³ The graph indicates rocket hits in Israeli territory and does to include mortar shell fire or rocket launches that failed.

13. Since the beginning of Operation Protective Edge the Iron Dome has intercepted more than 145 rockets targeting Israeli population centers. On July 11, 2014, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) received another Iron Dome system, for a total of eight. The last is an improved version that will provide greater coverage and protection. The battery, which was made operative in a rapid process, is the second received by the IAF since the beginning of the operation (IDF Spokesman, July 13, 2014).

14. According to reports in the Palestinian media, **Hamas claimed responsibility for most of the rocket fire** (including firing long-range rockets and the rockets from Lebanon). **Abu Obeida**, spokesman for the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military-terrorist wing, said in an announcement that Hamas still considered the battle "limited" and was using only a small fraction of its capabilities (Al-Aqsa TV, July 10, 2014).



Left: A map showing the ranges of the various rockets in the Hamas arsenal (R160, Buraq 70, J80, M75, Grad and Qassam) fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel (Facebook page of the Hamas forum, July 11, 2014). Right: Hamas' military-terrorist wing claims responsibility for firing J80 rockets at Tel Aviv and Bat Yam (a southern suburb of Tel Aviv) (Qassam.ps, July 12, 2014).

15. In addition to Hamas, the **Jerusalem Brigades, the military-terrorist wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)** claimed responsibility for rocket fire (including long-range rocket fire), as did the military-terrorist wings of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and the Popular Resistance Committees. Several local terrorist networks publicly claimed responsibility for rocket fire, especially at the areas close to the Gaza Strip.

Anti-Tank Missile Fired at IDF Jeep

16. On **July 11, 2014**, an anti-tank missile was fired at an IDF jeep near the Gaza Strip border. Two soldiers sustained minor wounds. Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** said that blowing up the jeep was a precedent for [Israel's] future ground action, and added that the Gaza Strip would turn into "a graveyard for IDF soldiers" (Samanews.com, July 11, 2014).

17. **Ahmed Jibril**, secretary general of the PFLP-GC, said that **Syria had provided Hamas with its Kornet anti-tank missiles**. He also said that **Iran had delivered weapons to Hamas via Sudan and the Sinai Peninsula** (Al-Mayadeen, July 10, 2014).

Activity in Other Sectors

Rocket Fire from Lebanon Targets the North of Israel

18. While rockets and mortar shells fell in Israel's south, **there were two attempts to fire rockets from Lebanese territory**. In the assessment of IDF sources, pro-Palestinian elements in Lebanon were behind the rocket fire:

1) In the early morning hours of **July 11, 2014**, a rocket was fired into Israeli territory from Lebanon. It exploded near the northern community of Metulla. There were no casualties. The IDF responded with artillery fire at the elements responsible for the rocket launch. Lebanese army headquarters said in an announcement that "an anonymous source" had fired three rockets from the region of Marjayoun (in the eastern sector of south Lebanon). Lebanese army forces that searched the area found the position from which the rockets had been fired. They also found documents and maps with coordinates and targets (Al-Akhbar and Al-Nashra, July 11, 2014). A UNIFIL force, in coordination with the Lebanese army, increased its forces on the ground as well as its patrols, in order to prevent other incidents. The UNIFIL commander said that firing rockets into Israel from Lebanon was a serious violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 (UN Website, July 11, 2014).



Rockets ready for firing, found by the Lebanese army (Al-Manar, July 12, 2014).

2) On **July 12, 2014**, at around 2200 hours, sirens were sounded in the western Galilee. A 122mm rocket landed in a population center and two others landed near other population centers. The IDF responded with artillery fire at the source of the rocket fire in Lebanon. Hamas' military-terrorist wing claimed responsibility for the rocket fire in Lebanon. Hamas' military-terrorist wing claimed responsibility for the rocket fire, and said in an announcement that it had been carried out by its Martyr Muhammad Abu Khdeir unit in Lebanon (Qassam.ps, July 12, 2014).

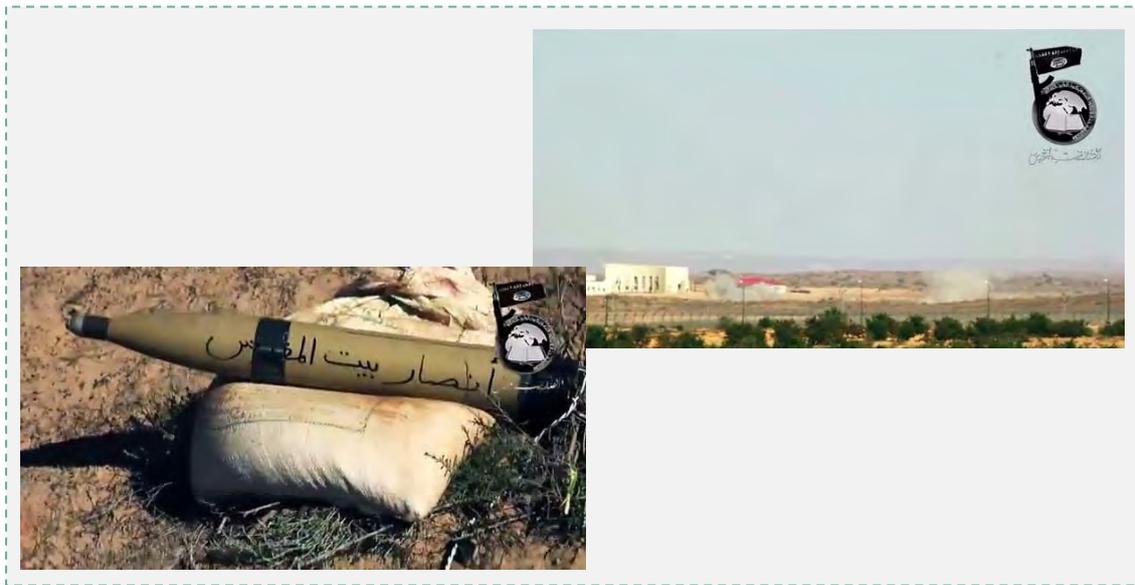
Note: At this stage the credibility of the announcement is doubtful.



Left: Structure destroyed by the rocket that fell in the north. Right: the remains of the rocket (Photo by Shai Vaknin for Tazpit.org.il, July 14, 2014)

Rocket Fire from the Sinai Peninsula

19. On **July 11, 2014**, the **Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis**, a Salafist-jihadi organization affiliated with Al-Qaeda and operating in Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula, **uploaded a video to YouTube in which it claimed responsibility for firing rockets from the Sinai Peninsula into Israel**. According to the announcement, the organization fired five 107mm rockets at the community of Bnei Netzarim⁴ near the Egyptian and southern Gaza Strip borders, to "support the residents of the Gaza Strip" (YouTube, July 11, 2014).



Left: A rocket inscribed "Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, the 11th of Ramadan". Right: The rocket hit within the community of Netzarim (YouTube, July 11, 2014)

20. At the same time, a source in Egyptian security in the northern Sinai Peninsula reported that on July 10, 2014, Egyptian security forces had seized a truck near the Egypt-Gaza Strip border carrying 20 Grad rockets. The Egyptian security forces confronted the operatives, who were planning to use a tunnel in Rafah to smuggle the rockets into the Gaza Strip (Maannews.net, July 11, 2014).

Attack in Samaria Prevented

21. In Judea and Samaria there were local confrontations between Palestinians and the Israeli security forces in a number of locations (Hebron, Bethlehem, Jenin, Ramallah, etc.). It seems that there has been only relatively limited activity in Judea and Samaria supporting the Gaza Strip.

⁴ A community established in 2008 by families from the settlement of Netzarim, which was evacuated from the Gaza Strip.

22. On **July 10, 2014**, the Israeli security forces detained a vehicle at the trans-Samaria crossing. The vehicle had a Palestinian license plate and was carrying two passengers. The security forces at the crossing, who were suspicious of the passengers, conducted a comprehensive examination of the vehicle, finding a bag resting on the floor of the car. **The bag held an IED made of a gas balloon and electrical wiring.** Police demolitions experts called to the site closed the crossing to traffic and neutralized the IED, which in all probability might have been used for a terrorist attack in Israel.

23. The Palestinian media published a large number of pictures of Palestinians celebrating the rockets attacks in Israel, especially in the big cities. For example a picture was published of Palestinians from Hebron watching the greater Tel Aviv area for the barrage of rockets "promised" by Hamas' military-terrorist wing (Facebook page of Gaza al-A'an, July 13, 2014).



Left: Palestinians in Budrus (near Ramallah) celebrating the rocket attack on the greater Tel Aviv area (Facebook page of the Hamas forum, July 12, 2014). Right: Residents of Hebron watch the rocket fire attacking Tel Aviv (Paltimes.net, July 13, 2014).

The Crossings

24. Throughout Operation Protective Edge, **the Kerem Shalom crossing has remained open for the delivery of equipment and supplies to the Gaza Strip.** **General Yoav Mordechai**, Coordinator for Government Activities in the Territories, said that every day food, milk, fuel and medicines entered the Gaza Strip through the Kerem Shalom crossing. **He said that every day the terrorist organizations attacked the crossing through which Israel allowed trucks carrying supplies to enter the Gaza Strip** (IDF Spokesman, July 12, 2014).

25. **Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi** said that the Rafah crossing was open for the transfer of the wounded to hospitals in Egypt and that 500 tons of food and medicines, a gift from the people of Egypt to the Palestinian people, had been delivered (Youm7.com, July 12, 2014). On July 10, 2014, the Rafah crossing opened and a number of patients were taken from the Gaza Strip for treatment in Egypt. After one day of operation the Egyptians decided to close the crossing (Safa.ps and Maannews.net, July 11, 2014). Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** said that opening the Rafah crossing was a good step but insufficient because it had to be open normally so that Gazans could enter and leave and that aid could be delivered to the Gaza Strip (Al-Aqsa TV, July 10, 2014).

Statements from Hamas and PA Figures

Statements from Senior Hamas Figures

26. **Ismail Haniya**, deputy chairman of Hamas' political bureau, issued a press release stating that Israel's aggression against the Gaza Strip would not achieve its goals and the Palestinian people would be victorious. He called on Israel to stop what he referred to as its "war crimes" against the Palestinians. He said Israel was the aggressor and had to cease (Safa.ps, July 11, 2014).

27. **Sami Abu Zuhri**, Hamas spokesman, said there were no talks about a lull and the only contacts were exchanges of information. He called on the UN Security Council to take responsibility for what was happening in the Gaza Strip, where "war crimes" and violations of international law were being committed (Al-Aqsa TV, July 10, 2014).

28. **Fawzi Barhoum**, Hamas spokesman, said that a "war equation" existed and it meant "a rocket in exchange for a rocket and aggression in exchange for aggression." He said as long as Hamas had the strength they would continue to fight,

and that "all possibilities were open." He added that if Israel wanted to protect its civilians from Hamas' rockets it would have to put an Iron Dome on "every last house in Tel Aviv." He said that Hamas' "bank of targets" included **"the ministry of defense, Ben-Gurion international airport, and the reactor in Dimona"** (Al-Aqsa TV, July 11, 2014). He called on the residents of Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria, as well as Israeli Arabs, to take to the streets to reinforce the "resistance fighters." He claimed that the rockets of the "resistance" [i.e., the terrorist organizations] could distinguish between areas where Jews lived and those where Israeli Arabs lived. He added that Hamas' military wing was going to add "new elements" that Israel was not familiar with (Samanews.com, July 11, 2014).

29. **Izzat al-Rishq**, a member of Hamas' political bureau, said that Hamas would only accept a cease fire on its own terms. He said that Netanyahu could start a war but he couldn't finish it (Palestine-info.info, July 12, 2014). **Ghazi Hamed**, senior Hamas figure, **detailed the steps Israel would have to take to restore the lull**. He said all the detainees in Judea and Samaria had to be released, including those released in the Gilad Shalit deal, and all the understandings of 2012 had to be implemented, the crossings had to be opened, the fishing zone had to be expanded and Gazans living close to the border had to be allowed to return to their houses (Voice of Palestine Radio, July 10, 2014).

The PA

30. PA chairman **Mahmoud Abbas** blamed Israel for the escalation. He said the Israeli government had escalated deliberately because it did not want the two-state solution. **He said the balance of power was in Israel's favor despite the rocket fire**. He added **that those mainly wounded in the fighting were Gazans and that was why it was important to end Israel's "aggression"** (Al-Mayadeen TV, Lebanon, July 11, 2014). **Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri** criticized Mahmoud Abbas, saying he "had no respect for the blood of the shaheeds." He added that Mahmoud Abbas' remarks had harmed the Palestinian people and the "resistance." He said that Hamas would enforce its conditions and would not heed "weak positions" (Paltimes.net, date, 2014).

Attempts to End the Fighting

The UN Security Council

31. **The UN Security Council** "called for de-escalation of the situation, restoration of calm, and reinstatement of the November 2012 ceasefire...The Security Council members further called for respect for international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians"⁵ (UN Security Council website, July 12, 2014).

Egypt

32. **Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi** consulted with Tony Blair, the International Quartet's envoy to the Middle East. A spokesman for the Egyptian president said that el-Sisi warned of a military escalation and innocent civilian casualties. **Bader Abd al-A'aty**, spokesman for the Egyptian ministry of foreign affairs, said that Egypt was working with international agencies to end the escalation in the Gaza Strip and to reach an agreement that would bind both sides (Youm7.com, July 12, 2014).

33. According to **a formal announcement from the Egyptian ministry of foreign affairs**, Egypt was maintaining increased, ongoing contacts with all the relevant factors, including the Palestinian leadership, the Israeli authorities and the Palestinian organizations. It was also in contact with the Arab and Islamic states and UN Security Council. The announcement appealed to the international community to shoulder the responsibility to renew the lull agreement of 2012 and end "Israeli aggression against Palestinian civilians) (Shorouknews.com, July 12, 2014).

⁵ <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48257#.U8LXPI2Sy1s>