



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (February 19 – 25, 2014)



Left: The windshield of an Israeli car hit by a stone (Photo by Tamir Orbaum for Tazpit News Agency, February 19, 2014). Right: Seven IEDs found in the possession of two Palestinians near Nablus (Photo by Nof-Yam, reprinted by the Tazpit News Agency, February 24, 2014).

Overview

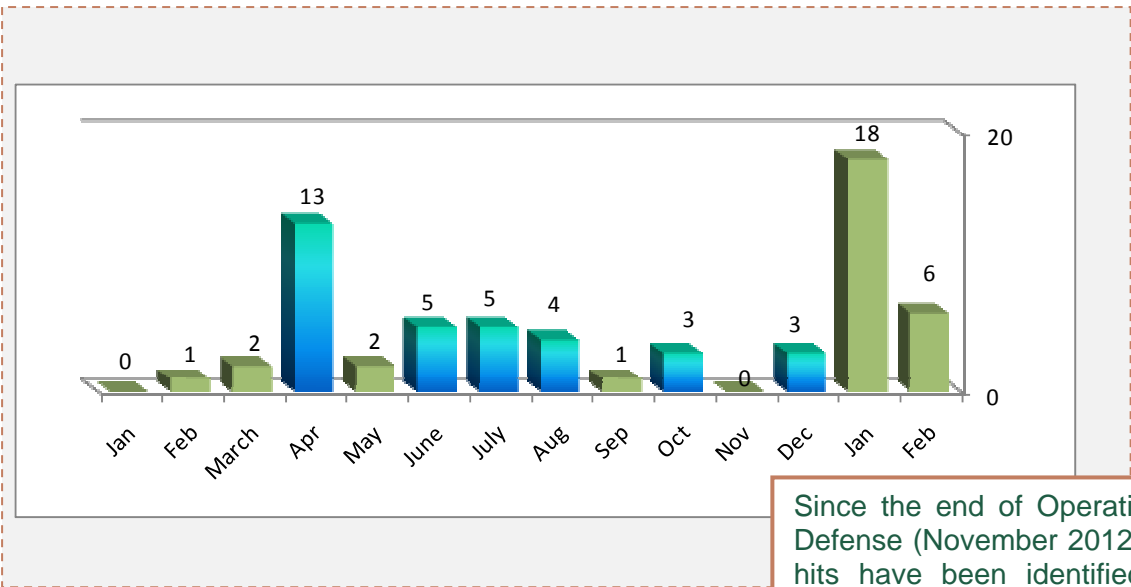
- This past week no rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory. A powerful IED planned for an attack on IDF forces operating near the security fence was discovered and neutralized. Palestinian acts of defiance carried out on Fridays near the Israeli-Gazan border continued. Violence and terrorism targeting the Israeli security forces and Israeli civilians in Judea and Samaria continued.
- Masked Palestinians confronted Israeli police on the Temple Mount. Armed, masked operatives of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine held a march in Abu Dis, east Jerusalem, to mark the 45th anniversary of the organization's founding.
- Mahmoud Abbas met with John Kerry twice this past week. Saeb Erekat said that Kerry had given Mahmoud Abbas an invitation to meet the American president in the White House.

The Situation in Israel's South

Rocket Fire

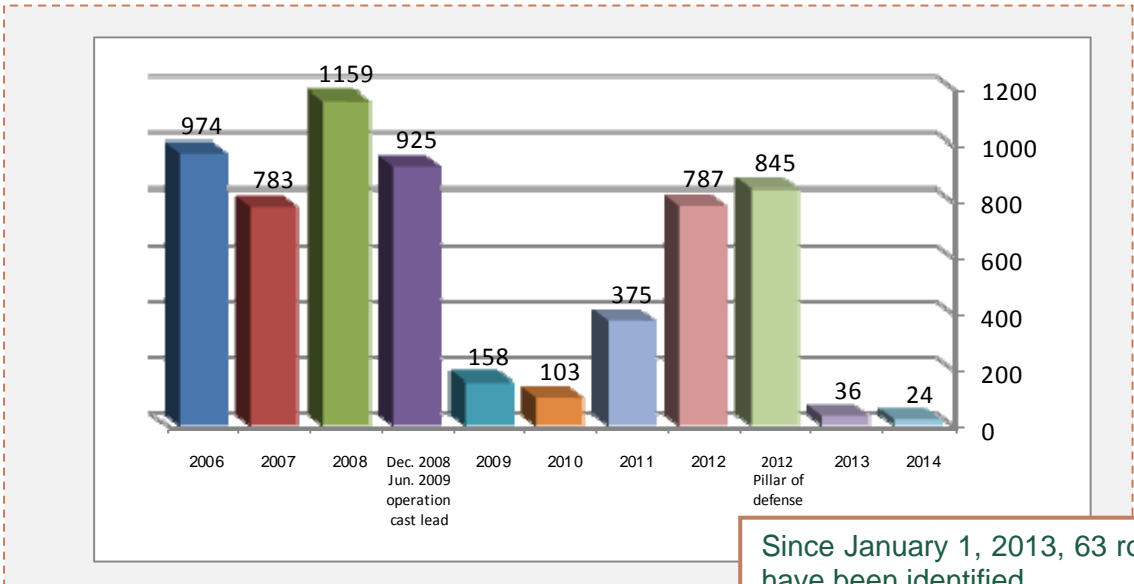
- This past week there was no rocket fire from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory.

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since January 1, 2013¹



Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), 63 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory, including eight rockets fired at the southern Israeli city of Eilat.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire²



Since January 1, 2013, 63 rocket hits have been identified.

¹ As February 25, 2014. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire and rocket hits inside the Gaza Strip.

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Terrorist Attack on Gaza Strip Border Prevented

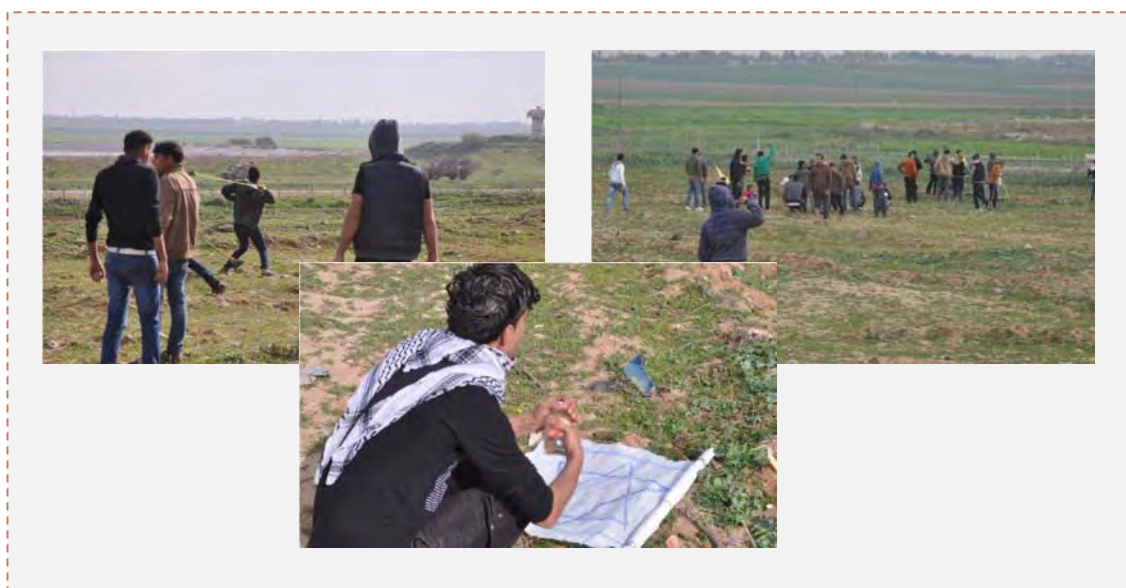
■ On February 18, 2014, during an IDF action in the southern Gaza Strip, a powerful IED was discovered and neutralized. Its discovery prevented an attack on IDF forces that were carrying out ongoing security activities (Ynet, February 18, 2014).

Palestinian Islamic Jihad Involvement in Rocket Fire

■ **Ahmed al-Mudallal**, a senior figure in the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), denied the involvement of PIJ operatives in the latest rocket fire into Israeli territory. He stressed the organization's adherence to the lull agreement. He said the recent rocket fire had been the result of a "private initiative" taken by "youngsters" because of the "Israeli siege." He added that the PIJ closely coordinated its activities with the other organizations [i.e., Hamas] and did not want to drag the Gaza Strip into a war with Israel (Alresala.net, February 22, 2014).

Friday Demonstrations on the Northern Gaza Strip Border

■ The Palestinian daily newspaper Al-Ayam investigated and reported **a rise in the number of participants at the weekly demonstrations near the security fence in the northern Gaza Strip**. Palestinian youths participating in the demonstrations were interviewed for the article. They expressed their determination to participate in activities to confront IDF forces. One of them called on the organizers to hold demonstrations daily and not just on Fridays. One of the organizers, who refused to reveal his name, said that he wanted an increased number of demonstrators and more friction points with IDF forces. According to the article, at the February 21, 2014 Friday demonstration, 14 people were wounded, and the previous week 17 were wounded (Al-Ayam, February 21, 2014).



Top row: Palestinian youths confront IDF forces near the security fence east of Gaza City. Bottom picture: A young Palestinian draws an Israeli flag in preparation for the ceremony of burning it (Paltoday website, February 21, 2014).

Judea and Samaria

Palestinian Violence Continues

- This past week violent incidents continued in Judea and Samaria, part of the so-called "popular resistance." Stones were thrown at Israeli civilians and Israeli security forces and Molotov cocktails were thrown at vehicles on main roads. A number of planned terrorist attacks were prevented, primarily Molotov cocktail attacks.
- Prominent this past week was **the demonstration held in Hebron to mark the 20th anniversary of the massacre in the Cave of the Patriarchs.**³ The demonstration turned into a riot. The event began with a march from a mosque in Hebron and headed toward Al-Shuhadaa Street. It was led by **Kamel Hamid**, governor of Hebron. The demonstrators demanded the opening of Al-Shuhadaa Street, which has been closed since the massacre. As the march approached the Old City, Palestinians began throwing stones at IDF forces, who responded with gunfire and used riot control measures. The Palestinian media reported that 15 people had been wounded (Ma'an and Wafa news agencies, February 21, 2014).

³ The massacre took place on Purim in 1994, which fell on February 25. Dr. Baruch Goldstein, a follower of Meir Kahana's extreme right-wing Kach group and resident of Kiryat Arba, entered the Muslim prayer hall in the Cave of the Patriarchs and opened fire on the worshippers. Twenty-nine people were killed and more than 100 wounded. Baruch Goldstein was beaten to death by the angry crowd.



Confrontations between Palestinians and Israeli security forces near Al-Shuhadaa Street in the Old City in Hebron (YouTube, February 22, 2014).

■ Other prominent events were the following:

- **February 19, 2014** – There was a riot in the Jelazoun refugee camp (north of Ramallah). Palestinians set tires on fire and threw stones (Tazpit News Agency, February 19, 2014). Stones were thrown at Israeli vehicles driving on a road near Ni'lin. There were no casualties but a number of vehicles were damaged (Tazpit News Agency, February 19, 2014). An 18-month old baby girl was injured by a small metal ball thrown near the plaza in front of the Western Wall (Tazpit News Agency, February 19, 2014). According to another version, it was a glass marble.⁴

⁴ <http://www.jewishpress.com/news/breaking-news/baby-injured-in-jerusalem-terror-attack/2014/02/19/>



Left: Stone thrown at an Israeli civilian vehicle (Photo by Tamir Orbaum for Tazpit News Agency, February 19, 2014). Right: Palestinians throw stones at IDF forces in the Jelazoun refugee camp (Wafa News Agency, February 21, 2014).

- **February 22, 2014** – An IDF force detained two Palestinians, residents of the village of Anabta, at the Einab roadblock (near Tulkarm). A search of the car revealed two pipe bombs and a Molotov cocktail. They also had a Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) flag in their possession. During interrogation they said they had been planning to attack IDF soldiers (IDF Spokesman, February 23, 2014).



Two pipe bombs, a Molotov cocktail and a PFLP flag found in a car at the Einab roadblock (IDF Spokesman, February 23, 2014).

- **February 23, 2014** – Two Palestinians were detained near the gate of the Jewish village of Alon Moreh (near Nablus). They had seven IEDs in their possession. An initial investigation revealed that the two, both 17 years old and

from the Askar refugee camp, had been planning to throw the IEDs at Israeli vehicles (IDF Spokesman and the Tazpit News Agency, February 24, 2014).

- **February 25, 2014** – Dozens of masked Palestinians threw stones and flares at Israeli police forces on the Temple Mount. Two policemen sustained minor injuries. The Palestinians' excuse was a deliberation held in the Knesset regarding Israeli sovereignty over the Temple Mount (Ynet, February 25, 2014).

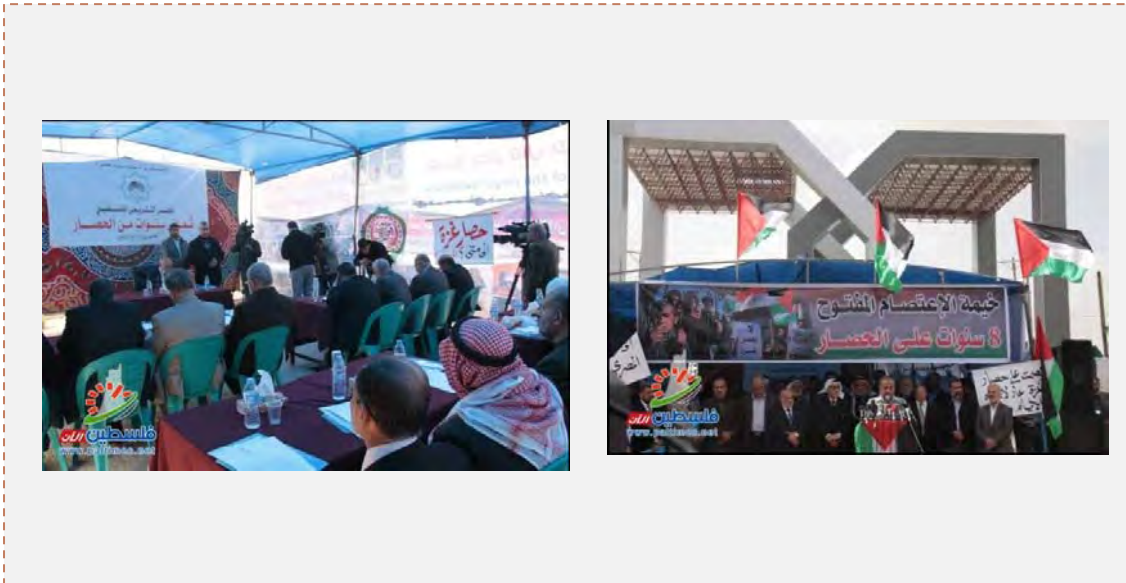


Palestinians, some of them masked, demonstrate on the Temple Mount (Filastin Al-'Aan, February 25, 2014).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Rafah Crossing

- This past week the Rafah crossing was open intermittently, mainly for pilgrims. On February 23, 2014, in response to the trickle of activity at the crossing, the "National Committee for Lifting the Siege" erected a protest tent in front of the crossing. The de-facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip held its weekly meeting in the tent, and as a special meeting of the Hamas members of the Palestinian Legislative Council was held there as well. During the meeting **Ahmed Bahar**, PLC vice chairman, called for the uninterrupted opening of the Rafah crossing to allow people and merchandise to pass through (Quds.net, February 23, 2014).



Left: The Palestinian Legislative Council holds a meeting in the protest tent. Right: The protest tent erected at the Rafah crossing (Filastin Al-'Aan, February 23, 2014).

Proposal to Privatize the Crossings

■ **Ziyad al-Zaza**, deputy head of the de-facto Hamas administration and minister of the treasury, said that Hamas proposed that control of the main crossings between the Gaza Strip and Israel and the Gaza Strip and Egypt be turned over to the private sector. He said that privatizing the crossings demanded coordination with many factors, including the chairman of the PA, Mahmoud Abbas, and it was not clear if the plan would be authorized. Sources in Fatah criticized the proposal, saying that it again proved that Hamas wanted to create tension (Voice of Palestine, February 23, 2014).

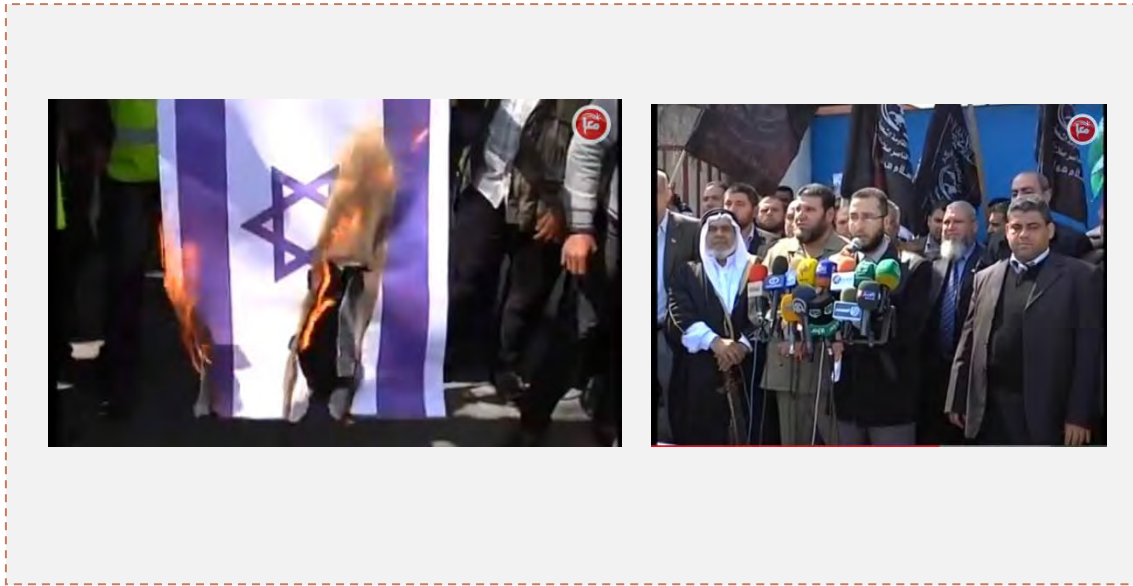
Egyptian Actions to Destroy the Tunnels

■ **Egypt continued destroying the tunnels along its border with the Gaza Strip.** It was reported that houses were demolished in the Rafah area (Safa News Agency, February 23, 2014). A spokesman for the Egyptian army reported the destruction of eight tunnels. The Palestinian media reported that dozens of tunnel workers had been injured by smoke grenades thrown into the tunnels by the Egyptian army (Filastin al-Yawm, February 23, 2014).

Flag-Burning in the Gaza Strip

■ On **February 22, 2014**, "The Popular Resistance Movement" (affiliated with Hamas and headed by **Zakaria Dughmush**, who split from the Popular Resistance Committees) held a rally in front of the UN offices in Gaza City to protest "Israel's activities in Jerusalem." The rally was attended by representatives of the Palestinian terrorist organizations, who called on the West and the Arab-Muslim world to slander

Israel in international forums. During the demonstration the Israeli flag was burned (Satellite TV channel of the Ma'an News Agency, February 22, 2014).



Right: The rally held in front of the UN offices in Gaza City. Left: Burning the Israeli flag (Satellite TV channel of the Ma'an News Agency, February 22, 2014)

The Palestinian Authority

The Negotiations with Israel

■ **Mahmoud Abbas**, PA chairman, met twice in Paris with American Secretary of State John Kerry (on February 19 and 20, 2014). The meetings, called by the State Department an important stage in the negotiations, were also attended by **Saeb Erekat**, a member of PLO's Executive Committee and head of the Palestinian negotiation team, **Nabil Abu Rudeina**, presidential spokesman, **Majdi al-Khaldi**, diplomatic advisor, and other advisors (Al-Ayam, February 20, 2014).



**John Kerry meets with Mahmoud Abbas and a Palestinian delegation in Paris
(Wafa News Agency, February 20, 2014)**

- A "Palestinian source" reported that during the meetings Kerry presented **Mahmoud Abbas** with "vague ideas that tended to favor the Israeli positions." The source added that Kerry had not given the Palestinians any written document describing his concept of the "framework for agreement." Instead he continued to discuss only general ideas. The source said that the meeting had not given **Mahmoud Abbas** the impression that a framework for agreement could be reached (Xinhua News Agency, February 21, 2014). After the meeting **Mahmoud Abbas** said that so far the Americans had not succeeded in formulating a framework for an agreement that would lead to a final arrangement for the conflict (Paltoday website, February 21, 2014).
- **Saeb Erekat** said that John Kerry had invited Mahmoud Abbas to meet with American President Barack Obama in the White House. A date has not yet been set for the meeting. As to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's request to meet with Mahmoud Abbas, **Saeb Erekat** said that the request was "an exercise in public relations" and that he expected Netanyahu to focus on deeds (Voice of Palestine, February 24, 2014).
- Interviewed by the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Watan, **Mahmoud Abbas strongly reiterated the position that the PA would not recognize Israel as a Jewish state.** He said that "it was a fabrication and invention" and a new obstacle to the peace process. Mahmoud Abbas said that Netanyahu had added the demand to the six outstanding issues. He added that if the Israelis continued demanding recognition of Israel as a Jewish country there would be no peace. He also said that if Israel did not implement the last stage of prisoner releases the negotiations would end immediately and the PA would appeal to international institutions. He added that he did not reject

the possibility of extending the negotiations "if something is in the works" but that it was pointless to continue the negotiations indefinitely (Al-Watan, February 19, 2014).

Demonstration in Abu Dis Marking the Founding of the DFLP

- The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), a Palestinian terrorist organization, held a rally and military display to mark the 45th anniversary of its founding. The rally was held in Ramallah and attended by the organization's heads and operatives, and by representatives of the other Palestinian terrorist organizations, among them senior Fatah figures. **Azzam al-Ahmad**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, **represented Mahmoud Abbas and gave a speech in his name, praising the organization** (Watan TV channel, Ramallah, February 22, 2014).
- **Operatives of the DFLP's military-terrorist wing held a military display in Abu Dis where armed, masked operatives marched.** They waved DFLP flags and called for escalating the "resistance" in all its forms and for the immediate end of the negotiations with Israel. The display ended with a rally where speeches were given stressing the DFLP's commitment to the struggle (Dunia Al-Watan, February 23, 2014).



The military display held by the PFLP in Abu Dis to mark the 45th anniversary of its founding (Dunia Al-Watan, February 23, 2014).