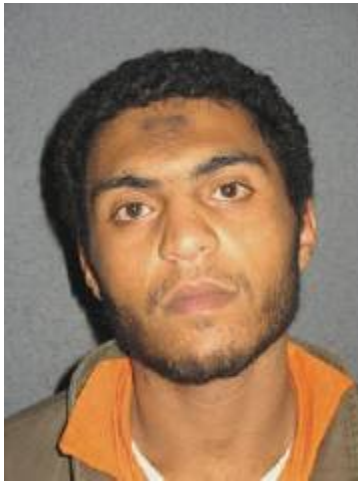




**Intelligence and Terrorism  
Information Center  
Israel Intelligence Heritage  
and Commemoration Center**

## **News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

**April 21-27, 2009**



Left: The Palestinian terrorist detained suspected of stabbing a young boy to death in the community of Bat Ayn (Israel Security Agency, April 26, 2009). Right: The scene of the crime (Photo courtesy of ZAKA, April 2, 2009).

### **Overview**

- This past week quiet continued in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. An important counterterrorism activity was the detention of a Palestinian terrorist from Khirbet Safa in the Mt. Hebron region who is suspected of stabbing a child to death in the community of Bat Ayn. Investigation showed that no terrorist organization was behind the attack and that it was undertaken on the terrorist's initiative, the product of religious Islamic motives and his desire to die as a *shaheed* (a martyr who dies in battle for the sake of Allah).
- This week as well the Egyptians carried out intensive activities to prevent smuggling into the Gaza Strip. On the other hand, senior Hamas figure Musa Abu Marzuq stated that the smuggling was Hamas's "right" and that smuggling weapons into the Gaza Strip would continue.

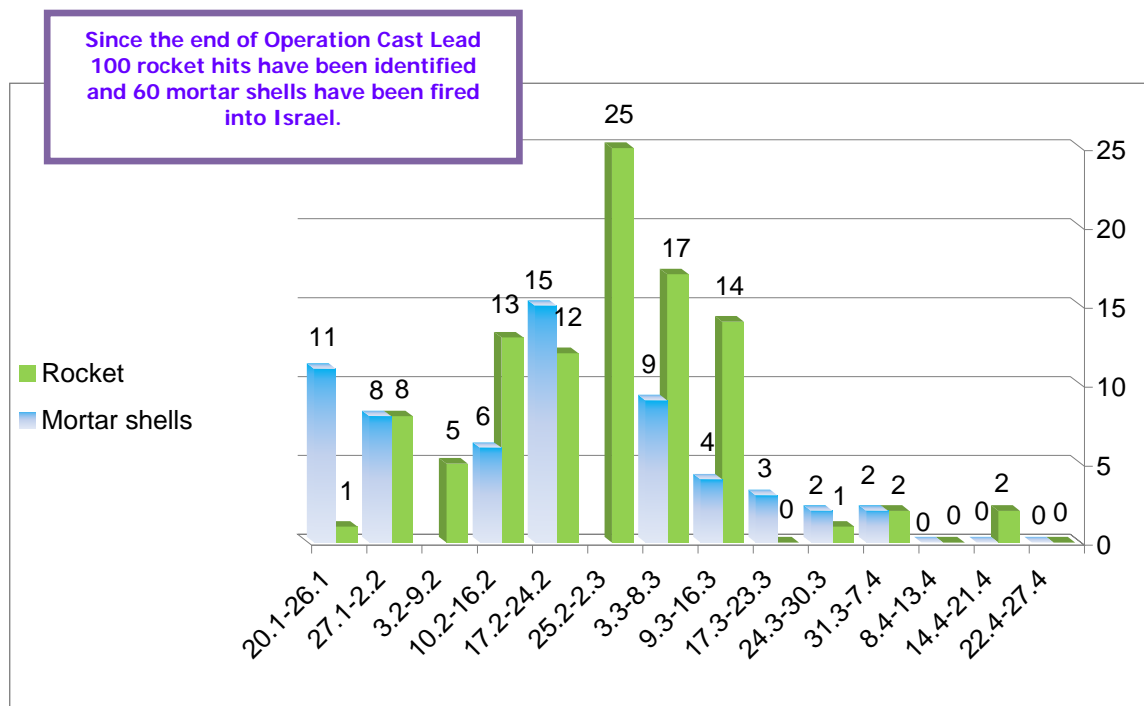
## Important Events

### The Gaza Strip

#### Rocket and mortar shell fire

■ The trend toward quiet from the Gaza Strip continued. This past week neither rockets nor mortar shells were fired at the western Negev.

#### Rocket and mortar shell fire since the end of Operation Cast Lead



### Judea and Samaria

#### Detention of Palestinian terrorist suspected of stabbing Bat Ayn boy to death<sup>1</sup>

■ On April 14 the Israeli security forces detained Musa Ibrahim Musa Tit, a 26 year-old Palestinian from the village of Khirbet Safa (about 2 km south of Bat Ayn) as a suspect in the stabbing of Shlomo Nativ on April 2. The terrorist managed to flee the scene. After an extensive intelligence effort the security forces located and detained him. During an Israel Security Agency

<sup>1</sup> According to information from the Israel Security Agency.

interrogation Musa Tit admitted committing the attack, showed how he did it and gave up the weapons ( a knife and an axe) he used.

■ The interrogation showed that **no terrorist organization was involved** and that the premeditated attack was the result of **“religious motives” and the terrorist’s desire to die as a *shaheed*** (a martyr who dies in battle for the sake of Allah). [In our assessment, his motive was fostered by the continual Islamic religious brainwashing to which young Palestinians are subjected, the same motive behind the attacks carried out by other lone Palestinian terrorists.] He acquired the weapons two weeks before the attack and hid them in a gulley near the community of Bay Ayn. A few days later he wrote a will. On the morning of the attack he picked up the weapons and entered Bat Ayn, where he stabbed Shlomo Nativ to death, and then used the axe to attack another child and then a third, who managed to escape. After local residents fought with him he fled to his village. He destroyed some of the evidence linking him to the crime and then continued his daily life, believing he would not be caught.



Left: The suspect holding his will. Right: The knife left on the ground after the attack (Israel Security Agency, April 26, 2009).

## Counterterrorism Activities

■ The Israeli security forces continue their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria. On April 22, during an activity in a village southwest of Jenin two rifles, an improvised hand gun and a number of bullets were found. The weapons were confiscated and transferred to the Israeli Police. Later the same day stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near the same village.

## The Gaza Strip after Operation Cast Lead

**Egyptian weekly reports Iranian ship carrying weapons sunk off the coast of Sudan**

■ The Egyptian weekly *Al-Ussbu'*, quoting "reliable sources in Sudan," reported that two weeks ago an Iran ship was sunk off the Sudanese coast. According to the sources, the boat was sunk by missiles fired from an unidentified gunboat ("which might have been Israeli or American"). It is conjectured that the boat, which was carrying weapons, was going to unload its cargo in Sudan, and that the weapons would then be transported through Egypt into the Gaza Strip (*Al-Ussbu'*, April 26, 2009). Note: At the end of March 2009 American (and Arab) media reported that in **Sudan** Israel attacked a convoy of weapons on their way to the Gaza Strip.<sup>2</sup>

### Hamas states it intends to continue smuggling weapons into the Gaza Strip

■ During an interview, **Musa Abu Marzuq**, deputy head of the Hamas political bureau in Damascus, was asked about the increased Egyptian inspection of the border between Egypt and the Gaza Strip. He answered that Hamas was a "resistance movement" [i.e., a terrorist organization] and that such a movement could not officially purchase weapons. He said, "we import our weapons in ways we think will ensure [acquiring them], and it is our right to arm our men..." He added it was a "natural position" to support occupied peoples with money and weapons and give them every possible assistance (Hamas's Palestine-Info website, April 23, 2009).

### Egypt continues its activities to prevent smuggling

■ The Egyptian security forces continue their extensive anti-smuggling activities along the border between Egypt and the Gaza Strip. During the past week tens of thousands of liters of fuel meant to be smuggled into the Gaza Strip were confiscated. In addition, a number of truck carrying washing machines and plasma TV screens were also confiscated on their way to Rafah.

■ The Egyptian security forces use various measures, including gas, to stop the smuggling through the tunnels. On an Israeli Channel 10 TV report, a Palestinian smuggler was photographed as he was taken from a tunnel after gas was pumped into it, a measure which led to the deaths of a number of Palestinians who did not get out in time. According to the smugglers in the report, the Egyptian measures cause greater harm than Operation Cast Lead (Israeli Channel 10 TV, April 21, 2009, reported by Shlomi Eldar).

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<sup>2</sup> For further information see our March 31 bulletin "News of Terrorism and the Palestinian- Israeli Conflict, March 24-31, 2009" at [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/html/ipc\\_e023.htm](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/ipc_e023.htm)



Egyptians pump gas into the tunnels (Photo courtesy of Israeli Channel 10 TV, March 21, 2009).

### A Scottish delegation visits the Gaza Strip

■ On April 24 a Scottish delegation of Scottish charity workers headed by MP **Pauline McNeil** visited the Gaza Strip. They entered the Gaza Strip along with nine trucks carrying medicines and medical equipment, as well as a gift of money from the Scottish government and Palestinian charitable societies. The delegation met with members of the Palestinian Legislative Council and important figures in various Palestinian organizations. It also toured sites damaged during Operation Cast Lead and met with the families of Palestinian prisoners (Al-Aqsa TV, April 24).



The Scottish delegation meets in the Gaza Strip with prisoners' families (Al-Quds TV, April 24, 2009).

## Hamas responds to a Human Rights Watch report criticizing the oppression of its Opponents

■ On April 20, the NGO **Human Rights Watch** issued a 26-page report about Hamas's **political violence** in the Gaza Strip. The report was severely critical of Hamas's activities during and after Operation Cast Lead. It stated that during the operation **Hamas executed 18 people suspected of collaboration with Israel**, and that masked gunmen shot down many Hamas opponents, especially Fatah activists. In addition, according to the report, the executions continued after Operation Cast Lead, and scores of individuals were tortured. Despite Hamas's promises, with one exception, no investigations were made<sup>3</sup> (Human Rights Watch report, April 27, 2009).



Human Rights Watch report about political violence in the Gaza Strip (Human Rights Watch website, April 27, 2009).

■ **Fawzi Barhoum**, Hamas spokesman in the Gaza Strip, criticized the report, claiming that violating human rights was not part of Hamas policy. He said that the report had been written in haste, was inexact and incomplete, and ignored the policy of both the Hamas movement and government, which was founded on law enforcement. He added that the report ignored the "anarchy and destruction in the Gaza Strip, which is [the result of] the Zionist enemy" (Al-Aqsa TV, April 19, 2009).

## The Diplomatic Front

### Gilad Shalit, the abducted Israeli soldier

■ Hamas spokesmen responded to reports in the Israeli media that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu intended to replace Ofer Dekel as chief negotiator for liberating Gilad Shalit, the abducted Israeli soldier (April 20, 2009, source). **Mahmoud al-Zahar** said that the negotiations were currently "stuck," but that replacing Ofer Dekel had no influence on the process because the present government was continuing where the previous one had left off (Ma'an News Agency, April 22, 2009). **Musheir al-Masri**, chairman of the Hamas faction in the Palestinian Legislative Council, said that "what is of interest to Hamas is compliance with its conditions without any relation to the person heading the government or responsible for the negotiations" (*Al-Jarida*, April 21, 2009). A senior Hamas figure who remained anonymous said that Prime Minister

<sup>3</sup> The Human Rights Watch report about Hamas abuses joins the one issued by Amnesty International on February 10, 2009. According to that report, Hamas ordered the killing of individuals suspected of collaboration with Israel. For further information see our February 12, 2009 bulletin about the Amnesty International report, "Oppression of Hamas Opponents in the Gaza Strip" at [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/html/hamas\\_e058.htm](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/hamas_e058.htm).

Netanyahu might want to start the negotiations from the beginning, and that Netanyahu was taking into consideration a possible attempt to liberate Gilad Shalit by military force (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, April 21, 2009).

■ **Ali Barakeh, a senior Hamas figure in Damascus**, interviewed during “Palestinian Prisoner’s Day,” addressed himself to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and said that Hamas would not alter its conditions. He repeated the demand for the release of 450 Palestinian prisoners “sentenced to long prison terms” as well as the women, children, ministers and Hamas members of the Palestinian Legislative Council currently being held in Israel. He added that Hamas expected to continue negotiating during May after the new Israeli team had been formed (*Al-Aqsa TV*, April 18, 2009).

## The Internal Palestinian Arena

### The Palestinian dialogue

■ On April 26 the internal Palestinian dialogue reconvened in Cairo after the arrival of the Fatah and Hamas delegations on April 25 and 26.

■ Hamas spokesman **Fawzi Barhoum** claimed that the current round of talks is expected to be the most difficult, and would clarify future Palestinian relations (Ramattan News Agency, April 25, 2009). Senior Hamas figure **Ismail Radwan** expressed hope that the talks would be decisive and that unity would be achieved. He added that Hamas considered the formation of the national unity government as an important part of the package deal, and if it were not achieved, Hamas had its own ways of responding to the Egyptian proposal. **Ayman Taha**, senior Hamas figure in the Gaza Strip, said that the current talks could not be described as decisive and it was not presently necessary to reach an agreement in this round of talks (*Al-Quds website*, April 25, 2009).

### Detentions of Hamas activists in Judea and Samaria and Fatah activists in the Gaza Strip continue

■ As the dialogue was taking place, the Palestinian security services continued detaining Hamas activists in Judea and Samaria. Concurrently, Hamas’s security services in the Gaza Strip detained figures affiliated with Fatah (*Wafa News Agency*, April 25, 2009). On April 23 violent conflicts were reported between Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad operatives near a Palestinian bank in Dir al-Balah in the Gaza Strip (*Fatah Internet forum*, April 23, 2009).