



**The Meir Amit Intelligence
and Terrorism Information**

News of Terrorism and the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict

October 19-25, 2011



**Israeli President Shimon Peres visits Gilad Shalit at his home in the
Western Galilee (Israeli President's website, October 24, 2011).**

Overview

- This past week terrorist events focused on the stabbing of an Israeli by a Palestinian in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Ramot. Two attempted stabbings were prevented at a junction south of Jerusalem and near the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron. For the third consecutive week, no rockets were fired into Israeli territory from the Gaza Strip.
- Festive receptions continue for the terrorists released in the deal to liberate Gilad Shalit. They are being held in the Palestinian Authority, the Gaza Strip and the countries which agreed to accept the 41 deported prisoners (Turkey, Syria, Qatar and Jordan). The terrorists repeatedly stated that they did not regret their terrorist actions and that they would continue to adhere to the path of violence and terrorism (the so-called "resistance"). High-ranking Hamas figures repeatedly called for the abduction of more Israelis "to empty" Israeli jails of Palestinian terrorists.

Stabbings in Jerusalem and Elsewhere in Judea

■ On October 22 **two Israeli youths were attacked in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Ramot**, apparently by a Palestinian about 20 years old and **armed with a knife**. One of the boys, 17, was seriously wounded and taken to a hospital for treatment. IDF forces and police chased the stabber, who escaped in the direction of the Palestinian village of Beit Iksa (near Ramot), but he has not yet been caught. No Palestinian terrorist organization claimed responsibility for the attack (IDF Spokesman, October 22, 2011).

■ Two stabbing attempts in Judea were prevented this past week:

● On **October 19** a young Palestinian woman approached a group of soldiers and civilians waiting for a bus at the Gush Etzion junction, south of Jerusalem. **She took out a knife** and shouted "Death to the Jews, Allahu akbar." The soldiers overcame and detained her (IDF Spokesman, October 19, 2011).

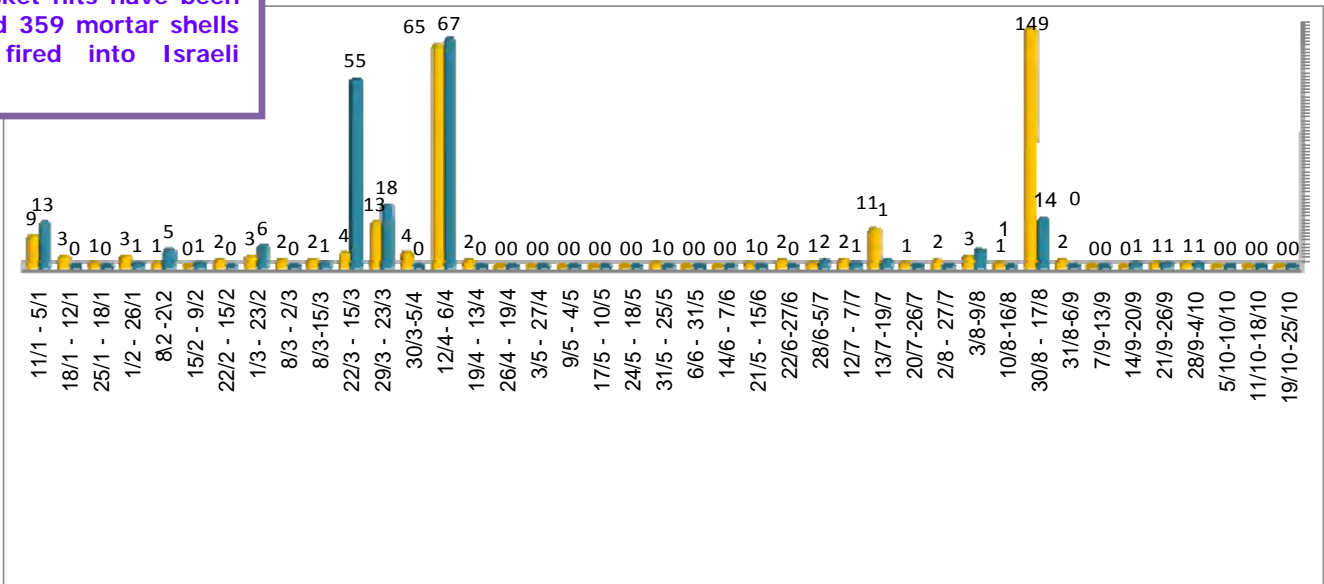
● On **October 23** Border Policemen detained a young Palestinian man who aroused their suspicions at the roadblock near the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron. A search revealed him to be **armed with a knife**. During interrogation he admitted he had intended to stab a Jew in the region of the Cave of the Patriarchs (IDF Spokesman, October 23, 2011).

Israel's South Important Terrorism Events

■ **For the third consecutive week no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israeli territory.**

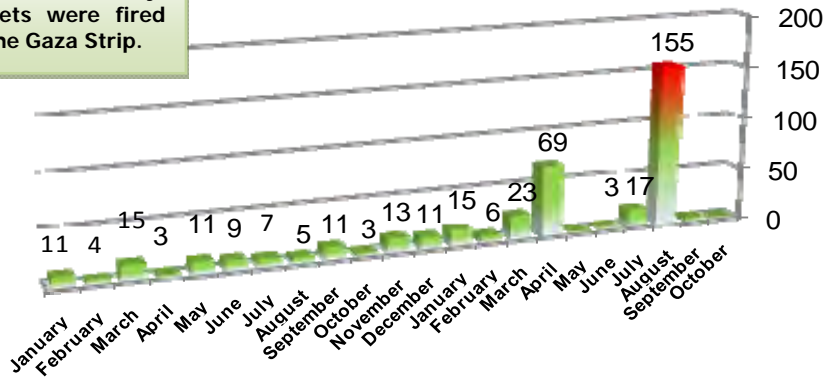
Rockets and Mortar Shells Fired into Israeli Territory¹

Since the end of Operation Cast Lead 550 rocket hits have been identified and 359 mortar shells have been fired into Israeli territory.



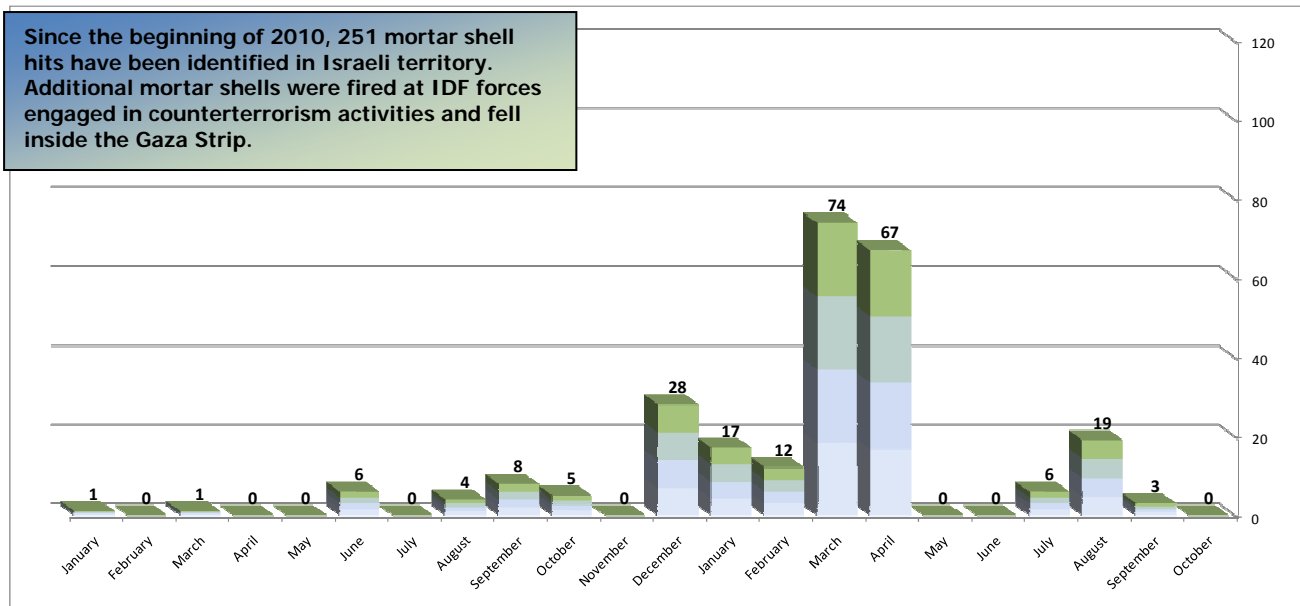
Rocket Fire – Monthly Distribution

Since the beginning of 2010, 505 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory. Additional rockets were fired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.



¹ The statistics do not include rockets and mortar shells fired which fell inside the Gaza Strip. As of October 25, 2011.

Mortar Shell Fire – Monthly Distribution



Judea and Samaria

The Situation on the Ground

■ This past week, in addition to the stabbing attacks in Judea, there were many instances of stones thrown at Israeli civilians, security force personnel and vehicles. Confrontations continued between Palestinians and Israeli settlers, primarily related to the on-going olive harvest:

- On October 22 Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle south of Bethlehem. There were no casualties. Damage was done to the vehicle (IDF Spokesman, October 22, 2011).
- On October 22 about 50 Palestinians gathered near the village of Karmeit Zur (southwest of Bethlehem) and threw stones at Israeli security forces (IDF Spokesman, October 22, 2011).

The Liberation of Abducted Israeli Soldier Gilad Shalit – Update

Receptions for the Released Palestinian Terrorists

■ In Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip the receptions for the terrorists exchanged for Gilad Shalit, led by the Palestinian Authority and the de-facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip. The receptions have been exploited for military displays of force to emphasize the success, in the eyes of the Palestinians, of terrorism (the so-called "resistance"), and to send the message that other Palestinians terrorists will be released through the abduction of more Israelis. There

was extensive coverage of the arrival of the 41 deported Palestinian terrorists by the media in the countries which accepted them: Turkey, Syria, Qatar and Jordan.



Military display held by the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military-terrorist wing, in honor of the terrorists released to the Gaza Strip on October 21 (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website, October 22, 2011).



An Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades poster with the logo in the upper righthand corner (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website, October 21, 2011). Both the poster and logo stress the theme that only terrorism and violence can achieve the Palestinians' goals.

■ The de-facto Hamas administration and the Palestinian Authority are engaged in a kind of competition over the gestures to the freed terrorists, in order to win the sympathy and support of the Palestinian public. For example, Mahmoud Abbas ordered that every freed terrorist, whether remaining in the Palestinian Authority or deported, be awarded the sum of \$5000. He also ordered the medical centers to provide full, free medical care for each of them (The PIJ's Paltoday website, October 23, 2011). All the terrorists released to the Gaza Strip received \$2000 and a room in a hotel for one month (later they were promised permanent housing). Hamas is facilitating the entrance of the relatives of the freed terrorists into the Gaza Strip as well as allowing their children free tuition at schools and universities. In addition, each former terrorist prisoner will receive free health insurance (Qudsnet website, October 20, 2011).

■ However, sources in the Palestinian Authority's security forces made it clear that **they would not allow anyone to exploit the events in support of the freed terrorists as a show of support for Hamas**. For example, operatives of the security forces entered the ceremony held by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad in Jenin in honor of one of the women terrorists and removed the Hamas flags hung there. In addition, families of freed terrorists were asked to remove the Hamas flags flown from their homes (Ajnad-news website, October 4, 2011).

Reception of the Terrorists in Countries Abroad

■ Hamas made arrangements to monitor the 41 terrorists who were deported. **Every group was accompanied by a member of Hamas' political bureau who personally oversaw the reception procedures**. Izzat al-Rishq accompanied the group to Doha, Muhammed Nasser accompanied the group to Ankara, Saleh al-'Aarouri accompanied the group to Damascus (Hamas' Palestine-info website, October 19, 2011).

■ The Turkish press gave extensive coverage to the liberation of Gilad Shalit, especially **the arrival of 11 terrorist operatives in Ankara as part of the deal**. One of those who arrived in Turkey was female terrorist Amina Muna, a Fatah operative who was convicted of planning the abduction and murder of an Israeli youth, using the Internet to manipulate him (January 2001). The other ten terrorists were **Hamas operatives**. According to the Turkish press, they terrorists are being monitored by Turkish intelligence and will not be allowed to circulate unaccompanied. On the other hand, Turkey will not force them to remain in the country or prevent them from going to another country if they request it (Hürriyet, October 20, 2011).



The terrorists arrive in Ankara (Zaman website, October 19, 2011).

■ A ceremony was held for the terrorists deported to Syria in the Yarmouk refugee camp (Al-Aqsa TV, October 22, 2011). Saleh al-'Aarouri, a member of Hamas' political bureau and holder of the prisoners' portfolio, said that Hamas had been operating for years to release the prisoners from [Israeli] jails and that the prisoners were now looking forward to the next deal.

Statements from the Freed Terrorists

■ **At many receptions and interviews with the media**, the freed terrorists often stressed that they did not regret having chosen the path of terrorism and that they encouraged its continuation:

- **Na'el al-Barghouti**, the oldest prisoner, said that his release and the release of hundreds of other prisoners were **proof of the success of the "resistance" [i.e., violence and terrorism]**. He said that the so-called "resistance" had overcome the path of agreement, and the deal achieved was the ideal realization of national unity (Al-resalah.net website, October 18, 2011).

- **Ahlam al-Tamimi**, who went to Jordan, said that she called on young Arabs to exert pressure on their governments for the sake of the Palestinian prisoners and to use the cause of the prisoners as a way of exerting pressure on every instance of negotiations with Israel. **She said she would never regret her participation in the attack (at the Sbarro restaurant) in Jerusalem in 2001²** (Ammon News Agency, Jordan, October 19, 2011).

- **Yehya al-Sanwar**, high-ranking Hamas terrorist operative, **said that he wanted to live as a fighter and die as a fighter**. He said that **the warning issued by Israeli Prime Minister to the prisoners not to return to "resistance" would not make him lose sleep**. He also said that the only way to release the prisoners was to capture **more Israeli soldiers** (Safa News Agency, October 19, 2011).

- **Wafa al-Bas**, the only female terrorist released to the Gaza Strip, said that she would not abandon the goal she had pursued and if she were asked to carry out a suicide bombing attack she would not hesitate. **She said she was committed to the oath of the shaheeds, to continue the path of the Palestinian "resistance" [i.e., violence and terrorism] because it was the only way to "get rid of the Israeli occupation" (Al-Quds TV, October 20, 2011).**

Statements from High-Ranking Hamas Figures about the Deal

■ **Khaled Mashaal, head of Hamas' political bureau, left Cairo to return to Damascus. Before he left he met with Ahmed Jaabari, commander of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades (Filastin al-'Aan, October 19, 2011).** Ahmed Jaabari headed the Palestinian team negotiating the deal and was shown holding Gilad Shalit's arm before he was turned over to the Egyptians.

²Ahlam al-Tamimi escorted the suicide bomber who blew himself up in the Sbarro restaurant in August 2001. Fifteen Israeli civilians were killed in the attack. She was sentenced to 16 consecutive terms of life imprisonment.



Ahmed Jaabari and Ismail Haniya (Filastin al-'Aan, October 21, 2011)

■ After the prisoners were released, high-ranking Hamas figures repeatedly stressed the success of the deal and Israel's surrender to Hamas demands. **They called for more abductions.** **Ahmed al-Jaabari**, commander of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, said that it was the happiest day of his life and that the deal had succeeded only because Israel had surrendered to Hamas demands. As for accepting the principle of deportation (which at the time led to internal Palestinian criticism of Hamas) he said that Hamas had agreed to the deportation of 41 prisoners **because it was the only way their release could be obtained** (Al-Hayat, October 20, 2011).

■ **Ahmed al-Jaabari** told the press that **Israeli soldiers and officers would continue to be abducted as long as there were Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails**. He said that the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades **had taken it upon themselves to empty the Israeli jails** and release all the prisoners without considering their organizational affiliations or political positions (Hamas' Palestine-info website, October 23, 2011).

■ **Osama Hamdan**, in charge of Hamas' foreign relations, said that the deal with Israel was a victory for the "Palestinian resistance" [i.e., terrorist organizations]. He said its achievements were unprecedented and that prisoners who had been sentenced to long terms had been released. He said that despite the pressures exerted on it, the stubbornness of the Palestinian team was one of the prime reasons for its success, as well as its ability to keep Gilad Shalit alive throughout the time he was held captive. He said the Israeli government would be in a difficult position if more soldiers were captured (Alresalah.net website, October 18, 2011).

■ **Khalil al-Hayeh**, high-ranking Hamas activist, said that Hamas was firm in its decision to obtain the release of the remaining prisoners in [Israeli] jails (Hamas' Palestine-info website, October 21, 2011). Izzat al-Rishq, high-ranking Hamas figure, said that **Hamas would continue its efforts to secure the release of all the prisoners through more "resistance"** [i.e., terrorist] actions, especially abductions (Al-Jazeera TV, October 19, 2011).

■ **Sources within Hamas also expressed concern that Israel would harm the**

terrorists who had been freed. Mahmoud al-Zahar, a member of Hamas political bureau, warned Israel not to harm them (Alresalah.net website, October 23, 2011). **Ahmed Bahar**, deputy chairman of the Palestinian Legislative Council, also warned Israel not to harm them and called on the former prisoners to be extremely careful in Jerusalem and the West Bank. He said it was up to Mahmoud Abbas to play the main role in protecting them (Ma'an News Agency, October 23, 2011).

Implementing the Second Stage of the Agreement

■ In the second stage **of the exchange agreement 550 Palestinian terrorists chosen by Israel will be released. Sources within Hamas**, worried Israel will release prisoners Hamas deems as "lightweight," **reiterated their expectations: The prisoners to be freed would be only those sentenced for "nationalist" and security crimes, and not "criminals." They would be allowed to return to their homes and would not be deported. They would not have almost finished serving their sentences (Safa News Agency, October 22, 2011).**

■ **Ahmed al-Jaabari**, commander of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, said that in the second stage **priority would be given to prisoners who were sick or old, and those who had been in jail for 20 years or longer.** He rejected the possibility that Israel would breach the agreement because it had been obtained under Egyptian aegis, and Egypt was responsible for ensuring the implementation of the second stage (Hamas' Palestine-info website, October 23, 2011). Ismail Radwan, Hamas spokesman, said that Egypt would not allow Israel to add criminals to the list of prisoners released in the second stage, adding that Egypt was the deal's only guarantor (Shehab News Agency, October 19, 2011).

■ **Salah al-'Aarouri**, member of Hamas' political bureau and holder of the prisoners' portfolio, said that Hamas, through the Egyptian intermediary, had given Israel **a list of nine additional female prisoners** who had not been included in the first stage and whose release was demanded by Hamas; not releasing them, he said, would be a violation of the agreement (Qudsnet, October 23, 2011).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

Remarks about the Fatah-Hamas Reconciliation

■ The heads of Hamas and Fatah are making an attempt to exploit recent events to advance the reconciliation between them. **Khaled Mashaal**, head of the Hamas political bureau, called **Mahmoud Abbas** and suggested they meet. He said that thanks to the good atmosphere resulting from the prisoner exchange deal, a meeting between the sides could lead to a reconciliation (Al-Hayat, October 20, 2011). During his visit to Egypt, Mahmoud Abbas said that

he would meet with Khaled Mashaal in Cairo, apparently at the beginning of November, to discuss the articles of the internal Palestinian reconciliation.

■ Mahmoud Abbas said that **he would be willing to hold elections in January 2012**, after which a unity government would be formed. In response, **Mahmoud al-Zahar**, a member of Hamas' political bureau, said that it would not be enough to hold elections, there were other issues that had to be resolved to achieve a full reconciliation and that elections could not be held before those issues had been settled.

The Political Front

The Members of the International Quartet Attempt to Promote Negotiations

■ **Tony Blair**, the International Quartet envoy to the Middle East, said that representatives of the Quartet had invited representatives of Israel and the Palestinian Authority to separate meetings in Jerusalem on October 26. "We need strong, clear commitments that both parties will produce comprehensive proposals on borders and security within 90 days," he said³

■ Officials in the Palestinian Authority again stressed the Palestinians' pre-conditions and warned that the efforts of the International Quartet would fail if their conditions were not met:

- **Mahmoud Abbas** said that if a common basis were found in the October 26 meetings with International Quartet the negotiations would be renewed, but that the Palestinians were prepared to negotiate **only on the condition that Israel recognize the 1967 borders and freeze construction in the settlements** (Wafa News Agency, October 21, 2011).

- **Saeb Erekat**, head of the PLO negotiating team, said that renewing negotiations with Israel would necessitate a commitment from the Israeli **government to freeze all [construction] activity in the settlements, including East Jerusalem, and agreement to the 1967 borders** (Wafa News Agency, October 19, 2011). In a series of media interviews he accused Israel of sabotaging a renewal of the negotiations and demanded that the members of the International Quartet specifically announce which side was sabotaging the peace process (Agence France-Presse, October 24, 2011).

³<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/23/us-israel-palestinians-blair-idUSTRE79M2GQ20111023>