



Spotlight on the Israel-Palestinian Conflict

June 4-10, 2024

Overview¹

- ▶ **The southern arena:** This past week IDF operations focused on the refugee camps in the central Gaza Strip and the Rafah area in the south. A terrorist infiltration near Kerem Shalom was prevented, during which an IDF soldier was killed.
- ▶ **The issue of the hostages:** The Israeli security forces rescued four Israeli hostages in an operation in the al-Nuseirat refugee camp. A fighter of the counterterrorism unit was killed. The Palestinians claimed that more than 270 civilians were killed during the operation and accused Israel of a "massacre." Despite this, Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) said they were still interested in reaching an agreement that would lead to a permanent ceasefire, the withdrawal of IDF forces from the Gaza Strip and the release of the hostages in exchange for Palestinian prisoners.
- ▶ **Aid for the Gaza Strip:** The delivery of humanitarian aid was renewed through the floating sea pier constructed by the United States military off the coast of Gaza.
- ▶ **Israel, Judea and Samaria:** No terrorist attacks were carried out this past week. A car bomb exploded about a kilometer from a military checkpoint in the Jordan Valley; there were no casualties. The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria. The security forces of the Palestinian Authority (PA) detained wanted operatives of the PIJ's Tubas Battalion.

The Southern Arena

IDF operations in the Gaza Strip

- ▶ This past week IDF operations focused on the refugee camps in the central Gaza Strip and on the Rafah area in the south. The forces fought terrorist operatives, destroyed terrorist facilities and located large quantities of weapons.

¹ Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

► **The central Gaza Strip:** IDF forces operated in the eastern part of the al-Bureij refugee camp, eastern Deir al-Balah and in the area of the al-Nuseirat refugee camp. The forces killed a large number of terrorist operatives, destroyed terrorist facilities and seized large quantities of weapons (IDF spokesperson, June 9, 2024).

► **Rafah:** IDF forces continued operations in the Rafah area, locating tunnel shafts, a latrine for the production of weapons, mortar shell launchers and other weapons, including weapons hidden in a baby's crib (IDF spokesperson, June 7 to 9, 2024). Correspondents for the Arab TV channels reported that the IDF's activity in Rafah focused on the east of the city and the neighborhoods adjacent to the Philadelphia Axis along the Egypt-Gaza Strip border (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, June 7, 2024).



Right: Weapons seized by IDF forces in Rafah (IDF spokesperson, June 6, 2024). Left: Weapons found in a baby's crib (IDF spokesperson's website, June 7, 2024)

Terrorist infiltration near Kerem Shalom prevented

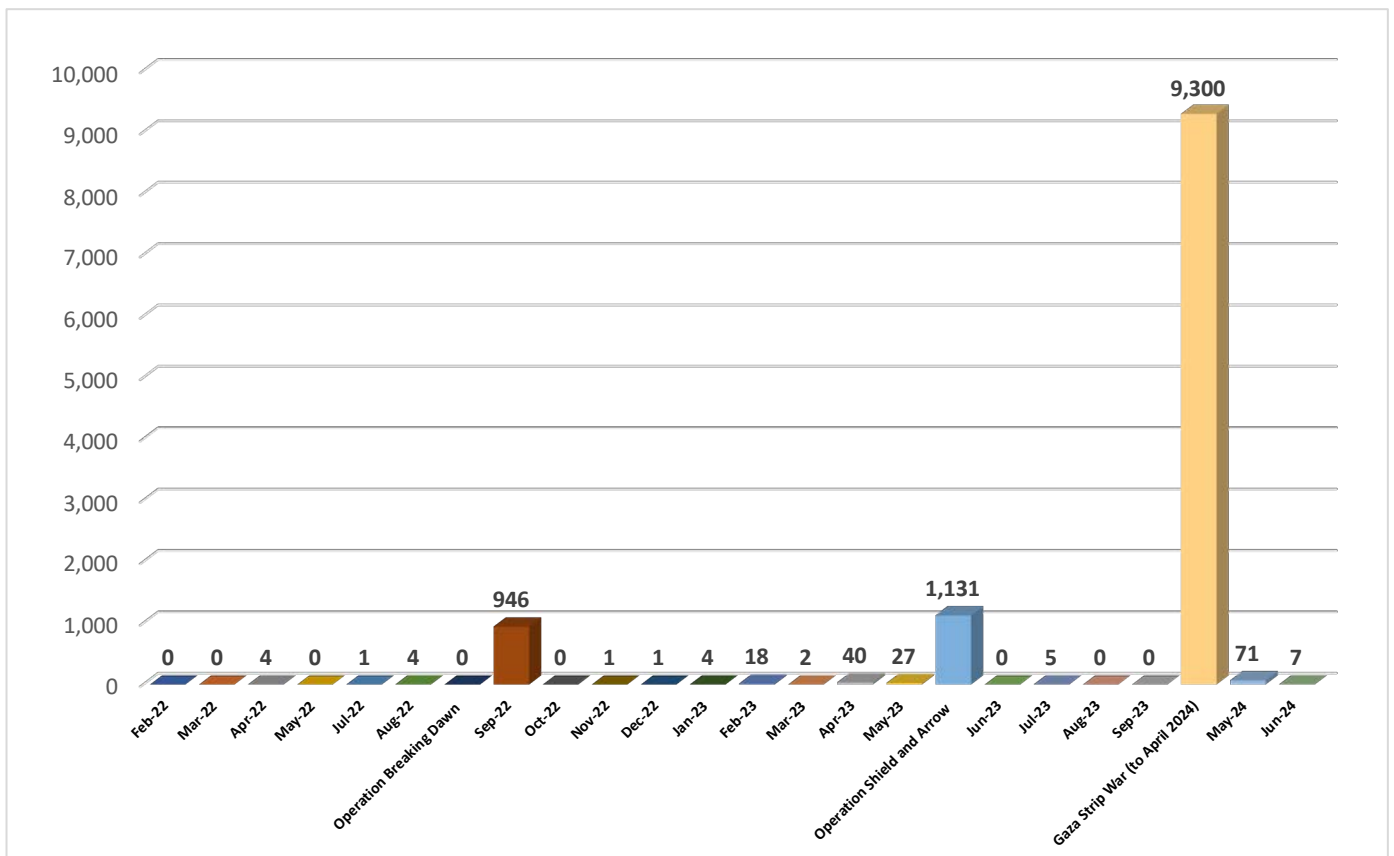
► Before dawn on June 6, 2024, IDF forces prevented a terrorist infiltration near Kerem Shalom. Four armed terrorist operatives were identified emerging from a tunnel shaft and advancing towards the Gaza Strip border in an attempt to reach Israel. IDF forces exchanged fire with the Palestinians and an IDF aircraft killed two of the operatives. Another was killed by tank fire and the fourth fled back to the Rafah area. An IDF soldier was killed (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, Israeli media, June 6, 2024).

► The Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, claimed responsibility for the attempted infiltration. It falsely claimed that in "Operation Beyond Enemy Lines" its fighters penetrated the separation fence and attacked the headquarters of the IDF division operating in Rafah (Hamas Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria, June 6, 2024).

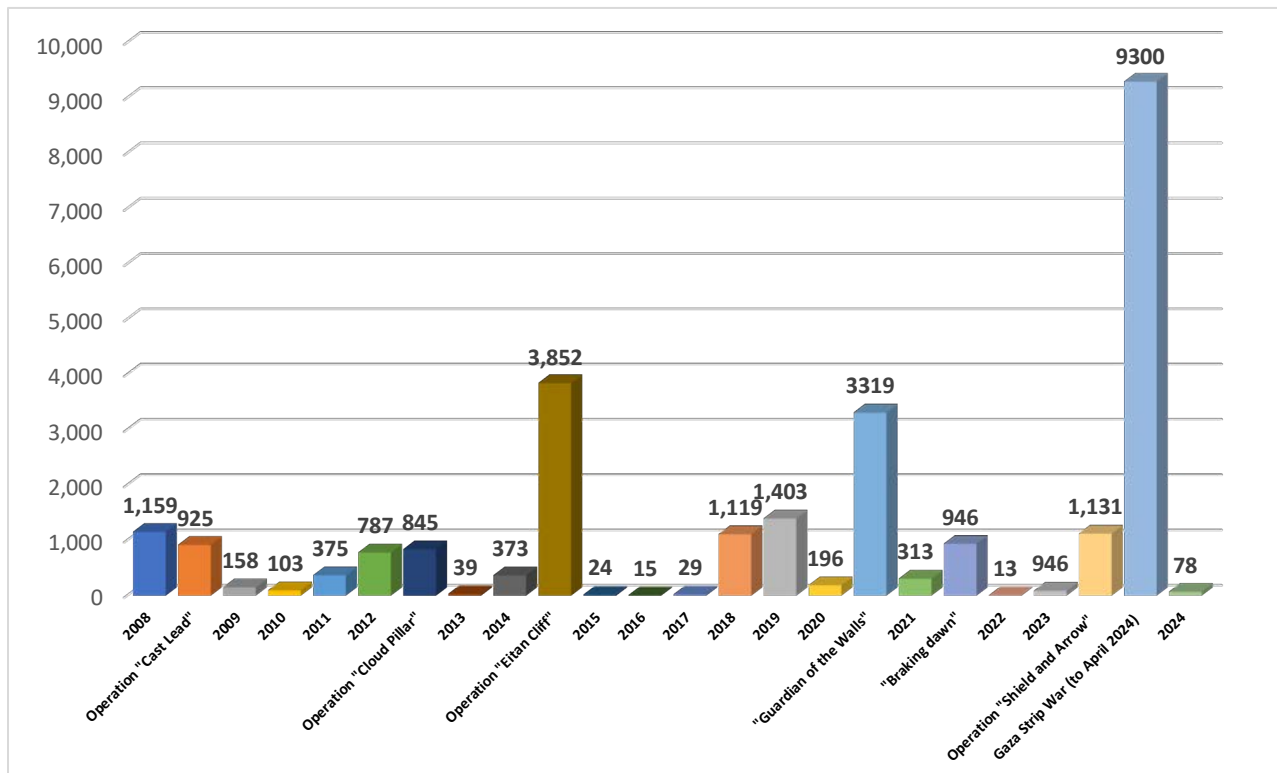
Rocket fire from the Gaza Strip

- ▶ This week there was a decrease in the volume of rocket fire from the Gaza Strip into Israel:
 - ◆ On the evening of June 8, 2024, four rockets were fired at towns and villages surrounding Gaza. The Jerusalem Brigades, the military wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), claimed responsibility for the attack (Jerusalem Brigades Telegram channel, June 8, 2024).
 - ◆ On the morning of June 7, 2024, a rocket was fired at the western Negev. It fell in an open area; no casualties were reported (Israeli media, June 7, 2024). The PIJ's military wing claimed it had fired a "barrage of rockets" at the headquarters of the IDF Gaza Division in Kibbutz Re'im (Filastin al-Yawm Telegram channel, June 7, 2024).
 - ◆ On June 6, 2024, rockets were fired from the Rafah region and fell in an open area in the western Negev. No casualties were reported (Israeli media, June 6, 2024).

Monthly Distribution of Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire since June 2022



Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits



* Distribution for 2024 begins in May

The hostages and a ceasefire agreement

Four hostages rescued from al-Nuseirat

► On June 8, 2024, Israeli security forces rescued four Israeli hostages in an extraction operation in the al-Nuseirat refugee camp. They were kidnapped on October 7, 2023 and were being kept in two buildings near each other. During the rescue an IDF soldier was killed (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, June 8, 2024).

► The Hamas-controlled ministry of health in Gaza, claimed that 274 "civilians" had been killed in the IDF operation, [allegedly] including 64 children and 57 women, and accused Israel of committing a "massacre" (ministry of health in Gaza Telegram channel, June 9, 2024).



Right: Extraction of the hostages from the al-Nuseirat refugee camp (al-Jazeera TV, June 8, 2024). Left: IDF forces with two of the rescued hostages (IDF spokesperson, June 8, 2024)

► The IDF spokesperson stated that three of the hostages had been held in the family home of Abdallah Ahmed Aljamal, Hamas operative who worked for al-Jazeera TV (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, June 9, 2024).² Al-Jazeera denied that Aljamal was one of its employees and claimed that he only helped write an opinion piece in 2019 (al-Jazeera X account, June 10, 2024). However, an al-Jazeera website on social media represented him as a "reporter and photojournalist," having reported on the return marches near the border fence between the Gaza Strip and Israel in 2018 (Safaa Subhi's X account, June 9, 2024).



Abdallah Aljamal, represented as a "reporter and photographer" working for al-Jazeera (Safaa Subhi's X account, June 9, 2024)

► The Palestinians condemned the IDF operation in the al-Nuseirat refugee camp:

- ◆ Hamas stated that even the rescue operation would not change the fact that Israel had failed. Hamas claimed the "resistance" still held a large number of hostages and was capable of increasing the number. Hamas also condemned the [alleged] United States' involvement in the rescue operation (al-Quds, June 8, 2024). The American Army's

² For further information, see the February 2024 ITIC report, "[More than half of the Palestinian journalists killed in the Gaza Strip during Operation Iron Swords were affiliated with terrorist organizations](#) (Full version)."

Central Command (CENTCOM) stated in response that claims that the naval pier constructed off Gaza coast had helped the Israeli security forces were false (CENTCOM X account, June 9, 2024).

- ◆ Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, claimed Israel was "massacring" the Palestinian people. He claimed the "resistance" would "continue to protect the rights of the Palestinians" [sic] and called on the world to "rise up against the [alleged] brutal massacres" (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, June 8, 2024).
- ◆ Abu Obeida, spokesman for Hamas' military wing, claimed that the activities of the [so-called] "occupation" in the al-Nuseirat camp were "war crimes." He falsely claimed that other Israeli hostages held in the area were killed during the operation and warned that the Israeli operation would endanger the lives of the hostages and affect their living conditions (Abu Obeida's Telegram channel, June 8, 2024).
- ◆ The PIJ claimed that the "war crime" in the al-Nuseirat refugee camp confirmed that Israel's "criminal conduct" was beyond bounds. It said that the fact that Israel had rescued only a few hostages out of more than a hundred held by the "resistance" indicated Israel's military incompetence (PIJ Telegram channel, June 8, 2024).
- ◆ Mahmoud Abbas ordered Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian delegate to the UN, to request an urgent UN Security Council meeting because of the "many casualties" in the al-Nuseirat refugee camp. He also contacted Arab and international officials and called on them to pressure Israel to comply with the "legitimate international resolutions" which call for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip (Wafa, June 8, 2024).
- ◆ Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesman for Mahmoud Abbas, said that the [alleged] "massacre" in al-Nuseirat was a continuation of Israel's [alleged] Palestinian "genocide." He also accused the American government of being responsible for the "crimes" and called on the United States to stop the war (Wafa, June 8, 2024).

Contacts for a ceasefire

- ▶ The rescue operation in al-Nuseirat was carried out during efforts to promote a ceasefire agreement and the release of hostages. Following the speech of American President Joe Biden, on May 31, 2024, in which he presented the main points of the Israeli proposal, CIA Director William Burns and Brett McGurk, Biden's adviser, visited Qatar. Ziyad al-Nakhalah, PIJ secretary general, and his deputy, Muhammad al-Hindi, arrived in Cairo for talks (PIJ Telegram channel, June 5, 2024).

►According to sources in Hamas, the movement is asking for guarantees from President Biden that Israel will agree to implement his proposal. They also argued that while Biden's proposal met their demands, the Israeli proposal received from the mediators did not include a permanent ceasefire or transition between the various stages of the deal that bound them together (al-Sharq al-Awsat, June 5, 2024).

►Officially, Hamas has not yet responded to the Israeli proposal, but according to reports the mediators did in fact receive a written document in response, according to which Hamas wanted the war to stop one week before the start of the deal and for Israel to clearly confirm its withdrawal from the Strip within the framework of international guarantees. According to the response, the agreement did not have a clause called "humanitarian lull" but the cessation of war, and Hamas wanted aid to enter the entire strip without dividing it into regions. In addition, the movement demanded the release of senior Fatah figure Marwan al-Barghouti, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine secretary general Ahmed Saadat, Ibrahim Hamad and Abbas al-Sayyid, as well as the release of all the terrorist operatives released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal and redetained (al-Ghad, June 6, 2024).

►According to reports, Qatar and Egypt conveyed a message to the leaders of Hamas informing them that they could expect to be detained, have their assets frozen, be sanctioned and deported from Doha if they did not agree to a ceasefire with Israel. The report said the threats were the result of pressure from the Biden administration. In response, Hamas sources denied to the al-Arabiya network that Egypt and Qatar had made the threat (The Wall Street Journal, June 8, 2024).

►Even after the Israeli operation in the al-Nuseirat refugee camp, senior Hamas PIJ terrorists continued to claim they wanted to reach a ceasefire agreement:

- ◆ Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, met with Hakan Fidan, the Turkish foreign minister, and yet again reiterated Hamas' position that any agreement had to include a permanent cessation of "aggression" and a complete withdrawal of Israel from the Gaza Strip, along with an agreement to exchange hostages for prisoners and an agreement for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, June 9, 2024).

- ◆ Osama Hamdan, a senior Hamas member, said that if the United States was serious about achieving a ceasefire, it had to stop or at least reduce military aid to Israel. He

added that Hamas [allegedly] cared only about stopping the "aggression" against the Palestinians (al-Manar, June 9, 2024).

- ◆ Ghazi Hamad, a member of the Hamas political bureau, said that so far the organization had not received a clear, unequivocal Israeli position, according to which it agreed to a permanent ceasefire, as Hamas had demanded from the mediators. He said that although Israel tried every form of military pressure, it was unable to change the movement's position. Hamad emphasized that no Israeli hostage, dead or alive, would leave Gaza except as part of an agreement (al-Araby al-Jadeed, June 9, 2024).
- ◆ Muhammad al-Hindi, deputy PIJ secretary general, said that the Israeli activity in al-Nuseirat would not affect the negotiations to reach an agreement. He added that the deal would not take place unless the "resistance's" conditions were met (Filastin al-Yawm, June 8, 2024).

The Gaza Strip

Palestinian casualties

- ▶ **The Hamas-controlled ministry of health in the Gaza Strip** reported at 1:00 p.m., June 10, 2024, that since the beginning of the war, 37,124 Palestinians had been killed and 84,712 injured (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, June 10, 2024).
- ▶ Israeli Air Force aircraft carried out targeted attacks on Hamas senior figures and terrorist operatives:
 - ◆ On June 7, 2024, Iyad al-Mghari, the mayor of al-Nuseirat, was killed. In the past he was a senior operative in Hamas' West Bank headquarters and was prominent in directing terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria (IDF Telegram channel, June 7, 2024). The Palestinian media reported that Iyad Ahmed al-Mghari (Abu Bilal) was killed, along with other Palestinians, in an attack on a facility of the al-Nuseirat municipality (Safa Telegram channel, June 7, 2024).
 - ◆ On June 6, 2024, Salama Muhammad Abu Ajaj, one of the heads of Hamas' general security forces, was killed in Rafah (IDF spokesperson, June 7, 2024).



Right: Salama Abu Ajaj (IDF Telegram channel, June 7, 2024). Left: Mourning notice from the PA ministry of local government (ministry of local government Facebook page, June 7, 2024)

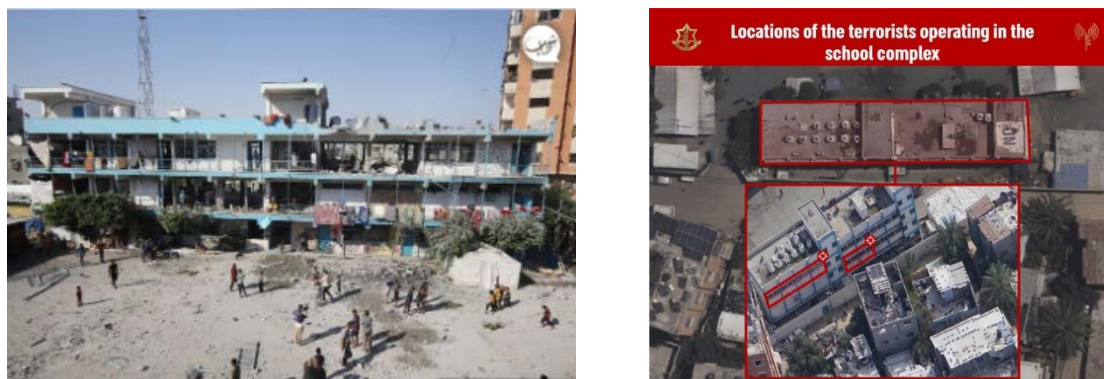
- ◆ Before dawn on June 6, 2024, based on intelligence, Israeli Air Force planes attacked a compound used by Hamas inside an UNRWA school in al-Nuseirat. Hamas nakhba and PIJ terrorist operatives who had taken part in the October 7, 2023 terrorist attack and massacre were staying in the school. The operatives had initiated attacks from inside the school and planned to carry out additional attacks on IDF forces. The IDF spokesperson emphasized that prior to the operation extensive measures were taken to reduce harm to non-involved persons (IDF Telegram channel, June 6, 2024).



17 Hamas and PIJ operatives killed in the attack on the UNRWA school (IDF spokesperson's website, June 6 and 7, 2024)

- ◆ The Hamas government information office in the Gaza Strip reported the [alleged] deaths of 40 displaced persons, including 14 children and nine women, and the injury of 74 more, including 23 children and 18 women, in an attack by warplanes on several classrooms, where dozens of displaced persons had taken shelter, in an UNRWA school in the Camp 2 area of al-Nuseirat (Hamas government information office Telegram channel, June 6, 2024).
- ◆ Hamas issued a statement claiming that the attack on the school was a continuation of Israel's [alleged] "crime of genocide" against the Palestinians. The statement [falsely]

accused the IDF of "focusing on harming civilian groups, especially UNRWA schools and centers" and called on the UN and the international community to establish commissions of inquiry (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, June 7, 2024).



Right: The areas in the school compound taken over by the terrorists (IDF Telegram channel, June 6, 2024). Left: The school after the attack (Shehab Telegram channel, June 6, 2024)

- ◆ On June 3, 2024, the Palestinian social networks reported the death of Imad 'Ouda (Abu Ja'far), an operative in Hamas' Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades. He was represented as the sniper who killed an IDF officer in Beit Hanoun during Operation Protective Edge (2014). According to reports, after the operation he was appointed commander of the sniper training program in the Gaza Strip and general supervisor of teaching and developing programs at the "military academy" of Hamas' military wing. He was eventually appointed nakhba commander in Beit Hanoun, a position he held during the current fighting (Amira al-Nahal's X account, June 3, 2024; Ibrahim al-Madhoun's X account, June 3, 2024).



Imad 'Ouda (Abu Ja'far) (Amira al-Nahal's X account, June 3, 2024)

Aid for the Gaza Strip

- On June 7, 2024, the American Army Central Command (CENTCOM) announced it had successfully reattached the floating naval pier off the coast of Gaza, allowing the continued

delivery of the humanitarian aid needed by the residents of the Gaza Strip (CENTCOM X account, June 7, 2024). The pier was shut down for more than a week because of damages caused by the impact of the waves and was repaired in the Port of Ashdod.

►Samantha Power, director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), said that during June 8, 2024, more than 492 tons of aid had passed through the pier (Samantha Power's X account, June 9, 2024). However, Cindy McCain, director of the UN World Food Program, reported that the agency had suspended its activities at the pier after two of the agency's warehouses were attacked by rockets. She indicated that activities would resume only after the safety issues had been settled (CBS News, June 9, 2024).

►The Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) reported the continuation of humanitarian aid airlifts to the Gaza Strip. He said that so far 118 drops have been carried out, which included 9,546 pallets of humanitarian aid. He also presented documentation of large quantities of humanitarian aid which had accumulated on the Palestinian side of the Kerem Shalom crossing after having been transferred from the Israeli side (COGAT Facebook page in Arabic, June 9, 2024).



Humanitarian aid on the Palestinian side of the Kerem Shalom crossing COGAT Facebook page in Arabic, June 9, 2024)

►The World Central Kitchen (WCK) said that it has provided more than 50 million meals in the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the war. It stated that it now ran two main field kitchens, in Deir al-Balah and al-Mawasi, after the kitchen in Rafah suspended operations on May 21, 2024, following the IDF's instructions to evacuate. The organization operates 65 other community kitchens spread throughout the Gaza Strip. John Torpey, WCK manager in the Middle East, said the organization was currently inactive in the northern Gaza Strip due to difficulties in transporting supplies from the southern Gaza Strip to the north (Reuters, June 4, 2024; WCK website, June 4, 2024).

The situation in the Gaza Strip

►The ministry of health in Gaza claimed that due to the IDF attacks in the central Gaza Strip, Shuhada al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah, the only hospital currently providing health services to the one million people in the central Gaza Strip, had no way of admitting new patients due to a shortage of medical equipment and personnel. Khalil al-Daqran, spokesman for the hospital, said that the attacks on the al-Bureij and al-Maghazi refugee camps had filled the hospital with wounded, and said it was unable to provide care for more wounded (al-Jazeera website, June 5, 2024). The hospital later announced that one of his two generators had stopped working (Hamas government information office Telegram channel, June 5, 2024).

►The International Medical Corps announced that the escalation of fighting in and around Rafah affected the activity of its field hospital in al-Mawasi [in Rafah], which has 160 beds. The organization was therefore forced to transfer all its activities to a field hospital in Deir al-Balah (International Medical Corps Facebook page, June 5, 2024). The World Health Organization later said that only two hospitals continued to provide health services in the Rafah district, a Red Cross field hospital in the al-Mawasi region and a UAE field hospital in Rafah, which is more difficult to reach because of the ongoing fighting (World Health Organization CEO's X account, June 6, 2024).

The issue of "the day after"

►Ghazi Hamad, a member of the Hamas political bureau, said that Hamas had reached an understanding with all the Palestinian organizations that any change in the Palestinian territories was an internal matter without external involvement. He said Hamas did not intend to leave the Palestinian political arena. He also said that after the establishment of a Palestinian state and the end of the "occupation," Hamas would be prepared to integrate into a Palestinian national army, but in light of the "occupation's" presence it would not hand over its weapons. Hamad also blamed Mahmoud Abbas for the failure of the reconciliation talks. He said Hamas had held several talks with Fatah members and offered to establish a national unity government or a government of technocrats by agreement, but there had been no response from Mahmoud Abbas (al-Araby al-Jadeed, June 9, 2024).

►A "senior source" in Fatah accused Hamas of not caring about the lives of the Palestinians, sacrificing them in order to survive. He added that Hamas sacrificed more than 270 Palestinians for four hostages and that it gave Israel all the means to kill the Palestinians. He

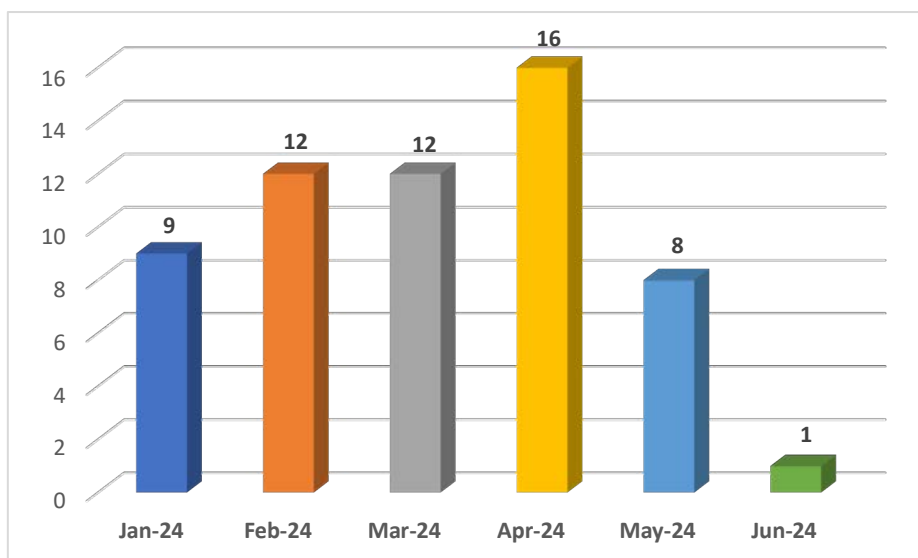
said Hamas had to rid itself of external agendas, adding that the PA had not closed the door to Hamas (al-Arabiya, June 9, 2024).

Israel, Judea and Samaria

Car bomb explodes near Tubas

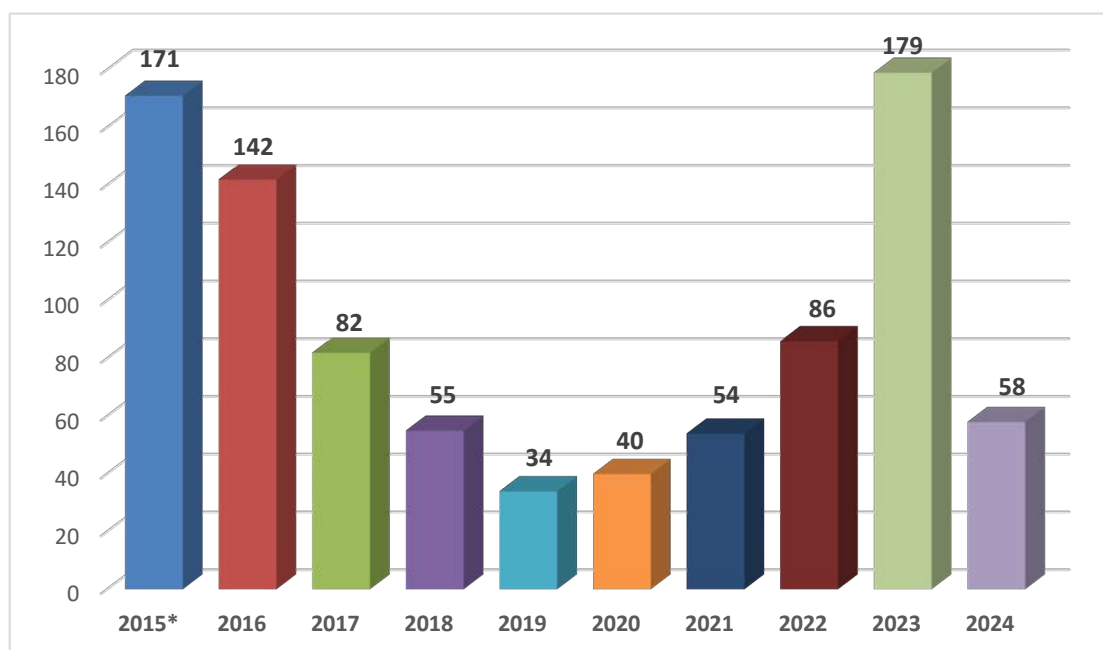
►On the night of June 5, 2024, a car bomb containing a large number of IEDs exploded in the Jordan Valley, about a kilometer from the Tayasir roadblock on the Palestinian side; there were no casualties. The IDF and the Israeli Security Agency launched an investigation (IDF Telegram channel and Israeli media, June 6, 2024). The Tubas Battalion of the Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military wing, claimed its operatives had attacked the Tayasir roadblock with a car bomb in response to "the settlers' invasion of the al-Aqsa Mosque and in response to the [alleged] massacre in Rafah" (Telegram channel A7rartoubas, June 6, 2024).

Critical terrorist attacks, 2024³



³ A critical attack is defined by the ITIC as involving shooting, stabbing, a vehicular attack, the use of IEDs, or a combination of the above. Rocks and Molotov cocktails thrown by Palestinians are not included. Shots fired at IDF forces during counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria are included.

Annual distribution of critical terrorist attacks



Counterterrorism activities

►The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria, focusing on Tubas, Tulkarm and Jenin. Since the beginning of the war, approximately 4,150 wanted Palestinians have been detained, of whom more than 1,750 have been Hamas operatives (IDF spokesperson, June 6 to 9, 2024):

◆ **Tubas:** On the night of June 9, 2024, Israeli security forces operated in the al-Far'ah refugee camp, south of Tubas. Several IEDs were detonated to attack IDF armored vehicles; there were no casualties (Israeli media, June 10, 2024). The Palestinian media reported that 15-year-old Mahmoud Ibrahim Nabrisi died after being shot by the IDF. It was also reported that IEDs were thrown at IDF vehicles advancing in the al-Far'ah refugee camp (Wafa, al-Jazeera, June 10, 2024).

◆ **Tulkarm:** On the night of June 9, 2024, Israeli security forces detained a Palestinian wanted for terrorist activities in the town of Danabah in the Tulkarm region. During an exchange of fire, the forces shot at an armed terrorist. There were no casualties (Israel Police X account, June 10, 2024). The Palestinian media reported an exchange of fire between Israeli security forces and armed Palestinians, during which 21-year-old Yusuf Samih Abd al-Karim Abd al-Daim was killed (al-Jazeera, June 10, 2024). Hamas issued a

mourning notice claiming him as an operative in the Tulkarm Battalion of the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades (Hamas Telegram channel in Tulkarm, June 10, 2024).

- ◆ **Jenin:** On the afternoon of June 6, 2024, Israeli security forces operated in the city of Jenin and its refugee camp. The forces attacked terrorist operatives and detained a Palestinian wanted on suspicion of terrorist activity (IDF spokesperson, June 6, 2024). The director of the government hospital in Jenin said that three Palestinians had been killed in the operation: Ibrahim Taher Muhammad al-Sa'adi, 21 years old; Issa Nafez Jalad, 17 years old; Uday Ayman Mir'i, 24 years old (Wafa, June 6, 2024). The PIJ's Jenin Battalion claimed Mir'i as an operative of it (jenencamb Telegram channel, June 6, 2024). Hamas claimed al-Sa'adi as one of its operatives (Hamas Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria, June 6, 2024).



Right: Israeli security forces in Jenin (Wafa, June 6, 2024). Left: Uday Marai, Issa Jalad, Ibrahim al-Sa'adi (Palestine Post X account, June 6, 2024)

- ◆ On June 5, 2024, Israeli security forces detained a Palestinian wanted for terrorist activities in Nablus. The forces arrived at the building where the terrorist was hiding and shot at his legs when he tried to escape. Local residents rioted as the forces withdrew. The forces shot a Palestinian who threw an IED at them (Israel Police X account, June 5, 2024).

PA security forces' activities

- On June 5, 2024, after the PA security forces tried to detain a wanted operative of the Tubas Battalion, armed Battalion operatives attacked the vehicle of Mahmoud al-Amin, the commander of operations in Tubas general intelligence. Dozens of young Palestinians blocked roads and the entrance to the al-Far'ah refugee camp and set tires on fire. According to reports, on June 8, 2024, the Palestinian security forces confiscated IEDs from the Tubas Battalion (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel , June 8, 2024).

►A senior operative of the Tubas Battalion called on the PA security forces to allow them to confront Israel. He added that the PA was not a target, but those who wanted to kill them "will not be greeted with flowers," and that any attack by masked men pursuing wanted operatives would be met with gunfire, regardless of whether they were Israeli or Palestinian security forces (al-Araby al-Jadeed , June 5, 2024).



Right: Weapons confiscated by Palestinian General Intelligence from the home of an operative in the Tubas Battalion (A7rartoubas Telegram channel, June 4, 2024). Left: Mahmoud al-Amin's car after the attack (@fer9s X account, June 5, 2024)

Israeli Jerusalem Day events

►On June 5, 2024, Israel celebrated Jerusalem Day and the traditional flag parade was held under heavy police security. The parade passed through the Damascus Gate and the Old City, and ended at the Western Wall. The Israeli police reported that 18 Israelis had been detained during the parade for attacking Israeli and Palestinian correspondents (Israeli media, June 5, 2024). There were Palestinian condemnations of the parade, and calls for a "day of rage" and confrontations with the Israeli security forces:

► **Nabil Abu Rudeineh**, spokesman for Mahmoud Abbas, said that the flag parade would not change Jerusalem's status as the eternal capital of "Palestine." He claimed the parade was a violation of international law which considered east Jerusalem occupied Palestinian land, and a blatant provocation of Arab, Islamic and Christian sentiments. He warned such events could lead to a religious war, and called on the American administration to intervene immediately to stop Israel's actions (Wafa, June 5, 2024).

► Hamas claimed the approval to hold the flag parade in the streets of Jerusalem was proof of Israel's trying to Judaize the holy places, and was "aggression" against the sentiments of hundreds of millions of Muslims around the world. Hamas warned Israel against continuing its "criminal" policy against the holy places, especially al-Aqsa Mosque, and said that the

"resistance" would find a way to harm [Israel]. Hamas called on the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria, Jerusalem and inside Israel to turn June 5 into "a day of rage" (Hamas website, June 5, 2024).

► **Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau**, said that the "settler rampage" in Jerusalem confirmed that the city was the heart of the conflict. He said the Palestinians would not rest until the "occupation" disappeared and an independent Palestinian state was established with Jerusalem as its capital (Hamas website, June 5, 2024).

► **Haroun Nasser al-Din, the head of Hamas' office for Jerusalem affairs**, said the flag parade was "blatant aggression" against Jerusalem [sic] and the Arab and Islamic nations, and called on them to increase their participation in Operation al-Aqsa Flood. He added that Operation Sword of Jerusalem [the name Hamas gave to Operation Guardian of the Walls, which began on Jerusalem Day 2021 when Hamas fired rockets at Jerusalem] was still being wielded, was manifested in its greatest form on October 7, 2023 and continued until today. He declared that Operation al-Aqsa Flood would continue until "victory, freedom and independence" were achieved, and would not stop until al-Aqsa Mosque was "liberated" (Hamas website, June 5, 2024).

► The PIJ condemned the flag parade and called on Palestinians "everywhere" to confront "Zionist bullying." It also condemned the "shameful" Arab silence (PIJ combat information Telegram channel, June 5, 2024).



The gathering of the participants of the Flag Parade near the Damascus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem (Wafa YouTube channel, June 5, 2024)

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Mahmoud Abbas' international activity

► On June 7, 2024, Mahmoud Abbas met with Issam a-Badour, the Jordanian ambassador to the PA, and Ihab Suleiman, the Egyptian ambassador. They presented Mahmoud Abbas with a formal invitation from the King of Jordan, Abdullah II, the President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, and the UN secretary general, Antonio Guterres, to participate in the activities of the urgent humanitarian response conference for the Gaza Strip, to be held in Amman. Mahmoud Abbas stated that immediate action had to be taken for a ceasefire, speed up the delivery of humanitarian aid and prevent the migration of residents (Wafa, June 7, 2024).



Mahmoud Abbas receives an invitation to the international conference (Wafa, June 7, 2024)

PA prime minister meets with UN coordinator for Gaza

► Muhammad Mustafa, PA prime minister, met in his office with Sigrid Kaag, the UN coordinator for humanitarian affairs and the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip. They discussed the importance of coordination between all aid agencies and the Palestinian government. Mustafa reviewed the government's plans for aid in the short, medium and long terms as well as plans for the day after the war in the Gaza Strip. In addition, he indicated the government's readiness to reopen the Rafah Crossing according to the 2005 Crossings Agreement,⁴ along with the withdrawal of IDF forces. Kaag noted the importance of investing efforts to increase the delivery of aid to the Gaza Strip from all the crossings and its distribution to all areas of the Gaza Strip (Wafa, June 5, 2024).

⁴ According to the Crossings Agreement of November 2005, the Rafah Crossing is to be managed by the PA in cooperation with Egypt and under the supervision of an EU force. The agreement has not been valid since Hamas took over the Gaza Strip in June 2007.

Israel put on the UN's black list

- ▶ Antonio Guterres, UN secretary general, announced the inclusion of the IDF on an international black list of countries and armed organizations that have not taken adequate measures to improve the protection of children. Hamas and the PIJ were also placed on the list (Israeli media, June 7, 2024).
- ▶ Nabil Abu Rudeineh claimed that Israel should have been placed on the list a long time ago because of its actions against the Palestinians. He called it a step in the right direction designed to demand accountability from Israel for its actions and put an end to them by the international community (Wafa, June 7, 2024).
- ▶ Izzat al-Rishq, a member of the Hamas political bureau and head of the movement's central information bureau, expressed satisfaction with the UN's decision against Israel and called Israel "an ostracized entity sued in international courts" (Quds Press, June 7, 2024).

The United States sanctions the Lion's Den network

- ▶ The American State Department announced the imposition of sanctions on the Palestinian Lion's Den network. The sanctions were imposed in response to terrorist attacks carried out by the network operatives against Israeli security forces and civilians in 2022 and 2024 and due to the killing of Palestinian residents in clashes with the PA security forces in Nablus in 2022 (State Department website, June 6, 2024). The Lion's Den responded that it would be victorious and the "surprise would be enormous" (Lion's Den Telegram channel, June 7, 2024).