



**Intelligence and Terrorism
Information Center at the Israel
Intelligence Heritage &
Commemoration Center**

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The Six Months of the Lull Arrangement



Summary

1. On June 17, 2008, after several months of indirect contacts between Israel and Hamas through Egyptian mediators, Egypt and Hamas individually announced that a lull arrangement (**tahadiya**¹) had been reached between Israel and the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, and it would go into effect at **0600 hours on the morning of June 19**. Israel's position was that the lull had no time limit. The position of Hamas and the other Palestinian terrorist organizations was that it would remain in force for six months and they then expected it to be extended to Judea and Samaria. Spokesmen of Hamas and other terrorist organizations later stated that it would end on Friday morning, December 19; in the field it had been seriously eroded since November 4.

2. The lull arrangement was based on unwritten understandings and called for the cessation of the fighting in the Gaza Strip. Hamas committed itself to enforce the arrangement on the other Palestinian terrorist organizations which had not expressed their opposition (some organizations opposed it, some were reserved). The cessation of the fighting was supposed to lead to the **opening of the crossings** between the Gaza Strip and Israel, to initiate negotiations for **the release of Gilad Shalit**, the abducted Israeli soldier, and to lead to discussions about the opening of the Rafah crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt.

3. The lull arrangement brought **relative quiet** to the western Negev population and the Gaza Strip, especially during its first months, but it did not completely end the rocket and mortar shell attacks. In the six months the arrangement was in force, **329 rockets and mortar shells** were fired at Israel, most of them during the month and a half after November 4. That was significantly fewer than the rockets and mortar shells fired during the six months preceding the lull, during which **2,278** rockets and mortar shells were launched (an average of **380** a month).

4. An analysis of the situation on the ground indicates two distinct periods:

i) **A period of relative quiet between June 19 and November 4**: As of June 19, there was a marked reduction in the extent of attacks on the western Negev population. The lull was sporadically violated by rocket and mortar shell fire, carried out by rogue terrorist organizations, in some instance in defiance of Hamas (especially by Fatah and Al-Qaeda supporters). Hamas was careful to maintain the ceasefire. The IDF refrained from undertaking counterterrorism activities in the Gaza Strip, taking only routine defensive security measures along the border fence. Between June 19 and

¹ The correct transliteration of the Arabic word is *tahdi'a*, but due to the difficulty of pronouncing the Arabic *alif hamzah* as a consonant, the word is usually transliterated "tahadiya."

November 4, **20 rockets** (three of which fell inside the Gaza Strip) and 18 mortar shells (five of which fell inside the Gaza Strip) were fired at Israel.

ii) **The escalation and erosion of the lull arrangement, November 4 to the time of this writing, December 17²**: On November 4 the IDF carried out a military action close to the border security fence on the Gazan side to prevent an abduction planned by Hamas, which had dug a tunnel under the fence to that purpose. Seven Hamas terrorist operatives were killed during the action. In retaliation, Hamas and the other terrorist organizations attacked Israel with a massive barrage of rockets. Since then, **191 rockets and 138 mortar** shells have been fired. The attacks have been continuous and some were carried out by weapons not previously used, such as 122mm standard Grad rockets and 120mm mortar shells. Hamas has been directly involved in the attacks in cooperation with the other terrorist organizations.

5. During the second period a **new dynamic** was created which replaced the former relative calm: Hamas and the other terrorist organizations extended their attacks (rocket and mortar shell fire, IEDs and light-arms fire), the IDF operated to prevent attacks within the Gaza Strip (Israeli Air Force attacks, firing at terrorist squads within the Gaza Strip near the border), the terrorist organizations responded with barrages of rocket and mortar shell fire to retaliate for their losses and continued daily sporadic fire, in response to which Israel closed the border crossings, exerting pressure on Hamas and the Gaza Strip residents.

6. **During the first period** the crossings between Israel and the Gaza Strip were open most of the time (Israel closed them for short intervals in response to rocket fire). Scores of trucks delivered large quantities of consumer goods through the Karni and Sufa (and later Kerem Shalom) crossings on a daily basis, including supplies of commodities Israel had previously not permitted into the Gaza Strip, such as cement and iron. Hamas leaders admitted that there was an improvement in the supply of goods and that civilian life was returning to normal. Life also returned to normal in the western Negev towns and villages for the first time in the period preceding the lull.

7. With the escalation in rocket and mortar shell attacks which began on November 4, Israel began closing the crossings for **longer periods**. That led to shortages of basic goods in the Gaza Strip and to disruptions in the supply of various types of fuel (although electrical power was not cut off, since the plant in Ashqelon, which supplies 65% of the Gaza Strip's electricity, provided an uninterrupted flow of power).

² On December 17, 18 rockets and six mortar shells were fired; two of the rockets targeted Sderot and Ashqelon. Two civilians were wounded. The PIJ claimed responsibility for most of the rocket fire. In response, the IDF attacked rocket-launching squads and terrorist targets in the northern and southern Gaza strip.

8. Hamas did nothing to stop the attacks against Israel, preferring to deal with the problem of the closed crossings by instituting a **propaganda campaign in the international media**. Hamas hoped it would exert pressure on Israel (and Egypt) and force it to open the crossings, even while the rocket and mortar shell attacks continued. At the same time, Hamas found alternatives to the crossings, institutionalizing the tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border and setting up a maritime delivery service from abroad. The alternatives have eased the shortages but have not provided an appropriate solution for the problem of the closed crossings.

9. Israel's expectations that the **lull arrangement would speed up negotiations for the release of the abducted Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit**, and Hamas's expectations that it would lead to discussions regarding the Rafah crossing, **were not realized** during the six months the arrangement was in force. When it came to Gilad Shalit, Hamas obstinately refused to budge from its former demand for the massive release of Palestinian murderers from Israeli jails. As to the issue of the **Rafah crossing**, Egypt does not seem eager to negotiate, possibly as a way of exerting pressure on Hamas because it is disappointed with Hamas's policies regarding a variety of internal Palestinian issues and because it fears Hamas will establish a radical Islamic emirate in the Gaza Strip. In our assessment such an emirate might try to establish closer contact with the Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood, its mother organization and a major, longstanding opposition group to the Egyptian secular-oriented regime.

10. During the lull, Hamas and the other terrorist organizations exploited the pause in IDF activity in the Gaza Strip to continue their military buildup and improve their preparedness for the expected confrontation with the IDF "the morning after."³ They smuggled vast quantities of weapons into the Gaza Strip through the tunnels, stepped up the pace of the military training of their operatives and continued developing their weapons-manufacturing capabilities. Hamas and the other terrorist organizations gave **extensive media coverage** to their activities to frighten both Israeli and internal Palestinian public opinion.

11. **Conclusion:** It is safe to say that the lull arrangement, especially its first period, provided a breathing-space in the daily fighting between Israel and Hamas. During that time there was also a significant increase in the amount of goods delivered to the Gaza Strip through the crossings. However, when the terrorist organizations began a policy of continuous rocket and mortar shell attacks against Israel, accompanied by other forms of terrorism, the lull arrangement was eroded to the point where it remained only on paper as its first six months drew to a close.

³ Note: This assessment was written **prior** to the outbreak of Operation Cast Lead, December 27, 2008.

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The Situation on the Ground during the Lull Arrangement

Overview

13. The six months of the lull arrangement can be divided into two distinct periods: during the first, which lasted from June 19 to November 4, relative quiet was maintained by the Palestinian terrorist organizations while the IDF did not undertake any counterterrorism activities in the Gaza Strip and reduced the level of its defensive and security operations around the border security fence.⁴ The second period was marked by an escalation in Palestinian violations of the arrangement, which was seriously eroded following the IDF's prevention of an abduction attack through a tunnel under the fence.

The first period, June 19 - November 4

14. As soon as the lull arrangement went into effect there was a **marked decrease** in the extent of rocket and mortar shell attacks against the western Negev population and the Ashqelon region. There was relative calm in Sderot and the towns and villages near the Gaza Strip, although the calm was disrupted by sporadic rocket and mortar shell fire and occasionally by light arms fire and attempts to place IEDs by rogue terrorist organizations (primarily networks of Fatah, the Popular Resistance Committees and other small groups, some of them affiliated with Al-Qaeda). **Hamas**, for its part, was careful to maintain the ceasefire. IDF forces refrained from undertaking counterterrorism activities in the Gaza Strip and only carried out defensive security activity around the border security fence to prevent attacks. That was the situation on the ground before November 4. During the first period **20 rockets** were fired, three of which fell inside the Gaza Strip, and **18 mortar shells**, five of which fell inside the Gaza Strip.

Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire between June and October

	June	July	August	September	October
Rockets	5	4 (3 in the Gaza Strip)	8	1	2
Mortar shells	4	8 (3 in the Gaza Strip)	3	3 (2 in the Gaza Strip)	

⁴ IDF sources used various means to appeal to the Palestinian people not to approach or cross the border security fence, stressing that "any person who does not heed this warning is endangering his life" (IDF Spokesman's website, July 10).

15. The sporadic rocket fire during this period was generally carried out in response to what the rogue organizations called “Israeli violations” of the arrangement. In certain instances there were attacks to protest the fact that the arrangement had not been extended to Judea and Samaria; that was noticeable from the beginning of the lull. For example, on June 24 three rockets were fired at Sderot, the first Palestinian violation of the arrangement, after a Palestinian Islamic Jihad operative was killed in Nablus (in Samaria), despite the fact that **Judea and Samaria were not included in the lull arrangement**, and both terrorist attacks and counterterrorism activities were carried out there at that time.

16. Networks belonging to Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades were the most prominent and central in violating the lull arrangement. Their motivation was the desire to show themselves as the standard bearers of the “resistance” (i.e., terrorism) and to send a message of **defiance** to Hamas, their rivals, even though Fatah in Judea and Samaria renounced the attacks.⁵ In certain instances the **Palestinian Islamic Jihad** or other organizations fired rockets. In most instances they did not publicly claim responsibility. Such attacks were motivated by deep internal Palestinian rivalries, especially between Fatah and Hamas, and not responses to “violations” on the part of Israel.

17. During the first period **Hamas** was careful to **maintain the ceasefire** and its operatives were not involved in rocket attacks. At the same time, the movement tried to enforce the terms of the arrangement on the other terrorist organizations and to prevent them from violating it. Hamas took a number of steps against networks which violated the arrangement, but in a limited fashion and contenting itself with short-term detentions and confiscating weapons. For example, a number of times Hamas’s security services detained Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades operatives, including Abu Qusai, an Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades spokesman, who claimed responsibility for rocket fire (June 29). Detained operatives were released after a short interrogation and no real measures were taken against them. However, it was clear that throughout the first period Hamas sought to avoid direct confrontations with the rogue organizations (especially the PIJ) insofar as was possible, lest it be accused of collaborating with Israel and harming the “resistance.” Hamas therefore focused on using politics to convince the organizations to maintain the lull arrangement and on seeking support for it within Gazan public opinion (including issuing statements by its activists regarding the lull’s achievements).

⁵ Fatah spokesman **Abd al-Rahman** said that his organization supported the lull arrangement and denounced every violation. He said that Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades’ claiming responsibility for the attacks had not basis in fact and that they were “false claims made by suspicious sources” (Wafa News Agency, July 14).

Lull Arrangement Violations, June-July 2008



Rescue team on its way to the site of the attack (Hamutal Ben-Shitrit for www.sderotmedia.co.il, June 24).



Home in Sderot damaged by rocket fire (Hamutal Ben-Shitrit for www.sderotmedia.co.il, June 24).



Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades spokesman Abu Qusai claims responsibility for the attack in a phone call: "The rockets were fired to send a number of messages [to Israel]..." (Al-Jazeera TV, June 26).



Rocket fired by Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades at Sderot on June 26 (Al-Alam TV, June 26).



Sderot resident seeks safety in a bomb shelter after a siren is heard (Zeev Trachtman, July 10).



Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades fire rockets (Al-Jazeera TV, July 10).

Escalation and the Erosion of the Lull Arrangement

18. On November 4 a series of events began which led to a **significant erosion** of the lull arrangement, eventually leaving nothing but the name. Between November 4 and the early morning hours of December 17, the terrorist organizations fired **171 rockets and 120 mortar shells** at Israel; the grand total for the entire lull has been **329 attacks**. During the six months which preceded it, **2,278 rockets and mortar shells** had been fired.

19. The second period of the arrangement began with Hamas's preparations to abduct an Israeli or Israelis through a tunnel dug under the border security fence. In our assessment, those who planned it had to take into consideration that such an attack would do great harm to the arrangement, but nevertheless Hamas was eager to have another Israeli hostage to use as a bargaining chip.⁶ Following information, the IDF went into action close to the border, prevented the attack and killed seven Hamas terrorist operatives. Hamas responded with a massive barrage of rocket and mortar shell fire, unprecedented since the lull arrangement had gone into effect.

20. **The status quo ante was never restored, and a new dynamic was created:** Hamas and operatives from other Palestinian terrorist organizations attempted to carry out attacks (rocket and mortar shell, IEDs, light-arms fire); the IDF acted to prevent the attacks, including an increase in its operations inside the Gaza Strip, although not to the same extent as before the lull (IAF attacks, firing at terrorist squads near the security fence); the terrorist operatives responded with rocket and mortar shell fire, and continued daily sporadic attacks; Israel closed the crossings; Hamas did nothing to enforce the ceasefire on the other organizations (which would have led to the reopening of the crossings) but instead instituted a propaganda campaign to exert pressure on Israel to open the crossings even as the shelling continued.

21. The escalation beginning in November led to a **new situation**, but there was nevertheless less rocket fire than before the lull. The differences between the pre-November and post-November situations were the following:

- i) **Continuing violations:** From November 4 to December 17 there was almost daily rocket and mortar shell fire (See Graph).
- ii) **Amount of fire:** The volume and number of attacks rose significantly during the second period, although they still did not approach those of the pre-arrangement era.

⁶ It was not the first time Hamas in the Gaza Strip had tried to abduct Israelis during the lull arrangement. For further information see our October 26 Bulletin entitled "[The Israeli security forces detained a terrorist from Rafah who infiltrated into Israel through Egypt.](#)" In addition, a Hamas group exposed in Jerusalem in November 2008 also planned to abduct Border Policemen.

During November and as of December 17, **171 rockets and 120 mortar shells** were fired, compared with **20 rockets and 18 mortar shell** attacks between June and November.

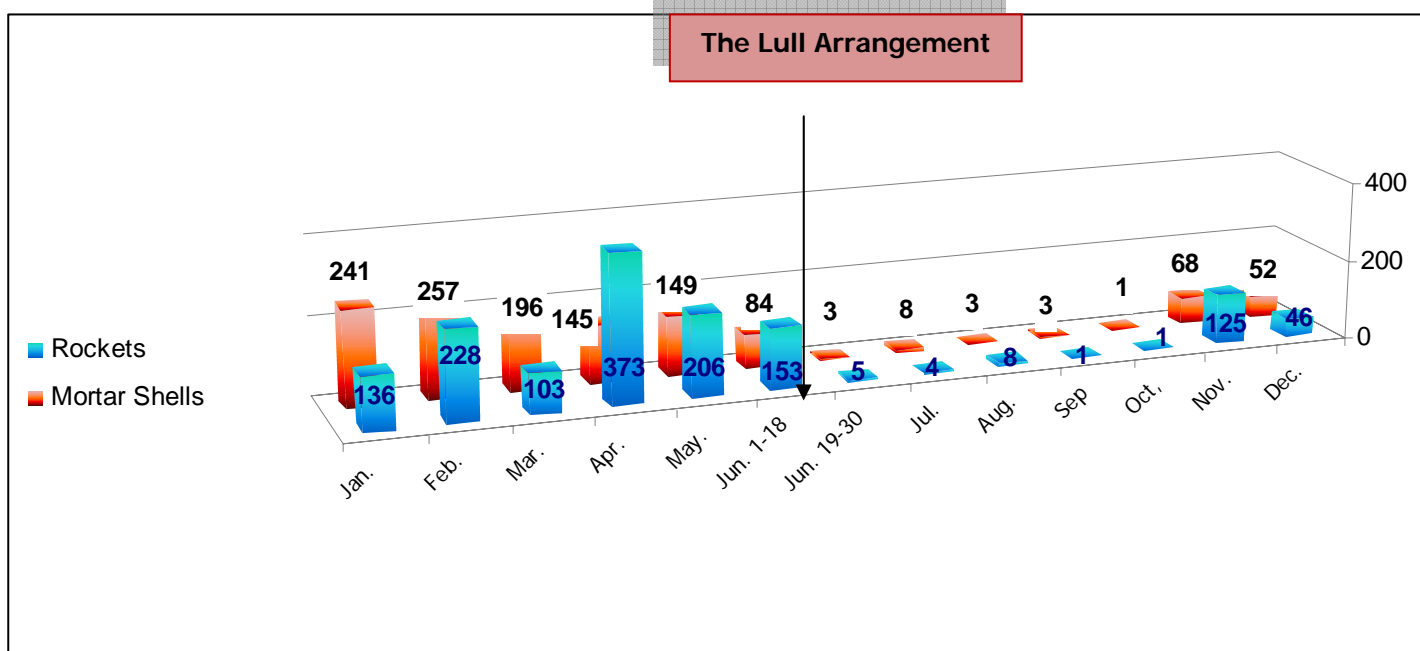
iii) **Types of weapons used:** After November 4, 122mm standard Grad missiles were also fired at Ashqelon, and 120mm mortar shells, which had not been fired previously, were also employed. On November 28 a mortar shell hit an IDF base near the village of Nahal Oz, wounding eight soldiers, one of them critically, the most serious incident occurring during the lull.

iv) **Direct Hamas involvement:** After November 4 Hamas became directly involved in rocket and mortar shell fire, even **publicly claiming responsibility**. Hamas was joined by the PIJ, Fatah and some of the smaller groups. During this period Hamas made no real efforts to stop the attacks or the dynamic which eroded the arrangement.

v) **Increase in IDF counterterrorism/preventive activities:** In view of the change in the status quo, the IDF returned to carrying out counterterrorism activities in the Gaza Strip. However, they were limited to preventing rocket and mortar shell fire and the placing of IEDs, and did not include attacks (for example, the targeted killings carried out before the lull arrangement).

vi) **The length of time Israel closed the Gaza Strip crossings:** Before November 4 Israel closed the Gaza Strip crossings for short periods in response to rocket and mortar shells attacks. After November 4, they were closed **most of the time** because the attacks were continuous. They were occasionally reopened following shortages in the Gaza Strip and appeals from international aid groups, but they were soon reclosed because of the continuing attacks.

Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire during the Lull Arrangement Compared with the Preceding Months (As of December 16)



Lull Arrangement Violations, November 2008



Police demolitions expert examines the remains of a rocket which hit Sderot
(Photo: Zeev Trachtman, December 16.)



Rockets land near Sderot
(Photo: Zeev Trachtman, November 7).

The Crossings between Israel and the Gaza Strip

22. The opening of the Gaza Strip crossings between Israel and Egypt, which serve as vital supply lines for the Gaza Strip, was one of Hamas's main motives for agreeing to the lull arrangement. As far as Hamas is concerned, having the crossings continuously open would ease the economic embargo in place on the Gaza Strip since Hamas took over in June 2007, improve the lot of the Gazans and **help Hamas establish its political position both in the Gaza Strip and abroad.**

23. To a great degree, Hamas regarded the lull arrangement as a tradeoff: Hamas would stop the terrorist attacks originating in the Gaza Strip in return for Israel's stopping its activity in the Gaza Strip and opening the crossings. **Israel**, before November 4, refrained from initiating action in the Gaza Strip but **responded** to rocket and mortar shell attacks by closing the crossings for short periods of time (hours to days). After November 4 the crossings were closed for long periods in response to **the continued attacks** against Israel.

24. On June 22, after four days of calm, Israel reopened the Karni and Sufa crossings to enable regular deliveries of consumer goods and fuel to the Gaza Strip. They were closed shortly thereafter, following the first violation of the arrangement, when rockets were fired at Sderot on June 24. However, when calm was restored, the crossings remained open for long periods of time. On August 17 the Kerem Shalom crossing was also opened for the delivery of goods, to a certain degree replacing the Sufa crossing, after repairs had been completed (the

Kerem Shalom crossing was closed on April 19 when the IDF prevented a combined mass-casualty attack in the region, as a result of which the crossing was almost completely demolished⁷).

25. Before November 4, large quantities of food, fuel, construction material and other necessities for renewing the Gaza Strip's economic activity were delivered through the Karni and Sufa crossings. A daily average of 80-90 trucks passed through the crossings, similar to the situation before they were closed following the April 19 attack on the Kerem Shalom crossing. Changes were made in the types of good which could be delivered, permitting the entry of iron, cement and other vital raw materials into the Gaza Strip.



The Sufa crossing: The truck passing through the crossing on the left is carrying sacks of cement. The ones on the right are carrying other goods and supplies (Photo: The Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center staff, July 10).

26. Before November 4, despite Hamas's repeated complaints that the quantities and quality of the goods entering the Gaza Strip were not up to their expectations, **senior figures in the movement occasionally admitted that thanks to the lull, the situation regarding supplies had improved.** Sources in the Gaza Strip confirmed that Israel had begun increasing the quantities and delivering goods such as clothing, material, children's shoes, flower seedlings and other agricultural products which had not been allowed in before the lull (Al-Ayyam, July 24).

27. A trucking company was set up in the Gaza Strip with one hundred trucks to transport the goods delivered through the crossings. Company president, **Abd al-Hakim Hasouna**, said that the growth in the types and quantities of goods entering the Gaza Strip was a factor behind the speed with which it was founded (Al-Ayyam, July 22). **Muhammad Adwan**, appointed by Hamas as responsible for the Gaza Strip Crossings Authority public relations, admitted that the lull had increased the number of trucks and the amounts of goods passing

⁷ For further information see our April 22, 2008 Bulletin entitled "On Passover Eve IDF forces prevented a combined mass-casualty attack at the Kerem Shalom Crossing" at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/ct_210408e.htm.

from Israel into the Gaza Strip. However, he added that “in view of the severity of the siege, the Strip needs more...” (Al-Ayyam, July 24). The Gazans expressed their satisfaction with the increase in the supplies, one of the benefits of the lull arrangement.



Muhammad Adwan, Hamas spokesman for the Gaza Strip Crossings Authority (Al-Risala, August 4).

29. The improvement in the delivery of supplies to the Gaza Strip ended when the escalation began on November 4. Since then **the crossings have been closed most of the time, the result of the unending rocket and mortar shell attacks against the western Negev population.** Hamas, instead of stopping the attacks and enforcing the ceasefire on the other terrorist organizations, which would have lead to the reopening of the crossings, preferred to accuse Israel of violating the lull arrangement and imposing a “siege” on the Gaza Strip. Hamas’s false claims and propaganda have accused Israel of responsibility for closing the crossings, while Hamas completely ignores the continual rocket fire which prevents their opening.

30. Closing the crossings for long periods of time led to shortages of fuel in the Gaza Strip. Especially felt was the lack of industrial fuel, particularly for the operation of the Gaza Strip’s power plant. At the same time, **Israel continued supplying electricity to the Strip from the power plant in Ashqelon, which was a target for rocket attacks.** (Note: Ashqelon supplies about 65% of the Gaza Strip’s electricity, and Egypt another 5%.) To make matters worse, Hamas occasionally blacked out the Gaza Strip, sending the **completely false message** to the international community that there was no electricity there at all. In addition, in view of the difficulties in operating the power plant, despite the continued rocket and mortar shell attacks, Israel occasionally permitted a limited amount of fuel to be delivered to the Gaza Strip, especially diesel fuel, to renew the plant’s activities.



Power outage in Gaza City (Al-Jazeera TV, November 9)

31. The distress caused by the closing of the Gaza Strip crossings after November 4 led Hamas to undertake an **international media campaign** to publicize the so-called “siege” of the Gaza Strip. Its objective was to exert international pressure on Israel to open the crossings **despite** the continued rocket and mortar shell attacks. At the same time, Hamas waged a campaign against Egypt to try to force it to open the Rafah crossing, contravening the crossings agreement of 2005. Hamas also organized supply boats from various countries, which attempted to reach the Gaza shores to break the “siege” via the sea, and in all probability to establish a maritime supply line to the Gaza Strip. Hamas’s plan was to circumvent its dependence on the land crossings and to increase the pressure on Israel.

32. The first two boats left Cyprus on August 23. The voyage was organized by a Hamas-affiliated group called “The Popular Committee to Break the Siege,” headed by Jamal al-Khudari, in collaboration with international organizations and pro-Palestinian activists. Israel permitted the boats to reach the Gaza Strip, which encouraged the rapid organizing of other boats carrying activists and material aid to the Gaza Strip.



The first solidarity voyage: The boats about to set sail in Cyprus (Free Gaza website, August 10)



The third protest boat, Dignity, leaves the Gaza port on November 10 (Hamas’s PALDF Forum, November 10)

33. On December 1 the Israeli Navy prevented the **Al-Marwa, a Libyan boat** carrying 3,000 tons of humanitarian supplies and a crew of 18, from reaching the Gaza shores. As it approached, Israeli Navy cutters intercepted it and requested an inventory of its cargo. It was also made clear to the crew that maritime access to the Gaza Strip was blocked. In view of the situation, the captain decided to turn around and anchor in El-Arish in the northern Sinai peninsula. It was the first time Israel prevented a boat from docking in the Gaza Strip. Jamal al-Khudari, chairman of "The Popular Committee," said that it wouldn't be the last boat (Al-Jazeera TV, December 1). Other boats were expected from Iran, Lebanon, Qatar, Yemen, Jordan and Kuwait before the outbreak of Operation Cast Lead.



The Libyan boat whose arrival in the Gaza Strip was prevented by Israel before its departure (Libya-alyoum website, November 26).

The Rafah Crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip

34. During the lull arrangement **relations between Hamas and Egypt deteriorated**, reaching a new low in recent days. Throughout the period the Egyptians watched anxiously as Hamas's "Islamic emirate" evolved in the Gaza Strip, and as Hamas built up its military capabilities with the support of Iran and Hezbollah, which are hostile to Egypt; such developments threaten Egypt's internal stability. To be more precise, one of the disputed issues is the operating the Rafah crossing, the only exit from the Gaza Strip to the outside world which does not involve passage through Israel.

35. Hamas considers the opening of the Rafah crossing a matter of **utmost importance**, as it would decrease the Gaza Strip's dependence on Israel. During the negotiations in preparation for the lull, Hamas demanded the Rafah crossing be opened as soon as the arrangement went into effect, and even publicly represented opening the Rafah crossing as one of the main reasons it had agreed to the lull. Hamas was of the opinion that when the lull went into effect, the calm would be enough to initiate a series of talks with Egypt about permanently opening the Rafah crossing.

36. **Egypt**, for its part, has made it clear that **the Rafah crossing will open only in compliance with the November 2005 crossings agreement, according to which the Europeans, the PA and Israel will all be involved in operating and overseeing it.**

Egypt also announced it would include representatives from the PA in the negotiations, since the PA was party to the original agreement. Hamas refused, and as the lull arrangement continued, Egypt did not seem eager to start negotiations about the Rafah crossing, especially since they could be used to pressure Hamas in view of Egypt's dissatisfaction with Hamas's policies (for example, its sabotage of the national Palestinian dialogue which was supposed to be held in Cairo during 2008). The lack of progress in the Rafah crossing issue has led to tension on both sides.

37. To provide a release for some of the pressures building up in the Gaza Strip, Egypt adopted a policy of opening the Rafah crossing for short periods of time and controlling the flow of people exiting.⁸ On July 1, about two weeks into the lull arrangement, the Rafah crossing was partially opened for the first time, allowing patients from the Gaza Strip seeking medical treatment to enter Egypt, and the passage into the Gaza Strip of people who had been delayed in Egypt. The crossing was opened for a limited time, and in protest, on July 2, **hundreds of Palestinians (in all probability encouraged by Hamas) tried to break through to the Egyptian side.** The Palestinians confronted Egyptian security forces sent to the crossing, which dispersed the demonstrators using riot control equipment. Following the confrontations, Egypt fortified its side of the border and announced the closing of the crossing.

38. To exert more pressure on Egypt, on August 10 Hamas activists organized a march to the Rafah crossing, which was widely covered in Hamas's media. To prevent riots and an attempt to break through the crossing, Egypt sent reinforcements. Prior to that the 150 Palestinians delayed on both sides of the crossing began a hunger strike to pressure Egypt into coordinating their passage and to allow Gazans seeking medical treatment to be allowed into Egypt (Palestine-info website, August 6).

39. On August 30-31, on the eve of the holy Muslim month of Ramadan, the Egyptians made an exception and the Rafah crossing was opened. More than a thousand Gazans passed through, most of them from the Gaza Strip into Egypt. Opening the crossing was coordinated between the Hamas administration and Egypt, and it was decided that people crossing through would be transported in buses and ambulances. Egyptian sources were quick to emphasize that it was a one-time opening and a gesture for Ramadan (Middle East News

⁸ Egypt proposed opening the **Kerem Shalom crossing** as a temporary solution to enable Gazans to leave and enter Egypt until the issue of the Rafah crossing could be settled. Hamas opposed the suggestion, fearing that it would set a precedent, i.e., establishing the crossing through Israel instead of Egypt, which would later be very difficult to change.

Agency, August 30). Another disagreement arose when Hamas prevented Muslim pilgrims from leaving through the Rafah crossing for Mecca in preparation for the holiday of Eid al-Adha (and Egypt severely criticized Hamas for its actions.)



The Rafah crossing opens for Ramadan (Al-Aqsa TV, August 30).

40. **Conclusion:** Hamas has initiated a campaign against Egypt similar to the one it wages against Israel. It is an alternative to cooperating with diplomatic measures which would lead to solving the problem of the Rafah crossing based on the crossings agreement of 2005. The propaganda is aimed at using the Muslim Brotherhood and other opposition groups to create internal pressure on the Egyptians, and to incite the Arab-Muslim world to create external pressure to force Egypt to bow to Hamas's demands. So far, Egypt has shown itself firm in the face of such pressures.



Left: Hamas protest march on August 10. Right: Egyptian security forces on the Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing (Hamas's PALDF Forum, August 10).

The Release of the Abducted Israeli Soldier, Gilad Shalit



Demonstrators outside the home of the Israeli prime minister, calling for the release of Gilad Shalit (Eliana Apunta for Reuters, November 27).

41. As far as Israel is concerned (and Egypt as well, in all probability), the lull arrangement was supposed to kick-start negotiations for the release of Gilad Shalit. Senior Hamas figures, however, repeatedly stated that for them the matter of Gilad Shalit was separate from the lull arrangement. It depended, they said, on Israel's readiness to accede to Hamas's demands to release a massive number of Palestinians murderers sentenced to long terms in jail. Egypt, which brokered the lull arrangement, expected that after the ceasefire had been firmly established, intensive negotiations for the release of Gilad Shalit would begin. However, in retrospect, it is possible to say that Israel (and Egypt) were greatly disappointed and that **the lull arrangement had no influence on the issue whatsoever.**



Ismail Haniya: The matter of Gilad Shalit is separate from the lull arrangement (Al-Jazeera TV, June 15).

42. On July 16, 2008, the prisoner exchange deal between Israel and **Hezbollah**, in which murderer Samir Kuntar was released in return for the bodies of Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, was took place one month into the lull arrangement. In our assessment, it encouraged Hamas to remain intransigent in **its demands for the release of hundreds of**

Palestinian murderers from Israeli jails. Hamas spokesmen viewed the deal with Hezbollah as a great victory, claiming it proved the most effective way to release prisoners was to **abduct soldiers** (In our assessment, Israel's release of prisoners as a goodwill gesture to Mahmoud Abbas casts serious doubts on the Hamas claim.).

43. During the lull, Hamas spokesmen repeatedly stressed the importance of abducting more Israeli soldiers as a way of thawing the Gilad Shalit stalemate. Terrorist operatives belonging to Hamas and the other Palestinian terrorist organizations coordinated their efforts **to abduct Israeli soldiers during the lull**, despite the fact that a success would sabotage the arrangement. Two examples were the attempt to abduct IDF soldiers through Israel's border with Egypt and smuggle them into the Gaza Strip,⁹ and the attempt to abduct a soldier through a tunnel dug under the border security fence, which was prevented by the IDF action in the Gaza Strip on November 4.¹⁰

44. On August 5 and 7 an Israeli security delegation met with high-ranking officials in Egypt to discuss an Israel-Hamas exchange of prisoners (Reuters, August 5; Al-Quds website, August 7); however, no progress was made. Hamas then announced that negotiations would be suspended until Israel complied with its demands. On August 26, after Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak met with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Alexandria, Hamas refused to change its position and announced it had taken an exchange of prisoners off the agenda. Khaled Mashal, head of Hamas's political bureau in Damascus, said that "Hamas has not delayed the negotiations on this matter...Hamas opposes the Zionist blackmail to reduce the number [of Palestinian prisoners released in return for Gilad Shalit], and **aspires to complete the exchange as soon as possible**. We will cooperate with all efforts made, since we are interested in what will lead us to our goal" (Palestine-info website, September 14).

45. **Conclusion:** In our assessment, the longer the lull arrangement lasted, especially after November 4, the smaller Hamas's motivation became to take a flexible position which would lead to Shalit's release (It is also possible that Hamas wanted to use him to advance other political goals.) The deep fissures which became apparent between Hamas and Egypt also contributed to the stagnation in the negotiations. Egyptian Foreign Minister **Ahmed Abu al-Ghait** said that Egyptian mediation would not be beneficial since **Hamas was not interested in releasing Shalit** because he could be used as a bargaining chip (BBC, October 16). **Six months after the lull arrangement went into effect, no progress regarding his release has been made.**

⁹ For further information see our October 26 Bulletin entitled "[The Israeli security forces detained a terrorist from Rafah who infiltrated into Israel through Egypt.](#)"

¹⁰ For further information see our November 5, 2008 Bulletin entitled "[Escalation in the Gaza Strip: the IDF operated inside the Gaza Strip near the security fence to prevent the abduction of soldiers.](#)"

The Military Buildup of Hamas and the Other Terrorist Organizations during the Lull

Overview

46. Hamas and the other Palestinian terrorist organizations exploited the lull to continue building up their military capabilities and to accelerate their preparations for “the next round” of confrontations with the IDF. Hamas and the other organizations did not view the lull arrangement as an obstacle to military buildup, but rather the opposite. The fact that the IDF generally refrained from taking action inside the Gaza Strip gave the various organizations a breathing space after a long period of attacks and pressure, and made it easier for them to build up their military strength. The IDF also used the time to prepare for a possible renewal of the hostilities and possible incursions into the Gaza Strip.

47. The intensive military activities undertaken by the terrorist organizations during the lull arrangement included the following:

i) **A significant increase in smuggling weapons into the Gaza Strip:** With the beginning of the lull arrangement, the smuggling of weapons into the Gaza Strip through the tunnels under the Philadelphi route in the Rafah region increased. The Egyptian security forces occasionally tried to prevent it but **could not significantly change its scope**. Standard explosives, material for the manufacture of rockets and standard weapons (such as long-range rockets made in Iran) were smuggled in, as were various types of weapons which the terrorist organizations did not have before the lull.

ii) **A significant increase in military training:** During the lull extensive military training was carried out, which included women¹¹ and adolescents.¹² **Special emphasis was placed on practicing the abduction of soldiers.** The training exercises included the use of advanced anti-tank weapons, naval training, special forces courses and urban combat. According to the organizations, the objective of the training was to prepare for a possible Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip. However, there were also exercises to improve their offensive capabilities, such as invading Israel posts, sniper fire and abductions.

¹¹ For further information see our September 9, 2008 Bulletin entitled “[As part of the Gaza Strip military buildup, women are trained for combat and for suicide bombing attacks.](#)”

¹² For further information see our August 21, 2008 Bulletin entitled “Hamas and the other Palestinian terrorist organizations are taking advantage of the lull in the fighting to promote their military buildup” at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/hamas_e003.pdf.

iii) **Fortifications:** During the lull trenches were dug, positions were fortified, areas were mined and embankments were erected, all in preparation for a possible confrontation with the IDF.

iv) **Development of the technical capabilities of the weapons manufacture and engineering units of Hamas and the other terrorist organizations:** Means for manufacturing weapons were improved, weapons were upgraded, **including long-range rockets**, and trial firings were held. For example, when a team of CNN correspondents visited the Gaza Strip (accompanied by representatives of the local Palestinian media), they were permitted to visit a workshop where rockets were manufactured for the Popular Resistance Committees. Operatives showed them an improved rocket called "Nasser 4," claiming that its range was twice as long as any other possessed by the Palestinian organizations (CNN, August 3).¹³ According to a newspaper report, during the lull a number of Hamas operatives were killed while trying to manufacture bombs more powerful than the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades' **Shawaz charges** (Al-Bayan website, July 28).¹⁴

48. The intensive training exercises carried out during the lull **received wide coverage in the Palestinian, Arab and international media**, because Hamas and the other terrorist organizations were interested in sending a message of deterrence to Israel and of strength to the Palestinians and international community. Occasionally, terrorist operatives brought correspondents to their training camps to ensure the reporting of their activities.¹⁵

¹³ Today the Popular Resistance Committees have rockets they manufactured themselves, the Nasser 4, whose maximum range is 9 kilometers (more than 5.5 miles). For further information see our December 19, 2007 Bulletin entitled "Rocket threat from the Gaza Strip, 2000-2007, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/rocket_threat_e.htm." Following the CNN report, a spokesman for the PRC denied the information, but noted that the organization was in fact trying to improve its rocket capabilities (Sawt Al-Hak website, August 16, 2008).

¹⁴ The **Shawaz** (flame) **charges** are explosively formed projectiles made by Hamas with greater penetrating capabilities than those in the hands of the other Palestinian terrorist organizations, and are based on Iranian and/or Hezbollah technology.

¹⁵ Hamas's newspaper Felesteen published an editorial criticizing the various organizations for making their training public. **Adnan Abu Omar**, who comments on Israeli issues, said that the publicity served Israel, which was trying to prepare international public opinion for a military strike once the lull arrangement ended (Felesteen, September 4). However, his arguments carried less weight than the desire for media coverage.



The Popular Resistance Committees manufacture rockets in a residential environment during the lull arrangement, 2008.

Hamas

49. Hamas's military-terrorist wing, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, exploited the lull for training to raise the operatives fighting capabilities and for military courses. The exercises were carried out as part of what Hamas called "the Brigades' continuing preparedness for any Zionist aggression, even under the shadow of the lull arrangement" (Palestine-info website, July 19). According to an article in Hamas's magazine Al-Risala, it was incorrect to describe the situation in the Gaza Strip as "the fighters enjoying a well-earned rest," since the forces were undergoing intensive activities at all times. One operative described the situation as "stressful," saying that the **pace of training had been doubled** since the lull began, and that everything was done under the pressure of time because as far as they were concerned, the lull could end at any moment (Al-Risala, July 10).

50. Some examples of Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades training and shows of strength were the following:

- i) On **July 19**, Hamas held exercises in the Al-Sabra neighborhood in the southwestern part of Gaza City. Operatives marched through the streets and fired their guns in the air (Palestine-info website, July 19).
- ii) On **July 28**, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades held **a military show** in Rafah in the southern Gaza strip, with the participation of dozens of operatives who had recently finished intensive military training.
- iii) In the **middle of August**, 1,500 operatives finished a weapons-training course (Felesteen, August 22).

iv) In the **middle of October**, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades held a military show in the Nusseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip. Operatives simulated taking over a house, and performed attack and soldier-abduction exercises (Palestine-info website, October 17).

v) On **October 30** the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades held exercises in the Nusseirat refugee camp. They included taking over an IDF post accompanied by live arms fire and grenades. After the exercises the Hamas operatives held a military parade through the streets of the camp (Al-Aqsa TV, October 30).



Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades hold military exercises in Gaza City (Muhammad Salem for Reuters, August 10).



Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades operatives undergo military training in the Nusseirat refugee camp (Al-Aqsa TV, October 30).

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad

51. **The Jerusalem Battalions, the PIJ's military-terrorist wing**, also exploited the lull for training, building fortifications and manufacturing weapons. Lebanese NTV, which accompanied Jerusalem Battalions operatives, documented their activities in some detail. According to NTV, Jerusalem Battalions commanders trained fighters in techniques such as ambushes, placing IEDs and reconnaissance missions (NTV, July 9).



The PIJ in training during the lull (NTV, July 9).

52. **On July 25** the Jerusalem Battalions carried out exercises in areas which had been Jewish settlements until the disengagement in August 2005. They included firing light and medium weapons using live ammunition and launching RPGs. On July 25 a source in the organization told the Ma'an news agency that "the Jerusalem Battalions 's leadership is exploiting the lull to train more resistance fighters [i.e., terrorist operatives]...as part of its preparations for the next stage..." The source also reported that a military show was held in Khan Yunis on July 25, during which rockets manufactured by the organization were displayed, as were IEDs and guns, and that a similar show had been held in the southern part of Gaza City (Ma'an News Agency, July 25).

53. On **August 22** a Jerusalem Battalions spokesman said that two courses had been held, one for 100 operatives in the Al-Zeitun neighborhood in eastern Gaza City, and the other for 40 new operatives in the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood in the center of the city (Nidaa al-Quds website and Sawt al-Quds Radio, August 23).



The Jerusalem Battalions in training (Hamass's PALDF Forum, August 14).



The Jerusalem Battalions in training (Hamas's PALDF Forum, August 14).

The Popular Resistance Committees

54. The **Salah al-Din Brigades**, the PRC's **military-terrorist wing**, held a number of courses during the lull arrangement in which hundreds of terrorists participated. Exercises included using anti-tank weapons to penetrate IDF posts and firing missiles at them, jumping over obstacles while shooting, shooting from moving vehicles, using IEDs to ambush military convoys, firing submachine guns and abducting soldiers. At the end of the training, exercises with live ammunition were carried out in the Rafah area.

55. Some of the courses and exercises were the following:

- i) On **August 16** an exercise simulating the abduction of an Israeli soldier from a post was carried out by 50 Jerusalem Battalions terrorist operatives (Ali Waked, Ynet, August 16).
- ii) On **August 18** an exercise was held in Gaza City, during which Jerusalem Battalions operatives demonstrated their ability to fight in an urban setting, and penetrate and take over IDF posts (Qawm website, August 18).
- iii) On **August 20** a graduation ceremony was held south of Gaza City, attended by hundreds of terrorist operatives who had undergone a training and refresher course which lasted a number of weeks. The "penetration unit" demonstrated what it had learned, including firing anti-tank weapons, using IEDs, and firing rockets and heavy machine guns (Qawm website, August 20).



PRC operatives in training (Qawm website, August 15).



Operatives of the PRC's Kamal al-Neirab faction undergo military training in Rafah (Qawm website, August 8).



The PRC trains in the Gaza Strip. The upper pictures show operatives crawling through tunnels; the lower pictures show operatives training to attack Israeli army posts and abduct soldiers (Al-Manar TV, September 4).

The Tunnel Industry during the Lull

56. Hamas and the other terrorist organizations exploited the lull arrangement to **develop and institutionalize the vast network of smuggling tunnels in the Rafah area**. According to one estimation, there are about **400 tunnels** in use today; according to another, the number is closer to **600** (The Guardian, October 22; The Independent, October 25). The tunnels are meant to make it possible for Hamas to regularly smuggle weapons, terrorist operatives and money into the Gaza Strip. At the same time, they make it possible to smuggle food, merchandise and fuel, partially relieving the shortages caused by Israel and Egypt's closing of the Gaza Strip crossings. Hamas makes no great effort to hide the smuggling activities,¹⁶ which grew and became institutionalized during the lull, until they became not only a central factor in the military buildup of Hamas and the other terrorist organizations, but also an integral and important factor in the Gaza Strip's economy.

57. The tunnels exist primarily to smuggle weapons into the Gaza Strip for Hamas and the other terrorist organizations, as well as food and fuel, and are a response to the closing of the crossings into Israel and the Rafah crossing into Egypt. The lull arrangement, which stopped IDF activities in the Gaza Strip, helped the tunnel industry's flourish, in that they could operate without interruptions from Israel. Egyptian security forces did increase their activities against the smugglers, and from time to time exposed tunnels to stop the smuggling and confiscated the merchandise. However, their activities were **not sufficiently effective** and did not put an end to the smuggling or even reduce its scope.

58. During the lull the tunnel network was institutionalized by the Hamas administration and is now run by the Hamas authorities in the Gaza Strip, even to the point of people calling for it to be "nationalized." That includes supervision of goods coming in, collecting taxes and improving security, all of which have been led by the **Hamas administration's interior ministry**. The objective was to increase Hamas supervision, raise profits and provide better safety measures for the workers (after tunnel workers had been wounded and killed).¹⁷ Thus **Hamas improved its ability to provide for its military needs** and at the same time partially solved the problem of the shortages of goods and fuel for the civilian population. Both were achieved by circumventing the Israeli and Egyptian oversight of the Gaza Strip crossings.

¹⁶ Hamas has publicly recognized the tunnels and has allowed British correspondents to interview operatives linked to the tunnel industry. However, it has fabricated and marketed the story that they are only used to smuggle merchandise to ease the "siege," hiding any reference to weapons, terrorist operatives or money.

¹⁷ **Note:** The tunnel industry claimed several victims during both construction and operation. The fact that Palestinians were dying as they worked in the tunnels worried the Hamas administration, which tried to limit its dimensions. It was reported that the Hamas interior ministry, parallel to but separate from the Palestinian Authority interior ministry, had decided to force the tunnel owners to pay reparations to the families of Palestinians killed in the tunnels to motivate them to implement higher safety levels (Paltoday website, October 5).

59. The tunnel industry flourished during the lull to the point at which civilians and merchants in the Gaza Strip at times stated that there had been a significant improvement in their economic situation. Cheap, varied goods flowed into the Gaza Strip, making it possible for Gazans to stock up on products which had been hard to find. The tunnels also eased the fuel shortage (although they did not solve the problem of industrial fuel) after pipelines had been laid in some of the tunnels for transferring Egyptian gas into the Gaza Strip. At the same time, many young unemployed Palestinians found well-paying jobs digging tunnels.

60. It has been estimated that **thousands of workers and terrorist operatives** have been employed in digging the tunnels and in smuggling. According to articles in The Guardian and The Independent (October 22 and 25, respectively), 6,000 workers were involved in operating the tunnels in Rafah. According to estimations, the net profit from each tunnel is between \$30,000 and \$50,000 a month, while it costs between \$60,000 and \$70,000 to dig one. Half the sum is paid to the owners of the houses in which the tunnel entrances are hidden, and the other half goes for excavation equipment and salaries for workers and construction engineers. According to The Independent, active tunnels can be sold for as much as \$150,000.



Laying telephone lines in the tunnels (Hamis's PALDF Forum, October 23)



Smuggling livestock through the tunnels (Pal-today website, October 22)

The Increase in Radical Islamic Activity in the Gaza Strip

61. During the lull arrangement the trend, which began with the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip, toward an **increase of the operational and media activities** of organizations in the Gaza Strip with global jihad affiliations continued. It was a function of the process of Islamization Hamas has forced on the Gazans (turning the Gaza Strip into a kind of “Islamic emirate”) and the infiltration of Al-Qaeda’s ideology into the Strip. Prominent among the organizations are the **Army of the Nation, Jerusalem**, the **Army of Islam** (which participated in the June 2006 abduction of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit) and one calling itself “**Conquest of Islam in the Land of the Frontier**” (*Fath al-Islam fi Ard al-Ribat*¹⁸), the Palestinian branch in the Gaza Strip of a terrorist organization called Fath al Islam, which operates in Lebanon and is a branch of the global jihad.

62. Organizations affiliated with the global jihad **did not accept the lull arrangement** and even criticized Hamas for agreeing to it. Throughout the lull those organizations increasingly claimed responsibility for attacks from the Gaza Strip, especially rocket and mortar shell fire (although relatively speaking, they played a small part). Mumtaz Dughmush, the Army of Islam commander in the Gaza Strip, admitted that his organization, which had announced its rejection of the lull arrangement, had carried out “small” attacks, “shelling” Israel without publicly claiming responsibility (Sada al-Jihad [“The Echo of Jihad”],¹⁹ September 25). There was also an increase in the number of **attacks in the Gaza Strip carried out by radical Islamic elements against institutions and individuals identified with the west and its culture**. Hamas occasionally tried to confront the groups which refused to accept its authority, and on a number of occasions did not hesitate to use military force against them, although it refrained from completely suppressing their activities, which continue into the present.²⁰

63. On November 17 Hamas’s surfer forum PALDF issued an announcement from an organization called the **Army of the Nation, Jerusalem**, which claimed responsibility for firing two rockets at the western Negev and Ashqelon on the afternoon of November 14. According to the announcement, it was the organization’s first attack and the rockets were of

¹⁸ *Ard al-ribat* (“the land of the frontier”) is the Islamic name for the territory known as “Palestine,” where the Temple Mount, the third holiest site in Islam, is located. Since the site is governed by Israel, a non-Muslim country, the area in which it is located (Jerusalem) and its surroundings (“Muslim Palestine,” today the State of Israel plus Judea and Samaria) are considered an area where Palestinians are the front line. It is their role is to take part in the future jihad to liberate the Islamic holy places in Jerusalem.

¹⁹ A monthly online magazine published by the Global Islamic Media Front, a jihadist propaganda media outlet.

²⁰ For further information see our September 21, 2008 Bulletin entitled “ [Hamas security forces exerted massive military power to confront the Dugmush clan and operatives of the Army of Islam, a network affiliated with Al-Qaeda.](#)”

a type called **Abd al-Rashid Ghazi**.²¹ **Note:** On November 14 a number of rockets were launched at the Ashqelon region. Responsibility was claimed by Hamas's Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website, November 14). A video clip documenting the rocket fire was appended to the Army of the Nation's announcement. Spokesmen said that the rocket fire was part of a larger operation dedicated to Abd al-Rashid Ghazi, which would "pulverize the posts of the Jewish Nazis." They also said that the **organization did not adhere to any lull arrangement** and that its operations would continue as part of "the path of the global jihad."



Two Army of the Nation operatives holding rockets inscribed "Al-Rashid Ghazi" (Hamas's PALDF Forum, November 17).

64. At the same time, the organizations affiliated with the global jihad also exploited the lull arrangement for military buildup and training. For example, on September 1 Reuters published an article about 25 Army of the Nation terrorist operatives who were undergoing training.²² The organization is headed by **Abu Hafs al-Maqdisi**, who was detained by Hamas a number of times in the past. Al-Maqdisi, who has criticized Hamas, said the Army of the Nation would fight Israel and the "infidels" until Islam had taken over the whole world (Reuters, September 1).

²¹ **Abd al-Rashid Ghazi** was one of the leaders of the armed men in the events which took place at the Red Mosque in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. He was killed there by Pakistani army forces on July 10, 2007. On July 7, 2007, he declared an Islamic revolution, following which the Pakistani army attacked the militants entrenched within the compound of the Red Mosque, known as a stronghold of radical Islam, and whose clerics supported the Taliban. More than 100 people were killed in the events. Various weapons were found in the Red Mosque, as were letters of instruction from the Al-Qaeda leadership to Ghazi and his father Mulana Abdallah, who founded the mosque (and who was killed in 1998).

²² For further information about the Army of the Nation see our February 11, 2008 Bulletin entitled "[A group called "Army of the Nation, Jerusalem" is yet another global jihad offshoot in the Gaza Strip.](#)"



Left: Abu Hafs al-Maqdisi expresses solidarity with Al-Qaeda's leaders. Right: Army of the Nation operative in training.

Terrorism in Judea and Samaria during the Lull

65. From the very beginning, **the lull arrangement was binding only in the Gaza Strip**. That is, the Israeli security forces retained full freedom to operate against the terrorist organizations in Judea and Samaria. Terrorist attacks carried out by the organizations there were not considered violations of the lull arrangement, and throughout the lull the Israeli security forces continued acting against them. At the same time, the terrorist networks were under pressure from the Palestinian Authority's security forces because of the increasing tension between Fatah and Hamas and the PA's interest in preventing a Hamas takeover of Judea and Samaria.

66. From the beginning of the lull arrangement, Palestinian terrorist organizations, headed by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, severely criticized Hamas for not having Judea and Samaria included in it. In the end, and under pressure from Hamas, they were forced to agree to the arrangement, but their spokesmen made it clear that as far as they were concerned, there was no separation between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. To make the point, in several instances rockets and mortar shells were fired into Israeli territory in response to successful IDF counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria.

67. Conspicuous was the increase in terrorist attacks in Jerusalem carried out by Palestinian Arabs living in East Jerusalem and holding Israeli ID cards. Hamas (and the other terrorist organizations) praised the attacks, despite that fact that in most instances the perpetrators did not belong to their organizations (one exception was the prevention of an abduction

planned by two Hamas operatives).²³ Throughout Judea and Samaria there was a rise in the number of attempted “cold” attacks (stabbings, Molotov cocktails).

68. The following attacks were carried out in Jerusalem by **lone Palestinian Arab terrorists**, residents of East Jerusalem who did not belong to the terrorist organizations:

i) On **October 23**, a Palestinian terrorist a resident of the village of Taqua near Bethlehem, drew a knife and stabbed a policeman in the back. The policeman drew out his gun and shot the terrorist in the stomach. The wounded terrorist managed to escape, and on his way stabbed and killed Abraham Ozeri, 86, in Gilo, a neighborhood in south Jerusalem.²⁴

ii) At 2300 hours on **September 22**, a Palestinian resident of East Jerusalem drove a BMW to the center of the city and drove along a main street. At one point he drove up onto the sidewalk at high speed and deliberately ran into pedestrians, after which he hit a wall. Seventeen people were wounded, including a group of 14 soldiers. An IDF officer whose soldiers were wounded shot and killed the terrorist. Investigation revealed that he was a resident of the neighborhood of Jabel Mukaber in southeastern Jerusalem.



The BMW used by the terrorist (Baz Ratner for Reuters, September 22).

iii) On **July 22**, a Palestinian took a construction vehicle from a building site in the neighborhood of Yemin Moshe and raced down one of Jerusalem’s main streets, crashing into a number of vehicles. A civilian, who saw what was happening, shot at him but he continued plowing into cars. Shortly thereafter a Border Policeman shot and killed him. Twenty-eight civilians were wounded in the attack.²⁵

²³For further information see our December 14, 2008 Bulletin entitled “The Israel security forces in Jerusalem detained two Hamas operatives carrying Israeli IDs” at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/ct_e014.htm.

²⁴ For further information see our October 6, 2008 Bulletin entitled “[Jerusalem as a focus for terrorist attacks: increase in terrorist activity in Jerusalem and in the involvement of East Jerusalem residents.](#)”

²⁵ For further information see our July 24, 2008 Bulletin entitled “[Jerusalem as a focus for terrorism.](#)”

iv) On **July 11**, a terrorist went to the Lions Gate in the Old City and opened fire at two on-duty policemen, critically wounding one of them. The other, who was also wounded, shot at the terrorist, who escaped through a nearby cemetery.

v) On **July 2** a terrorist took a large construction vehicle from the building site where he was employed and drove it down a main street, ramming into everything in his path. **Three civilians were killed** and about 40 were wounded. The terrorist was killed. He was a resident of the village of Sur Baher in southeastern Jerusalem and had a criminal record; he held an Israeli identity card.²⁶



Crushed vehicles at the scene of the attack (Israeli Foreign Ministry, July 2)

69. There were two prominent terrorist attacks in Samaria:

i) On **June 20**, two Palestinians riding in a car shot at a number of Israelis walking in a wadi near the settlement of Halamish, in southwestern Samaria, wounding three of them.



Evacuating the wounded evacuated to Tel Hashomer Hospital (Yosi Yempel for ZAKA, June 20).

ii) On **September 13** a Palestinian terrorist infiltrated the Shalhevet Yam settlers' outpost in Samaria, located near the village of Yizhar, southwest of Nablus. He set fire

²⁶ For further information see our July 3, 2008 Bulletin entitled "[Mass-casualty terrorist attack on Jaffa Road in Jerusalem.](#)"

to a house. In an attempt to set fire to another house, he attacked a nine-year old boy who called for help. The terrorist stabbed the boy, pushed him out of the house and escaped; the child was not seriously wounded. Following the attack, settlers from Yizhar went to the nearby village of Assira al-Qabliya and rioted, confronting the residents. Three Palestinians were wounded. IDF forces, the Border Police and Israeli police arrived on the scene, separated the sides and confiscated the Israelis' weapons (IDF Spokesman's website, September 13).

The Influence of the Lull Arrangement on the Residents of the Western Negev Population and the Gaza Strip

The Western Negev

70. Despite the sporadic violations, the lull arrangement slowly returned life to normal in Sderot and the western Negev towns and villages (especially between June 19 and November 4). Farmers again worked the fields near the Gaza Strip and more and more children could be seen playing in the streets, playgrounds and yards. Cultural events and shows were put on in Sderot and other locations. Summer camps were organized for the children and events were held which attracted many residents. The Succoth Jewish holiday ("The Feast of the Tabernacles"] food fair in Sderot was a great success and people came from all over the country to see it; no such event could have been held before the lull arrangement went into effect.

71. However, many civilians who had lived with continual bombardments for eight years found it difficult to switch over to a non-threatening situation. Some of them stated that they still had not shaken off the fear of an attack and were still sleeping in fortified rooms, and felt the calm was only temporary. The sense of **menace returned at the beginning of November** with the renewal of incessant rocket and mortar shell fire from the Gaza Strip.



A sign of the lull: a party at Kibbutz Nahal Oz's swimming pool (Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center staff, July 10).

72. The relative quiet during the lull was partially exploited to fortify residents' houses, bus stations and public buildings, and to provide more psychological help for civilians suffering from anxiety and fear.

The Gaza Strip

73. Gazans received the lull arrangement with mixed emotions. Alongside their lack of faith in Israel and their doubts as to the continued existence of the lull, they expressed hope and said they expected it would lead to a lifting of the blockade and an improvement in the quality of their lives. Those who were interviewed by the Arab media before November 4 said they were content and hoped the lull would improve daily life in the Gaza Strip, rehabilitate the economy and aid all the sectors harmed by the extended fighting.



The lull in the Gaza Strip: Children in a pool and at an amusement park (Palestine-info website).

74. Before November 4 Gazans enjoyed the benefits of the lull. The prices of various goods and fuel declined and people could be seen streaming to the beaches, public parks and markets. Some Gazans living east of Khan Yunis in areas of friction with Israel returned to their houses. Those living in the northern Gaza Strip in areas from which rockets were

launched could live normal lives again. Before November 4, signs of normalization were widely covered in the Gaza Strip media.



The early stages of the lull in the Gaza Strip: full beaches and crowded markets.

75. However, after November 4, when the Rafah crossing remained closed and due to continual rocket and mortar shell fire the crossings into Israel were frequently closed, regular deliveries were stopped and Gaza Strip residents began to feel shortages of previously-obtainable goods, especially fuel. Hamas aggravated the shortages and described the situation as a humanitarian “holocaust,” using the distress of its civilians to make propaganda capital with Arab and international target audiences. As in the past, the **Gazans paid the price** of the policy of Hamas and the other terrorist organizations, which would rather renew incessant rocket and mortar shell fire into Israeli territory than have open crossings.

76. In the first half of December, when Hamas often referred to the possibility of ending the lull arrangement, civilians living near the border and in areas of friction with Israel often expressed worry that they would return to the status quo ante. They paid a heavy price for the launching of rockets and mortar shells which landed near their houses, causing extensive damages. The media in the Gaza Strip, which is controlled by Hamas, did not report those fears, but they found their way into the Palestinian media in Judea and Samaria:

77. **Al-Ayyam** is a Palestinian newspaper published in Ramallah and reflects the opinions of the Palestinian Authority. Hamas considers it a PA organ and forbids its circulation in the Gaza Strip. It published two articles on the subject:

- i) The headline of the first read “**Residents near the border: the lull made us feel more secure and less tense.**” According to the article, Gazans living near the border were anxiously following statements regarding the end of the lull, and that “after six months, [they] felt that despite its faults, it provided a calmer atmosphere.” They were following information regarding the possibility of an IDF incursion into the Gaza Strip and were afraid they would again be the victims of the “frequent invasions” which occurred before the lull. The article ended by saying that “until the lull arrangement’s

remaining days go by, fear and worry will continue to plague civilians" (Al-Ayyam, written by a correspondent in Khan Yunis, December 14).

شبح الاجتياحات الماضية يطاردهم ككابوس مزعج

سكان المناطق الحدودية: التهدة وفرت أجواء أكثر أمناً وأقل توتراً

خان يونس - الأيام: يراقب سكان المناطق الحدودية بالحق وخوف الإيمان الجدي عن انتهاء لدة القفرة لانتفاخ التهدة التي أبرمت في حزيران الماضي برعاية مصرية، أو تمديدتها لعدة سعة الشهر كما تضمن الاتفاق، وإن كان الخيار الأخير في ظل تصاعد حدة التصريحات من كلا الطرفين مستبعداً تماماً. ويعد ستة الشهر يشعر سكان الحدود أن التهدة بالرغم من علاتها، وفرت لهم أجواء أكثر هدوءاً وأقل توتراً.

ويخشى هؤلاء من عودة الأيام التي خلفت بملامحها السخنة والاضطرية حيث صيحت لياليهم ونهارهم بالقلق والفرع، إسرائيل، وعلى لسان قادتها، تهدد بشن عملية عسكرية على قطاع غزة بجعة إيقاف صواريخ للقذوم.

من جهتها، تواصل الفصائل ضرب للواقع العسكرية والمسلطانات للمناخية لحدود قطاع غزة.

وبحسب مصادر إسرائيلية، فإن الجيش الإسرائيلي استعدى جنود الاحتياط ربما للمشاركة في عملية عسكرية لاجتياح قطاع غزة في حال عدم تمديد التهدة.

سكان مناطق الخماس يجنون في التهدة ولفاً للزئيد للهم وخوفهم، فلم يعد بإمكان لواءة ناريمان الفرا، من عيسان الجديدة شرق خان يونس، أن تلف في بقلتها الصغيرة قبل ستة أشهر كما هو الحال اليوم.

ناريمان نصف أجواء الحدود اليوم بالهدوء المحذر متخبة أن تستمر التهدة، وتكر أنها لن تستطيع أن تخمس الأيام للضحية التي عانتها وأسرتها في رعب وتشير بيدها إلى بيت جاريتها الشهيدة وفاء الدغمة التي قتلها الجنود الإسرائيليون أثناء اقتحام منزلها.

تبيع ناريمان أحد الأطفال حلوى وتواصل: كانت دكانتنا عملية بالفضائع وعبارة عن غرفة مسقوفة فهدمتها الديابات الإسرائيلية في اجتياحها للمنطقة، هي مصدر دخلنا الوحيد، لم نستطع إعادة بنائها إذ لا يوجد أسمنت.

وتهدت للمناطق الشرقية من محافظة خان يونس في الأشهر التي سبقت التهدة أياماً عسيرة وعانى سكانها الويلات جراء الاجتياحات المتواصلة.

وبالرغم من عدم التزام إسرائيل ببنود التهدة، إلا أن سكان منطقة الحدود لهم وجهة نظر مختلفة تماماً عما يتداوله السياسيون، فلم يعد توار الغاز والكهرباء يلبي حاجة لهم إذا تلقوا معها الحماية إلى الأمن والأمان على حياتهم.

لو توار الغاز والكهرباء «وحشنا الخوف والقلق» هل ستكون هناك حياة؟ سؤال طرحه الطلبة حنان الدغمة (١٨ عاماً) القاطنة في عيسان الجديدة شرق خان يونس بالقرب من الحدود مع إسرائيل.

وتضيف: بناقلون التهدة هل استمعوا إلينا وتشعروا بالنا ومعالقتنا؟ هل سألوا إن كنا نريد التهدة أم لا؟ ولشراكتها المسائلت والخوجسات ذاتها للوطنية الفراء، وتشريف: بحاية الله نجونا بداية العام الحالي من سيطرة محقة خلال القصف وإطلاق النار العشوائي، نحن نريد التهدة لتخمس بالامان.

في المقابل، يضاعف الجدل في إسرائيل حول التهدة، ويرجح القادة الإسرائيليون أن تنتهي قبل موعدنا في ظل استمرار إطلاق المسائل الصواريخ، وبالغالب يتوقع أن تستكمل الفصائل مشاوراتها مع حركة حماس، والتي بدأتها قبل أيام، بشأن التهدة، ويات هناك نبيه إجماع على أن التهدة منذ إعلانها مئة ولم تفر إلا الأمن لسكان البلدات الإسرائيلية ويراقب توفيق أبو طعمية (٨٤ عاماً) نشرات الأخبار وأمد يشعر بمعاتنا، كل مسؤول في بيته أما نحن فنقتصدى ونحن لهذه الاجتياحات.

وحتى ثمر الأيام السبعة التي بقيت على انتهاء التهدة، تبقى حالة الخوف والقلق والمحرر تصاحب المواطنين، وتصبح للوت كابوس مزعج يطارد أحلام الدغمة في طفولها بالثانوية العامة لهذا العام، وأحلام العالين في العيتن بسلام وأمان.

The voice of the Gaza Strip residents living near the border (article in Al-Ayyam, December 14)

ii) The headline of the second read "**Beit Lahia: residents eagerly awaiting a lull extension as its end approaches.**" According to the article, farmers who had fields near the border were "hoping the lull will be extended beyond the date [set by Hamas for its end], to make it possible for them to pick the strawberry crop..." Civilians, the article continued, were increasingly worried the lull would collapse and were fearful of what the immediate future would bring. For example, Sufian Abu Ghayn, 42, a resident of northern Beit Lahia who grew vegetables near the border, said that "the lull enabled us to move around freely without a direct threat from the forces of the occupation" [the Israelis]. 'A'id al-Ghouf, 33, said that the lull had given the children and the Gazans in general a breathing space (Khalil al-Sheikh, Al-Ayyam, December 15).

العدد ١٦/١٢/٢٠٠٨

أعربوا عن قلقهم من استئناف الاعتداءات الإسرائيلية

بيت لاهيا : المواطنون يترقبون تمديد التهدئة مع قرب انتهاء موعدها

كتب خليل الشبيخ:

يترقب سكان ومزارعو بيت لاهيا المتضررين القادمة عند الموعد المحدد لانتهاء التهدئة.

ويأمل المزارعون الذين يمتلكون أراضي بالقرب من السياج الحدودي تمديد التهدئة بعد التاريخ المحدد لتكثيفهم من ممارسة عملهم، لا سيما في جنس محصول التوت الأرضي.

كما يراقب مواطنو السياقا أعمال بلدة بيت كاهيا بالقرب والشيخ تحركات قوات الاحتلال على طول الحدود منذ عدة أيام.

ويرغم ما ابداه هؤلاء المواطنون من ارتياح بعد ان عطلت قوات الاحتلال اعتدائها خلال التهدئة فسارية منذ التسرع على مندهم حزين المناخي، إلا ان القلق يعتريهم من انهيارها في أي وقت.

وتحدث بعضهم عن التلوث المستجدة التي يرون بها منذ أكثر من اسبوع، مشيرين إلى ان حالة الهدوء المسالمة منذ فترة طويلة بدأت بالتغير.

وقال المواطن أبو سائد خضير (٤٠ عاماً) إنه استلخج خلال الشهرين الماضية المكون في أرضه الزراعية ورعايتها، مشيراً إلى انه متخوف من المستقبل القريب.

والهدف: إنه يدس بطرفه وقلق من إطلاق النار عليه حال تسلل التواجد العسكري الإسرائيلي عند السياج.

وقال خضير: بالرغم من الهدوء المسالمة إلا ان التحركات الإسرائيلية لم تتوقف على طول السياج في الأيام الماضية فالمناخية، محرباً عن أمه في تصديق التهدئة التي ساهمت في توقف الاعتداءات الإسرائيلية.

اما المزارع سفيان أبو عين (٤٢ عاماً) فهي يسكن في منزل ويسد أرض زراعية شمال بيت لاهيا، فقال: إن التهدئة مكثت من التجهول بحرية دون تمديد مباحث من قوات الاحتلال، موضحاً أنه يعمل في الزراعة وظل

تفتقرات بشكل يعرفه للموسم للمتلحق الحدودية.

وتعتبر ان هناك تغييراً ملحوظاً طرأ على طبيعة حياة السكان في منطقة السياقا طيلة الشهر المناسية.

وأحد أبو عين ان التمهيدات الإسرائيلية بعدم سريان التهدئة وتكثيف عمليات عسكرية في غزة التابت موجبة عن فتوف لدى السكان والمزارعين بشكل قل من عدد الذين يستلمون في أرض زراعية بجوار السياج الحدودي.

من جانبه، قال المواطن عبد الغول (٣٣ عاماً) إن التهدئة منحت مختلفاً للأطفال والمعتدين عموماً، لافتاً إلى ان انهيارها سيضرهم لشطر القاصف والقتل.

وأكد ان التلوث المستجدة التي تراقبها تحركات إسرائيلية في منطقة السياقا بعد تهدئة دامت عدة أشهر تركت تحولات لدى السكان والمزارعين.

The voice of the Gaza Strip residents living near the border (article in Al-Ayyam, December 15)

The Internal Palestinian Arena during the Lull

78. During the lull arrangement **tensions worsened** between Hamas and Fatah, and the **schism** between the radical Islamic rule of Hamas in the Gaza Strip and nationalist (secular-oriented) Fatah rule of the Palestinian Authority in Judea and Samaria **widened**. While Hamas exploited the relatively calm period to suppress its opponents among Fatah and local clans in the Gaza Strip, the security services in the PA took steps against Hamas's terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria to prevent them from undermining its rule. The widening schism between the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria was also manifested by the **Islamization of the Gaza Strip through Hamas's turning it into an "Islamic emirate."**²⁷

79. In the Gaza Strip, Hamas exploited the lull to **continue the suppression of Fatah and to strengthen its control over the rogue terrorist organizations and strong clans**, leading to a number of violent confrontations between Fatah activists and Hamas's security services. They peaked at the beginning of August when Hamas security services took measures against Fatah activists and the Hilles clan in the Saja'iyah neighborhood of Gaza City in a confrontation which claimed the lives of nine residents, including two Hamas operatives,

²⁷ For an updated example see our November 3, 2008 Bulletin entitled "[Yet another step in the establishment of a totalitarian "Islamic Emirate" in the Gaza Strip.](#)"

and wounded at least 90, among them 12 children (Ma'an News Agency, August 2). Dozens of Fatah activists fled to the border security fence near Nahal Oz. In view of their condition and obvious distress, the IDF forces permitted them to cross into Israel territory; the wounded received medical attention at hospitals in Israel (IDF Spokesman's website, August 3).



Hamas security services detain Fatah activists in the Gaza Strip (Al-Alam TV, August 1).

80. On the other hand, in Judea and Samaria the PA's security services exploited the period to take increased security measures against Hamas's terrorist networks and its civilian infrastructure (the *da'wah*), mainly in the large cities (Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron). In coordination with Israel, large Palestinian security forces were sent in. They detained Hamas terrorist operatives (including those involved in terrorist activities against Israel), confiscated large quantities of weapons (including explosive belts) and took steps against civilian Hamas institutions which support its terrorist activities (charitable societies, educational institutions, mosques, printers).²⁸



The Palestinian security services deploy in Hebron (Nayef Hashalmon for Reuters, October 25).

81. The attempts made by Egypt to end the schism between Hamas and the PA through a national dialogue **bore no fruit**. Among other reasons, Hamas, feeling itself in a position of

²⁸ For further information see our October 27, 2008, Bulletin entitled "[The Palestinian security services carry out intensive security activity in the Hebron district \(Update and implications\).](#)"

power, was unwilling to give up any of its control over the Gaza Strip and sought to take over the PA as well, including the PLO's institutions and the PA's security services. Thus Hamas announced that its delegation would not participate in the national dialogue set for on November 9 in Cairo. Egypt accused Hamas of responsibility for sabotaging the dialogue. (An issue likely to arise in the near future is the continuation of Mahmoud Abbas's term of office, which is supposed to end January 9, 2009).

Appendix

Data Relating to Lull Arrangement Violations Carried Out by the Palestinians

Violations of the Lull Arrangement between June 19 and November 4²⁹

Number	Date	Event	Organization Claiming Responsibility	Israel's Response	Notes
1	Night of June 23	Mortar shell fire	None	Crossings closed by order of the Defense Minister ³⁰	
2	June 24	Three rockets hit Sderot	PIJ	Crossings closed	Before the violation the crossings were open for only two days. The PIJ claimed it launched the rockets in retaliation for the killing of one of its operatives in Nablus.
3	June 26	Rocket lands near village of Gevim	Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades	Crossings closed	The organization claimed it was sending a warning to Israel and a message to Hamas and Egypt to extend the lull arrangement to the West Bank
4	June 27	Two mortar shells fired at the Karni crossing	None	Crossings closed	
5	June 28	Mortar shell fired at the Karni crossing	None	Crossings closed	
6	June 30	Rocket falls near the village of Mefalsim	None	Crossings opened on June 29 are reclosed	According to a newspaper report the rocket was fired by a PIJ operative

²⁹ According to data from the IDF's Operations Division.

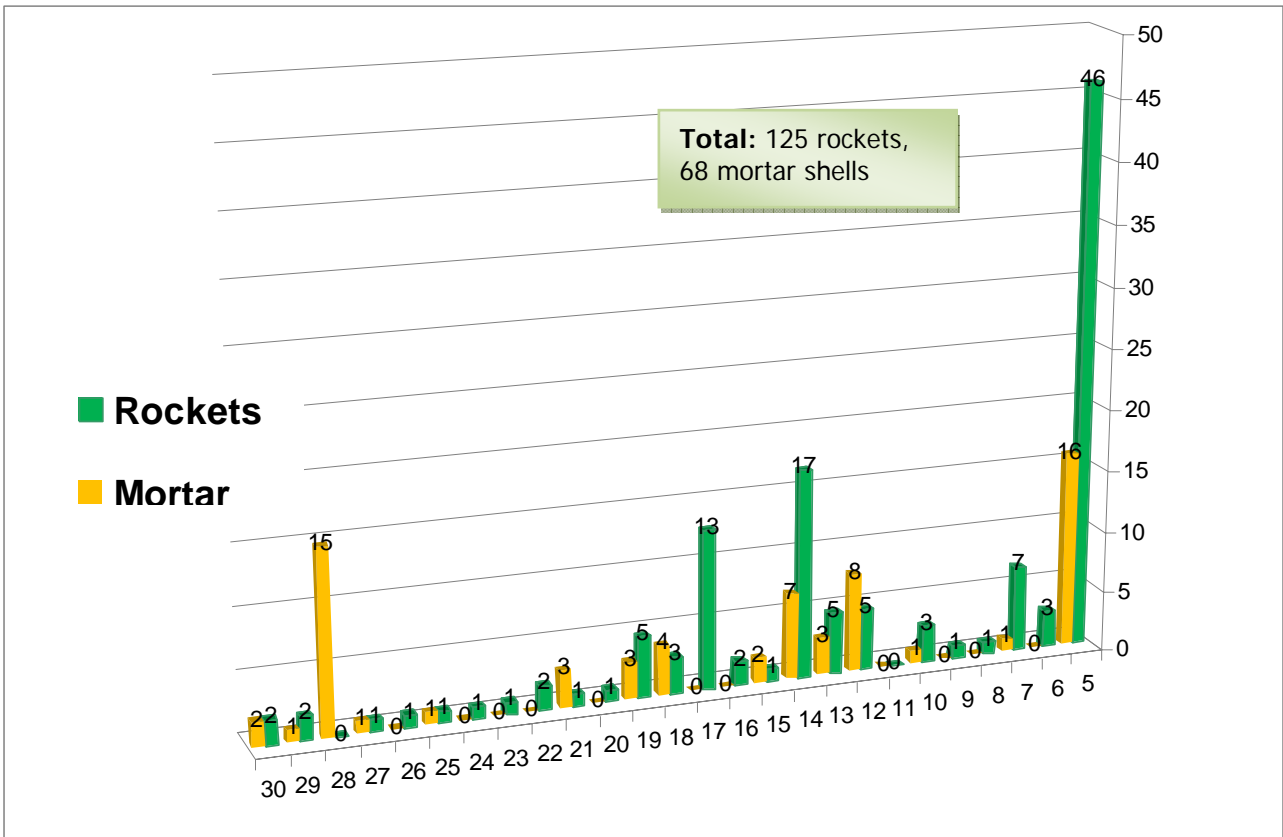
³⁰ The opening and closing of the crossings can only be authorized by the Defense Minister.

					later detained by the Hamas police (Iran's Fars website)
7	July 3	Rocket lands in open area north of Sderot	An unknown organization calling itself the "Badr Forces"	Crossings closed (July 4)	
8	July 6	Farmers working the fields of Nahal Oz attacked by light arms fire	None		
9	July 7	Mortar shell lands near Karni crossing	None	Crossings closed July 8, partially reopened July 9	
10	July 8	Mortar shell lands in open field in the Eshkol regional council (across from the central Gaza Strip)	None		
11	July 10	Two rockets land in an open field near village of Gevim	Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (the Imad Moughnieh Squad)	Crossings closed, but reopened after a few hours following an Egyptian appeal	The attack was claimed to be motivated by the death of an organization operative near Kissufim the same morning
12	July 10	Three mortar shells fell three kilometers southwest of the Sufa crossing	None		
13	July 12	Rocket lands in an open area in the Sha'ar Hanegev regional council (across from the northern Gaza Strip)	None		
14	July 13	Two mortar shells fall on the Gaza side of the border security fence in the Nahal Oz region	None	Nahal Oz and Sufa crossings closed	

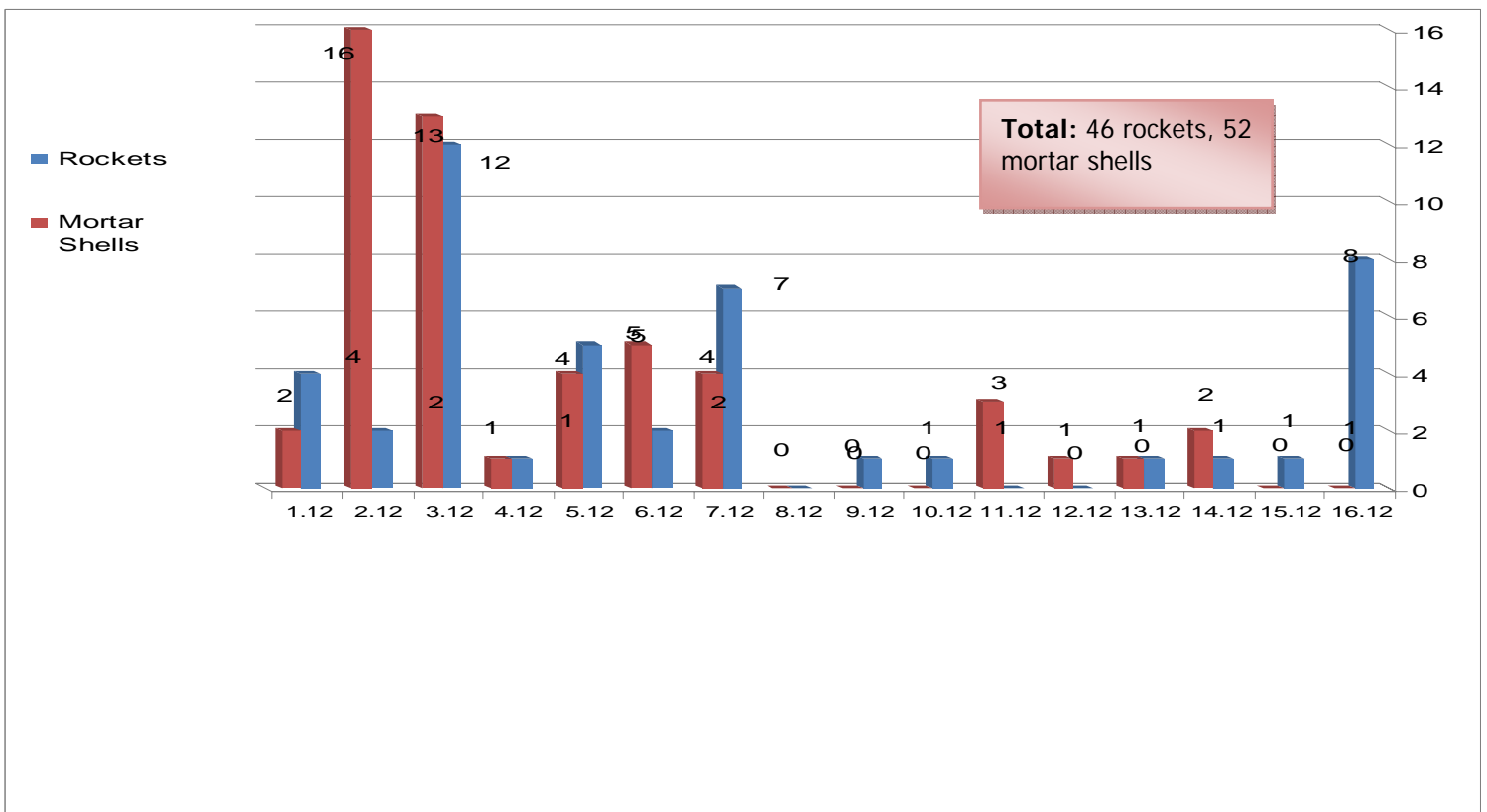
15	July 15	Mortar shell hit identified	None		
16	July 25	Rocket lands on the Gazan side near the Kissufim crossing	None		
17	July 29	Rocket launched from and lands in Palestinian territory	None		
18	July 31	Rocket launched and lands in Palestinian territory	None		
19	August 6	Rocket lands	None		
20	August 6	Three mortar shells land in Israeli territory	None		
21	August 9	Rocket lands in an open area near Sderot	None		
22	August 11	Rocket lands in Sderot	None		
23	August 15	Rocket lands in open area near village of Gevaram	None		
24	Night of August 15	Small arms fire at IDF forces in the Karni crossing area	None		The attack was in response to IDF activity in the area
25	August 17	Rocket lands near Kibbutz Re'im	None	Crossings closed until August 21	
26	August 25	Two rockets land in an open area in the Sha'ar Hanegev regional council	None	Crossings closed	

27	September 2	IED detonated against IDF position one kilometer east of the Erez crossing	None		
28	September 11		Group calling itself the Martyr Ayman Fahid's United Squads		
29	September 14	Rocket hits Sderot	Al-Quds Brigade (a PIJ splinter group)	Crossings closed	
30	September 21	Two mortar shells land north of the Karni crossing	None		
31	September 21	ISA and IDF forces detain a Rafah resident trying to infiltrate Israel through the Egyptian border to abduct IDF soldiers	Hamas		The incident was a gross violation of the lull arrangement despite the fact that it was carried out through the Egyptian-Israeli border in Sinai.
32	September 30	Mortar shells fired and landed in Palestinian territory	None		
33	October 21	Rocket lands near Kibbutz Gevaram	None	Crossings closed	
34	October 30	Rocket fired at Sderot	Hezbollah Brigades in Palestine	Crossings closed	
35	October 31	IDF force identifies terrorist squad placing IED near border security fence	None	Crossings closed	

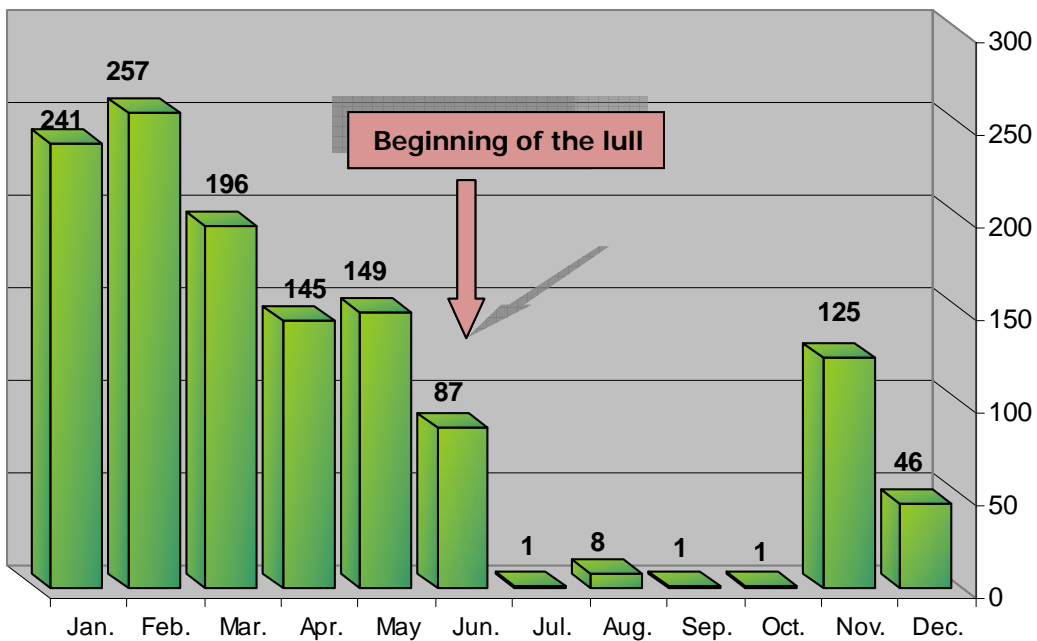
Erosion of the Lull Arrangement Daily Distribution of Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire in November, 2008



Daily Distribution of Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire in December, 2008 (as of December 16, 2008)



Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire during the Past Year



Monthly Distribution of Mortar Shell Fire during the Past Year

