



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict May 29 – June 4, 2013



Rami Hamdallah, appointed this past week as PA prime minister, with Mahmoud Abbas (Al-Arabiya TV, June 2, 2013)

Overview

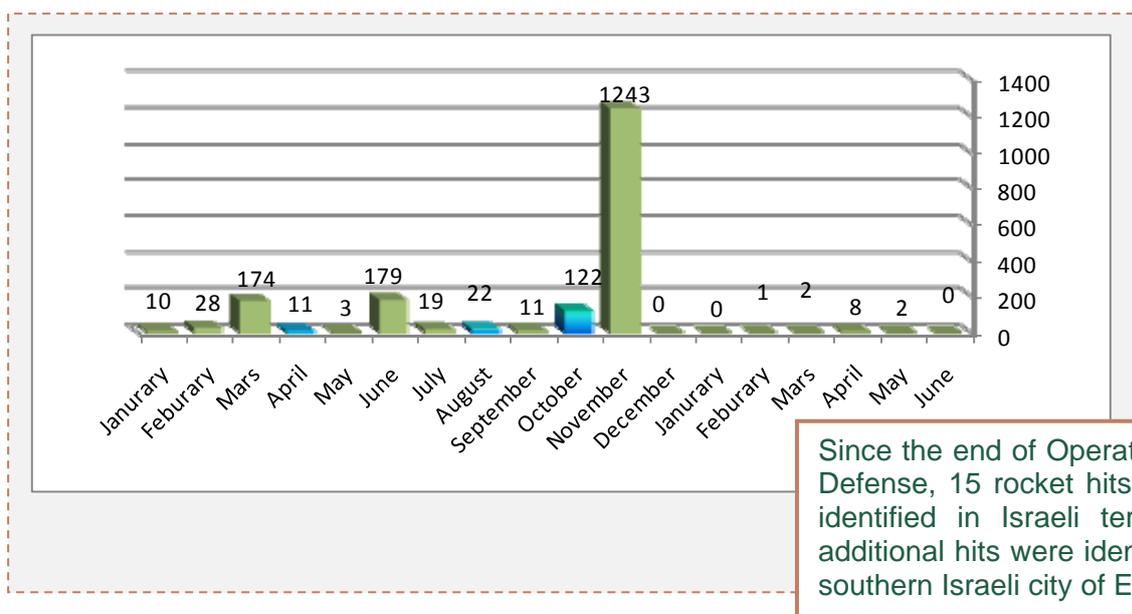
- This past week there was quiet along Israel's southern border. Violent confrontations and riots continued in Judea and Samaria between Palestinians and Israeli security forces, part of the Palestinian "popular resistance." Hamas continued its efforts to encourage military-terrorist activity in Judea and Samaria (abductions and shooting IDF soldiers and Israeli civilians).
- Rami Hamdallah, president of Al-Najah University, was appointed as PA prime minister by Mahmoud Abbas, replacing Salam Fayyad. He will hold the office for three months, until the establishment of a national unity government (conditioned on reconciliation with Hamas). Rami Hamdallah, who has close relations with Mahmoud Abbas, is a respected academic but without a political power base because he is not an active Fatah member. Hamas spokesmen were quick to claim that the new government was illegal and did not represent the Palestinian people.

The Situation in Israel's South

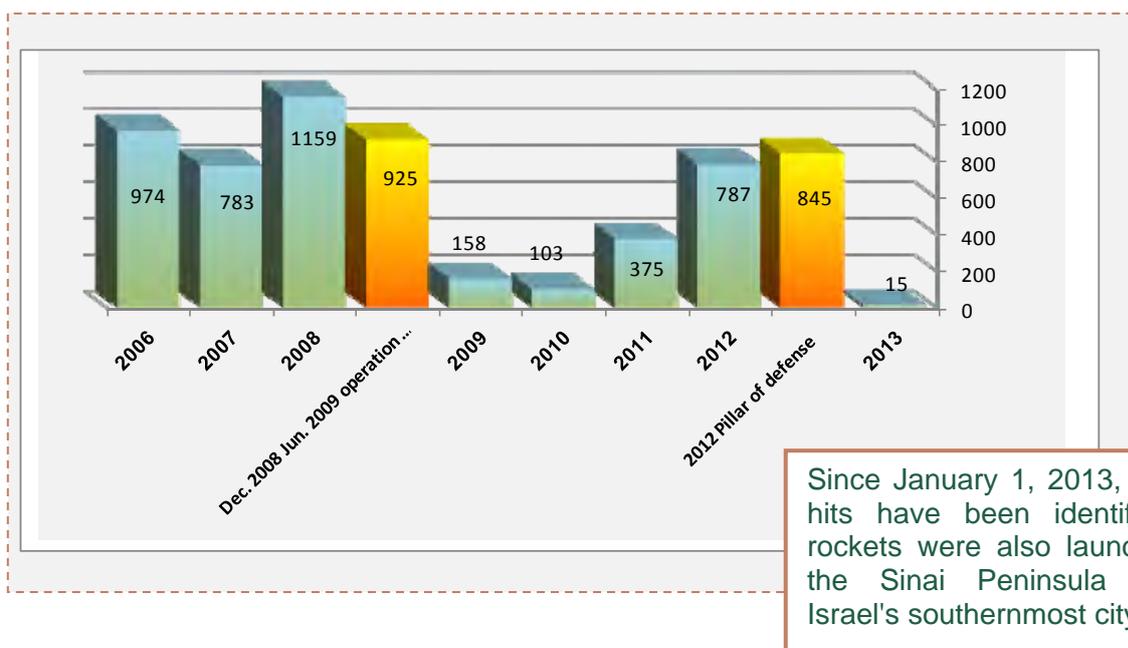
Rocket Fire on the Southern Border

- This past week Israel's southern border was quiet; no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israeli territory.

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory¹



Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire²



¹ As of May 28, 2013. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Judea and Samaria

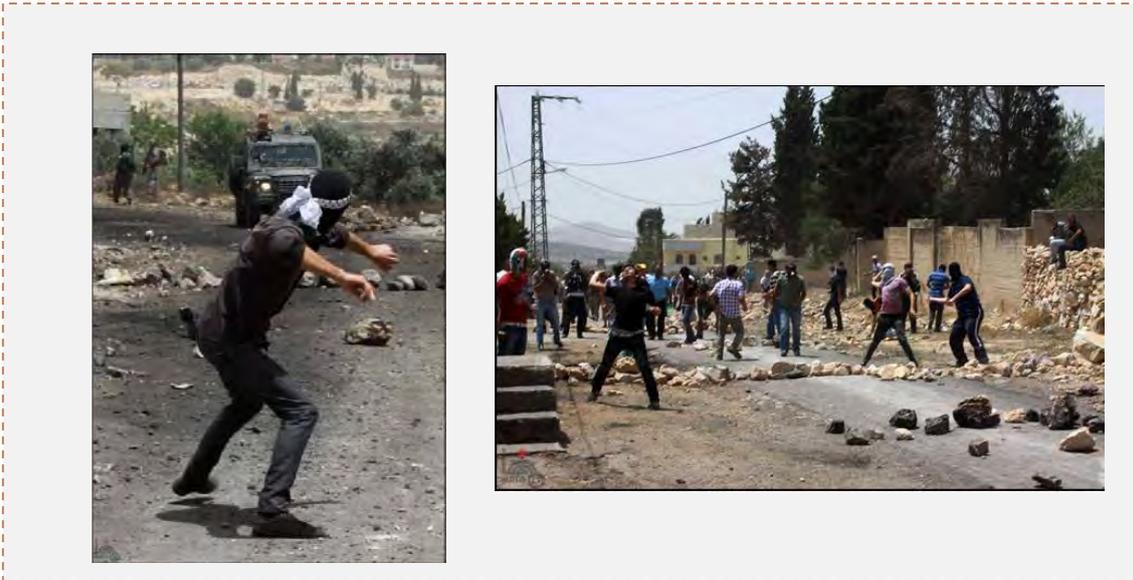
Hamas Operative Detained – Planned Abductions and Shooting Attacks

■ In May 2013 the Israel Security Agency (ISA) detained Hamas operative **Baker Atallah Samih Sa'ad**, from village of Mazra'a al-Sharqia (in the Ramallah region) who planned to carry out abductions and shooting attacks. His interrogation revealed that in April 2013 he met in Jordan with Hamas operative **Hisham Abd al-Qader Ibrahim Hijaz**, from the same village, **who had been released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal.**³ Hijaz recruited him to Hamas and **instructed him to plan abductions and shooting attacks against Israeli soldiers and civilians.** He was told that close to the date of the attacks a messenger would bring him four weapons. He was also instructed to raise money for his activities. Baker Atallah Samih Sa'ad agreed to go to Sudan for military training (ISA website, June 3, 2013).

Violence Continues

■ This past week violence and riots continued between Palestinians and the Israel security forces at the traditional friction points, part of the so-called "popular resistance." Following Palestinian violence in the region of the Tomb of Rachel, the Palestinian media reported a Palestinian youth had been seriously wounded at the northern entrance to Bethlehem (PalPress website, Paltoday website (Wafa News Agency, June 1, 2013).

³ **Hisham Abd al-Qader Ibrahim Hijaz** was responsible for the deaths of ten Israeli civilians and soldiers in terrorist attacks he carried out. He was sentenced to ten consecutive terms of life imprisonment but released in the Gilad Shalit deal and expelled to a foreign country. Today he lives in Qatar.



Palestinian youths throw stones at Israeli security forces during the weekly riot in the village of Qadoum (Wafa News Agency, May 31, 2013).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Crossings

■ On June 3, 2013, a convoy of supplies from Jordan for the Jordanian hospital entered the Gaza Strip. It consisted of 12 truckloads of medical equipment, medicine and food. Its entrance was coordinated with the Coordinator for Government Activities in the Territories (Coordinator website, June 3, 2013).

Khaled Mashaal Visits Kuwait

■ **Khaled Mashaal**, head of Hamas' political bureau, arrived in Kuwait to raise funds for the de-facto Hamas administration (Al-Qabas, June 2, 2013). The crisis in Hamas' relations with Iran and the Egyptian activity to destroy the tunnels have led to economic distress in the Gaza Strip (PalPress website, June 2, 2013).

■ Senior Hamas figures were interviewed a number of times and asked to comment on Hamas' relations with Iran:

- **Khaled Mashaal**, interviewed by a British TV station, said that the fact that Hamas operatives had left Syria did not mean it had betrayed Syria or Iran and it did not reflect Hamas' political stance (Channel4news, May 31, 2013).
- **Khalil al-Haya**, chairman of the Hamas faction of the Palestinian Legislative Council, denied that Iran had stopped its aid because of Hamas' political position regarding Syria. He said there was no difference of opinion between Hamas and Iran as far as the Palestinian cause was concerned and that Hamas had made

sure no damage would be done to its relations with any country or regime (Website of the information department of the Hamas faction in the PLC, May 30, 2013).

Ceremony for the Third Anniversary of the Mavi Marmara

■ On **May 31, 2013**, the foreign ministry of the de-facto Hamas administration held a ceremony to mark the third anniversary of the *Mavi Marmara* flotilla. It was held in Gaza port near the memorial erected by the Hamas administration for those killed in the events. The ceremony was attended by Ghazi Hamed, Hamas deputy foreign minister, Muhammad Kaya, IHH representative in the Gaza Strip, the general manager of the Turkish news agency Al-Anadolu and representatives of the Palestinian organizations (Safa News Agency, May 31, 2013). Ismail Haniya, head of the Hamas administration, said that "Turkish force of will overcame Israel" (i.e., Israel had apologized to Turkey) and that negotiations for reparations were still being held (Al-Aqsa TV, May 31, 2013).

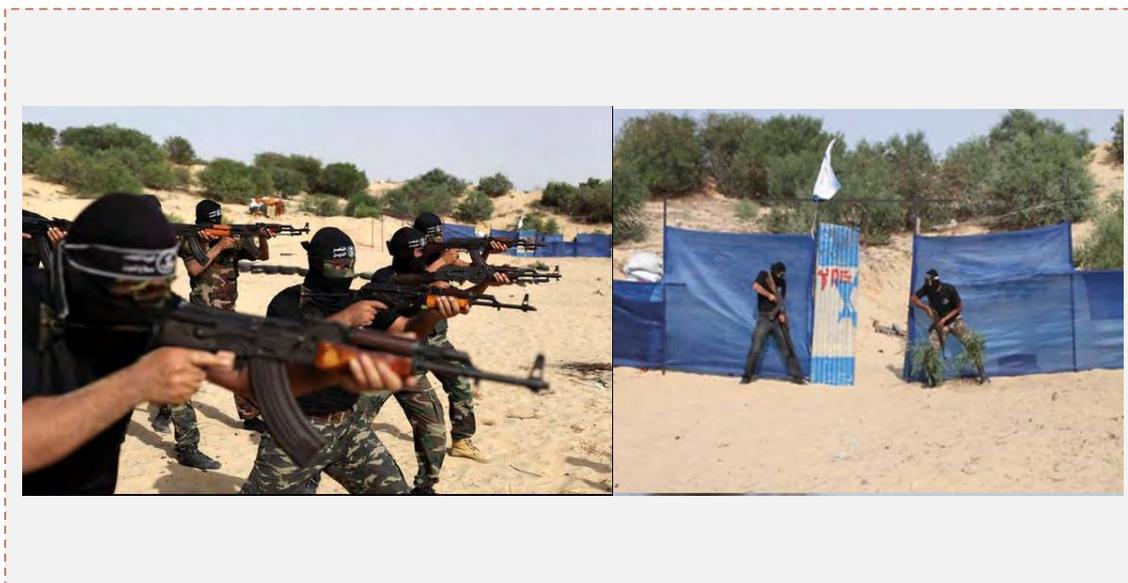


Left: Muhammad Kaya, IHH representative in the Gaza Strip speaks at the ceremony. Right: The ceremony held at the memorial in Gaza port (Filastin Al-'Aan, May 31, 2013).

Popular Resistance Committees (PRC) Military Training

■ The PRC's military-terrorist wing held a training exercise at its training camp. It included military displays, and simulated attacks on an IDF post and an IDF jeep (Salah al-Din Brigades website, June 3, 2013). It also held a display in Khan Yunis at the end of a military training course. During the display PRC operatives simulated **attacking and overcoming an Israeli military base**. According to the spokesman for the PRC's military-terrorist wing, **the organization's top priority is obtaining the**

release of Palestinian prisoners through abducting Israeli soldiers (Safa News Agency, June 2, 2013).



Left: Target practice. Right: Uniformed PRC terrorist operatives simulate an assault on an IDF base.

Summer Camps Open in the Gaza Strip

■ UNRWA announced it had completed preparations for opening 125 summer camps in the Gaza Strip. The camps will last for three weeks and be attended by **an estimated 150,000 children**. According to **Yousef Musa**, UNRWA director in Rafah, activities would be limited this year because of proximity to the Muslim religious month of Ramadan and because of the financial difficulties plaguing the agency. **He said this year the summer camps would take into consideration the customs and traditions of Palestinian society, and boys and girls would be completely separated.**

■ In past years Hamas criticized UNRWA summer camps because they allegedly emphasized universal values and not **religious-political-military indoctrination**. For that reason UNRWA camps were often the victims of Islamist criticism and harassment. Thus Yousef Musa's statement regarding customs and traditions may reflect UNRWA's surrender to the Hamas dictates regarding the UNRWA summer camp program.

The Palestinian Authority

New Prime Minister Appointed

■ Mahmoud Abbas appointed **Rami Hamdallah**, president of Al-Najah University, to replace Salam Fayyad as PA prime minister. **He will hold office for three months**, until a national unity government is formed (on the condition that the internal Palestinian reconciliation with Hamas has been reached).

■ Rami Walid Kamal Hamdallah (Abu Walid) was born in the village of Anabta (near Tulkarm) in 1958. Today he lives in Nablus with his wife and four children. He studied at Manchester University in Britain and has a PhD in applied linguistics. Since 1998 he has served as president of Al-Najah University. He is also chairman of the board of directors of the Palestinian stock exchange in Nablus, secretary general of the Palestinian Central Elections Committee, a member of the Palestinian constitutional committee and of the board of trustees of the Yasser Arafat Foundation. **He is considered as close to Mahmoud Abbas and a respected academic, although he has no political power base because his origins are not in Fatah.**



Rami Hamdallah (Website of Al-Najah University, June 4, 2013)

■ Immediately after his appointment, Rami Hamdallah announced that he would do everything in his power to advance the establishment of a Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital (Al-Ayam, June 3, 2013). As to his government, he said most of the currently serving ministers would remain, with the exception of minor changes, and that the government would be the continuation of Salam Fayyad's (Voice of Palestine Radio, June 3, 2013).

■ Hamas criticized his appointment and accused the PA of violating the reconciliation agreement and abandoning "national agreement."

- Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** said that the new government did not represent the Palestinian people, was not legitimate and did not take its legitimacy from the Palestinian Legislative Council (Alresala.net website, June 2, 2013).
- Hamas administration spokesman **Taher al-Nunu** said that the new government was "illegal" and did not represent the Palestinian people (Alresala.net website, June 2, 2013).

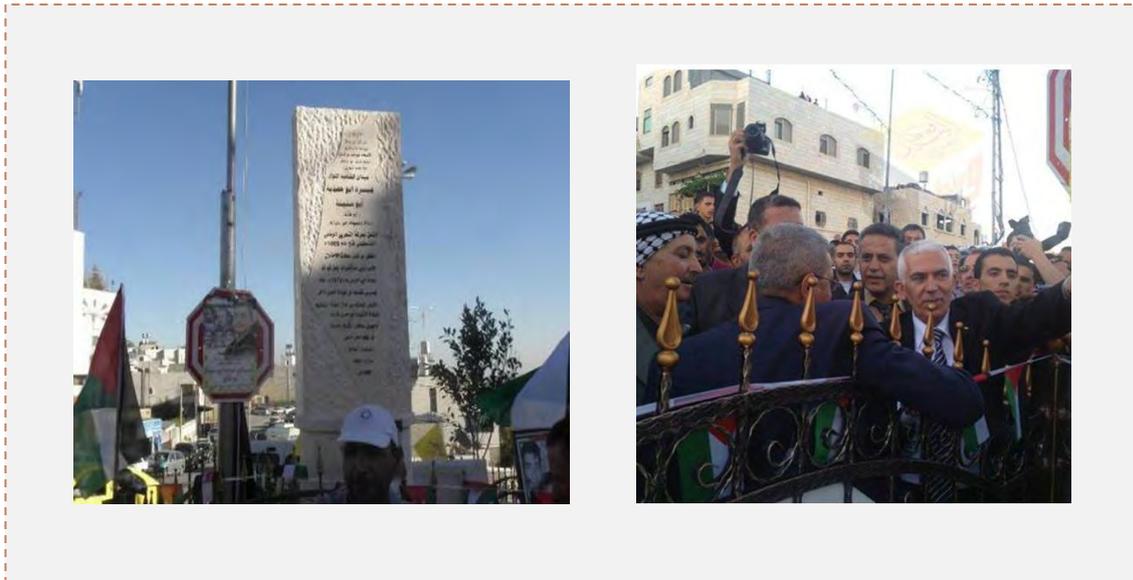
Israel Criticized for Construction in Jerusalem

■ Senior PA figures strongly criticized Israel for issuing a tender for the construction of 300 dwelling units in the neighborhood of Ramot Jerusalem and putting 800 more on the market in the neighborhood of Mordot Gilo on the Palestinian side of the 1967 Green Line. They claimed that by taking such action Israel had ended the possibility of renewing negotiations. **Saeb Erekat**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee and head of the PLO negotiating team, accused the government of Israel of "ethnic cleansing" in east Jerusalem, "proving" its intention to sabotage the efforts of American Secretary of State John Kerry to renew the negotiations (Wafa News Agency, May 29, 2013).

Square in Hebron Renamed for Deceased Prisoner

■ On **May 28, 2013**, a ceremony was held to rename a square in the center of Hebron for deceased Palestinian terrorist prisoner Maysara Abu Hamdia.⁴ The ceremony was attended by senior Palestinian figures, among them Issa Qaraqa, Palestinian minister for prisoner affairs, Kamel Hamid, governor of the Hebron district, and family members. Issa Qaraqa said that Abu Hamdia had been a victim of the so-called "Israeli medical negligence of Palestinian prisoners." He called his death in an Israeli jail a "war crime" (Ma'an News Agency, May 28, 2013).

⁴ **Maysara Abu Hamdia** was a Fatah terrorist-operative sentenced to life in prison for his involvement in the Cafe Cafit terrorist attack in Jerusalem in 2002. He died of cancer in the Israeli Soroka Hospital on April 2, 2013. Following his death riots broke out in Israeli jails and throughout Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip.



Left: The ceremony in Hebron renaming the square (Fatah Facebook page, May 28, 2013). Right: The Maysara Abu Hamdia Square in Hebron (Al-Quds TV, May 28, 2013).

Propaganda Events

The Global March to Jerusalem (GMJ)

- Preparations continue for the GMJ, supposed to be held on Friday, June 7, 2013, as part of the activities marking the so-called "Naksa Day" (the anniversary of the Arab defeat in the Six Day War). At this stage interest in the march seems limited. The international committee organizing the march held a press conference in Cairo where it said that preparations for the activities planned throughout the world had been completed, and that the theme of the march would be "The people of the world want the liberation of Jerusalem" (Shihad, the GMJ website, June 2, 2013).
- **Zaher Birawi**, a Hamas activist who serves as spokesman for the campaign, said that the march would send an important message to Israel ("the country of the occupation that carries out crimes on the soil of Jerusalem"). He said the activities would be held all over the world (with the exception of Syria), including in countries which did not participate last year, such as those in South America (Al-Quds TV, May 29, 2013). **Ahmed Abu Halbia**, chairman of the national committee in Gaza for the GMJ, stressed the role of the media in covering the events and in enlisting world public opinion and the Palestinian elite for mass participation in the GMJ (Ma'an News Agency, May 29, 2013).
- **Salah al-Khawaja**, activist of the popular committees of the "popular resistance" who coordinates the march in Judea and Samaria, said that the main objective was to

create internal unity on the ground against the [Israeli] "occupation" and to create tension outside Palestine. He said that learning from past experience, this year they had decided on new strategies. He said that this year activists from at least 45 foreign countries would participate. Some of them would arrive in Judea and Samaria and others would participate in marches in countries bordering Israel and in front of Israeli embassies around the globe (Voice of Palestine Radio, May 29, 2013).



Posters issued for the Global March to Jerusalem (GMJ Facebook page)

- Some of the events planned are the following:
 - In the **Gaza Strip**: The main event is supposed to be held in **the region of Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip**. According to Ahmed Abu Halbia, chairman of the Jerusalem Committee of the Palestinian Legislative Council, activities will be held in the institutions of higher learning and workers' organizations in the Gaza Strip to encourage attendance at the march. He said the events would be secured to prevent riots and keep Palestinians from trying to cross the border into Israel (Felesteen, May 21, 2013).
 - **In east Jerusalem and the PA: Gatherings are planned for the Nablus Gate** after the Friday prayer. Meetings are planned for other friction points in Judea and Samaria, such as the **Qalandia roadblock** south of Ramallah.
 - In **Jordan**: The main rally will take place at **al-Suweima in the Jordan Valley**. The Jordanian national commission to defend Al-Aqsa mosque and the holy sites announced that they would hold a march with the theme "Leaving for Jerusalem."
 - In **Egypt**: A demonstration is supposed to be held in Cairo after the Friday prayer.

- In **England**: A demonstration is planned for London, supposed to be held in front of the Israeli embassy around noon on June 7. Speeches will be made by politicians, clerics, public figure and representatives of the Palestinian organizations (Dunia Al-Watan, May 25, 2013).
- In **Tunisia**: A march is planned for Tunis, the capital city, which will begin at its main mosque.
- In **Malaysia**: A large rally is planned for the capital city, Kuala Lumpur, which will mark the end of week of activities to increase awareness about Jerusalem.