



December 20 2007

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

**Palestinian Islamic Jihad operational-terrorist network in the Gaza Strip under attack: in several strikes, the Israeli Air Force killed ten PIJ operatives. One was the commander of the PIJ's terrorist operative wing in the Gaza Strip, others were important weapons manufacturers and commanders of rocket launching squads.**

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**Pictures of four of the ten PIJ terrorist operatives killed in IDF attacks on December 17 and 18. Top: Majid al-Harazin, commander general of the Jerusalem Battalions [the PIJ's terrorist operative wing]. Bottom right: Karim Marwan al-Dachdouch [senior weapons manufacturer] (Quds News Website, December 20).**

## Background information

1. During the first two weeks of December 2007 there was a sharp increase in the amount of rocket fire aimed at the city of Sderot and other western Negev towns and villages. There were 66 identified rocket hits, compared with 65 for the entire month of November. The attacks peaked on December 12 when 26 rockets hit Israel, most of them in and around Sderot.
2. Most of the responsibility for the attacks was claimed by the PIJ, the terrorist organization which has **launched the greatest number of rockets** since Hamas took over the Gaza Strip in June 2007. Hamas **allows and even encourages** the PIJ and other, small terrorist organizations to launch rockets, and its operatives play a central role in mortar shell fire aimed at civilian and military targets near the Gaza Strip security fence.

## The Israeli security forces' main actions

3. Following the escalation of rocket fire, the IDF and the Israel Security Agency deployed to attack senior PIJ terrorist operatives involved in rocket fire and other types of attacks. The Israeli security forces carried out intensive actions aimed at three of the organization's levels: **the high operational command level**, composed of decision-makers and operational directors; **the weapons-manufacturing level**, composed of experts responsible for developing rockets and supplying them to the launching squads; and **the ground level**, the commanders of squads firing rockets.
4. On December 17 and 18 the IAF carried out **four air strikes**, killing **ten PIJ** and **two Hamas terrorist operatives**:
  - 1) **The first strike** was carried out on December 17 close to 9:00 at night (2100 hours) in the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood of Gaza City and targeted **Majid al-Harazin**. The IAF hit the vehicle in which he and **Jihad Mustafa Dhaher**, his bodyguard were riding, killing both of them.

For a IDF spokesman video of the attack, [click here](#).



**Majid al-Harazin (Quds News Website, December 20).**



**Al-Harazin's vehicle after the attack (Al-Aqsa TV, December 18).**

2) **The second strike** was carried out the same night just before midnight, and targeted a vehicle in the Sabra neighborhood of Gaza City which was carrying four PIJ terrorist operatives. The attack killed **Karim Marwan al-Dachdouch**, senior weapons and rocket manufacturer in the Gaza Strip and **three other terrorist operatives**.

3) **The third strike** was carried out on the morning of December 18 and targeted a vehicle in the Jabaliya refugee camp. The strike killed **Husam Abu Hibl** (Abu Obeida), a member of the squad which carried out the rocket attack against Zikim and towns and villages south of Ashqelon, and which planned to launch additional rockets into Israel. **The attack killed three other PIJ terrorist operatives** and wounded four.

4) **The fourth strike** was also carried out on the morning of December 18 and targeted a terrorist position belonging to Hamas' Executive Force (now integrated into the police force). It is located on the ruins of the former Israeli settlement of Morag in the southern Gaza strip. The strike killed two operatives of the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' terrorist operative wing. The attack was carried out following mortar shell fire that morning at Kibbutz Kerem Shalom.

5. On December 18 the funerals of the PIJ operatives killed in the strikes were held. One was in Gaza City for six who had been residents of the city and the other, for operatives residing in the northern Gaza Strip, was in the town of

Beit Lahia. Thousands took part in the funeral processions, among them senior members of the PIJ and other terrorist organizations, calling for revenge (See below).

## Senior terrorist operatives killed in the strikes

6. The following are short descriptions of the senior PIJ operatives killed in the IAF strikes:

- 1) **Majid Yussuf Harazin (Abu Maa'mun)**: born 1970, resided in Sajaiya Turkeman in Gaza City, **commanded the Jerusalem Battalions, the PIJ's terrorist operative wing in the Gaza Strip.** In recent years he was responsible for (and sometimes actively participated in) a large number of rocket attacks against Israel which injured many civilians and Sderot and western Negev towns and villages. He was involved in attacking IDF forces and in firing mortar shells at IDF posts.
- 2) **Karim Marwan al-Dachduch**: senior manufacturer of weapons and rockets for the organization in the Gaza Strip. He supplied a considerable portion of the rockets fired into Israel and was involved in carrying out a large number of rocket attacks in which many Israeli civilians were injured.
- 3) **Husam Abu Hibl**: senior PIJ operative. He orchestrated rocket fire into Israel from the northern Gaza Strip. He also carried out attacks against IDF forces operating along the border fence and planned mass-casualty attacks against Israel.
- 4) **Jihad Dhaher**: born 1968, terrorist operative, took part in a large number of rocket attacks against Israel.

## Palestinian Reactions

### The Palestinian Islamic Jihad

7. PIJ leader **Ramadan Abdallah Shalah** warned that Israel would pay a high price for its actions. He said that "these war crimes will not deter us from continuing the path of jihad and resistance, and the Annapolis and Paris

extermination conferences will not be successful” (Paltoday Website, Qudsnet Websire, December 18). According to the Ma’an News Agency (December 18), he offered his condolences to the families of the slain terrorists, saying **“Stand firm...the response will be thunderous in the depths of Israel.”**

8. PIJ senior activist **Muhammad al-Hindi** said that the organization’s terrorist operative wing **would carry out suicide bombing attacks within Israel** (Gaza Strip daily newspaper *Felesteen*, December 19). **Abu Hamzeh**, Jerusalem Battalions spokesman, threatened a series of “mass-casualty explosions” (Radio Sawt al-Quds, December 18). The Jerusalem Battalions Website reported (December 18) that the killing of al-Harazin would “open the gates to **a wave of suicide bombing actions.**”

## **Hamas**

9. **The Hamas movement did not issue militant statements** after the IDF attacks. Hamas prime minister Ismail Haniya referred to the Israeli activity as “desperate blows inflicted by Israel, which failed to bring the Gaza Strip to its knees” (Ramattan News Agency, December 19).

10. Israeli Channel 2 TV broadcast a telephone interview conducted by its commentator Suleiman al-Shafi’ with Hamas prime minister Ismail Haniya (who, according to the report, called al-Shafi’). Haniya said that **“it is not a problem for us [Hamas] to conduct negotiations with the government of Israel on at least two topics: the rocket fire and the targeted killings. [We will do that] to bring about a mutual cease fire.”** He also said that “we both want to and can stop the rocket fire, but the Israeli killings prevent us [from reaching an agreement with the PIJ regarding stopping Qassam rocket fire]” (Israel Channel 2 TV, December 18).

11. In response to the broadcast, **Taher al-Nunu**, spokesman for the government in the Gaza Strip, said that “if the Israel occupation adheres to the lull [in the fighting] and stops its aggression, killings and the siege against the Palestinian people, **there will be a simultaneous mutual lull**”

(PalMedia Website, December 18). In another interview he said that “the ball is in the Israel court. If it stops its aggression against our people and lifts the siege, a mutual lull might be possible...” (Palestine-info Website, December 18).

## **The Palestinian Authority**

12. PA chairman **Abu Mazen** denounced the “unbridled and barbaric attacks against the Palestinian people,” but at the same time denounced the rocket fire from the Gaza Strip into Israel which caused the Israeli response. He said that “Majid al-Harazin was a Palestinian citizen and we deplore his killing, and **we also denounce the rocket fire. It is a useless action which must stop**” (Ma’an News Agency, December 18).

13. Presidential spokesman **Nabil Abu Rudeina** denounced the Israel attacks and added that the objective of the Israeli escalation, which occurred a few hours after the Paris conference ended, was to sabotage the conference’s achievements and the efforts of the participant countries to support the peace process which began at the Annapolis meeting (Wafa News Agency, December 18). **Abu Rudeina completely ignored the rocket fire at western Negev towns and villages which preceded the Israeli attacks.**