



IDF Spokesperson Unit

May 2004



Rafah:

A Weapons Factory and Gateway



A Facility for Receiving and Storing Weapons

Terror organizations use Gaza as a strategic position to smuggle, procure and produce weapons intended to be used against Israeli citizens in terrorist acts.



Increasing Weapons Capability



Throughout the past three and half years, terrorists in the Gaza Strip have continually enhanced their weapons arsenal and increased the deadliness and destructiveness of their weaponry.

Types of Weapons Procured in and Smuggled into the Gaza Strip



- RPG rockets and launchers
- Hundreds of kilograms of explosives
- Rifles (mainly AK- 47 Kalashnikovs)
- Bullets, other ammunition and cartridges

Qassam Rockets: Threatening Israeli Cities and Towns



Statistics on Qassam Rocket I:

- Length: 79 centimeters
- Diameter: 60 millimeters
- Weight: 0.5 kilograms
- Firing Distance: 3 Kilometers



Statistics on Qassam Rocket 2:

- Length: 2.2 meters
- Diameter: 170 millimeters
- Weight: 90 kilograms
- Firing Distance: 9.5 Kilometers

The capability of the weapons in Gaza is continually increasing and continues to become a greater threat to Israeli citizens and to cause greater damage.



Weapon Range

Terror organizations took advantage of the cease fire during the summer of 2003 in order to increase its production and quality of weapons. Directly after the cease fire, terrorists shot a Qassam rocket into the densely populated city of Ashkelon, reaching a distance of 9.1 km, the furthest a Qassam rocket has ever been fired.



Qassam Rockets: Reaching Israeli Population Centers



This Qassam rocket was able to reach a greater distance due to the fact that the IDF was not carrying out preventative operations against terrorism and therefore terrorist were able to freely procure, smuggle and improve their weapons.

These past advances in weapons serve as a warning for the potential destructiveness and precision of weapons the terrorists are capable of creating.



There is a direct correlation between the level of violence and terrorism and the ability to procure, produce and smuggle weapons.

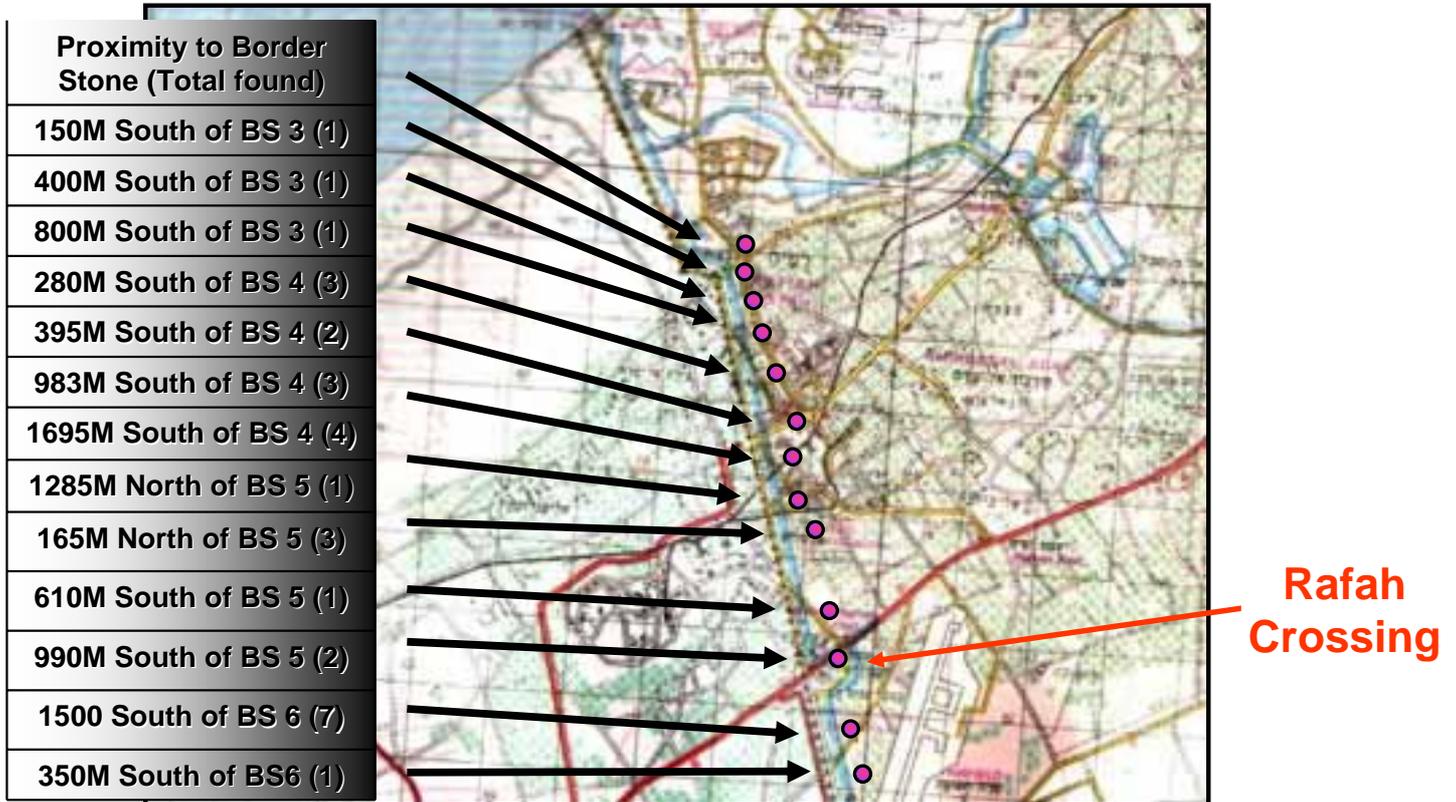


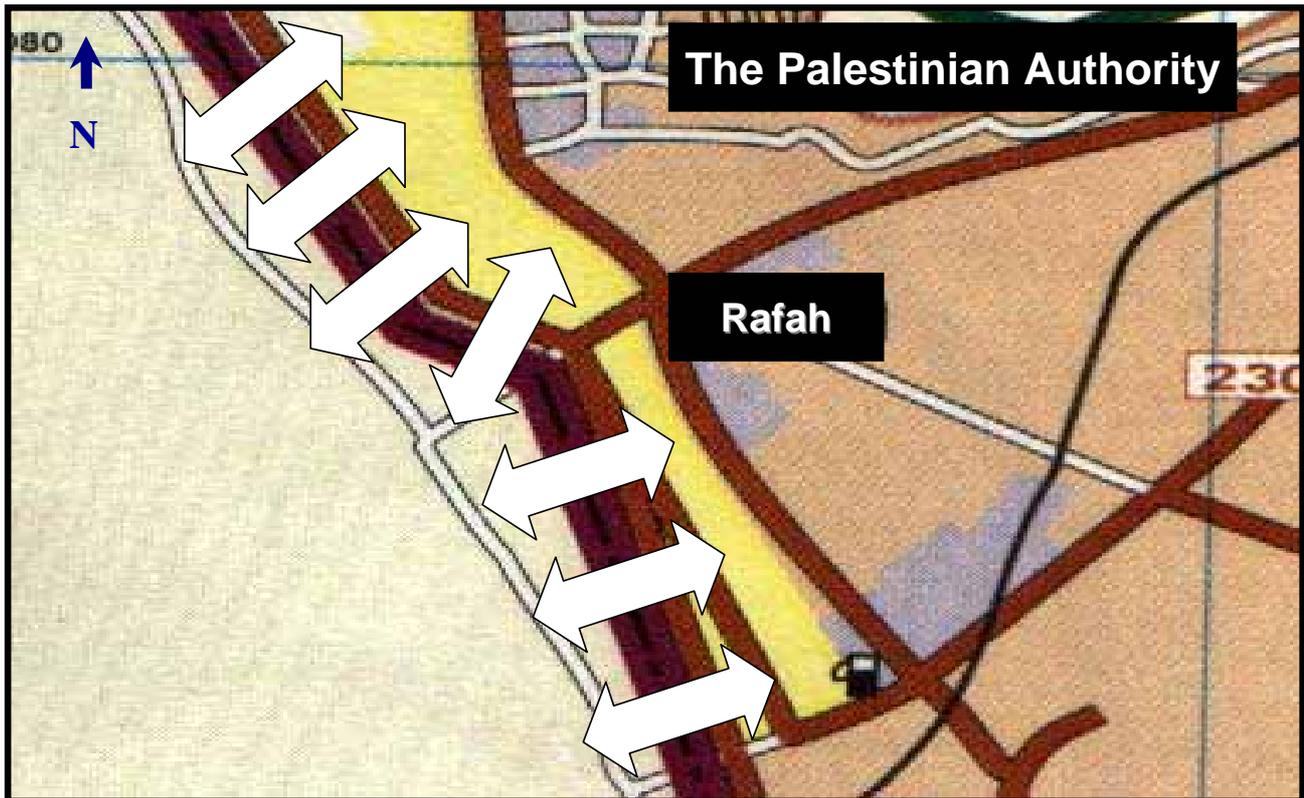
Increasing Weapons Capabilities



If the IDF does not prevent weapons procurement and production by dismantling the terrorist infrastructures, such as weapons smuggling tunnels and weapons factories, the terrorists will attain weapons that can potentially be a threat to all of southern Israel, and possibly part of central Israel, including major population centers.

Rafah: The Gateway to Terror





In order to prevent weapons smuggling, the IDF is widening the Philadelphi route in order to maintain the integrity of the internationally recognized border, to prevent terrorism and to protect Israelis and Palestinians from terrorism.

Preventing Terrorism

The IDF is conducting operations against weapons factories and weapons smuggling tunnels in order to prevent terrorists from procuring, producing and attaining weapons.



**Closing Weapons Smuggling
Tunnels**



Shutting Down Weapons Factories

The IDF is forced to operate in Palestinian civilian areas because the terrorists use the civilian areas as their base of operation.

Terrorists endanger the Palestinian population by carrying out terrorist activity within Palestinian civilian areas when procuring and producing weapons, often without approval from the population.



Terrorists Use the Homes of the Palestinian Population

We have witnessed the efforts of the Palestinian population to prevent the terrorists in Rafah from taking over their homes and using them as cover for their smuggling operations. The terrorist will continue to terrorize at any cost to the Palestinian population.



Homes used to store explosive material.



The Role of the Palestinian Authority



The Palestinian Authority has **failed to carry out its obligation both to prevent terrorism and to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure** in areas under its control. Furthermore, the terrorist organizations have increased their power, built up their infrastructures and continue to plan and carry out terrorist activities, while the Palestinian Authority turns a blind eye.

Hamas Terror Organization: Ruling Gaza with Violence



Hamas' main route for smuggling weapons is the Rafah tunnels.

Senior Hamas terrorists, Hizballah contacts, terrorists in other countries and the Iranian government oversee and aid in weapons smuggling.

Due to the Palestinian Authority's failure to operate against terrorism, the Gaza Strip is an area overrun and controlled by terrorism and violence.



The IDF is currently making pinpoint operations against terrorism in order to prevent a situation where intense combat is necessary. The IDF must operate against terrorism before the capability of terrorists places Israel in an indefensible situation.



The IDF will continue to operate against terrorism as is demanded.