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

## **An attempted mass-killing attack was prevented when a truck carrying explosives blew up near the Erez Crossing**



The scene of the suicide bombing attack at the Erez Crossing (IDF Spokesman, May 22).



The explosion caused by the car bomb at the Erez Crossing (Hamás's PALDF Forum, May 22).

### **Overview of the attack**

1. During the early morning hours of May 22, a truck which reached the merchandise zone at the Erez Crossing in the northern Gaza Strip blew up. Damage was done to various structures but there were no casualties.
2. A short time later the Israeli Air Force attacked a vehicle near the crossing which had been involved in the attack (IDF Spokesman, May 22). According to reports from the Palestinian media, a Dodge Magnum jeep near the scene of the explosion was attacked by IAF helicopters (Palestinian media, May 22). According to a report based on an IDF source, the

jeep, which was not carrying explosives, was apparently intended to aid the entrance to the crossing and in the abduction of IDF soldiers (Ynet May 22).



The jeep attacked by the IAF after the attempted attack (Al-Jazeera TV, May 22).

### Claiming responsibility and responses

3. Two terrorist organizations, the Jerusalem Battalions of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (a faction called "The shurah council of the squads of the shaheed Ayman Jawdeh"), claimed joint responsibility for the attempted attack. According to the announcement, the suicide bomber, Ibrahim Muhammad Ibrahim Nasser, 23, from Jabaliya, blew up the truck at the entrance to the Erez Crossing carrying **4.5 tons of explosives**.

4. According to the announcement, the "Palestinian resistance [i.e., the terrorist organizations] opposes the lull if it gets nothing in return, under the pressure of escalation..." In addition, said the announcement, the terrorist organizations (the "resistance factions") oppose the lull agreement if it is not mutual, and includes both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Ayman Jawdeh Website, May 22).

5. Abu Hamzeh, Jerusalem Battalions spokesman, said that "the Erez Crossing is one of [those] used by the enemy to invade the northern [Gaza] Strip," adding that as long as the IDF continued entering the Gaza Strip and attacking Palestinians, there would be painful reprisals, and that the suicide bombing attacks were one means of deterring [the enemy] (PalMedia Website, May 22).

## **The Gaza Strip crossings are focal points for terrorist attacks**

6. The Gaza Strip crossings are the Palestinian terrorist organizations' **preferred targets** for attacks, despite the fact that the fuel and humanitarian aid **vital to the daily lives of the Gaza Strip residents** pass through them. Humanitarian aid is also delivered through the Erez Crossing and it is the entrance into Israeli territory for Gaza Strip residents in need of urgent medical care.

7. During the years of the confrontation the Erez Crossing has been the target of many terrorist attacks. Besides mortar shell fire and light arms attacks, there have been mass-casualty attacks which caused the deaths and wounding of IDF soldiers. For example, in June 2005 a female suicide bomber, who planned to carry out an attack within Israeli territory, tried to blow herself up at the crossing. In February 2004 two terrorists infiltrated into the crossing's industrial zone and shot and threw hand grenades at an IDF post. In January 2004 a female suicide bomber blew herself up at the Erez Crossing. In January 2004 the IDF also detained a terrorist planning to carry out a suicide bombing attack near the Erez industrial zone. In 2002 and 2003 a number of shootings and suicide bombing attacks were also carried out at the Erez Crossing.