



## **Subject: Use of Falsified Medical Certificates for Entering Israel**

### Background

The fence surrounding the Gaza Strip and the Israeli activity to prevent border-smugglings, pose a substantial difficulty for the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, in executing terror attacks.

In the past year there appears to be an intensified Palestinian effort to exploit the humanitarian channel to the Gaza Strip for entering Israel, a phenomenon that has accelerated since the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip (June 2007).

In 2008 more than 13,700 entrance permits to Israel were issued for the purpose of medical treatment (the number above specifies the number of permits issued, and not the number of Gaza-Strip residents who have entered Israel, hence, it is possible that some of the permit holders have entered Israel several times in 2008).

Recently there is a marked step-up in the overall phenomena of forging medical documentation. It can be said that the Hamas regime in the Gaza strip sponsors a thriving industry for acquiring false medical certificates. Attaining false medical documentation in return for money, is predominant on the part of doctors who collaborate in this matter, when at times the certificate is attained by pretending to be ill or using an ill person's documentation.

### Following are a few examples from the past year:

- Hisham Mouhamad Shawa, Gaza strip resident, born in 1974, with a history of illegal staying in Israel, had attempted to enter Israel for private purposes by using a forged medical permit. He admitted (Nov. 2008) in his debriefing in the Erez checkpoint to falsifying his illness and to attaining the entrance permit for eye-treatment through an acquaintance who suffers from eye problems. The



## Israel Security Agency

### Subject: Use of Falsified Medical Certificates for Entering Israel

acquaintance presented the doctor with Shawa's ID and received a letter on his name referring him to a treatment in Israel.

- Nasser Ahmed Ghanem, Gaza Strip resident, born in 1971, stayed illegally in Israel from December 2007 to July 2008, after having entered Israel with a humanitarian permit as his brother's escort, who needed surgical treatment in the Muqased hospital in Jerusalem. While debriefed in July 2008, he admitted to attaining faked a medical referral for his brother in return for payment, whereas actually they both entered Israel for working purposes.
- Darin Abu Rezek, Gaza Strip resident, born in 1983, applied for an entrance permit to Israel in order to treat her kidney problems. In her debriefing (July 2008) she admitted to not being ill altogether and to attaining the permit in order to leave the Gaza Strip for work in Ramalla.
- Talat Jamil Abd El Nabi, Gaza Strip resident, born in 1974, applied for an entrance permit to Israel for the purpose of conducting medical treatment in the Muqased hospital in Jerusalem. In his debriefing (June 2008) he admitted to possessing faked medical documents, which have been purchased for 3000 NIS. He stated he wanted to leave for the West Bank in order to get married there.
- Hasan Azmi Goundiya, Gaza Strip resident, born in 1962, disclosed (June 2008) that he is not suffering from any medical problems, and only wishes to enter Israel for work purposes. He acquired the faked medical referral for treatment in Israel and medical certificates in return for payment.
- Riham Ibrahim Nahhal, Gaza Strip resident, born in 1984, previously suspected in the crossing-point since she provided suspicious certificates. She disclosed (June 2008) she is not ill but wished to go abroad in order to join her fiancé. She further disclosed her father is a medical doctor who assisted her in acquiring the faked documents for checkups in Jordan.

#### The Risk Potential

It should be stressed that besides the entering attempts into Israel for personal needs, such as work in Israel, visiting relatives, marriage, etc, the major effort is on the part of the terrorist organizations, who aim at infiltrating perpetrators into Israel, including



## Israel Security Agency

### Subject: Use of Falsified Medical Certificates for Entering Israel

duped objects (i.e.: those who are initially not aware of the fact that terrorist elements are exploiting their entrance to Israel to execute attacks).

Furthermore, the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip are aiming at upgrading the terrorist capabilities of West Bank infrastructures, by transferring activists and trainers, who disseminate knowledge and help recover the terror infrastructures and establish new terrorist cells.

The risk potential is high in light of past precedents, where patients and/or holders of medical certificates for entering Israel and their relatives, had been recruited to execute attacks. Among these:

- Wafa Albaz – She was arrested (June 2005) in Erez crossing-point wearing an explosive belt. Albaz was carrying an authentic medical certificate for treatment in a hospital in Israel, and was planning to commit a suicide attack there.
- Fatma Zik and Rawdah Habib – two female suicide bombers, planning to execute a double suicide attack in Tel Aviv and Netanya. They were arrested in Erez crossing-point (May 2007), carrying a false medical certificate, which they meant to use in order to enter Israel.

It should be noted, that Palestinians who enter Israel with false documentation for allegedly personal needs, also constitute a risk potential since they are illegal aliens, and might be taken advantage of by terrorist organizations in order to execute attacks.

The meticulous screening performed by Israel makes possible the spotting of these individuals using false medical documentation and preventing their entry. Nevertheless, the examples provided above demonstrate the risk potential which Israel has to confront.