



The first fighter to cross the border to Gaza in the beginning of the ground operation during “Cast Lead” was in fact a robot. This fact indicates that the field of robotics within the ground forces has matured. The robots scanned mined grounds, sighting underground tunnels and saving human lives.



A field that has developed

“The robotics field has vastly developed over the last few years and this can be seen now”, says the weapons officer of the robotics field in YAHALOM, Sergeant Major Dekel Shapira. In the special tasks engineering unit of the engineering corps different robots are in use. Some are intended for usage in tunnels and some in houses, like the “EyeDrive” which can be thrown up to a second story of a building. The robots are usually equipped with cameras that transmit to a computer that is carried on the operator’s vest.



The doll and the robot

“We send the robots in to tunnels that humans can not go into, small robots that can penetrate narrow places, robots are put into building which are suspected to have terrorists inside” explained Sergeant Major Shapira. “During the first week of fighting we observed a human figure on the top floor on a two story building, our forces felt that there was something fishy and sent a robot to check it out from close up. The camera discovered that it was a doll that was intended to draw in our forces, in order not to take a chance the doll was shot down and we realized it was booby-trapped, thanks to this robot many lives were saved”. As far as Sergeant Major Dekel is concerned, the field is always undergoing technical development, in the future he predicts “a robot for each division or squadron soldier which will allow for safe and professional work”. Two nights ago was the first time that Sergeant Major Shapira was in the field for an operation involving robotics, “I am excited when the need for robotics arises, as it requires special professional abilities”.

