



August 4, 2015

Handling Hamas networks in Judea and Samaria from abroad as part of Hamas's effort to carry out terrorist attacks against Israel



"The Heroes of Silwad": poster issued by the military wing of Hamas congratulating the two perpetrators of the shooting attack in the village of Shvut Rachel, in which an Israeli civilian was killed. The attack was carried out by a Hamas military network from Silwad (north of Ramallah), which was handled from Jordan by a Hamas operative released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal.

Overview

1. In July 2015, Israeli security forces uncovered a **Hamas military network** from the village of Silwad (north of Ramallah), whose operatives were involved in the shooting attack on June 29, 2015, near the village of Shvut Rachel, north of Ramallah. Malachi Rosenfeld was killed in the attack and three people were wounded. Two days earlier, this network had carried out a shooting attack on an Israeli ambulance. Under questioning, the network operatives, some of whom also detained by the Palestinian Authority, revealed that **their handler was a Hamas operative in Jordan**. The handler was **Ahmed al-Najjar**, from the village of Silwad, who was previously imprisoned in Israel, released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal (hereinafter: the Shalit deal) and deported to the Gaza Strip. **He**

moved from the Gaza Strip to Jordan and from there he handled the Hamas terrorist network.

2. This case illustrates how **Hamas operatives** residing in the Gaza Strip or in various Arab/Muslim countries **play a central role in handling terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria**. Their activity **gathered momentum over the year that has passed since Operation Protective Edge**, as a result of Hamas's efforts to **recruit and handle terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria (while Hamas takes care to maintain the lull in the Gaza Strip)**.

3. The terrorist networks are instructed by their handlers to carry out attacks against Israeli targets in **Judea and Samaria but sometimes also in Israel itself, thereby challenging the Palestinian Authority**. In some cases, Hamas terrorist operatives also engage in **incitement to carry out attacks**, through the local and Arab media. Most of the attacks that these networks tried to carry out over the past year were **thwarted by the Israeli security services** and a small number were thwarted by the security services of the Palestinian Authority. In some cases they managed to **carry out fatal attacks**, the last of which was the shooting attack near the village of Shvut Rachel, north of Ramallah.

4. Terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria are handled from **the Gaza Strip** and from **Arab/Muslim countries**. When questioned by the Israeli security services, terrorist operatives repeatedly mentioned **Turkey, Qatar, Jordan and Malaysia** (along with the Gaza Strip) as countries where **terrorist operatives in Judea and Samaria are recruited, directed, financed and trained**. In addition, **Saudi Arabia** was mentioned in the past **as a meeting place** used for purposes of **recruiting terrorist operatives and transferring funds to Judea and Samaria**, taking advantage of the large number of Muslims making the pilgrimage to Mecca to fulfill their religious duty. Sometimes more than one country is involved in handling terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria, for **considerations of operational convenience** (handlers residing in distant countries prefer to meet with the operatives that they handle in intermediary countries near Israel, such as Turkey and Jordan).

5. **Hamas's operational need to use the territory of Arab/Muslim countries as local headquarters for handling terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria** arose after the **removal of Hamas's headquarters in Damascus, following the Syrian civil war**. It received a further boost **in view of Hamas's efforts after Operation Protective Edge to encourage terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria**. Turkey

stands out in this regard. **It is the site of Hamas's foreign military headquarters, headed by Saleh al-Arouri, one of the founders of Hamas's military wing in Judea and Samaria.**

6. **Turkey and Qatar** allow overt political and propaganda activities by Hamas from their territory, due to their favorable attitude towards the Muslim Brotherhood, from which Hamas emerged (even though this activity includes incitement to terrorism). **At the same time, they turn a blind eye to the clandestine military activity taking place in their territory** and they tend **to deny its existence**. In the ITIC's assessment, another country, **Malaysia**, also turns a blind eye to Hamas's activity that is carried out in its territory. **Jordan**, however, does not allow Hamas to carry out operational activity, **and Hamas's handling of terrorist networks from its territory is carried out clandestinely.**

7. **Three Hamas terrorist operatives** who handled terrorist networks operating in Judea and Samaria that were exposed in the past year **were noteworthy**. Two of them were **released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal** and the third is a **former prisoner in Israel who took part in the negotiations that led to the Shalit deal**. These three operatives possess extensive knowledge and close ties that aid in their activities on the ground. Here are the details:

A. **Saleh al-Arouri (Turkey)** - from the village of Aroura, in the Ramallah area. **Member of Hamas's political bureau and Hamas's senior terrorist operative.** One of the founders of Hamas's military wing in Judea and Samaria in the 1990s. He was detained by Israel in 1992 and sentenced to five years in prison. Since then he has been detained a number of times and served various prison sentences. On March 30, 2010, he was released from an Israeli prison as part of an agreement signed with him, after serving 18 years in prison. He was deported from Israel and moved to Jordan and Syria. **When the Hamas headquarters was ousted from Damascus, he moved to Istanbul.** He was appointed to Hamas's political bureau and received the prisoners' affairs portfolio, and was involved in the negotiations leading to the Shalit deal. He recently accompanied Khaled Mash'al and other Hamas officials on their visit to Saudi Arabia. In addition to his political-propaganda activity, Al-Arouri **also serves as head of the Judea and Samaria area at Hamas headquarters abroad and is engaged in handling terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria and in Jerusalem, from his base in Turkey.**



Saleh Muhammad Suleiman al-Arouri (imemc.org, June 20, 2014)

B. **Hussam Atef Badran (Qatar)** - from the Askar refugee camp in Nablus. He holds a master's degree in History from Al-Najah University in Nablus (Hamas website, August 2, 2015). **He is one of those released in the Shalit deal.** After his release, **he went to Qatar, where he serves as Hamas's spokesman.** In addition to his position as spokesman, **he also handles terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria.** His name was mentioned in the interrogation of terrorist operatives detained by the Israeli security forces. Due to operational considerations (proximity to Judea and Samaria), **he sometimes stays in Turkey** in order to recruit and handle networks in Judea and Samaria. He often makes public statements inciting terrorism.



Senior Hamas operative Hussam Badran, who was released in the Shalit deal, during a stay in Turkey (Hamas forum, October 19, 2012)

C. **Ahmed al-Najjar** (Jordan) - Hamas operative from Silwad (north of Ramallah). He was imprisoned in Israel for carrying out shooting attacks that killed six Israelis, **released in the Shalit deal**, deported to the Gaza Strip and moved to Jordan. From there he handles terrorist operatives in Judea and Samaria. He handled the terrorist network in Silwad, which carried out attacks against Israeli vehicles, including the attack near Shvut Rachel that killed Malachi Rosenfeld (July 2015). He also provided financing for the activity of this terrorist network, taking advantage of his family ties with residents of Silwad (Israel Security Agency website, July 19, 2015). According to the Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners Affairs, Ahmed al-Najjar **holds US citizenship** (blog.amin.org, March 19, 2011).



Hamas operative Ahmed al-Najjar, Jordan-based handler of the terrorist network from Silwad that carried out the shooting attack that killed Malachi Rosenfeld (mepanorama, July 20, 2015)

8. A significant proportion of those terrorist operatives released in the Shalit deal and deported to the Gaza Strip then became handlers of terrorist networks operating in Judea and Samaria. Some of these operatives left the Gaza Strip and settled in Arab/Muslim countries. They **play an important role** in handling terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria from **Turkey, Jordan and Qatar**, and also from the **Gaza Strip**. In addition, some of those released in the Shalit deal to their homes in

Judea and Samaria returned to their former ways and became involved in terrorist attacks.¹

9. Following is an Appendix summarizing the role of the Gaza Strip and Arab/Muslim countries where Hamas terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria are handled. The information presented in the Appendix is largely from the past year and is based on the interrogation of terrorist operatives detained by the Israel Security Agency (according to the Israel Security Agency website). The Appendix also includes supplementary information from the media about the activities of Hamas's networks in Judea and Samaria and their handling from the various countries.

¹ For example, **Izz al-Din Ziad Hassan Awad**, a Hamas operative released in the Shalit deal, was involved in the shooting attack on the eve of Passover, April 24, 2014. The attack, aimed at vehicles traveling on their way to the Seder in Hebron, killed police officer Chief Superintendent Baruch Mizrahi and injured his wife and a child who was in one of the vehicles (Israel Security Agency website, June 23, 2014).

Appendix A

Handling Hamas's military networks in Judea and Samaria from the Gaza Strip and from countries in the Arab/Muslim World

Overview

1. Due to **Hamas's political and operational difficulties in operating from the Gaza Strip**, Hamas has a clear interest in **encouraging military-strategic activity in Judea and Samaria**. This is in order to **harm Israel** and to **challenge the Palestinian Authority and undermine its governance**. In the year that has passed since Operation Protective Edge, Hamas's **efforts** to handle networks in Judea and Samaria have been clearly evident. **Most of them were thwarted at an early stage by the intelligence services of Israel and the Palestinian Authority**, but on a number of occasions **they managed to carry out deadly attacks**.

2. In the past, **Hamas's headquarters in Damascus played a central role** in handling networks in Judea and Samaria and transferring financial and military aid to these networks. However, after the removal of the Hamas headquarters in Damascus during the civil war in Syria, Hamas was forced to turn to a number of Arab/Muslim countries in order to find alternatives to the operational activity of its headquarters in Damascus. **In the ITIC's assessment**, most of these countries **are aware of the clandestine activities carried out in their territory but prefer to turn a blind eye, because of their favorable attitude towards Hamas, making the traditional claim** that the activity in question is of a political and propaganda nature.

3. Communication between the handlers and the operatives in Judea and Samaria is **mainly by phone or via the Internet**. Money transfers are performed by utilizing people who hold **an entry permit into Israel** (for example, for medical treatment) **and the Palestinian Authority**. In some cases, **meetings are held outside Judea and Samaria** by means of a courier who goes abroad. In the ITIC's assessment, **Turkey and Jordan** are the two countries of choice for these meetings. This is due to their geographical proximity to Judea and Samaria and the relative ease with which one can create a suitable cover story in order to travel to them.

The Gaza Strip

4. **Since Operation Protective Edge**, Hamas's headquarters **have been making an effort to change the location of terrorist attacks from the Gaza Strip** (where Hamas is taking care to maintain the lull) **to Judea and Samaria**. From Hamas's perspective, the disadvantage of handling networks from the Gaza Strip is the geographical disconnection from Judea and Samaria and the difficulties in traveling between them. Therefore, money is transferred and instructions are conveyed from the Gaza Strip **via Jordan**, which serves as an **intermediary country**. The operatives in the Gaza Strip who handle networks in Judea and Samaria include a number of Hamas's senior members. Senior Hamas operative **Fathi Hamad, former interior minister in the Hamas government, is one of those whose names have been mentioned as having instructed operatives in Judea and Samaria to carry out terror attacks.**

5. Here are some examples of **money transfers from the Gaza Strip to Judea and Samaria:**

A. **In June 2015**, Israeli security forces blocked a **conduit for transferring money from Hamas operatives in the Gaza Strip to Judea and Samaria**. **Sanaa Muhammad Hussein Hafi**, 43, from Nuseirat in the Gaza Strip, was detained. For a number of years, she had been using various methods to transfer **hundreds of thousands of dollars** from Hamas to her brother, Hussein Abu Kweik, **a Hamas operative imprisoned in Israel**. During her interrogation, Sanaa Hafi said that the **money was transferred from Hamas's Al-Nur Society, which transfers money to its imprisoned operatives and to the families of its operatives who were killed or wounded.**² The detainee used **moneychangers** because of the difficulty involved in transferring Hamas funds via the formal banking system (Israel Security Agency website, June 11, 2015).

B. **In May 2015**, Israeli Police reported the arrest of an Israeli-Arab dentist from **Kafr Kana**, on suspicion of having regularly **transferred large sums of money to the Hamas infrastructure in Judea and Samaria**. The money was

² **The Al-Nur Society** is a charitable society affiliated with Hamas that operates in the Gaza Strip with the goal of helping prisoners and their families, and the families of shahids. Senior Hamas officials were involved in the establishment and activities of the society, including Hamas leaders Ahmad al-Jaabari and Salah Shehadeh. The society was closed by the Palestinian Authority and reopened under a new name, The Al-Nur Society for the Care of Prisoners and the Families of Shahids. Due to its activity and its affiliation with Hamas, the Al-Nur Society was declared an illegal association in Israel by Israel's defense minister and the head of the IDF Central Command (2002).

transferred **on the instructions of a Hamas operative from Gaza** (Israel Police website, May 5, 2015).

C. **In April 2015**, the Israeli security forces uncovered a **conduit for the transfer of Hamas funds from the Gaza Strip to Judea and Samaria via Jordan** (Israel Security Agency website, April 28, 2015):

1) **Two Palestinian lawyers** from Hebron were involved in the transfer of funds via this conduit. After the conduit was uncovered, three operatives who were involved in transferring the money were detained. One of them was a resident of Jordan originally from Hebron.

2) Under interrogation, the three revealed that their activity was intended to establish a conduit for transferring terrorist funds **from senior Hamas operatives in the Gaza Strip** to operatives in Judea and Samaria. The money was transferred to a resident of Hebron, **who was to deposit it in Jordan** and later transfer it to Judea and Samaria and give it to a Palestinian lawyer who lives in Hebron. **This conduit was intended, among other things, for transferring funds for the legal representation of Hamas operatives.**

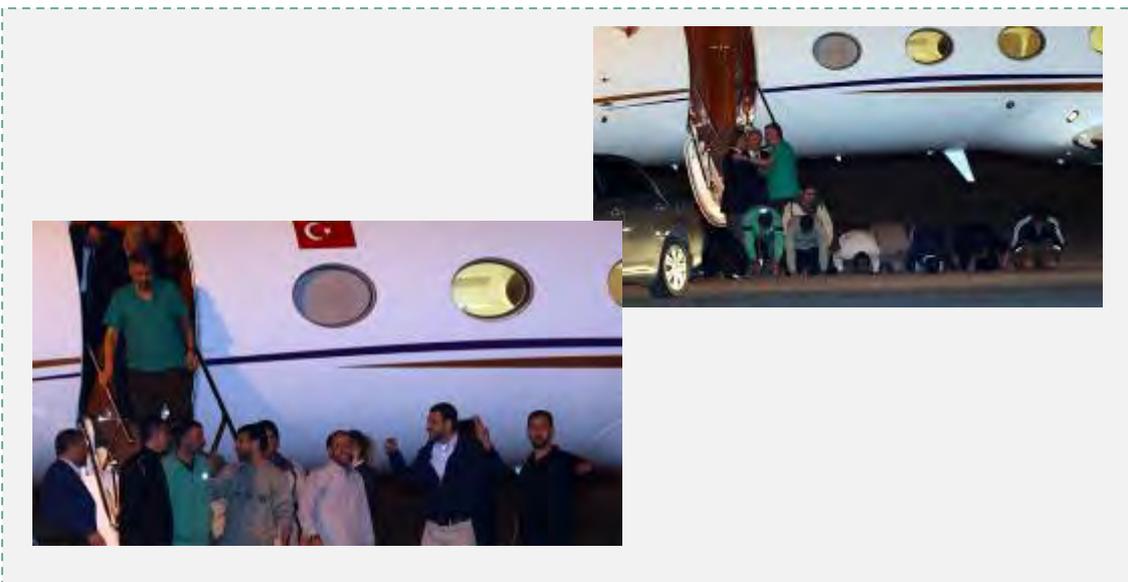
3) The investigation revealed that the money transfer conduit that was uncovered was **intended to enable the transfer of significant sums of money from Hamas in the Gaza Strip to operatives in Hebron and Bethlehem, via Jordan.** The money transfers were carried out clandestinely and in various ways in an attempt to disguise the method used for the transferring it. The funds that were transferred **were intended to strengthen Hamas's terrorist infrastructure and increase its scope of activity.**

D. **On July 11, 2014**, the Israeli authorities arrested **Hussam Hassan Qawasmeh**, who owned the land where the bodies of the three Israeli boys who were kidnapped and murdered by Hamas terrorists from Hebron were found (June 2014). From his interrogation by the Israel Security Agency and from the interrogation of additional detainees, it is evident that Hussam Qawasmeh served as headquarters for the operatives who carried out the attack and kidnapping. In this capacity, **he obtained the sum of NIS 220,000 through his brother, Mahmoud Qawasmeh, one of those released in the Shalit deal** and deported to the Gaza Strip. This money was used, among

other things, for the purchase of weapons that were transferred to Marwan Qawasmeh, one of the terrorists who carried out the attack (Israel Security Agency website, September 4, 2014).

Turkey³

6. **In the ITIC's assessment, the Hamas headquarters in Turkey plays a key role in handling terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria.** Seeing as Turkey politically supports the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, **it allows a group of operatives, including former Israeli prisoners, to operate freely in its territory.** It should be noted that **11 terrorist operatives released in the Shalit deal were deported to Turkey, including ten Hamas operatives.** Saleh al-Aroui, a former prisoner in Israel with extensive operational experience, also settled in Turkey. These operatives handle Hamas terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria from Turkey. **A number of these networks were exposed by the Israeli security services over the past year.** During their interrogation, the detainees indicated the role of the headquarters in Turkey in handling them.



Prisoners released in the Shalit deal arriving in Turkey (Zaman, October 19, 2011)

7. **Turkey is the site of Hamas's foreign military headquarters, headed by Saleh Mohammed Suleiman al-Aroui, one of the founders of Hamas's military wing in Judea and Samaria. The foreign military headquarters recruits Palestinian college students during their studies abroad and trains them in Turkey or in**

³ For details about directing terrorism from Turkey, see the ITIC's Information Bulletin from August 24, 2014: "Saleh al-Aroui, Turkey-based senior Hamas operative who handles military-terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria, admitted that Hamas was behind the abduction and murder of the three Jewish youths from Gush Etzion."

countries where they study. When the recruits return to Judea and Samaria, they are given various tasks and assigned to units by senior Hamas officials in Turkey. Some of the instructions for activity on the ground are conveyed to the network operatives via the headquarters in Turkey.

8. Saleh al-Arouri and additional operatives at the military headquarters in Turkey are also engaged in **training operatives recruited by Hamas.** Some of the terrorist operatives exposed in Judea and Samaria in August and September 2014 had received training in Turkey on planning military operations and methods for carrying out attacks against targets in Israeli territory, in Judea and Samaria, and abroad. After completing their military training, the recruits were given various tasks and assigned to squads by senior Hamas officials in Turkey (Israel Security Agency website, November 27, 2014).



Musa Akkari, released in the Shalit deal, sends a message from Istanbul to Muslims on the Temple Mount (YouTube, May 5, 2015)

9. Apart from Saleh al-Arouri (who was discussed at the beginning of the document), there is another prominent Hamas operative in Turkey by the name of **Musa Akkari.** He is the brother of **Ibrahim Akkari,** who carried out the vehicular attack at a Jerusalem light rail station on November 5, 2014. **Musa Akkari** was an operative in the squad that abducted and murdered border policeman **Nissim Toledano** on December 13, 1992. He received three life sentences, was released in the Shalit deal, and moved to Turkey.

10. The use of Turkey in the context of training Hamas recruits **also arose in the case of Palestinian college students recruited to Hamas's military wing during**

their studies in Malaysia. In his interrogation, **Wasim Qawasmeh**, a Hamas operative recruited in Malaysia, **revealed that he had been sent by Hamas on week-long course in Turkey.** During his stay there, he heard lectures by Hamas operatives, including Senior Hamas figure **Mohammad Nazzal** (Israel Security Agency website, November 27, 2014).



Mohammad Nazzal (Abu Baraa), member of Hamas's political bureau, in an interview with the Al-Quds satellite TV channel (Mohammad Nazzal's Facebook page, December 22, 2014)

11. On August 20, 2014, Saleh al-Aroui spoke to the audience at the fourth meeting of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, held in Turkey. He said that **Hamas's military wing was behind the abduction and murder of the three teenagers in Gush Etzion** (June 12, 2014). His words were read aloud from a sheet of paper, **in the name of Hamas leader Khaled Mash'al.** They were apparently recorded unbeknownst to Al-Aroui, uploaded to YouTube and received considerable attention. **This was the first time Hamas publicly acknowledged that it was behind the abduction and murder of the three teenagers.**



Saleh al-Aroui speaking at the fourth meeting of the International Union of Muslim Scholars in Istanbul. In his speech, he admitted that Hamas's military wing was behind the abduction and murder of the three teenagers in Gush Etzion (YouTube, October 3, 2014).

12. According to an article by Shlomi Eldar (Al-Monitor), **Al-Aroui is demonstrating the ability to collect donations from various Islamic organizations in Turkey and around the world to finance his bureau's operations and to finance Hamas in general.** According to the article, Al-Aroui has acquired **significant power in the Hamas leadership** and has an impact on the functioning of the movement. **Al-Aroui's activity, conducted from his office in Istanbul, has autonomous characteristics similar to those of the military wing of Hamas operating in the Gaza Strip** (article by Shlomi Eldar, Al-Monitor, December 1, 2014). Evidence of Al-Aroui's senior status in Hamas's leadership can be seen in **his participation in the delegation of the movement's leaders, headed by Khaled Mash'al, on its visit to Saudi Arabia in July 2015** (the first visit of its kind in three years).

Jordan

13. **Jordan serves as a convenient intermediary country for recruiting and handling Hamas terrorist operatives.** Its importance stems from the presence of a Palestinian population in its territory, the presence of Palestinian college students studying there, and the ongoing communication between it and Judea and Samaria.

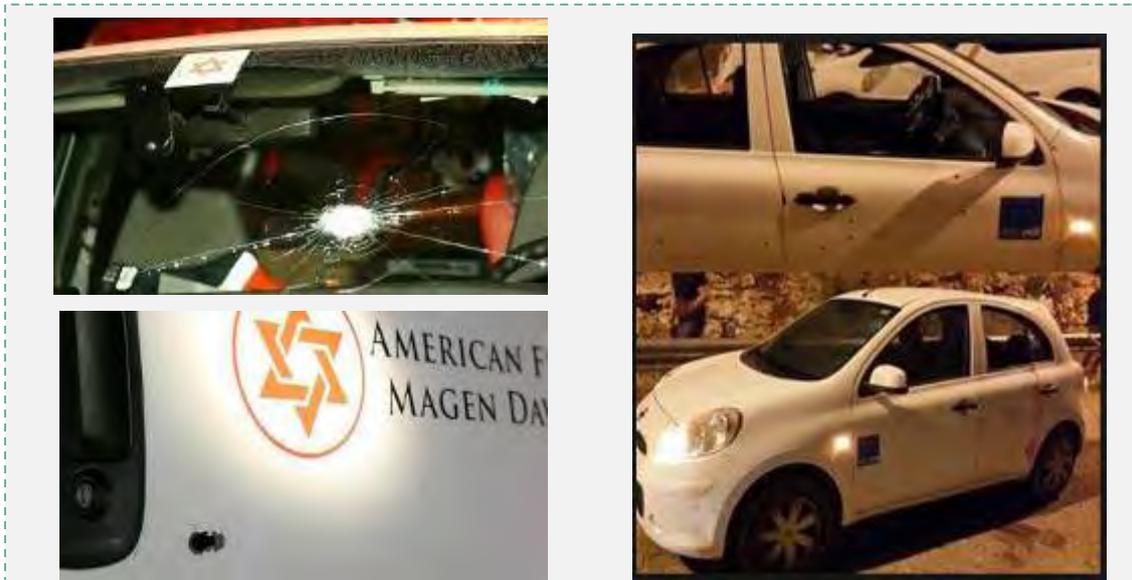
14. In the ITIC's assessment, **Hamas's activity is carried out in Jordan without permission,** unlike other countries where Hamas exploits the political support of the various regimes. Therefore, Hamas's activity in Jordan has **undercover characteristics,** enabling its operatives **to continue their activity over time.** However, **the Jordanian security services occasionally manage to thwart their**

activities. For example, on July 28, 2015, a Jordan security court imposed prison terms of up to 15 years on 12 Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood operatives accused of having ties with Hamas. They were allegedly **involved in recruiting operatives and transferred financial and military aid to Hamas in Judea and Samaria**, among other things (Ynet, July 28, 2015).

15. Operatives are recruited to the networks among **Palestinian college students from Judea and Samaria** attending universities in Jordan, or among Palestinians living or visiting in Jordan. **In addition to being a recruitment pool, Jordan serves as a conduit for transferring money to finance terrorist activities in Judea and Samaria.** The monies are generally transferred by means of messengers traveling to Judea and Samaria via the Allenby Bridge. **Sometimes the source of the funds is the Gaza Strip** (see the above section on the Gaza Strip).

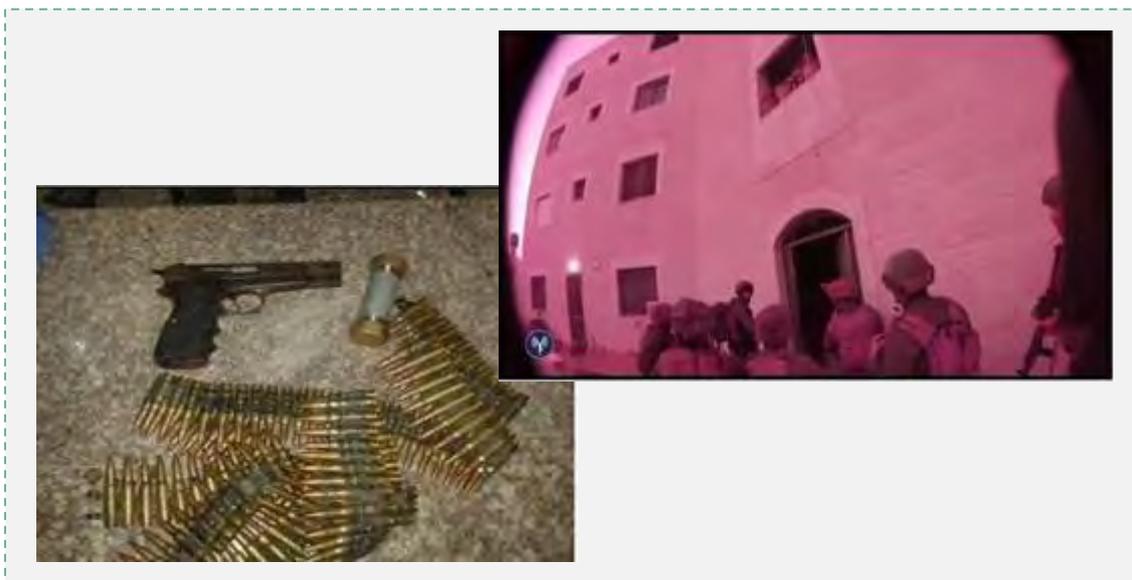
16. The latest exposure of a terrorist network handled from Jordan was in July 2015. Israeli security forces detained operatives of a Hamas military network, all but one of whom were **residents of the village of Silwad** (north of Ramallah). The squad operatives were involved in **carrying out the shooting attack near the village of Shvut Rachel on June 29, 2015, in which Malachi Rosenfeld was killed and three other young people were wounded.**⁴ This terrorist network was also responsible for carrying out a shooting attack two days earlier **at an Israeli ambulance and vehicles.** Some of the network operatives were also detained by the security services of the Palestinian Authority.

⁴ On June 29, 2015, shots were fired at an Israeli vehicle traveling north of Ramallah. The shots were fired at four young residents of Kochav Hashachar from a car traveling in the opposite direction. Malachi Rosenfeld was killed in the attack and three others were wounded. The vehicle fled from the scene.



Left: Israeli ambulance damaged in a shooting attack while en route to Beit El. There were no casualties in the attack (Tazpit News Agency, June 27, 2015. Photographer: Hillel Meir). Right: Photo of the vehicle Malachi Rosenfeld was traveling in at the scene of the attack near Shvut Rachel (Israel Security Agency website, July 19, 2015).

17. It is evident from the interrogation of the network detainees who carried out the shooting attacks that the attacks were directed by **Ahmed al-Najjar**, a Hamas operative who was once jailed in Israel for carrying out shooting attacks that killed six Israelis. Ahmed al-Najjar, from the village of Silwad, **was released in the Shalit deal** and deported to the Gaza Strip. **He moved from the Gaza Strip to Jordan and from there he handled squads that carried out attacks in Judea and Samaria.** Being a native of Silwad made it easier for him to recruit and handle terrorists from among the villagers.



Left: Handgun used in the attack and ammunition found in the network members' possession (Israel Security Agency, July 15, 2015). Right: Detention of operatives of the network in the village of Silwad, which was handled from Jordan (IDF Spokesman, July 19, 2015).

18. Following are additional examples of Hamas handling networks from Jordan over the past year:

A. Transferring money from Jordan: it is evident from the interrogation of an operative of a Hamas network in the Nablus area, which was exposed in early July 2015, that this network had representatives in Jordan. The representatives were a couple, **Muna and Bassam Saih, residents of Nablus** who stayed in Jordan on a long-term basis for medical treatment. They served as representatives of the headquarters in Jordan, especially **with regard to the transfer of funds**. The money for the squad's activity was transferred, inter alia, by **purchasing gold in Jordan and smuggling it to Judea and Samaria**. This was accomplished through a partner, the owner of a gold jewelry store, who served as the infrastructure's money man and helped with money laundering through his store.



Gold found in the hands of the Hamas network in Nablus, which was supposed to be converted into funds to finance its operations (Israel Security Agency, July 1, 2015).

B. Exposure of a Hamas network in Qalqilya:

1) **In March 2015**, the Israeli security forces uncovered a Hamas network in Qalqilya, consisting of six operatives. The operatives **had planned to carry out attacks on Israeli territory. Two of the detainees were students at Al-Najah University in Nablus**. Dozens of kilograms of sulfur and a small amount of mercury fulminate (raw materials used to manufacture IEDs) were found in the operatives' possession.

2) **Under interrogation, the network operatives admitted that they had been recruited to carry out military activity for Hamas while staying in Jordan and that the Hamas headquarters in Jordan had been involved in their recruitment. The network operatives underwent military training in the Gaza Strip and were sent to Judea and Samaria to recruit additional operatives and obtain funds for military/terrorist activity. The network operatives received their instructions from Hamas operative in the Gaza Strip.**

3) The network operatives set up an **explosives laboratory in an apartment in central Nablus**. Raw materials and means for making explosives intended for carrying out attacks were found in the laboratory. During Operation Protective Edge, the network members had received instructions to carry out terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria, but these instructions were not carried out (Israel Security Agency, March 22, 2015).

C. The exposure of two extensive Hamas networks in Judea and Samaria, whose handlers were recruited in Jordan (Israel Security Agency website, 2014):

1) In August and September 2014, Israeli security forces uncovered **two Hamas military networks operating in Judea and Samaria. These networks recruited squads to carry out attacks against Israeli targets, including showcase attacks in Jerusalem (the Teddy Stadium attack and an attack targeting the light rail). Most of the operatives were recruited while studying in Jordan and underwent training outside Judea and Samaria.**

2) During the investigations, **over thirty operatives were detained and large quantities of weapons were seized.** The terrorist infrastructure that was exposed **was handled by Saleh Mohammad Suleiman Al-Aroui, a senior Hamas operative in Turkey. Some of the operatives of the infrastructure underwent training in Turkey, including the study of methods for carrying out terrorist attacks against targets in Israel, Judea and Samaria and abroad.**

Qatar

19. Qatar supports Hamas as part of its support for the Muslim Brotherhood.

Khaled Mash'al, head of Hamas's political bureau, and other senior operatives use Qatar, to some extent, as a substitute for the headquarters in Damascus that they were expelled from.

20. From the exposure of a number of terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria by the Israeli security services, it is evident that the activity carried out from Qatar is **not only of a political-media nature**. It also includes military-operational activity. The investigation of the networks revealed that **their handler was based in Qatar and their activities were directed from there**. One of the senior contacts mentioned is **Hussam Badran**, from Nablus, **one of those released in the Shalit deal** and deported to Qatar, where he also serves as a spokesman for Hamas. Due to the considerable distance between Qatar and Judea and Samaria, Hussam Badran and other handlers from Qatar use **Turkey and Jordan as intermediary countries for handling the networks in Judea and Samaria**.



On the right: Hussam Badran being interviewed on the Turkish TRT channel (Hussam Badran's Facebook page, June 7, 2014).

21. **Hussam Atef Ali Badran (Abu Imad)**, a Hamas operative, was released from Israeli prison as part of the Shalit deal. Badran was sentenced in 2004 to 17 years in prison **for his involvement in carrying out suicide bombings during the second intifada**. On his release (October 2011), Hussam Badran was deported from Israel. He lives in Doha, Qatar, **but sometimes stays in Turkey** in order to handle networks in Judea and Samaria. In December 2013, Hussam Badran was

appointed as **Hamas's official spokesman abroad** (Wafa News Agency, December 25, 2013).



Hussam Badran conveying a message in Hebrew that Hamas has captured Israeli soldier Oron Shaul (YouTube, July 20, 2014)

22. In early July 2015, it was reported that Israeli security forces **had uncovered a Hamas network of around forty operatives operating in the Nablus area**. The network heads worked to renew Hamas's activity in Judea and Samaria, including carrying out terrorist activity. During the interrogation of the infrastructure operatives, **a Hamas military squad that intended to carry out a terrorist attack was uncovered. Operatives from Qatar and Jordan were involved in handling the squad** (in the ITIC's assessment, Jordan served as an intermediary country in this instance).

23. The interrogation of the operatives revealed that **Hussam Badran, a Hamas operative currently in Qatar, directed the activity of the headquarters in Nablus and was in direct contact with it**. This contact was carried out, inter alia, by **e-mailing** instructions to operatives. Hussam Badran was also involved in making decisions regarding the recruitment of officials **and transferred funds totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars for financing the network in Nablus** (Israel Security Agency website, July 1, 2015).

Malaysia⁵

Overview

24. Another country mentioned as being involved in Hamas's terrorist activities in Judea and Samaria is **Malaysia**. Interrogation of detainees in Judea and Samaria revealed that college students in Malaysia are **recruited** there, and sometimes training activities take place there as well. **However, due to the considerable distance, they are not handled from Malaysia but rather from intermediary countries closer to Judea and Samaria, mainly Turkey.**

25. Hamas's activity in Malaysia is apparently carried **out with the connivance of the local authorities or even with their consent**. At the time, Malaysia **denied** media reports that Hamas operative were trained in its territory. The deputy interior minister claimed that Malaysia had never organized secret military training of Hamas operatives or those of any group apart from countries with which it has formal agreements (Malaysian News Agency, July 31, 2014).

Recruitment and handling of college students from Judea and Samaria

26. **On February 13, 2015**, Hebron resident **Wasim Rashad Umran Qawasmeh** was detained at the Allenby Bridge on his return from his studies in Malaysia. Wasim Qawasmeh was recruited, along with other Palestinian students from Judea and Samaria, by Hamas's military wing **during his studies at the International Islamic University** in Malaysia.⁶ After being recruited, he participated in Hamas activities and conferences and received money from a Hamas operative (Israeli military courts website, March 18, 2015).

27. During his stay in Malaysia, Qawasmeh pledged allegiance to Hamas (around December 2013). The pledge of allegiance ceremony was attended by Hamas operatives living in Malaysia, including **Dr. Maan Khatib** (a lecturer at a university in Malaysia and the man in charge of the Malaysia arena on behalf of the Hamas

⁵ For further information about Hamas's activity in Malaysia, see the ITIC's Information Bulletin from May 6, 2015: "Hamas Activity in Malaysia: Hamas's military-terrorist wing recruits students from Judea and Samaria in Malaysia. In addition, its operatives have been trained in Malaysia to use hang gliders to attack Israel."

⁶ **The International Islamic University of Malaysia** is a state university whose main campus is located in Gombak, north of the capital Kuala Lumpur. The university was founded in 1983 with the support of the governments of several Muslim countries, including Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The university offers studies in Islam, in addition to the natural sciences, social sciences and medicine (Wikipedia).

external headquarters) and **Dr. Radwan al-Atrash** (who studied in Malaysia and is a lecturer at a university there).

28. After his recruitment, in July 2014, Wasim Qawasmeh **was offered the chance to attend a Hamas management and command course, which was to be held in Turkey.** Qawasmeh agreed and, in August 2014, he flew from Malaysia to Turkey and attended the course, which lasted about a week. Wasim Qawasmeh's stay in Turkey was financed by Hamas. In the course, Qawasmeh attended lectures related to Hamas, including a lecture by senior Hamas leader Mohammed Nazzal. Wasim Qawasmeh attended a **conference organized in Malaysia by the Hamas Training Committee**, which is in charge of training Hamas operatives in the areas of research, management and use of computers, and instilling the history of Hamas.

Paragliding training

29. **During Operation Protective Edge, on the night of July 20-21, 2014,** an IDF force in the area of Karara (Khan Yunis) detained a Hamas operative serving in a special unit of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades. During his interrogation, the operative said that he was drafted into the military wing of Hamas in 2007. After around three years in the military wing, **he was assigned to a special force which was sent to Malaysia for paragliding training**, as part of a group of around ten operatives from different battalions in the Gaza Strip. The operatives received a week of paragliding training in Malaysia, in preparation for a terrorist attack in Israel.