



February 4, 2013

Education for terrorism: Hamas increases its military and propaganda activities among Gazan youth to raise a younger generation able to continue its anti-Israeli path of terrorism and ensure Hamas control of the Gaza Strip.



Gazan adolescents display their skills at disassembling and assembling weapons at the end of one of Hamas' winter camps for youngsters (Hamas forum website, January 27, 2013).

Overview

1. Hamas places great importance on inculcating the next generation of Gazans with its radical Islamic ideology. Its teachings particularly emphasize the so-called "liberation of Palestine" and the annihilation of Israel, the culture of jihad and "resistance" [i.e., violence and terrorism], the shaheed cult, and inculcating radical Islam and hatred of Israel. The objective of Hamas' education both formal and informal, for terrorism and hatred, is to **turn Gazan children and adolescents into Hamas operatives and activists, or at least supporters, who will participate in the armed campaign against Israel and ensure the long-term control of Hamas over the Gaza Strip.**

2. One of the Hamas' main methods for realizing its goals is by encouraging **paramilitary and sometimes full military activities among children and adolescents**. The activities are meant to **prepare the youngsters both physically and ideologically** for induction into the ranks of Hamas. To that end, **a project for training Gazan youth was institutionalized last year under the aegis of the ministry of education of the de-facto Hamas administration**. Each training camp for the youngsters lasted a week, and over the year **an estimated 10,000 Gazan youths participated**. The camps were in addition to the ones held by Hamas over the summer. Ismail Haniya also announced his intention **to establish a military academy that would train Gazan children in military subjects, from elementary school until they received academic degrees**.

3. Paramilitary and indoctrination activities for children and adolescents were held with the participation of the Hamas administration's ministries of the interior and education, the security services controlled by Hamas and the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, its military-terrorist wing. **Hamas seeks full control of the educational system of the Gaza Strip** exerting pressure on other existing educational systems, such as that of UNRWA, whose curricula do not always match Hamas' positions.



Armed, uniformed children participate in a Hamas rally (Hamas forum website, December 9, 2012).

Military and Paramilitary Training for Gazan Youth

Winter Training Camps

4. During 2012, referred to by Hamas as "the year of Palestinian education," the Hamas ministry of education began implementing a program called ***Al-Futuwah***

("youth" or "heroism").¹ The objective of the program was to integrate paramilitary studies into government schools. Involved in planning and implementing the program were **Osama al-Muzeini**, the Hamas minister of education, and **Abu Obeida al-Jarrah**, commander of the national security service. **Colonel Muhammad Amin al-Nakhleh** (Abu Abdallah), an officer in the Hamas national security service, was appointed as the director of the youth camp project. He also serves as aide to the commander of the national security service in matters relating to logistics and technology.

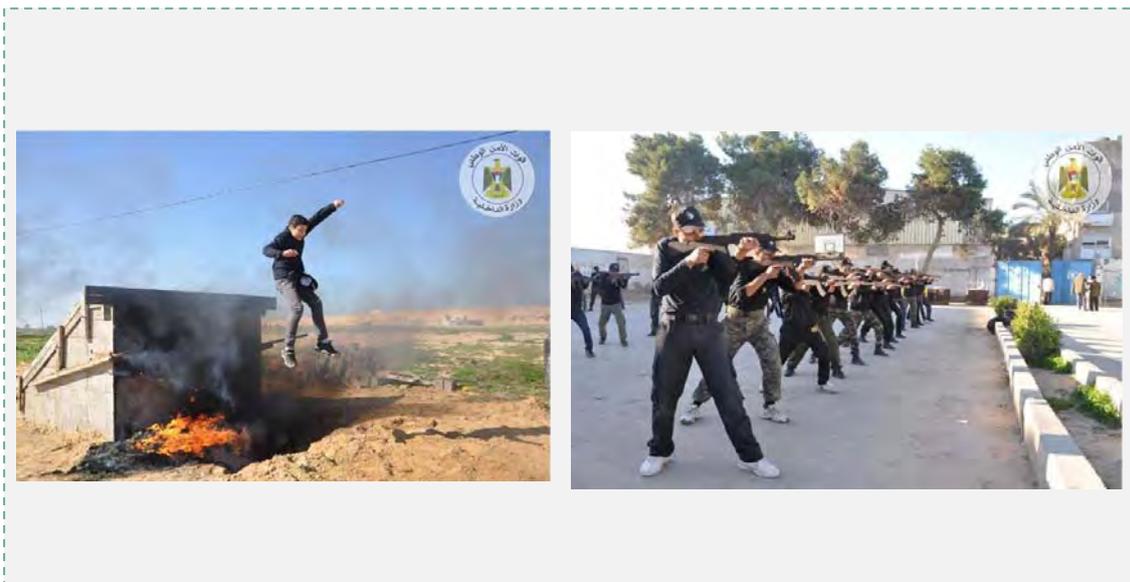
5. During the program that began in September 2011, training camps were held on a weekly basis. **Over a period of one year, an estimated 10,000 Gazan youths were trained in the camps.** The camps used the facilities of governmental high schools (more than 35) and facilities belonging to the Hamas administration's security services. The camps were held in collaboration with the Hamas ministry of the interior, the national security service and Hamas' military-terrorist wing. The uniform-wearing youth underwent **military training that included the use of live ammunition.** They also attended lectures on military topics (Hamas forum website, January 25, 2013). Some of the exercises were directed by **members of Hamas security services** (Hadhara website, January 21, 2013) and **operatives from Hamas military-terrorist wing** (Hamas ministry of education website, January 29, 2013).



Education for hatred of Israel at Hamas winter camps. Left: The officer in charge of pre-military education stands on an Israeli flag during morning parade. Right: He explains the structure of a Kalashnikov (Filastin Al-'An, December 30, 2012).

¹ The word **futuwah** has several meanings: youth, heroism, nobility. It was also the name for Islamic orders in the Middle Ages, and is currently used as the name of youth movements, some of them paramilitary, in the Arab states (Menachem Milson dictionary).

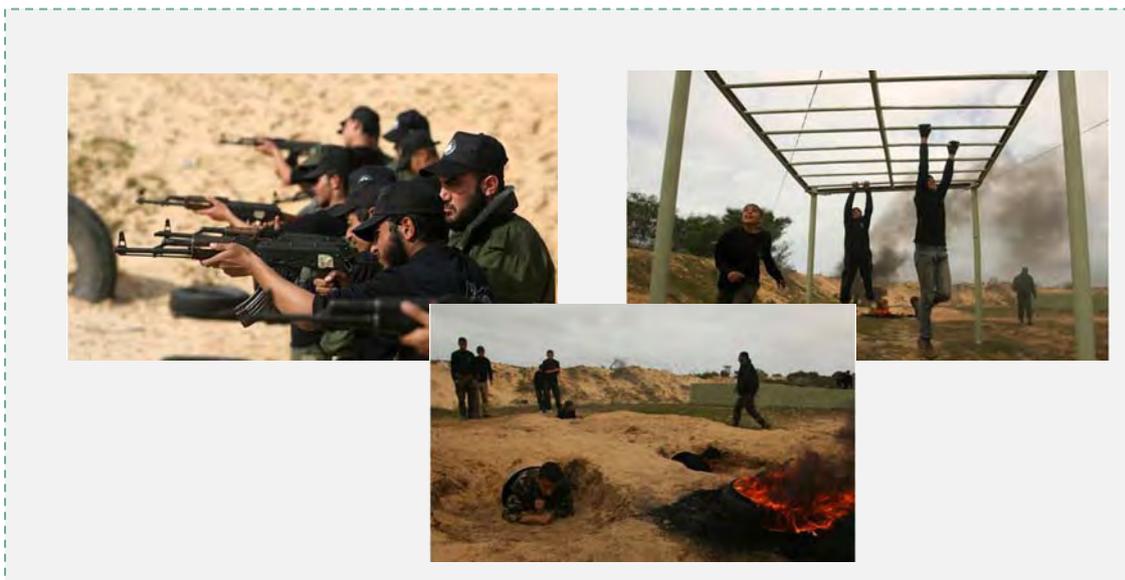
6. On a tour of the winter camps, **Osama al-Muzeini**, Hamas minister of education, said that the project's objective was "to expel the Zionist occupation from Palestine and to give students strength and respect" (Hamas forum website, January 24, 2013). **Abu Obeida al-Jarrah**, commander of the Hamas national security service, said that its objective was to train a generation that would serve the homeland by instilling religious and moral values.



Gazan adolescents participate in military exercises at one of Hamas' winter camps (Website of Hamas' national security service, January 22, 2013).



Gazan adolescents listen to lectures (left) and train (right) at one of the Hamas' winter camps (Website of Hamas' national security service, January 22, 2013).



Gazan adolescents in military and paramilitary exercises at Hamas winter camps (Hamas forum website, January 23, 2013).

7. On January 24, 2013, a festive graduation ceremony was held in the Al-Yarmouk compound in Gaza City. It was attended by, among others, Ismail Haniya, head of the de-facto Hamas administration, **Fathi Hamad**, minister of the interior, **Osama al-Muzeini**, minister of education, and **Abu Obeida al-Jarrah**, commander of the national security service. During the event the graduates **put on a military display** which included **jumping from heights, disassembling and assembling guns and self-defense tactics** (Hamas forum website, January 25, 2013). In our assessment, **the presence of senior Hamas figures indicated the importance Hamas places on the project.**

8. **Ismail Haniya** gave a speech praising the minister of education and ministry employees who had supervised and carried out the program. He also praised the curriculum which, he said, would foster a generation able to "confront the occupation to uproot it and its aggression" (Al-Aqsa TV, January 24, 2013). He said the camps would "end with victory and liberation, and would only end with praying in Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem" (Anadolu News Agency, Turkey, January 24, 2013).

9. **Ismail Haniya** exploited the stage to call for **the establishment, next year, of a military academy to be called the "Palestine Military School."** The school, he said, would be open to all ages from elementary school on and students would also be able to pursue an academic degree in military affairs there. He said the academy would **educate the children and prepare them for "the liberation of Palestine and the establishment of a Palestinian state from the [Jordan] river to the [Mediterranean] sea."** He also said that such a curriculum would **foster a generation**

able "to confront the occupation to uproot it and its aggression" (Al-Aqsa TV, January 24, 2013).



Gazan youth put on a military display at the graduation ceremony of a winter camp (Hamas forum website, January 27, 2013).



The stage for the ceremony. The inscription reads "Ceremony ending the activities of the year of Palestinian education and youth camps, 2012" under the aegis of Ismail Haniya and the minister of culture and higher education (Hamas forum website, January 27, 2013).



Ismail Haniya, head of the de-facto Hamas administration, at the graduation ceremony (Hamas forum website, December 27, 2013).

10. A few days later another ceremony was held at the ministry of education, where medals were presented to all those who had taken part in the project. **Osama al-Muzeini**, minister of education, praised all the participants, including the ministry of the interior, the national security service and the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades. **Abu Obeida al-Jarrah** said that "these youth camps send a message to the Zionist enemy, [telling them] that **they have no place in their country**" (Website of the Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip's ministry of education, January 29, 2013).

Military Training in Hamas' Summer Camps

11. Speaking at the graduation ceremony of the winter camps, **Ismail Haniya** praised **the military training received by the Gazan children**, mentioning the **summer camp program**. He said the children who attended them **received training from operatives of Hamas' military wing** (Al-Aqsa TV, January 24, 2013).

12. In fact, **Hamas' summer camps are exploited for the paramilitary training and ideological indoctrination** of the youngsters. This past year they opened on June 2012 and were attended by an estimated 70,000 children. Most of the camps had as their theme the slogan "We will live with our heads held high," which was the slogan of the Palestinian terrorist operatives who went on a hunger strike in Israeli jails. According to Hamas spokesman **Fawzi Barhoum**, the slogan marks one of milestones in the struggle against Israel for the restoration of the so-called "Palestinians' rights," the most recent of which was the Palestinian prisoners' hunger strike (Safa News Agency, June 21, 2012).

13. At the opening ceremony of the summer camps, Ismail Haniya presented the sum of \$50,000 to fund the camps' activities, adding that he would give additional funding

for **"training the army for the liberation of Al-Aqsa mosque in the coming years."** This year, unlike previous years, UNRWA did not run summer camps and all the camps were under the control of Hamas and the other terrorist organizations.²

14. Among the variety of activities offered by the camps, emphasis was put on military and paramilitary exercises. The campers learned how to crawl on their stomachs as if under barbed wire, stood in military formation, and shot guns; sometimes the children wore uniforms. In addition to practical military training they also received indoctrination to brainwash them with the ideology of an armed struggle against Israel. They chanted slogans such as **"We will live with one hand holding a pen and the other a rifle...."** **"One hand studies and the other fights Israel..."** etc. (Filastin Al-'An, July 12, 2013).

15. **Muhammad Abu Askar**, a senior Hamas figure and one of the organizers of the summer camps in Jabaliya, said that the objective of the camps was **to build a younger generation that knew how to hold a weapon** and to inculcate the children with love for the homeland and **Islam** as a way of life. In that way **they would eventually be part of the "Palestinian liberation army."** **Mustafa al-Sawaf**, a Hamas-affiliated political commentator, said that the summer camps were **"preparation for the day of victory"** (Fajar website, June 10, 2012). Senior Hamas figures visited the summer camps and met with the children. **Ismail Haniya**, meeting with children in the Shati refugee camp, said that "the hour of victory is coming closer and closer." He added that the current generation would see the victory and liberation (Safa News Agency, June 12, 2012).

² For further information about the summer camps in the Gaza Strip, see the July 30, 2012 bulletin "This year Hamas and the other terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip again exploited summer camps to integrate camping activities with political Islamic brainwashing and paramilitary training."



Paramilitary training at a Hamas summer camp (Al-Quds, July 10, 2012).



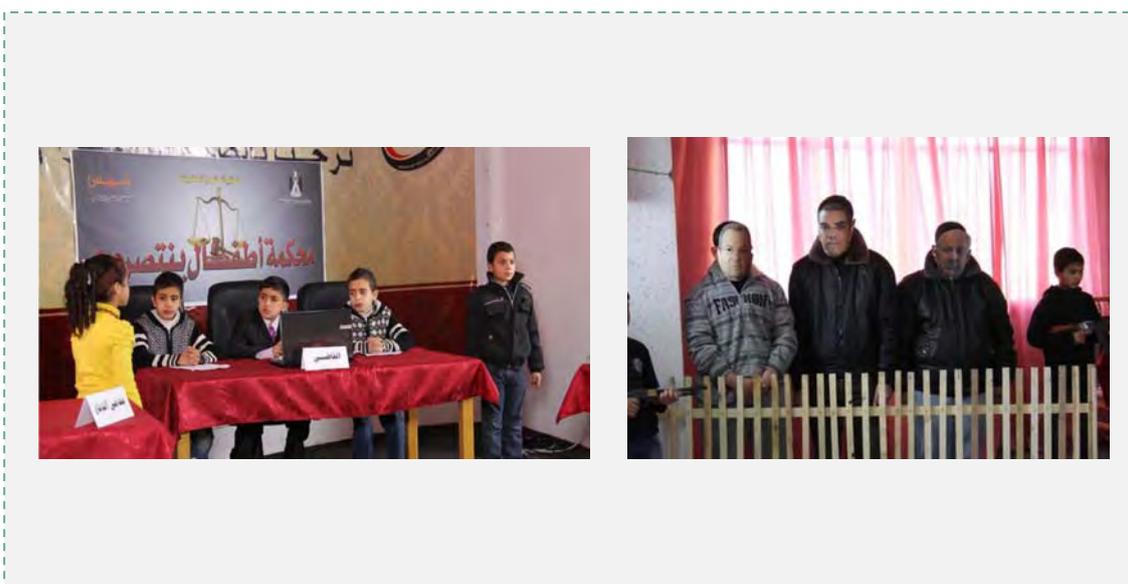
Children at a scout summer camp watch and take part in paramilitary exercises (Hamas forum PALDF, July 22, 2012).

Gazan Youth Participate in Displays

16. In addition to formal military training, Gazan children also participate in informal "educational" activities. Those included rallies, military displays, ceremonies and other events of a military nature, **all of which were intended to brainwash the children with hatred for Israel and the importance of the path of terrorism ("resistance" and jihad).**

17. Some of the events were the following:

1) On **January 17, 2013**, a mock trial was held by children in the Gaza Strip. On trial were Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defense Minister Ehud Barak and the IDF's Arabic spokesman. The trial was held under the auspices of the Hamas administration's ministry of youth and sport, and **children played the roles of the judges, the prosecution, the accused and the witnesses**. The accused were eventually sentenced to death. The "trial" was held in collaboration with the Al-Shams Media and Technology Institute and lasted for eight days (Alresala.net website, January 17, 2013).



The mock trial held in Gaza Strip under the auspices of the Hamas administration's ministry of youth and sport. Left: The three "accused." Right: The "judges" (Alresala.net website, January 17, 2013).

2) On **December 8, 2012**, Hamas held a mass rally in Gaza City to mark the 25th anniversary of its founding. The rally was used as a showcase for Hamas "victory narrative" for the last round of escalation and Khaled Mashaal's visit to the Gaza Strip. Among the rally participants were many children, who wore Hamas headbands and uniforms and carried [plastic] rifles, signs that the younger generation is being recruited for military activity against Israel.

3) Children also participated in the "victory" celebrations after Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012). They wore uniforms, walked on Israeli flags and watched as Israeli flags were set on fire (Qudsnet website, November 25, 2012).



Kindergarten children in the Square of the Unknown Soldier in Gaza City participate in setting an Israeli flag on fire, with the assistance of an adult (Qudsnet website, November 25, 2012).