



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

April 10-17, 2013



Remains of one of the two rockets fired at Eilat, Israel's southernmost city (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, April 17, 2013).

Overview

- Terrorist attacks targeting Israel's south continue. This past week two rockets were fired from the Sinai Peninsula at Eilat, Israel's southernmost city. A network in the Gaza Strip affiliated the global jihad claimed responsibility for a Grad rocket attack. In addition, an IED exploded near the vehicle of IDF engineers engaged in routine security activities along the border fence.
- On April 13, 2013, Salam Fayyad, prime minister of the Palestinian Authority, tendered his resignation to Mahmoud Abbas. His resignation reflected the long-standing troubled relations between the two. Mahmoud Abbas asked Salam Fayyad to remain as prime minister in an interim government until a successor could be found.

The Situation in Israel's South

Rockets Fired at Eilat

■ On the morning of **April 17, 2013**, explosions were heard in Eilat and sirens were activated. **According to initial reports, two rockets were fired at the city.** The Iron Dome aerial defense system, installed in Eilat a month ago, identified the launchings. One rocket hit a construction site and the other an open area along the Israel-Jordan border. **The rockets were apparently launched from the Sinai Peninsula.** There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Ynet and the Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, April 17, 2013).

■ **A global jihad-affiliated network in the Gaza Strip calling itself the Shura Council of the Jihad Fighters of the Environs of Jerusalem claimed responsibility for the rocket attack.** The network said in a statement that the rockets had been fired to protest the deaths of two Palestinian youths from Tulkarm killed in a violent confrontation with the Israeli security forces. According to the statement, two Grad rockets had been fired; however, the launching site was not noted. The statement also demanded that "the sane members of Hamas" exert pressure on the de-facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip to stop pursuing and detaining Salafist operatives (Ansar al-Mujahideen forum, April 17, 2013). The same network claimed responsibility for the mortar shell fire targeting Israel's south on **April 2, 2013**.

■ It is not the first time Eilat has been attacked by rockets fired from the Sinai Peninsula. There was a similar attack on the night of **August 15, 2012**, when two Grad rocket hits were identified in Eilat, launched from the Sinai Peninsula. A network affiliated with Al-Qaeda calling itself the Supporters of Jerusalem (*ansar bayt al-quds*) claimed responsibility for the attack (Moheet.com website, August 16, 2012).

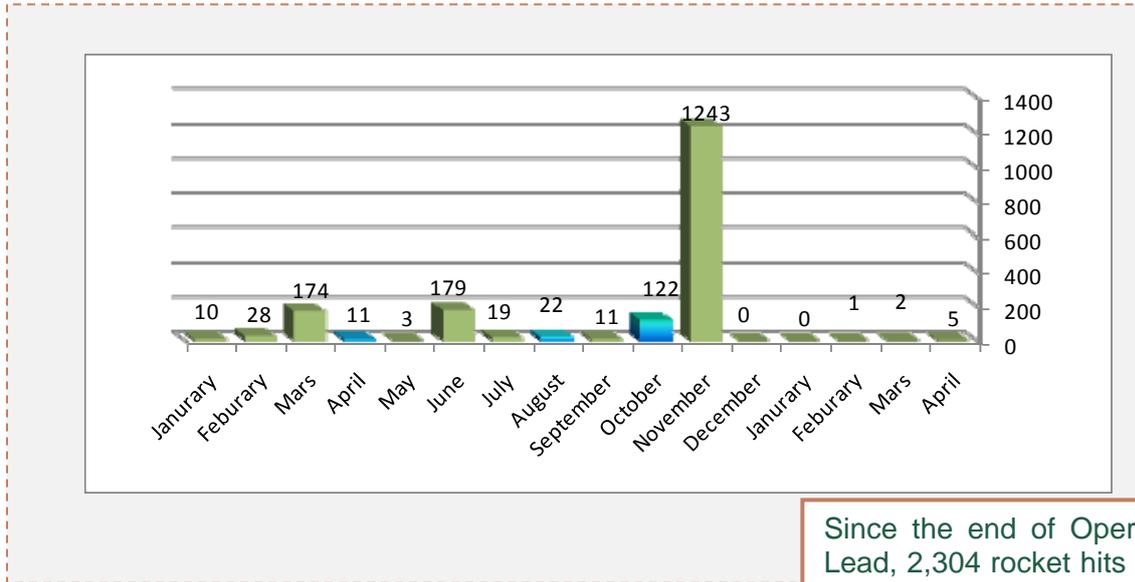
IDF Bulldozer Attacked by IED

■ On **April 9, 2013**, an IED exploded near a vehicle of the IDF's engineering corps, which was dealing with routine security activities along the border fence at the time. There were no casualties; an IDF bulldozer was slightly damaged (Ynet, April 9, 2013).

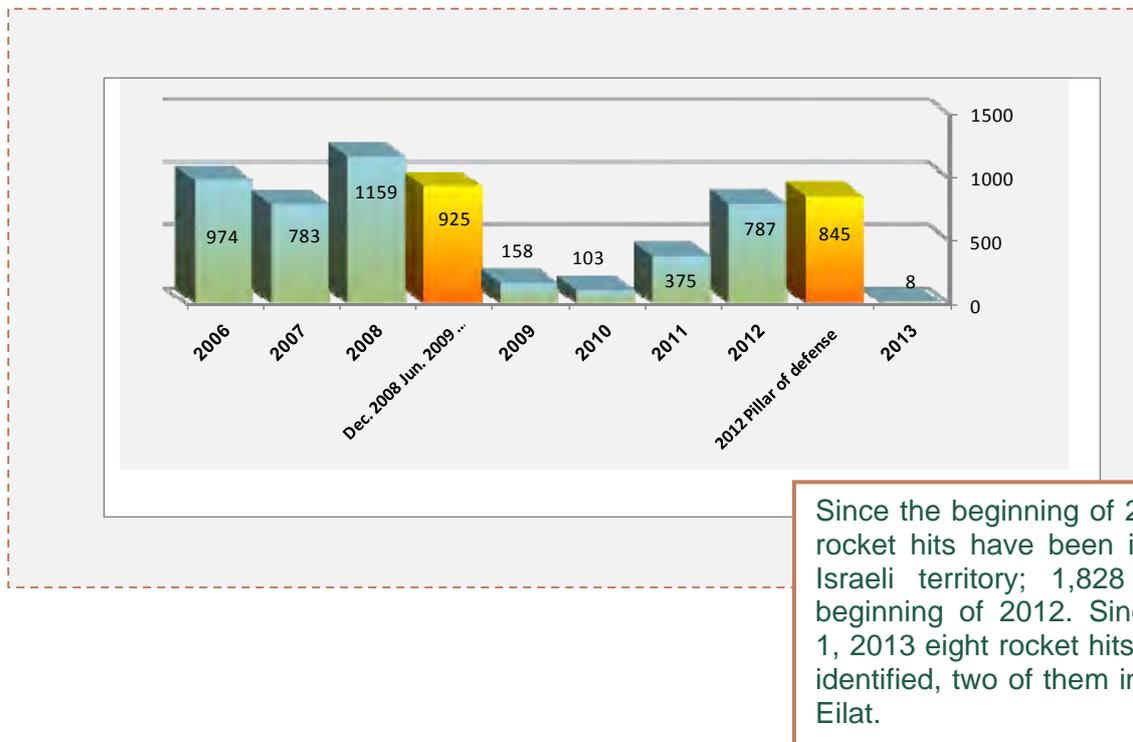
■ The identity of the terrorist organization responsible for the attack is so far unknown. However, in response the Twitter account of **Abu Obeida**, spokesman for the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military-terrorist wing, posted the following Tweet: "The land of liberated Gaza will continue to be out of bounds for your army and

[military] convoys." Hamas' PALDF forum quoted the Tweet, which was interpreted as a hint and informal claim of involvement by Hamas' military-terrorist wing.

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since the Beginning of 2012¹



Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire²

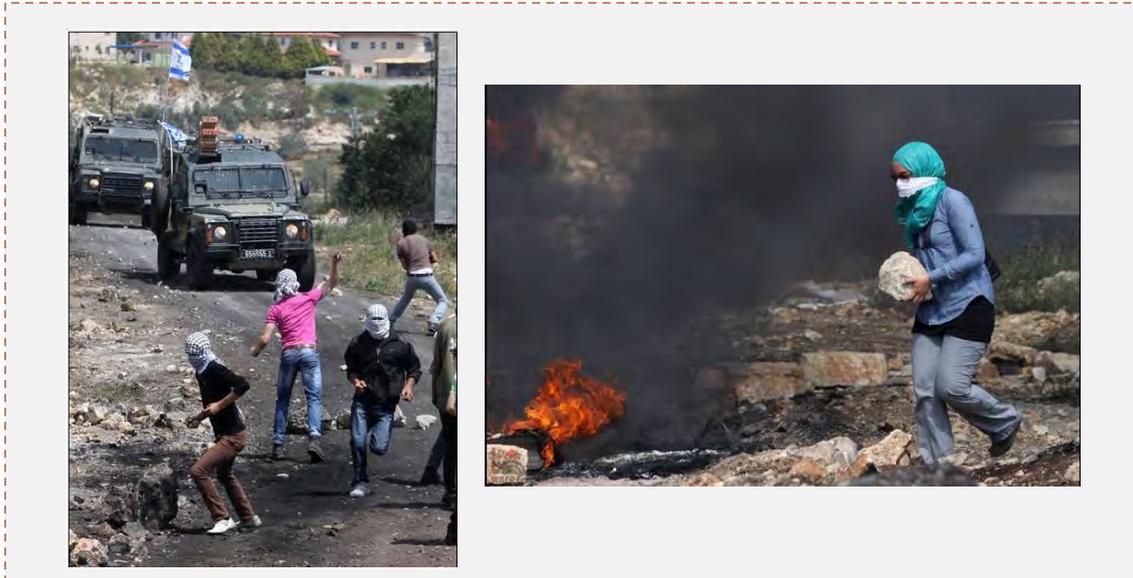


¹ As of April 17, 2013. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Judea and Samaria

- This past week violent confrontations continued between Palestinians and the Israeli security forces at the traditional friction points in Judea and Samaria.



Palestinian youths throw stones at IDF forces during the weekly riot in the village of Qadoum, near Qalqiliya (Wafa News Agency, April 12, 2013).

Indictments for the Perpetrators of Stabbings

- The Israeli security forces **recently found the culprits behind two stabbing attacks** carried out in 2013 and the perpetrators have been brought to justice (Israel Security Agency website, April 14, 2013):

- On **January 23, 2013**, an Israeli civilian was stabbed and severely wounded. The attack occurred at the Tapuah junction (near Nablus). The terrorist, a 23 year-old Palestinian from the village of Beit Rima, was a student at Al-Najah University in Nablus. During interrogation he said that the attack was his own idea and that he had no accomplices. **His only motive, he said, was to kill an IDF soldier.** Since he had not found a suitable candidate, he decided he would kill one of the civilians standing at the bus stop at the junction.
- On **April 4, 2013**, a stabbing attack occurred in east Jerusalem; an Israeli civilian incurred minor wounds. The knife hit the prayer book the victim was carrying in his pocket, preventing him from being seriously injured. The terrorist, who was apprehended on the scene by the Jerusalem police, was a 28 year-old **Hamas operative** from the village of Idhna (south of Mt. Hebron). He admitted to

having stabbed the Israeli. During interrogation he said that **for three months he had been planning to murder either an ultra-Orthodox Jew or an Israeli settler**. A few days before the attack he sneaked into Jerusalem and stayed in the eastern part of the city until he was ready to attack. During interrogation he also admitted that he had placed a locally-manufactured IED in a bus used by ultra-Orthodox Jews in the Israeli city of Beit Shemesh (west of Jerusalem).

The Terrorist Prisoners

Preparations for Palestinian Prisoner Day

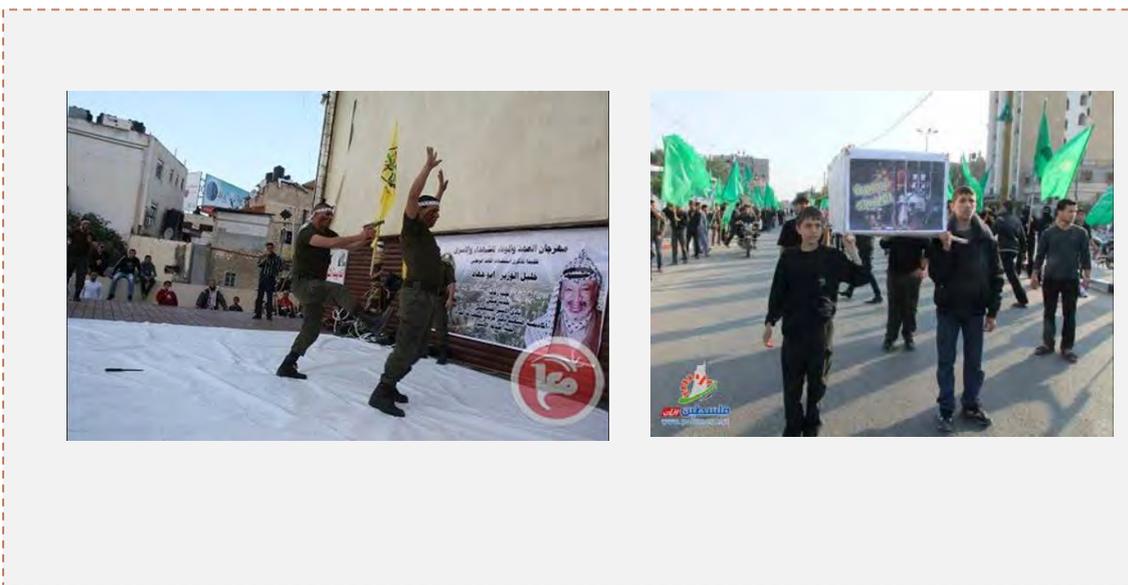
■ This year, as usual, **Palestinian Prisoner Day will be held on April 17**. Events will include rallies and marches, the traditional means by which Palestinians express solidarity with the terrorist operatives incarcerated in Israeli jails. This year Prisoner Day will be a continuation of the events held recently in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip in support of the Palestinian prisoners and to mark the deaths of a number of Palestinian prisoners. Various events are planned, among them demonstrations, rallies, prayers and exhibitions.



Issa Qaraqa, minister of prisoner affairs in the PA (center) and Qadoura Fares, chairman of the Palestinian prisoners' association (right), launching Palestinian Prisoner Day at a press conference in Ramallah (Wafa News Agency, April 15, 2013).

■ **Ismail Haniya**, deputy chairman of Hamas' political bureau and head of the de-facto Hamas administration, called for Prisoner Day to be marked in an exceptional way. He called for all means to be employed to free the prisoners, adding that the "resistance"

[i.e., the terrorist organizations] that freed the prisoners in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal was capable of freeing the remaining Palestinian prisoners (Safa News Agency, April 12, 2013).



Left: operatives of the PA's internal security forces demonstrate self-defense maneuvers at a rally in Jenin for Palestinian Prisoner Day and the 25th anniversary of the death of senior Fatah operative Khalil al-Wazir (aka Abu Jihad)_ (Ma'an News Agency, April 16, 2013). Right: A march in Khan Yunis to mark Palestinian Prisoner Day and the anniversary of the death of senior Hamas operative Aziz al-Rantisi. School children carry a "coffin" bearing the inscription "[Prison is a] cemetery for the living" (Filastin Al-'Aan, April 17, 2013).

Gaza Strip Reception for a Released Terrorist

■ A festive reception was held in the Gaza Strip for **Ibrahim Baroud**, a senior **Palestinian Islamic Jihad terrorist operative** who was released from an Israeli jail to the Gaza Strip after serving a term of 27 years. Ibrahim Baroud, from Jabaliya, was arrested in 1986 and sentenced to 27 years for activity in a terrorist organization and terrorist activities against Israel. At the reception he wore the uniform of the Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military-terrorist wing, and waved an M-16 assault rifle (Palinfo website, April 8, 2013).



The Gaza Strip reception for Ibrahim Baroud (Palinfo website, April 8, 2013).

Palestinian Criminal Imprisoned in Israel Dies in Jail

■ **Ali Qara'in**, a Palestinian prisoner from east Jerusalem, died of an infectious disease in Ichilov Hospital on April 10, 2013. He had been sentenced to life imprisonment for killing his wife (Jerusalem Post website, April 10, 2013). **Issa Qaraqqa**, PA minister of prisoner affairs, accused Israel of medical negligence and withholding treatment, and claimed the Israel government was responsible for his death (Ma'an News Agency, April 11, 2013).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Crossings

■ According to **Omar Shaaban**, an economic commentator from the Gaza Strip, the closing of the Gaza Strip crossings causes direct and indirect damage to the Gaza Strip's economy and damages its industry and commerce. He asked that the crossings not be closed as punishment (Filastin al-Yawm, April 9, 2013). Note: The Kerem Shalom crossing was recently closed following a rocket fire attack on Israel.

■ **Maher Abu Sabha**, director of the crossings and border authority of the de-facto Hamas administration, said that the Egyptian government had promised Ismail Haniya, during his recent visit to Egypt, that passage through the Rafah crossing would be made easier and that the number of people allowed to use it would be increased while the number of people forbidden would be decreased (Sama News Agency, April 9, 2013).

The Islamization of the Gaza Strip Continues

■ The Gaza Strip police recently detained a number of young people whose hair styles were Western or who wore low-cut jeans. The detentions were part of a campaign against young Gazans' adopting Western dress. A spokesman for the Hamas police issued a denial, saying that the information was "inexact" and that the police did not interfere in the personal freedom of civilians (Al-Quds, April 6, 2013). However, he did admit that the police had ordered a number of young Gazans to appear for interrogation, and had had cut their hair because, he claimed, there had been complaints from local residents.

■ Coincidentally, Hamas' department of refugee affairs issued a video warning of the dangers inherent in trips arranged by UNRWA for junior high school students to Western countries, during which they were exposed to "problematic material." According to the video, to be avoided were projects initiated by UNRWA which, it was claimed, exceeded the limits of providing welfare and employment, for which the agency had been established. In addition, according to the video, in 2010 children were taken to an exhibition of pictures of the so-called " Holocaust of the Jews" at UN headquarters in New York. Gazan parents had asked that their children not be exposed to that sort of "brainwashing" and recommended that they be sent instead to tour the refugee camps or go on pilgrimages to the places sacred to Islam.

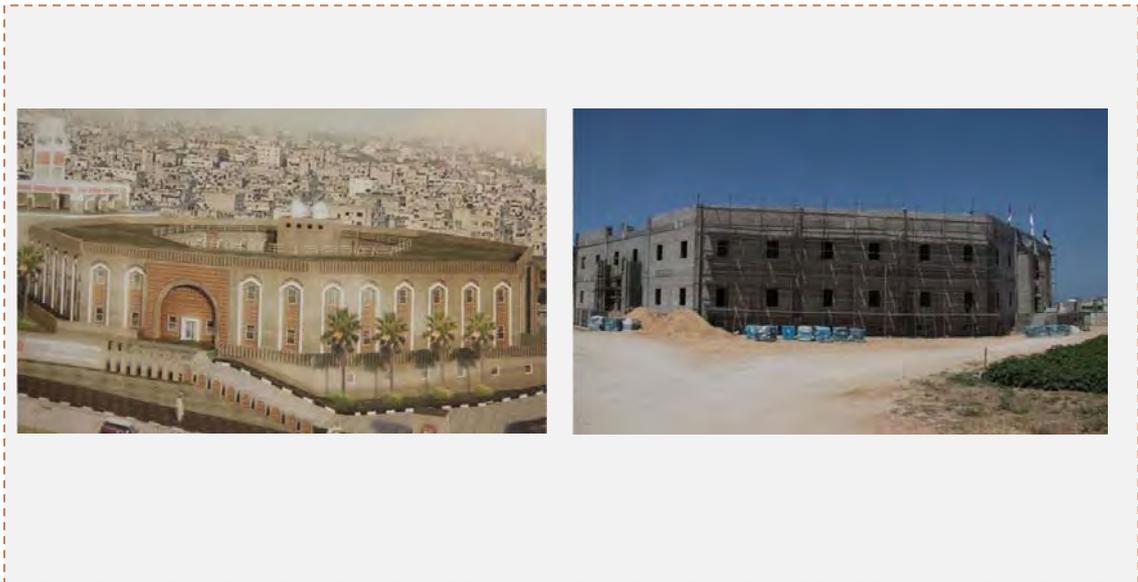
Hamas and the Salafist Networks Trade Accusations

■ **Yahya Musa**, Hamas faction member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, accused the Salafist networks in the Gaza Strip of firing rockets and mortar shells into Israeli territory. He said the Salafist networks could not be allowed to act as they pleased and that every action against Israel had to be carried out by the "Palestinian resistance" [i.e., terrorist organizations] after a careful examination (Qudsnet website, April 9, 2013).

■ **Abu Abdallah al-Maqdasi**, senior figure in the Salafist networks in the Gaza Strip, accused the security forces of the de-facto Hamas administration of intensifying their battle against the Salafists after the rocket fire into Israel. He said the Salafist networks had the right to respond to Israel and that they were not bound by any Gazan agreement to a lull in the fighting. He also said that the Salafist networks would continue waging jihad and setting up military cells (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 9, 2013).

Indonesia Association Funds a Hospital in the Northern Gaza Strip

■ A hospital is currently being built in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip, funded by Indonesia Association. The contract for its construction was signed in November 2011 by Bassem Naim, at the time minister of health in the de-facto Hamas administration, and the Indonesia Association funding the project (Filastin Al-'Aan, April 14, 2013).



Left: An illustration of the planned hospital. Right: The hospital under construction (Filastin Al-'Aan, April 14, 2013).

The Palestinian Authority

Salam Fayyad, Palestinian Prime Minister, Resigns

■ **Salam Fayyad**, Palestinian prime minister, tendered his resignation to Mahmoud Abbas on April 13, 2013 (Wafa News Agency, April 13, 2013). The Palestinian media reported a number of times that he was planning to resign. It was also reported that various forces in the United States had tried to exert pressure on him and on Mahmoud Abbas to postpone his resignation, without success.

■ Salam Fayyad's resignation reflects the tense relations between him and Mahmoud Abbas. The troubles relations peaked when Fayyad accepted the resignation of Nabil Qassis, minister of the treasury, without authorization from Mahmoud Abbas – apparently the last straw. Mahmoud Abbas asked Salam Fayyad to remain as prime minister in an interim government until a successor could be found (Wafa News Agency, April 14, 2013). Sources in Hamas emphasized that there was no connection between Fayyad's resignation and the reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah, and

that it was an internal matter of differences of opinion between Fatah and Fayyad (Ma'an News Agency and Agence France-Presse, April 13, 2013).



Mahmoud Abbas accepts Salam Fayyad's letter of resignation (Wafa News Agency, April 13, 2013).

PA Requested to Authorize the Rome Convention

■ **Raji Suriani**, director of the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR), a leading organization in the lawfare campaign being waged against Israel, called on the PA leadership to make haste and sign the Rome Convention, **which would enable the PA to appeal to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague**. He said the signature of the PA and its authorization of the convention would provide it with a broad scope for its activities and give it an opportunity to wage lawfare against Israel. However, he also made it clear that joining the ICC would not be an alternative to the armed campaign (Quds Press, April 9, 2013).

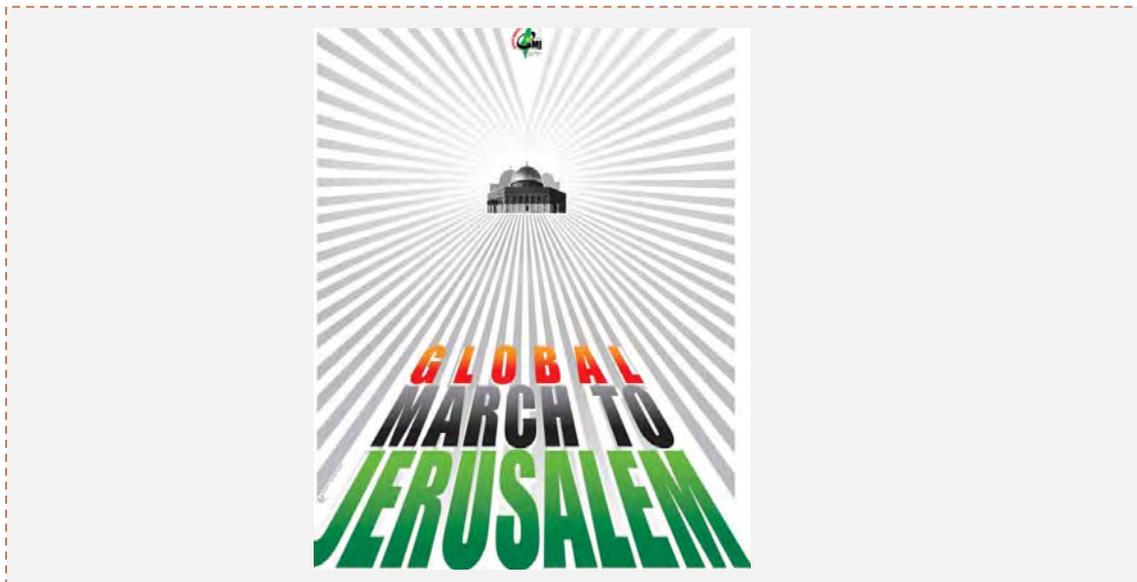
Results of the Student Council Elections at Beir Zeit University

■ The results of the student council elections at Beir Zeit University gave Fatah a small advantage (23 of 51 seats), while Hamas' student wing won 20 seats. The remaining votes were divided among the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (seven seats), and the Popular Struggle Front and National Initiative (one seat each) (Wafa News Agency, April 10, 2013). Hamas represented the results as a significant achievement.

Propaganda Events

The Global March to Jerusalem (GMJ)

■ The organizers of what is known as the Global March to Jerusalem announced that **this year it would take place on Friday, June 7, 2013**. According to the announcement, they plan to hold a mass march to Jerusalem or to the point closest to it in Judea and Samaria and the countries bordering Israel. In addition, demonstrations are planned for major cities around the world and in front of Israeli embassies (GMJ website, April 14, 2013). The initiative began in March 2012 with the organization of a number of marches to Israel under the collective title of the Global March to Jerusalem.



Poster for the Global March to Jerusalem (GMJ website, April 14, 2013).

Activities Commemorating the Death of Senior Fatah Operative Abu Jihad

■ The PA and Fatah are currently marking the 25th anniversary of the death of Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), a senior Fatah operative and former head of the movement's military-terrorist wing. To that end Fatah and PA websites issued notices glorifying him and praising his participation in the armed struggle against Israel. The Fatah information office held an event in his honor attended by senior Fatah members as well as his wife, Intissar al-Wazir (Umm Jihad) (Wafa News Agency, April 16, 2013).

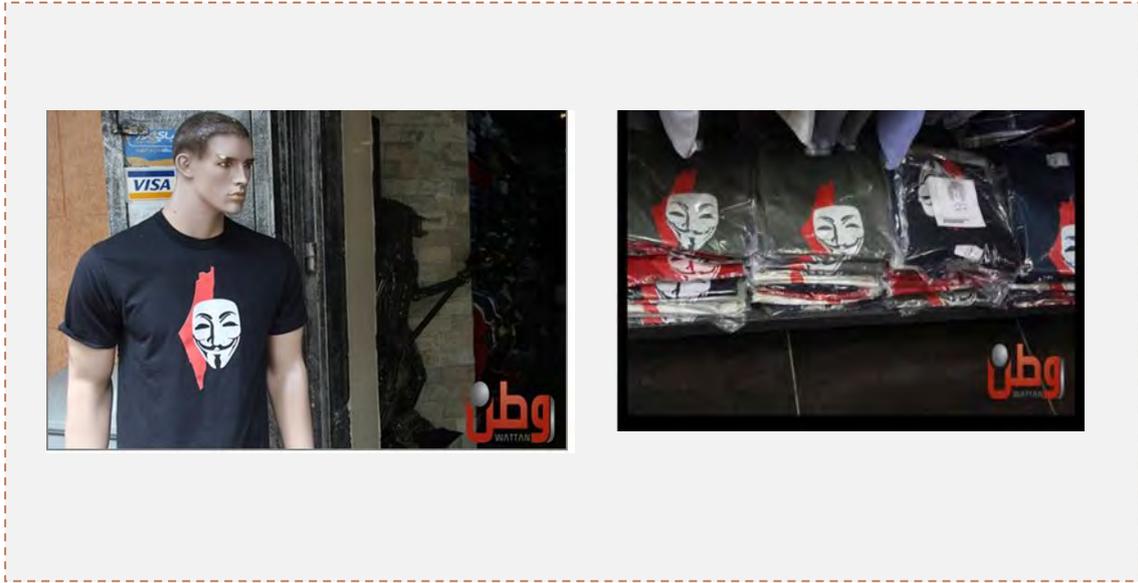


One of the posters issued in memory of the terrorist operative Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad). It reads "Prince of the shaheeds, Khalil al-Wazir, Abu Jihad. The first bullet...the first stone...April 4, 1988" (Facebook page of the Fatah movement, April 14, 2013).

PA Campaign Honors the "Anonymous" Hacker Group

- After the attack on the Israeli government's Internet sites by the hacker group calling itself "Anonymous" on April 7, 2013, **T-shirts went on sale in Ramallah glorifying the event**. The shirts were sold for 50 Israeli shekels (\$13.75) and were printed with a "picture" of Anonymous on a map of "Palestine." The initiative for the shirts came from a group of young Palestinians in Ramallah who had them made up to express their admiration for the hackers who allegedly succeeded in taking down Israeli government sites³ (Watan, April 9, 2013).

³ In fact, they failed.



Anonymous hacker T-shirts on sale in Ramallah (Watan, April 9, 2013).