



August 5, 2013

This year events were again held for Iranian-sponsored Jerusalem Day. Not well attended, they received scant media coverage. As in previous years, the events were exploited for propaganda and incitement against Israel, the United States and the West, with vague and explicit calls for the destruction of Israel.



Burning Israeli, American and British flags at an International Jerusalem Day march in Tehran (Mehr News Agency, Iran, August 2, 2013)

Overview

1. On **August 2, 2013**, the last Friday of the Muslim religious month of Ramadan, Iranian-sponsored International Jerusalem Day was marked with marches, demonstrations and rallies throughout the Arab-Muslim world and by Muslim communities in the West. The main events, as usual, were held in Iran and attended by the leaders of the Iranian regime.

2. The events were generally characterized by the following:

1) **Themes** – As in previous years, the events were exploited for hate propaganda and incitement against Israel and the United States, and calls were heard for the destruction of Israel. Slogans condemning the renewal of the Israel-

Palestinian negotiations were also present, as were slogans in support of Syria and the regime of Bashar Assad.

2) **Scant participation outside Iran** – The demonstrations and events were mainly held in Iran. In other countries, as in years past, there were few participants at the events. Apparently the recent dramatic events in the Middle East (the second coup in Egypt, the ongoing fighting in Syria) have overshadowed the issue of the Palestinians in general and Jerusalem in particular. The relatively small number of participants might also be a result of the anti-Iranian criticism in the Sunni Arab-Muslim world, caused by Iran's support for the Assad regime.

3) **The prominent Iranian-Shi'ite nature of the events** – Despite the Iranian desire to make Jerusalem Day a pan-Muslim event, it is still identified as Iranian-Shi'ite. Most of the events were organized by the Shi'ite communities in the various countries and attended by Shi'ites or pro-Iranian activists. Conspicuous this year was the absence of Sunni activists, possibly in protest of the killing of Sunnis in Syria by the Assad regime, which is supported by Iran and Hezbollah.

3. **Media coverage** – The events were not well covered by the media. Most of the reports of international events appeared in the Iranian media. **Particular attention was paid by the media to the statement made by the new Iranian president, Hassan Rouhani.** At the Jerusalem Day march in Tehran he said "In our region, a sore has been on the body of the Islamic world for many years in the shadow of the occupation of Palestine and holy Quds." He was careful not to explicitly say "Israel," or even the "Zionist regime," allowing the Iranians to issue a "clarification" claiming his statement had been distorted. However, during the Jerusalem Day events in Iran, Lebanon and elsewhere, there were specific calls for the destruction of Israel (for example, a poster at the march in Tehran quoting Ali Khamenei as saying that "the Zionist regime must be toppled," and a speech given by Hassan Nasrallah quoting the Ayatollah Khomeini as calling Israel "a cancerous growth that has to be excised").

Events in Iran

Overview

4. As in years past, Jerusalem Day was marked in Iran with marches, demonstrations and rallies held throughout the country. The main rally was held in Tehran. Marchers carried anti-Israeli, anti-American and anti-British signs and **chanted slogans**

including "Down with to Israel," "Down with America" and "Down with Britain" [in Farsi and Arabic they signs read "Death to Israel" and "Death to America"], and stamped on Israeli, American and British flags. There were also "ceremonies" in which the Israeli, American and British flags were burned. They also called on the government to impose sanctions on "the merchandise manufactured by the Zionists" (Fars and Mehr News Agencies, Iran, August 2, 2013).

5. **The office of the president** issued an announcement for Jerusalem Day stressing the day's importance and Iran's support for the Palestinians' struggle. Senior members of the Iranian regime attended the march in Tehran, among them newly-elected President Hassan Rouhani, Hashemi Rafsanjani, chairman of the Expediency Discernment Council, former Iranian president Ahmadinejad, and others (ISNA, Iran, August 2, 2013).



The demonstration in Iran. The red posters read "Down with Israel" (Press TV Facebook page, August 2, 2013).

Statements by Iranian Leaders

6. **Newly-elected Hassan Rouhani was interviewed** at the march. He said that for many years in the Middle East there had been a sore on the body of the Islamic world in the shadow of the occupation of Palestine and holy Jerusalem. He added that Jerusalem Day was a reminder that the Muslim nation would not

forget its historic right and would always stand firm against oppression and aggression (ISNA, Iran, August 2, 2013).¹

7. **Outgoing president Ahmadinejad** said that Jerusalem Day was one of the great Islamic days and that it was important for all of humanity, in the hope it would lead to the isolation of the so-called "Satanic front" (Fars News Agency, Iran, August 2, 2013).

8. **Seyed Abbas Araghchi, spokesman for the Iranian foreign minister**, said that this year Jerusalem Day was doubly important because it fell at the time of the renewal of the talks between Israel and the Palestinians. He said that if all the Muslims in every Muslim country demonstrated their loyalty to the Palestinians' aspirations for the "liberation of Jerusalem," without a doubt it would lead to the failure of the talks. He condemned the negotiations because he said they did not relate to the "rights of the Palestinian people." He said that the "Zionist regime" did not want peace and existed on a foundation of war and occupation (Fars News Agency, Iran, August 1, 2013).

Jerusalem Day Events

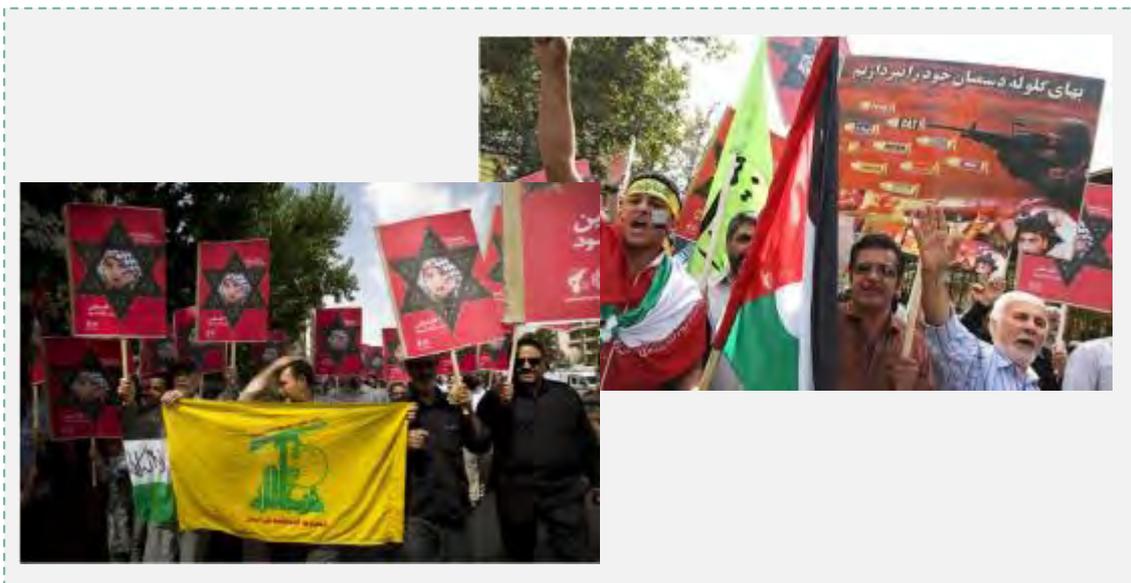


Left: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani marches in Tehran (Press TV website, August 2, 2013).
Right: A banner quoting Ali Khamenei: "The Zionist regime must be toppled" (YouTube, August 2, 2013)

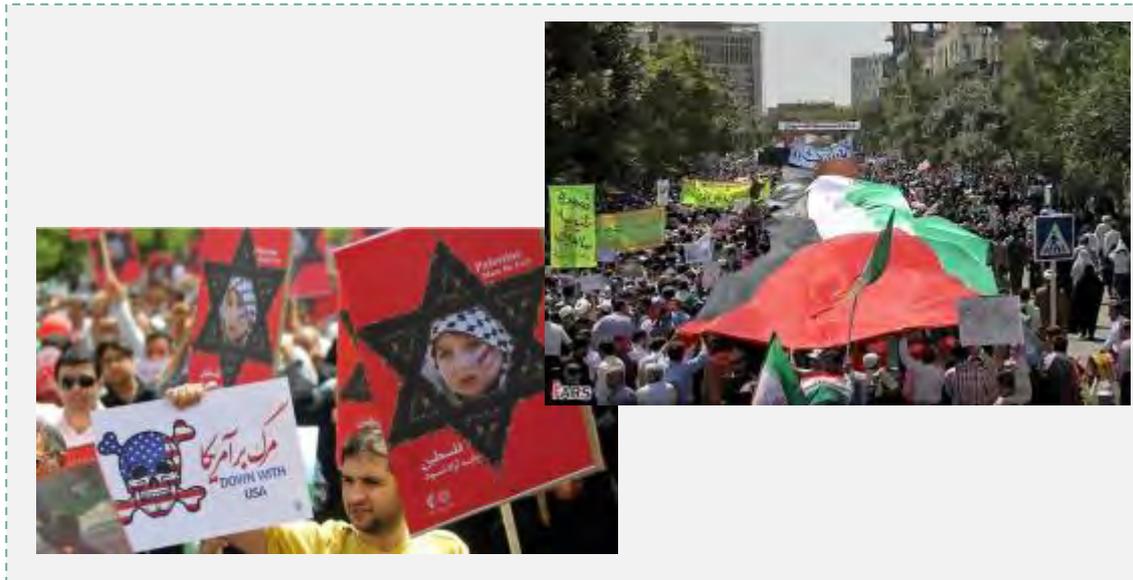
¹ Initially, the various media quoted Rouhani as saying that "the Zionist regime has for years been a sore on the body of the Islamic world and the wound must be healed." A number of hours later an Iranian clarification was issued to the effect that the media had misquoted him and that he had not said what had been attributed to him (ISNA, Iran, August 2, 2013). In fact, Rouhani did not explicitly mention "the Zionist regime" but the spirit and the message, were consistent with the main theme of Jerusalem Day, i.e., the destruction of the State of Israel.



(Vosiznelas.com website, August 2, 2013)



Demonstrations in Iran. Left: The yellow Hezbollah flag (Vosiznelas.com website, August 2, 2013)



Demonstrations in Tehran (Vosiznelas.com website, August 2, 2013)



Left: A coffin for Zionism. Right: "Down with the USA," "Down with Israel" (in Arabic "Death to the USA" and "Death to Israel") at a demonstration in Iran (Mehr News Agency, Iran, August 2, 2013)

Events in Lebanon

Overview

9. Jerusalem Day events were held at a number of locations in Lebanon. The main rally was held in Beirut, where Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah gave a speech. In south Lebanon there were a number of local demonstrations and rallies. Events were also held in the Palestinian refugee camps.

Beirut

10. The main rally was held in a closed auditorium in a southern suburb of Beirut where a speech was given by Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah and broadcast live. The rally was attended by the Iranian and Syrian ambassadors to Lebanon, Deputy Hezbollah Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem, Hashem Safi al-Din, chairman of Hezbollah's Executive Council, and other senior figures. In an unusual move, Hassan Nasrallah appeared on stage in person to deliver his speech, which was interrupted by applause and **shouts of "Death to Israel."** Some of his remarks were the following:

1) **"Palestine" extends from the [Mediterranean] sea to the [Jordan] river and must return in its entirety to its sons and rightful owners** [i.e., the Palestinians]. No one has the right, no king, ruler, country, government or organization can cede one inch or it or one drop of its water or give anyone else the power to do so.

2) **Israel is a terrible and continual danger to all the peoples of the region** and not just a threat to the existence of the Palestinians. **Khamenei was right when he called it a cancerous growth.** Israel must not be recognized, and anyone who opposes it is defending the future of his children and grandchildren and therefore the disappearance of Israel has to be the nation interest of every country in the region.

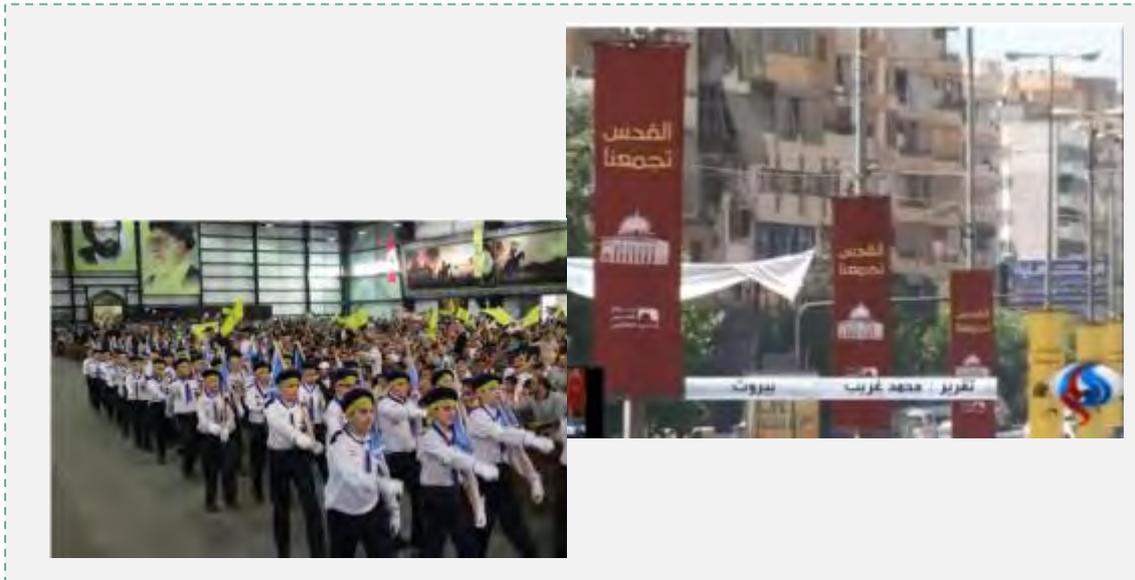
3) **Hezbollah will continue to support Palestine.** Jerusalem should be a common interest for all Arabs and Muslims, no matter where they are. Nasrallah thanked Iran and Syria for their efforts for the Palestinian cause and said that his organization would continue on the path of "resistance" [i.e., terrorism].



Hassan Nasrallah speaks in a southern suburb of Beirut (Press TV website, August 2, 2013).



Left: Ramadan Shallah, secretary general of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Nasrallah's deputy Naim Qassem, during the event (Paltoday website, August 2, 2013). Right: The auditorium where the event took place (English.arabiya.net website, August 2, 2013).



Left: The Imam al-Mahdi Scouts (Hezbollah in Lebanon's youth movement) in the southern suburb of Beirut (Imam al-Mahdi Scouts website). Right: Banners hung in the streets of Beirut for Jerusalem Day. They read, "Jerusalem unites us" (Al-Alam)

South Lebanon

11. For Jerusalem Day Hezbollah hung a large sign across from the Israeli border reading in Hebrew and Arabic, "[We are] coming" (Al-Akhbar, August 1, 2013)



Left: Putting up the four-meter-long sign near the Israeli-Lebanese border " "[We are] coming."
Right: A model of the Dome of the Rock in the town square of the village of Kila in south Lebanon (Al-Manar)

Events in Syria

12. In Syria a Jerusalem Day event was held in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. Its theme was "From Damascus to Jerusalem, one campaign for liberation, return and the failure of the American project." The event was organized by the so-called central alliance of Palestinian forces and the Syrian Wakf. After the event an announcement was issued in support of the Syrian people and the path of the so-called "resistance," which, it claimed, was stronger than ever. The announcement expressed admiration for the role of the Syrian leadership's sponsorship of every aspect of the "resistance" [i.e., terrorism]. It also condemned the "repeated Zionist attacks on Syrian territory," and praised the role of Iran, stressing the importance of its support for Iran in view of the external pressure exerted on it (Syrian News Agency, August 2, 2013).



The rally at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, apparently not well attended
(Islamicinvitationturkey.com website, August 2, 2013)

Events in Egypt

13. A number of minor events were held in Egypt. One was in Tahrir Square in Cairo, and did not attract many participants. Several dozen Egyptians marched to the American embassy demanding America be expelled from Egypt (En.alalam.ir website, August 2, 2013).



Left: Demonstration in Asyut, Egypt. Right: The event in Tahrir Square (Beta.masrawy.co website, August 2, 2013).

Events in the Gaza Strip

14. A number of events were held in the Gaza Strip (Press TV, date, 2013). After the Friday prayer marchers left all the mosques in the Gaza Strip and filled the main streets. They demanded that all the countries around the world help Jerusalem end its [Israeli] occupation and stressed Jerusalem was Arab-Muslim in nature.

15. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), sponsored by Iran, marked Jerusalem Day with a march of supporters chanting "Death to America! Death to Israel." Khaled al-Batash, one of the PIJ's senior figures in attendance, said that "Palestine is Arab-Muslim land and the most important and central issue" (Al-Alam, August 2, 2013).

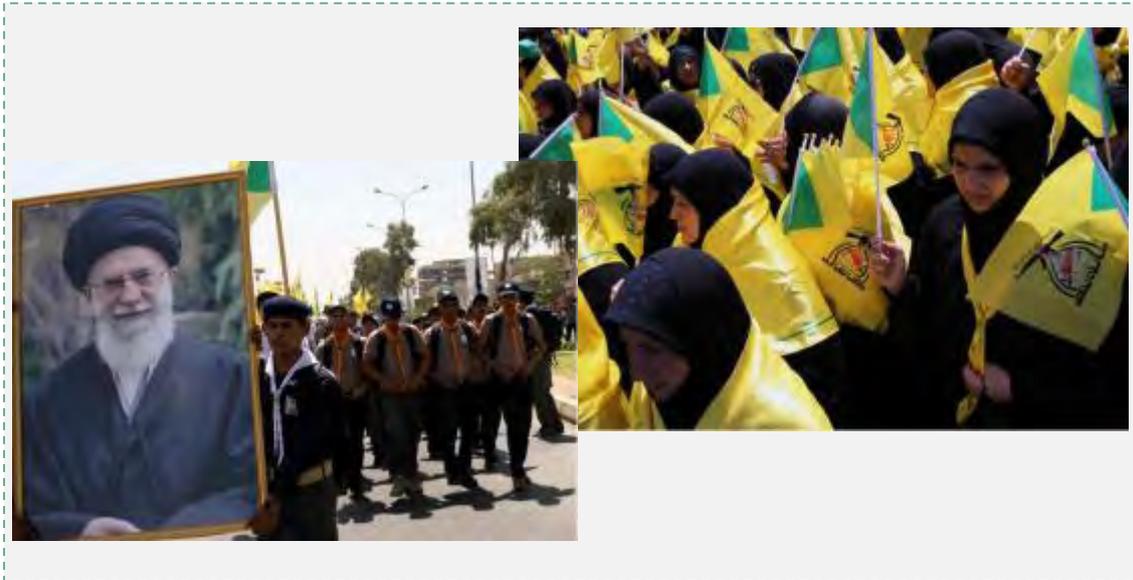


Left: Burning the Israel flag. Right: The march organized by the PIJ (Al-Alam TV, August 2, 2013)

Events in Other Arab Countries

Iraq

16. **In our assessment the events in Iraq were completely Shi'ite-oriented.** The major events were held in the **center of Baghdad and Basra**. A demonstration was held in Baghdad attended by politicians and religious leaders. They appealed to the international community to solve the Palestinian problem and prevent Israeli attacks. In Basra demonstrators gathered in the center of the city and protested Israel's so-called attacks against the Palestinian people (Alliraqnews.com website, August 2, 2013). Some of the events were organized by the Hezbollah Brigades, Shi'ite militias in Iraq established by Iran to fight the armies of the United States and its Western allies.



Left: Hezbollah Brigades youth movement members demonstrate in Baghdad and carry a picture of Khomeini. Right: Girl Hezbollah Brigades members demonstrate in Baghdad (Vosiznelas.com website, August 2, 2013)



Uniformed demonstrators in Basra (English.alarabiya.net website, August 2, 2013).

Turkey

17. In Turkey Jerusalem Day events were marked with a ceremony held in the Zeynebiyeh Mosque in the Halkali section of Istanbul. A speech was given by a leader of the Iranian-affiliated Turkish Jaafari movement. He said that Jerusalem Day was a gift from the Imam Khomeini to the Muslim nation. He denounced Israel and said the Turks had not forgotten Al-Aqsa mosque. Participants held signs reading "Death to

Israel" and chanted anti-Israeli and anti-American slogans (Zeynebiye.com website, August 2, 2013).



Jerusalem Day event in Istanbul (Zeynebiye.com website)

Yemen

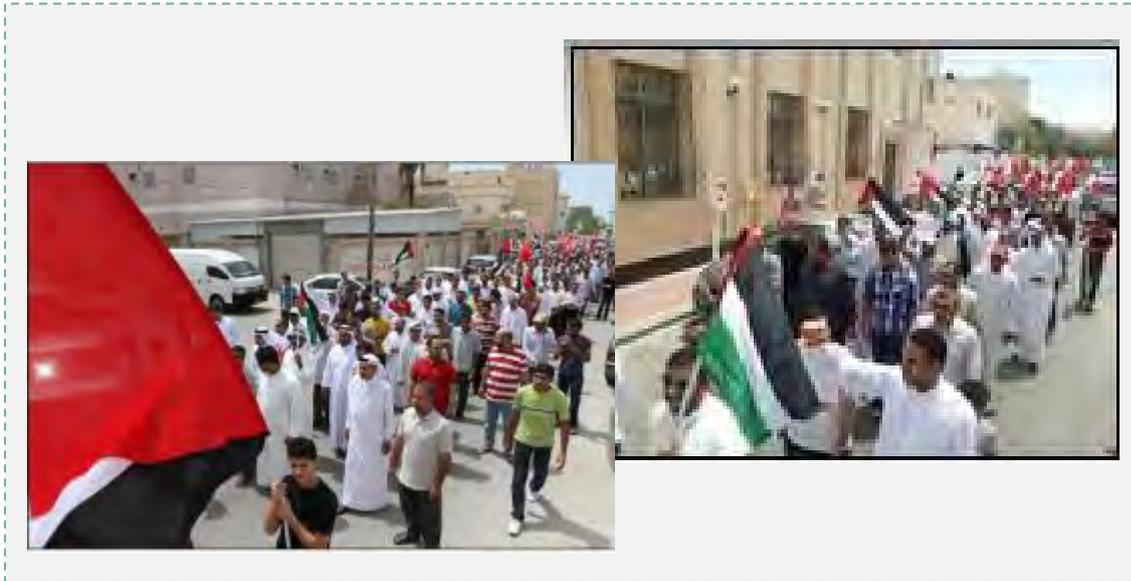
18. A well-attended rally was held in Sana'a. In addition to protesting Israel, the demonstrators called for unity in the Arab world (Presstv.ir website, August 3, 2013). There was also a rally in the **city of Sa'ada in northern Yemen, the center of the Houthi Shi'ite rebels, who receive extensive support from Iran.**



Left: The rally in Sana'a. Right: The rally in Sa'ada (YouTube, August 2, 2013).

Bahrain

19. Demonstrators from around the country held a march waving Palestinian flags and chanting anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist slogans. The march was held despite opposition from the authorities (Ialamtimes.org website, August 4, 2013). According to the participants, the police used tear gas against the demonstrators and several of them were injured (Rohama.org website, August 3, 2013).



The march in Bahrain (Islamtimes.org and Rohama.org websites, August 2 and 3, 2013)

Events in Europe

Britain

20. The main event was held in London. The demonstration began near the BBC building (which, according to the claims of the demonstrators, is a symbol of pro-Israeli British propaganda) and ended near the American embassy. The demonstrators came to London from around Britain. The main slogan this year was the "liberation of Palestine," and the demonstrators waved Palestinian flags and signs calling for the boycott of Israel (English.irib.ir website, August 3, 2013).



The demonstration in London: "We are all Hizbullah" (Newenglishreview.org website, August 2, 2013)



The demonstration in London: calls to boycott Israel (YouTube and the shiapost.com website, August 2, 2013)

Germany

21. In Berlin, an estimated 900 Muslims affiliated with Iran and Hezbollah held a demonstration along the Kurfürstendamm, the main shopping street, calling for the destruction of the State of Israel (Jerusalem Post, August 2, 2013). The demonstration was also attended by anti-Zionist ultra-Orthodox Jews.



The demonstration in Berlin (Press TV, August 2, 2013)

Austria

22. A demonstration of several hundred Muslims, including Shi'ite clerics, was held in Vienna.



The demonstration in Vienna (YouTube, August 2, 2013)

Events in North America

New York

23. Several dozen Muslims and far leftist Americans gathered in Times Square. There were also a number of anti-Zionist ultra-Orthodox Jews belonging to the Neturei Karta sect. One of the demonstrators said in an interview that it was "great to demonstrate in

New York, especially in Times Square, the stronghold of capitalism" (Press TV, August 2, 2013).



Left: The demonstration in New York (Press TV, August 2, 2013). Right: Ultra-Orthodox Jews (Cindy Gadia Facebook page, August 2, 2013).

Canada

24. Relatively small demonstrations were held in a number of Canadian cities. An estimated 300 Shi'ites gathered in Ontario. In addition to the usual anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist slogans, the participants waved Iranian, Syrian, Palestinian and Hezbollah flags, as well as pictures of the Ayatollah Khomeini. As opposed to previous years, the leaders of the Sunni community did not participate in the event, apparently to protest the deaths of Sunnis in Syria at the hands of the Iranian- and Hezbollah-supported Syrian regime (Israelnationalnews.com website, August 4, 2013).



A demonstration in Toronto (Patdollard.com website, August 2, 2013).

Events in Other Countries

Australia

25. The main events in Australia were held in Melbourne and Sydney.



Left: The demonstration in Melbourne (Facebook page of events in Australia, August 2, 2013).
Right: the demonstration in Sydney (Press TV Facebook page, August 2, 2013)



Sydney, Australia, an event with Hezbollah insignia (Facebook page of events in Australia, August 2, 2013)

Indonesia



The demonstration in Indonesia (Vosiznelas.com website, August 2, 2013)

Pakistan

26. Several hundred Pakistanis, primarily Shi'ites, participated in demonstrations in the main cities, among them Karachi, Lahore, Quetta and Peshawar. They carried signs condemning the United States and Israel, and protested the attacks on the grave of Al-Set Zaynab south of Damascus in Syria, a Shi'ite holy site (Shiitenews.com website, August 2, 2013).



Left: Shi'ite children demonstrate in Pakistan (English.alarabiya.net website, August 2, 2013).
Right: Shi'ite demonstration in Palestinian (Thejakartapost.com website, August 3, 2013).



An event in Pakistan (Shiitenews.com website, August 2, 2013)

Afghanistan

27. Demonstrations were held in several cities in Afghanistan, especially in Kabul, the capital.



The demonstration in Kabul (YouTube, August 2, 2013).

India

28. Events were held in New Delhi, where several hundred demonstrators gathered near the Parliament building in a show of support for the Palestinians, and protested the so-called Israeli occupation. Events were also held in other cities in India, and in Kashmir as well.



Left: The demonstration in New Delhi (Scoop.it website, August 2, 2013). Right: Demonstration in Kashmir (YouTube, August 2, 2013)



Demonstration in India (India.shafaqna.com website, August 2, 2013)

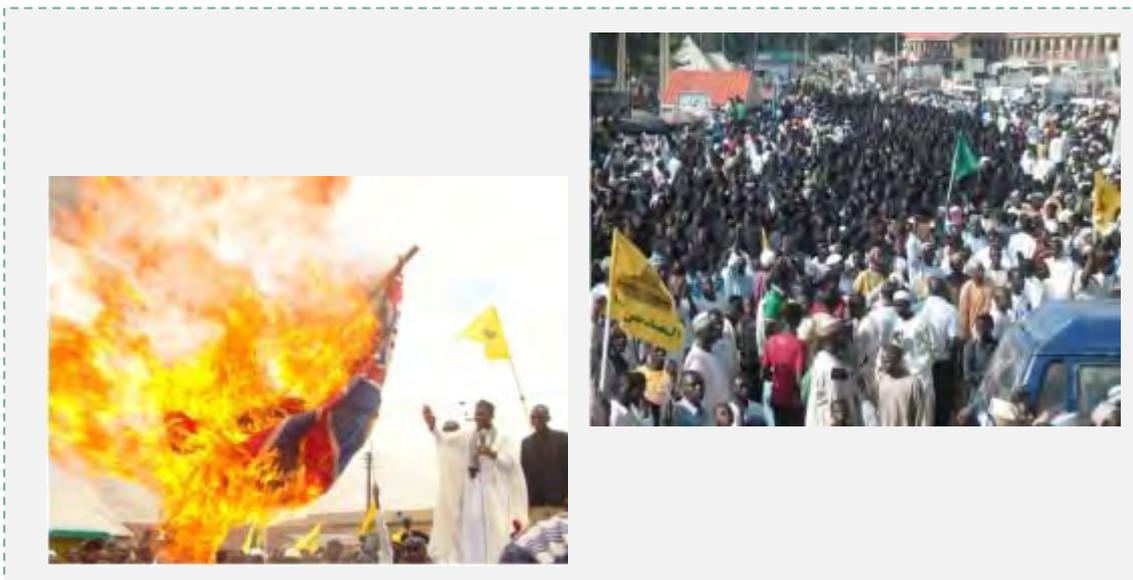
Mauritania



The event in Mauritania (YouTube)

Nigeria

29. Jerusalem Day events were held in Zaria, a major city in northern Nigeria. A mass demonstration was held and participants held signs and chanted slogans of solidarity with the Palestinian people. They also held banners denouncing the United States for its support of Israel. They events were widely covered by the Iranian media and Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV in Lebanon.



The mass demonstration in Zaria, Nigeria. Left: Burning the British flag (Al-Manar, August 2, 2013).