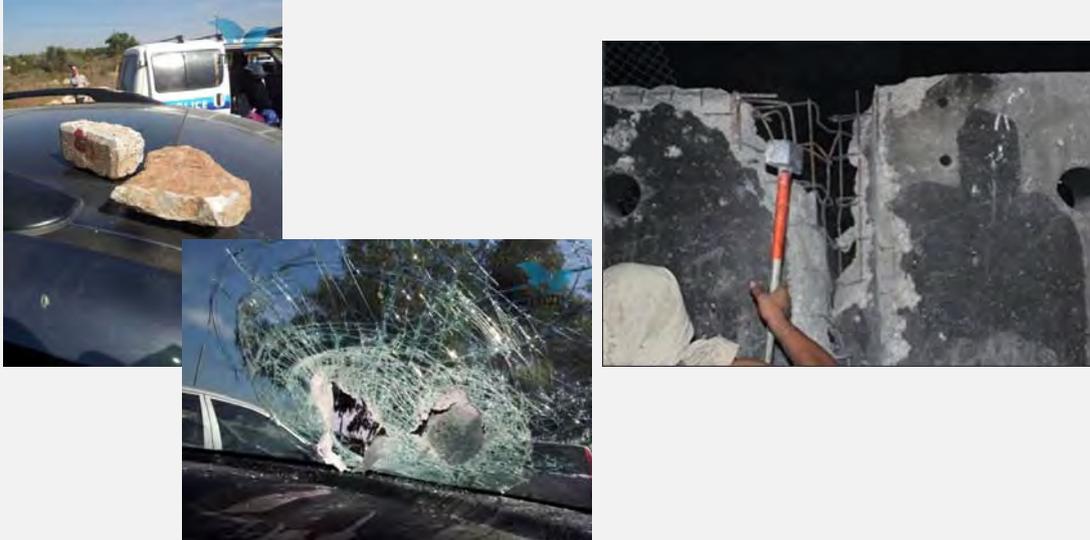




News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict October 23 – 29, 2013



Popular resistance violence continues in Judea and Samaria. Left and middle pictures: Israeli vehicle damaged by stones thrown near Kafr Azoun (Photo by Sraya Diamant, Tazpit News Agency, October 24, 2013). Right: Popular resistance activists vandalize the security fence at Abu Dis (Ma'an News Agency, October 22, 2013).

Overview

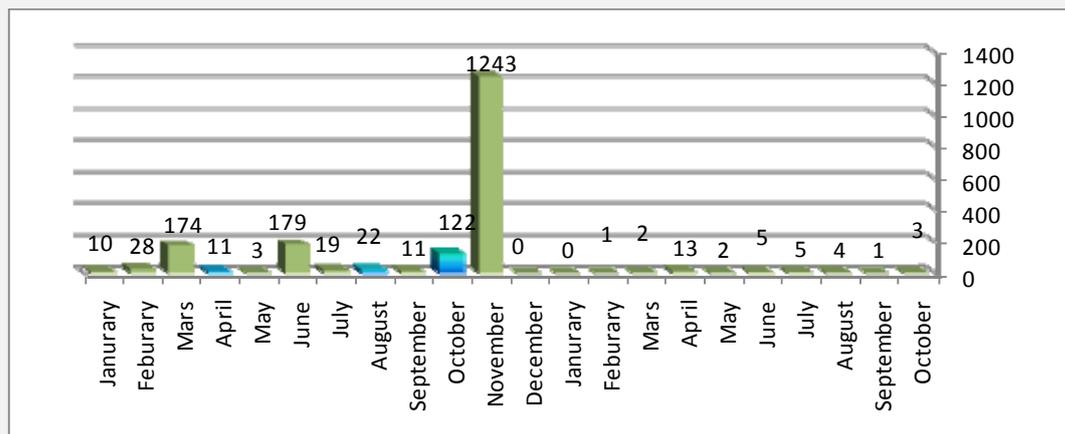
- This week rocket and mortar shell fire from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory recommenced. Two rocket hits were identified near the southern Israeli city of Ashqelon and two mortar shell hits were identified in an open area in the western Negev. In response Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip. In Judea and Samaria violence continued as part of what is known as the popular resistance, including stones thrown at Israeli vehicles.
- The release of 26 Palestinian terrorists was implemented on the night of October 29, 2013. The released prisoners carried out terrorist attacks before the Oslo Accords and were sentenced to long prison terms. Almost all of them belong to Fatah. The families of the Israeli victims protested strongly and the release caused a fierce political debate. The Palestinian Authority (PA), headed by Mahmoud Abbas, held a formal reception for the released terrorists at the Muqata'a in Ramallah.

The Situation in Israel's South

Rocket Fire

- On October 28, 2013, two rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory near the southern city of Ashqelon. One was successfully intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system and the other fell in an open area. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (IDF spokesman and Ynet, October 28, 2013).
- On the afternoon of October 27, 2013, two mortar shells fell in an open agricultural area in the western Negev near the security fence. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Western Negev spokesperson, October 27, 2013).

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since January 1, 2012¹



Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), 36 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory, including five rockets fired at the southern Israeli city of Eilat.

¹ As of October 29, 2013. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire²



Since January 1, 2013, 36 rocket hits have been identified.

Israeli Air Force Response

- In response to the rocket fire Israeli aircraft attacked terrorist targets in the northern Gaza Strip, destroying two underground rocket launchers (IDF spokesman, October 28, 2013).
- The Palestinian media reported that no one was injured in the attacks (Al-Aqsa TV and Filastin Al-'Aan, October 28, 2013). After the attack Hamas said in a statement that it held Israel responsible for what it called "showcase escalation." It warned Israel not to exploit the peace negotiations and its security cooperation with the PA to attack the Gaza Strip (Hamainfo website, October 28, 2013).

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.



The results of the IAF attack on the rocket launchers (Alresala.net website, October 28, 2013).

Judea and Samaria

Terrorist Who Planned Bus Explosion in Tel Aviv during Operation Pillar of Defense Killed

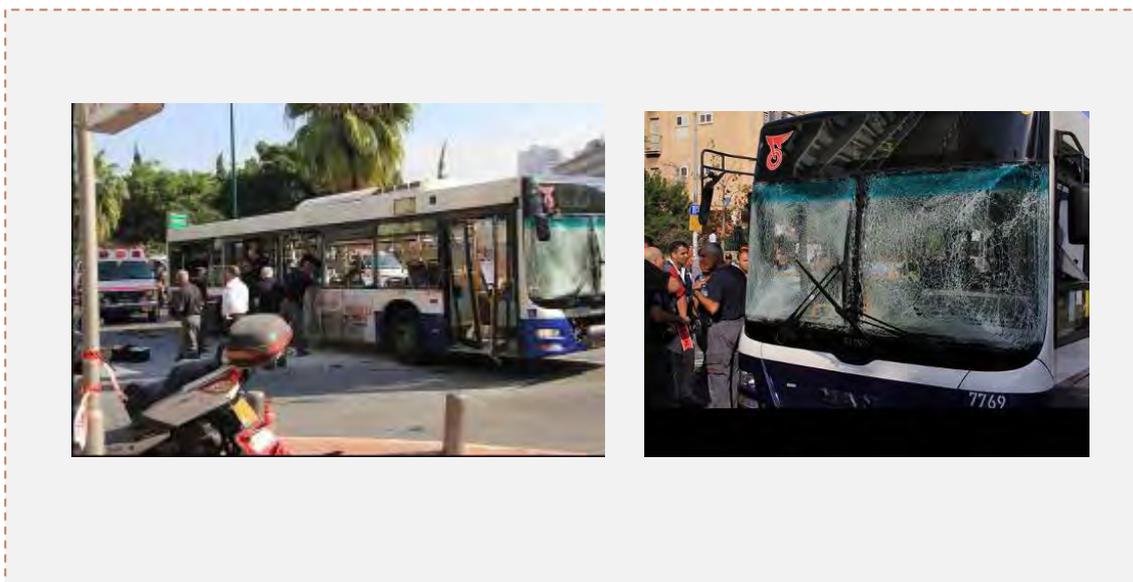
■ On October 22, 2013, **Muhammad Rabah Shukri 'Asi** was killed by Israeli security force fire near the village of Bil'in. He was one of the terrorists who planned to explode a bomb on a bus full of passengers in Tel Aviv during Operation Pillar of Defense. When IDF forces came to detain him he fled and then opened fire, barricading himself inside a cave. He was killed in the ensuing exchange of fire with the IDF soldiers. Two Palestinians who aided him were detained, both members of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). Both of them had been detained in the past (IDF spokesman, October 22, 2013).

■ **Muhammad 'Asi** came from the village of Beit Lakia, near Ramallah. He was born in 1985. He was a **PIJ terrorist operative** and had been imprisoned in Israel a number of times for terrorist activities. He was one of the planners of the November 21, 2012 terrorist attack on a Tel Aviv bus during Operation Pillar of Defense (IDF spokesman, October 22, 2013). **After his death there were conflicting reports about his organizational affiliation.** Hamas' military-terrorist wing issued an announcement claiming that he was a Hamas operative and that the attack on the bus in Tel Aviv had been carried out by a Hamas squad (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website, October 22, 2013). However, a PIJ spokesman claimed that he belonged to the PIJ (Filastin al-Yawm, October 22, 2013).



Left: The death notice issued by Hamas' military-terrorist wing (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website, October 22, 2013). Right: The death notice issued by the PIJ (Paltoday website, October 22, 2013).

■ The attack on the Tel Aviv bus was carried out on November 21, 2012, the last day of Operation Pillar of Defense, injuring 29 people. The terrorists who carried it out were detained the same day, members of networks affiliated with Hamas and the PIJ, most of them from Beit Lafia. During interrogation they said they had placed an IED on the bus and that the plan was to have it detonated remotely by cell phone. They enlisted an Israeli Arab from Taybeh (who was originally from Beit Lafia) to take the device to Tel Aviv and place it in a bus. He then informed the terrorist operative responsible for the operation in Beit Lafia, who detonated it using a cell phone (IDF spokesman, November 22, 2012).



The bus after the explosion (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, November 21, 2012)

■ **Senior figures in the PA expressed their condolences to the family.**

Mahmoud Abbas sent a communiqué stating that he sent his condolences to the family on the death of their son, who was "killed in cold blood by the army of the occupation" (Wafa News Agency, October 23, 2013).³ At its weekly meeting the Palestinian government condemned the so-called "killing of civilian Muhammad 'Asi" in Bil'in (Wafa News Agency, October 23, 2013). **Hussein al-'Araj**, head of Mahmoud Abbas' office, also sent condolences to the family, condemning the "daily crimes carried out by the occupation" against the Palestinian people (Website of the Palestinian presidential guard, October 23, 2013).

■ Muhammad 'Asi's funeral was held in Beit Lakia. It was attended by representatives of the Palestinian terrorist organizations, led by senior PIJ and Hamas figures. The body was draped with a PIJ flag. The funeral was also attended by Ms. Layla Ghanem, governor of the Ramallah district.



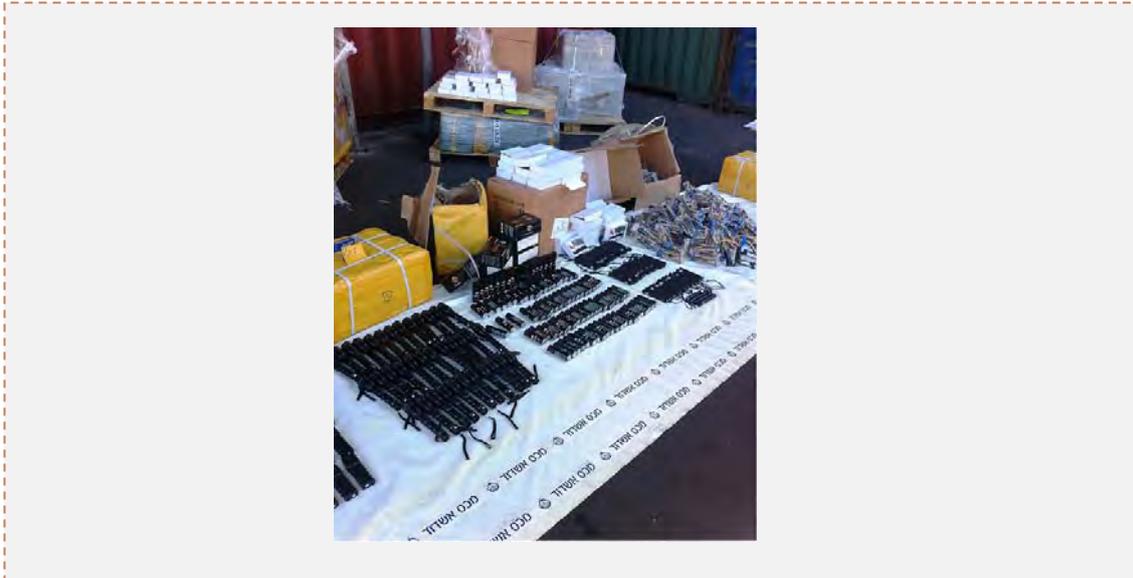
Layla Ghanem, left, governor of the Ramallah district, at the funeral of terrorist operative Muhammad 'Asi (Facebook page of the Friends of Layla Ghanem, October 23, 2013)

Smuggling of Weapons into Judea and Samaria Prevented

■ On October 23, 2013, Israeli customs inspectors at the port of Ashdod in Israel's south found more than 14,000 cold weapons and other items whose import into Israel is banned. They were hidden in a container destined for Judea and Samaria, which the importer claimed contained jewelry, purses, hair ornaments, etc.

³ The communiqué was later removed from the Wafa News Agency website, but it remains on the website of the PA's presidential guard and on the website of Fatah's information bureau.

■ The container, which aroused the suspicions of the customs inspectors, was X-rayed and found to contain 4,000 electric shockers shaped like small flashlights, 1,000 iron clubs, 3,200 units of pepper spray, 2,000 slings and 400 laser pointers. The contained was sent from China and **consigned to a Palestinian from Hebron**. An investigation carried out by the Israel Police and the Customs Authority revealed that the importer planned to sell the merchandise to the Palestinian security forces (Spokesman for the Israel Customs' Authority, October 24, 2013).



The cold weapons and other equipment found in the container (Spokesman for the Israel Customs' Authority, October 24, 2013)

■ In response **Adnan al-Dhameri**, spokesman for the PA's security forces, claimed that the container had held a consignment of fireworks and firecrackers sold to children in Israeli stores and that Israel was trying to turn it into an issue (ASIA News Agency, October 25, 2013).

Violence Continues in Judea and Samaria

■ Violence continued in Judea and Samaria, part of the so-called popular resistance. Scores of stones were thrown at Israeli civilians and Israeli security forces, as well as Molotov cocktails. In addition, a shooting attack and the throwing of an improvised bomb were also reported. The most prominent attacks were the following:

- On **October 26, 2013**, eight Israelis and a Palestinian girl were injured when stones were thrown at a bus and car near the village of Al-Fawar (Southern Mount Hebron). They received medical treatment and were later evacuated to a hospital (Ynet, October 26, 2013).

- On **October 26, 2013**, an Israeli driver at the Deir Qaddis junction (near Modi'in) reported he had been shot at. Two bullet holes were found in his car. The Israeli security forces searched the area (Tazpit News Agency, October 26, 2013).
- On **October 25, 2013**, a bomb, apparently improvised was thrown at a school bus near the village of Yabud (northern Samaria). There were two children in the bus at the time. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Ynet, October 26, 2013).
- On **October 24, 2013**, stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near the village of Azoun (east of Qalqiliya). A resident of Jerusalem sustained minor injuries (Tazpit News Agency, October 24, 2013).
- On **October 22, 2013**, popular resistance committee activists in Abu Dis vandalized the security fence (Ma'an News Agency, October 23, 2013).

Media Reports PA Security Forces Expose Squad Planning to Launch UAV

- The Israeli media reported that the **PA's security forces caught a Hamas squad in Hebron planning to launch an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) into Israeli territory**. Senior Hamas figures then sharply criticized the PA for its security cooperation with Israel. **Salah al-Bardawil**, a senior Hamas figure, said that the apprehension of the squad was one of the "fruits of the coordination" senior Fatah figures, led by Mahmoud Abbas, were so proud of (Paltoday website, October 25, 2013).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Crossings

- After six days during which the Rafah crossing was open, primarily for pilgrims returning from Mecca, it closed on October 25, 2013 (Al-Ra'i, October 25, 2013). It is not known when it will reopen.

The Worsening Economic Situation in the Gaza Strip

- Hamas continued to report economic damage to the Gaza Strip resulting from the closing of the crossing points and tunnels. **Hatem Oweida**, deputy minister of the economy in the de-facto Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip, said that serious losses had been incurred by industry, commerce, agriculture, transport and construction, and that the losses amounted to \$230 million a month (Safa News

Agency and the Alresala.net website, October 27, 2013). A sharp decline was also reported in fuel consumption because of the high cost of importing fuel from Israel, as opposed to the lower price of fuel smuggled in through the tunnels, and because of the limited buying power of the Gazan public (Al-Ayam, October 27, 2013).

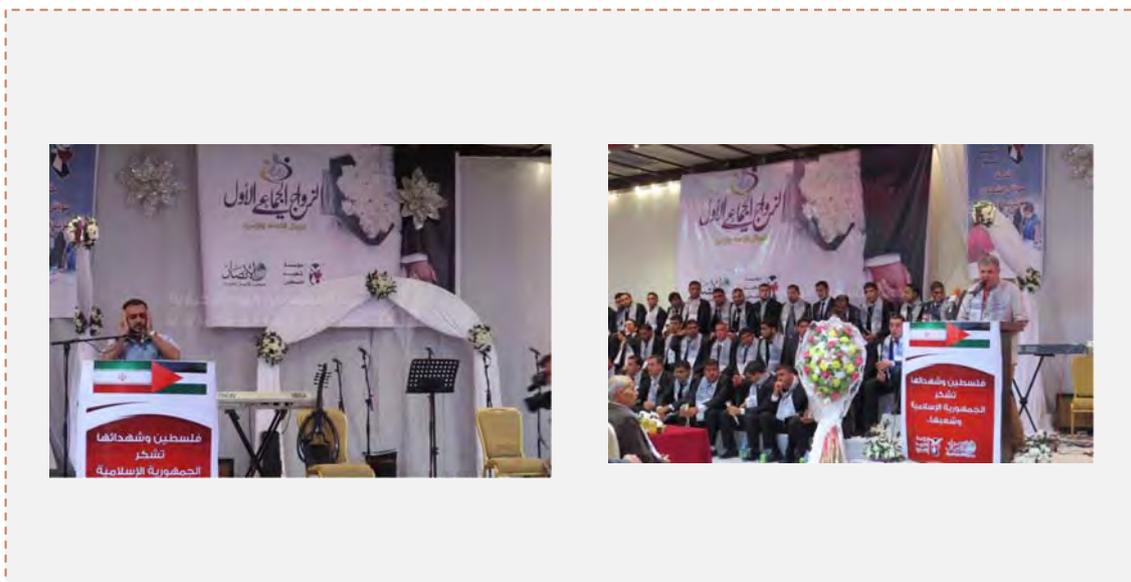
Hamas Calls for the Abduction of Israeli Soldiers

■ On the anniversary of the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal Hamas called for **the abduction of more Israeli soldiers**. **Rawhi Mushtaha**, one of the Palestinian terrorists released in the deal, a member of Hamas political bureau and holder of the prisoner affairs portfolio, said in an interview that Hamas would work for the release of all the prisoners in Israeli jails. He said the options of "resistance" were open and that abducting Israeli soldiers was one of them (Alresala.net website, October 23, 2013). **Musheir al-Masri**, a Hamas member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, said that the Gilad Shalit deal had encouraged the "resistance" to repeat the success and that the "resistance" would do everything in its power to release the prisoners (Al-Ra'i, October 23, 2013).

Iranian Support for a PIJ Charitable Society in the Gaza Strip

■ On October 24, 2013, the PIJ-affiliated Al-Ansar charitable society held a mass wedding ceremony in the Gaza Strip for 162 couples who belonged to families of Palestinian shaheeds. **The full cost of the event was borne by the Palestinian Shaheed Institution, a branch of the Iranian Shaheed Institution**, to help the families of Palestinian shaheeds.⁴ It was also reported that during the most recent Muslim religious month of Ramadan (July 2013) Iran sent the PIJ in the Gaza Strip food packages costing \$2 million for distribution to the needy (Paltoday website, October 25, 2013).

⁴ The **Palestinian Shaheed Institution** is a branch of the Iranian Shaheed Institution, established in Iran on the orders of the Ayatollah Khomeini. The Palestinian branch was established in 1993 primarily to support the families of shaheeds. It supports 5,700 families in the PA and beyond. Its offices are located in Lebanon.



The mass wedding ceremony in the Gaza Strip. On the podium are the flags of Iran and Palestine, and the inscription reads "Palestine and its shaheeds thank the Islamic Republic [of Iran] and its people" (Paltoday website, October 25, 2013).

The Palestinian Authority

Prisoners Released as Part of the Negotiations

- The government of Israel announced that following the decision made by the government on July 28, 2013, to renew the peace process with the Palestinians, **26 more Palestinian prisoners would be released as a gesture to the PA**. According to the announcement, any prisoner who resumed hostile activities would be returned to prison to serve the rest of his sentence (Prime Minister's website, October 29, 2013).
- **The prisoners were released on the night of October 29, 2013.** Most of the 26 prisoners on the list were sentenced to one of more terms of life imprisonment. All of them committed their crimes before the Oslo Accords, and served terms of between 19 and 28 years. Some of them were detained after the Oslo Accords were signed. Twenty-one of them will return to Judea and Samaria, and five to the Gaza Strip.
- The PA, led by Mahmoud Abbas, gave the prisoners a formal reception at the Muqata'a in Ramallah. They were greeted by Mahmoud Abbas and other senior PA figures. Other receptions were expected in the various Judea and Samaria districts (Al-Ayam and the Ma'an News Agency, October 27, 2013). **Saeb Erekat**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, again noted that the release of prisoners who

served long sentences did not depend on the negotiations or the continued construction in the settlements, but was rather linked to the Palestinian commitment to rejecting requests to join international institutions during the nine months of the negotiations, according to the agreement signed with American sponsorship. Therefore, he said, Israel's attempts to link [different] issues [to the release of the prisoners] were "deceptive, wrong and false" and their objective was to hide the internal contradictions inherent in the Israeli coalition (Ma'an News Agency, October 27, 2013).

The Palestinian Terrorist Operatives Whose Release Was Expected

No.	Name	Affiliation	Information
1	Muhammad Ibrahim Muhammad Nasr	Fatah	Residents of Ramallah. Detained in 1985. Sentenced to life imprisonment
2	Rafa' Farhoud Muhammad Karajeh	Fatah	for the murder of IDF reservist soldier Aharon Avidar in 1985 when Avidar was guarding the customs offices in Ramallah.
3	Muhammad Ahmed Mahmoud al-Sabbagh	Fatah	Resident of the Jenin refugee camp. Detained in 1991. Sentenced to three consecutive terms of life imprisonment for the murder of two Palestinians suspected of collaborating with Israel.
4	Hazem Qassem Taher Shubeir	Fatah	Resident of the Gaza Strip. Detained in 1994. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the axe murder of Isaac Rothenberg.
5	Hilmi Hamad Obeid al- Amawi	Fatah	Resident of the Gaza Strip. Detained in 1993. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the stabbing Yigael Klein to death in the village of Batzra.
6	Ahmed Sa'id Muhammad al- Damouni	Fatah	Resident of the Gaza Strip. Detained in 1990. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of reserve IDF soldier Amnon Pomerantz in the al-Bureij refugee camp in the

			central Gaza Strip.
7	Yussuf Awad Muhammad Masalha	Fatah	Resident of the Gaza Strip. Detained in 1993. Sentenced to two terms of life imprisonment for the murders of David Reuven in Petah Tikva and Yigael Vaknin in the village of Batzra.
8	Sharif Hassan Atiq Abu Dhaila	Fatah	Resident of Nablus. Detained in 1992. Sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering his employer, Avi Osher, in the date fields of the village of Massua.
9	Mustafa Amar Muhammad Ghnaimat	Fatah	Residents of the village of Surif in the Hebron district. Detained in 1985.
10	Ziyad Mahmud Muhammad Ghnaimat	Fatah	Sentenced to life imprisonment for the murders of Meir Ben-Yair and Michal Cohen in the Massua Forest of Jerusalem.
11	Rizaq Ali Khadher Salah	Fatah	Resident of Bethlehem. Detained in 1993. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of IDF soldier Guy Friedman in Bethlehem.
12	Afu Musbah Nofal Shukeir	Fatah	Resident of Nablus. Detained in 1986. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the abduction and murder of IDF reservist soldier Akiva Shaltiel whose body was found in the village of Beit Arieh.
13	Muayad Salim Mahmoud Haja	Fatah	Resident of Nablus. Detained in 1992. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of Yosef Shirazi in Eilat. Haja belonged to a terrorist squad that swam from the Jordanian port of Aqaba to Eilat and planned to carry out a terrorist attack on the Eilat-Taba road.
14	Najah Muhammad Badawi Muqbel	Fatah	Resident of Hebron. Detained in 1990. Sentenced to a term of 38 years for

			the murder of his employer, Yaakov Shalom, owner of an inn in Ein Kerem.
15	Haza'a Muhammad Haza'a Sa'adi	Fatah	Residents of Jenin. Detained in 1985. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the
16	Othman Abdallah Mahmoud Bani Hassan	Fatah	murder of Yosef Eliahu and Leah Almakayas on the Gilboa.
17	Abd al-Rahman Yussuf Mahmoud al-Haj	Fatah	Resident of Qalqiliya. Detained in 1992. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of Genia Friedman and for stabbing passersby on the streets of Kfar Saba.
18	Ahmed Sa'id Qassem Abd al-Aziz	Fatah	Residents of Jenin. Ahmed al-Aziz was detained in 1993, the other two in
19	Osama Zakari Awadi' Abu Hanana	Fatah	1992. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of Motti Biton, whom
20	Muhammad Yussuf Suleiman Turkeman	Fatah	they shot in his grocery store at the Jenin-Jezreel junction in 1992.
21	Issa Nimer Jibril Abd Rabbo	Fatah	Resident of Bethlehem. Detained in 1984. Sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of Revital Seri and Ron Levi who were hiking close to the Cremisan monastery near Jerusalem. He tied them up, put sacks on their heads and shot them at close range.
22	Muhammad Musbah Khalil Ashour	Fatah	Resident of Ramallah. Detained in 1985. Sentenced to a term of 30 years for the murder of taxi driver David Caspi.
23	Omar Issa Rajeb Masoud	PFLP	Resident of the Gaza Strip. Detained in 1993. Sentenced to three consecutive terms of life imprisonment for the murders of Ian Feinberg, a lawyer, and of three Palestinians suspected of collaborating with Israel.
24	Khaled Daoud Ahmed Azraq	Fatah	Resident of Bethlehem. Detained in 1991. Sentenced to life imprisonment

			for the murder of Shimon Cohen in the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem using an IED.
25	Israr Mustafa Kaleib Samarin	Fatah	Residents of Ramallah. Detained in 1992. Sentenced to life imprisonment
26	Musa Izzat Musa Qura'an		for the murder of Zvi Klein. The two opened fire on Klein's car in the center of Al-Bireh; Klein lived in the village of Ofra and was on his way home.

The Palestinian Prisoners' Organizations Escalate Their Anti-Israeli Protests

■ **Qadoura Fares**, chairman of the Palestinian Prisoners' Club, **Shaawan Jabarin**, director-general of Al-Haq, and **Jamal al-Tawil**, the former mayor of Al-Bireh, held a press conference in Ramallah where **they announced the escalation of the protest of the Palestinian administrative detainees held in Israel**. According to Qadoura Fares, as of October 25, 2013, the Palestinian administrative detainees would boycott the military courts and hold a hunger strike every Monday. Later, he said, they would intensify their protest by extending the hunger strike to three days a week and refusing to receive medical treatment at the clinics of the Israeli prisons. According to Shaawan Jabarin, "it is a brave step and will expose how the occupation denies the Palestinian prisoners their rights, and will shed light on the issue of administrative detentions, which must be ended" (Watan TV, October 24, 2013).



From left to right: Former Al-Bireh Mayor Jamal al-Tawil, Palestinian Prisoners' Club Chairman Qadoura Fares, and Al-Haq Director-General Shaawan Jabarin (Watan TV, October 24, 2013).