



May 1, 2014

The funeral held in Al-Bireh for two senior Hamas terrorist operatives, brothers whose remains were returned to the Palestinian Authority by Israel, was exploited by Hamas for a show of force in Judea and Samaria – although Hamas continues its commitment to the internal Palestinian reconciliation.



Hamas-affiliated flags dominate the funeral held in Al-Bireh for Adel and Imad Awadallah (Filastin Al-'Aan, April 30, 2014).

Overview

1. On April 30, 2014, Hamas held a **mass-attended funeral** in Al-Bireh for two brothers, **Adel and Imad Awadallah**, two of its senior operatives whose remains were returned to the Palestinian Authority (PA) by Israel on April 19, 2014.¹ Hamas exploited the funeral to show its force within the Palestinian population. Khaled Mashaal, chairman of Hamas' political bureau (in a transmitted speech), and senior Hamas figures in Judea and Samaria (who were in attendance) stressed that **jihād [i.e., the path of terrorism] was the best way to "liberate Palestine"** "from the [Mediterranean] sea to the [Jordan] river," and called on the PA to stop negotiating with Israel. In the same breath Khaled Mashaal reiterated Hamas' commitment to the

¹ On April 30, 2014, a third terrorist operative whose remains were returned by Israel was buried in 'Aqaba in the Jenin district. He was **Izz al-Din al-Masri**, the terrorist operative who carried out the suicide bombing attack at the Sbarro restaurant in Jerusalem in 2001. The attack killed 19 Israelis and wounded 140.

internal Palestinian reconciliation and said that in addition to jihad and the armed "resistance" (which is Hamas' main strategy), political and diplomatic activities to "pursue Israel" around the globe should not be rejected.

The Funeral

2. The funeral of the Awadallah brothers was held on April 30, 2014, permitted by the PA in the shadow of the internal Palestinian reconciliation. In our assessment, the funeral was controlled by Hamas, and held without the significant presence of PA security forces and without any meaningful attempt to cast the funeral as official or Palestinian-governmental (as opposed to previous funerals for terrorist operative remains returned to the PA by Israel, which were attended by senior PA figures).

3. The Awadallah brothers were among the founders of Hamas' military-terrorist wing in Judea and Samaria. They were killed on September 10, 1988, in an exchange of fire with IDF forces near Tarqumia in the Hebron district. The cortege left from the larger of Al-Bireh's two mosques and proceeded to the local cemetery. For the most part, participants carried green Hamas-affiliated flags. They demanded revenge for "the blood of the martyrs" (*shaheeds*), called to strike Israel, condemned the PA's security coordination with Israel, demanded an end to the negotiations with Israel and chanted "Death to Israel" (Zaman Press website, eremnews.com, April 30 2014).



Left: Coffin of terrorist operative Imad Awadallah decorated with his picture and the insignia of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades and Hamas (Filastin Al-'Aan, April 30, 2014). Right: Poster of terrorist operative Adel Awadallah. The insignia the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades is at the left and of Hamas at the right (Pis48.net, April 30, 2014)



Banner carried during the funeral held in Al-Bireh for the Awadallah brothers. The inscription reads, "The beginning of the path is in giving blood [of the shaheeds]... We will not abandon the shaheeds Adel and Imad Awadallah" (Roya TV, April 30 2014).

Speeches Given at the Funeral

4. Prominent Hamas figures in Judea and Samaria attended the funeral, among them **Aziz Dweik**, Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) chairman, senior Hamas figure **Hassan Yousef**, and **Ahmed Mubarak**, a member of the PLC. **Aziz Dweik** accused Israel of carrying out a so-called "war crime" and called on the PA to join the Rome Convention to be able to bring Israel's leaders to trial. **Hassan Yousef** called for the negotiations with Israel to be ended and for the internal Palestinian reconciliation to be completed. He said that the **path of individual sacrifice and jihad were the shortest paths to achieving the "rights" of the Palestinians and the "liberation of Palestine" from the Mediterranean to the Jordan**, including the "purification of Jerusalem," the Al-Aqsa mosque and the holy places (Eremnews.com, April 30 2014).



Left: Hassan Yousef delivers a speech at the Awadallah brothers' funeral (YouTube, April 30, 2014). Right: Aziz Dweik at funeral (pls48.net, April 30, 2014).

5. **Khaled Mashaal**, chairman of Hamas' political bureau, gave a transmitted speech. In it he praised the two terrorist operatives for their jihad spirit and sacrifice for the sake of Allah. He said that **joint action had to be taken, in the form of jihad and political action, to restore Palestinian land and be liberated from the "occupation."** He said Palestinian goals would be achieved "through jihad and resistance [i.e., terrorism and violence] and through reconciliation, national unity, closing ranks, and unity of leadership, the unity of the source of authority, the unity of political rule and the unity of decision-making" (Al-Aqsa TV, April 30, 2014). He said that "it is our path that will make the internal reconciliation succeed. The Gaza Strip is not a burden, is not outside [the parameters of] the process." He also said that "**in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria, in Israel and abroad, our choice is resistance and our path is the rifle.**" However, he added that "**we are also in favor of policies, diplomacy and pursuing Israel internationally**" (Palestine-info.info, April 30, 2014).

6. **Salah al-Arouri**, a member of the Hamas political bureau and holder of the "prisoners portfolio,"² was interviewed via satellite TV from **Istanbul**. He said that the day [of the funeral] was important in the history of the jihad and struggle in the West Bank. He said the "option of resistance" had not disappeared, it was in sleeper cells and had gone underground because of external pressure, but **it would reawaken and arise at the first opportunity**. He said the Palestinians **had no other way to extricate themselves from the occupation except for the path of jihad, which had a toll of casualties**. He added that the Palestinians were at a crossroads because

² **Salah al-Arouri** was one of the founders of Hamas' military-terrorist wing in Judea and Samaria. He was imprisoned in Israel for 15 years and released in 2007.

their attempts to restore their rights by means of the UN, UN agencies and international institutions **had reached a dead end** (Al-Aqsa TV, April 30, 2014).

7. **Hassan Badran**, Hamas' international spokesman, interviewed in Doha, Qatar, said that "it was a day of joy and honor for the entire Palestinian people, not just the Hamas movement...**Anyone who says the resistance cannot arise again and attack the occupation is wrong**, because the resistance is used to acting under surveillance?"(Al-Aqsa TV, April 30, 2014).