



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

May 14 – 20, 2014



Palestinians confront the Israeli security forces near the Ofer jail during a Nakba Day riot (Paltoday.ps, May 15, 2014). Two teen-aged Palestinians were killed.

Overview

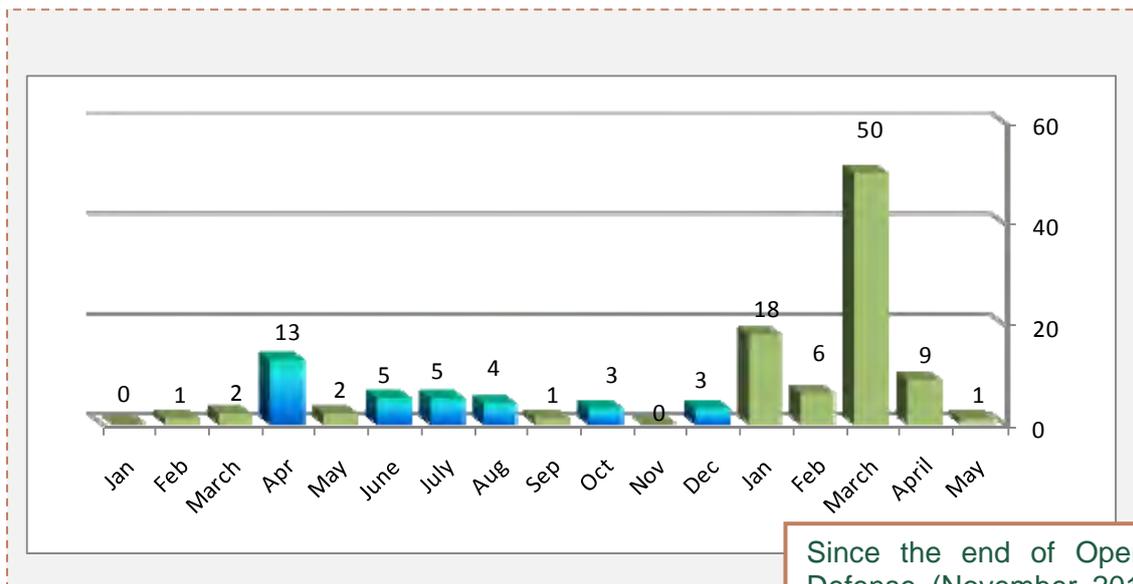
- This past week Israel's south was quiet. In Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, Nakba Day passed without exceptional incidents, with the exception of a violent clash near the Ofer jail where two teen-aged Palestinians were killed while confronting Israeli security forces. Hamas announced that one of them was a Hamas member. The Palestinian Authority blamed Israel for their deaths. The Israeli media reported that the IDF had ordered an investigation of the event.
- Mahmoud Abbas met with American Secretary of State John Kerry. According to a State Department spokesperson, Kerry told Mahmoud Abbas that the United States would not be able to support the internal Palestinian reconciliation unless Hamas "foreswore military operations" against Israel and publicly recognized its right to exist. This past week Hamas and Fatah continued making mutual gestures as part of the reconciliation agreement, however the fundamental problems have not yet been resolved.
- Nakba Day events were exploited again this year to vilify and demonize Israel. Special emphasis was put on the issue of the so-called "right of return," described as a "sacred right" that could not be waived. Israel was accused of having carried out "organized ethnic cleansing" in 1948, which led to giving the "keys to the [Palestinian] homeland to bloodsuckers" (Palestinian TV, May 15, 2014).

The Security Situation in Israel's South

Rocket Fire into Israel

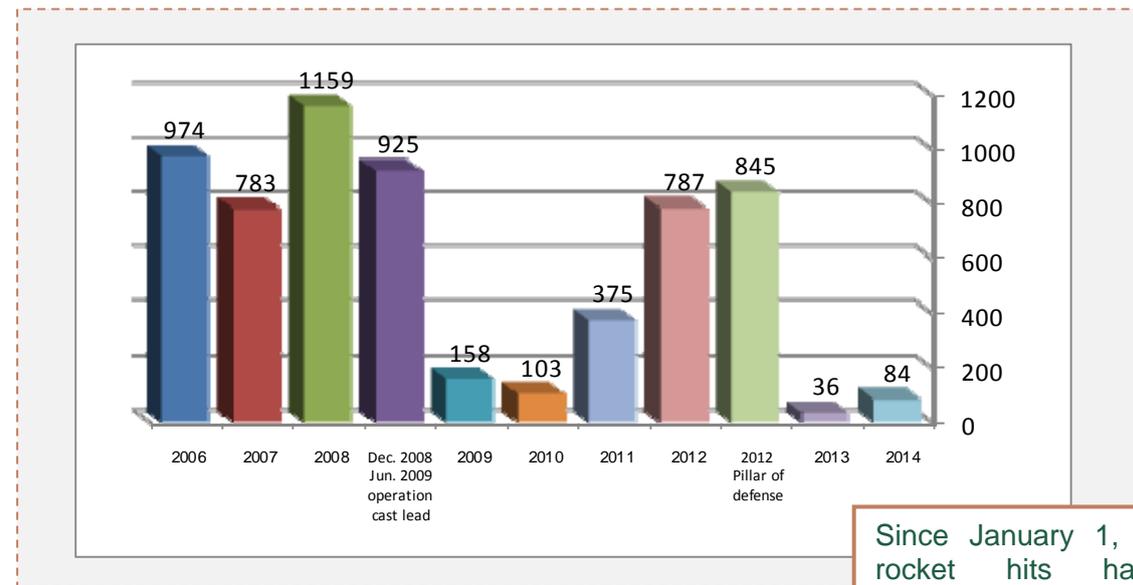
- This past week no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israeli territory.

Rocket Hits in Israeli Territory since January 1, 2013¹



Since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012), 123 rocket hits have been identified in Israeli territory, including eight rockets fired at the southern Israeli city of Eilat.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire in Israel's South²



Since January 1, 2013, 123 rocket hits have been identified.

¹ May 20, 2014. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire and rocket hits inside the Gaza Strip.

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

Israeli Arab Detained; Returned from Fighting in the Ranks of the Global Jihad in Syria

- On **April 20, 2014**, Israeli security forces detained **Ahmed Imad Hiri Shurbaji**, 23, from Umm al-Fahm in northern Israel. He went to Syria in January 2014 and **joined the ranks of a global jihad organization**. Investigation revealed that he went to join the struggle against the Syrian regime, and once there joined the **Islamic State in Iraq and Greater Syria** (ISIS).
- He underwent military training which included firing light arms and heavy machine guns, and theoretical instruction in operating various types of weapons (grenades, RPG launchers). He said he had participated in at least two battles and had joined in planned operational activities in various regions in Syria, including areas close to the Syria-Iraq border.
- In our assessment, **so far at least 20 Israeli Arabs** have joined the fighting in the ranks of the rebels. Most of them join organizations affiliated the global jihad, and at least one of them was killed in battle.³

Judea and Samaria

Two Teen-Aged Palestinians Killed by Israeli Security Forces

- On **May 15, 2014** during the Nakba Day riots, two teen-aged Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces. They were participating in a violent clash with the IDF close to the Bitunya roadblock near the Ofer jail (south of Ramallah). Hamas said in an announcement that one of them had been a Hamas member (Al-Aqsa TV, May 15, 2014). The Israeli media reported that the IDF had ordered an investigation of the event.
- Hundreds of people, including Hamas and Fatah activists, participated in the funeral for the two Palestinians in Ramallah on May 16, 2014. One of the dead Palestinians was wrapped in a Hamas flag and the other in a Fatah flag. While the funeral was being held there were marches in Hebron, Gaza and Nablus attended by many Hamas activists. Riots were held in many locations throughout Judea and Samaria, as well as

³ For further information about Israeli Arabs in Syria, see the January 19, 2014 bulletin "[Israeli Arabs and Palestinians Join the Ranks of the Rebels in Syria, Mainly Organizations Affiliated with Al-Qaeda and the Global Jihad \(January 19, 2014\).](#)"

on the Temple Mount. The Palestinian Authority (PA) announced a general day of mourning (Wafa.ps, May 15, 2014).



Masked Palestinians riot and confront Israeli police on the Temple Mount (Quds.net, May 16, 2014).

- The PA strongly condemned the killing of the two Palestinians. **Ihab Bsaiso**, spokesman for the Palestinian government, blamed Israel for their deaths, claiming that killing them was a violation of international conventions. He demanded immediate intervention from the international community (Wafa.ps, date, 2014).

- Following the deaths of the two Palestinians, **Adnan Dmeiri**, spokesman for the PA's security services, said in an announcement that in light of the conduct of the Israeli security forces in Bitunya, the Palestinians were considering whether or not to continue security coordination. He claimed that the event was an escalation of Israel's bad behavior, which included ending the negotiations and support for "Price Tag" groups.

Palestinian "Popular Resistance" Violence Continues

- This past week violent incidents continued in Judea and Samaria, part of the so-called "popular resistance." Stones were thrown at Israeli civilians and Israeli security forces and Molotov cocktails were thrown at vehicles on main roads. The Friday riots held at the traditional friction points (Bil'in, Ni'lin, Nebi Saleh, Qadoum, etc.). Most of the riots emphasized Nakba Day and solidarity with the administrative detainees holding hunger strikes in Israeli jails.

- Some of the events were the following:

- **May 13, 2014** – During an IDF detention operation in the village of Qadoum (near Nablus), 30 IDF stun grenades were found in the homes of several Palestinian security service operatives. They grenades were apparently intended for use in the riots held in Qadoum every week (IDF Spokesman, May 13, 2014).



Some of the stun grenades found in Qadoum (IDF Spokesman, May 13, 2014)

- **May 16, 2014** – An improvised IED was thrown at the house of Jewish family in east Jerusalem. After it exploded Palestinians began throwing stones at the house. They also threw stones at the Border Police forces called to the scene (Tazpit News Agency, May 16, 2014).
- **May 16, 2014** – Palestinians placed a burning tire on the fence of the Jewish village of Psagot. The fire damaged the fence (Tazpit News Agency, May 16, 2014).
- **May 19, 2014** – A tire was set on fire on the Alon Road near the village of Al-Mughir. Security forces arriving on the scene found a fake IED nearby (Tazpit News Agency, May 19, 2014).



Left: The fake IED. Right: The burning tire (Tazpit News Agency, May 19, 2014).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Rafah Crossing

- This past week the Rafah crossing was open a number of times, primarily for the exit of Gazan pilgrims. Two aid convoys entered the Gaza Strip: "Miles of Smiles 27" and "Algeria-Gaza 2," with a total of about 30 people. Their entry had been delayed by Egypt a number of times (Alresala.net, May 18, 2014). Trucks delivering building materials also entered the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing, destined for the Qatari building project (Saffad Press, May 18, 2014).



Receptions for the two aid convoys at the Rafah crossing (Filastin Al-'Aan, May 18, 2014).

■ On a visit to the Gaza Strip, **Azzam al-Ahmad**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, said that the Egyptian authorities had promised the Rafah crossing would be open all the time as soon as the [new] interim government was formed (Alresala.net, May 13, 2014). **Ahmed Abu Rush**, head of the Qatari committee in the Gaza Strip, said that Egypt had agreed to allow the remainder of the Qatari gift of fuel to be delivered to the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing. The delivery will begin next week (Alresala.net, May 14, 2014).

Egyptian Security Forces Prevent Smuggling

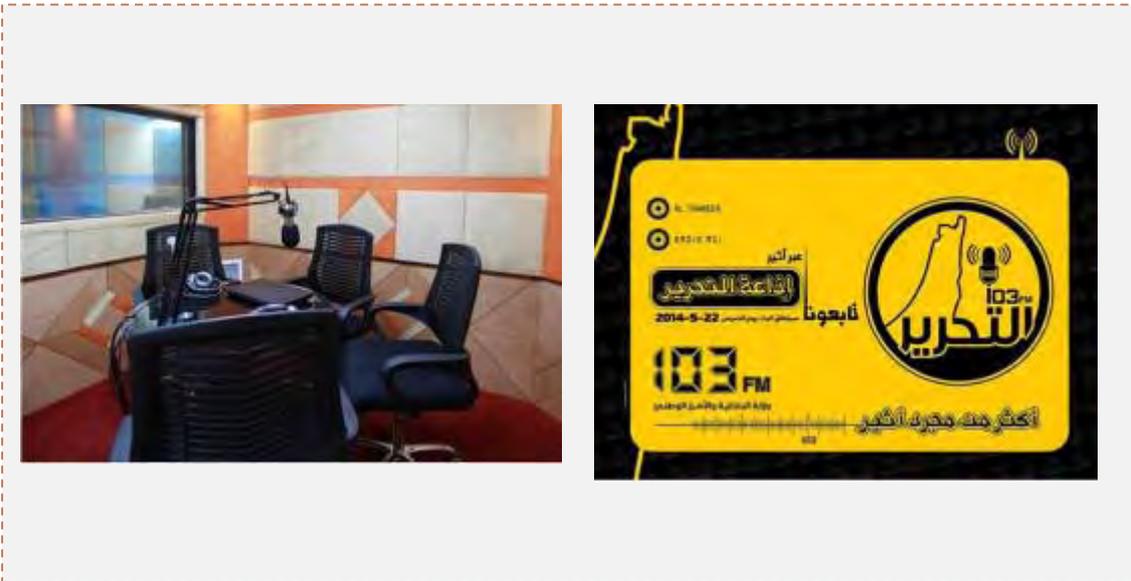
■ Egyptian security sources in the region of El-Qantarah (northern Egypt) reported the capture of a vehicle carrying two residents of El-Arish who tried to smuggle five tons of graphite, used to manufacture weapons. According to the report, a warehouse in El-Qantarah had been found where ten tons of graphite were stored (Facebook page of the spokesman for the Egyptian Armed Forces, May 14, 2014).

Egyptian Citizenship of Mahmoud al-Zahar Revoked

■ A senior source in the Egyptian ministry of the interior reported that the ministry had decided to revoke the Egyptian citizenship of senior Hamas figure **Mahmoud al-Zahar** and of his family, received during the reign of Mohamed Morsi. The reason given was Mahmoud al-Zahar's membership in Hamas. The source also said that 24,000 Palestinians had received Egyptian citizenship since 2011, 8,000 of them during the reign of Mohamed Morsi (Palpress.ps, May 17, 2014). Mahmoud al-Zahar denied that his citizenship had been revoked, saying that he had not received any announcement or document to that effect (Al-Youm Al-Sabea, May 17, 2014).

New Radio Station in the Gaza Strip

■ **The ministry of the interior of the de-facto Hamas administration** in the Gaza Strip announced its intention to launch a new radio station on May 22, 2014. The station will be called "**Radio al-Tahrir**" ("Radio Liberation"). Initially it will hold trial broadcasts every day between 0800 and 1700 hours. According to the ministry, its objective is to strengthen the ministry's connection with the residents of the Gaza Strip (Website of the Hamas administration ministry of the interior, May 19, 2014).



Left: The broadcasting studio. Right: Radio Liberation's logo (Facebook page of the Hamas administration ministry of the interior, May 20, 2014).

The Fatah-Hamas Reconciliation Agreement

Contacts to Form an Interim Reconciliation Government

- On **May 13, 2014**, **Azzam al-Ahmad**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee and Fatah representative to the reconciliation talks, arrived in the Gaza Strip. He met with a Hamas delegation headed by **Musa Abu Marzouq** to discuss forming the government (Maannews.net, May 13, 2014). After the meeting he met with **Ismail Haniya**, head of the de-facto Hamas administration (Filastin al-Yawm, May 14, 2014).



Azzam al-Ahmad meets with Ismail Haniya in the Gaza Strip (Filastin Al-'Aan, date, 2014)

■ According to **Musa Abu Marzouq**, Hamas and Fatah reached **an agreement regarding the interim government**. He added that Azzam al-Ahmad was supposed to deliver the document written during his visit to the Gaza Strip to Mahmoud Abbas for his inspection, and would visit the Gaza Strip again. In his assessment the interim government will be announced at the end of the time allotted by the reconciliation agreement for its formation (Anadolu News Agency, Turkey, May 17, 2014).

■ According to a general Palestinian estimate, in the coming days the formation of a new government will be announced, after ratification by Mahmoud Abbas and after **Azzam al-Ahmad** visits the Gaza Strip again for consultations. **Azzam al-Ahmad** said that the list of candidates for the interim government, which will have 15 ministers, would be given to Mahmoud Abbas for his inspection as soon as he returned from abroad (Venezuela). Mahmoud Abbas will have the right to head the government or to appoint someone else to head it (Dunia Al-Watan and the Voice of Palestine, May 18, 2014). As soon as the formation of the government is announced, the Hamas government will announce its resignation (Quds.net, May 18, 2014). The composition of the government will be presented to the Palestinian Legislative Council for ratification approximately a month after its formation, when Mahmoud Abbas convenes it, as stated in the reconciliation agreement (Filastin al-Yawm and Voice of Palestine, May 18, 2014).

Mutual Fatah-Hamas Gestures Continue

■ Fatah and Hamas continue making mutual tactical gestures, although the fundamental problems have not yet been resolved. Hamas emptied Mahmoud Abbas's house in the Gaza Strip and turned it over to operatives of the presidential guard, who went to the Gaza Strip specifically to receive it (Samanews.com and quds.net, May 14, 2014). The Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate announced its intention to reopen its office in the Gaza Strip, which was closed four years ago.



Evacuating Mahmoud Abbas's house in the Gaza Strip in preparation for turning it over to Fatah (Wantaniya TV, Gaza Strip, May 14, 2014).

The Nature and Role of the Palestinian Security Forces

- The nature and role of the Palestinian security forces is one of the fundamental issues that has not yet been resolved by the reconciliation agreement. **Ismail Haniya**, head of the de-facto Hamas administration, said that an Arab committee headed by Egypt would monitor the rebuilding of the security forces in **the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria** (according to the Cairo agreement). He said that during its rule in the Gaza Strip, Hamas had successfully restored security and stamped out anarchy, and that the status quo ante of anarchy would not be allowed to return under any condition (Safa News Agency, May 15, 2014).
- **Mahmoud al-Zahar**, a member of Hamas' political bureau, said that a distinction had to be made between the Palestinian security forces and the military wings of the various organizations. He said that a coordinator would be appointed to deal with the security forces of the Gaza Strip and West Bank and that the military wings of the various organizations were **not within the framework of the reconciliation discourse**. He said there were differences of opinion regarding the roles of the forces because in the Gaza Strip Israel was considered an enemy, and the PA had security coordination with Israel, which **Hamas would not agree to** (Almayadeen.net, May 14, 2014). **At a press conference held to mark Nakba Day, Mahmoud al-Zahar claimed that the reconciliation agreements considered any security coordination with Israel a "crime"** (Alresala.net, date, 2014).

■ Despite the claims of progress in the talks and the mutual gestures, **the PA security forces and those of the Hamas administration continue their detention policies**. Thus the Hamas administration security forces summoned Fatah activists in the Gaza Strip for interrogation (Safa News Agency, May 15, 2014). Hamas accused the PA security forces of attacking a number of Hamas activists during the marches to show solidarity with the administrative detainees in Hebron and Tulkarm (Alresala.net, May 16, 2014). Hamas administration head **Ismail Haniya** called for an end to the detention of Hamas activists, calling them "political detentions." He said that Hamas would not accept the continuation of the so-called "political detentions" (Safa.ps, May 15, 2014).

The Palestinian Authority

Mahmoud Abbas Holds Meetings in London

■ While in Britain Mahmoud Abbas met with John Kerry, the American secretary of state. According to the a State Department spokesman, Mr. Kerry stressed to Mr. Abbas that the United States could not support a peace process involving Hamas unless it foreswore military operations and publicly recognized Israel's right to exist (Wall Street Journal, May 14, 2014).⁴ Mahmoud Abbas said that the establishment of the reconciliation government did not contradict peace and that the future Palestinian government would not oppose peace (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat and Al-Quds Al-Arabi, May 16, 2014).

■ It was reported that during the meeting John Kerry called on Mahmoud Abbas to renew the negotiations with Israel and not to take unilateral, provocative steps, such as joining international organizations (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat and Al-Quds Al-Arabi, May 16, 2014). **Saeb Erekat**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, said that the meetings had not produced results that would breathe new life into the peace process (Safa.ps, May 15, 2014).

⁴ <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303908804579562770057310340>



Mahmoud Abbas meets with John Kerry in London (Wafa.ps, date, 2014).

■ During his visit in London Mahmoud Abbas also met with the **Israeli Minister of Justice, Tzipi Livni**, who conducts the negotiations with the Palestinians. It was the first meeting the two held since the negotiations had been ended. In response **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** made it clear that on that particular occasion Tzipi Livni represented herself and not the government of Israel. The Israeli position, he said, as unanimously decided by the Cabinet, was that the government of Israel would not negotiate with a Palestinian government supported by Hamas, a terrorist organization that announced its intention to destroy the State of Israel (Ynet, May 17, 2014).

American President Obama Tries to Please Israel



A cartoon appearing in the Hamas-affiliated newspaper Felesteen (May 18, 2014)

Administrative Detainees' Hunger Strike

■ The hunger strike of the Palestinian administrative detainees in Israeli jails has escalated. According to **Issa al-Qaraqa**, PA minister of prisoner affairs, the strike has "reached the point of no return." He claimed the prisoners had decided not to undergo medical testing or take medication (Voice of Palestine, May 19, 2014). Throughout Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip demonstrations were held in support of the hunger-striking prisoners. Nakba Day events were also dedicated to solidarity with them.



Left: Hamas march in Nablus (Palestine-info.info, May 15, 2014). Right: Hamas rally in Ramallah in support of the administrative detainees (Paltimes.net, May 17, 2014).

■ **Issa al-Qaraqa**, PA minister of prisoner affairs, and **Fares Qadoura**, chairman of the prisoners' club, held a series of meetings with representatives of the international community to discuss the hunger strike. The two met with official representatives of the EU and of 27 countries, and updated them on recent developments. They asked the international community to intervene and to exert pressure on Israel to accede to the detainees' demands (Wafa.ps, May 19, 2014).

The Battle for Heart and Minds

Nakba Day in the PA Territories and Arab Countries

Overview

■ The Palestinian Nakba Day was marked in Judea and Samaria, the Gaza Strip and throughout the Arab world with solidarity demonstrations and rallies, most of which did not attract many participants. Most of them passed without exceptional occurrences, with the exception of a riot held near the Ofer jail, where two teen-aged Palestinians were killed (See above). The central theme of the events was the Palestinians'

adherence to the so-called "right of return" of the Palestinian refugees who fled in 1948. Another theme was the long hunger strike of the administrative detainees in Israeli jails. In Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip the Fatah-Hamas reconciliation was also noted in the Nakba Day events.

- The Palestinian media began broadcasting Nakba Day programs a number of days before the date, with the theme "We will not forget." **The broadcasts vilified and demonized Israel.** For example, a program broadcast on the official Palestinian TV station described the events by claiming at the end of the British Mandate "a Zionist minority" in Palestine led a program of "organization ethnic cleansing." It was a "plot carried out jointly with the previous occupation [the British] which gave the keys to the [Palestinian] homeland to the [Israeli] bloodsuckers" (Palestinian TV, May 15, 2014).

Judea and Samaria

- Nakba Day was marked throughout Judea and Samaria with popular marches and rallies. At noon a 66-second siren was heard, signaling the beginning of the event. Most of the demonstrations were held without exceptional occurrences, although in several locations the demonstrations turned into riots targeting the Israeli security forces. The main demonstration was held near the Ofer jail where two Palestinian rioters were killed by Israeli security force fire. The Palestinian media reported that several dozen demonstrators had been wounded at the various riot sites.

- The main Nakba Day event was a march held in Ramallah, which began at the grave of Yasser Arafat, went through the city and ended with a rally in Al-Manara Square. The marchers, who included some of the PA's senior figures, carried signs referring to the "right of return." **Wasel Abu Youssef**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, said that **the return of the Palestinian people who had emigrated was a "sacred right"** that could not be waived. Nakba Day events were also held in Bethlehem, Nablus, Hebron and other cities throughout Judea and Samaria.

The Gaza Strip

- A joint march was held to a site near the Erez crossing in the northern Gaza Strip, organized by the Palestinian terrorist organizations. Several hundred Palestinians participated. After the march a rally was held and senior Hamas figures gave speeches. During the rally it was stressed that the Palestinian territories would be liberated through "resistance and reconciliation." South of Gaza City several dozen Palestinians demonstrated under the aegis of a network called the Intifada Youth Coalition.



Left: The Palestinian organizations march in the region of Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip (Filastin Al-'Aan, May 15, 2014). Right: Palestinians throw stones at IDF forces east of Jabaliya in the northern Gaza Strip (Paltoday.ps, May 16, 2014).

■ **Hamas** issued a statement stressing its adherence to "resistance" "in all its forms," especially "**armed resistance**," (i.e., terrorism), while seeking to finalize the reconciliation agreement with Fatah. With regard to Nakba Day, **Abu Obeida**, spokesman for Hamas' military-terrorist wing, stressed Hamas' adherence to the "right of return" and achieving it through armed resistance. He said that "**Zionism has no future on the land of Palestine.**"

■ **The de-facto Hamas administration's security services deployed in advance at the various centers of activity to contain the events.** In one incident Hamas policemen attacked six journalists who covered the events. Following condemnation of the incident, a Hamas ministry of the interior spokesman said that an investigation would be held. In light of the findings, the ministry issued an apology to the victims and jailed the attackers for two weeks (Facebook page of the Hamas administration's ministry of the interior, May 19, 2014).

Lebanon

■ A symbolic march of about 50 people was held in Lebanon. The participants started in Beirut, marched to Sidon stopping along the way at a number of "historic" sites until they reached Naqoura, about three kilometers, or almost two miles, from the Israeli border. Afterwards a ceremony was held in the Al-Bass refugee camp in Tyre (Al-Mayadeen TV, May 15, 2014). A demonstration was held at the Eyn al-Hilweh refugee camp and attended by representatives of the various Palestinian terrorist organizations (Al-Nashra, May 15, 2014). Unlike past years, this year there were no provocative marches to the Israeli border.



Left: Nakba Day marchers reach UNIFIL headquarters in Naqoura and present the soldiers with a petition (Yasour.org, May 15, 2014). Right: Nakba Day marchers at the entrance to Tyre, next to the memorial for Hezbollah suicide bomber Ahmed Jaafar Qasir (Yasour.org, May 15, 2014).

Egypt

■ Several symbolic events were held in Egypt. A few dozen people demonstrated in front of the Journalists' Syndicate in Cairo. They carried Egyptian and Palestinian flags and chanted slogans like "A million shaheeds are marching to Jerusalem," "Woe to Jerusalem," "The people want to topple Israel," etc. (Al-Youm Al-Sabea, May 15, 2014).

Jordan

■ Opposition elements in Jordan expressed solidarity with Nakba Day at various demonstrations. A coalition of leftist and pan-Arab parties, as well as the trade unions, held a demonstration in front of UN headquarters in northern Amman. They carried signs expressing the support of young people for the Palestinian prisoners. The national unity party held a demonstration near the Israeli embassy in Amman. The demonstrators condemned Israel and demanded the expulsion of the Israeli ambassador (Al-Bousla, Al-Maqar, May 15, 2014).

Bahrain

■ The official Facebook page of Fatah's office of recruitment and organization posted a picture of **Osama al-Tamimi**, a member of the Bahrain parliament, burning an Israeli flag in the parliament chamber (Official Facebook page of Fatah's office of recruitment and organization, May 16, 2014).



Osama al-Tamimi, a member of the Bahrain parliament, burns an Israeli flag in the parliament chamber (Official Facebook page of Fatah's office of recruitment and organization, May 16, 2014).

Preaching Violence against Israel on Fatah and Other PA Websites

■ Nakba Day was an opportunity for various institutions in the PA to upload postings and pictures on the social networks to support the continuation of anti-Israeli violence.

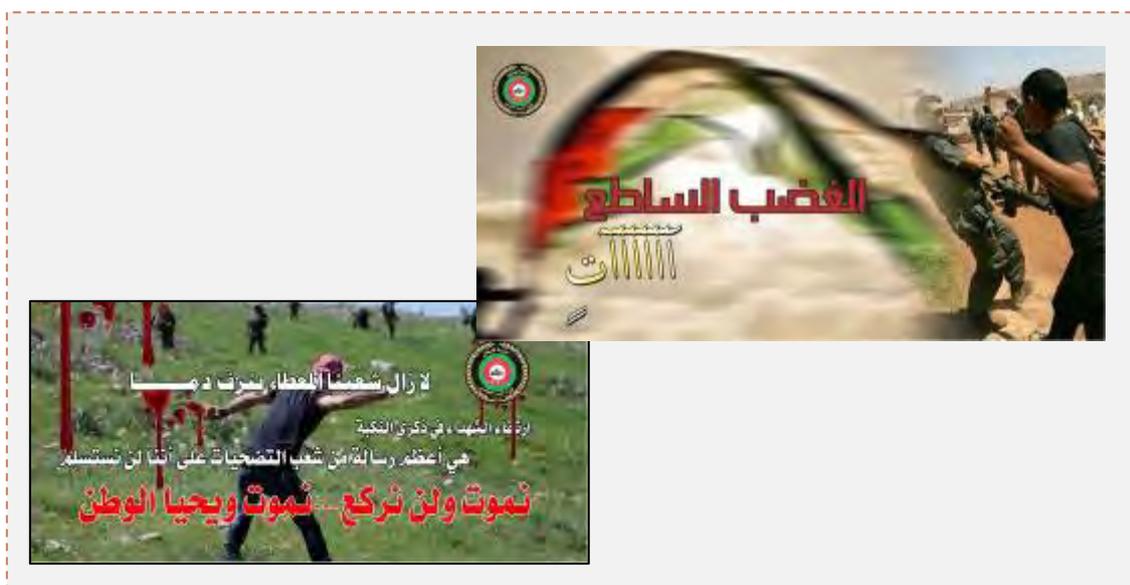
For example:

- **The official Facebook page of Fatah's office of recruitment and organization posted notices encouraging violence against Israel.** One showed young Palestinians armed with rifles; the Arabic reads, "We will continue to fight, generation after generation, until we return to Palestine" (May 16, 2014)

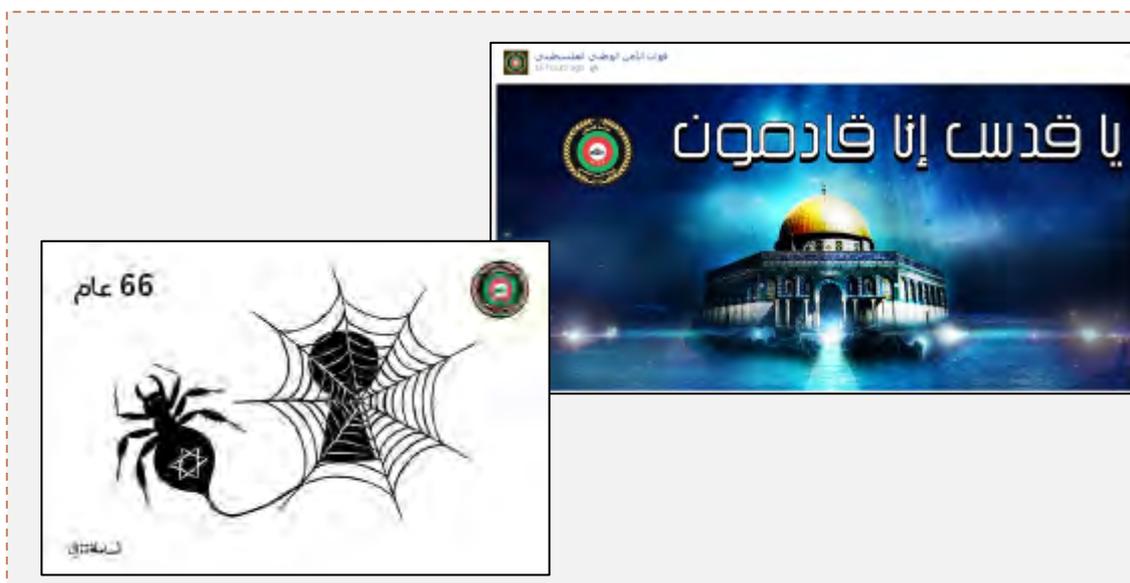


"We will continue to fight, generation after generation, until we return to Palestine" (Official Facebook page of Fatah's office of recruitment and organization, May 16, 2014).

- The official Facebook page of the PA's national security forces also continues posting encouragement for violence. For example (From the official Facebook page of the PA's national security forces, May 14, 15 and 18, 2014):



Left: Encouragement for sacrifice and death. The Arabic reads, "Our people still bleed. The death of shaheeds on Nakba Day is the mighty message of the people of sacrifice that we will not surrender. We will die and not bow our heads...We will die and long live the homeland!"
Right: A Palestinian tries to attack an Israeli Border Police soldier. The Arabic reads, "Bold anger is coming."



Left: Cartoon for the 66th Nakba Day. Israel's spider web has blocked the return to Palestine.
Right: The Arabic reads, "O Jerusalem, we are coming."



Encouraging violence against the IDF. The Arabic reads, "This is where the story of how the society that opposed oppression was shaped, [the society] that fights evil and creates heroes."

Town Square in Al-Bireh Named for Terrorist Operatives

■ The Al-Bireh municipality named one of the town squares for Adel and Imad Awadallah, and hung a plaque in commemoration. The Awadallah brothers were among the founders of the Hamas military-terrorist wing in Judea and Samaria. They were killed in an exchange of fire with IDF forces near Tarqumia, in the Hebron district, on September 10, 1998. Their remains were returned to the PA by Israel on April 29, 2014, and they were given a state funeral.⁵

⁵ For further information see the May 1, 2014 bulletin ["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."](#)