



## News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (December 17-13, 2014)



Remains of the rocket that hit the western Negev on December 19, 2014  
(Facebook page of the Israel Police Force)

### Overview

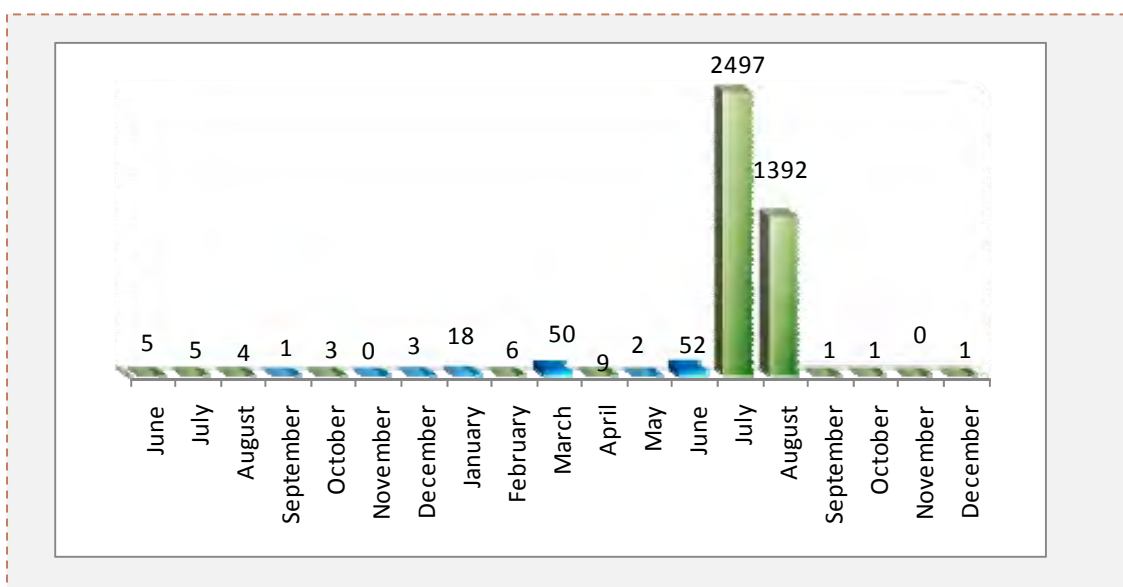
- A rocket hit was identified in Israel's south, the third since the end of Operation Protective Edge. In response to the rocket fire the Israeli Air Force struck a Hamas cement factory in the southern Gaza Strip. Hamas condemned the attack, but senior Hamas figure Musa Abu Marzouq claimed Hamas was still committed to the lull agreement and still honored the ceasefire.
- On December 17, 2014, Jordan proposed a draft version of a Palestinian resolution to the UN Security Council calling for a peace arrangement and the end of the [Israeli] occupation of the Palestinian territories before 2017. The proposal is unilateral and part of the campaign waged by the PA to pressure Israel through international institutions.
- On December 17, 2014, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) announced it had annulled the measures against Hamas, namely the designation of Hamas as a terrorist organization and the freezing of Hamas' funds. The ruling, said the Court, was based on procedural grounds and was not a political decision. However, the ruling left a three months' grace period to allow for appeals. Hamas responded to the ruling with unfettered joy.

## Israel's South

### Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

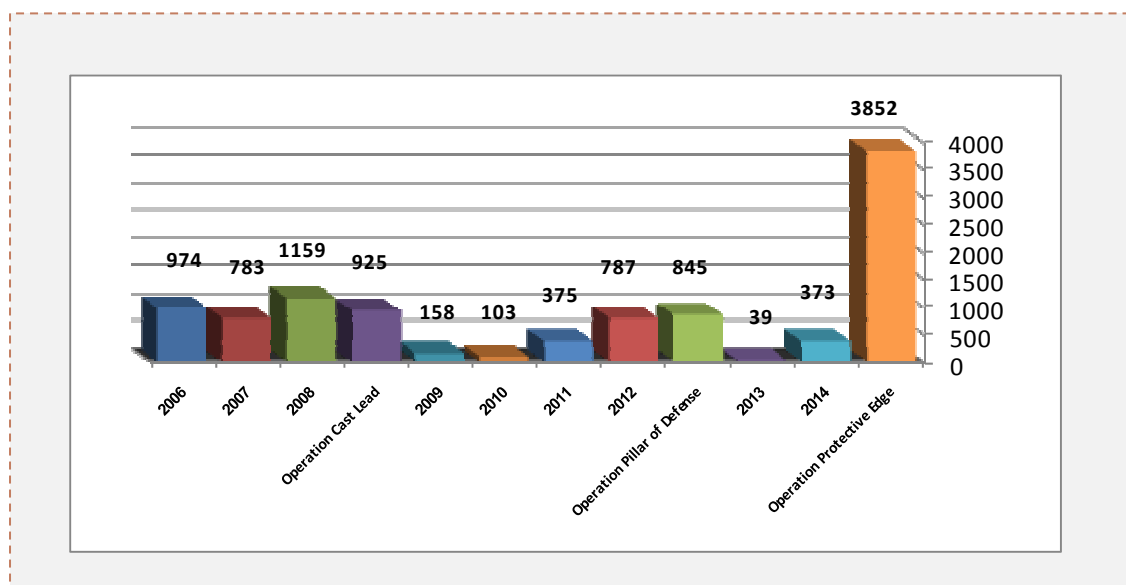
■ On the afternoon of December 19, 2014, a rocket hit Israeli territory in the western Negev. It landed in an open area. There were no casualties; agricultural damage was reported. No terrorist organization claimed responsibility for the rocket attack. **It was the third rocket hit identified in Israeli territory since the end of Operation Protective Edge.**

### Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire (2013 – 2014)<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> As of December 23, 2014. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire or rockets which misfired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

## Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire in Israel's South<sup>2</sup>



### IDF Response to the Rocket Fire

■ In response to the rocket fire Israeli Air Force aircraft struck Hamas' terrorist infrastructure in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, December 20, 2014). Israeli media reported that a cement factory used by Hamas was attacked. **It was the first aerial attack the IDF carried out in the Gaza Strip since the end of Operation Protective Edge.**

### Hamas Responses

- Senior Hamas figures responded harshly to the attack, claiming that it was a violation of the lull agreement:
  - **Ismail Haniya**, deputy chairman of Hamas' political bureau, claimed the attack was a gross violation of the lull agreement, and called on Egypt to prevent Israel from carrying out further aerial attacks (Paltimes.net, December 20, 2014).
  - **Sami Abu Zuhri**, Hamas spokesman, claimed the aerial attack was a dangerous escalation and warned Israel not to do it again (Facebook page of Sami Abu Zuhri, December 20, 2014).
  - **Salah al-Bardawil**, a Hamas member of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), claimed it was part of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's election

<sup>2</sup> The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

campaign, an attempt to overcome Israel's defeat in Operation Protective Edge (Facebook page of Salah al-Bardawil, December 20, 2014).

- **Musa Abu Marzouq**, a Hamas member of the PLC, claimed that Israel was naturally aggressive and had violated the agreement achieved through the indirect talks in Egypt (Press TV, December 20, 2014). **However, he claimed Hamas was committed to the lull agreement as long as Israel was. He claimed Hamas, along with the other [terrorist] organizations, would make an attempt to honor the ceasefire agreement in order not to give Israel an excuse to attack the Gaza Strip** (Samanews.com, December 20, 2014).

### Another Incident on the Gaza Strip Border

- **This past week there was another incident near the Israel-Gaza Strip border security fence.** On December 19, 2014, several dozen Palestinians approached the security fence in the region of Jabaliya. IDF forces opened fire. The Palestinian media reported that five Palestinians had been shot in the leg.

## Terrorism and Violence in Judea, Samaria and East Jerusalem

- This past week the wave of violence and rioting continued in the traditional friction spots in Judea, Samaria and east Jerusalem (Kafr Qadoum, near the Ofer prison, Bil'in, the Qalandia roadblock, etc.), part of what the Palestinians call the "popular resistance."
- The prominent disturbances were the following:
  - On **December 19, 2014**, a demonstration was held in the village of Turmus Aya (north of Ramallah) in memory of Ziad Abu Ein. Senior Palestinian Authority (PA) figures were in attendance. A riot developed and Palestinians attacked IDF forces present at the time (Wafa.ps, December 19, 2014).
  - On **December 19, 2014, Hamas organized** a mass demonstration on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Masked Palestinians wearing Hamas headbands waved Hamas-affiliated flags (PALDF, December 19, 2014).



Left: Hamas activists, some of them masked, wave a Hamas-affiliated flag at a demonstration on the Temple Mount (PALDF, December 19, 2014). Right: Palestinians burn tires during a riot in the village of Turmus Aya (Wafa.ps, December 19, 2014).

■ In Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown and there were stabbing attacks targeting Israelis. In addition, prominent attacks were the following:

- On **December 19, 2014**, Israel security forces conducted a search of the village of Duma (southeast of Nablus) and found a large quantity of weapons. They included a gun, magazines for M16 assault rifles and hundreds of bullets (IDF Spokesman, December 19, 2014).



The weapons found in Duma (IDF Spokesman, December 19, 2014).

- In the late hours of the night of **December 18, 2014**, during a routine check near A-Ram (south of Ramallah) a number of Palestinians were detained. They

were found to be carrying knives and substances suspected of being drugs (IDF Spokesman, December 18, 2014).

### Israeli Gestures to Christians for the Christmas Season

■ In accordance with a decision made by the minister of defense, the chief of staff and the coordinator for government activities in the Palestinian territories, a number of goodwill gestures will be made towards the Christian Palestinians in Judea and Samaria. During the holiday season the Israeli security force presence will be increased at the Bethlehem and Jericho crossings and their hours of operation will be extended to facilitate quick entrance into Bethlehem. Permission to enter Israel will be given to more Palestinians. Seven hundred Christians from the Gaza Strip will be permitted to visit their families in Judea and Samaria; 500 Christians from Judea and Samaria will be able to visit their families in the Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, December 18, 2014).

## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### The Erez Crossing

■ PA representative in Egypt **Jamal al-Shubaki** said in an announcement that Egypt was planning to open the Erez crossing. However, it would be open only to allow Palestinians stranded on the Egyptian side to enter the Gaza Strip. The Egyptians are also expected to allow 51 Palestinians imprisoned for unlawful entrance into Egypt to return to Gaza (Paltoday.tv, December 10, 2014).

■ On December 21, 2014, the Rafah crossing opened, however, according to reports, only eight buses passed through (Website of the Palestinian ministry of the interior, December 21, 2014). **Maher Abu Subha**, Palestinian head of the crossings administration, complained that the crossing had only been opened for a short period of time and not all the Palestinians who wanted to pass through had been able to (Al-Aqsa TV, December 21, 2014).



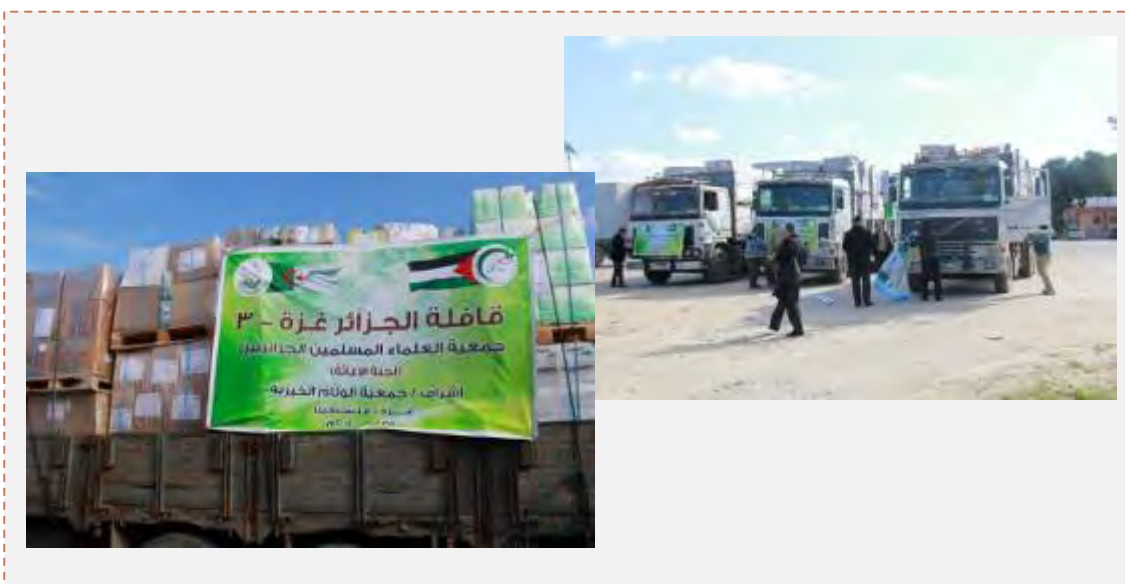
Left: "The Rafah crossing" in a cartoon published by the Hamas-affiliated Felesteen (Felesteen.ps, December 22, 2014). Right: Gazans wait at the Rafah crossing (Facebook page of PALDF, December 21, 2014).

## Rebuilding the Gaza Strip

- According to reports from **Global Humanitarian Assistance**, an agency monitoring the flow of funds for humanitarian needs, and UNRWA, **only a small fraction of the funds promised to the Gaza Strip by various donor countries and organizations has actually been transferred**. Not transferring funds is one of the factors causing major delays in rebuilding the Gaza Strip
- Hamas continues blaming the PA for the delays in the rebuilding. Senior Hamas figure **Khalil al-Haya** said in an interview that while Israel and the international community would like to see the Gaza Strip rebuilt, that was not the case for the PA, which was using delaying tactics (Alresala.net, December 20, 2014).
- The Gazans continue their protests against the delays. On December 18, 2014, refugee committees held a protest demonstration near the Erez crossing. **Muein Abu Okal**, head of the refugees' committees, warned that the next demonstration **would be held closer to the Erez crossing** and that they intended to hold demonstrations throughout the Gaza Strip "from Rafah to Beit Hanoun and in the direction of the Israeli and Egyptian borders" (Paltoday.tv, December 18, 2014).

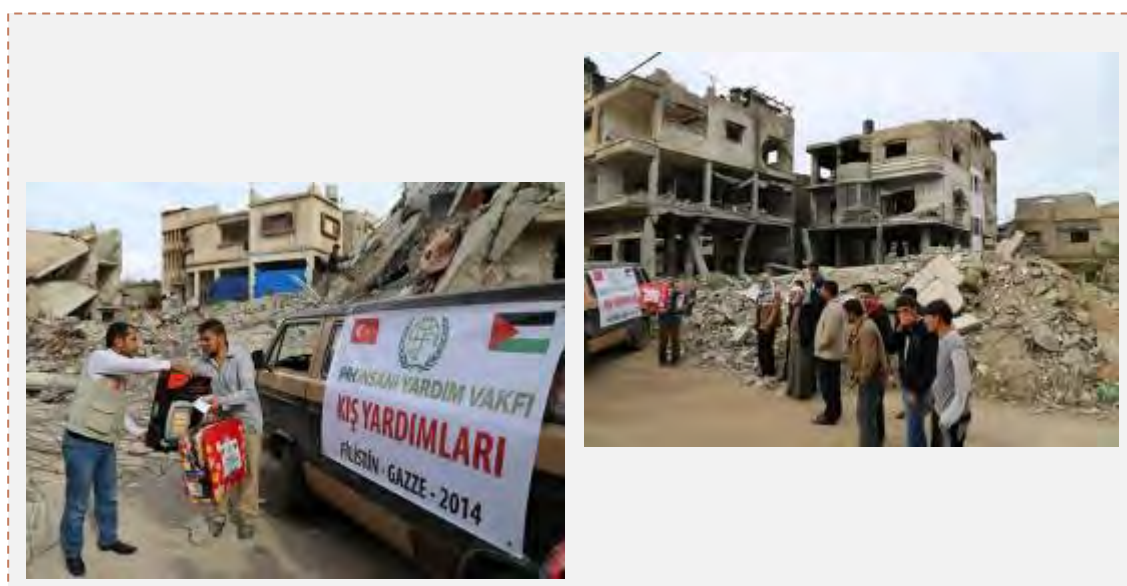
## Aid for the Gaza Strip

- On December 22, 2014, six truckloads of medical equipment donated by Algeria entered the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing (Paltimes.net, December 22, 2014).



Trucks carrying aid for the Gaza Strip at the Rafah crossing: "Algeria–Gaza 3" (Paltimes.net, December 22, 2014).

- On December 20, 2014, activists from the Turkish Islamist IHH distributed equipment and goods (mostly blankets and space heaters) to Gazans whose houses had been damaged during Operation Protective Edge (IHH.org.tr, December 20, 2014).



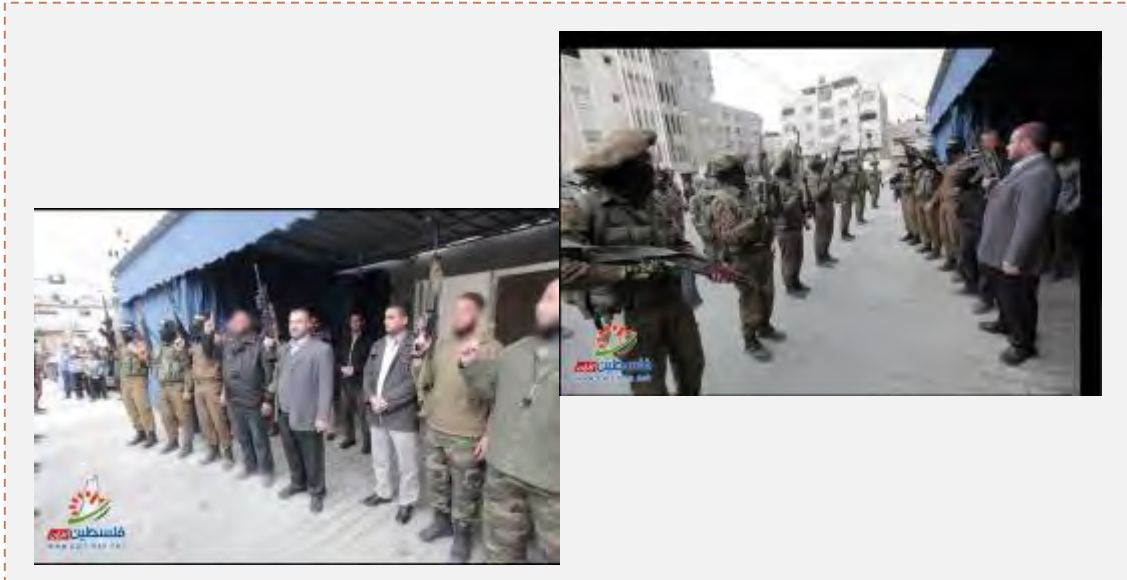
IHH activists distribute equipment to Gazans (Facebook page of PALINFO, December 20, 2014).

### Fathi Hamad Visits Nukhba Operatives

- On December 20, 2014, the Hamas-affiliated Paltimes.net website posted pictures of **Fathi Hamad**, a senior Hamas figure and minister of the interior in the former de-facto Hamas administration. In the pictures he appears meeting with operatives of the **Nukhba unit, an elite force of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, in the northern Gaza Strip**. It was reported that during the visit Nukhba operatives swore to him they



would continue the path of the "resistance" [i.e., anti-Israeli terrorism] (Paltimes.net, December 20, 2014). That would apparently indicate Fathi Hamad's importance and influence in Hamas' military and security affairs, despite the fact that he does not have an official role in the current administration in the Gaza Strip.



Nukhba unit operatives swear allegiance to Fathi Hamad. He is photographed holding an M16 assault rifle (Paltimes.net, December 20, 2014).

### Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades Operative Killed during a Training Exercise

■ As part of Hamas' efforts to overcome the blows to its military-terrorist infrastructure in Operation Protective Edge, its military-terrorist wing is holding training exercises. On December 18, 2014, **Bilal Abd al-Mun'im al-Munirawi** was killed. Al-Munirawi, 20, was from the Al-Shabura refugee camp north of Rafah. Four other operatives were injured, apparently by an explosion in the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades' training camp near the Rafah crossing. Hamas issued a formal notice of his death and his funeral and memorial service were attended by senior Hamas figures. Ismail Haniya, deputy chairman of Hamas' political bureau, paid a condolence call to the family (Qassam.ps, December 18, 2014; and the Facebook page of PALINFO, December 20, 2014).



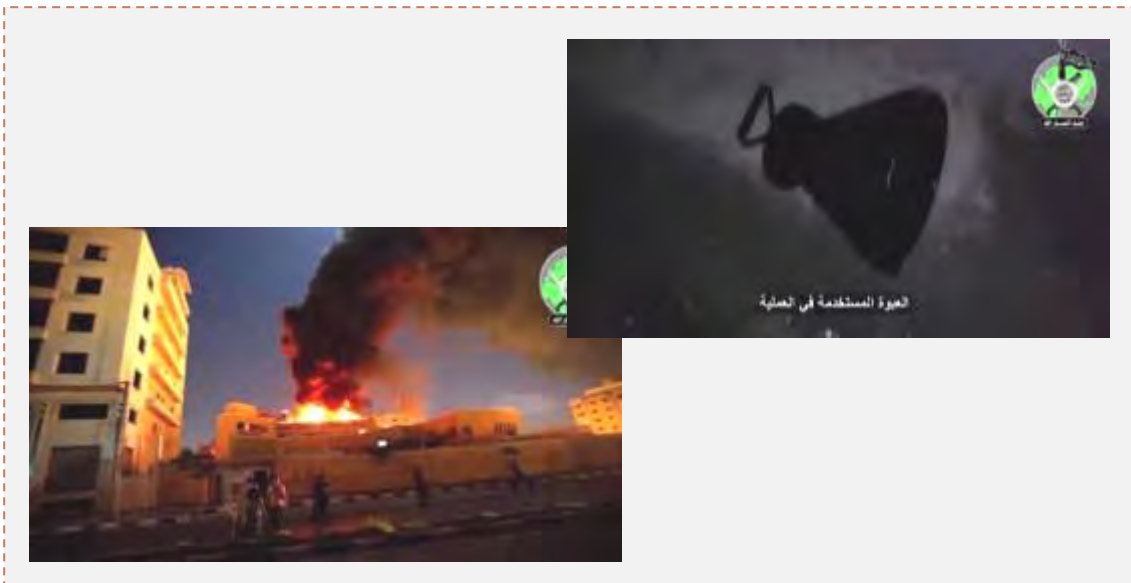
Left: Ismail Haniya pays a condolence call to the family (Facebook page of PALINFO, December 20, 2014). Right: Bilal al-Munirawi (Paltimes.net, December 18, 2014).

### Attack on the French Cultural Center in Gaza City – Update

■ A global jihad-affiliated Salafist-jihadi network called **Jund Ansar Allah** posted a video to YouTube on December 18, 2014, **claiming responsibility for the explosion at the French Cultural Center in Gaza City on December 12, 2014.** According to the video, **the attack was carried out in retaliation for the actions of the forces of the coalition, of which France is a member, against ISIS.** It was also stated that the attack was carried out even though the Center was surrounded by headquarters of Hamas' security forces. (**Note:** On the evening of December 12, 2014, the French Cultural Center was attacked with an IED that damaged its exterior wall.)

■ **Intense rivalry exists between Hamas and Jund Ansar Allah.** On August 14, 2009, Hamas used military force to suppress the Jund Ansar Allah network. During clashes at and around the Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah mosque in Rafah 24 people were killed and 130 were wounded, and several hundred suspects were detained, Salafist-jihadi operatives among them. Among the dead were **Sheikh Nur al-Din al-Maqdisi** (the source of religious and ideological authority for the Salafist-jihadi networks) and **Khaled Banat, aka Abu Abdallah the Syrian** (the Jund Ansar Allah's military leader). During the clashes Hamas' forces did not hesitate to fire at the mosque, which was a prominent Salafist-jihadi symbol, and heavily damage it.<sup>3</sup>

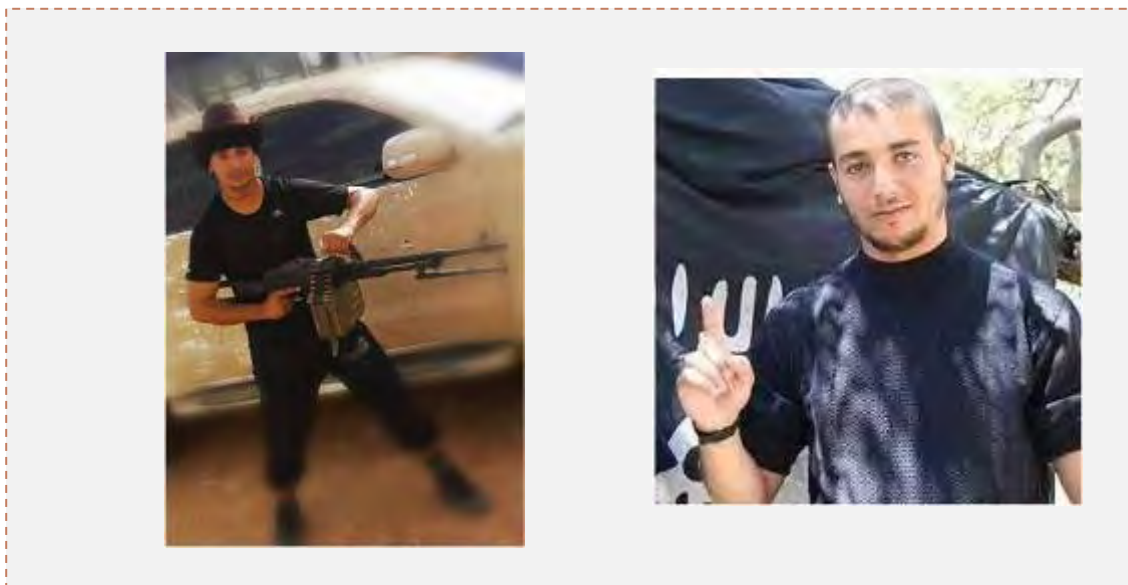
<sup>3</sup> For further information see the October 4, 2009 bulletin "[The struggle between Hamas and the jihadi-Salafist networks in the Gaza Strip affiliated with the global jihad.](#)"



Pictures from the video. Left: The explosion at the French Cultural Center. Right: The IED used in the explosion (YouTube, December 18, 2014).

### Palestinian Dies Fighting in Iraq

- On December 20, 2014, a Hamas forum reported that **Mumtaz al-Wahidi**, 27, from the town of Al-Zahraa' (south of Gaza City) had died fighting in the ranks of ISIS in Iraq (Hamas forum, December 20, 2014). It was also reported that he was killed in an ISIS attack on an Iraqi army post in the northern part of Nineveh province (Samanews.com, December 20, 2014).



ISIS foreign fighter from the Gaza Strip, Mumtaz al-Wahidi, who died in Iraq (Hamas forum, December 20, 2014).

## The Palestinian Authority

### The PA Appeal to the UN Security Council

- On December 17, 2014, Jordan, which represents the Arab states on the Security Council, formally lodged a Palestinian appeal with the Council aimed to attack Israel in the international arena and exert pressure on it. The Palestinian proposal calls for the imposition of **a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians and the end of the so-called [Israeli] "occupation of Palestinian territory" before 2017**. According to the proposal, the sides will resolve the issue through negotiations based on the 1967 borders, which will include security agreements and designate Jerusalem as the shared capital of the two countries. The proposal also calls for both sides to end unilateral actions which are illegal, such as construction in the settlements (Maannews.net, December 17, 2014).
- The draft resolution was put "in blue," meaning the its text had been finalized and could be put to a vote 24 hours later. According to **Riyadh al-Maliki**, foreign minister in the Palestinian national consensus government, the draft version was a combination of the French proposal and Palestinian comments and decisions (UN Report, December 17, 2014). The Palestinian leadership is reportedly still discussing the final version of the draft, as well as when it should be put to a vote.
- **Riyadh al-Maliki** said that the proposal could be changed according to suggestions from the Security Council members. He said efforts were also being made to "strengthen" the proposal by clarifying it, especially regarding the issues of Jerusalem and the settlements (Al-ayyam.com, December 21, 2014). He also said that before the vote a number of fundamental changes had been made regarding Jerusalem and construction in the settlements (Maannews.net, December 21, 2014).
- **Regarding the date of a vote**, it is possible that **Mahmoud Abbas will wait until the agreement nine members of the Security Council is assured**, that is, at the beginning of January 2015 (Aawsat.net, December 21, 2014). **Majdi al-Khaldi**, Mahmoud Abbas' diplomatic advisor, said that the Palestinians would begin consulting the members of the Security Council to enlist support and afterwards the proposal would be put to a vote (Maannews.net, December 21, 2014). **Riyadh al-Maliki** said that despite efforts by American Secretary of State John Kerry to convince them, the Palestinians refused to postpone the vote until after the elections in Israel (March 17, 2015) (Maannews.net, December 21, 2014).
- **Rami Hamdallah**, prime minister of the Palestinian national consensus government, said in an interview that if the PA's proposal in the Security Council

failed **there were several other options**. One was an appeal to other international institutions. Another was to consider economic and security relations with Israel as well as promoting the "popular resistance" [i.e., popular terrorism]. He appealed to the United States to reconsider its policies in light of the positions of the European and other world countries regarding the Palestinians (Sky News in Arabic, December 21, 2014).

- **Jen Psaki**, spokesperson for the State Department, said the Department had "not made a decision, and it's based on the context and the text that would be proposed. One hasn't been submitted formally yet. We realize this is an ongoing process. We've seen the same reports that you have, but we're not going to comment on alleged draft text." However, she said the United States would not support unilateral actions (Website of the American State Department, December 17, 2014).<sup>4</sup>

### Reactions from Hamas

- **Hamas criticized the PA's appeal to the Security Council**. Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** said that Hamas rejected anything that might "lessen national rights and principles," especially anything relating to Jerusalem and the so-called "right of return" [of the Palestinian refugees to the territory of the State of Israel]. Senior Hamas figure **Salah al-Bardawil** accused Mahmoud Abbas of shirking his responsibility for the interests of the Palestinians and the Gaza Strip, saying that the appeal to the Security Council was part of his attempts to reach an arrangement and a way of seeking endless negotiations (QNN, December 21, 2014).

### Vote in the European Parliament

- On December 17, 2014 the European Parliament voted, 498 to 88 with 11 abstentions, to support, in principle, the **recognition of a Palestinian state and the two-state solution**, side by side with promoting peace talks. The wording of the decision was a compromise between the large factions in the parliament and **did not call for an immediate recognition of "Palestine."** However, the members of the European Parliament **expressed concern over the escalation on the ground, condemned every act of terrorism and repeated their objection to the construction in the settlements.**

- **Nabil Shaath**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee and responsible for its international relations, praised the decision taken by the European Parliament, calling it historic and indicating a change in the European arena regarding the Palestinian

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2014/12/235370.htm#UN>

issue. He said he hoped it would encourage more European governments to recognize the Palestinian state (Wafa.ps, December 17, 2014).

### Call to Arms on Fatah's Official Website

■ Fatah's official Facebook page posted a notice showing an armed Fatah military-terrorist operative and a Fatah military display. The Arabic read, "Take up arms again so that your enemy [i.e., Israel] will have no calm " (Official Facebook page of Fatah, December 22, 2014).



Posting on Fatah's official Facebook page (December 22, 2014)

## Hamas Taken Off List of Terrorist Organizations

### Ruling of the European Court of Justice

■ On December 17, 2014 the European Court of Justice (ECJ)<sup>5</sup> ruled that as of December 27, 2014, **Hamas would no longer be included on the EU's list of terrorist organizations**. That was because in the Court's view insufficient evidence of its being a terrorist organization had been presented, and including Hamas on its list of terrorist organizations had been based on processes which were no longer accepted by the EU (i.e., basing on information from the media). The ECJ noted that the decision did not indicate its evaluation in principle of Hamas as a terrorist organization. **Therefore the Court left its sanctions against Hamas in place for a period of at least three months** (until March 17, 2015), or until the process of

<sup>5</sup> The European Court of Justice (ECJ) is the EU's main court. Its decisions bind all EU institutions. Member EU countries or private individuals can appeal to it through the courts in their own countries. It is also responsible for the legal interpretation and enforcement of the EU's basic conventions, including oversight of the legality of international agreements.

appeal could be completed, during which member states could present evidence to cause Hamas to be put back on the list (European Council website, December 17, 2014).<sup>6</sup>

■ **Khaled al-Shuli**, a lawyer who heads the CBSP, a French organization working for the Gaza Strip, who was active in efforts to have Hamas removed from the EU's list of terrorist organizations, claimed that the ruling included the organization's military wing. He also claimed that if no appeal were entered within three months the organization's assets would be unfrozen and Hamas would be able to open offices in every country in Europe and all of its members would be able to obtain visas for European countries (Aljazeera.net, December 18, 2014).

### Reactions in the West

■ **A spokesperson for the European Commission** said that the EU still regarded Hamas as a terrorist organization and was examining its next steps, including possibilities of appeal.

■ **A spokesman for the British Foreign Office** said that Britain was studying the ruling and would act with its partners to ensure that Hamas remained on the list of terrorist organizations (Website of the British Foreign Office, December 17, 2014).

■ **A spokesperson for the American State Department** said that the EU would leave in place sanctions and restrictions against Hamas because it was a terrorist organization. In addition, the United States would continue cooperating with the EU on the matter (Website of the State Department, December 17, 2014).

### Reactions from Hamas

■ Hamas reacted with unfettered joy:

- **Khaled Mashaal**, head of Hamas' political bureau, said that the Hamas leadership viewed the ruling as a step in the right direction and way of changing an erroneous position not based on objective facts. He called on the governments of the EU to cooperate with the ECJ's ruling and adopt "brave resolutions" to remove Hamas from the list of terrorist organizations (Middle East Monitor, December 17, 2014).

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[http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/israel/press\\_corner/all\\_news/news/2014/20141812\\_01\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/israel/press_corner/all_news/news/2014/20141812_01_en.htm)

- **Musa Abu Marzouq**, senior Hamas figure, expressed satisfaction, claiming it was a victory for all the Palestinians who supported the "resistance" [i.e., the path of terrorism] (Facebook page of Musa Abu Marzouq, December 17, 2014).
- **Salah al-Bardawil**, senior Hamas figure, said that Hamas viewed the ruling as correcting a serious mistake. He claimed the terrorist entity that had to be brought to justice and whose name had to be put on the list of terrorists was the "Zionist enemy" (Al-Jazeera, December 17, 2014).