



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(April 1 – 14, 2015)



The scene of the stabbing near Nablus where two IDF soldiers were wounded. The attacker was killed (Wafa.ps, April 8, 2015).

Overview

- These past two weeks Israel's south remained quiet. In Samaria there were two stabbings at IDF roadblocks. In Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem stones were thrown at Israeli vehicles. During March 2015 the decline in the number of terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria continued, as opposed to a rise in the number of attacks in Jerusalem.
- The Israel Security Agency recently exposed a Hamas cell that planned to carry out a shooting attack targeting IDF soldiers at a roadblock at the entrance to Jerusalem near Abu Dis. The cell was headed by a Hamas operative who had been imprisoned in the past for involvement in a shooting attack targeting IDF forces.
- On April 1, 2015, the International Criminal Court in The Hague (ICC) formally announced the Palestinians were the 123rd State Party to the Rome Statute, the ICC's founding treaty. Saeb Erekat, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, said the Palestinians had asked the Court to investigate the issues of the settlements and Operation Protective Edge. Mahmoud Abbas did not give a specific date for presenting the cases against Israel to the Court.

Two Stabbings in Samaria

■ On April 8, 2015, a Palestinian terrorist stabbed two IDF soldiers at the Sinjil roadblock in southern Samaria. He approached the soldiers, who were standing at the roadblock, shouted at them, and took out a knife. He stabbed a soldier and then walked to a vehicle where soldiers were sitting and tried to stab them as well. One of the soldiers in the vehicle, who had been stabbed, shot and killed the attacker. The Palestinian terrorist was **Muhammad Jasser Karakra**, 29, from the village of Sinjil, a known felon involved with drugs.

■ **Fatah** issued a death notice for the terrorist. The official Facebook page of the **Sinjil town hall** also issued a death notice for the "heroic shaheed" Muhammad Jasser Karakra, who died while stabbing two soldiers at the Sinjil junction (Facebook page of the Sinjil town hall, April 9, 2015).



Left: Sinjil residents attend the funeral of Muhammad Karakra holding a sign prepared by Fatah.

Right: The Sinjil town hall's death notice as it appeared on its official Facebook page (Facebook page of the Sinjil town hall, April 13, 2015)

■ In response to the killing of the Palestinian terrorist, Fatah spokesman **Osama al-Qawasmeh** claimed that Israel's aggression against the Palestinian people was outrageous and that Israel engaged intensively in persecution, Judaization, land expropriation, constructing settlements and exercising a policy of anti-Palestinian racism (Wafa.ps, April 8, 2015). Hamas spokesman **Husam Badran** praised the stabbing attack, claiming it was the "natural reaction" of the Palestinian people to the harm inflicted by Israel (Alresala.net, April 8, 2015).

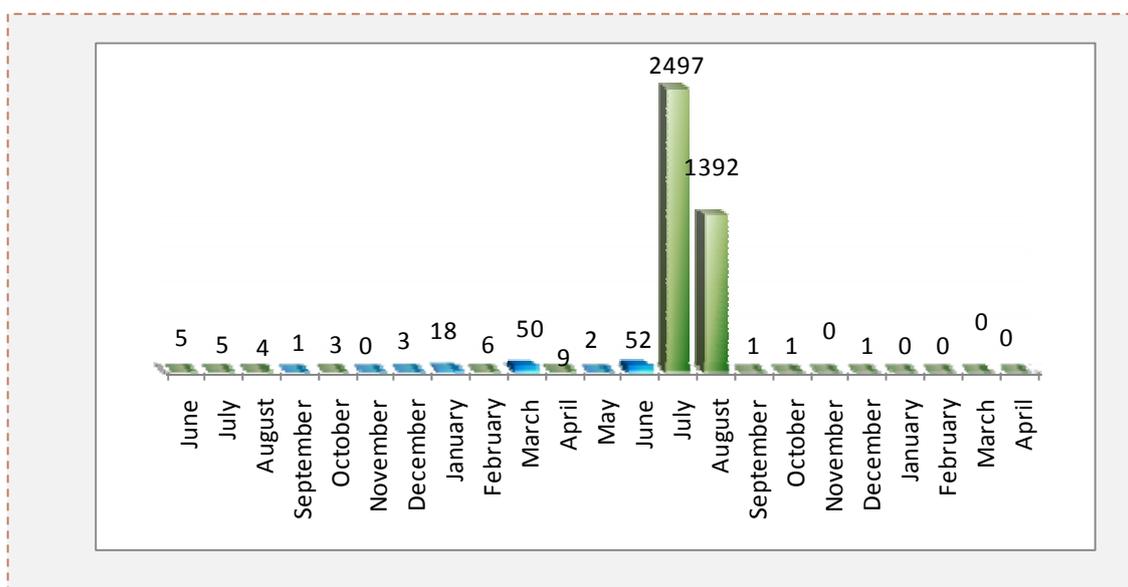
■ Another stabbing took place on April 2, 2015, when an IDF force detained six Palestinians who had crossed the security fence near the **trans-Samaria roadblock**. One of the soldiers sustained minor wounds when he was stabbed by one of the Palestinians. The soldier overcame the Palestinian attacker (IDF Spokesman, April 2, 2015). The six were apparently planning to infiltrate into Israel.

Israel's South

Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

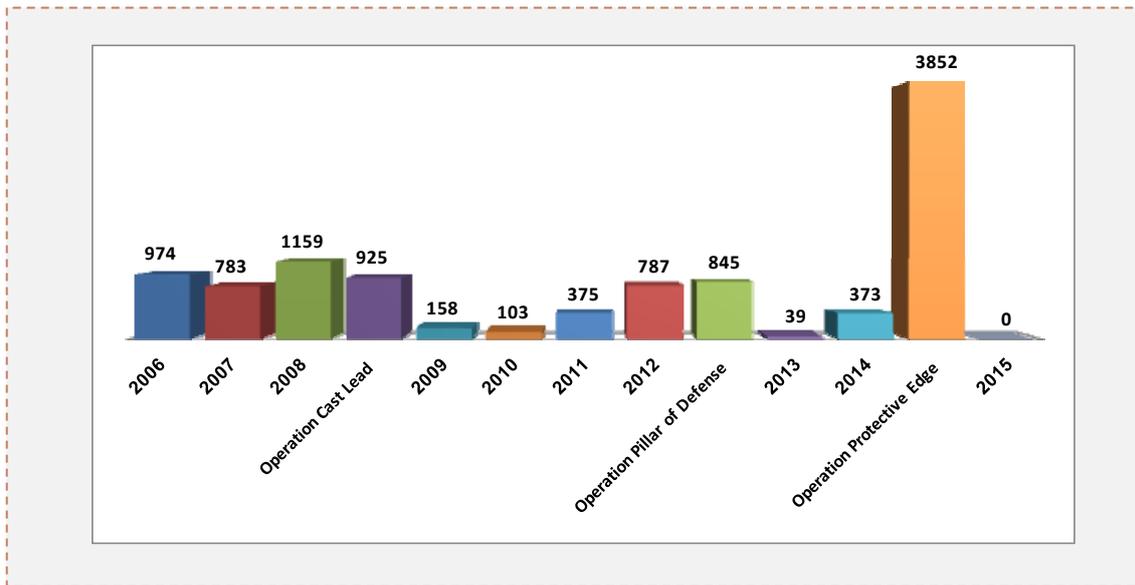
■ This past week Israel's south remained quiet, and no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israeli territory.

Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire (2013 – 2015)¹



¹ As of April 14, 2015. 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 South²



Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

"Popular Resistance" Terrorism and Violence Continue

■ This past week violence and rioting continued at the usual locations 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 violence mainly centered on throwing stones, rocks and Molotov cocktails. There were also a number of demonstrations. Some of the prominent attacks were the following:

- On **April 7, 2015**, Palestinians threw stones at a bus en route from Jerusalem to the village of Adam (southeast of Ramallah). The driver and one of the passengers sustained minor injuries caused by broken glass (Ynetnews.co.il, April 7, 2015).
- On **April 7, 2015**, Palestinians threw stones at an Israeli civilian vehicle at the Efrat junction in Gush Etzion. The driver sustained minor injuries (Ynetnews.co.il, April 7, 2015).
- On **April 11, 2015**, Palestinians threw stones at the light railway in the Shuafat area of north Jerusalem. There were no casualties. Damage was reported to one of the train's cars.

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire.

- On **April 12, 2015**, Palestinians threw stones at a civilian bus in Jerusalem. One passenger sustained minor wounds. A window of the bus was broken.



Left: Damage done to a light railway car. Right: Bus window broken by thrown stones (Red Alert, April 11 and 12, 2015).

- On **April 13, 2015**, Palestinians threw stones at a security guard vehicle in the Silwan neighborhood of east Jerusalem. Two guards were injured and the vehicle was damaged (Red Alert, April 13, 2015).

Palestinians Riot over Death of Released Terrorist

- On April 9, 2015, **Ja'far Ibrahim Awad**, 22, a Palestinian terrorist prisoner released from an Israeli jail, died in a hospital of a terminal disease. Awad was a **Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)** operative who was released from jail three months ago. The Palestinians blamed Israel for his death. During the funeral, held in Bayt Umar (north of Hebron), there were violent confrontations between Palestinians and the Israeli security forces, in which rioters threw stones and Molotov cocktails. During the riot **Ziyad Omar Awad**, a cousin of the prisoner, was killed, and other family members were wounded (Maannews.net, Paltoday.ps, Alquds.com and Ynetnews.co.il, April 10, 2015). The Israeli military police are investigating the circumstances of Ziyad Omar Awad's death.

Hamas Squad Exposed, Planned Shooting Attack

- The Israeli security forces recently exposed a **Hamas squad** whose members were planning a shooting attack on IDF forces in the region of Abu Dis during the Purim holiday (March 5, 2015). To carry out the attack the squad had acquired a

vehicle and had practiced shooting. They took the vehicle for a test drive and collected information about the locations of IDF forces and the lanes leading through the roadblock.

■ Interrogation revealed the location of the weapons they were planning to use, among them a Kalashnikov assault rifle and a 9mm gun. The terrorists' original plan had been to carry out a shooting attack in Jerusalem, but in view of the difficulties involved **the site was moved to the roadblock at the entrance to Jerusalem, near Abu Dis**. The squad was headed by a Hamas operative named **Ma'an Nur al-Din Ahmed Shaer**, 26, from the village of Burka, who worked in the cafeteria at Abu Dis University. Between 2001 and 2009 he was imprisoned for his involvement in an attack on Israeli army forces (Shabak.gov.il, April 14, 2015).



Left: The weapons in the possession of the squad. Right: Cell leader Hamas operative Nur al-Din Shaer (Shabak.gov.il, April 14, 2015).

Terrorist Attacks – March 2015³

■ During March 2015 **the decline in the number of terrorist attacks continued**. A total of **89 terrorist attacks** were reported (compared with 96 in February). The decline was particularly **prominent in Judea and Samaria**, where there were **58 attacks** (84 in February). On the other hand, there was **a rise in the number of attacks carried out in Jerusalem** (31, as compared with 12 in February). Most of the attacks (78) involved **Molotov cocktails**. There was also a vehicular attack in Jerusalem, eight instances of IEDs and two shooting attacks involving light arms.

³ According to data from the Israel Security Agency. The statistics do not include the dozens of incidents of stones thrown at Israeli vehicles.

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Crossings – Recent Developments

The Kerem Shalom Crossing

■ Israeli security guards examining the contents of some of the trucks passing through the Kerem Shalom crossing **discovered a shipment of thousands of electrodes**, apparently consigned to terrorist operatives in the Gaza Strip. They were concealed between two slabs of marble sent to the Gaza Strip from Judea and Samaria (Red Alert, April 13, 2015). The electrodes were apparently meant to be used by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip in the manufacture of weapons.



Revealing the electrodes concealed between marble slabs on the flatbed of a truck (Border Crossings Authority, Israeli Ministry of Defense, April 13, 2015).

The Rafah Crossing

■ The Rafah crossing remains closed. **Maher Abu Subha**, head of the Palestinian border crossing authority, denied reports that the crossing was expected to open, since so far no confirmation had been received. He claimed contacts continued with the Egyptians regarding the date of its opening. He added that the border crossing authority was prepared to transfer responsibility for the crossings to the Palestinian national consensus government, which, he claimed, had to fulfill its obligations in the matter (Alresala.net, April 11, 2015).

■ Senior PIJ figure **Ahmed al-Uri** claimed that the Egyptian leadership and his organization had reached an "almost final" agreement regarding the Rafah crossing.

According to the alleged agreement, the Palestinian Authority's (PA) presidential guard would take control of the crossing. He claimed the agreement had been reached when PIJ secretary general **Ramadan Shallah** and his deputy visited Egypt the previous month (Alaraby.co.uk, April 7, 2015).

Disturbances in the Supply of Electricity to the Gaza Strip

■ **Jamal al-Dardasawi**, responsible for public relations for the Gaza Strip electric company, claimed that following the shutdown of a power plant in Egypt, the supply of electricity to the Rafah district had been completely cut off. He claimed the relevant agencies were in contact with Egypt to restore the flow of electricity (Alrai.com, April 6, 2015).

Iranian Financial Aid for Families of Palestinians Killed in the Gaza Strip

■ On April 12, 2015, the **Al-Ansar charitable society⁴** in the Gaza Strip announced that at the beginning of April 2015 \$2 million worth of financial aid would be donated to 5,000 families in the Gaza Strip whose members were killed by the IDF between the beginning of the **Al-Aqsa intifada (September 2000) and June 31, 2014** (before Operation Protective Edge) (Website of the Al-Ansar charitable society, April 12, 2015). According to an announcement issued by the society on April 5, 2015, the funding came from the Iranian-affiliated shaheed institution (Facebook page of the Al-Ansar charitable society, April 5, 2015).

⁴ The **Al-Ansar charitable society** is an Islamic charitable society **affiliated with the PIJ**. It is headed by Nafez Othman al-Aa'raj. The society is supported by Iran's Palestine shaheed institution. **The society serves as a pipeline for funneling money from Iran to the families of shaheeds in the Gaza Strip** (i.e., terrorist operatives).



Left: The society's announcement regarding the time and place for the distribution of funds (Facebook page of the Al-Ansar charitable society, April 5, 2015). Right: Al-Ansar in the Gaza Strip's announcement about the allocation of funds (Website of the Al-Ansar charitable society in the Gaza Strip, April 12, 2015).

Egyptian Security Activity along the Egypt-Gaza Strip Border

- According to Egyptian sources, as part of the Egyptian security forces' counterterrorism activities in the Sinai Peninsula, **Egypt is currently examining the possibility of widening the buffer zone along its border with the Gaza Strip to five kilometers (about three miles) in the near future to end the existence of the tunnels.** The Egyptian decision was made after a tunnel 2.8 kilometers (about 1.75 miles) long was discovered leading from the Gaza Strip to the Sinai Peninsula.
- Since the beginning of January 2015 the **Egyptians have exposed and destroyed more than 240 tunnels** running under the Egypt-Gaza Strip border (Okaz.com.sa, April 11, 2015). According to a security source in the Sinai Peninsula, the second stage of constructing the future buffer zone will end soon, when more than 1,150 houses of the planned 1,220 have been destroyed (Almasryalyoum.com, April 5, 2015).

The PIJ and the Idea of a Long-Term Lull in the Fighting with Israel

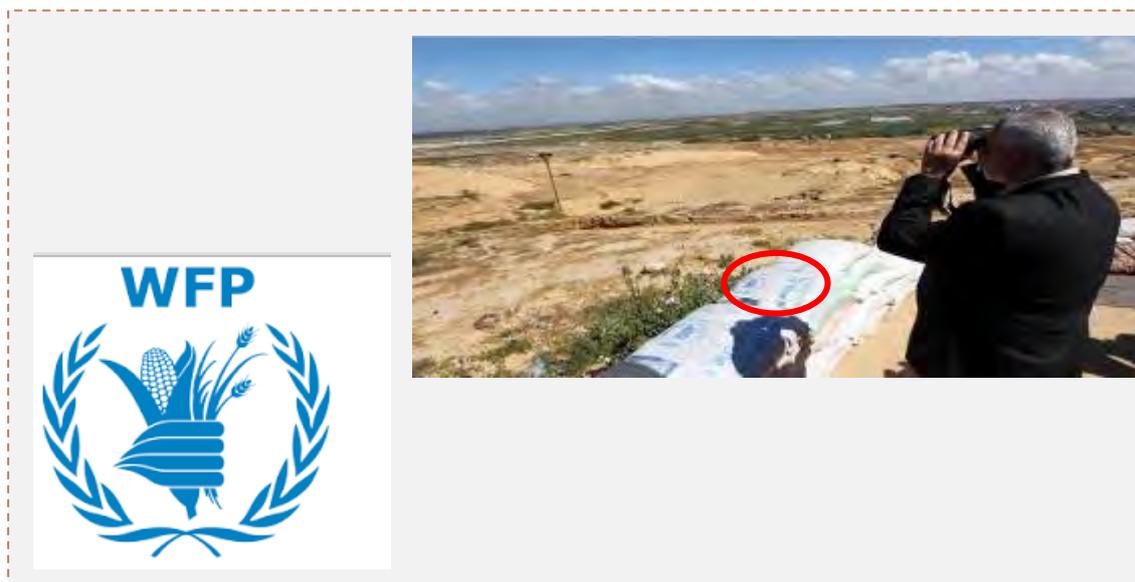
- Regarding the lull in the fighting with Israel, PIJ activist **Khader Habib** claimed that **an agreement to any long-term lull with Israel was out of the question.** He said there could be no lull with Israel without preconditions and a national consensus. He added that the PIJ would oppose the lull if it did not include all the Palestinian factions

and if it did not answer the Palestinians' needs and interests (Quds.net, April 13, 2015).

■ **Note:** During March 2015 the Hamas media claimed the organization had been presented with a proposal for a long-term lull with Israel (of up to five years) in return for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip and the lifting of the siege (mention was also made of an agreement for a ceasefire, a *hudna*). According to Hamas spokesmen, the proposal was made by "European diplomats," or according to another version, presented by UN envoy Robert Serry.⁵

Ismail Haniya Visits New Hamas Military Posts in the Northern Gaza Strip

■ On April 4, 2015, **Ismail Haniya**, deputy head of Hamas' political bureau, and **Fathi Hamad**, minister of the interior in the former de-facto Hamas administration, visited Hamas military-terrorist posts ("Al-Yarmouk" and "Palestine") newly constructed on the northeast border of the Gaza Strip. According to spokesmen of Hamas' military-terrorist wing, **the new posts near the border are intended to "challenge Israel," and were built as a lesson learned from the last confrontation with Israel.** They also claimed that work to develop posts near the border continued (Palestine-info.info and the Facebook page of PALINFO, April 4, 2015).



Ismail Haniya visits the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades' new forward posts. It is being shored up with sacks imprinted with the logo of the UN's World Food Program, apparently a donation to the Gaza Strip (Palestine-info.info and the Facebook page of PALINFO, April 4, 2015).

⁵ For further information see the April 5, 2015 bulletin "[Initial Hamas Reactions to the Long-Term Lull Proposal in Return for Reconstruction of the Gaza Strip and Lifting the Siege.](#)"

Salafist Activists Arrested in the Gaza Strip

- A number of Salafist activists were arrested in the Gaza Strip, among them **Sheikh Adnan Khader Mayat**, a senior Salafist activist, labeled by the media as "**the ISIS leader in the Gaza Strip.**" Sheikh Adnan Khader Mayat, from the Bureij refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, delivers sermons in a mosque and is considered one of the senior members of the Salafist-jihadi groups in the Gaza Strip that support ISIS. The sheikh customarily attacks Hamas in his sermons for its anti-ISIS statements and actions (Alquds.com, April 7, 2015).
- An estimated fifty Salafist activists demonstrated in front of the Ansar prison in the Rimal neighborhood of Gaza City to demand the release of the arrested activists. A flyer issued in the name of ISIS presented Hamas with an ultimatum to release them (Alkhabarpres.com April 9, 2015). **Iyad al-Bazam**, spokesman for the Hamas police, denied the reports that ISIS had a presence in the Gaza Strip, claiming they were "a baseless media exaggeration." He claimed the security forces in the Gaza Strip had not arrested Salafist activists and that Adnan Mayat had not been arrested but rather summoned for interrogation and released.



Left: The flyer signed by ISIS in the Gaza Strip, demanding Hamas release the sheikh (Alkhabarpres.com April 9, 2015). Right: Sheikh Adnan Mayat (Alquds.com, April 7, 2015).

The Palestinian Authority

The PA Joins the International Criminal Court in The Hague

Overview

■ On **April 1, 2015**, the ICC formally announced that the Palestinians were the 123rd State Party to the Rome Statute, the ICC's founding treaty, that is, had joined the Court. According to the announcement the Palestinians could now participate in the Court's decision-making process (ICC website, April 1, 2015)

Responses of the PLO, the PA and Fatah

■ The Palestinian media affiliated with the PA, like those affiliated with Hamas, gave extensive coverage to the Palestinians official membership the ICC. Palestinian TV broadcast special programs where senior PA figures were interviewed, and lawyers and jurists provided background material. The main responses were the following:

- The **PLO** announced that the Palestinians' joining was s **the first step in a long political-legal campaign against Israel**, and that its objective was to motivate the world to do its duty and impose sanctions on Israel for violating basic human rights.
- **Mahmoud Abbas** claimed it was an achievement for the Palestinian people. He claimed that professional national, economic, political and security committees were currently working to deal with the issue (Wafa.ps, April 1, 2015). Interviewed during a visit to Russia, he did not give a specific date for presenting cases to the Court (Russian news agency Sputnik, April 13, 2015).
- **Saeb Erekat**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, claimed it was a historic day for the Palestinian people. He claimed it meant recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, which was not subordinate to negotiations with Israel. He added that **the PA would now join 523 international agreements and protocols** (Palestinian TV, April 1, 2015). Interviewed elsewhere, Saeb Erekat claimed the Palestinians had asked the ICC to begin investigating **the issues of the settlements and Operation Protective Edge**. He claimed a committee had been formed of representatives of the Palestinian organizations, including Hamas, the trade unions and senior legal experts to investigate the issues (Xinhua News Agency, April 11, 2015).

- **Nabil Shaath**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, claimed that the Palestinian committees responsible for presenting the files to the Court were working hard to collect the necessary proof to be ready **within two months**. He claimed **the file dealing with the settlements would be presented first**. He claimed Hamas was prepared for any Israeli counterclaim (Alkhaleejonline.net, April 21, 2015).
- **Ibrahim Kharisha**, PA representative to the UN in Geneva, said the Fourth Geneva Convention, which forbids the use of weapons against civilians, also obligates the Palestinian side, and admitted that the abduction of the three [Jewish] youths in Gush Etzion in June 2014 violated the Convention. He also said that the fact that the PA belonged to the ICC and Israel did not create difficulties. He said that very precise preparations had to be made for the Palestinian cases before they were presented to the ICC and that they should not be presented hastily (Palestinian TV, April 6, 2015).

Hamas and the PIJ

■ **Hamas also praised the PA's new membership in the ICC**. Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** congratulated the PA in the name of Hamas, claiming it was a step in the right direction and would make it possible to try the Israeli leaders for the [so-called] "crimes" they had committed against the Palestinians. Senior Hamas figure **Ismail Radwan** called on the ICC to bring the Israeli leaders to trial. **Khalil al-Haya**, a member of Hamas' political bureau, claimed Hamas was preparing itself to deal with the ICC, and that dealing with the Court did not contradict the continuation of the "resistance" [i.e., violence and terrorism] in all its forms (Alwatanvoice.com, April 10, 2015).

- Senior PIJ figure **Khaled al-Batash** claimed his organization did not have faith in the international legal system, but nevertheless hoped the ICC would try those who had committed crimes against the Palestinian people throughout history.

The Palestinian Tax Revenues

■ The **announcement** made by the Israeli prime minister about thawing the PA's frozen tax revenues, after its debts to various Israeli bodies (including the Israel electric company) had been deduced, **was met with outrage in the PA**:

- **Mahmoud Abbas** stated that the Palestinians would not accept the "financial decrees" of Israel and that they wanted the matter arbitrated according to the

Oslo Accords. He claimed if arbitration did not succeed the Palestinians would appeal to the ICC (Wafa.ps, April 1, 2015).

- A meeting of the Palestinian national consensus government headed by **Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah** was held in Ramallah on April 7, 2015. It voted to reject the tax funds from Israel because the sum of 1.05 billion Israeli shekels (about \$265 million) would be deducted [the amount owed to various Israeli suppliers] (Wafa.ps, April 7, 2015).
- **Rami Hamdallah** threatened that if Israel persisted in deducting funds from the Palestinians' tax revenues, the Palestinians would appeal to the ICC. He claimed his government was in constant contact with international agencies to exert pressure on Israel to thaw the tax revenues (Wafa.ps, April 10, 2015).

Local Violent Confrontations in the Refugee Camps in Judea and Samaria

- Violent confrontations continue between local operatives and the PA security forces in the Palestinian refugee camps of Jenin and Balata: on the night of April 10, 2015, unknown arsonists torched the vehicle belonging to **Fayez Arafat**, director of the Jaffa [Community] Center and a Fatah activist from the Balata refugee camp (Safa.ps, April 11, 2015).



Left: Armed, masked Palestinian operatives in the Balata refugee camp demonstrate support for local operatives imprisoned in PA facilities (Facebook news page of the Balata refugee camp, April 13, 2015). Right: Armed, masked Fatah operatives block Al-Quds Street in the eastern part of Nablus, halting traffic (Maannews.net, April 13, 2015).

Fatah Operatives Hold Military Display in Kafr Qalil

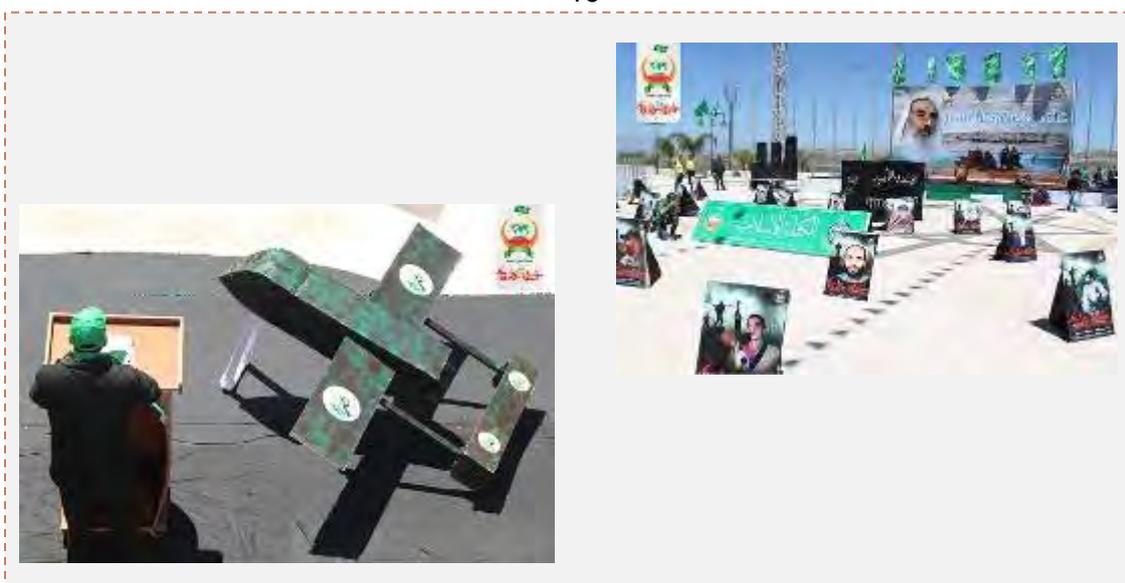
■ On **April 10, 2015**, Fatah military-terrorist operatives from the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades held a military display in Kafr Qalil (in the region of Nablus) to mark the 13th anniversary of two Fatah terrorists killed in the region (Majid al-Qani and Mahmoud al-Qani). Dozens of armed, masked Fatah terrorist operatives participated in the display, waving their automatic weapons in the air (Facebook page of I love you Burin, April 10, 2015).



Dozens of armed Fatah military-terrorist operatives participate in a military display in Kafr Qalil (Facebook page of I love you Burin, April 10, 2015)

Incitement to Violence against Israel at Palestinian Universities

■ On April 5, 2015, the **Islamic block** (Hamas' student wing) at **Al-Najah University** in Nablus held a festival to glorify Palestinian terrorist shaheeds. They prepared a display in the same format for the second time running. During the festival **Islamic block activists and senior Hamas figures in Judea and Samaria gave speeches**. A telephone message was relayed from **Ismail Haniya**, who praised the activity of the Islamic block and expressed his opposition to the PA's detention of activists. There were also presentations about Palestinian shaheeds and a display of an unmanned aerial vehicle which, Hamas claimed, had flown over Israel during Operation Protective Edge (Facebook page of the Islamic Block at Al-Najah University and Paltimes.net, April 5, 2015; Hamas website, April 6, 2015).



Pictures from the display. Left: Model of an unmanned aerial vehicle (Facebook page of the Islamic Block at Al-Najah University, April 5, 2015).

- The Facebook page of the **Islamic Block at Beir Zeit University** also incites **violence**. On April 1, 2015, it posted a picture of masked Hamas terrorist operatives with the caption, "This is the only path...this is our right with pride and we will shed blood on our own way..." The hashtags were "resistance," "education" and "creativity" (Facebook page of the Islamic Block at Beir Zeit University, April 1, 2015).



The picture posted on the Facebook page of the Islamic Block at Beit Zeit University

The Northern Arena

Palestinian Reactions to the ISIS Takeover of the Yarmouk Refugee Camp⁶

- On April 1, 2015, about a thousand ISIS-affiliated terrorist operatives attacked the Yarmouk refugee camp (Al-Darar Al-Shamia, April 1, 2015). According to reports, initially ISIS operatives took over extensive areas of the camp (80%-90%). The armed Palestinian groups were besieged in the southern part of the camp, with Syrian army forces to the north (Al-Mayadeen TV, April 1, 2015). After a number of days the Palestinian organizations managed to drive back the ISIS operatives from the center and western parts of the camp, but apparently ISIS still controls the southern part, where residents who remained in the camp are concentrated (Al-Akhbar, April 8, 2015, Paltoday.ps, April 9, 2015).
- In the PA and Gaza Strip the events are being closely monitored. Apparently both the PA and Hamas want to remain neutral, and entreat the Palestinians not to get dragged into the bilateral military confrontations. The PLO said in a statement that it opposed the fighting in the refugee camp and that it would work in collaboration with most of the agencies involved to halt the armed activity, especially UNRWA (Wafa.ps, April 9, 2015). Demonstrations and rallies were held throughout Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip in support of the Palestinians in the Yarmouk refugee camp.
- **Saeb Erekat**, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, claimed Mahmoud Abbas was monitoring the "suffering of the Palestinian people" in the camp and that he was in contact with the UN, the United States the Arab league and other international agencies in order to support the residents of the camp. Mahmoud Abbas also dispatched a PLO delegation headed by **Ahmed Majdalani**, also a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, which arrived in Damascus on April 6, 2015, to discuss the issue of the refugee camp.
- The Palestinian organizations in the **Gaza Strip** held an urgent meeting to discuss the ramifications of the events in the Yarmouk camp. They discussed ways to supply the residents with help and support (Safa.ps, Quds.net and Paltoday.ps, April 6, 2015). In response to accusations in the media that Palestinian operatives in the

⁶ The Yarmouk refugee camp is the largest refugee camp in Syria. It is located in the southern outskirts of Damascus to the southeast of the city. In the past it was home to 160,000 Palestinians and Syrians. Today only about 18,000 inhabitants remain, controlled by a number of armed Palestinian groups and rebel organizations.

camp affiliated with Hamas were fighting, senior Hamas figure **Musheir al-Masri** claimed that Hamas did not have a military presence in Syria and did not interfere in Syria's internal affairs. He claimed the Palestinian military units established in the Yarmouk refugee camp were composed of local people, they had no direct connection with Hamas and their objective was to defend the camp (Egyptian satellite Mekamelleen TV, April 11, 2015).

■ However, Palestinians who support the Syrian regime, such as **Ahmed Jibril**, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command (PFLP-GC), criticized the lack of responsiveness of the Palestinians. He claimed a Palestinian group had been involved in the deterioration of the situation and the incitement in the media that led to the current situation, while the PLO did not take a stand. He claimed that men of the PFLP were currently the main force fighting in the camp (Almayadeen.net, April 7, 2015).