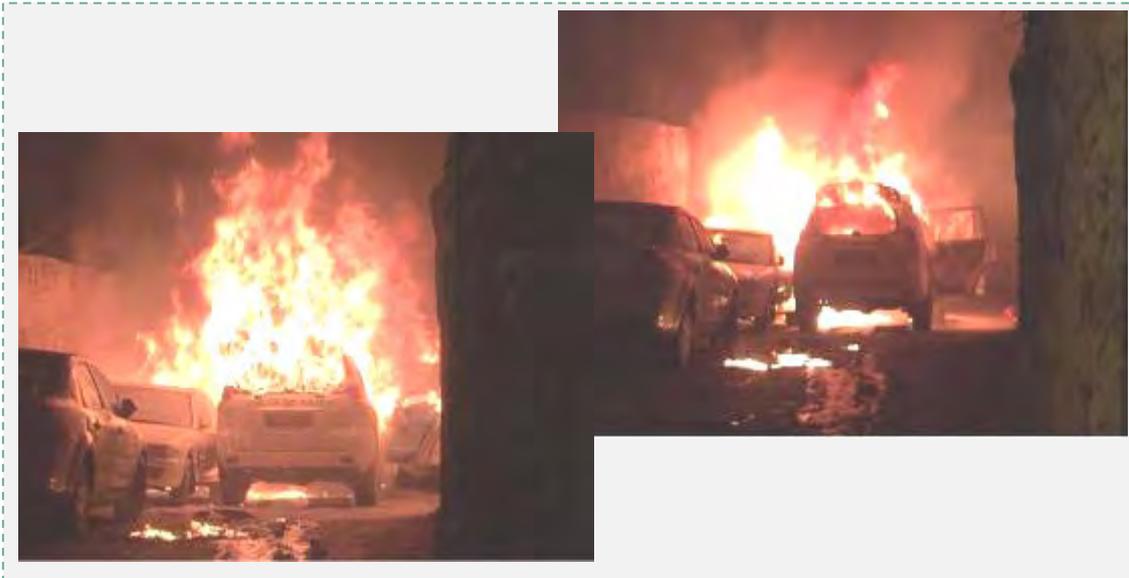




September 2, 2015

The "Popular Resistance" (i.e. Popular Terrorism) in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem Has Become More Organized in the Past Year



A Border Police jeep burns in the A-Tor neighborhood of east Jerusalem, set on fire by a Molotov cocktail (Facebook page of Quds.net, August 26, 2015). Palestinians threw stones at a fire engine sent to extinguish the blaze.

Overview

1. **Throwing stones, rocks and Molotov cocktails** has been the main modus operandi of the "popular resistance" (i.e., popular terrorism). The "popular resistance" has been the **main anti-Israel strategy of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Fatah during the past six years**. **Throwing stones and Molotov cocktails at Israeli security forces and civilians has increased** in the past year. That has been particularly noticeable in **the Old City of Jerusalem, east Jerusalem and the main roads and means of transportation in Judea and Samaria (especially Route 443, linking Jerusalem and Modi'in, and Jerusalem's light railway)**. **The PA and Fatah provide full political and media support for the "popular resistance,"** falsely representing it to the international community as **non-violent**.

2. The PA and Fatah customarily represent the "popular resistance" as grass-roots and spontaneous. However, during the past year it has become evident that **in several instances popular terrorist stone and Molotov cocktail attacks are becoming more organized, although most of them still are not.** That can be seen by the transition from lone-wolf attacks to local networks specializing in throwing stones and Molotov cocktails. The exposure of the networks indicated that some of them made preparations before attacks, decided on methods, choose significant targets and looked for ways to solve problems of financing and supplying weapons (Molotov cocktails and fireworks).

General Description of the "Popular Resistance" (i.e., Popular Terrorism)

3. The "popular resistance" (popular terrorism) has been **the main strategy employed by the PA and Fatah for the past six years** (since it was adopted by the Sixth Fatah Conference in August 2009). The PA and Fatah use the "popular resistance" to maintain **a continuous, monitored, controlled level of tension** in their relations with Israel, **exerting violent pressure on Israel** in coordination with what the PA and Fatah perceive as their current interests.¹

4. The **"popular resistance" is not the peaceful, non-violent protest the PA claims it is to the international community.** It makes **massive, systematic use of cold weapons and Molotov cocktails, and targets not only the Israeli security forces but Israeli civilians as well.** Its main modus operandi is **throwing stones, rocks and Molotov cocktails, and shooting fireworks.** Their use has been **increasing in the past year, especially in and around Jerusalem and the main roads in Judea and Samaria.** In addition, popular terrorism also **employs stabbing and vehicular attacks, whose use is also increasing.** The PA gives the "popular resistance" **political and media backing, including for attacks directed against Israeli civilians.**²

5. The Israeli Ministry of Construction and Housing, which operates a security system in the so-called "Holy Basin" of the Old City in Jerusalem, recently issued data **exposing the scope of stone- and Molotov cocktail-throwing.** According to the statistics, in June and July 2015 there **were 580 instances of violence directed**

¹ For further information see the May 20, 2013 study, ["The Palestinian "Popular Resistance" and Its Built-In Violence."](#)

² For further information see, for example, the June 4, 2015 bulletin, ["How the Palestinian Authority and Fatah Respond to Vehicular Attacks."](#)

against Israeli civilians and security forces in the Old City. **In 477 instances stones were thrown at passing cars and in 28 instances Molotov cocktails were thrown at cars and residences inhabited by Jews.** In July 2015 there were 221 attacks, a slight reduction compared with June, in which **359 attacks** were reported (Ynet, August 26, 2015). The statistics do not include stones and Molotov cocktails thrown in the Arab neighborhoods of east Jerusalem.³

6. Most of the attacks carried out by Palestinians in Judea and Samaria during the past few years have been popular terrorism attacks. However, they have been accompanied by a rise in shooting attacks, which have nothing to do with the "popular resistance," and can rather be characterized as **organized military-terrorist activity.** Some of the shooting attacks have **killed Israeli civilians** (the attacks at the spring near the community of Dolev and near the community of Shvut Rachel, north and northwest of Ramallah, respectively).⁴

Stone-Throwing and Molotov Cocktail Attacks Have Become More Organized

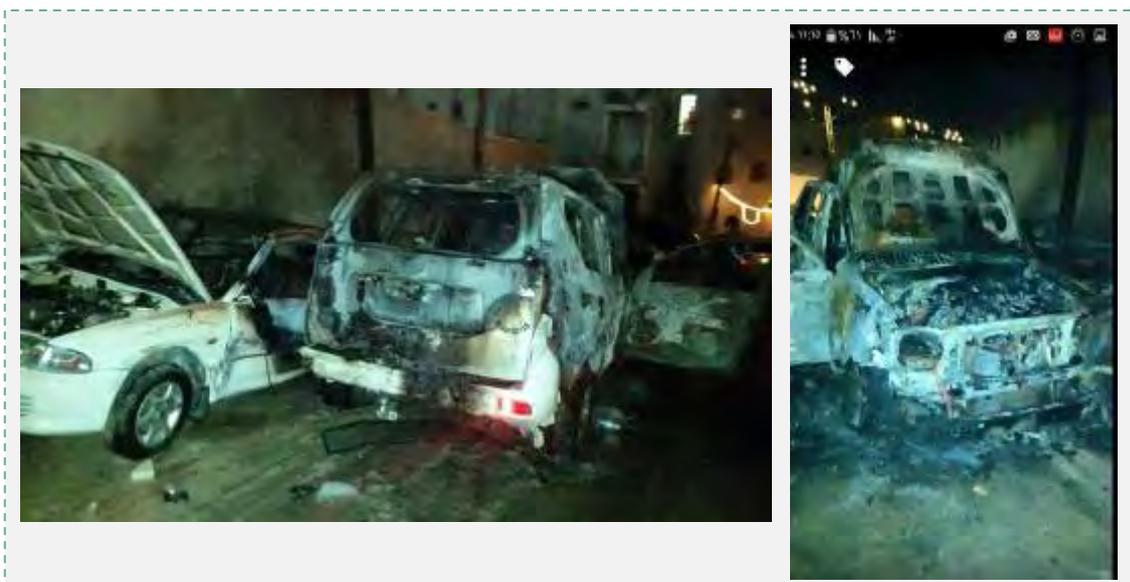
7. Since the Palestinians adopted the strategy of popular terrorism, **generally speaking the stones and Molotov cocktails have been thrown by individuals, usually as spontaneous actions. They have been directed against the Israeli security forces, Israeli civilians and Israeli vehicles on the roads in Judea and Samaria and the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem.** In most cases the attackers were young Palestinians and sometimes high school pupils and young children. They generally attacked at the "traditional" points of friction between Palestinians and the Israeli security forces, and sometimes in various locations throughout Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem.

³ The data refer to three of the four quarters of the Old City, the so-called "Holy Basin" between the walls, the Mount of Olives, and the City of David. They do not include the violence of June and July 2015 in the east Jerusalem neighborhoods, among them Shuafat, Beit Hanina, Issawiya, Jabel Mukaber (Ynet, August 26, 2015).

⁴ The most recent shooting attack was carried out on August 30, 2015, a drive-by shooting near the community of Kedumim, west of Nablus. The Israeli driver was wounded.

8. As opposed to the original spontaneous, grass-roots nature of popular terrorism **during the past year throwing stones and Molotov cocktails has become more organized, even if only in a minority of the cases.** An analysis of the attacks and the interrogation of operatives in networks that were exposed indicate that in **several instances the attacks were carried out by local networks** that had made preparations before the attacks. They also devoted thought to the modus operandi, for example, throwing Molotov cocktails, which would lead to the arrival of fire engines, which could also be attacked.⁵

9. It is also apparent that the stone-throwing and Molotov cocktail terrorists **chose significant rather than random civilian targets,** for example, Israeli vehicles on roads in Judea and Samaria, including emergency vehicles, especially on **Route 443, which links Modi'in and Jerusalem; the light railway in Jerusalem, which has turned into a favorite target for Palestinians throwing stones; and the residences of Jews in the Old City and in and near the Arab neighborhoods in east Jerusalem.**



A Border Police jeep after it was hit by a Molotov cocktail in the A-Tor neighborhood of east Jerusalem (Facebook page of Quds.net, August 26, 2015). The fire engine that arrived to extinguish the blaze was stoned.

10. The following are examples of information gotten from the interrogation of **local Palestinian networks** in various places in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria whose operatives threw stones and Molotov cocktails (the Israel Security Agency website):

⁵ For example, on August 26, 2015, a Molotov cocktail was thrown at a Border Police vehicle in the A-Tor neighborhood of Jerusalem. It caught fire, and the fire engine that arrived to extinguish the blaze was stoned (Israel Channel 10, August 27, 2015). In ITIC assessment stoning the fire engine was not spontaneous and had been planned in advance.

- 1) **At the end of August 2015 a Palestinian squad from Beit Hanina was apprehended.** Its operatives threw Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles, wounding three Israeli civilians. **Two of the squad's operatives held Israeli ID cards.** Two of them were minors, aged 16 and 17. During interrogation they admitted they had planned the attacks as revenge for the murder of the Palestinian baby in the village of Duma (Israel Security Agency, August 23, 2015).
- 2) **At the end of August 2015 a Palestinian squad from the village of Beita (south of Nablus) was apprehended.** Its operatives threw Molotov cocktails from their vehicle at passing Israeli cars and **threw stones at Israeli security forces.** One of the Palestinians, 21 years old, was a Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) terrorist operative (Israel Security Agency, August 25, 2015).
- 3) The Israeli security forces exposed a terrorist network **responsible for a number of attacks in the region of Neve Tsuf (northwest of Ramallah).** The network had six operatives, all from Bayt Rima (north of Ramallah). Most of their activities involved throwing pipe bombs and Molotov cocktails in January and February 2015 (Israel Security Agency, April 27, 2015).
- 4) **A Palestinian network of dozens of terrorists was exposed in the Abu Tor neighborhood of east Jerusalem.** Its operatives threw **Molotov cocktails, IEDs and stones, and shot firecrackers at Israeli security forces and local Jewish residences.** Their operations were organized. **Their objective was to attack Jewish Israelis and the Israeli security forces in Abu Tor and damage property.** The network was recently headed by Fatah terrorist operative **Bakr Abd al-Mughrabi. He was involved in funding the network, in manufacturing IEDs and supplying Molotov cocktails and fireworks to the network's operatives** (Israel Security Agency, February 2015).

Supplying Popular Terrorism with Weapons

11. On July 26, 2015, **a toy store the Samaritan village of Bartaa' was discovered to be selling fireworks of the type shot at Israeli security forces during riots.** Three Palestinians were detained. They were suspected of selling **three hundred crates of fireworks subsequently used by rioters to attack the Israeli security forces in Judea, Samaria and east Jerusalem.** The explosives in the fireworks were also used to manufacture IEDs. BB guns were also found in the store. **During 2015 there has been an increase in the use of fireworks to attack the Israeli**

security forces along with stones and Molotov cocktails (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, July 26, 2015).

12. In ITIC assessment, the organized supply of Molotov cocktails and fireworks to the terrorist network in Abu Tor, and the exposure of hundreds of crates of fireworks in the village of Bartaa' meant for the riots in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem, indicate the organization behind the "spontaneous" "popular resistance" riots.



The stock of fireworks discovered in a toy store in the village of Bartaa', used as weapons by popular terrorism (Israel Police Force Spokesman's Department, July 26, 2015).