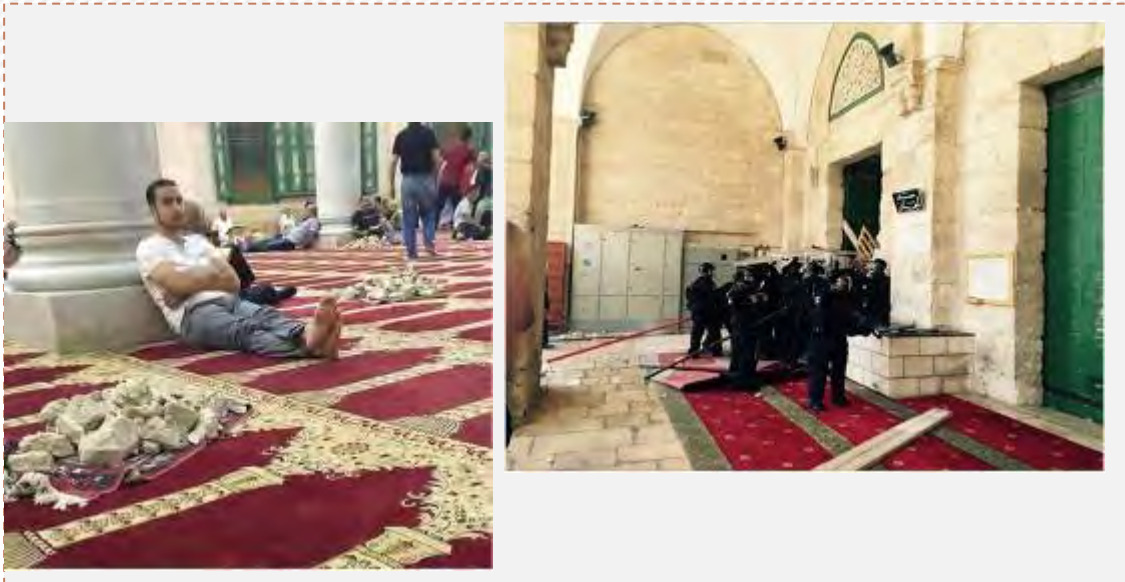




News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(September 9-20, 2015)¹



Left: Muslim worshippers on the Temple Mount sitting near a pile of stones before throwing them at the Israeli security forces (Gaza Alan's Twitter account, September 14, 2015). **Right:** Clashes on the Temple Mount between masked men and the Israeli security forces (Israel Police Facebook page, September 13, 2015).

Overview

- The main events of the past two weeks were the increase of “popular terrorism” in scale and intensity. “Popular terrorism” focused on the Temple Mount, the eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem, and the adjacent Jewish neighborhoods. The clashes spread to additional areas throughout Judea and Samaria. The clashes took place with intensive Palestinian incitement mainly by Hamas and other terrorist organizations.
- A Jerusalem resident was killed as a result of a stone-throwing attack on his car near his home in the Arnona neighborhood in south Jerusalem. In addition, a number of members of the Israeli security forces and several Palestinians were injured in the clashes.
- The Israeli Prime Minister convened a special session on the situation in and around Jerusalem. In the wake of the session, it was decided to adopt a number of measures for increased enforcement, prevention and punishment. At the same time, the Prime Minister made it clear (in response to the Palestinian incitement) that Israel did not intend to change the status quo on the Temple Mount.
- Over the past few days, a number of rockets were fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip. One rocket landed in Sderot and the other was intercepted by the Iron Dome system in the vicinity of Ashkelon. In response, the IDF attacked three Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip.

¹ Due to the High Holy Days, the next issue will be published after Sukkot. We wish our readers a happy Jewish New Year.

Man killed in a stone-throwing attack

■ An Israeli was killed when stones were thrown at his car near the south Jerusalem neighborhood of Arnona. The deceased was Alexander Levlovich, 64, a resident of Jerusalem. He was driving home with two women after the holiday dinner. The car was attacked with stones on the road. As a result, the driver had a heart attack, lost control of the car, veered off the road and crashed into a pole. He was pronounced dead at the hospital. The two passengers sustained minor injuries (Ynet, September 14, 2015).



The car after being attacked with stones (Israel Fire and Rescue Services, September 14, 2015; Photo: Arik Abouloff)

Israel's South

Rocket Fire and Mortar Shells Attacking Israel

■ In recent days there have been several launches of rockets at Israel. One rocket landed in the **city of Sderot**. Another rocket was intercepted by the Iron Dome system in the **vicinity of Ashkelon**. Below are details of the launches and falls:

- **On September 18, 2015, a rocket was launched from the Gaza Strip at Ashkelon.** The rocket was intercepted by the Iron Dome system. There were no casualties and no damage was caused (IDF Spokesperson, September 18, 2015). This was the first rocket interception by the Iron Dome system since Operation Protective Edge. An ISIS-affiliated network calling itself the Company of Sheikh Omar Hadid – Bayt al-Maqdis claimed responsibility for the rocket attack. According to the statement, the rocket fire was carried out in support of the Al-Aqsa Mosque (the network's Twitter page, September 19, 2015). This network has claimed responsibility for most of the recent rocket fire from the Gaza Strip.

- **On September 17, 2015**, a rocket hit was identified in the **vicinity of Sderot**. There were no casualties. A vehicle was damaged (IDF Spokesman, September 17, 2015). No network or organization claimed responsibility for the attack.
- **On the night of September 15, 2015**, several rockets were launched at Israel from the central Gaza Strip. One rocket hit a house in Deir al-Balah and the rest fell in open areas in the Gaza Strip. There were no casualties (Red Alert Facebook page, September 15, 2015).

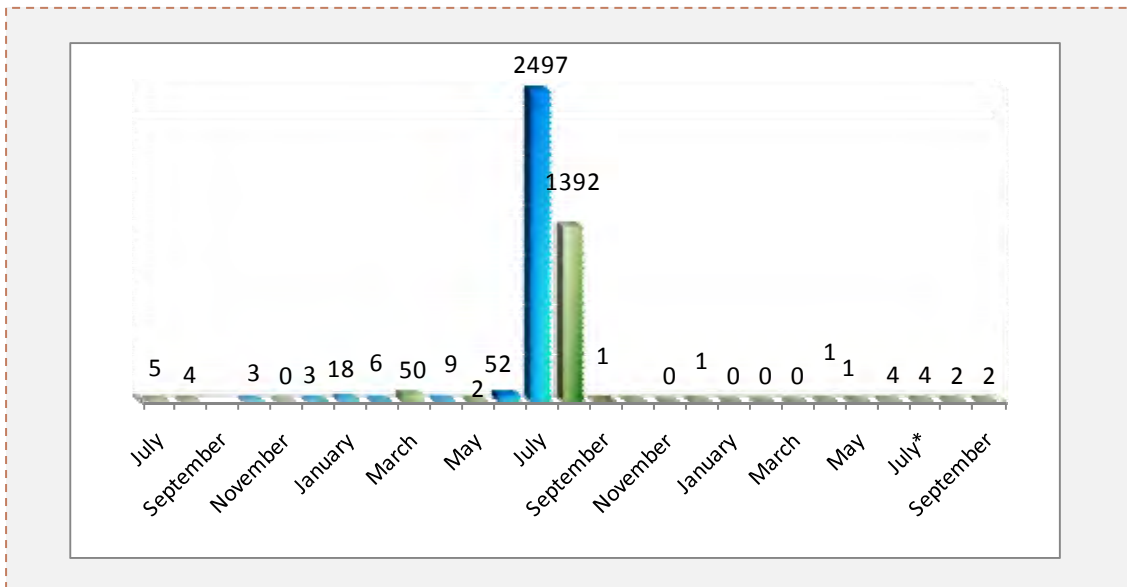
Israel’s response to the rocket fire

- In response to the rocket launches, Israel Air Force aircraft attacked three Hamas terrorist infrastructures in the northern Gaza Strip on the night of September 18-19, 2015 (IDF Spokesman, September 19, 2015). The Palestinian media reported on an attack at a site near Jabaliya and another site in the area of Beit Hanoun (Qudsnet, September 19, 2015).



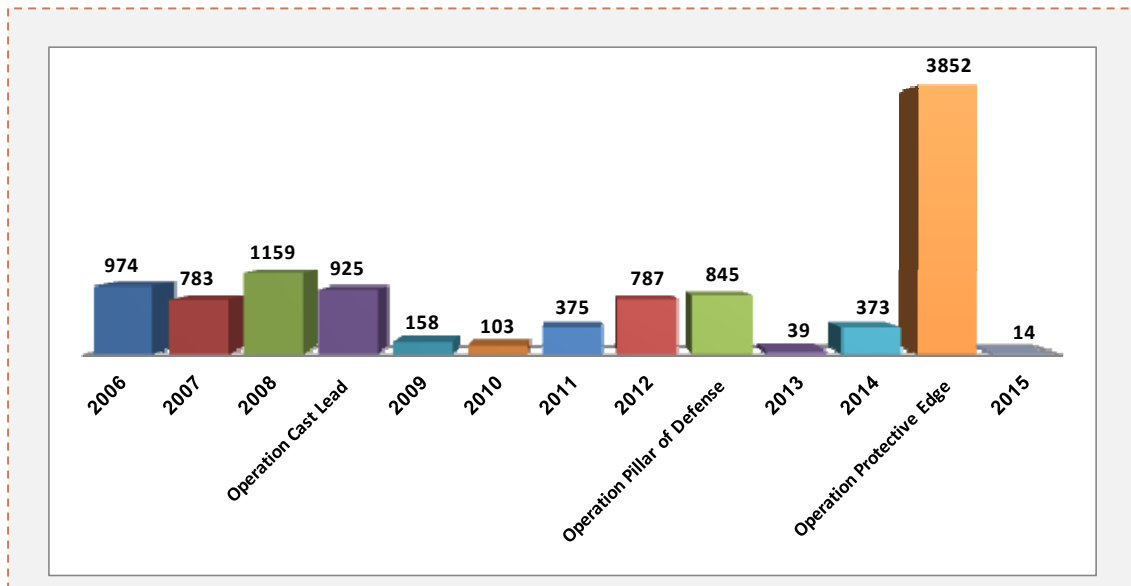
Left: A Hamas broadcasting antenna attacked in Jabaliya (Quds Net’s Facebook page, September 19, 2015). Right: Claim of responsibility issued by the Company of Sheikh Omar Hadid – Bayt al-Maqdis (The network’s Twitter page, September 19, 2015).

Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire (2013 – 2015)²



* The figures include three rockets that were fired at the western Negev in July from the Sinai Peninsula by the Islamic State's Sinai province.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire in Israel's South³



Three of the rockets that hit Israeli territory in 2015 were launched from the Sinai Peninsula by the Islamic State's Sinai Province.

² As of September 20, 2015. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire or rockets which misfired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

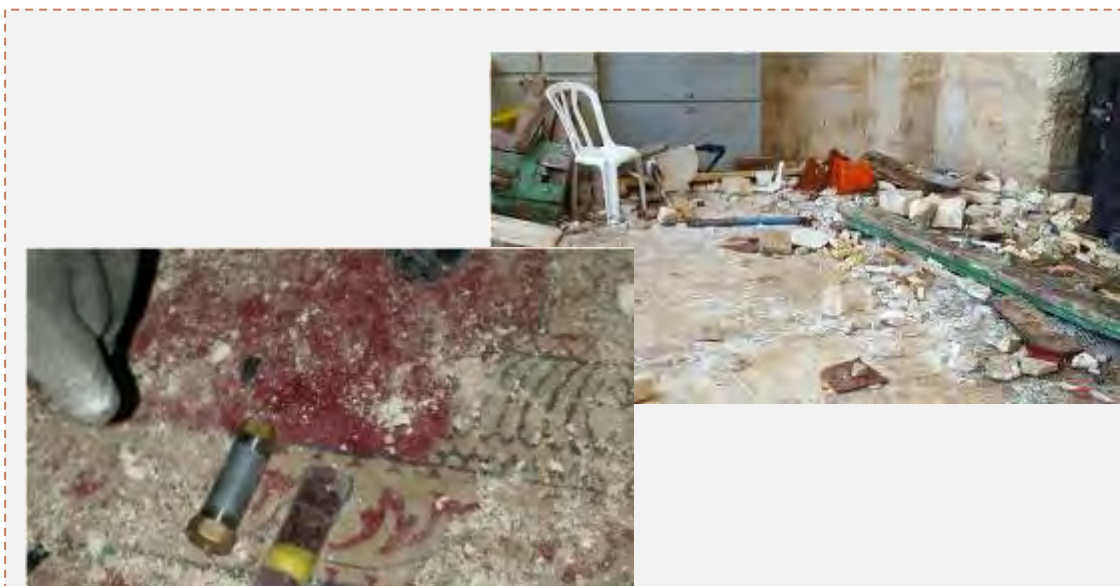
³ The statistics do not include mortar shell fire or rockets which misfired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria

Clashes on the Temple Mount and in Jerusalem

Summary of the incidents

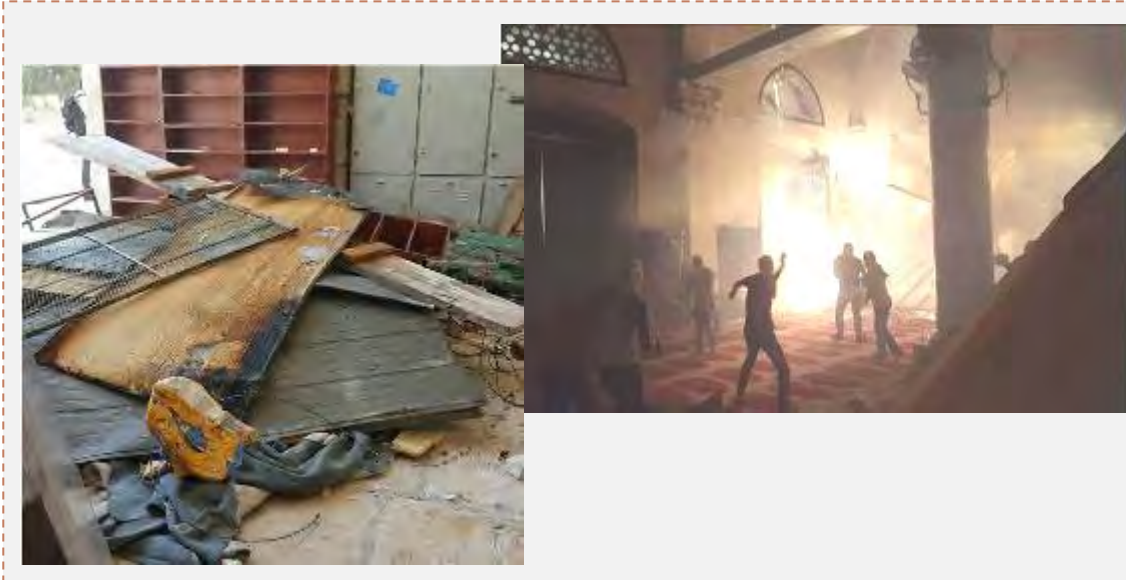
- During the past two weeks, widespread and severe clashes continued between Palestinians and Israeli security forces in the Temple Mount compound, and in East Jerusalem and the adjacent Jewish neighborhoods. The clashes spread to additional areas throughout Judea and Samaria.
- **The first wave of clashes** developed during the Jewish New Year (September 13-15, 2015). The clashes began when Palestinians tried to block the entrances to the Temple Mount to visitors during the holiday. **Masked Palestinians barricaded themselves in the Al-Aqsa mosque, collected stones and firecrackers and set up barricades to prevent the entry of police into the compound.** With the opening of the Temple Mount to visitors, the masked men began throwing stones and Molotov cocktails at Israeli security forces at the Mugrabi Gate. Later they also threw stones and Molotov cocktails inside the mosque itself. During the clashes, five policemen were lightly wounded and were treated on the spot (Israel Police Facebook page, September 13, 2015)



Left: Some of the pipe bombs confiscated on the Temple Mount (Israel Police spokesman's office, September 13, 2015). Right: Stones and blocks prepared in advance at the Al-Aqsa Mosque (Israel Police spokesman's office, September 15, 2015).

- **On September 16, 2015**, with the opening of the Temple Mount to visitors, masked men began throwing stones at the Mugrabi Gate. Police forces, deployed at the site in advance, immediately entered the Temple Mount compound. The Palestinians fled into

the Al-Aqsa mosque, throwing stones, blocks and iron bars at police and shooting dozens of fireworks at them. A Molotov cocktail was also thrown at the police. The police began to remove the barricades and managed to close the door of the mosque with the Palestinians rioters inside (Israel Police Facebook page, September 16, 2015).



Left: The remains of barricades erected by the Palestinians in the Al-Aqsa mosque to prevent the entry of Israeli security forces (Israel Police spokesman's office, September 15, 2015). Right: Palestinians clashing with Israeli security forces on the Temple Mount (Quds Net Facebook page, September 13, 2015).

■ At the same time, there were several violent incidents and stone-throwing attacks throughout Jerusalem. Below are some of them:

- A young man wearing a prayer shawl and phylacteries was attacked near the Chain Gate⁴ by a number of Palestinian Muslims who threw objects at him. The young man sustained minor injuries and was treated on the spot (Ynet, September 13, 2015).
- A young Jewish man was slightly wounded by stones thrown in the Silwan neighborhood (Ynet, September 13, 2015).
- Palestinians threw stones at Border Police on the Mount of Olives (Ynet, September 13, 2015).
- Stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown at Israeli security forces in the area of Issawiya (Ynet, September 13, 2015).

⁴ One of the main gates used by Muslims to enter the Temple Mount. Adjacent to the Western Wall.

- At the Majlis Gate⁵ in the Old City, a Molotov cocktail and stones were thrown at Israeli security forces. There were no casualties (Israel Police Facebook page, September 15, 2015).

- Stones were thrown at an Israeli bus near the Western Wall. There were no casualties (Red Alert Facebook page, September 13, 2015).

■ On Friday, September 18, 2015, there was a second wave of clashes after the Palestinians called for a “day of rage” in response to the incidents on the Temple Mount. With the end of Friday prayers, violent clashes began between the Israeli security forces and Palestinians in the area of the Nablus Gate, the Qalandiya checkpoint and the neighborhoods of East Jerusalem (At-Tur, the Shuafat refugee camp, Jabel Mukaber, Wadi Joz and Issawiya). There were also violent clashes at Rachel’s Tomb in Bethlehem and in other locations in Judea and Samaria.

■ Around 10 members of the Israeli security forces were wounded in these violent incidents. In addition, several dozen Palestinians were wounded. Some of the demonstrations throughout Judea and Samaria were reportedly dispersed by the Palestinian Authority’s security apparatus (Alresalah.net, September 18, 2015). As a result, Hamas harshly criticized the activities of the Palestinian Authority’s security apparatus (Al-Aqsa TV, September 19, 2015).



Left: Hamas poster calling for attacks for Al-Aqsa that will shake Israel’s security. The poster reads: “Make Israel’s security tremble for the sake of Al-Aqsa” (PALDF Facebook page, September 17, 2015). Right: Hamas calling for a day of rage on Friday on behalf of Al-Aqsa (PALDF Facebook page, September 16, 2015).

⁵ One of the main gates used by Muslims to enter the Temple Mount. Located in the western part of the Old City.

Israel's response

- **Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu** convened a special session on the situation in and around Jerusalem. He declared that Israel would fight with all the necessary means against those who throw stones, Molotov cocktails and pipe bombs in order to harm civilians and policemen. He noted that such attacks would meet with a decisive response. The Prime Minister added that Israel would bring about an overall change and the setting of new standards of deterrence and prevention.
- As a result, it was decided to tighten measures in several areas: changing the rules of engagement, setting minimum sentences for these offenses and imposing high fines on minors and their parents who commit them (Prime Minister's Office website, September 15, 2015). According to media reports, the Prime Minister is considering presenting the government with a draft proposal for stricter rules of engagement, in coordination with the Attorney General.

The Palestinian Authority's response

- The Palestinian Authority called on Jordan, the UN Secretary-General and a number of other countries to intervene in what was happening in Jerusalem. **Mahmoud Abbas** spoke by phone with **Mohammed VI**, King of Morocco, and **Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**, the King of Saudi Arabia, about the incidents at Al-Aqsa mosque (Wafa News Agency, September 16, 2015).
- At a meeting held by Mahmoud Abbas with Palestinian Authority senior officials he said that "the Palestinians are in Jerusalem and will remain in Jerusalem and will protect the holy places of Christianity and Islam." This despite his claim that Israel is waging a "war" in Jerusalem. He also stressed that a Palestinian state would not be established without Jerusalem being its capital (Wafa News Agency, September 14, 2015).
- **Presidential Spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeina** condemned the "invasion of Al-Aqsa Mosque by the occupation police" and said that East Jerusalem and the holy places of Islam and Christianity are considered a "red line" and that the Palestinians would not sit idly by in light of the incidents (Wafa News Agency, September 13, 2015). **Rami Hamdallah**, Prime Minister of the Palestinian consensus government, warned against the consequences of the Israeli escalation in Jerusalem, which will lead to an explosion situation in the region. He stressed that Israel must bear the consequences of damage to the Al-Aqsa mosque and added that the Palestinian government was working hard to support institutions in Jerusalem and the "steadfast position" of the Palestinians in Jerusalem (Wafa News Agency, September 13, 2015).

■ **Riyadh Mansour, the PLO representative at the United Nations**, addressed a number of member states of the UN Security Council, including Jordan's ambassador to the UN, Russia's ambassador and the Chairman of the Security Council for the current month (Wafa News Agency, September 15, 2015). In a speech to the foreign ministers of the Arab League, **Riyadh al-Maliki, Foreign Minister of the Palestinian consensus government**, said that the incidents at Al-Aqsa "are religious and racial cleansing." According to him, these incidents are liable to ignite a religious war in the region (Wafa News Agency, September 13, 2015).

Hammas

■ **Hammas** called on the Palestinian people to take to the streets and demonstrate on behalf of Al-Aqsa and to create confrontations with the IDF forces (Hammas website, September 14, 2015). In the Gaza Strip, Hammas organized popular assemblies. **Khaled Mash'al** spoke with **Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani**, the Emir of Qatar, and asked him to get the international community to take steps to protect the Palestinian people and the Al-Aqsa Mosque (Safa News Agency, September 15, 2015). Following are additional responses:

- Hamas spokesman **Fawzi Barhoum** called on the Palestinian people to rise up and fill Al-Aqsa (Fawzi Barhoum's Facebook page, September 13, 2015).
- **Moussa Abu Marzouq**, a member of the Hamas political bureau, condemned the incidents, calling them the embodiment of terrorism (Moussa Abu Marzouq's Facebook page, September 13, 2015).
- **Izzat al-Rishq**, a member of the Hamas political bureau, condemned the "invasion" of Israelis into the Temple Mount, and called for the rescue of the holy places from Israeli aggression (Hammas website, September 13, 2015).
- Hamas Spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** said that the Israeli escalation at the Al-Aqsa mosque was a declaration of war and called on the international community to stop the Israeli crime before the situation exploded (Hammas website, September 15, 2015).
- Senior Hamas official **Ismail Radwan** praised those who operated inside Al-Aqsa mosque and protected the holy places. He called on the international community to stop the attacks on the Al-Aqsa mosque and to be accountable for them (Al-Aqsa TV, September 15, 2015).

- Senior Hamas official **Fathi Hamad** said that “by breaking into the Al-Aqsa mosque, the Zionists brought death upon themselves.” According to him, the resistance, jihad and suicide bombers support the *Murabitun*, who guard the mosque.⁶ Hamad called on the residents of Judea and Samaria to begin a dual intifada, both against Israel and against the Palestinian Authority’s security apparatus (Al-Aqsa TV, September 18, 2015).
- Senior Hamas official **Ahmed Yousef** said that Hamas did not want war with Israel, but **a global crisis must be created so that the world would respond to the Palestinian problem** (Dunya al-Watan, September 19, 2015).

The PIJ

- **Senior PIJ official Khaled al-Batash** said that if Israel continued to Judaize and divide Jerusalem, there would be no lull and no ceasefire. He called on the “sons of the resistance” in Judea and Samaria to take immediate action as the only way to stop Israel (PalToday, September 17, 2015).

The UN Security Council

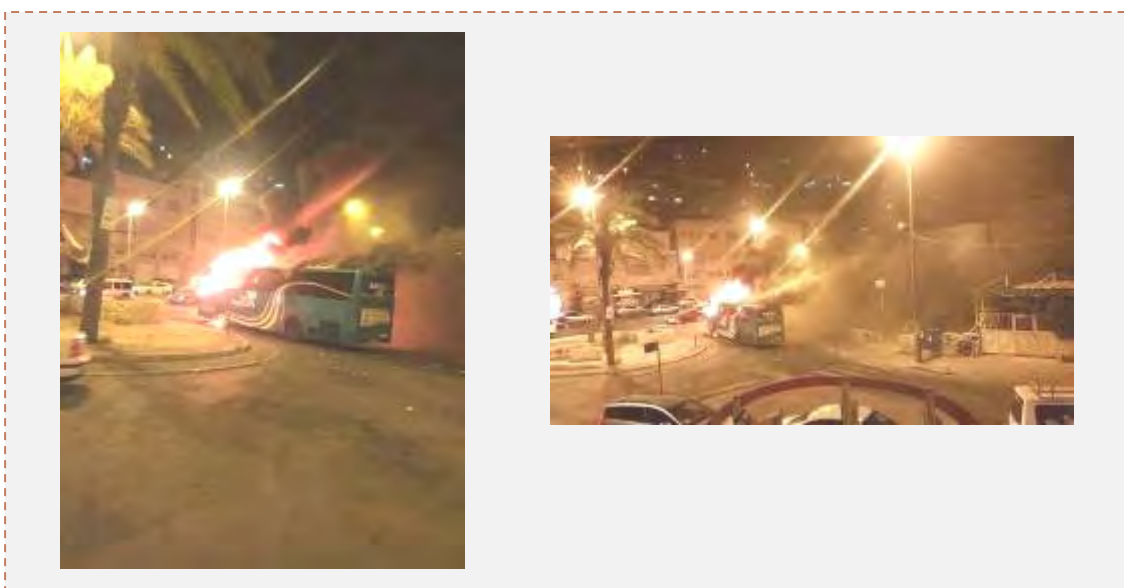
- In a statement published by the UN Security Council, the 15 members of the Council condemned the incidents on the Temple Mount, expressed deep concern in view of the recent events and called on both sides to calm the situation and **maintain the status quo** (UN Security Council website, September 18, 2015).

Popular terrorism incidents (“popular resistance”) in Judea and Samaria

- There were an increasing number of popular terrorism incidents (“popular resistance”) in the neighborhoods of East Jerusalem and throughout Judea and Samaria. Following are a number of noteworthy incidents:
 - **On September 20, 2015**, rocks were thrown at a couple and their six-month-old daughter, who were traveling in two cars between Tekoa and Har Homa in East Jerusalem. There were no casualties. The cars were damaged. According to the drivers, they were ambushed by a group of about 15 Palestinians who threw rocks and blocks at them (Ynet, September 20, 2015).

⁶ *Murabitun* - groups of young Muslims who guard the Temple Mount. Their activity is funded in part by the northern faction of the Islamic Movement in Israel. The *Murabitun*, and the corresponding women’s association, the *Murabitat*, were recently declared illegal organizations by Israel’s defense minister.

- **On September 19, 2015**, a Molotov cocktail was thrown at the Anatot military police base. A fire broke out. There were no casualties (Red Alert Facebook page, September 19, 2015).
- **On September 19, 2015**, stones were thrown at an Israeli bus and Israeli cars traveling on the Gush Etzion road near Beit Omar. There were no casualties. The bus's windshield was damaged (Red Alert Facebook page, September 19, 2015).
- **On September 17, 2015**, stones were thrown at Israeli vehicles on Highway 443 near Atarot. There were no casualties. The vehicles were damaged (Red Alert Facebook page, September 17, 2015).
- **On September 17, 2015**, a bus driver was stoned in East Jerusalem's Ras al-Amud neighborhood. The driver abandoned the bus, which was set on fire and burned to the ground. The bus driver sustained minor injuries (Ynet, September 17, 2015).



Bus in flames after being set on fire by a Molotov cocktail thrown at it by Palestinians in East Jerusalem's Ras al-Amud neighborhood (Quds Net Facebook page, September 17, 2015)

- **On September 16, 2015**, two pipe bombs were thrown at an Israel Border Police post in Hebron. There were no casualties (Red Alert Facebook page, September 16, 2015).
- **On September 16, 2015**, Israeli security forces in Issawiya identified a masked man running toward them carrying a Molotov cocktail. They fired at the masked man and hit him below the waist (Israel Police Facebook page, September 16, 2015).

- **On September 16, 2015**, Border Police combatants thwarted a stabbing attack at Tapuach Junction. A Nablus resident in his twenties came to the junction carrying a bag. After arousing the suspicion of the combatants, they called him over for a search. During the search, he took out a knife and tried to stab the combatants. One of them cocked his gun and the suspect dropped the knife and began to run away. He was caught and taken for questioning. During his interrogation, he admitted that he had planned to carry out a stabbing attack (Israel Police Facebook page, September 16, 2015)
- **On September 16, 2015**, an Israeli driver was injured by stones thrown at his car in Beitar Illit. The vehicle was damaged (Tazpit Agency, September 16, 2015).
- **On September 15, 2015**, an IDF force at a guard post at Rachel's Tomb identified two Palestinians who were planning to throw Molotov cocktails. The force fired at the two Palestinians below the waist and they fled (Red Alert Facebook page, September 15, 2015).
- **On September 15, 2015**, near Har Bracha in Samaria, stones were thrown at an IDF patrol. A soldier was slightly wounded in the face and taken to the hospital (Red Alert Facebook page, September 15, 2015).
- **On September 13, 2015**, Israeli security forces engaged in a military operation in Jenin were fired at and pipe bombs were thrown at them. There were no casualties (Red Alert Facebook page, September 13, 2015).
- **On September 11, 2015**, a Palestinian throwing stones at Israeli vehicles on the Gilad route in Samaria hit three vehicles and was shot by Israeli security forces with a rubber bullet. The young man was moderately wounded. Several other Palestinians at the scene fled (Red Alert Facebook page, September 11, 2015).

Terrorist attacks in August 2015

■ According to data from the Israel Security Agency, **there was an increase in the number of terrorist attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem in August 2015**. In total, 168 terrorist attacks were carried out, compared with 105 in July 2015:

- **Distribution of the attacks** - in Judea and Samaria, 117 attacks were carried out (compared to 63 in July 2015). In Jerusalem, 51 attacks were carried out (compared to 42 in July 2015). **These figures do not include stone-throwing incidents.**

- **Modus operandi** - most of the attacks (136 out of 168) were in the form of **Molotov cocktails**, fifty of them were carried out in Jerusalem.⁷ There were also **five stabbing attacks** (one in Jerusalem), **one vehicular attack**, **four shooting attacks with light weapons**, **22 IED and improvised grenade attacks**. In addition, many dozens of **stone-throwing incidents** were carried out, which are not included in the Israel Security Agency's data (but are liable to be fatal, as was recently demonstrated).
- **Casualties** - during the month of August, the number of casualties also increased. **A total of 12 people were wounded during the month**, four civilians and eight members of the security forces: **five Israelis** (one civilian and four members of the security forces) **were slightly wounded in stabbing attacks** (including two on Highway 443 and one at the Lions Gate in Jerusalem); **Three soldiers were wounded in a vehicular attack** (two seriously and one slightly); **A soldier was moderately wounded by a pipe bomb**; **A civilian was wounded when his car was fired at and two people were wounded when Molotov cocktails thrown at their cars.**

Detainee Muhammad Allan was arrested again

- Muhammad Allan, PIJ operative and administrative detainee, was discharged from the hospital on September 16, 2015. Upon his discharge, a new detention order was issued against him and he was transferred to the Israel Prison Service. Muhammad Allan's hunger strike lasted 65 days. He was hospitalized following a deterioration in his condition and the High Court of Justice decided that the administrative detention order against him must be revoked until his condition improved. Since stopping his hunger strike, Allan has recovered and has granted a series of interviews to journalists. Following his renewed detention, Allan announced that he was resuming his hunger strike (PaIToday website, September 16, 2015).
- Two days after declaring the resumption of his hunger strike, Muhammad Allan said that **he had decided to end the strike and resume eating**. According to the lawyer **Jawad Boulous**, Head of the Legal Department of the Palestinian Prisoners Club, Allan decided to stop his hunger strike after hearing a detailed explanation from him about his medical condition and legal status. Boulous noted that early this coming week, talks with the Israeli authorities and the Prison Service about his continued detention would be

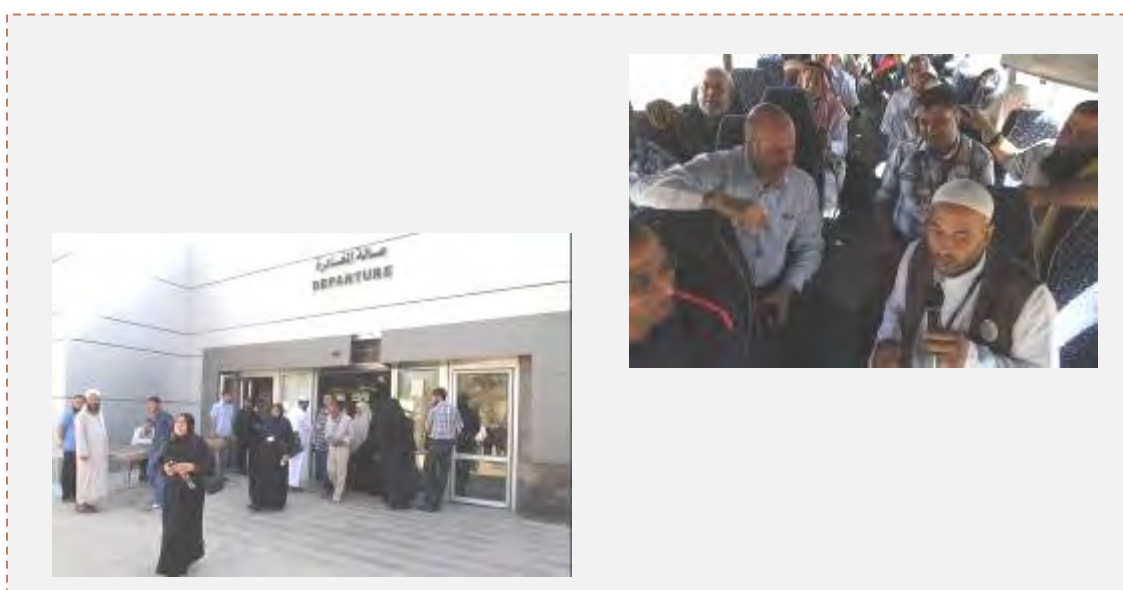
⁷ The report did not include dozens of stone-throwing incidents.

renewed (Al-Ayyam; Quds Press, September 18, 2015). **Allan's reasons for ending his hunger strike after two days are still not clear to us.**

The Gaza Strip

The Rafah Crossing

■ On September 17, 2015, the Rafah crossing was opened in one direction (from the Gaza Strip to Egypt) in order to allow 500 pilgrims to observe the Hajj (Alresalah.net, September 16, 2015). Their departure was made possible by a grant awarded by the Saudi king to relatives of people killed in in the Gaza Strip in order to finance their trip to Mecca (Ma'an News Agency, September 17, 2015).



The departure of 500 pilgrims from the Gaza Strip, funded by the Saudi king (Shihab Facebook page, September 17, 2015)

The electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip

■ Due to the closure of the Kerem Shalom crossing on the occasion of the Jewish New Year, the electricity supply in the Gaza Strip has switched to a daily format of six hours of electricity and a 12 hour power outage. The lack of a steady supply of electricity in the Gaza Strip has aroused a wave of protests and accusations regarding responsibility for the crisis. Mutual accusations have been exchanged between the Energy Authority and the Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip, and officials in the Palestinian Authority. In the wake of the energy crisis, public protests in the Gaza Strip have also intensified. There have been reports of demonstrations held throughout the Gaza Strip, some of them violent. During the demonstrations, calls against Mahmoud Abbas, Ismail Haniya and the electric company were voiced.

■ **The authorities in Gaza**, which are controlled by Hamas, blamed the Palestinian government for the power crisis, on the grounds that the reason for the crisis is not financial but rather an “irresponsible game” with the quantities of fuel (Al-Arabiya, September 14, 2015). Consensus government spokesman Ihab Bseiso said that the consensus government had announced that it was not responsible for the power cuts in the Gaza Strip and that it had made every effort to renovate the electric company’s facilities that were damaged during Operation Protective Edge (Wafa News Agency, September 15, 2015).

■ On the other hand, consensus government Prime Minister **Rami Hamdallah** said that the problem of electricity in the Gaza Strip was caused by the non-transfer of funds to the power plant. According to him, the consensus government pays NIS 30 million per month, but the electric company in the Gaza Strip does not transfer these funds to purchase fuel used by the power plants (Al-Kufiya Press, September 16, 2015).

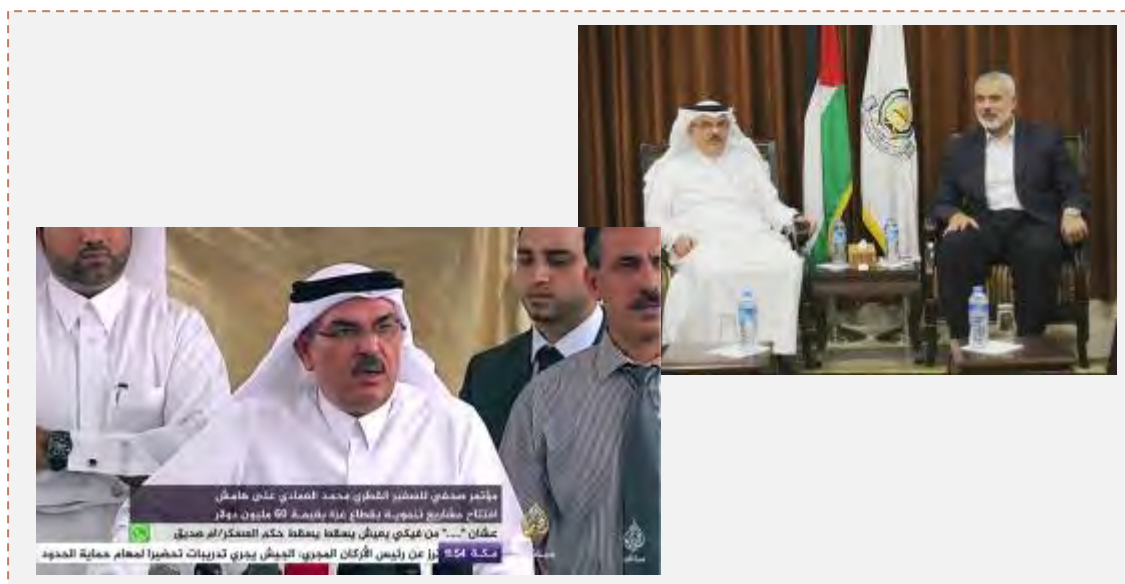
Flooding of tunnels by Egypt

■ The Egyptian Army reported that it had finished installing the water pipes along the Egyptian border with the Gaza Strip and **had begun to pump water from the sea into the tunnels**. This is in order to flood them and destroy them irreparably (Safa News Agency; Al-Aqsa TV, September 19, 2015).

■ Senior Hamas official **Yahya Moussa** said that what the Egyptians did with the tunnels was unacceptable. According to Moussa, that is a crime that causes damage to the historical relations between Egypt and the Gaza Strip. This action, according to him, serves Israel and preserves its borders and security (Dunya al-Watan, September 19, 2015).

Visit to the Gaza Strip by the head of the Qatari Relief Committee

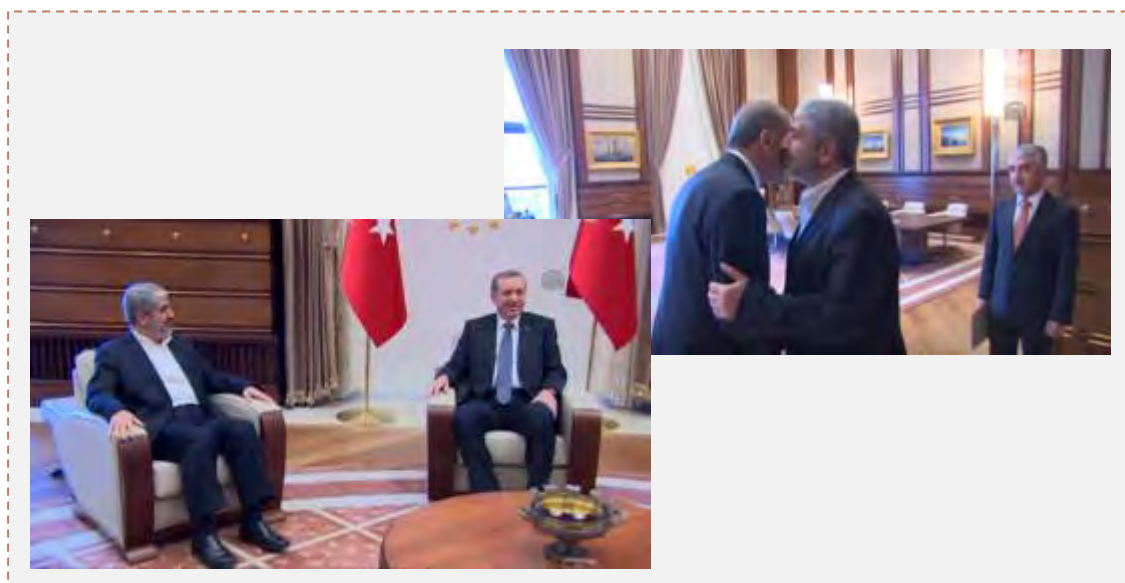
■ **Mohammad al-Emadi**, head of the Qatari Committee to Rebuild Gaza, arrived in the Gaza Strip for a visit. He met with Ismail Haniya, deputy head of the Hamas political bureau, and with the director general of the Ministry of Economy, and toured various construction sites. During his visit, he said that **Qatar intended to carry out additional construction plans in the Gaza Strip, in the sum of USD 60 million**, for housing, infrastructure, roads and education (Al-Jazeera TV, September 10, 2015).



Left: Muhammad al-Emadi, head of the Qatari Committee to Rebuild Gaza, holding a press conference in Gaza during which he announced the launch of additional projects for rebuilding the Gaza Strip, in the sum of USD 60 million (Al-Jazeera TV, September 10, 2015). Right: Ismail Haniya meeting in Gaza with Muhammad al-Emadi (Filastin Alan, September 10, 2015).

Hamas delegation visits Turkey

- A Hamas delegation headed by Khaled Mash'al, head of the Hamas political bureau, recently visited Ankara. The purpose of the visit was to participate in a meeting of the Justice and Development Party (AKP), the ruling party in Turkey. He met with a delegation of Turkish government officials, including Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu (PALDF, September 12, 2015). Khaled Mashaal also reportedly met in private with Turkish President Erdoğan (Hamas website, September 14, 2015).



Khaled Mash'al's meeting with Turkish President Erdoğan (YouTube, September 14, 2015)

The US Treasury Department imposed sanctions on Hamas operatives

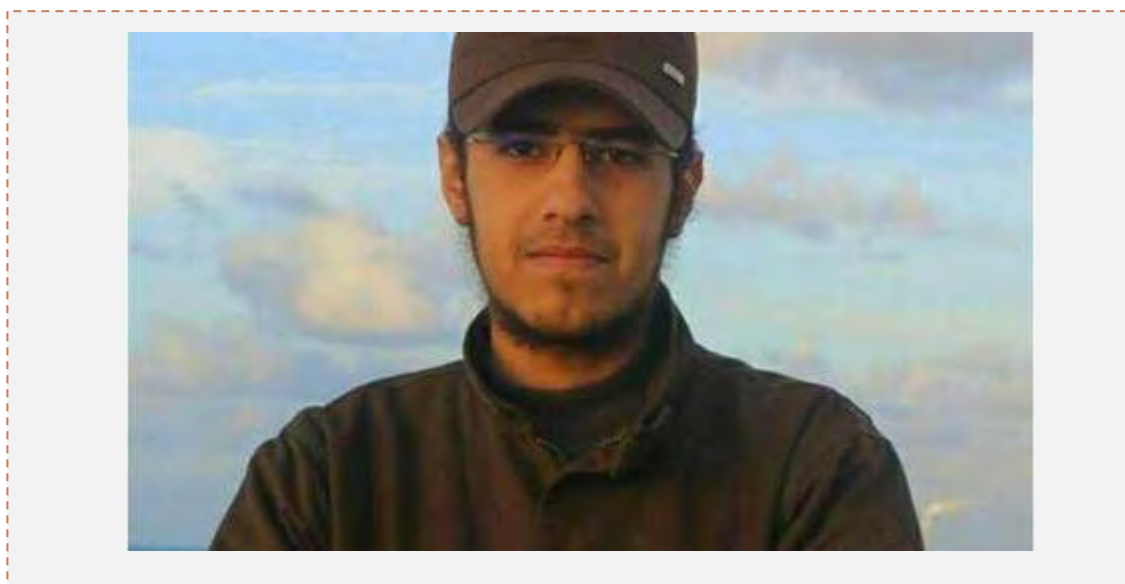
- The US Treasury Department imposed sanctions on four Hamas senior operatives involved in funding Hamas activities: **Saleh al-Aroui**, member of the political bureau, based in Turkey, who handles terrorist cells in Judea and Samaria; **Maher Jawad Younes Saleh**, Hamas's finance man abroad; **Abu Obeida**, spokesman for the military wing, and **Mohammad Reda Mohammad Anwar Awad**, who was involved in transferring funds to Hamas. It also imposed sanctions on the trading and investment firm Asyaf International Holding Group for Trading and Investment, **which is owned by Abu Obeida**. The meaning of sanctions is freezing their assets in the United States and forbidding persons or entities subject to US law to engage in economic relations with them (US Treasury website, September 10, 2015).
- This is the second time that sanctions have been imposed on Hamas in September 2015. On September 8, 2015, the US Department of State imposed similar sanctions on three senior operatives: **Mohammed Deif**, head of the Hamas military apparatus; **Rawhi Mushtaha**, member of the Hamas political bureau, and **Yahya Sinwar**, a Hamas military official in the Gaza Strip. It also imposed sanctions on Hezbollah operative **Samir Kuntar** for his involvement in the construction of a Hezbollah terrorist infrastructure in the Syrian Golan Heights (US Department of State website, September 8, 2015).
- In response to the publication of the decision, **Rawhi Mushtaha** said that the step taken by the US would not make him give up his position. According to Mushtaha, the term "terrorism" varies among nations, and he defines himself as a "freedom fighter" (Al-Quds al-Arabi, September 10, 2015).



In response to the US decision, Hamas issued a poster with photos of the three men designated by the US as terrorists. From left to right: Yahya Sinwar, Mohammed Deif and Rawhi Mushtaha. The inscription reads, “Our leaders are terrorizing our enemy” (PALDF Facebook page, September 7, 2015)

Gaza resident killed in the fighting alongside ISIS in Iraq

■ Palestinian websites reported the death of **Hamza Mahmoud Miqdad**, 18, resident of the Shati refugee camp in Gaza. He was killed on September 19, 2015, fighting in the ranks of ISIS in the city of Baiji in Iraq (Alrisala.net; Gaza Alan’s Twitter account, September 19, 2015). Iran’s Al-Alam TV reported that **Hamza Mahmoud Miqdad**, aka **Abu Mahmoud al-Ghazawi**, was killed fighting in the ranks of ISIS in the battles in the city of Mosul, Iraq (Iran’s Al-Alam TV, September 19, 2015).



Hamza Mahmoud Miqdad, 18, resident of the Shati refugee camp in Gaza, who was killed fighting in the ranks of ISIS in Iraq (Gaza Alan's Twitter account, September 19, 2015)

The Palestinian Authority

Displaying a Palestinian flag at the United Nations

- The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution permitting the Palestinian flag to be displayed at the UN headquarters in New York. 119 countries, including France, Sweden, Spain and Italy, voted in favor of the resolution, eight countries, including the US, Canada and Israel, voted against, and 45 countries abstained (including most of the countries of the European Union).
- Mahmoud Abbas congratulated the countries that voted in favor of displaying the Palestinian flag at the United Nations. He expressed his admiration of the countries of the world “that agreed to defend the rights of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian issue,” and stressed that “the **Palestinian struggle will continue until the flag is raised over the capital, Jerusalem.**” He said the flag would be raised at the UN when he arrives for the meetings of the General Assembly (Wafa News Agency, September 11, 2015). **Saeb Erekat**, Secretary of the PLO Executive Committee, praised the decision, calling it a victory of freedom, justice and independence and a defeat of the occupation and the settlements (Ma'an News Agency, September 11, 2015).

Mahmoud Abbas's anticipated speech at the UN General Assembly

■ Senior Palestinian officials continue to make statements about the content of Mahmoud Abbas's speech at the UN General Assembly:

- According to **Nabil Shaath**, member of Fatah's Central Committee, since Israel is not complying with the Oslo Accords, Mahmoud Abbas is expected to inform the General Assembly that **the Palestinian leadership has decided to stop implementing fundamental clauses of the Oslo Accords**. Shaath did not specify the clauses in question, but he may have been referring to security coordination with Israel (Ma'an News Agency, September 14, 2015).
- **Saeb Erekat**, Secretary of the PLO Executive Committee, said in a newspaper interview that Mahmoud Abbas's speech at the General Assembly would be "fateful". He said that the leadership of the Palestinian Authority was unable to continue in the current situation and would take steps in the near future at the internal and external levels (Dunya al-Watan, September 15, 2015).
- According to PLO Executive Committee member **Salah Rafat**, Mahmoud Abbas intends to announce **the cancellation of all agreements with Israel** and, first and foremost, **security coordination with Israel**. This is because, he says, Israel has renounced all the agreements signed with it (Radio Sawt Filastin, September 15, 2015).

Postponement of the Palestinian National Council meeting

■ On September 9, 2015, **Salim Zaanoun** announced at a press conference in Ramallah that the Palestinian National Council meeting scheduled for September 14, 2015, had been postponed to a later date within the next six months. A new executive committee was supposed to be elected at the meeting (Wafa News Agency, September 9, 2015). According to Zaanoun, due to the importance of the issues on the agenda for discussion at the meeting, more preparation and more time are required. Therefore, a decision has been made to set up a 5-7 member committee that will advance the preparations for the Council session (Radio Sawt Filastin, September 9, 2015).