



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(September 21 – October 7, 2015)



The scene of the shooting attack near the Jewish community of Itamar in which two Israeli civilians were killed (Arabsola website, October 3, 2015)

Overview

- During the past two weeks the wave of popular terrorism (the "popular resistance") increased and worsened, with shooting attacks which exceeded the "popular resistance's" modus operandi. The events began on the Temple Mount and east Jerusalem and spread to other locations in Judea and Samaria. On October 6, 2015, popular terrorism crossed the Green Line into Israel with a stabbing attack in Petah Tikva, the snatching of a soldier's rifle in Kiryat Gat and riots carried out by Israeli Arabs (the most prominent was a violent demonstration in Jaffa organized by the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel).
- Hamas plays a central role in inciting Palestinians to carry out terrorist attacks with the objective of initiating a "third intifada" in Judea and Samaria (while at the same time maintaining quiet in the Gaza Strip serves its interests). The Palestinian Authority (PA) provides a tailwind for popular terrorist attacks while also trying to prevent the situation from spinning out of control, which would serve Hamas' interests. To that end the PA continues its security coordination with Israel and at the October 6, 2015, meeting of the PLO's Executive Committee Mahmoud Abbas issued a message to calm the situation.
- During the past two weeks two rocket hits were identified in the western Negev. An ISIS-affiliated network claimed responsibility. The IDF responded by attacking Hamas targets.

The Situation on the Ground – Overview

■ During the past month there has been a wave of terrorist attacks which began on the Temple Mount and in east Jerusalem. The attacks later spread to Judea and Samaria and even crossed the Green Line into Israel under the battle cry of "Al-Aqsa mosque is in danger." So far **five Israelis have been killed** by the latest wave of Palestinian terrorism: two Israelis were shot to death at close range by Hamas terrorists near the Jewish community of Itamar (southeast of Nablus), two were murdered by a Palestinian in a stabbing attack in the Old City of Jerusalem, and one was killed when Palestinians threw rocks at his car in the southern part of Jerusalem, causing the car to crash. **An estimated nine Palestinians were killed** while carrying out terrorist attacks and rioting against the Israeli security forces. **The wave of terrorist attacks continues and has spread to Israel.**

■ The current wave of terrorist attacks **is part of the PA's strategy of "popular resistance" (i.e., popular terrorism) adopted by the PA and Fatah at the Sixth Fatah conference in August 2009.**¹ The PA and Fatah support the attacks, most of which involve throwing stones and Molotov cocktails and carrying out stabbing and vehicular attacks. However, neither the PA nor Fatah condemns the shooting and other "military-type" attacks, although they do not regard them as part of the "popular resistance."

■ Since the inception of the "popular resistance" the PA has attempted to control the level of violence and prevent it from spinning out of control. That is because such a situation **would serve Hamas** and harm the PA's overall policy and strategies of political and propaganda struggle waged in the international arena. Therefore, during the current wave to terrorist attacks the PA continues its security coordination with Israel, and Mahmoud Abbas publicly tried to calm the riots spreading throughout Judea and Samaria from Jerusalem, where they started.

■ During the six years since the inception of the "popular resistance," **the waves of popular terrorism have risen and subsided**, following internal and external influences. **Compared with previous waves of terrorism, the current one is not exceptional in any way, neither in nature, extent or degree of deadliness.** For example, from September to November 2014 there was a wave of Palestinian

¹ For the main points of the Palestinian strategy, see the ITIC's in-depth study issued on May 25, 2013, entitled "[The Palestinian 'Popular Resistance' and Its Built-In Violence:](#)" and the [February 26, 2014 bulletin "Violence and Terrorism in Judea and Samaria, 2013: Data, Characteristics and Trends."](#)

terrorist attacks that claimed the lives of 11 Israelis, including four in a synagogue in Jerusalem's Har Nof neighborhood. In ITIC assessment, the current wave of terrorist attacks is the result of several factors, among them the sharp decline of Mahmoud Abbas' and the PA leadership's status and popularity, the sense of purposelessness among the Palestinians because of the perceived lack of chances for political progress, and increasingly serious friction between the Israeli settlers in Judea and Samaria and the Palestinians (the worst example of which to date was the Jewish terrorist attack against the Palestinian family in the village of Duma). All of the above have been accompanied by aggressive incitement to violence from Hamas and other terrorist organizations and networks seeking to have the situation on the ground deteriorate and turn into a "third intifada."

The Shooting Attack Near Itamar

Overview

■ On the evening of October 1, 2015, Palestinians shot at a passing Israeli car on the road between Elon Moreh and Itamar near the Palestinian village of Beit Furik in Samaria (southeast of Nablus). In the car were parents and their four young children. **The shots killed the parents, Naama and Eitam Henkin.** The initial investigation revealed that Naama Henkin was killed instantly and her husband was wounded. He got out of the car and was shot again. The terrorists then approached the car and shot both parents again. They then fled the scene (IDF Spokesman, October 1, 2015). The children were not harmed, apparently because one of the terrorists mistakenly wounded another, causing them to flee. **A Hamas terrorist squad from Nablus carried out the attack.**

Apprehending the Terrorist Squad

■ On **October 5, 2015, the terrorist squad of five Hamas operatives from Nablus was apprehended.** Interrogation revealed that it was headed by a terrorist operative who in the past had been imprisoned in Israel. During interrogation the terrorists said that on the evening of the attack two of them had chosen its location. They were then joined by the rest of the squad. When they identified the Henkin's car they carried out the attack. Once the car had stopped two of the terrorists left their own vehicle and fired additional rounds at the parents at close range. One of the terrorists mistakenly shot and wounded another, causing him to drop his gun, which was later found by the Israeli security forces.

■ the wounded terrorist was located in a hospital in Nablus and removed by an Israeli force disguised as Arabs. During interrogation the terrorists admitted that they had recently been involved in two other shooting attacks, one of them on August 30, 2015, at Beit Jit, in which an Israeli civilian was wounded (Israel Security Agency, October 6, 2015).



Pictures of the terrorist operatives who carried out the terrorist attack near Itamar, issued by Hamas on its official Facebook page (Facebook page of PALDF, October 6, 2015).

Israel's Response

■ Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon praised the Israeli security forces for acting quickly and apprehending the murderers. He said, "We are acting with a strong hand against terrorism and against inciters. We have brought an additional four IDF battalions into Judea and Samaria, and thousands of police into Jerusalem... We are allowing our forces to take strong action against those who throw rocks and firebombs... [and] there are no restrictions on the action of our security forces. We will also lift restrictions regarding action against inciters" (Website of the Israeli prime minister's office, October 5, 2015).

Stabbing Attacks in the Old City of Jerusalem

■ On **October 3, 2015**, on Hagai Street in the Old City of Jerusalem, a Palestinian terrorist stabbed four Israelis, three of them family members. He took the gun of one of the wounded Israelis and used it to shoot at Border Policemen who were called to the scene. The Border Policemen shot and killed him. **Two Israelis died**. The wife of one of the murdered Israelis was seriously wounded, as was her infant son; they

were evacuated to a hospital (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, October 3, 2015).

■ The Palestinian terrorist was **Muhannad Halabi**, 19, from the village of Surda (near El-Bireh), a student at Al-Quds University. The day before the attack he used his Facebook page several times to protest the events on the Temple Mount. He wrote that "the third intifada has already begun." The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) issued a notice claiming Muhannad Halabi was one of its operatives (Aljazeera.net, October 5, 2015).



A PIJ banner hung at the mourning tent erected for Muhannad Halabi in the village of Surda (Aljazeera.net, October 5, 2015)

■ On **October 7, 2015**, another Palestinian terrorist carried out a stabbing attack near the same spot on Hagai Street in the Old City of Jerusalem. An 18 year-old girl attacked an Israeli civilian with a knife she had apparently hidden in her clothes. Seriously wounded in the upper part of his body, he took out his gun and shot her. She was evacuated to a hospital in critical condition.

Israel's Response

■ On his return from the United States, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called a meeting of the security leadership and ordered a series of steps to prevent and deter additional attacks. They include increasing the pace of razing terrorists' houses, extending the use of administrative detentions, a greater police presence in Judea and Samaria and expelling inciters from the Old City and the Temple Mount. In addition, it was decided on October 4, 2015, that for two days entrance to the Old City would be limited to residents, tourists, shopkeepers and local school children. Muslim

worshippers only over the age of 50 would be allowed to enter the Temple Mount and only through the Lions' Gate (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, October 4, 2015).

Palestinian Responses

■ The Palestinian media gave extensive coverage to the shooting and stabbing attacks. Most of the Palestinian organizations were quick to praise the attacks, claiming they were the direct consequence of Israel's anti-Palestinian actions. Most of the responses came from Hamas and the PIJ, which congratulated the terrorists, calling them "heroes," and calling for more attacks. The PA, as usual, did not condemn the attacks.

■ Some of the responses to the shooting attack at Itamar:

- **Fatah** issued a statement calling it "the natural response to Israel's crimes." Fatah accused the Israeli government of responsibility for the "escalation" against the Palestinians (Ma'an News Agency, October 2, 2015).

- **Abu Obeida, spokesman for Hamas' military-terrorist wing**, said they praised the "heroic action" against Israeli civilians and that it was the natural response to the "crimes committed by Israel and its citizens" in Jerusalem and the West Bank. He also claimed it was not the final response (Twitter account of Abu Obeida, October 1, 2015).

- **Hamas spokesman Husam Badran** stated that Hamas congratulated the "resistance fighters" on their "heroic action" in the West Bank. He claimed Hamas regarded it as a response to "Israel's crimes" in the West Bank and against Al-Aqsa mosque. He also appealed to the Palestinians to continue "such heroic actions" because it was the only way to support the Palestinian people everywhere (Hamas website, October 1, 2015).

- The **PIJ** said in a statement that it was the "natural response" to "Israeli aggression" in Jerusalem and the Palestinian cities (Paltoday, October 1, 2015).

■ Some of the responses to the stabbing attack in which two Israelis were killed:

- **Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri** praised the "heroic action" of the Palestinian youth Muhannad Halabi. He said Hamas regarded the attack as the "natural reaction" to the "crimes of Israel at Al-Aqsa mosque and the crimes of Israeli citizens against the Palestinian people." He claimed the Palestinians

would not sit idly by in light of [Israel's] continued crimes and the silence of the international community (Hamas website, October 3, 2015).

- **Hamas spokesman Husam Badran** praised the "heroic action." He said Hamas praised every action that harmed IDF soldiers and Israeli civilians. He added that Hamas operatives were ready to die and be detained to "defend Al-Aqsa" (Hamas website, October 3, 2015).
- The **PIJ** praised the "heroic action." The organization said it regarded the action as "excellent progress" in actions against Israel (Paltoday, October 3, 2015). Senior PIJ figure **Daoud Shihab** claimed Muhannad Halabi was a PIJ operative. He claimed the Palestinian people were waging the third intifada, with "everything that implied" (Dunia al-Watan, October 3, 2015).

Israel's South

Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

- During the past two weeks two rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory:
 - On **September 29, 2015**, a rocket was from the Gaza Strip **at the southern coastal city of Ashdod**. It was intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system. The ISIS-affiliated Company of Sheikh Omar Hadid claimed responsibility for the rocket fire, stating it had been fired in retaliation for the death of Hadil al-Hashalmoun (who was killed by the IDF when she tried to stab a soldier) and for the detention of Ms. Iman Kanju, who wanted to join ISIS (Twitter account of the Company of Sheikh Omar Hadid, September 29, 2015).
 - On **October 4, 2015**, a rocket hit was identified in an open area in the western Negev. Another rocket was fired and fell inside the Gaza Strip. There were no casualties and no damage was reported. The Company of Sheikh Omar Hadid claimed responsibility for that rocket attack as well (Twitter account of the Company of Sheikh Omar Hadid, October 4, 2015).

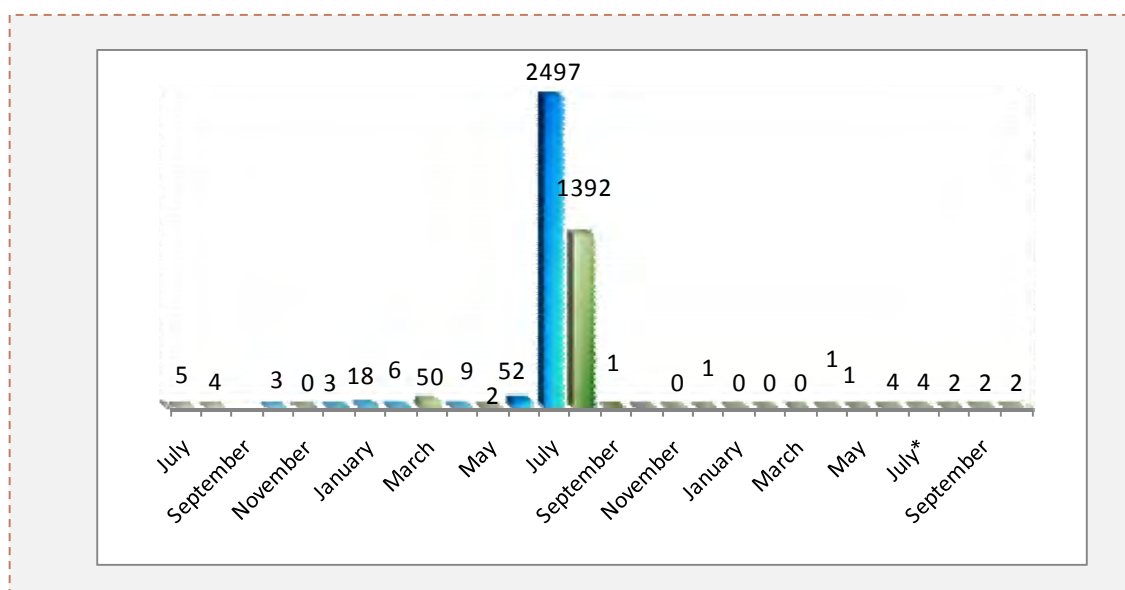
Israel's Response

- In response to the rocket fire Israel Air Force (IAF) aircraft attacked terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, September 30 and October 4, 2015):
 - On **September 30, 2015**, IAF aircraft attacked four Hamas terrorist targets. The Palestinian media reported hits on a container belonging to Hamas' naval

police in the northwestern part of Gaza City and on a military-terrorist wing post in Al-Zeitun in the western part of the city. No casualties were reported (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website, September 30, 2015).

- On **October 4, 2015**, IAF aircraft attacked Hamas' terrorist infrastructure in the northern Gaza Strip (IDF Spokesman, October 4, 2015).

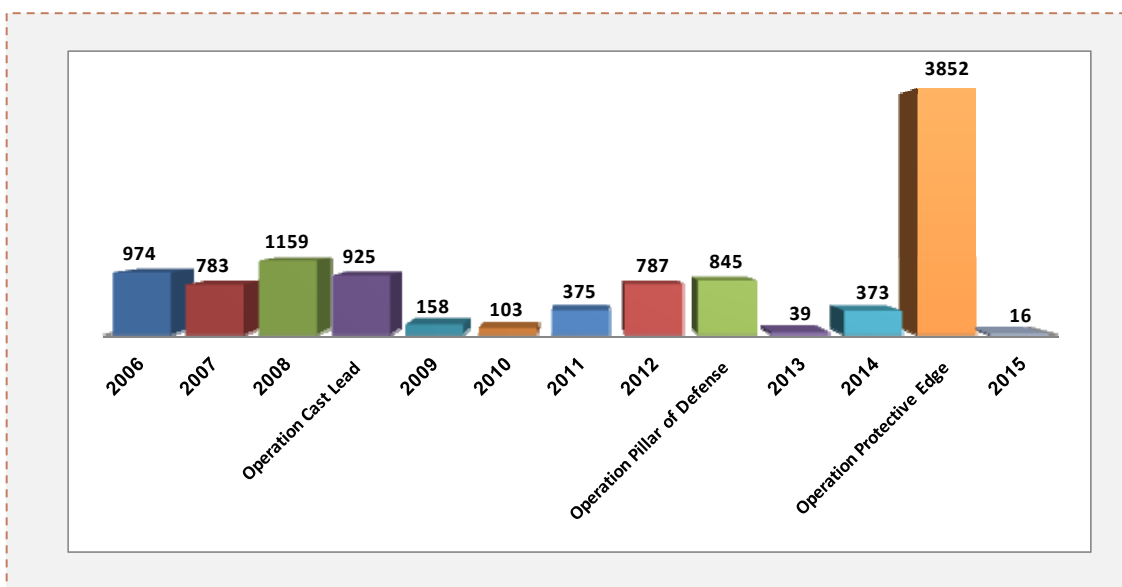
Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire (2014 – 2015)²



***The data include the three rockets launched by ISIS's Sinai Province from the Sinai Peninsula in July by ISIS's Sinai Province.**

² As of October 7, 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 South³



*Three of the rockets that hit Israeli territory in 2015 were launched by ISIS's Sinai Province.

Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

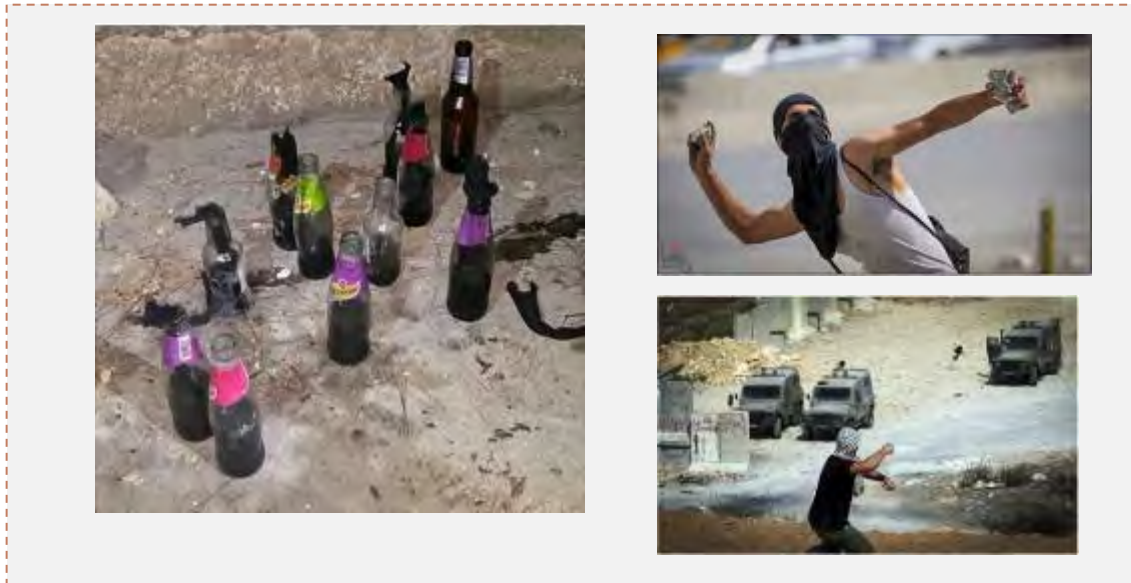
Additional Riots, Clashes and Popular Terrorism

Overview

■ During the past two weeks popular terrorism and Palestinian violence targeting the Israeli security forces increased on the Temple Mount, in east Jerusalem and the neighborhoods separating east and west Jerusalem. **The violence and rioting spread to other locations throughout Judea and Samaria.** Some of the events were local and spontaneous and others were organized. In some instances the PA's security forces contained and controlled the events.⁴ **Terrorism and violence continue.**

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

⁴ According to Hamas claims, the PA's security forces suppressed a public rally in support of Al-Aqsa mosque held in a mosque in Tulkarm after the Friday prayer. The PA security forces detained an estimated 20 Palestinians who participated in the event (Safa News Agency, October 2, 2015). Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri claimed that suppression of the rally negated what Mahmoud Abbas had said in his speech at the UN General Assembly (Hamas website, October 2, 2015).



Left: Molotov cocktails ready for throwing, found on the roof of a house in the A-Tor neighborhood of east Jerusalem (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, October 7, 2015).
 Right: Palestinians throw stones at IDF Spokesman (Wafa News Agency, October 5, 2015; Facebook page of QudsN, September 21, 2015).

■ The Palestinian media, especially those affiliated with Hamas, tried to foment an atmosphere of the "third intifada," and praised the Palestinians confronting the Israelis. They also called for escalation and a more significant involvement of the various organizations. In the meantime they criticized the PA for its continuing security coordination with Israel (Paltoday, October 6, 2015).

■ Speaking at the beginning of a meeting of the PLO's Executive Committee in Ramallah, Mahmoud Abbas accused Israel of escalating the situation on the ground, especially regarding the Temple Mount. **However, he claimed the Palestinians did to want security to deteriorate between the two sided and claimed he had sent instructions to the security forces in that spirit.** He claimed the PA wanted to reach a political solution by peaceful means and called on Israel to accept the hand offered by the PA (Wafa News Agency, October 6, 2015).

Terrorist Attacks Spread into Israel⁵

■ On the evening of **October 6, 2015**, Israeli Arabs held demonstrations in a number of cities, among them Nazareth, Jaffa and Haifa. The northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel organized **a riot in Jaffa**. Rioters hurled stones at cars and buses driving through the streets. They attacked police trying to defuse the situation, wounding six policemen. The "demonstration," which was held without authorization,

⁵ On October 7, 2015, after this document had been completed, Palestinians carried out two prominent terrorist attacks inside Israeli territory. One involved snatching the weapon of an IDF soldier and the other was a stabbing attack in Petah Tikva.

was dispersed by convincing the organizers to end it (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, October 6, 2015).

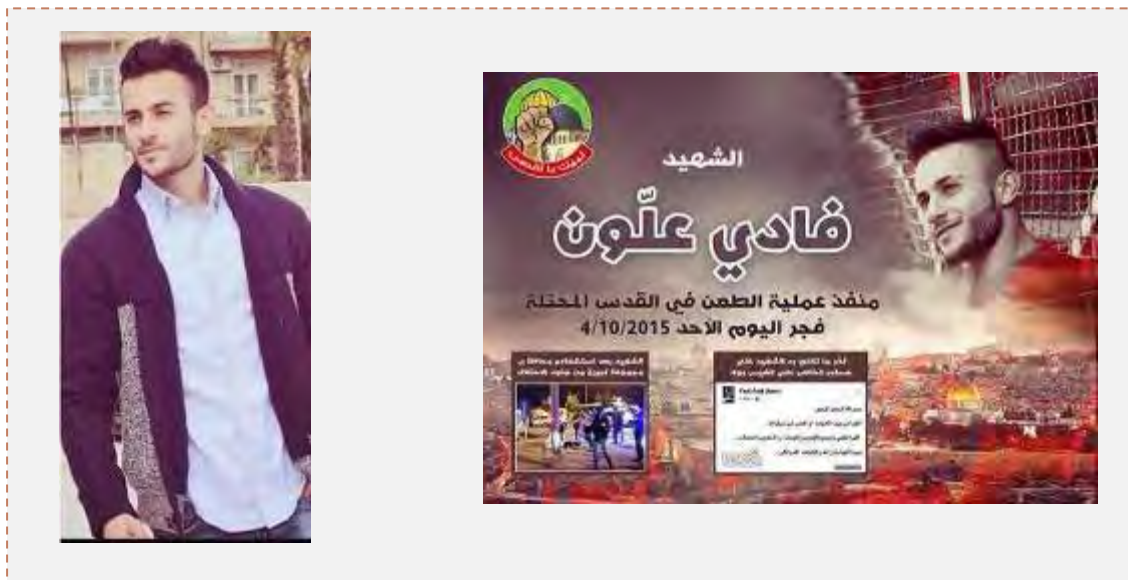
Prominent Attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

- Some of the more prominent events were the following:
 - On **October 7, 2015**, according to initial reports, **Amjad al-Jindi**, a Palestinian from the village of Yatta in southern Hebron, who was staying in Israeli illegally, **grabbed the gun of an IDF soldier in the southern town of Kiryat Gat**. He fled to a residence nearby and was shot to death by police.
 - On **October 6, 2015**, Border Policemen prevented a stabbing attack at the Tapuah Junction in Samaria. A Palestinian aroused their suspicions because when he came close he threw a box cutter on the ground. He was detained and found to be carrying another box cutter (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, October 6, 2015).
 - On **October 5, 2015**, a Palestinian youth was killed while rioting against the Israeli security forces in Tulkarm. The Palestinian media reported the death of **Hadhifa Othman Ali Suleiman**, 18, from the village of Bal'a (east of Tulkarm) (Wafa News Agency, October 5, 2015). Hamas issued a notice claiming he was one of their operatives (Hamas website, October 5, 2015).



Left: Hamas death notice issued for Hadhifa Suleiman. At the right, under the inset of a Palestinian throwing stones, the Arabic reads, "The intifada of the stone-throwers" (Facebook page of the Islamic Block at Bir Zeit University, October 5, 2015). Right: Hadhifa Suleiman (Watan, October 5, 2015).

- On **October 5, 2015**, a Palestinian boy was killed in a riot against the Israeli security forces in **the Al-Aida refugee camp north of Bethlehem**. The Palestinian media reported the death of Abd al-Rahman Shadi Abir Allah, 13 (Safa News Agency, October 5, 2015).
- On **October 5, 2015**, Palestinians threw stones at a bus on Uzi Narkiss Street in Jerusalem. Four passengers suffered minor injuries and were treated on site (Facebook page of Red Alert, October 5, 2015).
- On **October 5, 2015**, IDF soldiers located weapons in the villages of **Yatma and Huwwara (south of Nablus)**. They included two rifles, ten magazines, five knives and a large quantity of ammunition (IDF Spokesman, October 5, 2015).
- On **October 4, 2015**, a Palestinian terrorist stabbed a young Jewish man on Hanevi'im Street in Jerusalem then fled the scene. Nearby policemen saw the terrorist with a knife in his hand and neutralized him. The wounded man was taken to a hospital for treatment in serious condition (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, October 4, 2015). The terrorist was **Fadi Aloun**, 19, from Issawiya in east Jerusalem. The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) claimed he had died "defending Al-Aqsa mosque" (Facebook page of the DFLP, October 4, 2015; Facebook page of PALDF, October 5, 2015; Facebook page of PALINFO, October 5, 2015).



Left: Fadi Aloun (Facebook page of PALINFO, October 5, 2015). Right: Death notice for Fadi Aloun issued by Hamas' "At your orders, Al-Aqsa" campaign (Facebook page of PALDF, October 5, 2015).

- On **October 4, 2015**, a number of masked Palestinians were sighted near the **Tomb of Rachel**; they were preparing to throw stones. When Border Policemen chased them they threw a Molotov cocktail. A Border Policeman was wounded in the leg (Facebook page of the Israel Police Force, October 4, 2015).
- On **October 3, 2015**, a rifle bullet hit a car in **the vicinity of the village of Issawiya on the road between Jerusalem and Ma'aleh Adumim**. The man and woman in the car did not stop, and later saw the roof of the car had a bullet hole in it. The bullet was later found inside the car (Ynet, October 3, 2015).
- On **September 23, 2015**, IDF soldiers identified a Palestinian approaching their post near Taysir in the Jordan Valley. They detained him and found him to be carrying an explosive device ready for detonation (IDF Spokesman, September 23, 2015).
- Late on the evening of **September 22, 2015**, on a road west of Hebron, a local Israeli resident noticed an improvised roadblock of stones. A short time later an IDF patrol arrived and an explosion was heard. A search of the area revealed a dead Palestinian, apparently killed when a hand grenade exploded as he tried to throw it at the Israeli security forces (IDF Spokesman, September 22, 2015). The dead terrorist **was Diya Abd al-Halim al-Talahma**, 21, a PIJ operative from the village of Kharsa in the Hebron region. After his death local Palestinians rioted. His funeral was held in Kharsa, attended by Hamas and PIJ operatives (Ma'an News Agency, Facebook page of QudsN, Jerusalem Brigades website, Samaa News Agency, September 22, 2015).



Left: Death notice issued by the Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military-terrorist wing, showing al-Talahma in uniform. Right: PIJ death notice for al-Talahma, "the jihad warrior shaheed" (Facebook page of the Jerusalem Brigades, September 22, 2015).

- On **September 22, 2015**, a Palestinian woman attempted to carry out a stabbing attack at an IDF **military post in Hebron**. The soldiers shot and wounded the terrorist, who was taken to a hospital where she died (IDF Spokesman, September 22, 2015). According to the Palestinian media she was **Hadil al-Hashalmoun** (Wafa News Agency, September 23, 2015; Facebook page of PALDF, September 22, 2015).



Left: Hamas' death notice for Hadil al-Hashalmoun (Facebook page of PALDF, September 22, 2015). Right: The funeral held by Fatah, Hamas and the PIJ for Hadil al-Hashalmoun (Wafa News Agency, September 23, 2015).

- On **September 21, 2015**, Palestinians threw stones at a bus on the road between **Givat Asaf and Beit El** (north of Ramallah). The front window was

shattered. One passenger suffered minor wounds and was treated on site (Facebook page of Red Alert, September 21, 2015).

- On **October 3, 2015**, a rifle bullet hit a car in **the vicinity of the village of Issawiya on the road between Jerusalem and Ma'aleh Adumim**. The man and woman in the car did not stop, and later saw the roof of the car had a bullet hole in it. The bullet was later found inside the car (Ynet, October 3, 2015).

Some Palestinian Reactions to the Recent Events

■ **The Palestinian national consensus government** condemned what it called Israel's "policy of escalation" against the Palestinian people in Jerusalem and the West Bank. It asked the international community and international institutions to intervene and prevent Israel's "violations." **Ihab Bsiso**, spokesman for the national consensus government, claimed Israel was trying to destroy the Palestinian's political efforts and the two-state solution (Wafa News Agency, October 4, 2015). The **Palestinian foreign ministry** condemned what it called "Israel's continuing aggression" and its escalation of "the random killing of Palestinians or detentions and raids in Palestinian settlements." He condemned the killing of young Palestinian men and woman by IDF forces and said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had full responsibility for the escalation (Wafa News Agency, October 4, 2015).

■ Other reactions included the following:

- **Saeb Erekat, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee**, accused the Israeli prime minister of responsibility for the recent events and the deterioration of the situation in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem. He claimed Netanyahu was renewing the attempts of late Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to enter Al-Aqsa mosque and revive the Al-Aqsa intifada. He appealed to the UN Secretary General and the international community to protect the Palestinian people, since Israel had failed to protect them (Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, October 4, 2015).
- **Nimr Hamad, advisor to Mahmoud Abbas**, claimed that the objective of the "Israeli escalation" in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria was to bring the Palestinians into a cycle of violence. He claimed the Palestinian leadership did not want to lead a third intifada. He claimed the Palestinian leadership supported every act of peace and the recent actions were in response to Israel's crimes (Dunia al-Watan, October 4, 2015).

- **Musa Abu Marzouq, a member of Hamas' political bureau**, claimed that the events in Jerusalem were "only the beginning." He claimed Jerusalem was a "red line" that could not be crossed, and that there could never be a compromise on Jerusalem (Facebook page of mam, October 4, 2015).
- **Khader Habib, a senior PIJ figures**, claimed Israel was exclusively responsible for everything that happened in the West Bank and Jerusalem. He claimed all options were open, especially **renewing jihad [i.e., terrorist] actions, because Israel had crossed all the red lines**. He claimed all the organizations would use all the means at their disposal to protect the Palestinian people (Alresala.net, October 5, 2015).

Terrorists' Houses Razed

■ In the wake of the increase in terrorist attacks, the Israeli government's Political-Security Cabinet held a meeting where it was decided to raze the houses of terrorist operatives and employ administrative detentions. Thus on the night on October 5, 2015, IDF engineering forces supported by the Israel Police Force razed the houses of terrorist operatives who had carried out attacks and whose houses were still standing, despite orders to raze them. In addition, a room in the house of another terrorist operative was sealed (IDF Spokesman, October 6, 2015). The houses of the following terrorist operatives were razed:

- **Muhammad Naef Ja'abis**, who carried out a vehicular attack with a front loader on August 4, 2014. He killed one man and injured seven. He was killed at the scene of the attack by Border Policemen.
- Ghassan Abu Jaml, who, along with another terrorist, entered a synagogue in the Har Nof neighborhood of west Jerusalem and slaughtered four worshippers and an Israeli policeman on November 18, 2015. The two terrorists were killed during a firefight in the synagogue.
- A room in the house of **Muataz Ibrahim Khalil Hijazi** was sealed. He attempted to murder Yehuda Glick on October 29, 2014, near the Begin Heritage Center in Jerusalem.



The houses of terrorists Ja'abis (left) and Jaml (right) after being razed by the IDF (Wafa News Agency and the Facebook page of Quds.net, October 6, 2015).

The Israel Security Agency Resolves Popular Terrorism Cases

- In recent weeks the Israel Security Agency (ISA) has resolved a number of popular terrorism cases involving thrown stones and Molotov cocktails. That led to the detention of a popular terrorism squad from **the village of Hizma (northeast of Jerusalem)**. Its operatives participated in a series of attacks in which stones, rocks, cement blocks and Molotov cocktails were thrown at Israeli vehicles, including buses. Some of the attacks wounded passengers. Four of the squad operatives were indicted (Facebook page of Red Alert, September 21, 2015).
- Four young Palestinians from **the village of Sur Bahr in east Jerusalem** were detained on suspicion of **killing Alexander Levlowitz** on September 13, 2015, the eve of Rosh Hashanah by throwing stones which caused his car to crash. They were also responsible for wounding two women. The four, aged 16 to 19, carried Israeli ID cards. During interrogation they admitted they had planned a terrorist attack specifically for the eve of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. They situated themselves so they could see the license plates of passing cars and identify those which belonged to Israelis. One of the four **wrapped himself in a Hamas flag he claimed he had received at a rally in Um al-Fahm**, an Arab city in central Israel, the stronghold of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel. After carrying out the attack and seeing its results they fled, **having first agreed on what they would say if they were caught** (Israel Security Agency, date, 2015).

Despite the superficially spontaneous and popular nature of the "popular resistance," during the past year it has become increasingly apparent that **in certain instances the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails is organized**. Investigations of the various events and the interrogation of terrorist operatives revealed that in some instances local networks prepared for attacks in advance and invested thought in the kind and timing of the attack they would carry out.⁶ The exposure of the terrorist squad from Sur Bahr illustrates the inspiration of Hamas and the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel on the popular terrorism operatives, even if their activities are local.

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Crossings – Recent Developments

The Rafah Crossing

- On **October 4, 2015**, it was reported that preparations were being made to open the Rafah crossing to enable 25,000 pilgrims to return to the Gaza Strip. The crossing will be open only for those entering the Gaza Strip (Al-Youm Al-Sabaa, October 4, 2015).
- **Saeb Erekat**, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee, claimed that a delegation headed by Mahmoud Abbas was expected to visit Egypt in the near future to discuss ways of opening the Rafah crossing (Safa News Agency, October 4, 2015).

Fuel Crisis in Gaza

- The Palestinian media reported a serious lack of fuel in the Gaza Strip during the past three weeks due to the closing of the Kerem Shalom crossing and the irregular operation of the crossing during the Jewish High Holy Days. Long lines of Gazans were reported at gas stations, waiting to fill their tanks (Al-Ayyam, October 6, 2015). The fuel crisis is expected to end when the crossing returns to regular operation.
- The lack of fuel caused disturbances in the supply of electricity. The Gazan electric company also announced that no power was coming from Egypt because of an explosion on the Egyptian side of the border (Paltoday, October 1, 2015). It was later

⁶ For further information see the September 1, 2015 bulletin, "['The Popular Resistance' \(i.e. Popular Terrorism\) in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem Has Become More Organized in the Past Year.](#)"

reported that the Egyptian authorities had repaired the power lines (Paltoday, October 2, 2015).

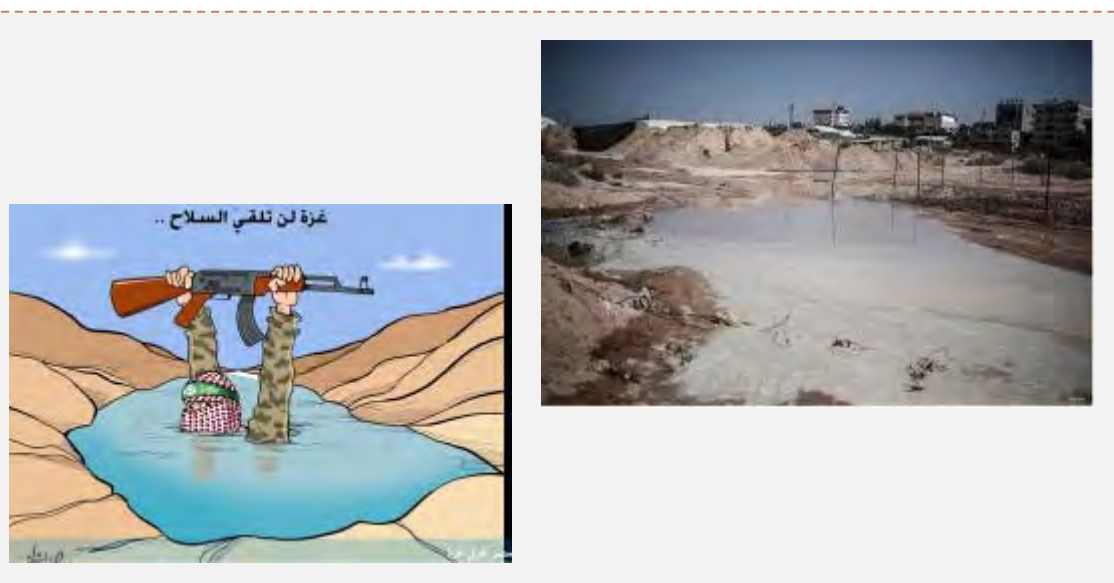
Preventing Smuggling into the Gaza Strip

■ Israeli customs officials at the Nitzana border crossing and the ISA prevented the smuggling into the Gaza Strip of **15 tons of sulfuric acid, which is used as a raw material in the manufacture of explosives**. The shipment, which reportedly contained paint thinner, also contained 15 tons of bubbling acid, which when analyzed proved to be concentrated (90%) sulfuric acid, used in the production of TNT, and whose import into the Gaza Strip is forbidden (Facebook page of Red Alert, September 24, 2015).

Salt-Water Channel along the Gaza Strip-Egypt Border

■ The Palestinian media continues to report on the channel being dug and filled with seawater by the Egyptian army along the Philadelphi Route, which marks the border between Egypt and the Gaza Strip. The Hamas environmental authority in the Gaza Strip claimed that filling the channel with seawater would raise the salinity of the Gaza Strip ground water by a factor of 40 (Facebook page of QudsN, September 21, 2015).

■ On the other hand, **Mahmoud al-Habash**, adviser to Mahmoud Abbas for Islamic affairs, told the Egyptian satellite channel Al-Youm that it was not only Egypt's right but its duty to close the tunnels to the Gaza Strip. He said if flooding the tunnels harmed the Gaza Strip and the Gazans, it was Hamas' responsibility (Facebook page of QudsN, September 24, 2015).



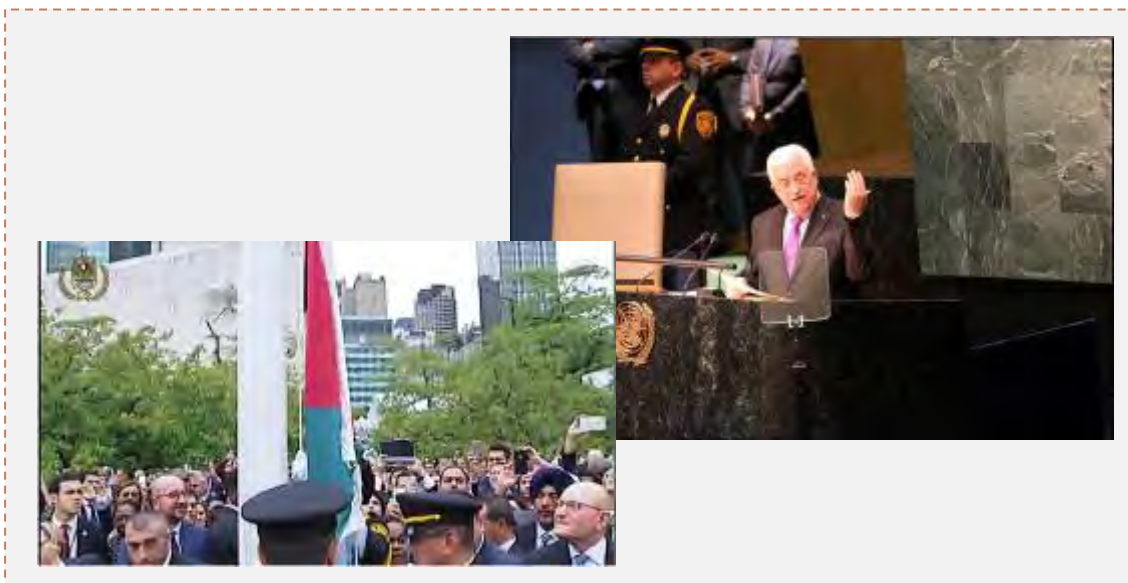
Left: Hamas cartoon. Regardless of the salt-water channel, the terrorists will continue brandishing their weapons (Felesteen, September 20, 2015). Right: Tehran Egyptian arms pumps seawater into the channel (Facebook page of QudsN, September 21, 2015).

The Palestinian Authority

Mahmoud Abbas's Speech at the UN General Assembly

■ On September 30, 2015, **Mahmoud Abbas** gave a speech before the UN General Assembly. A considerable part of it was devoted to calling on the international community to protect the rights of the Palestinian people, act to establish a Palestinian state recognized by the UN and create an international mechanism to protect the Palestinian people from Israel. He attacked Israel, accusing it of conducting "apartheid policies" against the Palestinians. He also blamed Israel for the failure of the negotiations and the destruction of the two-state solution. **As to the issue of the Temple Mount, he warned Israel that if its violation of the status quo and its attacks on the Al-Aqsa mosque continued, there would be an "explosion" not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judea and Samaria.**

■ Mahmoud Abbas claimed that the "State of Palestine" with the 1967 borders, whose capital was east Jerusalem, was "**under occupation.**" He also claimed that as long as Israel did not fulfill the terms of agreements signed with the PA in the past, **the PA was a regime without genuine authority. He warned that if Israel did not stand by its agreements neither would the PA, and Israel, as the occupying power, would bear the responsibility for the consequences** (Paltoday and Al-Quds, September 30, 2015). However, **Mahmoud Abbas did not specifically refer to the possibility of canceling the Oslo Accords or ending security coordination with Israel.**



Left: Raising the Palestinian flag at UN headquarters (YouTube, September 30, 2015). Right: Mahmoud Abbas at the UN General Assembly (Wafa News Agency, September 30, 2015).

- The day after the speech, **Mahmoud al-Habash**, Mahmoud Abbas' advisor for Islamic affairs, claimed **Mahmoud Abbas would not announce the cancellation of the agreements with Israel, but would condition Palestinian commitment to them on Israel's commitment**. He claimed the decision "would not be implemented tomorrow" (Ma'an News Agency, October 1, 2015). While Mahmoud Abbas was at the UN **the Palestinian flag was raised in front of the UN headquarters**. The flag-raising was attended by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and senior representatives from Western, Asian and African countries. Ban Ki-moon called it a day of pride and hope for the Palestinian people (YouTube, September 30, 2015).
- **Senior Hamas figures criticized Mahmoud Abbas' speech**. Hamas demanded Mahmoud Abbas to officially declare the end of the Oslo Accords. Hamas also stipulated he end the PA's security coordination with Israel and extend a hand to the "resistance" [i.e., to Hamas and other terrorist organizations] in the West Bank, and to appeal to the International Criminal Court to monitor Israel's crimes (Hamas website, September 30, 2015).

The Battle for Hearts and Minds

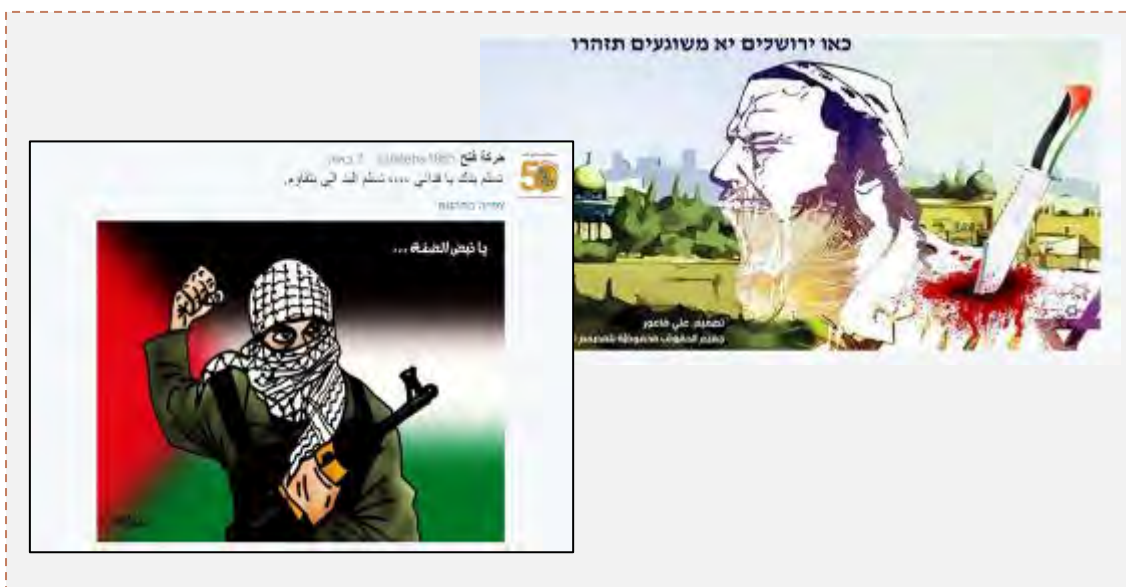
Palestinian Incitement to Violence

- The terrorist attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem **served Fatah and Hamas as material for incitement to violence on the social networks**. For example, **Sultan Abu Al-Einein**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee and an advisor to Mahmoud Abbas, used his Facebook page to praise and glorify the Palestinians killed in the current wave of terrorism. He claimed that those who died were "candles lighting the way to the altar of freedom" (Facebook page of Sultan Abu Al-Einein, October 4, 2015).



The Facebook page of Sultan Abu Al-Einein praises and glorifies the Palestinian terrorists killed during the recent wave of terrorism, calling them "candles lighting the way to the altar of freedom" (Facebook page of Sultan Abu Al-Einein, October 4, 2015).

- **Fatah's Twitter account** posted calls for anti-Israeli terrorism and violence. One posting **encouraged stabbing attacks in Jerusalem** and another **called for "resistance" actions in the West Bank** (Twitter account of Fatah's office of enlistment and organization, October 3 and 4, 2015).

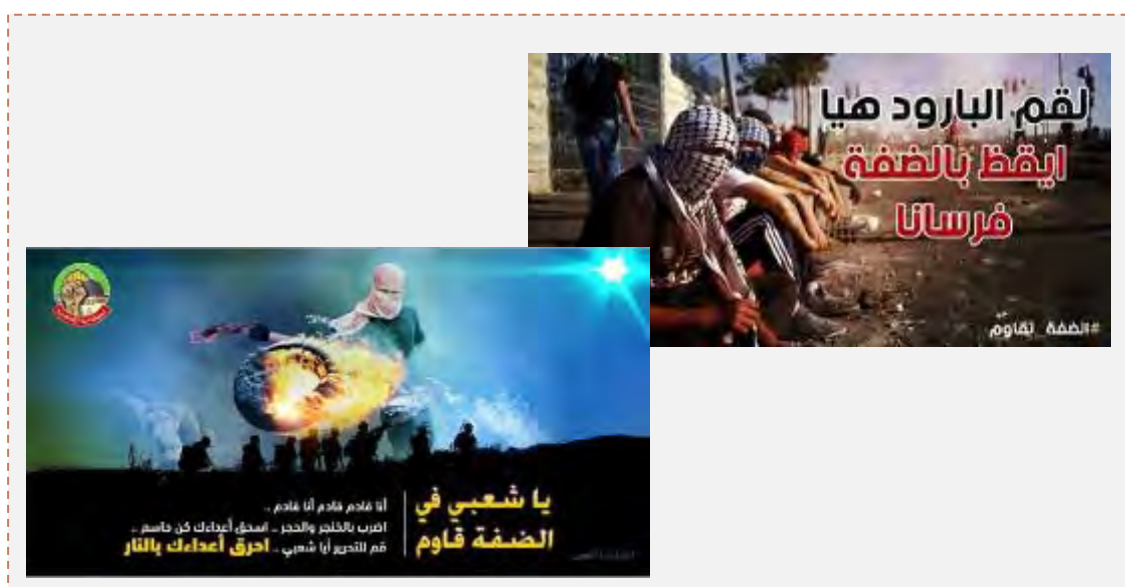


Left: Notice inciting terrorism in Judea and Samaria. The Arabic reads, "May your hand be blessed, oh fighter...May the hand that struggled be blessed...The heartbeat of the West Bank" (Twitter account of Fatah's office of enlistment and organization, October 3, 2015). Right: Fatah notice calling for the stabbing of Israelis in Jerusalem (Twitter account of Fatah's office of enlistment and organization, October 4, 2015).

■ **The Facebook pages of Hamas**, and especially of its affiliated student organizations, issued notices calling for the continuation of "resistance" and "rebellion." A logo for the attacks was designed for the social networks. Some examples are the following:



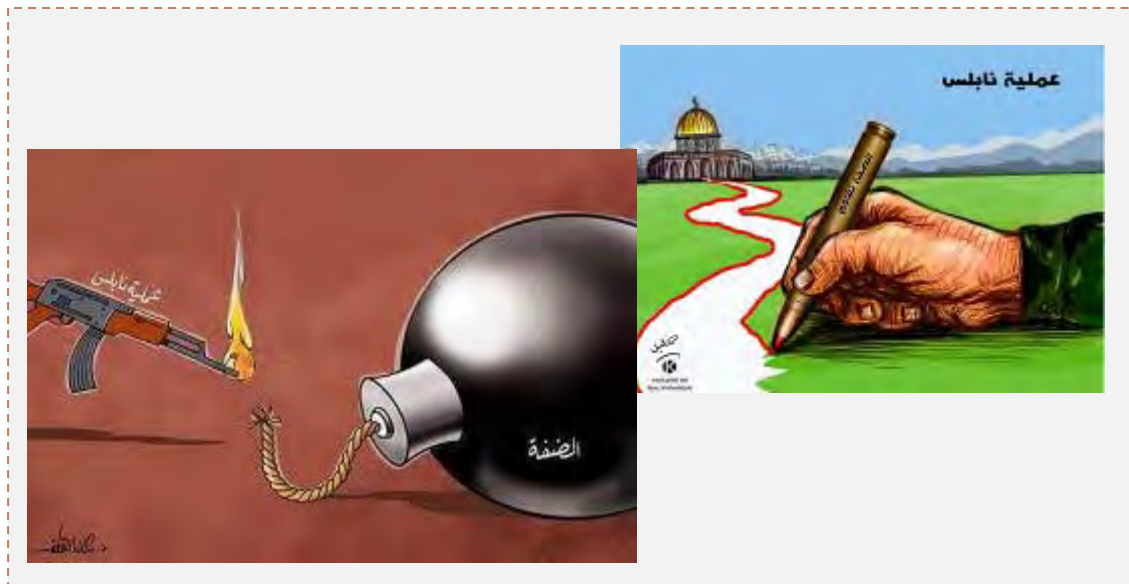
The logo designed for the Palestinian social networks depicting a Palestinian throwing stones. The Arabic reads, "The intifada has broken out."



Left: Notice disseminated by the Hamas "At your orders, Al-Aqsa" campaign. It shows a masked Palestinian throwing a Molotov cocktail and a burning tire at the tiny IDF soldiers below. The Arabic reads, "My people in the [West] Bank, arise!" "I am coming, I am coming... I will strike with dagger and rock...Grind your enemy into dust...Burn him with fire." Right: Masked Palestinians, participants in the violence. The Arabic reads, "The taste of gunpowder...Awake, knights of the [West] Bank" (Facebook page of the Islamic Block at Al-Najah University, October 4-5, 2015).



Call to vandalize and disable security cameras (Facebook page of PALDF, October 6, 2015).



Left: Hamas notice issued after the attack near Itamar calling for it to ignite Judea and Samaria. The Arabic reads, "The attack in Nablus" and "The [West] Bank" (Facebook page of PALDF, October 2, 2015). Right: Hamas notice issued after the attack in Nablus praising the activities of the "resistance" in the West Bank for the sake of Al-Aqsa mosque. The Arabic reads, "The attack in Nablus," "The [West] Bank resists" (PalInfo website, October 5, 2015).