



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(January 20 – 26, 2016)



The two Palestinian terrorists who carried out the stabbing attack inside the village of Beit Horon, killing one Israeli woman and wounding another. Left: Palestinian terrorists Hussein Abu Ghosh and his accomplice, Ibrahim Alan (Facebook page of Hussein Abu Ghosh, January 18, 2016) Right: Hussein Abu Ghosh's Facebook correspondence with his accomplice, Ibrahim Alan. He says he is planning to "hunt porcupines on Monday," apparently their code for the attack. The Arabic reads, "I will taste...the taste of the porcupines [myself]...logical [and] smart...Monday we will hunt porcupines" (Facebook page of Hussein Abu Ghosh, January 21, 2016). They used the term "hunt porcupines" to mean "kill Israelis."

Overview

- This past week the current Palestinian terrorist campaign continued. During the past few weeks there has been a decrease in the scope of the attacks (although the number remained high), but they have been more lethal and daring (shooting attacks and entrance into Israeli villages).
- Prominent this past week was a lethal stabbing attack in the community of Beit Horon (near Route 443, which leads from Modi'in to Jerusalem) carried out by two Palestinian terrorists who entered the village. The terrorists, both students at Bir Zeit University, killed one woman and seriously wounded another (bringing the death toll of the current terrorist campaign to 30). The correspondence carried out on Facebook before the attack indicates it was not spontaneous, but rather premeditated. The two Palestinian terrorists also had three pipe bombs in their possession which they planned to detonate (the bombs were not detonated).

Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

Terrorist Attacks and Attempted Attacks

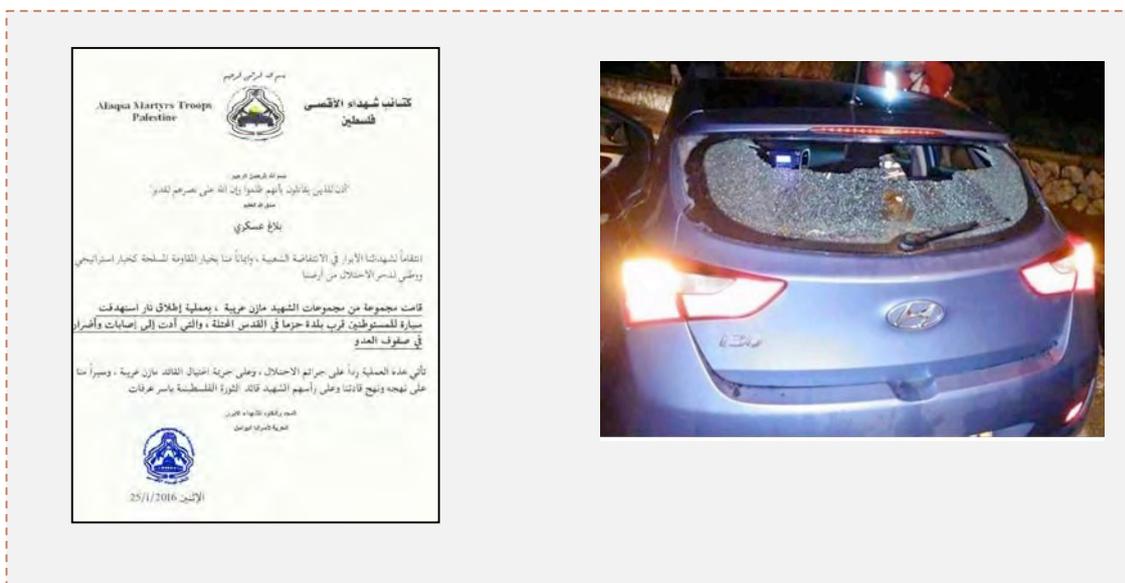
■ January 25, 2016 – entrance into a village and stabbing attack:

- Two women were wounded, one of them fatally, in a stabbing attack carried out in **Beit Horon** (near Route 443, the main route leading from Modi'in to Jerusalem). Two Palestinians entered the community and went to a local grocery store. Customers pushed them out and they ran away. They stabbed a woman standing near the store and another near the community's front gate. A security guard shot and killed them. **Three pipe bombs were found near a grocery store** where the terrorists had thrown them. One of the stabbing victims, a 23 year-old woman, later died.
- The Palestinian media reported that the two terrorists were Hussein Muhammad Abu Ghosh, 17 from the Qalandia refugee camp, and Ibrahim Osama Yusuf Alan, 23, from the village of Bayt Ur al-Tahta, west of Ramallah (Facebook page of Paldf, January 25, 2016). Both terrorists were students at Bir Zeit University (Facebook page of Hussein Abu Ghosh, January 26, 2016).
- The stabbing attack in Beit Horon is another indication of the role of the social networks in the current terrorist campaign. Hussein Abu Ghosh posted pictures on his Facebook page of Palestinian terrorist shaheeds he admired. On January 21, 2016, a few days before the attack, he corresponded with his friend Ibrahim Alan, who carried out the attack with him, and updated him on his intention to "hunt porcupines on Monday," apparently their code for killing Israelis. The Arabic read, "I will taste...the taste of the porcupine [myself]...logical [and] smart...Monday we will hunt porcupines" (Facebook page of Hussein Abu Ghosh, January 21, 2016). Their correspondence indicates the attack was premeditated and not spontaneous.

■ January 24, 2016 – shooting attack:

- Palestinians shot at a car on the road near the community of Dolev (west of Ramallah). The driver did not stop but continued to Dolev. His car was damaged. IDF forces searched the area for the shooters.
- Fatah's military-terrorist wing, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, claimed responsibility for the shooting attack. Their announcement claimed it had been

carried out "in response to Israel's crimes," the killing of Mazen Areiba,¹ and to avenge the killing of the shaheeds of the "popular intifada" (Facebook page of QudsN, January 25, 2016).



Left: The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades claim of responsibility (Facebook page of QudsN, January 26, 2016). Right: The Israeli vehicle damaged in the attack (Facebook page of Paldf, January 25, 2016).

■ **January 23, 2016 – bomb explodes:** A Palestinian was killed when he tried to throw a bomb at Israeli security forces at a **roadblock in Abu Dis** (east of Jerusalem). The bomb exploded before he could throw it. The Palestinian media reported the death of **Muhammad Nabil Darwish Halabia**, 17, from Abu Dis, who was apparently planning to attack IDF soldiers.

■ His grandfather, **Darwish Halabia**, was killed in 2002 during a clash with IDF forces. His father died forty days after his grandfather. **Hani Halabia**, spokesman for the Popular Resistance Committees, is a relative (Ma'an, January 23, 2016). Hamas issued a death notice for him (Facebook page of Paldf, January 23, 2016).

¹ Mazen Areiba was an officer in Palestinian intelligence and a cousin of senior Palestinian Authority figure Sa'eb Erekat. On December 3, 2012, he was shot at an IDF roadblock in the village of Hizma. An IDF soldier returned fire and killed him. Another IDF soldier and an Arab Israeli were also wounded in the attack.



The death notice issued by Hamas for Muhammad Nabil Darwish Halabia (Facebook page of Paldf, January 23, 2016).

- **January 23, 2016 – attempted stabbing attack:** A 13 year-old Palestinian girl went to **the community of Anatot** (east of Jerusalem). She took out a knife, ran towards the security guard at the front gate and tried to stab him. He shot and mortally wounded her, and she died a short time later. She was **Raqia Abu Eid** from the **village of Anata** (north of Jerusalem). The family is originally from the village of Yatta in the Hebron region. Raqia Abu Eid went to Anatot after having argued with her parents. According to statements from family members, **she had often said she wanted to kill Jews and had been influenced by reports of stabbing attacks**. The funeral was held in Yatta. Her body was wrapped in a Fatah flag; Hamas issued a death notice for her (Facebook pages of Palinfo, QudsN and Paldf, January 23-25, 2016).



Left: The death notice issued by Hamas (Facebook page of Paldf, January 25, 2016). Right: Raqia Abu Eid at the entrance of Anatot, holding a knife (circled in red) (Facebook page of Quds, January 23, 2016).

- **January 23, 2016 – shooting attack:** Palestinians fired light arms at an Israeli security force post **near Hebron**. No casualties were reported. IDF forces searched the region for the shooters.
- **January 20, 2016 – shooting attack:** Palestinians shot at an IDF force in the village of Dannaba, east of Tulkarm. An IDF soldier was wounded. On January 23, 2016, after an Israeli security force action, the three-man terrorist squad that carried out the shooting attack was apprehended. Two of its operatives carried out the shooting and the third, who belonged to the Palestinian general security forces, aided the terrorist operatives and hid the weapon in his home.

Riots, Clashes and Popular Terrorism

- In the meantime, demonstrations, protest marches, riots, and the throwing of stones, Molotov cocktails and pipe bombs continue in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem. Some of the more prominent incidents were the following (including terrorist attacks that were prevented):

- **January 22, 2016** – During a riot near the **village of Qaddoum**, Israeli security forces fired shots. In addition, in the region of Qalqiliya, two rioters incurred minor wounds from Israeli security force fire.
- **January 21, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones and a bottle full of paint at a bus near the community of Ma'aleh Amos in Gush Etzion. No casualties were reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 21, 2016).

- **January 21, 2016** – Palestinians threw a Molotov cocktail at an Israeli police force **near the village of Issawiya**. A policeman incurred minor injuries (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 21, 2016).
- **January 21, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at Jews visiting **the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron**. One man incurred minor injuries (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 21, 2016).
- **January 20, 2016** – Palestinians threw Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles on the **Gush Etzion-Hebron road near Bayt Ummar**. Palestinians also threw stones at an Israeli bus **near Bayt Ummar**. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 20, 2016).
- **January 20, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at the light railway in **Jerusalem near Shuafat**. No casualties were reported. A train car was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 20, 2016).
- **January 19, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at a bus on the **Gush Etzion-Hebron road near Bayt Ummar**. No casualties were reported. The bus was damaged. Palestinians threw stones at another bus on the **Gush Etzion-Jerusalem road**. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 19, 2016).



The bus attacked near **Bayt Ummar** (Facebook page of Paldf, January 20, 2016)

- **January 19, 2016** – Palestinians threw Molotov cocktails at an Israeli vehicle at a junction in **Samaria** (east of Ariel). There were no casualties and no damage was reported. Palestinians threw Molotov cocktails at an Israeli vehicle **northeast of**

Ramallah and at another **near Beit El** (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 19, 2016).

■ **January 19, 2016** – IDF forces identified two suspicious Palestinians near the **trans-Samaria road south of Nablus**. The soldiers chased and caught them. Weapons were found in their possession (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 21, 2016).

Hezbollah-Handled Terrorist Squad Exposed in Tulkarm

■ The Israeli security forces recently exposed a **five-man terrorist squad** in Tulkarm that planned to carry out terrorist attacks in Israel, including a shooting attack. The squad was headed by **Muhammad Zaghoul**, a Palestinian from Tulkarm, and **handled by Hezbollah in Lebanon**. The squad operatives who did not belong to a Palestinian terrorist organization, were involved during the past year in throwing stones and Molotov cocktails. Two of them also served sentences in Israeli jails.

■ Interrogation revealed they had been handled by Hezbollah's Unit 133, a Hezbollah unit which has tried to establish terrorist networks among the Palestinians in recent years, but so far without success. The head of the squad, **Muhammad Zaghoul**, was recruited via the Internet by **Jawad Nasrallah**, the son of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. After he was enlisted he was handled by a Hezbollah operative in Lebanon aka **Fadi**. Muhammad Zaghoul was asked to open an email account and the two used it to communicate. He was also asked to recruit other operatives for a squad and gather information about various targets in preparation for terrorist attacks. The squad operatives were preparing for a shooting attack and had already acquired a sun-machine gun which they planned to use in the attack.²

Apprehension of Two Sisters Who Manufactured Weapons in Their Home³

■ **On December 15, 2015, the Israeli security forces detained two Palestinian twin sisters** after a search of their home revealed weapons, including pipe bombs. They also found fertilizer used in making explosives, Hamas videos and items used by rioters. They were **Diana and Nadia Hawila**, 18, from the village of Shuweika, near Tulkarm.

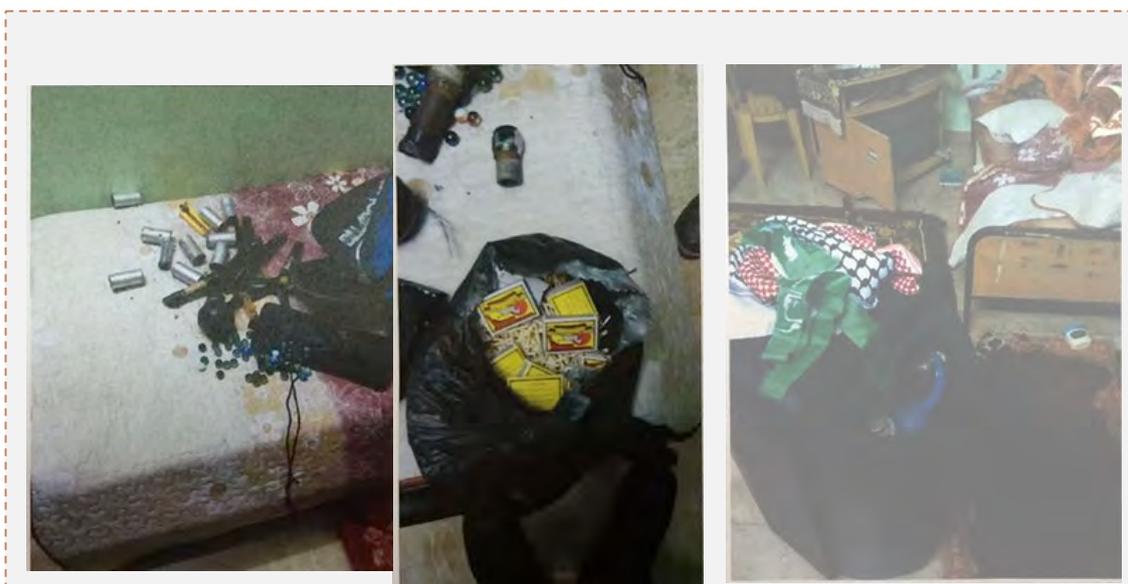
² For further information see the January 24, 2016 bulletin "Hezbollah Handled a Palestinian Squad in Tulkarm, Which Planned Terrorist Attacks."

³ Israel Security Agency website, January 25, 2016

■ Interrogation revealed that **Diana had been exposed to and influenced by extremist Islamic preaching on the Internet, encouraging women to participate in terrorist activities. She purchased chemicals and followed instructions she found in Internet videos for making IEDs.** She made IEDs and was planning to use them to attack Israelis. Her twin sister Nadia helped hide the IEDs in their house.



Nadia (left) and Diana Hawila (Israel Security Agency website, January 25, 2016).



Items found in the house of Diana and Nadia Hawila, some of them used to manufacture improvised weapons (Israel Security Agency website, January 25, 2016).

Interrogation of Dafna Meir's Murderer

■ The interrogation of the 15 year-old Palestinian terrorist who murdered **Dafna Meir in front of her own home** in the community of Otniel has shed light on

his modus operandi and motivation. He said that during the period before the attack **he watched Palestinian Authority (PA) TV programs which represented Israel as killing young Palestinians** [Israel is falsely represented by the Palestinian media as "executing" innocent young Palestinians].

- On the day of the attack, **influenced by what he had seen on Palestinian TV**, he **decided to stab a Jew to death**. He chose the Jewish community of Otniel, which is close to the village of Bayt Amra, where he lived. He went to Otniel, saw Dafna Meir, who was painting her front door, came up behind her and stabbed her in the head. He then hid in the bushes, and later escaped to his village, where he was found two days later (NRG, January 24, 2016).

Israel's South

Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

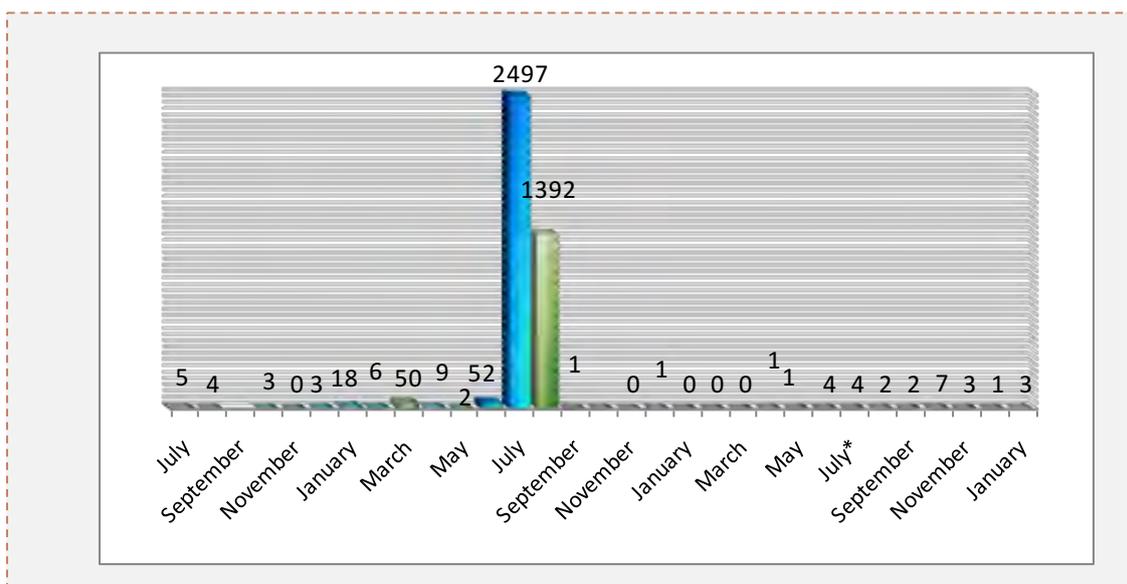
- On January 24, 2016, a rocket hit was identified in an open area in the **western Negev**. There were no casualties and no damage was reported. A network calling itself the **Soldiers of Jerusalem** (*ajnad bayt al-maqdis*) claimed responsibility for the rocket fire. The claim included verses from the Qur'an and the promise that it was only one of a series of attacks that would be carried out against Israel (Twitter account, January 24, 2016). The Soldiers of Jerusalem is probably a **Salafist network using a false name**. **Another rocket**, fired at Israel on January 23, 2016, fell in an open area inside the Gaza Strip near the border security fence. There were no casualties and no damage was reported.



The claim of responsibility issued by the Soldiers of Jerusalem (Ajnad bayt al-maqdis Twitter account, January 24, 2016).

■ In response to the rocket fire Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip. According to the Palestinian media, an open area southwest of Khan Yunis and an Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades site south of Dir al-Balah were struck. There were reportedly no casualties (Twitter accounts of the Soldiers of Jerusalem and Hamas, January 24, 2016).

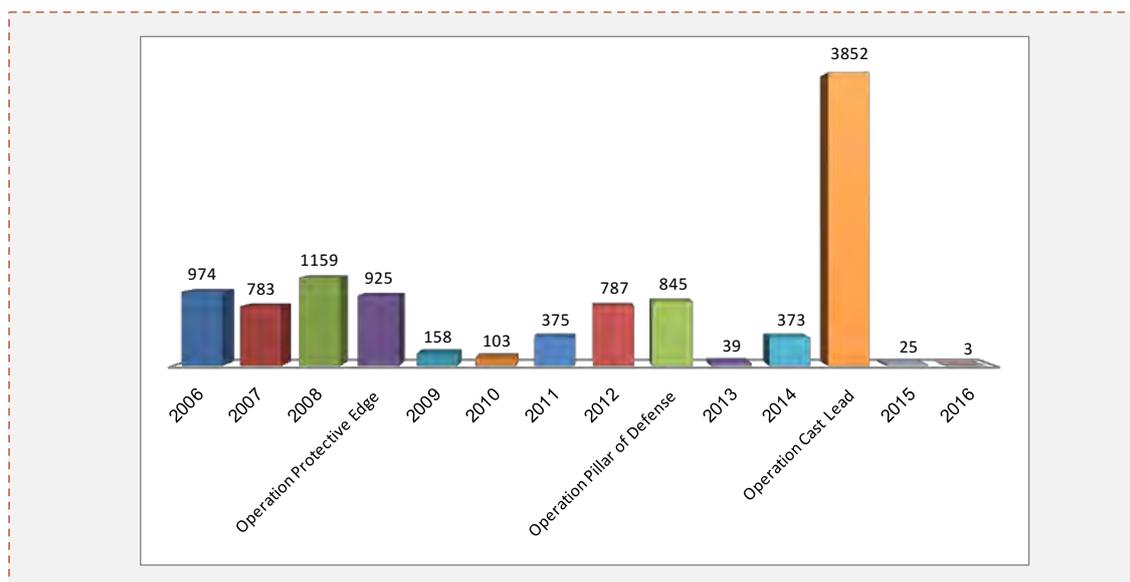
Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire (2014 – 2016)⁴



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

⁴ As of January 26, 2016. 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 South⁵



Incidents near the Border Security Fence

- On January 23, 2016, Palestinians shot at an IDF patrol near the border security fence in the northern Gaza Strip. No casualties were reported. The soldiers returned fire (Ynet, January 23, 2016).
- According to reports, after the incident of placing IEDs near the border security fence in the northern Gaza Strip,⁶ the IDF installed an artillery battery near the northern Gaza Strip border to enable a rapid response to shooting from open areas (Ynet, January 21, 2016). The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, headed by Hamas, were suspicious and concerned about the IDF move (Hamas forum, January 21, 2016), the first of its kind since the end of Operation Protective Shield. **Khaled al-Batash, a senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) figure**, said installing the artillery was Israel's response to the failure of its struggle against the Palestinian residents of Jerusalem, Ramallah, Hebron and other areas of confrontation (Paltoday, January 21, 2016).

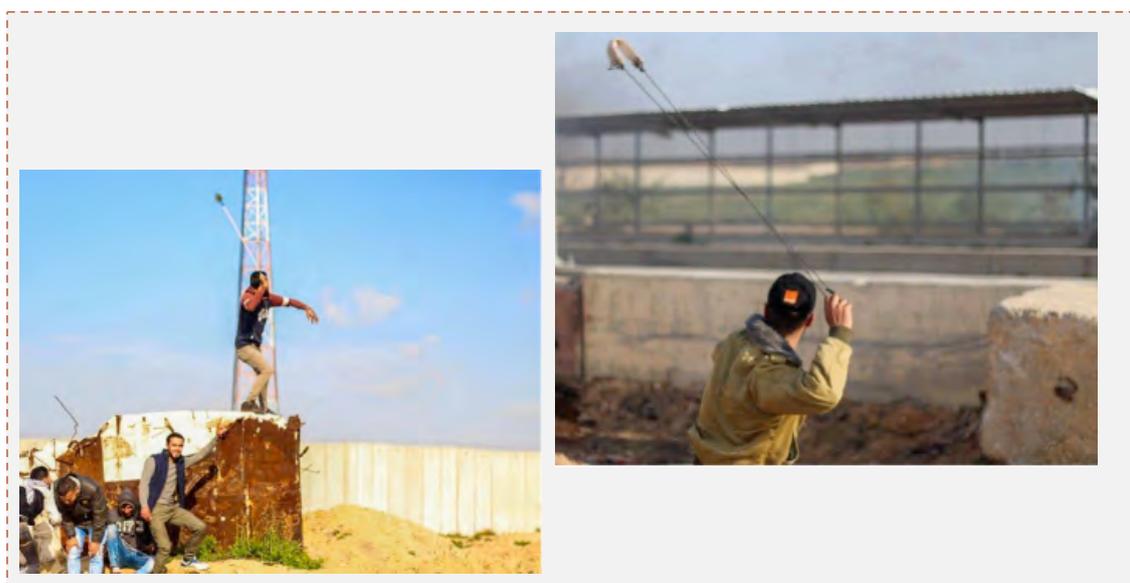
⁵ The statistics do not include mortar shell fire or rockets which misfired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

⁶ On January 13, 2016, IAF aircraft attacked a terrorist squad planting IEDs near the border security fence in the northern Gaza Strip. According to Israeli security forces the squad planned to use to bombs to attack Israeli security forces carrying out security activity near the fence (Ynet, January 13, 2016).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

Riots and Terrorist Attacks near the Border Security Fence

■ **In the Gaza Strip riots continue near the border security fence in a show of solidarity with the Palestinians in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem.** According to estimates, several hundred Palestinians participated in riots at various locations, including the Erez crossing, the region of Shejaiya and Al-Bureij, and the area of Khan Yunis. On **January 22, 2016**, dozens of Gazans gathered near the border security fence, burned tires and threw stones at the Israeli security forces. Eight Palestinians were injured during riots, two of them mortally (Twitter account of Ashraf al-Qidra, January 20, 2016).

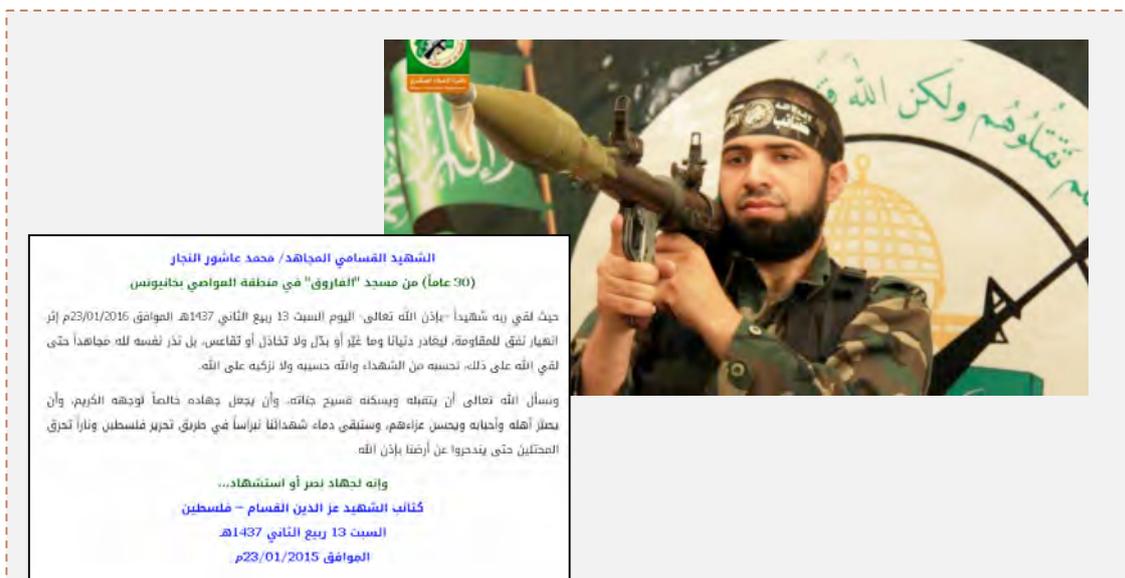


Palestinians throw stones near the Erez crossing (Facebook page of Quds, January 22, 2016).

Gaza Strip – Recent Developments

Another Gazan Killed in a Tunnel Collapse

■ **On January 23, 2016, another Gazan was killed when a tunnel in the region of Khan Yunis collapsed** (southern Gaza Strip). Hamas' military-terrorist wing announced the death of **Muhammad 'Ashour al-Najar**, 31, from Khan Yunis (Palinfo, January 23, 2016). Hamas' Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades has recently made a point of announcing the deaths of its operatives in the tunnels. The intention is apparently to stress the reconstruction and return to fighting fitness of the military wing, including the reconstruction of its attack tunnels.



Left: The Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades notice of the death of Muhammad al-Najar (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website, January 23, 2016). Right: Muhammad al-Najar (Hamas website, January 23, 2016).

Egyptian Court Rejects Appeal against Hamas

■ An Egyptian Administrative Court rejected the appeal to ban senior Hamas figures from entering Egypt on the grounds they were "involved in terrorist activities." Hamas was satisfied with the ruling. **Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri** expressed Hamas' appreciation of the ruling, calling it important because it showed Egypt's position towards the Palestinians was balanced. He said he hoped it would help relieve the two countries' mutual suspicions (Sawa and Hamas websites, January 19, 2016).

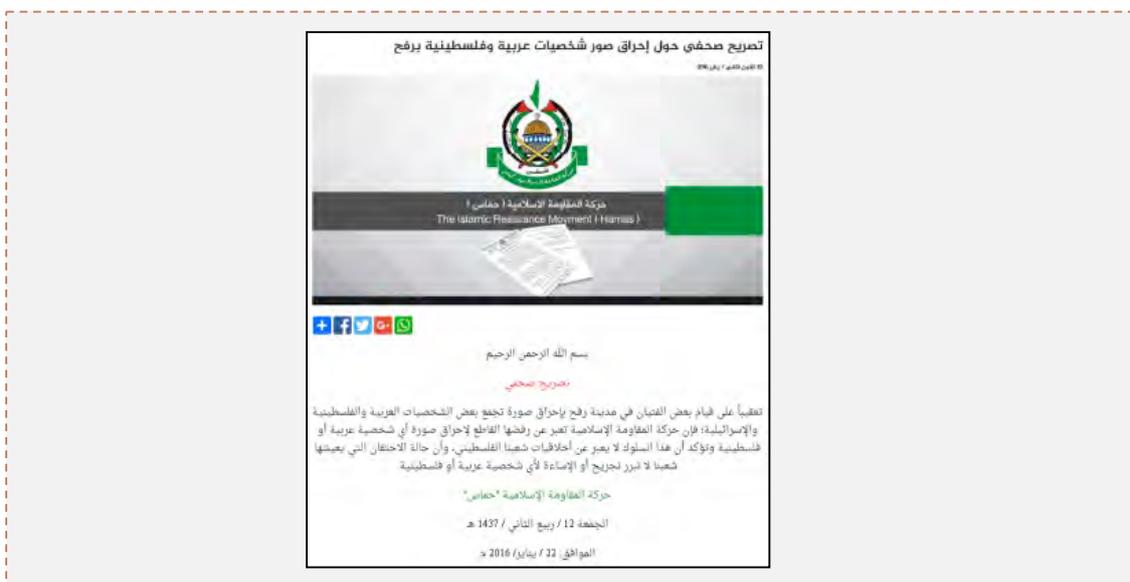
Hamas Rallies Mark the Tenth Anniversary of the "Siege" of the Gaza Strip

■ On January 22, 2016, Hamas held rallies throughout the Gaza Strip to mark the tenth anniversary of the so-called "siege" of Gaza and the closing of the Rafah crossing. Hamas organized the events and senior movement figures attended them.

■ **At the rally held in Rafah, Gazans burned effigies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.** They were claimed to be responsible for the "siege" of the Gaza Strip. To prevent damaging relations with Egypt, Hamas issued an announcement immediately after the rally claiming it condemned the burning of effigies of "Arab and Palestinian" [but not Israeli] figures (Facebook page of Quds and the Hamas website, January 22, 2016).



Left: Burning effigies of el-Sisi, Netanyahu and Abbas. Right: Effigy of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (Facebook page of Quds, January 22, 2016).



[Picture] [Caption] Hamas' apology to Egypt condemning the burning in effigy of "Arab and Palestinian" figures.

The Army of Islam Attacks Hamas

- A Salafist organization called the Army of Islam⁷ issued a video accusing Hamas of apostasy, and abandoning Islamic law and Islam. Therefore, according to the video, because of Hamas' apostasy, there was no course of action except ending all connection with Hamas. In response Hamas sent the Army of Islam a stern communiqué warning its operatives not to attack the security of the Gaza Strip.

⁷ A network in the Gaza Strip affiliated with Al-Qaeda and the global jihad. Its operatives participated in the abduction of Gilad Shalit in 2006 and in a series of terrorist attacks against local Western targets. The network was initially close to Hamas but has since distanced itself.

Hamas warned that if the organization did carry out attacks in the Gaza Strip, Hamas would declare an uncompromising war on it (Al-Masdar News, January 24, 2016).

The Palestinian Authority

The PA and Continuing Security Coordination with Israel

Overview

■ This past week **PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas and Majid Faraj, commander of Palestinian general intelligence**, were interviewed by the press. **Both spoke in favor of continuing security coordination with Israel**. Their statements were strongly criticized, especially by Hamas, which called on the PA to end its security with Israel. Mahmoud Abbas supported Majid Faraj.

Statements by Majid Faraj

■ Interviewed by the press, **Majid Faraj, commander of PA general intelligence**, said that **security coordination with Israel was a bridge that would preserve correct conditions between the two sides**. They would continue until conditions were right for the politicians to return to negotiations. He said that since the beginning of October 2015 (when the current wave of terrorism started), **the Palestinian security forces, with instructions from Mahmoud Abbas, had prevented 200 attacks against Israelis**. As to a takeover by extremist organizations, he said **ISIS was knocking at the PA's door** and its ideology had already invaded Palestinian youth. He warned of the spread of extremist organizations in the region and said the PA, Israel and the United States were working together to combat violence and terrorism (Defense News, January 19, 2016).

■ Majid Faraj's remarks enraged Hamas and other organizations. Some of the responses from Hamas were the following:

- **Sami Abu Zuhri**, Hamas spokesman, said "Faraj's confession" proved the PA's security forces served Israeli security and were destroying the intifada. He said that preserving Israel's security had become an important principle for the PA's security forces (Hamas website, January 20, 2016).
- **Khalil al-Haya**, a senior Hamas figure, said the PA had to try Majid Faraj for "crimes against the Palestinian people" (Paldf, January 22, 2016).
- **Ismail al-Shaqer**, a Hamas faction member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, said the fact that the Palestinian security forces had prevented more

than 200 attacks against Israel was proof of the role played by the PA as "a strategic threat to the existence of the Palestinian people." He claimed the Palestinian security forces had gone so far in security coordination that there was no difference between them and the Israeli security forces (Alresala.net, January 20, 2016).

- The Hamas Facebook page posted a comic video of Majid Faraj ordering his operatives to bring in a wanted Palestinian at all costs (Facebook page of Paldf, January 21, 2016).



Left: The Hamas video making fun of Majid Faraj (Facebook page of Paldf, January 21, 2016).
 Right: A Hamas cartoon making fun of Mahmoud Abbas and Majid Faraj because of the continuation of Palestinian security coordination with Israel. The Arabic reads, "Security coordinated, the path of the PA, directed by [Mahmoud] Abbas and carried out by [Majid] Faraj" (Al-Risala, January 25, 2016).

Mahmoud Abbas' Response

- **Mahmoud Abbas supported Majid Faraj on his position regarding security coordination with Israel**, emphasizing that the security forces were doing their duty according to his [orders](#) and that anyone who harm security would be detained (Facebook page of Shihab, January 24, 2016). Meeting with members of the press in the Muqata'a in Ramallah, regarding security coordination he said that the PA's security forces were **doing their duty and following orders to prevent terrorism in the PA territories**. He said security coordination with Israel currently existed but **he did not know what the future would hold**. He also said no one would drag the Palestinians into a campaign they did not want. He stressed that it was unacceptable that Palestinian children threw stones at IDF soldiers and were killed for it, and for

that reason the Palestinian security forces were operating to protect them (QudsN, January 24, 2016).

The Battle for Hearts and Minds

Boycotting Israel and Encouraging Terrorism

■ On January 21, 2016, an organization called **Al-Mubadara**, headed by **Palestinian leftist Mustafa Barghouti**, held a march in Hebron calling for a boycott of Israeli-made merchandise. The claim was made that buying goods manufactured in Israel supported the IDF in killing Palestinian children. The idea was illustrated by a display (Facebook page of Al-Mubadara, January 21, 2016). The organization also calls for **the continuation of the intifada**.



Left: Display showing that buying Israeli products helps the IDF kill Palestinian children (Facebook page of Al-Mubadara, January 21, 2016). Right: One of the notices calling for the boycott of Israeli products in Hebron (Wafa, January 20, 2016).



[Picture] [Caption] Notice on the Facebook page of Al-Mubadara encouraging Palestinians to throw Molotov cocktails. The Arabic reads, "Better than cursing the darkness..." (Facebook page of Al-Mubadara, January 18, 2016).