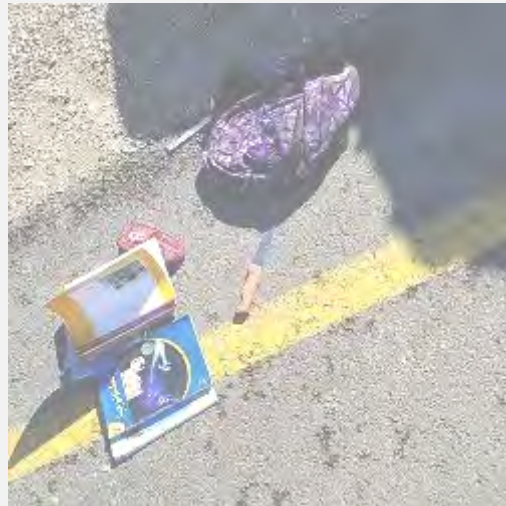




# News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(February 3 – 9, 2016)



Stabbing attacks on the way home from school. Left: The contents of the schoolbag of one of the girls who carried out the stabbing attack in Ramle (Photo courtesy of the Israel Police Force media spokesman, February 4, 2016). Right: The schoolbag of the young Palestinian girl who attempted to carry out a stabbing attack in the community of Karmeit Zzur (Photo courtesy of the Gush Etzion media spokesman, February 9, 2016).

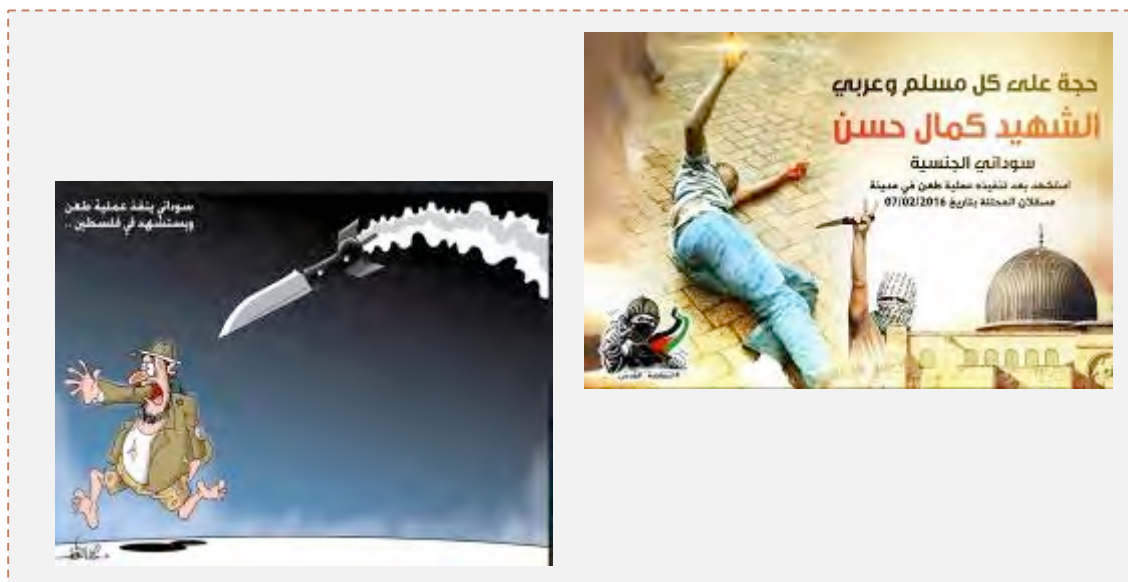
## Overview

- This past week the Palestinian terrorist campaign continued, manifested by shooting and stabbing attacks. Prominent was the shooting and stabbing attack carried out near the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem by three Palestinian youths from Qabatiya. One Border Policewoman was killed and another was critically wounded. The three apparently planned to carry out a mass-killing attack in Jerusalem, which was prevented by the Border Policemen. Senior Fatah figures in Judea and Samaria expressed support for the three terrorists and attended the funeral held for them in Qabatiya.
- Terrorist tunnels in the Gaza Strip continue collapsing, primarily because of severe weather conditions, but also because of the flooding of tunnels by the Egyptian security forces. Senior Hamas figures, obliged to respond to the deaths of operatives in the tunnels, repeatedly stated that Hamas was reinforcing the tunnels in preparation for a future confrontation with Israel. However, in an attempt to reduce tension caused by public statements, senior Hamas figure Mahmoud al-Zahar claimed that although Hamas did not rule out a war with Israel, it would not initiate one.

## Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

### Terrorist Attacks and Attempted Attacks

- **February 9, 2016 – stabbing attack:** A young Palestinian girl tried to stab a Border Policeman **near the Nablus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem**. She was noticed by a group of Border Policemen and they approached to examine her. When asked to hand over her bag, she took out a knife and tried to stab one of them. They overcame her and detained her for questioning. She was **Malek Yousef Hamdan**, 16, from Beit Safafa, in southeast Jerusalem (Facebook page of Quds, February 9, 2016).
- **February 7, 2016 – stabbing attack:** An IDF soldier was stabbed at a bus stop on **Ben-Gurion Street in Ashqelon**. Another soldier saw the attack, took his weapon and shot at the fleeing terrorist, wounding him. The terrorist later died. He was a Sudanese national; so far it is not clear why he stabbed the soldier. However, in police assessment his motives were **nationalist**. The Palestinian media reported the terrorist was **Kamal Hassan**, 32, an asylum seeker from Sudan (Facebook page of Paldf, February 7, 2016). Hamas rushed to issue a memorial notice, claiming the stabbing attack was an example for every Muslim and Arab throughout the world.



Left: Cartoon posted after the attack in Ashqelon. The Arabic reads, "A Sudanese national carries out a stabbing attack and dies as a martyr in Palestine..." Right: The Hamas notice commemorating the Sudanese terrorist. It claims the attack is an example for every Muslim and Arab (Facebook page of Paldf, February 7, 2016).

- **February 6, 2016 – stabbing attack:** A Palestinian terrorist stabbed a woman in **the market of the Bedouin city of Rahat** in Israel's south. The Palestinian, in Israel illegally, fled the scene.

■ **February 6, 2016 – shooting attack:** Palestinians opened fire at an Israeli vehicle near **Ariel**. There were no casualties and no damage was reported. Israeli security forces found seven empty shells nearby.

■ **February 4, 2016 – stabbing attack:** Two 13 year-old girls went to the mall near **the central bus station in the city of Ramle** (a city with a mixed Jewish-Arab population). When a security guard asked for identification they took knives out of their schoolbags and stabbed him in the arm and leg. Other security guards overcame them.

■ **February 3, 2016 – combined shooting and stabbing attack:**<sup>1</sup>

- Three Palestinian terrorists armed with rifles, knives and IEDs went from northern Samaria to Jerusalem to carry out a terrorist attack. Four Border Policemen noticed two of the terrorists sitting on a bench **near the Nablus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem**. The Border Policemen became suspicious and asked the two for their ID cards. One of them pulled out his ID card and the other took out a gun and shot at the policemen. The first terrorist stabbed a Border Policewoman. The police shot and killed the two terrorists. The third terrorist came up from behind and opened fire. One of the Border Policewomen was shot but returned fire and shot at the terrorist. A police officer shot and killed him. Two Border Policewomen were wounded in the attack, one of whom later died. The other was critically wounded.

- **The three terrorists were from the town of Qabatiya** in northern Samaria, in their early 20s, apparently childhood friends. They are not known to have been affiliated with any terrorist organization. According to the initial investigation, the three were armed with improvised submachine guns (homemade "Karl Gustavs"). They also had IEDs. **They apparently planned a combined mass-killing attack in a crowded location in Jerusalem**, but were detected by the Border Policemen before they could carry out the attack.

- The attack at the Nablus Gate was **exceptional**: a squad of **three terrorists** planned to carry out **a relatively complex attack** that included gunfire, stabbing and IEDs. Carrying out such an attack involves planning and professional support. In addition, the three terrorists came from Qabatiya, near Jenin, and did

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<sup>1</sup> A detailed analysis of the attack is available in Hebrew on the ITIC website and the English translation will be posted shortly.

not carry out the attack near their homes, like most of the terrorists, but planned to carry out a mass-killing attack in the heart of Jerusalem.

- **Fatah praised the three terrorists:** Senior Fatah figures in Judea and Samaria went to Qabatiya to attend the funeral. Many yellow Fatah flags were in evidence. Hamas also praised the attack. Hamas spokesman **Husam Badran** praised the terrorists who, he said, had reached Jerusalem despite the roadblocks. He called the attack a turning point in the so-called "Jerusalem intifada" (Hamas website, February 3, 2016).
- Following the attack the Israeli security forces imposed a closure on Qabatiya and carried out a series of detentions. Palestinian sources criticized the closure and called it "a war crime" whose objective was to subjugate the town inhabitants (Quds.net, February 6, 2016).



Left: Death notice issued by the town of Qabatiya and the Fatah movement in Qabatiya (Facebook page Qabatiya al-A'an, February 7, 2016) Right: The death notice issued by Hamas for the three terrorists from Qabatiya (Facebook page of the Islamic Movement in Nablus, February 3, 2016).



Support for the three terrorists from Fatah's Twitter account. The Arabic reads, "From Qabatiya to Jerusalem. Blessings" (Twitter account of Fatah, February 3, 2016).

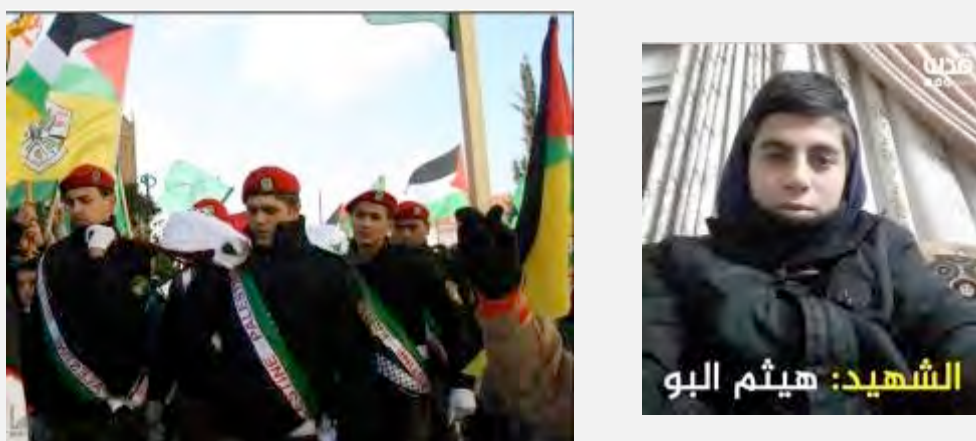
## Riots, Clashes and Popular Terrorism

■ In the meantime, demonstrations, protest marches, riots, and the throwing of stones, Molotov cocktails and pipe bombs continue in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem. This week as well, many of the riots in Judea and Samaria were held in support of **Muhammad al-Qiq**, a Palestinian administrative detainee who has been on a hunger strike. The more prominent events were the following (including terrorist attacks that were prevented):

- **February 9, 2016** – A 13 year-old Palestinian girl went to the guard post at the entrance of **the village of Karmeit Zur** (in the Gush Etzion region). The guard stopped her after one of the local residents reported seeing her approach the village suspiciously. When he asked her to identify herself she threw a knife on the ground. She was detained. She was **Dima Ismail al-Wawi**, 13, from Halhul, a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student (Facebook page of Quds, February 9, 2016).
- **February 8, 2016** – Israeli security forces at the **Nablus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem** noticed a woman behaving suspiciously. They examined her and found a large knife in her possession. She was 42 years old and lived in the Old City. She was taken for questioning.
- **February 8, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at a bus and other vehicles **near Bayt Ummar on the Gush Etzion-Hebron road**. In another attack Palestinians threw stones at a bus and other vehicles **on the Kiryat Arba-Hebron road**.

There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, February 8, 2016).

- **February 5, 2016** – During a riot in the region of Halhul (near Hebron) a Palestinian was shot and killed by the Israeli security forces (Facebook page of Red Alert, February 5, 2016). The Palestinian media reported the death of **Haitham Ismail Abu**, 17, from Halhul (according to other Palestinian sources, he was 14). The Palestinian Authority (PA) held a military funeral for him, attended by senior Fatah figure **Abbas Zaki** and **Kamel Hamid**, the governor of the Hebron district (Wafa and Al-Hariya, February 6, 2016).



Left: The military funeral held for Haitham Ismail Abu (Wafa, February 6, 2016). Right: Haitham Ismail Abu (Amin blog, February 6, 2016).

- **February 5, 2016** – Palestinians set fire to a tent holding Jewish religious books near the village of Karmeit Zur in Gush Etzion. There were no casualties. The books were badly burned. According to Israeli police sources, there were tracks leading to the nearby town of Halhul. The tent was used for prayers and activities for local children, and was not permanently manned (Facebook page of Red Alert, February 5, 2016).

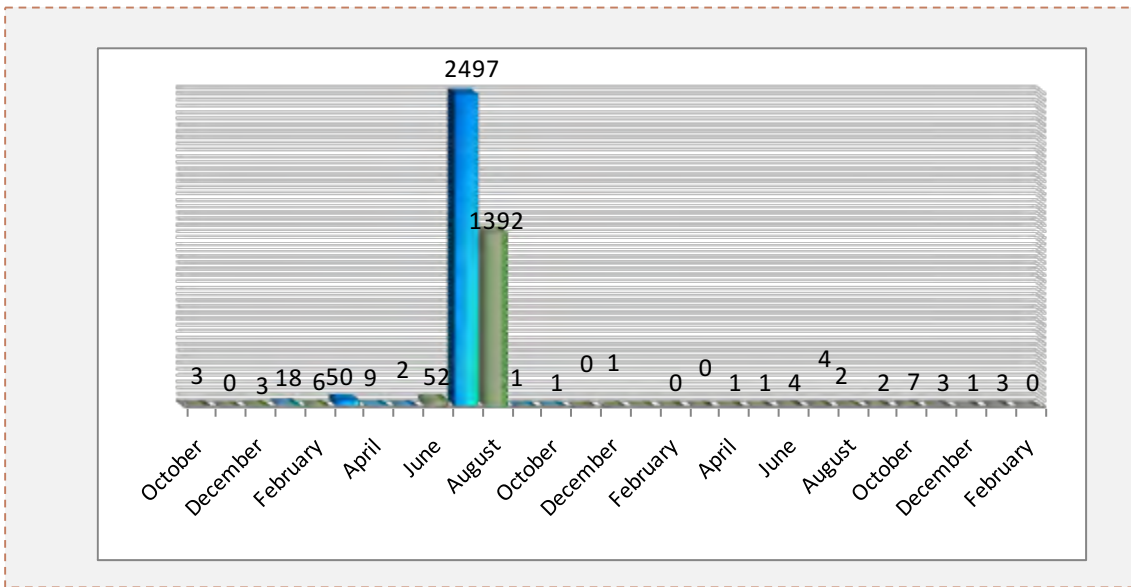
- **February 3, 2016** – Palestinians shot at an IDF force conducting an action in the village of Qatanna (near Har Adar, northwest of Jerusalem). There were no casualties; the force returned fire. The following day two Palestinians from Qatanna were detained. A search revealed a "Karl Gustav" submachine gun which apparently had been used by the two to shoot at IDF forces during the past few weeks (Facebook page of Red Alert, February 5, 2016).

## Israel's South

### Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire Attacking Israel

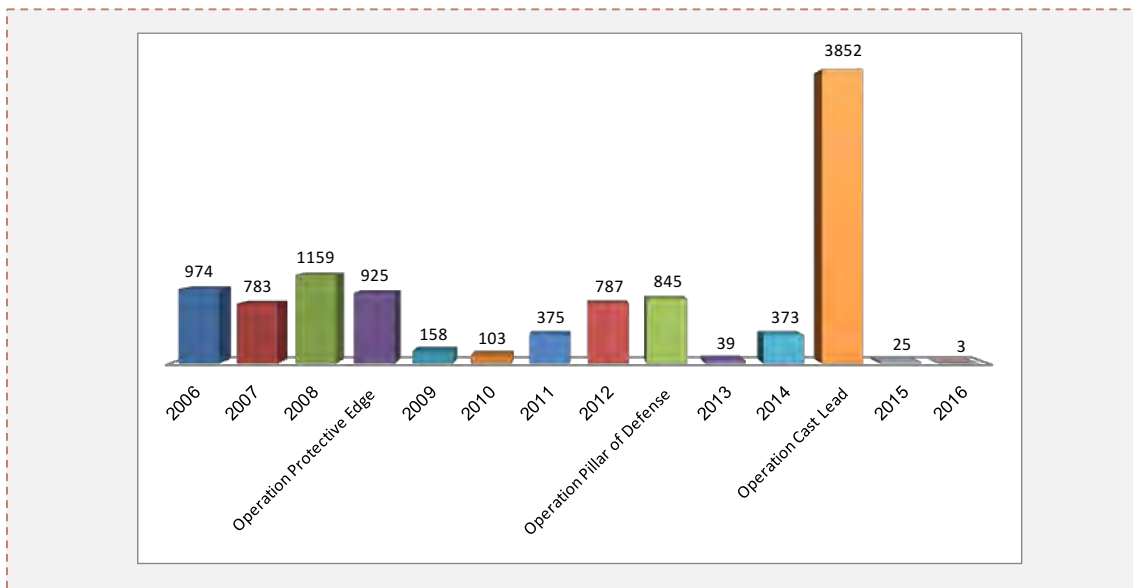
- This past week no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israeli territory.

### Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire (2014 – 2016)<sup>2</sup>



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

### Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire in Israel's South<sup>3</sup>

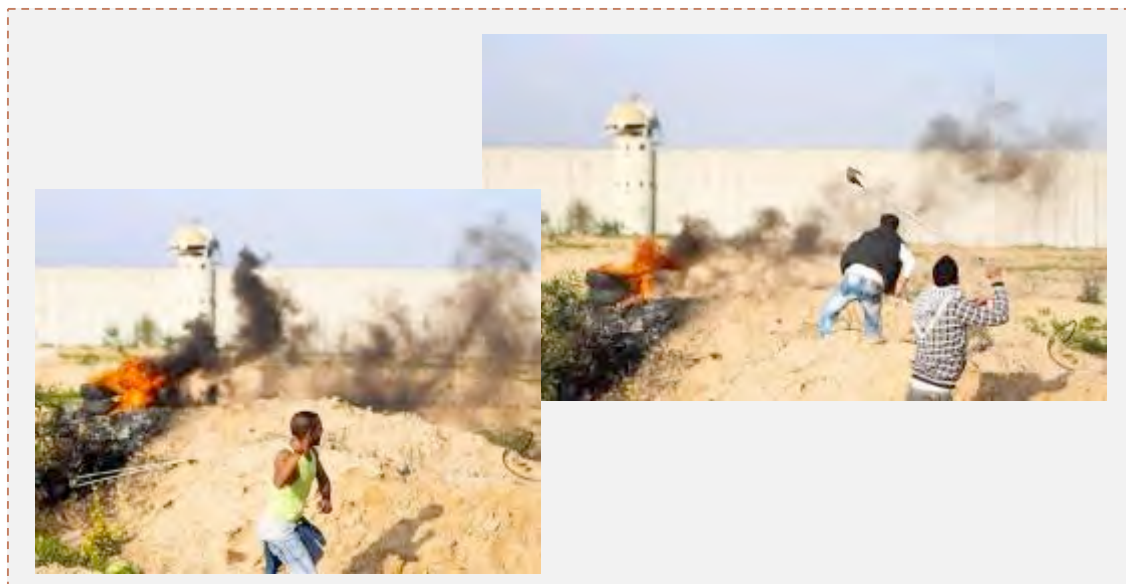


<sup>2</sup> As of February 9, 2016. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire or rockets which misfired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

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

## Riots and Terrorist Attacks near the Border Security Fence

■ This past week Gazans continued rioting near the border security fence in a show of solidarity with the Palestinians in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem. On February 5, 2016, a clash developed between Palestinians and IDF forces near the Erez crossing in the northern Gaza Strip (Facebook page of Quds, February 5, 2016).



Palestinians riot near the Erez crossing in the northern Gaza Strip (Facebook page of Quds, February 5, 2016).

## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### The Tunnels

#### Egypt Floods the Tunnels

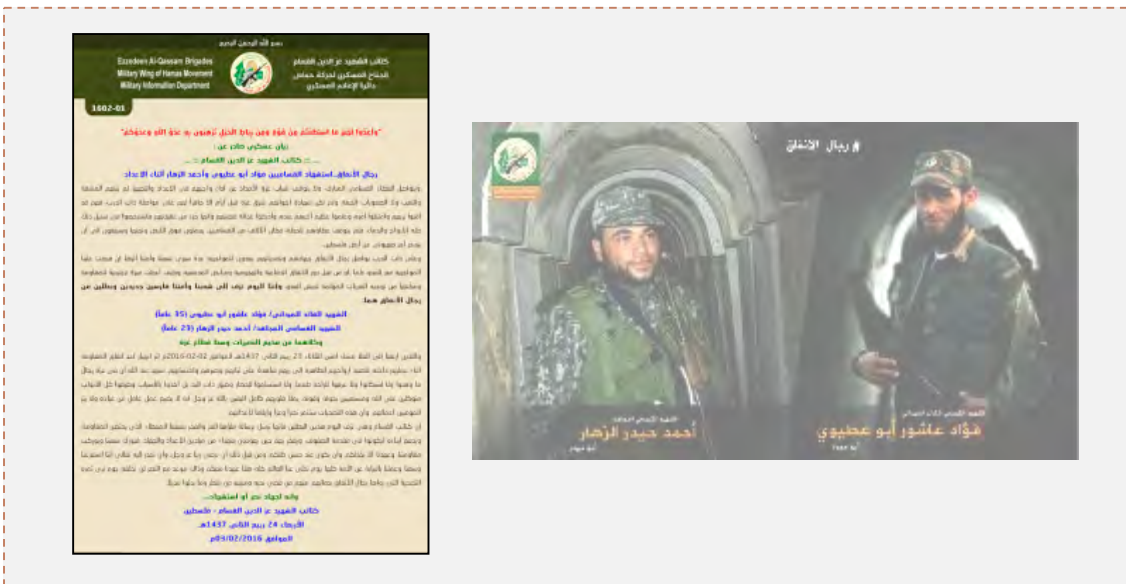
■ The Egyptian security forces reported **the collapse of two weapons-smuggling tunnels** in the Rafah region. The tunnels collapsed as a result of Egyptian security forces' flooding of the tunnels (Al-Watan, February 4, 2016). **Naim al-Ghoul, commander of the national security forces in the Gaza Strip**, claimed the situation along the border between Egypt and the Gaza Strip was deteriorating, and that the water the Egyptians used to flood Palestinian territory had reached the posts of the security forces near the border (Website of the ministry of the interior, February 8, 2016).

#### Collapse of the Tunnels in the Gaza Strip

■ The Palestinian media reported reported the collapse of a tunnel in the region of Al-Zahraa' in the southern Gaza Strip. The collapse killed **Fa'ed 'Ashur Abu Atiwi (Abu Hamza)**, 35, the ground commander, and **Ahmed Haydar al-Zahar (Abu**



**Haydar**), 23, (nephew of senior Hamas figure Mahmoud al-Zahar). Both were from the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip. Two other operatives were wounded (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades website and Facebook page of Paldaf, February 2 and 3, 2016).



Left: Death notice issued by the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military-terrorist wing, for the two operatives. Right: Fa'ed Abu Atiwi and Ahmed al-Zahar (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades website, February 2, 2016).

- The Palestinian media reported reported the collapse of another Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades tunnel in the Al-Zeitun neighborhood in eastern Gaza City Watan al-Akhbariya, February 3, 2016).
- A 24 year-old Palestinian from the northern part of Rafah was killed in the collapse of a smuggling tunnel on the Egypt-Gaza Strip border. Reportedly, the tunnel collapsed during renovations (Safa, February 8, 2016).
- In view of the tunnel collapses and subsequent public discourse, senior Hamas figures continue to **declare they are using the lull in the fighting to develop** Hamas' rocket-manufacturing capabilities and to renovate the tunnels in preparation for a future confrontation with Israel:
  - **Senior Hamas figure Khalil al-Haya** gave speech at a memorial service for Hamas operatives killed in tunnel collapses. He claimed the attempt to force the Palestinian people to abandon the "path of resistance" had failed. He said the Hamas movement would defend the territories and the Palestinian people, and

would not give up jihad or the resistance. He called on the Palestinian people to adopt the path of "resistance" and defend the intifada (Safa, February 5, 2016).

- **Senior Hamas figure Mahmoud al-Zahar** told an interviewer that Hamas had not ruled out war with Israel but **would not initiate one**. If a war did break out Hamas would respond forcibly. He also claimed that Israel raised the issue of the tunnels in the Gaza Strip to extort money for the IDF from the United States (Paltoday, February 5, 2016). In another interview he claimed the matter of the tunnels was defensive. He claimed Hamas did not want to escalate but did not rule out that a war would be imposed on the Gaza Strip, in which case Hamas would respond forcibly (Al-Mayadeen, February 5, 2016).

### **Hamas' Military-Terrorist Wing Executes A Senior Commander**

- The Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military-terrorist wing, reported the execution of **Mahmoud Rushdi Ashtiwi**, one of its senior commanders, for "improper behavior and moral felony". According to reports, he commanded the Zeitun battalion and was in charge of training for the southern Gaza brigade. He was arrested after Operation Protective Edge on charges of collaborating with Israel, including having provided information about the location of Muhammad Deif (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades website, February 7, 2016).

### **New Qur'an and Sunna Academy Opened**

- **The Indonesian-Malaysian Qur'an and Sunna Academy** was inaugurated in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip. **Ismail Haniyeh, deputy head of Hamas' political bureau**, spoke at the ceremony. He claimed Hamas was building up its strength without fear or worry and was dealing with threats in accordance with circumstances, as it dealt with internal matters. He claimed Hamas took its power and political capabilities from the laws of Islam in a way that served the Palestinian cause, which was part of the Islamic faith (Paltoday, February 4, 2016).



Left: The academy building. Right: The ceremony opening the Indonesian-Malaysian Qur'an and Sunna Academy (Facebook page of Paldf, February 4, 2016).

## The Palestinian Authority

### The PA Legitimizes the Current Palestinian Terrorist Campaign

- **Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas** held a press conference where he expressed support for what he called the "non-violent, peaceful popular awakening" of the Palestinian people "against the occupation." He claimed "Israeli stubbornness" was the main cause behind the "popular awakening." He claimed Israel had violated all the agreements it signed with the Palestinians and allowed the settlers to engage in violence against the Palestinian people and its holy sites (Wafa, February 8, 2016). **In reality, the so-called "popular resistance" or "popular awakening" employs violence and has cost the lives of 31 Israelis.**<sup>4</sup>

- **Rami Hamdallah, prime minister in the Palestinian national consensus government**, claimed Israel was responsible for the deterioration of security and called on the international community to act as quickly as possible to stop it. He called on international institutions to act immediately to force Israel to stop its "attacks" on the Palestinian people (Wafa, February 6, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> An article in the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth, based on Israeli national security data, elaborated on the consequences of the Palestinian terrorist campaign so far: 31 people have been killed. They left behind 52 orphans, 30 mourning parents, and 12 widows and widowers (Yedioth Ahronoth, February 8, 2016). **Calling the current terrorist campaign peaceful and non-violent is absurd.**

■ **Mahmoud al-'Alul**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, who is also responsible for the bureau of enlistment and organization in Judea and Samaria, claimed Israel would be punished for its "crimes" against the Palestinian people. He claimed Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian leadership supported the so-called "peaceful popular awakening." He also claimed Israel did not leave the Palestinian any choice but to use "popular resistance" (Dunia al-Watan, February 9, 2016).

## PA Policy regarding the Families of Terrorists Killed

### Mahmoud Abbas Meets with the Families of the Terrorists

■ On February 3, 2016, **Mahmoud Abbas** met at his office in Ramallah with the families of some of the Palestinian terrorists from Jerusalem killed in the current terrorist campaign who bodies were being held by Israel. He promised he would act to have their bodies returned and would **rebuild the houses razed by the IDF** (Wafa, February 3, 2016).

■ On February 6, 2016, Mahmoud Abbas met with the families of Palestinian terrorists from the Hebron district. **Saeb Erekat**, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee, and **Mahmoud al-'Alul**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, were also present (Facebook page of Mahmoud Abbas, February 6, 2016).



Left: A posting on Mahmoud Abbas' Facebook page about his meeting in Hebron with the families of terrorists (Facebook page of Mahmoud Abbas, February 6, 2016). Right: A posting on Mahmoud Abbas' Facebook page about his meeting in Jerusalem with the families of terrorists (Facebook page of Mahmoud Abbas, February 3, 2016).

## A Campaign to Rebuild Terrorists' Houses

- In preparation for "National Jerusalem Martyrs' Day," a campaign was announced for donations to rebuild the houses of the families of two terrorists from Jerusalem which were razed by the IDF. According to campaign member former prisoner **Fakhri al-Barghouti**, this campaign is different from the previous one in that **the money collected will also be used to buy houses in Jerusalem**.
- Fakhri al-Barghouti said the campaign's goal was \$700,000, which would be used to buy apartments in east Jerusalem for the families of **Bahaa Alian** (who carried out a stabbing attack in Jerusalem on October 13, 2015, killing three Israelis) and **Alaa' Abu al-Jamal** (who carried out a vehicular attack in Jerusalem on October 13, 2015). The remainder of the money, if any, would be used to reconstruct the houses of other terrorists (Facebook pages of Quds, Shihab, Filastin al-Yawm and Paltimes, February 7 and 8, 2016).



Left: Collecting money in Al-Bireh. At the right is Khader Adnan, a former administrative detainee who went on a hunger strike (Filastin al-Yawm, February 8, 2016). Right: The notice announcing the campaign. It provides the locations in various Palestinian cities where donations can be given (Facebook page of Quds, February 8, 2016).

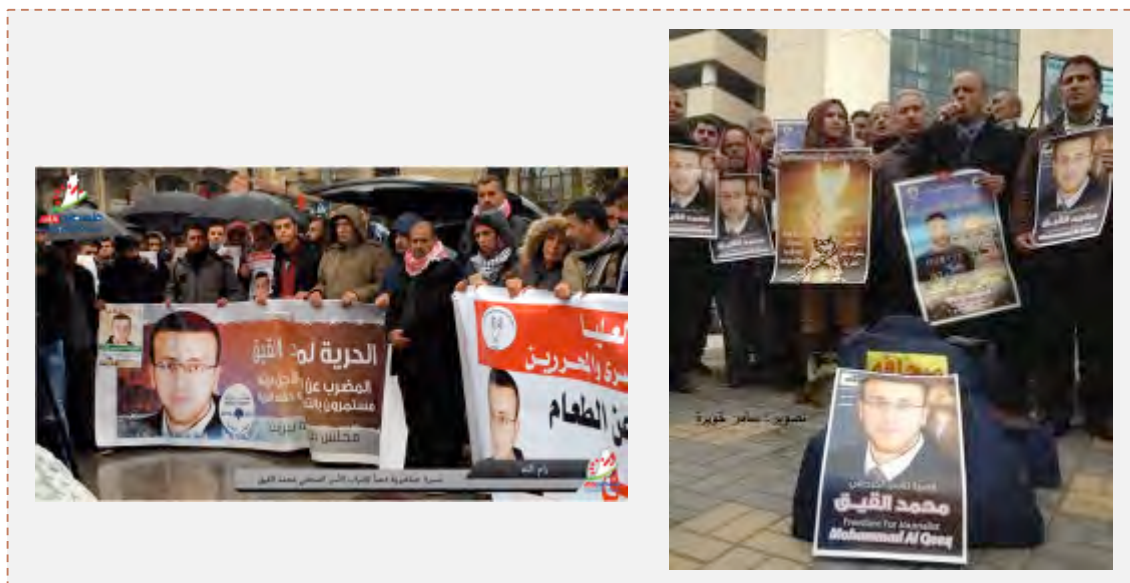
## Hunger Strike of Muhammad al-Qiq Continues

- The hunger strike of Muhammad al-Qiq continues. On February 5, 2016, his family reported **his health had deteriorated** (Facebook page of Paldf, February 5, 2016). **Jawad Boulos, director of the legal department of the Palestinian prisoners' club**, claimed the health of al-Qiq, who had been on a hunger strike for 76 days, was failing and his life was in danger. However, he claimed al-Qiq was fully conscious and made his decisions with clarity of mind (Sawt Filastin, February 8, 2016).

■ The PA and Hamas continue to hold Israel responsible for al-Qiq's health and have tried to exert pressure, including international pressure, to have him released. Support rallies continue throughout Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. After Palestinian demonstrators tried to break into the offices of Red Cross in Gaza City in protest over al-Qiq's condition, the organization closed its main office (Al-Quds, February 7, 2016).

■ The following were some of the statements made:

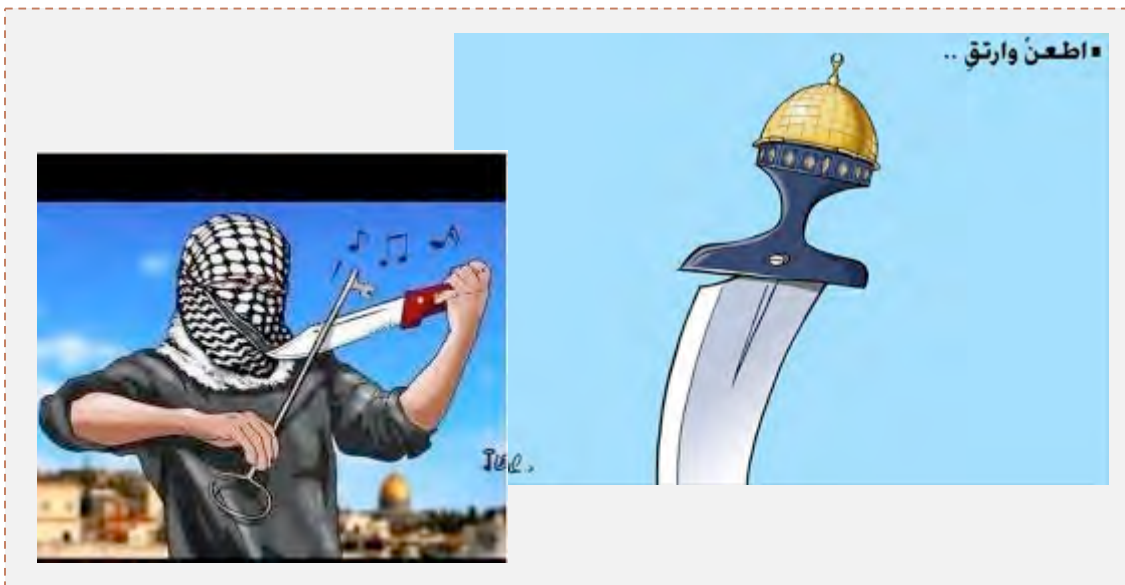
- **Saeb Erekat**, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee, claimed the Palestinians had sent letters to the American secretary of state, the Russian foreign minister, the high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and the UN secretary general, calling on them to intervene immediately to save al-Qiq's life (Palestine Online, February 7, 2016).
- **Osama al-Qawasmeh**, Fatah spokesman, condemned the silence of the international community regarding the hunger-striking prisoner, claiming the silence of the international institutions strengthened Israel's ability to continue its policy of detentions (Dunia al-Watan, February 5, 2016).
- **Musheir al-Masri**, senior Hamas figure, during a support rally held in the northern Gaza Strip, claimed that any harm done to al-Qiq would lead Israel "to hell," adding that Hamas would not sit by idly (Paltoday, February 4, 2016).



Rallies held in support of the release of Muhammad al-Qiq. Left: Rally and march in Ramallah (YouTube, February 7, 2016). Right: Rally in Nablus (Facebook page of Paldf, February 8, 2016).

## The Battle for Hearts and Minds: Palestinian Media Encouragement for the Current Terrorist Campaign

■ Social networks and websites continue glorifying the Palestinians who carry out terrorist attacks, defaming Israel and issuing calls and notices encouraging Palestinians to carry out attacks and throw stones. Hamas is foremost in its incitement of terrorism. Following are two examples of encouragement for stabbing attacks:



Left: A cartoon by Hamas-affiliated Omayya Joha from the Facebook page of Qabatiya, encouraging stabbing attacks. The key is the symbol of the so-called "right of return" (Facebook page of Qabatiya Online, February 7, 2016) Right: A Hamas posting to Facebook encouraging stabbing attacks. The Arabic reads, "Stab and rise up!.." (Facebook page of Paldf, February 3, 2016).