



February 14, 2016

The Shooting and Stabbing Attack at the Nablus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem Signals an Escalation in the Complexity and Daring of the Palestinian Terrorist Campaign.



Senior Fatah figures in Judea and Samaria, among them Mahmoud al-'Alul (center), visit the town of Qabatiya and the families of the three terrorists who carried out the shooting and stabbing attack at the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem (Facebook page of Mahmoud al-'Alul, February 8, 2016).

The Terrorist Attack at the Nablus Gate

1. On **February 3, 2016**, three young Palestinians carried out a combined shooting and stabbing attack at the Nablus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem. A Border Policewoman was shot and killed, and another was critically wounded. The three Palestinian terrorists, all from the town of Qabatiya in northern Samaria,¹ were killed by Border Police return fire. Their deaths apparently **prevented the mass-killing attack** the three had planned to carry out in a crowded location in Jerusalem (so far the details are not known).
2. **The attack at the Nablus Gate differed in many respects from most of the terrorist attacks of the current Palestinian terrorist campaign.** It was carried out by a **squad of three locally-organized terrorists and necessitated previous**

¹ Home to many of the terrorists in the current and former Palestinian terrorist campaigns.

planning and logistic deployment (acquiring weapons, passing through IDF roadblocks and entering Israeli territory). The three planned a relatively complex terrorist attack involving **shooting, stabbing and detonating IEDs**. In contrast to most of the attacks, this one was carried out **far from the terrorists' hometowns**, despite the logistic difficulties.

3. Therefore, the attack **continues the trend of escalating complexity and daring in the current terrorist campaign** of the past few weeks (alongside the continuation of "ordinary" terrorist attacks). The trend probably indicates **the desire to kill a larger number of Israelis and achieve greater public attention and media coverage**. It may result from the perception that the stabbing, vehicular and even shooting attacks carried out by lone terrorists are no longer considered exceptional, but rather part of a daily routine that even the Israeli public has become "accustomed to." The terrorists may have also personally **learned the lessons of the previous attacks**, and also want to improve their chances of surviving.

Palestinian Responses

4. **Fatah expressed solidarity with the terrorists**: on February 8, 2016, **Mahmoud al-'Alul**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, went to Qabatiya to pay a condolence call on the families of the three terrorists (Facebook page of Mahmoud al-'Alul, February 8, 2016). **The Fatah Twitter account** posted a cartoon in support of the three terrorists. At the funeral held in Qabatiya on February 5, 2016, there were many yellow Fatah flags. **Senior Fatah figures in Judea and Samaria participated in a solidarity march held in Qabatiya** on February 8, 2016.

5. The Palestinian Authority (PA) did not publicly praise the terrorist attack at the Nablus Gate and the three did not receive a "governmental" funeral. However, **the PA continues to systematically provide legitimization for the attacks carried out in the current terrorist campaign: Mahmoud Abbas** meets with the families of terrorists killed while carrying out attacks, the PLO gives them financial support, and the Palestinian media provide them with public backing. Mahmoud Abbas also legitimizes them by calling the attacks "non-violent resistance" and reiterating his support for them, despite the fact that he is referring to a violent, lethal terrorist campaign.²

² A recent example in which he described the terrorist campaign as "non-violent" was in the statements he made during a meeting held in Ramallah with representatives of the Arabic media in Israel (Wafa, February 8, 2016). In the current Palestinian terrorist campaign 31 people have been killed, leaving behind 52 orphans, 30 mourning parents, and 12 widows and widowers (Yedioth Ahronoth, date, 2016). **Calling the current terrorist campaign "peaceful and non-violent" is absurd.**

6. **Hamas** and the other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip **praised the terrorist attack at the Nablus Gate, representing it as a turning point in the Jerusalem intifada. They encourage an escalation of the terrorist campaign,** even though such an escalation can damage the lull in the Gaza Strip, which Hamas has an interest in continuing.

The Modus Operandi of the Terrorist Attack at the Nablus Gate

7. On the afternoon of **February 3, 2016**, three terrorists came to Jerusalem armed with guns, knives and IEDs. A group of four Border Policemen noticed two of them sitting on a bench **near the Nablus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem**. They roused the suspicion of the Border Policemen, who asked them for their ID cards. One of them took out his ID card, and the second took out a gun and shot at the policemen. The other terrorist stabbed one of the policewomen.

8. In response **the policemen shot and killed the two terrorists**. The third terrorist came from behind and opened fire, wounding another policewoman. She shot back and hit the terrorist. A police officer who arrived on the scene **shot and killed the terrorist**. Two Border Policewomen were wounded in the attack. **One died and the other was critically injured**.

9. The three terrorists who carried out the attack were young Palestinians in their early 20s, single, who wanted to avenge the deaths of their friends. As far as is known, they did not belong to one of the terrorist organizations.³ **The three had personal profiles similar to most of the terrorists who have carried out attacks during the current terrorist campaign.** However, an analysis of the attack indicates **a modus operandi different from most of the other terrorist attacks:**

1) **Objective of the attack** – The attack was planned as **a mass-killing attack** in a crowded location, which would receive wide public attention and media coverage. **Jerusalem** was chosen as the scene of the attack because of **its symbolic importance**, despite its distance from the town where the attackers lived (most of the terrorists in the current terrorist campaign who came from Qabatiya attacked at the nearby Jalameh crossing). Considerations of

³ Two of the three posted **Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)** notices on their Facebook pages, which may indicate identification with the organization. The PIJ was prominent in northern Samaria during the second intifada. However, the ITIC has no proof that the three belonged to the organization. Hamas issued death notices and support for the three, while the PIJ kept a relatively low profile and did not identify itself as connected to the three.

operational convenience may have also influenced the choice of Jerusalem (the Nablus Gate and city of Jerusalem in general were familiar to at least two of the three terrorists, who had gone there and posted pictures of their visits on their Facebook pages).

2) **Planning of the attack** – Most of the attacks in the current terrorist campaign have been carried out by lone terrorists who acted spontaneously after having made a personal decision. **This time, the attack was carried out by a squad of three terrorists who organized to plan the attack. Such an attack requires advance planning and the support of others.** They had to acquire submachine guns and IEDs, and probably also needed logistic support for transporting the weapons to Jerusalem (they had Palestinian ID cards, which do not authorize them to stay in Jerusalem. **At least two of them were forbidden to enter Israeli territory**).

3) **Complexity of the attack** – Unlike most of the "ordinary" terrorist attacks, the attack at the Nablus Gate was **more complex**. It was supposed to include shootings with improvised Carl Gustav submachine guns,⁴ stabbings and the detonations of IEDs. Choosing a location far from the terrorists' hometown obliged them to plan their movements to evade the Israeli security forces. So far it is unclear whether they arrived in Jerusalem with the weapons or if they received them from local collaborators when they reached the outskirts of Jerusalem or Jerusalem itself.

The Attack at the Nablus Gate as Part of the Trend of Increased Complexity and Daring of the Attacks

10. Based on the above analysis, in ITIC assessment the attack at the Nablus Gate is **part of a recent trend of escalating complexity in the terrorist attacks and daring of those who carry them out.** The trend has been manifested in **a number of attacks which were different in nature from the familiar routine of the terrorist campaign so far:**

1) **The desire for mass killing:** The shooting-stabbing attack at the Nablus Gate and the shooting attack at the Simta Pub in the heart of Tel Aviv **were meant to kill large numbers of Israelis**, and were carried out in crowded locations in major cities. They were different from most of the stabbing and vehicular attacks

⁴ The Carl Gustav is a Swedish submachine gun manufactured after the Second World War. The homemade variety, known by the Palestinians as "Carlo," are manufactured in local workshops in Judea and Samaria and are used by the Palestinian terrorist operatives.

which have characterized the current terrorist campaign so far, which were intended to kill individuals or small numbers of Israelis.

2) **The organizing of several terrorists:** The October 2015 attack at the Nablus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem involved **three terrorists** operating together and the attack in Beit Horon involved **two**. The terrorists organized themselves through personal and/or local acquaintance, and were not handled by one of the terrorist organizations (lived in the same place, were students at the same university or were friends). The attacks were different from the "lone wolf" attacks, which have characterized most of attacks in the terrorist campaign so far.

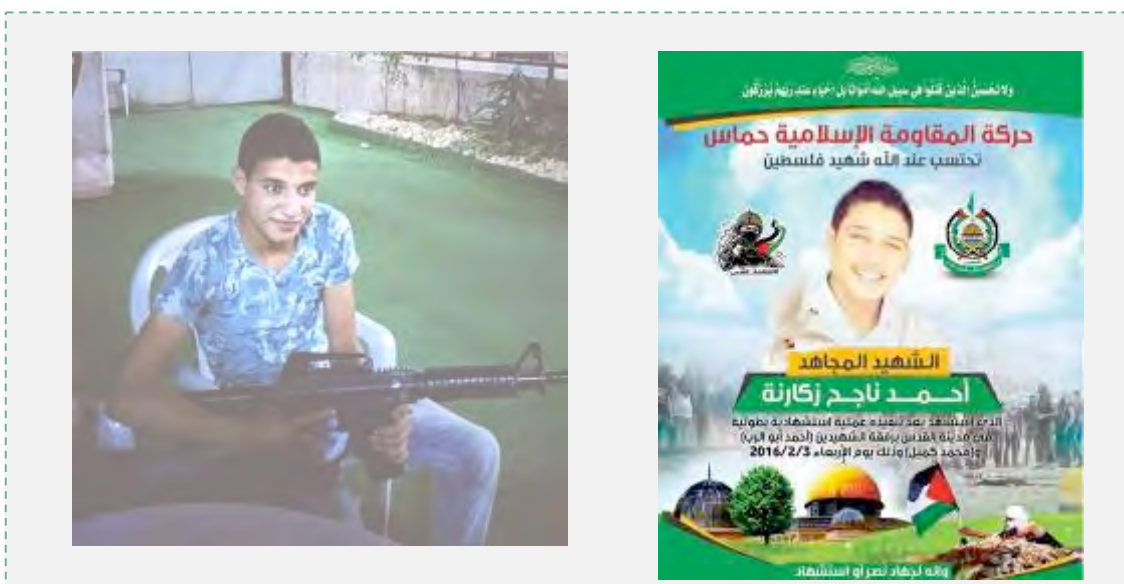
3) **Entrance into an Israeli village:** In three cases (Tekoa, Otniel and Beit Horon) the terrorists entered an Israeli community in Judea and Samaria, even when there was a security fence, and carried out a stabbing attack. They did not attack at the traditional friction points (roadblocks, bus stops, etc.), where most of the attacks have occurred (and where the IDF is present and takes security measures).

4) **Terrorists who do not conform to the usual profile:** Two attacks were carried out by one terrorist who could easily mingle with Israelis and another who could easily go to roadblocks where there were IDF soldiers (the shooting attack in Tel Aviv was carried out by an Israeli Arab; the attack at the IDF's Beit El roadblock was carried out by a Palestinian policeman).

Personal Information about the Terrorists

11. The three terrorists were all from the town of Qabatiya in northern Samaria:

1) **Ahmed Nasser Zakarna, aka Abu Hamid**, 21, studied law at the American University in Jenin. According to his Facebook page, he was the "commander" of a local body called **Qabatiya al-Sumoud** (an NGO operating in Qabatiya). He was a close friend of **Muhammad Alawneh**, who was killed on July 21, 2015, in a clash with the Israeli security forces in the village of Burqin. He was also a friend of **Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab**, from Qabatiya, who was killed by Israeli security force gunfire when he tried to carry out a stabbing attack at the Jalameh crossing. **On his Facebook page he often eulogized them, mourned their deaths and even promised to avenge them.**



Left: Ahmed Zakarna holds an M-16 rifle (Facebook page of Qabatiya al-A'an, February 3, 2016). Right: The death notice issued by Hamas for Ahmed Zakarna (Facebook page of the Islamic Movement in Jenin, February 3, 2016).

2) **Muhammad Ahmed Hilmi Kamil**, 20, a former student at the Shaheed Izzat Abu al-Rab high school in Qabatiya. Was on the local basketball team (Facebook page of Paldf, February 3, 2016; Facebook page of Muhammad Kamil, March 15, 2015). He left a living will which was posted on Palestinian media websites as soon as he died (but it was not found on his personal Facebook page). He said **he intended to become a shaheed and sacrifice his blood, and asked his parents not to be angry with him and to forgive him**. He asked his mother to ululate [with joy] because her son died as a shaheed. He signed the will, "the shaheed Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab groups" (Facebook page of Paldf, February 4, 2016). Hamas issued a formal death notice for him.



Left: The death notice issued by Hamas for Muhammad Kamil (Facebook page of Paldf, February 3, 2016). Right: The will of terrorist Muhammad Kamil, posted on the Palestinian media websites after his death (Facebook page of Paldf, February 4, 2016).

3) **Ahmed Najeh Ibrahim Abu al-Rab**, 21 (Ma'an, February 4, 2016). He was a former student at the American University in Jenin, and before that at the Shaheed Izzat Abu al-Rab high school in Qabatiya (Facebook page of Ahmed Abu al-Rab, February 7, 2016). Hamas issued a formal death notice for him (Facebook page of Paldf, February 3, 2016).



The death notice issued by Hamas for the death of "the mujahad shaheed" Ahmed Najeh Abu al-Rab (Facebook page of Paldf, February 3, 2016).

12. According to various statements, **the three were childhood friends** and were often together. Relatives of the three interviewed after the attack said **the three had been a very good friend of Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab (17, from Qabatiya)**. He was killed at the Jalameh crossing on November 2, 2015, when he tried to stab

an IDF soldier. According to the relatives, his death had a strong influence on them and changed their lives. Family members also said that the three often went to Ahmed Abu al-Rab's grave. Friends reported that they went there on the day before the attack. After that, they went to pray together at the town mosque, walked around and then returned home (Facebook page of Palinfo, February 4, 2016).

Reactions

Fatah

13. After the terrorist attack at the Nablus Gate there were various expressions of solidarity and support:

- 1) The Qabatiya municipality and the Fatah movement in Qabatiya issued a joint notice mourning the death of the three "heroic shaheeds" (Facebook page of Qabatiya al-A'an, February 7, 2016).



The death notice issued by the Qabatiya municipality and the Fatah movement in Qabatiya. Left to right, "The heroic shaheed, Ahmed Najeh Zakarna, the Heroic shaheed Ahmed Najeh Abu al-Rab, the heroic shaheed Muhammad Ahmed Kamil" (Facebook page of Qabatiya al-A'an, February 7, 2016).

- 2) Fatah's Twitter account posted a cartoon in support of the three terrorist operatives reading, "From Qabatiya to Jerusalem. Blessings."



The cartoon posted on Fatah's Twitter account. Left: A picture of Muhammad Kamil with two unidentified friends. Right: The Arabic reads, "From Qabatiya to Jerusalem. Blessings" (Twitter account of Fatah, February 3, 2016).

3) **Mahmoud al-'Alul, a member of Fatah's Central Committee**, who is also in charge of Fatah's bureau of enlistment and organization in Judea and Samaria, went to Qabatiya with other senior Fatah figures to pay a condolence call on the families of the three who were killed.



Mahmoud al-'Alul and other senior Fatah figures in Judea and Samaria on their way to console the families of the terrorists in Qabatiya (Facebook page of Mahmoud al-'Alul, February 8, 2016).

4) **At the funeral held for the three terrorists in Qabatiya** on February 5, 2016, many **yellow Fatah flags** were in evidence, as were pictures of Yasser Arafat.



Yellow Fatah flags at the funeral held in Qabatiya for the three terrorists (YouTube, February 5, 2016).

5) In a solidarity march held in Qabatiya on February 8, 2016, two Senior Fatah figures in Judea and Samaria were present, **Mahmoud al-'Alul** and **Jamal Muheisen**. Jenin district governor **Ibrahim Ramadan** (representing the PA), was also present. Marchers waved yellow Fatah flags and large signs mourning, "with pride and esteem," the three Palestinians from Qabatiya who carried out the attack at the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem. In the upper corners of the sign at the left are pictures of Mahmoud Abbas and Yasser Arafat (Palestinian TV, February 8, 2016).



The march attended by senior Fatah figures in solidarity and support of the residents of Qabatiya. At the left is a large sign mourning, "with pride and esteem," the deaths of the three terrorists who carried out the attack at the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem. In its upper corners are pictures of Mahmoud Abbas and Yasser Arafat (Facebook page of Fatah, February 8, 2016).

Hamas

14. No mention of Hamas was found on the Facebook pages of the three terrorists, but rather of the PIJ. Nevertheless, Hamas positioned itself at the head of the organizations praising the three terrorists, calling the attack a turning point in the Jerusalem intifada.

15. Hamas posted a notice on its Facebook page glorifying the three terrorists from Qabatiya (Facebook page of Paldf, February 4, 2016). The Islamic Movement in Nablus [i.e., Hamas] also issued a death notice for them (see below).

16. Hamas spokesman **Husam Badran** praised the terrorist attack and the three who carried it out **for reaching Jerusalem despite the IDF roadblocks**. He claimed the attack was **an important turning point in the Jerusalem intifada** (Hamas website, February 3, 2016).



Left: The Fatah death notice for the three terrorists (Facebook page of the Islamic Movement in Nablus, February 3, 2016) Right: The Hamas notice praising the attack (Facebook page of Paldf, February 4, 2016).



Notice drawn by Hamas-affiliated Omayya Joha glorifying the three "heroes of Qabatiya" who carried out the terrorist attack (Facebook page of Paldf, February 4, 2016).

The Role of the Social Networks: Appendix and List of Recent ITIC Bulletins

17. For the maturing of the idea of the terrorist attack at the Nablus Gate, as it was reflected in the Facebook pages of the three terrorists, see the Appendix.

18. For the maturing of the idea of carrying out previous terrorist attacks, see the following bulletins:

1) "The social networks as a source of inspiration and imitation for terrorists: the case study of Amjad Jaser Sukari, the Palestinian policeman who carried out a shooting attack near Beit El" (February 2, 2016).

2) "The social networks as a source of inspiration and imitation for terrorists: the case study of Obada Abu Ras, the Palestinian terrorist who carried out the stabbing attack in Givat Ze'ev, Jerusalem" (January 31, 2016).

3) "The stabbing attack in Beit Horon showed an increase in relative complexity, daring and premeditation" (January 27, 2016).

Appendix

The Maturing of the Plan to Carry Out the Attack Reflected on the Facebook Pages of the Three Terrorists

Overview

19. An examination of the Facebook pages of the three Palestinian terrorists who carried out the attack at the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem again illustrates the influence of the social networks on terrorist operatives. **Two of them had fairly active Facebook pages.** Their postings mixed thoughts and feelings common to young people their age with **praise for the shaheeds, whom they considered role models, and the desire to die as martyrs.** Prominent were their **longings for friends who had died while carrying out terrorist attacks, identification with the attacks, promises of revenge and the wish to die as shaheeds.** Identification with their shaheed friends prompted one of the three to turn his Facebook page into a quasi-memorial site for a friend from Qabatiya who had been killed while attempting to carry out a stabbing attack at the Jalameh crossing.

20. Two elements familiar from previous cases were evident on the Facebook pages examined:

1) The **theme of revenge:** Ahmed Zakarna and Muhammad Kamil were close friends of **Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab** from Qabatiya, who was killed while trying to carry out a stabbing attack at the Jalameh crossing in Samaria on November 2, 2015. Their Facebook pages had many expressions of mourning **and promises to die as shaheeds and avenge his death** ("Your men are coming in balls of fire.").

2) The **theme of imitation:** The Facebook pages of two of the three terrorists had posts commemorating **terrorists who carried out stabbing attacks**, among them **two who had separately carried out stabbing attacks at the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem.** On October 3, 2015, **Ahmed Zakarna** posted a picture of Palestinian terrorist **Muhannad Halabi**, who carried out a stabbing attack near the Nablus Gate. **Muhammad Kamil** posted praise for **Muhammad Sayid Muhammad Ali**, who also carried out a stabbing attack near the Nablus Gate on October 10, 2015. Muhammad Kamil **had a kind of "collective pride" for the stabbers in general, whom he called the "knife commando."**

21. According to the Israeli media, about a month before the attack Israel Security Agency and IDF investigators went to the home of one of the three (whose name has not been released). That was because Israeli intelligence had received information about his intention to carry out an attack to avenge the death of a friend [i.e. Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab] who had been killed trying to carry out a stabbing attack several months previously. The investigators asked him about his Facebook postings, especially one which praised the friend who had been killed at the Jalameh crossing and in which he said he was planning to become a shaheed soon and join him. The terrorist said he had in fact posted the notices on Facebook but **did not really intend to carry out an attack**. Given the lack of additional evidence, the terrorist was warned and not detained (Israel Channel 10 TV, Ma'ariv, February 6, 2016).

The Facebook Page of Ahmed Nasser Zakarna

22. **Ahmed Nasser Zakarna** had two Facebook pages. One, with the name "Ahmad Nassar Zakarneh," was created in December 2014 and closed on August 14, 2015. On July 7, 2015, he created a new Facebook page with the username "Abu Hamid Zakarna," which was active until his death. The reason for closing one Facebook page and creating another is not currently known.

23. According to his Facebook page, Zakarna was a close friend of **Muhammad Alawneh**, who was killed on July 21, 2015, in a clash with the Israeli security forces in the village of Burqin. He was also a friend of **Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab** from Qabatiya, who was killed trying to carry out a stabbing attack at the Jalameh crossing on November 2, 2015. **Zakarna often eulogized al-Rab on his Facebook page, mourned his death and promised to avenge him. His profile picture showed him and his friend Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab.** He updated his profile picture on December 25, 2015, and his background picture on January 21, 2016. He also eulogized **Muhannad Halabi, who carried out a stabbing attack at the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem** and became a role model for Palestinian youths.

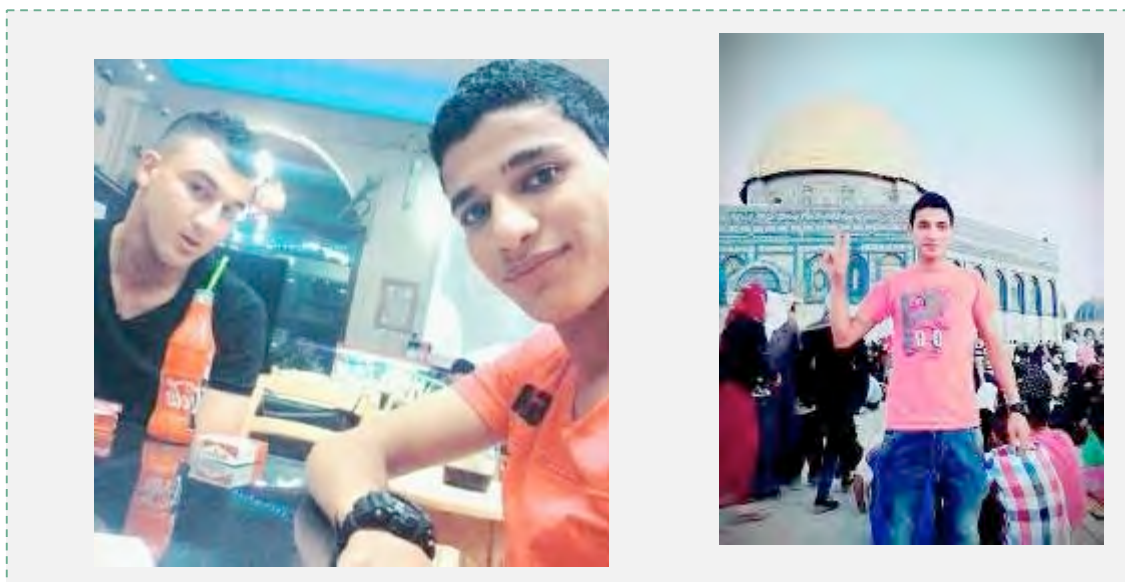
24. Ahmed Zakarna's Facebook page indicates **he was politically active and participated in Palestinian nationalist protests and events**. For example, according to his page for May 15, 2015, he participated in a demonstration to mark Nakba Day in Ramallah; on November 22, 2015, he posted a call for Palestinians to participate in a demonstration at Red Cross Headquarters [apparently in Jenin]; on August 14, 2015 he participated in a demonstration for the release of hunger-striking administrative detainee Muhammad Allan; and he called for Palestinians to participate in the demonstration for the return of the body of Ahmed Awad Abu al-

Rab. In addition to activity in the internal Palestinian arena, on August 5, 2015, he used his Facebook page to call for the release of **Sheik Khaled al-Rashad**, a Saudi Arabian Salafist cleric given a 15-year prison sentence by the Saudi authorities for financing terrorism.



Ahmed Zakarna's Facebook profile picture. In the right-hand corner is a picture of Zakarna (left) and Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab, killed while carrying out a stabbing attack at the Jalameh crossing.

1) On **July 14, 2015** (before the outbreak of the current terrorist campaign) Ahmed Zakarna posted pictures of **a visit to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem**. In the middle of September, he posted **a picture of himself and his friend Muhammad Kamil, with whom he carried out the terrorist attack in Jerusalem, near the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem.**



Left: Ahmed Zakarna and his friend Muhammad Kamil, near the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem (Facebook page of Abu Hamid Zakarna, mid-September 2015). Right: Ahmed Zakarna in front of Al-Aqsa mosque (Facebook page of Abu Hamid Zakarna, July 14, 2015).

2) On **July 21, 2015**, **Muhammad Alawneh** was killed in a clash with the Israeli security forces in the village of Burqin. According to Facebook postings from July 22, 23 and 26, 2015, they were friends. On July 22, 2016, he posted a picture of his friend and wrote,

3) **"I am from Qabatiya...but...we belong to Allah and return to him...To the soul of shaheed Hamoudi Alawneh"** (Facebook page of Abu Hamid Zakarna, July 22, 2015).



Ahmed Zakarna's Facebook post on July 22, 2015: "I am from Qabatiya...but...we belong to Allah and return to him...To the soul of shaheed Hamoudi Alawneh."

4) On **October 3, 2015**, he posted a picture of Palestinian terrorist **Muhannad Halabi**, who carried out a stabbing attack near the **Nablus Gate in Jerusalem** on October 3, 2015. He wrote, "Shaheed after shaheed, and the caravan [sic] only grows. They left and we didn't say goodbye. They left their dear ones behind. May Allah have mercy on you, oh shaheed. Your manliness is here with us."

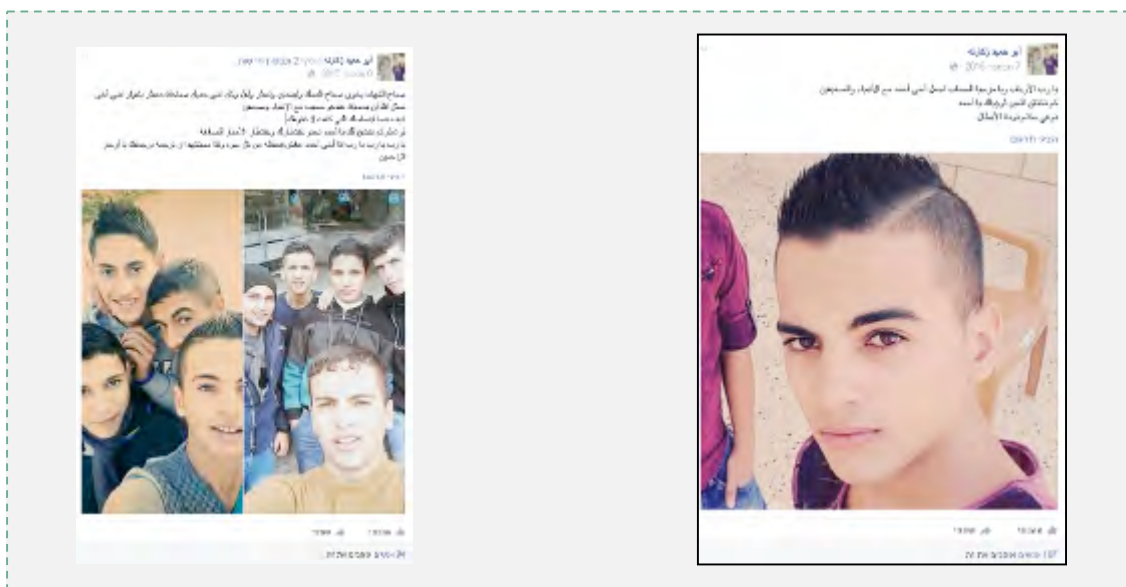


4) On **October 14, 2015**, he again mourned his friend Muhammad Alawneh, calling him by his nickname, "Hamoudi."



5) On **November 7 and 8, 2015**, he posted memorial tributes to his friend **Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab**, killed on November 2, 2015, mourning his death. He

said he missed him and asked Allah to allow al-Rab to sit next to him [in paradise] with the righteous prophets.



Postings in memory of Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab.

5) In another memorial for Abu al-Rab, posted on **November 13, 2015**, he wrote, "The homeland will rise to honor the souls of the heroes, and the sun hides in shame..." "May Allah have mercy on your soul, my brother...If you only knew how much I miss you, my brother..." He included a picture of Abu al-Rab and one Abu al-Rab and two other friends. During the following days he continued posting memorials.



Left: Facebook post from November 15, 2015. Right: From November 13, 2015.

6) On **November 22, 2015**, he posted a wish to die, writing, "Oh Allah, give us what is good in this world and in the next, and protect us from the tortures of fire [i.e., the fires of hell]."



7) On **December 9, 2015**, he posted a call for Palestinians to participate in a demonstration for the return of the body of his friend Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab. He said that **the demonstration would have media coverage** and he hoped they got their message across. He added the hashtag, "#our shaheeds_[are] not_numbers."

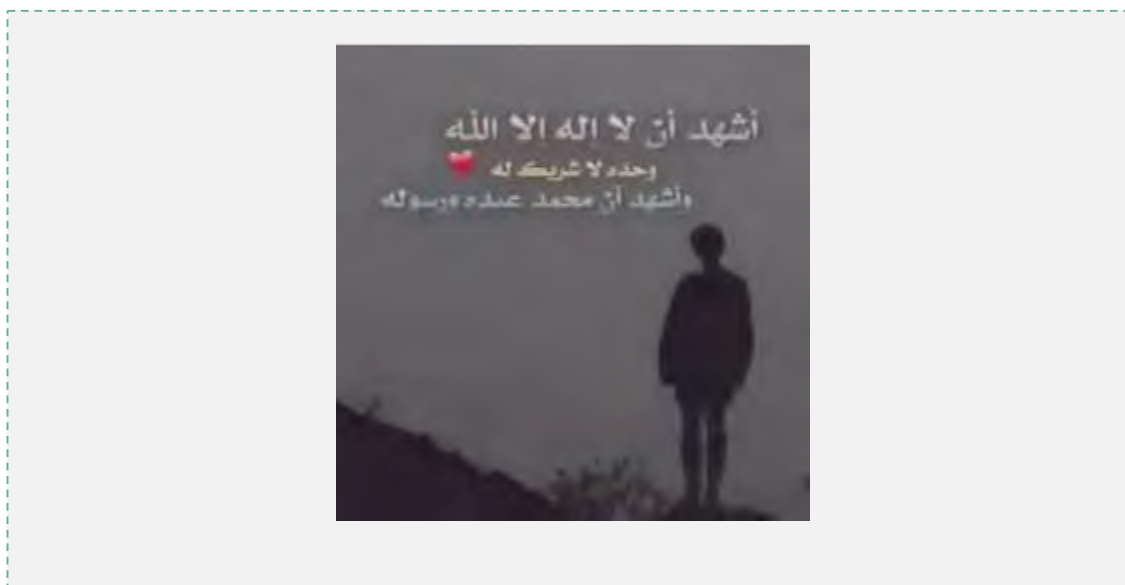


8) On **December 30, 2015**, he posted another memorial for Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab. He asked Allah to rattle the Jews and anyone who helped them. He

promised Abu al-Rab he would avenge him, saying, "**Your men are coming in balls of fire.**"



9) On **February 1, 2016**, two days before the attack in Jerusalem, Ahmed Zakarna posted a video entitled "Whoever purifies talks afterwards. There is no god but Allah. He is unique and there is no one beyond him. I testify that Muhammad is his slave and messenger. [Then] **the eight gates of paradise open before him and he enters from whichever he chooses.**"



A scene from the video Ahmed Zakarna posted on his Facebook page two days before the terrorist attack. It has a quotation from the shahadah, recited by every Muslim ("There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger") (Facebook page of Abu Hamid Zakarna, February 1, 2016).

25. On the Facebook page Ahmed Zakarna closed on August 14, 2015, before the outbreak of the current terrorist campaign, he wrote about terrorist attacks, glorified shaheeds, and said he wanted to die as a shaheed. For example:



Left: On June 30, 2015, he wrote, "My happiness will be the day I die as a shaheed." Right: June 29, 2015, he wrote he was happy a [female IDF] soldier was stabbed at the roadblock at the Tomb of Rachel, north of Bethlehem (Facebook page of Ahmad Nassar Zakarneeh).



Left: Postings from February 27 and May 14, 2015, glorifying a shaheed named Jihad Abu Assaf. Ahmed Zakarna received the response, "May Allah have mercy on him," but did not mention the connection between them. We have no information about the shaheed or his affiliation with Ahmed Zakarna. Right: Picture of an unidentified armed man in unidentified circumstances, posted on June 9, 2015 (Facebook page of Ahmad Nassar Zakarneeh).

The Facebook Page of Muhammad Ahmed Hilmi Kamil

26. An examination of the Facebook page of Muhammad Ahmed Hilmi Kamil revealed that **he had expressed a wish to die as a shaheed as early as October 2015**. After the death of his friend Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab his Facebook page became **a memorial to him, with pictures and declarations and Kamil's own wish to die**. In at least one instance he praised another terrorist operative who **carried out a stabbing attack at the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem**. However, the **living will** the Palestinian media claimed he wrote before his death was not posted to his Facebook page and it is unclear where and when it was first posted.

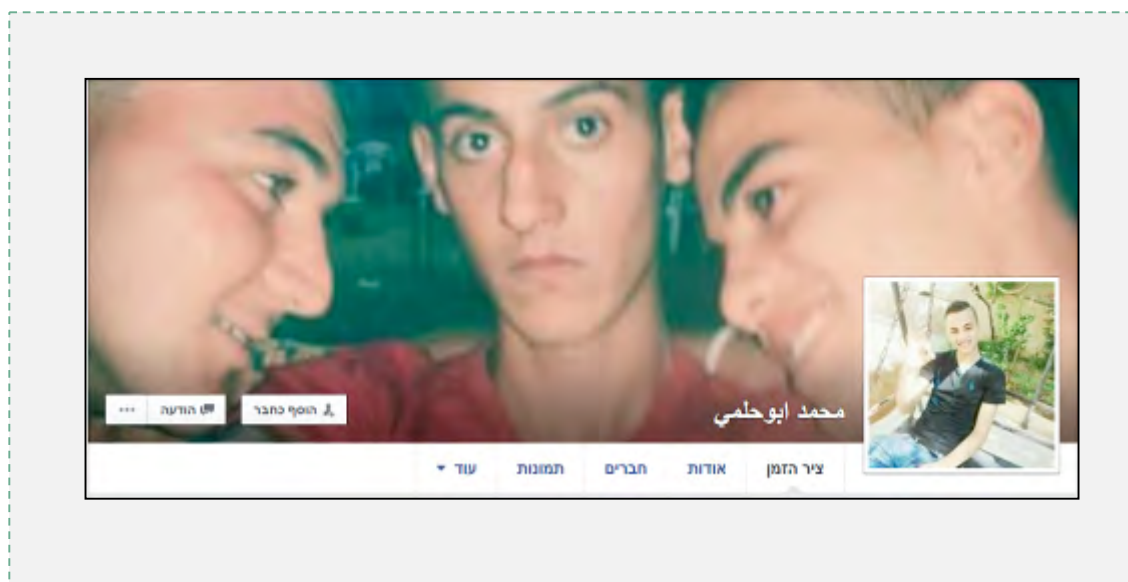
1) On **October 19, 2015**, during the first days of the current terrorist campaign, he wrote, "Oh Allah, I ask you for a happy life, to die like the shaheeds, to be in the company of the believers, and to accompany the prophets."



2) On **November 4, 2015**, he posted a notice of a young girl sitting on railroad tracks. The Arabic reads, "If only we could be children again. **We weren't afraid to die**. We thought that those who die go away and return...!" The upper inscription reads, "There is no god but Allah." The same day he also posted a picture of the living will of his friend Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab. Above it he wrote, "The dear will of Ahmed Al-Awad" (Facebook page of Muhammad Kamil, November 4, 2016).



3) On **November 15, 2015**, about two weeks after his death of Abu al-Rab, Muhammad Kamil replaced his profile picture with one of the two of them (and an unidentified individual). He also posted a notice reading, "I miss your smile. I miss you soooo much..."



4) On **December 2, 2015**, he posted praise for **Muhammad Sayid Muhammad Ali** (who carried out a **stabbing attack near the Nablus Gate in Jerusalem** on October 10, 2016). He praised him for having wounded trained policemen in a matter of seconds. He called Ali a hero, and **signed the post "the knife commando."** He headed the post by writing "It is certainly hard to forget you" [possibly an indication he had the idea to carry out an attack at the Nablus Gate].

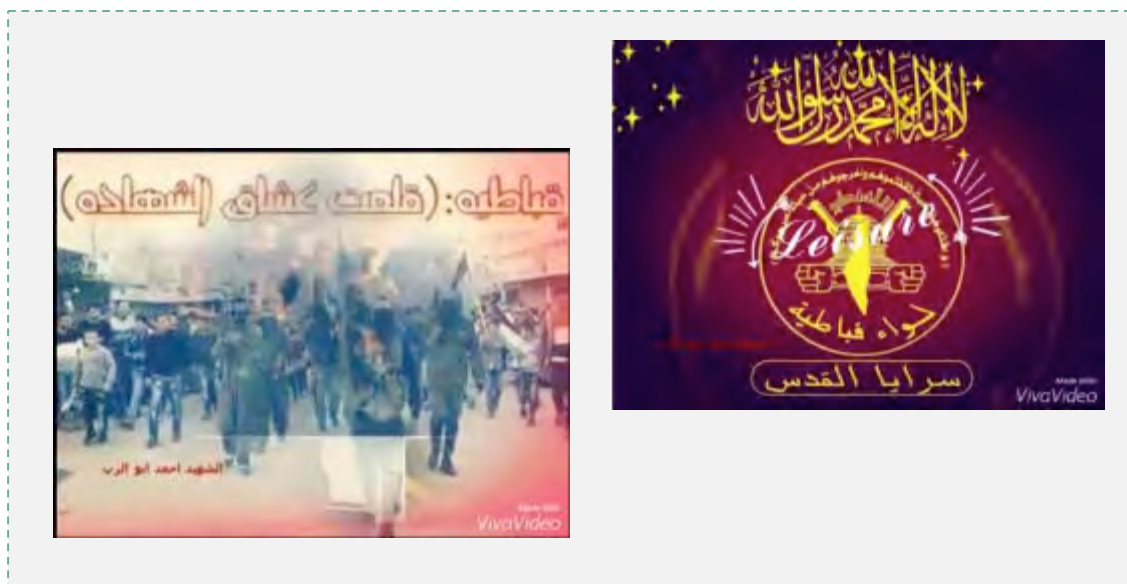


5) On **December 24, 2015**, he posted a picture of the funeral held for Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab. He wrote, "My friend Ahmed, may Allah have mercy on you. My dear [friend]. I am proud of you for having carried out the *shahadah* [i.e., dying as a martyr for the sake of Allah]. All the good days we had together are gone. Alas...May Allah have mercy on you and forgive you."



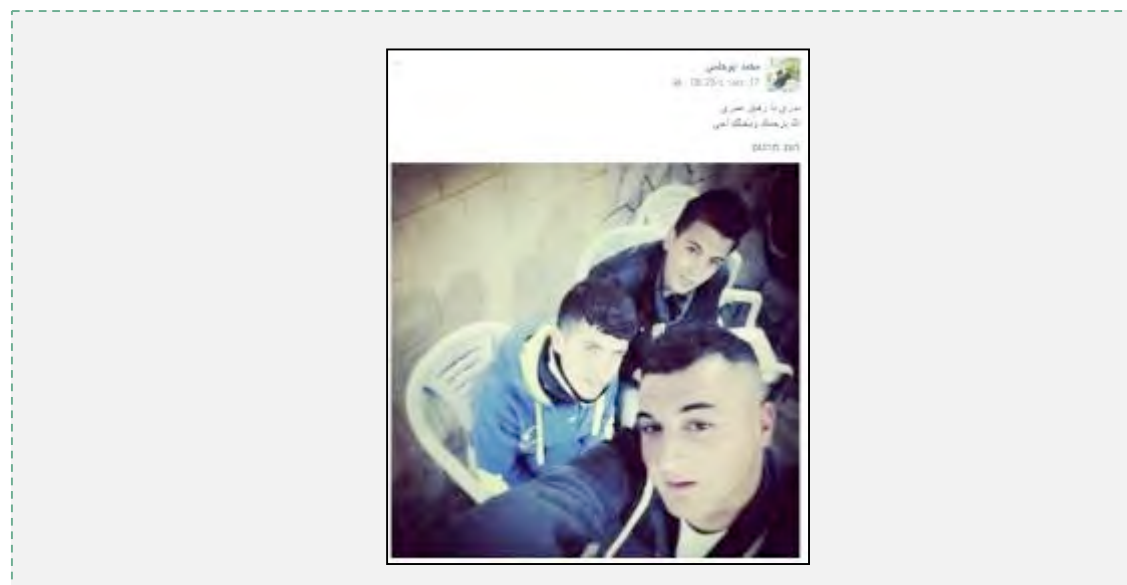
6) On **January 3, 2016**, he posted a video produced by the **Jerusalem Battalions**,⁵ the PIJ's military-terrorist wing, commemorating Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab, with pictures from his funeral.

⁵ In northern Samaria, especially in Jenin and the surrounding refugee camps, **there was an extensive PIJ infrastructure during the second intifada**. The PIJ was involved in **many lethal suicide bombing attacks** (carrying out nearly 30% of them, second only to Hamas).



Pictures from the video produced by the PIJ's military-terrorist wing.

7) On **January 17, 2016**, he posed a picture of himself with his friend Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab (upper right). The Arabic reads, "It is early, my lifelong friend. May Allah have mercy on you and receive you, oh my brother."



8) On **January 26, 2016**, he posted a picture of Ahmed Awad Abu al-Rab and wrote, "Heaven, make it rain and water his grave. Saying goodbye to you is painful. May Allah have mercy on you, oh my brother, and on all the shaheeds and Muslim mothers."



The Facebook Page of Ahmed Najeh Ibrahim Abu al-Rab

27. An examination of the Facebook page of Ahmed Najeh Ibrahim Abu al-Rab revealed that **his social network activity was far less intense than that of his two friends**. Some of his postings were characteristic of boys his age and included pictures of cars, himself at various events, etc. **However, there were also pictures of weapons**. There were also indications of solidarity with the PIJ (although not that he was one of its operatives). As opposed to his two friends, he did not eulogize shaheeds on his Facebook page or identify with them. Some examples are the following:

- 1) On **January 20, 2016**, his profile picture shows a car, and the Arabic reads, "Here [on earth] is love!! And the marriage will be in heaven," apparently a quote from someone's Twitter account.



2) On **October 9, 2015**, at the beginning of the current terrorist campaign, he posted a picture of **a man armed with a rifle**. The Arabic reads, "Correct me, oh son of someone [sic]...The world ends in chaos." On the same day he also wrote, "We are marching, our Jihad is Islamic, and the Jerusalem Battalions [are] our identity card (Facebook page of Ahmed Abu al-Rab, October 9, 2016).



Left: A PIJ video. Right: A man armed with a rifle.

3) On **January 1, 2016**, he posted a picture of a man aiming a rifle. The Arabic reads, "Son of Qabatiya to the marrow of his bones."

