



# News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(March 30 – April 5, 2016)



**Left:** Hamas notice posted after Mahmoud Abbas' interview on Israeli TV mocking him and the Palestinian Authority (PA). It shows two toddlers in diapers facing a wall with knives next to them as if in their possession. A spokesman for the Palestinian security forces announces the detention of a so-called "terrorist squad" that planned stabbing attacks against Israelis (Facebook page of Paldf, April 4, 2016). **Right:** Mahmoud Abbas interviewed by Ilana Dayan on the Israeli TV program "Ouvda" ("Fact"), where he claimed the PA was trying to keep young Palestinians from carrying out stabbing attacks (YouTube, April 1, 2016).

## Overview

- The Palestinian terrorist campaign that began over half a year ago continues with increasing and decreasing levels of intensity. At the end of March-beginning of April there was a perceptible decrease in its intensity and extent. However, it is still too early to say if that is a trend or merely temporary.
- Events this past week focused on a stabbing attack in Rosh HaAyin in the central part of Israel. The female terrorist who carried out the attack was detained and taken for interrogation. In addition, several terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria were prevented; rioting continues.
- Mahmoud Abbas, Palestinian Authority (PA) chairman, was interviewed by Israel's Channel 2 TV station. The interview was aimed directly at the Israeli public over the heads of the Israeli political leadership. Mahmoud Abbas stressed his desire for peace and called on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to sit down with him and negotiate. In response Netanyahu said he invited Mahmoud Abbas to meet with him and that his door was always open to anyone who wanted peace with Israel, on the condition that incitement and violence against Israel ended.

## Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

### Terrorist Attacks and Attempted Attacks

■ **April 3, 2016 – stabbing attack:** A Palestinian woman tried to stab an Israeli woman at a site in the industrial zone of the city of **Rosh HaAyin** in the central part Israel. A security guard who heard shouts ran to the terrorist and tried to take the knife away from her. He and two civilians took the knife she was holding and another one in her possession. She was detained. The woman she attacked was not seriously wounded. The terrorist, 23, from Kafr Qasem (north of Rosh HaAyin), was taken for interrogation.

### 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. The Israeli security forces prevented a number of terrorist attacks. There were also a number of riots and rallies to mark "Land Day" on March 30, 2016.<sup>1</sup>

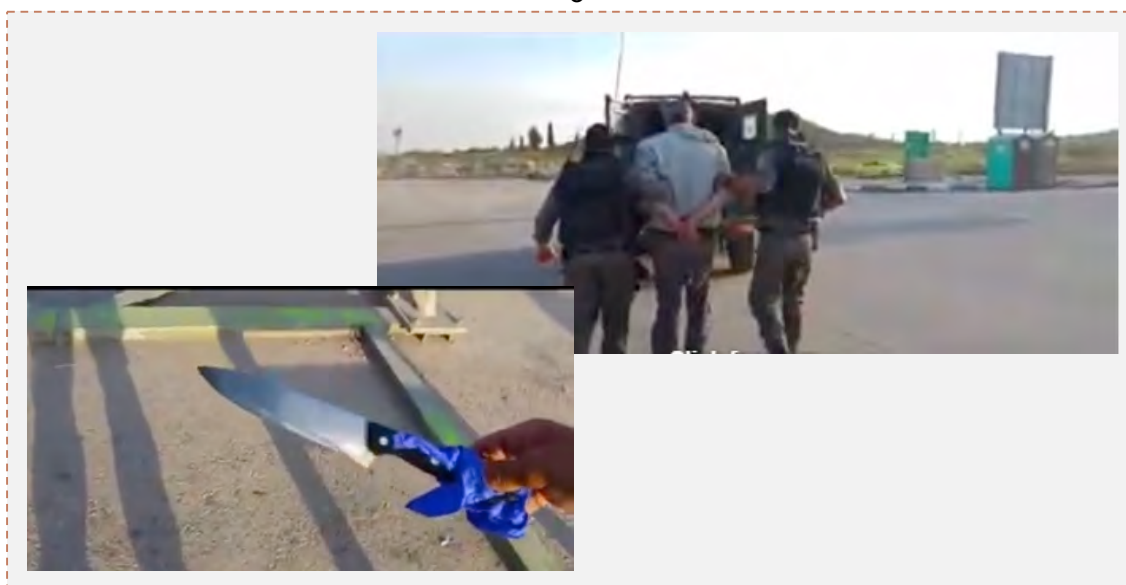
■ The more prominent events were the following (including terrorist attacks that were prevented):

- **April 4, 2016** – A 23 year-old Palestinian from Ramallah drove to a [Border] police **roadblock in the Binyamin region**. A security check revealed he had never gotten a driver's license and that the car he was driving had been stolen from the a city in the center of Israel the previous month. During interrogation he said he was planning to use the car to carry out a vehicular attack against IDF soldiers and become a shaheed (Facebook page of Red Alert, April 4, 2016).

- **March 3, 2016** – A Palestinian armed with a knife went to a bus stop at the **Tapuah Junction in Samaria**. Border Policemen stationed in the region noticed him as he approached some civilians. When the police ordered him to halt he pulled out a knife. They overcame him and detained him, and he was taken for interrogation.

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<sup>1</sup> Since 1976 Israeli Arabs have commemorated "Land Day" every March 30 to express their adherence to their lands and their objection to the expropriation of land.



Left: The knife found in the possession of the Palestinian terrorist. Right: The stabber is taken for interrogation (Israeli Police Force Spokesman's Unit, April 3, 2016).

- **March 31, 2016** – Palestinians threw an improvised gas grenade at an IDF post near **Abu Dis in east Jerusalem**. There were no casualties (Facebook page of Red Alert, March 31, 2016).
- **March 31, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones and Molotov cocktails at an Israeli bus and other vehicles north of the community of **Ofra**. There were no casualties. Some of the vehicles were damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, March 31, 2016).
- **March 31, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at Israel vehicles on **Route 443 between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, near Beit Horon**. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, March 31, 2016).
- **March 30, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at Israeli vehicles on the **Husan bypass (near Beitar)**. There were no casualties; the vehicles were damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, March 30, 2016).
- **March 30, 2016** – During an Israeli security forces action in the town of **Al-Bireh** various weapons were found, among them gas grenades, an improvised Karl Gustav machine gun, a pistol, bullets, magazines and ammunition for an M-16 assault rifle (IDF spokesman, March 30, 2016).



Left: An Israeli car damaged by stones thrown by Palestinians near the village of Tarqumiya, west of Hebron (Facebook page of Paldf, April 3, 2016). Right: Some of the weapons found in Al-Bireh (IDF spokesman, March 30, 2016).

- **March 30, 2016** – Palestinians shot at IDF forces operating in **Jenin**. There were no casualties (Facebook page of Red Alert, March 30, 2016).
- **March 29, 2016** – A Palestinian was found with a knife in his possession at the **Idna Tarqumiya Junction in Mt. Hebron**. He was taken for interrogation (Facebook page of Red Alert, March 29, 2016).

## Razing Terrorists' Houses

- In accordance with a directive from the political leadership, IDF forces razed the house of **Ihab Fathi Zakaria Masouda** in Hebron, who carried out a stabbing attack near the **Cave of the Patriarchs** on December 7, 2015. He mortally wounded Gennady Kaufman, 41, who later died. The Israeli security forces also razed the houses of three Palestinian terrorists in Qabatiya who carried out a combined shooting and stabbing attack at the Nablus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem on February 3, 2016, killing Hadar Cohen, a Border Policewoman.
- During the razing of the houses Palestinians who had gathered at the sites rioted. **Hamas spokesman Husam Badran** said razing the four houses would not prevent the continuation of the "heroic actions" and called on the Palestinian people to support the families whose houses had been destroyed (Hamas website, April 4, 2016).



Left: Ruins of the house of Muhammad Kahil in Qabatiya (Facebook page of Quds, April 3, 2016). Right: The house of Ihab Masouda in Hebron (Facebook page of Shihab, March 31, 2016).

■ On April 4, 2016, **Ibrahim Ramadan, governor of the Jenin district**, the local endowments authority, engineers and a number of functionaries of the Qabatiya district met with Fatah activists and relatives of the terrorists whose houses had been razed. After the meeting the governor announced **he would appoint and head a committee for rebuilding the houses that had been destroyed**. Members of the committee would include functionaries from the ministry of endowments, the ministry of general works, the local authorities and the Qabatiya municipality (Facebook page of the Jenin district, April 4, 2016).



Announcement on the Facebook page of the Jenin district announcing the appointment of a committee to rebuild the houses of the terrorists. The picture below shows the governor of the Jenin district on a visit to Qabatiya (Facebook page of the Jenin district, April 4, 2016).

■ However, the Israeli Supreme Court cancelled the orders for sealing the houses of three of the five terrorists involved in the stone-throwing attack which caused the

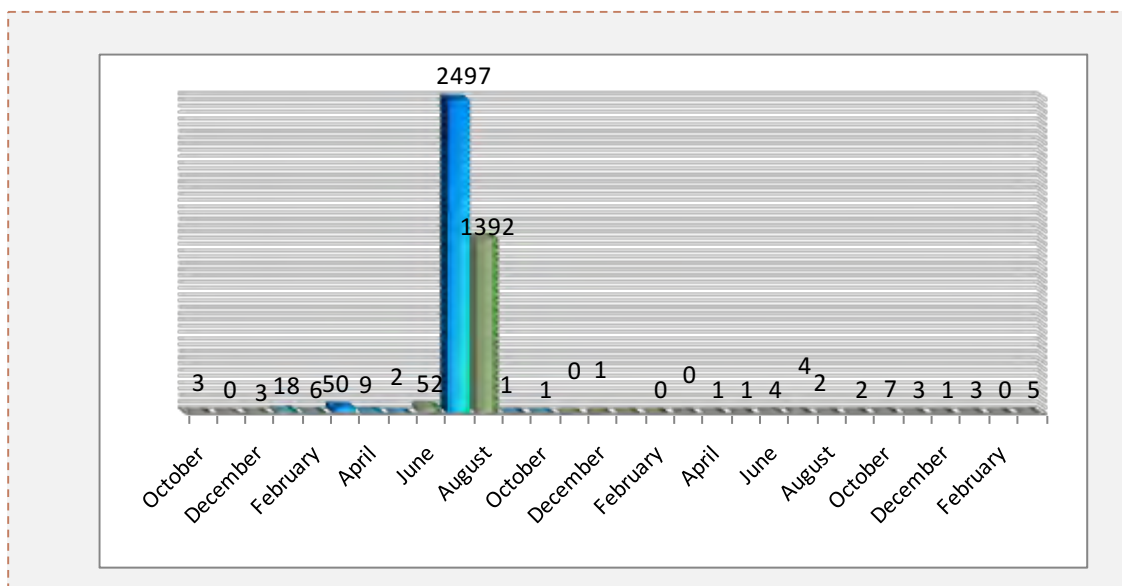
death of Alexander Levlowitz on September 13, 2015. The court authorized only the destruction of the houses of the main terrorists whose stone-throwing led directly to Levlowitz' death, and not of the other terrorists involved in the attack.

## Israel's South

### Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire Attacking Israel

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

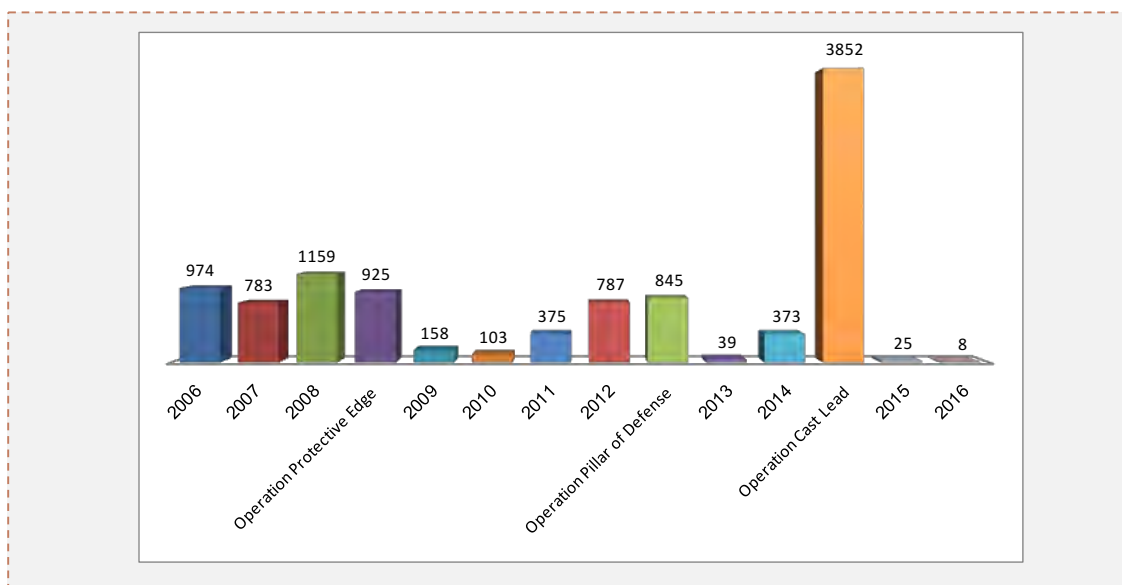
### Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire (2014 – 2016)<sup>2</sup>



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

<sup>2</sup> As of April 5, 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 South<sup>3</sup>



## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### "Land Day" Events

- On March 30, 2016, Gazans held a number of events to mark "Land Day." They planted trees near the border security fence. On April 3, 2016, Hamas held a march with the slogan "We are marching to Jerusalem." Dozens of Gazans participated (Facebook page of Quds, March 29-3; Hamas website, March 30; Facebook page of Shihab, April 3, 2016).



Left: Senior Hamas figure Yahya Musa delivers a speech for "Land Day" near the border security fence east of Abasan (Hamas website, March 29, 2016). Right: Gazans plant saplings near the border security fence (Facebook page of Shihab, March 30, 2016).

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

■ To mark "Land Day" Hamas issued a formal announcement stating that the "resistance" [i.e., the path of terrorism] was its "strategic choice" for restoring the lands and liberating the holy sites (Hamas website, March 30, 2016). Senior Palestinian figures in the Gaza Strip exploited the events to make statements about the current terrorist campaign. **Khaled al-Batash, senior PIJ figure**, claimed the Palestinian struggle against Israel was a national and ideological struggle and that he believed lands belonging to Palestinians could not be divided. He claimed the Al-Quds intifada would continue until "all the rights" of the Palestinian people had been realized (Paltoday, March 30, 2016).

### Hamas Statements

■ A rally was held by the women's movement in the region of Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip, near the Erez crossing. At the rally **senior Hamas figure Musheir al-Masri** claimed Hamas' military-terrorist wing was planning new prisoner exchange deals (Quds.net, April 2, 2016). **Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri** claimed the IDF's use of new digging techniques to expose the [terrorist] tunnels had "no value." **He claimed Hamas had the capabilities to dig more tunnels in preparation for the next confrontation with Israel.** He claimed Hamas continued to use everything at its disposal in its plans to resist any Israeli aggression. However, he said, he ruled out an escalation in the near future (Quds.net, April 2, 2016).



Senior Hamas figure Musheir al-Masri speaks at a rally of the women's movement (YouTube, April 2, 2016).

## The Palestinian Authority

### Mahmoud Abbas' Interview with Israeli TV

■ Mahmoud Abbas was interviewed by Ilana Dayan on the Israeli Channel 2 TV program "Ouvda" ("Fact"). **The interview was aimed directly at the Israeli public over the heads of the political leadership. That is probably why it was not posted to Mahmoud Abbas' personal Facebook page, which usually documents everything he says.** The main points of the interview were the following:

- **"Lone wolf attacks"** – Mahmoud Abbas claimed he objected to the lone wolf attacks and that the PA's security forces were active in the schools to prevent young Palestinians from carrying out stabbing attacks [**Note:** When speaking to the Palestinian public, Mahmoud Abbas and the heads of the PA unconditionally support the attacks, which are part of the PA policy of "popular resistance."]
- **PA incitement** – Mahmoud Abbas rejected the claim that he was guilty of incitement and claimed he resisted any form of Palestinian incitement. However, he said, there was also incitement on the Israeli side [**Note:** Mahmoud Abbas' "objection" to incitement has so far not been manifested in any practical way in the **media affiliated with the PA and Fatah**, which continue supporting the current terrorist campaign against Israel.]
- **Negotiations and agreements with Israel** – Mahmoud Abbas stressed **his desire for peace and called on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to sit at the negotiating table with him.** That, he claimed, would bring hope to the Palestinians and as a result no one would dare carry out a stabbing attack. He reiterated his demand to implement past agreements, especially regarding the cessation of the IDF's activities in PA Area A. He claimed **he adhered to the security coordination** but warned that the PA was **on the brink of collapse.** **He claimed he would meet with the Israeli prime minister anywhere at any time.**

■ In response, **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu invited Mahmoud Abbas to meet with him and said he would clear his schedule for the meeting.** He said his door was open to anyone who wanted peace with Israel, on condition anti-Israel incitement and violence stopped (Ma'ariv, April 4, 2016).

■ Mahmoud Abbas' interview with Israeli TV was criticized by Hamas. **Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri** issued a formal Hamas announcement condemning

Mahmoud Abbas' statements against the intifada, justifying security coordination with Israel and giving Israel an excuse to continue its activities against the Palestinian people. Sami Abu Zuhri called for an end to such statements, which he claimed harmed Palestinian interests (Facebook page of Paldf, April 4, 2016).



Left: Hamas cartoon of Mahmoud Abbas walking into his own grave as his term of office ends. The Arabic reads "Deeds [are judged] according to their ends," a quote from a hadith (the Islamic oral tradition) attributed to Muhammad. It is interpreted to mean that a person's last deeds, whether good or bad, are how he is judged (Facebook page of Paldf, April 1, 2016). Right: Hamas notice condemning the remarks made by Mahmoud Abbas (Facebook page of Paldf, April 4, 2016).

## Statement from Adnan al-Damiri about the Terrorist Attacks in Europe

- On March 24, 2016, **Adnan al-Damiri, spokesman for the PA security forces**, posted a message to his Facebook page about the recent terrorist attacks carried out by ISIS in Europe. He asked Facebook users for answers to the following questions: **Why has Europe turned into an arena for terrorism and the murder of innocent people** after the general recognition of the state of Palestine by most of the European parliaments, and after the widening of the European boycott of products made in Israel and the settlements? **Is the current timing of ISIS attacks a coincidence?** Why are the attacks being carried out in Europe at a time when there is increased popular and official support for Palestine?
- Apparently the questions were intended to create the impression that Israel was behind the attacks without specifically saying it. Actually, many Facebook users who answered the questions understood the hint and did in fact say that Israel and the United States were behind the recent ISIS terrorist attacks in Europe.

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



A picture on Fatah's Twitter account encouraging the continuation of the "resistance" [i.e., the current Palestinian terrorist campaign]. The Arabic reads, "Our resistance [is] the only way to freedom and independence (Twitter account of Fatah, March 28, 2016)