



# News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(July 27 – August 2, 2016)



The Israel Police Force exposed the intention of a Palestinian from Hebron to attack the light railway in Jerusalem. The bombs were seized before they could be detonated (Jerusalem Police Spokesman's Unit, August 2, 2016).

## Overview

- This past week terrorist events focused on an attempted stabbing attack of IDF soldiers by a Palestinian at a roadblock at the entrance to Nablus. The throwing of Molotov cocktails and stones at Israeli security forces and vehicles on the roads in Judea and Samaria continued.
- Muhammad al-Faqih, who murdered Michael Mark, was killed by Israeli security forces. He had barricaded himself in a building the village of Surif (south of Hebron), exchanged fire with Israeli security forces and refused to surrender. Muhammad al-Faqih was imprisoned in Israel between 2006 and 2010 for Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorist activity.

## Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

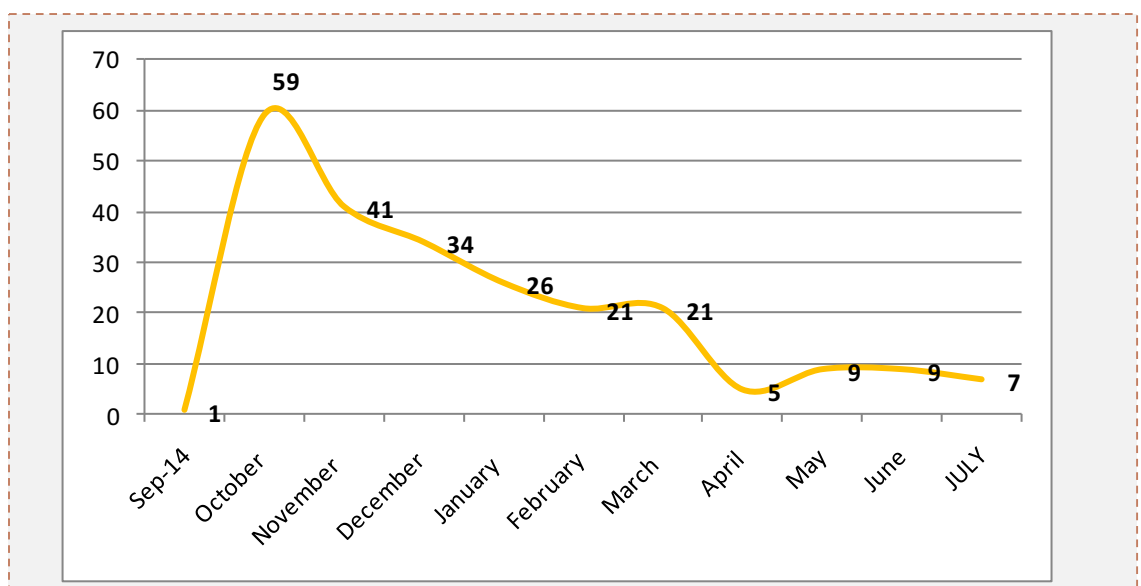
### Terrorist Attacks and Attempted Attacks

■ July 31, 2016 – A Palestinian drove from the city of Nablus to the **Hawwara roadblock at its entrance**. He stopped near a group of soldiers, got out of the car and ran towards them holding a knife. He was shot and killed. The terrorist was **Rami Muhammad Zaim Awartani**, 31, from Nablus. He was married and had three children, and owned a barber shop in Nablus. Hamas in Nablus issued a death notice for its "heroic shaheed son" (Facebook pages of Hamas in Nablus and Paldf, and Wafa, July 31, 2016).



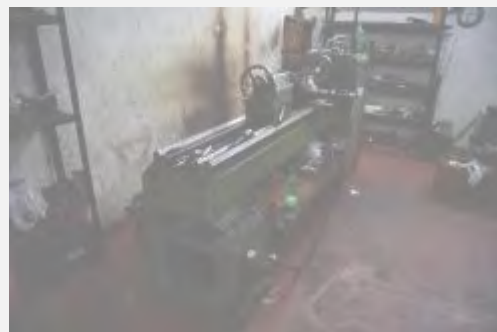
Left: The death notice issued by Hamas for Rami Muhammad Zaim Awartani (Facebook page of the Hamas movement in Nablus, July 31, 2016). Right: The knife carried by Awartani (IDF spokesman, July 31, 2016).

### Monthly Distribution of Terrorist Attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem



## Riots, Clashes and Popular Terrorism

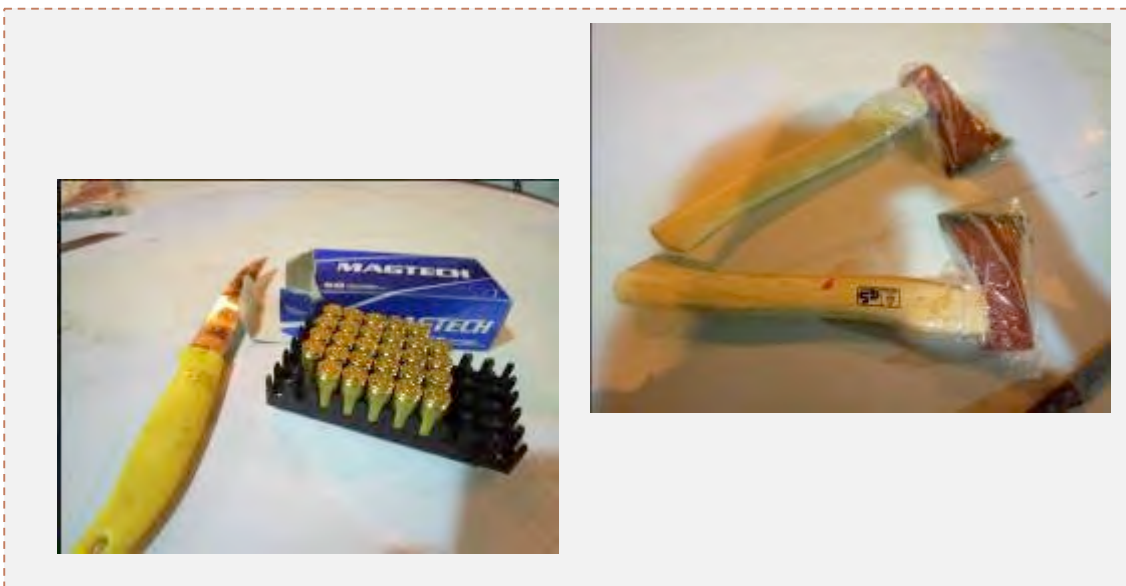
- In the meantime, demonstrations, protest marches, riots, and the throwing of stones, Molotov cocktails and pipe bombs continue in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem.
- The more prominent events were the following:
  - **August 1, 2016** – During an Israeli security force activity in the **region of Jenin** four Palestinians were detained when their vehicle aroused suspicion. A search revealed an improvised automatic weapon which had been hidden in the vehicle (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 1, 2016).
  - **August 1, 2016** – During an Israeli security force crackdown on arms dealers and manufacturers in **Qalqilya**, lathes and other equipment used in the manufacture of weapons were seized. A Palestinian Authority (PA) security force operative from Nablus was detained on suspicion of manufacturing and selling weapons (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 1, 2016).



Some of the lathes seized in Qalqilya used in the manufacture of weapons (Facebook page of Quds.net, August 1, 2016).

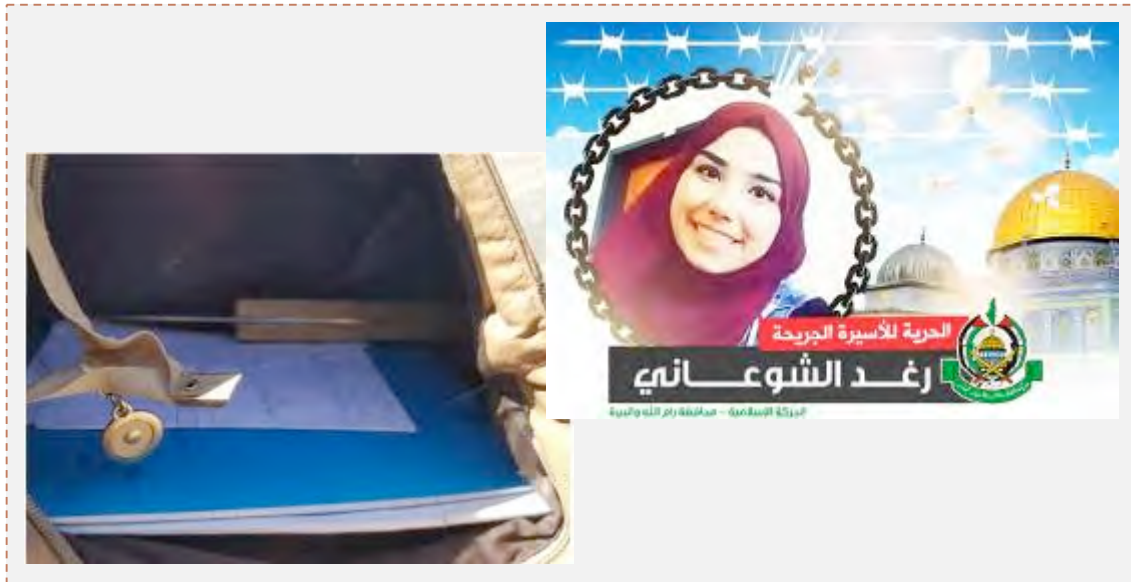
- **July 31, 2016** – Several pipe bombs were found in a vehicle at the **Trans-Samaria crossing**. The crossing was subsequently closed (Facebook page of Red Alert, July 31, 2016).
- **July 30, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at Israeli vehicles in the **Sha'ar Binyamin industrial area (north of Jerusalem)**. There were no casualties. A vehicle was damaged.

- **July 30, 2016** – The Israeli security forces stopped a vehicle with Israeli license plates at the **Trans-Samaria crossing**. A search revealed two knives, two axes and rifle bullets (Israeli crossings authority, July 30, 2016).



**Weapons found in the car (Israeli crossings authority, July 30, 2016).**

- **July 29, 2016** – Palestinians burned tires and threw stones and Molotov cocktails at Israeli security forces **near Beit El (north of Ramallah)** (Facebook page of Red Alert, July 29, 2016).
- **July 28, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at Israeli vehicles on the **Gush Etzion-Hebron road** near Bayt Ummar. There were no casualties. A vehicle was damaged. Palestinians also threw two Molotov cocktails at an Israeli bus (Facebook page of Red Alert, July 28, 2016).
- **July 27, 2016** – A young Palestinian woman ran towards the guards at the vehicle checkpoint of the **Qalandia roadblock**. She was ordered to halt, and when she did not obey the soldiers shot at her legs, inflicting minor wounds. **A knife was found in her bag** along with a scarf of Hamas' Islamic Bloc in Bir Zeit University. She was **Raghd Ziyab al-Shuwa'ani**, 18, from the Qalandia refugee camp, a second-year student at Bir Zeit University (Facebook page of the Islamic Bloc at Bir Zeit University, July 27, 2016; Facebook page of the Hamas movement in Nablus, July 30, 2016).



Left: The knife found in Raghad al-Shuwa'ani's bag (Israel Police Force spokesman's unit, July 27, 2016). Right: Notice issued by Hamas calling for the release of Raghad Ziyab al-Shuwa'ani (Facebook page of the Hamas movement in Nablus, July 30, 2016).

- **July 27, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at an Israeli bus near **Nebi Elias (east of Qalqilya)**. There were no casualties. The bus was damaged. Palestinians also threw stones at Israeli vehicles near the **Gush Etzion junction**. There were no casualties but damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, July 27, 2016).

## Michael Mark's Murderer Killed by the Israeli Security Forces

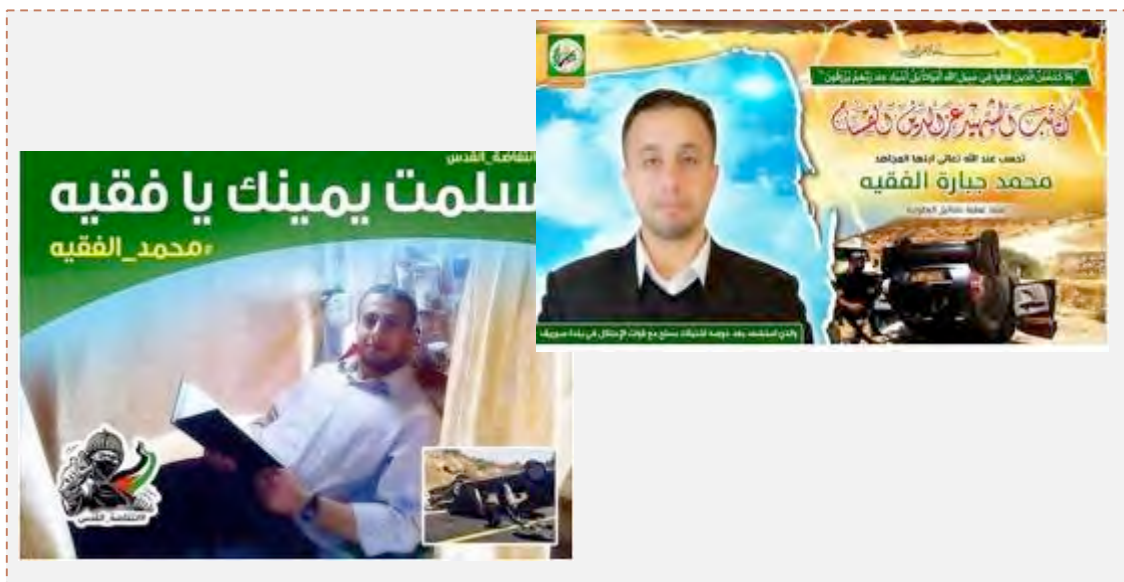
■ On the evening of July 26, 2016, after a broad intelligence-operational activity, Israeli security forces entered the village of Surif (south of Nablus) to detain **Muhammad Jabara al-Faqih**. He was a terrorist who carried out the shooting attack near Otniel on July 1, 2016, killing Michael Mark and wounding his wife and daughter. Al-Faqih barricaded himself in a building in the village and refused to surrender. The Israeli security forces began razing the building. After a prolonged exchange of fire (lasting a number of hours) and the collapse of part of the building, he was killed. Three other terrorists involved in the shooting attack that killed Michael Mark were detained.



Picture issued by Hamas of the four operatives of the terrorist squad that carried out the shooting attack near Otniel ("the Dura squad"). Left to right: Muaz al-Faqih, Suheib al-Faqih, Muhammad Amayra and Muhammad al-Faqih (Twitter account of Palinfo, July 27, 2016).

■ Information about the Palestinian terrorists who carried out the attack:

- **Muhammad Jabara Ahmed al-Faqih**, 29, from the village of Dura. Graduated from the local high school and studied in the physical education department of Al-Najah University in Nablus. **He did not graduate because he was detained by the IDF in Nablus in 2006 for PIJ terrorist activity.** He was released on November 10, 2010, whereupon he enrolled in the business administration program at the **Palestine Polytechnic University in Hebron.** After graduation he went to work in sales for Al-Watania, the Palestinian mobile phone company. His cousin, **Ahmed Ayeid al-Faqih** (a PIJ operative), was a Palestinian operative who participated in the shooting attack at the Otniel yeshiva in 2002, killing four students (Facebook page of Dura Online, July 27, 2016). Muhammad al-Faqih's brother was detained and confessed to having helped Muhammad hide and conceal his weapons. A cousin was also detained.



Left: Notice issued by Hamas glorifying the terrorist attack carried out by Muhammad al-Faqih. The Arabic reads, "May your right hand be blessed, oh Faqih, Muhammad al-Faqih." Right: Death notice issued by Hamas' military-terrorist wing for Muhammad al-Faqih (Facebook page of Paldf, July 27, 2016).

- **Muhammad Abd al-Majid Amayra**, operative in the PA's national security forces. He was detained a few days after the attack. During interrogation he confessed to being the driver of the car used in the attack, and claimed Muhammad al-Faqih had fired the shots. During his interrogation the weapons and car used in the attack were surrendered. **In the past he was imprisoned in Israel for four years for his involvement in a shooting attack in the al-Fuar refugee camp.**

## Reactions

- Hamas was quick to issue a death notice Muhammad al-Faqih (Palinfo, July 27, 2016). **Ismail Haniyeh, deputy head of Hamas' political bureau**, telephoned Muhammad al-Faqih's family and said Muhammad had participated in the battle that proved the Palestinian people remained faithful to the path of "resistance" [i.e., terrorism] (Hamas website, July 27, 2016).
- **Saeb Erekat, secretary general of the PLO's Executive Committee, condemned Israel's killing of al-Faqih and the destruction of the house.** He claimed the international community was responsible because it did not protect the Palestinians from Israeli harassment. He demanded the international community make an effort to restrain Israel (Dunia al-Watan, July 27, 2016).

## Palestinian Planning to Attack Jerusalem Light Railway Detained

■ On August 2, 2016, the police in Jerusalem detained **Ali Abu Husan**, 21, from the village of Ula near Hebron. He studied civil engineering at the Palestine Polytechnic University in Hebron. **He planned to detonate an IED on the light railway in Jerusalem** (Spokesman for the Jerusalem Police Department, August 2, 2016):

- **Assembling the IED: Ali Abu Husan assembled pipe bombs in his home, downloading the instructions from the Internet.** He experimented in an empty field near Hebron to determine how effective the bombs were, and improved them according to the results. He eventually planned to detonate them in Jerusalem using a time delay fuse, which would allow him to escape.
- **Going to Jerusalem:** About two weeks ago **he left his "will" in the Palestine Polytechnic University in Hebron** and asked a friend to give it to his parents. **He entered Jerusalem through Sur Bahr** carrying the IED in a bag. He changed clothes and shaved off his beard to avert suspicion. He slept in an olive grove near Jabel Mukaber.
- **Locating the target:** He walked around looking for a place to carry out the attack. He entered a restaurant and considered detonating the bombs there. He finally decided **the most effective results would be obtained by detonating the device in a closed light railway car.**
- **Carrying out the attack:** On the morning of July 17, 2016, he went to the light railway station on Jaffa Road and watched the passersby. A security guard saw him and asked him to open his bag. When he did not, he was detained. **The bag was found to contain three pipe bombs. Nails and screws were glued onto them and they had been dipped in rat poison.**





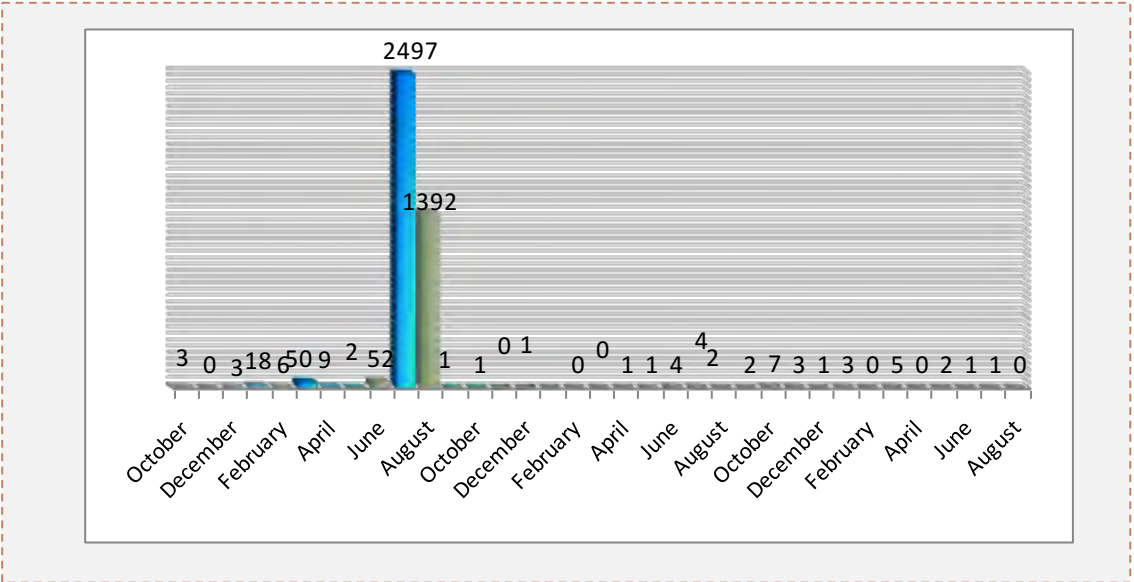
Left: The clothes worn by Ali Abu Husan to avert suspicion. Right: A knife and other items found in Ali Abu Husan's bag (Jerusalem Police spokesman's unit, August 2, 2016).

## Israel's South

### Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

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

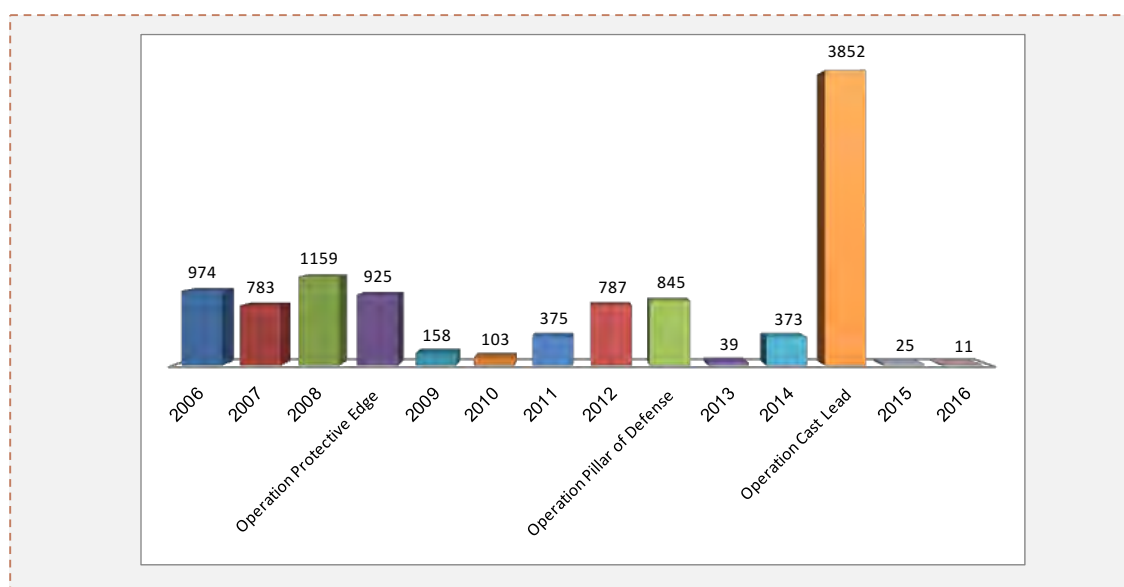
### Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire (2014 – 2016)<sup>1</sup>



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

<sup>1</sup> As of August 2, 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>2</sup>



## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### Interview with Khaled Mashaal

■ **Khaled Mashaal, head of Hamas' political bureau**, claimed in an interview that **Hamas' refusal to recognize Israel was not an obstacle to peace but rather a political position that could change** ("Even Arafat recognized Israel," he said.). However, he said, Mahmoud Abbas had recognized Israel and that had led to failure. He claimed Hamas did not object to Mahmoud Abbas' dialogue with Israel and said Hamas had signed the national agreement document in 2006 recognizing dialogue based on the 1967 lines. He also claimed that when the occupation ended [i.e., when Israel withdrew to the 1967 lines] Hamas would reevaluate its relations with the "Zionist entity." He justified the use of violence by claiming Hamas' attacks were directed only against Israel (DNA, July 26, 2016).

■ Hamas' opponents exploited the interview to claim Hamas was ready to recognize Israel. Hamas rushed to issue a statement denying Khaled Mashaal's remarks about recognizing Israel. According to the statement, **Hamas firmly refused to recognize Israel and called on the media for the accurate reporting of Hamas' positions and the statements of its leaders** (Hamas website, July 26, 2016).

### Summer Camps in the Gaza Strip

■ PIJ summer camps began on July 31, 2016, with the slogan "Jerusalem is the direction of our jihad." **About 5,000 Gazans between the ages of 10 and 16 have**

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

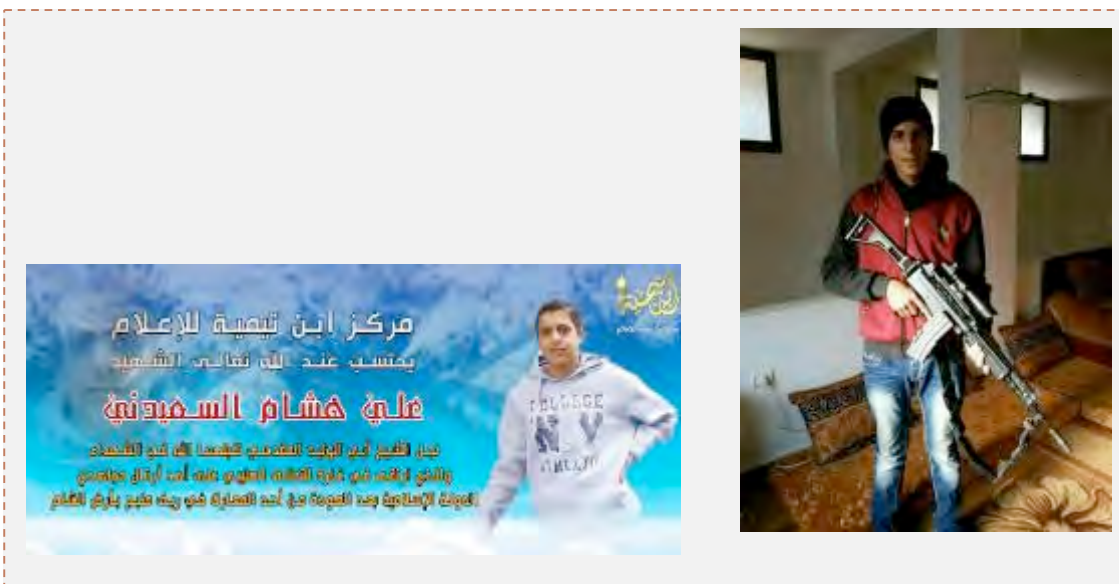
**enrolled in the PIJ's weeklong camps.** The PIJ said in an announcement that the camps were meant to deepen the campers' perception and that "resistance" and jihad were intended for the liberation of Jerusalem and the Palestinian territories. At the opening ceremony **Ahmed al-Mudallal, a senior PIJ figure,** said the camps were meant to prepare the next generation to shoulder the responsibility of liberating Palestine and Jerusalem (Paltoday, July 30, 2016).



Pictures from the second day of the PIJ summer camps (Addresspress, August 2, 2016).

## Another Palestinian Killed Fighting in Syria

■ **Walid Hisham al-Saidani**, son of **Hisham al-Saidani**, one of the Salafist-jihadi leaders in the Gaza Strip, was killed in Syria. He was the second al-Saidani son killed during the past month. On July 3, 2016, **Ali Hisham al-Saidani** was reported killed in Syria in a coalition airstrike on ISIS forces in the area around the northern Syrian city of Manbij (Haq, July 29, 2016). The father, Hisham al-Saidani, was killed on the night of October 12, 2012, in an Israeli Air Force strike.



Left: Ali Hisham al-Saidani, killed at the beginning of the month (Haq, July 3, 2016). Right: Walid Hisham al-Saidani (Haq, July 29, 2016).

## Display of New Weapons in the Gaza Strip

- The Jerusalem Battalions, the PIJ's military-terrorist wing, held a rally in Rafah to mark the second anniversary of Operation Protective Edge and to commemorate the terrorist operatives killed in the operation. The theme of the rally was "Blood relations." New weapons were displayed, including an anti-aircraft missile and the new S350 long-range rocket, whose range is "a secret" (Website of the Jerusalem Battalions, July 31, 2016).



Left: Rally attendees walk on the Israeli flag. Right: The new S350 rocket, which bears the inscription "Jerusalem Battalions." Its range is claimed to be secret (Website of the Jerusalem Battalions, July 31, 2016).

- The Hamas police force in the Gaza Strip held a ceremony to inaugurate its new headquarters, rebuilt after it had been destroyed in Operation Protective Edge

(2014). Present were General Tawfiq Abu Na'im, commander of Hamas internal security forces; and General Taysir al-Batash, commander of the Hamas police. Al-Batash gave a speech where he claimed the police had recently opened 18 headquarters around the Gaza Strip which had been constructed and rebuilt after Operation Protective Edge (Website of the Hamas ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip, August 1, 2016).



Inauguration of the new central police headquarters, rebuilt two years after Operation Protective Edge Website of the Hamas ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip, August 1, 2016).

## The Palestinian Authority

### International Activity

- **Mahmoud Abbas met in Paris with American Secretary of State John Kerry.** Kerry posted a Tweet in which he claimed the meeting had been productive and that **the United States was deeply committed to the two-state solution** (Wafa, July 30, 2016). Mahmoud Abbas also met with **French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault**. According to Saeb Erekat, secretary general of the PLO's Executive Committee, at both meetings Mahmoud Abbas expressed his full support for the French initiative and demanded that the renewal of the negotiations with Israel be conditioned on setting a schedule for contacts and a framework for international oversight to ensure their implementation (AFP, July 30, 2016).

### PA Intention to Sue Britain over the Balfour Declaration

- **Riyad al-Maliki, PA foreign minister, reported that the PA was serious in its intention to sue Britain over the Balfour declaration** (Al-Quds, July 30, 2016). The PA foreign ministry said in a statement that the ministry expected Britain **to take steps**

**to correct the historical injustice done to the Palestinians by the Declaration.** Those steps, according to the ministry, would include a formal apology from senior members of the British government and **a formal recognition by Britain of the state of Palestine with the 1967 borders and east Jerusalem as its capital** (Safa, date, 2016).

### **PA Security Force Activity**

■ The PA's security forces have continued carrying out detentions throughout the PA, including the detention of Hamas operatives, some of them senior operatives, in Tulkarm, Nablus and Tubas (Hamas website, July 27, 2016). In addition, dozens of illegal vehicles have been confiscated and destroyed (Kofiapress.net, July 26,2016).