



March 23, 2017

## Glorifying shaheeds who carried out deadly terrorist attacks and turning them into role models: Dalal al-Mughrabi, a Fatah terrorist who participated in the 1978 Coastal Road Massacre, as a case study



Left: Dr. Layla Ghanem, Palestinian Authority governor of the Ramallah district, gives a speech at a memorial ceremony for Dalal al-Mughrabi held in Ramallah on the 39th anniversary of the Coastal Road Massacre. The picture at the left is of Dalal al-Mughrabi (Facebook page of Dr. Layla Ghanem, March 11, 2017) Right: The logo of the Dalal al-Mughrabi boys' and girls' governmental elementary school in Bayt Awa, west of Hebron. The logo features a picture of Dalal al-Mughrabi superimposed on a map of Palestine.

## Overview

1. Dalal al-Mughrabi was a Fatah terrorist operative who participated in the March 11, 1978 Coastal Road Massacre, which killed 35 Israelis, 12 of them children, and wounded 71. Since then she has become a national Palestinian heroine and a symbol of the armed Palestinian struggle against Israel. The Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Fatah movement systematically glorify her ("the bride of Palestine"), inflate the importance of the attack ("a heroic victory"), and commemorate her in various ways. Significant effort goes into inculcating her narrative among **Palestinian youth**. Schools are named for her, as are summer camps, training camps and sporting events. In addition, streets and town squares are also named for her, including a square in Ramallah. Glorifying her (part of the

extensive glorification of terrorist operatives of all the organizations<sup>1</sup>) **has turned her into a role model and provides justification for acts of anti-Israeli terrorism.**

2. One aspect of fostering Dalal al-Mughrabi's murderous legacy is the annual memorial ceremony held on or about March 11, the date of the Coastal Road Massacre. **The ceremonies are attended by senior Fatah and PA figures.** The main ceremony is traditionally held in Ramallah, while other events are held throughout Judea and Samaria. This year as well, on March 11, 2017, a ceremony was held in Ramallah (see Appendix A). Events are also held for her birthday. At those events speeches are given praising her and Coastal Road Massacre, and they are given extensive coverage in the Palestinian media.

3. Four appendices follow:

- a. **Appendix A** – Events commemorating Dalal al-Mughrabi in 2017
- b. **Appendix B** – Commemorating Dalal al-Mughrabi in previous years (2009 – 2016).
- c. **Appendix C** – Commemorating Dalal al-Mughrabi among adolescents, students and school children.
- d. **Appendix D** – The Coastal Road Massacre.

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<sup>1</sup> Hamas also aspires to glorify Dalal al-Mughrabi, despite her affiliation with Fatah. On the other hand, the PA glorifies shaheeds from Hamas and the other terrorist organizations. For example, a street in Ramallah was named for **Yahya Ayash**, a senior Hamas terrorist operative, who was responsible for a series of suicide bombing attacks in Israeli cities, carried out to sabotage the Oslo Accords.

## Appendix A

### Events Commemorating Dalal al-Mughrabi in 2017

1. This year the official annual ceremony commemorating the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Dalal al-Mughrabi in the Coastal Road Massacre was held in Ramallah on March 11. **Layla Ghanem, the PA governor of the Ramallah and al-Bireh district, was in attendance, as was Abbas Zaki, a member of Fatah's Central Committee.** Zaki gave a speech praising the Coastal Road Massacre, which, according to him, was carried out under the command of Dalal al-Mughrabi, and turned her into a legend. He said the Coastal Road Massacre was the "new beginning" of the "Palestinian resistance" because of its "deep influence" and inspiring the Palestinians with the "spirit of victory." He said the attack had been planned by Abu Jihad, who commanded Fatah' military wing (karamapress, March 12, 2017).



**Dr. Layla Ghanem, PA governor of the district of Ramallah and al-Bireh, gives a speech at a ceremony held in Ramallah on the occasion of the 39th anniversary of Dalal al-Mughrabi's death (Facebook page of Dr. Layla Ghanem, March 11, 2017)**



Senior Fatah figure Abbas Zaki gives a speech in Ramallah on the occasion of the 39th anniversary of Dalal al-Mughrabi's death. At the right is a picture of Dalal al-Mughrabi next to a banner with the Fatah logo (Facebook page of Abbas Zaki, March 12, 2017).



Abbas Zaki (second from right) sits next to Dr. Layla Ghanem, the PA governor of the Ramallah and al-Bireh district, at a memorial ceremony for Dalal al-Mughrabi (Facebook page of Abbas Zaki, March 12, 2017).

2. In addition to the main event in Ramallah, a ceremony was held in **Jericho** on March 12, 2017, attended by **Mahmoud al-Alul, a member of Fatah's Central Council and deputy chairman of Fatah**. It was held at the end of an al-Ta'ayush youth camp, **organized by the Fatah movement in Nablus for Palestinian youth**. The camp was conducted at the national security forces' training camp in al-Nuway'imah, north of Jericho.<sup>2</sup> The camp lasted for three days and was **dedicated to**

<sup>2</sup> The al-Ta'ayush camps are training camps for young Palestinians, held under the aegis of the PA's national security forces.

the memory of Dalal al-Mughrabi. The campers underwent military training and heard lectures about Fatah's legacy (for inculcating Palestinian youth with the legacy of Dalal al-Mughrabi, see Appendix C). On March 11, the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dalal al-Mughrabi's death in the Coastal Road Massacre, **senior Fatah figures Jamal Muheisen and Saeb Erekat paid a visit to the camp** (official Facebook page of Fatah, March 12; the Facebook page of the security forces in al-Nuway'imah, March 11-12, 2017).



**Left: Picture posted to the Facebook page of the Palestinian national security forces. The Arabic reads, "The shaheed Dalal al-Mughrabi. Bride of Jaffa. The 39th anniversary of her death as a martyr." Dozens of Facebook users praised Dalal al-Mughrabi and wished her rest in paradise. The webmaster of the Palestinian national security forces' Facebook page joined in praising her, writing that he hoped she was resting in paradise with all the other shaheeds (Facebook page of the Palestinian national security forces, March 11, 2017) Right: Senior Fatah figure Mahmoud al-Alul at the final ceremony of the al-Ta'ayush youth camp in Jericho, dedicated to the memory of Dalal al-Mughrabi (Facebook page of Mahmoud al-Alul, March 12, 2017)**



Left: Saeb Erekat speaks to young Palestinians at an al-Ta'ayush youth camp in Jericho, dedicated to the memory of Dalal al-Mughrabi. Right: Senior Fatah figure Jamal Muheisen visits the al-Ta'ayush youth camp (Facebook page of the security forces in al-Nuway'imah, March 11, 2017)

3. For the 52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the founding of Fatah, on January 1, 2017, a march was held in **Bethlehem**, attended by senior Fatah figures. Marchers held pictures of shaheeds and Palestinian flags of the countries that voted in favor of Resolution 2334. Marchers also held pictures of Mahmoud Abbas, Yasser Arafat and Dalal al-Mughrabi.



March in Bethlehem for the anniversary of Fatah's founding. There are signs with Yasser Arafat (left), Mahmoud Abbas (right) and Dalal al-Mughrabi (center) (Facebook page of Fatah , January 1, 2017).

## Appendix B

### Commemorating Dalal al-Mughrabi in Previous Years (2009 – 2016)

#### Overview

1. The PA and Fatah have commemorated Dalal al-Mughrabi every year since the days of Yasser Arafat. Events are usually held on or about March 11, the day of the Coastal Road Massacre, sometimes on other days. The official events are attended by senior PA and Fatah movement figures and the Palestinian media gives them extensive coverage. The following are examples of events held from 2009 to 2016.

#### 2016

2. The main event to mark the 38<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Dalal al-Mughrabi was organized by Fatah on March 12, 2016. It was held in the **Red Cross auditorium in al-Bireh**, and attended by **Dr. Layla Ghanem, the PA governor of Ramallah and al-Bireh**. Also present were members of the PLO's Executive Committee and Fatah's Central Committee. Dr. Ghanem said she was very proud of shaheed Dalal al-Mughrabi, who, she said, had insisted on carrying a rifle and fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with her male comrades.

3. **Sultan Abu al-Einein**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee (who today is PA chairman of NGO's with the status of minister), said Dalal al-Mughrabi and her comrades [who carried out the attack] wanted to send a message to their Arab brothers, that Palestine was a pan-Arab problem. He claimed **it was Israel that made Palestinian children carry out stabbing attacks on settlers and IDF soldiers** (Ma'an, March 12, 2017).



Sultan Abu al-Einein, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, speaks at a Fatah event in al-Bireh for the 38th anniversary of the death of Dalal al-Mughrabi. His head partially hides the Fatah logo (Ma'an, March 12, 2017).

## 2015

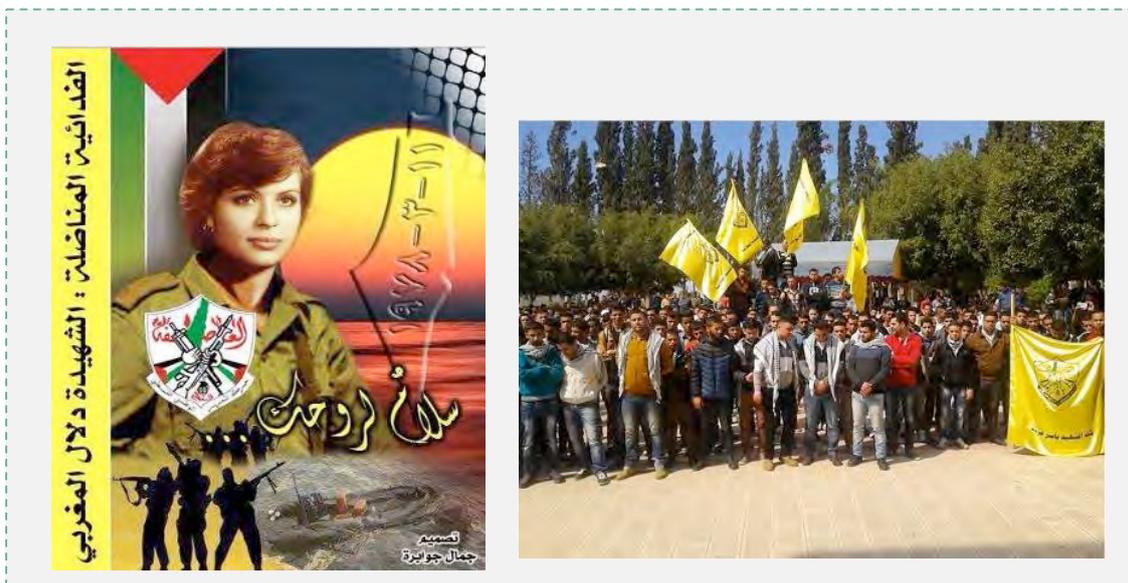
4. For the anniversary of the Coastal Road Massacre the official Facebook page of Fatah posted a picture of Dalal al-Mughrabi with a text representing the event as breaking news. It read, "Just in, large-scale attack in Herzliya in Tel Aviv...80 [sic] Israelis killed and more than 100 [sic] wounded. The flag of Palestine was flown in the center of the city...**This was a heroic victory...**" (Facebook page of Fatah, March 10, 2015).



Notice on Fatah's official Facebook page for the anniversary of the death of Dalal al-Mughrabi in the Coastal Road Massacre (Fatah's official Facebook page, March 10, 2015).

## 2014

5. On March 11, 2014, the Fatah movement held a memorial rally for Dalal al-Mughrabi in the al-Amari refugee camp (south of Ramallah). Present at the rally were **Ziyad Abu Ein**, PA deputy minister for prisoner affairs and a member of Fatah's Revolutionary Council; and **Rashida al-Mughrabi**, Dalal's sister and a brigadier general in the PA security forces.<sup>3</sup> Speakers at the rally praised Dalal al-Mughrabi's "heroism and sacrifice," saying she would never be forgotten.



Left: Memorial poster of Dalal al-Mughrabi with the Fatah logo. Right: Fatah flags at a rally held in memory of Dalal al-Mughrabi in the al-Am'ari refugee camp (Fatah's official Facebook page, March 11, 2014).

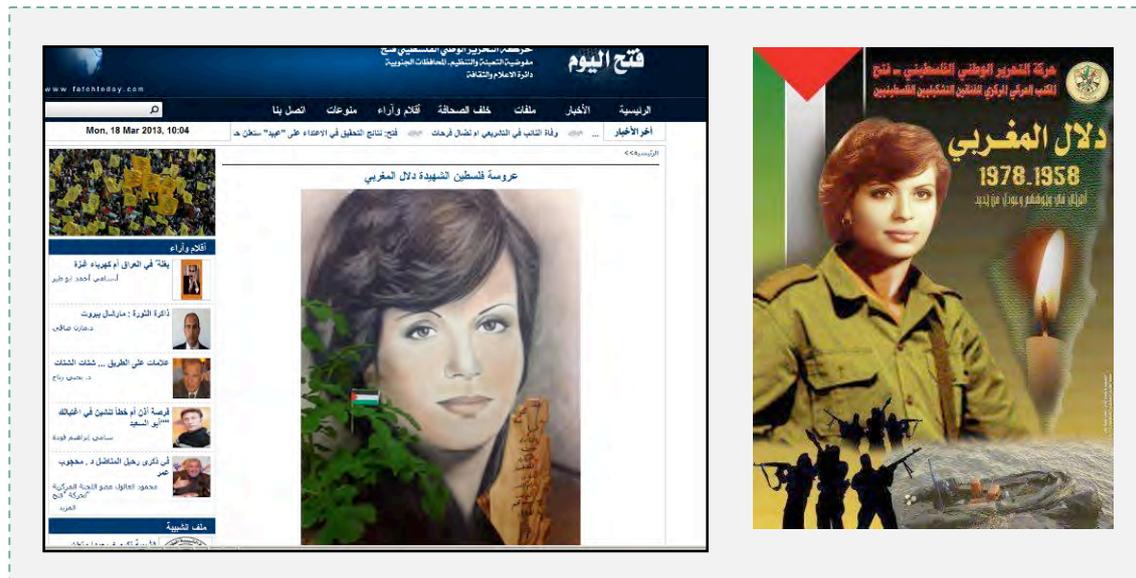
<sup>3</sup> **Brigadier General Rashida al-Mughrabi**, sister of Dalal al-Mughrabi, is a long-standing Fatah activist. She was born in Lebanon and went to the PA territories in 2009 for the general Fatah conference held in Bethlehem. For years she was prevented by Israel from entering Judea and Samaria because of her history as a terrorist. She held a senior position in the Political Guidance Authority of the PA's national security forces and served in Palestinian military intelligence in Ramallah. Today she is responsible for manpower in Palestinian national security.



Pictures from a Fatah event held in front of the al-Mughrabi house in Ramallah to commemorate Dalal al-Mughrabi and the other terrorist operatives who carried out the Coastal Road Massacre. Candy was distributed to al-Mughrabi family members during the ceremony (Zaman Press, March 11, 2014).

## 2013

6. On March 11, 2013, the Fatah website marked the anniversary of the death of Dalal al-Mughrabi by posting pictures and notices glorifying and commemorating her. The Fatah al-Yawm website, which serves Fatah's office of enlistment and organization, posted a notice entitled "**Bride of Palestine, shaheed Dalal al-Mughrabi**" (Fatah al-Yawm, March 18, 2013).



Left: Post calling Dalal al-Mughrabi "the bride of Palestine" (Fatah al-Yawm, March 18, 2013) Right: Poster marking Dalal al-Mughrabi's birthday (Fatah bureau in Denmark, March 18, 2013).

7. For the anniversary of the Coastal Road Massacre the Palestinian news channel Watan produced a **documentary about the life of Dalal al-Mughrabi**. Her sister, **Brigadier General Rashida al-Mughrabi** was interviewed. There was a link to the

program on a number of Palestinian websites affiliated with Fatah, including PalPress.



Picture from a documentary about Dalal al-Mughrabi produced by the Palestinian Watan TV channel (Watan, March 11, 2013).

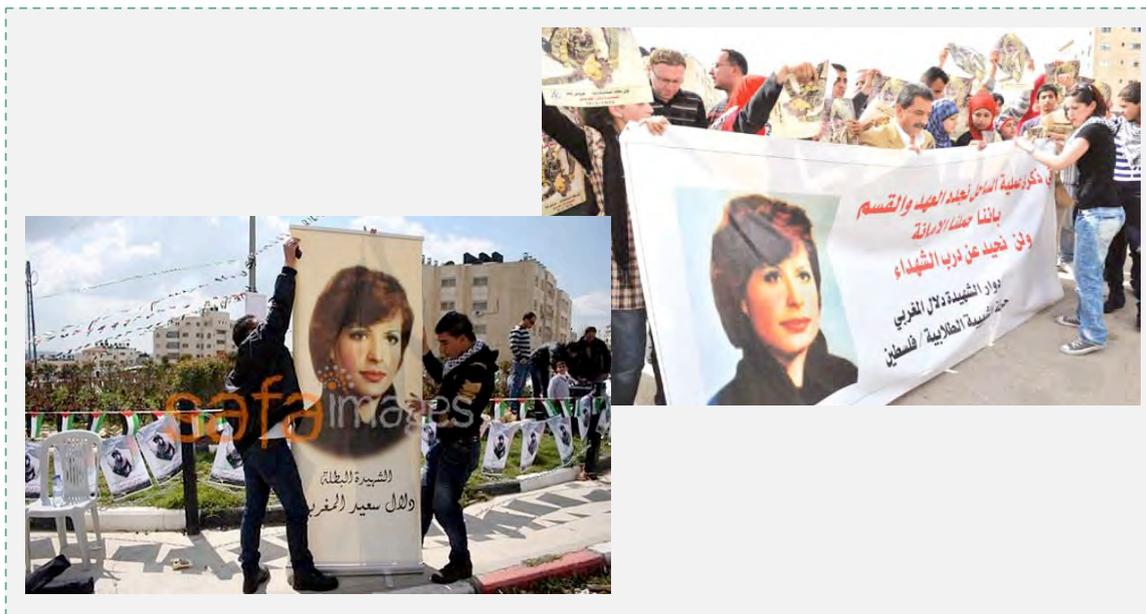
8. On December 29, 2013, the official Facebook page of Fatah' office for enlistment and organization posted a notice for Dalal al-Mughrabi's birthday. It read, "The birthday of Dalal al-Mughrabi...the birth of a legend...,the birth of the revolution" (official Facebook page of Fatah's office of enlistment and organization, December 29, 2013).



Notice posted to the Facebook page of Fatah's office of enlistment and organization for the birthday of Palestinian terrorist Dalal al-Mughrabi (official Facebook page of Fatah's office of enlistment and organization, December 29, 2013).

## 2010

9. At the end of 2009 the PA announced that on March 11, 2010, the anniversary of the Coastal Road Massacre, it would hold a formal ceremony dedicating the Dalal al-Mughrabi square in al-Bireh. A short time before the date the PA announced it had decided not to hold the ceremony because of "technical reasons." Despite the announcement, which had apparently been issued to placate the Americans in view of the impending visit of American Vice President Joe Biden, **an unofficial ceremony was held**. It was attended by senior Fatah figures, among them **Tawfiq Tirawi**, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, and **Mustafa Abu Rabi'**, a senior Fatah figure in Ramallah.

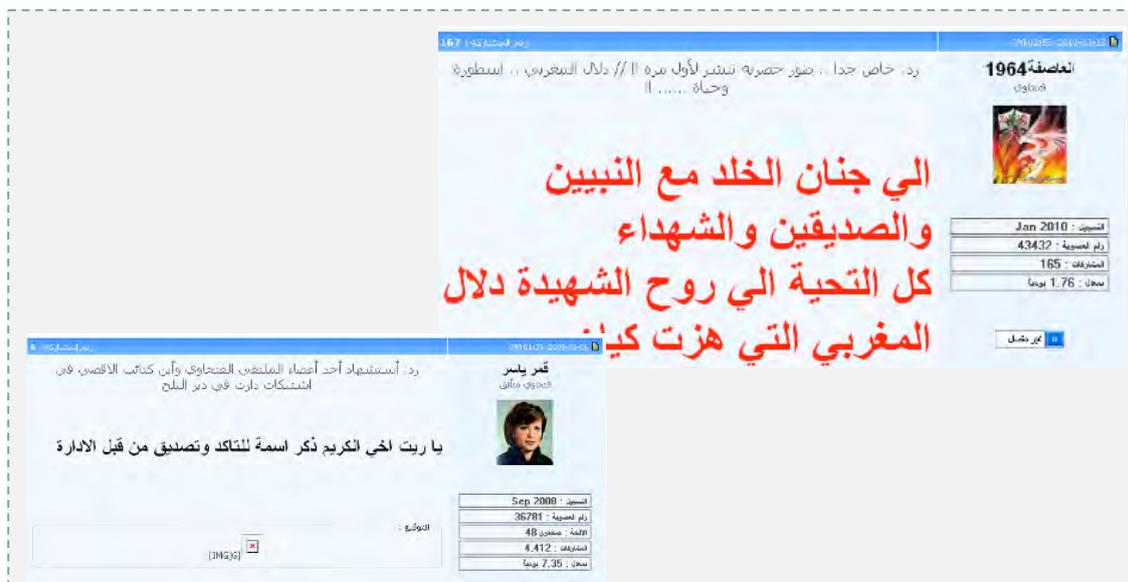


Left: Fatah activists in Ramallah hang pictures of "heroic shaheed" Dalal al-Mughrabi in one of the town squares (Safa, March 13, 2011). Right: Unofficial ceremony dedicating the Dalal al-Mughrabi square in al-Bireh on March 11, 2010. At the center in a light suit is Tawfiq Tirawi, a senior Fatah figure (al-Quds, March 12, 2010).

10. The official Palestinian media devoted a number of articles and programs to the event, stressing the importance and deeds of "freedom fighter" Dalal al-Mughrabi. On March 11, 2010, Palestinian TV broadcast a program about her legacy. Her sister, Rashida, appeared on the program, and said "today is a day of pride and victory for the Palestinian people, and a day of pain for the Zionists." She called on the audience to gather at the square in al-Bireh which had been named for her sister (MEMRI, March 17, 2017).

11. After the (unofficial) dedication of the square in Ramallah, the Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip announced it was naming two important squares in Gaza City after female shaheeds: one for **Dalal al-Mughrabi** and the other for **Rim**

**al-Riyashi**, a Hamas suicide bomber.<sup>4</sup> The decision was made, according to Hamas' announcement, because of its faith in the "honorable history of the resistance and all its branches," and in defiance of Mahmoud Abbas, who had cancelled the ceremony in al-Bireh because of pressure from Israel [sic] (Palinfo, March 18, 2010).



Left: A Fatah forum user, calling himself "the moon of Yasser [Arafat]" adopted a picture of Dalal al-Mughrabi (official Fatah forum, January 6, 2009). Right: Praise for Dalal al-Mughrabi, who "shook the [Zionist] entity," and who rose "to the gardens of eternity [i.e., paradise] [to be with] the prophets, the just and the [other] shaheeds" Mughrabi (official Fatah forum, March 13, 2010).

12. On November 3, 2010, a ceremony was held in Nablus dedicating a street to Dalal al-Mughrabi. It was attended by young members of the Fatah movement.



Naming a street in Nablus for Dalal al-Mughrabi (al-Quds, November 3, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> On January 14, 2004, Rim al-Riyashi blew herself up at the Erez crossing terminal in the northern Gaza Strip, killing three IDF soldiers and one civilian, and wounding ten others.

## 2009

13. In December 2009 the PA's authority for national political guidance, which is subordinate to Mahmoud Abbas,<sup>5</sup> held a ceremony marking Dalal al-Mughrabi's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was sponsored by Mahmoud Abbas. Senior Fatah and PA figures attended, giving speeches stressing her as a symbol of the Palestinian struggle. **Children also held a parade in honor of her birthday.** A large poster was hung at the ceremony with her likeness and the inscription, "**Sponsored by Chairman Mahmoud Abbas. The authority for national political guidance. Ceremony to mark the birthday of the bride, the bride of the universe, shaheed Dalal al-Mughrabi**" (Wafa, December 29, 2009).



**Celebration of Dalal al-Mughrabi's 50th birthday, held at the PA's authority for national political guidance (Wafa, January 16, 2010).**

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<sup>5</sup> The **authority for national political guidance** was established in the 1970s as part of the Palestinian forces deployed in the Lebanese arena. With the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1994 it was reestablished as the national authority operating within the ranks of the Palestinian security forces (although not only within its ranks. According to the PA website, it also operates in the PA's government offices). The Authority for National Political Guidance is directly subordinate to Mahmoud Abbas who serves, among other things, as the high commander of the Palestinian security forces. The Authority is strongly affiliated with Fatah. In recent years it has been headed by **General Adnan al-Damiri**, who is also spokesman for the PA's security forces. He is a released prisoner, a long-standing member of Fatah and a member of Fatah's Revolutionary Council.



Left: Children parade to celebrate Dalal al-Mughrabi's birthday. Right: Large poster for Dalal al-Mughrabi's 50th birthday (pictures courtesy of Palestinian Media Watch)

## Appendix C

### Commemorating Dalal al-Mughrabi among Adolescents, Students and School Children

#### Naming Schools for Dalal al-Mughrabi



Left: The main entrance of the Dalal al-Mughrabi governmental elementary school in Bayt Awa, south of Hebron. Right: The school logo (Facebook page of the Dalal al-Mughrabi elementary school, March 21, 2017).



On the 39th anniversary of the death of Palestinian terrorist Dalal al-Mughrabi, the Awa elementary school posted pictures and praise for Dalal al-Mughrabi on its Facebook page (Facebook page of the Dalal al-Mughrabi elementary school, March 11, 2017).

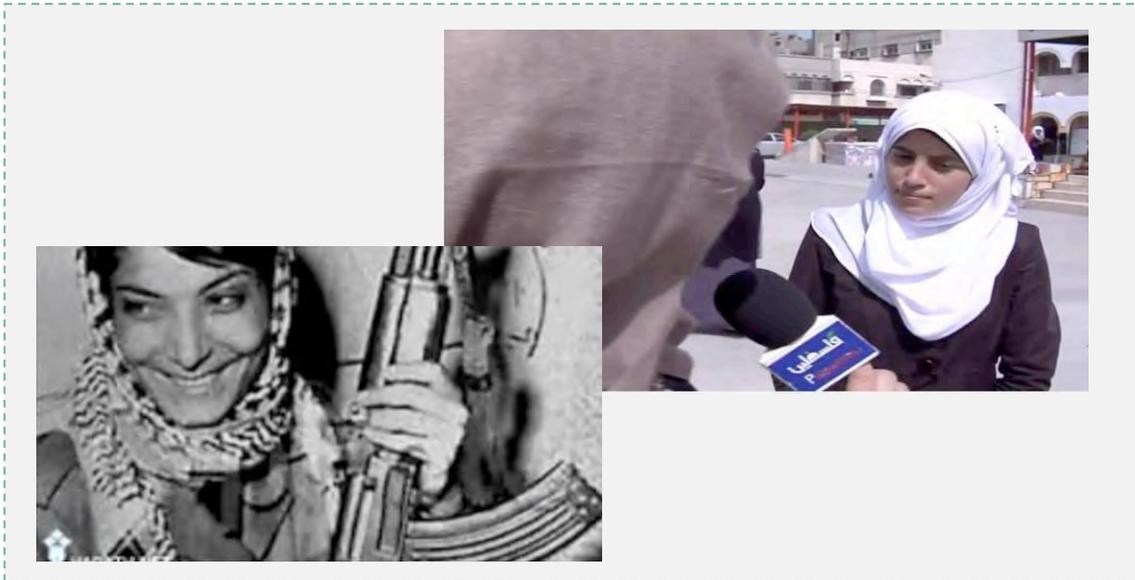


Left: Pupils of the Dalal al-Mughrabi girls' elementary school in Shuyuh, north of Hebron (Facebook page of the Dalal al-Mughrabi elementary school, April 25, 2016). Right: Dalal al-Mughrabi elementary school pupils (Facebook page of the Dalal al-Mughrabi elementary school, November 16, 2016).



The Dalal al-Mughrabi elementary school in the village of Burqin, west of Jenin (Facebook page of the Dalal al-Mughrabi elementary school, October 23, 2016).

1. In March 2014 Palestinian TV broadcast a program in memory of Dalal al-Mughrabi. A TV reporter visited the **Dalal al-Mughrabi girls' high school in eastern Gaza City** and interviewed several students. One of them said she was proud to study in a school named for the "shaheed Dalal al-Mughrabi" (YouTube, March 27, 2014).



Left: A picture of Dalal al-Mughrabi that appeared in the TV report. Right: A reporter interviews one of the students (YouTube, March 27, 2014).



Left: The Arabic reads, "Dalal al-Mughrabi Girls' High School." Right: The Dalal al-Mughrabi girls' school (YouTube, March 27, 2014).

## Activities with Children and Adolescents



The Shabiba Movement (Fatah's student movement in the Jerusalem region) pays a visit to the home of brigadier general Rashida al-Mughrabi, Dalal al-Mughrabi's sister, on the occasion of Dalal al-Mughrabi's birthday. They thanked Rashida al-Mughrabi for her support of Fatah and the sacrifice her sister made for the sake of the national Palestinian struggle (Panet, January 2, 2012).

2. On January 20, 2010, the **Ramallah Friends School**<sup>6</sup> in Ramallah held an exhibition of pictures of "Shaheeds of the Palestinian revolution and the national movement." It was organized by the local student council. Among the exhibitions were **pictures of notorious terrorists: Sheikh Ahmed Yassin (the founder of Hamas), Dr. Fathi Shqaqi (former leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad), Abu Jihad (a former senior Fatah leader) and Dalal al-Mughrabi.** Present at the opening of the exhibition were **Majida al-Masri, Palestinian minister of social affairs; and Issa Qaraqe, PA minister of prisoner affairs.** Majida al-Masri praised the students for their commemoration of shaheeds of the Palestinian national movement, and told them stories about her personal relations with shaheeds.

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<sup>6</sup> The **Ramallah Friends School** is a non-governmental Christian school established in 1869 under the Ottoman Empire. Today it has a student body of 1,400, from the first through the 12<sup>th</sup> grades. It has two campuses in Ramallah and is supported by wealthy Palestinians and **international organizations such as the UNDP and USAID** (Ramallah Friends School website, March 22, 2017).



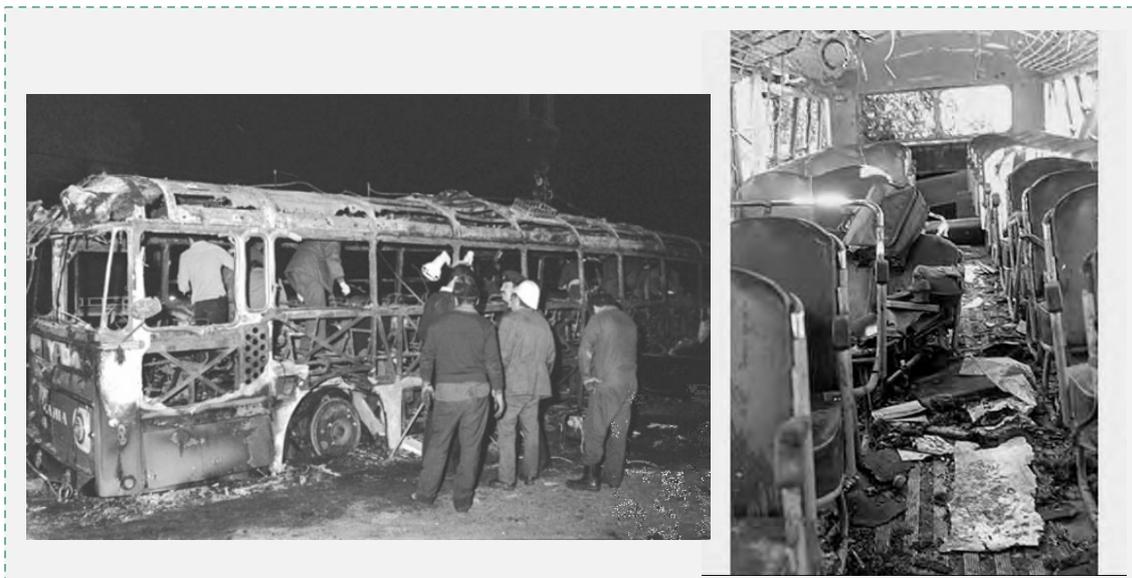
**Majida al-Masri, Palestinian minister of social affairs, officially opens an exhibition commemorating shaheeds at a school in Ramallah. The exhibition was organized by the local student council (al-Ayam, January 20, 2010).**

## Appendix D

### The Coastal Road Massacre

1. **The Coastal Road Massacre was carried out on March 11, 1978, by a squad of Fatah terrorist operatives.** On the morning of March 11 a squad of 11 terrorists landed on the shore south of Haifa, arriving from Lebanon in an inflatable rubber boat. On the shore they came across Gail Rubin, an American nature photographer, and murdered her. From there they moved eastward towards the Coastal Road (between Haifa and Tel Aviv), where two terrorists stopped a taxi and drove towards Tel Aviv. **The others stopped a tourist bus en route to Haifa. They broke into the bus and demanded the driver turn around and drive back in the direction of Tel Aviv.** On the way they shot through the windows of the bus at passing cars, killing four people.

2. Close to Hadera they joined the two terrorists in the taxi, forced the taxi passengers into the bus and continued driving south. On their way they stopped another bus and forced its passengers onto the tourist bus. Police attempts to halt the bus were unsuccessful. North of Tel Aviv police shot out the bus's tires and it stopped. The police engaged the terrorists in a firefight. **Finally, the terrorists blew up the bus, killing 35 passengers, 12 of them children, and wounding 71. In response to the attack, Israel launched Operation Litani in south Lebanon.**



**Left: The bus after the attack (IDF archives, the Israeli ministry of defense, March 11, 1978). Right: The bus after the attack (Photo by Moshe Milner, Israeli Government Press Office, March 11, 1978).**