



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(June 7 – 13, 2017)



The financial hardships of Hamas. Cartoon by Ismail al-Bazam shows milestones in the decrease in funding for Hamas between 2012 and 2017. "Iran: the conflict in Syria, 2012. Egypt: the fall of the Morsi regime, 2013. Turkey: the Turkish-Israeli reconciliation, 2016. Qatar: the Arab alliance against Qatar, 2017" (Facebook page of Ismail al-Bazam, June 8, 2017).

Overview

- This past week again, no significant terrorist attacks were carried out in Judea and Samaria or from the Gaza Strip. Riots and violent demonstrations continued at various locations along the Gaza-Israel border, in answer to calls from Hamas. So far the events have not spun out of control.
- The Palestinian Authority recently told Israel it was planning to cut 40% of the funds it gave Israel to pay for the electricity Israel supplies to the Gaza Strip. Israel's political-security cabinet acceded to Mahmoud Abbas' appeal, which will mean **less electricity to the Gaza Strip from Israel**.
- A Hamas spokesman responded to the proposed cut by **calling Israel's decision "dangerous and potentially disastrous," liable to accelerate the worsening of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and lead to "an explosion."** He called for international intervention and the provision of urgent alternatives for the electricity essential to run medical facilities in the Gaza Strip.

Riots, Clashes and Popular Terrorism

■ This past week demonstrations, clashes and riots continued throughout Judea and Samaria, primarily involving the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails. The Israeli security forces detained a number of Palestinians suspected of terrorist activity. The more prominent occurrences were the following:

- **June 12, 2017** – A young Palestinian woman armed with a knife went to **the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron**. She was detained and taken for interrogation. She admitted she was planning to murder Jews. (Facebook page of Red Alert, June 12, 2017). The Palestinian media reported she was **Manal Mahmoud Yusuf Abu Ali**, 28, from the village of Yatta, south of Hebron (Facebook page of Shehab, June 12, 2017).



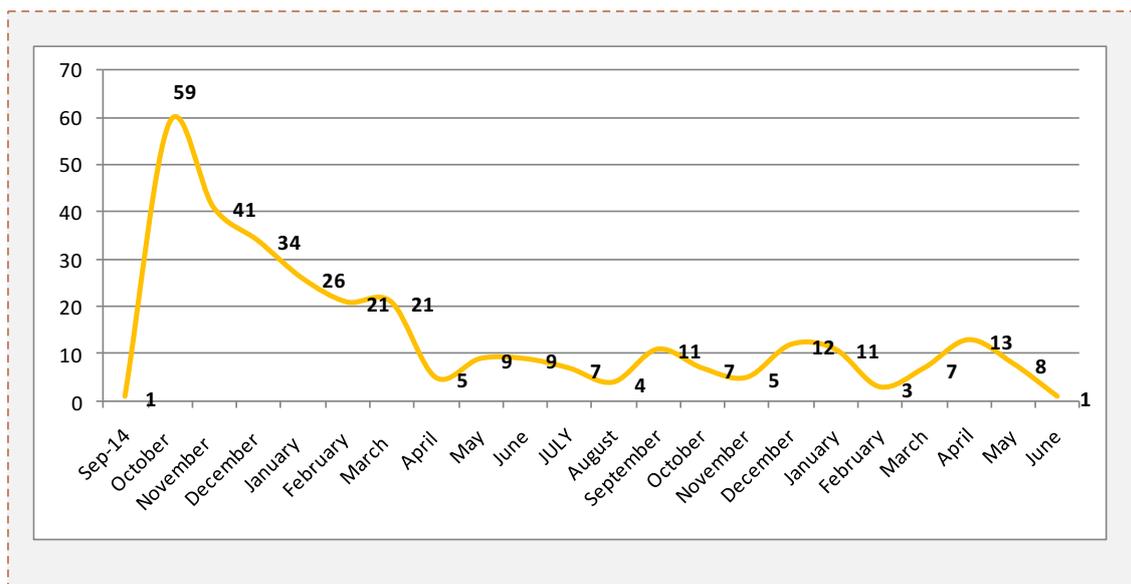
Knife found in the possession of a Palestinian woman at the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron (Israel Police Force, June 12, 2017).

- **June 12, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at an Israeli vehicle on the road between **Ariel and the Gitai Avishar junction in Samaria**. There were no casualties; the vehicle was damaged. (Facebook page of Red Alert, June 12, 2017).
- **June 11, 2017** – A Palestinian tried to attack a Border Policeman near **the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron**. The Palestinian was detained (Facebook page of Red Alert, June 11, 2017).
- **June 11, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at Israeli vehicles on **the road between Kiryat Arba and Hebron**. Palestinians also threw stones at an Israeli

bus on **the Gush Etzion-Hebron road near al-Aroub**. There were no casualties; the vehicles were damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, June 11, 2017).

- **June 11, 2017** – Two Palestinians threw stones at a group of Jews visiting **the Temple Mount**. They were detained and taken for interrogation (Facebook page of Red Alert, June 11, 2017).
- **June 9, 2017** – Six Palestinians were detained for throwing stones at Israeli security forces and attempting to cross the border security fence near Jerusalem instead of passing through one of the crossings. Three of them were terrorist operatives released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal (Facebook page of Red Alert, June 9, 2017).
- **June 9, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at an Israeli vehicle at **the entrance to Kiryat Arba**. There were no casualties; the vehicle was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, June 9, 2017).
- **June 8, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at an Israeli vehicle on route 443 near Beit Horon. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, June 9, 2017).

Significant Terrorist Attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem since September 2015¹



¹ A significant attack is defined by the ITIC as involving shooting, stabbing, a vehicle, the use of IEDs, or a combination of the above. Stones and Molotov cocktails thrown by Palestinians are not included.



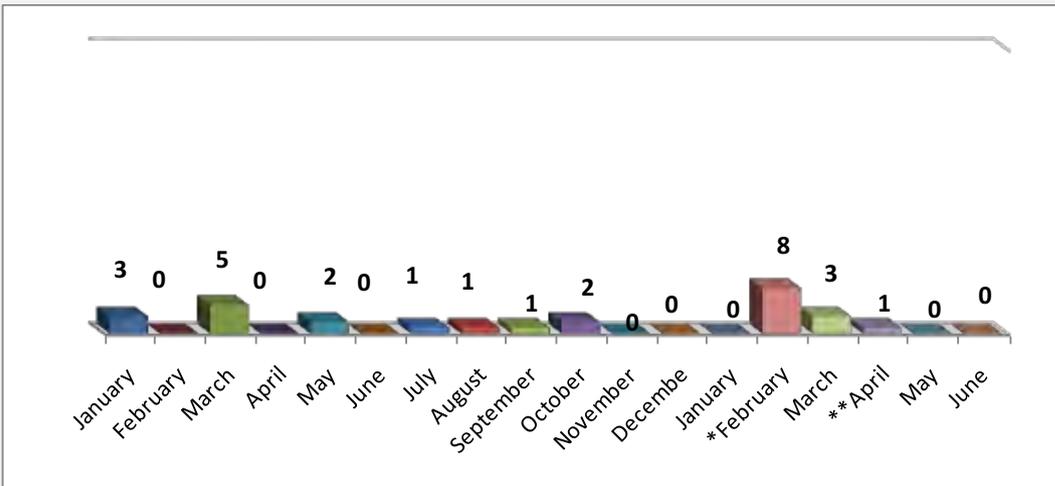
Palestinians throw rocks at Israeli security forces in the village of Qadoum during the weekly riot (Palinfo Twitter account, June 9, 2017).

Israel's South

Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

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

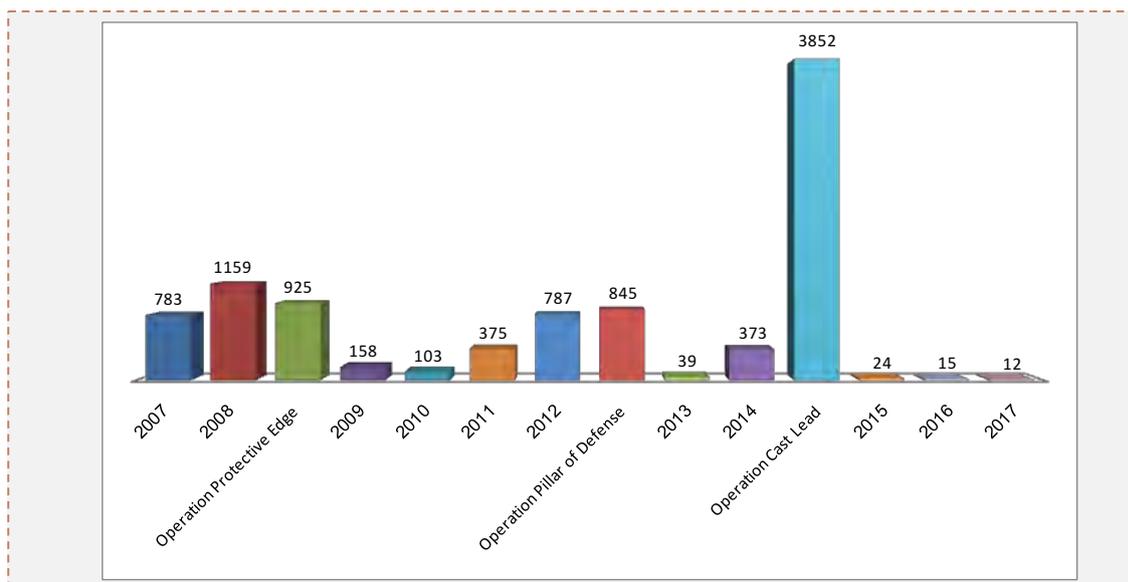
Monthly Distribution of Rocket Hits in Israel since January 2016



*Six of the rockets fired in February 2017 were launched from the Sinai Peninsula at Israeli territory, apparently by ISIS's Sinai Province.

** The rocket fired in April was launched from the Sinai Peninsula by ISIS's Sinai Province.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits in Israel's South²



Violence at the Border Security Fence

■ This past week riots incited and organized by Hamas continued along the Israel-Gaza border to protest the "siege" of the Gaza Strip (al-Aqsa, June 9, 2017). The riots took place at a number of locations and each was attended by several hundred Gazans. On June 9, 2017, **Fathi Hamad, a member of Hamas' political bureau**, participated in a riot held in the eastern part of Jabalia (Palinfo, June 90, 2017).



Left: Fathi Hamad, Hamas political bureau member, at the demonstration east of Jabalia. Right: Violent demonstration east of Jabalia (Facebook page of Shehab agency, June 9, 2017).

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

- On June 6, 2017, according to reports, a number of Gazans were wounded and one was killed by IDF fire east of Khirbet Ikhza'a in the southern Gaza Strip (Twitter account of Ashraf al-Qidra, June 6, 2017). The Palestinian killed was **Fadi Ibrahim al-Najar, a traffic policeman from Bani Suheila** (website of the police in the Gaza Strip, June 8, 2017). On June 10, 2017, another Palestinian was killed during a riot in the Jabalia region. He was **A'aed Khamis Jumaa, an operative in a special unit of the northern brigade of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)** (Website of the Jerusalem Battalions, June 10, 2016). **Senior PIJ figure Khaled al-Batash** said he was killed during what al-Batash referred to as the campaign "to break the siege." He said the Palestinian people were fed up with the siege and the "cold-heartedness" of the "neighboring countries," and the only way to cope was to fight along the border with Israel (al-Aqsa, June 9, 2017).
- The funeral held for A'aed Jumaa in Jabalia was attended by senior Hamas figures Ismail Haniyeh, Fathi Hamad, Khalil al-Haya and Muhammad al-Hindi. Ahmed Bahar, deputy chairman of the Palestinian Legislative Council, gave a speech in which he said the Palestinians would continue to fight the "jihad" to liberate [Palestinian] land and the holy places. He said their "weapon" was the "resistance" of the military wings of Hamas and the PIJ, which the Palestinians should aim only at the "Zionist enemy" (al-Aqsa, June 9, 2017).



Ismail Haniyeh, Khalil al-Haya and Fathi Hamad attend the funeral of A'aed Jumaa (Website of the Jerusalem Battalions, June 10, 2017).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Continuing Electricity Crisis

■ Several weeks ago **the Palestinian Authority (PA)** told General Yoav Mordechai, the Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, that **it was going to reduce (by 40%) the money it paid Israel for the electricity Israel supplied to the Gaza Strip.** The decision was made by PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas, one of his efforts to exert pressure on Hamas. On June 11, 2017, **the Israeli political-security cabinet voted to accede to his appeal, which would mean reducing the amount of electricity Israel supplied to the Gaza Strip** (from 125 megawatts to 75 megawatts). According to **Muhammad Thabet, spokesman for the Hamas-controlled electric company in the Gaza Strip,** that would mean electrical power for only between three and four hours a day.

■ **Muhammad Thabet said the decision would be catastrophic for the Gaza Strip** because the electricity supplied by Israel today was barely sufficient for four hours a day (and the Egyptian electric company announced it was cutting off electric power from Egypt for "maintenance work"). According to Thabet, the Gazan electric company had not yet received notice of the cut in electricity from Israel (alresalah.net, June 12, 2017).

■ **Hamas responded with rage and threatened Israel with escalation:**

- **Hamas spokesman Abd al-Latif al-Qanua** claimed Israel's decision was "dangerous and potentially disastrous" because it affected every aspect of life in the Gaza Strip. He said **it would worsen the humanitarian crisis and lead to "an explosion."** He claimed Israel was responsible, as well as Mahmoud Abbas who, he claimed, collaborated with Israel (al-Ra'i, June 12, 2017).

- **Jamal al-Khudari, member of the Hamas faction in the Palestinian Legislative Council and chairman of the "popular committee to struggle against the siege,"** warned the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip was worsening. He called for international intervention and for urgent alternatives for Gazan medical facilities to deal with the consequences of the cut in electricity (Ma'an, June 12, 2017).

- **PIJ spokesman Daoud Shehab** claimed the decision was a "war crime." He said Israel's justifications for the "siege" on the Gaza Strip were false and prepared the ground for "additional crimes." He claimed anyone who thought the

"siege" would make the Palestinians surrender was mistaken (Palinfo, June 12, 2017).

■ On the other hand, **Yusuf al-Mahmoud, spokesman for the Palestinian national consensus government**, said Hamas was responsible for the situation in the Gaza Strip. That, he said, was because since 2007 Hamas had collected money from the residents of Gaza to pay for electricity and had not transferred it to the PA. Therefore, he said, today the Palestinian government was financing the electricity supplied to the Gaza Strip (Wafa, June 12, 2017).



A family in the Gaza Strip breaks the Ramadan fast, eating by candlelight because of the lack of electricity (Facebook page of Shehab, June 12, 2017).

Article in Hamas Newspaper Calls for a Limited War against Israel from the Gaza Strip

■ On June 7, 2017 Hamas' newspaper Felesteen published an article written by **Dr. Issam Adwan, head of Hamas' department of refugee affairs**. It was entitled, "A controlled confrontation³ is necessary." It called for "**delivering controlled blows to the enemy**" as an alternative that could provide a response to the intensification of the siege on the Gaza Strip through local, regional and international forces.

■ The so-called "**controlled confrontation**," according to Adwan, should be **completely different from a comprehensive confrontation** without borders. Controlled blows would, he claimed, **cause Israel to respond strongly**. In such a scenario the "resistance" [i.e., Hamas and the other terrorist organizations] would not respond in kind but would keep their responses "**measured and minimal**." Thus, he

³ In Arabic, *al-muwajaha al-munthabita*.

claimed, after a number of days, **"the enemy will lower the level of its aggression, understanding the nature of the confrontation wanted by the resistance."** In Adwan's opinion, **Israel would also react minimally to prevent escalation and agitation on the home front.**

■ A "controlled confrontation," in Adwan's opinion, **can be very profitable politically.** That is because it **would put the Gaza Strip and its needs at the top of the global media's agenda** and cause all international, regional and local forces to act to find solutions for the new situation created by the "resistance." The article recommended that Hamas' decision-makers examine the scenario, which would be the most beneficial "in the current complex circumstances" (Felesteen, June 7, 2017).

Tunnel Located in a Compound of Two UNRWA Schools

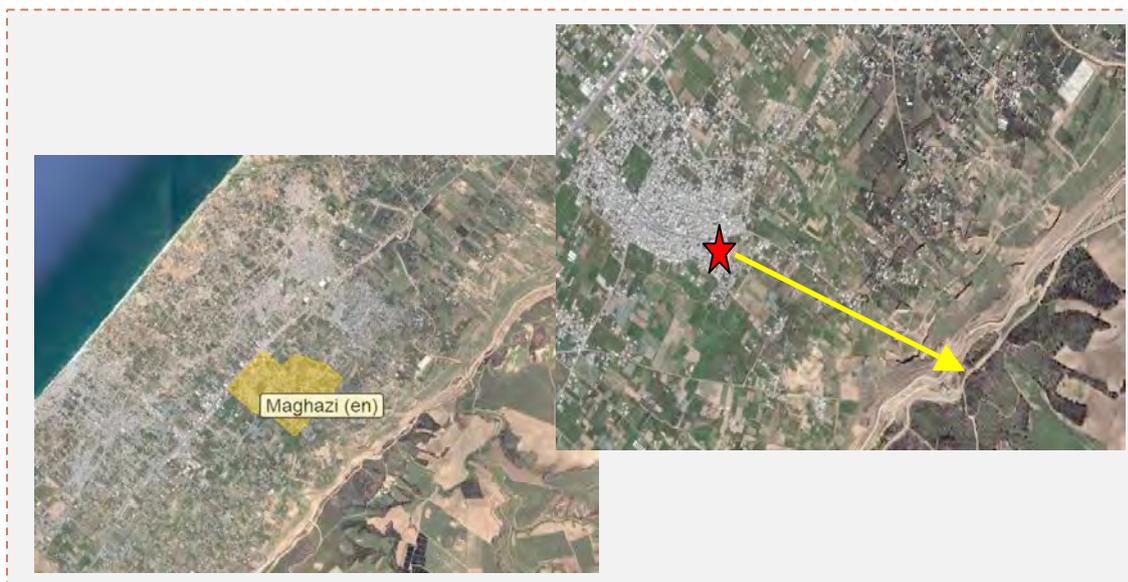
■ UNRWA announced that on June 1, 2017, during summer construction of an extension for **one of the buildings of its schools in the al-Maghazi refugee camp, part of a tunnel was exposed under the schools. The schools were a boys' elementary and middle school,** which shared property. According to the announcement (ITIC emphasis throughout), "Following a thorough inspection of the site, UNRWA can confirm that the tunnel has no entry or exit points on the premises nor is it connected to the schools or other buildings in any way...**UNRWA has robustly intervened and protested to Hamas in Gaza.**"

■ The announcement continued, **"The construction and presence of tunnels under UN premises are incompatible with the respect of privileges and immunities owed to the United Nations under applicable international law, which provides that UN premises shall be inviolable. The sanctity and neutrality of UN premises must be preserved at all times"**⁴ (UNRWA website, June 9, 2017). On June 11, 2017, **the Israeli prime minister instructed the Foreign Ministry Director General to file an official protest against Hamas at the UN Security Council** (Israeli prime minister's website, June 11, 2017).

■ **Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum condemned the UNRWA announcement,** claiming Israel exploited such claims to make excuses for its "crimes." He said all the "resistance organizations" [i.e., terrorist organizations] had stated they had undertaken no activity at the specific location mentioned by UNRWA and that they

⁴ <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-condemns-neutrality-violation-gaza-strongest-possible-terms>

were careful to exclude UNRWA from all "resistance" activity (Hamas website, June 9, 2017).



Left: The al-Maghazi refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, where a Hamas tunnel was exposed. Right: The location of the two UNRWA schools (red star). The yellow arrow leads to the border security fence between Israel and the Gaza Strip (Wikimapia, June 12, 2017).

■ **Hamas and the other terrorist organizations use educational facilities in the Gaza Strip for military purposes** (many of the facilities are run by UNRWA). Such use endangers the students and faculty, and is a gross violation of the international laws of war. **Note: During Operation Protective Edge UNRWA announced it had found twenty rockets hidden in one of its schools in the Gaza Strip** (without specifying the name or location of the school). It was summer and the children were on vacation. Immediately after finding the rockets UNRWA reported to the "relevant parties" (without specifying) and reportedly took all measures necessary to secure the school.⁵

Hamas Delegation Visits Cairo

■ A Hamas delegation led by **Yahya al-Sinwar, the head of the new Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip**, returned after a one-week visit to Cairo, during which talks were held with senior figures in the Egyptian government. Palestinian sources reported that the visit had positive results for every aspect of Hamas-Egypt relations and would influence how Egypt related to the Gaza Strip, the crossings and Gazan security. The sources also reported that regularly scheduled meetings would

⁵ See the July 20, 2014 bulletin, "Hamas and other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip use schools for military-terrorist purposes: The case of rockets found hidden in an UNRWA school during Operation Protective Edge."

be held to implement the understandings reached, and that "the residents of the Gaza Strip will feel of the results of the visit in the near future" (Samaa News, June 10, 2017).

■ Commentator **Fayez Abu Shamala** wrote an article revealing the understandings he claimed had been reached between the Hamas delegation, the head of Egyptian General Intelligence and Muhammad Dahlan. The understandings reportedly included appointing a joint committee to manage the Rafah crossing and control the Israel-Gaza Strip crossings. Egypt also said it would keep the Rafah crossing open (Ma'an, June 11, 2017). Senior Hamas figures **denied they had signed a memorandum** and claimed talks had been held without the presence of another party (Safa, June 12, 2017).



Senior Hamas figures from the Gaza Strip visit Egypt. Left to right, Rawhi Mushtaha, a member of Hamas' political bureau, Tawfiq Abu Na'im, deputy minister of the interior, and Yahya al-Sinwar, head of Hamas' political bureau in the Gaza Strip, on the banks of the Nile (thegazapost.com, June 10, 2017).

Saudi Arabia-Qatar-Hamas Relations

■ The Saudi Arabian foreign minister called on Qatar to cut off its relations with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood movement. He said Qatar had to keep its past promises to stop supporting extremist organizations. **Hamas condemned the Saudi Arabian statement**, expressed sorrow at its contents and said such a statement did not reflect the views of Saudi Arabia, which supported the rights of the Palestinian people and their struggle (Hamas website, June 7, 2017). **Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri** said the hostile statement of the Saudi foreign minister was an attempt to "curry favor with the Zionists" and foment anti-Palestinian

incitement, and relinquished [Palestinian rights to] Jerusalem (Twitter account of Sami Abu Zuhri, June 7, 2017).

■ The Saudi daily newspaper al-Okaz published **an article strongly attacking Hamas**. Among other accusations, according to the article, **during the past three years Hamas had invested \$120 million in constructing tunnels and had used millions of dollars donated by Saudi Arabia and the UAE for tunnels**. In addition, **Hamas dug tunnels under schools, private homes and hospitals**, endangering lives. What Hamas did in the Gaza Strip, according to the article, was no different from what ISIS did in Mosul (al-Okaz, June 10, 2017).

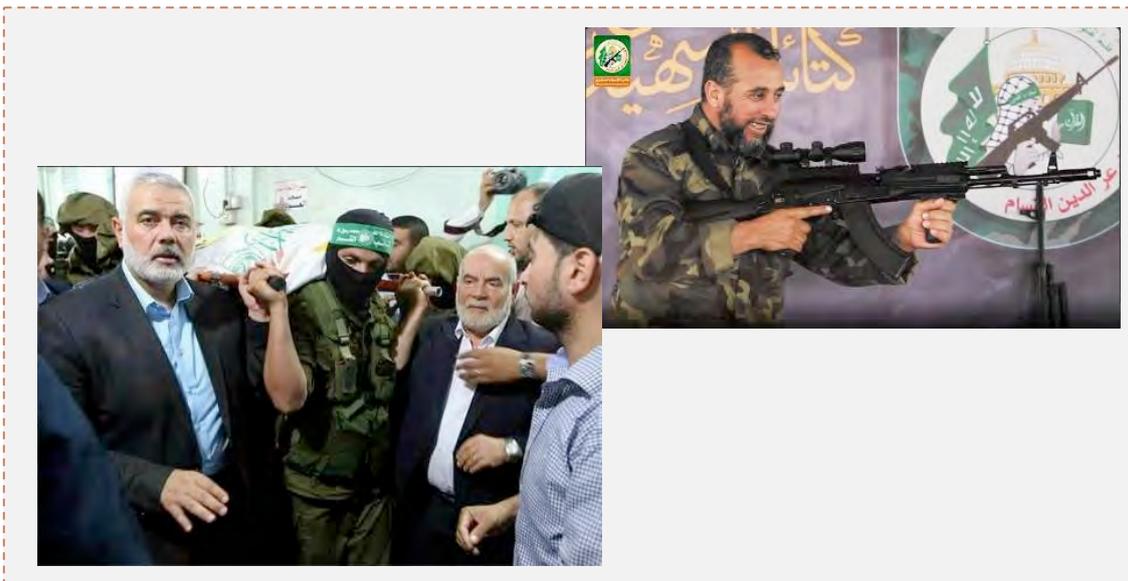
■ A "senior Hamas source" reported that if Qatar requested, senior Hamas figures currently residing in the country would be prepared to leave to keep Qatar from experiencing difficulties (Dunia al-Watan, June 7, 2017). **Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman gave a statement to Nikki Haley, the American ambassador to the UN during a meeting. According to the statement, senior Hamas figure Saleh al-Arouri, who operated against Israel from Turkey and later from Qatar, had arrived in Lebanon along with two other Hamas operatives** (Haaretz, June 9, 2017).

Death of Hamas Military-Terrorist Wing Operative

■ Hamas announced the death of **Ibrahim Hussein Abu al-Naja, 51, commander of the engineering unit of the Rafah brigade** of the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades. He died after having been injured in an explosion while preparing IEDs in Rafah (Shabakat al-Quds, June 7, 2017). Three other terrorist operatives were injured in the same explosion (Facebook page of the spokesman for the ministry of health in the Gaza Strip, June 7, 2017).

■ Abu al-Naja joined Hamas' military-terrorist wing in 2000 at the beginning of the second intifada, and was deployed to its unit for military production because of his great proficiency in manufacturing IEDs. He then commanded the Rafah Brigade's training department, and later its engineering unit. His house in Rafah was attacked during Operation Protective Edge. The prominent attacks in which he participated included preparing IEDs and barrels of explosives for an attack on an IDF post on December 17, 2003; preparing IEDs and barrels of explosives for an attack in a tunnel dug under an IDF post on June 27, 2004; preparing IEDs and barrels of explosives for an attack in a tunnel dug under an IDF post near the Rafah crossing on

December 12, 2004; preparing a vehicle and IEDs for an attack on the Kerem Shalom crossing on April 19, 2008 (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades website, June 11, 2017).



Left: Ismail Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, and Ahmed Bahar, deputy head of the Palestinian Legislative Council, at Abu Naja's funeral in Rafah (Facebook page of ahdath.ps, June 8, 2017) Right: Ibrahim Abu al-Naja (Twitter account of Hamas' military-terrorist wing, June 8, 2017).

Iranian Payments to Families of Shaheeds in the Gaza Strip Continue

- The PIJ-affiliated **al-Ansar charity association**, which operates in the Gaza Strip, posted an official statement to its website, Facebook page and Twitter account. It instructed the families of shaheeds killed in Operation Protective Edge (2014) to go to the association's offices in the Gaza Strip to receive funds. According to the announcement, the families of shaheeds younger than 15 were not entitled to financial support (website of the al-Ansar charity association, June 11, 2017).
- The PIJ-affiliated Paltoday website posted a notice from the al-Ansar charity association saying **the support was financed by the Iranian Islamic Republic** (Paltoday, June 11, 2017). The al-Ansar charity association recently distributed \$2 million worth of financial aid from by the Palestinian Shaheed Foundation. The money was given to the families of shaheeds in the Gaza Strip killed between the beginning of the second intifada and June 30, 2014.⁶ The funds for shaheeds killed in Operation Protective Edge are **additional**.

⁶ See the May 28, 2017 bulletin, "Iranian Support for Palestinian Terrorism: This year funds were again transferred to families of shaheeds in the Gaza Strip by the Iranian Martyrs Foundation through the PIJ-affiliated al-Ansar charity association."



Notice of distribution of funds to the families of shaheeds who died during Operation Protective Edge (archive photo) (website of the al-Ansar charity association, June 11, 2017).

The Palestinian Authority

Positive Signals from the PA to Israel?

- **Muhammad Mustafa, chairman of the Palestine Investment Fund and financial advisor to Mahmoud Abbas, told Bloomberg⁷ that to revive the peace process the Palestinian leadership had temporarily suspended its demand that Israel freeze construction in the settlements as a pre-condition for negotiations.** He also alleged that the **PA would be prepared to soften its condemnation of Israel in the UN and its demands to try Israel** [in the International Criminal Court in The Hague (ICC)] for "war crimes." He claimed that the increase in unemployment and the failure of donor countries to meet their commitments had forced Mahmoud Abbas to deal once again with the issue of negotiations (Bloomberg, June 8, 2017). In the meantime Wafa, the official PA news agency, published a **statement from Muhammad Mustafa** in which he said that the Palestinian position regarding construction in the settlements was clear and that **first and foremost construction had to be frozen, and then the settlements should be dismantled as part of the final agreement** (Wafa, date, 2017).
- In addition, a Palestinian source speaking on condition of anonymity said Mahmoud Abbas had ordered a halt to any appeals and legal proceedings against Israel in the ICC as well as the call to boycott Israeli-manufactured products. His intention, according to the source, was to take steps that would lead to the renewal of the negotiations (Shehab, June 10, 2017).

⁷ A private American investment company which also runs Bloomberg News.

Muslims Pray on the Temple Mount during Ramadan

■ The Palestinian ministry of endowments (*wakf*) estimated that on June 9, 2017, the second Friday of Ramadan, 300,000 Muslims from Judea and Samaria and the Arab-Muslim countries had prayed at al-Aqsa mosque. The Friday sermon was given by **Ikrima Sabri**, the official sermonizer of al-Aqsa mosque and chairman of the Supreme Islamic Council. His sermon was entitled "**al-Aqsa mosque is for the Muslims and the Western Wall is part of it**" [a message to Jibril Rajoub]. He said the wave of people surging towards al-Aqsa illustrated the love, devotion and feelings of Muslims for the mosque. Therefore, they had to protect it and would not allow compromises, negotiations or giving up even a centimeter of it. Ikrima Sabri condemned the statements made by Jibril Rajoub and stressed that **the Western Wall was part of al-Aqsa mosque and considered part of the Islamic endowment (*wakf*)**, as authorized by UNESCO, which had made it clear that there was no connection between the Jews and al-Aqsa mosque or the Western Wall (Ma'an, June 9, 2017).

Palestinian Reactions to Israel's Intentions to Cut Prisoners' Salaries

■ The Palestinian media reported that **the Israeli ministerial committee for legislation confirmed the proposal for a law to cut the salaries received by Palestinian terrorist prisoners** and their families from the tax money Israel collects and transfers to the PA.

■ Confirming the proposal was met with a series of enraged responses from Palestinian spokesmen:

- **Qadoura Fares, chairman of the Palestinian prisoners' club**, said the proposal made it legal to steal money from the Palestinian people and that it was clearly in violation of international law (Dunia al-Watan, June 11, 2017).

- **Issa Qaraqe, chairman of the PA authority for prisoners affairs**, said the proposed law was the beginning of a war against the rights of the Palestinian people. He called for reinforcing the status of the Palestinian prisoners by appealing to the ICC. He said every international decision stressed the legitimacy of the struggle of the prisoners against the Israeli occupation (Ma'an, June 12, 2017).

- **Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem** called the proposed legislation a "crime," and claimed Israel was stealing money from the Palestinian people and trying to break their spirit. He claimed the law harmed important Palestinian figures and the leaders of the national struggle. He also called on the PA to end its coordination with Israel (Hamas website, June 12, 2017).