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Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center
at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S)

Senior terrorist-operative joins the Hamas administration: Jamal Abu Samhadana appointed general supervisor of the interior ministry and the police.



Jamal Abu Samhadana, appointed general supervisor of the interior ministry and police while he continues commanding the Popular Resistance Committees (PRC Internet site, www.moqawmh.com)

Overview

✂ On April 1, Siyad Siyam, the interior minister of the Hamas government, announced he was appointing **Jamal Abu Samhadana**, head of the **Popular Resistance Committees (PRC)**, as general supervisor of the interior ministry and police. He also ordered **the formation of a security force** which, he claimed, would assist the Palestinian police to restore public order. The new force would be composed of members of the various terrorist organizations and would be directly responsible to the interior minister.

✿ The appointment set a **precedent** by being the **first time the new Hamas government** appointed to a senior position a **self-declared terrorist leader with a long record of attacks against Israel and with Israeli (and possibly American) blood on his hands** (See **Appendix**). In addition, after his appointment Samhadana gave interviews to the media and made it clear that he had no intention of giving up his position as head of the PRC and that he would continue carrying out attacks against Israel. He also stated that there was no contradiction between his continuing as head of a terrorist organization and his new appointment.

✿ Behind the appointment are the power struggle between Abu Mazen and the Hamas government for control of the PA's security forces and Hamas' attempts to cope with the rising anarchy in the PA. In our assessment, Samhadana's appointment was the Hamas answer to Abu Mazen's appointment of Rashid Abu Shubaq as head of the internal security apparatus (which includes the preventive security service, the police and civil defense.) Hamas viewed Abu Shubaq's appointment as a step taken to drain to interior ministry (controlled by the Hamas government) of its power and authority.

✿ However, Abu Samhadana's appointment will not spell the end of PA power struggles. **Abu Mazen**, after having met with the PLO executive committee, issued a presidential order **revoking** the interior minister's decisions to both set up a new security force and to appoint Abu Samhadana its head (the Italian news agency AKI, April 21). Hamas leader **Khaled Mashal**, in a speech at the refugee camp Al-Yarmukh on April 21, rejected Abu Mazen's actions, saying the government had the right to establish a force to defend the homeland and impose law and order. Abu Samhadana hinted that he would ignore Abu Mazen's order (AP, Gaza Strip, April 21).

Statements from Abu Samhadana

✂ After his appointment, **Jamal Abu Samhadana** gave interviews to the Arab and Western media, saying the following:

☑ **His mission would be to supervise the functioning of the security forces,** to bring order and enforce the law. As to the continuation of rocket fire into Israel, he said it was the business of the various organizations and that “the Palestinian government had not asked them to stop the rocket fire...” (Ramatan News Agency, April 20).

☑ **Under his leadership, the PRC would continue carrying out attacks against Israel.** He claimed there was no contradiction between his activities in the interior ministry and his activities as commander of the PRC (Ma’a News Agency and Pal-Media, April 21).

☑ **He had every intention of continuing his involvement in attacks against Israel:** “We have only one enemy. They are Jews. We have no other enemy. I will continue to carry the rifle and pull the trigger whenever required to defend my people” (Sunday Telegraph, April 23).

Appendix

Jamal Abu Samhadana – Portrait of a terrorist



From the PRC Internet site, www.moqawmh.com

✿ **Jamal Abu Samhadana (Abu ‘Ataya)** was born in 1963 in Al-Maghazi refugee camp near Dir al-Balah (in the center of the Gaza Strip). His family moved to the Rafah refugee camp where they live to this day. He is married and has four sons and a daughter.

✿ He graduated from the Rafah high school and joined **Fatah**. His brothers also belonged to terrorist organizations: Saqer was a member of the Popular Liberation Forces and moved to Lebanon, where he was killed in 1975. Tareq was a prominent Fatah operative and was killed during the first violent Israeli-Palestinian confrontation in 1987. **Some members of the Abu Samhadana clan are involved in crime, including smuggling operations between the Gaza Strip and Egypt.**

✿ In 1982, wanted by the IDF, he fled the Gaza Strip to Egypt. From there he went to Damascus and then to Morocco and Tunis, where he stayed for two years. From Tunis he went to Germany where studied at an officers’ training school, graduating in 1989. He then went to Algeria, the last stop on his world tour.

✿ In 1994, after the Oslo accords were signed, he returned to the Gaza Strip despite his objections to the accords and to normalized relations with Israel. He entered the

ranks of the PA's national security service, where he stayed until the current violent Israeli-Palestinian confrontation broke out.

Samhadana's PRC terrorist activities

✂ In September 2000, when the current confrontation began, he **established the PRC as an alternative to Fatah**. The new organization included former Fatah operatives and ex-members of the Palestinian security services. They were joined by former Hamas, PIJ and Popular Front terrorists.

✂ The organization then began carrying out attacks against Israel, which have increased in number because of the **large amounts of support received from external sources**. The organization avails itself of the **PA's preventive security forces, Iranian** elements operating in Lebanon and the **Hezbollah**, for which it acts as a contractor, carrying out attacks in return for money. In recent years, especially during the so-called "lull in the fighting," the organization has been supported by Hamas as part of its policy of giving behind-the-scenes aid to other terrorist organizations to carry out attention-getting attacks against Israel.¹



The insignia of the PRC (right), which closely resembles that Hezbollah in Lebanon (left)

¹ Hamas aid was also used to settle internal Palestinian accounts. A prominent example was the assassination of Mussa Arafat on September 7, 2005, by PRC operatives aided by, and possibly directed by, Hamas.

✿ The organization has carried out a series of deadly attacks against civilian targets and against the IDF forces in the Gaza Strip. Prominent among them were the following:

☑ **Shooting and side charge attacks against civilian targets:**

✓ On October 8, 2000, **a shooting attack was carried out against a bus** carrying Airport Authority workers in the area of the Rafah crossing; eight wounded.

✓ On November 8, 2000, **an Israeli vehicle traveling along the Kerem Shalom-Rafah crossing road was shot at;** one woman was killed.

✓ On November 20, 2000, near the settlement of Kfar Darom in the Gaza Strip, **a side charge blew up a bus full of children on their way to school;** two adults accompanying the children were killed.

✓ In July 2003, **anti-tank missiles** were fired at Kfar Darom; four wounded.

✓ On May 2, 2004, **five members of the Hatuel family were murdered** when two terrorists shot at their car on the Kissufim road. They then approached the stopped car and shot all the passengers at close range. The five were the mother, Tali (eight months pregnant), and four of her daughters, including a two-year old infant.

✓ On July 24, 2005, **a drive-by shooting on the Kissufim road** killed two Israelis.

☑ **Powerful side charges were exploded near IDF tanks and an IDF post was penetrated:** Anti-tank charges killed three Israeli soldiers on February 14, 2002; three soldiers on March 14, 2002 and one soldier (and wounded four) on September 5, 2002. On September 26, 2004, an IDF post at the settlement of

Morag in the Gaza Strip was penetrated, killing three soldiers and wounding one.

✂ During the past year the PRC's terrorist activity focused on **firing Qassam rockets and mortar shells at Israeli population centers in the western Negev**. Since the disengagement from the Gaza Strip (August 2005) the organization has also been involved in directing terrorist groups and operations in Judea and Samaria, including the transmission of information, the establishment of infrastructures for firing rockets and mortars, and the infiltration of terrorist experts and potential suicide bombers into the West Bank. For example, on October 5, 2005, three senior PRC terrorist-operatives were arrested near Mitzpe Ramon (in the southern part of the Negev) on their way to Jenin. They had been dispatched by **Jamal Abu Samhadana** and **Al-'Abd Yussuf Qoqa**, two PRC leaders.

✂ It should be remembered that the PRC is most probably the organization which used **a side charge to attack the American convoy at Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip** on October 15, 2003. The attack killed three American security guards who were accompanying the American cultural attaché. To this day the PA has failed to investigate the incident.

✂ As head of the PRC, Jamal Abu Samhadana is **responsible for a long series of terrorist attacks, some of which he was involved in personally**. Among others, he was responsible for the murder of seven IDF soldiers when deadly side charges were detonated under a tank in 2002 and for the murders of five members of the Hatuel family in 2004. **Jamal Abu Samhadana is one of the most senior Palestinian terrorists on Israel's wanted list**, and has twice escaped from targeted killing attempts.