



**Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center
at the Israel Intelligence Heritage
& Commemoration Center (IICC)**

June 22, 2008

Terrorism and Internet: Hamas has recently upgraded the website of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, its military-terrorist wing. Upgrading the website, which incites to hatred and anti-Israeli terrorism, reflects the importance Hamas places on its website network as a central component in the battle for hearts and minds.



The Arabic-language homepage of the upgraded website (June 15, 2008): belligerent images and messages of violence. The main picture shows an Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades operative loading a mortar to fire at Israel; the title reads: "The mortar of [the Izz al-Din] al-Qassam [Brigades] – target precision and losses among the enemy".

Overview

1. Hamas has recently launched a **new and improved version** of the website of Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, its military-terrorist wing. The upgrade of the website is reflected in new sections, technical improvements, and extensive use of visuals (documenting Hamas's terrorist activity and glorifying shahids, particularly suicide bombers). Similarly to its predecessor, the new website is available in Arabic and in English and obtains its technical services from a **company based in Russia**.

2. Upgrading the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website illustrates once again that **Hamas places considerable importance on the Internet as a major component in the battle for hearts and minds**, indicating that Hamas is ready to **invest resources in improving its extensive website network**. It should be mentioned that Hamas operates more than 20 websites, the most important being Palestine-info, which is published in **eight languages**. Through those websites, Hamas distributes actual information combined with propaganda and psychological warfare, targeting various reader audiences: Palestinians in the PA-administered territories (first priority), the Arab and Muslim world (second priority), and European and North American countries (third priority).

3. Hamas's website network, of which the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website is part, is **significantly more extensive and of a higher quality** than that of Fatah and the Palestinian Authority. This network enables Hamas to circumvent difficulties imposed on it by governments (including Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Arab countries, and Western countries), distributing its radical Islamic ideology and its political messages almost unhindered. Such messages preach terrorism and the destruction of Israel, and include anti-Semitic and anti-Western incitement, encouragement of terrorism, and glorification of its perpetrators.

4. At the same time, Hamas and other Islamic terrorist organizations deny Western messages distributed through the Internet. This is evident in the Gaza Strip, where Hamas imposes censorship on the Internet and where Internet cafés often serve as targets for attacks by radical Islamist elements. Recently, following weeks of intensive pressure on the part of the Hamas administration, Hamas's Ministry of Communication and the Palestinian communications company PalTel signed an agreement that makes Internet surfing harder for Gazans. As stipulated in the agreement, the company undertook to filter and block websites displaying immoral content or incompatible with values of Islam. Taher al-Nunu, spokesman for the Hamas administration,

noted that the agreement's objective was to protect the Palestinian public as a whole, particularly the younger generation, from "cultural infection" to which they are exposed over the Internet.

General description of the upgraded Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades website

5. Launched on June 8, 2008 was a **new and improved version** of the website of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas's military-terrorist wing. The newly upgraded website was widely covered in many websites operated by Hamas and its supporters. According to an article published in the upgraded version of the website, more than half a million surfers accessed it the day the new version was on the air. The website's address is still the same (www.alqassam.ps).¹

6. **From the perspective of content**, the new website includes many sections its predecessor did not have. According to an interview granted by the upgraded website's manager, new sections have been added, including "The Zionist affairs section", which follows Israeli media news; a statistics section, which publishes statistical data on the activities of Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, numbers of shahids and prisoners and numbers of Israeli casualties; a section which covers the operative activity of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, including a video section which documents the organization's activities.

7. **From the technical perspective**, the new website responds faster, has a more advanced design than its predecessor, and makes **extensive use** of images and audio files. Of particular note is the use of video files (copyrighted by the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades Information Office), which are republished on other websites, including **YouTube**. The website also features materials published by Hamas, complete texts of various books (such as terrorist martyrs' biographies and past jihad operations), information on martyrs (in a section called "Martyr Oasis"), translations of articles from the Israeli media, message boards, opinions of Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades leaders, and so forth.

8. The upgraded website contains, amongst others, the following sections:

¹ The English version is not identical to the Arabic version. The messages there are "softer" and more emphasis is placed on the wrongs committed by the "Israeli occupation".

a. **A video section**, which contains videos divided into various categories, such as jihad missions, documentaries, examples of shahids, firing at Israeli population centers, blowing up Israeli vehicles, and so forth.

b. **An album** with photographs of shahids belonging to the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, posters, photographs of acts of jihad, seized equipment, parades, training, and so forth.

c. **An audio section**, which contains such music albums as "Suicide Bombers" (*istishhadiyoun* in Arabic), "Knights of Victory", "The Intifada Continues", and so forth.

9. The upgraded website in its Arabic and English versions obtains its technical services from **DataForce Contacts**, a company based in **Moscow, Russia**. Technical information on the website follows:

a. IP address: 195.42.160.0-19 – 195.42.191.255

b. Internet Service Provider (ISP): DataForce Contacts

c. ISP address: 3rd Samotechny per 11, 103473, Moscow, Russia

d. Phone: 7-495-7375887

e. Fax: 7-495-7373246

f. E-mail: info@dataforce.net

10. Following are examples of encouragement for violence and terrorism on the upgraded website:



A page featuring songs. The album on this page is titled *"Istishhadiyour"*, i.e., suicide bombers, and it includes songs which glorify those who perpetrate suicide bombing attacks against Israel. One of the songs in the album is titled "Fasten Your [Explosive] Belt, *Istishhadi* [i.e., suicide bomber]", performed by a band called Al-Ghurabaa. The refrain of the song is "Fasten your [explosive] belt, *istishhadi* [i.e., suicide bomber], and fill the square [or arena] with blood, until we return the land [referring to the "liberation of Palestine" and the destruction of Israel], let joy surround everybody".



A webpage dedicated to clips which glorify the organization's martyrs, include incitement to terrorism and violence, and document terrorist attacks against Israel.



A clip and a song dedicated to Yahya "the Engineer" Ayyash, glorifying suicide bombing attacks and turning Yahya Ayyash into a role model.

إحصائية هجمات حماس في الضفة والقطاع والقصطنة

نوع الهجمة	عدد الهجمات	عدد المصابين والقتلى		عدد الضحايا	التعليق
		القتلى	المصابين		
مسلحون	89	0	617	3371	أبواب أنواع الهجمات
طائرات مسلحة	357	0	136	413	
فدح مسلحة	58	0	68	96	
كثير مسلح	271	0	192	414	
فدح قوات مسلحة	477	0	77	306	
هجمات قنصل	90	2	99	0	
هجمات باردة	41	0	47	76	
قصف فلتان هزات	1194	4499	7	156	
قصف مواقع حماس	1256	2258	13	489	
قصف BBO	267	328	6	37	
قصف 'اسرا'	193	281	0	11	
خروج بار	201	243	0	14	
أسر جولة أو إعدام وقاتل	23	0	24	45	
سيرة مطبوع	10	0	27	115	هجمات أخرى بطرق
كثيرة ضحايا	6	0	9	8	
إصابة قاتلة	2	0	0	0	
هجمة حرس	10	0	18	37	
هجمة غير	58	0	35	16	
المجموع	4862	7988	1170	5735	

Statistics of terrorist attacks (including suicide bombing attacks) perpetrated by Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades



Suicide bombing attack in Beersheba (August 31, 2004)



Gruesome photographs from suicide bombing attacks perpetrated by Hamas. The photos show bodies of Israeli civilians inside and outside of buses.



A poster which glorifies the suicide bombing attack in Dimona (February 4, 2008)



Posters which glorify terrorist attacks and their perpetrators

The English-language website



A webpage dedicated to glorifying and commemorating the organization's shahids. At the top of the page is a photograph of Mohammed Moammar (the perpetrator of the suicide bombing attack in the Sheffield club in the city of Rishon LeZion, in which 16 Israeli civilians were killed and 45 were wounded, on May 7, 2002). The suicide bomber is described as possessing good qualities and caring about the Islamic nation. The website goes on to add: "He went out on Tuesday 7th of May, 2002 penetrating all the [Israeli] security barriers and fortifications and he entered a club for a Zionist gambling, carrying a suitcase bomb and Mohammed detonated it in the place. 20 Zionist settlers¹ were killed and 60 others were wounded in the operation".