



**Intelligence and Terrorism
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Summer camps in the Gaza Strip run by Hamas and other terrorist organizations inculcate youngsters with radical Islamic ideology and the culture of terrorism. Some camps offer military training to prepare future ranks of operatives for the terrorist organizations.



Young Palestinians undergoing military training at Hamas summer camps. Their instructors are Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades operatives; the rifles are made of wood.

1. Every year Hamas and other terrorist networks organize summer camps in the for Palestinians youngsters from the age of kindergarten to university. The camps indoctrinate them with radical Islamic ideology and the organizations' culture of terrorism ("the resistance"). It is part of a continuing process, which begins in kindergarten and ends with university students, to turn the children into at least supporters and if possible, operatives in the various terrorist organizations. For the Gazan population, which is economically distressed, the camps (which charge almost nothing and provide the children with hats and T-shirts) are a convenient and popular way of giving the children something to do during the summer vacation.

2. Several hundred camps are operating in the Gaza Strip this summer, with tens of thousands of campers. Most of them have been organized by Hamas or Hamas-affiliated Islamic institutions. The Islamic Block, Hamas's student organization, also organized a summer camp for Islamic University students. The PIJ camps have at least 10,000 campers. In addition to the usual games and other leisure-time activities, the children are exposed to propaganda promoting violence and terrorism as the means of achieving Palestinian goals (especially the "right to return") and the glorification of shaheeds, who are turned into role models. As part of their camping experience, Hamas campers are taken on field trips to visit the graves of shaheeds such as Hamas leaders (such as Ahmad Yassin and Abd al-Aziz Rantisi) and others.¹

3. Some of the camps have **paramilitary** or even **fully military activities** intended to prepare the young Palestinians for enlistment into the ranks of the various terrorist organizations. These activities are integrated into the extensive training held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip in preparation for "the day after"² (For photos see Appendix 1). The training is often deliberately held in full view of the media. For example, an AP correspondent in the Gaza Strip was present at the graduation ceremonies of a Hamas camp in the eastern Saja'iyah neighborhood of Gaza City, which ended on August 10. The correspondent reported that the camp aimed at "preparing the youngsters for battle against Israel. About 200 teens dressed in the uniform of the Hamas military wing showed off their new skills," which they acquired at the camp. Their final show included the presentation of

¹ The difference in the nature of the summer camps in the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria is readily apparent. In Judea and Samaria, where they are under the control of the Palestinian Authority, more emphasis is placed on art, sports, preparation for matriculation exams, foreign languages, music, literature, etc., in addition to Palestinian nationalistic themes such as the "right to return" and commemorating the shaheeds.

² For further information see our August 21, 2008 Bulletin entitled "Hamas and the other Palestinian terrorist organizations are taking advantage of the lull in the fighting to promote their military buildup, which includes intensive training, in preparation for the day after" at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/hamas_e003.pdf.

various fighting techniques, while in the background their instructors (bearded Hamas operatives) kept up a steady barrage of rifle fire and detonated small explosive devices in a nearby field. Present at the final activities was **Khalil al-Hayyeh**, a senior Hamas leader in the Gaza Strip, who “thundered” that “[These youngsters] are tomorrow’s leaders” (AP, August 11, 2008).

4. Some of the summer camps in the Gaza Strip, which are a breeding ground for future terrorist operatives, are run by radical Islamic associations, most of them affiliated with Hamas. The associations are funded by Islamic foundations abroad, some of them through a organization known as the **Union of Good**. Thirty-six funds and foundations belonging to it were recently outlawed by Israel.³ The Union of Good’s Internet site reported it was sponsoring **more than 100 summer camps in the Gaza Strip**, whose theme was “We stand firm despite the blockade” (Union of Good website, July 8, 2008). The camps which the Union of Good sponsors (and helps finance) are fully affiliated with **Hamas**, and at some of them military training is provided by operatives from the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the movement’s military-terrorist wing.

³ For further information see our July 8, 2008 Bulletin entitled “The war on financing terrorism: Defense Minister Ehud Barak signed an order outlawing 36 global Union of Good Islamic funds which raise money for Hamas institutions in the Palestinian Authority-administered territories. The money supports Hamas in building a political alternative to the PA and maintain a terrorism-supporting system” at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/financing_0708e.pdf.

Appendix I

Palestinian youths given military training by Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades operatives





Campers receiving paramilitary training at a Hamas summer camp (from an Israeli TV Channel 10 report which appeared on the Haaretz website, July 29, 2008)



Children wearing Hamas hats practice using a gun to subdue an enemy.



Children at a Hamas summer camp practice capture.



Children at a Hamas summer camp in the Gaza Strip fighting with nunchakus, traditional Japanese weapons consisting of two sticks connected at their ends by a short chain or rope.



Children at a Hamas summer camp in the Gaza Strip exercising while shouting anti-Israeli and anti-American slogans.

Appendix II

Pictures from summer camp, 2008



Boys at a Hamas summer camp in the Gaza Strip wearing green Hamas hats.



Hamas summer camp in the Saja'iya neighborhood of Gaza City. Its theme is "We stand firm despite the blockade" (Hamas Palestine-info website, August 17, 8.



Ismail Haniya, head of the Hamas administration, visits a camp in Khan Yunis.





Left: The group named after “shaheed” Ismail Abu Shunab, a Hamas leader in the Gaza Strip who died in a targeted killing in August 2003. The group is part of the summer camp run by the Hamas-affiliated Islamic Association.⁴ Right: A group of campers studying in class.



Summer camp run by Hamas-affiliated Dar al-Qur’an, where segregated groups of young men and women memorize the Qur’an. The summer camps run by the organization enrolled some 3,000 students aged 10-17.

⁴ The Islamic Association is an important Hamas institution in the Gaza Strip. It is headed by sheikh **Dr. Ahmad Bahar**, a senior Hamas activist, deals with indoctrinating youth and runs a large network of kindergartens. Its offices were closed by the PA at the beginning of 2002 but it continued operations by virtue of donations from Islamic foundations abroad.

Encouraging children to join Hamas and its military-terrorist wing when they grow up (from an Israeli TV Channel 10 report which appeared on the Haaretz website, July 29, 2008).



Asked, "Who is your army?" the children answer "[the Izz al-Din al-] Qassam [Brigades],⁵ [Hamas's military-terrorist wing].



The children are asked what their movement is, and they answer "Hamas!"



A Hamas camper answering the questions "What do you want to be when you grow up," says, "I want to be a military man, a holy warrior, to liberate this land, which belongs to us and not to others."

⁵ Boys and girls at Palestinian Islamic Jihad camps are also brainwashed to support the organization's terrorist activities. For example, on July 31, 2008, AP released a photo of girls at a PIJ camp carrying models of an Al-Quds rocket, the weapon used by the organization to attack western Negev towns and villages.

Pictures of children who wear uniforms and carry weapons. Hamas brainwashes the young to both accept and desire violence.



A preschool child wearing battle fatigues and a hat with the Hamas insignia; the picture is from the Hamas website. Hamas and the other terrorist organizations often issue pictures of children in uniform and carrying weapons, sending a message to the younger generation that violence is acceptable and desirable (Palestine-info website, August 17, 2007).



A preschool child in uniform and carrying a plastic rifle.⁶ (www.muqata.blogspot.com, July 31, 2008).

⁶ For further information see our November 8, 2007 Bulletin entitled "Palestinian children playing with plastic weapons, copying the fighting methods of the terrorist organizations" at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/h_i_1107.pdf.