



Intelligence and Terrorism  
Information Center  
at the Israel Intelligence Heritage &  
Commemoration Center

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## Summary of the Palestinian terrorist organization and Arab media reactions to the Jewish-Arab violence in Acre (Updated to October 15)

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An Arab pushing a caricature Jew off the walls of Acre, a reference to Acre's historical resistance to foreign invaders (Tishrin, Syria, October 14, 2008).

## Overview

1. The violent confrontations between Jews and Arabs in the northern Israeli city of Acre prompted a wave of reactions from the Palestinian terrorist organizations, Hezbollah and the Arab media. They were characterized by **spiteful anti-Israeli incitement** which in some instances attempted to fan the flames and continue the events, and possibly spread them to other Israeli cities. They accused Israel of wanting to expel the Arabs of Acre from their city as part of a general Israeli terrorist policy. All the propaganda and incitement **completely ignored** the train of events (which began with the provocative ride of an Arab resident through a Jewish neighborhood on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar) and the efforts made by the Israeli authorities to calm the situation.

2. The Palestinian terrorist organizations, especially Hamas, called upon the Arab residents of Acre to continue their "resistance" against Israel, promising to support and "defend" them. They assured the Arabs of Acre that when the time came Hamas troops would enter Acre, and expressed their hope that the events heralded the beginning of the "third intifada."

## The Palestinian terrorist organizations

### Hamas

3. On October 11 Hamas held a procession in the northern Gaza Strip in support of the "Palestinians of Acre." At the rally which followed, Hamas spokesman **Musheir al-Masri** expressed support for the Arab residents of Acre, saying that the day would come when the forces of Hamas and the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades would enter the city (PalMedia website, October 11).



Musheir al-Masri speaking at a rally in support of the Arabs of Acre (Al-Aqsa TV, October 11).

i) **Mustafa al-Sawaf**, editor of Hamas's daily newspaper Felesteen, wrote that "a new Zionist wave of terrorism was visited upon Acre," and that the "civilian resistance" of the Palestinian people in the with was "their entirely legal right." If the confrontations in Acre continue, they will spread, he said, to other mixed cities in Israel. He called upon the Arabs of Acre to **continue their resistance** [i.e., violence] and expressed his hope that their activities were the **beginning of a third intifada** (Felesteen, October 12).



An Israeli thinks about "a product with no Arabs" as he is about to use the head of an Arab (labeled "Acre") as a golf ball (Felesteen, October 15. The cartoon also appeared on the Palestinian Islamic Jihad's Pal-today website.)

ii) Hamas spokesman **Sami Abu Zuhri** said that the events prove that "Zionist racism against Arab residents" had increased and were the result of the Annapolis meeting. He said that Hamas stood shoulder to shoulder with Israeli Arabs, who were "the victims of repeated Zionist attacks" (Palestine-info website, October 9).



Rally held in the northern Gaza Strip to support of the Arabs of Acre (Al-Qqsa TV, October 11).

## Other Palestinian Terrorist Organizations

5. **Walid Hilles**, Palestinian Islamic Jihad activist in the Gaza Strip, said that the attacks showed “the barbarity of the occupation and its racism,” and called upon Palestinians to stand firm in the face of “the Israeli plan to expel them from their lands” (Pal-today website, October 10).

6. **Jamal al-Hudheiri**, chairman of Hamas’s Popular Committee to Resist the Blockade, claimed that Israel’s objective was to destroy the Palestinian people in a new way, through attacking Palestinians in Acre (Qudsnet website, October 10).

7. An announcement was issued by **Abu Jamal**, who represented himself as a spokesman for the **Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine**, to the effect that the PFLP would defend Israeli Arabs. Responding to remarks made by Israeli parliament member Avigdor Lieberman, he said that the Brigades would not remain silent and that even the lull arrangement would not prevent them from reacting to the “occupation’s continuing crimes.” He said that his organization’s plan to assassinate Israel ministers had not ended and Lieberman’s fate would be similar to that of Rechavam Ze’evi<sup>1</sup> (Fox News from the Gaza Strip website, October 14).

## Hezbollah

8. Hezbollah issued an announcement representing the events as “an organized campaign of attacks carried out by gangs of settlers and of the regime of the Israeli occupation to expel [the Arabs of Acre] from their lands,” saying that “the wild aggression completes the racist expulsion plan.” Hezbollah expressed solidarity with “the firm stance of the Arabs of Acre” and called upon the Arab and Islamic people to support and defend them (Lebanese News Agency, October 14).

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<sup>1</sup> Rechavam Ze’evi, Tourism Minister in Ariel Sharon’s government, was assassinated by terrorist operatives belonging to the PFLP on October 17, 2001, in the Hyatt Hotel in Jerusalem. For further information see our Bulletin entitled “IDF operation seizes the assassins of late Israeli minister, Rechavam Ze’evi” at [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/pdf/jericho\\_e.pdf](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/jericho_e.pdf)

## The Arab Media

### Al-Jazeera

9. Al-Jazeera coverage of the events in Acre was traditionally hostile to Israel. Its website described them as the peak of a continuing campaign of provocation carried out by the Jewish residents of Acre and represented the Arab residents as victims. An article entitled "**The Arab's Kristallnacht**"<sup>2</sup> quoted a local **Al-Yater**<sup>3</sup> activist named Sami Hawari. He said that the sights in Acre reminded many people of pictures of the Kristallnacht, and expressed his fear of "another massacre of Palestinians, this time in Acre."

### Syria

10. The Syrian governmental media, which doesn't miss an opportunity to attack Israel, exploited the events in Acre for spiteful anti-Israeli propaganda. Two editorials appeared in the official newspaper *Tishrin* relating to the events:

i) According to the first, the events in Acre were reminiscent of the activities of "the Haganah and Etzel gangs" and proved the existence of "terrorism and the continuing violations of human rights." In addition, they proved that there had been no change in "Zionist mentality and in the activities of the occupation to effect a transfer, and that [Israel continues] its policies of making areas exclusively Jewish, settlement, entrenching the occupation and destroying Arab rights" (Tishrin, October 11).

ii) In the second editorial, Tishrin pointed the finger of guilt at all the Israeli leaders since the inception of the State of Israel, claiming they were "terrorists who should be tried in the Hague." It also attacked the Israeli rabbis who were "brought up on spite and extremism," as well as the IDF, which "supervises and protects the settlers." "Israeli society," it claimed, "grew on aggression and on depriving other people of their rights and lands, and every day it nurtures its racist orientation in the schools, army, political and social life and even in its economy" (Tishrin, October 13).

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<sup>2</sup> The Kristallnacht occurred in Nazi Germany on the night of November 9, 1938. In a single night, 92 Jews were murdered and 25,000-30,000 were rounded up and deported to concentration camps.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Yater is an "association for promoting cultural and social development" in Acre which operates to promote the city's Arab-Palestinian identity.

## Egypt

11. According to an editorial in **Al-Ahram** entitled “Riots and Ethnic Cleansing,” the events in Acre showed the dangers lurking for Palestinians living in Jewish neighborhoods in Israel. The events were a manifestation of the Israeli policy referred to by historian Ilan Pappé as “the ethnic cleansing program carried out by Israeli leaders against the Palestinians.”<sup>4</sup> One of the signs was that Jewish extremists burned four “Palestinian” buildings in the eastern section of Acre, after which the families had to move (Al-Ahram, October 14).

12. According to an editorial in Al-Gumhuriya entitled “The Events in Acre – Israeli Terrorism,” the “bloody confrontations” in Acre between the Arab residents, “the legitimate owners of the land” and the Israelis “who settled there by force” exposed the truth behind the State of Israel. Forcing to Arab residents to leave their homes after they had attacked them and burned their houses was another chapter in the “series of Zionist terrorist actions which forced the Palestinian refugees to leave their lands and home after the most barbaric acts of slaughter in modern history” (Al-Gumhuriya, October 14).

## Jordan



The Israeli ship of state crashing into the walls of Acre, a reference to Acre’s historical resistance to foreign invaders (Al-Ghad, October 10; reprinted in Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, October 12).

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<sup>4</sup> Ilan Pappé is a “new historian” whose work is inflexibly anti-Israeli and presents a revisionist version of the history of the State of Israel, especially with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Arab propaganda hostile to Israel is only too happy to exploit his work for its own ends.

## The Palestinian Authority



The Arab at the left loudly proclaims “Akka,” the Arab name for Acre, while the religious Jew at the right whispers “Acco,” its Hebrew name. The Hebrew “Acco” is crossed out at the bottom right in favor of the Arabic “Akka” (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, October 15).



A frightened Israeli soldier running from stones in Acre. The slingshot forms part of the word “Acre” in Arabic (Omayma Joha, Hamas-affiliated cartoonist, Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, October 14).