



## Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center

March 14, 2010

# Terrorism and the Internet: “Electronic intifada” declared on Israel on Facebook. Hamas and radical Islamic groups, encouraged by Iran, employ social networks on the Internet for the struggle against Israel

## Overview

1. Following the Israeli government’s decision to include the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron and Rachel’s Tomb in Bethlehem in the national heritage sites, **a new Facebook group was created in late February by Palestinian web activists**, calling for an “**electronic intifada**” to protect the holy sites of Islam from Israel. The group has **several thousand members**, with more people joining constantly. The first message of the group (published on February 25) states that the group members consider themselves a **power “that will uproot the [Zionist] entity”**.

الإنتفاضة الأولى للفيس بوك إنتصرة المسجد الأقصى و الدفاع عن المقدسات الإسلامية  
فتوح: كل فتوحنا في يدينا

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بدء فعاليات الإنتفاضة الأولى للفيس بوك إنتصرة المسجد الأقصى و الدفاع عن المقدسات الإسلامية

البيان الأول  
من  
إنتفاضة الفيس بوك الأولى

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
( يا أيها الذين آمنوا اصبروا وصابروا وابطلوا واتقوا الله لعلكم تفلحون )

يا أيها الجماهير المسلمة :  
أنتم اليوم على موعد مع قدر الله سبحانه النافذ في اليهود وأعوانهم .. بل  
أنتم جزء من هذا القدر الذي سيفتح جذور كيانهم إن كان أجلا أم عاجلا بإذن  
الله سبحانه وتعالى .

إن ملايين الشهداء و مئات الآلاف من الجرحى الذين قدموا أرواحهم خلال  
فترة هذا الاجتلال في سبيل الله من أجل عزة أمتهم وكرامتها ، ومن أجل  
استعادة حقنا في وطننا رفيعاً لرؤية الله في الأرض .. لهي تعبير صادق عن  
روح التضحية والقداء التي يتمتع بها الشعب الفلسطيني والذي قض مضاجع  
الصهيانية ووزله كيانهم ، والذي أتت للعالم أن شعباً يطلب الموت لا يمكن أن  
يموت .

شعلة ناراً

The first message of the Facebook group (February 25, 2010)

2. The first announcement published by the group calls upon all the Muslims in the world to join the struggle for the holy sites in Jerusalem and to **exert pressure on their governments** to take a firm stance against Israel. The announcement attempts to incite its various target audiences by spreading false information according to which Jewish organizations intend to declare an international day for the establishment of the third temple, during which they are going to break into the Temple Mount. **The terminology used by the group is radical Islamic.** Several indications show that **Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood is involved in the initiative.** It is also possible that the group members include activists affiliated with Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist organizations.

3. One of the implications of using Facebook is the creation of **yet another platform for spreading messages of hate and incitement, encouraging violations of public order in Judea and Samaria (specifically the Temple Mount).** The effectiveness of that platform was proven in the wave of protest which engulfed Iran after the last presidential elections. Recently, Iran's minister of intelligence, speaking at a recent pro-Palestinian convention in Tehran, called to declare a media intifada against Israel using online social networks.

## **Using the Facebook social network for a so-called electronic intifada against Israel**

4. According to an article recently published on the website of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Egyptian province of Al-Sharqiyya, the Facebook group was established by private Muslim individuals, and the group members call for a campaign named **"The First Facebook Intifada", to save the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy sites of Islam, and for an "electronic awakening"**. They also issued a call to launch a propaganda campaign designed to stress the importance of the holy sites to Islam and Muslims. The group members indicated that they were no less active than Palestinians dealing with the "brutal Zionist occupation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip"<sup>1</sup> (www.sharkiaonline.com, February 28, 2010). **The article was also published on Al-Resala, a website affiliated with Hamas, on February 28, 2010,** and on other Hamas media.

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<sup>1</sup> This may indicate that the group members are not necessarily Palestinians from Judea, Samaria, or the Gaza Strip.



The article published on Hamas periodical Al-Resala (February 28, 2010)

5. The group members share texts, pictures, posters, videos, and various relevant links. The website features a video of a speech given by Ra'ed Salah, the head of the northern faction of the Islamic movement in Israel, at a convention called "Al-Aqsa in Danger". In the speech, Salah accuses Israel of terrorism and conducting excavations on the Temple Mount to establish the third temple there.<sup>2</sup> The group members also send each other messages on planned events, such as protest demonstrations, rallies, and conventions.

6. The contents of the website show that **the group has over 5,000 registered members as at March 2** (according to the Al-Resala article, about 3,000 members registered in the first two days), and that number is constantly growing. The group manager identifies himself as **Ahmed Muhammad al-Dari (possibly his nickname)**. The group members use **radical Islamic terminology associated with the Muslim Brotherhood**. Some of the texts are in the Egyptian dialect. The group may also include Hamas operatives or people associated with them.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/ahmedeldary?v=wall&ref=search>

<sup>3</sup> The announcement was published on Al-Resala and on Hamas's forum website. Images posted by the group include graphic elements used by Hamas as well as Hamas illustrations and photographs (for example, a poster for the 22nd anniversary of the establishment of Hamas).



## Hamas called to declare March 9 as day 1,000 of the Gaza Strip “blockade”

8. On March 6, an announcement was posted on Hamas’s website Palestine-info, according to which it was decided to declare March 9 as the “electronic day against the Zionist blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip”. The day was declared to mark 1,000 days of the “blockade” on the Gaza Strip. During that day, activists on online social networks (Facebook, Twitter, and various blogs) announced that they would change their online profile pictures to one single image dedicated to that day and to the Gaza Strip.

9. As part of the “electronic day” events, a new Facebook was created which is called “Gaza under siege for 1,000 days”, in which members upload mostly videos and audio clips representing the “tragedy of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, particularly during the latest Zionist war last year”. **The number of group members has already exceeded four thousand.** The group members have emphasized that “Gaza and the West Bank are two places in one country—Palestine, and that their salute to Gaza and to its firm stance will not make them forget what is happening in the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the attempts of the [Zionist] entity to turn it into a Jewish site” (March 6, 2010, Palestine-info).



The group supporting Gaza on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?v=info&qid=329537828907>

## The implications of using Facebook for the Palestinian struggle against Israel

10. Using online social networks in general and Facebook in particular **is yet another instrument for raising considerable support and gaining influence in the battle for hearts and minds**. It is an open, publicly available instrument, which transcends borders and allows direct and almost unmonitored communication. It can be used to deliver textual and visual messages. Hamas and radical Islamic groups supporting it (encouraged by Iran) recently began to use Internet social networks for the struggle against Israel.

11. For the Palestinians, using the web allows a direct connection between the Gaza Strip, controlled by Hamas, and Judea and Samaria, controlled by the PA. It also enables the Palestinians to maintain contacts with countries in the Middle East and elsewhere in which radical Islamic and terrorist elements exist. In addition to the propaganda implications, it is also a **convenient platform for incitement**. The target audience of such networks are usually **young people who can be influenced by those messages**. This may allow **radical Islamic and terrorist elements to incite young people for violations of public order in Judea and Samaria, specifically on the Temple Mount**.



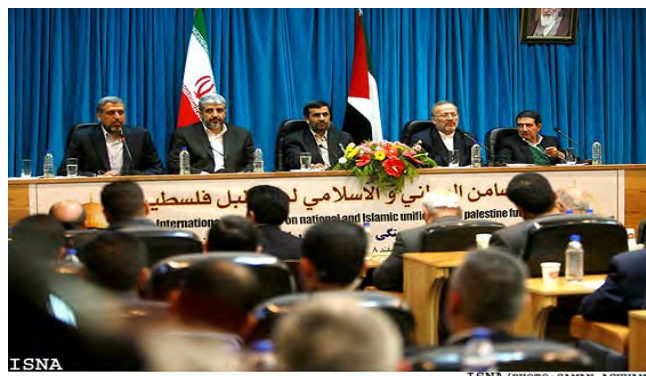
Terrorism-supportive messages on the Facebook group: a mother straps an explosive belt on her son, who is wearing a mask

## Iran's minister of intelligence calls for online intifada against Israel

12. On February 28, a conference titled National and Islamic Solidarity for the Future of Palestine was held in Tehran. The conference was headed by Iran's President Ahmadinejad, who even gave a belligerent anti-Israeli speech. The conference participants included Khaled Mash'al, the chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau; Ramadan Shalah, the secretary-general

of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad; and Ahmed Jibril, the head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command.

13. During the conference, **Iran's Intelligence Minister Haydar Maslahi called on Muslim countries** to launch a so-called media intifada against Israel. According to Maslahi, that intifada, the third in number, must be waged by **establishing an online social network to expose the deeds of Israel and the US by means of a propaganda campaign against them**. Maslahi also said that his ministry was willing to provide **any assistance necessary to the Palestinian people for that purpose** (IRNA, February 28, 2010).



Iran's President Ahmadinejad at a press conference with Hamas Political Bureau chief Khaled Mash'al at the National and Islamic Solidarity for the Future of Palestine conference (ISNA, February 28, 2010)

14. It is our assessment that the Iranian intelligence minister's call to use online social networks must be considered **within the context of the considerable effectiveness proven during the regime opponents' struggle following the presidential elections**. Being aware of the effectiveness of that tool, the Iranian regime **attempts to channel its use against Israel** while waging an all-out war on such activities inside Iran. The Iranian regime often blocks websites which it finds unacceptable (such as websites affiliated with government opponents), detains bloggers, and even completely shuts down all Internet access during events such as the revolution anniversary.

## Appendix

### Incitement online: full text of the first announcement on the creation of the Facebook group

بدء فعاليات الإنتفاضة الأولى للفييس بوك لئصرة المسجد الأقصى و الدفاع عن المُقدسات الإسلامية

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إنتفاضة الفييس بوك الأولى

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يا أيها الجماهير المُسلمة:

أنتم اليوم على موعد مع قدر الله سبحانه النافذ في اليهود وأعوانهم .. بل أنتم جزء من هذا القدر الذي سيقتل جذور كيانه إن كان أجلا أم عاجلا بإذن الله سبحانه وتعالى.

إن ملايين الشهداء و مئات الآلاف من الجرحى الذين قدموا أرواحهم خلال فترة هذا الاحتلال في سبيل الله من أجل عزة أمتهم وكرامتها ، ومن أجل استعادة حقنا في وطننا رفعة لراية الله في الأرض .. لهي تعبير صادق عن روح التضحية والفداء التي يتمتع بها الشعب الفلسطيني والذي قض مضاجع الصهاينة وزلزل كيانهم ، والذي أثبت للعالم أن شعباً يطلب الموت لا يمكن أن يموت.

لا بد أن يفهم اليهود برغم قيودهم وسجونهم ومعقلاتهم و إغتيالاتهم .. برغم المعاناة التي يعانينا شعبنا في ظل احتلالهم المجرم .. برغم شلالات الدماء التي تنزف كل يوم .. برغم الجراح ، فإن شعبنا أقدر منهم على الصبر والثبات في وجه طغيانهم و غطرستهم حتى يعلموا أن سياسة العنف ستقابل أشد منها من أبنائنا وشبابنا لأنهم يعشقون جنات الخلد أشد مما يعشق أعداؤنا الحياة الدنيا.

لقد جاءت انتفاضة شعبنا المرابط في الأرض المحتلة رفضا لكل الاحتلال وضغوطاته.. رفضا لسياسة انتزاع الأراضي وغرس المستوطنات .. رفضا لسياسة القهر من الصهاينة.. رفضاً للتهود .. قد جاءت لتوقظ ضمائر اللاهثين وراء السلام الهزيل .. وراء المؤتمرات الدولية الفارغة.. وراء مصالحات جانبية خائنة .. وأن يتيقنوا أن الإسلام هو الحل وهو البديل.

و أن يعلم كل المستوطنون المستهترون أن شعبنا عرف ويعرف طريقه .... طريق الاستشهاد وطريق التضحية ، وأن شعبنا جواد كريم في هذا الميدان ، ولن تجديهم سياسة العسكريين – إسرائيل و أمريكا - والمستوطنين وستتطم كل محاولاتهم لإذابة شعبنا و إبادة برغم رصاصهم و برغم عملائهم و برغم مخازيرهم..

وليعلموا أن العنف لا يولد إلا العنف وأن القتل لا يولد إلا القتل . وصدق الفائل : "وأنا الغريق فما خوفي من البلل".  
ولصهاينة المجرمين : ارفعوا أيديكم عن فلسطين بأكملها – عن مُدنها – عن مخيماتها- عن أطفالها – عن نساؤها – عن شيوخها – عن مدارسها – عن مستشفياتها .. ... عن قرآننا ، فمعركتنا معكم معركة عقيدة ووجود و حياة.



و ان ما يحدث الآن من ضم للمعالم الإسلامية .. إلى معالم إسرائيل ، و كذلك عمليات التهويد لمدينة القدس ، و كذلك الحفريات التي تحدث أسفل المسجد الأقصى..

لن يتم السكوت عليه ابدأ مهماً كان الثمن  
سأحمل روعي على راحتى ... و ألقى بها في مهاوى الردى  
فإما حياة تسر الصديق ... و إما ممات يغيظ العدى  
إجعلوا غداً الجمعة يوم الشهادة بفلسطين

وليعلم العالم أن اليهود يرتكبون الجرائم النازية ضد الشعب الفلسطيني . وأنهم سيشرّبون من نفس الكأس.

(ولتعلمن نبأه بعد حين)

عشاق الشهادة

الخميس 25/2/2010