



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

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Using the Internet to market terrorism: The Palestinian Islamic Jihad markets its terrorist messages using Internet sites supported by Western (mainly American) companies (despite the fact it has been declared a terrorist organization by both the United States and the European Union)

(Revised and updated August 29, 2004)

Overview

1. Palestinian and international terrorist organizations make **massive use of the Internet** to spread propaganda supporting terrorism and as a means of maintaining contact between organizations (and headquarters), their infrastructures and their target populations (often over enormous distances).
2. The importance of the Internet as a means of marketing terrorism became significantly greater after the events of September 11, 2001. That was because the Web makes it relatively easy for them to evade the difficulties imposed by various governments (particularly the American government). It also enables them to exploit liberal Western laws ensuring freedom of speech to spread their propaganda **without effective supervision and with no censorship whatsoever**.
3. The following case study examines the way the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) uses the Internet to spread its terrorist propaganda.

The PIJ Internet infrastructure – Survey

4. **The PIJ operates three main and three subsidiary Internet sites.** A description of those sites and of the Internet companies supporting them follows. ¹

¹ The data provided here are primarily based on an examination of the Haganah Internet site in the United States (<http://internet-haganah.us/haganah/>), which tracks terrorist Internet sites, predominantly of an Islamic nature. Other sources used were the MEMRI (particularly "Islamist Websites and Their Hosts Part I: Islamist Terror Organizations," by Marie-Hélène Boccara) (<http://www.memri.org/news.html>) and Whois Domain-Based Research Services (<http://whois.net>) sites. The picture as presented here **is by no means complete**. In addition, the survey does not include sites which support the PIJ but do not officially belong to the organization.

5. **The three primary sites:-**

- a. <http://www.qudsway.com>: The site posts current notices from the organization, archival material about its activities, publication of books and articles sponsored by the PIJ, encouragement of terrorism against Israel and praise for the suicide bombers.
- b. <http://www.palestineway.com>: The contents of this site are similar to those of Qudsway.
- c. <http://www.sarayaalquds.com>: This is the site of the organization's operational-terrorist wing (the Jerusalem Battalions). It includes updated documentation about the Battalions, archival material about the organization's terrorist activities, publication of books and articles sponsored by the PIJ, encouragement of terrorism against Israel and praise for the suicide bombers.

6 The three subsidiary sites:-

- a. <http://www.jimail.com/abrar/> : It posts notices, information about the organization's activities, publication of books and articles sponsored by the PIJ, encouragement of the use of terrorism against Israel and praise for the suicide bombers. It is inactive but directs surfers to the organization's main sites.
- b. <http://www.rabdullah.com> : This is the organization's site dedicated to its current leader, [Ramadan Abdallah Shalah](#) . It documents his pronouncements, activities and worldview in favor of an uncompromising armed insurrection for the "liberation" of "all Palestine" and the establishment of an Islamic state. It posts articles, lectures, speeches, pictures and a biography of Shalah.
- c. <http://www.shikaki.com> : This is the organization's site dedicated to the memory of its founder and leader, [Fathi Shqaqi](#) , who was killed in Malta in 1995. It documents his pronouncements, activities and worldview in favor of an uncompromising armed insurrection for the "liberation" of "all Palestine" and the establishment of an Islamic state.

7. Insofar as can be verified , the organization's Internet infrastructure is supported by Western companies located mainly in the United States ; in one case it is supported by an Iranian company (See Appendix A). The PIJ appears on the lists of terrorist organizations prepared by the United States and the European Union . Preference mainly for the United States is not a matter of chance but rather convenience: it features companies which can provide advanced technological support, the PIJ can easily "disappear" among so many American and Western companies, and because of freedom of expression laws, it does not strictly or effectively control the sites of the various terrorist organizations (in the United States reliance is placed on the First Amendment to the Constitution).

8. In that context, it is worthwhile to note that other Palestinian terrorist organizations, such as [Hamass](#) and the Lebanese [Hezbollah](#), as well as international terrorist organizations such as – paradoxically -- [Al-Qaeda](#), all extensively use Western companies and technology, particularly those in the United States.

9. Following Appendices describe the various PIJ Websites and provide information about the companies supporting them.

Appendix A

<http://www.qudsway.com> and <http://www.qudsway.org>

Home Page



1. This is a [Palestinian Islamic Jihad Website](#) . It posts basic information about the PIJ and its past and present leaders; regular reports on its terrorist attacks (and those of other organizations), archival material, publication of books and

articles sponsored by the PIJ, encouragement of terrorism against Israel and praise for the suicide bombers. It is frequently updated.

2. Its ISP is Iranian:-

Telecommunications Company of Iran (TCI)
Data Communication Affairs
665 Shiraz Ave.
Mollasadra St.
Tehran 14358, Iran
+98 218029495
+98 218029494
mahdioun@mail.dci.co.ir

Appendix B

<http://www.palestineway.com> (abrarway.com)

Home Page



1. This is a Palestinian Islamic Jihad Website . It posts announcements about the organization and its activities, archival material, publication of books and articles sponsored by the PIJ, encouragement of terrorism against Israel and praise for the suicide bombers. It is updated frequently and its contents are similar to those of qudsway.com.
2. Its ISP is VONOC, located in Englewood, Colorado.
3. Its host server is web-host-plus.com, probably based in London. (Note : In early July 2004 it was learned that web-host-plus.com is actually based in Bucharest, Romania. Its current status is unclear.
4. The site is registered in Beirut.

Note : The site now (August 29, 2004) appears in skeleton form only. Abrarway.com has begun operating separately, using the services of an American company which is a Level3 customer. Level3 has made it clear that it has no customer relationship with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad . It also made it clear that it alerted a customer which did provide the PIJ with its services. For the complete text of the Level3 disavowal, see Appendix G .

Home Page



1. This is the site of the Jerusalem Battalions, the PIJ's operational-terrorist wing. It posts updated information about the Battalions, material about the organization's terrorist activities (wills of the "martyrs," words of praise in their memories, announcements, etc.) and publication of books and articles sponsored by the PIJ. The site is updated less frequently than Qudsway.com and Palestineway.com.
2. Its ISP was an American company receiving its services from Level3. Level3 has made it clear that it has no customer relationship with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad . It also made it clear that it alerted a customer which did provide the PIJ with its services. For the complete text of the Level3 disavowal, see Appendix G .
3. The site was registered in Beirut .

Note: The site is no longer operative (August 29, 2004).

Home Page



Note: Above is the home page reached for jimail.com/abrar.

1. This is the PIJ's site. It posts announcements, information on the organization's activities, publication of books and articles sponsored by the PIJ, encouragement of terrorism against Israel and praise for the suicide bombers. **It is inactive** but serves to direct surfers to the organization's main sites.
2. Its ISP is Alabanza, based in Baltimore, Maryland.
3. The site is registered in Beirut.



1. This is the organization's site dedicated to its current leader, [Ramadan Abdallah Shalah](#) . It documents his pronouncements, activities and worldview in favor of an uncompromising armed insurrection for the “liberation” of “all Palestine” and the establishment of an Islamic state. It posts articles, lectures, speeches, pictures and a biography of Shalah. The site is not updated.
2. [Its ISP was an American company](#) receiving its services from Level3. Level3 has made it clear that it has no customer relationship with the [Palestinian Islamic Jihad](#) . It also made it clear that it alerted a customer which did provide the PIJ with its services. For the complete text of the Level3 disavowal, see [Appendix G](#) .
3. [The site was registered in Beirut.](#)

Note: The site is no longer operative (August 29, 2004).



1. The PIJ Website dedicated to the memory of its founder and leader, Fathi Shaqaqi (killed in Malta in 1995). It documents his pronouncements, activities and worldview in favor of an uncompromising armed insurrection for the “liberation” of “all Palestine” and the establishment of an Islamic state.
It is almost identical in structure to Ramadan Shalah's site.
2. Its ISP was an American company receiving its services from Level3. Level3 has made it clear that it has no customer relationship with the [Palestinian Islamic Jihad](#) . It also made it clear that it alerted a customer which did provide the PIJ with its services. For the complete text of the Level3 disavowal, see [Appendix G](#) .
3. The site was registered in Beirut.

Note: The site is no longer operative (August 29, 2004).

Appendix G

Dr. Erlich --

We believe your August 2004 report is misleading because it strongly implies that the PIJ is a customer of Level 3's. To the contrary, Level 3 has no customer relationship whatsoever with that group.

Level 3 operates one of the largest Internet backbones in the world, and the company's network carries a substantial percentage of the world's Internet traffic every day. The company sells services on a wholesale basis to a wide variety of communications service providers, including ISPs and web-hosting companies. Level 3 itself is not a retail ISP, nor does it provide web-hosting services.

Level 3's global security department conducted an investigation following issuance of your report. The investigation determined that a U.S. company that buys services from Level 3 was an underlying provider of hosting services to some of the web sites identified in the report. Level 3 alerted its customer; the customer conducted its own investigation into the matter and has indicated it will decommission the web sites.

I am formally requesting that you do the following:

1. Please amend your report so that it accurately reflects the facts. We would like you to delete all references to Level 3 since, again, we do not have any customer relationship with the PIJ.
2. Remove the screen shots taken from Level 3's web site, which are inflammatory and harmful to the reputation of our company.

In addition, I would appreciate it if, in the future, you would first contact me if you have questions about web sites that may be connected to our network through our customers before releasing information publicly. As we have seen in this case, that information may be incorrect or highly misleading. If we determine that a web site is in violation of any applicable laws, we will take appropriate action immediately.

Thank you.

Arthur Hodges
Vice President, Corporate Communications
Level 3 Communications