



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (August 2 – 8, 2017)

Overview

- ▶ The Temple Mount crisis has waned but **popular terrorism continues**: in a supermarket in the central Israeli city of Yavne a Palestinian carried out a **stabbing attack**, critically wounding the assistant manager. At the Gush Etzion Junction there was an attempted stabbing attack. North of Ramallah an IDF post near the community of Beit El was shot at. **Note**: On August 8, 2017, after this bulletin was issued, a rocket was fired from the Gaza Strip, exploding in the region of the southern Israeli city of Ashqelon. In response Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked Hamas targets.
- ▶ The Israel Security Agency reported the recent exposure of the transfer of funds by courier from **Hamas in Turkey to the Gaza Strip and from there to Hebron**. The couriers visited Turkey as "businessmen." The exposure shows the efforts made by Hamas to transfer large sums of money to Judea and Samaria to fund its activities. According to an Israel Security Agency report, **Turkey continues as a base for Hamas operatives who handle terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria** and maintain close contact with the Gaza Strip.
- ▶ This past week King Abdallah of Jordan paid an official visit to the Muqata'a in Ramallah. It was a consequence of the Temple Mount crisis, which has waned. After the visit the Palestinian foreign minister reported a decision had been made to establish a joint Palestinian-Jordanian situation room to deal with the issue of the Temple Mount.

Terrorist Attacks and Attempted Terrorists Attacks

Stabbing Attack in a Supermarket in Yavne

- ▶ On **August 2, 2017**, a young Palestinian entered a supermarket in the central Israeli city of Yavne. He stabbed the store's assistant manager with a knife. The assistant manager tried

to fend him off, but the Palestinian terrorist stabbed him repeatedly, wounding him critically. The terrorist was detained by the Israeli security forces. The Palestinian media reported he was **Isma'il Ibrahim Abu 'Aram (al-N'aamin)**, 19, from **the town of Yatta**, south of Hebron (Facebook page of Shehab, August 2, 2017).



Left: The terrorist who carried out the stabbing attack (Facebook page of Nablus News, August 2, 2017). Right: The stabbing attack captured on a security camera in the supermarket (YouTube, August 2, 2017).

► **Stabbing attack at the Gush Etzion Junction – On August 2, 2017**, a Palestinian woman went to the Gush Etzion Junction armed with a knife. She was seen by a security force at the junction. As they approached her she threw the knife on the ground. The security force detained her; there were no casualties. The woman was from Beit Fajjar, south of Bethlehem. During interrogation she stated she had been inspired to carry out a stabbing attack by the events on the Temple Mount.

► **Shooting attack north of Ramallah – On August 5, 2017**, there was a drive-by shooting by Palestinians in a car coming from the direction of the Jilazoun refugee camp. They shot at an IDF post near Beit El. A bullet hit the post and a shell casing was later found. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 5, 2017). During a search in Jilazoun an improvised Carlo submachine gun was found (IDF spokesman, August 6, 2017). Local sources reported that three Palestinians had been detained: **Ibrahim Abu Kharma, Muhammad Ramadan 'Alian, and Karam Makhoulf Nakhle** (Ramallah News, August 6, 2017).



The submachine gun (or one like it) used in the shooting attack (Palinfo Twitter account, August 6, 2017).

The Situation in Judea and Samaria

Riots, Clashes and Popular Terrorism

► This past week Palestinians continued throwing stones and Molotov cocktails. The Israeli security forces carried out counterterrorism activities throughout Judea and Samaria, detaining dozens of Palestinians suspected of terrorist activity. Weapons and objects used in riots were seized. The more prominent occurrences were the following:

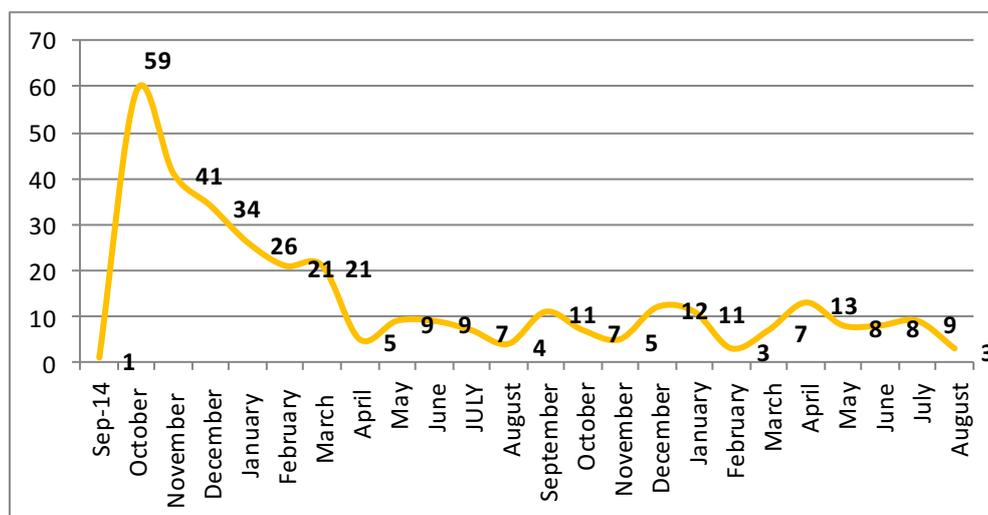
- ◆ **August 7, 2017** – Palestinians threw Molotov cocktails at a security vehicle in **Silwan, east Jerusalem**. The security team was not harmed. A short time later the Israeli security forces detained three suspects (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 7, 2017).
- ◆ **August 6, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at Israeli security forces in the **Old City of Jerusalem**. A policeman was hit in the head by a stone and evacuated to a hospital (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 7, 2017).
- ◆ **August 6, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at a bus carrying children on the **Gush Etzion-Hebron road** near the al-'Aroub refugee camp. A one-year-old child was injured by flying glass and evacuated to a hospital.

- ◆ **August 5, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at Israeli security forces in the **Arab village of Teqo'a south of Bethlehem**, wounding an IDF soldier (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 5, 2017).
- ◆ **August 4, 2017** – The Palestinian media reported that two Palestinians had been injured by Israeli security forces during the weekly riot in the **village of Qadoum** (Wafa, August 4, 2017).
- ◆ **August 4, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at a group of about 70 Israeli sightseers near the community of **Neveh Souf (Halamish), northwest of Ramallah**. IDF forces and security personnel from Neveh Souf rescued them. They were unharmed but their belongings were damaged. They had gone to the region without permission or coordinating with the proper authorities (Ynet, August 4, 2017).
- ◆ **August 4, 2017** – According to reports from Hamas, the Israeli security forces detained **Muhammad Abu Tir**, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), who was released two months ago. The Hamas faction in the PLC condemned the Israeli security forces for detaining him (Palinfo, August 4, 2017).
- ◆ **August 3, 2017** – During the past few days the Israeli security forces detained about 50 Palestinians who participated in riots in **the eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem** (Israel Police Force, August 3, 2017).



Israeli vehicle damaged by a Molotov cocktail near the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem (Facebook page of Palinfo, August 6, 2017).

Significant Terrorist Attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem since September 2015¹



Exposure of Channel for Transferring Funds for Terrorist Activity

- The Israeli security forces recently exposed a channel for **transferring funds from Hamas headquarters in Turkey to the Gaza Strip, and from the Gaza Strip to Hebron.** The transfers began in 2016, initiated by **Muhammad Maher Badr, a senior Hamas figure from Hebron and a Hamas-faction member of the PLC.** He recruited two couriers from Hebron. One of them was **a Hamas operative named Mus'ab Hashalmoun,** who was sent to Turkey on a "business trip."

¹ A significant attack is defined by the ITIC as involving shooting, stabbing, a vehicular attack, the use of IEDs, or a combination of the above. Stones and Molotov cocktails thrown by Palestinians are not included.

- ▶ **Mus'ab Hashalmoun** was asked to transfer funds from Turkey **to finance the activities of the Hamas headquarters in Hebron**. He was also asked to transfer funds to Hamas operatives who had been released from prison. In the meantime, two of his associates were in contact with a Hamas operative in the Gaza Strip from Hebron named **Majed Jab'ah**, who had been released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal. He helped coordinate the transfer of funds from Turkey.
- ▶ Mus'ab Hashalmoun and another courier met in Turkey several times with a Hamas operative from Hebron named **Haroun Nasser al-Din**, also released in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal. Haroun Nasser al-Din gave the couriers tens of thousands of dollars. They used the money to buy merchandise in Turkey which they imported [to the Hebron region] through an international delivery company. They then sold it and transferred the money to Hamas operatives in Hebron, after they had taken a fee. According to estimates, before they were exposed they had transferred about **\$200,000 to Hamas**. In addition, those involved planned to build a cement factory at a cost of millions of dollars, funded by Hamas, to launder terrorist money (Israel Security Agency, August 6, 2017).

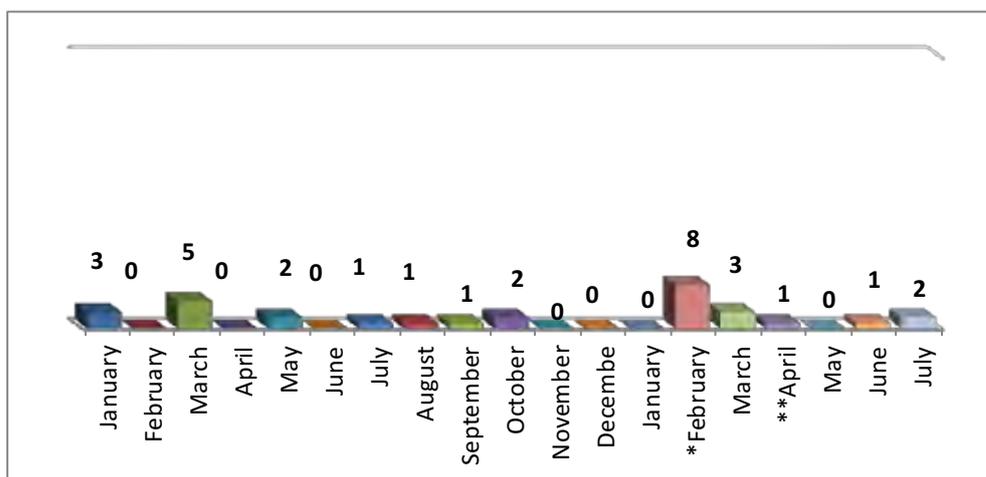
In ITIC assessment, the exposure shows the efforts made by Hamas **to transfer large sums of money to Judea and Samaria to fund its activities**. According to reports, Turkey continues as a base for Hamas operatives who handle terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria and maintain close contact with the Gaza Strip.

Israel's South

Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

- ▶ This past week no rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory.

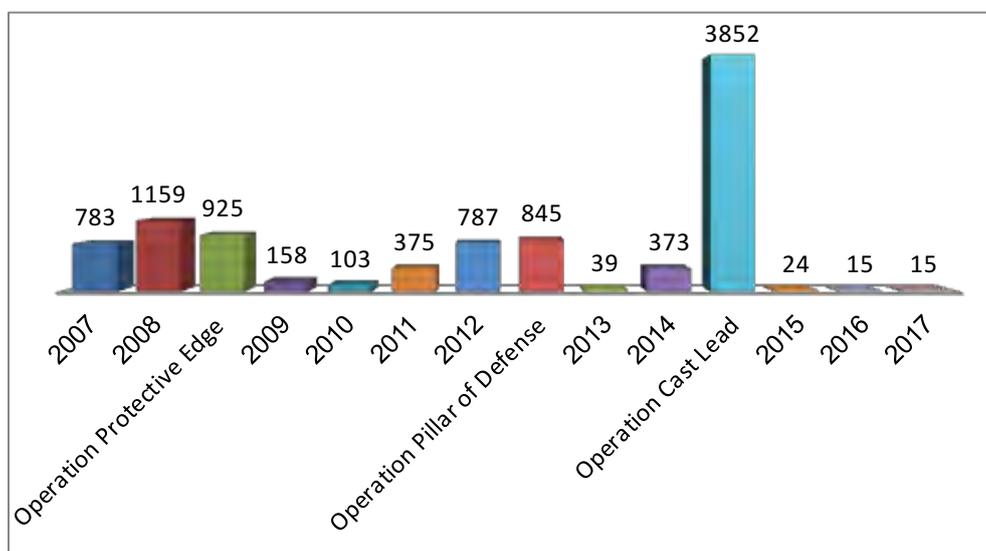
Monthly Distribution of Rocket Hits in Israel since January 2016



*Six of the rockets fired in February 2017 were launched from the Sinai Peninsula at Israeli territory, apparently by ISIS's Sinai Province.

** The rocket fired in April was launched from the Sinai Peninsula by ISIS's Sinai Province.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits in Israel's South²



Hang Glider from the Gaza Strip Falls in Israeli Territory

- ▶ On August 5, 2017, an IDF force identified a hang glider from the Gaza Strip that had fallen in Israeli territory. It was taken for examination. Several days previously IDF forces saw a hang glider approach the border of the northern Gaza Strip and then turn back. It may have been used by Hamas to collect intelligence (Ynet, August 5, 2017).

² The statistics do not include mortar shell fire or rockets which misfired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

Developments in the Gaza Strip

The Humanitarian Crisis

- ▶ **Abd al-Salam Siam, head of Hamas' committee for administering the Gaza Strip,** told foreign correspondents that **the Rafah crossing would open during the second half of August to allow pilgrims to leave for Mecca.** He added that it might also open in both directions for the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha. Regarding the electricity shortage, Siam said the committee had a plan to exact payment from Gazans for their electricity bills, thereby collecting 45 million shekels (about \$12.5 million) a month. That would be enough to cover the cost of providing electricity in eight-hour cycles (Sawa, July 31, 2017).
- ▶ Given the humanitarian crisis, Palestinian activists in the Gaza Strip recently launched a **campaign on the social networks calling for the immediate disbandment of Hamas' administrative committee,** which is headed by Abd al-Salam Siam. They posted cartoons and notices calling for the committee to be disbanded for the sake of the residents of the Gaza Strip (Facebook page of Mush Heik, August 6, 2017). **The disbandment of the committee is one of Mahmoud Abbas' fundamental demands and a condition for the Fatah-Hamas reconciliation.**



Left: Hashtag `#disband_the_committee`, calling for the Hamas' administrative committee, headed by Abd al-Salam Siam, to be disbanded (Facebook page of Mush Heik, August 6, 2017). Right: A cartoon by Gazan Isma'il al-Bazam (Facebook page of Ismail al-Bazam, August 8, 2017).

Hamis Delegation Visits Iran

- ▶ A delegation of senior Hamas figures went to Iran to participate in the swearing-in ceremony of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, after having received a formal invitation. The invitation was delivered during a visit of a delegation of Hamas figures in Lebanon

headed by Saleh al-Arouri, who met with **Hossein Amir Abdollahian, special international affairs advisor to the speaker of the Majlis** (the Iranian parliament). Also present at the meeting was **Mahmoud Fateh Ali**, the Iranian ambassador to Lebanon (Hamas website, August 2, 2017).



Saleh al-Arouri meets with Hossein Amir Abdollahian in Beirut (eremnews, August 2, 2017). It was Saleh al-Arouri's first media appearance since he was expelled from Turkey and Qatar. He is apparently currently staying in Lebanon.

► The delegation to Iran was headed by **Izzat al-Rishq**, a member of Hamas' political bureau, and included **Saleh al-Arouri**; **Usama Hamdan**, responsible for international relations; and **Zaher Jabarin, a Hamas operative** (Hamas website, August 4, 2017). **Isma'il Haniyeh**, head of Hamas' political bureau, did not join them. **Ramadan Shallah**, secretary general of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), also attended the swearing-in ceremony (Palinfo, August 4, 2017).



The delegation of senior Hamas figures, led by Izzat al Rishq (second from the right), in Tehran (official Hamas website, August 4, 2017).

- ▶ With the departure of the delegation, **Hamas stressed its close relations with Iran:**
 - ◆ **Ali Baraka, Hamas representative in Lebanon, claimed Hamas-Iran relations had been restored.** He said Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, would visit Iran as soon as it was possible for him to leave the Gaza Strip (Dunia al-Watan, August 6, 2017).
 - ◆ Before the delegation left the Gaza Strip, Hamas' political bureau issued a statement saying **the high-ranking delegation members would offer Hamas' thanks to Iran for its support of the Palestinian struggle and the Palestinian resistance.** Hamas also expressed the importance of strengthening relations with Iran.

- ▶ While in Iran the members of the delegation met with **Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Majlis speaker Ali Larijani.** The Iranians stressed that **they would continue supporting the Palestinian people and the "resistance"** [i.e., Hamas and other terrorist organizations]. Senior Hamas figures thanked Iran for supporting the Palestinian cause. Both sides stressed **they were turning over a new leaf in their relations and mutual struggle [against Israel]** (Hamas website, August 7, 2017).



Left: Members of the delegation meet with Ali Larijani (at the right), the speaker of the Majlis. Right: Members of the delegation meet with the Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif (directly to the left of the Iranian flag) (Hamas website, August 7, 2017).

► **The arrival of the Hamas delegation in Iran enraged the Saudi Arabians.** The Saudi daily newspaper **al-Riyadh** referred to the Hamas delegation as **a delegation of the terrorist movement Hamas**. Hamas condemned the newspaper for calling it a terrorist organization, claiming doing so was dangerous and could damage the reputation of the Palestinian people and its resistance. According to Hamas, calling it a terrorist organization did not serve anyone except the Palestinian people's enemies (Hamas website, August 5, 2017). The social networks also posted angry comments. **In response the paper removed the item from its website** (alresalah.net, August 5, 2017).

Unveiling a Monument Commemorating for Mazen Fuqahaa

► Hamas' military-terrorist wing organized a ceremony in the Nuseirat refugee camp (central Gaza Strip) **to inaugurate a square named for Mazen Fuqahaa**, a senior terrorist operative killed several months ago. A monument was erected for him in the center of the square. The ceremony was attended by masked Hamas operatives. The spokesman for the ceremony was **Mahmoud al-Zahar, a member of Hamas' political bureau**, who said that whoever chose the correct path would keep his rifle close and confront Israel (Facebook page of QudsN, August 7, 2017).



Left: During the ceremony senior Hamas figure Mahmoud al-Zahar raises a rifle with one hand and holds Mazen Fuqahaa's son with the other (Facebook page of QudsN, August 7, 2017). Right: The square and the monument in the Nuseirat refugee camp (Palinfo Twitter account, August 7, 2017).

Statement About the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) Snipers' Unit

► **The commander to the PIJ's sniper unit** said in an interview that during recent years his organization's military wing had developed sniper capabilities. He said that during Operation Protective Edge snipers had dealt a heavy blow to Israel. Regarding the unit's activities, he said they were kept secret for the sake of surprise. He also said the unit used tactics of deception and that its operatives were positioned mainly along the routes near points of contact with Israel. He said the operatives customarily "fooled spy planes flying through Gaza Strip airspace" (Website of the Jerusalem Battalions, August 5; and Filastin al-Yawm, August 7, 2017).

2017 Summer Camps End in the Gaza Strip

► Pictures from the closing ceremonies of the Hamas summer camps in the Gaza Strip **provide a look at what the children and adolescents learn there. For example:**

- ◆ The "Knights of Palestine" camp in the western part of Rafah had about 150 campers. It was sponsored by Hamas' public activities unit in Rafah, and lasted several days. The highlight of the closing ceremony was a simulation of **infiltrating an IDF post through a tunnel, abducting a soldier and taking him back into the tunnel.** The exercise was carried out **using real weapons** with a soundtrack of gunshots in the background (Facebook page of Rafah24, July 29 and 30, 2017).



Taking over an IDF post. Right: Emerging from a tunnel (Facebook page of Rafah24, July 26, 2017).



Abducting an IDF soldier.

- ◆ The closing ceremony of another "Knights of Palestine" camp was attended by **senior Hamas figure Fathi Hamad**. The campers simulated **emerging from a tunnel, capturing an IDF tank, abducting an IDF soldier and taking him back into the tunnel**. The campers also "demonstrated" attaching an explosive device to a tank to blow it up (Facebook page of Rafah24, July 26, 2017).



Left: Abducting an IDF soldier. Right: Attacking the tank (Facebook page of Rafah24, August 6, 2017).



Operatives of Hamas military-terrorist wing's naval commando unit position an explosive device on a tank (their swimming fins are attached to the back of their belts) (Facebook page of Rafah24, August 6, 2017).

Radio Station for Women Launched in the Gaza Strip

► On August 6, 2017, a new radio station named **Hawa Radio** began broadcasting. It targets the female audience in the Gaza Strip and will broadcast subjects related to family life and children.



(Facebook page of the Hawa Media Network, August 7, 2017).

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

King Abdallah of Jordan Visits the PA

► **On August 6, 2017, King Abdallah of Jordan arrived in Ramallah for a state visit** and was welcomed with a festive reception at the Muqata'a. He and Mahmoud Abbas met and mainly discussed **the issue of the Temple Mount**. Abdallah stressed the importance of Palestinian-Jordanian coordination and collaboration to initiate a peace process and find a just resolution for the Palestinian issue. They agreed they had to cooperate with the American administration for a peace process based on the two-state solution. As for Jerusalem, they agreed there was a need to preserve its historical and legal status because any change would have negative consequences for the entire region (Jordanian News Agency, August 7, 2017). **At the end of the meeting the Palestinian foreign minister**

announced they had decided to establish a joint Palestinian-Jordanian situation room to deal with the issue of the Temple Mount (Palestinian TV, August 7, 2017).



King Abdallah of Jordan visits Ramallah (Wafa, August 7, 2017).

Reactions to America's Freeze of Aid Funds to the PA

► On August 3, 2017, **the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved a bill that would suspend \$300 million in foreign aid to the PA** as long as it continued financing violence and terrorism against Israeli and American civilians.

► **The PA was enraged by the passage of the bill.**

◆ **Husam Zomlot**, PA representative in the United States, claimed the bill was a mistake and would have negative consequences. He claimed the PA gave financial aid to families who had lost their breadwinners because of the [Israeli] "occupation," whether through detention or killing (quds.net, August 5, 2017).

◆ During the annual conference of the Bethlehem Association in the United States, Husam Zomlot said the measure was useless and would not influence the commitment of the PA leadership, which would not renege on its commitment to the Palestinian people. He said if the Palestinian leadership had to choose between American aid and its responsibility to the Palestinian people, it would choose the latter. He also claimed that in any case, because of a previous decision, the United States had not contributed to the PA's budget for years (Ma'an, August 6, 2017).



Husam Zmlot delivers a speech at the annual of conference of the Bethlehem Association in the United States (Facebook page of Husam Zmlot, August 6, 2017).

◆ **Ahmed Majdalani, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee**, said the proposed bill had been expected by the Palestinian leadership because the United States had recently threatened to cut off its aid. In his opinion, he said, the bill was linked to the PA's decision to freeze all contacts with Israel, and it was "unjustified political punishment." He said it again showed the American administration's solidarity with Israel and support for it. That only served to reinforce the Palestinians' speculation that the United States was not a fair broker for a serious political process (al-Quds, August 4, 2017).

◆ **Wasel Abu Yousef, also a member of the PLO's Executive Committee**, who is secretary general of the Arab Liberation Front, said that conditioning aid to the PA on stopping payments to the families of shaheeds and Palestinian prisoners was very serious. He said the funds they received were legitimate and anchored in international law. He added that the United States had again proved its bias towards Israel (Ma'an, August 6, 2017).

Security Coordination with Israel

► According to **Ahmed Majdalani, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee**, Israel has been exerting pressure on the PA to reinstate security coordination. He said the PA was determined not to change its mind before re-examining all the agreements defining relations with Israel after the Oslo Accord was signed. He said the PA conditioned the reinstatement of security coordination on restoring security in Judea and Samaria to the

status quo before the second intifada, canceling the economic measures and ending Israel's control of the crossings (quds.press, August 3, 2017).

The PA in the International Arena

► **Nabil Shaath, advisor to Mahmoud Abbas for foreign affairs and international relations**, said the PA was continuing its preparations **to propose a number of resolutions related to the rights of the Palestinians** at the UN General Assembly when it met in September 2017. He said that because the UN Security Council was subject to an American veto, the Palestinians were unable to get new resolutions passed or to implement resolutions previously passed, even though most of the countries of the world supported the Palestinians. He also said that the PA had not changed its mind [about security coordination with Israel], because Israel's actions contradicted security coordination (Dunia al-Watan, August 6, 2017).

The PA Opens a Consulate in Istanbul

► On August 2, 2017 the PA officially opened a consulate in Turkey. In attendance were **Riyad al-Maliki, the foreign minister of the Palestinian national consensus government, and Mevlüt Cavuşoğlu, the Turkish foreign minister** (Wafa, August 2, 2017).