



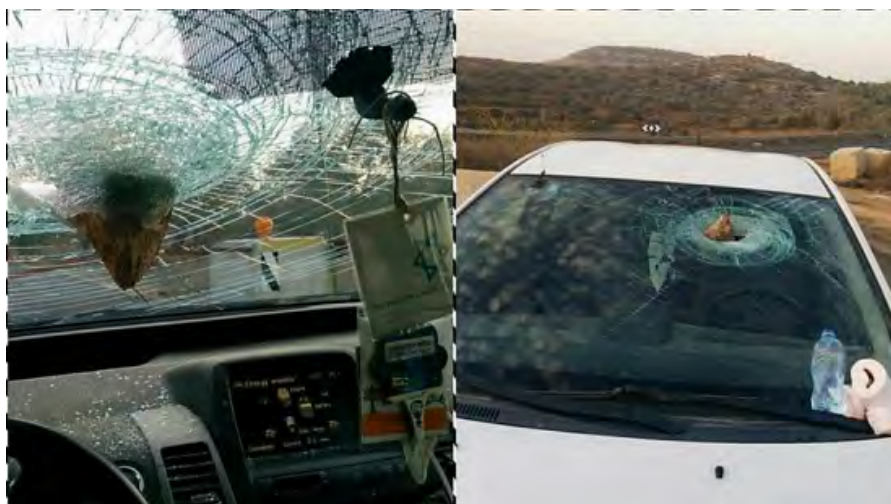
# News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (November 8-14, 2017)

## Overview

- ▶ In response to threats issued by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) to exact revenge for the blowing up of its tunnel and the death of operatives, General Yoav Mordechai, the Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), warned that **if the organization attacked Israel, Israel would react with might and determination**. His statement was aimed not only at the PIJ, **but at Hamas as well**.
- ▶ **The PIJ** said in an announcement that it had the right to respond to any act of "aggression" and **called Israel's threats "a declaration of war."** Hamas said that the COGAT's remark reflected Israel's panic and confusion in the face of a response from the "resistance" [i.e., the terrorist organizations], but unlike the PIJ did not issue direct, blatant threats against Israel.
- ▶ The transfer of authority in the Gaza Strip is proceeding according to the Fatah-Hamas reconciliation agreement. However, in the meantime, **fundamental issues have surfaced that make progress difficult and cause tension and disagreement**. The main disagreements concern **disarming Hamas and effective control over the security forces by the Palestinian Authority (PA)**. While PA senior figures demand one authority with one set of weapons, Hamas absolutely refuses to disarm or transfer control of its security forces to the PA.

## 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 Palestinians suspected of terrorist activity. The more prominent occurrences were the following:
  - ◆ **November 13, 2017** – Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near **Deir Nadham, northwest of Ramallah**. There were no casualties; the vehicle was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, November 13, 2017).



**The Israel car damaged by a rock thrown near the village of Deir Nadham, northwest of Ramallah (Facebook page of Shehab, November 13, 2017).**

- ◆ **November 11, 2017** – A Molotov cocktail was thrown at the precinct of the **Tomb of Rachel in Bethlehem**. There were no casualties; damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, November 11, 2017).
- ◆ **November 10, 2017** – An IDF force detained a number of Palestinians who tried to enter the community of **Neveh Daniel in Gush Etzion** (Facebook page of Red Alert, November 10, 2017).
- ◆ **November 10, 2017** – Rocks and stones were thrown at an IDF force at **the entrance to the village of Beit Furiq**, east of Nablus (Facebook page of Beit Furiq First, November 10, 2017).



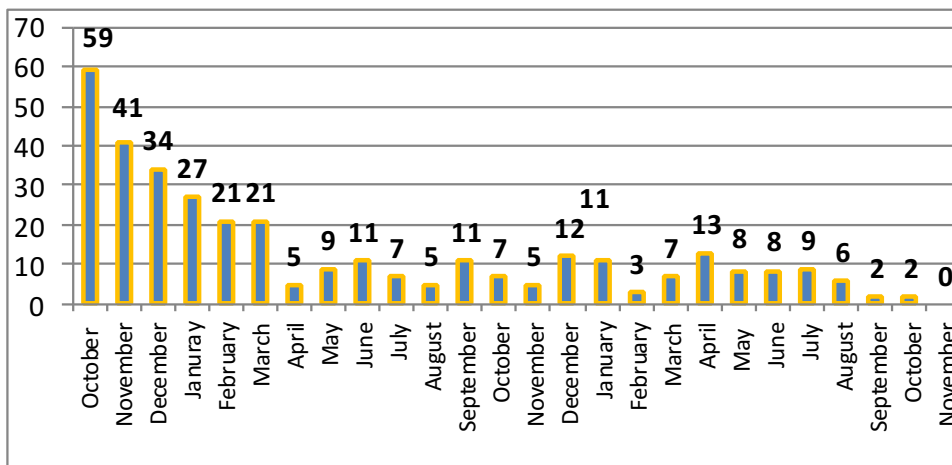
**Palestinians attack IDF jeep with rocks in Beit Furiq, east of Nablus (Facebook page of Beit Furiq First, November 10, 2017).**

- ◆ **November 9, 2017** – The Israeli security forces detained a Palestinian en route to carry out a terrorist attack near **Kokhav Yair (Benyamin region)**. Two knives and Qur'an were found in his backpack (Facebook page of Red Alert, November 9, 2017).



**Knives and Qur'an found in the backpack of the Palestinian who was detained (Ma'an, November 9, 2017).**

### Significant Terrorist Attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem during the Past Two Years<sup>1</sup>



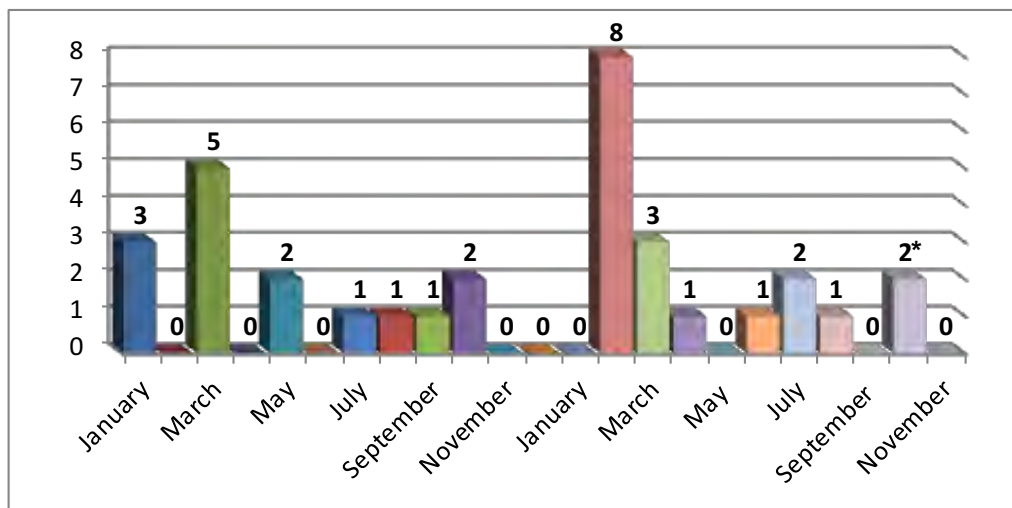
<sup>1</sup> A significant attack is defined by the ITIC as involving shooting, stabbing, a vehicular attack, the use of IEDs, or a combination of the above. Stones and Molotov cocktails thrown by Palestinians are not included.

## Israel's South

### Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

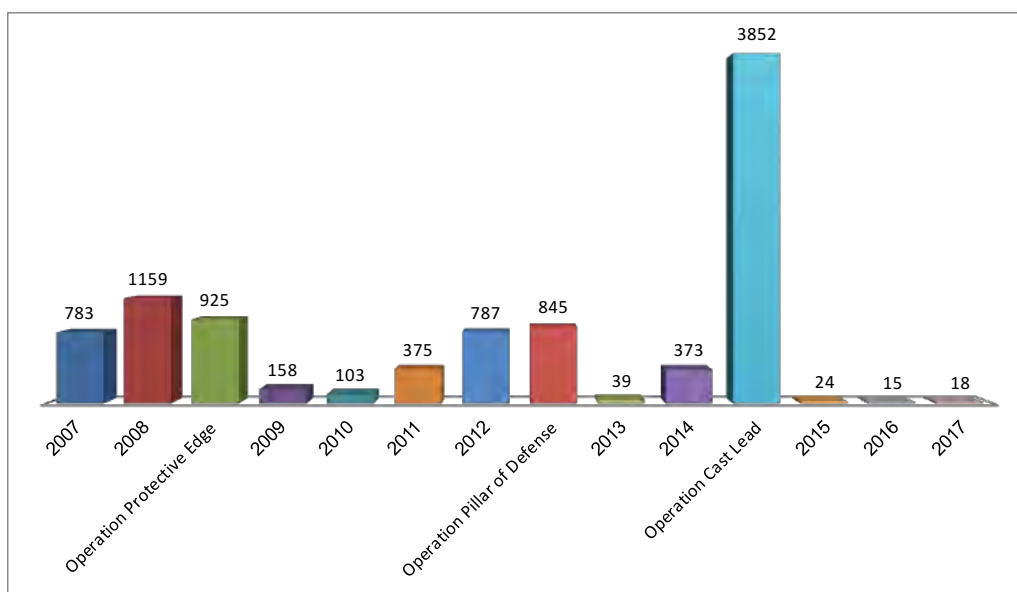
- ▶ This past week no rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory.

### 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. In April a rocket was launched from the Sinai Peninsula by ISIS's Sinai Province. In October 2017 two rockets were fired from the northern Sinai Peninsula by ISIS's Sinai Province. They fell in an open area in the western Negev.

### Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits in Israel's South<sup>2</sup>



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

## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### Israel warns the PIJ not to carry out a revenge attack

► In response to threats issued by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) to exact revenge for Israel's blowing up its tunnel and the death of operatives, General Yoav Mordechai, the Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), issued a video in Arabic for the PIJ and Hamas. In the video he warned their senior figures that if the PIJ attacked Israel, **Israel would react with might and determination not only against the PIJ, but against Hamas as well.** He said that Israel had blown up the terrorist tunnel inside the sovereign territory of the State of Israel. He added that Israel was aware of PIJ plans to exact revenge, and said that "We advise the PIJ leadership in Damascus, and senior figures Ramadan Shallah and Ziyad Nakhleh to take control of matters, because they are the ones who will bear responsibility for the outcome" (COGAT website, November 10, 2017).

► The PIJ countered by **saying it had the right to respond to any act of aggression, and that included the blowing up of a tunnel.** Israel's threats to harm the leadership, it said, were **"a declaration of war"** (Filastin al-Yawm, November 12, 2017).

► **Senior PIJ figures threatened a strong response:**

◆ **Senior PIJ figure Khaled al-Batash** claimed Israel's ongoing threats against the Palestinian people, the commander of the PIJ, the secretary general and his deputy did not frighten them. He claimed Israel wanted to deter the PIJ and make it reconsider its decision to "punish" Israel. However, Israel understood only the language of force as used by the "resistance." All its threats would not prevent the PIJ from pursuing its plans (al-Mayadeen, November 12, 2017). On another occasion Khaled al-Batash said that they would not sit idly by while their operatives were being killed and that the PIJ's military wing had the authority to decide the organization's response (al-Mayadeen, November 13, 2017).



**Khaled al-Batash interviewed by the Lebanese TV station al-Mayadeen (al-Mayadeen TV website, November 12, 2017).**

- ◆ **PIJ spokesman Da'ud Shehab** said they would respond to the "crime of the tunnel" at a convenient time and place (Paltoday, November 12, 2017).
- ▶  **Hamas also responded to the remarks of the COGAT. Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum** said the threats of Yoav Mordechai, the so-called "person who coordinated the activities of the occupation government," reflected panic and confusion in Israel (the "Zionist entity") in the face of the "resistance's" response to the crime of attacking Palestinian "resistance" fighters (Facebook page of Fawzi Barhoum, November 12, 2017). **Hamas' statement was less militant than the PIJ's and did not include overt threats.**

### **Hamas delegation visits Lebanon**

- ▶ A delegation of senior Hamas figures led by **Izzat al-Rishq, a member of Hamas' political bureau**, visited Lebanon. They met with senior members of the Lebanese government and army, including President Michel Aoun and Nabih Beri, speaker of the Parliament (al-Aqsa, November 9, 2017). They also met with General Abbas Ibrahim, head of Lebanese General Security. The discussions centered on the internal Palestinian reconciliation and developments in the Palestinian arena.



**Right: The Hamas delegation meets with Lebanese President Michel Aoun (Twitter account of Izzat al-Rishq, November 10, 2017). Left: The Hamas delegation meets with General Abbas Ibrahim, head of Lebanese general security ('Asemat al-Shatat website, November 8, 2017).**

## The Internal Palestinian Reconciliation

### The Fatah-Hamas reconciliation process

- ▶ **The transfer of authority in the Gaza Strip to the PA continues. However, in the meantime, differences of opinion continue regarding key issues, which make implementing the agreement difficult.** Despite the differences of opinion, Hamas still states it is willing to abide by the reconciliation agreement. On November 21, 2017, a meeting is to be held in Cairo to put the agreement on a firm footing (Filastin al-Yawm, November 8, 2017). Egypt sent formal announcements to all the representatives of the Palestinian organizations. **Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau**, also received a formal invitation to attend the meeting (Hamas website, November 9, 2017).
- ▶ **Senior Hamas figure Khalil al-Haya** said Hamas had taken many measures for the sake of the reconciliation because it understood the hardships of the Palestinian people. It also understood the importance of unity for the success of the national Palestinian project and the struggle against the [Israeli] occupation. He said progress towards reconciliation had been made. He claimed the first two stages of transferring responsibility for the government ministries and transferring control over the crossings **had been successful**. That proved, he said, that solutions could be reached in the future for other important issues. He claimed that every disagreement would be resolved through discourse with Egyptian mediation (al-Aqsa, November 8, 2017).

### Disarming Hamas' security forces

**The PA continues to emphasize the importance of disarming Hamas' military wing and of control over its security forces**, to enable it to take responsibility for the Gaza Strip in general and the crossings in particular ("one authority with one set of weapons"). On the

other hand, senior Hamas figures continue their absolute refusal to disarm, calling disarmament a red line that cannot be crossed.

### The PA's position

- ▶ **Rami Hamdallah, prime minister of the Palestinian national consensus government,** said the PA **could not operate the crossings without active control over the security forces in the Gaza Strip.** He called on the organizations to act rapidly to resolve the issue. He said the government could not continue its program to improve civilian conditions without first resolving the security issue (Facebook page of Rami Hamdallah, November 6, 2017). Interviewed by al-Arabiya TV, Hamdallah said the security [forces] and weapons in the Gaza Strip **had to be part of one authority and one legitimate rule,** and under the supervision of the political leadership. He said it was the political leadership that had to make decisions about war and peace (alarabiya.net and Watan, November 10, 2017).
- ▶ **Adnan al-Dhamiri, spokesman for the PA security forces,** said Rami Hamdallah had accurately described the situation. He said Hamdallah entreated the organizations to resolve the issue of the security [forces] so the government could operate and take responsibility without pressure or threats. He said that in security there were no quotas or factional cooperation. He said that the determining factor was the 2005 law of security forces' service (Facebook page of Adnan al-Dhamiri, November 7, 2017).
- ▶ **Hazem 'Atallah, commander of the Palestinian police force,** told foreign correspondents that for the reconciliation to succeed, **Hamas had to be disarmed.** He said they were talking about **one authority, one law and one set of weapons.** Asked if Hamas' military wing would be allowed to retain its weapons when he received command of the police in the Gaza Strip, he answered that it would not. He said it **would be impossible to supervise security when all the rockets, rifles and other weapons were in the Gaza Strip.** **He said the 8,000-9,000 policemen in the Gaza Strip before Hamas took control would return to their jobs** (Reuters, swissinfo.ch and al-Quds, November 8, 2017).



**Hazem 'Atallah, commander of the Palestinian police force, at a press briefing with foreign correspondents (al-Quds, November 8, 2017).**

### Hamas' position

► Senior Hamas figures criticized the statements made by the heads of the PA and continue to call disarmament a red line that cannot be crossed:

- ◆ **Ismail Haniyeh, head of the Hamas political bureau**, meeting with students at the Islamic University in Gaza City, said that Hamas' strategy was to preserve and develop the program of "resistance" [i.e. terrorism]. He said abandoning the strategy of "resistance" was out of the question and could not be negotiated. He also claimed the existence of the "resistance" had been noted in the Cairo agreement of 2011 and in the protocol recently signed in Cairo, and therefore no one could disarm the "resistance" (Palinfo, November 12, 2017).



**Ismail Haniyeh, second from the right, sits next to Khalil al-Haya (extreme right) at a meeting with students at the Islamic University in Gaza City (Hamas movement website, November 12, 2017).**

- ◆ **Senior Hamas figure Musa Abu Marzouq**, while visiting Turkey, said that there was no need to be concerned about the fate of the weapons of the "resistance" after the reconciliation. **He claimed the "resistance" and its weapons were the right of the Palestinian people.** He also claimed that from the beginning, the weapons of the "resistance" were not an issue to be discussed. He said past experience had shown that

weapons were what preserved rights, not negotiating with the enemy (Arabi21, November 11, 2017).

◆ **Senior Hamas figure Musheir al-Masri** said that as part of the Cairo agreements of 2011 it had been decided that the security forces in the Gaza Strip would continue their activities while integrating 3,000 PA operatives one year after the signing of the agreement. He claimed the remarks made by Rami Hamdallah contradicted the principles of national and bilateral cooperation (Shehab website, November 6, 2017).

### Transferring control of the crossings

▶ The Rafah crossing is supposed to open in the middle of November 2017. "A Palestinian security source" reported that teams of police, security operatives and civilians who were supposed to operate the crossing had begun supervising activities. That included the construction of surveillance posts and installing advanced communications networks and security cameras. According to the source, contacts are being held with the EU to again send observers to oversee the management of the crossing (al-Quds al-Arabi, November 6, 2017).

▶ Transferring control over the crossings to the PA **again brought to the surface the issue of Hamas and other terrorist organizations' weapons in the Gaza Strip and making them subordinate to effective PA's security force control.** At its weekly meeting the national consensus government stressed the importance of enforcing its control and full sovereignty over all the Gaza Strip crossings. According to a government announcement, the **crossings would not be able to operate unless the PA had effective control of the security forces in the Gaza Strip.** The announcement called on the Palestinian organizations to quickly resolve the issue (Wafa, November 7, 2017).

▶ **Iyad al-Bazam, spokesman for the ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip,** said that the crossings would be fully transferred to the PA's crossings and borders authority. He said that during a discussion about the transfer, Hamas had suggested the crossings authority leave the security forces [appointed by Hamas] in place. That would support the authority in its work and facilitate the operation of the crossings until final agreements had been made for security, in accordance with the Cairo agreement. He said **the PA crossings authority had rejected the suggestion** and demanded that **no [Hamas-appointed] worker remain at the crossings** because the authority did not need them (website of the ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip, November 7, 2017).

► The expected opening of the Rafah crossing led to another disagreement because of  **Hamas' objections to the PA's plan to operate the crossing on the basis of the 2005 agreement, which allows Israeli involvement at the crossing. Senior Hamas figure Musheir al-Masri** criticized the PA's position, calling it a "national crime" that opened the door to direct and indirect Israeli intervention in a Palestinian matter (Samaa News, November 6, 2017). According to a joint announcement signed by nine organizations in the Gaza Strip (including Hamas and the PIJ), the Rafah crossing is a Palestinian-Egyptian crossing. They called for reaching an Egyptian-Palestinian agreement in addition to the 2005 crossings agreement (qudspress.com, November 8, 2017).



**Cartoon from a website affiliated with the Muhammad Dahlan faction in Fatah. It criticizes Mahmoud Abbas, who wants to enforce an early retirement on Hamas employees in the Gaza Strip. The Arabic reads, "Retire!" (Karma Press website, November 5, 2017).**

### Transferring additional ministries to the PA

► **The ministry of health: Jawad 'Awad, PA minister of health**, arrived in the Gaza Strip to discuss local health issues (Palinfo, November 10, 2017). Rami Hamdallah, prime minister of the Palestinian national consensus government, said that Mahmoud Abbas had ordered 22 truckloads of medicines and medical supplies to be transferred to the Gaza Strip (Wafa, November 7, 2017).



**Rami Hamdallah holds a press conference in Ramallah with the Palestinian minister of health as a shipment of medical assistance is about to be sent to the Gaza Strip (Wafa, November 8, 2017).**

► **Lands authority: Rami Hamdallah**, interviewed by al-Arabiya TV, said that there had been a number of problems in the transfer of ministries in the Gaza Strip. One of those ministries was the **lands authority**. He said there were national lands in the Gaza Strip that had been illegally distributed during the schism, and that the issue had to be resolved (Wataniya Agency, November 10, 2017).

### **Hamas spokesmen criticize the PA**

► **Hamas spokesmen continue demanding that as part of the reconciliation process Mahmoud Abbas immediately lift the sanctions he imposed on the Gaza Strip. Senior Hamas figure Khalil al-Haya** called on the national consensus government to lift the sanctions, saying that if the president [i.e., Mahmoud Abbas] did not expedite matters, matters would expedite him. Senior Hamas figure **Salah al-Bardawil** said they were waiting for the meeting in Egypt on November 21, 2017, to learn what excuse Mahmoud Abbas was going to give to leave the sanctions in place, even after Hamas had disbanded the committee it had appointed to administer the Gaza Strip (al-Aqsa TV, November 13, 2017).

► **Sources in Hamas criticized the continuing detentions of Hamas operatives in Judea and Samaria. Khalil al-Haya** said the reconciliation was not reflected in Judea and Samaria. He added that if the people did not take the reconciliation to its bosom it would be in dire straits. He said the reconciliation was not only for the Gaza Strip, and everyone had to enjoy the fruits for it to succeed. He said Hamas members in Judea and Samaria had to feel free, as Fatah members felt free in the Gaza Strip (al-Aqsa TV, November 8, 2017).

► **According to Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum**, the PA continued carrying out "political detentions" [i.e., detaining Hamas operatives in the PA territories]. That, he said, embittered inhabitants who did not feel the reconciliation process had "positive results" (Shehab website, November 12, 2017).



**The procrastination in implementing the reconciliation agreement leaves the Gaza Strip trapped and without air. The Arabic reads, "Procrastination" (Facebook page of Isma'il al-Bazam, November 12, 2017).**

## The Palestinian Authority (PA)

### Hamas criticism of the renewal of PA security coordination with Israel

► The publication in the media of the renewal of the PA's security coordination with Israel led senior Hamas and PIJ figures to strongly criticize the PA:

◆ **Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum** said Hamas had been surprised by the PA's decision. He said it was a great danger to the Palestinian people, its unity and its rights. He said security coordination with Israel harmed the reputation of the Palestinian people and its historic struggle. He called for pressure to be exerted on the PA to stop the coordination (Shehab website, November 9, 2017).

◆ **Senior PIJ figure Muhammad al-Hindi** strongly condemned the PA's security coordination dealings with Israel. He said anyone who adopted such a policy should be ashamed (al-Istaqlal and the Facebook page of the Vision Center for Political Development, November 11, 2017).

► "A senior Palestinian political source" told the Israeli website Ynet that during October 2017 the PA's security forces had prevented seven attacks on Israeli targets in Judea and Samaria. According to the source, the planned attacks were shooting attacks, IED attacks and stabbing attacks. During October, according to the source, the PA security forces detained dozens of Hamas operatives in Judea and Samaria despite the Fatah-Hamas reconciliation

process. In addition, weapons and ammunition were seized, as well as money to finance terrorism. In the wake of the security forces' activities, Hamas publicly demanded that Rami Hamdallah, prime minister of the Palestinian national consensus government, order the security forces to stop the detentions, which Hamas called "crimes" (Ynet, November 7, 2017).

### Israel detains a senior PIJ operative in northern Samaria

► On November 13, 2017, the Israeli security forces detained **Tareq Q'adan, a senior PIJ commander in northern Samaria. He was detained in his home in the village of Arabeh, south of Jenin.**<sup>3</sup> The PIJ issued a statement condemning the detention and saying Israel was fully responsible for his safety (Paltoday, November 13, 2017). **Senior PIJ figure Khader 'Adnan** called the detention part of a wave of the Israeli security forces' attacks and escalation against the PIJ and the Palestinian people (Dunia al-Watan, November 13, 2017).



**Tareq Q'adan interviewed by PIJ-affiliated Radio Sawt al-Quds (which broadcasts from the Gaza Strip) on the anniversary of the death of PIJ founder Fathi Shqaqi (YouTube channel of Radio Sawt al-Quds, October 22, 2017).**

## The Battle for Hearts and Minds

### Events marking the 13th anniversary of the death of Yasser Arafat

► The 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Yasser Arafat was marked by the reconciliation process and the continuing internal tension between the supporters of Mahmoud Abbas and the supporters of Muhammad Dahlan (Mahmoud Abbas' greatest rival). In accordance with a request Fatah made to the ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip, the ministry and the

<sup>3</sup> **Tareq Q'adan**, 45, married and father of five. In the past he was detained 15 times by Israel and spent a total of 19 years in prison. While in jail he was one of the senior PIJ leaders in the Israeli prison system (Paltoday, November 13, 2017).

security forces in the Gaza Strip cooperated to secure Fatah's rally. All the security forces, including the police, participated in securing the event. An operations room was also established from which they followed the events on the ground (al-Aqsa, date, 2017).

► **Two separate rallies were held in the Gaza Strip:** the main rally, held by supporters of Mahmoud Abbas, and another, held by supporters of Muhammad Dahlan, which received favorable coverage from the Hamas-affiliated media. The well-attended rally held by supporters of Mahmoud Abbas was also attended by Hamas and PIJ operatives. A number of senior Hamas figures attended the rally held by Dahlan supporters, among them Khalil al-Haya (who also gave a speech).

► **Mahmoud Abbas addressed the crowd of his followers**, appealing to the Gazans and saying that a precise execution of the agreement and the firm establishment of the government would without a doubt lead to easing their suffering and encourage hope for a better future. He said that they were all one people and that "**there is no [separate] country in the Gaza Strip and there is no country without the Gaza Strip**" (Wafa, November 11, 2017). **Senior Hamas figure Ismail Radwan** criticized Mahmoud Abbas' speech at the rally, calling it a disappointment because he did not use it to announce the lifting of the sanctions imposed on the Gaza Strip.



**Right: Fatah rally in the Gaza Strip marks the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Yasser Arafat (Wafa, November 11, 2017). Left: Senior Hamas figure Khalil al-Haya gives a speech at the rally marking the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Yasser Arafat held by supporters of Muhammad Dahlan (Paltoday, November 9, 2017).**