



The Culture of Palestinian Shaheeds:

On the anniversary of Fatah's founding, the movement's official Facebook page commemorated five female Fatah terrorists involved in deadly suicide bombing and "self-sacrifice" attacks.

January 4, 2018

Overview

► January 1, 2018, marks the 53rd anniversary of the founding of the Fatah movement. In honor of the day the profile picture of the official Fatah Facebook page homepage was replaced by a picture of a masked Palestinian slinging a stone on the background of the Dome of the Rock. The lower inscription in Arabic reads, "**the year of confrontation and defense of the holy sites**"¹ (Facebook page of Fatah, December 30, 2017).



Profile picture of the Fatah Facebook page homepage, updated for the 53rd anniversary of the movement's founding (Facebook page of Fatah, December 30, 2017).

► The previous day, December 29, 2017, a video was uploaded the Fatah Facebook page. It was produced by Fatah's bureau of organization and mobilization specifically for the anniversary. It was described as "a video for publication and distribution: The year of confrontation and defense of the holy places." The video was composed of a series of video clips and pictures from Palestinian clashes with Israeli security forces. Two of the subtitles were "**the Jerusalem intifada**" and "**Jerusalem will remain the capital of the state of Palestine**" (Facebook page of Fatah, December 29, 2017).

¹ Fatah has declared 2018 as "the year of confrontation and defense of the holy sites."



A video inciting to violence against Israel, produced by Fatah to mark the 53rd anniversary of its founding (Facebook page of Fatah, December 29, 2017).

- ▶ Especially prominent on Fatah's homepage are **posts glorifying the role of Palestinian women, dedicated to five suicide bombers and "self-sacrifice" terrorists who carried out attacks killing and wounding many Israelis.** Five separate but identically formatted postings show pictures of female terrorists but **without names.** Every picture features a Palestinian slinging stones and a background of mosques and churches. The Facebook page also had a post praising the role of the Palestinian woman in the Palestinian struggle. On a background of *keffiyeh*-wearing women the text reads, "the Palestinian woman... mother... sister... **shaheed... prisoner... fighter**" (Facebook page of Fatah, December 30, 2017).
- ▶ The ITIC has identified the women in the pictures as **the Palestinian terrorist who carried out a "self sacrifice attack" in 1978** (the Coastal Road Massacre) and four female Palestinian terrorists **who carried out suicide bombing attacks during the second intifada** (see Appendix). The five terrorist attacks in which the women were involved **killed 48 Israelis and wounded 276**, the overwhelming majority of whom were civilians. The following pictures are of:
 - ◆ **Dalal al-Mughrabi**, who in 1978 participated in the Coastal Road Massacre, **killing 37 Israelis, 12 of them children, and wounding 71 civilians.**

- ◆ **Zaynab Abu Salem**, who, on September 22, 2004, carried out a suicide bombing attack on French Hill in Jerusalem, **killing two Israeli Border Policemen and wounding 17 other Israelis.**
- ◆ **Andalib al-Taqtqa**, who carried out a suicide bombing attack in the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem on April 12, 2002, **killing two people and wounding about 60.**
- ◆ **Wafa' Idriss**, who carried out a suicide bombing attack on Jaffa Road in Jerusalem on January 27, 2002, **killing one person and wounding more than 100.**
- ◆ **Ayat al-Akhras**, who carried out a suicide bombing attack near a supermarket in Jerusalem on March 29, 2002, **killing two Israelis and wounding 28.**



Prominent shaheeds: Pictures posted to Fatah's official Facebook page to mark the 53rd anniversary of the movement's founding glorify five female terrorists (official Fatah Facebook page, December 30, 2017). They were responsible for the deaths of 48 Israelis and the wounding of 276.

- Commemorating the terrorist operatives during the decades of Palestinian terrorism and turning them into role models is **a well-known phenomenon and is firmly rooted in**

Palestinian society, culture and politics. Participating in the shaheed culture are the Palestinian Authority (PA), Fatah and the various Palestinian terrorist organizations. In the PA territories, it is customary to glorify the names and deeds of terrorists who carried out showcase terrorist attacks, including suicide bombing attacks in which many Israelis were killed and wounded. Memorial services are held for them, and streets, town and city squares, schools and cultural institutions are named for them. The memory of the terrorists is fostered in the schools and is part of Palestinian children's formal education (in official school textbooks) and informal education (such as summer camps named for terrorists).

The shaheed culture has led to a situation in which terrorists who kill many Israelis become role models and are venerated by Palestinian society. That includes Palestinian youth, who form the hard core of the Palestinian terrorists who have carried out popular terrorism attacks in recent years. Posting praise for terrorists on Fatah's official Facebook page to mark the anniversary of its founding contributes to glorifying them and turning them into role models. **Thus Fatah and the PA send the message to Palestinians that carrying out terrorist attacks against Israel is not only legitimate, but desirable as well.**

Appendix

Biographical information about the female terrorists on the Fatah Facebook page

Dalal al-Mughrabi



Notice published recently on the official Fatah Facebook page.

- **Dalal al-Mughrabi** was an operative in a 22-man squad of Fatah operatives who carried out the Coastal Road Massacre on March 11, 1978. **The attack killed 37 people, 12 of them children, and wounded 71.** In response Israel launched Operation Litani in south Lebanon.



Right: The bus after the Coastal Road Massacre (photo by Moshe Milner, Israeli Government Press Office, March 11, 1978). Left: The bus after the attack (IDF Archive, Israeli Ministry of Defense, March 11, 1978).

- Terrorist Dalal al-Mughrabi became a national heroine and a symbol of the Palestinian armed struggle. The PA and Fatah movement systematically glorify her ("the bride of

Palestine"), exaggerate the importance of the Coastal Road Massacre ("the heroic victory"), and commemorate her in various ways.

► Every year, from the days of Yasser Arafat, the PA has held events to commemorate Dalal al-Mughrabi, usually held on or about March 11, the day of the Coastal Road Massacre. Sometimes events are held on her birthday or other dates. Official events are attended by senior Fatah and PA figures, and are extensively reported in the PA media. Great emphasis is put on commemorating her among Palestinian youth. Schools are named after her, as are summer camps, training camps and sporting events, and town and city streets and squares, including a square in Ramallah.

Zaynab Ali Issa Abu Salem

► **Zaynab Ali Issa Abu Salem**, from the Askar refugee camp in Nablus, was 18 years old. She graduated from high school in 2003 and enrolled in al-Najah University in Nablus to continue her studies. On September 22, 2004, she left home in the morning after telling her family she was going to the university to take care of paperwork. **She blew herself up at a bus stop on French Hill in Jerusalem when Border Policemen stopped her for a security check.** Two Border Policemen were killed and 17 other people were injured. **She had been sent to carry out the suicide bombing attack by a Fatah network in Nablus.**

► **Zaynab Ali Issa Abu Salem was turned into a role model.** For example, a Hamas newspaper for children featured a picture of her decapitated head with the captions, "Zaynab Abu Salem, who carried out a suicide operation. Her head was severed from her pure body and her *hijab* remained to adorn [her face]. Your place is in paradise in heaven above, Zaynab...sister [who reached the heights of] men" (Issue #38 of Hamas' online children's magazine al-Fateh).



Right: Zaynab Ali Issa Abu Salem as a role model (Issue #38 of Hamas' online children's magazine al-Fateh). Left: Notice recently published on the official Fatah Facebook page.

Andalib Khalil Muhammad Suleiman (Taqatqa)

► **Andalib Khalil Muhammad Suleiman (Taqatqa)** lived in Bethlehem. She was 21 years old and an operative in the Fatah-Tanzim. The day of the attack she was driven to Abu Dis and from there took a taxi to Jerusalem, where she went to the **Mahane Yehuda market**. **Standing next to a bus**, she detonated an explosive device she carried in her bag, **killing six people** (four Israelis and two foreigners Chinese), and **wounding 60** (April 22, 2002). The attack was orchestrated by **Mu'taz Heimuni** from Hebron, a Palestinian Liberation Front operative, who was detained during Operation Defensive Shield. **Marwan Zaloum**, a senior Fatah-Tanzim operative in Hebron prepared the IED used to carry out the attack.



Notice recently published on the official Fatah Facebook page.

Wafa' Ali Khalil Flifel (Idriss)

► **Wafa' Ali Khalil Flifel (Idriss)** blew herself up **on Jaffa Road in central Jerusalem** on January 27, 2002, using a powerful explosive device. **One person was killed and more than**

100 wounded. Wafa' Idriss was 31 years old. She lived in the al-Am'ari refugee camp in Ramallah. Wafa' Idriss was divorced, after having been married for nine years, and had no children. She worked as a nurse for the Palestinian Red Crescent. The suicide bombing attack was orchestrated by a Fatah-Tanzim operative from Ramallah (with the support of Palestinian General Intelligence). After her death she became legendary and was commemorated as **the first woman to carry out a suicide bombing attack during the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.**



Right: Wafa' Idriss' picture on the cover of a book praising her and the suicide bombing attack she carried out (book written by Muhammed Suleiman, published in Egypt in 2002). Left: Notice recently published on the official Fatah Facebook page.

Ayat Muhammad Lutfi al-Akhras

► **Ayat Muhammad Lutfi al-Akhras** blew herself up in a **supermarket in Qiryat Yovel, Jerusalem**, on March 29, 2002. **The attack killed two people and wounded 28.** Ayat al-Akhras was 18 years old, lived in the Dheishe refugee camp, near Bethlehem, and was an excellent high school student. She was recruited by her fiancé, who was a Fatah-Tanzim operative. She carried an explosive device in a black purse which had been prepared for her. **Ayat al-Akhras became a role model**, and is commemorated every year by Fatah in an event "to honor the woman who watered the land with her pure blood" (Facebook page of Fatah, May 25, 2016).



Right: Poem praising Ayat Muhammad al-Akhras, saying "you were rightly named Aya [model]" [the singular form of "Ayat" (Filistin al-Muslima, June 2003 issue, page 56). Left: Notice recently published on the official Fatah Facebook page.