



The PLO's Central Council and Mahmoud Abbas call for the continuation and strengthening of [so-called] "peaceful popular resistance" [i.e., popular terrorism]

January 17, 2018

► **The concluding statement of the PLO's Central Council** of January 15, 2018, related to a variety of open issues between Israel and the Palestinians, among them a call for **the continuation, strengthening and upgrading of the so-called "peaceful popular resistance"** (Palestinian TV, January 15, 2018). At the opening ceremony on January 14, 2018, **Mahmoud Abbas** gave a speech in which he said the Palestinian people would continue the "peaceful popular resistance." He claimed the Palestinians favored "non-violent" demonstrations and were committed to a struggle against terrorism everywhere (Dunia al-Watan, January 14, 2018). **Jamal Muheisen, a member of Fatah's Central Committee**, said a meeting of the heads of Palestinian organizations would be held in the coming days. **Its objective would be to strengthen the "popular resistance" and to respond to the decisions of the PLO's Central Council** (Wafa, January 16, 2018).

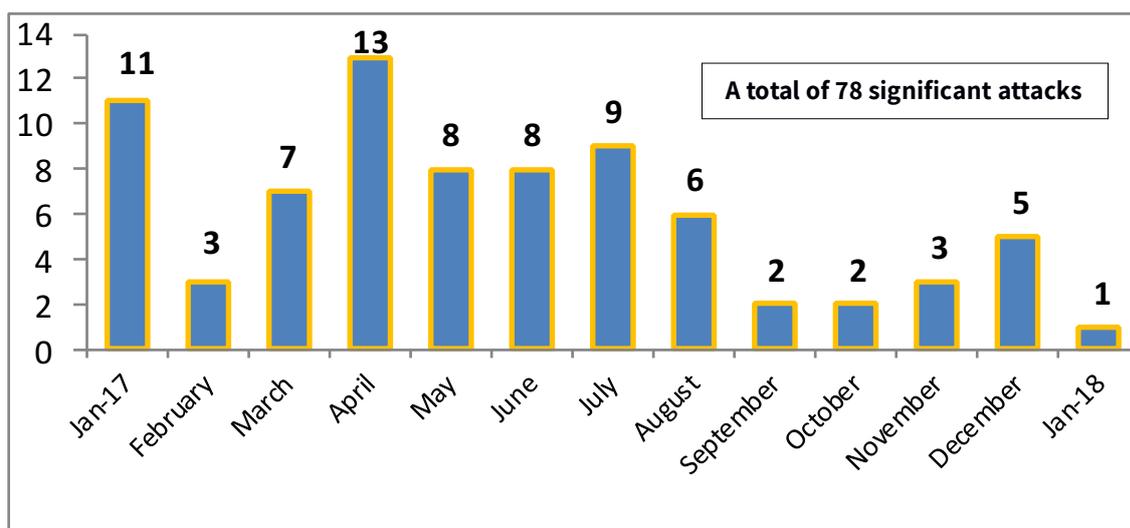


Right: Mahmoud Abbas gives a speech as the opening session of the PLO's Central Council (Felesteen YouTube channel, January 14, 2018). Left: The Central Committee conference in Ramallah, chaired by Mahmoud Abbas (Wafa, January 14, 2018).

The so-called "popular resistance" is a Palestinian Authority (PA) strategy formulated at the 6th Fatah Conference (August 2009). **It is not a "quiet protest" carried out by "peaceful means,"** as claimed by Mahmoud Abbas and the Central Council. **It involves the intensive use of terrorism and deadly violence,¹** from the frequent throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails to **stabbing, vehicular and even shooting attacks.** Since October 2015, **62 Israelis have been killed in popular terrorism attacks. Since the "popular resistance" strategy was adopted in 2009, 112 civilians have been killed.** The attacks, including the deadly ones, **won direct and indirect support from Fatah and the PA.**

► Popular terrorism has had ups and downs since the wave of popular terrorism that erupted in October 2015. **During the first stage** (October 2015 – March 2016) **dozens of significant terrorist attacks were carried out every month** in Judea, Samaria, and inside Israeli territory.² **The initial wave waned after about half a year.** During the **second stage** the number of attacks stabilized at nine to thirteen attacks a month. During the past months the number of significant attacks has declined to between two and five a month, but there is a trend to an increase in such attacks.

Significant terrorist attacks carried out during the past year as part of popular terrorism



¹ For further information, see the October 15, 2015 bulletin, "The Fatal Results of Palestinian Popular Terrorism Analysis of Israeli deaths during the six years of the "popular resistance" strategy, what the Palestinian Authority calls "peaceful resistance."

² "Significant attacks" are defined by the ITIC as stabbing attacks, shooting attacks, vehicular attacks, the detonation of IEDs, or a combination of them.

Mahmoud Abbas' harsh rhetoric and the PLO Central Council's decision **are liable to fuel moods of desperation and frustration**, especially among young Palestinians in Judea and Samaria, and **to encourage the expansion and escalation of popular terrorism**. However, in ITIC assessment, the PA and Fatah will continue trying to keep popular terrorism at **what they consider a controlled level** to prevent its being turned into an overall armed confrontation with Israel. On the other hand, Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) continue **calling for an escalation of popular terrorism and for turning it into an armed intifada**, which the PA opposes.

Basic documents issued by the ITIC on popular terrorism ("popular resistance")

- ▶ Popular Terrorism: The Current Situation (October 3, 2017).
- ▶ The 7th Fatah Movement Conference Again Legitimizes Popular Terrorism (The So-Called "Peaceful Popular Resistance") (December 12, 2016).