



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (January 17 – 23, 2018)

Overview



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- ▶ This past week terrorist events focused on three popular terrorism ["popular resistance"] attacks. One was a **stabbing attack** at the Tapuah Junction in Samaria (south of Nablus), and two were **vehicular attacks** (one near the Allenby Bridge and the other at the Atarot Junction roadblock north of Jerusalem). Palestinian demonstrations and riots continue, with consistently dwindling numbers of participants.
- ▶ The Fatah movement disseminated notices calling "**to escalate the popular resistance**" and "**to turn the lives of the settlers into a living hell.**" The notices call for **demonstrations, a general strike** (which was held on January 23, 2018) and **a focus on disrupting traffic on the roads leading to Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria.**
- ▶ Mahmoud Abbas gave two speeches this past week. The first was a **speech with strong rhetoric** at the al-Azhar conference in Cairo, calling for support of Jerusalem, stressing the Palestinians' historical and religious ties to Palestine and Jerusalem. The second, **with softer rhetoric** was given at a press conference in Brussels. Mahmoud Abbas claimed the Palestinian people was interested in negotiations and peace. He asked the European Union to **recognize the state of Palestine and its institutions**, claiming such recognition would not harm negotiation efforts.

Terrorist attacks and attempted terrorist attacks

- ▶ **Attempted stabbing attack at the Tapuah Junction** (about 11 kilometers, or almost 7 miles, south of Nablus): On January 23, 2018, Border Policemen prevented a **stabbing attack**. One of the policemen saw two Palestinians approaching a bus stop at the **Tapuah Junction** in a suspicious manner. They followed procedure and called to the Palestinians to halt. One of the Palestinians took out a knife and proceeded towards the policemen. A

policeman shot and wounded them (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, January 23, 2018).

► **Vehicular attack near the Allenby Bridge:** On January 19, 2018, there was a vehicular attack **near the Allenby Bridge**. A Palestinian drove his car to the security check near the Qasr al-Yahud baptism site. He demanded that the two Israeli soldiers manning the checkpoint allow him to enter. When they refused he drove around without obeying instructions and ran over one soldier, wounding him. The soldier received medical attention at the site. The driver was detained. At the initial interrogation the Palestinian claimed he carried out the attack because he was dissatisfied with the soldiers' behavior (Ynet, January 19, 2018). The Palestinian media reported the Palestinian was **Jihad Elias Muhammad Ja'abari**, 55, from Hebron (Felesteen, January 19, 2018).



Right: Attempted vehicular attack (yellow arrow); picture from a security camera (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 19, 2018). Left: ID card of Jihad Elias Muhammad Ja'abari (Felesteen, January 19, 2018).

► **Attempted vehicular attack at the Atarot roadblock (north Jerusalem):** On January 18, 2018, a Palestinian drove his vehicle at high speed towards **the Border Police roadblock near the Atarot Junction**. The policemen at the roadblock ordered him to halt but he continued driving towards them. When he did not hit them the first time, he reversed the car, then drove forward again in a second attempt. The soldiers shot out the tires but the driver escaped towards Ramallah (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 18, 2018).

Apprehension of the terrorist squad that murdered Rabbi Raziel Shevah in Jenin

► On the night of January 18, 2018, Israeli security forces carried out a raid in **the Jenin neighborhood of Wadi Burqin** to apprehend the murderers of Rabbi Raziel Shevah, who was murdered in a shooting attack. During the raid there was an exchange of fire between the Israeli security forces and the terrorists, who hid in one of the buildings. One terrorist

was killed. He was **Ahmed Isma'il Muhammad Jarar**, 31. Two terrorists were detained. It is assumed that the squad leader, **Ahmed Nasr Jarar, claimed by Hamas as an operative in its military-terrorist wing, managed to escape**. Two fighters of the Israeli security forces were wounded, one of them critically. During the operation the forces destroyed three houses belonging to the Jarar clan. After the rubble had been cleared, it was reported that no bodies had been found (Palinfo, January 19, 2018).

► The Palestinian ministry of health reported that the Palestinian killed was **Ahmed Isma'il Jarar**, 31, known as a Hamas operative (Shehab, January 18, 2018). Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, spoke on the phone with the Jarar clan. He said he was proud of the heroism of Ahmed Isma'il Jarar and his family, who had provided "great examples of resistance," among them senior Hamas operative Nasr Jarar, and his wanted son Ahmed (Hamas movement website, January 20, 2018).



Ahmed Isma'il Jarar (left) with his cousin, Ahmed Nasr Jarar, who apparently escaped (Palinfo, January 18, 2018).



Death notices issued for Ahmed Isma'il Jarar. Right: Death notice issued by the Fatah student movement (official Fatah Facebook page, January 18, 2018). Left: Death notice issued by Hamas in the Jenin district (Palinfo Twitter account, January 18, 2018).

► During an Israeli security force activity in Jenin, hundreds of Palestinians threw stones at IDF soldiers, who responded with riot dispersal measures. The Palestinian media reported three Palestinians had been wounded during clashes with Israeli security forces, one of them critically and two seriously (Wafa, January 18, 2018).

► **The event was exploited by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) spokesmen to call for the expansion of the intifada in Judea and Samaria and for security coordination with Israel to be ended:**

◆ **Mahmoud al-Zahar, a member of Hamas' political bureau**, said the West Bank was again functioning as part of the "resistance." He claimed it had a potential for "resistance" that only someone familiar with it could evaluate. He said that if the potential persisted and security coordination with Israel ended, then the Palestinians could rejoice in their achievements (al-Quds, January 21, 2018).

◆ **Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri** said the event in Jenin was not the first and would not be the last. He said security coordination could not prevent the "resistance" from continuing its activity against the decisions of the American president or keep the Palestinians from defending Jerusalem (Twitter account of Sami Abu Zuhri, January 18, 2018)

◆ **Hamas spokesman Abd al-Latif al-Qanu'** warned that the operation in Jenin would not go without response and that it would come from the "armed Palestinian resistance," which was capable of seriously harming the [Israeli] occupation and cause loss of life. He said Hamas wanted to awaken an intifada in Judea and Samaria in every sphere and **denounced the activities of the Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces**, which, he claimed, had been silent during the Israeli activity in Jenin. He called for **the intifada in the West Bank to escalate** and stop the security coordination with Israel (al-Aqsa TV, January 18, 2018).

◆ **Senior PIJ figure Ahmed Medullal** claimed the clashes with IDF forces in Jenin proved the "resistance" was opposing Israeli aggression. He said security coordination with Israel had to be ended and that the intifada in the West Bank had to continue and to develop its own weapons. He called for increased support for the "popular resistance" [i.e., popular terrorism] and to intensify the intifada against Israel (Shehab, January 18, 2018).



Hamas cartoon calling for an escalation of the armed struggle against Israel (Paldf, January 21, 2018).

Riots, clashes and popular terrorism

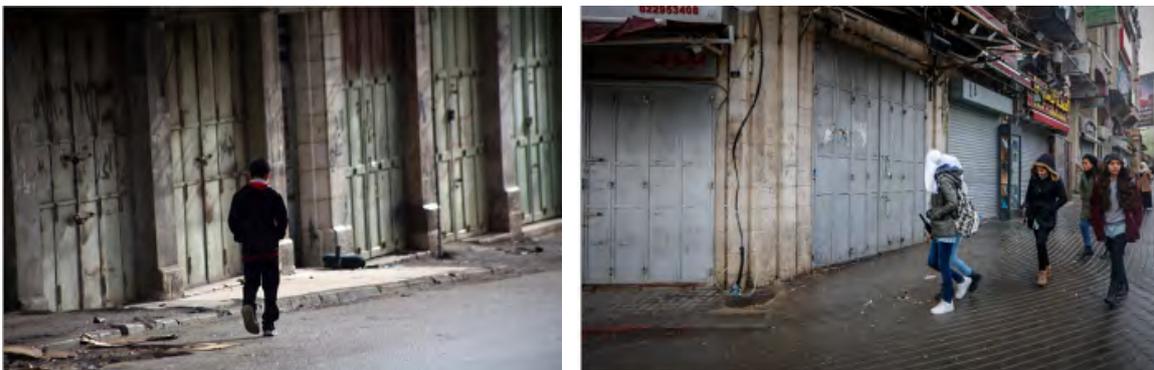
► This past week Palestinians continued holding demonstrations and rioting in Judea, Samaria, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in the wake of Donald Trump's declaration that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel (December 6, 2017). The numbers of participants at the events have continued to decrease. **At demonstrations and riots held during the week and especially on Friday, there have been relatively small turnouts.**

► With the visit of American Vice President Mike Pence to the region, **the Fatah movement in Judea and Samaria issued notices calling for the escalation of the "popular resistance"** [i.e., popular terrorism] and **"to turn the lives of the settlers into a living hell."** The notices call for a **general strike** [which was held on January 23, 2018] and demonstrations at various locations in Judea and Samaria. They also call for focusing efforts **to disrupt traffic on the roads to the Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria.**



Notice disseminated by Fatah calling for an escalation of the "popular resistance" [popular terrorism] and to "turn the lives of the settlers into a living hell" (official Fatah Facebook page, January 20, 2018).

► In the Gaza Strip, in addition to anti-American protests, there were demonstrations and other events protesting the difficult economic situation. **Fatah spokesman Usama Qawasmeh** called on all Palestinians to participate in the general strike, claiming it reflected the Palestinians' refusal to accept the declaration of the American administration regarding Jerusalem and the vice president's visit to the region. He said there would be no peace in the Middle East if east Jerusalem did not become the "capital of Palestine" (Ma'an, January 22, 2018).



General strike in the PA to protest the visit of American Vice President Mike Pence and the Donald Trump's declaration regarding Jerusalem (Wafa, January 23, 2018).

► In the meantime Palestinians continued throwing stones and Molotov cocktails at the Israeli security forces and civilian targets. The Israeli security forces carried out counterterrorism activities throughout Judea and Samaria, detaining Palestinians suspected of terrorist activity. Weapons and objects used in riots were seized. The more prominent events were the following:

- ◆ **January 22, 2018** – A Palestinian went to one of the checkpoints at the entrance to **the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron**. The metal detector did not react but the Palestinian still aroused the suspicions of the Border Policemen manning the checkpoint. A search of his person revealed **a knife hidden under his clothing**. According to the initial interrogation, he apparently planned to carry out an attack (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 22, 2018).



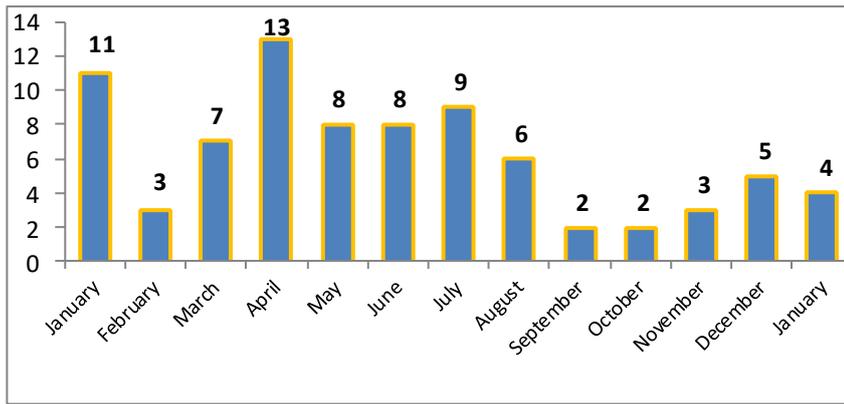
Knife found in the possession of a Palestinian at the entrance to the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron (Israel Police Force, January 22, 2018).

- ◆ **January 22, 2018** – Palestinians threw stones at an Israeli vehicle near **Lubban al-Sharqiya** (about 7 kilometers, or 4 miles, south of Nablus). (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 22, 2018).
- ◆ **January 21, 2018** – Stones were thrown at Border Policemen in the region of **a-Ram, southeast of Ramallah**. Three Border Policemen were slightly injured (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 21, 2018).
- ◆ **January 20, 2018** – Shots were fired at **the police station in Givat Haavot in Kiryat Arba**. A patrol car was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 20, 2018).
- ◆ **January 19, 2018** – A young Palestinian woman went to one of the checkpoints **near the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron**. She was found to be in possession of two knives. The woman, in her thirties and from the town of Edna (west of Hebron), was detained and taken for interrogation (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 19, 2018).



Knives found in the possession of a Palestinian woman during a security check near the Cave of the Patriarchs (Israel Police Force, January 19, 2018).

Significant terrorist attacks during the past year 1

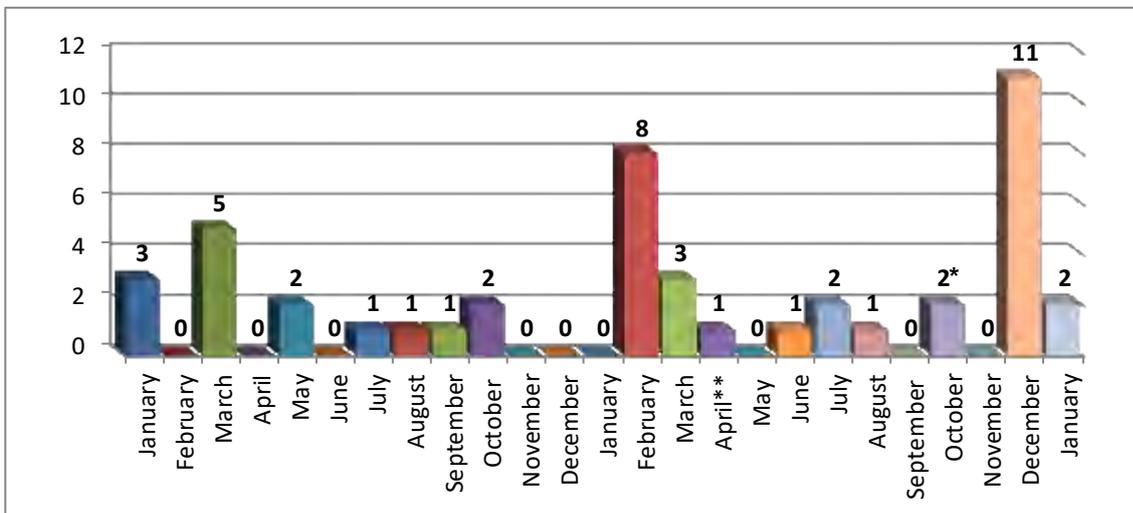


Israel's South

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



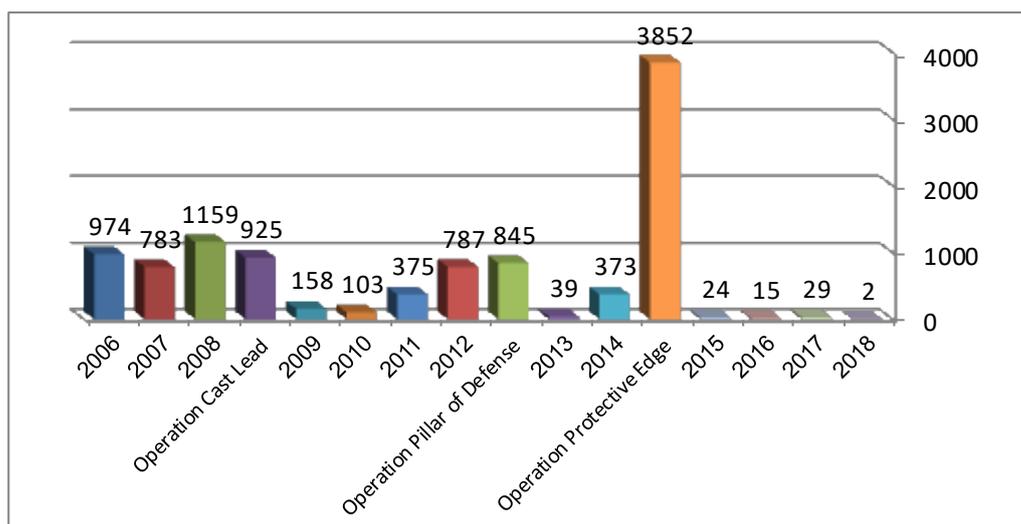
Notes:

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

** 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.

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

Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits



Developments in the Gaza Strip

The humanitarian situation

- **Muhammad Thabet, spokesman for the Gazan electric company**, said power was currently provided to the residents of the Gaza Strip in cycles of six hours with a 12-hour hiatus. He also said the power lines from Egypt which had been non-functioning had returned to operation (quds.net, January 21, 2018).
- **Ashraf al-Qidra, spokesman for the ministry of health in the Gaza Strip**, said the ministry suffered from a lack of fuel. He claimed there was concern that if no solution was found before the middle of February, the situation would worsen considerably and would have dire consequences (Twitter account of Ashraf al-Qidra, January 21, 2018).



General strike in the Gaza Strip initiated by the private sector protesting the PA's disregard for the difficult economic situation (Twitter account of Palinfo, date, 2018).



Gazans burn pictures of Rami Hamdallah, prime minister of the national consensus government, and senior Fatah figure Hussein al-Sheikh during a demonstration protesting the lack of electricity. The Arabic on the picture reads, "Traitor" (official Fatah Facebook page, January 19, 2018).

Hamas-Iran relations

► **Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau**, sent a communiqué to Ali Khamenei, the supreme leader of Iran, thanking him for the support Iran gives to strengthen the Palestinian "resistance" and for Iran's uncompromising stand on the issue of Jerusalem. He represented the "popular intifada" in Judea and Samaria as the way to deal with "the conspiracy against Palestine." He accused the United States and other countries, claiming they wanted to destroy the Palestinian cause. He claimed the "conspiracies" had been obvious from the beginning but that in recent months the declarations of Donald Trump regarding Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas had illustrated them even more (al-Mayadeen, January 18, 2018).

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Statements from Mahmoud Abbas

This past week Mahmoud Abbas, the PA chairman, gave two speeches in which he related to America's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and to the Palestinian cause in general. One was to the participants of the al-Azhar conference in Cairo held in support of Jerusalem, and used strong rhetoric, similar in tone to the speech he gave at Fatah's Revolutionary Council. The other speech, however, given at a press conference for European Union foreign ministers in Brussels, used softer and more conciliatory rhetoric.

► In his speech in Cairo, **Mahmoud Abbas stressed the historical and religious ties of the Palestinians to the land of Palestine and Jerusalem.**

◆ He said the facts could not be disputed and therefore Trump's declaration was null and void, and did not give Israel any right to Jerusalem. He added that the declaration violated international law, the policies of previous American presidents and the will of the international community, as the vote in the UN General Assembly had proved. He said steps had to be taken to prevent Israel from continuing to harm the status of Jerusalem and the holy places. He called on all those present to support Jerusalem and its residents, stressing that visits to Jerusalem were not part of normalizing relations with Israel but rather support for Palestine and the Palestinian people. He said Jerusalem should be an open city for people of all religions where any person could come to pray with safety.

◆ Mahmoud Abbas also criticized the international community for not implementing the resolutions dealing with the Palestinian cause. However, he said, **the Palestinians would continue to act peacefully and in the political sphere** until they achieved a Palestinian state with the 1967 borders and east Jerusalem as its capital. He also claimed the Palestinians had the right to appeal to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for the "crimes" Israel carried out against them and said no one could prevent them from appealing (Palestinian TV, January 17, 2018).

► **In his speech in Brussels**, however, Mahmoud Abbas softened his rhetoric, saying the European Union was the PA's central partner in establishing the state of Palestine, and he demanded it play a political role in reaching a solution that would have international recognition. He said **the Palestinian people had an interest in negotiating** because it was the only way to achieve peace between Israel and Palestine. He claimed that despite the obstacles, Palestine was committed to fighting terrorism, extremism and violence locally and regionally, and that the PA was committed to the agreements it had signed with Israel. He also called on Israel to fulfill its part in those agreements. **He appealed to the EU to recognize the state of Palestine and its institutions**, claiming such recognition **would not harm the negotiating efforts** (Palestinian TV, January 22, 2018).

The United States announces cut to UNRWA support

► **The American administration announced it would transfer \$60 million to UNRWA but would withhold the transfer of an additional \$65 million until future consideration.**

Heather Nauert, spokesperson for the American Department of State, said that the decision was not intended as a punitive move against the Palestinians, rather its objective was to encourage other countries to increase aid (New York Times, January 17, 2017).

► **The American decision was received by the Palestinians with anger** and perceived as continuing the pursuit of a hostile American policy. The foreign ministry of the Palestinian national consensus government denounced the American administration's decision (Wafa, January 17, 2018). **Husam Zomlot, PLO representative in Washington**, met with representatives of human rights organizations and the director of UNRWA in Washington and denounced the freezing of the agency's payments and the administration's threats to cut off funding. He claimed the actions of the American administration violated international law regarding the Palestinian refugees (Wafa, January 17, 2018).

◆ **Saeb Erekat, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee**, claimed the cut would keep the most basic necessities from the Gazans and turn the refugee camps into focal points for extremist groups. He said Trump had buried the two-state solution and that all these decisions were destructive for moderate Palestinians who believed in peace and did not want to employ violence (France24, January 20, 2018).

◆ **Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum** said America's cutting financial aid was an unacceptable policy whose objective was to destroy the Palestinian cause, and especially the issue of the Palestinian refugees. He called on UNRWA and on the entire world not to surrender to American pressure (Hamas website, January 17, 2018). On another occasion he praised UNRWA and the services it provided to the refugees. He called on the countries of the world to meet their commitments to the Palestinian cause and to provide funds to ensure that UNRWA could continue functioning until the refugees could "**return to the homes from which they were exiled**" (Hamas website, January 22, 2018).

► **Pierre Krähenbühl, UNRWA Commissioner General**, arrived in the Gaza Strip to launch a campaign to enlist funds for the agency in order to overcome the crisis created by the American decision (Twitter account of UNRWA's commissioner general, January 22, 2018). **Belgium** has already announced it would immediately transfer €6.3 million and €19 million over the next three years (Fars, January 17, 2018).



The UNRWA commissioner general holds a press conference in one of the agency's school in the Gaza Strip (al-Ghad, January 22, 2018).

► **UNRWA spokesman Sami Mushasha** said the agency would continue providing services to the Palestinian refugees, noting the services were not influenced by changes in American support. He said UNRWA had a budget of \$300 billion, of which the United States contributed \$300 million (Wafa, January 16, 2018).

PA and PLO appeal to the International Criminal Court in the The Hague

► **Riyadh al-Maliki, foreign minister of the national consensus government**, sent a communiqué to **Fatou Bensouda, the attorney general of the International Criminal Court** (ICC) in the The Hague, demanding the court impose its authority regarding the [so-called] "crimes" Israel committed against the Palestinian people. He claimed Israel **"harmed" the rights of children**, referring specifically to the detaining of Ahed al-Tamimi. He claimed Israel's actions violated international law and human rights in agreements regarding children's rights, as specified in the anti-torture agreement. He claimed Israel's "crimes," which were subject to ICC judgment, were an integral part of Israel's "regime of oppression" against the Palestinian people. He said all means were to be employed so that "Israeli war criminals" would have to account for their actions. He called for an investigation to be opened, at least a criminal investigation, in order to deter them and to revoke the immunity of Israeli leaders and criminals (Wafa, January 18, 2018).

► **Saeb Erekat** said that if the ICC did not open an investigation, **the PLO would lodge a formal complaint and demand. He claimed the PLO was being helped by six international lawyers** to choose the best way to have an investigation opened against senior Israeli figures, charging them with war crimes (Palestinian TV, January 20, 2018).

Palestinian reactions to the visit of the American vice president

- ▶ The visit of **American Vice President Mike Pence** to the region, and especially to Israel, and his statements about the right of Israel led to a wave of strong Palestinian reactions. **Fatah spokesman Usama Qawasmeh** said Fatah and the Palestinian people did not welcome the vice president's visit to the region. He said Pence's remarks about Jerusalem violated all international conventions. He called on the Western countries to reject them and on the Palestinian people to hold a general strike to show their objections to the decision of the American president to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (Ma'an, January 20, 2018).
- ▶ Dozens of Palestinians, including the secretary of the Fatah branch in Bethlehem, held a demonstration in front of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem to protest the visit of the vice president. During the demonstration they walked on his picture and then burned it (PNN, January 21, 2018).



Palestinian activists in front of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem burn pictures of American Vice President Mike Pence (Twitter account of Palinfo, January 22, 2018).