Overview

Senior Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) figures summed up with satisfaction the eighth round of escalation (which lasted for two days, May 4-5). They said the terrorist organizations had proved their military capabilities and coordinated the attacks at a very high level. They also threatened that if Israel did not meet its commitments or used live ammunition against the return march participants, it would be considered as having violated the understandings reached at the end of the most recent round of escalation.

In the meantime, measures are being taken to strengthen the lull reached at the end of the escalation: the fishing zone was increased to 12 nautical miles; the Erez and Kerem Shalom Crossings were opened; Qatari ambassador al-Emadi arrived in the Gaza Strip with currency to buy diesel fuel for the Gaza Strip power plant and to distribute to needy families; Nikolay Mladenov, the UN special envoy also arrived in the Gaza Strip, bringing with him long-term plans for improving the economic situation in the Gaza Strip.

However, despite measures taken to strengthen the lull, the situation in the Gaza Strip is unstable and the ceasefire is fragile. The first test case will be the mass event planned for Nakba Day (May 15, close in time to the events of the international Eurovision song contest in Israel). Following the threats issued against Israel, the question is whether during the Nakba Day events Hamas will make a serious effort to restrain violent activities and prevent PIJ provocations.

Israel's South

The eighth round of escalation

On the morning of May 6, 2019, the eighth round of escalation, which lasted for two days, ended. It began with a PIJ sniper attack that wounded two IDF soldiers. The IDF responded by attacking Hamas targets and killing two operatives of its military-terrorist wing. The following day massive barrages of rocket and mortar fire began attacking the Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip, and the attacks were gradually extended to a range of 40
kilometers from the Gaza Strip to include the southern Israeli cities of Ashqelon, Ashdod, Qiryat Gat, Qiryat Malachi and Beersheba. During the round of escalation 690 rockets and mortar shells were fired at Israel. In response the IDF attacked more than 350 terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip, including targets of high value for the terrorist organizations. The rocket attacks killed four Israelis and wounded 123 (most of them were treated for shock and minor injuries). Twenty-three Palestinians were killed, most of them (17) belonging to the terrorist organizations, about half of whom were PIJ operatives.

The round of escalation in the eyes of Hamas and the PIJ

Senior Hamas and PIJ figures who summed up the round of fighting stressed the effectiveness of the joint operations room. They threatened that another round of fighting is liable to break out if Israel does not meet the conditions of the understandings. Some of their statements were the following:

- **Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau**, claimed it was Israel that asked for the ceasefire. He claimed that during the round of fighting the "resistance" [i.e., the terrorist organizations] used a minimal amount of its capabilities. He also claimed that the military wings of Hamas and the PIJ collaborate both on the ground and in the political arena (al-Aqsa, May 10, 2019).

- **Khalil al-Haya, deputy chairman of the Hamas political bureau**, claimed the round began after the killing of Abdallah al-Maluh, an operative of Hamas military wing. After his death they had no choice but to make it clear that Israel could not impose an equation that would permit it to commit murder in cold blood. He praised the work of the joint operations room, led by Hamas' military wing, which, he claimed, coordinated activities and was responsible for determining rocket launching policy, for example, when it began and when it ended (al-Aqsa, May 8, 2019).

- **Senior Hamas figure Isma'il Radwan** said that the "resistance" had proved its ability to hit military targets with precision. Regarding the launch of the anti-tank rocket at a civilian Israeli vehicle, he said that according to the video civilian vehicles passed by but the "resistance" fighters ignored them and attacked only a military

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1 For further information, see the May 6, 2019 bulletin, "The eighth round of escalation, the most intensive and severe since the return marches began (Updated to 1500, May 6, 2019)."

2 According to the Israeli media, Abdallah al-Maluh was a medium-level commander in Hamas rocket-manufacturing network. He was killed by the IDF on Friday in response to the PIJ sniper attack which wounded two IDF soldiers (Yedioth Ahronoth, May 10, 2019).
vehicle. That proved, he claimed, the "resistance" used its weapons only against soldiers in accordance with international law (Paltoday, May 6, 2019). **Note:** The vehicle attacked was civilian and not military, as Hamas claimed.

**Usama Hamedan, responsible for Hamas' public and international relations,** claimed that if Israel had not compromised, within a few hours the "resistance" would have increased the range of its rockets and attacked Tel Aviv. He claimed the capabilities of the "resistance" had improved, especially after during a round of fighting in 2018 they found a weak point in the Iron Dome aerial defense system. During the most recent round of escalation, he claimed, they exploited the weak point, which lessened the system's effectiveness. He also claimed that the equation of "quiet in return for quiet" was no longer valid. If Israel harms demonstrators with live ammunition, changes the status quo in Jerusalem or harms Palestinian prisoners, it will be considered a violation of the understandings (al-Manar, May 10, 2019).

**Khalil al-Haya, a member of Hamas' political bureau,** blamed Israel for the recent round of fighting, because, he claimed, Israel violated the understandings. He claimed they had no option but to restrain Israel in order to protect the marches and the demonstrators, and to stop Israeli fire. **He said the joint operations room had collaborated at a very high level** and that Hamas wanted to expand it. He claimed that with every confrontation with Israel the fighting capabilities of the "resistance" improved with regard to quantity, quality and precision (al-Aqsa, May 8, 2019). On a different occasion he threatened that Israel would not enjoy calm and the region would not enjoy stability as long as the occupation of the land of Palestine and the siege on the Gaza Strip continued (Hamas website, May 10, 2019).

**Senior PIJ figure Khaled al-Batash** said the last round of fighting created a new equation: the joint operations room, headed by the military wings of the PIJ and Hamas, could respond with all its force to Israeli aggression and even cause it to ask for a ceasefire. He also said that if Israel does not implement the understandings agreed upon through Egyptian mediation, the "resistance" will be able to force Israel to implement them. He appealed to Egypt to exert pressure on Israel to implement the understandings, including the promises not to fire at demonstrators during the return marches [sic] (Istiqlal, May 11, 2019).
Senior PIJ figure Abd al-Jowad al-'Attar called on all the organizations to be prepared for additional rounds, as long as Israel delays implementing the understandings or if it harms the return march participants (Paltoday, May 9, 2019).

Stabilizing the lull after the round of escalation

On May 9, 2019, an Egyptian General Intelligence delegation entered the Gaza Strip through the Erez Crossing. Among the members of the delegation were Ahmed Abd al-Khaliq, who holds the Palestinian portfolio in Egyptian General Intelligence, and Ahmed Farouq, the deputy minister of intelligence (Palinfo, May 9, 2019). The delegation met with senior figures from Hamas, the PIJ and other organizations to stabilize the lull. Hamas and PIJ sources reported that Egypt asked them to show military restraint in the coming days so that the delegation could remain in the Gaza Strip to monitor the situation and ensure the implementation of the understandings (al-Akhbar, May 11, 2019).

Following the round of escalation measures began to stabilize the lull:

On May 9, 2019, the fishing zone off the Gaza Strip coast was extended to 12 nautical miles. The office of the Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories announced that the measure was conditioned on Gazan fishermen's honoring the understanding, and warned that passing the 12-mile limit would not be permitted (Israeli media, May 9, 2019). On May 11, 2019 the Israeli navy detained three Gazans who were suspected of having sailed into a forbidden zone off the Gaza coast. They were interrogated and released (Israeli media).

On May 12, 2019, the Erez and Kerem Shalom Crossings were opened for the first time since the escalation (Haaretz, May 13, 2019).

The Palestinian side of the Kerem Shalom Crossing with the renewal of its activities (Shehab Facebook page, May 12, 2019).
On May 13, 2019, Mohammed al-Emadi, the Qatari ambassador, and his deputy, Khaled al-Hardan, arrived in the Gaza Strip (Dunia al-Watan, May 13, 2019). Al-Emadi brought currency for the purchase of diesel fuel for the Gaza Strip power plant, and $109 thousand for distribution to needy families. The Gaza branches of the post office bank began distributing $100 to every family (Sawa, Facebook page of journalist Hassan Aslih, May 13, 2019).

Nikolay Mladenov, the UN special envoy to the Middle East, also entered the Gaza Strip through the Erez Crossing. He said the UN had long-term plans for improving the situation in the Gaza Strip, but they would only be implemented when the continuation of the lull was assured. He warned of a collapse of the lull and called on all the sides to fulfill their part in the understandings. He also said it was the last opportunity to prevent a "total conflict" between Israel and the Gaza Strip (Sawa, May 13, 2018).
Threat of rocket fire for the Eurovision song contest

Notice that appeared on the Facebook page of a group calling itself "The journalists' team." The terrorist organizations threaten to fire rockets during the Eurovision song contest, held this year in Israel ("The journalists' team" Facebook page, May 14, 2019).

Removal debris and compensating families

The ministry of public works and housing in the Gaza Strip reported that it had begun clearing debris and opening streets that had been blocked. According to the ministry, during the round of escalation 100 dwelling units were completely demolished, 30 were partially destroyed and more than 700 were slightly damaged. According to the statement, the ministry had begun paying $1,000 to everyone whose house had been destroyed (al-Manar, May 7, 2019).
Right: Teams from the Gaza City municipality clear the streets of debris after the destruction of a building by the IDF (Gaza City municipality Facebook page, May 6, 2019). Left: Teams from the Gaza City municipality clear the debris after the destruction of the al-Ghussein building, which according to the IDF spokesman was used by the Hamas cyber unit (Gaza City municipality Facebook page, May 5, 2019).

Isma’il Haniyeh pays a round of condolence calls to the families of Palestinians killed in the Gaza Strip (Palinfo Twitter account, May 7, 2019).

A number of additional agencies announced donations of support to families in the Gaza Strip whose houses had been damaged:

- The **al-Falah charitable association**, which operates in the Gaza Strip, held a ceremony in coordination with the Palestinian Authority (PA) ministry of public works and housing to distribute funds to families whose houses had been destroyed. During the ceremony, **$500 was distributed to every family**. Muhammad Ziyara, PA minister of public works and housing, gave a speech in the name of Palestinian prime minister Muhammad Shtayyeh, thanking the association. He said **Mahmoud Abbas and Muhammad Shtayyeh had ordered the rebuilding of all the houses that had been destroyed** (Abu Usama Ramadan’s Facebook page, May 12, 2019).

- Ihab al-Ghussein, coordinator for the General Union for Charitable Societies in the Gaza Strip, announced the provision of emergency support of **$1,000 for every family that lost its house**. He said they were planning to launch an emergency...
campaign to help the families and called on Miles of Smiles for support. He gave his speech at a press conference held by the 36th Miles of Smiles convoy in front of the ruins of the al-Khazandar building in Gaza City (Safa, May 7, 2019).

Issam Yousef, the coordinator general of the Miles of Smiles convoys campaign, at the press conference. Next to him, wearing a white shirt, is Ihab al-Ghussein (Palestine Post Twitter account, May 7, 2019).

- The General Union began distributing $1,000 to the owner of every dwelling unit completely destroyed in the recent escalation. The money was provided by a delegation headed by Walid al-Amoudi, the General Union's deputy chairman (Hamas' al-Ra'i agency, May 8, 2019; Ihab al-Ghussein's Facebook page, May 8, 2019). On May 12, 2019, the General Union distributed aid to an additional 84 owners of houses that had been destroyed (Ihab al-Ghussein's Facebook page, May 12, 2019).

Walid al-Amoudi distributes support to the owners of houses that were destroyed (Ihab al-Ghussein's Facebook page, May 8, 2019)

- The agricultural union and the ministry of public works and housing distributed $500 to 75 families who houses were destroyed during the round of escalation (al-Aqsa, May 13, 2019).
Return marches

The return march of May 3, 2019

On Friday, May 3, 2019, on the eve of the eighth round of escalation, the 57th return march was held. About 6,000 Palestinians participated, gathering at the five return camps. During the march there were a number of attempts to cross the fence and clash with IDF soldiers. A spokesman for the ministry of health in the Gaza Strip reported that two Palestinians were killed and 49 wounded (Ashraf al-Qidra’s Facebook page, May 4, 2019). One of the fatalities was an operative of Hamas military wing, and the other a PIJ operative. Later snipers wounded two IDF soldiers. Following Israel’s response to the sniper fore the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip began firing rockets and mortar shells at Israel, which was the signal for the beginning of the eighth round of escalation.3

The return march of May 10, 2019

The 58th return march was held on May 10, 2019, the first Friday of Ramadan and the first after the most recent round of escalation. Its theme was "United in the struggle against the deal of the century." About 6,000 Palestinians participated, gathering at five sites along the Gaza Strip border with Israel. Some of the demonstrators approached the fence and clashed with IDF forces. The Israeli Ynet news site, quoting a Palestinian source, reported that following an agreement with the Egyptian security delegation, Hamas deployed operatives to serve as a buffer between the demonstrators and the border. Members of the Egyptian

3 For the summary of the round of escalation see the May 6, 2019 bulletin, "The eighth round of escalation, the most intensive and severe since the return marches began (Updated to 1500, May 6, 2019)."
General Intelligence delegation, who had arrived in the Gaza Strip the previous day, visited the return camps (Ynet, May 10, 2018). According to a spokesman for the ministry of health in the Gaza Strip, one demonstrator was killed and 30 were injured (Ashraf al-Qidra's Twitter account, May 10, 2019). **The Palestinian killed was an operative in Hamas' military wing.**

Supreme National Authority notice for the return march of Friday, May 10, whose theme was "United against the deal [of the century]" (Supreme National Authority Facebook page, May 9, 2019).

Expected Nakba Day events

In the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria **preparations are being made for the events of Nakba Day** (May 15) and the anniversary of the relocation of the United States embassy to Jerusalem (May 14). **The Nakba Day events will occur close in time to the events of the Eurovision, held this year in Israel.** Rallies are being planned for the Gaza Strip, Ramallah and al-Bireh. Ahmed Abu al-Houli, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee and chairman of the high national committee for marking Nakba Day, said the main activity in Judea and Samaria would be a march and rally in Ramallah. The march would leave from Yasser Arafat's
grave and end at Yasser Arafat Square. He said in the Gaza Strip the march would leave from the western gate of UNRWA headquarters and end at UN headquarters, where the main rally would be held (Wafa, May 9, 2019). The Supreme National Authority announced that on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, there would be a general strike, and called for mass public participation in events. According to the announcement, the events will begin in the afternoon at the five return camps (Filastin al-Yawm, May 10, 2019).

Supreme National Authority notices calling for massive participation in the May 15 events (Supreme National Authority Facebook page, May 11 and 15, 2019).

Right: List of the pickup sites for transportation to the Nakba Day events in the return camp in the Khan Yunis district (Supreme National Authority Facebook page, May 14, 2019). Left: Joint notice issued by the PLO’s department of refugee affairs and the Supreme National Authority to mark Nakba Day with a march and rally in Gaza City (Twitter account of the PLO’s department of refugee affairs, May 9, 2019).

Nakba Day events in Judea and Samaria

At the government meeting held on May 13, 2019, Palestinian Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh called on all Palestinians to participate in the Nakba Day activities, and to treat the day as a day of learning about Palestine and its history (Wafa, May 13 2019). According to Ahmed Hanoun, head of the department of refugees' affairs in the PLO, various activities will
be held during the day; the main activity will take place at Yasser Arafat’s tomb (Sawa, May 7, 2018).

The national and Islamic forces in the Ramallah-al-Bireh region called for turning Friday, May 17, into a day of escalation at points of friction with IDF forces and at locations where the weekly Friday events were held. He also called on Palestinians to go to Jerusalem to pray as a sign of resistance to the limitations the posed by the IDF at the crossings (Wafa, May 12, 2019).

Rocket and mortar shell fire

During May 4 and 5, 2019, 690 rockets and mortar shells were fired at Israel, about 200 of them aimed at populated areas (cities in southern Israel and along the southern coastline). About 86% of the rockets targeting inhabited areas were intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system. However, because barrages of dozens of rockets were launched at the same time, it was difficult to provide a hermetic defense (IDF spokesman, May 5, 2019). In response to the rocket fire the IDF attacked scores of terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip. Three Israelis were killed by the rockets and scores were injured. A fourth civilian was killed when his vehicle was hit by an anti-tank missile.

Right: Rockets fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip (Palinfo Twitter account, May 4, 2019). Right: IDF attack on terrorist targets in Beit Lahia (Palinfo Twitter account, May 4, 2019).
Attempt to cross the security fence

On May 12, 2019, IDF soldiers detained a Palestinian suspected of crossing the security fence in the northern Gaza Strip. He was carrying a knife. He was taken for interrogation (IDF spokesman, May 12, 2019).

Judea and Samaria

Events on the ground

On May 10, 2019, the first Friday of Ramadan, 75,000 Palestinians entered Jerusalem from Judea and Samaria to pray on the Temple Mount. No exceptional events were reported (IDF...
spokesman, May 10, 2019). According to Palestinian reports, about 200,000 people prayed on the Temple Mount (QudsN Facebook page, May 10, 2019).

In Judea and Samaria Palestinians continued throwing stones and Molotov cocktails at Israeli security forces and civilian targets. Israeli security forces carried out counterterrorism activities throughout Judea and Samaria, detaining Palestinians suspected of terrorist activity, confiscating funds used to finance terrorist activities, and seizing military grade and improvised weapons. The round of escalation in the Gaza Strip did not influence the events in Judea and Samaria.

The more prominent events were the following:

- **May 13, 2019** – Stones were thrown at the Israeli security forces securing the Gush Etzion-Hebron road near the al-Aroub refugee camp. No casualties were reported (United Hatzalah, May 13, 2019).
- **May 12, 2019** – A Molotov cocktail was thrown at a bus carrying children on the Gush Etzion-Jerusalem road. The Israeli security forces pursued, captured and detained the Palestinian who threw the Molotov cocktail (Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria, May 12, 2019).
- **May 9, 2019** – Stones were thrown at a bus on the Gush Etzion-Hebron road near Halhul. No casualties were reported; the bus windshield was damaged (Rescue Without Borders, Judea and Samaria, May 9, 2019).
- **May 7, 2019** – Stones were thrown at an Israeli vehicle on the Gush Etzion-Hebron road near Bayt Umar. No casualties were reported. The vehicle was damaged (United Hatzalah, May 7, 2019)
May 6, 2019 – During Israeli security forces’ searches in the village of al-Zawiya in Samaria an improvised machine gun was seized. During searches in Hebron another weapon was seized. Both were transferred to the Israeli security forces (IDF spokesman, May 6, 2019).

Significant terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria since June 2017

The humanitarian situation

The supply of electricity

The electric company in the Gaza Strip announced it had completed a number of new projects whose objective was to permanently connect several hospitals in the Gaza Strip to power lines for an uninterrupted supply of electricity 24 hours a day. The hospitals mentioned were Shifaa, in Gaza City, Shuhadaa in Deir al-Balah, and Hamed Hospitals for prosthetic devices (Safa, May 13, 2019).

Delivery of funds

Jamie McGoldrick, UN deputy special coordinator for the Middle East peace process, said one of the reasons for the terrible economic situation in the Gaza Strip is the fact that it receives only 14% of the funding the UN asked for the Gaza Strip for 2019, $350 million (UN website, May 9, 2019). Pierre Krähenbühl, UNRWA commissioner general, said that during

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A significant attack is defined by the ITIC as involving shooting, a vehicular attack, the use of IEDs, or a combination of the above. Stones and Molotov cocktails thrown by Palestinians are not included.
Ramadan UNRWA would begin collecting donations for education and food for the Gaza Strip. He said the agency would also appoint 500 officials and give part-time workers full-time jobs (Dunia al-Watan, May 3, 2019).

The following donations were recently delivered to the Gaza Strip:

- The **Italian government** donated €1.9 million for first aid health services at six medical centers in the Gaza Strip for six months (Dunia al-Watan, May 4, 2019).
- The **Canadian government** donated $2.4 million to the World Health Organization to aid 91,000 needy people in the Gaza Strip by distributing electronic food coupons for six and a half months; 37,000 needy people will receive similar support for three months (Sawa, May 9, 2019).
- The **Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency**, in collaboration with a local charitable association in the Gaza Strip, distributed 10,000 food packages to needy families (Shehab, May 13, 2019).
- **Wa’el Koraz, spokesman for the Imam Khomeini Support Committee**, announced the distribution (for the seventh consecutive year) of 600,000 meals for breaking the fast during the Muslim religious month of Ramadan. He said 20,000 meals would be distributed every day, and would include meals for breaking the fast, packages of food and supplies. They would be given to the needy, the families of those killed and imprisoned and those whose houses had been destroyed. The food will be given according to lists prepared in collaboration with the committees that will handle the distribution of the packages throughout the Gaza Strip (Mehr News Agency in Arabic, May 8, 2019).

A spokesman for the Imam Khomeini Support Committee announces a plan to distribute meals to break the Ramadan fast. The sign at the left reads, "The charity kitchen of the Imam Khomeini Support Committee – Gaza district; supported and funded by the Imam Khomeini Support Committee; 2019" (tybikalam Facebook page, May 9, 2019).
Interview with Ziyad al-Nakhalah

On May 7, 2019, the day after the end of the most recent round of escalation in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) Secretary General Ziyad al-Nakhalah was interviewed by the Hezbollah-affiliated al-Mayadeen TV station in Lebanon. He exploited the interview to send threatening messages to Israel and at the same time to deflect claims made against the PIJ which generated the recent escalation.

PIJ Secretary General Ziyad al-Nakhalah interviewed by al-Mayadeen, Lebanon (al-Mayadeen YouTube channel, May 7, 2019).

Al-Nakhalah admitted that at the beginning of the most recent round of escalation there was no agreement between the PIJ on the one hand and Hamas and Egypt on the other. However, as the escalation progressed Hamas took part in fighting Israel and the two organizations cooperated, according to al-Nakhalah, at a very high level. He avoided clarifying the PIJ’s escalation strategy (behind which, in ITIC assessment, stood Iran), undermining Hamas’ interest to promote an arrangement which would provide a response for the severe economic hardships of the Gaza Strip population. The PIJ’s strategy also challenges the Egyptian mediation efforts to calm the situation in the Gaza Strip and prevent an escalation that could lead to a broad military confrontation serving the interests of Iran, the PIJ’s sponsor.

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

For a full analysis of the interview, see the May 12, 2019 bulletin, ”Threatening Messages Sent to Israel in an interview with Palestinian Islamic Jihad Secretary General Ziyad al-Nakhalah.”
Statements from senior PA figures

At the weekly Palestinian government meeting, Palestinian Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh related to the recent developments in the Gaza Strip. He praised the agencies involved in reaching a ceasefire. He said that in view of the "aggression" shown by Israel, the international community had to intervene and force Israel, according to international law, not to renew its "aggression." The Palestinian government instructed the Palestinian ministry of health to provide a solution for the lack of medicine and first aid equipment in the hospitals in the Gaza Strip (Wafa, May 6, 2019).

At the government meeting held on May 13, 2019, Muhammad Shtayyeh called on the European countries and the World Bank to send a commission to investigate Israel's deduction of Palestinian tax revenues, claiming it was illegal. He also called on the countries of the world that believe in the two-state solution to respond to Israel's threats regarding the annexation of Judea and Samaria by recognizing the "right of return" and the existence of a Palestinian state with the 1967 borders and Jerusalem as its capital (Wafa, May 13, 2019).

Muhammad Mustafa, advisor to Mahmoud Abbas for economic affairs, said the PA had begun to look for an alternative to the Paris Protocol in order to gradually separate itself from the Israeli economy. He said the alternative would be based on strengthening the foundations of the Palestinian national product. He said future agricultural projects would prove the PA's economic separation from Israel (Wafa, May 1, 2018).

Transfer of the Qatari funds to the PA and the Gaza Strip

Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the emir of Qatar, instructed the allotment of $480 million to Palestinians in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip (Sawa, May 7, 2019). The allotment is apparently the result of a request made by the PA. Hussein al-Sheikh, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, tweeted that in accordance with instructions from Mahmoud Abbas, he went to Qatar with the minister of the treasury. During the visit it was agreed to transfer $480 million to the PA. Al-Sheikh said that $180 million would be transferred to the Gaza Strip and $300 million would be deposited in the PA treasury, $50 million as a donation and the rest as a loan. According to the arrangement, $25 million will be transferred every month for a year (Hussein al-Sheikh's Twitter account, May 7, 2019).

Mahmoud Abbas thanked the emir of Qatar for the funds, mentioning the close relations between the Qatari and Palestinian people (Wafa, May 7, 2019). Isma'il Haniyeh, head of
Hamas’ political bureau, also expressed esteem for the emir’s decision to transfer the funds (aljazeera.net, May 7, 2019).

The Battle for Hearts and Minds

In London thousands of people, among them Ahed Tamimi (a serial provocateur who often confronts IDF soldiers) and her father, participated in a march to mark Nakba Day. The march was sponsored by the Palestinian Forum in Britain. After the march a rally was held where speeches were given by Zaher al-Birawi, deputy chairman of the Palestinian Forum in Britain; Husam Zomlot, the PA representative in Britain; and Richard Burgon, a Labour MP, and others (aljazeera.net, May 11, 2019; Palestinian Forum in Britain Facebook page, May 11, 2019).

The demonstration in London. On the left senior Hamas figure Zaher Birawi holds an umbrella with the colors of the Palestinian flag (next to the woman in yellow), and left to right, Husam Zomlot, (with the kaffia around his neck) Ahed Tamimi and her father, Bassem (Zaher al-Birawi’s Facebook page, May 11, 2019).

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For further information about Ahed Tamimi, see the December 21, 2017 bulletin: Ahed Tamimi: Serial provocateur since childhood in the village of Nabi Saleh.
Right: Richard Burgon, a Labour MP at the demonstration (Richard Burgon's Facebook page, May 11, 2019). Left: Jeremy Corbyn, head of the Labour Party, shows his support for the demonstration. At the right of the sign held by Corbyn is a key, which is the symbol of the so-called "right of return" of the Palestinians (which means the destruction of the State of Israel) (Palestinian Forum in Britain Facebook page, May 11, 2019).