



# News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (July 3 – 9, 2019)

## Overview

- ▶ On Friday, July 5, 2019, the return march was held. About 7,000 Palestinians participated (similar to last week). **The level of violence was relatively low**, similar to that of previous weeks: Palestinians threw IEDs, sabotaged the security fence, tried to penetrate into Israeli territory and launched balloons. Although most of them had pictures attached, two fires were identified in Israeli territory. (**Note:** During the week several Palestinians were detained when they crossed the security fence. They had fragmentation grenades, accelerants and a knife.)
- ▶ **This past week there was a significant reduction in the number of incendiary and IED balloons launched into Israel.** According to Palestinian reports, that was in exchange for diesel fuel delivered to the Gaza Strip and the extension of the fishing zone. However, several incendiary and IED balloons were launched and threats were issued to renew the extensive launchings and to launch "new things" (possibly drones with explosive devices attached).
- ▶ The visit of the Egyptian delegation to the Gaza Strip was postponed again. According to reports, the delegation will go to Ramallah in the near future, and then visit the Gaza Strip. Senior Hamas figures claim Israel does not meet its commitments and threaten to cause the security situation to deteriorate again.
- ▶ While constructing the underground barrier along the Gaza Strip border, **a tunnel penetrating into Israeli territory was exposed in the southern Gaza Strip. It was the 18<sup>th</sup> tunnel exposed by the Israeli security forces.**
- ▶ **In Judea and Samaria, terrorist attacks focused on a vehicular attack north of Jerusalem targeting IDF soldiers.** Five IDF soldiers were injured, three of them seriously. This past week the Israel Security Agency issued a report about the detention of Hamas operatives in Judea and Samaria. One of them had been trained to set up a laboratory for the manufacture of explosives and to recruit operatives in Judea and Samaria. Other operatives were instructed by Hamas to carry out suicide bombing and shooting attacks against Israelis.

## Israel's South

### The return march of July 5, 2019

►On Friday, July 5, 2019, the return march was held in the Gaza Strip. Its theme was "With unity we will prevent the plot [i.e., the "deal of the century"]." About 7,000 Palestinians participated in the events, most them gathering at the five return camps. The level of violence demonstrated at the events was similar to that of the preceding weeks. Several dozen rioters approached the security fence, burned tires and threw explosive devices. Some of the rioters tried to climb the fence and sabotage it. Others tried to cross the border into Israeli territory. During the march balloons were launched, most of them bearing pictures. However, two fires (set by incendiary balloons) were identified in Israeli territory.



**Right: Palestinian demonstrators at the return march in eastern Khan Yunis (I'lam Khan Yunis Facebook page, July 5, 2019). Left: Demonstrators in the central Gaza Strip (Supreme National Authority of the Great Return March Facebook page, July 5, 2019).**



**IDF equipment the Palestinians claim they took after they crossed the fence and reached an IDF post east of Khan Yunis (Mu'taz Abu Rida's Twitter account, July 5, 2019).**

►A spokesman for the ministry of health in the Gaza Strip reported that forty Palestinians had been injured (Ashraf al-Qidra's Twitter account, July 5, 2019). The Supreme National Authority announced that the theme of the July 12, 2019 return march will be "No to

negotiations...no to reconciliation...no to recognition of the [Zionist] entity" (al-Aqsa TV, July 5, 2019).

### Arson terrorism

► **This past week the number of incendiary and IED balloons launched into Israeli territory was significantly reduced.** The Palestinian media reported that Hamas agreed to stop launching balloons into Israel in return for the delivery of diesel fuel and the extension of the fishing zone. On the other hand, on July 8, 2019, the Sons of al-Zawari in Rafah unit reported it was preparing for launching incendiary and IED balloons into Israel. In addition, they claimed, preparations were also being made to launch "new things." A picture accompanying the threat showed hand grenades attached to a type of drone (possibly an indication they would use a drone bearing an explosive device).



**Threat from the Sons of al-Zawari to replace balloons with drones  
(Sons of al-Zawari in Rafah Facebook page, July 8, 2019).**

### The lull

► The visit of the Egyptian General Intelligence delegation to the Gaza Strip has been postponed until further notice. On July 2, 2019, the delegation formally announced the visit to the Gaza Strip was being postponed because of "reasons related to the delegation itself, unconnected to the Palestinian side" (Dunia al-Watan, July 2, 2019). Two days later another postponement was announced (Palinfo, July 4, 2019). A Hamas source reported that the visit had been postponed because of the negative answer the Egyptian delegation received from the Fatah movement regarding the internal Palestinian reconciliation (al-Akhbar, July 5, 2019).

► On July 7, 2019, it was reported that the Egyptian delegation would visit Ramallah in the near future and from there go to the Gaza Strip. Diplomatic sources reported that the

members of the delegation asked the Palestinians to preserve the current calm and avoid clashes with the Israelis. They promised that in deliberations with Israel they would discuss the issue of the IDF's shooting at demonstrators during the Friday marches. They also promised to continue their efforts to secure the return of the fishing boats Israel had confiscated (Dar al-Haya, July 7, 2019).

► **A " Hamas source" reported that the [terrorist] organizations in the Gaza Strip threatened to cause the security situation to deteriorate if Israel delays the delivery of the monthly installment of funds from Qatar, which is supposed to enter the Gaza Strip next week.** According to the source, during the past few days Hamas held talks with the negotiators regarding the understandings but rejected Israel's attempt to convert the Qatari funds into a foundation for initiating industrial projects. Reportedly Hamas asked that funds be allotted for such projects separately (al-Akhbar, July 5, 2019). **Mahmoud al-Zahar, a member of Hamas political bureau,** also accused Israel of not having implemented all its commitments. He claimed that recently Israel was discussing new aggression against the Gaza Strip as a response to the difficulties the Israeli leadership faced in dealing with internal matters.

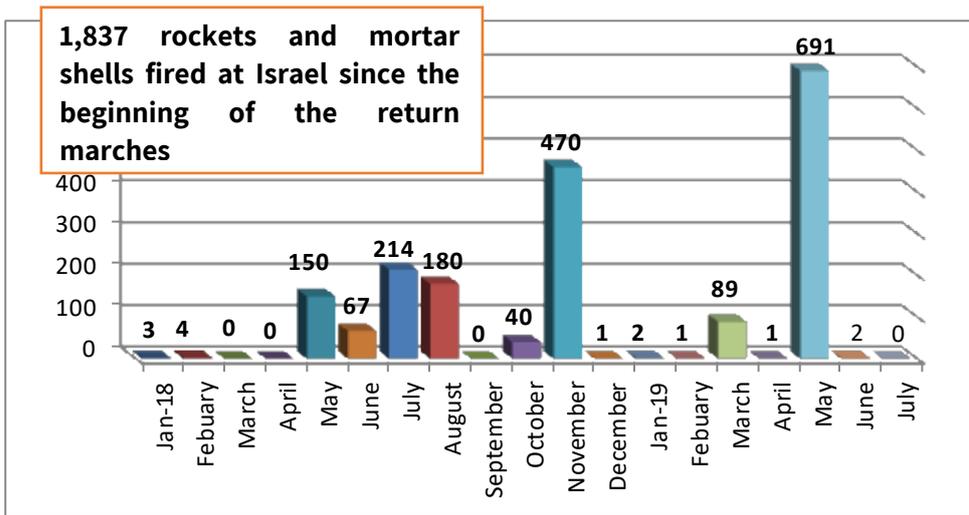
► **Maher Muzher, a member of political bureau of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP),** denied reports in the Israeli media stating that [as part of the lull understandings] measures were being taken to facilitate daily life for the residents of the Gaza Strip. He claimed that so far the limitations had not been removed. He also called for the continuation of the return marches, and to expand them to Judea and Samaria to exert pressure on Israel to end its [alleged] "delaying tactics" in the Gaza Strip (al-Quds, July 7, 2019).

# Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire

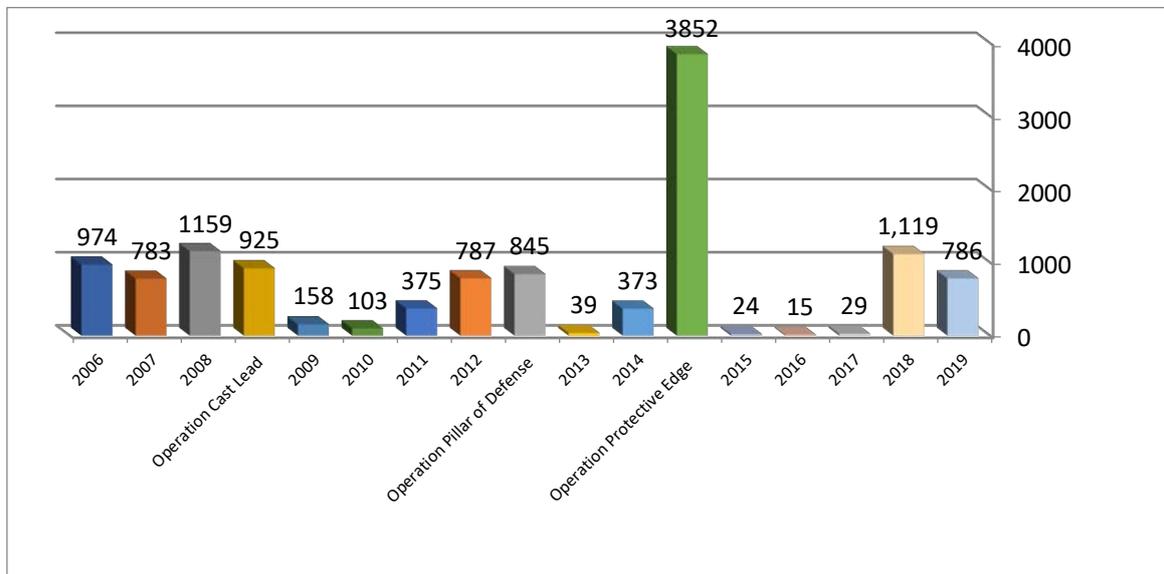
## Rocket and mortar shell fire into Israel

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

## Monthly Distribution of Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire since January 2018



## Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits



## Other events

### Drone penetrates Israeli territory

►On July 8, 2019, an IDF force identified a drone that entered Israeli air space from the Gaza Strip. It was intercepted and seized by IDF forces in the Zikim region north of the Gaza Strip, and taken for examination (IDF spokesman, July 8, 2019).



**The drone launched into Israel from the Gaza Strip (Mu'taz Abu Rida's Twitter account, July 8, 2019).**

### Another penetrating tunnel exposed

►During the construction of the underground barrier along the Israeli-Gaza Strip border a **tunnel penetrating into Israeli territory was exposed in the southern Gaza Strip**. The IDF is examining the route of the tunnel (IDF spokesman, July 8, 2019). It is apparently an old tunnel. **It was the 18<sup>th</sup> tunnel exposed by the Israeli security forces.**

### Crossing the security fence

►On the night of **July 6, 2019**, Israeli security forces detained three suspects who crossed the security fence in the southern Gaza Strip. They were in possession of **a fragmentation grenade and accelerants**. They were taken for interrogation (IDF spokesman, July 7, 2019). On **July 5, 2019**, during the return march in the Gaza Strip, IDF soldiers detained two Palestinians who crossed the security fence in the southern Gaza Strip. One of them had a knife. The two were taken for interrogation (IDF spokesman, July 5, 2019).

## Judea and Samaria

### Vehicular attack

►On July 7, 2019, a Palestinian vehicle hit several IDF soldiers who were conducting a security activity. The soldiers were at the side of the road between Hizma and Anatot

(north of Jerusalem). The Palestinian driver rammed the soldiers and drove off. After a few miles he abandoned the vehicle, took another and drove north. **The attack wounded five IDF soldiers**, three seriously. After an intelligence-operational activity, **the Palestinian suspected of carrying out the vehicular attack was detained** (IDF spokesman, July 7, 2019).

► Hamas praised the vehicular attack and the attacker. **Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem** said the "activity" in Jerusalem against the IDF forces was a continuation of the uprising of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem. He claimed the "resistance" [i.e. terrorist organizations] is what would determine the borders of the city on its path to full liberation (Filastin al-Yawm, July 7, 2019).



**The scene of the vehicular attack in the Hizma area, north of Jerusalem (royanews.tv, July 7, 2019).**

## Other events on the ground

► 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 and seizing military grade and improvised weapons. The more prominent events were the following:

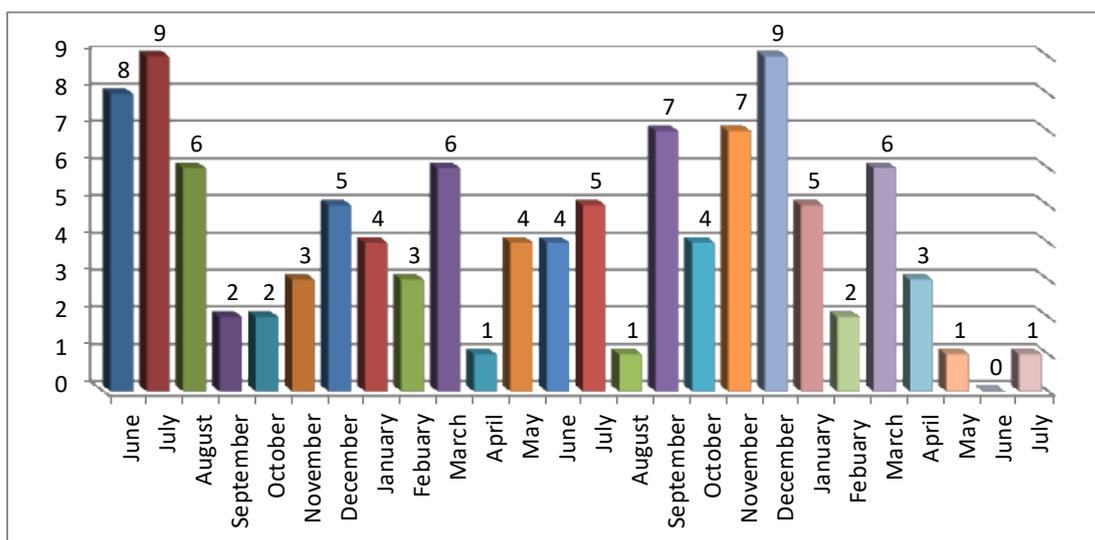
- ◆ **July 9, 2019** – A Palestinian threw several Molotov cocktails at a Border Police post at **the entrance to the military court in Samaria** (near the village of Salem). He was shot and wounded by Border Police soldiers (Israel Police Force's spokesman's unit, July 9, 2019).
- ◆ **July 8, 2019** – Palestinians threw two Molotov cocktails from a passing car at an IDF post near **the Ariel Junction**. No casualties were reported (Rescue Without Borders, July 8, 2019).

◆ **July 7, 2019** – Palestinians threw stones at a vehicle in the village of Sinjil (**northeast of Ramallah**). No casualties were reported. The front windshield of the vehicle was damaged (Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria, July 7, 2019).

◆ **July 7, 2019** – The Israeli security forces detained a Palestinian at the **Rahel Crossing in south Jerusalem**. A knife was found in his possession and he was taken for interrogation (Israel Police Force spokesman's unit, July 7, 2019).

◆ **July 4, 2019** – IDF soldiers identified several Palestinians throwing Molotov cocktails and IEDs at an IDF post in **Abu Dis (east Jerusalem)**. They shot at the attackers, wounding one (IDF spokesman, July 4, 2019).

### Significant terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria since June 2017<sup>1</sup>



### Hamas attempts to recruit operatives in Judea and Samaria for terrorist attacks

► After a series of detentions carried out by the Israeli security forces in recent months, Hamas attempts to establish networks in Judea and Samaria were prevented. The objective of the networks was to carry out terrorist attacks against Israel. Following are the details of the activities planned by one of the detainees (Israel Security Agency, July 3, 2019):

◆ **Recruitment:** Fadi Abu Subah, 35, from the Nuseirat refugee camp, was recruited to the Hamas military-terrorist wing in July 2018 by a **Hamas operative named Ashraf Sabah**. Sabah was released from an Israeli jail in 2015 after serving 12 years for involvement in placing IEDs on the Gaza Strip border to attack IDF forces and

<sup>1</sup>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.

involvement in other terrorist attacks. Fadi Abu Subah was recruited after it became known that he was in the process of obtaining a permit to go via Israel for medical treatment in Judea and Samaria.

◆**Training:** After recruitment, between July and September 2018 Fadi Abu Subah underwent intensive military training, given by operatives of Hamas' military-terrorist wing. The objective was to prepare him to set up a laboratory for the manufacture explosives and IEDs, and to instruct operatives in Judea and Samaria. He was also briefed about what to say during questioning at the Erez Crossing and during Israel Security Agency interrogations. He was told to deny any familiarity with his recruiters or his military training in the Gaza Strip. Meetings were held at the home of **Musab Hashalmon, a Hamas operative**, who had been deported to the Gaza Strip as part of the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal.

◆**Handling:** Before leaving the Gaza Strip Fadi Abu Subah received a jacket with a strip of material hidden in it with the code words he would need for encrypted communications between Hamas terrorist operatives and recruits in Judea and Samaria. He was asked to take the jacket with him in September 2018 when he left the Gaza Strip through the Erez Crossing for medical treatment in Jordan. However, he failed to complete his mission

◆**Leaving the Gaza Strip for medical treatment:** In May 2019 he paid a doctor in the Gaza Strip to forge medical documents stating that he could not receive the necessary treatment in the Gaza Strip. On May 15, 2019, he went to the Erez Crossing with a bag and the jacket with the strip of material. He used his permit to enter Israel and went to Hebron. In reality, he did not go to the hospital, instead he met with Hamas operatives in Hebron. He was detained on May 18, 2019, a short time after he entered the Taybeh region (in central Israel).



**Fadi Abu al-Subah, who was recruited to Hamas' military wing and entered Israel by exploiting a permit to receive medical treatment. He is holding a strip of material with code words, which was hidden inside his jacket (Israel Security Agency, July 3, 2019).**

► **Detention of other terrorist operatives:**

◆ **In recent months the Israeli security forces detained a number of Palestinians in Judea and Samaria who had been recruited by Hamas and instructed to carry out terrorist attacks.** All the operatives were in contact with **Nuri al-Din, a Hamas military operative** in the Gaza Strip. Among those detained were Fares Hamran, 30, an operative in the Palestinian Authority's security services, who **agreed to carry out a suicide bombing attack.** He received instructions in the preparation of explosive devices and also recruited other terrorist operatives.

◆ **Between March and May 2019 the Israeli security forces detained 11 Palestinians from the village of Zawya (southeast of Qalqilya). They belonged to a network of operatives who were supposed to carry out suicide bombing and shooting attacks against Israelis.** Weapons were found in their possession.

◆ **Between April and May 2019 the Israeli security forces detained a number of Palestinians recruited by Hamas operatives from the Gaza Strip. They planned to manufacture explosive devices following instructions sent to them from the Gaza Strip. They also planned to recruit a Palestinian to carry out a suicide bombing attack with a motorcycle.**

## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### The fifth anniversary of Operation Protective Edge

► In the Gaza Strip the fifth anniversary of Operation Protective Edge (July-August 2014) was celebrated. Hamas issued a press release stating that the results of the operation "were an important milestone." Hamas called on Israel to read the statement carefully, and made it clear that **the "resistance" would not hesitate to respond to Israel's [alleged] "takeover" of Jerusalem and al-Aqsa mosque** (Hamas website, July 7, 2019).

► Hamas' military wing issued a statement with the number of penetrations "behind enemy lines" during the operation. It also gave information about the weapons in its possession, including Ababil UAVs, locally manufactured rockets and Ghoul sniper rifles. The military wing boasted of its **improved capabilities, including its larger number of more precise rockets**, claiming Hamas was prepared for any clash with Israel (Hamas military wing website, July 7, 2019).

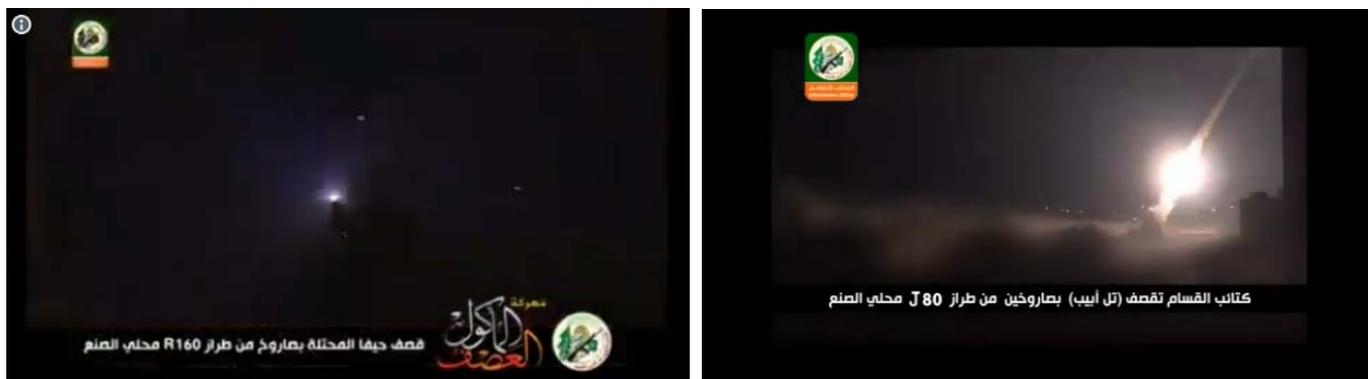
► Hamas also issued a call to the public to use the hashtag "#the chaff that was consumed [by fire]" (the name Hamas gave to Operation Protective Edge). The hashtag was supposed to be used on July 8, 2019, at 19:00, to mark the fifth anniversary of the operation (Muqawama Press Twitter account, July 8, 2019).



**A general call to the public to use the hashtag "#the chaff that was consumed [by fire]" (Muqawama Press Twitter account, July 8, 2019).**

► Hamas' military wing issued two propaganda videos about the types of rockets it claimed were used during Operation Protective Edge. In one video Hamas terrorist operatives claim that during the operations rockets manufactured in the Gaza Strip reached Haifa, Ben-Gurion International Airport and the nuclear reactor in Dimona. Hamas also used the video to reveal

the J80 rocket, manufactured in the Gaza Strip with a range of 50 miles, which hit Tel Aviv and which the Iron Dome aerial defense system failed to intercept. Hamas also threatened Israel, claiming that the future held "surprises" (Hamas military wing website, July 8, 2019).



Right: From a video documenting the firing of a J80 rocket at Tel Aviv during Operation Protective Edge (Issam al-Jaabari's Twitter account, July 8, 2019). Left: Firing an R160 rocket at Haifa during the Operation (Shehab website, July 8, 2019).



Propaganda infographic issued by Hamas' military-terrorist wing. It shows the number of rockets fired during Operation Protective Edge and the Israeli cities attacked. According to the data, 3,621 rockets of various types were fired (R160, J80, Fajr 5, M75, Sijil 55, Grad, Qassem 3) (Ahmed Sheikh Khalil's Twitter account, July 9, 2019).

## Payments to the wounded and families of Palestinians killed in the return marches

► On July 3, 2019, the Hamas-controlled ministry of social development in the Gaza Strip announced the beginning of payments to the wounded and families of Palestinians killed in the return marches. The payments will be made through branches of the post office bank. The names will be examined using a link to a website (Paltoday, July 3, 2019). The link is <http://query.mosa.gov.ps/injured6>. The title is "Support for the killed and wounded in the

return marches, (month) June 2019" (website of the ministry for social development in the Gaza Strip, July 9, 2019).

The link for the purposes of obtaining financial aid from the ministry of social development in the Gaza Strip. The title reads, "Support for the killed and wounded in the return marches, June 2019.) applicants enter the ID numbers of the killed or wounded and the date of their birth (website of the ministry for social development in the Gaza Strip, July 9, 2019).

## The Palestinian Authority (PA)

### The PA's economic situation

- ▶The PA treasury ministry announced that June salaries would be paid on July 4, 2019, according to the following key: **top priority** would be given to the salaries of the wounded, the families of shaheeds, prisoners and former prisoners, and they would be paid in full. **Second priority** would be given civilian and military employees and pensioners, and 60% of their salaries would be paid, but not less than 2000 Israeli shekels (\$560).
- ▶Given the difficult financial situation in the PA, **Khaled al-Asili, minister of the national economy**, said the Palestinian leadership was examining ideas "outside the box" for a solution to the financial crisis. The ideas include **attempts to exert pressure on Israel to transfer the Palestinian tax revenues it has not released**. He said part of the solution is to implement the decisions made by the Central Council and the National Council and to disengage the Palestinian economy from Israel, especially by supporting Palestinian-manufactured products. He said medical referrals should no longer be given to Israel; the amount of electricity imported from Jordan should be increased, and clean energy should be developed, which would save the PA's treasury large sums of money (al-Najah, July 2, 2019).
- ▶Regarding the Palestinian budget, Palestinian prime minister Muhammad Shtayyeh said **the PA would appeal to international arbitration about Israel's "theft" of PA funds**, and would sue Israel for "every nickel." He said that because of Israel's decision to deduct

Palestinian tax funds, **the PA had decided to reopen the legal cases pending with Israel** (al-Mamlaka, July 8, 2019).

## The PA signs economic agreements with Jordan

► **PA prime minister Muhammad Shtayyeh** visited Jordan. During an interview he said the visit was in accordance with instructions from Mahmoud Abbas, who told him to increase the PA's ties to Arab states in the fields of economy, health, education and energy (Palestinian TV, July 6, 2019). Muhammad Shtayyeh and Jordanian prime minister Omar al-Razzaz signed three memorandums of understanding in three area (Wafa, July 7, 2019).

◆ **In the area of energy and natural resources:** The memorandum referred mainly to the increase in the supply of electricity to the region of Jericho and the Jordan Valley, and increasing the grid to include the regions of Jerusalem, al-E'izariya and Abu Dis.

◆ **In the area of health:** The Palestinian ministry of health and the Jordanian ministry of health agreed to refer patients for treatment to hospitals in Jordan instead of Israel.

◆ **In the area of commerce.**

► Signing the memorandums of understanding with Jordan is part of the PA activity to gradually free itself from economic dependence on Israel. Palestinian prime minister Muhammad Shtayyeh said that the government's strategy is a gradual separation from Israel by strengthening Palestinian manufacturing and an appeal to the Arab states (Wafa, July 8, 2019). At the Palestinian government meeting held on July 8, 2019, the government approved all the agreements and memorandums of understanding signed with the Jordanian government (Wafa, July 8, 2019).

## PA security forces' exercises

► On July 2, 2019, the PA's security forces carried out a comprehensive exercise in collaboration with civilian bodies in a number of districts simultaneously. In the Ramallah-al-Bireh district the exercise simulated a fire breaking out in the al-Bireh municipality, and at the same time overcoming of a terrorist squad that had barricaded itself in a building in Bitunia. In the Bethlehem district the exercise was called "the president's convoy," and simulated the reception of the president's convoy while a civilian protest demonstration was being held. In the Jenin district an exercise was held simulating the dispersal of an illegal civilian gathering which had turned into a riot. The objective of the exercises was to raise the level of alert, raise the level of functioning of the security forces, and raise the level of their collaboration/coordination with civilian bodies (Wafa, July 2, 2019).



**Exercise in Bethlehem (official Facebook page of public relations in the Palestinian preventive security apparatus, July 2, 2019).**

### PA public opinion poll

►Khalil al-Shqaqi's Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR), which conducts public opinion polls, issued the initial findings of its quarterly poll, held at the end of June 2019. Findings of the second quarter of 2019 **show a widespread rejection of the US Administration, the “Deal of the Century,” and the Bahrain workshop**: Ninety percent said that they did not believe or trust the US administration; about 80% supported the PA decision to boycott the Bahrain workshop; and 80% view that participation as an abandonment of the Palestinian cause. Demand for Abbas’ resignation stands at 49% in the West Bank and 71% in the Gaza Strip. In addition, 62% support, and 29% oppose, the PA decision to refuse to accept a partial transfer of custom revenues (PCPSR website, July 9, 2019).

### Conference in Beirut to protest the "deal of the century"

►On July 7, 2019, a conference was held in Beirut with the theme "United against the deal of the century." It was held on the initiative of the PLO. The conference was attended by about 300 Palestinian, Lebanese and other Arab participants, including representatives from Fatah and Hamas. Topics discussed included formulating a joint Arab position against the "deal of the century" and the decisions reached at the economic workshop in Bahrain. Azam al-Ahmed, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, stressed the conference's importance.

►The conference ended with the publication of the "[Islamic] nation's charter against the deal of shame," which stressed total rejection of every facet of the "deal of the century," past, present and future. It stressed support for all forms of the "resistance," especially "armed resistance" [i.e., terrorism]. It also noted that it required every person in the [Muslim] nation **to give every form of support to the "resistance,"** especially the return marches and those

who defend al-Aqsa mosque (the *mourabitoun*). Also mentioned was the need to reject all forms of normalization with the "Zionists" because normalization was the first step towards the success of the deal of Trump and his agents (al-Quds International Institution website, July 8, 2019).



**Conference participants**  
(al-Quds International Institution website, July 8, 2019).



**Cartoon of about the internal Palestinian rift that make it difficult to struggle against the "deal of the century."** The Arabic reads, "The internal Palestinian rift and the struggle against the deal of the century" (Alaa al-Laqta's Facebook page, July 5, 2019).