



# News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(September 16 – 22, 2020)

## Overview

- ▶ In the **Gaza Strip** the moderate rise of Covid-19 infections continues. **There are currently 1,780 active cases**, up from 1,669 a week ago. **Medical sources report shortages of drugs, test kits and medical equipment.** A spokesman for the ministry of health in Gaza blamed Israel for the shortages and called on the international community to pressure Israel into providing the Gaza Strip with all its medical and humanitarian needs.
- ▶ In **Judea and Samaria** as well **the number of Covid-19 infections continues to rise. There are currently 9,062 active cases**, up from 8,683 a week ago. The Palestinian Authority (PA) has still refrained from imposing a complete lockdown but did announce its intention to increase local preventive measures to prevent a worsening of the situation in the various districts. PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh ordered stricter punishment for violations of public health guidelines, and for enforcing the ban on weddings and the erection of mourning tents.
- ▶ **The quiet in the Gaza Strip, reached with understandings for a lull, was broken when two rockets were fired at the southern Israeli cities of Ashqelon and Ashdod.** The rockets were fired during the signing of the agreements for normalizing Israel's relations with the UAE and Bahrain. In response IDF aircraft attacked Hamas terrorist targets. Several hours later 13 rockets were fired at the Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip. **The terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip did not formally claim responsibility for the rocket fire.** However, a senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) figure said it was a message according to which the battle was being fought in Palestine, not the United States. The military wings of the PIJ and Hamas said the rockets had been launched by the "resistance" as part of the "equation" of **"a bombardment in return for a bombardment."**
- ▶ This past week **the decision to renew the launching of IED and incendiary balloon to attack the Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip** was announced on the social networks. A senior PIJ figure claimed the reason was Israel's delay in implementing the lull understandings. So far no IED and incendiary balloons have been located in Israeli territory.

► Media and diplomatic activity of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the various organizations increased after the signing of the agreements in Washington. However, **the protest demonstrations organized in the PA were not well attended**. The Palestinians are planning extensive diplomatic activities in the UN, **including a speech by Mahmoud Abbas**. Senior Hamas and PIJ figures called for "Israel to be burned from within" with an intifada, using the BDS against Israel, promoting the "popular resistance" [i.e., popular terrorism], and holding military activity in Judea and Samaria. Calls were increasingly heard for an internal Palestinian reconciliation, given the common resistance to the measures taken by the United States and Israel.

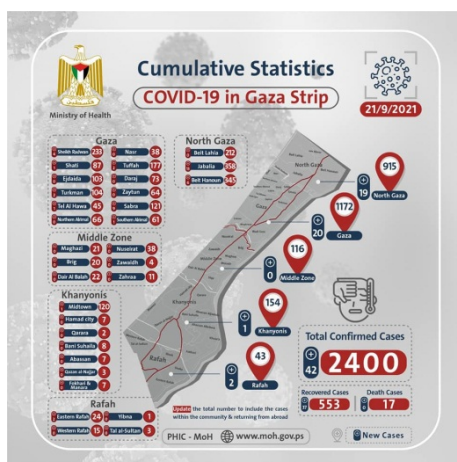
## Covid-19 Infection in Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria: Overview

### Gaza Strip

**This past week the moderate rise in Covid-19 infection inside the Gaza Strip continued.**

According to the ministry of health in Gaza, 518 new active cases were detected (776 a week ago). **The number of active cases is currently 1,780**, up from 1,669 a week ago, after several dozen people recovered. So far there have been **17 deaths** (16 inside the Gaza Strip, one a woman who returned from abroad) (Facebook page of the medical committee of the ministry of health in Gaza devoted to combatting Covid-19, September 22, 2020).

► By district, **the epicenters are the al-Sabra neighborhood in Gaza City, and Beit Hanoun and Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip**. The chairman of the emergency committee of the northern Gaza Strip district in the ministry of health, Dr. Jamal Muhammad Salman, said the medical teams were in control of the spread of the virus in the district and had contained the virus in **Beit Hanoun, which remained the only region designated as "red."** It was being treated differently from the other regions in the district, he said, most of which were designated "green" (alresala.net, September 21, 2020).



The growing number of Covid-19 cases inside the Gaza Strip according to district (Facebook page of the medical committee of the ministry of health in Gaza devoted to combatting Covid-19, September 21, 2020).

► Spokesmen for the ministry of health and the ministry of the interior said the Gaza Strip was **still at the stage of overcoming the virus and had not yet reached the stage of living with it**. They stressed that Gazans had to continue following public health guidelines and taking preventive measures (masks, social distancing and personal hygiene). **They should not ignore the guidelines** (al-Ra'i news agency, September 20, 2020; website of the ministry of health in Gaza, September 19, 2018).

► On the other hand, Salama Maarouf, in charge of the bureau of information in Gaza, said that **the curve of infection had definitely begun to flatten, especially in the parts of the northern Gaza Strip where there is a large number of active cases**. However, he said, Covid-19 was still dangerous, and he called on local residents to obey public health guidelines (al-Aqsa, September 20, 2020). Khalil al-Haya, a member of Hamas' political bureau, said they were planning to return high school students to their studies on October 1, 2020 (Sawa, September 20, 2020).



Shopping malls in the Gaza Strip reopen (website of the ministry of the interior in Gaza, September 19, 2020).

► Senior figures in the refugee camps in the Gaza Strip complained of **serious defects in UNRWA's Covid-19 activity**. They said UNRWA had completely stopped sanitation and disinfection activity and was not supplying disinfectants or masks (Filastin, September 17, 2020).

► **Medical sources in Gaza report a shortage of drugs and medical equipment**. Muneir al-Barash, general manager of the bureau of pharmaceuticals in the ministry of health, called **the drug situation in Gaza was "catastrophic."** He said **the amount of drugs dispensed daily was equivalent to the amount usually dispensed monthly**, and the ministry of health's drug warehouses were empty. The director of the laboratory department reported a shortage of reagents, with a quantity sufficient for only a few days (al-Aqsa, September 17, 2020).

► According to Salama Maarouf, there is **a shortage of drugs, medical equipment and test kits**. He said the ministry of health wanted to increase the number of tests to 3,000 a day but they had reserves for only a few days (al-Aqsa, September 20, 2020). **Dr. Ashraf al-Qidra, spokesman for the ministry of health**, blamed Israel and called on the international community to pressure the "Israeli occupation" into providing all the Gaza Strip's medical and humanitarian needs (al-Ra'i news agency, September 17, 2020).

► Nikolay Mladenov, the UN special envoy to the Middle East, reported that **20,000 test kits had reached the Gaza Strip, as well as other laboratory equipment**. He thanked the W.H.O. for providing the equipment (Nikolay Mladenov's Twitter account, September 21, 2020).

### Opening the Rafah Crossing

► **Efforts are being made in the Gaza Strip to open the Rafah Crossing** for returning Palestinians and to enable local residents to leave. According to Salama Maarouf the number of Gazans who want to return to the Gaza Strip from Egypt is between 800 and 1,000 (Wafa, September 14, 2020). According to Khalil al-Haya, a member of Hamas' political bureau, contacts with Egypt continue and the Palestinians expect the Rafah Crossing to open in the near future (Sawa, September 20, 2020).

### Judea and Samaria

**This past week the number of active cases in the PA territories continued to rise** with the detection of 5,380 new cases. **As of September 22, 2020, the number of active cases was 9,062**, up from 8,683 a week ago, and, the Ramallah district had the largest number of cases

(1,909, more than the Hebron district, which had 1,767 active cases). According to PA reports so far **1,856 active cases have been detected in Jerusalem** (1,517 according to the Jerusalem municipality). Of the active cases in the PA territories, 41 are in ICUs, eight of them on ventilators. **There have been 314 deaths** (45 in the east Jerusalem neighborhoods). The number of cases detected since the outbreak of the disease is 34,135, up from 28,755 a week ago.

► At the weekly PA government meeting, PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh said that the **rise in the number of active cases was unacceptable**, and that the government and other official agencies would **increase measures to prevent it from rising further** (Wafa, September 21, 2020). On September 20, 2020, 420,000 students, from the fifth to the 12<sup>th</sup> grades, went back to school. Muhammad Shtayyeh called on school principals to enforce public health guidelines and guard the health of the students.

► Among the measures instituted were the following:

- ◆ **The *waqf* announced the Temple Mount compound would be closed for three weeks**, parallel to the lockdown imposed by Israel.
- ◆ **The ministry of health in Ramallah announced it would classify districts and cities according to their epidemiological condition.** Every district and city would be designated by a color indicating number of Covid-19 cases per one thousand inhabitants (Sawa, September 20, 2020).



Map issued by the headquarters of the Palestinian national security forces showing the PA districts according to the "traffic light" model, as of September 20, 2020. Jericho, Jerusalem and Qalqilya are red areas (six active Covid-19 cases or more per 1,000 inhabitants); and Jenin and Salfit (and the Gaza Strip) are green areas (fewer than two active cases per 1,000 inhabitants); all other areas are yellow (2-5 active cases per 1,000 inhabitants) (Facebook page of "The friends of the Palestinian national security forces – Jerusalem and the suburbs," September 21, 2020).

► Muhammad Shtayyeh ordered the security forces to take stronger measures against anyone who disobeyed the public health guidelines and to **increase punishments**. He also stressed the ban on weddings and the erection of mourning tents, which are significant vectors of infection (Wafa, September 16, 2020).

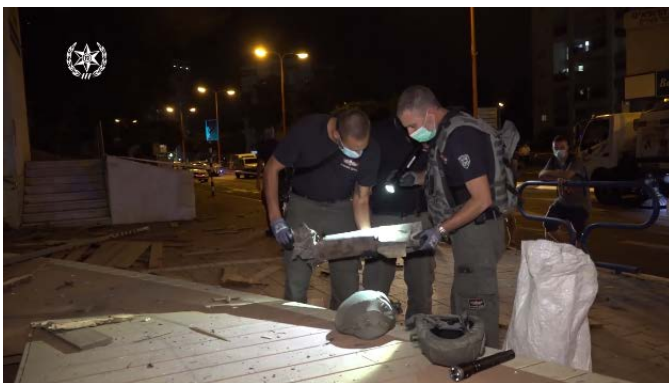
## Rocket Fire

### Rocket fire into Israel during the ceremony for normalization of relations held in Washington

► At 20:00 on **September 15, 2020**, during the ceremony in Washington for signing the agreement for normalizing Israel's relations with the UAE, and Bahrain's announcement of peace with Israel, **two rockets were fired from Gaza Strip at the southern Israeli cities of Ashdod and Ashqelon**. One was intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system, the other fell in Ashdod near a shopping mall. **Six Israeli civilians were wounded, one critically, two slightly**, and **three were treated for shock**. Property was damaged. No organization claimed responsibility for the rocket fire and although there was no official claim of responsibility, one of the rogue organizations may have been behind it. (see below, the media response)



The site of the rocket hit in the commercial center of the southern Israeli city of Ashdod (Magen David Adom spokesman's unit, September 15, 2020).



Right: The remains of the rocket that hit Ashdod. Left: Police demolitions experts deal with the rocket (Israel Police Force spokesman's unit, September 15, 2020).

► **Before dawn on September 16, 2020, 13 rockets were fired at the Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip.** Eight were intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system. (IDF spokesman, September 16, 2020). One rocket exploded between two structures on a kibbutz in the western Negev, No casualties were reported; there was damage to property.



**The remains of the rocket hit in a kibbutz in the western Negev (Israel Police Force spokesman's unit, September 16, 2020).**

## Israel's response

► In response to the rocket fire IDF aircraft attacked Hamas terrorist targets. They included a workshop of the manufacture of rockets and explosives, a military training and rocket test compound, and an underground Hamas facility (IDF spokesman, September 16, 2020).

► The Palestinian media reported an attack on the Asqalan (Ashqelon) post of Hamas' military wing, northwest of Beit Lahia; an aerial defense post near the American school in northwestern Beit Lahia; the al-Tal post west of Deir al-Balah and the al-Jalil post northeast of the al-Tufah neighborhood in Gaza City (al-Quds, Safa, Palinfo, September 16, 2020).



**Right: IDF attack on the Asqalan post (Twitter account of journalist Hassan Aslih, September 16, 2020). Left: IDF attack on a post northwest of Gaza City (Facebook page of journalist Hani al-She'ar), Some of the prominent events were the following: 16, 2020).**

## Palestinian media responses to the rocket fire

### Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) announcements

► **The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip did not formally claim responsibility for the rocket fire.** However, after the IDF attacks the PIJ's military wing announced that **in response to the Israeli attacks, and as part of the "equation" of "a bombardment in return for a bombardment," the "resistance" [i.e., the terrorist organizations] had launched rocket barrages at enemy positions and settlements near the Gaza Strip** (Jerusalem Brigades Telegram channel, September 16, 2020). "A senior source in the PIJ's military wing" said that when the agreements were signed in the White House, **the "resistance" sent a message through rockets and fire**, showing that the Palestinians made the decisions and **would have the first and last words** (Canaan, September 17, 2020).



PIJ military wing notice. The Arabic reads, (top) "Palestine makes the decision," and (bottom) "Our battle will continue throughout Palestine – from the [Mediterranean] sea to the [Jordan] river, from the north to the south" (Jerusalem Brigades Telegram channel, September 17, 2020).

► **Senior PIJ figure Khaled al-Batash** said they would not accept the Arab peace initiative, which they considered the "Arab Balfour Declaration" for Israel. He said that the rocket fire from the Gaza Strip during the signing of the agreements **made it clear to the world that the battle was for Palestine and not the United States. He said the "popular resistance" was not canceling the armed resistance, as could be seen by the rocket fire at Ashdod.** He also said that **armed "resistance" activities should be carried out on the West Bank** (almasira.net, September 18, 2020).

### Hamas announcements

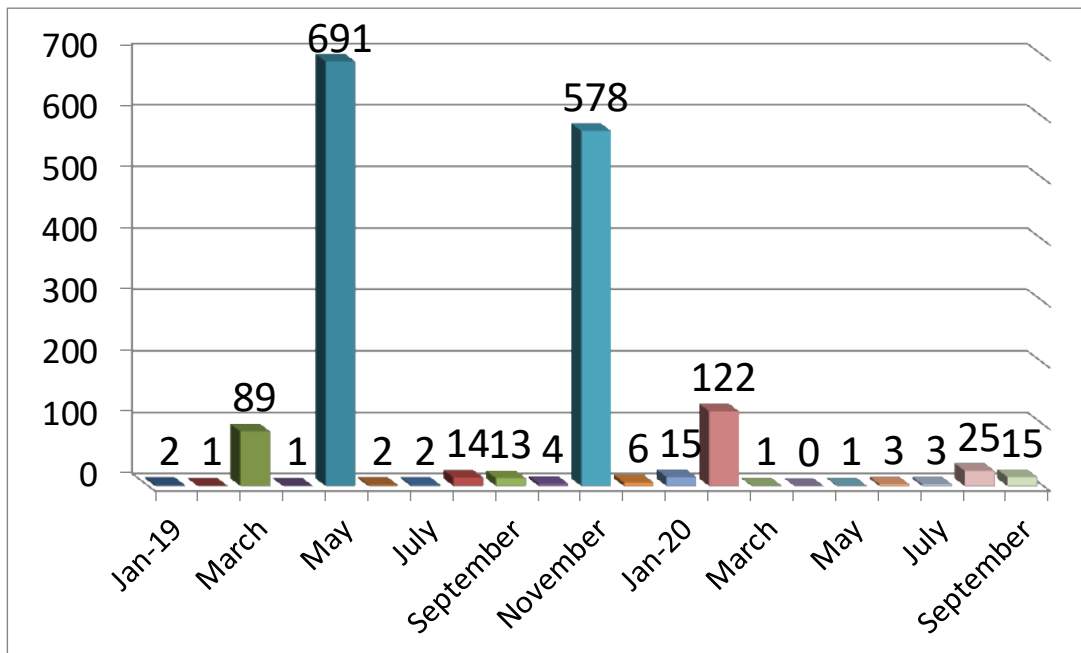
► **A number of hours later Hamas' military wing** said in an announcement that the "resistance headquarters had its say" and that **the equation of "a bombardment in return for a bombardment" would continue.** According to the announcement the military wing wanted to expand its response, as Israel had done so "aggressively" (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, September 16, 2020). Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem said

that each time, the "resistance" proved its ability to establish its equations with Israel ("the occupation") and keep it from changing the rules of engagement (Hazem Qassem's Twitter account, September 16, 2020).

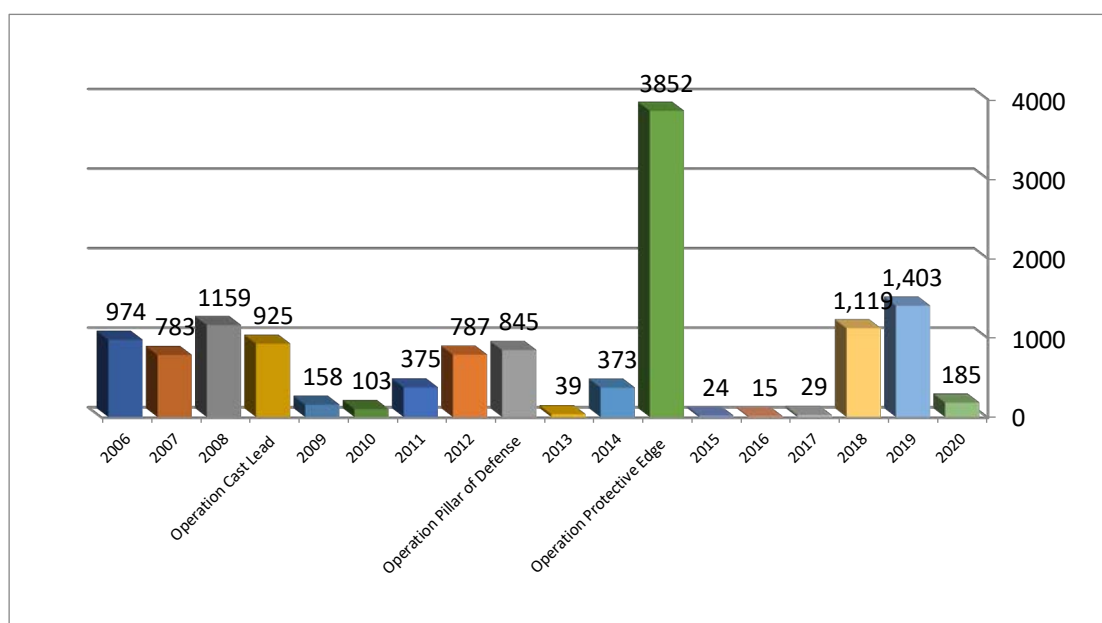


Cartoon showing a Hamas military wing operative preparing a rocket for firing, which speaks to him with the words of a UAE song sung after the signing of the agreement normalizing relations with Israel: "Take me to visit Tel Aviv" (Facebook page of photojournalist Anas al-Sharif, September 19, 2020).

### Monthly Distribution of Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire



## Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits



## Renewal of balloon launching

► During the past few days the social networks have posted almost daily notices about the decision to renew the launching of IED and incendiary balloons into the Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip. In the meantime, a number of balloon-launching units have reported launches from various parts of the Gaza Strip (**Note:** So far we have no proof to corroborate the claims.) They claim they have renewed their activity because Israel has not fulfilled the lull understandings, including the delivery of drugs to combat Covid-19 (Twitter accounts of Twitter account of Hasan Abd al-Aziz and Twitter account of Khaled al-Asoud, and Facebook page of the Sons of al-Zawari in Rafah, September 21, 2020).

► Senior PIJ figure Khader Habib, said **the renewal of IED and incendiary balloon launches from the Gaza Strip at the Israeli communities was the response to Israel's delay in implementing the measures agreed on for lifting the [so-called] "siege" of the Gaza Strip, including the delivery of drugs.** He also said the launching of balloons by civilians [sic] and the response of the "resistance" to the continuation of the "siege" were "legitimate," according to all humanitarian and international conventions (Sabaq24, September 21, 2020).

## Hamas security forces prevent Palestinian youth from entering Israeli territory

► Local sources in the Gaza Strip reported that Hamas' security forces detained a young man who tried to infiltrate through the security fence into Israeli territory. He was in possession of an IED, which he wanted to place near the security fence. He was put into quarantine (Amad, September 18, 2020).

## Judea and Samaria

### Stones and Molotov cocktails thrown

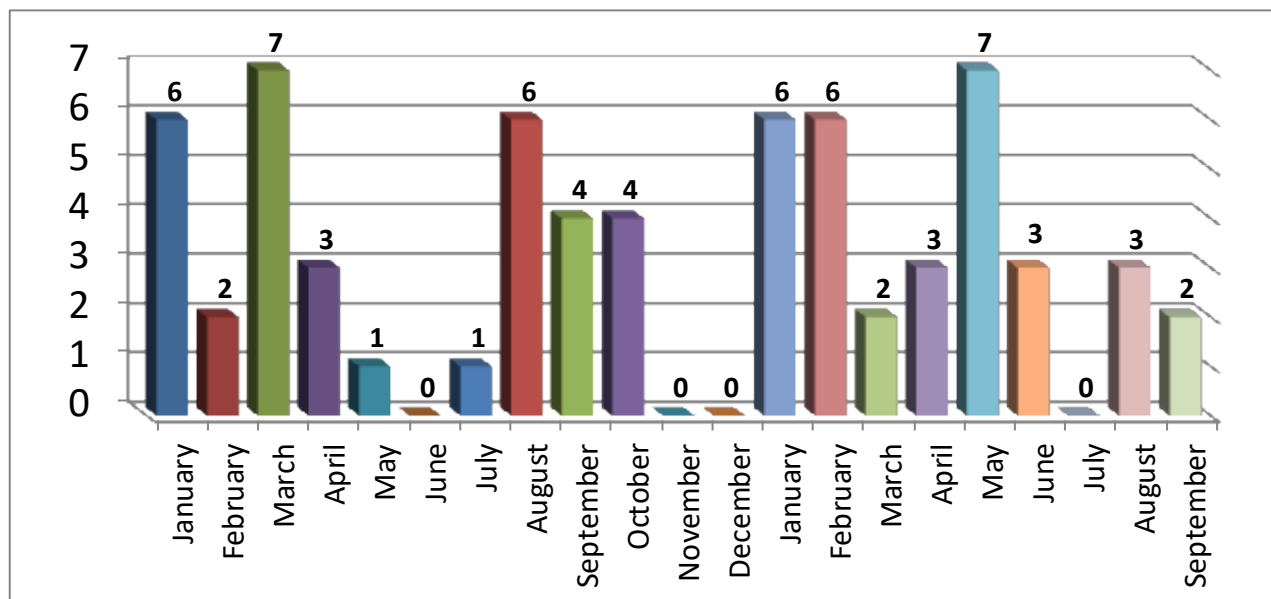
► In Judea and Samaria Palestinians continued throwing stones and Molotov cocktails. The more prominent events were the following:<sup>1</sup>

- ◆ **September 21, 2020:** Stones were thrown at a civilian Israeli vehicle northeast of Ramallah. No casualties were reported; the front windshield of the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **September 17, 2020:** Stones were thrown at a civilian Israeli bus south of Hebron. No casualties were reported.
- ◆ **September 15, 2020:** Stones were thrown at a civilian Israeli vehicle northwest of Hebron. No casualties were reported.
- ◆ **September 15, 2020:** Stones were thrown at a civilian Israeli bus southeast of Ramallah. No casualties were reported; the front windshield of the vehicle was damaged.

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<sup>1</sup> All information and reports are from Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria unless otherwise noted.

## Significant terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria since January 2019<sup>2</sup>



## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### Aid for the Gaza Strip

► The ministry of public works in Gaza reported it had begun to transfer \$2 million in aid from Kuwait for the water infrastructure damaged during Operation Protective Edge in 2014 (Dunia al-Watan, September 19, 2020).

### Nikolay Mladenov visits the Gaza Strip

► **Nikolay Mladenov, the UN special envoy to the Middle East**, visited the Gaza Strip for a number of hours. Hamas spokesman Abd al-Latif al-Qanua said the Hamas leadership met with Mladenov to discuss easing the situation of the Palestinians in Gaza, lifting the "siege" and the UN's efforts in regard to it. Al-Qanua said they were working hard so that the negotiators' efforts would have practical outcomes, and that the Palestinian civilian would sense them through the implementation of projects they had agreed on in the past and with the transfer of the funds from Qatar (Palinfo, September 16, 2020).

### Hamas terrorist operative killed in tunnel collapse

► **One Palestinian was killed and three injured when a tunnel collapsed in the northern Gaza Strip** (Palinfo Twitter account, September 20, 2020). Hamas' military wing issued a

<sup>2</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.

mourning notice for Khalil Muhammad Lubad, 27 from the Jabalia refugee camp, killed when a "resistance" tunnel collapsed (Shehab Twitter account, September 20, 2020). The funeral held for him in the Jabalia refugee camp was attended by many Palestinians, including senior Hamas figures (Hamas' military wing's website, September 21, 2020).



**Right: The funeral held in Jabalia for Khalil al-Lubad: some masks, no social distancing (Sawt al-Aqsa Radio Twitter account, September 21, 2020). Left: Notice issued after the death of Khalil al-Lubad. "Men of the tunnels" is written in "blood," and the inscription on the pickaxe reads, "To Jerusalem" (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, September 20, 2020).**

## Terrorist organization heads meet in Beirut

► PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah and other figures from the organization met in Beirut with a Hamas delegation led by Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau. They discussed organizational cooperation and the formulation of a united position against Arab normalization of relations with Israel (PIJ website, September 16, 2020).



**Ziyad al-Nakhalah and Isma'il Haniyeh meet in Beirut (Twitter account of U-news, which apparently operates from Lebanon and focuses on covering the Iranian-led so-called "resistance axis," September 16, 2020).**

## PIJ leader interview with al-Mayadeen

► PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah was interviewed by al-Mayadeen and elaborated on the struggle against Israel. He said that a war was being fought between Israel and the Gaza Strip,

it had no "red lines" and the entire territory of Israel had always been a target for the organizations. He claimed that the PIJ's military wing manufactured all its own weapons. Asked if the "popular resistance" was preparation for the third intifada, Ziyad al-Nakhalah answered that it was. Asked if they had thought about establishing a "military body" in the West Bank, he said **that military bodies existed in the West Bank but were working in secret** (al-Mayadeen, September 16, 2020).



**Ziyad al-Nakhalah interview**  
(YouTube channel of al-Mayadeen Programs, September 16, 2020).

► Ziyad al-Nakhalah said the assumption that the Palestinian organizations adhered to the 1967 border was simply wrong. **He claimed the Palestinian people had the "right" to "all Palestine" and not just the West Bank.** He said it was dangerous, that Saudi Arabia, where Muslim shrines were located, was approaching a détente with Israel, and he stressed that there had to be a new political program agreed on by all the Palestinian organizations (al-Mayadeen, September 16, 2020).

## The Palestinian Authority (PA)

### Aid from Qatar for the PA

► Nabil Sha'ath, advisor to Mahmoud Abbas, said Qatar had expressed willingness to help the PA (which had asked for a loan) pay its salaries (al-Andalou News, September 18, 2020). According to the Saudi Arabian newspaper al-Akhbar, **Saudi Arabia and Qatar conditioned the donation of \$1 million a month, requested by the PA, on the renewal of security cooperation and agreement to receive funds from Israel** (Filastin al-Yawm, September 15, 2020).

## PA reactions to the ceremony held in the United States for the signing of the agreement normalizing Israel's relations with the UAE and Bahrain

► This past week the PA continued its political and media activity against the normalization agreements signed by Israel with the UAE and Bahrain. A number of protest demonstrations were organized **but were not particularly well attended**. Mahmoud Abbas spoke with Khaled Aref, the PA representative in Bahrain, whom he recalled to Ramallah for consultations following the signing of the normalization agreement between Israel and Bahrain (Wafa, September 19, 2020).



Protest march with the participation of senior Hamas and PLO figures (Right: al-Quds, September 15, 2020; Left: Wafa, September 15, 2020).



Israel flags burned during a demonstration in Khan Yunis (Safa Facebook page, September 15, 2020). Left: Burning pictures of Netanyahu, Trump and Bahrain's Hamad al-Khalifa at a rally held in front of the Legislative Council in Gaza (al-Ahrar movement website, September 15, 2020).

► Mahmoud Abbas plans to relate to the issue of the normalization of relations with Israel in his speech before the UN General Assembly. According to Saeb Erekat, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee, Mahmoud Abbas' speech will be "one of the most important ever given before the Assembly" and a response to the [alleged] campaign the United States is waging against the Palestinian cause. According to Saeb Erekat the

Palestinian organizations stand behind Mahmoud Abbas to deter the "deal of the century" through **"popular resistance" and a united leadership**. He said that during the deliberations in the General Assembly **19 resolutions regarding Palestine** will be voted on. He added that **the Palestinians would continue to work with the UN Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court (ICC), and for European recognition of a Palestinian state** (Wafa, September 19, 2020).

► **Musa Abu Marzouq, a member of the Hamas political bureau**, said the agreements of the UAE and Bahrain with Israel were a serious blow to the Palestinian people. He said they turned the two countries into an axis with Israel whose objective was to fight against the Palestinian people (France24 on YouTube, September 18, 2020). On a different occasion he said the Arab states should stand up strongly to pressure from the United States to normalize their relations with Israel. **He called for using the BDS against Israel and the revoking of the PA's agreements with Israel**. He said **the Palestinians should burn Israel from the inside with an intifada, "resistance" and a boycott** (al-Aqsa, September 19, 2020).

### Internal Palestinian reconciliation rhetoric continues

► After declarations about a rapprochement between the Palestinian organizations, it was reported that **Mahmoud Abbas ordered an end to political detentions in general and of Hamas operatives in particular**. "External" Hamas spokesman Husam Badran confirmed the report and said there was ongoing coordination among the organizations. He said they were determined to carry out the decisions made at the meeting of the organization leaders in Beirut as soon as possible (Shabakat Quds, al-Akhbariya, September 19, 2020). Nabil Sha'ath, advisor to Mahmoud Abbas, said they were of the same opinion as Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, regarding opposition to the "Trump plot," the "normalization conspiracy" and the "annexation conspiracy" (al-Jazeera, September 15, 2020).

### Protests against the Arab Bank continue

► **The families of the Palestinian prisoners from east Jerusalem neighborhoods held a rally in front of the offices of the Arab Bank in al-E'izariya**. The demonstration was attended the director of the Jerusalem unit in Mahmoud Abbas's office and the chairman of the committee of the families of prisoners and detainees in Jerusalem; and a number of Fatah representatives. **The demonstrators demanded that the Arab Bank's directorate change the decision to stop the payments of the prisoners' salaries and to close their**

**accounts.** They held signs criticizing the bank reading, "Arab Bank, either you are subordinate to the monetary authority or to the [Israeli] occupation," and "Our brave prisoners – not paying them their salaries is treason" (al-Hayat al-Jadeeda, Safa, September 15, 2020).



**Right: Demonstration in front of the Arab Bank in al-E'izariya (al-Hayat al-Jadeeda, September 15, 2020). Left: Graffiti sprayed on the window of the Arab Bank in al-Bireh. The Arabic reads, "The prisoners are the red line" (Ramallah Mix Facebook page, September 19, 2020).**

## Results of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research survey

► On September 15, 2020, Khalil al-Shqaqi's Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR) issued the initial results of a public opinion poll of 1,270 Palestinians in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip between September 9 and 12, 2020. **The findings indicated Palestinian public anger at the UAE's decision to normalize relations with Israel and a significant decrease in support for the two-state solution.** The findings indicated significant satisfaction with the PA's handling of the Covid-19 crisis, but **the demand for Mahmoud Abbas to resign also rose.** The main findings were the following.<sup>3</sup>

► **The normalization agreement between Israel and the UAE:** The findings show a consensus (86%) that the agreement serves only the interests of Israel. When asked to pick one word that represents sentiments toward the normalization agreement: the majority (53%) picked "betrayal." Three quarters (75%) believe that the normalization agreement forces Israel to merely postpone annexation.

► **Security coordination with Israel:** A majority of 62% is opposed to the restoration of security coordination with Israel. If Israel conditioned resumption of civil and fiscal

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pcpsr.org/en/node/817>

coordination with a resumption of security coordination, a majority of 59% would oppose, and 35% would support, the resumption of relations.

► **Performance of Mahmoud Abbas:** Most of the population (62%) wants president Abbas to resign, and 63% are dissatisfied with his performance. If elections were held between Isma'il Haniyeh and Mahmoud Abbas, Isma'il Haniyeh would win 52% of the vote, Mahmoud Abbas 39%.

► **Combatting Covid-19:** Most of the Palestinian public is relatively satisfied the measures taken by the PA in managing the Covid-19 crisis. However majority of 55% say that are dissatisfied with the PA decision during the past several months to stop cooperation and coordination with Israel in the health sector.