



Spotlight on Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (August 24-30, 2022)

Overview

► **This past week Palestinians carried out two shooting attacks:** shots were fired at Israelis who entered Nablus without security coordination to pray at the Tomb of Joseph; two of them were wounded. Shots were also fired at an Israeli security vehicle in Shavei Shomron, northwest of Nablus. No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged. On August 30, 2022, the shooters who carried out the attack in Shavei Shomron were detained by Israeli security forces who surrounded their house in the village of Rujeib, southeast of Nablus. A stabbing attack was prevented when a Palestinian armed with a knife was detained at the Reihan Crossing. The Israeli security forces continued and increased their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria, detaining dozens of Palestinians suspected of involvement in terrorist activities and confiscating large quantities of weapons. Among the detainees was a senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) operative from Qabatiya. **There was an increase in attempts to smuggle weapons** into Judea and Samaria. Several suspected smugglers were detained by the Israeli security forces.

► The Gaza Strip remained relatively quiet. The PIJ continued repeating the narrative of its "victory" in Operation Breaking Dawn, holding mass rallies in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria, Lebanon and Syria themed "Unity of the arenas." Senior PIJ figures called for the "struggle" against Israel to be continued and again thanked Iran and Hezbollah for their support. Senior Hamas and PIJ figures met in Beirut, also holding individual meetings with Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah.

► Mahmoud Abbas met in Ankara with Turkish President Erdogan, who assured him that the renewed relations with Israel would not detract from Turkey's support of the Palestinians. Mahmoud Abbas revealed his planned moves for the UN General Assembly, again stressing his adherence to the "peaceful popular resistance."

► Palestinians expressed dissatisfaction with the opening of the Ilan and Asaf Ramon International Airport, north of Eilat, to Palestinians flying out of Judea and Samaria.

Judea and Samaria

Shooting attack at the Tomb of Joseph in Nablus

► On the night of August 29, 2022, five Israelis went to the Tomb of Joseph in Nablus to hold prayers, arriving in their own vehicle without coordinating with the Israeli security forces. They were shot at and two of them were wounded, and Palestinians set their vehicle on fire. Israeli security forces entered the city to rescue them and evacuated the wounded to Israel for medical treatment (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 30, 2022).



The Israeli vehicle set on fire near the Tomb of Joseph in Nablus (QudsN website, August 30, 2022).

► **Hamas** welcomed the shooting attack, calling it a response to the "crimes of the occupation" and claiming it "sent Israel the message" that the "resistance" [terrorist attacks against Israel] would continue and escalate until "all the rights of the Palestinian people" had been realized (Hamas website, August 30, 2022). **Ahmed al-Mudallal a senior PIJ figure in the Gaza Strip**, also welcomed the attack, claiming it proved the "resistance" was alive and escalating, and that the West Bank was on the brink of "igniting" (Filastin al-Yawm, August 30, 2022).

Shooting attack in Shavei Shomron

► On August 26, 2022, Palestinians shot at an Israeli vehicle in the settlement of Shavei Shomron, northwest of Nablus. No casualties were reported but the vehicle was damaged (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 26, 2022).

► On August 30, 2022, after a search for the shooters, the Israeli security forces operated in the village of Rujeib, east of Nablus, surrounding a house belonging to the Sawalha family where two of the shooters and another Palestinian had barricaded themselves. After several hours of exchanges of gunfire, with the aid of one of the shooters' father the wanted Palestinians

surrendered to the Israeli security forces. The forces took an M-16 assault rifle, a handgun, ammunition, pipe bombs and hand grenades from the house (IDF spokesman and the Israeli media, August 30, 2022). According to the Palestinian media the Palestinians who were detained were Nabil Sawalha, Nihad Aweid and Mahmoud al-Tirawi (QudsN, August 30, 2022). Medical sources in Nablus reported that during the operation in Rujeib 25 Palestinians were wounded by IDF fire and 20 by tear gas (Filastin al-Yawm, August 30, 2022).



Right: Anti-tank missile fired at the house in the village of Rujeib (QudsN Twitter account, August 30, 2022). Left: Weapons taken from the house where the Palestinians had barricaded themselves (Israel Police Force, August 30, 2022).

► **Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem** welcomed the confrontations with the Israeli security forces. He claimed they "proved" Israel could not destroy the "resistance" [terrorism and violence] in the West Bank with preventive measures and raids on Palestinian cities. He said Israel had to recognize the "equation," according to which every raid on a Palestinian city would always be answered with "resistance" [terrorist attacks] (Hamas website, August 30, 2022). During the activity in Rujeib, **PIJ spokesman Tareq Izz al-Din** called on the residents of the West Bank to confront the Israeli security forces. He said the only path before the Palestinians was the path of "resistance," especially the "armed struggle," because, he claimed, Israel understood only "the language of force" (Quds Press, August 30, 2022).

Stabbing attack prevented

► On August 27, 2022, security inspectors of the Crossings Authority detained a suspicious Palestinian at the Reihan Crossing, west of Jenin. He was found to be armed with a knife and was taken for interrogation by the Israeli security forces (Israeli defense ministry spokesman's unit, August 27, 2022).



**The knife found in the Palestinian's possession
(Israeli defense ministry's Crossing Authority, August 27, 2022).**

Counterterrorism activities

► This past week the Israeli security forces continued intensive counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria, detaining Palestinians suspected of involvement in terrorist activities and confiscating large quantities of weapons.

► On August 29, 2022, IDF forces operated in Qabatiya to detain a wanted Palestinian. He barricaded himself inside his house and shot at the forces, who returned fire. He finally surrendered (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 29, 2022). The Palestinian media reported he was **Alaa Zakarna, a PIJ military-terrorist wing operative**. Shadi Zakarna, a relative, was detained with him (Ma'an, August 29, 2022). The PIJ reported the detention of Alaa Zakarna, 30 years old, a senior organization figure in Qabatiya. According to the report, he was detained by Israel in March 2015 and sentenced to a prison term of four years for PIJ membership. The Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military-terrorist wing, issued a statement claiming its operatives had engaged in a fierce exchange of fire with the Israeli security forces during the activity in Qabatiya (Jerusalem Brigades website, August 29, 2022).

► A delegation of **senior PIJ figures headed by Khader Adnan** visited the family of Alaa Zakarna. Adnan said Alaa Zakarna served as a model for the "resistance" [terrorist organizations] and that the "struggle" would continue until the "occupation" had been defeated (Filastin al-Yawm, August 30, 2022). **Muhammad Allan, senior PIJ figure in Judea and Samaria**, said the Jerusalem Brigades would continue to prove their loyalty to the shaheeds and the path of "resistance" until the defeat of the "occupation." He said Israel had made the PIJ a target, but would not break them because PIJ operatives would fight until their last drop of blood (al-Quds al-Yawm, August 29, 2022).

► Other events:

◆ On August 28, 2022, two Palestinians suspected of terrorist activity were detained in Nablus. Shots were fired at the Israeli forces during the detention. IDF forces also operated in the village of Bayt Awa, west of Hebron, to detain a Palestinian suspected of terrorist activity; they also confiscated an M4 carbine (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 28, 2022).



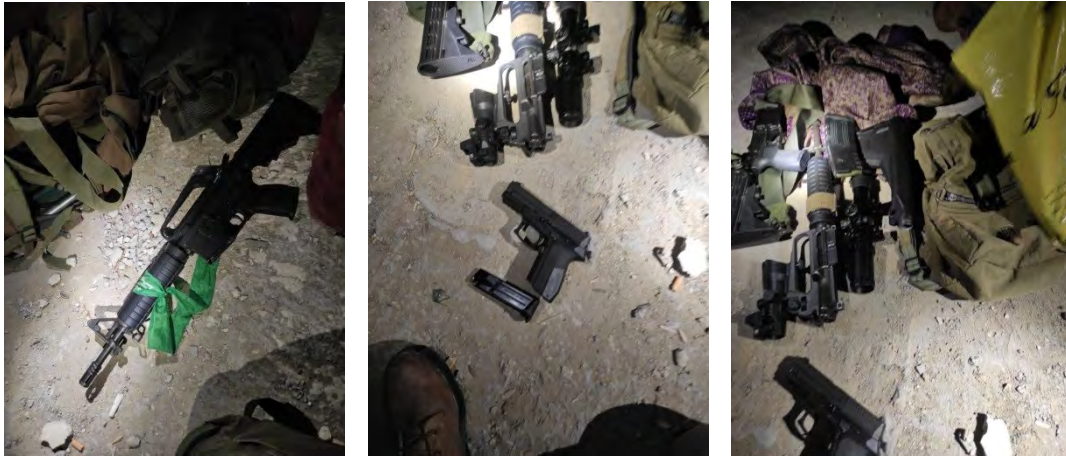
The M4 confiscated in Bayt Awa (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 28, 2022).

◆ On August 27, 2022, Israeli security forces operated in the village of Silwad, northeast of Ramallah, confiscating weapons. During the activity Palestinian rioted and threw rocks at the forces, who responded with riot-dispersal measures (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 27, 2022).



Weapons confiscated in Silwad (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 27, 2022).

◆ On August 24, 2022, Israeli security forces detained 14 wanted Palestinians and confiscated various types of weapons (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 24, 2022).



**Weapons confiscated by the Israeli security forces
(IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 24, 2022).**

Preventing smuggling

► This past week the Israeli security forces preventing the smuggling of large quantities of weapons and ammunition into Judea and Samaria:

- ◆ On August 29, 2022, a Palestinian vehicle was pursued and captured in the village of al-Awja, north of Jericho; 26 handguns were found in the vehicle (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 29, 2022).



The handguns found in al-Awja (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 29, 2022).

- ◆ On August 28, 2022, the smuggling of handguns from Jordan was prevented. IDF surveillance identified a suspicious Palestinian near the Jordanian border, and two vehicles were halted. Ten handguns were found in the vehicles (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 28, 2022).



The handguns found in the vehicles (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 28, 2022).

◆ On August 27, 2022, Israeli Crossings Authority security examiners at the Lamed-He Crossing southwest of Bethlehem prevented 9,000 rifle bullets (5.56mm) and spare parts for weapons from being smuggled from Israel into Judea and Samaria. A resident of east Jerusalem who arrived at the crossing aroused the suspicions of the examiners, who inspected his vehicle and found a crate of IDF ammunition and parts of M-16 assault rifles (Israeli defense ministry spokesperson, August 27, 2022).



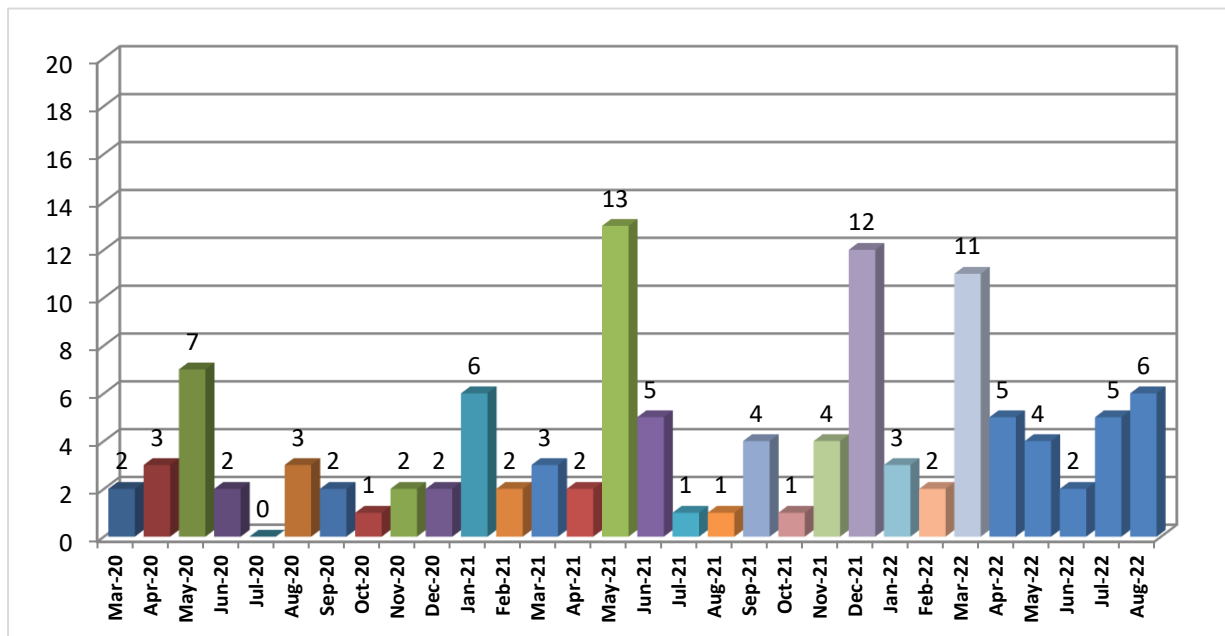
Ammunition and weapon parts found in the vehicle (Israeli defense ministry spokesperson, August 27, 2022).

◆ On August 24, 2022, IDF surveillance identified four Palestinians attempting to smuggle weapons near the Dead Sea. Israeli security forces sent to the site confiscated three M-16 assault rifle and three handguns (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 24, 2022).



The weapons confiscated near the Dead Sea (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, August 24, 2022).

Significant Terrorist Attacks in Judea and Samaria since January 2020¹



Protests of security prisoners

► On August 16, 2022, security prisoners of all the terrorist organizations in Israeli jails renewed the activity of the prisoners' emergency committee in preparation for taking steps for a collective "struggle" planned for the beginning of September 2022 (Facebook page of the Palestinian prisoners' club, August 16, 2022).

► The committee issued a statement claiming that the Israeli Prison Service reneged on the understandings reached in March 2022 and did not cancel what the prisoners call the

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

"harassment" they underwent after the six security prisoners escaped from the Gilboa Prison (website of the Palestinian prisoners' club, August 20, 2022). The committee decided on a "tactical" protest, including the dismantling of the prisoners' organizational frameworks as of August 28, 2022, which would force the Prison Service to deal with the prisoners as individuals and not as organizations. Reportedly, the "struggle" will peak with an unlimited hunger strike beginning on September 1, 2022 (Facebook page of the Palestinian prisoners' club, August 27 and 28, 2022).



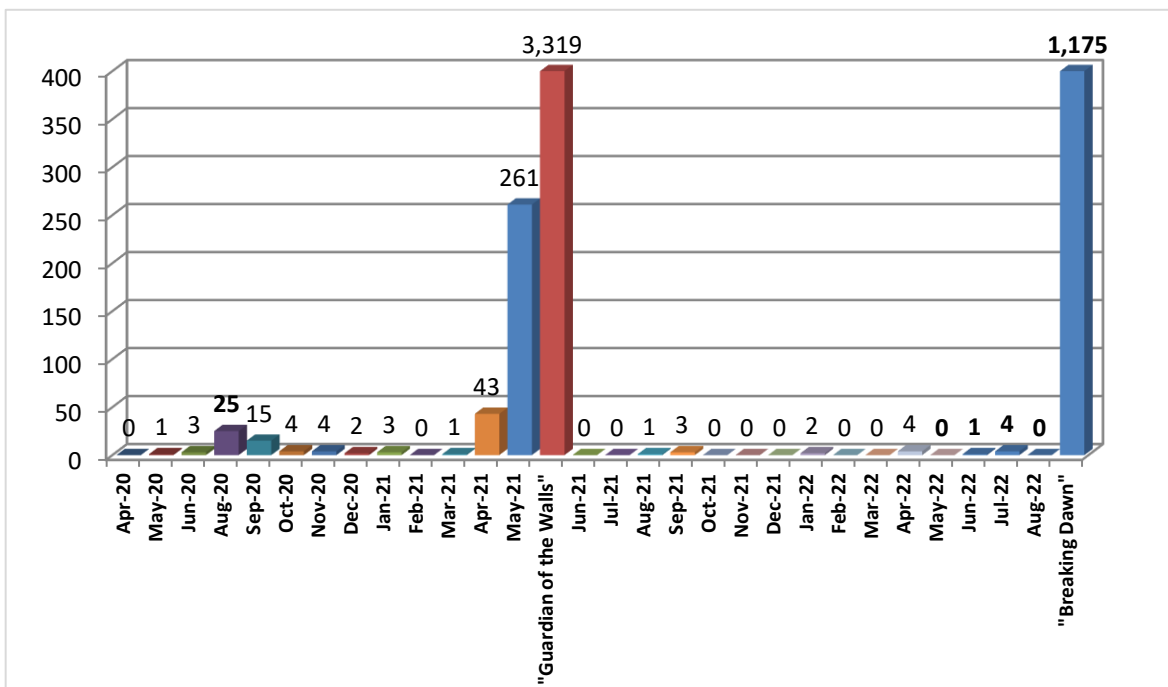
Right: A rally in solidarity with the prisoners, held in front of Red Cross headquarters in Gaza City (Shehab Twitter account, August 26, 2022). Left: A solidarity rally held in front of Red Cross headquarters in Bethlehem (Wafa, August 25, 2022).

Israel's South

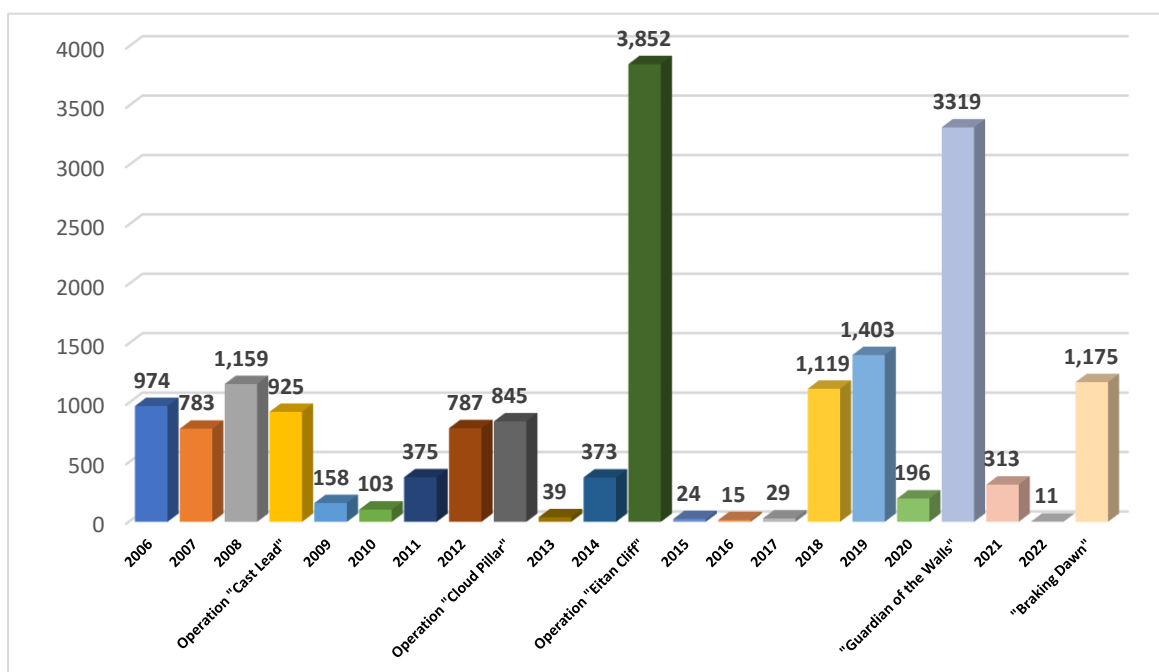
Rocket and mortar shell fire into Israel

► Since the ceasefire of Operation Breaking Dawn, which began on August 8, 2022, no rocket or mortar shell hits were identified in Israeli territory.

Monthly Distribution of Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire since January 2020



Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits



Developments in the Gaza Strip

The PIJ holds a "Unity of the Arenas" rally

► As part of its fixation with spreading a "victory narrative" after Operation Breaking Dawn, on August 25, 2022, the PIJ and its military-terrorist wing held rallies in Gaza City, Rafah, Jenin, Damascus and Beirut, where speeches by **PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah and Abu Hamza, spokesman for the Jerusalem Brigades** were transmitted. **Senior PIJ figure Ahmed al-Mudallal**, whose son was killed in the operation, gave a speech on behalf of the families of the shaheeds.

► Al-Nakhalah said in a speech they would continue the fight against Israel. He said the most recent campaign had shown the unity of the arenas and regions, the opposite of what Israel wanted. He said that all the "forces of resistance" [terrorist organizations], regardless of name or description, were one unit facing Israel. He also claimed the joint operations room was still a national necessity, which had to be preserved and strengthened. He added that Israel continued to evade its commitments to Egypt and had to bear the full responsibility for its actions. As to the West Bank, he said the "resistance" of the Palestinian people continued in all the arenas of "Palestine," and [the organizations] complemented one another in the fight against Israel (PIJ website, August 25, 2022).

► **Jerusalem Brigades spokesman Abu Hamza** said that for three days the operatives of the military wing had "pounded" Israel's settlements [near the Gaza Strip], military bases and main cities, including the greater Tel Aviv area, with more than a thousand rockets and mortar shells. They attacked 58 cities and settlements simultaneously with intensive rocket barrages. He sent a message to the leaders of Israel ("the enemy"), who were again talking about targeted killings, to tell them that [the Palestinian terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip] had "something waiting" that would make the leaders regret they had ever thought about attacking the "resistance" leadership (Jerusalem Brigades website, August 25, 2022).

► On the sidelines of the rally in the al-Yarmouk refugee camp in Damascus, **Isma'il al-Sindawi, PIJ representative in Syria**, claimed **the fighters who had successfully waged the battle had been trained in Syria, Iran and Lebanon by Hezbollah**. He said Syria had been present during the fighting by providing the PIJ with a safe harbor (al-Watan, Syria, August 28, 2022).



Simultaneously transmission of the rallies. From the upper lefthand corner, clockwise, Beirut, Rafah, Damascus, Jenin, Jenin, Gaza City (Alquds Today Live Facebook page, August 25, 2022).



Right: The rally in Gaza City (PIJ website, August 25, 2022). Left: The rally in Jenin. At the right, Maher al-Akhras, a senior PIJ figure (Paltoday, August 25, 2022).

Jerusalem Brigades spokesman military display in Rafah

► On August 24, 2022, the Jerusalem Brigades held a military display in Rafah in memory of the Palestinians killed in Operation Breaking Dawn. Hundreds of operatives participated, marching from the al-Muhajed post in the western part of Rafah to al-Najma Square in the center. **Ahmed al-Mudallal** gave a speech in which he said "the blood of the shaheeds was the fuel of victory," claiming the sword of the "resistance" [Palestinian terrorism] would remain raised in opposition to Israel ("the Zionist enemy") (Jerusalem Brigades website, August 24, 2022).



The Jerusalem Brigades military display in Rafah (Jerusalem Brigades website, August 24, 2022).

Hassan Nasrallah meets with Saleh al-'Arouri

► A delegation of the Hamas leadership visited Lebanon this past week. Among the members of the delegation were **Saleh al-'Arouri, deputy chairman of Hamas' political bureau; Khalil al-Haya, a member of Hamas' political bureau and deputy chairman of Hamas in the Gaza Strip; and Zaher Jabarin, a member of the political bureau.** The delegation met with **Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah** (Hezbollah's public relations website, August 28, 2022). A few days earlier Nasrallah met with **PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah.** They discussed the recent events in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and Operation Breaking Dawn (Hezbollah's public relations website, August 24, 2022).



Right: Nasrallah meets with Saleh al-'Arouri (Hezbollah's public relations website, August 28, 2022). Left: Nasrallah meets with Ziyad al-Nakhalah (Hezbollah's public relations website, August 24, 2022).

Saleh al-'Arouri and PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah meet in Beirut

► On August 26, 2022, the Hamas delegation met with Ziyad al-Nakhalah in his office in Beirut. Also present were members of the PIJ's political bureau, Akram al-Ajouri, Abd al-Aziz al-Minawi, and other senior figures. They discussed regional developments, Israel's attempts to attack the increasing Palestinian "resistance" [terrorist attacks], and Operation Breaking Dawn. They repeatedly emphasized the depth and strength of the relations between Hamas and the PIJ, stating their intention to continue cooperating (Hamas website, August 27, 2022).

Note: However, despite the show of "unity," Hamas was criticized for not playing an active role in Operation Breaking Dawn.



Hamas and the PIJ meet in Beirut. Left to right, Akram al-Ajouri, Abd al-Aziz al-Minawi, Ziyad al-Nakhalah, Saleh al-'Arouri, Khalil al-Haya and Zaher Jabarin (Hamas website, August 27, 2022).

Explosion in an apartment in Khan Yunis

► On August 23, 2022, **Iyad al-Buzum, spokesman for the ministry of the interior in Gaza,** reported an explosion had occurred near a house in the western part of Khan Yunis, killing one Palestinian and wounding a young girl. He claimed the relevant apparatuses were investigating the occurrence (ministry of the interior in Gaza, August 23, 2022). Reportedly,

the fatality was **Nidal Mustafa al-Atal** (KhanYounes2 Facebook page, August 23, 2022), a Fatah terrorist operative who served in the PA's Palestinian naval police (Facebook page of Abu Muyin al-Atal, August 24, 2022).



Right: The results of the explosion (Shehab Twitter account, August 23, 2022). Left: Nidal Mustafa al-Atal (Facebook page of his uncle, Darwish al-Atal, August 24, 2022).

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Mahmoud Abbas visits Turkey

► On August 23, 2022, **Mahmoud Abbas met Turkish President Erdogan** in Ankara. After they meeting they held a joint press conference where Mahmoud Abbas expressed great esteem for Erdogan because of his support for the Palestinians, claiming that at every meeting they worked to deepen the connections between the two sides. Mahmoud Abbas also said he was planning to appeal to the UN Security Council and various UN agencies to preserve the idea of the two-state solution for the sake of ending the "Israeli occupation" of the Palestinian territories. He also reiterated his adherence to the "peaceful popular resistance" [popular terrorism].

► Erdogan said the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with "Jerusalem as its capital" was necessary for regional peace and stability. He said they opposed everything Israel was doing in Jerusalem and al-Aqsa mosque. As to the renewal of relations between Israel and Turkey, he said they would not lessen Turkey's aid and support for the Palestinian cause, and would help with improving the Palestinians' situation (Mahmoud Abbas' Facebook page, August 23, 2022).



Right: Reception held for Mahmoud Abbas in Ankara. Left: Joint press conference held by Mahmoud Abbas and Erdogan (Mahmoud Abbas' Facebook page, August 23, 2022).

Palestinian reaction to the opening of the Ramon International Airport for outbound flights of Palestinians from Judea and Samaria

► On August 22, 2022, the first flight of Palestinians from Hebron and Bethlehem, as well as Israeli passengers, took off from **the Ramon International Airport near Eilat** en route to Cyprus. The flight was part of an Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories pilot project to enable Palestinians to leave Israel from the new airport. Until now Palestinians have gone to Jordan and flown out of Amman.

► The flight led to a wave of reactions from Palestinians and Jordanians. Critics called on Palestinians not to use the airport. **Musa Rahel, spokesman for the Palestinian ministry of transportation**, said the PA's official position was to oppose Palestinian use of the airport. He claimed it was an Israeli economic venture whose objective was to attack Palestinian sovereignty. He called it a unilateral Israeli measure carried out without coordination with the Palestinians, which meant the PA had no advance knowledge about the Palestinian passengers (al-Andalou News, October 26, 2022).

► **PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh** gave a speech at the opening of the al-Rama power plant in the Jordan Valley, **attended by Jordanian Prime Minister Bisher al-Khasawneh**. Shtayyeh said Israel's intention in opening the airport was to attack Palestinian-Jordanian relations, and the Ramon International Airport or any other airport was not a replacement for the depth of the Palestinians' relations with Jordan. He added that anyone who wanted to make life easier for the Palestinians should open an airport in Jerusalem [a hint to Israel to open the airport at Atarot, north of Jerusalem, which the Palestinians call the "al-Quds international airport," or the "Qalandiya airport!'] which the Palestinians were capable of operating (Muhammad Shtayyeh's Facebook page, August 24, 2022).

► **Wa'el Abu Yusuf, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee**, said the Palestinian leadership opposed Israel's move, which was meant to fool the world and improve Israel's image. For that reason, he called on the Palestinian public not to fly from the Ramon International Airport (al-Andalou News, August 26, 2022).



Palestinian cartoon showing the plane [that took off from the Ramon International Airport] as an aerial prison (Facebook page of Muhammad Sabaana, August 22, 2022).

Palestinians riot in the Nur Shams refugee camp in Tulkarm

► On August 24, 2022, riots broke out between the PA's security forces and young Palestinians after the security forces broke into the house of Sayif Abu Labda, a PIJ terrorist operative killed in the Nur Shams refugee camp in Tulkarm, and to arrest his brother Wisam (al-Shahed website, August 24, 2022). According to reports, Fatah headquarters in the camp were set on fire (Twitter account of Yasin Izz al-Din, August 24, 2022). Protests continued on August 25, 2022, after a vehicle of the PA's security forces was attacked with rocks near the entrance to the camp (Paldf Twitter account, August 26, 2022; Twitter account of Yasin Izz al-Din, August 24, 2022).



Fatah headquarters on fire (al-Shahed website, August 24, 2022) Left: PA security force vehicle attacked with rocks (Paldf Twitter account, August 26, 2022).

Interview with the Palestinian minister of health

► **Mai al-Kayla, PA minister of health**, was interviewed by the Voice of Palestine Radio. She spoke about the ministry of health's strategic program to develop the Palestinian public health system, especially in Area C. She said the public health system had undergone extensive development since the establishment of the PA in 1994. She claimed Israel was responsible for the ministry of health's debts to the Palestinian drug companies because of the "financial siege" Israel was waging on the PA, which made it difficult for them to pay what they owed (ministry of health in Ramallah Facebook page, August 23, 2022).



Mai al-Kayla interviewed in the Voice of Palestine radio station (ministry of health in Ramallah Facebook page, August 23, 2022).

Appendix

Rocks, Molotov cocktails and other attacks

► In Judea, Samaria and east Jerusalem Palestinians continued throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles driving on the roads. The more prominent events were the following:²

- ◆ **August 30, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at Israeli vehicles between Yakir and Revava, north of Salfit. No casualties were reported; the windshield of a bus was damaged.
- ◆ **August 29, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle between the Tapuah Junction and Hawwara, south of Nablus. No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **August 28, 2022:** Shots were fired at an IDF post north of Ofra, northeast of Ramallah. No casualties were reported; damage was reported.
- ◆ **August 28, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle prime minister the Jerusalem-Gush Etzion road near Khader, west of Bethlehem. No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **August 28, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle between Hizma and Anatot, northeast of Jerusalem. No casualties were reported; the windshield of the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **August 25, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus near the Yakir Junction, southwest of Nablus. No casualties were reported; the bus was damaged.
- ◆ **August 25, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus near the Halhul Junction, north of Hebron. No casualties were reported; the windshield of the bus was damaged.
- ◆ **August 24, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle in Hawwara, south of Nablus. No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **August 24, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus between Bayt Umar and al-Aroub, north of Hebron. No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **August 24, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus between Yitzhar and Havat Gilad, southwest of Nablus. No casualties were reported; the bus was damaged.
- ◆ **August 23, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus between Itamar and Alon Moreh near Bayt Furik, southeast of Nablus. No casualties were reported; the bus was damaged.

² Information and pictures from Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria unless otherwise noted.

◆ **August 23, 2022:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus near al-Aroub. No casualties were reported; the windshield of the bus was damaged.