



## Palestinian adolescents in the service of the terrorist organizations in Judea and Samaria

December 4, 2022

### Overview

- ▶ On November 22, 2022, as Israeli worshippers entered the Tomb of Joseph in Nablus, Palestinians clashed with the Israeli security forces securing their entrance. During the riot **Ahmed Amjad Shehadeh**, 16 years old from the Balata refugee camp in Nablus, was killed. The Lion's Den terrorist network issued a mourning notice stating he was a young network operative and a mass funeral was held for him. His body was wrapped for burial in a Lion's Den flag and he was wearing a Lion's Den headband.
- ▶ **It was not the first time, generally speaking and especially during the past year, when Palestinian adolescents were involved in terrorist activity and actively participated in violent clashes with the Israeli security forces.** After their deaths it was revealed that despite their young age, at least some of them belonged to the military-terrorist wings of the various Palestinian terrorist organizations or networks in Judea and Samaria (such as the Jenin Battalion, the Nablus Battalion, the Lion's Den network, etc.), carried out terrorist attacks and actively participated in riots. Some were inspired by the organizations and wanted to become shaheeds, without actually enlisting in any organization or network.
- ▶ **The integration of adolescents in demonstrations, riots and clashes with the Israeli security forces is not new.** For example, during the second intifada a number of adolescents were involved in carrying out terrorist attacks, including suicide bombing attacks. Their involvement after harsh criticism from the Palestinian public and calls not to use adolescents in activities against Israel. During the wave of terrorist attacks in 2015 adolescents were sent to participate in riots and clashes with the Israeli security forces at the friction points in Judea and Samaria. Children and adolescents were prominently used to assist in carrying out military operations against the IDF during the return marches in the Gaza Strip, including being positioned in the front lines.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For further information, see the May 27, 2018 bulletin, " Hamas sends boys to their deaths in the "great return march:" the case of Saadi Abu Salah, 16, who died in an attempt to cut through the security fence on May 14, 2018."

- ▶ The deaths of children and adolescents in clashes with the Israeli security forces serve the terrorist organizations as material to use in propaganda and lawfare against Israel. After every death, the senior Palestinian figures, media and social networks rush to represent Israel as deliberate, cold-blooded killers of children and adolescents.
- ▶ Giving children and adolescents military and semi-military training to prepare them to confront Israeli security forces is widespread. Thousands of adolescents undergo ideological indoctrination at school and in the summer camps run by the terrorist organizations. For the most part, the camps are held in the Gaza Strip, and are organized and supervised by the military-terrorist wings of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). A small number of the camps are organized by NGOs. Summer camps are held in Judea and Samaria as well, some of them under the aegis of the Palestinian Authority (PA) security apparatuses. All the camps' activities are well-covered by the Palestinian media. The campers participate in regular summer activities, but the programs also include indoctrination according to the ideology of the organization running them, which includes the glorification of terrorists and shaheeds, as well as military and semi-military exercises. This past year a large number of camp names commemorated terrorists killed during clashes with Israeli security forces in Jerusalem and Nablus.<sup>2</sup>

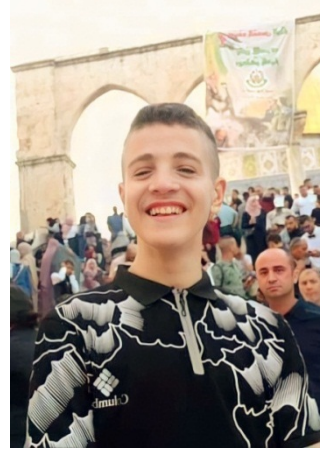
## Events In Which Adolescents Belonging or Affiliated With the Terrorist Organizations Were Killed

### Terrorist attacks carried out by adolescents

- ▶ On the afternoon of October 22, 2022, a Palestinian adolescent stabbed and critically wounded an Israeli civilian in the back near French Hill in Jerusalem. The security forces sent to the site closed and searched the area. The Palestinian was located by a policeman in the soccer field of Sheikh Jarrah, about a kilometer away from the attack. He threatened the policeman with a knife; the adolescent was shot and wounded (Israel Police Force Twitter account, October 22, 2022). The stabber was **Muhammad Rajab Abu Qataish**, 16, from Dahiat al-Salam in Jerusalem. He confessed to the crime and claimed he was avenging the death of Uday al-Tamimi, who carried out the shooting attacks at the Shuafat Crossing and near Ma'aleh Adumim (QudsN and Sama, October 22, 2022).

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<sup>2</sup> For further information see the July 31, 2022 bulletin, "Fatah summer campers in the Nablus district undergo military training."



**Right: Muhammad Rajab Abu Qutaish (QudsN Twitter account, October 22, 2022). Left: The knife used in the attack (Israel Police Force Twitter account, October 22, 2022).**

- ▶ On the evening of May 8, 2022, a Palestinian armed with a knife infiltrated the settlement of Tekoa in Gush Etzion. A local resident saw him in the yard of his house and shot and killed him. IDF forces instituted a search for suspects (IDF spokesman, May 8, 2022).
- ▶ The Palestinian media reported he was **Mu'tassem Muhammad Atallah**, 17, from Harmala, a small Palestinian village near Tekoa. Hamas issued a mourning notice claiming he was an operative in the Hamas movement (Twitter account of journalist Hassan Aslih, May 8, 2022).



**Right: The knife used in the attack (Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria, May 8, 2022). Left: The mourning notice issued by Hamas (Radio al-Aqsa Twitter account, May 8, 2022).**

## Terrorist organization events in which adolescents were killed

- ▶ On the evening of November 22, 2022, as Israeli security forces were deploying to secure Jewish worshippers who were entering the Tomb of Joseph in Nablus, Palestinians who had made preparations in advance rioted and blocked the roads to the tomb (Israeli media, November 22, 2022).
- ▶ According to reports, **Ahmed Amjad Shehadeh**, 16 years old, from the Balata refugee camp in Jenin, was killed. The Lion's Den terrorist network said in a statement that he was one of its young operatives, and threatened Israel (Lion's Den Telegram channel, November 23, 2022). A funeral was held for him in Nablus the following day, attended by dozens of armed terrorists. He had a Lion's Den headband and his body was wrapped for burial in a Lion's Den flag (Shehab Twitter account, November 23, 2022). **It was the first time an organization or network revealed that adolescents also played an active part in activities against the Israeli security forces.**



**Right: The funeral held for Shehadeh in Nablus. He is wearing a Lion's Den headband (Twitter account of photojournalist Hassan Aslih, November 23, 2022. Left: armed terrorist operatives at the funeral in Nablus (Shehab Twitter account, November 23, 2022).**



**Ahmed Shehadeh next to the grave of Amjad al-Fayid, a PIJ terrorist operative killed on May 21, 2022, during a clash which the Israeli security forces (Nablus al-Hadath Telegram channel, November 23, 2022).**

► The Palestinians condemned the killing without mentioning that he was a Lion's Den operative:

- ◆ **The PA foreign ministry** condemned the "awful crime of the execution of the child, the shaheed Ahmed Amjad Shehadeh," adding that the "crime" was a continuation of the "killings without trial" and "an integral part of Israel's attacks on Palestinian children" (Wafa, November 23, 2022).

- ◆ The **Presidency of the Palestinian National Council** strongly condemned "Israel's methodical terrorism against innocent children and unprotected civilians," and the execution of 15 year-old [sic] Ahmed Amjad Shehadeh. According to the condemnation, "Israel's barbarity and torture of children must not be allowed to continue without accountability, and the entire world must act to defend Palestinian children" (Wafa, November 23, 2022).

- ◆ The **PIJ** issued a mourning notice for Shehadeh claiming that the growing number of "crimes" of Israel ("the enemy") would be met with the Palestinians' firm stance and "resistance fighters" [terrorist operatives], such as the praise-worthy November 23 double attack in Jerusalem (PIJ website, November 23, 2022).

► It was not the first time during the past year that adolescents played an active part in clashes with the Israeli security forces, and some of them were killed. For example:

- ◆ On November 9, 2022, an IDF force secured Israeli worshippers entering the Tomb of Joseph in Nablus. Palestinians rioted and **Mahdi Muhammad Hamdallah Hashash**, 15 years old (17 years old according to the Quds Press website), from the Balata refugee

camp in Nablus, was killed (Wafa, November 9, 2022). The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades (AAMB) in Nablus issued a mourning notice for the death of its operative, Mahdi Hashash (Amad, November 9, 2022).



**Right: Mourning notice issued by the AAMB for the death of its operative Mahdi Hashash (Newpress Twitter account, November 9, 2022). Left: Mahdi Hashash. His rifle strap bears a white AAMB emblem (Paltoday, November 9, 2022).**

◆ On the night of September 14, 2022, Israeli security forces operated in the village of Kafr Dan, northwest of Jenin, mapping for demolition the houses of the terrorists who had shot at IDF forces the night before. During the activity armed Palestinians rioted, throwing IEDs and Molotov cocktails, and shooting at the soldiers. The soldiers returned fire (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, September 15, 2022), and reportedly killed **Uday Terad Hashem Salah, 17 years old, from Kafr Dan** (Wafa, September 15, 2022). The Fatah branch in the Jenin district issued a mourning notice for him, claiming **he was one of their operatives**. According to the notice, he was the son of an officer in the Palestinian security forces (Facebook page of Fatah's bureau of information and culture, September 15, 2022).



**Right: Uday Terad Hashem Salah, armed with an M-16 (Facebook page of Mu'ataz Salah, September 16, 2022). Left: Armed Palestinians carrying the body to burial. The Arabic on the yellow headband reads, "Shaheed Abu Amer Brigades" (Alarabiya Palestine, September 16, 2022).**

- ◆ On August 2, 2022, an exchange of fire developed in Jenin between Israeli security forces and armed Palestinians. The Palestinian media reported that **Derar Riad Saleh al-Kafrini**, 17, from the Jenin refugee camp, had been shot and killed during the exchange of fire (Ma'an, August 1, 2022). The PIJ issued a mourning notice for him, saying he was an operative in the organization's night harassment unit in the Jenin refugee camp (Jerusalem Brigades website, August 2, 2022). His body was wrapped for burial in a PIJ flag (@HejaziAlrahman's Twitter account, August 2, 2022).



**Right: Operatives of the Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military-terrorist wing (Twitter account of the al-Jazeera website's Palestinian page, August 1, 2022). Left: Derar al-Kafrini (Khaled Affif's Twitter account, August 2, 2022).**

- ◆ On May 21, 2022 On **May 21, 2022**, a Palestinian was killed while rioting against Israeli security forces in the Jenin region. The Palestinian media reported he was **Amjad Walid al-Fayed**, 17, from the Jenin refugee camp. A funeral was held for him in the Jenin refugee camp, attended by armed masked men, and his body was wrapped for burial in

a PIJ flag (Ma'an, Shehab, May 21, 2022). His father called for the "resistance" [i.e., terrorist attacks] against Israel to continue (Shehab Twitter account, May 21, 2022). A general strike was called in Jenin in solidarity and mourning for Amjad al-Fayed (QudsN Twitter account, May 21, 2022).



**Right: al-Fayed armed with a rifle (Paldf Twitter account, May 21, 2022). Left: The funeral held for al-Fayed in the Jenin refugee camp. His body was wrapped for burial in a PIJ flag (Shehab Twitter account, May 21, 2022).**

### **Adolescents who identified with the terrorist organizations and were killed in clashes with Israeli security forces**

► A number of adolescents who were killed apparently did not belong to any organized terrorist organization, but according to reports from people close to them, they customarily confronted the Israeli security forces. Some of them expressed the desire to die as shaheeds:

- ◆ On October 16, 2022, the ministry of health in Ramallah reported the death of **Muhammad Fadi Nouri**, 16 years old, from Bitunia, west of Ramallah, who was mortally wounded at the northern entrance of al-Bireh [the Gush Etzion Junction] in September 2022 (Wafa, October 16, 2022). **Relatives reported that from the time he was a little boy he had been influenced by the stories of shaheeds and wanted to become one** (al-Araby al-Jadeed, October 20, 2022).



Right: Muhammad Fadi Nouri (Facebook page of Yousef Eid Afghani, October 20 2022). Left: Fatah flags carried at his funeral (Palestine Online, October 20, 2022).

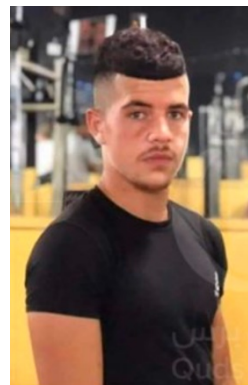
◆ The ministry of health in Ramallah reported that in the same activity on August 9, 2022, in which Ibrahim al-Nabulsi, one of the heads of the AAMB, was killed, **Hussein Jamal Taha**, 16 years old, also died (al-Kawfiya TV website, August 9, 2022). He was born in Qalqilya but was raised and lived in Nablus. He was in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade in the Omar Abu As boys high school in Nablus. He often posted shaheeds and the *shahada* on to his Facebook page. According to an article posted after his death, on the morning of the Israeli security force activity he claimed he felt he was going to become a shaheed. He sent his friends a post asking their permission [to become a shaheed] and said goodbye to them (Shehab website, August 9, 2022). His funeral was held with those of Ibrahim al-Nabulsi and Islam Sabouh. Mahmoud Abbas called his father to offer condolences (Wafa, August 10, 2022).



Right: Hussein Taha (Shehab website, August 9, 2022). Left: Mourning notice issued by Fatah in Nablus (QudsN YouTube channel, August 10, 2022).

◆ On July 29, 2022, in classes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces, **Amjad Nish'at Abu Alia**, 16 years old, from Mughayir, was wounded and subsequently died. His mother said he wanted to go to a place where there were IDF forces because he wanted to be a shaheed (Wafa, July 30, 2022). A military-style funeral was held for him

in Mughayir. His body was wrapped for burial in a Palestinian flag and carried on the shoulders of operatives of the PA security forces. (Ma'an, July 30, 2022).



Right: Amjad Abu Alia (Quds Press, July 29, 2022). Left: The military-style funeral held for Amjad Abu Alia (Sanad YouTube channel, July 30, 2022).

◆ On May 24, 2022, as Jewish worshippers were entering the Tomb of Joseph in Nablus, Palestinians rioted, throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at the Israeli forces securing the site. The forces responded with gunfire. According to a source in Nablus, **Ghait Rafiq Yamin**, 16 years old, from the Ras al-Ayn neighborhood of Nablus, was killed by IDF fire (Wafa, May 25, 2022). His father, Rafiq Yamin, said **his son and his friends had participated in the clashes before the settlers entered the Tomb of Joseph**. He said it was "natural" [to clash with IDF forces] (aljazeera.net, May 26, 2022).



Right: Ghait Rafiq Yamin (Wafa, May 25, 2022). Left: Armed Palestinians at the funeral in Nablus (Paldf Twitter account, May 25, 2022).

## In conclusion

► **Including children and adolescents in demonstrations, clashes with Israeli security forces and riots, and sending them to carry out terrorist attacks is a familiar Palestinian terrorist modus operandi.** For example, during the second intifada (2000-2005) many adolescents were involved in terrorist attacks, including suicide bombing attacks. Several of the children who were killed were turned into symbols of the "Palestinian struggle" and

books, articles, songs, poems and movies were dedicated to them. The deaths of children and adolescents were exploited to fan the flames of hatred and the desire for revenge, and to foster violence in the Palestinian street, as well as to reap media and propaganda rewards from world public opinion. Exploiting children waned during the second intifada after harsh criticism was voiced by the Palestinian public and calls were heard not to use young Palestinians in activities against Israel.

► During the wave of terrorist attacks in 2015 adolescents were again sent to participate in riots and clashes with the Israeli security forces at the friction points in Judea and Samaria. They were taken out of school, classes were canceled and they and bussed to the sites. During the return marches in the Gaza Strip as well, children and adolescents were often sent on military missions against the IDF, including putting them on the front line and sending them to place IEDs on the border security fence, forcing them to confront the soldiers and endanger their lives.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For further information the May 27, 2018 bulletin, " Hamas sends boys to their deaths in the "great return march:" the case of Saadi Abu Salah, 16, who died in an attempt to cut through the security fence on May 14, 2018."