



Spotlight on Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(March 1-7, 2023)

Overview

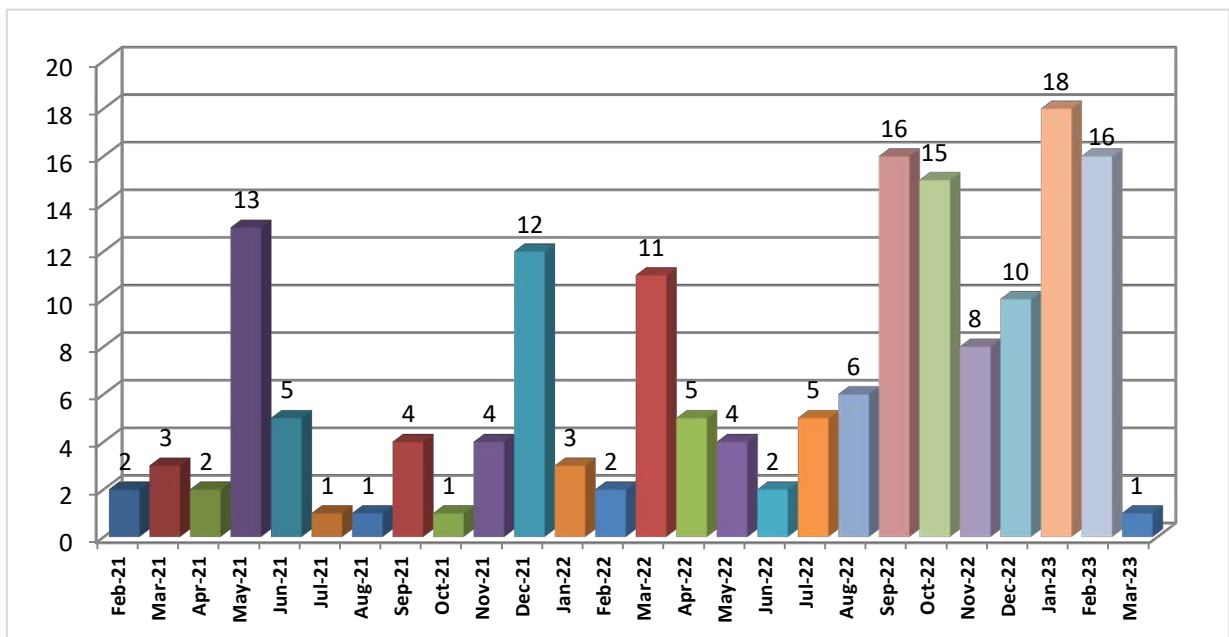
- ▶ This past week there was a shooting attack at the Beit Hagai Junction (south of Hebron); one Israeli was wounded. The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities, focusing on the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp near Jericho and detaining the terrorists who shot and killed an Israeli civilian on route 90 on February 27, 2023. During the activity one was killed. Palestinians continued throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles driving on the roads in Judea and Samaria.
- ▶ Reactions to the events in Hawwara continue. This past week PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh and several foreign delegations visited the town, among them representatives of the EU and Hady Amr, deputy assistant secretary for Israeli and Palestinian affairs in the American State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. They called for the perpetrators to be prosecuted and promised support for local residents.
- ▶ The Gaza Strip remained relatively quiet. After several delays, the envoy from Qatar arrived to discuss the renewal of the Qatari donation of funds. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) announced it had completed electing the organization's leadership and political bureau. Ziyad al-Nakhalah was elected head for another four-year term. A Hamas delegation led by Khalil al-Haya, a member of Hamas' political bureau, visited Syria and met with representatives of the Palestinian organizations. The delegation noted Hamas' close relations with the Syrian regime.
- ▶ Mahmoud Abbas arrived in Doha to participate in the Fifth Least Developed Countries Conference (LDC5). The law for giving terrorists the death penalty, which passed its first vote in the Knesset, led to a series of strong condemnations in the Palestinian Authority (PA), including calls for a mass uprising and threats against Israel.

Judea and Samaria

Shooting attack near the Beit Hagai Junction

► On the night of March 4, 2023, shots were fired at an Israeli vehicle near the Beit Hagai Junction (south of Hebron), wounding an Israeli civilian. IDF forces arrived at the site, conducted a search and retrieved several shell casings. According to IDF sources, the shots were fired from a moving vehicle which then drove away (IDF spokesman's Twitter account and the Israeli media, March 4, 2023).

Critical Terrorist Attacks in Judea and Samaria since February 2021¹



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, focusing on the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp near Jericho. On March 1, 2023, security forces entered the refugee camp and surrounded a house where there were four operatives of the terrorist squad that carried out the shooting attack on route 90 (February 27, 2023) and killed an Israeli civilian. Two terrorists tried to escape and the forces shot at them. Two other terrorists surrendered. Among the four who were detained were the terrorist who carried out the shooting and three who were suspected of

¹ A critical 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.

involvement. The weapons they had in their possession were seized. During the activity Palestinians shot at the forces. Local residents who were called on to go to the site clashed with the Israeli forces (IDF spokesman's Telegram channel and the Israeli media, March 1,



Right: One of the terrorist operatives is detained (Wafa, March 1, 2023). Left: Clashes during the Israeli security force activity in the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp (Shehab Twitter account, March 1, 2023).

- ▶ The Palestinian media reported that the house belonged to the family of Maher Shloon, and that clashes broke out during which the Israeli forces shot at Palestinians, wounding three, one of them critically. They reported that the forces detained five [sic] brothers of the Shloon family, all of them affiliated with Fatah and former prisoners in Israeli jails (Wafa, March 1, 2023). The Palestinian ministry of health in Ramallah reported the death of **Mahmoud Jamal Hassan Hamedan, 22 years old**, who was wounded during the events (Wafa, March 1, 2023).
- ▶ The **Aqabat Jabr Refugee Camp Battalion, which belongs to Hamas' military-terrorist wing**, said its forces had clashed with the Israeli security forces, and claimed that Mahmoud Jamal Hamedan, killed during the events, was one of its operatives (Aqabat Jabr Refugee Camp Battalion Telegram channel, March 1, 2023).
- ▶ **The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades (AAMB)** issued a mourning notice for Mahmoud Jamal Hamedan, also claiming him as one of its operatives. Fatah's media information and cultural commission claimed he was a Fatah operative (Telegram channel of the Awda Channel of Fatah's media information and cultural commission, March 2, 2023).



Mahmoud Jamal Hamedan, here seen as a Hamas terrorist operative (Aqabat Jabr Refugee Camp Battalion Telegram channel, March 1, 2023).



Right: Mourning notice issued by Fatah (Facebook page of the Fatah branch in the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp, March 1, 2023). Left: Mahmoud Jamal Hamedan next to an AAMB flag (Telegram channel of the Awda Channel of Fatah's media information and cultural commission, March 2, 2023).

- The **PIJ in Judea and Samaria** issued a mourning notice for Mahmoud Jamal Hamedan stating that the "heinous crime" would not deter the Palestinians or change their belief in the right to the land (PIJ website, March 2, 2023).

Palestinian reactions to the activity in Aqabat Jabr

- Palestinians strongly condemned the Israeli security force activity in the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp to detain wanted terrorists:

- ◆ **The PA foreign ministry** condemned the IDF's "armed, oppressive siege" of the Palestinian territories in general and of Nablus, Jericho and Hawwara in particular. The ministry stated the "siege" was one of the most terrible forms of the "collective punishment" the Palestinians are subjected to, the home of the "price tag" activities and an advanced form of apartheid [sic]. It expressed its surprise at the silence of the

international community, the international organizations and UN agencies, and called for urgent American and international intervention (PA foreign ministry website, March 1, 2023).

◆ **Rawhi Fatouh, chairman of the Palestinian National Council**, said using women and children as human shields [sic], firing rockets and destroying houses reflected the extent of the crimes of the "occupation army" and the extremist government, which whitewashes its internal crisis by shedding Palestinian blood. He added that the IDF's "aggression" and the "siege of the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp" in Jericho were proof of the Netanyahu government's determination to promote a "program of terrorism" against the Palestinians (Wafa, March 1, 2023).

◆ **Hamas** issued an announcement praising the residents of Jericho for their firm stance and the "resistance fighters" [terrorist operatives] who "bravely clashed" with the Israeli security forces and proved that only force could counter force (Hamas website, March 1, 2023). **Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem** said they "salute the revolutionaries in every arena of the struggle, especially those in the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp." He said the "great revolution in Judea and Samaria" would continue and inflate in a way Israel did not expect (Hazem Qassem's Telegram channel, March 1, 2023).

Palestinian killed in Azzun

► On the night of March 2, 2023, Palestinians shot fireworks at an Israeli vehicle near the village of Azzun (east of Qalqilya). An IDF force dispatched to the site searched for suspects. During the search Molotov cocktails were throw at the forces, who responded with gunfire (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, March 2, 2023).

► The ministry of health in Ramallah reported the death of **Muhammad Nidal Salim, 15, a 10th grade student in the boys' high school in Azzun**. The ministry claimed the security forces shot at three adolescents at the entrance to Azzun, killing one and wounding two, one of them critically (Wafa, March 2, 2023). Salim was given a military funeral in Azzun which was attended by Rafi' Rawajba, governor of the Qalqilya district, and Mahmoud Walwil, secretary of the Fatah movement in the Qalqilya district (Facebook page of the governor of the Qalqilya district, March 3, 2023).

► **PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh** claimed the "terrible crime" was the statements made by the Israeli leadership translated into the killing and "destruction" of the

Palestinians. The most recent statement, he said, was made by Bezael Smotrich, minister of the treasury, who called for Hawwara to be "wiped off the map" (PA government spokesman Ibrahim Melhem's Facebook page, March 2, 2023).

► **Hamas** issued a mourning notice for the death of Muhammad Salim, claiming his "execution" was a new addition to the "cruel record" of the crimes of Israel, which recognized only the language of killing and aggression. The notice praised the residents of Azzun and called on them to continue clashing with IDF forces and settlers (headquarters, March 2, 2023).

► The **PIJ in Judea and Samaria** claimed the continuation of the "evil war" against the Palestinians would not give the government of Israel security on Palestinian land, and the blood shed by the young would turn into fuel which would strengthen the determination of the jihad fighters [terrorist operatives] and hasten the "coming of victory." **The notice called for the escalation of the "resistance" [anti-Israeli Palestinian terrorism] in all the arenas** (PIJ website, March 2, 2023).



Mourning notice issued by the Palestinian ministry of education (Facebook page of the Palestinian ministry of education, March 2, 2023).



Right: The Qalqilya district governor attends the funeral of Muhammad Salim (Facebook page of the Palestinian ministry of education, March 2, 2023). Left: The Fatah mourning notice (Ibrahim Melhem's Facebook page, March 3, 2023).

Hamas terrorist recruiter and operatives detained

► News of the detention of Ahmed Muhammad Abu Salah, 24, from Judea and Samaria, was released for publication. He was detained for interrogation by the Israeli Security Agency when he returned from Turkey after a long period of academic studies. Interrogation revealed that while in Turkey he was recruited by Hamas and sent for military training in Turkey and Syria, including the use of firearms and the manufacture of explosives, in order to carry out terrorist attacks in Israel. Before he returned from Turkey he met with a high-ranking Hamas operative who asked him to get weapons and money and establish terrorist cells by recruiting and training operatives.

► Following his detention three other Palestinians were detained. The interrogation of two of them revealed they had enlisted in the ranks of Hamas and underwent training in the Gaza Strip. Interrogation also revealed the four were planning a number of terrorist attacks and had thrown rocks at police in al-Aqsa mosque during Ramadan in April 2022. The four had been in contact in Turkey with the son of a high-ranking Hamas operative, who operated on instructions from Hamas in Turkey, especially from Saleh al-'Arouri, deputy chairman of Hamas' political bureau, and responsible for Judea and Samaria (Israeli Security Agency spokesman's unit, March 6, 2023.)

Hamas instructional video on how to carry out a shooting attack²

► The Hamas-affiliated online media outlets recently posted a video calling for "revenge attacks" against Jewish civilians and Israelis in public places. The video showed "the next lone wolf" walking "innocently" on the street and then killing Israelis and Jews (identifiable by their clothing and headgear) with a handgun or knife. The video was first uploaded to a Telegram channel created especially for it, but within a short period it was reposted on Hamas' outlets with the claim it had been "spread by the Internet." Links were given to Hamas' al-Aqsa and al-Risalah websites (Hamas' al-Risalah website, February 22, 2023).

² For further information see the March 2, 2023, report, "The Use of Social Networks by the Palestinian Public – Facts and Assessments."



Pictures from the instructional video posted to al-Risalah Telegram channel, February 22, 2023.

Speech given by Ziyad al-Nakhalah

- ▶ The PIJ held a memorial ceremony in the Jenin refugee camp. **PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah gave a videoed speech.** He said the fighters [terrorists] and shaheeds in the Jenin refugee camp had become symbols of the "resistance" [anti-Israeli terrorism and violence]. He said the local battalions were multiplying and spreading throughout Judea and Samaria in every city and village, noting the Lion's Den and the Battalions of Nablus, Tubas, Tulkarm, Jaba, Qabatiya, Burqin and Silat al-Harithiya, "all the way to Jericho." He called on all the "resistance" fighters [Palestinian terrorist operatives] to be careful not to use cellphones because they revealed their location and helped the Israeli security forces.
- ▶ Al-Nakhalah added that the United States had used all its power and influence to push a "new plot" at the summit meeting in Aqaba, but only one "fighter" in Hawwara had foiled the plan to create internal dissention and exposed the true face of the settlers, proving how great a danger the settlement project was, not just to the Palestinians but to "all humanity." He told the Palestinians not to hesitate to fight because, he said, life under the "occupation" was death, and the death of a martyr on the battlefield was life. **He called on all the Palestinians to go out and fight and surprise [Israel] everywhere.** He also claimed the "prison front" had opened, and that the Palestinians in the prisons in Israel were planning a fierce battle (PIJ website, March 3, 2023).



Right: Ziyad al-Nakhalah gives a speech (Paltoday YouTube channel, March 3, 2023). Left: Armed children participate in the memorial ceremony (Jerusalem Brigades website, March 3, 2023).

General closure of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip for the Purim holiday

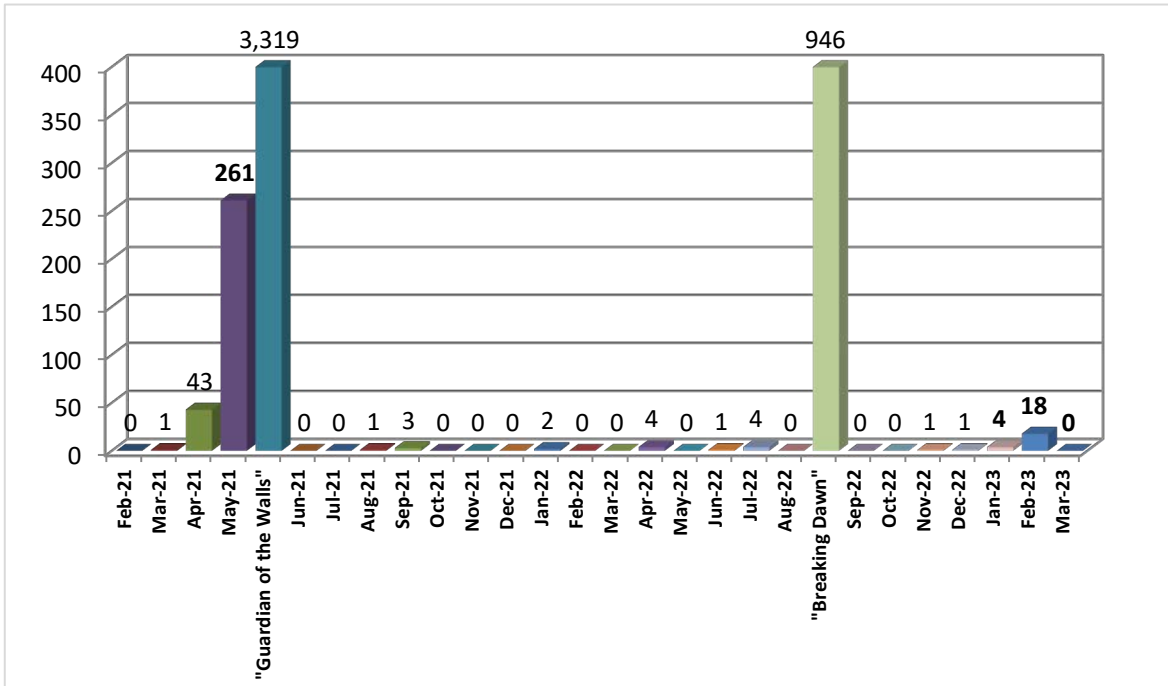
► The IDF spokesman announced that in accordance with the security assessment and with instructions from the political leadership, during the two-day Purim holiday (March 7 and 8, 2023) a closure would be imposed on Judea and Samaria, and the Gaza Strip crossings would be closed. The crossings for the delivery of goods would remain open, and vital workers and humanitarian cases would also be able to leave, subject to permission from the Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, March 5, 2023).

Israel's South

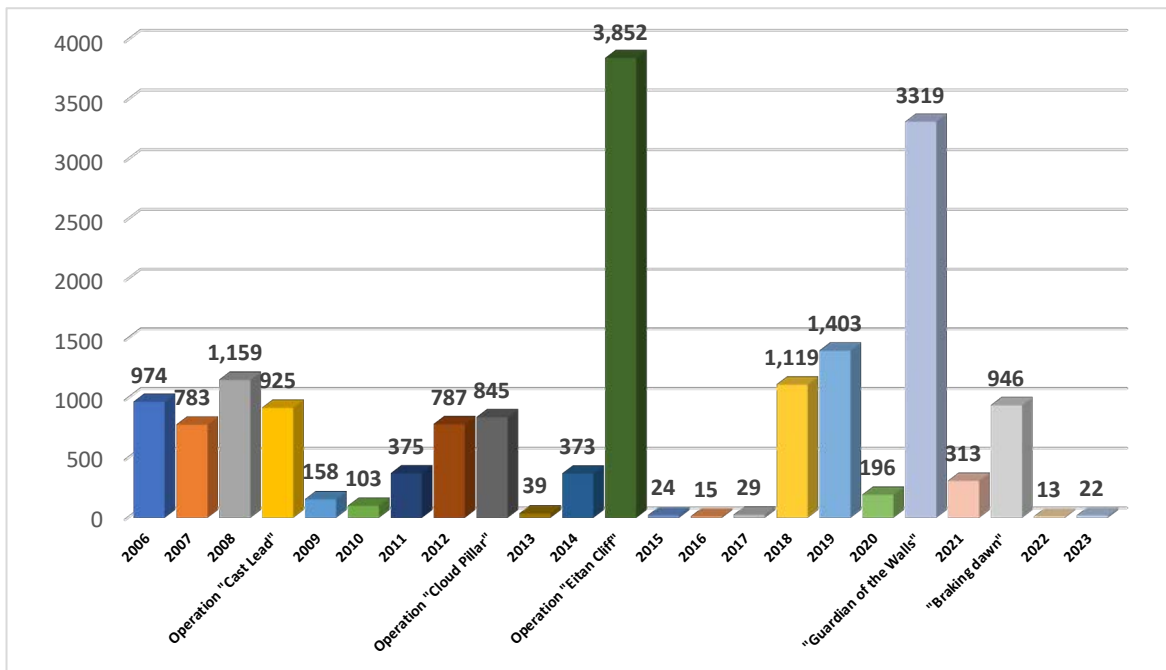
Rocket and mortar shell fire into Israel

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

Monthly Distribution of Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire since February 2021



Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits



Developments in the Gaza Strip

The envoy from Qatar visits the Gaza Strip

► After a series of unaccountable delays, **Mohammed al-Emadi, chairman of Qatar's National Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza**, arrived in the Gaza Strip through the Erez Crossing on the evening of March 6, 2023. According to Hamas' Shehab website, he came to discuss the renewal of the funds Qatar annually provides to the Gaza Strip, and would meet with the Gaza Strip leadership (Shehab, March 6, 2023).

PIJ leadership elections

► On March 4, 2023, elections were held for the PIJ leadership and political bureau for the coming four years. It was the second time the organization held internal elections; the last time was in 2018 (al-Araby al-Jadeed, March 4, 2023). According to a press briefing, Ziyad al-Nakhlah (who was the only candidate) would serve as organization leader for four more years. The members of the political bureau are the following (PIJ website, March 5, 2023):

- ◆ Akram Muhammad al-Ajouri
- ◆ Dr. Yusuf Muhammad al-Hussaina
- ◆ Nafez Rashad Azzam
- ◆ Dr. Muhammad Sayid al-Hindi
- ◆ Ali Muhammad Abu Shahin, responsible for the Lebanese arena
- ◆ Dr. Walid Ali al-Qutati
- ◆ Ahmed Khalil al-Mudallal, who replaces Khaled al-Batash from the Gaza Strip
- ◆ Muhammad Hussein Hamid
- ◆ Ihsan Suleiman Atiya, PIJ representative in Lebanon
- ◆ According to reports, the names of members of the political bureau elected from Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the prisons were not revealed for reasons of security (Ma'an and al-Quds, March 5, 2023).



Right: The PIJ leadership, headed by Ziyad al-Nakhalah (PIJ Telegram channel in the Gaza district, March 5, 2023). Left: The PIJ leadership in the Gaza Strip votes in the organization's internal elections (Paltoday, March 5, 2023).

Khalil al-Haya in Damascus

- ▶ On March 2, 2023, a delegation of Hamas' political bureau headed by Khalil al-Haya arrived in Damascus for an official visit. The delegation included Usama Hamedan, who was Hamas' representative in Damascus for many years. Meetings were held behind closed doors with high-ranking members of the Palestinian organizations in Damascus, including Talal Naji, head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command, and Isma'il al-Sindawi, PIJ representative. On March 3, 2023, a meeting open to the media was held (al-Akhbar, Lebanon, March 4, 2023).
- ▶ Khalil al-Haya was interviewed before the meeting. He claimed the presence of the delegation in Damascus confirmed that relations with the Syrian government had returned to their former status. According to al-Haya, since the last official meeting with President Bashar al-Assad, Hamas representatives had paid a number of private visits to Damascus, which contributed to the rapprochement between the two sides (al-Akhbar, Lebanon, March 4, 2023).
- ▶ Khalil al-Haya held a press conference where he said the Hamas delegation had also met with Syrian leaders and he thanked the Syrian government for the efforts it made to support the Palestinian victims of the earthquake and to facilitate the arrival of international aid. Asked about meeting with Assad, he said no meeting was on the agenda for the current visit. However, he said, the Hamas leadership was pleased with its relations with the Syrian leadership and people, and Hamas delegations had held a large number of public and private visits and meetings in Damascus, which contributed to channeling relations in the right direction (Sputnik in Arabic, March 2, 2023).



Right: The Hamas delegation meets in Damascus with representatives of the Palestinian organizations. Left: Khalil al-Haya holds a press conference (Shehab, March 3, 2023).

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Mahmoud Abbas visits Doha

► On March 3, 2023, Mahmoud Abbas arrived in Doha, the capital of Qatar, to participate in the UN's Fifth Least Developed Countries Conference (LDC5). On the sidelines of the conference he met with the president of Serbia, the prime minister of Bangladesh and the Russian deputy foreign minister, and discussed the situation in the Palestinian arena (Wafa, March 5, 2023).

► He gave a speech in which he said "Palestine" would continue confronting "the occupation" [Israel] and its violations of international law and unilateral measures. He said the Palestinians intended to appeal to international forums and courts, and called on the international community to stop "Israeli terrorism against the Palestinian people" and to punish it. He also thanked the emir of Qatar, Tamim ibn Hamad Al Thani, for his political and financial support of the Palestinian people (Wafa, March 6, 2023).



Mahmoud Abbas at the conference in Doha (Wafa, March 5, 2023).

Palestinian activity following the events in Hawwara

► On February 26, 2023, after two Israeli civilians were shot to death in a terrorist attack, dozens of Jewish settlers attacked Palestinians and Palestinian property in Hawwara. In the wake of the events, the Palestinians are currently working for international coverage and exposure of the damages. This past week several international figures visited Hawwara:

- ◆ On March 3, 2023, Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff, the EU representative in the PA, visited Hawwara heading a delegation of EU representatives and diplomats from around 20 countries. **Von Burgsdorff condemned the settlers' attack and said the EU would demand accountability from them.** He also demanded reparations for the damage caused. He and the members of the delegation paid a condolence call to the village of Zaatra, south of Nablus, at the house of Sameh Aqtash, who was killed during the events (Wafa, March 3, 2023).



Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff, the EU representative in the PA, and some members of the delegation visit Hawwara (Wafa, March 3, 2023).

- ◆ On March 1, 2023, several PA government ministers, led by PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh, visited Hawwara. Shtayyeh held a press conference in the town, where he said they had come to express their support for the firm stance of the Palestinians in the face of the vandalism of the Jewish settlers, which he claimed was carried out under the aegis of the IDF. He claimed the real response to the vandalism was the "popular resistance" [popular terrorism] and establishing popular "defense" committees in the villages, refugee camps and cities (Ma'an, March 1, 2023).



Muhammad Shtayeh visits Hawwara (Wafa, March 1, 2023).

◆ On February 28, 2023, **Hady Amr, deputy assistant secretary for Israeli and Palestinian affairs in the American State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs**, visited Hawwara. He condemned the Jewish settler violence and claimed he was "very worried" by the escalation in violence in Judea and Samaria. He called for those responsible to be prosecuted according to the law and for reparations to be paid to those who had lost property or were harmed in any other way. **Deputy Fatah chairman Mahmoud al-'Aloul**, who was present during Amr's visit to the town, stressed the importance of providing the Palestinians with protection, rapid intervention to deter the Jewish settlers, putting a stop to the construction in the PA territories and stopping the Israeli attacks. Moeen Dmeidi, the mayor of Hawwara, said the about \$5 million worth of damages had been caused (PNN website, March 1. 2023).



Hady Amr visits Hawwara (Wafa, February 28, 2023).



Palestinian cartoons comment on the events in Hawwara. Right: "The Israeli cycle of violence" (al-Quds al-Arabi, March 1, 2023). Left: "The settler violence against the Palestinian town of Hawwara." The inscription on the magazine reads, "The Netanyahu government" (al-Quds al-Arabi, February 28, 2023).

Interview with Hussein al-Sheikh

► Hussein al-Sheikh, general secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee and responsible for coordination with Israel, was interviewed several times and related to the discourse between Israel and the PA at the summit meeting in Aqaba. Some of the topics he discussed were the following (al-Araby al-Jadeed, February 27, 2023):

- ◆ Al-Sheikh said it was important to continue the discourse and even claimed Mahmoud Abbas was willing to meet with the Israeli prime minister at any time and to send the Israeli audience the message that there was a "partner for peace" [sic]. However, said al-Sheikh, it was likely that a third intifada would break out if Israel's activities did not stop, especially the expansion of the settlements and the IDF's entrance into Area A of the PA territory.
- ◆ He also said security issues has not been discussed in Aqaba because, he claimed, the problem with Israel was political and not related to security.
- ◆ He added that the Palestinian side would not cede anything and the suspension of security coordination with Israel was still in force. Only when Israel stopped its unilateral actions would the Palestinians be willing to renew security coordination.
- ◆ **Regarding possible escalation during Ramadan following the events in Hawwara, he claimed it depended on Israel and the settlers.**

► According to reports, the PA threatened it would not participate in the follow-up meeting scheduled for Sharm el-Sheikh on March 17, 2023, because, according to the Palestinians, Israel continued violating the understandings and did not meet its commitments. Hussein al-Sheikh said the PA conditioned its participation on the receipt of guarantees that the

promises Israel made at the meeting in Aqaba on February 26, 2023, would be kept. The PA demanded the American administration rethink the course of the meeting in light of Israel's violations. It was also reported that so far the PA to hold a meeting of the joint security committee to discuss the renewal of security coordination (al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 3, 2023).

Reactions to the proposed law for the death penalty for terrorists

► On February 26, 2023, the Israeli Ministerial Committee for Legislative Affairs authorized a law that would impose the death penalty on terrorists, and on March 1, 2023, the preliminary reading of the law was passed in the Knesset by a majority of 55 to nine (Israeli media, March 1, 2023). The proposed law was strongly condemned in the Palestinian arena, including calls for a mass uprising and threats against Israel. Some of the reactions were the following:

- ◆ **Rawhi Fatouh, chairman of the Palestinian National Council**, said Israel did not need laws to kill and execute Palestinians, as it did so every day. He claimed Israel, with the help of its racist, fascist laws, was an apartheid regime and was turning into a racist country which violated all international laws and conventions in a way that was "historically unprecedented" [sic] (Wafa, March 1, 2023).

- ◆ **Hussein al-Sheikh** said it was a continuation of Israel's racism and imperialistic ideology and escape from the truth, which was that Israel was an occupier that killed "throughout history" [sic] and "threw international legitimacy behind its back" [sic] (Hussein al-Sheikh's Twitter account, March 1, 2023).

- ◆ **Muhammad al-Shalalkeh, PA minister of justice**, said the proposed law was a violation of the Fourth and Sixth Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the first protocol of the Geneva Convention of 1977, and was a gross violation of all international, humanitarian, legal rules and human rights. He claimed the legal status of the Palestinian prisoners negated the legitimacy of the law because they had been detained while "working for freedom and independence," and their "struggles" were anchored in international law and international humanitarian jurisprudence. According to al-Shalalkeh, **it was necessary to respond to the legislation immediately, and begin a diplomatic and legal battle to label Israel an apartheid, racist country** (Wafa, February 28, 2023).

- ◆ **Qudri Abu Bakr, chairman of the commission for prisoners and released prisoners' affairs**, said passing the law was to be expected. He said the "operatives of the Palestinian struggle" [terrorists] were not worried by execution, and Israel would

pay a price for passing the law. He added that the fact that most of the Knesset members [sic] voted in favor of the law revealed more forcefully the truth about Israel, especially to global public opinion, which regarded it as a democracy and supported it (website of the commission for prisoners and released prisoners' affairs, March 2, 2023).

◆ **Hamas** said that passing the law was an overt attempt to legitimize the IDF's methodical killing of Palestinians and a continuation of the IDF's policy of cold-blooded executions carried out before the eyes of the world. Hamas claimed Israel's policies and laws would not frighten the "resistance fighters" [terrorists] or the Palestinians, who would continue their "struggle" [attacks]. Hamas demanded the international community and relevant institutions take action to deter and punish the Israeli government (Hamas website, March 1, 2023).

◆ **The emergency committee of security prisoners in Israeli jails** said that for the prisoners the law was a path to death as a martyr, adding that Israel would regret the moment it finally passed (Raya, March 2, 2023).

PA security services activity in Tulkarm

► On March 4, 2023, there were reports of clashes between the Palestinian security services and local residents in Tulkarm, who opposed the activities of the security services against Palestinians wanted by Israel. Reportedly, the security service operatives suppressed demonstrations in favor of the Tulkarm Battalion. Hundreds of demonstrators blocked roads, set fire to tires, chanted slogans against the security services and accused them of being an arm of Israeli security (Shehab, March 4, 2023).

► A spokesman for the Tulkarm Battalion calling himself "Abu Shams" said that on March 1 and 2, 2023, Palestinian preventive security forces has tried to detain a Battalion operative. He said the Israeli security forces also tried to detain him after they surrounded his house. In addition, Palestinian preventive security forces had detained two young Palestinians from Tulkarm's eastern neighborhood on suspicion of being affiliated with the Tulkarm Battalion (al-Araby al-Jadeed, March 4, 2023).



Demonstrations in Tulkarm protesting detentions carried out by the Palestinian preventive security forces (Right: Shehab, March 4, 2023. Left: Filastin al-A'an Twitter account, March 4, 2023).

Student council elections at Hebron University

► On March 2, 2023, elections were held for the student council of Hebron University. The Shahid Yasser Arafat faction of the Shabiba (Fatah's student movement) won 25 of the student council's 41 seats. The Islamic Bloc, Hamas' student faction, won 16 seats (Hebron University website, March 2, 2023). **Deputy Fatah chairman Mahmoud al-'Aloul and Hussein al-Sheikh** were quick to congratulate Tel Aviv's "crushing victory" in the election (Twitter accounts of Mahmoud al-'Aloul and Hussein al-Sheikh, March 2, 2023).

► Hamas represented the election results as a victory because the Islamic Bloc won five seats more than it had during the last election, held in 2019, thereby shortening the gap between the number of seats (Safa and the Twitter account of the Islamic Bloc in Hebron University, March 2, 2023).



Right: Demonstration held by the Islamic Bloc in Hebron University, part of its election campaign (Twitter account of the Islamic Bloc in Hebron University, March 1, 2023). Left: Shabiba activists celebrate their victory (Khalil Qanan's Twitter account, March 2, 2023).

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:³

- ◆ **March 5, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle between Efrat and the T Junction (southeast of Bethlehem). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **March 4, 2023:** A pipe bomb was thrown from a passing vehicle at a post of the Judea and Samaria Division near Beit El (northeast of Ramallah).
- ◆ **March 2, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus and other vehicles near Rehelim (east of Salfit). No casualties were reported; vehicles were damaged.
- ◆ **March 2, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus and other vehicles north of Bayt Einun (north of Hebron). No casualties were reported; vehicles were damaged.
- ◆ **March 2, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus near the settlement of Yitzhar (south of Nablus). No casualties were reported; the bus was damaged.
- ◆ **March 2, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus near Bayt Ummar (north of Hebron). No casualties were reported; the bus was damaged.
- ◆ **March 2, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle between the Khadr Junction and Beitar (west of Bethlehem) No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **March 2, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus carrying soldiers in Jiftliq (Jordan Valley). No casualties were reported; the bus was damaged.



Window of a bus shattered by a rock in the Jordan Valley.

³ Information and pictures from Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria unless otherwise noted.

- ◆ **March 2, 2023:** Molotov cocktails were thrown at an IDF post at the al-Fawwar Junction (southwest of Hebron). No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **March 1, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near the settlement of Carmel (south of Hebron). A passenger was injured.
- ◆ **March 1, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle between the Tapuah Junction and Ariel (east of Salfit). A two-month old baby was injured by flying glass. The vehicle was damaged.