



# Spotlight on the Israel-Palestinian Conflict

July 31 – August 6 , 2024

## Overview<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ **The elimination of Isma'il Haniyeh:** Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, was killed in an attack in Tehran; he was buried in Qatar. Senior Hamas figures said killing him would not alter the movement's path. The Hamas leadership held consultations to choose his successor. "Sources" stated the movement would resume negotiations for a ceasefire after a new leader had been elected.
- ▶ **The southern arena:** This past week IDF forces focused their activity on the Rafah area in the southern Gaza Strip and the Netzarim Corridor in the central Gaza Strip. They attacked Hamas terrorist facilities operating in civilian compounds and exposed tunnels and weapons. There was an increase in rocket fire from the Gaza Strip; an Israeli civilian was injured.
- ▶ The IDF confirmed that Muhammed Deif, the commander of Hamas' military wing, was killed in an airstrike in Khan Yunis; Hamas did not issue a confirmation; the IDF continued to target terrorist operatives in the Gaza Strip, including those involved in smuggling and operatives who participated in the Hamas terrorist attack and massacre on October 7 2023.
- ▶ A UN investigation determined that there was evidence indicating the possible involvement of nine UNRWA employees in the October 7, 2023 attack, and announced their dismissal.
- ▶ **Israel, Judea and Samaria:** This past week Palestinian terrorist operatives carried out three attacks, murdering two Israelis and injuring four others. A Palestinian terrorist stabbed two civilians to death and wounded two others in Holon, and a female Border Police fighter was stabbed at the Tunnel roadblock. An Israeli civilian was injured in a combined shooting and stabbing attack near Kiryat Arba. The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria, killing nine terrorist operatives in two airstrikes in Tulkarm, and at least five in two airstrikes in Jenin.

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<sup>1</sup> Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

► **The Palestinian Authority:** The Palestinian Authority (PA) representative to the UN called on the international community to stop the "terrible Israeli attacks" on the Palestinians and on "the entire Middle East."

## The Elimination of Isma'il Haniyeh

► On August 2, 2024, the funeral of Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, was held in Qatar. He was killed on July 31, 2024, in an explosion in Tehran attributed to Israel.<sup>2</sup> The service was held at the Imam Muhammad bin Abd Mosque in Doha attended by senior Hamas figures, including Khaled Mashal, Khalil al-Haya and Musa Abu Marzouq; Ziyad al-Nakhalah, secretary general of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ); Tamim bin Hamad, the emir of Qatar; Khan Fidan, the Turkish foreign minister; Mahmoud al-'Aloul, Fatah deputy chairman; and Jibril al-Rajoub, secretary of Fatah's Central Committee (Wafa and al-Jazeera, August 2, 2024).

► The Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) denied reports that Haniyeh had been killed by an explosive device planted in his room at the Corps' guest house in Tehran. They claimed the killing had been carried out by "the launch of a short-range 'item' with a warhead weighing about seven kilograms that caused a large explosion" (SNN agency, August 3, 2024).

► Hamas spokesman Jihad Tahe claimed the shedding of Haniyeh's blood "increases our determination to continue 'resisting the occupation'," adding that the funeral service reflected appreciation for Haniyeh's role (Shehab Agency Telegram channel, August 2, 2024).

► Khalil al-Haya, deputy chairman of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, said Haniyeh's death would not cause Hamas to change course, and would revitalize the Arab nation. He claimed Haniyeh's death had not left a vacuum and a new leader would soon be chosen (Hamas Telegram channel, August 4, 2024).

► "Informed sources" said that Hamas was holding consultations to select Haniyeh's successor, discussing the possible establishment of a leadership of three deputies of the political bureau's head: one would perform "representative tasks," another would choose a deputy for the head of the political bureau, and the third would be responsible for convening a meeting of the Shura Council to choose an interim successor for Haniyeh until elections could be held. According to the "sources," the joint leadership would consist of Khaled Mashal, head of the "external" Hamas leadership, Yahya al-Sinwar, head of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, and Zaher Jabarin, head of Hamas in Judea and Samaria (al-Sharq, August 4, 2024).

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<sup>2</sup> For further information, see the ITIC report, "Reactions to the Deaths of Fuad Shukr and Isma'il Haniyeh."

►According to "sources," Yahya al-Sinwar opposes appointing Khaled Mashal as interim political bureau head, preferring his deputy, Khalil al-Haya. According to the "sources," Sinwar wants Haniyeh's replacement to have good relations with Iran and Syria. It was also noted that the appointment would be for a few months until elections could be held (al-Arabiya, August 4, 2024).

►The PLO's Executive Committee erected a mourning tent for Isma'il Haniyeh, who at one point was PA prime minister,<sup>3</sup> at the headquarters of the Palestinian Red Crescent in al-Bireh. Muhammad Mustafa, PA prime minister, members of the PLO's Executive and Central Committees, the secretaries of the PLO factions, the governor of the Ramallah and al-Bireh District and various government ministers came to pay their respects (Wafa, August 4, 2024).



**Muhammad Mustafa, PA prime minister (right); Ramzi Rabah, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine representative in the PLO Executive Committee; and Laila Ghannam, Ramallah and al-Bireh district governor (extreme left) pay their respects at the mourning tent (Laila Ghannam's Facebook page, August 4, 2024)**

## The Southern Arena

### IDF operations in the Gaza Strip

►IDF activity last week focused on the Rafah area in the southern Gaza Strip and on the central Gaza Strip. Ground and air forces attacked terrorist operatives, destroyed terrorist facilities, and exposed several tunnels and large quantities of weapons.

►**Rafah:** IDF activity focused on the Tel al-Sultan neighborhood, where the forces killed dozens of terrorist operatives in clashes and airstrikes, and destroyed terrorist facilities, tunnels and tunnel shafts (IDF spokesperson, July 31 to August 6, 2024). They continued exposing tunnels along the Philadelphia Axis (the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt). A tunnel nine feet high was discovered which was large enough to allow for the passage of vehicles. According to estimates there are at least 20 tunnels, some of which cross the border into Egypt. The IDF

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<sup>3</sup> March 2006 to June 2014.

spokesperson confirmed that some of the tunnels were inactive (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 4, 2024). An "Egyptian source" denied the existence of border-crossing tunnels (al-Qahera al-Ekhbariya Telegram channel, August 5, 2024). A "source" in the Hamas ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip claimed that the tunnel discovered on the Philadelphia Axis had been inoperative since 2014 (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, August 6, 2024).



**The opening of the tunnel on the Philadelphia Axis (IDF spokesperson, August 4, 2024)**

► **The central Gaza Strip:** IDF forces continued defending the Netzarim Corridor, carried out targeted raids to locate terrorist tunnels and facilities, and killed terrorist operatives in clashes and airstrikes (IDF spokesperson, July 31-August 6, 2024).

## **Attacks on Hamas facilities operating in civilian sites in the Gaza Strip**

► On August 4, 2024, Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked Hamas command and control compounds in the Hassan Salama and Nasr schools in Gaza City. The IDF reported that the schools were used by Hamas' al-Furqan Battalion for attacks and as a hiding place for terrorist operatives. Jabr Aziz, the commander of the al-Furqan Battalion, was killed in the attack on the Hassan Salama school. He had participated in the preparations and training of the battalion for the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre, and personally participated in attacking cities, towns and villages surrounding Gaza. Before the IDF attacked measures were implemented to reduce possible harm to civilians (IDF spokesperson, August 4, 2024). According to Palestinian reports, 35 Palestinians were killed in the attack and more than 100 were injured, while the search for the missing was still ongoing (al-Araby al-Jadeed, August 4, 2024). The civil defense personnel in the Gaza Strip reported at least 30 dead and dozens of wounded in the attack on the schools in the west of Gaza City (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, August 4, 2024). Hamas claimed that the schools were full of "displaced persons" and accused Israel of committing a "massacre" (Hamas website, August 4, 2024).

►On August 3, 2024, Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked a Hamas command and control compound in the Hamama school in Gaza City. The IDF reported that the compound was used by Hamas operatives as a hiding place and for attacks on IDF forces. Weapons were manufactured and stored in the school, and it was also used for weapons trainings and exercises. Before the attack, measures were taken to reduce possible harm to civilians (IDF spokesperson, August 3, 2024). Civil defense in the Gaza Strip reported 17 deaths in the attack on the Hamama school in the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood in the west of Gaza City (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, August 3 2024).

►On August 1, 2024, the Israeli Air Force attacked terrorist operatives operating in the Dalal al-Mughrabi School compound in the Shejaiya neighborhood of Gaza City. Hamas used the site to hide terrorist operatives and commanders and to plan terrorist attacks. Prior to the attack, measures were taken to reduce possible harm to civilians (IDF spokesperson, August 1, 2024). Palestinian media reported that at least 15 people were killed and dozens were injured in the attack on the Dalal al-Mughrabi School in the Shejaiya neighborhood. The Palestinian media claimed the school was used as a shelter for the displaced and that part of the building collapsed during the rescue operations (Filastin al-A'an Telegram channel, August 1, 2024; al-Jazeera, August 1, 2024).

## **Rocket fire from the Gaza Strip**

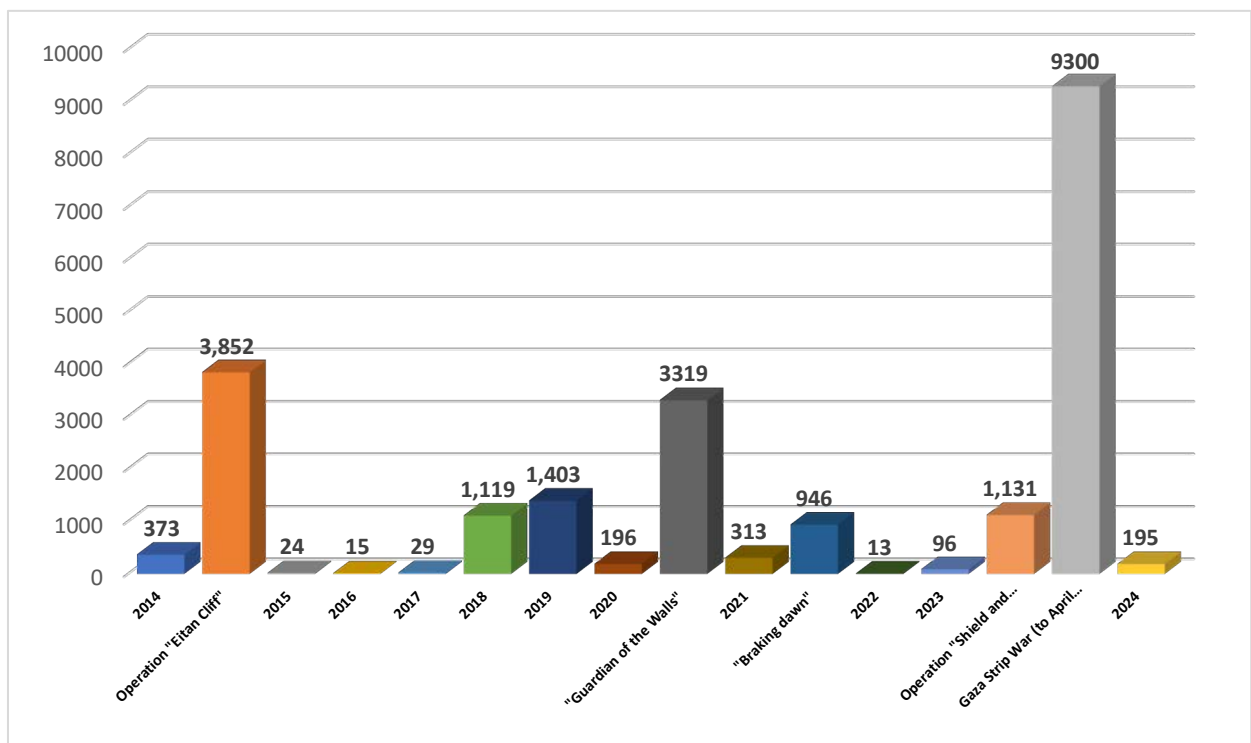
►This past week there was an increase in rocket fire from the Gaza Strip attacking cities, towns and villages in southern Israel:

- ◆August 2, 2024: In the afternoon a rocket was fired from the Khan Yunis-Rafah area at Kiryat Malachi and fell in an open area; no casualties were reported. It was the first time a rocket had been fired at Kiryat Malachi since October 2023 (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 2, 2024). In the evening ten rockets were fired from the Khan Yunis-Rafah region at the communities near the Gaza Strip. One rocket was intercepted and the rest fell in open areas; no casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 2, 2024). In the evening eight rockets were fired from the Rafah region at the communities near the Gaza Strip. The rockets fell in open areas, there were no casualties (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 2, 2024). Hamas' military wing claimed responsibility for firing two separate barrages of ten 114 mm Rajum short-range rockets at an IDF post (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, August 2, 2024). In the evening a rocket fired at a community near the Gaza Strip was intercepted; no

casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 2, 2024) The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades (AAMB) and the military wing of the Palestinian al-Akhrar Movement claimed responsibility for the attack (elaqsa\_1965 Telegram channel of the AAMB, August 3, 2024).

- ◆ August 4, 2024: Five rockets were launched from the Khan Yunis area. One landed near the southern coastal city of Ashqelon; no casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 4, 2024). The Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, claimed responsibility for firing a barrage of rockets at southern Israeli cities "in response to the massacres committed against the Palestinian people and 'resistance' leaders" (Hamas' Telegram channel , August 4, 2024).
- ◆ August 5, 2024: 15 rockets were fired into the area surrounding Gaza. Israel's aerial defense forces intercepted some of the rockets; hits were reported in the area. An Israeli civilian was slightly injured and a fire broke out (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 5, 2024).

## Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits



\* Distribution for 2024 begins in May

## The hostages and a ceasefire agreement

- ▶ "Informed sources" said that Hamas had frozen the negotiations for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip following the elimination of Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, but claimed

negotiations would be resumed. According to the "sources," no decisions were expected to be made before Haniyeh's successor had been named. Another "source" stated that Hamas did not want to stop the negotiations and it intended to renew them after Haniyeh's replacement had been chosen (al-Sharq al-Awsat, August 4, 2024).

►United States Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said action had to be taken for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip to prevent further escalation in the Middle East. He called on all parties to conduct negotiations, stop escalating and find "reasons to reach an agreement" (State Department website, August 1, 2024).

►John Kirby, spokesman for the National Security Council, said killing Haniyeh derailed efforts to reach an agreement. He noted that efforts were ongoing to promote an agreement which would allow for a six-week ceasefire in the first phase, the release a large number of hostages and the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip (The Hill, July 31, 2024). He also expressed confidence that the remaining gaps could be closed and that achieving a ceasefire was possible, even after Haniyeh's death (al-Khaleej, August 2, 2024).

## The Gaza Strip

### Palestinian casualties

►**The Hamas-controlled ministry of health in the Gaza Strip** reported that since the beginning of the war, 39,653 Palestinians had been killed and 91,535 injured (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, August 6, 2024, p.m.).

►IDF forces carried out targeted attacks on terrorist operatives:

◆On August 5, 2024, Muhammad Muhasneh, a Hamas operations officer who dealt with smuggling, was killed in an airstrike. According to the IDF, he focused on smuggling military equipment to the Gaza Strip by sea, but was also involved in smuggling through tunnels and border crossings (IDF spokesperson, August 6, 2024).

◆On August 4, 2024, the Hamas government information office in the Gaza Strip reported that Abd al-Fattah al-Zara'i, the deputy economy minister in Gaza, was killed in an Israeli airstrike in Deir al-Balah. He replaced Ihab al-Hussein, who was killed in an airstrike on July 7, 2024 (Hamas government information office Telegram channel, August 4, 2024). The IDF spokesperson confirmed that al-Zeriei was killed in an airstrike, adding that he was minister of the economy in the Hamas government and an operative in the military wing's production headquarters responsible for improving Hamas' weapons capabilities. He was also involved in the Hamas takeover of humanitarian aid delivered

to the Gaza Strip and was responsible for distributing fuel, gas and funds for terrorist activities (IDF spokesperson, August 5, 2024).

- ◆ Muhammad al-Jabari, responsible for the finances of the PIJ's weapons manufacture, was killed in a targeted attack. According to the IDF, he oversaw the PIJ's production of anti-aircraft missiles in the northern Gaza Strip, distributed funds to PIJ operatives, and participated in the organization's attempts to restore its rocket production capabilities and other facilities (IDF spokesperson, August 2, 2024) .
- ◆ On August 1, 2024, Isma'il Ayman Nofal was killed in an airstrike in the al-Nuseirat refugee camp. He was the son of Ayman Nofal, the commander of the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades' Central Camps Battalion, who was killed in a targeted attack on October 17, 2023 (Quds Agency X account, August 1, 2024). The IDF confirmed that Isma'il Nofal was killed in an airstrike in al-Nuseirat. He was an operative in Hamas' military wing, fired rockets at Israel and participated in the Hamas attack and massacre on October 7, 2023 (IDF spokesperson, August 4, 2024).
- ◆ On July 31, 2024, Palestinian media reported that correspondents Isma'il al-Ghoul and Rami al-Rifi were killed in an Israeli attack on a group of correspondents near the home Isma'il Haniyeh in the al-Shati refugee camp in western Gaza City (Quds Agency Telegram channel, July 31 2024). The Hamas government information office announced the death of Isma'il al-Ghoul, an al-Jazeera correspondent in Gaza, and Rami al-Rifi, an al-Jazeera photojournalist (Hamas government information office Telegram channel, July 31, 2024). The IDF confirmed that an airstrike killed Isma'il al-Ghoul, an operative in Hamas' military wing and a nukhba operative who participated in the October 7, 2023, terrorist attack and massacre. According to the IDF, he instructed Hamas operatives on documenting the attack and participated in documenting and distributing videos documenting Hamas terrorist activity against IDF forces (IDF spokesperson, August 1, 2024). Al-Jazeera TV denied that there was a connection between al-Ghoul and Hamas, and claimed that he was detained by IDF forces at Shifa Hospital in March 2024 and released after 12 hours, when no involvement in terrorist activities was found (al-Jazeera, August 1, 2024). The IDF then revealed a Hamas document from 2021 showing al-Ghoul was an engineer in the Hamas' Gaza Brigade, and all attempts by Hamas and



al-Jazeera to present him as an honest journalist were false (IDF spokesperson, August 3, 2024).



Isma'il al-Ghoul's personal information in the Hamas document (IDF spokesperson, August 3, 2024)

## The elimination of senior Hamas figures

► On August 1, 2024, the IDF spokesperson formally announced that Muhammed Deif, the commander of Hamas' military wing, was killed in an airstrike while hiding in the humanitarian zone in Khan Yunis on July 13, 2024. Rafe Salama, the commander of Hamas' Khan Yunis Brigade was killed in the same attack. Deif joined Hamas in 1987, and since then had been involved in its terrorist activities, contributed to strengthening Hamas in Judea and Samaria, collaborated with Yahya al-Sinwar, head of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, and initiated and orchestrated the Hamas terrorist attack and massacre on October 7, 2023 (IDF spokesperson, August 1, 2024). Hamas did not confirm the announcement of Deif's death. Izzat al-Rishq, a member of Hamas' political bureau, said that only the Hamas leadership could confirm or deny the death of its military wing commanders and that if no details were published by the leadership, the reports that were published in the media could not be confirmed (Sky News in Arabic, August 1, 2024).



IDF announcement of Muhammad Deif's death (IDF spokesperson, August 1, 2024)

► "Sources close to Hamas" said that an Israeli airstrike killed two members Hamas' political bureau, Rawhi Mushtaha, considered closest to Yahya al-Sinwar, and Samah al-Saraj, a Hamas figure in the Gaza Strip. Also killed in the attack were Abd al-Hadi Siyam, an intelligence commander and operations officer in the Gaza Brigade, Sami Odeh, commander of Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades intelligence and of Hamas internal security forces, and Muhammad Hadid, the commander of the rocket unit in the Gaza Brigade. According to the "sources," a tunnel in the industrial zone in southwest Gaza City was attacked. The tunnel was partially damaged at the beginning of the war but attacked again by an Israeli aircraft and collapsed, burying the senior figures who had been staying in it for the past few weeks. Four other Hamas operatives were killed by exposure to toxic gases during rescue attempts. The Hamas movement has not yet officially confirmed the report (al-Sharq al-Awsat, August 2, 2024).

## **The involvement of UNRWA employees in the attack on October 7, 2023**

► An internal UN investigation which examined the claim that 19 of the agency's employees participated in the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre, determined that there was evidence indicating that nine of them may have been involved, leading to their dismissal. No evidence was discovered regarding the involvement of one employee, and in the other ten cases the evidence was insufficient to prove they had been involved, and the investigation into their conduct was closed (UNRWA website, August 5, 2024).

► Philippe Lazzarini, UN commissioner, claimed the agency was committed to maintaining the principle of humanitarian aid in a neutral manner and ensuring that all employees complied with its policies regarding political activity or activity outside the UNRWA framework. He repeated his condemnation of the October 7 attack and called for the immediate release of all the hostages (UNRWA website, August 5, 2024).

► The Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) said the entrance of UN employees into the territory of the State of Israel under the auspices of an attack carried out by a terrorist organization against Israel should shock and worry all humanitarian organizations, and the fact that the UN remained silent should be a cause for concern for all the countries that have contributed to the organization. He emphasized that the donor countries had to support the humanitarian organizations in the Strip which were the backbone of the humanitarian effort, but not terrorist organizations (COGAT X account, August 5, 2024).

## The situation in the Gaza Strip

- ▶The COGAT reported that 5,552 trucks bringing humanitarian aid entered into the Gaza Strip during the month of July 2024, compared to 4,818 trucks in June 2024. Of them, 4,629 carried food, compared to 4,029 the previous month (COGAT X account, August 5 2024). According to reports, more than three million liters of fuel were brought into the Strip during July 2024 (COGAT X account, August 2, 2024).
- ▶On August 4, 2024, Majed Abu Ramadan, minister of health in Ramallah, announced a blood drive for the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip with the slogan, "Our blood is one." He said the objective was to collect 3000 units of blood by August 8. He warned that the Gaza Strip was in danger of a polio outbreak after three decades in which the virus did not exist in the Strip. He said the PA, the W.H.O., UNICEF and other organizations had prepared 1.2 million doses of polio vaccine and they would soon start vaccinating children up to the age of eight (Wafa, August 4, 2024).
- ▶Dozens of tents for the displaced families were transferred to the Gaza Strip as part of a UAE humanitarian aid operation, as well as tens of tons of equipment, including food packages and necessary equipment for displaced Palestinian families (alfaresalshahm.com website, August 2, 2024).



**Equipment and tents that arrived from the United Arab Emirates**

- ▶On July 31, 2024, following the withdrawal of the IDF forces from eastern Khan Yunis, the municipality announced the start of reconstruction work. Dr. Alaa al-Batta, head of the municipality, said they were working to clear the ruins to make it easier for the residents and to assist the movement of emergency vehicles (Khan Yunis municipality website Facebook page, July 31, 2024).



Reconstruction in Khan Yunis (Khan Yunis municipality Facebook page, July 31, 2024)

## "The Day After"

►A spokesman for Fatah claimed the PA was prepared to manage the Gaza Strip the day after the war "with Palestinian consent." He added that the PA had presented its plans and that the only obstacle was Israel's refusal, claiming Israel did not want a ceasefire in the Strip. He said the Fatah movement would continue collaborating with the other Palestinian organizations to reach a national consensus based on the PLO plan (Sky News in Arabic, August 2, 2024).

►A "source " said the PA government had given the Americans a draft of the its vision for the civilian management of the Gaza Strip the day after the war, but claimed it was not final. "The source" added the plan was based on the PA employees working in the Strip. "The source" also referred to the issue of security in the Strip and claimed that it focused on the plan of the "six Arab states," Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Qatar, the UAE and "Palestine." The "source" said Israel rejected any PA presence, claiming that it was incapable of managing the Gaza Strip "the day after the war," while "we receive messages from the United States that are contrary to [Israel's] claims" (AWP, August 5, 2024).

## Israel, Judea and Samaria

### Terrorist attacks

►This past week Palestinians carried out three terrorist attacks, murdering two Israeli civilians and wounding four others.

### Stabbing in Holon

►On the morning of August 4, 2024, a Palestinian armed with a knife stabbed several Israeli citizens in various locations in the central Israeli city of Holon, murdering two and wounding two; he was shot and killed by a policeman. He was identified as Amer Odeh, from Salfit, who was in Israel illegally (Israel Police Force X account, August 4, 2024). Palestinian media reported

that Amer Rizq Odeh, a member of a wealthy Salfit family, had previously served a prison sentence in Israel. On July 15, 2024, he was detained for 15 days by Palestinian General Intelligence after criticizing the PA on social media (Palestine Online, August 4, 2024). Hamas welcomed the attack, reiterating its claim that a terrorist attack is a "natural response" to the "crimes of the occupation" against the Palestinian people. Hamas called on the Palestinians in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem to continue escalating the "uprising" against the IDF and the Jewish settlers (Hamas website, August 4, 2024). The PIJ also welcomed the attack (Telegram channel of the PIJ Information Bureau, August 4, 2024) .



**Right: The knife used in the attack (Israel Police Force X account, August 4, 2024). Left: Hamas mourning notice for Amer Odeh (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, August 4, 2024)**

## Stabbing at the Tunnel roadblock

► On the morning of August 6, 2024, the Israeli security forces searched a bus that arrived at the Tunnel roadblock before entering Jerusalem. A Palestinian passenger stabbed a female Border Police fighter with a screwdriver; the security forces shot and killed him. A knife was also discovered in his possession (Israel Police Force X account, August 6, 2024). The ministry of health in Ramallah reported that Muhammad Rizq Ibrahim Hamash was killed by Israeli security force fire near Bethlehem (Wafa, August 6, 2024). The Abu Ali Mustafa Battalions, the military wing of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), confirmed Rizq Hamash was one of its operatives, and a released prisoner. They called it a "quality action" and "a natural response to the crimes of the occupation and the policy of assassinations of leaders and resistance fighters" (Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades Telegram channel, August 6, 2024). Hamas issued a mourning notice for the death of Muhammad Rizq Hamash, a resident of the Dheisheh refugee camp (Hamas Telegram channel, August 6, 2024).

## Combined shooting and stabbing attack near Kiryat Arba

► On the morning of July 31, 2024, a technical fault stopped an Israeli vehicle with three passengers on Route 60, between Kiryat Arba and the Beit Einun Junction. A Palestinian

terrorist drove up and opened fire at the driver, then exited his vehicle and stabbed the Israeli, seriously wounding him. The Israeli security forces instituted a search for the terrorist and detained him a few hours later (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, July 31, 2024). Hamas' military wing in Hebron claimed responsibility the shooting attack near Kiryat Arba and for shooting at IDF forces near the Cave of the Patriarchs. Hamas called the shootings a "rapid response" to the killing Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau (Hamas Telegram channel, July 31, 2024).

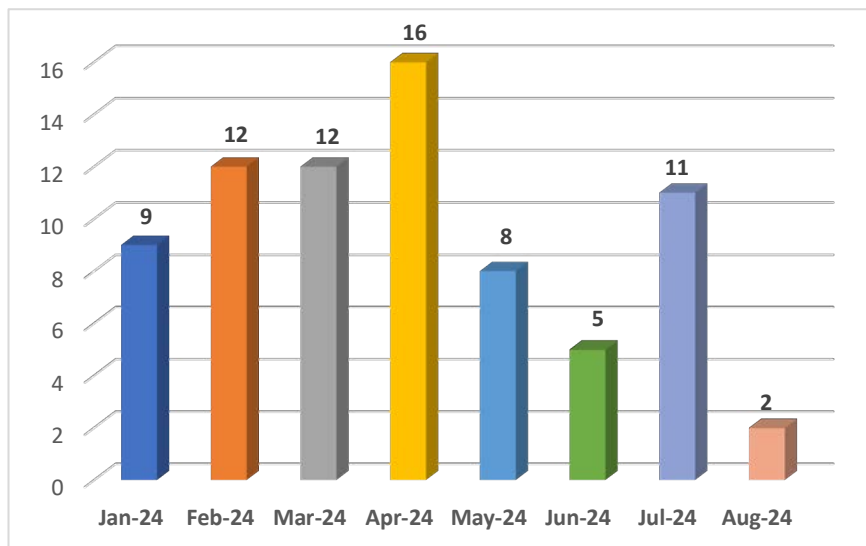
### Attempted stabbing in the Jordan Valley

►On August 5, 2024, shots fired at the Beka'ot community in the Jordan Valley. No casualties or damage were reported (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 5, 2024).

### Attempted IED attack on Route 57

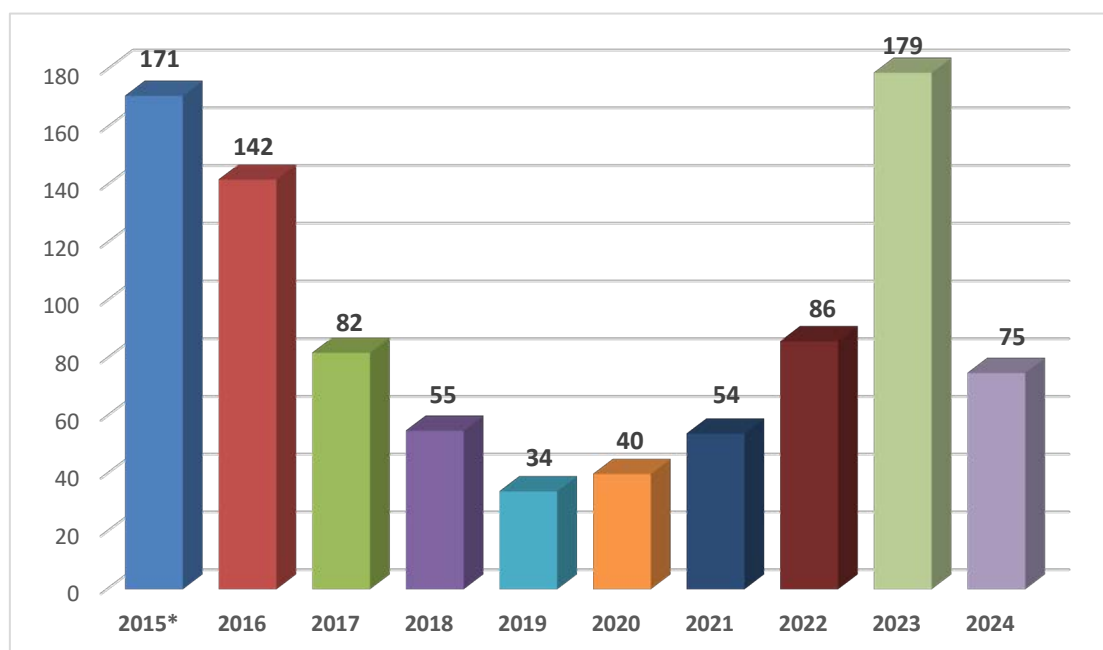
►On August 2, 2024, an IED was discovered on Route 57 between the communities of Shavei Shomron and Einav. It was neutralized; no casualties were reported (Israeli media, August 2, 2024).

## Critical terrorist attacks, 2024<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> 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. Rocks and Molotov cocktails thrown by Palestinians are not included. Shots fired at IDF forces during counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria are included.

## Annual distribution of critical terrorist attacks



## Counterterrorism activities

►The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria. Since the beginning of the war, approximately 4,400 wanted persons have been detained, of whom more than 1,850 were Hamas operatives (IDF spokesperson, July 30 to August 6, 2024):

- ◆On August 6, 2024, during an Israeli security force activity in Jenin, Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked two squads of armed terrorist operatives (IDF spokesperson, August 6, 2024). Wisam Bakr, director of the hospital in Jenin, reported that five bodies had arrived from the eastern neighborhood of Jenin and those who had been identified were Ahmad Hossam al-Saadi, Ayyam Hassan Jaber Bakarna, and Khattab Majd Badawiya (Wafa, August 6, 2024).
- ◆On August 3, 2024, during an Israeli security force operation in Tulkarm, Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked a squad of terrorist operatives en route to an attack. Another air strike targeted armed terrorist operatives who opened fire on the security forces. In the first attack, five terrorist operatives were killed, including Haitham Blidi, from Hamas' military wing, who had been involved in the deaths of two Israeli soldiers and in other attacks in Judea and Samaria, and Alil Khalil and Gamal Abu Haniyeh, who murdered an Israeli civilian in Qalqilya on June 22, 2024 (IDF spokesperson, August 4, 2024). Palestinian media reported that in the first attack, on a vehicle between the towns of Atil and Zeita, five Hamas and PIJ operatives were killed, including Haitham Blidi, Izz al-Din

Qassam Brigades commanders in Tulkarm; Ahmed al-Sabaa, a PIJ leader the Nur Shams refugee camp; and Jamal Abu Haniyeh and Ali Khalil Abu Bakr. In the second attack, four Hamas operatives from the Nur Shams refugee camp were killed (Quds Network, August 4, 2024). Hamas confirmed that four of the dead were operatives in its military wing: Haitham Nur al-Din Blidi, a commander from the Tulkarm camp and Ahmed Ibrahim Mahajana from the Nur Shams refugee camp, while Jamal Ibrahim Abu Haniyeh and Ali Khalil Abu Bakr were the military wing operatives from Qalqilya and murdered the Israeli civilian. The announcement stated that the "resistance" would continue to intensify its attacks and that "no fighter jets or unmanned aircraft would stop [Operation al-Aqsa Flood]" (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, August 4, 2024). The Jerusalem Brigades' Tulkarm Battalion stated that six of the dead were his operatives: - Abdul Jabbar al-Sabbagh, who was a field commander and one of the founders of the battalion, Ahmed Mahajana, Yazen Sa'ad Abu Daghigh, Ta'ar Ahmed Hamidi, Kamal Karawi and Mua'man Masharka. According to the announcement, Jamal Abu Haniyeh and Ali Khalil were PIJ military operatives in Qalqilya, and Haitham Balidi was the field commander of the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades' Tulkarm Battalion. The PIJ's Tulkarm Battalion threatened that they would attack [Israel] "where you cannot imagine" (Tulkarm Battalion Telegram channel, August 3, 2024).



**Right: Weapons found in the possession of the terrorist operatives killed in Tulkarm (IDF spokesperson, August 4, 2024). Center: The five killed in the first counterterrorism activity (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, August 3, 2024). Left: The four killed in the second attack (Hamas' Telegram channel, August 3, 2024)**

► On August 2, 2024, at the end of Friday prayers, the Israel Police detained the preacher of the al-Aqsa Mosque, Sheikh Akrama Sabri, at his home in the al-Savannah neighborhood in the town of A-Tor, east of Jerusalem. He was detained because of his incendiary sermon during the Friday prayer at al-Aqsa Mosque (Fajar TV August 2, 2024). After his detention, the Hamas movement stated that his removal from al-Aqsa Mosque was blatant interference in the



mosque's affairs and a violation of freedom of worship. The organization placed full responsibility for his safety on Israel because of the "incitement" against Sabri, who was one of the most important figures for the Palestinian people (Palestine Post August 2, 2024).

## Demolition of terrorist's house

►On the night of July 30, 2024, Israeli security forces demolished the house of Mourad Dahadha from the village of Atara. He had participated in the shooting attack at the British Police Junction on January 7, 2024, in which two Arab-Israeli civilians were murdered (IDF spokesperson, July 31, 2024).



**The demolition of the house of Mourad Dahadha (IDF spokesperson, July 31, 2024)**

## The activities of the Palestinian security forces

►According to reports, the PA security forces detonated a number of IEDs planted by terrorist operatives in Tulkarm (al-Shahed, August 4, 2024; Safa X account, August 4, 2024).

## The Palestinian Authority (PA)

### International activity

►Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian delegate to the UN, sent letters to Antonio Guterres, UN secretary general; Vasily Nebenzya, the Russian ambassador to the United Nations; and Dennis Francis, the president of the UN General Assembly, in which he claimed "Israel is waging a revolting war against our people, deliberately and arbitrarily, in flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions." Mansour claimed that Israel's attacks on the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria and the killing of Isma'il Haniyeh "prove it is a rogue state." Mansour called on the UN and the international community to act immediately to stop the "terrible Israeli attacks" on the Palestinians and the entire Middle East (Ma'an News, August 1, 2024).

►Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesman for Mahmoud Abbas, met with Mikhail Bogdanov, Russian envoy Middle East and Africa affairs. Abu Rudeineh said Mahmoud Abbas wanted to strengthen relations with Russia. He briefed Bogdanov on the situation in the Gaza Strip, Judea and

Samaria, and reiterated the Palestinian position, which calls for a halt to the "aggression" in the Gaza Strip and the delivery of humanitarian aid (Wafa, August 2, 2024).



**Nabil Abu Radina and Bogdanov (left) (Wafa, August 2, 2024)**

►Varsen Shahin, the Palestinian minister of state for foreign affairs, met in Ramallah with İsmail Cobanoğlu, Turkish consul in Jerusalem. Shaheen praised the historical relations between "Palestine" and Turkey, its support for the Palestinian issue in all international forums and its efforts to stop Israeli "aggression." Cobanoğlu noted the need to strengthen bilateral relations (Wafa, August 1, 2024).