



Spotlight on the Israel-Palestinian Conflict

February 4 – 11 , 2025

Overview¹

- ▶ Implementing the ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip: Hamas released three Israeli hostages in exchange for 183 Palestinian prisoners and IDF forces withdrew from the Netzarim Corridor. Hamas postponed the next scheduled hostage release on February 15, 2025, claiming Israel was not implementing the humanitarian clauses of the agreement and calling on mediators to pressure Israel.
- ▶ Hamas continued to demonstrate security and civilian governance, recruiting thousands of new operatives to its military wing and resuming tax collection.
- ▶ The Palestinian Authority (PA) signed a memorandum of understanding for clearing debris in the Gaza Strip and establishing temporary shelters. Fatah demanded that Hamas relinquish control of Gaza "the day after" in favor of a committee subordinate to the PA and the PLO. Hamas opposed the move, citing a lack of national consensus.
- ▶ A senior Hamas delegation visited Iran and met with regime officials to express gratitude for their support during the war.
- ▶ Israeli security forces continued the extensive counterterrorism operation in northern Samaria and expanded it to the Nur Shams refugee camp in Tulkarm. Palestinians claimed that tens of thousands of residents had fled their homes.
- ▶ PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas cancelled legal provisions related to payments to the families of prisoners, shaheeds and the wounded. Hamas condemned the decision.

The Ceasefire in the Gaza Strip

Implementing the ceasefire and the release of the hostages

- ▶ On February 7, 2025, Hamas delayed the submission of the list of Israeli hostages for several hours before it implemented the fifth phase of the ceasefire agreement. Hamas spokesman Abd al-Latif al-Qanua accused the "occupation" of delaying the implementation of the agreement's humanitarian clauses and warned that it could negatively impact Hamas'

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

"flexibility" in completing the deal. He added that before handing over the names of the hostages to be released, pressure had to be exerted on the "occupation" to implement the humanitarian provisions (al-Arabi TV, February 7, 2025). "Sources" stated that the delay was the consequence of Israel's obstructing the entry of mobile homes and fuel into the Gaza Strip (al-Arabiya Telegram Channel, February 7, 2025).

► Salama Maarouf, head of Hamas' government media office, claimed that no more than 8,500 trucks bearing humanitarian aid had entered Gaza, of the 12,000 which were supposed to enter. He claimed that only 2,916 trucks had reached northern Gaza instead of 6,000, and that most of the aid consisted of food packages, vegetables, fruit and less important items such as instant noodles, chocolate and potato chips at the expense of necessities such as tents and caravans (Hamas government media office Telegram Channel, February 7, 2025).

► On February 8, 2025, Hamas' released three Israeli hostages in a "ceremony" in Deir al-Balah, during which the Israeli hostages, who were in shockingly poor physical condition, were forced to deliver speeches praising Hamas (Israeli media, February 8, 2025). Israel then released 183 Palestinian prisoners, including 18 sentenced to life imprisonment, 54 serving long sentences, and 111 Gazans detained after the October 7, 2023 terrorist attack and massacre. Of the released prisoners, 42 were transferred to Judea and Samaria, 131 to the Gaza Strip, three to east Jerusalem and seven were deported abroad (Prisoners' affairs information ministry, February 8, 2025).

► After harsh criticism of the shocking physical condition of the Israeli hostages, Hamas accused Israel of a deliberate policy of abuse and neglect in its prisons, claiming a stark contrast between the "humane" [sic] treatment of Israeli hostages by the "resistance"² and Israel's "brutal repression" of Palestinian prisoners. To support its claims, Hamas reported that seven [of 183] released prisoners were immediately transferred to hospitals (Hamas Telegram Channel, February 8, 2025).

► According to the agreement, on February 9, 2025, the IDF completed its withdrawal from the Netzarim Corridor (Israeli media, February 9, 2025). Hamas called the withdrawal "a victory of Palestinian willpower, shattering Israel and its leadership's illusions of military control over the Strip, territorial division and creating facts on the ground through systematic destruction" (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram Channel, February 9, 2025). Senior Hamas figure Sami Abu Zuhri claimed the "humiliating" Israeli withdrawal from the Netzarim Corridor was an

² Palestinian terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip.

acknowledgment of defeat and a failure of Netanyahu to achieve his goals (Shehab Telegram Channel, February 9, 2025).



Right: Anas al-Sharif, al-Jazeera reporter and Hamas activist, photographed at the Netzarim Corridor after the IDF withdrawal (Anas al-Sharif's X account, February 9, 2025). Left: A cartoon by Palestinian-Swedish editorial cartoonist Mahmoud Abbas [same name, no relation] entitled "They leave, and we remain..." The Xed-out sign reads "Netzarim Corridor" (Mahmoud Abbas' X account, February 9, 2025)

► On February 10, 2025, Abu Obeida, Hamas military wing spokesman, announced the postponement of the sixth phase of hostage releases, originally scheduled for February 15, "until further notice." He accused Israel of "violating" the agreement by blocking humanitarian aid, delaying the return of residents to northern Gaza and harming them. He also demanded that the "occupation" provide retroactive compensation for its unfulfilled "obligations" of the past weeks (Abu Obeida's Telegram Channel, February 10, 2025:

◆ Hamas claimed it remained committed to the ceasefire agreement as long as Israel adhered to it. Hamas claimed Israel had "violated" the agreement by delaying the return of displaced persons to northern Gaza, attacking and killing numerous Gazans, blocking the entry of tents, caravans, fuel, debris removal equipment and rescue machinery, and delaying the entry of medicine and essential hospital supplies. Hamas said it was announcing the postponement five days before the scheduled hostage release to allow mediators enough time to pressure Israel to fulfill its commitments and to keep the agreement's implementation open (Hamas Telegram Channel, February 10, 2025).

◆ Hamas spokesman Abd al-Latif al-Qanua blamed Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu for the "resistance's" decision not to release more hostages according to schedule. He called on mediators to pressure Israel to "comply with the agreement." Hazem Qassem, another Hamas spokesman, accused the "occupation" of violating the ceasefire agreement from day one and claimed that the American administration was complicit in

interrupting the implementation of the agreement. However, he noted that Hamas had told the mediators of its willingness to complete the deal (al-Araby TV, February 10, 2025).

◆ Bassem Na'im, a member of the Hamas political bureau, claimed that in recent weeks, Hamas had "done everything according to the agreement," but Israel was blocking humanitarian aid and shooting at Palestinians. He blamed Netanyahu for delaying the start of negotiations for the second phase, which was supposed to begin on the 16th day of the ceasefire, adding that Hamas was prepared to negotiate and remained committed to the agreement. He urged mediators, the families of the "prisoners and Israeli society to exert pressure on the government, "which is trying to sabotage the agreement." He also warned that implementing the agreement would be delayed unless Israel made "serious changes" regarding its attacks on Palestinians and the entry of required aid into Gaza (al-Jazeera, February 10, 2025).

◆ Osama Hamdan, Hamas representative in Lebanon, claimed the "occupation" deliberately obstructed the implementation of the agreement, "leaving Hamas no choice" but to respond. He added that Abu Obeida's announcement was "a warning to the occupation" and had "positive implications" [sic] (al-Aqsa Channel Telegram, February 10, 2025).

► Alongside accusations against Israel, senior Hamas figures continued to claim a willingness to advance negotiations on the second phase of the ceasefire and the release of hostages:

◆ Bassem Na'im, a member of the Hamas political bureau, said Hamas was committed to negotiations on extending the ceasefire but warned that Israel's delays and lack of commitment to implementing the first phase could lead to its collapse. He stressed that Hamas was not interested in resuming fighting, but Palestinians would respond if Israel decided to attack. He added that Hamas was prepared to start negotiations for the second phase, which was supposed to begin on February 3, 2025, but Israel was causing delays, leaving no set date for the talks (Agence France-Presse, February 8, 2025).

◆ Musa Abu Marzouq, a member of the Hamas political bureau, also accused Israel of delaying negotiations for the second phase. He claimed negotiations would proceed normally and follow their intended course. He said that Marwan Barghout³ and Ahmad

³ Former secretary-general of the Fatah movement in Judea and Samaria and leader of the Tanzim. Detained in 2002 and sentenced to five consecutive life sentences plus 40 years in prison.

Sa'adat⁴ were at the top of the list of prisoners who release Hamas demanded in the second phase (Sky News in Arabic, February 10, 2025).

IDF operations in the Gaza Strip

► IDF forces fired warning shots at suspects approaching their positions in various areas of the Gaza Strip, as well as at vehicles moving toward northern Gaza on unauthorized routes and at boats exceeding security restrictions (IDF spokesperson, February 4-11, 2025).

► Following the IDF's withdrawal from the Netzarim Corridor on February 9, 2025, dozens of Gazans approached within several hundred yards of the border fence opposite Kibbutz Nir Oz. The IDF spokesperson reported that Israeli forces fired warning shots which hit suspicious figures (Israeli media, February 9, 2025; Avichay Adraee's Telegram Channel, February 9, 2025). Palestinian media reported that three dead Palestinian were brought to the al-Ahli Hospital after being hit by IDF fire while "returning to their homes" east of al-Kuwait Square in the al-Zeitoun neighborhood of Gaza City (al-Aqsa Channel Telegram, February 9, 2025; Palinfo, February 9, 2025).

Hamas governance

► On February 7, 2025, the funeral of Marwan Issa, Hamas military wing deputy commander, was held in the al-Bureij refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip. It was attended by many armed terrorist operatives of the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades and other "factions," alongside residents chanting slogans in support of the "resistance" (Quds News Agency, February 7, 2025). The IDF announced Issa's had died in an airstrike in March 2024 but Hamas only confirmed it on January 30, 2025.



**Armed Hamas military wing terrorists carry Issa's coffin
(Shehab News Agency Telegram Channel, February 7, 2025)**

⁴ Secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), orchestrated the 2001 assassination of Israeli Minister Rehavam Ze'evi, serving a 30-year prison sentence

► New recruits were seen participating in an enlistment ceremony for the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, uploaded to social media in the Gaza Strip. Hamas reported that it had recruited "tens of thousands of new fighters" in preparation for "defending the land, the holy sites and the Palestinian people from Zionist aggression." The new recruits pledged to fight the "Zionist invaders" and to continue on the path of "resistance"⁵ until the complete liberation of "Palestine," regardless of the sacrifices required (Gaza Now Telegram Channel, February 7, 2025).

► Hamas resumed collecting taxes. Abu Bakr al-Bouji, a lecturer at al-Azhar University, said that when he wanted to bury the body of his shaheed son, Hamas demanded 600 shekels (approximately \$170) for the burial plot, despite his having no money. As a result, several families were forced to bury their dead in the same grave to save costs. Hamas also required shop owners to pay taxes for the war year, even if their businesses had been damaged or destroyed, despite Hamas having collected over \$2 billion in aid funds (Abu Bakr al-Bouji's Facebook page, February 8, 2025). In response to al-Bouji, Basma Najjar, who runs two pharmacies in al-Nuseirat, stated that she was forced to pay hundreds of shekels in taxes for her pharmacies, despite their being severely damaged by Israeli airstrikes and remaining closed for months. She accused Hamas of being even worse than "the enemy in how they treat their citizens" (Basma Najjar's Facebook page, February 8, 2025). In response the Hamas ministry of local government announced relief measures for local authorities, including the full exemption from all municipal fees, commercial licenses for 2024 and the suspension of all tax collections and payments during the current period (al-Waad News Agency Telegram Channel, February 8, 2025).

► "Sources in the Gaza Strip" reported that under the cover of the ceasefire agreement and the withdrawal of IDF forces, Hamas set up checkpoints at several key roads throughout the Strip, where its operatives stopped humanitarian aid trucks entering Gaza and began imposing taxes on the imported goods (Elior Levy's X account, February 9, 2025).

The situation in the Gaza Strip

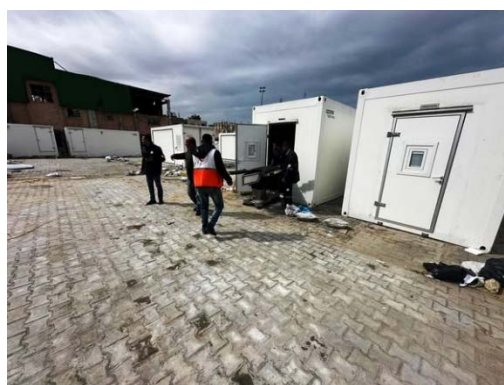
► The Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) reported that in the third week of the ceasefire 4,200 humanitarian aid trucks entered the Gaza Strip. Since the ceasefire began on January 19, 2025, a total of 12,600 aid trucks have been delivered (COGAT's X account, February 7, 2025).

⁵ Anti-Israel violence and terrorist attacks.

► The Hamas ministry of education and higher education claimed that 85% of schools unusable because of the war and education had been suspended for two consecutive years, with 140 university facilities also destroyed. The ministry developed an emergency plan to rehabilitate the education system, including the establishment of temporary schools, homeschooling and online learning alongside psychological support for students and teachers. The Hamas government media office in Gaza estimated the damage to the education sector at over \$2 billion and called on the international community to assist in rebuilding educational institutions and making it possible to resume studies as soon as possible (Quds News Agency, February 7, 2025).

► Muhammad Saleha, director of the al-Awda Hospital, the only operational hospital in northern Gaza, stated that since the ceasefire was declared they had requested equipment, supplies, medications and fuel from the World Health Organization but had not received anything. He claimed the emergency department admitted around 500 cases daily, about 100 women visited the women's clinic, which handles 12 births per day, and approximately 150 children were treated daily. However, most of the equipment at the hospital is in poor condition and the hospital pharmacy is nearly empty, with many essential medications, including children's medicine and painkillers, running out (al-Jazeera, February 9, 2025).

► The Palestinian Red Crescent completed the relocation of the Kuwaiti field hospital from Rafah to the al-Saraya area in Gaza City. The hospital reportedly has several departments, operating rooms, intensive care wards, neonatal care, radiology, admissions and emergency medicine. The hospital will be operated by the medical staff of the al-Quds Hospital in the Tel al-Hawa neighborhood, which was allegedly out of commission since the beginning of the war (Palestinian Red Crescent Facebook page, February 9, 2025).



**Establishing the Kuwaiti field hospital in Gaza
(Palestinian Red Crescent Facebook page, February 9, 2025)**

Activities of the Palestinian Authority (PA)

► The Palestinian water authority delivered 222 seawater desalination filters to the coastal municipalities water utility in Gaza, funded by the Islamic Development Bank. The initiative is part of an emergency plan to ensure the supply of clean water for Gaza residents while maintaining operations at the main desalination plant in southern Wadi Gaza. The authority said that desalination facilities supplying water to approximately half a million residents in Khan Yunis, Rafah and Deir al-Balah would continue to receive support, with further efforts to secure additional equipment (Palestinian water authority Facebook page, February 7, 2025).

► A memorandum of understanding worth \$80 million was signed between the UN Development Programme and the Arab and International Organization for Reconstruction in "Palestine"⁶ for damage assessment, debris removal and the construction of temporary shelters in the Gaza Strip under the supervision of the PA's ministry of public works and housing. According to the agreement, \$40 million will be allocated for temporary shelters, debris removal and technical assistance, along with efforts to raise an additional \$126 million for recovery in Gaza. The memorandum was signed in the office of PA Prime Minister Muhammad Mustafa, who said the initiative would increase government efforts to operate on the ground and address the emergency situation. He also gave his assurance that the PA would continue working towards the full reconstruction of the Gaza Strip (Wafa, February 10, 2025).



Mustafa (fourth from the right) (Wafa, February 10, 2025)

► PA Prime Minister Mustafa announced that a working committee would be established to manage Gaza's affairs. He claimed the objective was to emphasize the unity of Palestinian territories and strengthen national cohesion (Wafa, February 4, 2025). Senior PA and Fatah figures reiterated that the PA should govern Gaza in the post-war period:

⁶ The Arab and International Organization for Reconstruction in "Palestine," established in 2008, consists of engineering organizations, business associations, and official figures from Arab and Islamic countries working to promote construction and reconstruction projects in the "Palestinian territories."

◆ Mundhir al-Hayek, Fatah spokesman in Gaza, said the movement opposed establishing a popular committee to manage the Strip because it would not be subordinate to the PLO. He said "there is no need for tricks" and called on Hamas to openly declare that the PA government would take control of Gaza for assistance and reconstruction. He said Fatah only wanted Hamas to leave power, not the broader Palestinian political arena. He also said seeing senior Hamas officials visiting Iran made him feel pessimistic (Radio Alam Telegram Channel, February 9, 2025).

◆ Hussein al-Sheikh, secretary-general of the PLO Executive Committee, demanded that Hamas demonstrate national responsibility and declare that it would not return to governing Gaza, but rather allow the PA to assume control. He added that the administration of the Strip would be entrusted to a Palestinian national technocratic committee "closely linked to the PA government" (Sky News, February 10, 2025).

► In response, Musa Abu Marzouq, a member of the Hamas political bureau, said there was still no national consensus on how Gaza should be managed "the day after." He added that Egypt had proposed forming a committee of experienced professionals to govern the Strip, but the PA rejected the proposal (Sky News in Arabic, February 10, 2025).

Hamas Activities in the International Arena

► A Hamas delegation, led by Mohammad Darwish, chairman of the Shura Council, visited Iran and met with senior officials in Tehran. The delegation included Khalil al-Haya, acting head of the political bureau in Gaza; political bureau members Nizar Awadallah, Zaher Jabarin, Izzat al-Rishq and Muhammad Nasr; senior Hamas figure Taher al-Nunu; and Khaled al-Qaddoumi, Hamas representative in Tehran:

◆ Meeting with Ali Khamenei, Iran's Supreme Leader, the Hamas delegation described the "victory of the resistance" in Gaza and expressed gratitude for Iran's support. Khamenei claimed that the Palestinian "resistance" had not only defeated Israel but also the United States, adding that the suffering in Gaza led to the triumph of "truth over falsehood." He praised Hamas' negotiating team, calling the ceasefire agreement a "major achievement," and urged the Muslim world to support the Palestinians and contribute to Gaza's reconstruction, noting faith as the central power behind the "resistance" (Khamenei's Arabic website, February 8, 2025; Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram Channel, February 8, 2025).

◆ Meeting with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the Hamas delegation discussed the ceasefire agreement, continued negotiations, Gaza's reconstruction and the continuation of "resistance" until the "liberation" of holy sites and the realization of Palestinian rights. The Iranian president reaffirmed Iran's commitment to providing all support necessary to ensure the Palestinian people's "victories," backing them in both "resistance" and reconstruction efforts. He urged regional countries to participate in Gaza's reconstruction and aid the Palestinian people (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram Channel, February 8, 2025).



Right: Khamenei with senior Hamas figures (Fars, February 8, 2025).

Left: Pezeshkian with the Hamas delegation (IRNA, February 8, 2025)

◆ Delegation members also met with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps Commander Hossein Salami. Araghchi stated that he had been in contact with the foreign ministers of Turkey, Tunisia, Egypt and Pakistan to discuss countering President Trump's announcement regarding the displacement of the Palestinian people. He stressed that all the aforementioned countries rejected any plan to uproot the Palestinians (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram Channel, February 9, 2025).

► Khalil al-Haya spoke at celebrations marking the 46th anniversary of Iran's Islamic Revolution, declaring that Operation al-Aqsa Flood had unified the Islamic nation and was a prelude to "the liberation of Palestine and the end of the occupation."⁷ He praised Iran's support for the Palestinian people and acknowledged the support of Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq. He mentioned Hamas leaders who had been killed, including Ismail Haniyeh, Yahya al-Sinwar and Muhammad Deif, and claimed that despite Gaza's destruction, the Palestinian people remained steadfast against "the occupation" and the United States. Regarding Trump's

⁷ i.e., the destruction of the State of Israel.

proposal to evacuate Gaza, he vowed that Hamas would stop the plan from being carried out, stating that "the only places we will leave for are our cities and villages occupied in 1948" (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram Channel, February 10, 2025).

► According to reports, the Hamas delegation gave the Iranian government a copy of its investigative report on the assassination of Hamas political bureau chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran in July 2024. Hamas reportedly appointed an ad hoc committee after Haniyeh's death, reaching conclusions that differed from those of the Israeli government and Iranian authorities (al-Rai al-Youm, February 10, 2025).

► Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, leader of Pakistan's Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F), hosted a Hamas delegation led by Khaled al-Qaddoumi, its representative in Tehran. He expressed support for the Palestinian people and Hamas' struggle, condemned Trump's statements and claimed that Palestinians had full rights to their land, calling their "struggle" "a war of liberation" and labeling Israel an "illegal occupation." He said that the United States-backed attacks on Gaza had lasted for 15 months and caused the deaths of thousands of innocent people but claimed that occupying Gaza was not possible. He praised the Arab League's decision to reject Trump's statements and called on the Pakistani government and the Muslim world to provide financial support for Palestinians. Qaddoumi briefed him on recent developments, particularly in light of the ceasefire in Gaza, and noted the need for increased political efforts and humanitarian aid (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram Channel, February 7, 2025).

► According to reports, Khaled al-Qaddoumi and Naji Tahir,⁸ another senior Hamas figure, attended a conference in the Pakistani-administered part of Kashmir entitled "Day of Solidarity [in Pakistan] with Kashmir [under Indian control] and Hamas' Operation al-Aqsa Flood." The conference was attended by senior members of the groups Lashkar-e-Taiba⁹ (LeT)

⁸ During past visits Naji Tahir has been referred to by Pakistani politicians as "Hamas' representative to Southeast Asia."

⁹ Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) is a Pakistani Islamic global jihad organization that collaborates with al-Qaeda. It gained notoriety for the terrorist attack carried out by its operatives in Mumbai in November 2008, which also targeted the local Chabad House. For more details on the organization, see the December 2008 report, "Lashkar-e-Taiba: A Pakistani Islamic Global Jihad Organization Collaborating with al-Qaeda, Responsible for the Mumbai Terror Attack."

and Jaish-e-Mohammed¹⁰ (JeM) (India Today, February 5, 2025; Hindustan Times, February 7, 2025).

Israel, Judea and Samaria

Counterterrorism activities

► This past week, Israeli security forces continued Operation Iron Wall in the areas of Jenin, Tulkarm, Tubas and Tammun, expanding it to include the Nur Shams refugee camp in Tulkarm. The forces attacked terrorist operatives from the air and on the ground, detained wanted Palestinians and suspects involved in terrorism, located weapons and explosives, and confiscated firearms. A senior Hamas operative in the Jenin refugee camp, who was planning attacks, was detained (IDF spokesperson, February 4-11, 2025).

► The ministry of health in Ramallah reported that two women were killed by Israeli security forces' fire in the Nur Shams refugee camp and that hundreds of families left the camp (Wafa, February 9-10, 2025). Hamas confirmed that one of its operatives was killed in the Nur Shams refugee camp (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram Channel, February 10, 2025). According to reports, 85% of the residents of the Nur Shams and Tulkarm refugee camps, approximately 17,000-18,000 people, had left their homes since the beginning of the Israeli security forces' operations (Ramallah News Telegram Channel, February 10, 2025). Mansour al-Saadi, deputy governor of Jenin, stated that more than 20,000 residents had been evacuated from the Jenin refugee camp (al-Arabiya Telegram Channel, February 10, 2025).

► According to reports, between November and December 2024, Israeli security forces detained a terrorist cell from Ramallah composed of Fatah and Hamas operatives. Investigation revealed that in response to the fighting in Gaza, the cell had planned to smuggle an explosive device into Israel for a suicide bombing attack on a bus in Jerusalem, and that several of its operatives had carried out shooting attacks targeting IDF forces over the past year (Shin Bet spokesperson's unit, February 6, 2025).

Activities of the Palestinian security forces

► The PA security forces in Jenin reportedly arrested Suheib Muhammad Mar'i, who is wanted by Israel (Quds News Agency X account, February 7, 2025). Additionally, Mohammad al-Sirisi

¹⁰ A Pakistani Islamic group designated as a terrorist organization in various countries, including the United States and Australia. It attacks Indian targets, particularly in the Jammu and Kashmir region of India.

from the village of Siris, south of Jenin, who is also wanted by Israel, was reportedly arrested (Quds News Agency X account, February 8, 2025).

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Payments to families of terrorist operatives cancelled

► PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas issued a decree restructuring the welfare system, centered on canceling the legal provisions related to payments given to the families of prisoners, shaheeds and the wounded. All families previously eligible for allocations under existing laws and regulations would now fall under the same unified criteria applied to all families eligible for social protection and welfare programs. The measure aims to eliminate discrimination among Palestinian families in need of assistance. The decree also stipulates that the management of financial support will be transferred from the ministry of social development to the Palestinian fund for economic empowerment, an independent legal entity operating under international supervision to ensure transparency and equitable distribution of resources. It was noted that the move makes Palestinian welfare policies consistent with international standards, seeks additional funding for needy families affected by the war in Gaza, Judea and Samaria, and strengthens "Palestine's" position at the UN. The PA also plans to lift economic restrictions and counter Israeli deductions from Palestinian tax revenues (Wafa, February 10, 2025).

► Hamas condemned the decision, claiming it was an abandonment of the "national cause at a time when our people and resistance forces are fighting to secure the rights of the shaheeds, free the prisoners and ensure dignified lives for the released." Hamas claimed that "turning those who have given everything for our people into social welfare cases is a disgrace" (Hamas Telegram Channel, February 10, 2025).

► The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) also condemned the decision, calling it capitulation to pressure and extortion by the Americans and the "Zionists." The organization warned that the move weakened Palestinian morale and strengthened the determination to continue the "resistance." The PIJ also demanded that the PA reverse its decision (PIJ Telegram Channel, February 10, 2025).

► Qadoura Fares, PA chairman of the commission for prisoner affairs, admitted that he was surprised by Abbas' decree. He stated that such a significant issue had to first be discussed by the Palestinian National Council. He argued that the fund to which the stipends portfolio was transferred was a civilian organization unsuitable for managing financial support, as it would

require economic assessments of families before disbursing minimal payments, which he said was "unacceptable" (PNN and the Palestinian al-Hadath, February 11, 2025).

Indoctrinating hatred of Israel in Palestinian schools

► Ahmed Abu Houli, PLO executive committee member and head of the organization's refugee affairs department, demanded that UNRWA Commissioner General Philippe Lazzarini revoke the decision to replace the Arabic textbook for fifth grade in Judea and Samaria with independent educational materials.¹¹ Abu Houli claimed that the decision violated agreements between UNRWA and the host countries, was the result of American-Israeli pressure and an attack on the "Palestinian national memory." He claimed "international studies," including those by UNESCO, had dismissed accusations of incitement in Palestinian curricula, and the European Parliament approved its support for them by a majority vote. He said Palestinian refugees would not allow their "heritage" to be erased, and UNRWA was obligated to continue teaching the Palestinian curriculum as mandated, without modification, despite Israeli pressures (Wafa, February 8, 2025).

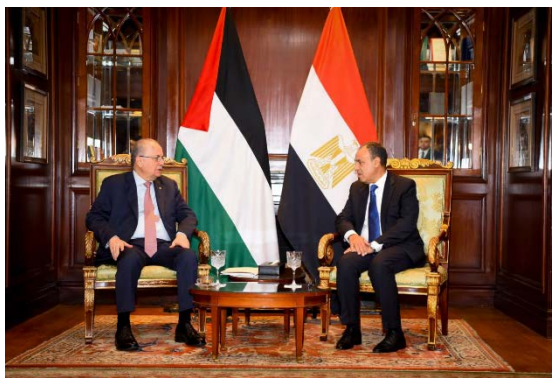
International Activity

► PA Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa visited Egypt and met with senior government officials and the Arab League. The discussions focused on recent developments in the Palestinian arena, particularly the PA's involvement in the Gaza Strip and events in Judea and Samaria:

- ◆ Meeting with Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty, the importance of advancing reconstruction projects and initiatives in Gaza was emphasized. Also discussed were debris removal and the delivery of humanitarian aid, stressing that it had to occur without "forcibly displacing Palestinians from the Strip." Abdelatty noted the need for a two-state solution and the importance of strengthening the PA economically and

¹¹ The ITIC and the Bedein Center for Middle East Policy Research jointly publish studies on textbooks used in the Palestinian Authority's education system, including in UNRWA schools. For example, see the May 2024 study: [*"Israel, the Jews, and Peace in Textbooks and Teacher Guides Used by UNRWA in Judea, Samaria, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip."*](#)

politically to enable it to assume governance in Gaza (Egyptian foreign ministry Facebook page, February 5, 2025).



**Mustafa meets with the Egyptian foreign minister
(Egyptian foreign ministry Facebook page, February 5, 2025)**

- ◆ Meeting with Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly, Mustafa briefed him on the security situation in Judea and Samaria. He praised Egypt's support for the PA and its efforts to end the "aggression" against Gaza (Wafa, February 6, 2025).
- ◆ Meeting with Arab League Secretary General Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Mustafa commended the Arab League for its support of the PA, particularly in the reconstruction of Gaza, and stressed the need to increase aid to the Strip. He also briefed Aboul Gheit on the PA's diplomatic efforts and expressed hope for accelerating joint initiatives with the Arab League and its member states (Wafa, February 6, 2025).
- ▶ Muhammad Mustafa spoke with Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan. They discussed developments in "Palestine" and efforts related to the Palestinian issue (Saudi Arabian foreign ministry X account, February 10, 2025).