



# Spotlight on the Israel-Palestinian Conflict

March 26 – April 2, 2024

## Overview<sup>1</sup>

- ▶The activities of IDF forces in the Gaza Strip focused on three locations: Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, where the activity ended on April 1, 2024. Hundreds of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorist operatives were detained, including senior operatives, about 200 terrorists were killed and large quantities of weapons were seized. The central Gaza Strip, where the IDF attacked Hamas checkpoints and surveillance centers. The Khan Yunis area, where the forces operated in the al-Amal neighborhood and the village of al-Qarara. The PIJ fired rockets at the Israeli villages of Kissufim and Alumim.
- ▶Talks for a hostage deal in Cairo continued without a breakthrough. Senior Hamas members reiterated yet again that they would not waive their demands and noted that no Hamas delegation was currently in in Cairo.
- ▶The introduction of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip continues, accompanied by Palestinian complaints about the slowness of its delivery. According to reports, trucks are waiting in El Arish to enter the Strip through the Rafah Crossing. The attack in Deir al-Balah attributed to Israel killed seven staff members of the World Central Kitchen, which provides humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip. The IDF is investigating the event.
- ▶Reportedly, Hamas has changed the nature of its combat and transitioned to limited attacks to preserve its forces and capabilities for "the day after."
- ▶The prayer on the third Friday of Ramadan on the Temple Mount passed with relative calm. According to reports, 125,000 worshippers came to pray.
- ▶There were three terrorist attacks. The Israeli security forces carried out counterterrorism activities in the Jenin and Tulkarm (Nur Shams) refugee camps.
- ▶The new Palestinian government was sworn in. The Palestinian Authority called on the United States to change its policy towards the Palestinians.

---

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

## The Southern Arena

### IDF activities in the Gaza Strip

► This past week the IDF focused its activities on Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, the central Gaza Strip and the al-Amal neighborhood west of Khan Yunis and the town of al-Qarara, to its north. The Palestinians reported IDF attacks in the northern Gaza Strip, throughout Gaza City, in the central Gaza Strip, around the city of Khan Yunis and Rafah (Wafa, March 30, 31, 2024). The main activities were the following:

► **Shifa Hospital:** On April 1, 2024, the activity of the IDF forces in the hospital which began on March 18, 2024, ended. During the past week the forces focused on the maternity unit and the emergency room, clashing face-to-face with armed terrorist operatives. The forces located large quantities of weapons hidden inside beds, air conditioning ducts and false plaster walls. During the operation 513 terrorist operatives were detained and 200 were killed, including senior Hamas terrorist operatives (IDF spokesperson, March 28-30, April 1, 2024):

- ◆ Ra'ed Thabat, head of Hamas' human resources and in charge of its production system. He maintained direct contact with Yahya al-Sinwar and Muhammad Deif.
- ◆ Mahmoud Khalil Zaqzouq, second in command in Gaza City for firing rockets.
- ◆ Fadi Dweik, a senior operative in Hamas military intelligence, who was deported to the Gaza Strip in the Gilad Shalit exchange deal. In 2002 he carried out the shooting attack in the village of Adura, killing four Israelis and wounding seven. He directed terrorist activity in Judea and Samaria from Gaza.



**Right: Weapons found in the maternity unit of Shifa Hospital in Gaza (IDF spokesperson, March 31, 2024). Left: An al-Jazeera TV presenter describes the activities of the IDF forces in and around Shifa Hospital (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, March 26, 2024)**

►The Palestinian media covered the destruction in the hospital complex after the IDF's activity ended. Reportedly, many casualties were removed and local residents came to see the damage for themselves (Shehab, April 1, 2024).



**An al-Jazeera correspondent in Gaza City reports on the extensive destruction to the area near the Shifa Hospital complex (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, March 28, 2024)**

►In the **al-Amal neighborhood of Khan Yunis** IDF forces continued their activities, raiding buildings and clashing with armed terrorist operatives. A stockpile of weapons and IEDs was found in a building near al-Amal Hospital (IDF spokesperson, March 28, 2024).



**Right: Weapons and IEDs found near al-Amal Hospital (IDF spokesperson, March 28, 2024). Left: An al-Jazeera presenter describes the activities of the IDF forces in the al-Amal neighborhood and near Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, March 26, 2024)**

►**The central Gaza Strip:** On March 31, 2024, an Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked a PIJ operations command in the courtyard of the Shuhada al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah; other PIJ terrorist operatives were also present (IDF spokesperson, March 31, 2024). Meanwhile, IDF forces continue their activities in the central Gaza Strip, clashing with terrorist operatives.



**Right: An al-Jazeera TV correspondent reporting after the Israeli Air Force attack on Shuhadaa al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, March 31, 2024). Left: Israeli Air Force attack on the al-Nuseirat refugee camp (Wafa YouTube channel, March 29, 2024)**

## Rocket fire from the Gaza Strip

- ▶ On March 27, 2024, the Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military-terrorist wing, announced that its operatives had launched Badr-1 rockets at a concentration of IDF armored vehicles and headquarters southeast of Kissufim (Filastin al-Yawm TV website, March 27, 2024). The IDF spokesperson reported that a rocket had been launched from the Gaza Strip at the Kissufim area and fell in an open area. In response, an Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked the area from which the rocket was had launched and killed the operative who launched it (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, March 27, 2024).
- ▶ On March 29, 2024, the Jerusalem Brigades announced that they had launched a barrage of 107 mm rockets at Alumim, near in the Gaza Strip; the attack was carried out in cooperation with the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) military wing (Paltoday Telegram channel, March 29, 2024). In response, an Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked the area of the launch and destroyed three operational shafts (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, March 30, 2024).

## The hostages and a ceasefire agreement

- ▶ Negotiations in Cairo have been resumed. According to an Egyptian source, the Israeli delegation, which is currently in Cairo, did not present new proposals which could lead to a breakthrough in the negotiations, and claimed the delegation's visit was mainly intended for security and logistical arrangements related to the situation on the Egypt-Gaza Strip border, in light of the expected IDF military operation in Rafah. The source said that the ceasefire negotiations had stalled, adding that after the mediators realized that it was difficult to reach an agreement for a ceasefire and prevent the ground invasion of Rafah, they began to work on

an alternative path to a three-day humanitarian truce on Eid al-Fitr. According to the source, the Egyptians and Americans are communicating to pressure the Israeli government to stop military operations and airstrikes during the holiday (al-Araby al-Jadeed, April 2, 2024).

►Senior Hamas officials noted there was no Hamas delegation in Cairo and no intention to send one; they were waiting for news. Khalil al-Haya, a member of the Hamas political bureau, claimed they were prepared to resume the negotiations, had not closed the door and had not declared that they would no longer negotiate (al-Alam TV website, March 28, 2024).

►Hamas spokesmen reiterated yet again that Israel had to meet their oft-repeated basic demands: the end of the war, the withdrawal of the IDF from the Gaza Strip, the return of the displaced Gazans to their previous places of residence, humanitarian aid and the reconstruction of the Strip. Husam Badran, a member of Hamas' political bureau, reiterated yet again that there would be no concession or compromise. Khalil al-Haya and senior Hamas member Mahmoud Mardawi hinted Hamas might be more flexible regarding the exchange of prisoners if Israel met Hamas' "basic" demands (Arab World Press News Agency (AWP), April 1, 2024).

►Meanwhile, **Izzat al-Rishq, a member of Hamas' political bureau**, denied the report broadcast on al-Arabiya al-Hadath TV regarding Hamas' agreement to a UN presence to oversee the ceasefire and the distribution of humanitarian aid. According to al-Rishq, Hamas demanded the presence of international bodies and organizations, especially UNRWA, to provide assistance. As for a ceasefire in the event of an agreement, what was required were countries which would guarantee the agreement and for Israel to comply with it, not supervisory bodies (Palinfo, April 2, 2024).

## The Gaza Strip

### Palestinian casualties

►**The Hamas-controlled ministry of health in the Gaza Strip** reported at 2:00 p.m. that since the beginning of the war in Gaza (October 7, 2023) 32,916 Palestinians had been killed and 75,494 wounded (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, April 1, 2024).

### The situation in the Gaza Strip

►Given the activities of the IDF forces at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City and al-Amal Hospital in Khan Yunis, World Health Organization (W.H.O.) Director Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus tweeted that only ten of the 36 hospitals in the Gaza Strip were partially functioning and the health

system in Gaza was barely surviving. On March 26, 2024, the Palestinian Red Crescent's al-Amal Hospital in Khan Yunis stopped functioning as a result of IDF activity in the area. The W.H.O. again demanded an immediate end to the attacks on hospitals in Gaza and called for the protection of the health workers, patients and civilians (Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus' X account, March 28, 2024).



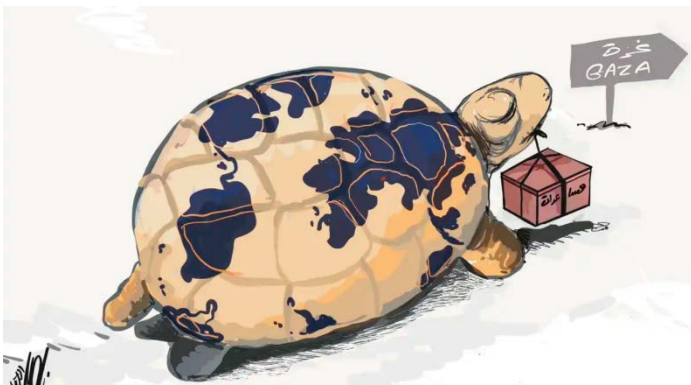
**Tent camps in Rafah near the Egyptian border (Wafa, March 28, 2024)**

## **Aid for the Gaza Strip**

- ▶The Palestinian Red Crescent in Gaza announced that on March 30, 2024, it had brought nine food trucks into the northern Gaza Strip, after coordinating their entry through the Rafah Crossing. The trucks arrived at the Red Crescent center in Jebalya where their contents were distributed (al-Quds, March 31, 2024).
- ▶Wafa TV broadcast the distribution of sacks of flour to Gazans at the UNRWA center in eastern Rafah. Local residents and evacuees currently in Rafah were interviewed and expressed concern at the intention to shut down UNRWA. They claimed only UNRWA was currently supplying them with food, and without its services they would starve to death (Wafa YouTube channel, March 25, 2024).
- ▶However, according to reports, aid trucks are waiting in El Arish to enter the Gaza Strip. Meanwhile, the Palestinian media complain about the slowness of the delivery of humanitarian aid through the Rafah Crossing (al-Jazeera channel, March 28, 2024).



**Flour sacks at UNRWA's distribution center in Rafah (Wafa YouTube channel, March 25, 2024)**



**Right: Palestinian criticism of United States aid to the Gaza Strip. The United States airlifts aid to the Gaza Strip while continuing to arm Israel to continue the war in Gaza (al-Quds, March 31, 2024). Left: Palestinian criticism of the slow arrival of aid to the Gaza Strip (al-Quds, March 30, 2024)**

## World Central Kitchen workers killed

► Seven staff members of the World Central Kitchen (WCK), an organization which provides the Gazans with humanitarian aid, were killed in western Deir al-Balah (April 1, 2024) by an attack attributed to the Israeli Air Force. According to the organization, the team left its facility in Deir al-Balah in two bulletproof vehicles and after full coordination with the IDF forces. Among the dead were citizens of Australia, Poland, Canada and the UK, and a Palestinian who was the team's driver (WCK, April 2, 2024). Hamas strongly condemned the attack and the Palestinian media published gruesome photos of the dead bodies and their passports (Shehab X account, April 2, 2024). The IDF spokesperson announced that an investigation of the incident had been initiated (IDF spokesperson, April 2, 2024).

## Aid ships sail to the Gaza Strip

► According to the International Campaign to Save Gaza (ICSG), whose establishment was announced on November 23, 2023 at a conference in Istanbul, a Libyan aid ship sailed from the

port of Misrata on the evening of March 29, 2024, with a cargo collected in Libya of 1,600 tons of medicines, tents, blankets, winter clothes and food. The ship is expected to arrive in El Arish in Egypt on April 3, from where the aid will be transferred to the Gaza Strip through the Rafah Crossing. Full coordination was reported between the Libyan and Egyptian Red Crescents and other organizations to speed up the delivery of the aid to Gaza (ICSG website, March 30, 2024). The ICSG and one of its members, the Turkish IHH, plan to launch additional aid ships for the Gazans during April.



**The Libyan Kevalay Queen (Right: ICSG X account, March 30, 2024. Left: Freedom Flotilla Coalition X account, March 30, 2024)**

## "The day after "

- ▶The Palestinian foreign ministry warned of the dangers inherent in the arrangements the Israeli government was promoting for "the day after" in the Gaza Strip. According to the ministry, Israel was currently determining a situation on the ground such as creating buffer zones and routes that cross the Strip east to west. In doing so, the ministry alleged, Israel was trying to cut off the Gaza Strip from the "Palestinian state." Furthermore, any arrangement which was not carried out in full coordination with the Palestinian leadership and not proposed as part of a political solution was a waste of time and prolonged the conflict, the cycle of violence and the war (Wafa, March 31, 2024).<sup>2</sup>
- ▶The daily al-Sharq al-Awsat reported from "informed Palestinian sources" that Hamas, which lost many of its operatives and military capabilities, had changed its tactics in conducting the war to preserve its forces and capabilities. It adopted a policy of limited, "necessary attacks" on IDF forces which would not expose its operatives to danger and would preserve its

<sup>2</sup> For further information, see the ITIC March 2024 report, "[The Palestinian perspective on alternatives for managing the Gaza Strip "the day after."](#)"



remaining resources until the end of the war. According to the sources, Hamas does not want to lose everything, and wants to save some of its strength for "the day after" the war. Israel, the United States, the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Arab countries have plans for "the day after" the war, and so does Hamas.

►According to the sources, the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades and other military wings have lost most of their rockets but still have a stockpile they could use at any moment, especially if the war comes to an end, in an attempt to claim a "victory shot." Hamas also has large quantities of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle rockets, as well as mortar shells, IEDs, ammunition and, and other weapons (al-al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 27, 2024).

## **Hamas and PIJ leadership visit Iran**

►On March 26, 2024, Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, arrived in Iran for an official visit. He met with senior Iranian officials, including Iranian leader Ali Khamenei, Iranian President Raisi, the Iranian foreign minister, the speaker of the Majlis and Muhammad Bakri, the Iranian chief of staff. Haniyeh again expressed his appreciation for the assistance Iran provided to the Palestinians (Tasnim, March 27-28, 2024).

►Ziyad al-Nakhalah, PIJ secretary general, who visited Iran at the same time, met with senior Iranian officials and thanked them for their continued support of the Palestinians, claiming Israel had achieved none of its objectives in the Gaza Strip. He also praised the Iranian foreign minister's role from the beginning of the war and claimed the "resistance" [terrorist organizations] would undoubtedly be victorious in the end (Irna, March 30, 2024).

►Haniyeh and al-Nakhalah met while in Iran to discuss the political developments on the ground caused by the war in the Gaza Strip. They praised the "firm stance" of Gazans and noted the need to escalate the "resistance" [terrorist attacks and violence] in all arenas of conflict while praising the actions of the "resistance" in Yemen, Iraq and south Lebanon (Hamas Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria, March 30, 2024).



**Right: The Hamas delegation led by Isma'il Haniyeh meets with the leader of Iran (leader of Iran's website, March 26, 2024). Left: Haniyeh meets with Ziyad al-Nakhalah (Hamas Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria, March 30, 2024)**

## Reactions to the killing of senior Iranian figures in Damascus

- ▶The Hamas-controlled government media office in Gaza condemned Israel's attack in Damascus, which [allegedly] targeted the Iranian consulate. The office called it "aggression" against the Islamic nation, adding that it was necessary to respond with "painful blows and blessed attacks" against Israel (Shehab X account April 2, 2024).
- ▶Abu Ahmed Fouad, responsible for the Arab and national relations in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), said that the killing of Mohammad Reza Zahedi (Hassan Mahdawi), commander of the Qods Force in Lebanon and Syria, and his colleagues, was a loss for the "resistance axis"<sup>3</sup> and a particularly great loss for the Palestinian people and the Palestinian "resistance." He added that Zahedi used to meet with the Palestinian factions and helped them develop their capabilities in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria. He also added that Zahedi assisted in the delivery of advanced weapons to the Gaza Strip with the help of Syria (al-Mayadeen channel website, April 1, 2024).

## Israel, Judea and Samaria

### Terrorist attacks

#### Stabbing in Gan Yavne

- ▶On the evening of March 31, 2024, a Palestinian terrorist armed with a knife and box cutter went to a shopping mall in Gan Yavne (to the east of Ashdod) and used the weapons to stab

<sup>3</sup> Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations, the Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq.

civilians, critically injuring three. A policeman and a city inspector killed him (Israel Police, April 1, 2024).

►The terrorist was Moamen Fayez al-Masalma, 19 years old, from Dura, south of Hebron, in Israel illegally. The security forces raided and searched his family house in Dura (Ma'an, April 1, 2024; Shehab Telegram channel, April 1, 2024). The Fatah branch in south Hebron issued a mourning notice and announced a general strike in Dura on April 1 (Facebook page of the Fatah branch in south Hebron, April 1, 2024).

►His last posting to his Facebook page went viral on the Palestinian social networks. It was Sura 9, al-Tawbah, verse 111: "Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties in exchange for Paradise. They fight in Allah's way, and kill and are killed. He took it upon himself to keep his promise to the truth, in the Torah and Gospels and the Qur'an. Is there anyone more faithful to his promise than Allah? So rejoice in making such an exchange, that is the supreme triumph" (Dura City Facebook page, April 1, 2024).



**Right: Palestinian terrorist Moamen Fayez al-Masalma (Dura City Facebook page, April 1, 2024).**

**Left: The weapons used in the stabbing (Israel Police, April 1, 2024)**

## Stabbing in Beersheba

►On the morning of March 31, 2024, there was a stabbing the central bus station in Beersheba. A terrorist stabbed and superficially wounded an IDF officer. An IDF soldier shot at killed the terrorist, Naji Abu Freih, 28 years old, from the Israeli Bedouin city of Rahat, who had a long criminal record involving drugs, and was supposed to start community service work soon. Following the attack, police forces raided his house in Rahat and arrested five of his family members (Israeli media, Israel Police, March 31, 2024).



**Right: The scene of the stabbing attack at the central bus station in Beersheba (Magen David Adom, March 31, 2024). Left: The knife used in the stabbing (Israel Police, March 31, 2024)**

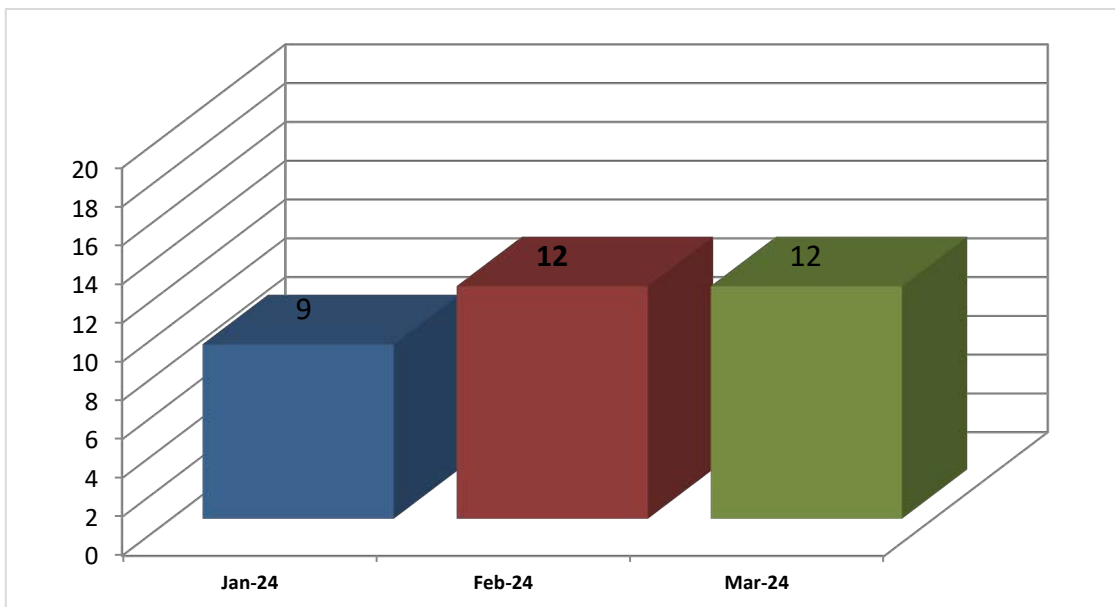
### **Shooting in the Jordan Valley**

► On the morning of March 28, 2024, shots were fired at a bullet-proof school bus and two Israeli vehicles near the village of al-Uja, in the Jordan Valley north of Jericho. Three civilians were wounded. The terrorist, who was masked and wore a uniform identical to IDF uniforms, fled the scene. After an IDF activity in al-Uja and a three-day manhunt, the attacker turned himself in to the IDF forces and the weapon used in the shooting was seized with him. The attacker is Muhammad al-Saadi (Abu Rida), an operative of the PA's national security force with the rank of sergeant, who lives in Jenin (Arabi48, March 31, 2024).

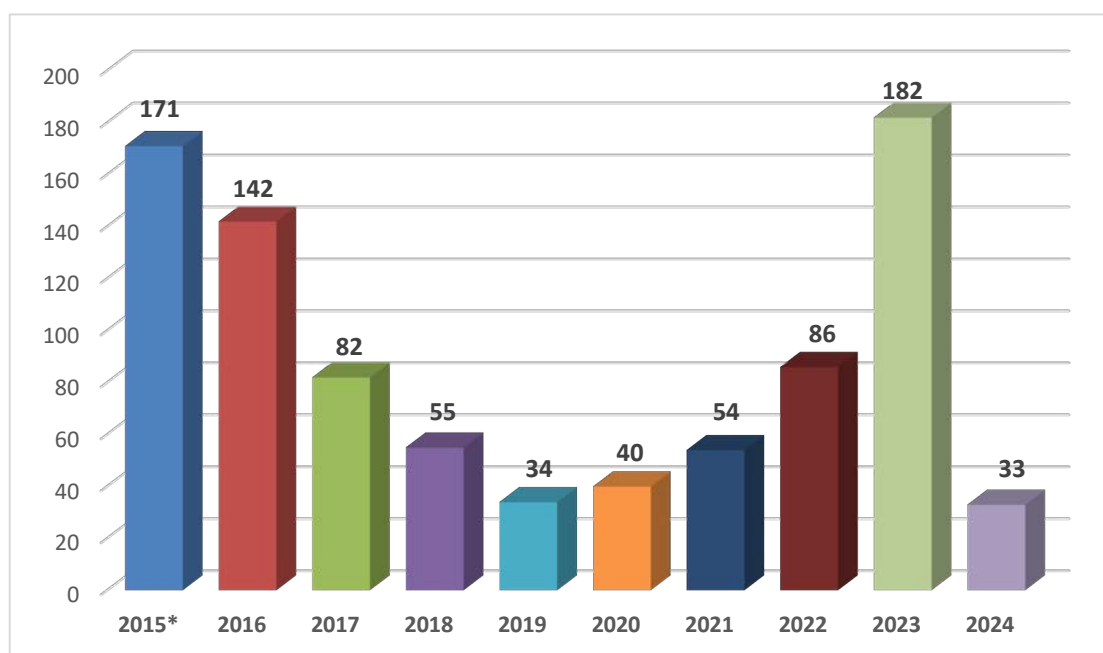


**Right to left: The Israeli school bus that was attacked (Bus Drivers' Union, the National Histadrut, March 28, 2024), the bus windshield, a photograph of the shooter in the Jordan Valley (QudsN X account, March 28, 2024), the shooter Muhammad al-Saadi, (Arabei48, March 31, 2024)**

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



## Annual distribution of critical terrorist attacks



<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.

## Counterterrorism activities

- ▶ This past week the Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria, detaining dozens of wanted persons and the seizing weapons. The centers of activity were Tulkarm, Jenin and Jericho (the IDF spokesperson's X account, March 28-31, 2024). Since the beginning of the war, approximately 3,600 wanted persons have been detained, over 1,600 of whom were Hamas terrorist operatives.
- ▶ Before dawn on March 27, 2024, Israeli security forces operating in the Jenin refugee camp uncovered IEDs planted under roads and, detained two suspects who were in a vehicle where IEDs prepared for use were found (the vehicle was later destroyed). During the operation, an Israeli Air Force aircraft fired at two Palestinian terrorists who endangered the forces. The forces shot at a Palestinian terrorist operative who threw IEDs at them (IDF spokesperson, March 27, 2024).
- ▶ An al-Jazeera correspondent in the Jenin refugee camp reported three deaths and 15 wounded during the security forces' activities in the camp. He reported that the Jerusalem Brigades' Jenin Battalion claimed the three dead were armed operatives who "resisted" [attacked] the Israeli forces. Also reported was heavy damage to houses and infrastructure (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, March 27, 2024).



**The vehicle in which the IEDs were found, after it was destroyed in the Jenin refugee camp (Wafa, March 28, 2024)**

- ▶ The ministry of health in Ramallah reported three deaths in the Jenin refugee camp, two in an aircraft attack, and another Palestinian shot by IDF forces (Wafa, March 27, 2024). The casualties of aerial strike were:
  - ◆ Hamza Ararawi, 27 years old, from the al-Ein refugee camp in Nablus. The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades (AAMB) issued a mourning notice stating that Ararawi (whose age was given as 21) was an operative in the organization (elaqsa\_1965, AAMB Telegram

channel, March 27, 2024). He was also a police officer in the Palestinian Customs Police at the rank of First Sergeant (Customs Police Facebook page, March 27, 2024).



**Right: AAMB mourning notice stating that Ararawi was one of the operatives of the organization in Nablus (elaqsa\_1965, AAMB Telegram channel, March 27, 2024). Left: Palestinian Customs Police mourning notice (Customs Police Facebook page, March 27, 2024)**

- ◆ Muhammad Nasser al-Sabti Bani Ghara (Wafa, March 27, 2024), 19 years old, from the Jenin refugee camp. According to the AAMB mourning notice, he was an operative in the Jerusalem Battalion in the Jenin refugee camp (elaqsa\_1965, AAMB Telegram channel, March 27, 2024).



**Right: Muhammad Nasser al-Sabti (Osama.sadaqa's X account, March 27, 2024). Left: Muhammad Nasser al-Sabti's funeral. A PIJ flag was placed on his body (Facebook page of the journalist Thaer Abu Bakr, March 27, 2024)**

- ◆ Ayman Yusuf Hassan Azouqah, 19 years old, from Jenin.



**Ayman Azouqah (Ayman Azouqa's Facebook page, January 14, 2023)**

## Attempted detention of the Tulkarm Battalion commander

► On March 30, 2024 the Palestinian security forces tried to detain Abu Shuja, the commander of the Tulkarm Battalion. Although injured, he escaped. Following the incident, armed clashes broke out between Tulkarm Battalion operatives and the Palestinian security forces. Muatasem al-Araf, a Tulkarm Battalion operative, was seriously injured. Mustafa Taqatqa, governor of the Tulkarm province, who was only recently appointed, reported that the incident was being dealt with (al-Araby al-Jadeed, March 31, 2024; Paltoday Telegram channel, April 1, 2024).



**Muhammad Jaber, aka Abu Shuja (Paltoday Telegram channel, March 31, 2024)**

## Land Day<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Land Day is marked by Israeli Arabs in memory of the violent demonstrations that took place on March 30, 1976 in the Karmiel area to protest the Israeli government's decision to expropriate Arab



►Land Day events in Judea and Samaria passed relatively calmly and unlike previous years, were mainly held in Palestinian city centers. On the evening of March 30, 2024, a procession was held in Ramallah with representatives of several factions and hundreds of Palestinians, who waved Palestinian flags, called for adherence to the land, and chanted condemnation of the war in Gaza and support for the Palestinian prisoners. (Wafa, March 30, 2024; al-Jazeera TV website, March 31, 2024). In Hebron, IDF forces dispersed a procession held to mark the 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Land Day. The marchers waved Palestinian flags and chanted slogans of devotion to the land and condemnation of Israeli "aggression" (Wafa, March 30, 2024).



**The procession in Ramallah (al-Jazeera website, March 31, 2024)**

►Hamas issued a statement calling on the masses in the Arab and Islamic nation and the "free people of the world" to escalate all forms of solidarity and support for the Palestinians in Gaza and to exert every form of pressure to stop the war, support the Palestinian "struggle" and take action to isolate Israel and bring its leaders to justice (Hamis Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria, March 30, 2024).

## Ramadan

### Friday prayer on the Temple Mount

►Sheikh Azzam al-Khatib, head of the Islamic waqf on the Temple Mount, said that about 125,000 worshipers participated in the Friday prayer, March 29, 2024, at al-Aqsa Mosque. In his Friday sermon. Sheikh Yusuf Abu Sneina, preacher of al-Aqsa Mosque, condemned the international silence regarding Israel's war in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinians claimed Israel prevented Palestinian men under the age of 55 and women under the age of 50 from Judea

---

lands. The symbolic date, which in essence expresses a protest by Israeli Arabs, was adopted by terrorist organizations and operatives to promote their anti-Israeli agenda and delegitimization attack.

and Samaria from entering Jerusalem to go to the mosque (Anadolu Agency, March 29, 2024; al-Jazeera TV website, March 29, 2024).

►During the weekend there were several incidents of incitement and calls for supporting the Gazans, the "resistance" and Hamas' military-terrorist wing on the Temple Mount. The two most prominent events occurred during the morning prayer of March 29 and in the evening, after the Taraweeh prayers. The Israel Police arrested 23 inciters, most of them residents of East Jerusalem (Israel Police, March 30, 2024).



**Right: Friday prayer on the Temple Mount (Wafa, March 29, 2024). Left: Incitement at al-Aqsa Mosque (QudsN , March 29, 2024)**

## The Palestinian Authority (PA)

### New Palestinian government sworn in

►On March 31, 2024, the 19<sup>th</sup> Palestinian government, headed by Muhammad Mustafa, was sworn in at Mahmoud Abbas' office in Ramallah. Immediately after the ceremony the government convened for its first meeting, chaired by Mahmoud Abbas. He called on the government to prepare for "presidential" elections in all the PA territories, especially in east Jerusalem (Wafa, March 31, 2024).

►On March 28, 2024, Muhammad Mustafa presented the newly-appointed ministers appointments of the new government and its basic outlines, to Mahmoud Abbas, who approved them. Mahmoud Abbas issued an announcement of confidence in the 19<sup>th</sup> government and approval of its establishment. Among the government's goals are an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, a complete Israeli withdrawal and the introduction of urgent aid to the Gaza Strip, security, economic and social reforms, and the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria. The government platform claimed that Judea, Samaria, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip were "one political and geographical [sic] unit," with the PLO as

the only legitimate representative of the Palestinians (Wafa, March 28, 2024). The new Palestinian government currently has 23 ministers (26 in the previous government), eight of whom are from the Gaza Strip (Anadolu Agency, March 29, 2024).



**The new Palestinian government after it was sworn in (Wafa, March 31, 2024)**

## Hamas march in Nablus in support of the Gazans

► On March 29, 2024, after the Taraweeh prayer, for the first time in months a procession was held in Nablus condemning the war in the Gaza Strip. Thousands of Palestinians participated in the procession, which was held at the invitation of Hamas, left from a mosque and marched to al-Shuhadaa Square in the center of the city (al-Araby al-Jadeed, March 29, 2024). Palestinian General Intelligence reportedly detained journalist Ahmed al-Bitawi, the son of a senior Hamas official who died, Sheikh Hamed al-Bitawi, and he was held for a week (al-Jazeera TV website, March 30, 2024).



**Hamas procession held in Nablus in support of the Gaza Strip (QudsN X account, March 29, 2024)**

## **Possibility of exchanging money paid to families of shaheeds and prisoners for an aid program**

- ▶ Two senior officials in the American administration confirmed to the news website Politico that the United States was close to reaching an agreement with the PA to end the payments to the families of Palestinian shaheeds and prisoners and to use the money for a general aid program instead (Politico, March 29, 2024).
- ▶ A Palestinian source reported that an American proposal regarding payments for prisoners, shaheeds and the wounded was presented to the PA but not to Israel. According to the source, the proposal was one of several for reforming the PA and was based on the United States' recognition of the "state of Palestine" and granting aid funds to the PA in exchange for regulating the payments to the prisoners, the wounded and the shaheeds [families] through the social welfare system (al-Araby al-Jadeed, March 30, 2024).