



# Spotlight on the Israel-Palestinian Conflict

October 29 – November 5, 2024

## Overview<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ **The southern arena:** IDF forces continued extensive operations in the northern Gaza Strip, focusing on the Jebalya refugee camp and Beit Lahia, while maintaining activity in the central and southern parts of the strip. Two IDF soldiers were killed, and another died after having been wounded.
- ▶ **The issue of the hostages and a ceasefire agreement:** Hamas leaders rejected Egyptian and American proposals for temporary ceasefires and partial releases of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, reiterating their demand for a complete end to the war and an Israeli withdrawal from the entire Gaza Strip.
- ▶ **"The day after:"** Hamas and Fatah representatives reached a preliminary agreement to establish a technocratic committee to manage public affairs for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and handle the strip's reconstruction after the war's end.
- ▶ **Israel, Judea and Samaria:** Over the past week no terrorist attacks were carried out. Israeli security forces continued counterterrorism activities throughout Judea and Samaria, including airstrikes. Dozens of operatives from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine were detained in operations in Judea and Samaria.
- ▶ **The Palestinian Authority:** PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas visited Cairo, meeting with President el-Sisi and the head of the Arab League. The Palestinians condemned Israel's announcement of banning UNRWA's activities.

## The Southern Arena

### IDF operations in the Gaza Strip

- ▶ This past week, the IDF focused on the northern Gaza Strip while continuing its activities in the Rafah area in the south and the Netzarim Corridor in the center. IDF forces attacked terrorist operatives from the air and on the ground, some of whom were operating in civilian areas, including the humanitarian zone in Khan Yunis. The forces also located and destroyed

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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.

large quantities of weapons and other terrorist facilities. Two IDF soldiers were killed in northern Gaza, and an IDF officer died after having been wounded a battle in the southern Gaza Strip in September 2024 (IDF spokesperson, October 29 - November 5, 2024).

►**The northern Gaza Strip:** IDF forces continued the operations which began on October 6, 2024, focusing on the Jebalya refugee camp and the Beit Lahia area. The forces eliminated dozens of terror operatives and destroyed weapons and terrorist compounds. IDF forces also facilitated the transfer of patients and escorts from hospitals in northern Gaza and the provision of humanitarian aid to hospitals. On November 4, 2024, six children were injured and Kamal Adwan Hospital was damaged after an explosive device planted by terrorist operatives exploded near a humanitarian convoy (IDF spokesperson, October 29 - November 5, 2024).



**Weapons found in the northern Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, October 30, 2024)**

► Hamas authorities the Gaza Strip continued to accuse Israel of committing "genocide" in northern Gaza and of deliberately harming health services. Munir al-Barash, head of the ministry of health in Gaza, claimed that more than 1,200 people had been killed since the beginning of the Israeli operation and that a severe humanitarian crisis had arisen because medical supplies had been prevented from entering northern Gaza (Shehab Agency, October 31, 2024). According to Hamas civil defense forces in Gaza, its activity had been halted in the northern Gaza Strip, accusing Israel of "destroying the humanitarian and medical system to pressure residents" (SAND Agency Telegram channel, November 5, 2024). The director of the Kamal Adwan Hospital claimed that several hospital departments were under heavy bombardment, the hospital was "under siege," and that the situation was "catastrophic" (journalist Safinar al-Loh's Telegram channel, November 4, 2024).

► **Central Gaza Strip:** During an activity near the al-Zeitoun neighborhood, IDF fighters discovered an underground tunnel route housing a Hamas weapons production facility. In the facility, located in a densely populated civilian area, the forces found lathes, hundreds of rocket components, artillery shells, grenades and diving equipment intended for Hamas commando sea infiltration into Israel. In addition, several long-term accommodation rooms were found in the tunnel, equipped with a stove, kitchenware, food, beds and offices used by Hamas operatives during the war (IDF spokesperson, November 2, 2024).



**Right: Equipment for producing weapons found inside the underground facility. Left: An accommodation room in the tunnel (IDF spokesperson, November 2, 2024)**

► The Hamas government media office in Gaza claimed that in the IDF's operations in central Gaza more than forty people were killed, and 254 housing units were destroyed in the area. It was further alleged that prohibited weapons and destructive means were used, which damaged residential buildings (governmental media office Telegram channel, November 2, 2024).

## Eliminating Hamas terrorist operatives

► The IDF continued targeted killings of prominent terrorist operatives in the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, November 1-4, 2024):

- ◆ Izz al-Din Kassab, a member of Hamas' political bureau who holds of the "national relations" portfolio, was killed in an airstrike on the Khan Yunis area. According to reports, he was responsible for Hamas' strategic and military relations with other terrorist organizations in Gaza (IDF and Israeli Security Agency spokespersons, November 1, 2024). Hamas announced the deaths of two "shaheed commanders," members of the monitoring committee of the National and Islamic Forces in Gaza, Izz al-Din Kassab and Ayman Ayash, in a "treacherous Zionist attack on their civilian [sic] car" in the Khan Yunis district (Hamas Telegram channel, November 1, 2024).



**Kassab's "ID card" (IDF spokesperson, November 1, 2024).**

- ◆ Rifat Ibrahim Mahmoud Akdich, a nukhba operative involved in the massacre at Kibbutz Nir Oz during the October 7, 2023, attack was an assistant to the nukhba head of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad's (PIJ) Khan Yunis Brigade.
- ◆ Ahmad al-Dalu, an operative in PIJ military intelligence in Gaza who participated in the massacre at Kibbutz Kfar Aza on October 7, 2023.
- ▶ According to reports, the Hamas leadership received information indicating the death of Muhammed Deif, the commander of Hamas' military wing, whom Israel reported having killed in an airstrike in Khan Yunis on July 13, 2024. "Sources close to Deif" stated there had been no contact with him since the attack. According to the report, samples taken from remains were identified as belonging to him, but communication delays and the complex security situation had prevented the final confirmation until now (al-Sharq al-Awsat, November 2, 2024). In response, Hamas claimed the report was false, urging the media to maintain accuracy, reliability and professionalism (Hamas Telegram channel, November 2, 2024). Khalil al-Haya, deputy chairman of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, claimed Deif was "doing well" and was still the leader of the "resistance." Al-Haya told Prime Minister Netanyahu, "Deif hears you now and is laughing at your lies" (Quds website, November 4, 2024).

## Rocket fire from the Gaza Strip

- ▶ On November 2, 2024, two rockets were fired from the northern Gaza Strip at Sderot, landing in an open area. No casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson, November 2, 2024). The Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military wing, claimed responsibility for firing a barrage of rockets at Sderot, Mefalsim and other communities near the Gaza border (Paltoday Telegram channel, November 2, 2024).

## The Hostages and a Ceasefire Agreement

► On October 30, 2024, it was reported that senior Hamas operatives believed that the American- and Egyptian-led mediation efforts for a ceasefire and prisoner exchange were not serious and primarily served the political interests of the Democrats in the days before the election. Nevertheless, the Hamas leadership decided to cooperate with the mediators, subject to certain conditions (al-Araby al-Jadeed, October 30, 2024).

► The Egypt's new proposal reportedly calls for a ten-day ceasefire with the daily entry of 150 aid trucks in exchange for the release of four Israeli hostages, including two women. Meanwhile, the new United States proposal calls for a 30-day ceasefire and the release of all the women and female soldiers, with the daily entry of 600 aid trucks. The proposals also include the possibility of a Palestinian prisoner exchange deal but do not include an end to the war, the return of displaced persons to their homes or an Israeli withdrawal (Quds Agency, October 31, 2024).

► According to reports, a Hamas delegation led by Khalil al-Haya, deputy chairman of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, arrived in Cairo for a meeting with a Fatah delegation, and was expected to meet with senior officials from Egyptian General Intelligence at the Egyptians' request to discuss proposals for a ceasefire in Gaza and the release of hostages and prisoners. The report stated that the Hamas delegation included new senior members who had not participated in such meetings before, with the objective of creating new opportunities for further discussion. According to the report, other senior figures in the delegation were Musa Abu Marzouq, Zaher Jabarin, and Muhammad Nasser, all political bureau members. According to later reports, the talks ended without progress having been made (al-Araby al-Jadeed, November 3 and 4, 2024).

► Senior Hamas figures expressed opposition to the proposals for a temporary ceasefire and partial release of hostages and prisoners. They said the movement was interested only in an agreement which included a complete end to the war, the withdrawal of IDF forces from the entire Gaza Strip, the return of the displaced in Gaza and the entry of humanitarian aid, as they claimed to have agreed to in July 2024, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2735:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 2735, adopted on June 10, 2024, calls on Hamas to accept the ceasefire proposal and return the hostages taken during Operation Iron Swords. The resolution, introduced by the United States outlines a three-stage ceasefire proposal, noting that Israel has accepted it. Implementing the agreement includes the release of all hostages held by Hamas, the establishment of

◆ Senior Hamas figure Sami Abu Zuhri stated that the movement sought to stop the [alleged] "massacres" in Gaza, and for that reason its members were taking a positive stance in the negotiations to reach an agreement. He added that the most recent proposal presented was a temporary ceasefire, which did not meet their demands. According to him, Israel did not want an agreement, hence the stalemate in the negotiations (al-Jazeera, November 1, 2024).

◆ Senior Hamas figure Osama Hamdan said that the movement would continue to discuss any proposal which met Palestinian demands. He stated that Israel was offering "fanciful ideas" and not a genuine proposal, and was not negotiating seriously. He said that any proposal or agreement had to "stop Zionist aggression permanently, not temporarily," and added that even attacking the leaders of the "resistance" did not weaken but rather strengthened it (al-Aqsa TV, November 1, 2024).

◆ Senior Hamas figure Izzat al-Rishq described proposals for a multi-day ceasefire as "an illusion." He claimed that Hamas related positively to any proposals or ideas which ensured the "end of aggression and the withdrawal of occupation forces from Gaza." He accused the Israeli government of trying to buy time and using negotiations as a cover for continuing its "aggression" (Izzat al-Rishq's Telegram channel, November 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, 43,391 Palestinians had been killed and 102,347 injured (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, November 5, 2024).

### The situation in the Gaza Strip

► On November 2, 2024, the campaign to administer the second dose of polio vaccine to children under the age of ten began in northern Gaza. Over 94,000 children were vaccinated as part of a World Health Organization and UNICEF campaign, in coordination with the Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) (COGAT X account, November 4, 2024). UNICEF reported that vaccinations were being given only in Gaza City but included children evacuated from conflict areas in northern Gaza. However, the target of vaccinating

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a permanent ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, and the advancement of a multi-year reconstruction plan for Gaza. The Resolution rejects any demographic or territorial changes in Gaza and reaffirms the Security Council's support for the two-state solution.

119,000 children may not be reached. Previously, more than 451,000 children were vaccinated in central and southern Gaza (UNICEF website, November 1, 2024).

►According to reports, the UAE sent a ship carrying thousands of tons of humanitarian aid to Gaza, part of the Gallant Knight 3 operation for bringing assistance to the Gazans. The ship, which set sail for the port of El Arish in Egypt from Hamriyah Port in Dubai, carries approximately 5,112 tons of supplies including food, medicines, materials for shelter and five ambulances. So far, the UAE has provided more than 34,000 tons of aid to Gaza, with support from the local Red Crescent and the Zayed bin Sultan and Khalifa bin Zayed charitable foundations. Additionally, the UAE has established two field hospitals, five bakeries and six desalination facilities, which supply water to more than 600,000 people. The UAE has also conducted 53 air lifts of aid to isolated areas in Gaza (al-Quds website, October 31, 2024).

►The Gaza municipality announced that the Prosthetic Limbs Center had resumed operations four days a week. According to the center's management, the main challenges it faces are a shortage of fuel needed to operate generators and a lack of the raw materials for producing prosthetic limbs (Gaza municipality Facebook page, October 30, 2024).

►Senior figures from the Hamas ministry of health in Gaza reopened the al-Rantisi Children's Hospital in Gaza City following its partial renovation and reconstruction. It ceased operations in November 2023 because of nearby IDF activity. According to reports, the hospital was renovated with support from donors in Qatar by means of the British-based al-Khair Foundation, and under the supervision of the ministry of health in Gaza. Maher Shamia, assistant deputy minister of health in Gaza, stated that the first phase of the renovation included the intensive care unit, radiology, the central laboratory, physiotherapy and inpatient departments (Safa Telegram channel, November 2, 2024; Anadolu Agency, November 2, 2024).



**Reopening the hospital (Safa Telegram channel, November 2, 2024).**



## Governance

►The Imsek 'Ameel Telegram channel (literally "Catch an Agent"), which focuses on exposing thieves, humanitarian aid looters and traders who exploit the situation in the Gaza Strip, reported that Hamas security forces conducted a major operation in a market near Khan Yunis, targeting merchants who gouged prices and refused to trade in ten-shekel coins. Several members of the Sheikh al-Eid family were arrested at al-Aqsa University after assaulting an officer and stealing chickens allocated for aid (Imsek 'Ameel Telegram channel, October 30, 2024).



**An officer armed with a club keeps order in the line of people waiting to buy bread at the al-Qala'a Bakery in Khan Yunis (Imsek 'Ameel Telegram channel, October 29, 2024)**

## "The Day After" and the Internal Palestinian Reconciliation

►On November 2, 2024, a Hamas delegation led by Khalil al-Haya, deputy chairman of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, arrived in Cairo to meet with a Fatah delegation headed by Mahmoud al-Aloul, Fatah deputy chairman, to discuss arrangements for the "day after" (al-Araby al-Jadeed, November 2, 2024). After two days of consultations, a "senior Hamas source" reported that the negotiations, sponsored by Egyptian General Intelligence, concluded with a preliminary agreement to establish an administrative committee for the



post-war period. The "source" added that Hamas had presented a detailed description of the committee's objectives, tasks and powers, while Fatah requested time to consult with its central leadership; further meetings are expected to be held (al-Araby al-Jadeed, November 4, 2024).

►A "senior Hamas figure" said the committee would be exclusively Palestinian, led by technocrats and include thousands of Gaza Strip employees. He said it would begin its work after being approved by Palestinian Authority (PA) "president" Mahmoud Abbas, providing assistance to Palestinians during the war and focusing on rebuilding Gaza afterward (al-Araby al-Jadeed, November 5, 2024).

►Senior Hamas figure Osama Hamdan said the Cairo meeting with Fatah representatives had dealt with various "national" issues, including the Gaza conflict and strategies to counter "the occupation and its supporters." He described the atmosphere as "positive and sincere," stating that Hamas would continue to meet with Fatah and other Palestinian organizations (Hamas Telegram channel, November 4, 2024).

►Senior Fatah figure Bassam al-Tamimi claimed there was greater understanding between Fatah and Hamas, and the movements could potentially reach real consensus on key issues, primarily public administration in Gaza and the distribution of humanitarian aid. However, he noted that the committee was not related to the establishment of a unity government (Radio Alam, November 4, 2024).

►"Arab sources" reported that Arab states were pressuring PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas to appoint a new prime minister as part of the discussions dealing with the "day after" and focusing on managing Gaza after the war. According to the report, a secret meeting was held in Riyadh with Saudi Arabian, Egyptian and Jordanian participation, where the parties discussed the need for reforms in the PA in preparation for renewed governance in Gaza, and proposed a new allocation of powers to the new prime minister (al-Shahad, November 3, 2024).

## Israel, Judea and Samaria

### **Terrorist attacks**

►This past week no terrorist attacks were reported.

### **Counterterrorism activities**

►The Israeli security forces continued counterterrorism operations throughout Judea and Samaria, detaining dozens of wanted Palestinians suspected of terrorist activities and locating weapons:

◆ On October 31, 2024, Israeli security forces eliminated Husam Malah, head of the Hamas military network in Tulkarm and responsible for planning attacks scheduled for the first anniversary of the October 7, 2023 terrorist attack and massacre (Israel Police Force X account, October 31, 2024). A mourning notice was issued by Hamas' military wing for Husam Bassam Malah (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, October 31, 2024).



**Mourning notice issued by the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades on the death of Husam Bassam Malah (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, October 31, 2024)**

◆ The Israeli security forces conducted a counterterrorism operation in the Nur Shams refugee camp, during which an Israeli Air Force aircraft eliminated two terrorist operatives, Abd al-Aziz Abu Saman and Ahmed Issam Fahmawi, who shot at the soldiers. The forces attacked other terrorist operatives and destroyed explosive devices planted on roads (IDF spokesperson, November 1, 2024). The Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military wing, claimed the two were operatives in its Tulkarm Battalion (Jerusalem Brigades in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, November 2, 2024). The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades announced the death of Mu'tasim Abu Issa, one of their operatives in the Nur Shams camp (al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades Telegram channel, November 3, 2024).

◆ On November 5, 2024, "local sources" reported that Israeli security forces operated in a number of areas in northern Samaria. The ministry of health in Ramallah reported that two Palestinians were killed during Israeli security force activities in the village of Tamun near Tubas, including wanted Palestinian Hani Bani Odeh, a PIJ terrorist operative. Palestinian media reported that Shuki Atsa'uts and Mohammed Atsa'uts were killed in a strike by an Israeli drone on Qabatiya. Clashes were reported between Israeli forces and armed men who detonated explosive devices, and additional Israeli security activities were reported in the al-Far'ah refugee camp (Quds News Agency and the Palestinian Media Center, November 5, 2024).

- ◆ Israeli security forces detained a wanted Palestinian from Hebron at the Kiosk checkpoint near Abu Dis. During a search, they seized 1.1 million shekels in cash, suspected to be used to finance terrorist activities (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, November 5, 2024).
- ◆ In recent weeks, Israeli security forces detained more than 60 Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) operatives in Judea and Samaria. Among them were Abla Saadat, the wife of PFLP secretary general Ahmed Saadat, who is imprisoned in Israel, Tahrir Jaber, head of the PFLP Women's Committees, and Bilal Kaid, a PFLP leader in Judea and Samaria. Security forces also searched the operatives' homes and closed offices and businesses used by the organization.



The PFLP members who were detained (IDF spokesperson, November 5, 2024)

## Activities of the Palestinian security forces

► According to reports, PA security forces discovered what was apparently a rocket hidden in the underbrush in the town of Budrus, near Ramallah. It had explosives, an activation mechanism and a launcher. Terrorists probably meant to fire it at the Modi'in area or a nearby community. The rocket was handed over to Israeli Civilian Administration officers. Reports indicated that while the rocket appeared "primitive," it was somewhat more advanced than rockets seized in the past year in Jenin and Tulkarm (Israeli media, November 4-5, 2024).



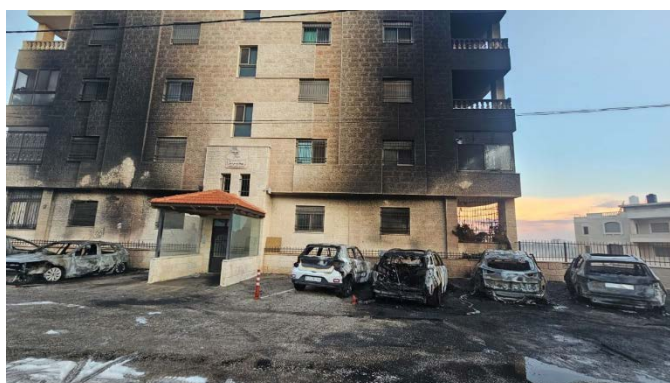
**The rocket and launcher (Quds News Agency, November 4, 2024)**

►This past week, the PA security forces detected several explosive devices planted by "resistance fighters" on the Tayasir-Tubas road, a route used by Israeli security forces during operations in Tubas (A7rartoubas Telegram channel, October 29-31, 2024; Quds News Agency, November 4, 2024).

►It was also reported that the PA security forces entered the Balata refugee camp and removed banners with pictures of the late Isma'il Haniyeh and Yahya al-Sinwar, former Hamas political bureau heads (Northern Wolves-Jenin Telegram channel, November 1, 2024).

## Israeli settlers clash with Palestinians

►"Local sources" reported that Israeli settlers burned 18 vehicles and two apartments in the al-Bireh industrial area before dawn on November 4, 2024. Hamas condemned the act, calling it a "terrorist attack" and a dangerous escalation which necessitated "intensifying the confrontation" (Palestinian Media Center, November 4, 2024). In response to the reports, the Israel Police and the Israeli Security Agency launched an investigation (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, November 4, 2024).



**The torched vehicles in al-Bireh (Quds News Agency, November 4, 2024)**

►There were also reports of clashes between Israeli settlers, Israeli security forces and Palestinians harvesting olives near Israeli settlements in various areas of Judea and Samaria. It was claimed that in the villages of Qusra and Qaryut in the Nablus district, and in Deir Ista near Qalqilya, olive-pickers were forced from their groves at gunpoint (Abnaa al-Balad

Telegram channel; Wafa, November 1, 2024). In Salfit, near Ariel, slogans and graffiti were scrawled on vehicles of Palestinians (Wafa, November 1, 2024).

►The Committee to Resist [sic] the Wall and Settlements<sup>3</sup> reported that between the beginning of this year's olive harvest and October 29, "occupation forces" and settlers had carried out 239 attacks on olive pickers harvesters, including 109 incidents in which they prevented the Palestinians from accessing lands. The attacks resulted in the death of 60-year-old Hanan Abd al-Rahman Abu Salameh from the village of Fuqua, northeast of Jenin, injuries to over 50 others, and the burning, uprooting and confiscation of hundreds of olive trees and olives.

## The Palestinian Authority (PA)

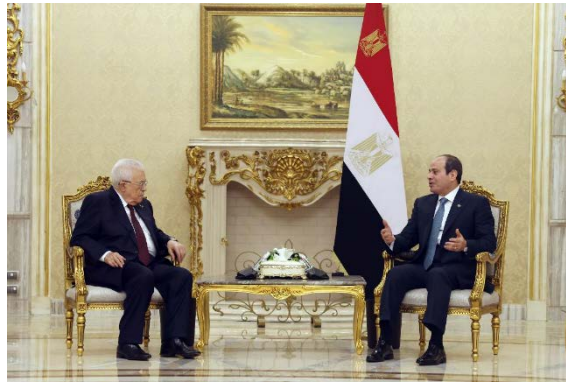
### Mahmoud Abbas visits Egypt

►PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas paid an official visit to Egypt at the invitation of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, where he held meetings and participated in the World Urban Forum held in Cairo (Wafa, November 2-4, 2024):

- ◆Mahmoud Abbas and Egyptian President el-Sisi discussed joint efforts to secure a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and ensure Israel's withdrawal, along with increasing humanitarian aid. Abbas also noted the dangers of Israel's decision to ban UNRWA operations in its territory, warning that it could worsen the refugee problem. He called for international intervention to curb settler violence in Judea and Samaria and described the PA's efforts to seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the "occupied Palestinian territories" and to secure full UN membership.

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<sup>3</sup> The Committee for Resistance against the Wall and Settlements is a Palestinian organization focused on "civil resistance" to the border security fence (the "wall") that Israel constructed along the separation line, as well as to the expansion of settlements in Judea and Samaria. The committee operates on the ground organizing demonstrations, protests and petitions to raise international awareness of the impact of the wall and settlements on the Palestinian population. The committee includes local Palestinian "activists" and sometimes also Israeli and international left-wing activists.



**Abbas and el-Sisi (Wafa, November 4, 2024)**

◆ Mahmoud Abbas also met with Ahmed Abu al-Ghait, secretary general of the Arab League, before the upcoming Arab-Islamic summit which will be held in Riyadh on November 11, 2024. Abbas discussed recent developments in the Palestinian issue in view of what he described as the [alleged] "continued war of extermination against Palestinians" and the Palestinian leadership's efforts to halt the "aggression" in Gaza and the West Bank. They also discussed implementing the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion and gaining more support for making "Palestine" a full member state of the United Nations.

◆ Speaking before the World Urban Forum, Abbas accused Israel of preventing sustainable urban development in 60% of Judea, Samaria and east Jerusalem, and committing "genocide" and ethnic cleansing" in Gaza, Judea and Samaria. He called on the international community to take action against Israel, claiming it had failed to meet its obligations under UN General Assembly Resolutions 181 and 194 and all relevant UN resolutions had to be implemented, including the one requiring Israel to end the "occupation" within 12 months. He added that the UN Security Council should pass a resolution for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, including the withdrawal of Israeli forces, refugee assistance, and infrastructure reconstruction.

## Other international activities

► Muhammad Mustafa, PA prime minister, held several meetings and political discussions:

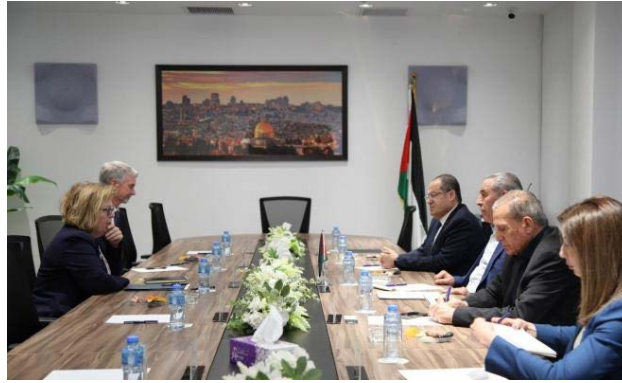
◆ Meeting in Ramallah with Xavier Bettel, Luxembourg's deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Mustafa expressed support for efforts and initiatives for a ceasefire and the release of all "prisoners," stating that would lead to a comprehensive solution to the "occupation" and contribute to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. He wondered how long the world would wait while Israel carried out "a series of [alleged] massacres against our people in the Gaza Strip." Mustafa also condemned Israel's

decision to halt UNRWA activities in its territory and called on the European Union to impose sanctions. Bettel reiterated Luxembourg's support for ceasefire efforts, the release of prisoners and hostages, an end to the "human suffering" in Gaza and regional de-escalation (Wafa, October 30, 2024).

◆Speaking with Faisal bin Farhan, Saudi Arabian foreign minister, Mustafa thanked Saudi Arabia for hosting the first meeting of the International Coalition for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, held in Riyadh on October 30, 2024. Mustafa also expressed support for the Coalition's unified positions on the need for a ceasefire, humanitarian aid, withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza and support for UNRWA (Wafa, October 31, 2024).

◆Meeting with a delegation from the European Parliament, Mustafa described the Palestinian situation and emphasized the need for European Parliament support for the International Coalition for the Two-State Solution. He called for action against Israel's decision to ban UNRWA activities, stating that it violated Palestinian refugee rights and worsened humanitarian conditions, particularly in Gaza (Wafa, November 3, 2024).

►Hussein al-Sheikh, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee, met in Ramallah with Barbara Leaf, American Assistant Secretary of State and Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesman and diplomatic advisor to Mahmoud Abbas. They discussed the need to stop the war in Gaza and noted the importance of opening crossings to allow humanitarian aid into the Strip. Al-Sheikh condemned "a series of [alleged] crimes and new massacres [sic] committed by the Israeli occupation in the northern Gaza Strip" and called for the return of the PA to Gaza and unification of Gaza, Judea and Samaria. Leaf reiterated the American administration's commitment to a political process which ensured regional stability and ended the conflict (Wafa, October 31, 2024).



**PA figures meet with the United States Assistant Secretary of State (Sawa, October 31, 2024)**

►Ahmad Majdalani, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, met with Mikhail Bogdanov, Russia's deputy foreign minister and special envoy to the Middle East, to brief him on developments in the Palestinian arena. Majdalani noted the importance of Russia's role in the Middle East. Bogdanov confirmed Russia's firm support for establishing a Palestinian state, as well as the importance of strengthening bilateral relations, including increasing political dialogue on various Middle Eastern issues (Wafa, October 30, 2024).

## **Responses to Israel's stopping UNRWA activities**

►On November 4, 2024, the Israeli Foreign Ministry notified the UN of its decision to cancel the 1967 agreement with UNRWA, which regulated the UN agency's activities in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria. The ban follows legislation passed by the Knesset prohibiting UNRWA's operations in Israeli territory (Israeli media, November 4, 2024). The Israeli announcement sparked condemnation in Palestinian circles:

- ◆Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesman for Mahmoud Abbas, claimed the "occupation" disregarded all norms, decisions, and international and humanitarian law. He added that Israel continued to attack UNRWA in an attempt to "eliminate" the refugee issue, cancel the [so-called] "right of return" and disrupt the agency's activities and role. He called on the international community to take action against Israel and obligate it to honor all agreements (Wafa, November 4, 2024).

- ◆ Hamas called the Israeli announcement "Zionist contempt" for the international community and confirmation that Israel was a "heretical entity." Hamas claimed it was an attempt to blur the Palestinian refugee issue and urged the international community to stand against the Israeli decision, strengthen UNRWA and protect it in light of [alleged] "genocide and crimes" (Hamas Telegram channel, November 4, 2024).

- ◆The PIJ condemned Israel's decision, calling on the UN Security Council to expel Israel from the UN General Assembly (al-Jazeera Mubasher, November 4, 2024).