



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(April 13 – 19, 2016)



Left: Two buses in Jerusalem go up in flames, the result of an explosion in the back of one (Facebook page of the Jerusalem district fire and rescue department, April 18, 2016) Right: Shaft of a Hamas attack tunnel exposed in Israeli territory in the central Gaza Strip near the border security fence (IDF spokesman, April 18, 2016).

Overview

- This past week terrorist events focused on **the explosion of an IED in a bus in Jerusalem**. Twenty-one people were injured, one apparently the terrorist operative who placed the bomb. So far the identity of the terrorist (or terrorists) involved is unknown. Hamas was quick to praise the attack, calling it the "progress of the Al-Quds intifada."
- **The IDF exposed a Hamas attack tunnel inside Israeli territory** near the border security fence. Israeli security sources are of the opinion that the tunnel was dug after Operation Protective Edge. Hamas trivialized Israel's achievement to provide an explanation acceptable to the residents of the Gaza Strip.
- As the Passover holiday approaches, **anti-Israel incitement regarding the Temple Mount increases**. In a speech given in Turkey, Mahmoud Abbas warned of Israel's "plots" against Al-Aqsa mosque, which would be carried out "by means of settling and excavations." The mufti of Jerusalem warned that Israel's continuing actions against Al-Aqsa mosque would turn the region into a "time bomb." Hamas joined the incitement, primarily on Facebook.

Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

Terrorist Attacks and Attempted Attacks

■ April 18, 2016:

- **An IED exploded on a number 12 bus in Jerusalem**, burning it to the ground. A bus next to it also went up in flames, and nearby vehicles were damaged. **Twenty-one people were injured**. One of them (apparently the terrorist operative) was critically wounded. Seven were seriously wounded and the rest suffered minor injuries. According to the initial investigation, the IED blew up at the back of the bus, causing a fire and injuring passengers. So far it is unknown who was responsible for the attack. No terrorist organization has claimed responsibility.
- Hamas and other terrorist organizations welcomed the attack, and candy was distributed to passersby in the streets of Gaza City. Hamas' websites posted notices and cartoons expressing support, encouragement and glee (Twitter account of Palinfo, April 18, 2016).
- **Musa Abu Marzouq, a member of Hamas' political bureau**, wrote on his Facebook page that the attack was a message for the settlers, informing them that they would not be safe as long as the Palestinian people were not safe. **Sami Abu Zuhri, a Hamas spokesman**, claimed the attack was the "natural response" to the so-called "crimes of Israel," and the "executions and desecration of Al-Aqsa mosque" (Hamas website, April 18, 2016). **Musheir al-Masri, a senior Hamas figure**, claimed the "progress of the intifada" was natural because of the "crimes of Israel" (Palinfo, April 18, 2016). **Husam Badran, a Hamas spokesman**, claimed the one who placed the IED had corrected the mistake made by all those who thought the intifada had come to an end. He added that despite the difficulties, the Palestinian people would not give up the "path of resistance" [i.e., terrorism] (Hamas website, April 18, 2016).



Left: Cartoon by Hamas-affiliated Omayya Joha expressing joy at the attack on the bus in Jerusalem. The Arabic reads, "How wonderful. May the hand be blessed of whoever blew up the bus this afternoon. You haven't seen anything yet...This is just a drop in the bucket...[ululation of joy]!!! (Twitter account of Palinfo, April 18, 2016). Right: The scene of the attack (Facebook page of the Jerusalem district fire and rescue department, April 18, 2016).

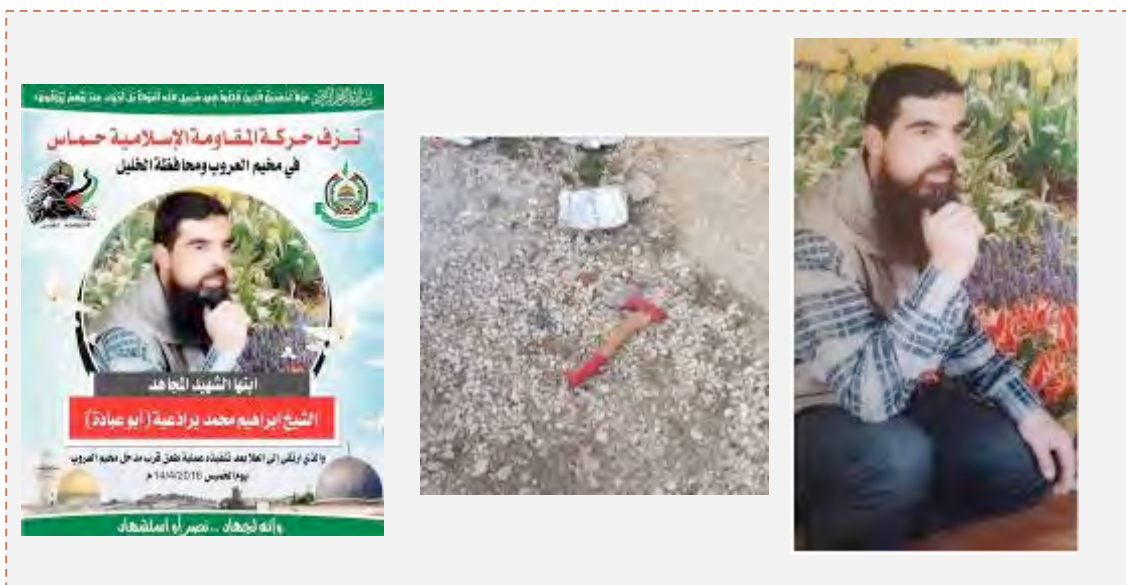


Left: Picture posted by Hamas. The Arabic reads, "[Yahya] Ayyash [the so-called "engineer" responsible for many explosions] was here." Right: Notice posted by Hamas claiming the attack in Jerusalem was "a natural response to the crimes of the occupation and its executions" (Twitter account of Palinfo, April 19, 2016).

■ April 14, 2016:

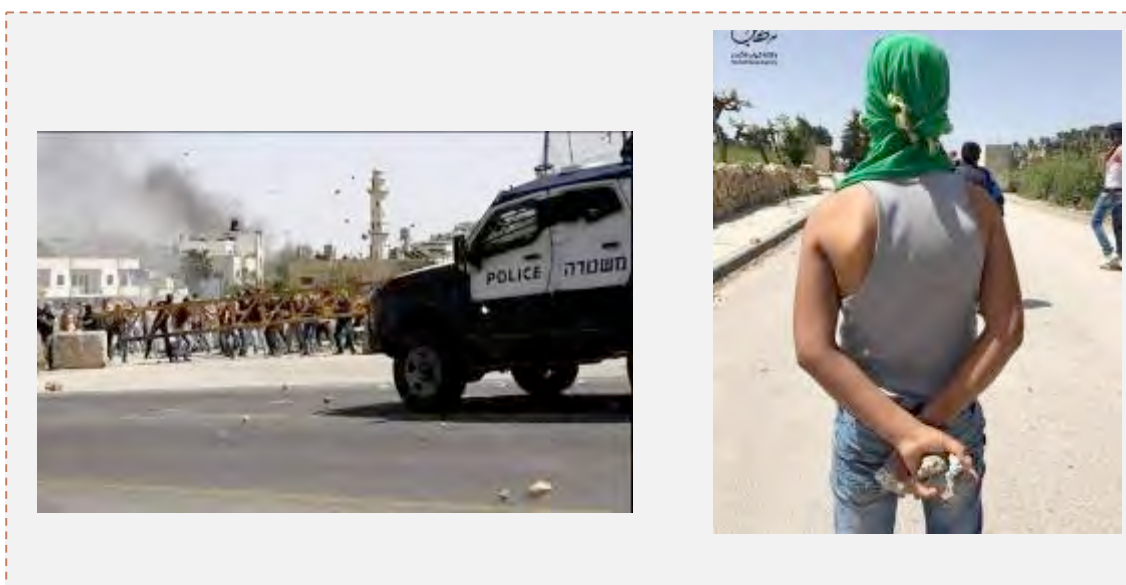
- A Palestinian armed with an axe rushed an IDF force manning a post in **the region of the Al-Aroub refugee camp, near Gush Etzion**. He tried to attack the soldiers, who shot and killed him.
- The Palestinian media reported he was **Ibrahim Muhammad Othman Baradiya**, 54, from the Al-Aroub refugee camp. Ibrahim Muhammad Othman Baradiya was a Hamas operative who had been imprisoned in Israel and released (QudsN website and Ma'an, April 14, 2016). Hamas issued a death

notice for him, calling him "a heroic shaheed." At his funeral, his body was draped with a green Hamas flag (Felesteen, April 16, 2016).



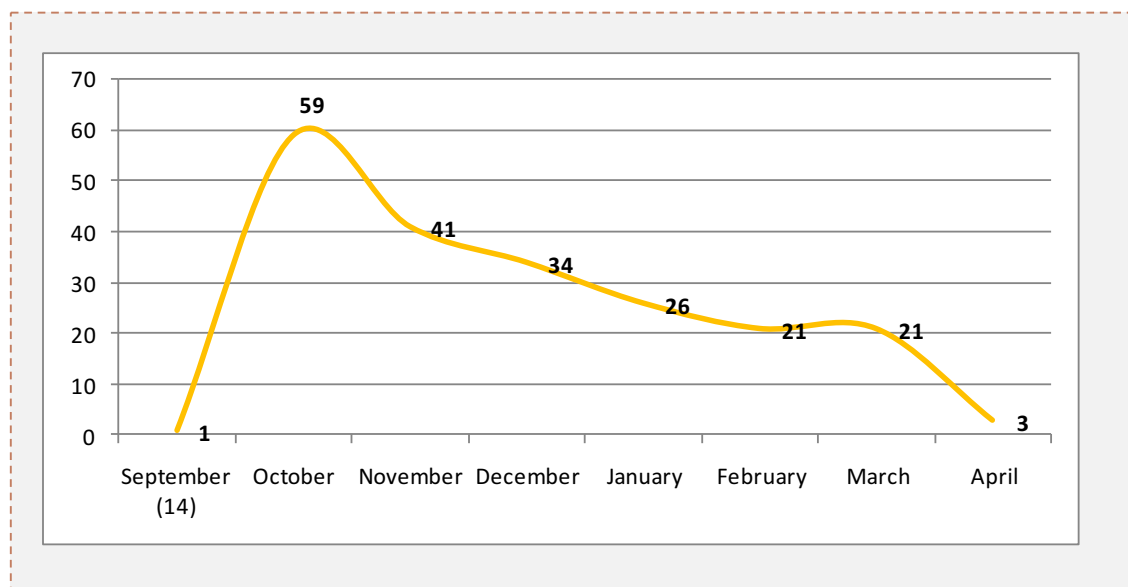
Left: The death notice issued by Hamas for Ibrahim Muhammad Othman Baradiya (Facebook page of Paldf, April 14, 2016). Center: The axe used in the attempted attack (Facebook page of QudsN, April 14, 2016). Right: Ibrahim Muhammad Othman Baradiya (Facebook page of Bethlehem al-Hadath, April 14, 2016).

- After the funeral held for Ibrahim Muhammad Othman Baradiya, Palestinians rioted on the Gush Etzion-Hebron road near the Al-Aroub refugee camp.



Left: Palestinians in the Al-Aroub refugee camp throw stones at an Israeli police vehicle after the funeral held for Ibrahim Muhammad Othman Baradiya (Facebook page of Paldf, April 16, 2016). Right: A young Palestinian from the Al-Aroub refugee camp, his head wrapped in a green Hamas flag, with stones ready to throw at IDF security forces.

Monthly Distribution of Terrorist Attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem since the Beginning of the Current Terrorist Campaign



Riots, Clashes and Popular Terrorism

■ This past week demonstrations, protest marches, riots, and the throwing of stones, Molotov cocktails and pipe bombs continued in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem. On April 17, 2016, Palestinian Prisoners' Day was marked in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip with rallies, marches and various other activities in the cities. Palestinian Prisoners' Day was an opportunity for senior figures in the Palestinian terrorist organizations to condemn Israel and call for the abduction of soldiers and settlers (Khaled al-Batash, senior PIJ figure, Paltoday, April 17, 2016).

■ The more prominent events were the following (including terrorist attacks that were prevented):

- **April 17, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at the light railway in **Jerusalem in the region of Shuafat**. There were no casualties. A train car was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, April 17, 2016).
- **April 17, 2016** – In two separate attacks, Palestinians threw stones at Israel vehicles on **route 443 (the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv road)** near the gas station. There were no casualties and no damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, April 17, 2016).
- **April 14, 2016** – Two Palestinian boys of about 12 years of age aroused the suspicions of police and Border Policemen at the **Chain Gate near the Temple**

Mount in the Old **City** of Jerusalem. They were detained for examination, and were found to be carrying knives and a meat cleaver. One of the children also had a note saying goodbye to his parents. During the initial interrogation the two said they had come to Jerusalem to carry out an attack. One of them was from the Qalqilya refugee camp and the other from the village of Aqab.



Left: The goodbye note to the parents of one of the children. Right: The knives and meat cleaver found in the possession of the two children who were detained in the Old City of Jerusalem (Facebook page of QudsN, April 14, 2016).

- **April 14, 2016** – An IDF soldier incurred minor injuries inflicted by stones thrown by Palestinians during a riot in **the village of Al-Aroub**. He was evacuated to a hospital (Facebook page of Red Alert, April 14, 2016).
- **April 13, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at the light railway in **Shuafat in northern Jerusalem**. There were no casualties. A train car was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, April 14, 2016).
- **April 13, 2016** – Palestinians threw a Molotov cocktail at an Israeli vehicle in a drive-by attack near the Mikhmarsh crossing (east of Ramallah). There were no casualties (Facebook page of Red Alert, April 14, 2016).

Investigation of Palestinian Terrorist Who Carried Out a Stabbing Attack in Rosh HaAyin

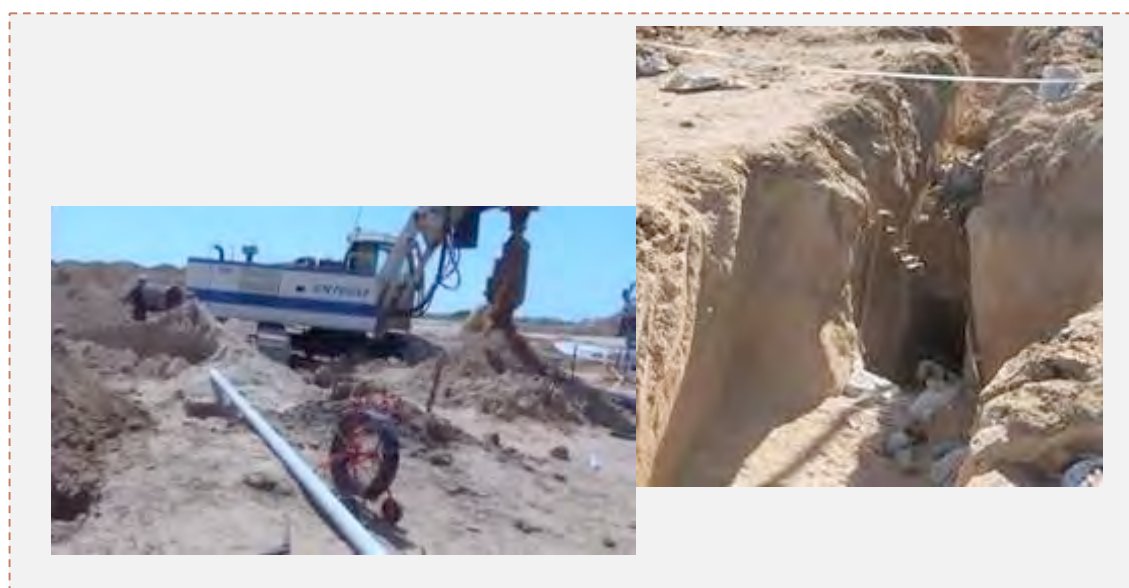
- The investigation of **Shatila Abu lyada**, 23, from the village of Kafr Qasem, who carried out a stabbing attack in the **Rosh HaAyin¹ industrial zone** on April 3, 2016, revealed that she had recently become religious and decided she had to kill Jews for the sake of Allah. Her initial plan was to use an improvised bomb or carry out a shooting attack. She found instructions for making bombs on the Internet and purchased the necessary materials, including screws and bolts to make the device more lethal.
- Shatila Abu lyada planned to place bombs in two restaurants and even went to look for suitable sites. To carry out a shooting attack she tried to acquire an automatic weapon from one of her acquaintances. She rejected his offer of a pistol because she thought she could kill and wound a greater number of people with an automatic weapon. She planned to carry out the shooting attack in Jerusalem but after a visit to the city, where she saw the deployment of security forces, she was afraid she would not be able to carry out her plan. When she could not successfully construct an IED or acquire an automatic weapon, she decided to carry out a stabbing attack (News websites, April 17, 2016).

¹ On April 3, 2016, Shatila Abu lyada stabbed an Israeli woman at the industrial zone in Rosh HaAyin. The woman incurred minor wounds. A security guard overcame Shatila Abu lyada and found another knife in her possession. She was taken for interrogation.

Israel's South

Hamas Attack Tunnel Exposed

■ **The IDF exposed a shaft of a Hamas tunnel of a Hamas attack tunnel crossing from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory under the border security fence using technological means developed in Israel.** The shaft was exposed in Israeli territory several dozen meters from the border security fence in the central Gaza Strip. According to security evaluations, Hamas planned to use the tunnel to carry out a showcase attack, infiltrating dozens of terrorist operatives from the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades' elite *nukhba* unit. In the view of Israeli security sources, the tunnel was dug after Operation Protective Edge (July-August 2014). After the tunnel shaft was exposed the IDF destroyed the tunnel, an activity that took about two weeks.



Left: The IDF destroys the tunnel. Right: The tunnel shaft (IDF spokesman, April 18, 2016).

Responses

■ **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** praised the exposure of the tunnel, calling it a **world breakthrough in Israel's efforts to locate tunnels**. He said the government was investing a fortune in thwarting the threat of tunnels. He called it an ongoing effort that Israel would "continue to invest in, steadily and firmly."²

■ **The Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military-terrorist wing**, issued an announcement trivializing the engineering and technological efforts Israel had invested over the past months. Israel's intention, said the announcement, was "to present an achievement to cover-up its panic and the mounting failures of the political and military

² <http://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-lauds-world-breakthrough-in-tunnel-detection>

leadership." The announcement also said that what Israel had uncovered was "a drop in the bucket" of what the resistance [i.e., the terrorist organizations] were preparing in order "to defend the Palestinian people, its holy places, its land and prisoners" (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades website, April 18, 2016). A Hamas military source claimed the tunnel exposed by Israel was small and old, and had been used during Operation Protective Edge (Facebook page of Shabakat al-Quds, April 18, 2016).

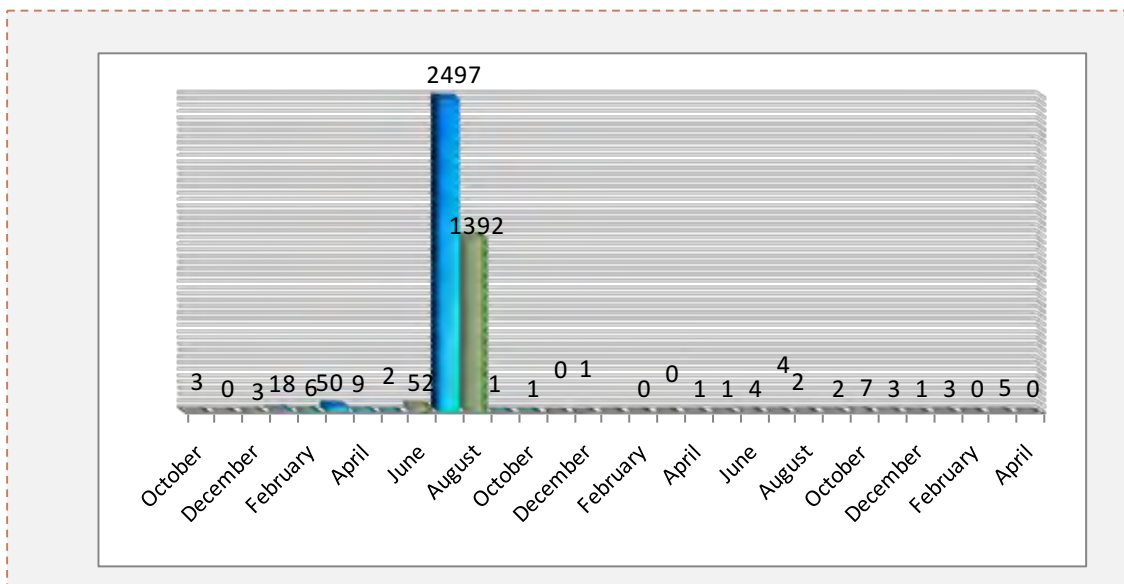
Israel's exposure of the tunnel joins the series of Hamas tunnel collapses in the Gaza Strip, the result of weather conditions and measures taken by Egypt. With that in mind, **Hamas' announcement was intended to provide an explanation that would be acceptable to the residents of the Gaza Strip by minimizing Israel's achievement in exposing the tunnel.**

■ In view of the IDF's activity on the border to destroy the tunnel, the security forces in the Gaza Strip increased their presence in the streets of Gaza City. The ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip announced it would hold a military exercise for all the security forces to raise their preparedness for emergency situations and crises (Paltoday, April 17, 2016).



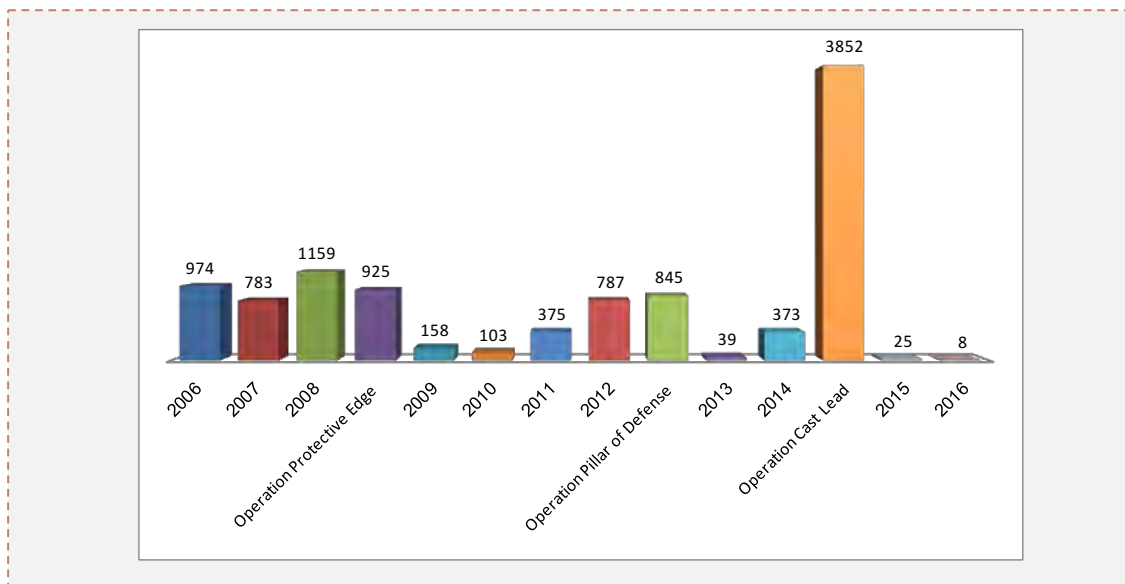
Left: Police barricade in Gaza City. Right: Palestinian policemen in the streets of Gaza City (Website of the ministry of the interior in the Gaza Strip, April 16, 2016).

Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire (2014 – 2016)³



*The data include the three rockets launched by ISIS's Sinai Province from the Sinai Peninsula in July by ISIS's Sinai Province.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire in Israel's South⁴



³ As of April 19, 2016. The statistics do not include mortar shell fire or rockets which misfired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

⁴ The statistics do not include mortar shell fire or rockets which misfired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

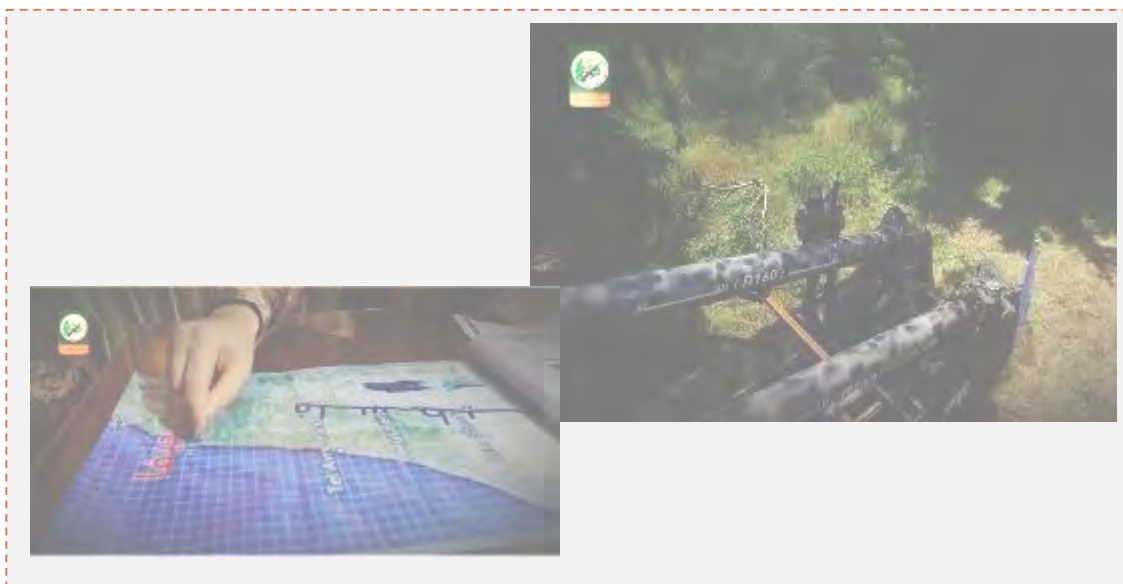
Developments in the Gaza Strip

Reinforcing Hamas Forces along the Egyptian Border

■ **Iyad al-Bazam, spokesman for the Hamas ministry of the interior**, said Hamas had begun increasing its forces along the Gaza-Egypt border by doubling the number of its posts. He said that initially three posts had been constructed between the Kerem Shalom crossing and the eastern part of Rafah. He said that showed Hamas had an interest in the security and stability of the border, and would not allow anyone to attack Egypt (Rai al-Youm, April 14, 2016). In ITIC assessment, **Hamas is taking the aforementioned steps as a show of acceding to the demands of Egypt, which claims the Gaza Strip is a hotbed of anti-Egyptian terrorism.**

Hamas' Military Buildup

■ To mark the anniversary of the death of Abd al-Aziz Rantisi⁵ Hamas military-terrorist wing issued a video entitled "Keeping the promise of Abd al-Aziz Rantisi." It shows an R-16 rocket which allegedly can reach Haifa and Tel Aviv. R-160 rockets, which were developed by Hamas, were fired during Operation Protective Edge (July-August 2014).

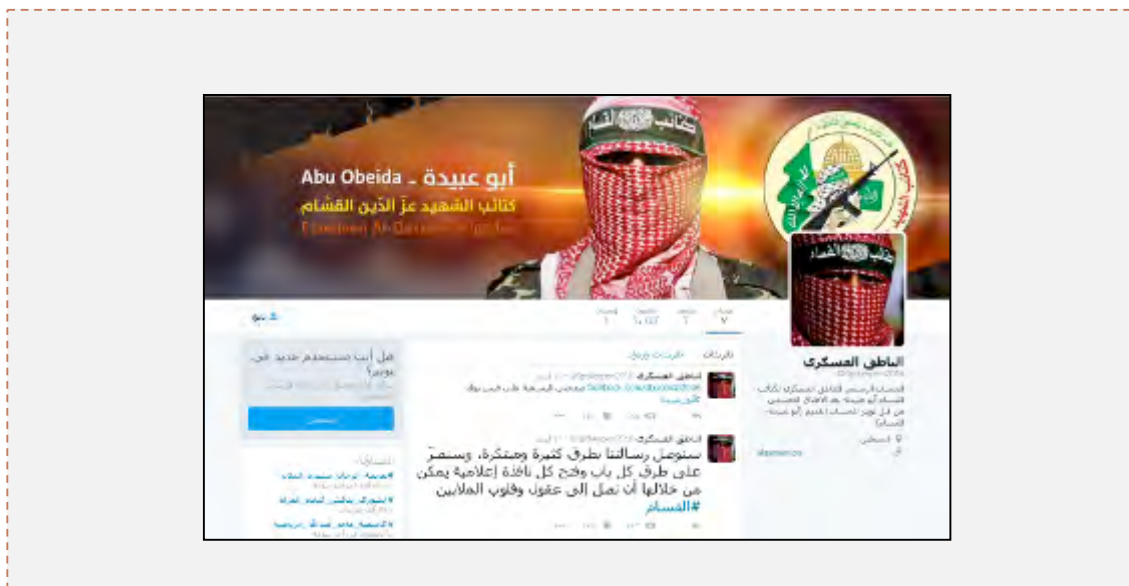


Scenes from the video present R-16 rockets and note that they can reach Haifa and Tel Aviv (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades website, April 17, 2016).

⁵ **Abd al-Aziz Rantisi** was one of the founders of Hamas. He served as a Hamas spokesman and head of its political bureau. After Ahmed Yassin died he replaced him, but less than a month later, on April 17, 2004, he was killed in a targeted attack.

Abu Obeida's Twitter Account Closed

- The management of Twitter closed the account of Hamas spokesman **Abu Obeida** (Palinfo, April 16, 2016). In response Abu Obeida said that Twitter had surrendered to pressure from Israel, creating the impression that Twitter was not objective and was pro-Israel. He also said closing the account of the military wing meant that the wing had "shaken Israel and its branches " around the globe. He said there were many other ways for the military wing to get its message out and reach the hearts and minds of millions of people (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades website, April 16, 2016).
- A few hours after the Twitter account was closed a new account was opened called "military_spokesman@Spokespers2016." On April 16 it had only six Tweets and 2,246 followers. Information about the account was given as "The official account of the military spokesman of the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Abu Obeida – after the arbitrary closing of the old Twitter account..." (Twitter account of Abu Obeida).



The new Twitter account of Hamas military-terrorist wing spokesman Abu Obeida.

The Palestinian Authority

Mahmoud Abbas' Speech at the Summit Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

- Mahmoud Abbas participated in the summit conference of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held in Istanbul. He gave a speech in which he said that the Palestinians expected those present to invest efforts in finding an "international defense umbrella" for Palestine, because Israel did not want peace and regarded itself

as above international law. He warned that the conflict between the Palestinians and Israel could turn into a religious conflict that could endanger the peace of the entire world. He also warned of what he called "**the results of Israel's plots against Al-Aqsa mosque, [carried out] by means of its settling branches and its excavations.**" Those, he claimed, were working to change the Arab and Islamic identity of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa mosque and the Palestinian presence there (Wafa, April 14, 2016).



Mahmoud Abbas (left) and Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan on the margins of the OIC summit in Istanbul (Wafa, April 15, 2016).

The Battle for Hearts and Minds: Palestinian Media Encouragement for the Current Terrorist Campaign

The Temple Mount, a Focus for Palestinian Incitement before Passover

- In the last days leading up to the Passover holiday, one of the three holidays when Jews go to the Temple Mount to pray (along with the High Holidays and Shavuot), the Palestinian media has given extensive coverage to the visits of Israelis to the Temple Mount plaza. Prominent Facebook pages have short videos of Israelis visiting the site, heavily guarded by Israeli police (Facebook page of QudsN, April 14, 2016). There are also pictures of Israeli couples holding engagement ceremonies in the Temple Mount compound. On one of the pictures "Kill them" was written (Facebook page of Paldf, April 13, 2016).

- **Sheikh Muhammad Hussein, the mufti of Jerusalem and the PA**, who also gives sermons in Al-Aqsa mosque, warned against the calls of extremist Jewish elements to

visit the Temple Mount for Passover. He warned that the **so-called continuing Israeli activity against the sites holy to the Palestinians, especially Al-Aqsa mosque, would turn the region into a "time bomb."** He called on Muslims to go to Al-Aqsa mosque to pray and prevent the Jews from visiting (Watan24, April 13, 2016).

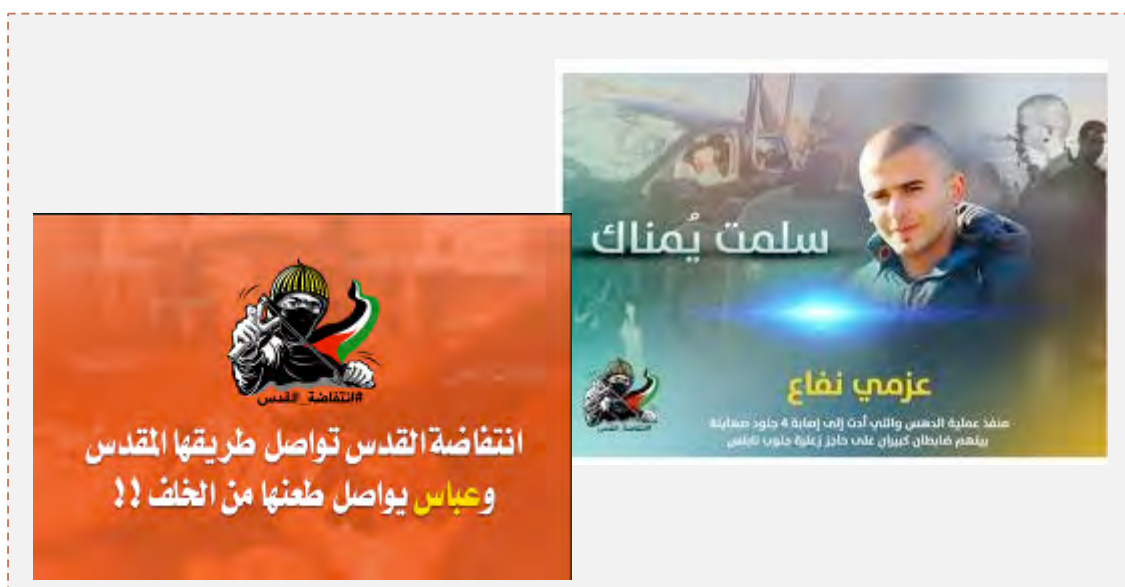


Hamis Facebook page criticizing the engagements of Israeli couples on the Temple Mount. The Arabic at the right reads, "Kill them" (Facebook page of Paldf, April 13, 2016).



Left: Post to the Facebook page of the Hamas student movement. The Arabic reads, "Temple Mount, do not be sad. The face of dawn has not disappeared...Final revenge will come tomorrow and then the swords of victory will be in our hands...(Student movement in the Al-Bireh-Ramallah region, April 15, 2016). Right: Hamas translation into Arabic of an announcement issued by the Temple Mount Faithful group calling for the Israeli public to go to the Temple Mount for Passover (Facebook page of Paldf, April 18, 2016).

Encouraging the Continuation of Terrorist Attacks



Left: Posting from Hamas in Al-Bireh and Ramallah calling for the continuation of the Al-Quds intifada and criticizing Mahmoud Abbas. The Arabic reads, "The intifada in Jerusalem continues its sacred path, while Abbas continues to stab it in the back!!" (Facebook page of Hamas movement in Al-Bireh and Ramallah, April 15, 2016). Right: Hamas notice for Palestinian Prisoners' Day with a picture of Palestinian terrorist Azmi Nafaa', who carried out a vehicular attack at the Tapuah Junction on November 24, 2015, wounding four IDF soldiers. The Arabic reads, "May your right hand be blessed" (Facebook page of Paldf, April 17, 2016).