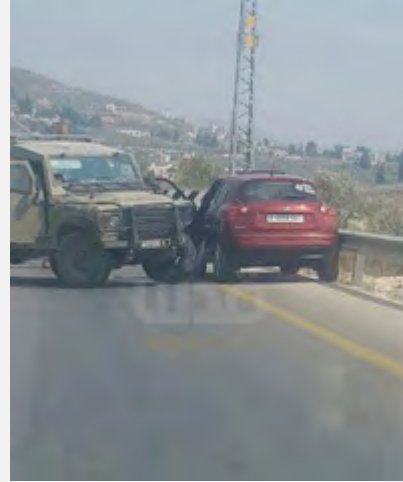




## News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(August 24 – 30, 2016)



**Left: Abu Ghrab, killed during a stabbing attack. The picture was taken in his youth and shows him holding weapons, sitting in front of a Palestinian Islamic Jihad flag (Facebook page of the PIJ in the Jenin district, August 24, 2016). Right: The scene of the stabbing attack near Yitzhar (south of Nablus) where an IDF soldier was wounded (Facebook page of Qabatiya al-A'an, August 24, 2016).**

### Overview

- The main terrorist event last week was a stabbing attack carried out during the pursuit of a Palestinian who threw stones at an IDF vehicle near the village of Yitzhar (south of Nablus). The stabber was shot and killed. He had been imprisoned in Israel for PIJ terrorist activities and released in July 2016. In addition, knives were found in the possession of several young Palestinians during security checks at IDF roadblocks near Ramallah, north Jerusalem and Hebron.
- The local elections in Judea and Samaria are supposed to be held on October 8, 2016. In the Gaza Strip the candidates running for office will be affiliated with Hamas and Fatah, while in Judea and Samaria the situation is more complex: in several municipalities, in addition to Hamas and Fatah, there are candidates belonging to other organizations or running independently, or coalitions of organizations (such as Fatah-Hamas in Nablus).

## Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem Terrorist Attacks and Attempted Attacks

### Terrorist Attack near Yitzhar

- On **August 24, 2016**, a Palestinian threw stones from a passing car at an IDF vehicle **near the village of Yitzhar, south of Nablus**. Soldiers pursued the car. They blocked its path and called on the Palestinian to exit the car. He obeyed and got out of the car holding a knife which he used to stab one of the soldiers. He was shot and killed. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) issued a death notice for **Sari Muhammad Ahmed Abu Ghrab**, 29, from Qabatiya, an operative in the organization (Al-Kofia Press, August 24, 2016).
- **Sari Muhammad Ahmed Abu Ghrab** worked in the family restaurant chain in Nablus and was opening a new branch which would be under his management. He studied technology at al-Najah University in Nablus. **At the beginning of July 2016 he was released from an Israeli jail after having served a sentence of six months for PIJ membership and terrorist activities**. His Facebook page had both religious and secular postings (he was apparently a fan of the Barcelona soccer team) (Al-Aqsa TV, Twitter account, Facebook page of Qabatiya al-Aan, al-Quds, August 24, 2016; Facebook page of Sari Abu Ghrab).



**Upper left: A Facebook post from August 24, 2016, about ten hours before he carried out the attack. The Arabic reads, "A mistake and we are sorry for it. (Facebook page of Sari Abu Ghrab, August 24, 2016). Lower left: On July 31, 2016, he posted an apology to the homeland for not having time to liberate it because of financial and personal interests (Facebook page of Sari Abu Ghrab, July 31, 2016) Right: Sari Abu Ghrab.**

## Palestinian Suspected of Planning Attack Killed

- On August 26, 2016, a Palestinian ran towards IDF soldiers manning a post in Silwad (near Ofra, northeast of Ramallah). They initiated standard procedures for the detention of suspects and when he did not obey they shot and killed him. He was found to be unarmed. IDF Military Police initiated an investigation into his death (Ynet, August 26, 2016).
- The Palestinian was **Iyad Zakaria Hamed**, 38, from Silwad, married, father of three, and a holder of American citizenship (Twitter account of Quds.net, Facebook page of Palinfo, Facebook page of Hamas in the Ramallah district and Ma'an, August 26, 2016). During his funeral Palestinians rioted and clashed with Israeli security forces. Five Palestinians were injured (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 27, 2016).



Left: The funeral held in Silwad for Iyad Zakaria Hamed (Twitter account of Quds.net, August 26, 2016). Right: The death notice issued by Hamas for Iyad Zakaria Hamed (Facebook page of Hamas in the Ramallah-al-Bireh district and Ma'an, August 26, 2016).

## Knives Discovered in the Possession of Palestinians

- **August 28, 2016** – A Palestinian from the Shuafat refugee camp planning to go to Jerusalem went to **the Shuafat roadblock**. An examination of his possessions revealed a knife. He was detained and taken for interrogation (Israel Police Force spokesman's unit, August 28, 2016).
- **August 28, 2016** – A Palestinian was detained by the Israeli security forces at **the southern entrance to Beit Hagai (Mt. Hebron)** when a knife was found in his possession.

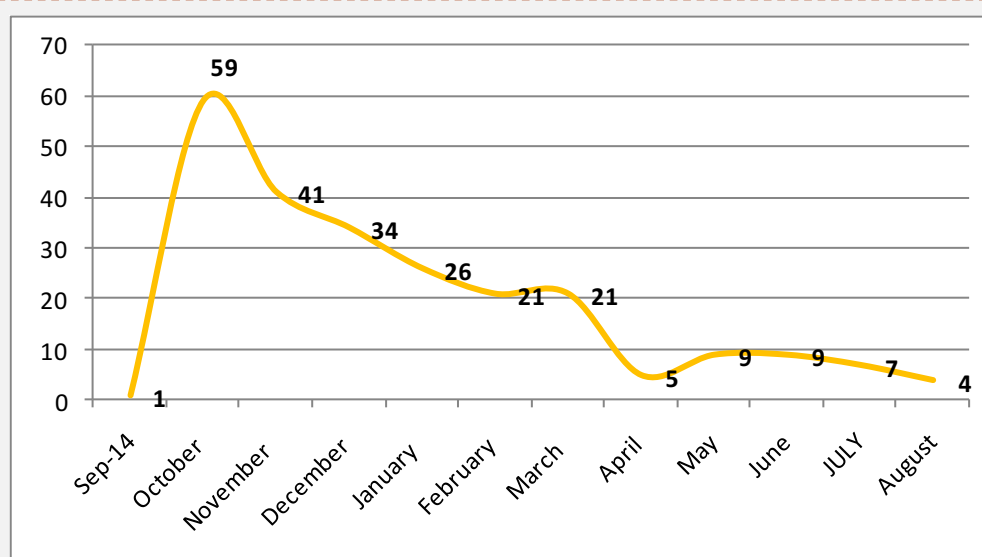
■ **August 27, 2016** – An 18 year-old Palestinian from Hebron roused the suspicions of Border Policemen at **the Cave of the Patriarchs**. They detained him. He was found to be carrying a knife. During interrogation he confessed he had gone to the Cave of the Patriarchs to avenge the death of his cousin, who had been shot to death in a terrorist attack in Tel Romeida.

■ **August 27, 2016** – Israeli police detained a Palestinian woman at **the Qalandia roadblock** when a knife was found in his possession. She was taken for interrogation.



Left: The knife found in the possession of the Palestinian woman at the Qalandia roadblock. Right: The knife found in the possession of the young Palestinian from Hebron near the Cave of the Patriarchs (Israel Police Force spokesman's unit, August 27, 2016).

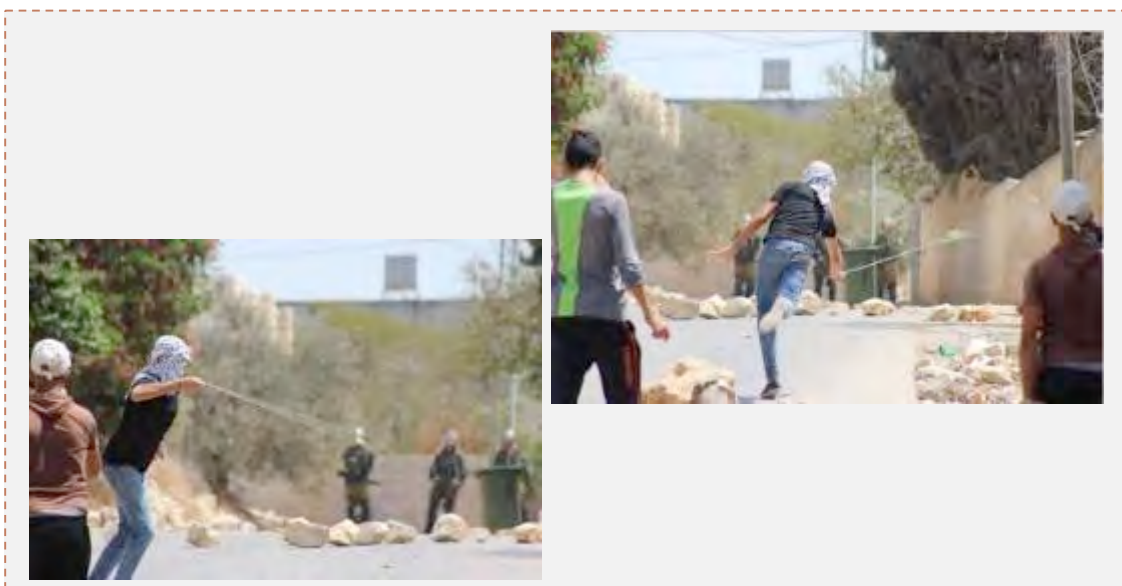
## Monthly Distribution of Terrorist Attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem





## Riots and Clashes

- In the meantime, riots, the throwing of stones, Molotov cocktails and pipe bombs and light-arms fire continue in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem.
- The more prominent events were the following:
  - **August 28, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at Israeli police in **Issawiya**. A policeman was wounded and evacuated to a hospital.
  - **August 27, 2016** – Palestinians rioted in the village of **Katana (near Har Adar, northwest of Jerusalem)** and clashed with Israeli security forces. A Border Policeman was struck in the eye with a stone (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 27, 2016).
  - **August 26, 2016** – Palestinians threw several pipe bombs and Molotov cocktails at Israeli security forces near **the Tomb of Rachel and the Dheisheh refugee camp (near Bethlehem)**. There were no casualties; damage was reported (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 26, 2016).
  - **August 25, 2016** – Palestinians threw improvised hand grenades at IDF forces near **Beit Jala (south of Jerusalem)**. There were no casualties (Facebook page of Red Alert, August 25, 2016).



Masked Palestinians throw stones at IDF soldiers in the village of Qadoum (Twitter account of Quds.net, August 26, 2016).

## House of Terrorist Demolished

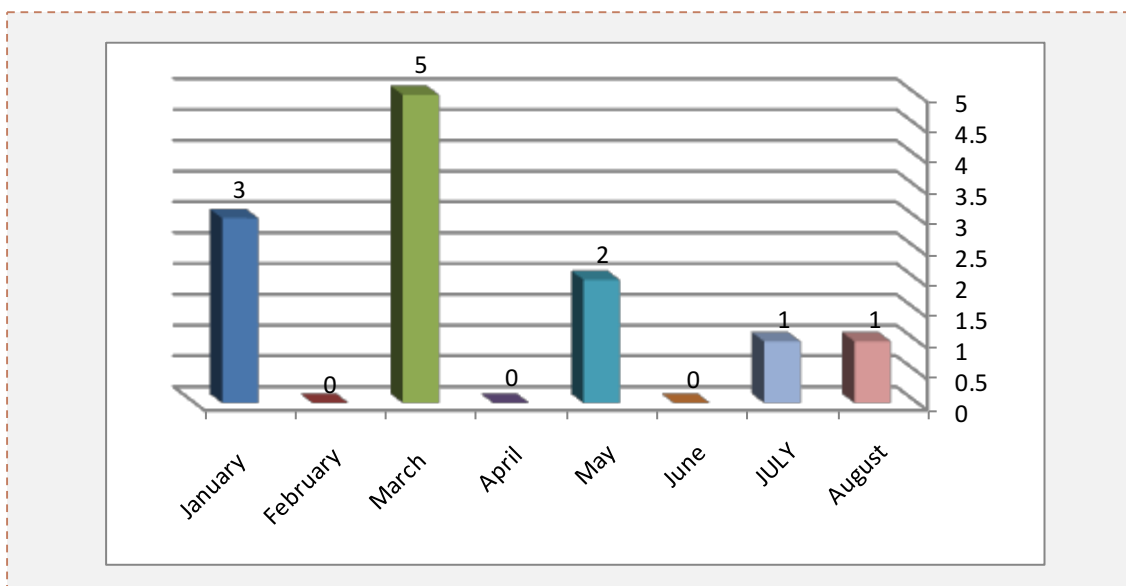
■ In accordance with a decision made by the political leadership, on the night of August 28, 2016, IDF forces demolished the house of **Muhammad Amayra** in the village of **Dura**. Amayra was an operative in the terrorist squad that carried out the shooting attack on July 1, 2016, near Otniel, killing Michael Mark.

## Israel's South

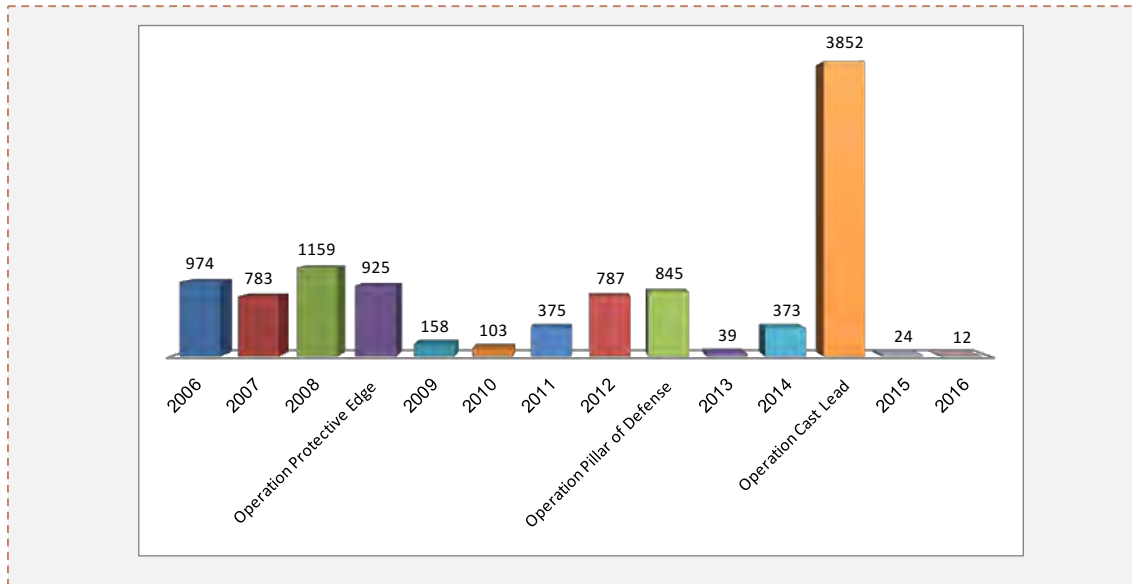
### Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

■ This past week no rocket hits were reported in Israeli territory.

### Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire, 2016

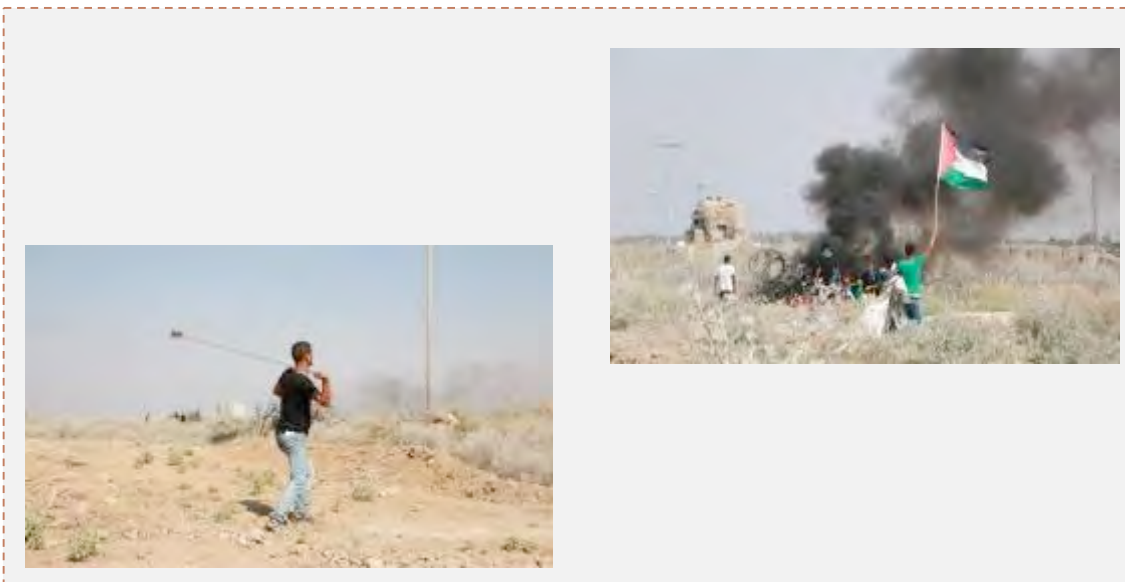


## Annual Distribution of Rocket Fire in Israel's South<sup>1</sup>



## Violence at the Border Security Fence

- Gazans rioted and clashed with IDF forces near the border security fence. The IDF soldiers employed crowd control measures. Three Palestinians were reported wounded (Twitter account of Quds.net and Facebook page of Palinfo, August 26, 2016).



Palestinians riot east along the border security fence east of Gaza City (Twitter account of Palinfo, August 26, 2016).

<sup>1</sup> The statistics do not include mortar shell fire or rockets which misfired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

## Palestinians Shoot at Israeli Navy Ship

■ On August 25, 2016, an Israeli Navy ship opened fire on a Gazan fishing boat in an attempt to detain Palestinians who had exceeded the area permitted for fishing off the coast of the northern Gaza Strip. One of the fishermen was wounded and was evacuated by the IDF force for medical care. During the event operatives of the Palestinian terrorist organizations situated on the Gazan shore opened fire at the Israeli Navy ship. Such an attack from the shore was exceptional. No organization claimed responsibility (Ynet, August 25, 2016).

## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### Status of IDF Investigation of Operation Protective Edge

■ Two years after the end of Operation Protective Edge the IDF issued a report on status of the examination and criminal investigations of 360 exceptional events in which IDF soldiers were involved. According to the IDF spokesman, the order was given to begin immediate investigations of 24 events where it was reasonable to suspect that a felony had been committed. In one case three soldiers were indicted for looting and abetting looting. Thirteen files were closed without legal or disciplinary measures. The other events have yet to be investigated. Two hundred and twenty additional cases were turned over to an IDF headquarters checking mechanism for investigation. Criminal investigations were initiated in seven cases. Eighty other cases were not considered as warranting criminal investigation (IDF spokesman, August 24, 2016).

■ **Saeb Erekat, chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee**, called on the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague to investigate suspicions of "war crimes" alleged by the Palestinians as having been committed Israel during Operation Protective Edge. He made the appeal following the decision of the Israeli army chief prosecutor to close files dealing with IDF activity during the operation. According to Erekat, the Palestinians gave the ICC information about the so-called "crimes" committed by Israel in the Gaza Strip. However, he said, Israel had cleared the IDF of "war crimes against the Palestinian people," which made it necessary for the ICC to examine their activities (Paltoday, August 26, 2016).



## The Palestinian Authority

### Attempts to Arrange a Meeting between Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas

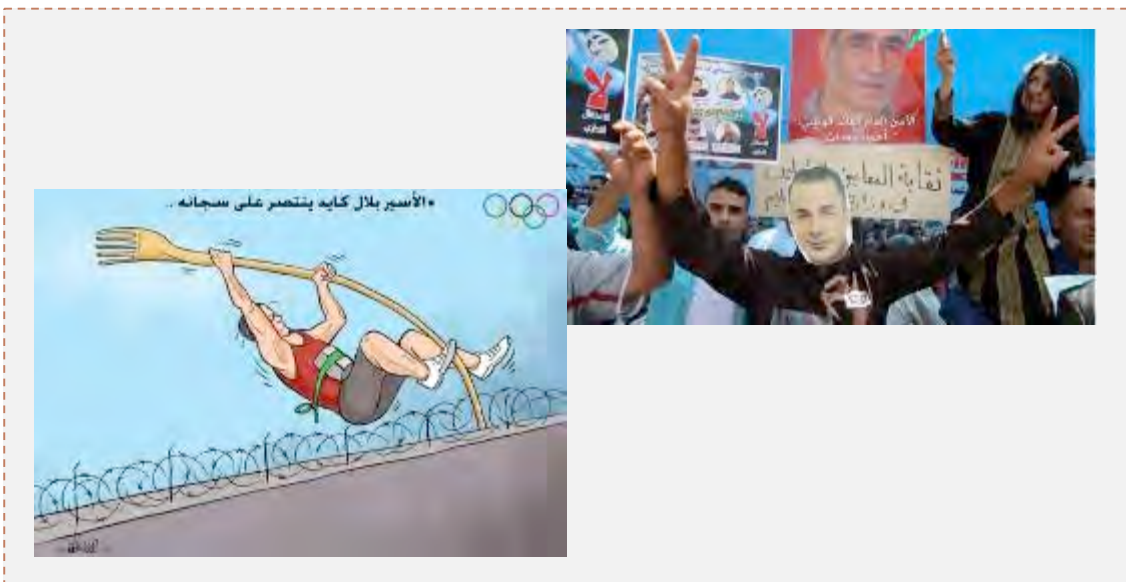
■ **Riyad al-Maliki, foreign minister in the Palestinian national consensus government**, said the Russian government had recently made efforts to arrange a meeting in October between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas. He said the PA did not object to the meeting but Netanyahu had so far not expressed willingness to attend. Al-Maliki said the meeting would be held only after Israel had announced the establishment of a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders with east Jerusalem as its capital, the cessation of construction in the settlements and the release of Palestinian prisoners (The Voice of Palestine, August 29, 2016).

### PA Security Force Activities

■ The PA security forces continue their activities to confiscate weapons in Judea and Samaria. According to Adnan al-Damiri, spokesman for the PA security forces, the activities are ongoing in all the PA districts and the results have been good (Facebook page of Watan, August 27, 2016)

### Bilal Kayed Ends Hunger Strike

■ **Issa Qaraqe, chairman of the Palestinian authority for released prisoners**, said that on August 24, 2016, after 70 days, Bilal Kayed announced he was ending his hunger strike. He reached an arrangement with the prison authorities according to which the military court would not renew his current administrative detention and he would be released in December 2016. Palestinian speakers represented the arrangement as a great achievement for the Palestinian people and the prisoners.



Left: Bilal Kayed symbolically pole vaults over the wall of the prison using a fork. The Arabic reads, "Prisoner Bilal Kayed overcomes his captors" (Twitter account of Palinfo, August 25, 2016). Right: A rally held in Ramallah to celebrate Bilal Kayed's "victory" (Facebook page of Quds.net, August 25, 2016).

## Elections in the Palestinian Authority

- The PA announced local municipal elections would be held on October 8, 2016. August 25, 2016, the election committee issued lists of candidates. Election campaigning will begin in the middle of September. On August 29, 2016, the election committee issued the lists of candidates for local elections. It includes 865 lists (787 in Judea and Samaria and 78 in the Gaza Strip). Elections will be held for 171 municipalities. No elections will be held in 181 municipalities because an agreed-upon list was registered. No lists at all were registered in 38 municipalities (Wafa, August 29, 2016).
- In the Gaza Strip the campaign will apparently be between Hamas and Fatah (which announced its candidates would run as "The faction for national liberation and structure"). In Judea and Samaria the situation is more complex because in several locations Fatah and Hamas formed coalitions (Nablus, for example). In some locations the two movements are rivals (Qalqilya, Tulkarm) and in others there are independent candidates running for office with local support (Ramallah, Bethlehem). In a number of locations coalitions of two or more movements are running on the same ticket, such as Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in Tubas. In east Jerusalem the elections have not stirred up much local interest there is a possibility that local elections will not be held.
- According to a poll conducted by the Arab World for Research and Development, voter turnout will be about 60%. In the Gaza Strip, 32.4% are expected to vote for

Fatah, 37% for Hamas, 8.8% for leftists and 6% for other Islamist groups<sup>2</sup> (AWRAD website, August 24, 2016).

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.awrad.org/files/server/Online%20elections%20Study-2016-8-24%20en\(1\).pdf](http://www.awrad.org/files/server/Online%20elections%20Study-2016-8-24%20en(1).pdf)