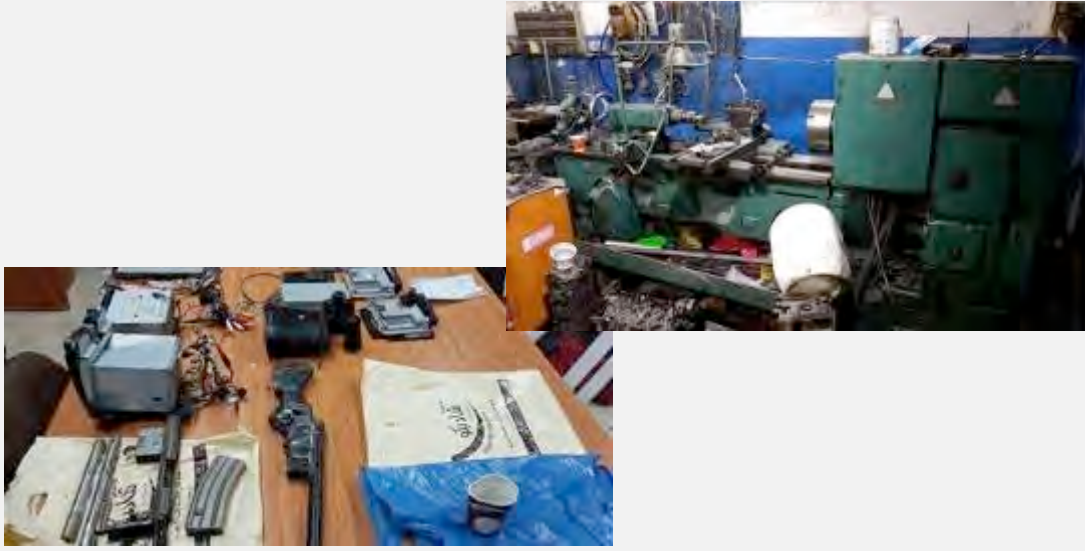




# News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(December 28, 2016 – January 3, 2017)



Lathe used in the manufacture of weapons found in Nablus by the Israeli security forces  
(Facebook page of Gaza al-A'an, December 28, 2016).

## Overview

- This past week popular terrorism continued with an attempted stabbing attack at the Qalandia crossing, near Ramallah. In addition, there was a drive-by shooting at an IDF post in the Jenin region.
- The Israeli security forces exposed a terrorist squad of Israeli Arabs who planned to attack IDF soldiers in the Negev. The attack was to be in retaliation for Israel's outlawing the Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement.
- The Palestinian Authority (PA) is planning use UN Security Council Resolution 2334 to initiate measures against Israel. According to Ahmed Majdalani, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, the PA will formally lodge a "settlements file" with the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague during the last week of January 2017.

## Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem

### Terrorist Attacks and Attempted Terrorists Attacks

■ **December 30, 2016** – A Palestinian woman armed with a knife went to **the Qalandia crossing near Ramallah**. She walked in the vehicle lane towards Israeli security forces and did not obey their order to halt. They shot and wounded her. The Palestinian media reported she was **Jihan Muhammad Hashima**, 35, from Issawiya, and had an Israeli identity card. **Hamas spokesman Husam Badran** said the shooting at the Qalandia crossing was proof of "Israel's brutality" (Hamas website, December 30, 2013).



The knife found in the possession of Jihan Hashima (Israel Police Force spokesman's unit, December 30, 2016).

■ **December 30, 2016** – There was a drive-by shooting at an IDF post at **the Mevo Dotan crossing near the village of Ya'abad (Jenin region)**. There were no casualties. The car drove away to Ya'abad. The following day the Israeli security forces detained three Palestinians suspected of carrying out the attack (Facebook page of Red Alert, December 31, 2016).

### Riots, Clashes and Popular Terrorism

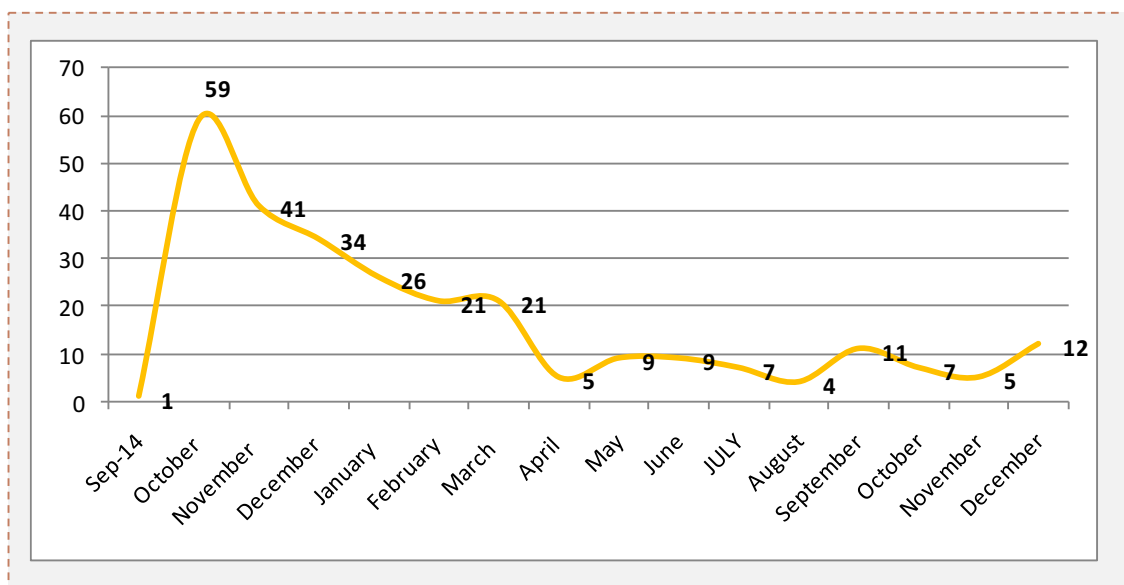
■ In the meantime, routine popular terrorism continues, focusing on throwing stones at Israeli vehicles in Judea and Samaria. The more prominent occurrences were the following:

- **January 2, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at Israeli vehicles near the village of **Luban al-Sharqia (northeast of Ramallah)**. There were no casualties; the

windshield of one car was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 3, 2017).

- **January 2, 2017** – Palestinians threw stones at an Israeli bus near **Umm Salamona in Gush Etzion**. There were no casualties. The windshield of the car was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, January 3, 2017).
- **December 31, 2016** – A Palestinian was detained by the Israeli security forces at the **Deir Sharaf Junction in Samaria**. A knife was found in his possession. He was taken for interrogation (Facebook page of Red Alert, December 31, 2016).
- **December 30, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at an Israeli vehicle on the **Gush Etzion-Hebron road near Bayt Ummar**. There were no casualties; the vehicle was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, December 30, 2016).
- **December 29, 2016** – Palestinians threw stones at an Israel vehicle **near Issawiya**. There were no casualties; the vehicle was damaged (Facebook page of Red Alert, December 29, 2016).
- **December 28, 2016** – Palestinians threw a pipe bomb at IDF forces near **the Tomb of Rachel in Bethlehem**. There were no casualties (Facebook page of Red Alert, December 28, 2016).
- **December 28, 2016** – Palestinians shot at **IDF forces operating in Jenin**. There were no casualties (Facebook page of Red Alert, December 28, 2016).

### Significant Terrorist Attacks in Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem since September 2015



## Exposure of Terrorist Squad Planning to Attack IDF Soldiers

- The Israeli security forces exposed a **terrorist squad of Israeli Arabs** who planned to attack IDF soldiers in southern Israel, **in retaliation for Israel's outlawing the Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement**. The ringleader was 37, from Beer Sheba, who had been in prison for 12 years because of involvement in terrorist activities. One of his partners was 24, from Ksifa in the Negev. Both worked in a supermarket in Beer Sheba. The third Israeli Arab terrorist involved was from Qalansuwa (in the center of Israel) and who had also been imprisoned for security offenses.
- In preparation for the attack they conducted surveillance to gather information about places that could be suitable. During interrogation they gave up a Karl Gustav submachine gun and a large quantity of remote detonators (Israel Security Agency website, December 27, 2016).

## Bodies of Terrorist Operatives Transferred to Palestinian Authority

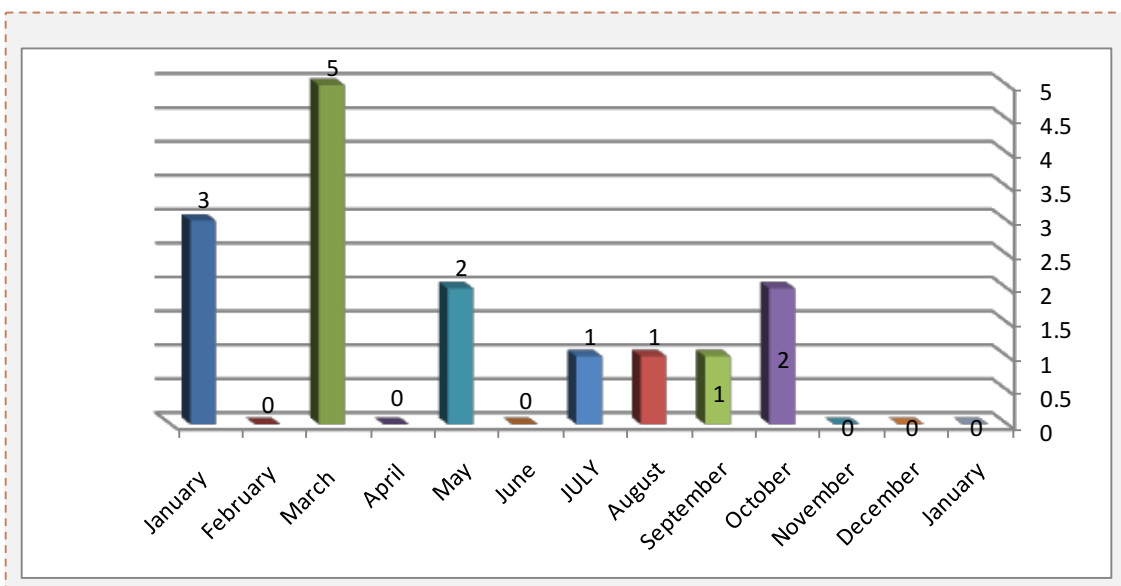
- Israel transferred the bodies of two terrorist operatives to the PA: **Ma'an Abu Qara**, who attempted a terrorist attack at the Ofra Junction; and **Hamed al-Sheikh**, who carried out a terrorist attack in the Old City of Jerusalem on December 14, 2016. During the funeral Palestinians rioted in Beit Surik and threw stone at the Israeli security forces.

## Israel's South

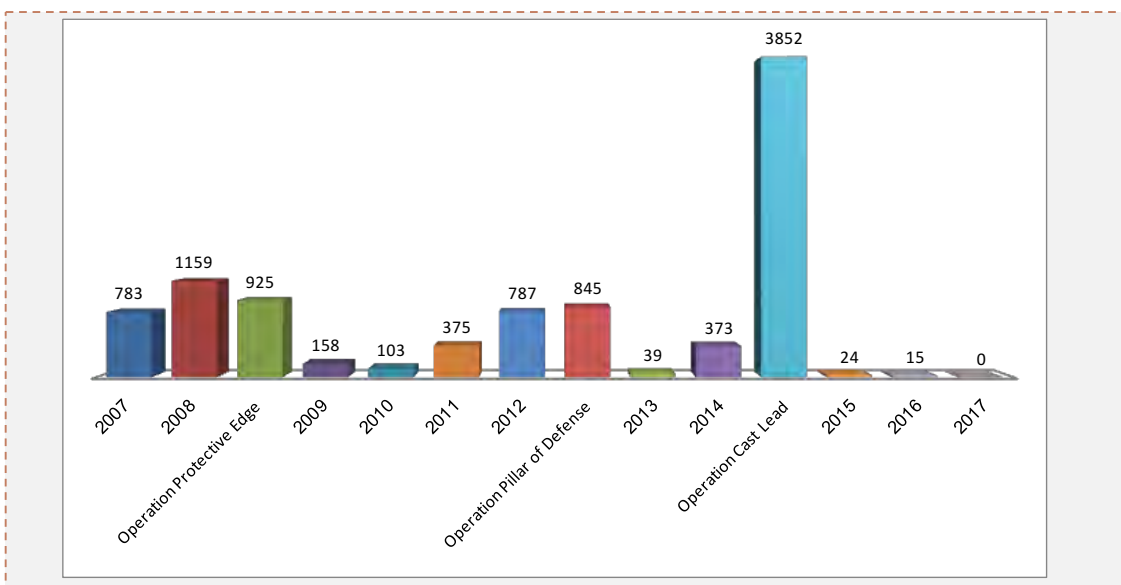
### Rocket Fire Attacking Israel

- This past week no rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory.

## Monthly Distribution of Rocket Fire, 2016



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



## Detention of Hamas Terrorist Operative Who Crossed into Israel

- On December 27, 2016, **Bilal al-Razayna**, 24, a terrorist operative in Hamas' military wing, was detained by the Israeli security forces after he crossed the border security fence. Interrogation revealed his extensive involvement in Hamas' military wing (he was a sniper, dug tunnels and served as a guard). He also accompanied his

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

brother, **Mustafa al-Razayna, head of Hamas's internal security forces in the northern Gaza Strip** (Israel Security Agency website, December 28, 2016).

■ During interrogation he gave up information about Hamas military posts, the routes of tunnels dug in the northern Gaza Strip and Hamas' digging methods. He also revealed that there was a tunnel under his house leading to many nearby tunnels used, among other things, for storing weapons. He also revealed that **during Operation Protective Edge his brother and other senior Hamas figures hid in the Kamal Adwan hospital in the Gaza Strip** and from there directed the fighting. He himself served as a courier to transfer messages to and from his brother and senior Hamas figures. He also gave extensive information about how Hamas uses civilian houses to carry out terrorist attacks (Israel Security Agency website, December 28, 2016).

■ The **Shaheed Kamal Adwan hospital** is located in the northern Gaza Strip in the region of Beit Lahia. We have information that during Operation Cast Lead as well Hamas used the hospital's facilities and turned it into the center of the activities of the Hamas police and security forces in the northern Gaza Strip. Hamas operatives improvised a war room in the hospital, remained in the hospital dressed in civilian clothes and transported weapons. When the IDF ground forces entered the Gaza Strip Hamas military operatives gathered in the hospital and armed operatives were seen walking around inside. Reportedly, senior Hamas figure Fathi Hamad (who was later appointed minister of the interior) established himself in the hospital during the operation.<sup>2</sup>

## Developments in the Gaza Strip

### Announcement for the Eighth Anniversary of Operation Cast Lead

■ Hamas marked the eighth anniversary of Operation Cast Lead by announcing that **the "armed resistance" would continue to spearhead the campaign against the Israeli occupation**. In addition, Hamas claimed, Israel had failed to achieve its objectives in the Gaza Strip. However, **Hamas would not rush to war**, but if Israel began one it would be surprised and defeated (Hamas website, December 27, 2016).

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<sup>2</sup> For further information, see the July 23, 2014 bulletin, "[Hamas and the Other Terrorist Organizations in the Gaza Strip Use Medical Facilities and Ambulances for Military-Terrorist Purposes](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/article/20683)," at <http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/article/20683>.

## Hamas-Egypt Relations

■ **Musa Abu Marzouq, a member of Hamas' political bureau**, met in Cairo with senior Egyptian figures to discuss topics which included opening the Rafah crossing and security issues related to the Gaza Strip-Egypt border. After the meeting he claimed Hamas had "turned over a new leaf" in its relations with Egypt and that currently Hamas-Egyptian relations were as good as they could be (al-Ghad, December 29, 2016). According to op-ed articles in the newspapers, in the coming year Egypt and Hamas can be expected to redefine their relations, Egypt having sent Hamas messages that it wanted to improve relations in order to support its security in the shadow of threats from Sinai Peninsula (Arabi 21, December 30, 2016)

### Hamas vs. the Salafi Jihadists in the Gaza Strip

■ On December 31, 2016, it was reported that Hamas security forces had detained **Muhammad Armilat, representative of ISIS's Sinai Province in the Gaza Strip** (Watan24, December 31, 2016). On the other hand, Salafist sources in the Gaza Strip reported that a Molotov cocktail had been thrown at the house of **Ayman Noufal, a senior operative in the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades** in the al-Bureij refugee camp. According to the report, it was thrown when senior Hamas security figures were inside the house, among them **Tawfiq Abu Na'im, commander of the security forces** (Twitter account of Tameh the Gazan, December 29, 2016).

■ Fatah-affiliated websites reported that ISIS in the Sinai Peninsula had recruited **Mahmoud Tabasi** to its ranks, a senior figure in Hamas internal security forces, an operative in Hamas' elite *nukhba* unit, and an expert sniper. According to the report Tabasi is in possession of sensitive information about Hamas' military wing, and **Hamas is worried about its Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades operatives' defection to ISIS, which has increased recently** (Watan24, December 31, 2016).

### Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Deaths, 2016

■ Hamas' military-terrorist wing said in an announcement that **29 of its military wing operatives from its training, preparation and fighting systems had been killed in 2016**. Twenty-one of them were killed in the tunnels, two in training and six in the struggle against Israel, some of killed by Israel (alresala.net, January 1, 2017).

## The Palestinian Authority

### Responses to John Kerry's Speech

■ On December 28, 2016, John Kerry, the outgoing American secretary of state, gave a long speech devoted to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, representing the position of the Obama administration. He also related to the decision of the United States to allow the Security Council to pass Resolution 2334. He claimed the United States had not been behind the resolution, which was formulated by the Palestinians and Egypt.

■ Senior PA figures were fairly satisfied with the speech because they claimed it criticized Israeli policies, although it also contained elements the Palestinians were uncomfortable with (such as defining Israel as a Jewish State). Some of the responses were the following:

- **Jibril Rajoub, a member of Fatah's Central Committee**, claimed Kerry's speech was "an indictment" of Israeli policies carried out by the "fascist, racist" Israeli government. He said the speech contained elements that linked regional stability and peace to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, with the 1967 borders and east Jerusalem as its capital. He added that the Palestinian leadership regarded the speech as a clear message to the international community, requiring it to clean house, increase its awareness of the conduct of the Israeli government and implement the Arab initiative as a basis for the end of the conflict (al-Arabiya, December 28, 2016).

- **Taysir Khaled, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee**, praised the speech. He claimed it would have been possible to prevent the government of Israel from implementing its policies if the American administration had respected international law and not defended Israel politically and diplomatically while it violated the Palestinians' human rights (Dunia al-Watan, December 29, 2016).

■ On the other hand, **Riyad al-Maliki, foreign minister of the Palestinian national consensus government**, said there was nothing new in Kerry's speech with the exception of the **"dangerous" attempt to have the Palestinians recognize Israel as the Jewish State**, an idea the Palestinians rejected out of hand. He stressed that the **Palestinians should not deal with recognizing a Jewish State, as they should not agree to Israeli security arrangements and needs when they were at the expense of Palestinian lands and rights**. He also claimed that in the first part of



the speech, Kerry had tried to make excuses for the way the United States voted on Resolution 2334, and in the second half he repeated the political ideas he had spoken about for years (Ma'an, December 28, 2016).

## Addition Palestinian Reactions to UN Security Council Resolution 23343

■ **The PA has begun to use Resolution 2334 to initiate measures against Israel in international institutions, such as the ICC in The Hague.** According to **Ahmed Majdalani, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee**, the PA will formally lodge a settlements file with the ICC towards the end of December 2017. He claimed contacts had already been held to the ICC's attorney general's office to begin an international investigation of the issue of the settlements (alresala.net, January 1, 2017).

■ **Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian envoy to the UN**, sent a communiqué to the UN secretary general, the president of the Security Council and the president of the General Assembly calling for the immediate implementation of Resolution 2334 so that its influence would be felt. He called for an end to construction in the settlements, saying it violated international law (Ma'an, December 30, 2016).



Hamas comment on UN Security Council Resolution 2334. The Arabic reads, "Condemnation of the settlements...a kick from behind" (al-Aqsa TV website, December 31, 2016)

<sup>3</sup> For further information, see the December 29, 2016 bulletin, "Palestinian Reactions to UN Security Council Resolution 2334," [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/articles/Art\\_21124/E\\_238\\_16\\_1794678671.pdf](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/articles/Art_21124/E_238_16_1794678671.pdf)

## Palestinian Comments about the Paris Conference

■ Palestinians made the following comments about the peace conference scheduled for January 15, 2017 in Paris.

- **Mahmoud Abbas**, interviewed by Palestinian TV on the occasion of the anniversary of Fatah's founding, noted the conference's importance. He mentioned the "historic victory" in the Security Council and said he hoped it would lead to forming a mechanism for overseeing the implementation of the resolution. He also said he expected a working plan to be devised which would rely on a timetable for ending the occupation and the declaration of a Palestinian state.
- **Salman al-Herfi, the PA ambassador to France**, said invitations had been sent to the 70 countries participating in the international peace conference scheduled for January 15, 2017. He claimed the Palestinians and Israelis had not been invited because of Israel's refusal to participate (Sawt Filastin, January 2, 2017).
- **Saeb Erekat, secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee**, said the Palestinian leadership had invested efforts to ensure the success of the Paris conference. He said **the Palestinian leadership would appeal to the international community again with a request for full membership in the UN**. He claimed that if Israel refused to participate in the conference, it would mean it had no respect for the international community (Dunia al-Watan, December 28, 2016).
- **Ahmed Majdalani, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee**, said Israel's non-participation in the Paris conference might lead to its political isolation, especially in light of Resolution 2334. He claimed Israel's decision could lead countries to recognize the Palestinian state. He said that in the meantime, contacts with the ICC continued to coordinate the Palestinian move and to begin an investigation of the issue of settlements (alresala.net, January 1, 2017).

## Fatah's 52nd Anniversary

■ The Fatah Movement marked its 52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary with a series of events. A torch-lighting ceremony in Ramallah was attended by **PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas**. He gave a speech in which he said the 7<sup>th</sup> Fatah Movement conference had been a success nationally and internationally, and demanded that Israel stop all activities in

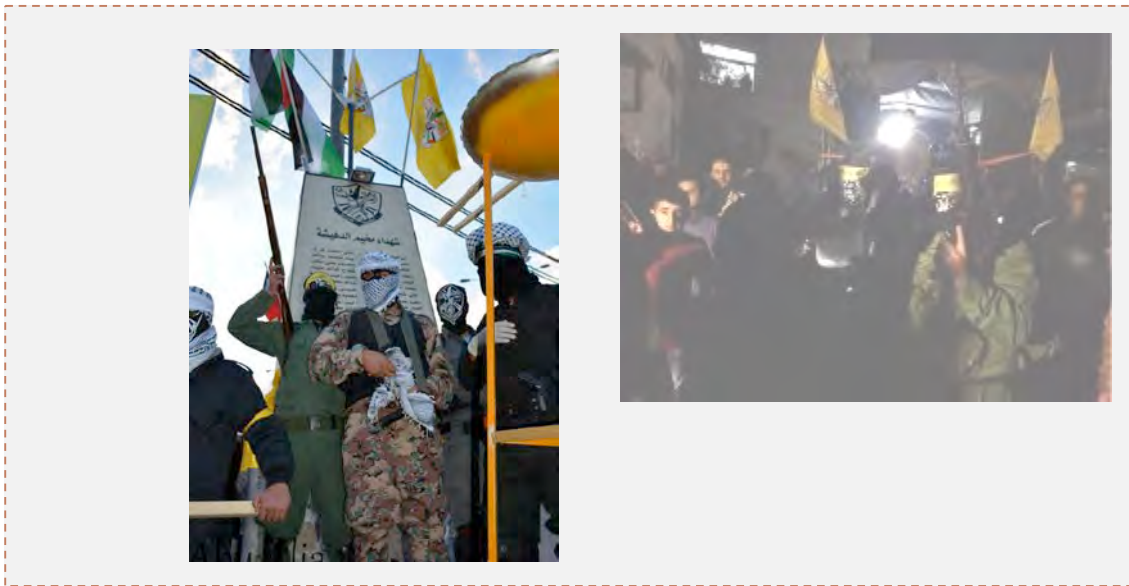
the settlements. He claimed 2017 would be the year of the international recognition of Palestine (Raya.ps, December 31, 2016)



Cartoon in the Palestinian daily al-Quds, published in east Jerusalem after Mahmoud Abbas said 2017 would be the year of international recognition for the state of Palestine. It predicts a difficult and complex campaign.

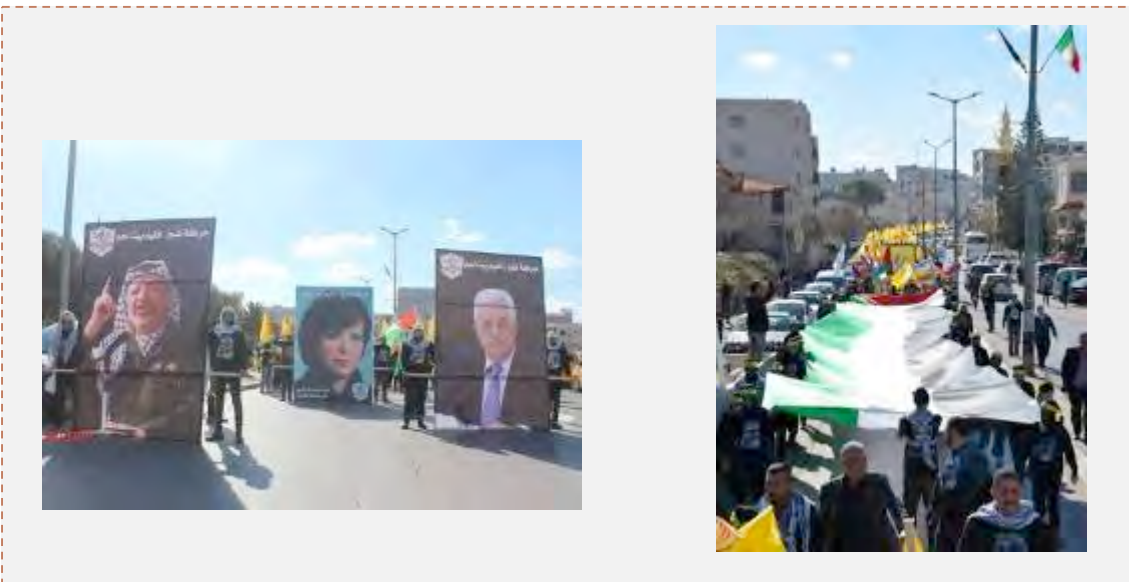


Left: Ahmed Hilles, a member of Fatah's Central Committee, light a torch at a ceremony in the Gaza Strip. Right: Mahmoud Abbas lights a torch at the ceremony for the 52nd anniversary of Fatah's founding (Wafa, December 31, 2016).



Left: Armed Fatah terrorist operatives in front of the shaheed memorial at a rally in the Dheisheh refugee camp in Bethlehem. Right: Masked, armed Fatah operatives at a rally held in the Jilazoun refugee camp, north of Ramallah (Facebook page of Fatah, December 30, 2016).

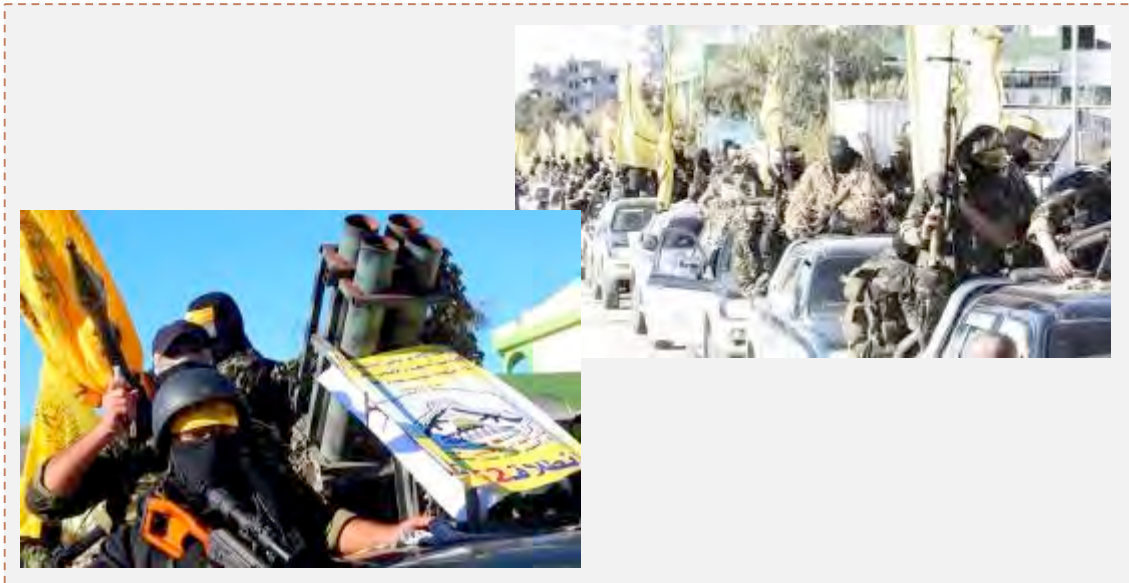
- A procession was held in the streets of Bethlehem with the participation of senior Fatah figures. Marchers held Fatah flags, pictures of shaheeds and flags of the countries that voted in favor of UN Security Council Resolution 2334. Members of Fatah's Central Committee lit torches and there was a minute of silence in memory of the shaheeds (PNN and the Fatah Facebook page, January 1, 2017)



Left: Pictures of Mahmoud Abbas and Yasser Arafat. In the center is Dalal al-Mughrabi, the female Palestinian terrorist organizations who participated in the Coastal Road massacre in 1978 and became a Palestinian symbol and role model. Right: Procession through the streets of Bethlehem (Facebook page of Fars, January 1, 2017).

- In the Gaza Strip operatives in Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades held a military display. An Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades spokesman said **they adhered to the option**

of the armed "struggle" as the only path to the liberation of Palestine (Quds Press, December 31, 2016).



Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades military display held in the Gaza Strip (Facebook page of Quds, December 31, 2016)

## Archbishop Hilarion Capucci Dies

■ This past week Archbishop Hilarion Capucci died at the age of 94. Between 1965 and 1974 he was the Greek Orthodox archbishop of Caesarea. In 1974 he was caught by the Israeli security forces smuggling weapons in his vehicle for Fatah operatives, exploiting his diplomatic status. He was sentenced to a term of 12 years but in 1978 the Pope asked Israeli President Ephraim Katsir to secure his release. Upon his release he was deported. In 2010 he participated in the *Mavi Marmara* flotilla. While on a visit to Rome in 2013, Mahmoud Abbas awarded him the "Star of Jerusalem" medal.

■ In the statement issued for Archbishop Hilarion Capucci's death, Mahmoud Abbas called him "a great warrior" (Wafa, January 1, 2017). **Yusuf al-Mahmoud, a PA spokesman**, said in a statement that his death left great sorrow in the heart of every Palestinian because of his positions and struggle for the sake of the Palestinian people (Wafa, January 1, 2017). Al-Hayat al-Jadeeda, the official PA organ, printed an editorial calling Capucci a "hero" from whom it was possible to learn how to integrate religion into a national struggle (al-Hayat al-Jadeeda, January 3, 2017).



**Left: Weapons concealed in the vehicle of Archbishop Hilarion Capucci for Fatah terrorist operatives (Israel Security Agency website). Right: Mahmoud Abbas presents Archbishop Hilarion Capucci with the "Star of Jerusalem" medal as a reward for his efforts for the Palestinian people (Wafa, date, 2016).**