



Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center  
at the Israel Intelligence' Heritage  
& Commemoration Center (IICC)

## News of the Israeli-Palestinian Confrontation

April 1-15, 2007



**Marketing the national unity government: Foreign minister Ziyad Abu 'Amro at a press conference in Vienna (Islam Online, April 5). The messages sent to Europe by the Palestinian foreign and finance ministers are contradicted by statements made by Hamas spokesmen about the continuation of terrorist activity and refusal to recognize Israel.**



**Relatives of Palestinian terrorists imprisoned in Israel demonstrating in the Gaza Strip (Islam Online, April 8). Media reports about the exchange of prisoners raised the expectations of the Palestinians that those with blood on their hands would be released.**

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## Overview

- Using Egypt as an intermediary, Hamas recently sent Israel a list of Palestinian prisoners whose release they demand in return for Gilad Shalit, the IDF soldier abducted last June. Among the prisoners are those who were involved in the planning and carrying out of mass-murder attacks. At a government meeting held on April 10, it was said that a certain measure of progress was being made in the negotiations but there were disappointments and reservations regarding the prisoners' list.
- The Palestinian national unity government has undertaken an political-propaganda campaign to lift Europe's political and economic boycott of the Palestinian Authority. To that end it sent its foreign and finance ministers on visits to a number of European countries. After meeting with the Israeli Prime Minister on April 15, Abu Mazen is to leave for a tour of the European capitals. Concurrently, senior Hamas officials have repeatedly declared that Hamas is committed to continuing terrorism and is determined not to recognize Israel. Prominent were the remarks made by Hamas spokesman Ismail Radwan, who preached jihad against Israel and called for the slaughter of Jews.
- Israeli security forces exposed **a Hamas operational infrastructure in Qalqilya** which was preparing mass murder attacks of various sorts during the Passover holiday. One of them was **a suicide bombing attack to be carried out in the Tel Aviv region** using a van loaded with 100 kg (220 lb) of explosives. The attack was aborted (for reasons which are still unclear) and the vehicle, which had already entered Israel, returned to Qalqilya, where it blew up as the result of a "work accident."

## **Important Events**

### **Shooting attacks in Judea and Samaria**

■ On April 10 an Israeli civilian from the settlement of Immanuel was wounded in a drive-by shooting as he waited at the bus stop at a junction north of the village of Jinsafut, about 1 km north of Immanuel. The shot was apparently fired from a hunting rifle. Two other civilians at the bus stop were not injured.

■ On April 12 shots were fired at an Israeli vehicle close to the settlement of Tekoa, south of Bethlehem. No one was injured. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

### **Stabbing attack in Hebron**

■ On April 8 a Palestinian youth stabbed two Border Policemen at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron. A Border Police force opened fire and wounded the attacker. According to the Hamas Website, the stabber was a 17 year-old student from Hebron.

### **Decrease in rocket fire from the Gaza Strip**

■ During the first two weeks of April six rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory (and three in the Gaza Strip itself). That marked a significant decrease in rocket fire from the Gaza Strip. On April 8 one of the rockets hit the industrial zone of Sderot, damaging a shed belonging to one of the factories; no one was injured. Responsibility for most of the launches was claimed by Fatah elements in the Gaza Strip.

■ The firing of rockets, which contravenes the ceasefire agreement reached in the Gaza Strip, was condemned by both Abu Mazen and the Egyptian foreign minister.

✿ In a speech made at the graduation ceremonies of a presidential guard course Abu Mazen called upon the Palestinian security forces to make every

effort to put an end to the anarchy plaguing the Gaza Strip and “to stop the useless rocket fire” (Palestinian News Agency, April 7).

✿ The Egyptian foreign minister called upon Israel “to preserve the lull [in the fighting]” and upon the Palestinians to stop firing rockets. He said that the rocket fire provided Israel with an excuse to escalate its military activity (Middle East News Agency, April 7).

## **IDF counterterrorist activities**

### **Gaza Strip**

■ On April 7, as part of activity against terrorist squads laying charges along the security fence, Israeli aircraft fired at terrorists near the Jabaliya refugee camp. A Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine operative was killed.

■ The ceasefire in the Gaza Strip notwithstanding, the Palestinian terrorist organizations continue to lay charges frequently along the security fence. During the past few months several dozen charges were laid to attack IDF forces as they drove by.

### **Judea and Samaria**

#### **Suicide bombing attack in Israel during Passover prevented**

■ During March 2007 a wave of arrests conducted in Qalqilya by the Israeli security forces led to the detention of 19 Hamas terrorist-operatives . Interrogation of the detainees revealed that the Hamas infrastructure in Qalqilya planned to carry out various types of attacks during the Passover holiday, **including a suicide bombing attack in the Tel Aviv area.**

■ Interrogations yielded the following information:

✿ The attack was to be carried out in the Tel Aviv area by means of a van which had been loaded with 100 kg (220 lb) of powerful explosives and a large quantity of metal fragments (ball bearings, screws, bolts and nails).

✿ The suicide bomber drove the van to the center of Israel but did not carry out the attack, and in the end he drove it back to Qalqilya. While the Hamas operatives were being arrested in Qalqilya, the van exploded as the result of what is called a “work accident” (i.e., a technical failure).

✿ The suicide bomber had an Israeli ID card which he had received as a result of family unification (as the son of a Qalqilya resident who had married a woman from Taibeh<sup>1</sup>). His car had had Israeli license plates, enabling it to enter Israeli freely to both collect information and infiltrate the explosives into the country.<sup>2</sup>

### **Senior Fatah operative was wounded and fled**

■ On April 1 Ahmad Sanaqra, a commander of the Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades in Nablus, was apparently severely wounded after the Israeli security forces surrounded the house he was hiding in in the Balata refugee camp (on the outskirts of Nablus).

■ Sanaqra, who once again succeeded in escaping, was responsible for many attacks, including suicide bombing attacks. Following his wounding, Fatah-Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades announced that terrorist activities would be escalated and suicide bombing attacks carried out in Israel (Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades Website).

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<sup>1</sup> An Israeli Arab town about 15 km (9.3 miles) east-southeast of Netanya.

<sup>2</sup> For further information see our April 11 Bulletin entitled “Interrogations of Hamas terrorists detained in Qalqilya revealed that the organization’s infrastructure there has been planning mass attacks against Israel...,” at [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/pdf/hamas\\_qalqilya0407.pdf](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/hamas_qalqilya0407.pdf).

## **Fighting terrorism funding**

■ On April 2 an IDF action in the Nablus region resulted in the arrest of Hamid Majed Muhammad Daraghmeh, a supporter of the PIJ infrastructure in Jenin. Daraghmeh, a resident of the village of Tubas, had 80,000 shekels in his bank account.

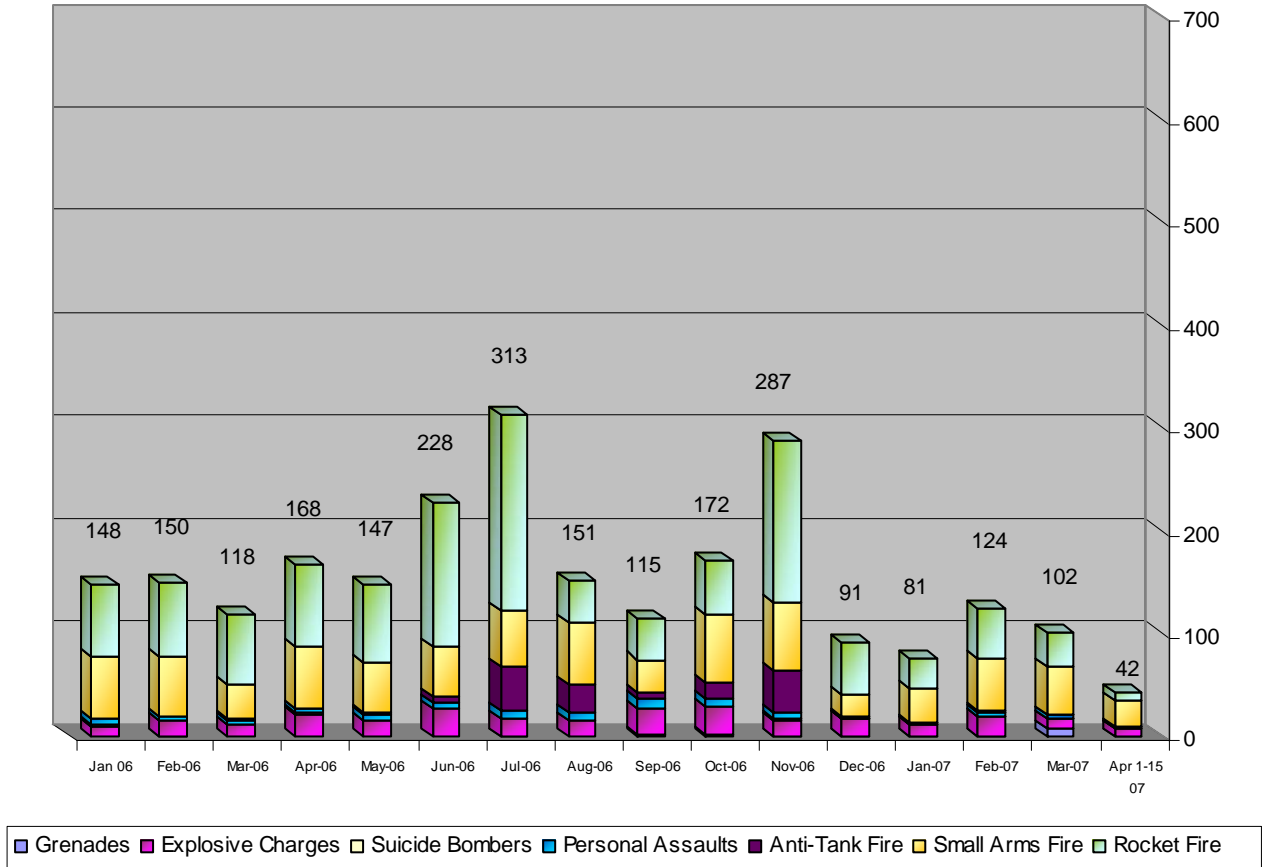
■ The PIJ infrastructure in northern Samaria, for which the money was earmarked, is responsible for mass suicide bombing attacks within Israel and is currently involved in planning other attacks. Recently, the PIJ infrastructure has been using bank accounts of various beneficiaries to transfer large sums of money from the organization's headquarters in Syria. (Website of the IDF Spokesman, April 13).

## **Zakharia Zubeidi wounded in IDF action in Jenin**

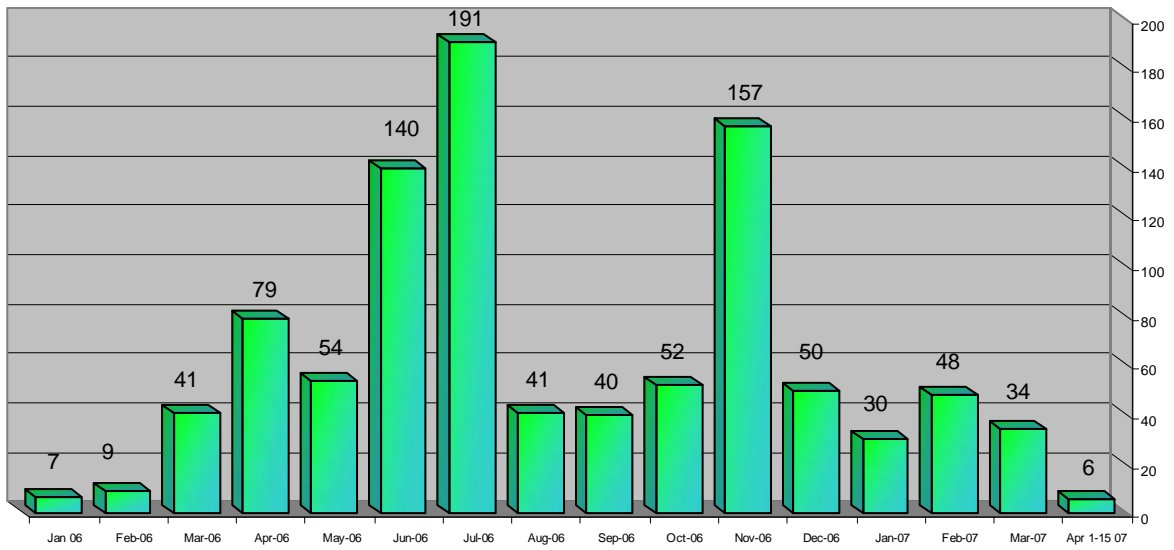
■ On April 7 fire was exchanged between terrorist squads and IDF forces who were searching for wanted terrorists in the Jenin refugee camp. During the shooting Zakharia Zubeidi, the Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades commander in Jenin was seriously wounded.

# Statistical Data

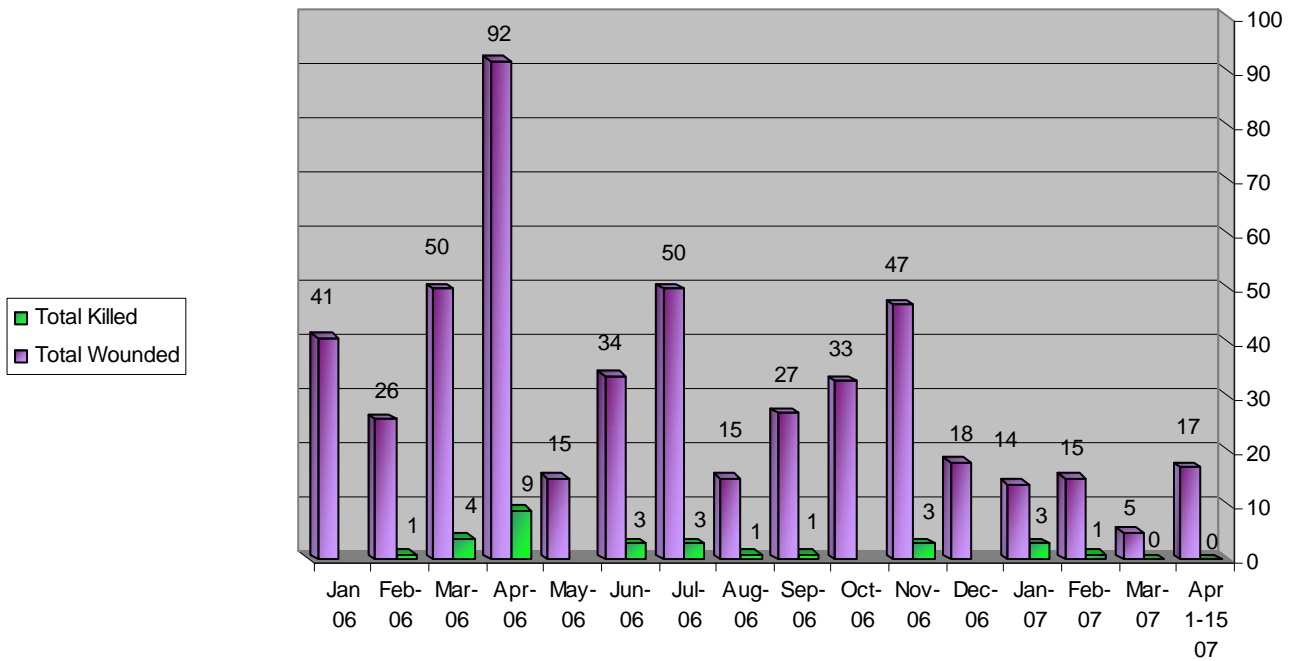
## Monthly distribution of attacks



## Monthly distribution of rocket hits



## Monthly distribution of Israeli casualties



# **The Internal Palestinian Arena**

## **Anarchy and clashes in the Gaza Strip continue**

■ Even after the establishment of the Palestinian national unity government, violent clashes between Fatah and Hamas supporters **continue** in the Gaza Strip, and the level of anarchy remains constant. At the same time, the mutual mud-slinging propaganda war between the two rival camps continues. Prominent were the following events:

- ✿ On April 1 a charge exploded in the home of Muhammad Ziyada (who in the past has been abducted by Hamas' Executive Force); no one was harmed.
- ✿ On April 1 armed men opened fire at the body guards of a senior Palestinian Preventive Security official.
- ✿ On April 3 there were confrontations between the Executive Force and members of the al-Kafarna clan in Beit Hanoun.
- ✿ On April 5 there were a number individuals were abducted, including Fatah operatives.
- ✿ On April 6 eight were wounded in clashes between Fatah and Hamas operatives.
- ✿ On April 8 approximately 12 Palestinians were wounded during an exchange of gunfire in which operatives of Hamas' Executive Force were involved.
- ✿ On April 9 four Palestinians were killed and three wounded in Khan Yunis during an armed clash between two clans.
- ✿ On April 9 there were violent clashes in Nablus between gunmen and police aided by members of the Palestinian Preventive Security services. During the course of the clashes two Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades operatives and one Palestinian policeman were wounded.
- ✿ On April 10 a Fatah-operative/Palestinian Preventive Security officer was shot and fatally wounded as he was driving his car.



■ During March the continuing anarchy in the Gaza Strip took the lives of 29 Palestinians.<sup>3</sup> Hani al-Qawasmi, the Palestinian interior minister, announced that his office has prepared a program for imposing order and stamping out anarchy. The program was presented to a cabinet session on April 7. Called “the hundred days program,” it included a redeployment of the Palestinian security forces to return law and order to the streets and to end the attacks on public and private property.

## **The campaign to market the Palestinian national unity government**

■ The Palestinian national unity government is working to achieve international legitimacy for itself, especially among the European countries, and to ease the political and economic boycott of the Palestinian Authority. To that end the foreign and finance ministers, both of whom are acceptable to the international community, have been sent to visit various European countries.

■ **Ziyad Abu ‘Amro, the foreign minister**, visited the following countries:

✿ In **France** he met with the French foreign minister. The two discussed the renewal of diplomatic relations and of direct financial aid to the Palestinian Authority. Abu ‘Amro said that the Palestinian government had met the conditions of the Palestinian people and that the government’s platform reflected a national consensus and not the Hamas platform. He praised the Arab peace initiative, calling it a more attractive solution to the Palestinian-Israeli crisis than the American Road Map (Le Monde, April 3).

✿ From France Abu ‘Amro went to **Austria**. In his meetings and media interviews he said that there was no Israeli partner for peace, praised the Arab peace initiative and claimed that the meaning of the paragraph about respecting agreements previously signed by the PLO, which appeared in the

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<sup>3</sup> According to a report issued by a Palestinian human rights organization called “The independent Palestinian Authority for human rights” (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, March 5).

platform of the national unity government, was “a recognition of Israel more than by implication.”

✿ In Brussels he was supposed to meet with a commissioner of the European Union’s external relations commission. The two were supposed to discuss ways of renewing European financial aid to the Palestinian Authority (Palestinian News Agency, April 6).

■ **Salam Fayyad, the finance minister**, visited Brussels, where on April 11 he met with representatives of the European Union. At a press conference with a foreign relations commissioner of the European Union he said that the Palestinians needed 1.3 billion euros in aid to prevent humanitarian collapse (Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda, April 12). From Belgium Fayyad went to Norway, where he met with the Norwegian foreign minister. After the meeting the latter said that his country would be willing to renew direct budgetary aid to the Palestinian finance ministry when conditions made it possible (April 12).

■ In the near future Palestinian Authority chairman Abu Mazen is to leave for a round of talks in Europe. He is to go first to France and then to Poland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Switzerland. The objective of his trip is to promote European cooperation with the national unity government and to put the Arab peace initiative into gear (Voice of Palestine radio, April 11; Agence France-Presse, April 13).

### **Extremist Hamas rhetoric**

■ As the Palestinian foreign and finance ministers try to market the national unity government and the Arab peace initiative to Europe, senior Hamas officials radicalized their already stridently anti-Israeli rhetoric. They repeatedly stressed Hamas’ commitment to continue terrorism and its determination not to recognize Israel.

■ **Ismail Radwan**, Hamas spokesman, was particularly blatant:

✿ At a rally in Khan Yunis on March 31 he said that “Jerusalem will not be liberated by conferences [hinting at the Arab League summit meeting in Riyadh], decisions and negotiations, but with rifles, Qassams and rockets.” He called for his listeners to prepare themselves for jihad because the enemy “only knows the language of force...” ( Hamas-affiliated Pal-media Website, March 31).

✿ In a sermon given in a mosque in Gaza on March 30 and broadcast live by Palestinian TV (which is controlled by Abu Mazen), he called upon his listeners to fight the Jews and slaughter them (citing quotes from the Muslim tradition attributed to Muhammad). He repeated his former statement that Palestine and Al-Aqsa would not be liberated by conferences or negotiations, but only with rifles, “jihad and the ‘resistance’ [i.e., violence and terrorism], as was foretold by Allah in the Qur’an...”<sup>4</sup>.

✿ An announcement issued by Hamas resulting from the visits of the foreign and finance ministers to Europe stated that distinguishing between moderates and extremists within Hamas was intended to create dissension in the Palestinian-Arab arena, supported Israel and denied the will of the Palestinian people. Hamas spokesman Ismail Radwan said in that context that **Hamas had no intention of becoming moderate**: “If moderation means irresponsibly renouncing rights and principles, we will not renounce our principles, and if intransigence means adhering to principles, we adhere to the principles of the Palestinian people ( Hamas-affiliated Pal-media Website, March 13).

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<sup>4</sup> For further information see our Bulletin entitled “Hamas spokesman Ismail Radwan delivered a hate-filled sermon calling for the “liberation of Palestine” through terrorism rather than through inter-Arab and international conferences...,” at [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/pdf/hamas\\_e\\_sermon.pdf](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/hamas_e_sermon.pdf).

**The logo of  
Palestinian  
TV**



**Ismail Radwan delivering the Friday sermon: a call to slaughter the Jews and liberate Palestine with guns and rockets (Palestinian TV, March 30, 2007)**

## **The negotiations to release Gilad Shalit**

■ Paltoday, the PIJ Website, and Islam Online, a Website affiliated with radical Islam, posed a list of 45 names which they claimed belonged to the list passed on to Israel on April 5 by Egypt. According to the “Palestinian sources” quoted by the two sites, the list is not final and can be changed. The exchange, during which they claimed that 1,400 prisoners would be released, would be carried out in three stages:

- ✿ **The first stage:** 400 Palestinian prisoners would be released, among them women, minors, and members of the former parliament and government. Once the first stage was completed, Gilad Shalit would be transferred to Egypt.
- ✿ **The second stage:** 450 long-term prisoners would be released, as would those sentenced to long terms. Once the second stage was completed, Gilad Shalit would be transferred to Israel.
- ✿ **The third stage:** a month after Gilad Shalit’s release, 500-550 other prisoners would be freed.

■ The 45 names on the list belonged to prisoners of the second stage. Among them were the names of senior terrorist-operatives who were members of the various organizations (such as Fatah's Marwan Barghouti and Ahmad Saadat, the secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine). There were also names of terrorists who were involved in the planning, logistic support and carrying out of mass-murder attacks (among them the names of terrorists involved in the attacks in Jerusalem at the Sbarro Restaurant, Café Hillel and on a number 18 urban bus, and the killing of Avi Sasportas, Ilan Saadon and others). According to the Israeli daily newspaper Haaretz, the list also included the names of Israeli Arabs currently in prison for aiding and abetting the terrorist organizations (Haaretz, April 11).

■ On April 10 Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert held a first security deliberation dealing with the list of prisoners whose release Hamas demands, and which was passed along to Israel by Egypt. The meeting was attended by the minister of defense, head of the Israel Security Agency, head of the Mossad and Ofer Dekel, special coordinator for the release of abducted soldiers. At the end of the meeting the prime minister's office published an announcement expressing “**disappointment and reservations**” about the list. The announcement stated that a certain measure of progress had been made in the negotiations, but that completion was a long way off. The announcement noted that Israel would continue contacts with Egypt in the matter (Prime minister's office Website, (Hebrew), April 10).

### **Rebuilding Fatah's military strength**

■ During the past year Fatah worked to rebuild its strength by reinforcing the security forces and uniting the organization's various factions active in the Gaza Strip. That was done in response to Hamas' construction of an operational infrastructure, especially the Executive Force.

■ Abd al-Hakim Awad, Fatah spokesman in the Gaza Strip, said that the organization had been focusing on unification, rebuilding itself and the

reorganization of all its various military wings into one military apparatus. He noted that the force's first core, which will be called "al-A'sifa force," will be composed of 5,000 men armed with high-quality equipment (Ma'an News Agency, April 1).

- Mahmoud al-Zahar, a high-ranking Hamas operative, viciously attacked Fatah and blamed it for violating the Mecca Accord and preparing for an armed confrontation with Hamas. He said that Fatah had established training camps where 4000 operatives were training to become an "operational force" which would take part in future confrontations with Hamas (Islam Online, April 3).

### **Meeting in Cairo**

- The Israeli daily newspaper Haaretz reported that at the end of March a meeting was held in Cairo attended by senior Israeli, Egyptian, American and Palestinian figures, and chaired by General Keith W. Dayton, American security coordinator. The participants described the discussion as "positive." "Palestinian sources" told Haaretz that the Egyptians said they would increase their intelligence cooperation regarding weapons smuggling and would deal with wanted Palestinians who reached the Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing. The Egyptians were also asked to operate against the radical Islamic terrorist cells which had established themselves in the Sinai desert and to stop the flow of weapons into the peninsula (Avi Issacharoff for Haaretz, April 4, 2007).

- Hamas spokesmen condemned the meeting, representing it as "stabbing the resistance in the back" and as an attack on both the atmosphere of national reconciliation and the national unity government (Hamas Website, April 2, April 4). On April 4 the deputy chairman of the Hamas faction in the Palestinian Legislative Council told Radio Sawt Al-Aqsa that the Palestinian people were not interested in security coordination with "the Zionist enemy" and that such coordination was "a return to the Oslo Accords which the Palestinian people bypassed in the last elections." The PIJ also joined the announcements condemning the meeting.