



Spotlight on Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

(April 24 – May 2, 2023)

Overview

- ▶ This past week Palestinian terrorists carried out four attacks: a shooting attack near the settlement of Avnei Hefetz (southeast of Tulkarm), a combined stabbing and vehicular ramming attack at the Gitai Avishar Junction (northwest of Salfit), a vehicular ramming attack in Jerusalem and a shooting attack at a junction northeast of Ramallah. Israeli security forces continued counterterrorism activities, focusing on Jericho, Jenin and Hebron. Uday al-Azizi, commander of the Lion's Den network, and 11 operatives surrendered to the Palestinian Authority (PA) security services.
- ▶ On May 2, 2023, Khader Adnan, a high-ranking Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorist operative who was on a hunger strike, died while in administrative detention. Consequently, about 25 rockets were fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip, the PIJ's military-terrorist wing in the Gaza Strip raised its level of alert and threatened revenge. A general strike was declared in the PA territories, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. The PA accused Israel of killing him and called for Israel to be prosecuted.
- ▶ The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip continue developing and testing anti-aircraft weapons. Israel's intention to renew the targeted killings of terrorist organization leaders has prompted threats of attacks on more than one front. Hamas' military-terrorist wing, concerned about the welfare of the donors, announced it would no longer accept bitcoin donations.
- ▶ The PA's foreign minister participated in a Security Council session devoted to the Middle East and attended by foreign ministers. Mahmoud Abbas hosted the children of shaheeds in Ramallah.

Terrorist Attacks

Shooting attack near the settlement of Avnei Hefetz

- ▶ On the morning of May 2, 2023, a Palestinian opened fire on three Israeli vehicles near the settlement of Avnei Hefetz (southeast of Tulkarm) and then drove away. An Israeli was injured by flying glass and the two vehicles were damaged. Fifteen empty shell casings were found

nearby. IDF forces are pursuing the shooter (IDF spokesman's Twitter account and the Israeli media, May 2, 2023).



Israeli vehicle hit by gunfire near Avnei Hefetz (QudsN Twitter account, May 2, 2023).

Stabbing and vehicular ramming attack at the Gitai Avishar Junction

►On April 27, 2023, a Palestinian drove to the Gitai Avishar Junction (northwest of Salfit), veered into the opposite lane and ran over Israeli civilians and security forces at the junction. He then crashed into a Palestinian vehicle in oncoming traffic. After the crash he left his vehicle and tried to stab a policeman with a knife. IDF fighters at the site shot and killed him (IDF spokesman's Twitter account and the Israeli media, April 27, 2023).



Right: The scene of the terrorist attack (Wafa, April 27, 2023). Left: The terrorist's knife (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, April 27, 2023).

►The ministry of health in Ramallah reported the death of **Ahmed Yaqoub Tahe, 39 years old, from the town of Badia (west of Salfit)**. Reportedly, he was an officer in the PA security services (ministry of health in Ramallah Telegram channel and Wafa, April 27, 2023). The social networks reported he was a captain in Palestinian general intelligence (Abo Mohamed's Twitter account, April 28, 2023).



Right: Ahmed Yaqoub Tahe (Wafa, April 27, 2023). Left: The mourning notice issued for Ahmed Yaqoub Tahe by the Fatah branch in the Salfit district (Ahmad Ayoub's Facebook page, April 28, 2023).

► **Fatah's media information and cultural commission** issued a mourning notice stating he was a Fatah operative. Israel was blamed for his death; no mention was made of his attempted combined terrorist attack (Fatah's media information and cultural commission's Facebook page, April 27, 2023). **Abdallah Kamil, governor of the Salfit district**, issued a condemnation and called on the international community to take urgent action to protect "defenseless" [sic] Palestinian civilians (Abdallah Kamil's Facebook page, April 27, 2023).

► **Hamas** said in a statement that the Palestinian "resistance" (anti-Israeli terrorist activities) would continue until the "occupation" [Israel] had been overcome and all the Palestinian national objectives had been attained, including the release of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails (Hamas website, April 27, 2023). The **PIJ in Judea and Samaria** said in a statement that the continuation of the "occupation's crimes and terrorism" would only serve to increase the Palestinians' adherence to the "resistance" (Daffa_media Telegram channel [the PIJ Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria], April 27, 2023).

Shooting attack near Ramallah

► On the morning of April 25, 2023, Israel's Memorial Day, there was a drive-by shooting at a junction northeast of Ramallah. Palestinians shot at a group of Israeli runners commemorating the deaths of IDF soldiers, wounding one civilian. IDF forces began a search for the shooter (IDF spokesman's Twitter account and the Israel Today daily newspaper, April 25, 2023).

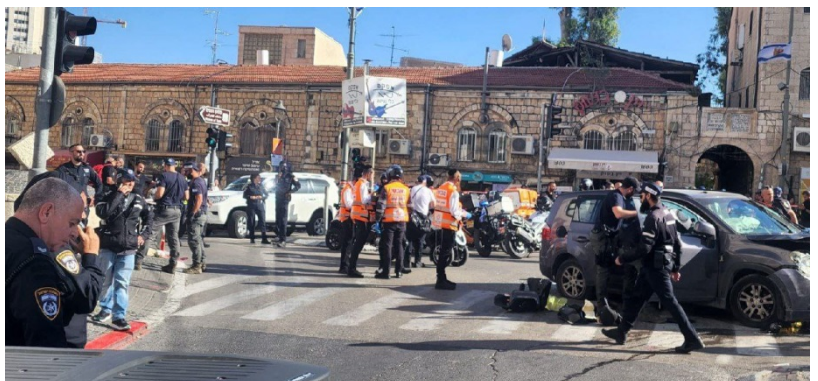


The scene of the shooting attack (Sanad News website, April 25, 2023).

► **Muhammad Hamada, Hamas spokesman for Jerusalem affairs**, praised the attack. He called it "heroic and with excellent timing," carried out while "settlers" were commemorating the deaths of those killed in "resistance activities." He also said it would not be the last attack and that IDF soldiers and settlers would continue to be "legitimate [sic] targets" for the "resistance" (al-Risalah and Shehab, April 25, 2023).

Vehicular ramming attack in Jerusalem

► On the afternoon of April 24, 2023, an Israeli Arab drove to the Mahane Yehuda market in west Jerusalem. He accelerated his vehicle and drove into pedestrians, wounding five, one of them critically. A civilian who saw the attack shot and killed the terrorist. The initial investigation ruled out a technical malfunction and all signs pointed to its being a deliberate vehicular ramming attack (Israel Police Force Twitter account and the Israel Police Force Facebook page in Arabic, April 24, 2023). The terrorist was **Haitham Assad Abu Najma, 39 years old, from Beit Safsafa**, father of five. According to reports, he was emotionally unbalanced (Wafa, April 24, 2023).



The scene of the vehicular ramming attack in Jerusalem (Shehab Twitter account and Shehab, April 24, 2023).



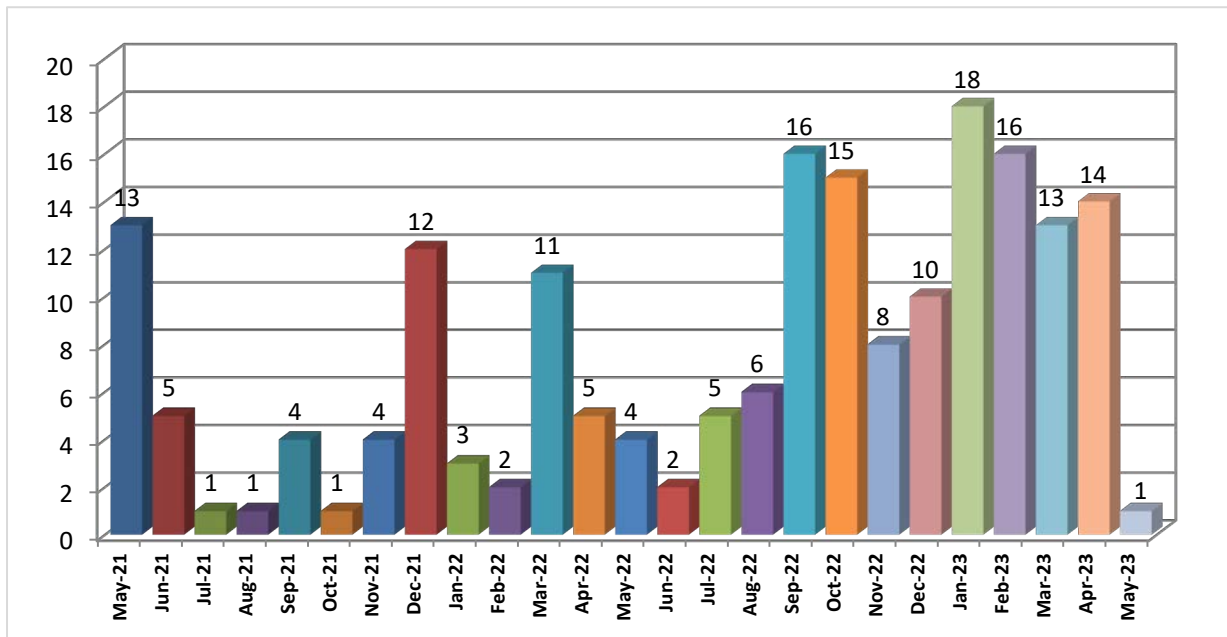
Haitham Assad Abu Najma (Wafa, April 24, 2023).

►The Palestinian terrorist organizations welcomed the attack and linked it to the events in al-Aqsa mosque. **Muhammad Hamada, Hamas spokesman for Jerusalem affairs**, claimed the attack was the "natural response to the occupation's crimes," the most recent of which was "breaking into" and "vandalizing" the Bab al-Rahma mosque (Hamas website, April 24, 2023). **Hamas spokesman Abd al-Latif al-Qanua** said **Israel would continue paying for its "crimes" and invasions of al-Aqsa mosque, and would not enjoy security or stability** (Abd al-Latif al-Qanua's Twitter account, April 24, 2023). The PIJ in Judea and Samaria claimed it was "a natural and legitimate [sic] response," avenged the violations of al-Aqsa mosque and defended the Palestinians and the prisoners and a responded to Israel's threats against the "resistance" leadership (PIJ website, April 24, 2023).



Right: Cartoon by Alaa' al-Laqta. The Arabic reads, "Go back to where you came from" (Shams News Twitter account, April 24, 2023). **Left: Cartoon by Hussein Zaqout. The Arabic reads, "Vehicular ramming attack in Jerusalem"** (Hussein Zaqout's Facebook page, April 24, 2023).

Critical Terrorist Attacks in Judea and Samaria since May 2021¹



Judea and Samaria

Death of administrative detainee Khader Adnan

► On May 2, 2023, the Israel Prison Service announced the death of administrative detainee Khader Adnan, who was found unconscious in his cell in the Nitzan prison facility. Attempts to revive him failed and he was pronounced dead at Asaf Harofeh Hospital. He had been on a hunger strike for 86 days and refused medical examinations or treatment.

► Khader Adnan, 45 years old, from Arabeh (south of Jenin) was a high-ranking PIJ operative in northern Samaria. He was detained by the Israeli security forces on February 5, 2023 on suspicion of membership in a terrorist organization, support for terrorism and incitement. It was the 13th time he had been detained. As on previous occasions, he immediately began a hunger strike (Israeli media, May 2, 2023).

¹ A critical attack is defined by the ITIC as involving shooting, stabbing, a vehicular attack, the use of IEDs, or a combination of the above. Stones and Molotov cocktails thrown by Palestinians are not included.



Picture from the house of Khader Adnan. Left: Adnan's son leads a march in Arabeh to protest his death (@asranews Twitter account, May 2, 2023).

►Following his death three rockets were fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip (see below). Palestinian sources reported that the Jerusalem Brigades (the PIJ's military-terrorist wing) had put all its "military" units on alert. The Palestinian Sada News website reported that according to "sources," the **PIJ was making preparations to respond to Adnan's death, including from the Gaza Strip, and carry out a series of shooting attacks in Judea and Samaria** (Sada News website, May 2, 2023).

►A general strike was declared in the PA territories, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. Calls were posted to the social networks for revenge and for confrontations with IDF forces at the friction points. The PIJ's political bureau cancelled a trip abroad (al-Quds, May 2, 2023).

►In the Palestinian arena there was considerable condemnation of Israel, which was blamed for his death. Threats were made that Israel would "pay for it" and calls were issued to the international community to punish Israel:

◆ **PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh** said Israel, its prison services and judges had committed the premeditated murder of Khader Adnan by refusing his requests for release, neglecting his health and leaving him in his cell despite the gravity of his medical condition (Muhammad Shtayyeh's Facebook page, May 2, 2023). He called on international human rights organizations to condemn the "crime" and not allow its perpetrators to evade punishment (Facebook page of PA government spokesman Ibrahim Melhem, May 2, 2023).

◆ **Hussein al-Sheikh, general secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee**, claimed Israel was fully responsible for Adnan's death, the result of "neglect and forced detention" (Hussein al-Sheikh's Twitter account, May 2, 2023).

◆ The **PIJ** issued a mourning notice assigning full, direct responsibility for his death to Israel, and claiming **Israel would pay** (PIJ website, May 2, 2023).

◆ **PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhlah** claimed the willpower Adnan had shown throughout his long battle and confrontations face-to-face with Israel, which climaxed with his death, was a medal of honor on the chest of the Palestinians, and Adnan would remain a symbol for the Palestinians and "freedom fighters" around the world (PIJ website, May 2, 2023).

◆ **Muhammad al-Hindi, a member of the PIJ's political bureau and in charge of its political department**, claimed Israel was fully responsible for Adnan's death and would **pay the price for its crimes against the prisoners and Palestinians** (Paltoday, May 2, 2023).

◆ **Hamas** claimed Israel and its government were fully responsible for the "crime of killing" Khader Adnan, committed deliberately and in cold blood, adding that the **government of Israel would pay the price for the crime and had to be prosecuted for its crimes** (Hamas website, May 2, 2023). **Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem** said the blood of Khader Adnan would fuel the escalation of the "revolution and resistance" against "the occupation," and the Palestinians had accustomed "everyone" to the fact that such a crime would be met with a fitting response (Hazem Qassem's Twitter account, May 2, 2023).

◆ **Zaher Jabarin, a member of Hamas' political bureau and head of the office of shaheeds, prisoners and the wounded**, claimed Israel and its prison service were fully responsible for the death of Khader Adnan and for the lives of the [alleged] 600 sick prisoners in Israeli jails and more than 1,000 administrative detainees, adding that their "arbitrary detention and medical neglect" were a death sentence (Hamas website, May 2, 2023).

Counterterrorism Activities

► This past week the Israeli security forces continued intensive counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria, detaining Palestinians suspected of involvement in terrorism and confiscating large quantities of weapons. Their activities focused on Jericho, Jenin and Hebron. Two Palestinians were killed.

The Aqabat Jabr refugee camp

► On the morning of May 1, 2023, IDF forces entered the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp in Jericho to detain wanted Palestinians. During the activity Palestinians rioted and fired shots at the forces, who returned fire (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, May 1, 2023). The Palestinian

media reported one Palestinian killed and six wounded. The fatality was **Jibril Muhammad Kamal al-Ladaa, 17 years old, from the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp. In a video posted to the social networks he was heard saying he wanted to be a shaheed. His father said he had wanted to be a shaheed and had gotten his wish.** The Fatah branch in the Jericho district declared a general strike to mourn his death (Ma'an and the Shehab Twitter account, May 1, 2023).



Right: Jibril al-Ladaa (Wafa, May 1, 2023). Left: Jibril al-Ladaa (Israa Darwish' Twitter account, May 1, 2023).

►On April 24, 2023, Israeli security forces operated in the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp to detain a wanted Palestinian. During the activity two suspects were identified trying to flee. The soldiers shot at them (IDF Twitter account, April 24, 2023). **Jihad Abu al-Assal, the governor of the Jericho district**, reported the death of **Suleiman 'Aish Hussein Awidh, 20 years old, from Aqabat Jabr**. Three other Palestinians were wounded (Wafa, April 24, 2023). The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades (AAMB) issued a mourning notice for the death of Suleiman 'Aish Awidh, whom they claimed as an operative in their ranks (AAMB Telegram channel, April 24, 2023). **Fatah's media information and cultural commission** issued a mourning notice claiming him as a Fatah operative (Fatah's media information and cultural commission Facebook page, April 24, 2023).



Suleiman 'Aish Hussein Awidh (Salsalbeel Aldwaimeh's Twitter account, April 24, 2023).

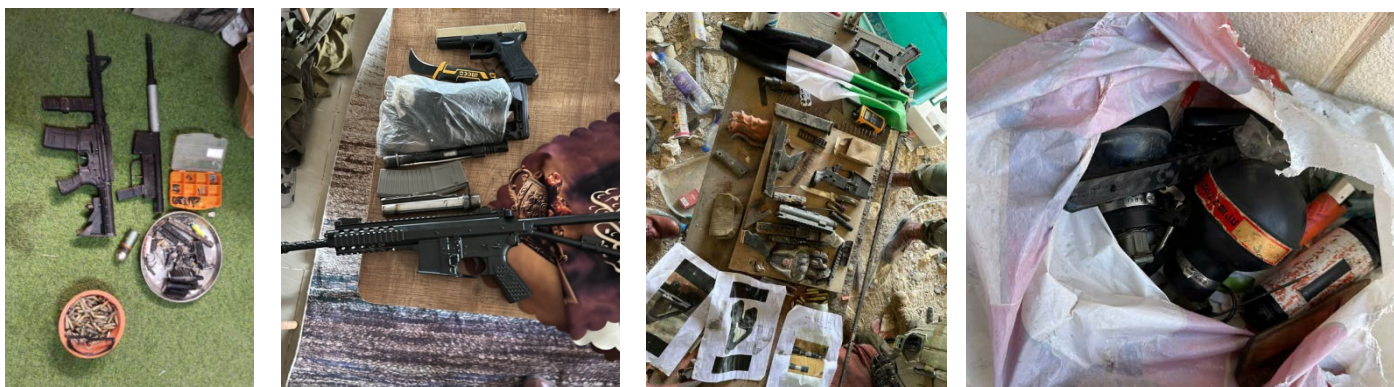


Right: The AAMB mourning notice (AAMB Telegram channel, April 24, 2023), Left: Mourning notice issued by the Fatah branch in the Jericho district and the Shabiba, Fatah's student movement (Facebook page of the Fatah branch in the Jericho district, April 24, 2023).

► **Hamas** claimed the Israeli security forces' repeated activities in the Aqabat Jabr refugee camp would not harm the determination of the Palestinians and the "resistance" fighters, and the refugee camps would continue as a reservoir of forces for the "revolution" (Hamas website, April 24, 2023). The **PIJ in Judea and Samaria** said in a statement that "the escalation of the occupation's crimes" against the Palestinians and the holy places "would return like fire and hell deep inside Israel" (PIJ website, April 24, 2023).

Jenin

► On the afternoon of April 28, 2023, Israeli security forces operated in Jenin to detain a Palestinian suspected of terrorist activities. The forces seized weapons and other military equipment. During the activity armed Palestinians shot at the forces and threw an IED at them; the forces returned fire (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, April 28, 2023).



The weapons found and seized during the activity in Jenin (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, April 28, 2023).

Hebron

►On the night of April 24, 2023, Israeli security forces operated in Hebron and Bayta, seizing funds for financing terrorist activities and weapons, including a gas pistol and knives (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, April 24, 2023).



Weapons seized by the security forces (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, April 24, 2023).

Palestinian killed in a clash in Teqoa

►During clashes between several dozen Palestinians and Israeli security forces near Teqoa in Gush Etzion, the forces fired into the air as Palestinians threw rocks. One of them approached the forces preparing to sling rocks; they shot at the lower part of his body (Telegram channel of the Arab-Palestinian desk of Israeli TV Kan 11, April 28, 2023). The Palestinians reported the death of **Mustafa 'Amer Sabah, 16 years old** (Wafa, April 28, 2023).

►**Fatah's media information and cultural commission issued a mourning notice claiming he was a Fatah operative** (Facebook page of Fatah's media information and cultural commission, April 28, 2023). **Kamil Hamad, governor of the Bethlehem district**, said he was "killed in the full sense of the word" (Wafa, April 29, 2023). Hamas and the PIJ said in a

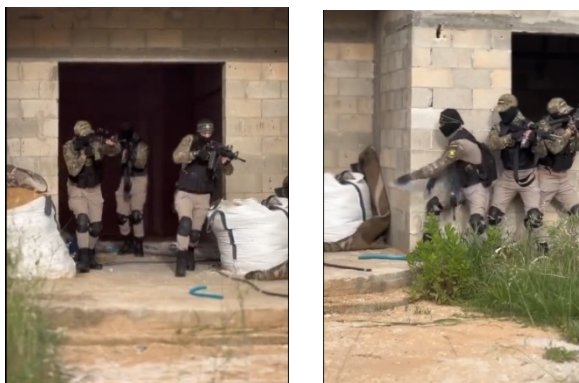
statement that the continuation of "crimes" would not prevent the Palestinians from continuing the "resistance" (Daffa_media Telegram channel, April 28, 2023).



Right: Mustafa 'Amer Sabah (Wafa, April 28, 2023). Center: Mourning notice issued by Fatah in Teqoa (Facebook page of the Fatah branch in Teqoa, April 28, 2023). Left: The military funeral held for him in Teqoa (PL Plus Twitter account, April 29, 2023).

Jenin Battalion training exercises

►A video was disseminated by the social networks documenting training exercises carried out by operatives of the Jenin Battalion of the PIJ's Jerusalem Brigades. The video shows operatives engaged in urban warfare exercises and storming a building (Fahmi Kanan's Twitter account, April 25, 2023, and the Twitter account of @abwmslmh357195, April 29, 2023).



Pictures from the video (Fahmi Kanan's Twitter account, April 25, 2023).

Lion's Den network operatives surrender to the PA's security services

►Fatah-affiliated web users reported that a number of days ago **Uday al-Azizi, the Lion's Den commander**, and 11 network operatives surrendered to the PA security services in Nablus, and on orders from Palestinian general intelligence commander Nidal Abu Dukhan, they would be transferred to Palestinian general intelligence headquarters in Ramallah (Alam Palestine and Marwan Zaloum's Twitter accounts, May 1, 2023).

►According to security sources in Ramallah, al-Azizi, a former operative in the PA's security services, coordinated the surrender with his former commanders after he left the service and chose to armed "activity" against Israel. The sources added that the security services ordered protection for the network operatives and suggested they surrender to the security services to prevent Israel from eliminating them. The commander of the PA's security services coordinated the move with Israel through the Israeli-PA security coordination channels (al-Sharq al-Awsat, April 29, 2023).



Uday al-Aziza, left, at his wedding in Nablus (YouTube, May 25, 2022).

Israel's South

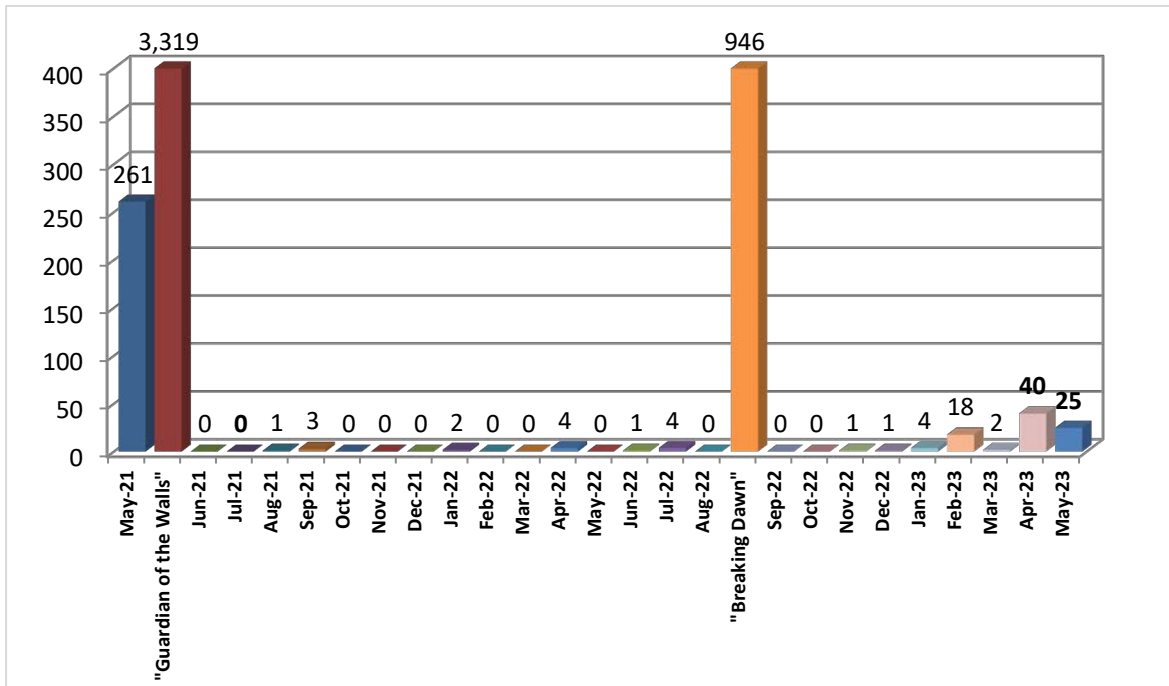
Rocket and mortar shell fire into Israel

►On the morning of May 2, 2023, when Khader Adnan's death was announced, three rockets were fired at Israel, falling in open areas. No casualties or damage were reported. Later mortar shells were fired at the border security fence. No casualties or damage were reported (IDF spokesman's Twitter account and the Israeli media, May 2, 2023).

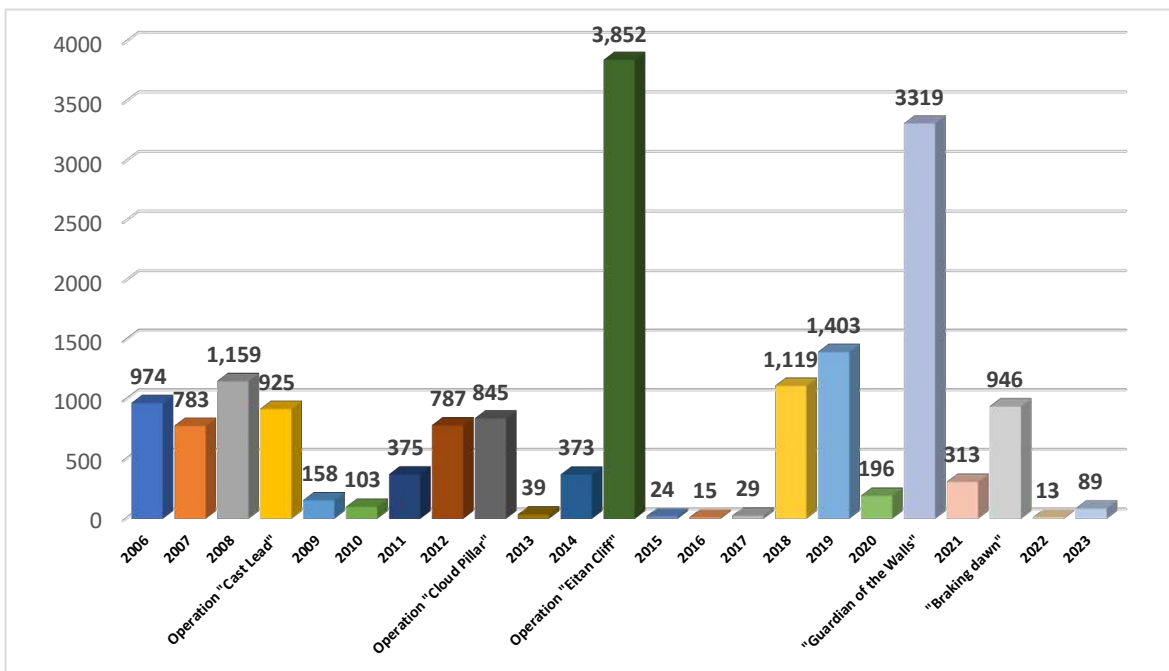
►At approximately 3 o'clock in the afternoon, after IDF tanks fired shells at the Gaza Strip, Israel was again attacked with rocket fire. According to the initial report, 22 rockets were fired at Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip, including Ashkelon, Sderot, Ivim, Nir Am and Erez. Four rockets were intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system (IDF spokesman, May 2, 2023). Two rockets fell in the city of Sderot, one fell in a building site and critically wounded a worker. Others were wounded by shrapnel.

►The joint operations room of the Palestinian organizations claimed responsibility for the rocket fire, claiming it was in initial response to the death of Khader Adnan, "a heinous crime which will have repercussions from all the arenas" (joint operations room Telegram channel, May 2, 2023).

Monthly Distribution of Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire since May 2021



Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits since 2006



Suspicious Palestinian crosses into Israeli territory

► On the night of April 27, 2023, IDF surveillance identified a suspicious Palestinian who crossed the border security fence in the northern Gaza Strip into Israeli territory. IDF fighters detained him and he was taken for interrogation by the Israeli security forces (IDF spokesman's Twitter account, April 27, 2023).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

Responses to threats of renewing targeted killings

► **Palestinians in the Gaza Strip continue to respond to Israel's threats to renew targeted killings of the terrorist organizations' leadership.** At the end of their periodic meeting on April 25, 2023, they said Israel's threats to use targeted killings against the heads of the "resistance" would not rehabilitate Israel's image and would cause great damage to Israel and its army (Palinfo, April 25, 2023).

► The Lebanese daily newspaper al-Akhbar reported that according to "resistance sources," after the threats the Palestinian organizations' "military" wings raised their level of alert, worried their leaders would be eliminated. They agreed that the response to any such activity would be coordinated among them. In the past the "resistance" informed the mediators that the response to the renewal of targeted killings would not be limited to the Gaza Strip, but would include Israeli territory and "abroad," and would be "unexpected." The "sources" also noted the response would be coordinated by the organizations and the "resistance axis" [Hezbollah, Iran, Syria and the Shi'ite militias] (al-Akhbar in Lebanon, April 26, 2023).

► **Walid al-Qutati, a member of the PIJ's political bureau,** said they took Israel's threats seriously but were not frightened by them nor would they cause the organization to change its "resistance policies." He said they had options for responding to targeted killings and were united in confronting Israel. He also said they had an agreement with Hezbollah regarding a response to Israel if a "resistance" leader died in a targeted killing (Filastin al-Yawm TV website, April 26, 2023).

► **Hamas leader Usama Hamdan** claimed any Israeli security activity or targeted killing anywhere in the world would be met with a response. He noted the "confrontation" [Operation Pillar of Defense] in the Gaza Strip which broke out in 2012 after the targeted killing of Ahmed Jaabari, and pointed out threats from Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah regarding an attack on an important person in Lebanon. He said Israel's policy of targeted killings had not stopped and they were taking Israel's threats very seriously. However, that did not mean the threats would subvert the "resistance's" plans, keep its leaders from functioning or cause it to freeze its activities. He added that Israel focused on Saleh al-'Arouri because he was deputy chairman of the Hamas movement and responsible for Judea and Samaria. Hamdan also claimed Israel's power of deterrence had eroded and its possibilities

for action were limited. He claimed Israel's equating Saleh al-'Arouri with Qassem Soleimani exposed Israel's fears of the presence of "inspirational personalities" (al-Mayadeen TV website, April 27, 2023).



Usama Hamdan, interviewed by al-Mayadeen TV (al-Mayadeen TV Twitter account, April 27, 2023).

Development of surface-to-air missiles

►A correspondent for the Shehab website reported the test launch of a missile, apparently **an anti-aircraft surface-to-air missile**, in the skies over the Gaza City. A loud explosion was heard at the time of the launch (Shehab, April 27, 2023).



The vapor trail (Right: Shehab Twitter account, April 27, 2023. Left: Twitter account of the Palestinian al-Sahara website, April 27, 2023).

►On April 9, 2023, the aljazeera.net website posted an article about the use made by the military-terrorist wings of Hamas and the other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip of anti-aircraft missiles. According to the article, during the most recent round of escalation, on April 6, 2023, the IDF spokesman confirmed that seven anti-aircraft missiles had been fired from the Gaza Strip. Five of them exploded in the skies over the Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip and two were launched towards the sea.

►"Political and military resistance" sources revealed that their engineers had developed a local prototype of the Russian Strela 2 anti-aircraft missile which had been test-fired at the

Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip. According to the sources, the "resistance" in the Gaza Strip aspired to achieve "secure skies" by developing defensive systems which would prevent Israeli planes from flying freely over the Gaza Strip. The sources claimed that since 2014 they had been able to neutralize the activity of the helicopters that carried out attack missions against targets on the ground which necessitated low-flying aircraft. The sources added that after Operation Guardian of the Walls in May 2021, efforts to develop anti-aircraft missiles increased in an attempt to prevent Israel warplanes from carrying out intensive, secure flights over the Gaza Strip to carry out attacks, and had succeeded in stockpiling a reserve of missiles whose effectiveness had recently been proved.

► **Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem** said they now had a new strategy for dealing with Israel warplanes and they aspired to be able to secure the skies over the Gaza Strip against hostile Israeli aircraft and prevent Israel from having freedom to fly over the Gaza Strip and attack.

► **Mu'aman Aziz, a high-ranking member of the Mujahedeen movement**, who claimed the movement had participated in the recent anti-aircraft fire, also claimed the "resistance" was developing locally-manufactured weapons and missiles to undermine the security of Israeli warplanes when they flew over the Gaza Strip. He said the surface-to-air missiles used by the "resistance" were part of the system developed by the "resistance's expert aerial defense engineers." He claimed that as they had successfully neutralized the IDF's helicopters during the past eight years, they were on course to fully securing the skies over the Gaza Strip (aljazeera.net, April 9, 2023).

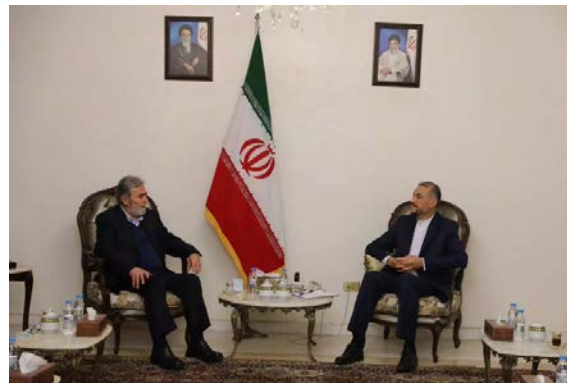
Donating to the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades

► On April 26, 2023, the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military-terrorist wing, formally thanked those who had given and still gave "material support" to the Palestinian "resistance." They announced they would no longer accept bitcoin donations out of concern for the safety of their donors, in light of what they called "the persecution of bitcoin donors." They called for continued contributions to the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades by other means (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades website, April 26, 2023). The announcement was apparently motivated by the seizure order recently signed by Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Galant for 81 digital accounts and hundreds of digital wallets linked to Hamas, for more than half a million Israeli shekels (about \$140,000) (National Bureau for

► Counter Terror Financing, April 21 2023).

The Iranian foreign minister visits Lebanon

► **Hossein Amir Abdollahian, the Iranian foreign minister**, visited Lebanon and met on the sidelines of his visit with PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah. He noted Iran's support for the Palestinians and the need for unity among the Palestinian organizations, Palestinian unity and government and popular Islamic unity in supporting the Palestinians, and in taking steps to deter Israel from activities in the sites sacred to Islam. Al-Nakhalah expressed his esteem for Iran and the support Iran gives the Palestinians in regional and international forums, and noted the importance of those positions in raising morale and strengthening the Palestinians' firm stance. He claimed the "resistance's" situation was the best it had been for the past ten years, adding that Israel's internal crises showed its helplessness and weakness in confronting the Palestinians (website of the Iranian foreign ministry in Arabic, April 28, 2023).



meets with al-Nakhalah (Twitter account of the website of the Iranian foreign ministry in Arabic, April 28, 2023).

► Abdollahian also spoke on the phone with Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau. He praised the Palestinians' "firm stance" and said he was proud of the Palestinian "resistance," which "caused Israel pain and troubled its sleep." He noted Jerusalem's centrality and said Iran followed Israel's aggression and activities in the city. He invited Haniyeh to visit Tehran and meet with the Iranian leadership. Haniyeh said he accepted the invitation and **was planning to visit Iran in the near future** (Hamas website, April 28, 2023).

► Abdollahian also spoke with **Yahya al-Sinwar, head of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip**. Al-Sinwar expressed his esteem and thanked the government of Iran for its political support of the Palestinians (Twitter account of the website of the Iranian foreign ministry in Arabic, April 28, 2023).

Saudi Arabia released a Hamas activist

►According to reports, on April 26, 2023, the Saudi Arabian authorities released Hani al-Khudri, the son of Muhammad al-Khudri, former Hamas representative in Saudi Arabia, who was released in October 2022. The two were detained in Saudi Arabia in 2019 along with dozens of other Palestinians, some of them with Jordanian citizenship, and accused of supporting the "resistance" (al-Andalou News, April 26, 2023). The release was effected a few days after a Hamas leadership delegation, led by Isma'il Haniyeh, visited Saudi Arabia, to renew relations between the two sides.

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

The Security Council session

►On April 26, 2023, the Security Council held a session dealing with "the situation in Palestine," headed by Sergey Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister. The session was attended by **Palestinian foreign minister Riyad al-Maliki**. He was there because Russia, which currently holds the Security Council presidency, raised participation in the session to the foreign minister level (PA foreign ministry Twitter account, April 24, 2023).² Tor Wennesland, special UN envoy to the Middle East peace process, briefed the meeting on the situation. He also related to shooting attacks against concentrations of Israelis. Al-Maliki condemned Israel for its activities against the Palestinians and called for the recognition of a Palestinian state and the two-state solution, and for Israel to be prosecuted for its activities against the Palestinians (PA foreign ministry website, April 26, 2023). The Security Council session ended without issuing resolutions.

►Al-Maliki met with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on the sidelines of the Security Council session, and with a number of foreign ministers from various countries, including Russian foreign minister Lavrov (PA foreign ministry website, April 26, 2023).

² Despite requests from Israel to postpone the session because of Memorial Day, the meeting was held as scheduled and attended by foreign ministers.



**The PA foreign minister at the Security Council session
(PA foreign ministry website, April 26, 2023).**

The PA continues supporting the families of shaheeds

► On April 23, 2023, during Eid al-Fitr, Mahmoud Abbas participated in an event held in honor of the Palestinian shaheed families and their children. It was held by the Mahmoud Abbas Institute³ and held simultaneously in Ramallah and Gaza City. The children of the shaheeds received gifts and enjoyed various activities. Mahmoud Abbas gave a speech saying he was happy to meet the children, whom he called "**the cadets of the future**" (Mahmoud Abbas' Facebook page, April 23, 2023). Also present at the event was **Karima Abu Diya, the daughter of Hamdi Abu Diya**,⁴ who praised her father "the hero" and said it was the first time she had met Mahmoud Abbas face-to-face (Palestinian TV, April 23, 2023).

³ The Mahmoud Abbas Institute is an NGO charity organization, registered in "Palestine" and Lebanon, and established in 2011 to support Palestinian refugees in the PA territories and dispersal, especially the refugee camps in Lebanon. It provides scholarships for Palestinian students from the camps in Lebanon, monthly financial support for Palestinian families in Lebanon, and education, health and welfare services to needy families in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip (Wafa, December 21, 2021).

⁴ Hamdi Abu Diya was an officer in the Palestinian police who carried out two shooting attacks, one on January 15 and the other on January 17, 2023, near Halhul, and was killed by IDF forces.



**Mahmoud Abbas at an event honoring the families of shaheeds
(Mahmoud Abbas' Facebook page, April 23, 2023).**

Boycotting Israeli-made products

- ▶The Oslo, Norway city council announced it would boycott goods and services produced by Israel in the Palestinian territories, stating that its purchasing policy would except companies that contributed, directly or indirectly, to Israel's settlement policy (BDS website, April 25, 2023, Middle East Monitor, April 26, 2023).
- ▶**Khaled Asili, PA minister of the national economy**, praised the decision, which he claimed was a step in the right direction, and a commitment to the principles and statutes of international law, which determined the illegitimacy of the settlements. He called on other countries to obey UN Security Council Resolution 2334, which stated that the Israeli settlements violated international law (Wafa, April 26,2023).
- ▶The Liège, Belgium city council, which has been a twin city with Ramallah since 2014, passed a resolution to sever relations with Israel and all its private and public institutions because of its [alleged] violations of Palestinian rights, and refuse to have relations with any institution that deals with the settlements or fulfilled any function in prolonging the "occupation." The PLO's department of Palestinian dispersal affairs praised the decision (The Brussels Times and Wafa, April 26, 2023).
- ▶The Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC), which leads the BDS movement, also welcomed the decisions passed by Oslo and Liège, and called on other cities around the world to end their relations with the "apartheid regime in Israel" (Wafa in English and the BNC Twitter account, April 25, 2023).

Appendix

Rocks, Molotov cocktails and other attacks

► **In Judea, Samaria and east Jerusalem Palestinians continued throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles driving on the roads.** The more prominent events were the following:⁵

- ◆ **May 1, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle at the Yitav Junction (north of Jericho). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **May 1, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle north of the British Police Junction (northeast of Ramallah). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **May 1, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle in Funduq (near Qadumim). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 30, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus near Anatot (northeast of Jerusalem). No casualties were reported; the bus was damaged.
- ◆ **April 30, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle in Hawwara (south of Nablus). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged. Two days previously rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle. No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 30, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near al-Khader (west of Bethlehem). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 28, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near Qadumim (east of Qalqilya). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 27, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near Azzun (east of Qalqilya). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged. The previous day rocks were thrown at a vehicle between Azzun and Ma'aleh Shomron. No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 27, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near Aqraba (southeast of Nablus). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 27, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle on route 443 near Beit Horon (west of Ramallah). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.

⁵ Information and pictures from Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria unless otherwise noted.

- ◆ **April 25, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near al-Mugheir (northeast of Ramallah). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 25, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle north of al-Luban al-Sharqia (south of Nablus). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 25, 2023:** Molotov cocktails were thrown at an Israeli bus near Bayt Ummar (north of Hebron). No casualties were reported; the bus was damaged.
- ◆ **April 24, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus between Tapuah and Migdalim (south of Nablus) No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 24, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at the southern entrance to Jericho, wounding an IDF soldier.
- ◆ **April 23, 2023:** A paint bottle was thrown from a passing car at an Israeli vehicle between the Rimonim roadblock and the Mikhmarsh Junction (southeast of Ramallah). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **April 23, 2023:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near the al-Aroub bridge (north of Hebron). No casualties were reported; the vehicle was damaged.