



Spotlight on the Israel-Palestinian Conflict

April 16 – May 7, 2024

Overview¹

► **The southern arena:** On the night of May 6, 2024, guided by intelligence, IDF forces began a targeted activity in limited areas of eastern Rafah, achieving operational control on the Gaza side of the Rafah Crossing. Meanwhile, IDF forces continued attacking terrorist targets and rocket launchers in the central Gaza Strip and Beit Hanoun (northern Gaza Strip). Terrorists in the Gaza Strip continued firing rockets at the cities, towns and villages surrounding Gaza and in southern Israel. Four IDF soldiers were killed in a Hamas rocket and mortar shell attack on a concentration of forces in the Kerem Shalom area. In response, IDF forces attacked rocket launch centers in Rafah and closed the Kerem Shalom Crossing.

► **The issue of the hostages:** After a series of meetings and the submission of proposals and counter-proposals, Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, informed the prime minister of Qatar and the head of Egyptian intelligence that Hamas agreed to the outline proposed for a ceasefire with Israel as part of the negotiations for the release of the hostages. According to reports, the proposal Hamas approved was drawn up by the United States and Qatar, based on an Egyptian proposal to which Israel had already responded positively. Following the announcement, Isma'il Haniyeh held an accelerated round of talks with Arab and Islamic officials and informed them of the details of Hamas' agreement and the steps required for advancing. Delegations from Hamas, Qatar and Israel are supposed to arrive in Egypt to continue the negotiations.

► **Aid for the Gaza Strip:** The delivery of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip continues, especially to the north, after the IDF recently allowed the entry of trucks through the Erez Crossing. Preparations are currently being completed for the construction (by the United States) of a floating sea pier off the coast of Gaza to bring in aid by sea. The IDF has completed preparations for the establishment of an operational area on the Gaza coast to

¹ Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

receive the aid. The closure of the Rafah Crossing following IDF activity and of the Kerem Shalom Crossing following the attack will slow down the transfer of aid.

► **Israel, Judea and Samaria:** During the past three weeks Palestinian terrorists carried out 11 attacks of various types. The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities. The detention of dozens of wanted persons and the confiscation of large quantities of weapons were reported. The centers of activity were Tulkarm, Jenin and Hebron. Near Tulkarm, the security forces killed a Hamas terrorist squad whose members were involved in the murder of an Israeli citizen and in IED attacks. Meanwhile, Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces also carried out counterterrorism activities.

► **The Palestinian Authority:** Mahmoud Abbas continued his efforts with international parties to end the war in the Gaza Strip and prevent the IDF's operation in Rafah. Muhammad Mustafa, PA prime minister, visited Qatar to raise financial aid. Despite the April 18, 2024 American veto in the UN Security Council against accepting the PA as a full UN member, the PA continues to promote the maneuver. A proposed resolution will be voted on by the General Assembly on May 10, 2024. Meanwhile, with Chinese support, an attempt was made to renew the Palestinian internal reconciliation, despite low expectations for its success.

The Southern Arena

IDF activities in the Gaza Strip

► **The southern Gaza Strip:** On the night of May 6, 2024, IDF forces with intelligence guidance began a targeted operation in limited areas of eastern Rafah against Hamas terrorist facilities, achieving operational control on the Gaza side of the Rafah Crossing. The activity was begun after intelligence was received that Hamas operatives were using the Crossing area for terrorist activities and after mortar shells were fired from the area at the Kerem Shalom Crossing, killing four IDF soldiers and wounding several others. Israeli Air Force aircraft and IDF ground forces attacked Hamas terrorist targets, including buildings used for military purposes, underground and other terrorist facilities from which Hamas operated in the Rafah area. Before the start of the activity an effort was made to evacuate the population from the fighting areas (IDF spokesperson, May 7, 2024).

► Medical personnel in Rafah reported 20 Palestinians had been killed and evacuated to the Kuwaiti hospital in the city. In addition, Palestinian officials warned that after the IDF forces took control of and closed the Palestinian side of the Rafah Crossing, the delivery of aid to the

Strip and the departure of the sick and wounded for treatment abroad would stop (al-Quds, May 7, 2024).

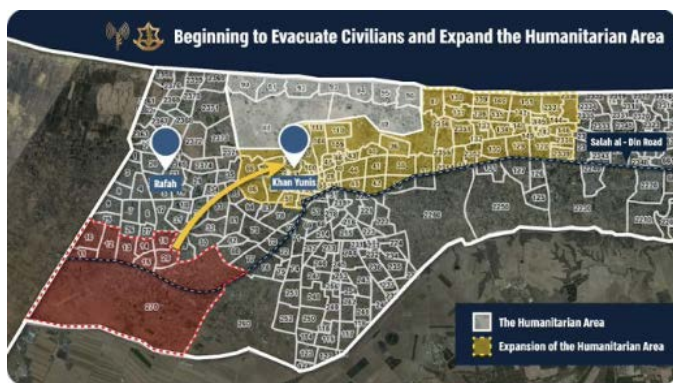


Right: Israeli Air Force strikes in Palestinian Rafah (Shehab X account, May 7, 2024). Left: Palestinians leave Rafah (al-Quds, May 6, 2024)



IDF forces at the Rafah Crossing (IDF spokesperson, May 7, 2024)

► Before the start of the operation, the IDF forces evacuated residents from the neighborhoods in eastern Rafah to the humanitarian zone in Mawasi in Khan Yunis. Calls to the residents to evacuate were distributed by flyers, SMS messages and phone calls. The expanded humanitarian zone has field hospitals, tents and large quantities of food, water, medicines and other supplies. Meanwhile, the IDF ramped up cooperation with international organizations regarding the possibility of increasing the amount of aid entering Gaza (IDF spokesperson, Israeli media, May 6, 2024).



Right: IDF flyer distributed to the residents of Rafah (IDF spokesperson, May 6, 2024). Left: The plan to evacuate residents from the east of Rafah towards the expanded humanitarian zone in Mawasi in Khan Yunis (IDF spokesperson's X account, May 6, 2024)

► **The central Gaza Strip:** IDF forces continued their targeted attacks on terrorist targets destroying tunnels, launch sites, weapons depots and Hamas observation facilities. The forces also operated to secure the recently paved east-west road, which transverses the Gaza Strip, passing through the site of the former Israeli settlement of Netzarim. IDF forces control the road to prevent the return of Palestinians from the southern Gaza Strip to Gaza City and the northern Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, April 23 – May 1, 2024).



Right: Attack on a Hamas terrorist facility (IDF website, April 30, 2024). Left: Israeli Air Force attacks in Jebalya (Wafa YouTube channel, April 23, 2024)

► **The northern Gaza Strip:** IDF forces continued their counterterrorism activities in the region, detaining terrorist operatives hiding in shelters and destroying terrorist facilities and tunnel shafts. One of the centers of activity was Beit Hanoun, from which rockets were launched towards Israel (IDF spokesperson April 23, 2024).

► The Palestinian media continued to report in detail on Israeli Air Force strikes throughout the Gaza Strip, while highlighting the extent of casualties and damage (Wafa YouTube channel, April 23-30, 2024).



An al-Jazeera presenter describes IDF activities in the central Gaza Strip and the forces' control over the east-west route dividing the Gaza Strip (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, May 5, 2024)

Rocket fire from the Gaza Strip

► Terrorist operatives in the Gaza Strip continue firing rockets and mortar shells almost daily at the cities, towns and villages surrounding the Gaza Strip and in southern Israel. Most of the rockets were fired at the city of Sderot, the launches claimed by the military wings of several terrorist organizations:

- ◆ **May 6, 2024:** At around 11:00 p.m. six rockets were launched at Sderot. Two were intercepted and the rest fell outside the city. Fragments of the interception fell in the yard of a house. No casualties were reported; damage was reported.
- ◆ **May 5, 2024:** 14 rockets and mortar shells were fired from Rafah at a concentration of IDF forces near the Kerem Shalom Crossing. Four IDF soldiers were killed and ten were wounded. In response, the IDF closed the Kerem Shalom Crossing and Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked the launch sites, some of which were near camps of Palestinian residents (Israeli media, May 5, 2024). Hamas' military-terrorist wing claimed responsibility for firing the rockets (Hamas Telegram channel, May 5, 2024).
- ◆ **May 3, 2024:** A rocket was fired at the cities, towns and villages near the southern Gaza Strip. It fell near the Gaza border (Israeli media, May 3, 2024). Hamas' military-terrorist wing announced the launch of a barrage of rockets at concentrations of IDF forces near Kibbutz Nirim (Safa Telegram channel, May 3, 2024).
- ◆ **April 29, 2024:** Several rockets were launched in the evening at Sderot, Ivim and Nir Am. One was intercepted and two fell off the coast of Ashdod (Israeli media, April 29, 2024). The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) military-terrorist wing claimed responsibility (Paltoday Telegram channel, April 29, 2024). In response, Israeli Air Force aircraft

attacked rocket launch positions in the northern Gaza Strip (IDF Telegram channel, April 30, 2024).

◆ **April 24, 2024:** Rockets were fired in the afternoon at Kissufim and in the evening at Gevim, the Sapir College, Sderot, Ivim and Nir Am. The Sderot municipality reported that a building had been damaged by shrapnel from an intercepted rocket (Israeli media, April 24, 2024). The Mujahideen Brigades² claimed responsibility for the two rocket attacks, claiming they marked the anniversary of the death of Omar Abu Sharia (Abu Hafs), the founder of the organization. During the night it was announced that another barrage had been launched towards the cities, towns and villages surrounding the Gaza Strip (Mujahideen Brigades Telegram channel, April 24, 2024).

◆ **April 23, 2024:** Several rockets were fired at Zikim, to the north of the Gaza Strip, in the afternoon, which were intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system. In response, Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked the area from which the rockets had been fired (IDF Telegram channel, April 23, 2024). The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades (AAMB) claimed responsibility for the attack, which they said had been carried out in cooperation with the military wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (elaqsa_1965, the AAMB Telegram channel, April 23, 2024). Rockets were fired at Gevim, Sapir College, Sderot, Ivim and Nir Am. The Sderot municipality reported that five rockets had been launched at the area, four which had been intercepted. No casualties were reported; damage was reported (Israeli media, April 23, 2024). The PIJ's military-terrorist wing claimed responsibility for the attack (Paltoday Telegram channel, April 23, 2024).

◆ **April 20, 2024:** Rockets were launched at Kissufim. The PIJ's military-terrorist wing claimed responsibility (Paltoday Telegram channel, April 20, 2024).

◆ **April 19, 2024:** In the evening five rockets were launched at Sderot, Ivim and Nir Am. Four fell inside Gaza Strip and one was successfully intercepted (Israeli media, April 19, 2024). In response, IDF forces attacked launch pits in Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza

² The Mujahideen Brigades began operating in 2000 at the beginning of the second intifada as part of the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, Fatah's military-terrorist wing. It split from the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, adopting radical Islamism. The secretary general of its political organization is Assad Ibrahim Abu Sharia, who lives in the Gaza Strip and was involved in rocket attacks on Israel and the placing of explosives near the border fence. The organization is active in the Gaza Strip, acknowledged by and under Hamas aegis, receiving funding, training and professional assistance from it. Starting in September 2022, it began issuing claims of responsibility for attacks in Judea and Samaria, allegedly carried out by its squads.

Strip (IDF Telegram channel, April 20, 2024). The Mujahideen Brigades claimed responsibility for the launch (Mujahideen Brigades Telegram channel, April 19, 2024), and immediately afterwards PIJ's military-terrorist wing claimed its operatives had launched the rockets (Paltoday Telegram channel, April 19, 2024).

◆ **April 18, 2024:** Rockets were launched at Mefalsim and Nir Am, and later at Ashqelon. The spokeswoman for the Ashqelon municipality announced that the rocket fell in an open area north of the city and that there were no casualties (Israeli media, April 18, 2024). The PIJ's military-terrorist wing claimed responsibility for the launch (Paltoday Telegram channel, April 18, 2024).

The war in the Palestinian perspective

► **Abu Obeida, spokesman for Hamas' military-terrorist wing**, gave a recorded speech for the 200th day of the war. He denied Israeli reports that Hamas' military wing had been destroyed, thanked Iran and the "resistance" fronts in Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen for their assistance and support and called for the escalation of "resistance" actions against Israel in all the arenas. Regarding Iran, he claimed it had established "new rules and important equations" in the conflict with Israel. Regarding the hostages, he said Hamas would make no concessions in the negotiations for the release of the hostages. He claimed Israel was trying to evade all its obligations in the negotiations and wanted to gain time, noting that "the scenario of Ron Arad" was most likely to repeat itself with the hostages in the Gaza Strip. He said they would continue their "resistance" as long as Israel continued its "aggression" or presence in the Strip (Hamas website, April 23, 2024).



Abu Obeida's first media appearance in a while (Hamas website, April 23, 2024)

The hostages and a ceasefire agreement

►After a series of delegation meetings and the submission of proposals and counter-proposals, on the evening of May 6, 2024, Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, informed Muhammad al-Thani, the prime minister of Qatar, and Abbas Kamal, head of Egyptian General Intelligence, that Hamas agreed to the proposal it received for a ceasefire with Israel, as part of the talks for the release of the hostages. Hamas claimed it had received guarantees from the United States, Egypt and Qatar that Israel would not resume fighting after the deal had been implemented. According to reports, the proposal Hamas agreed to was formulated by the United States and Qatar, based on an Egyptian proposal to which Israel had already responded positively (Ma'an, May 6 and 7, 2024). The delegations of Hamas, Qatar and Israel are supposed to arrive in Egypt to continue the negotiations. A senior official in Israel stated that the Hamas proposal was unacceptable to Israel (al-Jazeera and Israeli media, May 7, 2024)

►Following the announcement, Isma'il Haniyeh held an accelerated round of talks with Arab and Islamic officials and informed them of the details of Hamas' agreement and the steps required to advance it, noting that the matter was now in Israel's court. Speaking with Ziyad al-Nakhalah, PIJ secretary general, the two reiterated that their organizations would not waive their demands for a ceasefire, the complete withdrawal of Israel from, an exchange of prisoners [on Hamas-PIJ terms], the reconstruction of the Strip and lifting of the [so-called] "siege" (Hamas Telegram channel, May 6, 2024). Following the Hamas announcement, there were outpouring of joy in the Gaza Strip and in particular in Rafah, whose residents hoped that it would lead to the suspension of the IDF's operation in the city (Shehab, May 6, 2024; al-Jazeera, May 6, 7, 2024).

The Gaza Strip

Palestinian casualties

►**The Hamas-controlled ministry of health in the Gaza Strip** reported at 2:30 p.m., May 6, 2024, that since the beginning of the war in the Gaza Strip 34,735 Palestinians had been killed and 78,108 wounded (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, May 6, 2024).

►On May 4, 2024, Ayman Zo'rob, a senior PIJ terrorist operative who commanded the PIJ's actions in the terrorist attack and massacre on in Sufa October 7, 2023, was killed in an aerial targeted attack. Recently, from his hiding place, he had been planning the organization's

deployment in preparation for the fighting in the southern Gaza Strip. Two terrorist operatives hiding with him were also killed (IDF Telegram channel, May 4, 2024). A video was published on social media in his memory, in which he is recorded launching mortar shells. The surfer who posted the video wrote, "Shaheed Ayman Nasser Zo'rob, a commander in the Jerusalem Brigades' Rafah Battalion" (@flagvsls X account, May 4, 2024).



Picture from the video published in memory of Ayman Zo'rob (@flagvsls X account, May 4, 2024)

► On April 23, 2024, the death of Wassim Salman (Abu Ahmed) was reported after the vehicle in which he was riding in Deir al-Balah was attacked by a UAV (Adham Abu Salmiya's X account, April 23, 2024; the Facebook page of journalist Hani al-Sha'er, April 23 2024). Pictures show him as a policeman/officer in the Palestinian police in the central Gaza Strip.



Wassim Salman (Right: Wasim Salman's Instagram account, December 20, 2017. Left: Abdel Rahman Salman's X account, April 25, 2024)

►On April 21, 2024, the death of Muhammad Mazid al-Kafarneh, an operative in Hamas' military-terrorist wing in Beit Hanoun, was reported (@flagvsls X account, April 21, 2024; Ahmed Qassem's Facebook page, April 21, 2024). It is unclear where and when he was injured.



Muhammad Mazid al-Kafarneh (@flagvsls X account, April 21, 2024)

►On April 19, the death of Nidal Akram Abu Shkheidem in an attack in the Gaza Strip was reported. He was an operative in Hamas' military-terrorist wing from Hebron who was deported to the Gaza Strip in the Gilad Shalit exchange deal (Baraa Abumunshar's Facebook page, April 19, 2024; Paldf X account, April 19, 2024).



**Hamas mourning notice issued for Nidal Abu Shkheidem
(Telegram channel of Hamas in Judea and Samaria, April 20, 2024)**

►On April 18, 2024, it was reported that Yusuf Rafiq Ahmed Shbat, head of investigations in Hamas' internal security forces in Beit Hanoun, was killed in an aerial attack (IDF Telegram

channel, April 18, 2024). He was killed along with his son Muhammad on April 16, 2024 in an attack on the home of the Abu Labda family in the Tel al-Sultan neighborhood in Rafah (Yusuf Shbat's X account, April 16, 2024; @SalsabeelS38893 X account, April 16, 2024). According to reports, he had been injured in the past in an attempt to eliminate him while he was an operative in the rocket unit. He was seriously injured and went for medical treatment outside the Strip (Mohammed Qasem's X account, April 18, 2024).



Yusuf Rafiq Ahmed Shbat (Yusuf Shbat's X account, April 16, 2024)

Aid for the Gaza Strip

►On May 2, 2024, the World Central Kitchen (WCK) resumed its activities in the Gaza Strip, after suspending them following the death of seven of its employees in an IDF attack on April 1, 2024. According to reports, the kitchen in Rafah cooks hot food which is distributed to 25,000 Palestinians staying in Rafah after leaving their homes in the northern Gaza Strip and Gaza City (Wafa YouTube channel, May 2, 2024). Thanks to the organization's renewed activities, bakeries reopened. Local residents complained of long waiting lines and called for more bakeries (Wafa YouTube channel, April 20, 2024).



Right: Renewal of the WCK's activities in Rafah (Wafa YouTube channel, May 2, 2024). Left: Residents wait in line to buy pita at a bakery in Gaza City which recently reopened (Wafa YouTube channel, April 20, 2024)

► On May 1, 2024, for the first time since the outbreak of the war, the Erez Crossing was opened for the delivery of humanitarian aid. The Crossing, which was damaged on October 7, 2023, was opened after the IDF completed security work at the site. With the opening of the Crossing, 30 trucks carrying humanitarian aid which arrived from Jordan for the northern Gaza Strip entered the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, May 1, 2024). **Anas al-Sharif, a correspondent al-Jazeera TV**, reported the arrival of the trucks and the start of their unloading at the UNRWA center in the Jebalya refugee camp (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, May 2, 2024).



Right: The trucks enter through the Erez Crossing (IDF spokesperson, May 1, 2024). Left: An al-Jazeera TV correspondent reports the arrival of the aid trucks at the Jebalya refugee camp (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, May 2, 2024)

► On April 23, 2024, medical aid was delivered, accompanied by the United Nations, to the hospitals in the northern Gaza Strip. The aid, donated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Union, was transferred to al-Awda and Kamal Adwan hospitals (Wafa YouTube channel, April 23, 2024).



Delivering medical aid to the hospitals in the northern Gaza Strip (Wafa YouTube channel, April 23, 2024)

► On May 1, 2024, a demonstration was held in a tent camp of displaced Gazans to express gratitude for the recent pro-Palestinian demonstrations taking place at universities in the United States. The participants waved signs in English with the names of universities where the demonstrations are being held (Wafa YouTube channel, May 1, 2024).



Right: Demonstration thanking the American universities (Wafa YouTube channel, May 1, 2024).

Left: Cartoon of support for the Palestinians in universities around the world (Alaa al-Laqta's Facebook page, April 29, 2024)

Preparing the American-built pier for use

► The IDF forces continued the work of preparing the operational area on the Gaza coast to receive the humanitarian aid that will be transferred to the Strip through the floating pier under construction by the United States Army. The area covers about 67 acres and includes a hydraulic gate system which can be operated remotely (IDF spokesperson, April 27, 2024). The United States military began building the pier off the coast of Gaza to transfer humanitarian aid to the Strip. In the first phase, 90 trucks a day are planned to enter the Strip and later the daily volume will increase to 150 trucks (Pentagon website, April 25, 2024). British media reported the possibility that British Army soldiers would secure the movement of trucks throughout the Strip. British government officials stated that no decision had yet been made on the matter and the British Ministry of Defense refused to comment (BBC

website, April 27, 2024; The Guardian, April 27, 2024). Hamas and the PIJ protested the possibility, which they see as an "occupation," and indicated that they would attack anyone stationed at or around the pier (AP, April 25, 2024).



Right: IDF forces to prepare the operational area (IDF website, April 27, 2024). Left: United States Army construction of the floating pier (CENTCOM X Account, April 30, 2024)



A displaced Gazan staying in Deir al-Balah built a tent for his family from the airlift parachutes which dropped aid in the Gaza Strip (Wafa YouTube channel, April 17, 2024)

Freedom Fleet Coalition flotilla to the Gaza Strip

►The Freedom Fleet Coalition announced it had completed all the technical and crew-related requirements to launch the flotilla to the Gaza Strip on April 26, 2024 (Freedom Fleet Coalition Facebook page, April 24, 2024). However, on April 25, the coalition announced that even though all the required paperwork had been submitted to the port authorities and the cargo had been loaded and prepared for the voyage, it received notice of a delay initiated by Israel in an attempt to prevent the flotilla from sailing. According to the Coalition, Israel was pressuring Guinea-Bissau to remove its flag from the flotilla's lead ship, which caused Guinea-Bissau to conduct another inspection, delaying the voyage (Freedom Flotilla Coalition Facebook page, April 24, 2024).

►Later, the Freedom Fleet Coalition held a press conference where it announced that the authority in Guinea-Bissau in charge of inspections and the registration of ships sailing under

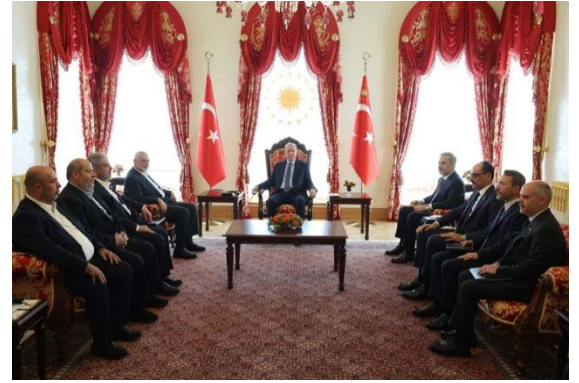
the country's flag said that it had removed the Guinea-Bissau flag from two of the flotilla's ships, one of which is the cargo ship Anadolu, on which more than 5,000 tons of humanitarian aid had already been loaded (Freedom Fleet Coalition website, April 27, 2024). **Zaher Birawi, chairman of the International Committee to Break the Siege on Gaza**, which is a founding member of the Freedom Fleet Coalition, noted that the close relationship between Israel and Guinea-Bissau sabotaged the efforts to launch the two ships flying the Guinea-Bissau flag (Watan Agency, May 2, 2024). As of May 4, the Freedom Fleet Coalition continued its efforts to find a country under whose flag the ships could sail (Turkish Mavi Marmara Association, May 4, 2024).

Hamas delegation visits Turkey

► Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, paid an official visit to Turkey, with a delegation of the movement's leadership which included Khaled Mashal, Khalil al-Haya, Zaher Jabarin, and the Hamas representative in Turkey, Musa Akari³ (Hamas website, April 19, 2024). They met with Turkish President Erdogan, who noted Turkey's firm position in support of the Palestinian cause and its efforts to stop Israel's activities against the Palestinian people. He also noted the importance of demanding accountability from Israel for its [alleged] "crimes," and promised continued Turkish aid for the Gaza Strip (Arabic website of the Turkish presidency, April 20, 2024).

► Haniyeh also met with heads of Turkish political parties and various members of the Turkish Parliament, and received delegations that came to offer condolences for the death of his sons and grandsons in an Israeli attack (Hamas website, May 3, 2024). During the visit, a coordination meeting was also held with a delegation from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) leadership headed by Jamil Mezher, deputy secretary general, and a delegation of the PIJ leadership headed led by Muhammad al-Hindi, deputy PIJ secretary general (Hamas website, April 26, 27, 2024). At the end of a two-week visit, the members of the delegation returned to Doha (Hamas website, May 3, 2024).

³ Musa Akari was a member of the terrorist squad that abducted and murdered Border Police fighter Nissim Toledano on December 13, 1992. He was caught and sentenced to three terms of life imprisonment, released in the Gilad Shalit exchange deal and deported to Turkey.



Right: The delegation meets with the president of Turkey (Arabic website of the Turkish presidency, April 20, 2024). Left: Hamas, PIJ and PFLP coordination meeting (Hamas website, April 27, 2024)

Israel, Judea and Samaria

Terrorist attacks

► During the past three weeks, there were 11 terrorist attacks, including shootings, stabbings and vehicle ramming attacks. Two were combined attacks (vehicle ramming and stabbing), three stabbings were carried out by women and one by a Turkish citizen:

- ◆ **On the morning of May 5, 2024**, police in the Old City of Jerusalem detained a 17-year-old Palestinian girl from al-Issawiya in east Jerusalem for questioning after she aroused their suspicion. During the examination, she pulled out a knife that she had hidden hid under her head covering (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, May 5, 2024).
- ◆ **On the afternoon of April 30, 2024**, near the Flower Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem, a man armed with a knife stabbed a Border Police fighter on patrol, who was later taken to a hospital for medical treatment. A nearby Border Police fighter saw the attack and shot and killed the Palestinian. The terrorist was Hassan Saklanen, a 34-year-old tourist from Turkey who apparently entered Israel through the Allenby Crossing (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, Israeli media, April 30, 2024). The Free Da'wah Party, the political arm of what used to be the Turkish Hezbollah, a Sunni Kurdish movement affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, issued a statement congratulating the "act of sacrifice" (KurdishFrontNews Telegram channel, May 1, 2024).



Right: CCTV recording of the attack, April 30, 2024. Left: The knife used in the attack (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, April 30, 2024)

- ◆ **On April 30, 2024**, a speeding Palestinian collided with the vehicles of Border Police fighters operating near the settlement of Barta'a in northern Samaria, injuring one Border Police fighter. The Palestinian was shot at but escaped (Israeli media, April 30, 2024).
- ◆ **On the night of April 27, 2024**, a vehicle with armed Palestinians fired shots at the IDF Salem Camp (northwest of Jenin). An IDF force lying in ambush shot and killed two of them; the rest fled the scene. Two M-16 rifles were found which had been used by the attackers (IDF spokesperson, April 27, 2024). Palestinian media reported that the dead were Mustafa Abed, 22 years old from Kafr Dan, and Ahmed Shawahinah, 21 years old ,from Silat al-Harithiya, west of Jenin (Ma'an, April 27, 2024).



The guns used by the attackers (IDF website, April 27, 2024)

- ◆ **On the afternoon of April 26, 2024**, in Ramla an Israeli Arab ran after a young Israeli woman walking down the street, stabbed her in the back, seriously wounding her, and fled to a nearby street. An Israeli citizen who was nearby chased, shot and killed him. The young woman was seriously injured. According to reports the terrorist

was Sa'ad Abu Ghanem, 21 years old, a resident of Ramla. His family claimed he was mentally unstable (Israeli media, April 26, 2024).



Right: Documenting the terrorist running with a knife towards the young woman. Left: The attack (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, April 27, 2024)

- ◆ **On April 24, 2024**, a Palestinian woman armed with a knife went to the IDF position at the bypass intersection near Kiryat Arba and tried to stab soldiers who were stationed there. She was shot and killed (IDF spokesperson, April 24, 2024). According to Palestinian media she was Maimouna Harahsha, 20 years old, a nursing student from Bani Na'im (Ma'an, April 24, 2024).

- ◆ **On the morning of April 22, 2024**, a vehicle carrying two Palestinians arrived at Tchelet Street in Jerusalem and rammed into three Israeli civilians and collided with a parked Israeli vehicle. The Palestinians exited the vehicle and one of them tried to fire an improvised Carlo-type submachine gun at the passers-by, but the gun malfunctioned. He threw it to the ground and fled with his friend. Police forces searched the area and caught the terrorists hiding in a furniture store with two knives in their possession. An axe and ammunition were found in their vehicle. The two terrorist were 17-year-old Hebron residents who arrived in Jerusalem via the Tunnel Road (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, April 22, 2024). The Palestinian media reported they were Hatem al-Qawasmeh, a member of a clan associated with Hamas. One of the clan, Abdallah al-Qawasmeh, was a senior operative of Hamas' military-terrorist wing in Judea and Samaria and was killed in a targeted attack in 2003 because of his involvement in suicide bombing attacks during the second intifada. The other terrorist was Mu'ataz Abu Ghulmeh, whose uncle, Jihad Abu Ghulmeh, was one of the founders Hamas' military-terrorist wing in Judea and Samaria and in the Hebron area (Ma'an, April 22, 2024).



The axe found in the terrorists' vehicle (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, April 22, 2024)

- ◆ **On the afternoon of April 21, 2024**, a Palestinian woman armed with a knife went to the Beka'ot Crossing in the Jordan Valley and tried to stab soldiers who stationed there. She was shot and killed (IDF spokesperson, April 21, 2024). Palestinian media reported the death of Manal Faze' Sawaftah, 40 years old from Tubas, during an attempted stabbing attack (Safa, April 21, 2024).
- ◆ **On the morning of April 21, 2024**, two Palestinians arrived at the Beit Einun Junction (north of Hebron) where IDF soldiers were securing the location. One of the two ran at the soldiers holding a knife to distract them, while the other took cover and shot at them from an improvised Carlo machine gun. They were both shot and killed (Israeli media, April 21, 2024). Palestinian media reported they were Muhammad Jabarin, 19 years old, and Musa Jabarin, 18 years old, both from Hebron (Ma'an, April 21, 2024).



Right: Muhammad and Musa Jabarin (Ramallah News, April 21, 2024). Left: the improvised Carlo submachine gun that was used in the attack (IDF spokesperson, April 21, 2024)

- ◆ **On the morning of April 21, 2024**, an IED exploded when an Israeli civilian tried to take down a PLO flag placed in an open area near the settlement of Kochav Hashahar (northeast of Ramallah). The civilian was injured. IDF forces arrived at the scene and initiated a search (Israeli media, April 21, 2024).



The explosion of the IED under the PLO flag (X account of a user named Fateh, April 21, 2024)

- ◆ **On the morning of April 21, 2024**, a shot was fired from the village of Jilabun at a house in Kibbutz Merav on the Gilboa. One of the bullets hit the window and two children were injured by flying glass (Israeli media, April 21, 2024).



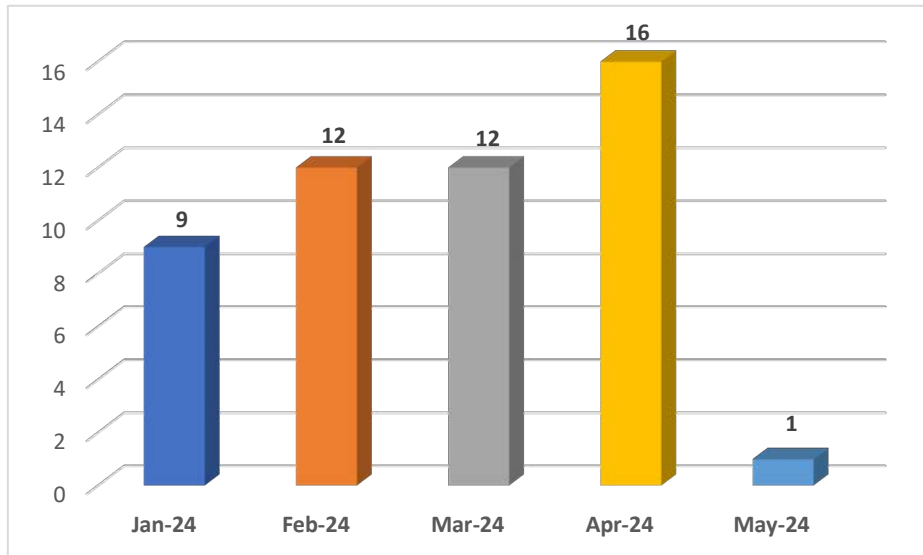
The bullet hole in the window of a house in Kibbutz Merav (QudsN X account, April 21, 2024)

Counterterrorism activities

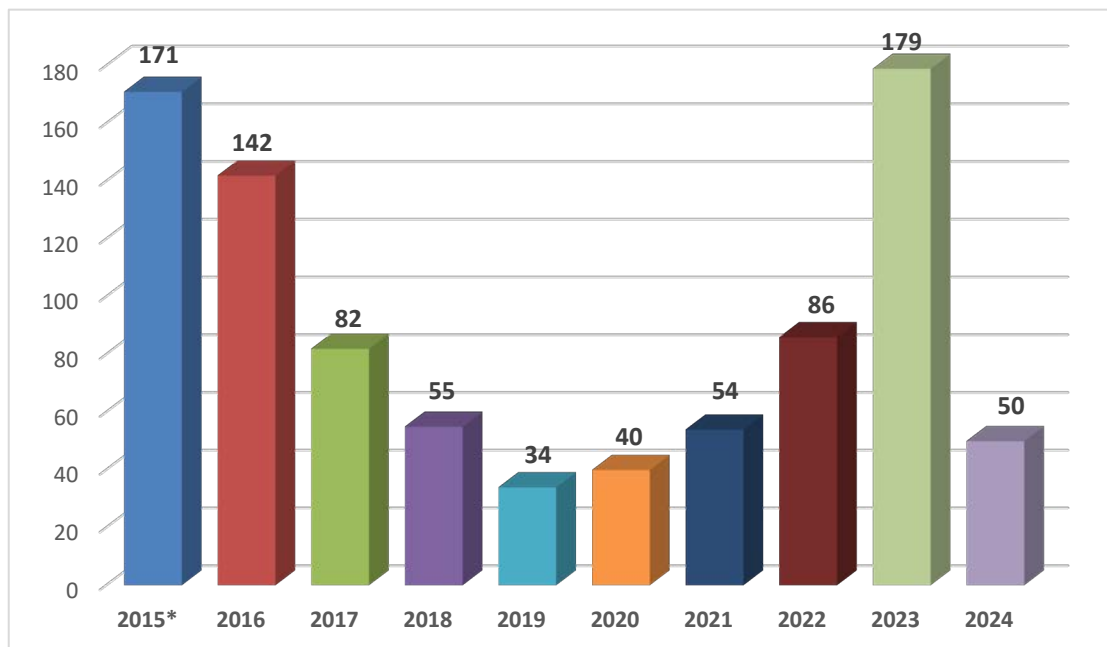
- ▶ On the afternoon of May 4, 2024, a suspect was seen in the city of Holon with a knife in his possession; he was detained. The suspect, a 21-year-old resident of east Jerusalem, was detained by police officers who arrived at the scene and took him for questioning (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, May 4, 2024).
- ▶ On the morning of April 26, 2024, IDF forces detained two Palestinians from east Jerusalem who arrived in a vehicle (which had been taken off the road, was not supposed to be driven and had no documentation) at a farm in the Ramallah area. Guns, axes and knives were found in the vehicle. The detainees were taken to the security forces for interrogation (Israeli media, April 26, 2024).
- ▶ On the morning of April 17, 2024, a 17-year-old Palestinian, an illegal resident from Birzeit, was detained near the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem, after arousing the suspicion of local police officers. During a search, a knife was found stuck to his body with glue; he planned to

use the knife in a stabbing attack. During questioning he said that he had written on his Facebook page that he intended to arrive in paradise (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, April 17, 2024).

Critical terrorist attacks, 2024⁴



Annual distribution of critical terrorist attacks



⁴ 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. Rocks and Molotov cocktails thrown by Palestinians are not included. Shots fired at IDF forces during counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria are included.

Counterterrorism activities

►The security forces continued their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria. During the past three weeks, dozens of wanted Palestinians suspected of terrorist activities were detained and weapons were confiscated. Since the beginning of the war, approximately 4,000 wanted Palestinians have been detained in Judea and Samaria, of whom more than 1,700 were Hamas terrorist operatives. The centers of activity were Tulkarm, Jenin and Hebron (IDF spokesperson's X account, May 6, 2024):

►On May 6 and 7, 2024, Israeli security forces operating in the Tulkarm region destroyed three explosives laboratories, uncovered a number of explosives buried under roads and confiscated dozens of weapons parts. During an exchange of fire, an armed terrorist operative was killed and six wanted Palestinians were detained (IDF website, May 6 and 7, 2024).



**A laboratory for the manufacture of explosives, destroyed by IDF forces
(IDF website, May 7, 2024)**

►On the evening of May 4, 2024, the security forces operated in Deir al-Ghsun (north of Tulkarm) to detain a squad of terrorist operatives who had barricaded themselves inside a building. The activity continued for more than 12 hours as the terrorists exchanged fire with the forces. After the IDF launched missiles at the building and carried out two attacks with UAVs and heavy engineering equipment, the four operatives were killed. A fifth surrendered to the forces. Large quantities of weapons were found. The terrorists had been involved in the killing an Israeli civilian in November 2023 and in several attacks in the Qalqilya area. During the activity, an Israeli Yamam soldier was injured (IDF spokesperson, May 4, 2024).

►Hamas' military-terrorist wing, reporting the deaths of the operatives, said in a statement that Alaa' Shritah was the commander of Hamas' military wing in the Tulkarm District; Tamer Fuqaha was one of the terrorists who carried out the double attack in Beit Lid and in Nebi

Elias; and Adnan Samara was an operative in the military wing (Palinfo, May 5, 2024). Regarding Asal Badran, the PIJ announced that he was an operative of the ranks of the organization (Telegram channel Daffa_media [PIJ Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria], May 4, 2024).



Right: A Hamas mourning notice issued for the terrorists killed in Deir al-Ghson. Clockwise from the top: Alaa' Shritah, Tamer Fuqaha, Asal Badran, Adnan Samara (Hamas Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria, May 4, 2024). From left: security forces activity in Deir al-Ghson (Wafa YouTube channel, May 4, 2024)

► Between April 20 and 21, 2024, the security forces operated in the Nur Shams refugee camp in Tulkarm, detaining wanted Palestinians, seizing large quantities of weapons and destroying two laboratories for the manufacture of explosives. There was a heavy exchange of fire between the forces and armed terrorist operatives (IDF spokesperson, April 21, 2024). According to the ministry of health in Ramallah, 14 residents of the refugee camp were killed in the operation, which lasted for about 50 hours (Wafa, April 20 and 21, 2024). According to the mourning notices issued by Hamas, 13 of the dead were armed "jihad fighters," and three of them were Hamas operatives (Hamas Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria, April 21, 2024). Initially, reports were published that Muhammad Jabr, the commander of the Tulkarm Battalion of the Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military-terrorist wing, who was known as Abu Shuja', was killed by the security forces and his body was being held by Israel. However, he denied the reports of his death and attended the funeral of the slain terrorists (Aljazeera.net, April 21, 2024).

► On April 22, 2024, **Muhammad Mustafa, the PA prime minister**, visited Tulkarm accompanied by a number of ministers. He visited the wounded from the Nur Shams camp hospitalized in the government hospital in Tulkarm, toured the camp and held a meeting with activists from the district (Wafa, April 22, 2024).



Right: Abu Shuja' carried on the shoulders of the funeral participants (@raghadm48 X account, April 21, 2024). Left: Muhammad Mustafa visits Tulkarm (Wafa, April 22, 2024)

Palestinian Authority security force counterterrorism activities

- Eyewitnesses reported that Ahmed Hisham Abu al-Ful, an operative of the Tulkarm Battalion of the PIJ's military-terrorist wing, was killed on the evening of May 1, 2024, after operatives of the PA's security forces shot at his vehicle in the southern neighborhood of Tulkarm. In a joint statement, the Tulkarm and Nur Shams camps' battalions blamed the PA's "treacherous" security forces for his death, and claimed his killing was a crime similar to the so-called [alleged] "massacres" carried out by Israeli security forces against "resistance" fighters [terrorist operatives]. Gunmen from the Tulkarm Battalion shot at the building of the Muqata'a in Tulkarm and the headquarters of the security forces. There were also clashes between armed terrorist operatives and security force operatives at the entrance to Tulkarm refugee camp (al-Jazeera TV website, May 2, 2024; Filastin al-Yawm TV website, May 2, 2024).
- Muhammad Jabr, aka Abu Shuja', commander of the Tulkarm Battalion, responded to the shooting in a written message in which he said they would not be silent much longer, and if the PA forces continued their "aggression," they would be forced to end their silence (QudsN , May 1, 2024). **Talal Dweikat, spokesman for the Palestinian security forces**, stated that as part of their routine activity, the Palestinian security forces were tasked with protecting civilian security, and while a patrol was in al-Salam Square in Tulkarm, someone shot at the patrol force and they returned fire at the source of the shooting (Wafa, May 2, 2024).



Ahmed Abu al-Ful (Filastin al-Yawm website, May 2, 2024)

► On May 4, 2024, a short video was published on social media which claimed to document PA security operatives deactivating an IED planted in the town of Maithaloun in the Jenin district (Shehab Telegram channel, May 4, 2024; al-Shahed website, May 4, 2024). Furthermore, it was reported that the PA's security forces had dismantled three IEDs planted in front of the southern entrance to the city of Tubas near al-Quds Open University (al-Shahed website, May 4, 2024; A7rartoubas Telegram channel, May 4, 2024).



Right: Dismantling an IED in Maithaloun (al-Shahed website, May 4, 2024). Left: Detonating the explosives in Tubas (Telegram channel A7rartoubas, May 4, 2024)

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Political activity

► On April 27, 2024, Mahmoud Abbas arrived for an official visit of a few days in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to participate in the World Economic Forum. He also met with the Jordanian prime minister, the French and Norwegian foreign ministers, the Saudi Arabian crown prince and the president of the World Economic Forum. In every meeting he reviewed the situation in the Gaza Strip and the PA's difficult financial situation. Speaking at the forum, he called for a

political solution within the framework of an international conference which would include the Gaza Strip, Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem in an independent Palestinian state. He claimed he was concerned that after the war in the Gaza Strip, Israel would turn to Judea and Samaria and deport [sic] the residents to Jordan. He again called on the countries of the world to recognize the PA as a full UN member state (Wafa, April 28, 2024).



Right: Mahmoud Abbas speaks at the World Economic Forum (Wafa, April 28, 2024). Left: Mahmoud Abbas meets with the Saudi Arabian crown prince (Wafa, April 29, 2024)

► In addition to his political activity, Mahmoud Abbas announced a number of new government appointments, including the appointment of Riad al-Maliki, the PA foreign minister, as his advisor for international issues and a special envoy on his behalf with the status of minister. Rami Hamdallah, the former PA prime minister, was appointed chairman of the election committee (Wafa, April 20, 21, 2024).

Muhammad Mustafa visits Qatar

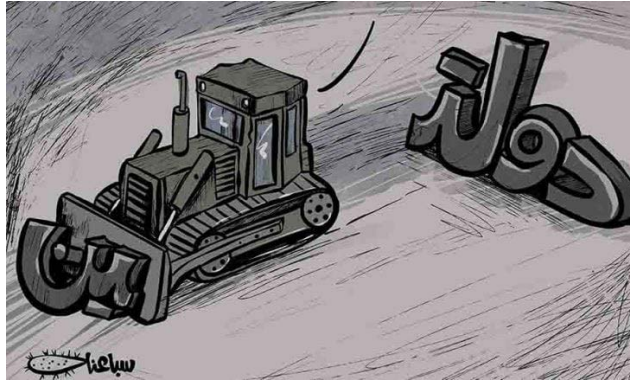
► Muhammad Mustafa, the PA prime minister, arrived on an official visit to Qatar to participate in the conference of the Arab Forum for Economy and Cooperation with the countries of Central Asia and Azerbaijan. He gave a speech in which he called for an immediate end to the war in the Gaza Strip and criticized Israel's conduct towards the Palestinians. He also noted that for the first time, his government had a minister whose role was to coordinate the issue of humanitarian aid. He also called for international recognition of a Palestinian state. On the Forum sidelines he met with the prime minister of Qatar, the prime minister of Libya and the secretary general of the Arab League to raise financial aid for the PA government. He also visited wounded Gazans hospitalized in hospitals in Doha, and thanked Qatar for funding their medical treatment (Wafa, April 30, 2024).



Right: Muhammad Mustafa participates in the Forum. Left: Mustafa visits wounded Gazans who are hospitalized in hospitals in Qatar (Wafa, April 30, 2024)

Palestinian maneuvers in the UN Security Council

- ▶ On April 18, 2024, a vote was held in the UN Security Council at the request of the PA to receive full membership in the UN. The proposed Palestinian resolution was vetoed by the United States and supported by 12 countries; Britain and Switzerland abstained (Reuters, April 18, 2024). Since 2011 the PA has been trying, unsuccessfully, to upgrade its status in the UN from observer to full member.
- ▶ Following the United States veto, Mahmoud Abbas said they were facing a new, difficult phase and would reexamine their relations with the United States (Ma'an, April 20, 2024). Members of the PA government said that because of the veto, Mahmoud Abbas refused to meet with Secretary of State Anthony Blinken in Ramallah and on the sidelines of the Economic Forum in Riyadh. It was Mahmoud Abbas way of expressing Palestinian anger at American positions "biased" towards Israel (al-Sharq News X account, May 1, 2024).
- ▶ Mahmoud Abbas' office strongly condemned the United States' use of its veto, calling it "immoral and unjustified," and challenging the [alleged] will of the international community which supports granting the PA full UN membership. Furthermore, the office claimed the veto revealed the "contradictions" in United States policy, which on the one hand claims support for the two-state solution but on the other hand prevents the international institution from implementing the solution [sic] (Wafa, April 18, 2024).
- ▶ In the meantime, the PA continues to promote the move by putting forward a proposed resolution for a vote on May 10 at the UN General Assembly that will oblige the UN Security Council to discuss the Palestinian request at the UN yet again (al-Ayam, May 1, 2024).



**Palestinian cartoon following the United States veto in the Security Council
(al-Quds al-Arabi, April 20, 2024)**

Palestinian reaction to confirmation of American aid to Israel⁵

►With a vote of 75 to 17, for the second time the United States Senate approved a \$95 billion aid package for Israel, Ukraine and Taiwan. That provoked angry reactions from the Palestinians, who condemned the decision.

►**Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesman for Mahmoud Abbas**, stated that the approval provided a green light for Israel to continue its operations against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, which would be expressed by "thousands of victims." He also attacked the United States for its support of the right-wing government in Israel and the cessation of funding to UNRWA for Palestinian refugees (Wafa, April 20, 2024).

►Hamas also condemned the approval of the aid and claimed it showed United States complicity "in the 'occupation's' [alleged] genocide of the Palestinians" and that the Biden administration supported Israel's actions and gave it a green light to continue its [alleged] "brutal aggression" (Hamis Telegram channel, April 24, 2024). The PIJ placed full responsibility on the United States for Israel's actions against them (PIJ Telegram channel, April 25, 2024).

Attempt to renew the internal Palestinian reconciliation

►On April 30, 2024, under the auspices of China in Beijing, the meeting held by a Hamas delegation headed by Musa Abu Marzouk and a Fatah delegation headed by Azzam al-Ahmed, came to an end. The objective of the meeting was to promote an internal Palestinian reconciliation. A joint statement issued by the parties noted the need for national unity and

⁵ On April 20, 2024, the United States House of Representatives approved a security aid package to Israel totaling \$26 billion, including \$4 billion for the Iron Dome and David slingshot defense systems.

an end to division within the PLO, while integrating all Palestinian organizations into the organization (Wafa, April 30, 2024).



Musa Abu Marzouk (right) and Azzam al-Ahmed (left) in Beijing (Quds Press, April 30, 2024)

►"Sources" said that the meeting had produced several results, the first of which was the understanding that Palestinian unity was needed within the PLO. According to the sources, the movements emphasized that all Palestinian organizations had to join the PLO based on previous agreements, and a temporary consensus government was needed during the war or after it. According to the sources, one of the main tasks of the government to be formed would be to unify the Palestinian institutions and prepare for general elections. The sources added that both movements noted that a joint committee should be established of all the relevant parties in the Gaza Strip, which would sit in Cairo with the objective of coordinating and monitoring the situation on the ground (al-Mayadeen, April 30, 2024).

►**Usama Hamdan, a senior Hamas member**, said Hamas had decided, together with the Palestinian organizations, on an initiative to establish an emergency government based on the end of the "aggression." He claimed they were facing a genuine opportunity to unite the Palestinian ranks, at the same time noting that their military wing would exist as long as the "occupation" existed, and that when the Palestinian state was established, everything would come in its time (al-Araby, April 25, 2024).

►**Mahmoud al-Habash, Mahmoud Abbas' advisor for religious affairs and Islamic relations**, criticized the meeting, claiming that meetings between Hamas and Fatah were not serious and did not yield results. He stated that Hamas wanted to enter the PLO to take control of it and that "their door was open but there are no proposals from Hamas" (al-Arabiya Telegram channel, May 2, 2024).

German representative to the PA forced to flee from Birzeit University

►Students from Birzeit University forced Oliver Owcza, the representative of Germany in the PA, to flee while he was visiting the Palestinian museum next to the university with a delegation from the European Union. According to reports, even before the visit, calls were issued on social media to go to Birzeit University and force the representative of Germany to leave because of his country's support for Israel in the war in the Gaza Strip. Eyewitnesses said that the students attacked some of the diplomatic vehicles with rocks and smashed the rear window of one of the vehicles (Reuters, April 30, 2024; al-Araby al-Jadeed, April 30, 2024; Aljazeera.net, May 1, 2024).



Right: The German representative rushes away from Birzeit University, followed by a group of students (Aljazeera.net, May 1, 2024). Left: The students broke the side mirror of the German representative's car (QudsN X account, April 30, 2024)