

Why the PA Should Not Control the Gaza Strip

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Shvat 5785 – January 2025
Policy Paper no. 92



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Introduction and Summary

Who will govern the Gaza Strip the day after the war? This question has been repeatedly invoked both in Israel and the international arena, ever since war broke out on October 7, 2023. Many in the international community, and even in Israel, point to the Palestinian Authority (PA), in its current form or in some renewed one, as the leading candidate for the job.

This paper aims to review this option by scrutinizing the PA's characteristics – the ideology that fuels its component organizations, the stance it takes towards Israel, its share in initiating and promoting terrorism, the way it treats its own citizens and its leaders' conduct in terms of their probity.

This paper's conclusion is that the idea of handing the Gaza Strip over to the PA's control is a dangerous idea – first and foremost to Israel, but also to the Gaza residents themselves.

The first chapter presents the ideological infrastructure that guides the PA's actions, starting with a review of the Fatah's establishment by Yasser Arafat in 1959, and its basic charter. This charter counts among its goals the complete destruction of the state of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state – meant to be part of the greater Arab nation. Next, the paper will trace how the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established, how the Fatah movement took it over and changed the national Palestinian charter after doing so. This charter also saw its primary goal as military struggle against the “Zionist entity”, as well as denying the connection between the Jewish people and their homeland while identifying the Palestinian struggle with the pan-Arab one. We will go on to follow the PLO's development, during which the “Phases” program was adopted – a program that was “willing” to promote the Palestinian cause in non-violent ways on condition they advanced the primary goal. We'll see how the PLO, later the PA, acted in precisely such a manner and how the PA refused any attempt to accept a long-term solution that involved recognition of the state of Israel.

In **the second chapter**, we'll see how, in practice, the PA works to promote its murderous ideology. The paper demonstrates the way the PA indoctrinates hatred and terrorism from early childhood. We'll see how incitement is deeply rooted in the Palestinian education system: from the schoolbooks, summer-camp materials, television and afternoon entertainment programs to the very names of the schools and camps.

We will also see how the PA absolutely refuses to recognize Israel, and how its senior officials take every opportunity to encourage terrorism and the struggle against Israel – including explicit support of the October 7 Hamas massacre.

We will further detail how the PA directly sponsors terrorism, and how, in practical terms, the most lucrative (and tenured) employment is killing Jews. We'll see how the PA takes pride in and prioritizes this financial sponsorship.

The second chapter closes by presenting the direct involvement of Palestinian Security Services personnel in terrorist attacks against Israel. In short, the PA promotes, sponsors and actively participates in acts of terrorism.

The **third and final chapter** seeks to present the viewpoint of the Arab population in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. The chapter opens with the fact that the PA has no democratic legitimacy. PA residents voted overwhelmingly for Hamas back in 2006, and no elections have been held since then – the PA being thoroughly convinced that the people have had enough of their say. This is also evident in opinion polls showing that PA residents see themselves as better off without the PA and would prefer other leadership. Sadly, the most popular candidate was Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh [now deceased]. We will demonstrate that, beyond that, the PA does not actually govern significant portions of its own territory.

Not only is the PA illegitimate in the eyes of its own population and does not de facto govern its own territories; wherever they do govern, they practice acute systematic abuse of the residents' human rights. As we will demonstrate, this includes the torture and murder of political dissidents, harm to the Christian minority, severe violation of women and children's rights, LGBT persecution and so on and so forth.

To all this must be added the pervasive corruption permeating the PA, considered to be deeply entrenched in its political culture, as well as the judiciary's lack of independence – the judicial system is, to all intents and purposes, ruled by Mahmoud Abbas, after his decades-long efforts to eradicate any shred of its independence.

This paper seeks to present a broad and comprehensible picture of the PA's actions and intentions, in order to promote vital public discussion of this issue. The subject matter reviewed herein is extensive, and we naturally could not cover the entirety of all available sources and studies. Still, the material presented here provides sufficient and substantial data to provide a comprehensive and coherent picture.

This paper would not be possible without the work of many organizations who spent years researching the Palestinian Authority. We wish to thank PMW for the sheer volume of material it gathered; to the research department of "Regavim" for their support and assistance in analyzing the PA's involvement in terrorist activity; The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs; The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI); The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center and The Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). These and others have collated, researched and analyzed a great deal of information over the years and this paper is based in large measure on their work. Gathering all the data into one place makes it possible to grasp the full picture and its inevitable conclusion.

The research and writing of this paper truly opened our eyes, and we hope its readers will be similarly enlightened,

The Authors.

Jerusalem, 2025.





A: The Ideological Infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority

To better understand the Palestinian Authority (PA), one must look back to its historical origins, to its ideological foundations, and to the founding documents of the bodies operating within its framework. To that end, we will review the history and ideology of the Fatah movement (“Harakat Al-Tahrir Al-Filastini” in Arabic – the Palestine Liberation Movement), whose flagship position is the armed struggle against the State of Israel till its destruction, as part of the pan-Arab struggle. We will then describe the founding of the PLO (The Palestinian Liberation Front), and how it was taken over by Fatah. We will present the Palestinian national charter, amended after the Fatah takeover to stipulate that armed resistance against Israel was a strategy rather than a tactic, and that raising children to an armed struggle was a sacred duty. Next, we will outline the changes the PLO underwent until its transformed into the Palestinian Authority. We will explain and demonstrate why the changes were merely window dressing - not evidence of the PLO relinquishing its original goals but merely part of the Palestinian phases plan, the program that views armed struggle as only one tool out of a set with which to fight against Israel. Afterwards, we will present part of the negotiation processes between Israel and the newly established PA, from which it is also clear that the idea of total war against the State of Israel was never abandoned.

The Fatah founders were inspired by the Algerian uprising against the colonialist power of France ('The Algerian War of Independence'). The violent uprising, marked by terror attacks on civilians, lasted more than seven years and ended with an Algerian victory and the establishment of an independent state.

A.1 The Early History and Ideology of Fatah (the Palestine Liberation Movement)

The basic idea for the Fatah organization was formulated in 1957 by Yasser Arafat, Khalil al-Wazir (known as Abu-Jihad) and other friends in Kuwait, based on two position papers they produced. The first official meeting of the organization was held in 1959, two years later, with close to twenty participants from various groups. Among these activists were Yasser Arafat, Khalil al-Wazir, Salah Khalaf and Khaled al-Hassan. They were later joined by Farouk Qaddumi, and together they led Fatah in its early days.

The Fatah founders were inspired by the Algerian uprising against the colonialist power of France ('The Algerian War of Independence'). The violent uprising, marked by terror attacks on civilians, lasted more than seven years and ended with an Algerian victory and the establishment of an independent state.¹

The Fatah charter was written before the Six Day War, when the areas of Judea and Samaria were occupied by Jordan, and the Gaza Strip by Egypt. It included some foundational principles, including the following primary ones:²

1. Palestine is part of the Arab world, the Palestinian citizens are part of the Arab nation, and their struggle is part of the overall Arab struggle.
2. The Palestinian people have a separate identity, have a right to decide their own destiny, and are fully sovereign over all their lands.
3. The Palestinian struggle is part of a general global struggle against Zionism, colonialism and imperialism.
4. The Zionist movement is racist, colonialist and aggressive in its ideology, aims, organization and methods.
5. Israeli existence in Palestine is a Zionist, colonialist invasion, and a natural ally of colonialism and imperialism.
6. The liberation of Palestine and defense of its holy places are an Arab, religious, and humanist duty.
7. Those who participate in the revolution and liberation of Palestine are the owners of the Palestinian land.

Among the movement's objectives stated in the charter were the following:³

1. The complete liberation of all Palestine, and the total annihilation of all Zionist existence – economic, political and military.
2. The establishment of a democratic state with full sovereignty over all the territory of Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital.
3. Active participation in attaining the Arab nation's goals of liberation and the building of a united, independent and progressive Arab society.

[For the sake of convenience, we use the term “Palestine” as the name for the land of Israel when presenting the Fatah, PLO and PA positions, in line with those who promulgated these positions and documents. This in no way marks a recognition on our part of “Palestine” as a legitimate designation for the Land of Israel].

In the chapter discussing Fatah's methods of operation,⁴ the charter states that the only way to liberate Palestine is in armed struggle, and that armed struggle is not a tactic but the strategy to eradicate Zionist existence. It also states that the armed struggle will not cease until the Zionist state is destroyed and Palestine fully liberated. The charter goes so far as to state that they will absolutely oppose any political solution constituting an alternative to the eradication of Zionist occupation in Palestine.

The charter distilled the Fatah organization's ideology and strategy together, which, as noted, viewed the Palestinian struggle as both religious and pan-Arabic, and itself as part of the greater Arab nation, which set itself the goal of destroying the State of Israel and liberating all of its territory.

In 1963, it was decided to establish a Central Committee for the organization, meant to bind together the scattered cells, whose connection had been somewhat tenuous up to that point.⁵

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A.2 The Establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its Takeover by Fatah

In 1964, another organization was established parallel to the rise of the Fatah organization, meant to be the umbrella organization for all Palestinian national movements - the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Its establishment was instigated by then President of Egypt Gamal Abdel Nasser, with some Soviet assistance, as part of his desire to use the Palestinian struggle to raise the pan-Arabic flag and the struggle against Israel.⁶ As Arafat himself pointed out, the goal of the PLO was to grant Nasser – not the Fatah – control over the Palestinian cause.⁷

Ahmed Shukeiri, born in Lebanon and raised in Tulkarm and Acre, was placed at the head of the National Palestinian Council, and as chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee. He established a committee that appointed members to the Palestinian National Council according to the geographical distribution of Palestinian concentrations in Arab countries and beyond, "from the sea to the gulf."⁸ The Palestinian National Council approved the "Palestinian National Charter", and the PLO's foundational constitution. The Second Arab Summit Committee, held in September 1964, approved the PLO's establishment. Nasser saw this as "the fundamental turning point in Arab action for the liberation of Palestine" and as an expression of "Zionism's failure to eliminate the Palestine problem."⁹

During that period, Fatah began carrying out terror attacks and sabotage operations against Israel, while challenging both the Egyptian strategy regarding the conflict with Israel, and the PLO's approach under Shukeiri's leadership. In a letter sent to the Palestinian National Council, the organization emphasized *fedayeen* activity, meaning terror operations, and called for transforming the PLO into a "revolutionary organization" - meaning a combatant organization fighting against Israel. Fatah's public emergence and its acts of terrorism and sabotage caused it to become a competing factor with the PLO.¹⁰

The challenge that Fatah posed to the PLO, alongside Shukeiri's conduct, led to a sharp decline in the PLO's status. In December 1967, 7 out of 15 members of the PLO Executive Committee demanded Shukeiri's resignation. When an additional member joined this demand, a majority was formed in the Executive Committee in favor of his resignation. On December 24, 1967, Shukeiri resigned.¹¹

Subsequently, and as a result of the rising prominence of organizations that operated through armed struggle against Israel, the PLO Executive Committee members concluded there was no escaping a change to the composition of the organization's institutions; they

needed to add representatives from the *fedayeen* (terror organizations). A new preparatory committee was therefore convened, and it decided on a new composition of the Palestinian National Council. The composition included one hundred members, according to the following key: 48 representatives of *fedayeen* organizations, 20 representatives of the Palestine Liberation Army, and 32 additional representatives. The new leadership convened in July 1968, with Fatah its central and leading organization. During this session, several amendments to the Palestinian National Charter were adopted.¹²

In February 1969, the process of the *fedayeen* organizations' takeover of the PLO was completed when a new Executive Committee was elected with a large majority of their representatives and supporters. The total votes for Fatah and their supporters reached 50%. Since then, the PLO has been identified with Fatah, and vice versa.¹³

A.3 The PLO's Palestinian National Charter

To reiterate, the PLO Charter was amended after Fatah's takeover of the organization. Below we will present several relevant sections from the Charter:¹⁴

- **Article 1: Palestine is the homeland of the Arab Palestinian people and is an inseparable part of the greater Arab homeland, and the Palestinian people are an integral part of the Arab nation.**
- **Article 4: The Palestinian identity is an authentic, inherent, permanent characteristic** passed from fathers to sons; the Zionist occupation and the dispersal of the Arab Palestinian people as a result of the disasters that befell them do not negate or eliminate their Palestinian identity and affiliation.
- **Article 5:** The Palestinians are the Arab citizens who were living permanently in Palestine until 1947, whether they were expelled or remained there. **Whoever is born to a Palestinian father after that date, within Palestine or outside is a Palestinian.**
- **Article 6: Jews who were living permanently in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians.**
- **Article 7:** The Palestinian affiliation and the material, spiritual and historical ties with Palestine are permanent realities. **The upbringing of the Palestinian individual in an Arab and revolutionary fashion is a national duty. All means will be employed to forge a national consciousness in the Palestinian, in order to profoundly acquaint him spiritually and materially with his homeland. It is necessary to prepare**

The upbringing of the Palestinian individual in an Arab and revolutionary fashion is a national duty. All means will be employed to forge a national consciousness in the Palestinian, in order to profoundly acquaint him spiritually and materially with his homeland. It is necessary to prepare him for the armed struggle, as well as the sacrifice of his property and life for the restoration of his homeland, until its liberation.

Fedayeen action forms the nucleus of the popular Palestinian war of liberation. This requires its escalation, expansion and protection, and the mobilization of all Palestinian capacities in human mass and science, their organization and involvement in the armed Palestinian revolution and realizing the national-struggle conflation of various groups of the Arab-Palestinian nation with the Arab masses (in the Arab countries) to ensure the continuation of the revolution, its expansion and victory.

him for the armed struggle, as well as the sacrifice of his property and life for the restoration of his homeland, until its liberation.

- **Article 9: Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine and is therefore a strategy and not a tactic.** The Palestinian people affirm their absolute resolution and abiding determination to pursue the armed struggle and to march forward towards the armed popular revolution, to liberate its homeland, return there, preserve its right to a natural life, and to exercise its right of self-determination and national sovereignty.
- **Article 10: Fedayeen action forms the nucleus of the popular Palestinian war of liberation.** This requires its escalation, expansion and protection, and the mobilization of all Palestinian capacities in human mass and science, their organization and involvement in the armed Palestinian revolution and realizing the national-struggle conflation of various groups of the Arab-Palestinian nation with the Arab masses (in the Arab countries) to ensure the continuation of the revolution, its expansion and victory.
- **Article 14: The destiny of the Arab nation, indeed the very Arab existence, depends on the destiny of the Palestinian issue. The efforts of the Arab nation to liberate Palestine flows from this connection.** The Palestinian people assume the vanguard role in realizing this sacred national aim.
- **Article 15: The liberation of Palestine from the Arab viewpoint is a national duty to repulse the Zionist, imperialist invasion from the great Arab homeland and to purge it from the Zionist presence.** The full responsibility for this falls to the Arab nation, both peoples and governments, with the Arab-Palestinian people at their head.
- **Article 19: The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of Israel is *a priori* null and void,** whatever time has elapsed because they stand contrary to the wishes of the Palestinian people and their natural right to their homeland and they contradict the principles embodied in the UN Charter, the first of which is the right to self-determination.

- **Article 20: The Balfour Declaration, the mandatory document, and all that was based upon them are considered null and void.** Claims of **historical or spiritual ties between Jews and Palestine do not tally with the historical realities nor** with the components of statehood in their true sense. **Judaism in its character as a religion of revelation, is not a nationality with an independent existence.** Likewise, **the Jews are not one people with an independent personality but rather citizens of the states to which they belong.**
- **Article 22: Zionism is a political movement organically related to world imperialism and is hostile to all movements of liberation and progress around the world. It is an inherently racist and fanatic movement;, aggressive, colonialist -expansionist in its aims; and nazi-fascist in its means. Israel is the tool of the Zionist movement and the human and geographic base for the world imperialism.** It serves as a springboard from which to strike at the heart of the Arab nation's hope for liberation, unity and progress.
- **Article 30: The fighters and bearers of arms in the battle of liberation are the nucleus of the popular Arab army which will be the protection arm for the Palestinian Arab people's achievements.**

Several features are clear from the charter:

1. The Palestinian people see themselves as part of a pan-Arab struggle (in the language of the charter “the Arab nation”), and the vanguard of the camp.
2. All Palestinian territory belongs to the Palestinian people, with no recognition of the Jewish people's right to self-determination within its borders.
3. Anyone born to someone who resided in Palestine before 1947 is considered Palestinian, as well as all future progeny, down through the ages.¹⁵
4. Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine, and this struggle must also be expressed in education and training, as well as sacrifices up to death.
5. Sweeping non-recognition of the State of Israel, the Balfour Declaration or the British Mandate, while denying the historic and religious connection of the Jews to the Land of Israel. According to the Charter, the Jews have no right to self-determination in the Land of Israel.
6. Zionism is an imperialist movement, which is racist, fanatical, aggressive, and even fascist-Nazi in the means by which it operates.

The Balfour Declaration, the mandatory document, and all that was based upon them are considered null and void. Claims of historical or spiritual ties between Jews and Palestine do not tally with the historical realities nor with the components of statehood in their true sense. Judaism in its character as a religion of revelation, is not a nationality with an independent existence. Likewise, the Jews are not one people with an independent personality but rather citizens of the states to which they belong.

A.4 From the PLO to the PA

The PLO under Yasser Arafat's leadership established itself in Jordan and launched strikes against Israel through terrorist attacks and missile fire from Jordanian territory. Simultaneously, the PLO attempted to act against the Jordanian kingdom and even tried to organize a coup. Following this attempt, King Hussein of Jordan launched a military operation in 1970 (later known as "Black September"), during which his forces entered PLO camps, killed thousands of operatives, and expelled the rest to Syria, from where they moved to Lebanon.

In the following years, the PLO established itself in southern Lebanon (in an area nicknamed "Fatahland"¹⁶), and from there carried out increasing numbers of terrorist operations against Israel and Israeli targets worldwide. One of the most notable terrorist actions during this period was the murder of eleven Israeli athletes in Munich in 1972.¹⁷

A certain shift in PLO strategy occurred after the Arab summit that convened in Algiers after the Yom Kippur War. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat pressured the PLO leadership to adopt the "Phases Plan" – a plan that acknowledged that armed struggle was not the only way to liberate Palestine. The Palestinian National Council, which convened in June 1974, held a discussion on the matter, and disagreement arose between those advocating a strategy that saw armed struggle as the only way to liberate all of Palestine, and those who saw the Yom Kippur War as a change in circumstances, calling accordingly to adopt the Phases Plan and a diplomatic solution alongside continued armed struggle. At the end of the discussion, the 12th Palestinian National Council adopted the Ten Point Program (Phases Plan), which stated:¹⁸

1. Opposition to UN Security Council Resolution 242, which recognized the sovereignty and independence of regional states (including Israel).
2. **The PLO would employ all means, and first and foremost armed resistance, to liberate Palestinian territory. This meant there were additional ways – besides armed struggle – to achieve the liberation of Palestine.**
3. **Opposition to any proposal that would allow the establishment of a Palestinian entity the price of which is recognition (of Israel), peace (with Israel), secure borders, renunciation of national rights, or denial of Palestinian right of return and self-determination in their homeland.** This article rejected all proposals based on recognizing Israel.¹⁹
4. **Any step taken towards liberation is a step toward realizing the Palestinian strategy.**

5. The struggle would be conducted together with Jordanian forces, to establish a Jordanian-Palestinian front.
6. Cooperation with additional Arab liberation forces supporting this plan.
7. Strengthening national unity to advance national duties and tasks.
8. **Once it is established, the Palestinian national authority will strive to achieve a union of the confrontation countries, with the aim of completing the liberation of all Palestinian territory, and as a step along the road to comprehensive Arab unity.**
9. Strengthen solidarity with socialist countries to thwart the plots of Zionism and imperialism.
10. Based on this plan, the leadership of the revolution will determine the tactics which will serve and make possible the realization of these objectives.

The adoption of the Phases Plan caused several militant Palestinian organizations (including the “Popular Front”) to suspend their membership in the Executive Committee.²⁰

Despite the apparent “softening” of its position, the PLO refused to accept Sadat’s initiative, his visit to Jerusalem, and his speech at the Israeli Knesset in November 1977. These were described as a “great betrayal” and “recognition of the Israeli victory in the historical struggle between the Arab nation and Zionism.” The Camp David Accords were denigrated as “selling the Palestine problem for a handful of Sinai lands”. At the next Palestinian National Council meeting, the dissenting organizations also participated, and the Council’s decision emphasized the PLO’s determination to continue and escalate armed struggle and all forms of political and popular struggle.²¹

The PLO’s establishment in Lebanon was temporary, and following the 1982 Peace for Galilee War, Arafat and his people were expelled to Tunisia, where they re-established PLO headquarters.

In the following years, King Hussein of Jordan tried to advance a joint Palestinian-Jordanian diplomatic proposal based on “land for peace”, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 242. The Palestinian National Council, and later Yasser Arafat himself, refused to explicitly agree to Resolution 242, to negotiate with Israel, and to condemn terrorism. Consequently, King Hussein announced that: “We cannot continue diplomatic coordination with the PLO leadership as long as it has no meaning and no commitment, credibility, and stability”.²²

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The First Intifada, which broke out in late December 1987 and was perceived as a continuation of the PLO's struggle against Israel, put the PLO in crisis. The King of Jordan feared that the Intifada might spread to his territory and took preemptive action, announcing the severance of administrative and legal ties with Judea and Samaria, and declaring in July 1988 that, "Jordan has no sovereignty over the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, which belong to the Palestinian people".²³

To prevent a vacuum in the territory, with some other body than the PLO establishing its sovereignty over the area, the Palestinian National Council approved the Palestinian Declaration of Independence²⁴ on November 15, 1988, along with a diplomatic statement.²⁵ In the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, the Council announced "the establishment of the State of Palestine on our Palestinian territory with its capital Jerusalem," with its legal basis being the 1947 Partition Resolution. This apparently meant the PLO recognized the right of two states to exist on Mandatory Palestine land – Israel and Palestine - without determining borders and without a clear statement on the matter. The Declaration of Independence also stated that Palestine believed in resolving regional disputes through peaceful means in accordance with the UN Charter and its resolutions, and that it rejected threats or use of force, violence, and terrorism against itself and against the territorial integrity of other states.

However, this Declaration of Independence also claimed that Israel had occupied Palestine and parts of other Arab territories, expelled Palestinians from their homes through organized terror, and that the Palestinians who remained as an enslaved remnant in their homeland were persecuted and forced to suffer the destruction of their national lives. Accordingly, it was declared that the Palestinian National Council, in the name of God and the Arab Palestinian people, established the State of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital, and that the Palestinian state was part of the great Arab nation.

The declaration ended with a call to Allah who "givest the Kingdom to whom Thou wilt, and seizest the Kingdom from whom Thou wilt; Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt, and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt; in Thy hand is the good; Thou art powerful over everything".²⁶

A political statement was also attached to the PLO's Declaration of Independence. The political statement issued by the PLO spoke of the need to convene an international conference based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, demanding Israel's withdrawal from all Palestinian and Arab territories occupied in 1967, solving the Palestinian refugee problem, and creating security arrangements between all states connected to the region, including

the Palestinian state. In this statement, the Palestinian National Council also announced its opposition to all manner of terrorism, referring to the Cairo Declaration of November 7 1988 on this matter. This was a declaration by Arafat that actions within Israel and the territories of Judea and Samaria are legitimate as “a war for independence and resistance to occupation”, and only sabotage operations abroad constituted “terrorism.” In other words, even the opposition to terrorism is not a renunciation of continuing to kill Jews in the Land of Israel.

It could be argued that within the framework of the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, the PLO accepted the basic premises of Security Council Resolution 242, which recognizes Israel's existence.²⁷ However, close reading of the aforementioned texts reveals that the State of Israel is not recognized or mentioned in the declaration at all, and that violent actions were rejected against Palestinian “independence and territorial integrity” and against the “territorial integrity of other states”, without specifically mentioning the State of Israel. The declaration also called on the Palestinian people to struggle until the end of the occupation without defining what that occupation was – Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, or all of Israel's territory.²⁸ Moreover, the declaration explicitly stated that the Palestinians stood by the limitless right of return, that they see Jerusalem as their capital, and that the declaration was not an announcement of the end of the conflict.

The inevitable conclusion is that the PLO leaders continued to adhere to the Phases Plan and saw the recognition of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 borders as simply one phase of the Phases Plan, not the end of the conflict.

During the Palestinian National Council deliberations before the declaration's publication, Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), for one, declared: “This is a state intended for future generations. At first, it will be small... God willing, it will expand eastward and southward... I wanted all of Palestine at once. But I was foolish. Yes, I want to liberate Palestine, but the question is how. And the answer is: step by step”.²⁹

About a month later, on December 14 1988, following American pressure, Arafat held a press conference where he declared that the Palestinian National Council recognized Israel's right to exist in peace according to Security Council Resolution 242, and that the PLO absolutely rejected all forms of terrorism. Following this declaration, the United States agreed to open dialogue with PLO representatives, opening the door to the Madrid Conference (held in 1991).

Close reading of the aforementioned texts reveals that the State of Israel is not recognized or mentioned in the declaration at all, and that violent actions were rejected against Palestinian “independence and territorial integrity” and against the “territorial integrity of other states”, without specifically mentioning the State of Israel. The declaration also called on the Palestinian people to struggle until the end of the occupation without defining what that occupation was – Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, or all of Israel's territory.

In a speech broadcast on Jordanian radio a few days before the signature of the Oslo Accords (on September 13 1993), Arafat said (in Arabic) that the Oslo Agreement "will be the basis for an independent Palestinian state, in accordance with the Palestinian National Council decision of 1974 [the Phases Plan], a decision that called for establishing a Palestinian national authority on any part of Palestinian land from which Israel withdraws, or which is liberated..."

In September 1993, after the change in political leadership in Israel and the establishment of a government headed by Yitzhak Rabin, Israel and the PLO exchanged letters of mutual recognition – Arafat wrote to Rabin that the PLO “recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security”, “accepts UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338”, commits to “resolving the conflict through peaceful means”, “renounces the use of terrorism”, and confirms that the articles of the charter denying Israel’s right to exist “are now inoperative and no longer valid”. He even committed to submit the necessary changes in the Palestinian charter to the Palestinian National Council. In response, Rabin wrote to him that the Israeli government decided to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, marking the beginning of the Oslo process that led to the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993.³⁰ These agreements established the Palestinian Authority, which was headed by Arafat.

Again, despite the declarations of apparent recognition of Israel, the Palestinians continued to clarify that they had no intention of being satisfied with a two-state solution, and that everything was part of the Phases Plan.

In a speech broadcast on Jordanian radio a few days before the signature of the Oslo Accords (on September 13 1993), Arafat said (in Arabic) that the Oslo Agreement “will be the basis for an independent Palestinian state, in accordance with the Palestinian National Council decision of 1974 [the Phases Plan], a decision that called for establishing a Palestinian national authority on any part of Palestinian land from which Israel withdraws, or which is liberated...”³¹

Similarly, in a sermon at a Johannesburg mosque on May 10 1994, Arafat promised that the jihad would continue, and that what was being negotiated with Israel was not “the eternal State of Israel” but “the eternal State of Palestine”. The Oslo Agreement, according to him, was no more binding than the agreement signed in 628 between the Prophet Mohammad and the Quraysh tribe in the Hejaz – “the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah” – an agreement Mohammad violated as soon as he was stronger and capable of winning the battle against them.³²

In November 1996, Mohammed Dahlan, a senior official in the PA security apparatus, said: “The Palestinian Authority does not rule out returning to armed struggle and will use its weapons”.³³ In August of that year, Arafat called Israel “Satan”, and called on Arabs to use all means at their disposal to fight it, going so far as to threaten that if Israel refused the PA’s demands, there would be a response. He further threatened: “We have a fighting force of

30,000 men”.³⁴ Nabil Shaath, a minister in the Palestinian Authority, also noted that same year that if Israel did not comply with PA demands regarding Jerusalem and the return of refugees, “we shall go back to the struggle, as we did for 40 years... except that this time we’ll have 30,000 armed Palestinian soldiers”.³⁵ The ideas of maintaining the armed struggle and the right of return are both present in these statements.

In 1996, Fatah won a majority in the Palestinian Legislative Council as the largest organization in the PLO, and Yasser Arafat became Chairman of the Palestinian Authority. But even the fact that he headed the PA did not lead to him fulfil his commitment to Rabin to submit the necessary changes in the Palestinian charter to the Palestinian National Council. The Palestinian National Council dragged its feet for several years in this regard, and only in December 1998, after heavy American pressure, were the articles in the charter actually canceled.³⁶

In 2000, U.S. President Bill Clinton tried to convene the Israeli and Palestinian leadership at Camp David to formulate a comprehensive and final peace agreement. Even after the failure of the Camp David talks, the American administration continued to try bringing the parties to an agreement on several basic principles, which were accepted by the Israeli leadership but completely rejected by the PA. They made it clear that they were unwilling to give up the Palestinian right of return to Israel itself, demanded full sovereignty over the Temple Mount (above and below), and most importantly – refused to declare an end to the conflict.³⁷

As historian Benny Morris notes, “Arafat’s refusal to agree to joint sovereignty over the Temple Mount expressed a clear denial of Jewish rights to the Temple Mount, and by implication, a denial of their right to the entire land as well, because according to Arafat’s view, the Jews ‘are not a people’ and have no historical past in the Land of Israel, therefore their political and territorial claims are not legitimate. This was Arafat’s message at Camp David, and such was the constant recurring chorus from Palestinian leaders, from Husseini to Abbas, throughout the history of the Palestinian national movement”.³⁸

Attorney Daniel Reisner, who participated on behalf of Israel at Camp David, described matters in a similar fashion. According to him, at one point in the talks Arafat demanded that Israel allow refugees from Lebanon and their hundreds of thousands of descendants to “return” to Israel. When he understood that he would have to give up the right of return in the format he had advocated for – he refused.³⁹

But even the fact that he headed the PA did not lead to him fulfil his commitment to Rabin to submit the necessary changes in the Palestinian charter to the Palestinian National Council. The Palestinian National Council dragged its feet for several years in this regard, and only in December 1998, after heavy American pressure, were the articles in the charter actually canceled.

In 2011, documents from the Palestinian negotiating team at Camp David were leaked to the press. The documents presented the "behind the scenes" of Palestinian demands, and they too clearly show that the Palestinians refused to give up the right of return and the right of Palestinians to settle in all places they had left before the War of Independence. The Palestinian demand to allow the return of hundreds of thousands or even millions of Palestinians into the territory of the State of Israel means the erasure of the existence of the State of Israel as a Jewish state.

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With the death of Yasser Arafat in November 2004, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) was elected Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, and he has headed the Palestinian Authority since then.

The change in leadership did not create an ideological change within the PA either, and it continued to refuse to recognize Israel as a Jewish state. In November 2007, Saeb Erekat said: "The Palestinians will not accept Israel as a Jewish state," and Abu Mazen said after the Annapolis peace summit: "The Palestinians do not accept the formula that the State of Israel is a Jewish state [...] We say that Israel exists and in Israel there are Jews and there are non-Jews".⁴¹

In the next chapter, we will see how the PA's ideology is expressed in practice – from education steeped in hatred of Israel and the Jews who live in it, through payments to terrorists, to the active involvement of PA personnel in the murder of Jews.



B: The Palestinian Authority Promotes Hatred of Israel and the Murder of Jews, and Actively Participates in Terrorism

The previous chapter presented the PLO's ideology – the organization at the head of the Palestinian Authority (PA). This chapter will detail how the PA and its member bodies act to implement these objectives and promote the destruction of the State of Israel.

The chapter will begin with a presentation of the PA's systems of education and propaganda, incorporating hatred, terrorism and the denial of Israel's existence and the promotion of terrorism and murder – among others through the official PA television channel and statements of its senior officials.

Later it will be shown that:

- The PA actively refuses to recognize Israel.
- PA senior officials themselves promote terrorism, including the October 7 massacre.
- The PA funds the murder of Jews by financial support for terrorists and their families.
- PA affiliates are actively involved in acts of terrorism and the murder of Jews in Israel.

Note that the many examples presented in this paper are but a small portion of the entire body of evidence accumulated on this issue, due to the sheer volume of source material and the limited scope of this research.

The previous chapter presented the PLO's ideology – the organization at the head of the Palestinian Authority (PA). This chapter will detail how the PA and its member bodies act to implement these objectives and promote the destruction of the State of Israel.

The PA education system inculcates children with hatred of Israel and Jewish people, encourages and teaches terrorism and murder, and preaches a religious war against Jews and the demand to expel Jews from all of Israel's territory. Such education begins in preschools and continues throughout all the years of education. Thus, entire generations are brought up on hatred of Israel and the glorification of terrorism and death.

B.1 Children's Education to Terrorism and Hatred of Israel in the PA

The PA education system inculcates children with hatred of Israel and Jewish people, encourages and teaches terrorism and murder, and preaches a religious war against Jews and the demand to expel Jews from all of Israel's territory. Such education begins in preschools and continues throughout all the years of education. Thus, entire generations are brought up on hatred of Israel and the glorification of terrorism and death. Presented below is the indoctrination into hatred and terrorism as expressed in the PA education system's official textbooks and various activities, teaching hatred and terrorism in preschools, elementary schools and other educational systems.

B.1.1 The PA Education System's Textbooks

The basis for hatred of Israel is inculcated in the students in the textbooks themselves. Throughout the years, several reports have been compiled on the Palestinian educational system's textbooks. In one case, the European Union appointed the Georg Eckert Institute to examine the Palestinian Authority's textbooks, and they conducted a review of textbooks and teacher's manuals published by the Palestinian Ministry of Education in 2017-2019.⁴² The study sought to examine how Palestinian textbooks address issues such as human rights or tolerance, whether they incite violence or hatred, and if so, in what manner. The study found that while the Palestinian textbooks presented a perspective that ostensibly supported human rights, they also contained anti-Semitic passages glorifying and supporting violence against the State of Israel and Israelis, labeled in the textbooks "the Zionist occupiers". In such a way, the first Intifada was presented as the "Stone Uprising"; terrorism against Israeli civilians was painted as a legitimate method of struggle; terrorist attacks, like those perpetrated by Dalal Mughrabi,⁴³ were presented as examples of legitimate civilian resistance. Many textbooks presented such acts alongside descriptions of unarmed civil resistance against the Israeli Occupation – such as strikes – and were often accompanied by exercises encouraging discussion of the examples given.

Moreover, most of the textbooks examined did not refer to the State of Israel at all but rather used the common designation “Zionist Occupation”; maps of the region did not show Israel, or showed the entire country as Palestinian territory, blocked out with the colors of the Palestinian flag.

Beyond that, the study found that many textbooks engaged in dehumanization of Israel and the Jews, portraying them in an aggressive and hate-provoking manner. One of the books in the study also included blatantly antisemitic stereotypes and allegations, accusing the Jews of attempting to murder the Prophet Mohammed. Other textbooks alleged a Jewish conspiracy to seize control of the holy sites of Islam.

Following are just a few examples from the study, taken from PA school textbooks:



Figure 72: Islamic Education 5/II (2019), p. 66²⁶⁵

The enemies of Islam in every time and place will not stop using all means and methods to fight Islam and Muslims, fighting those who call for Islam, and seeking to extinguish the light of Allah on earth, but Allah supports his religion and those who call to the way of Allah, despite the numerous methods of distortion and harm.

Topic for discussion:

The several attempts by Jews to kill the Prophet (pbuh)

Activity 2: Mention other situations used by enemies to insult Islam and Muslims.

Banner: (Victory is but an hour of patience).

The study found that many textbooks engaged in dehumanization of Israel and the Jews, portraying them in an aggressive and hate-provoking manner. One of the books in the study also included blatantly antisemitic stereotypes and allegations, accusing the Jews of attempting to murder the Prophet Mohammed. Other textbooks alleged a Jewish conspiracy to seize control of the holy sites of Islam.

قصة للنقاش:

فيم اليهود بتدنيس قبور عدد من الصحابة والسَّالِحين، وجرفها، وإزالتها من مقابر المسلمين في مدينة القدس خاصة، وفلسطين بشكل عام.



نستمع معاً لأنشودة (أنا ابن القدس ومن هون).

Figure 73: Islamic Education 5/II (2019), p. 71-268

Topic for discussion:

The Jews desecrated a number of the graves of the Prophet's Companions. They removed them from Muslim cemeteries in Jerusalem in particular, and in Palestine in general.

[Image]: The grave of 'Ubada Ibn al-Samit

Listen together to the song (I am the son of Jerusalem and from here).

شجاعة أهل فلسطين:

مدد وقوع فلسطين تحت الاحتلال الصهيوني وقف أهلها مواقف البطولة والقداء، رجالاً ونساءً وأطفالاً، حيث واجهوا المحتلَّين الصهاينة بكل قوة والأقدام، وقد ظهرت بطولات وشجاعة الكثير من القادة والأبطال من أهل فلسطين على مرَّ تاريخها أمثال الشهيد عبد القادر الحسيني، وغير الدين القسام كما برزت شجاعة أطفال فلسطين في الانتفاضتين الأولى والثانية، وقلَّما يقاومون الأعداء الصهاينة بكلِّ قوَّة وشجاعة، حيث ارتقى عددٌ كثيرٌ منهم شهداء أثناء دفاعهم عن أرض فلسطين أرض الإسراء والمعراج.



Figure 124a: Islamic Education 5/I (2019), p. 39-40

The courage of the Palestinians:

Since Palestine was under the Zionist occupation [صهيوني، *al-ihtilāl as-shuyūnī*] its people, men, women and children, stood up for heroism and sacrifice. They resisted the Zionist occupiers with courage. Palestine's history marks the heroism and bravery of many Palestinian leaders and heroes such as *a-shahid* Abdul Qader al-Husseini and Izz ad-Din Al-Qassam.³⁸⁵ The bravery of Palestinian children became also apparent during the First and Second Intifadas, as they resisted the Zionist enemies with strength and courage. Some of them became *shuhadā'* [died/were killed], while defending the land of Palestine, the land of *Isra'* and *Mi'raj*.

[Image]



تفكّر وتدبّر! الرسم الاتي، وتكبّر فقرة عن الرساءة التي ارد الزتميم يصفها.

الوحدة الثانية:

ثورات شعبية



تفكّر، وتدبّر:
الطريق إلى فلسطين ليست بالبعيدة، ولا بالقرية، إنها بسطة القرب.

Figure 92: History 12 (2019), p. 40

Unit two:

People's revolutions

Think and reflect:

The path to Palestine is neither far nor near; it is as far away as the revolution.

أساليب الانتفاضة:

نشاط (٢): نلاحظ، ونستج، ثم نجيب:



- نفقش الأساليب التي استخدمتها الانتفاضة الفلسطينية في مقاومة الاحتلال عام ١٩٨٧م.
- نفقش سبب تسمية الانتفاضة الفلسطينية عام ١٩٨٧م بالفاضة الحجارة.
- نستج أساليب وأدوات أخرى تم توظيفها في الانتفاضة عام ١٩٨٧م.

Figure 96: History 12 (2019), p. 58

نُعْتِي، وَنَحْفَظُ: أَرْضَ الْكُرَمَاءِ



قَسَمًا سَأُضْحِي بِدِمَائِي لِأَرْضِ الْكُرَمَاءِ
وَأُزِيلُ الْغَاصِبَ مِنْ بَلَدِي وَأُيَدِّ قُلُوبَ الْغُرَبَاءِ
يَا بَلَدَ الْأَقْصَى وَالْحَرَمِ يَا مَهْدَ النُّحُوءِ وَالْكَرَمِ
صَبِرًا صَبِرًا فَالْتَصِرْ لَنَا وَالْفَجْرُ يُطِلُّ مِنَ الظُّلَمِ



Figure 123a: The Arabic Language 3/II (2019), p. 66

Sing and learn by heart: The land of Kurāma' [generosity].
[Image]

I swear, I will sacrifice my blood to irrigate the land of generosity, to kick out the violators and strangers from my country.

O country of Al-Aqsa and Al-Haram, you cradle of revival and generosity.

Be patient, victory will be for us and the sun will rise after the night.

Haidar Mahmoud

قَضِيَّةٌ لِلنِّعَاشِ:

أُحَدِّثُ عَنْ دَوْرِ الْمَرْأَةِ الْفِلَسْطِينِيَّةِ فِي الْجِهَادِ وَالتَّضْحِيَةِ
وَالصَّمُودِ فِي مَوَاجَهَةِ الْإِحْتِلَالِ الْيَهُودِيِّ الصَّهْيُونِيِّ.



Figure 77: Islamic Education 5/II (2019), p. 77

Topic for discussion:

Talk about the role of Palestinian women in their *jihād*, their sacrifice and steadfastness in facing the Jewish Zionist occupation.

دَلالُ الْمُغْرَبِي

(المتلوون)

بَيْنَ يَدَيِ النَّصِّ

تَحَلَّقُ بَارِحَتَا الْفِلَسْطِينِيِّ كَثِيرٌ مِنْ أَسْمَاءِ الشُّهَدَاءِ الَّذِينَ قَدَّمُوا أَرْوَاحَهُمْ فِدَاءً
لِلْوَطَنِ، مِنْهُمُ الشُّهيدةُ دَلالُ الْمُغْرَبِي الَّتِي عَطَّرَتْ بِضَالِحِهَا سِوْرَةَ مِنْ سِوْرِ الْحَدِيثِ
وَالصُّلْحَةِ مَا جَعَلَ وَتَرَمَا عَالِيَا فِي قَلْبِهَا وَقَوْلِهَا، وَالصُّلْحَةُ الَّتِي بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهَا تَنْحَدِّثُ
عَنْ طَرْفٍ مِنْ مَسْرُوعِ بِضَالِحِهَا.



Figure 103: The Arabic Language 5/II (2019), p. 51³⁴⁴

Dalal Al-Mughrabi
(The authors)

About the text:

Our Palestinian history is full of many names of *shuhadā'* who sacrificed their lives for the homeland, including the *shahīda* Dalal Al-Mughrabi whose struggle took the form of defiance and heroism, which made her memory immortal in our hearts and minds. And the text in our hands talks about one aspect of her struggle.



Figure 91: The Arabic Language 9/II (2019), p. 50

The curriculum is replete with content that supports hate speech, incitement and the encouragement of violence.

Thus, for example, Newton's second law of motion is illustrated by a child using a slingshot aimed at soldiers. Probability is taught through the following example: "If the probability of hitting a car with the first shot is 0.7, and the settler shot at ten (Palestinian) cars, what is the number of vehicles that will be hit?"

Another report that studied school textbooks in the PA is "The 2020-21 Palestinian School Curriculum Grades 1-12"⁴⁴ by The Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-SE).⁴⁵

Below are several conclusions from the report, alongside verbal examples, to demonstrate:

- The curriculum is replete with content that supports hate speech, incitement and the encouragement of violence. Thus, for example, Newton's second law of motion is illustrated by a child using a slingshot aimed at soldiers. Probability is taught through the following example: "If the probability of hitting a car with the first shot is 0.7, and the settler shot at ten (Palestinian) cars, what is the number of vehicles that will be hit?" Linear equations are taught by references to the massacre in the Cave of the Patriarchs, with students being instructed to "calculate the number of martyrs and wounded in the massacre, assuming that the number of martyrs in the massacre is X and it is known that the number of wounded is five times the number of the martyrs". Biology is taught with the example of Mohammed al-Dura, a twelve-year-old boy killed in a firefight between the Israeli army and Palestinians in September 2002 (probably by Palestinian police). Chemistry is taught by a demonstration of the water and salt solutions that sustain Palestinian prisoners on hunger strikes.
- Textbooks systematically demonize Israel and the Jews. Thus, for example, Arabic poetry is taught by a poem and graphic photograph of the corpse of a four-month-old Palestinian girl at her funeral. The song describes how Israeli soldiers "burned her dimple" and "bombed her smile." Supplementary activities tell students to display pictures and names of babies "cold-bloodedly" killed by Israelis on the walls of their classroom. A story of a "Zionist officer" unjustly shooting a Gaza fisherman in front of his son is used for reading comprehension.
- Another exercise in reading comprehension presents a Palestinian girl writing a letter to the world's children that includes graphic depictions of alleged Israeli actions, including: ear-piercing with rifle fire, "Death to Soldiers" parades, the obliteration of childhood by the elimination of sunlight, and spreading darkness that "kills" roses and butterflies in the gardens.
- Issues of cooperation, coexistence, understanding and tolerance of the Jewish-Israeli other are completely absent. Making peace to resolve the conflict is not presented as

an option in any way. Moreover, the existence of Israel is completely denied on regional maps, which ignore both the State of Israel and Israeli cities. The name “Israel” and “Israeli occupation” are replaced by the term “Zionist occupation”. The very existence of Israel is portrayed as racist and its establishment by “Zionist gangs” is described as a form of racial discrimination against the Palestinians. Jewish history and heritage are repeatedly portrayed as having been forged. Jewish holy sites are presented as Muslim areas usurped by the Zionists.

- The textbooks are saturated with messages inciting children to sacrifice their life for the continuous struggle for “jihad”, “revolution” and “uprising”. Likewise, the reward of reaching Paradise and winning virginal brides for the “martyrs” is promised, while those looking for personal success are portrayed as cowards. “Drinking the cup of bitterness in glory is far sweeter than a long, pleasant life accompanied by humiliation”. The jihad “for the liberation of Palestine” is presented as “the personal duty of every Muslim”. Martyrdom is positively described as “the fuel that fed the intifada and gave it the power to continue”. The Arabic language is taught through a story about a suicide bombing in which Palestinians “cut the throats of the enemy soldiers” and “donned explosive belts”. Terrorists such as Dalal Mughrabi are glorified as “the crown of the nation”.
- The curriculum emphasizes the return of Palestinian refugees to the 1949 borders and the establishment of Palestinian sovereignty in Israel, with the message that the struggle for liberation does not extend only to the West Bank and Gaza.
- The textbooks contain classic anti-Semitic imagery such as an arm with a Star of David grasping a globe (Jews control the world), and Jews are characterized as liars and cheaters; controlling money, the media, and politics.

This is all well-known and familiar to the world at large. Thus, for example, at a Senate press conference in February 2007 in which the PA educational textbooks were being discussed, then Senator Hillary Clinton said:⁴⁶

“These textbooks do not give Palestinian children an education; they give them an indoctrination. When we viewed this report in combination with other media that these children are exposed to, we see a larger picture that is disturbing. It is disturbing on a human level, it is disturbing to me as a mother, it is disturbing to me as a United States Senator, because it basically, profoundly poisons the minds of these children...”

The existence of Israel is completely denied on regional maps, which ignore both the State of Israel and Israeli cities. The name “Israel” and “Israeli occupation” are replaced by the term “Zionist occupation”. The very existence of Israel is portrayed as racist and its establishment by “Zionist gangs” is described as a form of racial discrimination against the Palestinians. Jewish history and heritage are repeatedly portrayed as having been forged. Jewish holy sites are presented as Muslim areas usurped by the Zionists.

The curriculum is replete with content that supports hate speech, incitement and the encouragement of violence. Thus, for example, Newton's second law of motion is illustrated by a child using a slingshot aimed at soldiers. Probability is taught through the following example: "If the probability of hitting a car with the first shot is 0.7, and the settler shot at ten (Palestinian) cars, what is the number of vehicles that will be hit?"

This propaganda is dangerous. You know, words really matter. Some people sort of downplay the importance of words. But words really matter. Because in idealizing for children a world without Israel, children are taught never to accept the reality of the State of Israel, never to strive for a better future that would hold out the promise of peace and security to them, and is basically a message of pessimism and fatalism that undermines the possibility for these children living lives of fulfillment and productivity".⁴⁷

B.1.2 Teaching Hatred in Preschools and Elementary Schools

The indoctrination of hatred and terrorism is not only manifested in the textbooks, as described above, but also in various activities in the educational system. Thus, for example, in a number of kindergarten graduation ceremonies in the Tulkarm area, children put on plays calling for martyrdom in the name of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, waving toy weapons and chanting "We will continue to sacrifice until our last breath", and that Acre, Jaffa and Safed are not for sale.⁴⁸



PA preschools commemorate the Balfour Declaration as a day of mourning. The declaration is taught to be the root of all evil, Balfour's picture is burned, and both it and the declaration are stepped on.⁴⁹



A primary school in Sur Baher (East Jerusalem) taught young children to sing about being soldiers defending Al Aqsa, calling for the restoration of the glory of Islam and their own sacrifice (“Let our blood be spilled from us”). The children hold stones in their hands, and one can even be seen holding a bullet.⁵⁰



A British investigation discovered that Palestinian schools funded by British aid, put on plays in which the children “kill” an Israeli soldier.⁵¹



A primary school in Sur Baher (East Jerusalem) taught young children to sing about being soldiers defending Al Aqsa, calling for the restoration of the glory of Islam and their own sacrifice (“Let our blood be spilled from us”). The children hold stones in their hands, and one can even be seen holding a bullet.

B.1.3 Teaching Terrorism in Summer Camps

The inculcation of terrorism does not end with the formal education system – preschool and elementary school – but continues with even greater intensity in the informal educational system – summer camps and community centers.

Thus, for example, Sheikh Khaled al-Mughrabi teaches children (ages 7–12) at the Al-Aqsa Mosque summer camp about the “rights” of the martyr who dies in the defense of the homeland.⁵²



Another example is head of the education administration in Qabatiya (a town in Samaria), Rama Dra'amah who opens her summer camps under the heading: “Supporting the Prisoners in Appreciation of Their Struggles,” where she extols “the great sacrifice of our brave prisoners for the sake of freedom and the grandeur of the homeland.”⁵³

A play put on for young children at the Burj Al-Luqluq Community Center in East Jerusalem presented puppets who told the children: “I felt like standing up before an audience and singing to Jerusalem that is denied us, Jerusalem whose young the Jews are killing. Singing and saying: Jerusalem, we are coming, Jerusalem, the time of death has come. Jerusalem, we will not be defeated by our enemies, we will not be humiliated.”⁵⁴

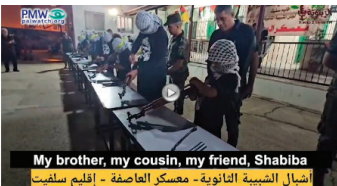


Another example is a Fatah camp held in June 2022 for children and teenagers (ages 13–17) in the village of Beita (south of Nablus). In the videos, children and teenagers, some of them armed with rifles, undergo semi-military training under the guidance and direction of the PA security forces and local armed and masked Fatah activists. The camp's purpose was to reinforce revolutionary concepts among the coming generations, as a means of preserving the legacy of the martyrs and their struggle.⁵⁵



Similar Fatah camps for the high school age taught adolescents to disassemble Kalashnikovs, and fight hand-to-hand.⁵⁶

The PA explicitly declares its goal (in holding summer camps) to be encouraging children to violently oppose Israel, holding up terrorists as role models for the children.⁵⁷



A Fatah camp held in June 2022 for children and teenagers (ages 13–17) in the village of Beita (south of Nablus). In the videos, children and teenagers, some of them armed with rifles, undergo semi-military training under the guidance and direction of the PA security forces and local armed and masked Fatah activists.

The PA explicitly declares its goal (in holding summer camps) to be encouraging children to violently oppose Israel, holding up terrorists as role models for the children.

Naming summer camps after suicide bombers is a common phenomenon in the PA.

Thus, for example, head of the Palestinian Authority's Council for Youth and Sport Jibril Rajoub, explains to children that the suicide bombers are the elite of the Palestinian people:



B.1.4 Naming Educational Institutions and Initiatives after Terrorists

Naming summer camps after suicide bombers is a common phenomenon in the PA. Thus, for example,⁵⁸ the Fatah summer camps in Hebron, Bethlehem and Jericho were named after Dalal Mughrabi, who led the Coastal Road massacre. Another example is the Abu Sukar equestrian summer camp. Abu Sukar planned the 1975 Jerusalem bombing in which 15 people were killed and over 60 were injured. Another example is the Fatah soccer tournament named after the three terrorists who murdered father of three Meir Hai in a shooting terror attack in 2009.⁵⁹

Accordingly, the children participating in those camps proudly highlight their connection to suicide bombers:



But not only summer camps are named after terrorists; the PA's education system is full of schools named after terrorists. Here is a partial list:⁶⁰

- A girls' high school in Tulkarm named after Nash'at Abu-Jabara (a Hamas operative who assembled explosive belts for suicide attacks).
- A boys' elementary school in Tulkarm named after "The Martyrs of Anabta".
- A boys' high school in Jenin named after Martyr Ahmed Yassin (founder of the Hamas terror organization).
- An elementary school in Jenin named after [Martyr] Izz ad-Din [al-Qassam] (the religious leader and head of terror gangs in the 1930s, who carried out acts of insurgency, murder, and sabotage in the north of the country against Jews and the British authorities. Hamas's military wing and the first rockets fired from Gaza at Israel were also named after him).
- A boys' school in Arraba, near Jenin, named after Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa (head of the "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine," and responsible for several major terror attacks).
- A girls' school in Arraba, named after Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa.
- A boys' high school in Arraba, named after Abu Jihad (the Fatah co-founder who planned dozens of terror attacks, including the Savoy Hotel attack in Tel Aviv, 1975; the refrigerator bombing at Zion Square in Jerusalem, 1975; the Coastal Road attack, 1978; the Hadassah House attack in Hebron, 1980; and more). A forest, a research center in Bitunia, a street and a museum in Ramallah, and a youth sports center in Qabatiya are also all named after Abu Jihad.
- A girls' high school in Al-Shuyukh, near Hebron, named after Dalal Mughrabi.
- A girls' school in Hebron named after "The Martyrs of the Al-Aqsa Intifada".
- A boys' school in Dura named after "The Martyrs of Al-Dura".
- An elementary school in Surif named after "The Martyrs of Surif".
- An elementary school in Jerusalem named after "The Martyrs of Hizma".
- A boys' high school in Jerusalem named after "The Martyrs of Silwad".

But not only summer camps are named after terrorists; the PA's education system is full of schools named after terrorists.

In the photos below, for example, a teacher leads a procession of female students, encouraging them to shout after her slogans supporting jihad, the October 7 massacre, and death to Zionists, such as: "We are the daughters of Mohammed Deif.

- A girls' school in Qalqilya named after "The Martyrs of the Al-Aqsa Intifada".
- A boys' high school in Ya'bad, northwest Samaria, named after [Martyr] Izz ad-Din al-Qassam.
- The PMW organization found that the most common name for schools in PA territories is "Al-Khansa" - the name of a respected woman in Islamic tradition (from the seventh century) who expressed great joy following the death of her four sons as martyrs on the battlefield.

The encouragement of violence and murder of Jews is integrated into the education system of both boys and girls. In the photos below, for example, a teacher leads a procession of female students, encouraging them to shout after her slogans supporting jihad, the October 7 massacre, and death to Zionists, such as: "We are the daughters of Mohammed Deif" (the Hamas leader who led the massacre), and additional slogans that can be seen in these images.⁶¹



B.1.5 Incitement in the PA's "Educational Television"

The incitement and calls for murder are effectively transmitted to children not only in the education system itself but also after school hours in the children's programs they watch on television. For example, a girl on the show "Giants of Patience" (on the PA's official television channel) presents a poem she wrote following "Trump's decision that Jerusalem is Israel's capital," which states:⁶²

“Balfour, you vile person, what did you do to our people? Is your conscience quiet? Go in your grave to the blazing fire; you are the one that expelled us, do not ask for help. You drank our blood from a goblet, and brought this fate down upon us... You brought to our people those orphaned small children. You have turned the best of our people into martyrs and prisoners; why did you bring the Jews to us, who defile Jerusalem and its great mosque?”



Another poem written by a child “on the occasion of Arafat’s death” on the program “House of Houses” (on the Palestinian Authority’s official television channel, in the presence of the PA’s Minister of Education), in which she accuses the “treacherous occupier” of poisoning Arafat,⁶³ and ends with the words: “To Jerusalem march millions of martyrs.”⁶⁴



Another poem written by a child “on the occasion of Arafat’s death” on the program “House of Houses” (on the Palestinian Authority’s official television channel, in the presence of the PA’s Minister of Education), in which she accuses the “treacherous occupier” of poisoning Arafat, and ends with the words: “To Jerusalem march millions of martyrs.”

PA Chairman Abbas, himself, was seen applauding a girl at an event marking Palestinian Children's Day (broadcast on Palestinian television), who recited the following: "If all the Jews came, and sought refuge with the monkeys, and the lions trembled before them, we would not agree to accept compensation for our land. There is no substitute for Jerusalem! In Palestine there are brave hearts, who fight the most terrible oppression... our death is like life, my homeland is a grave for invaders... I will still march a thousand miles, would that I die in it as a martyr..."

So too, for instance, did the official television broadcast a report about cultural activities in a Palestinian school aimed at strengthening students' awareness of the need to boycott Israeli products. The TV reporter told viewers that "planting the culture of boycotting occupier's goods in the hearts of children and adolescents was the goal that led the [PA's] Ministry of Education to place this issue at the center of school activities across the homeland." The student interviewed in the report went further and told the interviewers: "I came to rehearse the play, so we would boycott Israeli products, fight the Jews, kill them and overcome them."⁶⁵



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This, for example, is how the Palestinian Authority's official television presented a professional image, showing children sitting on grass, with the girl wrapped in a Palestinian flag and holding a bouquet of flowers, while the boy wears a kaffiyeh and holds a Kalashnikov.⁶⁷



B.1.6 Summary

The PA's education system is saturated with violence, hatred, and incitement to terrorism against Jews, alongside the denial of Israel's existence. Incitement to terrorism exists everywhere in the education system – in preschools, in school textbooks, in summer camps, and in naming educational institutions after Palestinian terrorists. A Palestinian child is educated from kindergarten age to hate Israel and to sanctify the struggle against it through terrorism. They learn to view terrorists as role models and emulate their example. All of these are the product of deliberate policy. The PA continues to operate according to the Palestinian National Charter, which sets as its goal “the upbringing of the Palestinian individual in an Arab and revolutionary fashion...prepare him for the armed struggle, as well as the sacrifice of his property and life for the restoration of his homeland, until its liberation”. The injection of poison and hatred into the minds and hearts of Palestinian children demonstrates more than anything that the PA has never abandoned the path of terrorism and violence but is rather preparing the next generation to act exactly in such a way.

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In a 2021 speech, PA Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh presented the Palestinian narrative as absolute historical truth that negates the Zionist and Jewish narrative. "78% of historical Palestine was cut off for the Zionist enterprise, and now what remains in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is being eroded... Israel, as a Zionist project, is a mission, not a state, as it is a functional state.

Chapter B.2 The Palestinian Authority Refuses to Recognize Israel and Its Right to Exist

The Palestinian Authority (PA), its senior officials, and its institutions consistently refuse to recognize the State of Israel. This refusal has many manifestations; below are some examples.

B.2.1. Erasure of Israel from Official Maps and Reference to Israeli Cities as Palestinian Cities

The State of Israel does not appear on the maps published by the PA. The entire territory is described as belonging to the Palestinians. This is reflected in official publications of Fatah,⁶⁸ the Palestinian Presidential Guard⁶⁹, the Palestinian National Security Forces⁷⁰, and Palestinian Television.⁷¹ These official publications occasionally also convey the desire to recapture the territories by force of arms.⁷²

Reports on textbooks in the PA (some mentioned above in Chapter B1) also contain many examples of the absence of the State of Israel from maps in textbooks.⁷³

The PA does not stop at erasing the State of Israel from maps published in its territories. Many publications present Israeli cities (Jaffa, Acre, Haifa, Nazareth, Ramla, Lod, Tiberias, Tzippori, Jerusalem, Tira, Beit She'an, and more)⁷⁴ and Israeli sites (the Sea of Galilee, Haifa Port, Mt. Carmel and Galilee Keshet Cave)⁷⁵ as Palestinian cities and sites. This is shown in broadcasts on the PA official television - in the logo at the bottom of the screen,⁷⁶ at the beginning of daily programs,⁷⁷ in educational and other programs,⁷⁸ in broadcast songs,⁷⁹ and in press publications⁸⁰ of the PA and its official bodies. This was also seen at a festival held in 2012 under the patronage of Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, which was also broadcast on official Palestinian television.⁸¹

PA senior officials similarly express themselves in an open and public manner. For example, in an interview with the sports channel Alkass, Jibril Rajoub said that "all of Palestine - from the river to the sea - is all occupied"⁸²; the governor of Salfit Governorate in the Palestinian Authority (located near Ariel) presented a plaque of appreciation featuring an image of Palestine that includes all territories of the State of Israel⁸³; Ziad Abu Ein, Head of the Anti-Wall and Settlement Commission and member of Fatah's Revolutionary Council said: "We will continue the resistance, and all the land is Palestinian land."⁸⁴

Aside from the geographical description, PA officials routinely express themselves in ways that completely negate the possibility of Israel's existence. The PA's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Riyad al-Maliki said on official television: "We say that the Balfour Declaration 100 years ago was the beginning of the Palestinian catastrophe. This is a disaster that still continues. This

disaster is primarily manifested in the uprooting and establishment of the Zionist entity which is the State of Israel.”⁸⁵ In a 2021 speech, PA Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh presented the Palestinian narrative as absolute historical truth that negates the Zionist and Jewish narrative. “78% of historical Palestine was cut off for the Zionist enterprise, and now what remains in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is being eroded... Israel, as a Zionist project, is a mission, not a state, as it is a functional state, and the colonization of Palestine did not begin with the Zionist movement, but fifteen years before its establishment, when the first colony, Petah Tikva, was established in 1882.”⁸⁶

An official PA document published in 2019 showed the PA's perception of Israel and the final outcome that the PA seeks to achieve through the peace process. The document's authors were careful to avoid using the term “the Jewish people”, as using this term would be tantamount to denying the Palestinian narrative that rejects the existence of such a people. Therefore, they clarify in the introduction that it is intended for the people in Israel, world Jewry, and the international community. The document speaks of two states based on the '67 lines, Israel and Palestine, living side by side, but refuses to accept the fact that one of the states will be a Jewish state, and to accept Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people.⁸⁷

B.2.2 Refusal to Participate in Events with Israelis or Maintain Normal Relations with Israel

The Palestinian Authority repeatedly calls for a refusal to compete in sports competitions with Israeli competitors or to maintain sports relations with them. For example, the Palestinian Olympic Committee ordered a Palestinian boxer to boycott a competition with an Israeli competitor.⁸⁸ Similarly, the chairman of the Palestine Olympic Committee claimed that “any normalization activity in sports with the Zionist occupation constitutes a crime against humanity.”⁸⁹

The PA has a national committee for combating normalization in Palestine. The committee previously issued a statement condemning the participation of children from Judea and Samaria in a soccer game between Palestinian and Israeli children, organized by the Peres Center for Peace.⁹⁰ Similar condemnation of the same event was issued by the Fatah movement leadership⁹¹ and by Palestinian Olympic Committee member Abd al-Salam Haniyeh⁹².

Regarding trade relations with Israel, Fatah Central Committee member and Mahmoud Abbas's vice chairman, Mahmoud al-Aloul, declared in 2012 that the goal is to strengthen among Palestinians a culture of not bringing Israeli goods into Palestinian homes, so that it becomes the prevailing culture in society.⁹³

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PA President Mahmoud Abbas frequently extends his patronage either directly or indirectly to events honoring and glorifying murderous terrorists. For example, he awarded the "Military Star of Honor" to terrorist Fatima Barnawi - who planted a bomb in a Jerusalem cinema in the 1970s.

B.3 The Palestinian Authority and its Senior Officials Openly Encourage Terrorism

The Palestinian Authority itself, its senior officials, leaders, and even its controlled media outlets openly and declaratively support terrorism and terrorists. There are numerous examples of this; following is a sample.

PA President Mahmoud Abbas frequently extends his patronage either directly or indirectly to events honoring and glorifying murderous terrorists. For example, he awarded the "Military Star of Honor" to terrorist Fatima Barnawi - who planted a bomb in a Jerusalem cinema in the 1970s. The ceremony was broadcast on the PA's official television channel, and the Secretary-General of the Presidential Office read out a presidential decree issued in her honor, in which she was called "the first prisoner of the modern Palestinian revolution," and appreciation was expressed "for her pioneering role in the struggle, her sacrifice for her homeland, for her people and for their revolution."⁹⁴



This is the same Abbas who, as mentioned, cheered a girl who sang "Our death is like life, my homeland is a grave for invaders... I will still march a thousand miles, would that I die in it as a martyr."⁹⁵

Another senior PA official who openly encourages terrorism is Jibril Rajoub. He currently serves as Deputy Secretary of Fatah's Central Committee (headed by President Abbas), Chairman of the Palestinian Football Association, Head of the PA's Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, and Chairman of the Palestine Olympic Committee. He previously served as head of the PA's Preventive Security Intelligence.

Jibril Rajoub sponsored a fencing competition named after terrorist Abu Jihad,⁹⁶ a table tennis championship named after martyr Muhannad Halabi, who murdered a father of seven walking with his family to the Western Wall,⁹⁷ a women's table tennis event named after terrorist Dalal Mughrabi,⁹⁸ a racing tournament named after

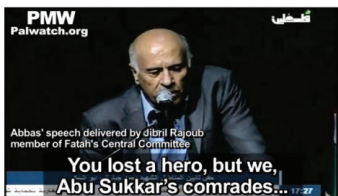
Abu Ali Mustafa, who planned many attacks against Israelis during the Second Intifada, and a car race named after terrorist Abu Jihad.⁹⁹ The same Jibril Rajoub, representing the Fatah movement on official Palestinian television, describes terrorists as heroes and as a crown on Palestinians' heads.¹⁰⁰



On official Palestinian television, Rajoub also called Palestinians killed during terrorist events “martyrs,” meaning saints, and “heroes”:



He also described the terrorist Abu Suker as “a beacon” and “a giant”:¹⁰¹

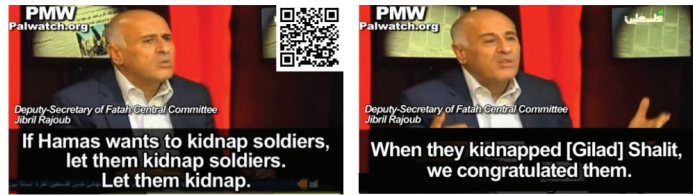


Jibril Rajoub sponsored a fencing competition named after terrorist Abu Jihad, a table tennis championship named after martyr Muhammad Halabi, who murdered a father of seven walking with his family to the Western Wall, a women's table tennis event named after terrorist Dalal Mughrabi, a racing tournament named after Abu Ali Mustafa, who planned many attacks against Israelis during the Second Intifada, and a car race named after terrorist Abu Jihad.

Rajoub saluted Hamas for kidnapping Gilad Shalit, saying that the only language Israelis understand is abductions:

Dalal Mughrabi was a terrorist who led the deadly Coastal Road attack, in which thirty five people, including twelve children, were murdered, and seventy seven were wounded. Due to the attack's scale and "success", Mughrabi became a revered figure and role model in the Palestinian Authority. As part of cultivating Mughrabi's character and legacy, an official ceremony is held annually in her memory on the date of the attack (March 11), with the participation of senior Fatah and PA officials, and official ceremonies are held to mark her birthday.

Rajoub saluted Hamas for kidnapping Gilad Shalit, saying that the only language Israelis understand is abductions:



He even presented plaques of appreciation to a pair of terrorists sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering two Israeli hikers in the Masua Forest area.¹⁰²

Lower-ranking officials also encourage this. For example, an annual ceremony was held for high school and university graduates, dedicated to the memory of Nissim Abu Rumi - a resident of El-Eizariya, who carried out a stabbing attack at the exit of the Temple Mount along with his friend, another resident of El-Eizariya. Among the participants in the ceremony were the head of the PLO's Jerusalem Department; the PA General Intelligence commander in the Jerusalem district; Fatah's secretary in El-Eizariya and his deputy; the mayor of El-Eizariya, school principals, students and their families.¹⁰³

Ceremonies in Memory of Dalal Mughrabi

As mentioned above, Dalal Mughrabi was a terrorist who led the deadly Coastal Road attack, in which thirty five people, including twelve children, were murdered, and seventy seven were wounded. Due to the attack's scale and "success", Mughrabi became a revered figure and role model in the Palestinian Authority. As part of cultivating Mughrabi's character and legacy, an official ceremony is held annually in her memory on the date of the attack (March 11), with the participation of senior Fatah and PA officials, and official ceremonies are held to mark her birthday.¹⁰⁴

In 2018, for instance, an event was held in Ramallah marking 40 years since the Coastal Road attack. At the event, where songs of praise for Dalal Mughrabi and the martyrs were recited, Nasser al-Qudwa, member of Fatah's Central Committee and head of the Yasser Arafat Foundation, spoke. He praised Mughrabi and all the "martyrs," and added: "We will continue with serious activity, sacrifice, and resistance."

In 2017, an official ceremony was held in Ramallah marking the 39th anniversary of Mughrabi's death. The ceremony was attended by Laila Ghannam, PA Governor of Ramallah and al-Bireh. Abbas Zaki, member of Fatah's Central Committee, also participated. In his speech, Abbas Zaki praised the Coastal Road attack that made Mughrabi a legend. He noted that the Coastal Road attack constituted a "new beginning" of "Palestinian resistance" due to the "deep impact and spirit of victory" it conveyed among Palestinians. In addition to the main ceremony in Ramallah, a ceremony was also held in Jericho, attended by Mahmoud al-Aloul, member of Fatah's Central Committee and Fatah's Vice Chairman.

The previous year, in 2016, the main memorial event was also held with Laila Ghannam's participation. Several members of the PLO Executive Committee and Fatah Central Committee also participated, including Sultan Abu al-Einein, member of Fatah's Central Committee (who also served as Head of the Palestinian Council for NGO Affairs, a rank equivalent to minister). Ghannam said she was very proud of martyr Dalal and her fellow terrorists. According to her, Dalal insisted on carrying a rifle alongside her male comrades and fought at their side. Similar statements were made by Amal Hamad, a member of Fatah's Central Committee.

In 2014, the Fatah movement held a rally in Al-Am'ari refugee camp (south of Ramallah) in memory of Mughrabi. The rally was attended by senior Fatah activists, including Ziad Abu Ein – PA Deputy Minister of Prisoners Affairs and member of Fatah's Revolutionary Council, and Rashida Mughrabi, Dalal's sister, an *Amid* (Brigadier General) in the PA security apparatus. At the rally, speakers praised the terrorist Mughrabi's "heroism and sacrifice" and emphasized that her memory would not be forgotten.

In 2009, the "National Political Guidance Authority," under Abbas, held a ceremony marking Mughrabi's 50th birthday. The ceremony was held under the President's patronage, with the participation of senior Fatah and PA officials who emphasized in their speeches her status as a symbol of the Palestinian struggle. A children's parade was also held for her birthday. A giant banner hung for the ceremony featured a picture of Dalal Mughrabi with the text: "Under the patronage of President Abu Mazen. The National Political Guidance Authority. Ceremony marking the birthday of the bride, the bride of existence, the martyr Dalal Mughrabi". Fatah spokesman Dr. Jamal Nazzal wrote in the official newspaper Al-Hayat al-Jadida, congratulating Mughrabi on her birthday.

Abbas Zaki, member of Fatah's Central Committee, thanked Hamas and Islamic Jihad for "the readiness for the October 7 operation", and said that Hamas "knows how to complete and achieve the goals that stand before us: lifting the siege and removing the occupation from the West Bank".

Justification or Denial of the October 7 Massacre

Rajoub (the aforementioned senior PA official) justified the October 7 massacre and defined it as being "in the context of the defensive war our people are waging".¹⁰⁵ This statement is not surprising, as the same Rajoub was the one who spread the blood libel against Israel that: "In every city in Palestine, from Rafah to Jenin, there is an Israeli Auschwitz to slaughter Palestinians".¹⁰⁶

Abbas Zaki, member of Fatah's Central Committee, thanked Hamas and Islamic Jihad for "the readiness for the October 7 operation", and said that Hamas "knows how to complete and achieve the goals that stand before us: lifting the siege and removing the occupation from the West Bank".¹⁰⁷

Talal Dweikat, head of the PA's Political and National Guidance Committee and spokesman for the Palestinian Authority's security forces, said on the PA's official television: "Not just President Mahmoud Abbas. They won't find a single Palestinian who would make such a decision and condemn what happened on October 7... We will continue together in the struggle until the occupation disappears, and until Palestinian children raise the Palestinian flag from every stone and church in Jerusalem".¹⁰⁸

Mahmoud al-Aloul, Fatah's Vice Chairman, wrote on his Twitter page: "We tell you that the blood of the heroes (who carried out the massacre in the Gaza Envelope) will become a curse that will remove this occupier, all those behind it, and all those who do not support our people." Al-Aloul made similar statements in an interview with the Palestinian news agency Wafa.¹⁰⁹

Fatah Tulkarm Branch Secretary Iyad Jarrad, expressed similar sentiments: "We stand alongside our brothers in the Gaza Strip, because they are truly a source of pride, heroism and honor for the Palestinian people".¹¹⁰

Billionaire Munib al-Masri, who was once a candidate to succeed Arafat, claimed in an article published in the Palestinian daily "Al-Quds" that the October 7 attack was a "natural response" and a "legitimate right" anchored in international law. In his article, al-Masri sent greetings to the Palestinian resistance "and its legitimate struggle." According to him, the Palestinian resistance "returned the Palestinian issue to its rightful place at the top of international priorities".¹¹¹

This opinion broadly expresses the view of common Palestinians, among whom the PA and its leaders invest great efforts to perpetuate in their consciousness the position that indiscriminate killing of Jews is an act of heroism worthy of admiration. 82% of respondents among the Palestinian public think Hamas was right to launch

the October 7 massacre, and 70% think the best way to fight the “occupation” is through armed struggle. Moreover, the massacre significantly increased Palestinian public support for Hamas and weakened Mahmoud Abbas.¹¹²

Another survey,¹¹³ found that 65% of respondents believed the war between Israel and Hamas is a war that serves all Palestinians, 75% of respondents believed the war would end in victory for Gazans, who would expel the Israeli occupier, and 79% even believed the end of the war would include all Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons. 98% of respondents felt rising pride in their Palestinian identity, and 87% said the chance to achieve a peace agreement with Israel has decreased (while 68% said their support for a two-state solution for two peoples has decreased).

The organizations perceived by Palestinians to be most important in the war were the Al-Qassam Brigades, Islamic Jihad, Al-Aqsa Brigades, and Hamas (89%, 84%, 80%, and 76% respectively). Fatah and the PA were perceived as much less significant factors (23% and 10% respectively).

Alongside justifying the massacre, as mentioned above, on November 19, 2023, the Palestinian Foreign Ministry issued a document denying the October 7 massacre, claiming that IDF combat helicopters killed the Nova festival participants and later many Israelis in the Gaza envelope communities.¹¹⁴

B.4 The PA Financially Supports Terrorists and Their Families with Terror Payments

The previous chapters discussed the Palestinian education system, where young children are educated about their role as warriors in the jihad (holy war) against Israel, and the role of PA senior officials in encouraging terrorism. The next layer of promoting terrorism is making it “worthwhile” for terrorists and their families: The Palestinian Authority directly pays terrorists imprisoned in Israel and the families of dead terrorists high salaries, thus directly incentivizing the murder of Israelis.

The PA established this allowance commitment through numerous laws, regulations, and government decisions, including, among others:¹¹⁵

- The 2004 Law No. 14 on Aid for Prisoners in Israeli Prisons.
- The 2004 Law No. 19 on Prisoners and Released Prisoners.

82% of respondents among the Palestinian public think Hamas was right to launch the October 7 massacre, and 70% think the best way to fight the “occupation” is through armed struggle. Moreover, the massacre significantly increased Palestinian public support for Hamas and weakened Mahmoud Abbas.

Law No. 19 on Prisoners and Released Prisoners institutionalized the commitment to terrorists and their families in primary legislation. It was passed by the Palestinian Legislative Council, ratified by the PA Chairman, and came into effect on April 23, 2005.

- The 2010 Palestinian Cabinet Decision No. 19 regarding regulations for exempting released prisoners from tuition in schools and universities, health insurance, and rehabilitation courses.
- The 2010 Palestinian Cabinet Decision No. 21 regarding the provision of prisoners' needs within Israeli prisons.
- The 2010 Palestinian Cabinet Decision No. 22 regarding regulations for providing prisoners' legal needs, health insurance, and courses.
- The 2010 Palestinian Cabinet Decision No. 23 regarding the procedure for distributing monthly salaries for prisoners.
- The 2013 Palestinian Cabinet Decision No. 15 regarding regulations for providing jobs to released prisoners.

As can be seen from the number of laws and resolutions enacted by the PA's governing bodies and the variety of support granted to terrorists, this is an issue that the PA views as of supreme importance.

Law No. 19 on Prisoners and Released Prisoners institutionalized the commitment to terrorists and their families in primary legislation. It was passed by the Palestinian Legislative Council, ratified by the PA Chairman, and came into effect on April 23, 2005. The law's stated purpose is to ensure "a dignified life for them (security prisoners and released security prisoners) and their families".

Article 1 of the law defines a prisoner as anyone who sits in "occupation" prisons due to their involvement in the struggle against the "occupation," and a released prisoner is a prisoner who was released from "occupation" prisons. A martyr is defined, among other things, as someone who was harmed because of the Israeli "occupation."

The payment amount is based on the number of years of imprisonment the terrorist is serving. The longer the prison term (and hence - the more serious the offenses committed by the terrorist and the more lethal the attack), the higher the salary they receive. Additionally, terrorists and their families receive benefits in employment, education, schooling, and more.

| Duration of imprisonment | Monthly salary (NIS) | Monthly supplement for married prisoners (NIS) | Monthly supplement for children under 18 (NIS) | Monthly supplement for prisoners from Jerusalem (NIS) | Monthly supplement for prisoners who are Israeli citizens (NIS) |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Up to 3 | 1,400 | 300 | 50 | 300 | 500 |
| 3.1-5 | 2,000 | 300 | 50 | 300 | 500 |
| 5.1-10 | 4,000 | 300 | 50 | 300 | 500 |
| 10.1-15 | 6,000 | 300 | 50 | 300 | 500 |
| 15.1-20 | 7,000 | 300 | 50 | 300 | 500 |
| 20.1-25 | 8,000 | 300 | 50 | 300 | 500 |
| 25.1-30 | 10,000 | 300 | 50 | 300 | 500 |
| Over 30 | 12,000 | 300 | 50 | 300 | 500 |

As is clear from the table, the “minimum wage” for a terrorist imprisoned in Israel is 1,400 NIS per month - equivalent to the minimum wage in the West Bank. Since the average salary in the West Bank is about 2,158 NIS, a terrorist imprisoned for more than five years “earns” more from this “work” than the market average. The longer the prison sentence, the more “profitable” the terrorists’ “work” becomes, placing them in the higher income deciles in the PA. This is all paid for by Palestinian taxpayers and with foreign aid transferred to the PA.

The benefits for terrorists don't end there. One of the extensive benefits given to released terrorists is employment in the Palestinian Authority, where the seniority of the position the released terrorist receives depends on the number of years spent in prison.

A terrorist imprisoned for more than five years “earns” more from this “work” than the market average.

A terrorist who "succeeded" in killing Jews and was consequently sentenced to tens of years will be appointed upon their release to very senior positions (and the high salaries that go with them), in addition to the huge salaries (compared to standard salaries in the PA) they received throughout their years of imprisonment.

| Number of years in prison | Civil rank | Military rank |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 5 years or less | Head of department | Lieutenant |
| 6 years and less than 8 | "C" administrator | Captain |
| 8 years and less than 10 | "B" administrator | Major |
| 10 years and less than 15 | "A" administrator | Lieutenant Colonel |
| 15 years and less than 20 | A4 CEO | Colonel |
| 20 years and less than 25 | A2 Assistant deputy | Colonel+ seniority |
| 25 and less than 30 | Deputy minister | General |
| 30 years and over | Must be appointed minister | General + seniority |

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Terrorists receive other benefits, among them:

- A stipend of 400 NIS a month for the purchase of goods in the prison canteen, and an additional 800 NIS per month for the purchase of clothing.
- An exemption from tuition fees in schools and universities for prisoners who have served at least five years, or female prisoners who served three; an exemption from government-subsidized tuition for all their children; and a tuition waiver for one of their children's undergraduate degrees.
- Payment of all expenses incidental to academic studies in the Israeli prisons.
- A release grant ranging from \$1,500 to \$25,000, depending on the length of sentence.
- A guaranteed lifetime income of 1,500 NIS to prisoners who served more than five years, and a guaranteed job in the public sector to prisoners who served more than ten years (or five years for female prisoners).

The benefits don't end there. The PA grants allowances to the families of terrorists who were killed or injured during a terror attack. For instance, the family of a married "martyr" will receive 1,400 NIS a month (with additional allowances for a partner and children) and so on.

It can be said without the slightest exaggeration that the most rewarding profession for a Palestinian is to become a terrorist. As a terrorist he secures a steady and continuous high income for himself and his family. Moreover, if he can succeed in carrying out a terror attack of "quality", he will also gain a senior position in the PA upon release from prison, up to the position of Minister.

In such a manner, the PA creates an enormous financial incentive for terrorism, while lowering the quality of life for all normative, law-abiding citizens, who discover that a large portion of their budget is transferred directly to terrorists and their families. Thus, the PA not only encourages terrorism but more importantly – directly funds and incentivizes terrorism.

These payments amount to incredible sums of money. The table below details the sums transferred by the PA to terrorists and their families in recent years:¹¹⁶

| Year | Total Payments to Terrorists and their Families (NIS) |
|------|---|
| 2018 | 502,697,000 |
| 2019 | 460,701,282 |
| 2020 | 448,804,361 |
| 2021 | 610,795,507 |
| 2022 | 620,559,290 |
| 2023 | 630,795,561 |

These are substantial amounts, which pose a heavy burden on the PA's already inadequate budget. Thus, for example, its projected budget (as approved) for 2022 was set at NIS 18.4 billion. From this, the PA has expended 3.4% for payments to terrorists and their families in addition to the other benefits enumerated above.

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To better comprehend the scope of support for terrorists, consider that 3.4% of Israel's budget is half of the entire budget for the Ministry of Transportation or the combined budgets of higher education and employment. This is what financial support for terrorists means and it is a clear, unequivocal statement of values on the part of the PA – they will continue supporting terrorists and murderers, even at the expense of everything else.

To better comprehend the scope of support for terrorists, consider that 3.4% of Israel's budget is half of the entire budget for the Ministry of Transportation or the combined budgets of higher education and employment.¹¹⁷ This is what financial support for terrorists means and it is a clear, unequivocal statement of values on the part of the PA – they will continue supporting terrorists and murderers, even at the expense of everything else.

Such is being said openly by PA senior officials. In 2018, for example, Abbas made it clear in a televised speech on official PA broadcast (emphasis added): “I say to all: stipends for our martyrs, prisoners and wounded are a red line. They [Israel] try, in every way, and put pressure, in every way – and they still press us now: ‘You must not pay this.’ They will even deduct the amount we pay to the martyrs from the funds we have with them. We said that this is a red line. And we won’t allow it [to be crossed]. Since 1965 until today, **this is a sacred matter. The martyrs and their families are sacred, the wounded, the prisoners. All of them must be paid. Even if we are left with only one penny, it is for them and not for the living**”.¹¹⁸ At another time he further clarified that payments to terrorists will continue “even if we would have to carve out parts of our bodies to help our people”.¹¹⁹ Abbas repeated such sentiment recently as well, telling the US in April 2023: “I do not intend to stop paying the salaries to the martyr and prisoner families, even if it costs me my position, I will continue to pay them to my last day”.¹²⁰

It's important to understand that the Palestinian Authority funds not only terrorists from its own territories but Hamas terrorists as well - the same Hamas that defeated the PA in the Gaza elections and forcibly expelled it. Thus, the PA announced after the October 7 massacre that it would transfer salaries to families of terrorists eliminated in Gaza through post office branches and ATMs connected to the Palestinian Postal Bank.¹²¹

This means a grant of 6,000 NIS to each family of a killed terrorist, in addition to a lifetime monthly allowance of 1,400 NIS (before the various supplements for married terrorists and those with children), as well as a monthly allowance for fifty Hamas terrorists who were captured by Israel after the massacre they carried out. In total, in October the PA paid over 11 million NIS to Hamas terrorists who carried out the heinous massacre and to their families.¹²²

B.5 Involvement of Fatah and PA Personnel in Acts of Terrorism Against Israelis

Previous chapters presented evidence for the PA's indirect involvement in terrorism, beginning with their education system, through incitement and the promotion of terrorism and ending with payments to murderers. Beyond that, PA personnel (including Fatah members who represent the dominant party in the PA) are themselves involved in many terror attacks. This chapter will bring examples of such.

During Yasser Arafat's era, there were several incidents where PA security personnel attacked IDF soldiers themselves. This happened on September 25, 1996, during the "Western Wall Tunnel riots," when Arafat himself called "to respond with violence," and PA police consequently turned their weapons against IDF soldiers.¹²³ This was also the case during the Second Intifada, which broke out in September 2000, and was planned, according to the testimony of Arafat's wife and additional evidence, by Arafat himself.¹²⁴ The riots were preceded by the conduction of dozens of youth "summer camps" throughout the PA territory in which the adolescents were trained to use weapons and attack soldiers and settlers. During the violent riots that later broke out, Palestinian police armed forces charged into Joseph's Tomb, were involved in a lynch in Ramallah when two reservists mistakenly entered the city, and shot at IDF forces.¹²⁵

In recent years, the main involvement of PA personnel in terrorism is individual security forces officers and policemen who carry out terror attacks themselves. In a study conducted in February 2023 it was reported that "the number of PA policemen recently involved in terrorism is already nearly twenty".¹²⁶ Following are several examples from only the recent past:

- Bilal Rawajba, a captain in the Palestinian security forces, shot at IDF soldiers near Nablus on November 4, 2020, and was killed by IDF forces.¹²⁷
- The terrorist Daoud Zbeidi, brother of Zakaria Zbeidi (a terrorist who was in command of the Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades in Jenin), was a lieutenant colonel in the Palestinian Preventive Security. He was wounded during an exchange of fire with the IDF on May 13 2022 (in which Yamam soldier Noam Raz was killed), and later died of his wounds.¹²⁸

PA personnel (including Fatah members who represent the dominant party in the PA) are themselves involved in many terror attacks.

A study by the PMW organization found the declared involvement of scores of PA security personnel in terrorism, in recent years alone. Research by the Regavim organization found that between 2020-2024 alone, forty six PA security employees were killed during terrorist attacks, in addition to twenty five arrested by the IDF for involvement in terrorism.

- The terrorist Ahmed Abed, a member of the Palestinian security forces, was involved in a shooting attack in the Jenin area in which IDF officer Major Bar Falah was killed.¹²⁹
- The terrorist Hamdi Abu Dayyeh, a PA police officer who had served five years in an Israeli prison, carried out a shooting attack against an IDF force near Hebron on January 17 2023.¹³⁰
- The terrorist Nimr Abu Mustafa, a member of the PA security forces, was killed in December 2023 during a failed attempt to throw a bomb at IDF forces in Nablus. The PA's security forces held an official funeral for the terrorist.¹³¹
- The terrorist Ahmad Taha, a security officer in the PA security forces, attempted a vehicular and stabbing attack on April 27 2023 at the Gittai Avishar junction near Ariel.¹³²
- The terrorist Abd el-Nasser Riahi, a security officer in the PA, was killed in December 2023 during an exchange of fire with IDF forces in Nablus; he was seen in photos posted on social media sitting atop an armored vehicle belonging to the PA security forces.¹³³

These are only recent examples, the latest in a long line of terror attacks committed by terrorists who served in the past as PA security personnel.¹³⁴ A study by the PMW organization found the declared involvement of scores of PA security personnel in terrorism, in recent years alone.¹³⁵ Research by the Regavim organization found that between 2020-2024 alone, forty six PA security employees were killed during terrorist attacks, in addition to twenty five arrested by the IDF for involvement in terrorism.¹³⁶

This data demonstrates the fact that alongside the official and overt support, assistance and funding of the PA, a significant number of PA and PA security personnel are themselves directly involved in terrorism.



C. The Palestinian Authority Does Not Function as a Proper Sovereign in its Territories

So far, we have presented the ideology of armed struggle espoused by the Palestinian Authority (PA) (Chapter 1) and the ways in which it implements this ideology (Chapter 2).

In this chapter, we will show that the PA is not only destructive to the State of Israel but to its own citizens as well.

First, we will see that the Palestinian Authority has no governing legitimacy among its own people, and that it currently does not effectively control parts of its territories.

We will then see how the PA severely violates its own citizens' human rights instead of protecting and safeguarding them, and we will shine a spotlight on the corruption within the PA. Finally, we will present the Palestinian judicial system and its complete lack of independence.

The PA's dysfunction should make it clear that there is no place for "importing" a non-functioning body to govern additional territories and populations.

C.1 The Palestinian Authority Lacks Public Legitimacy Among Palestinians

The PA does not function as a democracy in almost any aspect, and even its functioning as a sovereign is extremely poor. Its president Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) has not stood for election since 2005, and it has had no legislative council since 2006. As a result, there is no separation of powers at the national level, and leaders have no democratic source of authority for their activities. While there are signs of consistent democratic functioning in the municipal system, participation in it is low.

The PA is not only destructive to the State of Israel but to its own citizens as well.

In its twenty nine years of existence, the Palestinian Authority has held presidential elections only twice: immediately after its establishment (1996) and after the death of its founder, Yasser Arafat (2005). Although various dates have been set for new elections since then, these have never taken place, and the PA is headed by a president who was elected to his position almost two decades ago.

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Elections for the legislative authority were held twice: in 1996, when 88 members of a “Palestinian Legislative Council” were appointed,¹³⁸ and in 2006, under a completely different electoral system and parliamentary structure.¹³⁹ The Fatah organization, which enjoyed a majority in the outgoing council, rejected the election results that transferred control of the council to Hamas. In response, Hamas violently seized the Gaza Strip from Fatah. Following these events, the Palestinian Legislative Council *de facto* ceased to exist.¹⁴⁰

Thus, the Palestinian governmental system rejected the principle of consensual transfer of power – a vital principle in democratic countries. Public opinion polls and interviews with Palestinian voters during and after the last presidential and council elections reveal that the absolute majority of Palestinians voted against Fatah representatives out of disgust with the corruption that has spread throughout the Palestinian system since they took power. Accordingly, the governing authority in the PA suffers from deep illegitimacy.¹⁴¹

Unlike the inability to function democratically at the national level, Palestinian democracy is slightly more successful at the local level. Between December 2004 and December 2005, four rounds of local authority elections were held throughout Palestinian-controlled territory.¹⁴² Despite changes in rules¹⁴³ and frequent postponements of election dates, Palestinians held partial elections for local councils also in 2012, 2017, and 2021-2022 (in two rounds). Hamas's takeover of the Gaza Strip prevented elections in Gaza in all of these rounds.

However, a closer examination of the data reveals that even local democracy is not in great shape. In practice, in an increasing number of authorities (4.52% in 2012, 8.44% in 2017, and 16.32% in 2021-22),¹⁴⁴ no candidate lists were submitted at all, so no elections took place. This means that in 2022, 78 municipalities had no candidate lists at all. To these must be added the 11 municipalities in which there were fewer candidates than council seats. Thus, in 2022, the effective rate of municipalities where no candidate lists were submitted in local elections stands at 18.62%. These add to a high percentage

(though actually decreasing)¹⁴⁵ of local authorities where elections do not take place due to prior agreement on the identity of all council candidates. Among such authorities are many large ones, so that ultimately, approximately 60% of eligible voters do not get the opportunity to choose their representatives at the local level.

The cumulative meaning of this data is that the true participation rate in the latest local elections of the Palestinian Authority stood at only 25%. The PA's report of 58% participation among eligible voters refers only to municipalities in which elections were actually held.

This democratic deficit – the lack of elections for central government and only partial elections in local government – is reflected in the Palestinian mood. In March 2023, 57% of Palestinians believed that the PA's existence primarily served Israeli interests, and 52% believed that dismantling the PA would lead to an improvement in their quality of life.¹⁴⁶

In September 2023, close to 62% of Palestinian respondents saw the PA as a burden on the Palestinian public.¹⁴⁷ They did not believe that the current leadership was capable of holding national elections, let alone implementing their results. In the same survey, only 42% of Palestinians expressed willingness to participate in general PA elections. Of these, only 37% expressed willingness to support the continued tenure of the incumbent president Abbas (compared to 58% who would choose Ismail Haniyeh). Several months later, in December 2023,¹⁴⁸ after the outbreak of war, Abu Mazen's support percentages dropped to 16% among those who expressed willingness to participate in elections, and the support percentages for Ismail Haniyeh rose to 78%.

Ziad Abu Ziad, a former PA minister, published an article in 2019¹⁴⁹ sharply criticizing the Palestinian Authority's failure to build a state based on the rule of law and democracy that would provide citizens with all their needs. He argued that the focus on external symbols, such as flag, anthem, and political appointments, came at the expense of building a state that gives citizens a sense of belonging, security, and livelihood. Abu Ziad warned that in the absence of substantive elements of governance, rule of law and democracy, the PA would become just another failed and corrupt Arab regime, based not on the concept of citizenship but on family and tribal rule. These words seem to be not a distant warning, but the result of a clear view of the situation as it is in PA territories. This is the situation on the ground, and this is how Palestinian citizens themselves see it.

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In November 2021, clan conflicts in Hebron intensified, and due to the PA's loss of control in the city, city notables requested King Abdullah of Jordan to send army forces to restore order. Similarly, in July 2020, Israel identified several areas of PA non-governance, especially in villages and refugee camps.

C.2 The Palestinian Authority No Longer has Effective Control over Parts of its Territory

In the summer of 2005, Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip and left its full control in the hands of the Palestinian Authority. In the two years following the withdrawal, the PA underwent an accelerated process of recruitment and the integration of the Al-Aqsa Battalions into the official security forces, and according to existing estimates, had about 85,000 salary recipients among various security forces in May 2007,¹⁵⁰ 55,000 of whom were in Gaza itself. Despite this considerable force, in June 2007 Hamas captured the Strip from the PA in a violent battle that lasted five days, at the end of which PA representatives were expelled or executed by Hamas.

That same year, which was the last year the Palestinian National Council (PNC) functioned, the PNC's Public Oversight Committee published a harsh report on the functioning of Palestinian security forces.¹⁵¹ According to the report, security chaos prevailed in areas under PA supervision. Public buildings were subject to frequent attacks; murder and crime rates rose sharply; thieving gangs roamed the cities; and street battles between Palestinian factions became routine. Despite all this, law enforcement authorities showed a marked unwillingness to fulfill their role.

In the years since then, the PA has received extensive international assistance for the development and training of its law enforcement and order maintenance forces from various sources, including the US,¹⁵² the European Union,¹⁵³ and the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF).¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, security chaos is spreading in Judea and Samaria, and the PA is losing its grip on parts of the territory.

In November 2021, for example, clan conflicts in Hebron intensified, and due to the PA's loss of control in the city, city notables requested King Abdullah of Jordan to send army forces to restore order.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, in July 2020, Israel identified several areas of PA non-governance, especially in villages and refugee camps.¹⁵⁶

In June 2023, it was reported that the PA was losing control in Jenin, with dozens of armed groups throughout Judea and Samaria rejecting the PA's authority.¹⁵⁷ That same year, an assessment was also published stating that the PA had effectively lost control in northern Samaria, and Palestinian security mechanisms lacked not only the motivation but the ability to deal with terrorist groups that had taken control of Jenin, Nablus, and their surroundings.¹⁵⁸

In the absence of territorial control, terrorist groups' capabilities rapidly expanded, including digging tunnels in the area,¹⁵⁹ and weapon proliferation surged.¹⁶⁰

At the end of the day, the PA is unable to enforce law or maintain order in the territory that is, according to the agreements, under its responsibility. This is despite extensive international assistance in developing police forces, and massive Israeli assistance with enforcement and the arrest of terrorists. Just as in the past, when the PA lost its hold on Gaza despite holding 66% of its forces there, the data today indicate that it is losing its grip on certain areas in Judea and Samaria.

C.3 The Palestinian Authority Severely Violates Palestinians' Human Rights

The Palestinian Authority was established through the Oslo Accords with the goal of “preparing” Palestinians for statehood.¹⁶¹ Later in this process, the PA received a “non-member observer state” status at the UN.¹⁶² This status allows the PA to sign international treaties, including those concerning human rights.¹⁶³ The PA used this status to sign several treaties, including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT),¹⁶⁴ the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD),¹⁶⁵ the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR),¹⁶⁶ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)¹⁶⁷ the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),¹⁶⁸ and others.¹⁶⁹ Sadly, despite the hopes that such accession would constitute “a significant step towards enhancing the promotion and protection of human rights in Palestine”,¹⁷⁰ it appears the PA never intended to act according to the conventions it signed or to promote Palestinian human rights,¹⁷¹ but rather the opposite. The Palestinian government under Mahmoud Abbas has shown complete disregard for human rights, and has persisted in violating rights such as freedom of expression,¹⁷² freedom of religion,¹⁷³ freedom of association,¹⁷⁴ women's rights,¹⁷⁵ LGBT rights,¹⁷⁶ and many others.¹⁷⁷ In this chapter, we will present examples of the human rights situation in the PA and clarify that the PA does nothing to promote its citizens' human rights.

It appears the PA never intended to act according to the conventions it signed or to promote Palestinian human rights, but rather the opposite. The Palestinian government under Mahmoud Abbas has shown complete disregard for human rights, and has persisted in violating rights such as freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of association, women's rights, LGBT rights, and many others.

Opposition to the regime in the Palestinian Authority is not formally prohibited, but the PA *de facto* suppresses its critics. For this purpose, the PA uses illegal arrests, abuse and violence during arrest.

C.3.1 The Palestinian Authority Violates Freedom of Expression

Without delving into the status of international law within the Palestinian legal system,¹⁷⁸ it can be said that formally, international conventions have supreme status in the PA's domestic law.¹⁷⁹ The PA signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR),¹⁸⁰ Article 19 of which establishes an obligation to ensure the freedom of expression; therefore, this is ostensibly a binding norm for the PA.¹⁸¹ This obligation requires both the permission of freedom of expression and the active protection of individuals' freedom of expression when it is prevented or violated by others' actions.¹⁸²

In parallel with its obligations under international law, the PA has an obligation to protect freedom of expression also under Article 19 of the Palestinian Basic Law, which establishes that “every person shall have the right to express his opinion in any form”, as well as under additional constitutional articles, such as Article 27(2), Article 26 (introduction), and Article 26 (5).¹⁸³

Despite these obligations, the PA's laws serve as tools for attacking and silencing opponents.¹⁸⁴ The PA has a 1995 law allowing it to censor any material it disapproves of.¹⁸⁵ The law requires journalists to avoid publications that contradict the principles of “national responsibility [...] and respect for truth.”¹⁸⁶

Clearly, this law can be interpreted very broadly to prohibit publications against the government, Islam, and the Palestinian police,¹⁸⁷ and to implement strict censorship – which is indeed what happens.¹⁸⁸ Moreover, the PA also has “defamation” laws, allowing it to accuse journalists and regime opponents of “defamation,” “incitement against the authority,”¹⁸⁹ and “statements against Islam.”¹⁹⁰ In addition to these laws, the PA enacted the Electronic Crimes Law in 2017, allowing it to impose its authority over social networks and internet publications.¹⁹¹ Among other things, the law allows the PA to impose heavy fines and even hard labor as punishment for those publishing statements against the PA and its leader, as well as those sharing or retweeting such content.¹⁹² There are many examples of this law being used for arrests¹⁹³ and for blocking sites and publishers critical of the government.¹⁹⁴

Opposition to the regime in the Palestinian Authority is not formally prohibited, but the PA *de facto* suppresses its critics.¹⁹⁵ For this purpose, the PA uses illegal arrests,¹⁹⁶ abuse and violence during arrest,¹⁹⁷ and the blocking and silencing tools mentioned above.¹⁹⁸ In 2021, the ICHR received 89 complaints about arrests violating freedom of expression,¹⁹⁹ and an analysis of arrestee identities in the PA from 2015 shows that out of 1,274 arrests that year, 476 were students, 67 were academics and teachers, and 35 were journalists.²⁰⁰ In 2015 alone, 1,089 people were investigated in the PA following

their political expressions, as a kind of “warning” not to continue criticizing the government.²⁰¹ Examples of such harassment of opponents to the regime include: the arrest of a girl who “insulted” Abbas on Facebook,²⁰² the arrest of a professor who accused the PA of collaborating with Israel,²⁰³ the arrest of the husband of a journalist who criticized the regime, in an attempt to pressure her,²⁰⁴ the arrest and investigation of a businessman who criticized Abbas,²⁰⁵ the arrest of Nizar Banat, a critic of the PA, which included eight hours of beating that eventually led to his death,²⁰⁶ arrests of regime critics that included cruel physical abuse, including hanging those investigated upside down, and more. The PA also bureaucratically hinders and even shuts down human rights organizations it disapproves of.²⁰⁷ All these events have a significant chilling effect and generate self-censorship.²⁰⁸

The PA operates mechanisms of coercion and abuse, especially towards journalists. In 2021, the ICHR received 16 complaints from journalists about violations of their press freedom, and in 2015 alone, 35 journalists were arrested for their activities.²⁰⁹ Journalists suffer arrests,²¹⁰ abuse and harassment, including violence,²¹¹ torture in detention,²¹² and occasional confiscation of their property (usually cameras, computers, and the like).²¹³ For example, Mamdouh Hamamrah was arrested 14 times for his statements against the PA, and his interrogations included beatings and threats.²¹⁴ In another case, Tareq Abu-Ziad was arrested and sentenced to a year and a half in prison, despite civilian courts ruling in favor of his release.²¹⁵ In another case, a journalist named Abdul Rahman Thahir was sentenced to three months in prison for insulting the authorities, without any explanation during his trial about which statement led to his arrest.²¹⁶ Journalists arrested for their work testified that they were threatened not to continue criticizing the government,²¹⁷ and many journalists reported that fear of violence causes them to self-censor.²¹⁸ The PA maintains this conduct towards journalists despite sharp criticism from human rights organizations, both within and outside the PA.²¹⁹

The Palestinian Authority frequently uses excessive force to suppress demonstrations.²²⁰ In February 2012, police violently attacked pro-Egyptian protesters, beat those present, and harmed journalists.²²¹ In June-July 2012, police attacked protesters, this time over a demonstration against negotiations with Israel.²²² In August 2013, police and other individuals in civilian clothes (apparently undercover officers) attacked protesters demonstrating in support of Syria.²²³ In 2021, police attacked and beat protesters demonstrating against the murder of Nizar Banat,²²⁴ and in another incident attacked female protesters, arrested female journalists, and broke equipment belonging to journalists' present at the demonstration.²²⁵ In June-July 2021, PA forces acted in several cases to violently disperse funerals and “release parties” of Hamas members.²²⁶ These are repeated violations of freedom of demon-

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stration and freedom of expression, which are enshrined in both Palestinian Basic Law²²⁷ and international conventions to which the PA is signatory.²²⁸ Despite this, prosecution of the perpetrators of these offenses is merely for show. Until 2011, only one case was prosecuted in this context - and all those involved were completely acquitted.²²⁹ Even after the widespread protests mentioned above following the death of opposition figure Nizar Banat, the fourteen low-ranking police officers who were investigated for causing his death were acquitted, and no one was convicted for the murder.²³⁰

C.3.2 The Palestinian Authority Violates Freedom of Association

Under the ICCPR convention to which it is a signatory,²³¹ as well as under the Basic Law which includes the right to freedom of association,²³² the Palestinian Authority is obligated to respect freedom of association. However, per a resolution issued by Mahmoud Abbas, based on the state of emergency declared in 2007, the Minister of Interior was given the ability to “review all permits for associations and organizations” and “take any steps deemed necessary against associations and organizations with the intent of closure, amendment, or any other action”.²³³ Clearly, this power allows the PA control over freedom of association. Since then, a pattern has emerged of a sustained attempt to harm civil society organizations in every way possible: In 2021, Abu Mazen tried to pass a law requiring organizations to receive budgetary and organizational approval from the PA, an attempt that was met with protest and did not therefore mature into law.²³⁴ However, even without legal authority, the PA finds ways to harass these organizations: for example, the PA refrained from renewing the license of an organization that provided legal support to political detainees in the PA.²³⁵ In another case, two senior officials in an organization that published a critical report about corruption in Abbas's environment were taken for questioning.²³⁶ Additionally, the approval mechanism for non-profit organizations in the PA is complicated and includes close supervision by the PA at all stages,²³⁷ in a way that constitutes an “unreasonable obstacle” to these organizations' ability to function independently.²³⁸

C.3.3 The Palestinian Authority Violates Women's Rights

The Palestinian Authority has several commitments related to women's rights. Internationally, the PA is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW),²³⁹ which includes obligations to ensure gender equality,²⁴⁰ ensure women's ability to live full and equal lives,²⁴¹ work to eliminate stereotypes and gender roles,²⁴² legislate equal laws regarding marriage and divorce,²⁴³ and act against prostitution and sexual violence.²⁴⁴ Additionally, the PA is also a signatory to the Convention Against Torture,²⁴⁵ wherein is included rape and sexual abuse during detention.²⁴⁶ The PA is also a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child,²⁴⁷ under which it must protect children from sexual exploitation.²⁴⁸ Furthermore, the PA's Basic Law guarantees equality before the law without gender discrimination.²⁴⁹ The PA is also committed to fighting prejudices, especially when these cause discrimination and domestic violence.²⁵⁰

However, the PA has never tried to fulfill these commitments. Even from a strictly legal perspective, there is no equality between men and women in the PA.²⁵¹ Judges and senior officials in the PA have expressed their view that signing the CEDAW did not bind the PA in any instance in which the convention contradicts Islamic laws.²⁵² Personal status laws in Palestine operate according to Islam, and severely discriminate against women: these laws include the possibility of polygamy for men, while this option does not exist for women,²⁵³ and women are obligated to obey their husband²⁵⁴ - which obligation includes the man's right to "educate" his wife (through punishment).²⁵⁵ The ability to divorce is one-sided, and granted only to husbands in a very simple process, while women need to present grounds, with these grounds being extremely limited and narrow²⁵⁶ - even violence from the husband is not enough to justify divorce.²⁵⁷ Moreover, although domestic violence is legally grounds for divorce, very few women manage to take advantage of their rights because the justice system considers a woman's testimony equal to half that of a man's.²⁵⁸

Women's inheritance rights are less than those of men and based on Islamic laws.²⁵⁹ Women seeking to oppose this discrimination and demand inheritance often face violence.²⁶⁰ Women's right to child custody ends at ages 10 and 12, and remarried or widowed women are not entitled to custody.²⁶¹ Even when women have ownership or inheritance rights, they are expected to give them up for their brothers or husbands.²⁶² Many family cases are handled independently through the religious courts rather than through the PA's judicial system, where the male-controlled system yields even more dire outcomes for women.²⁶³ The PA has laws against adultery

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Child marriages exist and are common in the PA: approximately 20% of women marry before age 18. There is legislation against child marriage, but no known cases of its enforcement. This exists alongside the recognized practice of forced marriages.

Abortions, with the exception of incest, risk to the mother, and rape, are illegal in the PA, with criminal sanctions of lengthy imprisonment. However, the exceptions are approved only rarely and only after religious sanction.

and loss of virginity. In 2022 alone, dozens of cases were opened for these offenses.²⁶⁴ The punishments imposed for these offenses are lesser for men,²⁶⁵ applied unequally and primarily against women; and often used by men to blackmail and pressure their wives with false complaints in divorce proceedings.²⁶⁶ Women must obey their husbands, including regarding their right to work, study, or relocate.²⁶⁷ Many divorced women gave up the financial support due to them in order to obtain their divorce.²⁶⁸

In an attempt to prevent extramarital relations, the PA does not register children born to unmarried women with their family name, representing a potential loss of honor, thus deterring women from sexual freedom.²⁶⁹ Only men can pass their citizenship to their children.²⁷⁰ Women cannot give birth in hospitals if they are not registered as married.²⁷¹

Child marriages exist and are common in the PA: approximately 20% of women marry before age 18.²⁷² There is legislation against child marriage, but no known cases of its enforcement.²⁷³ This exists alongside the recognized practice of forced marriages.²⁷⁴ Women need approval from a male “guardian” in order to marry.²⁷⁵

Abortions, with the exception of incest, risk to the mother, and rape, are illegal in the PA, with criminal sanctions of lengthy imprisonment.²⁷⁶ However, the exceptions are approved only rarely and only after religious sanction.²⁷⁷

Women's rights in the PA are not equal to those of men. Lack of control over marriage as well as child marriages prevent women from having equal access to education, as schools often won't accept married women, and their husbands usually do not allow them to attend anyway.²⁷⁸ The educational content that women and children are taught is that women should obey their husbands, wear modest clothes, and stay at home. Children are taught content that objectifies women, such as that “martyrs” receive 72 virgins.²⁷⁹

There are industries in which women cannot work, thus limiting their economic rights.²⁸⁰ Many in Judea and Samaria believe that a woman's place is in the home, thus even when women are accepted for work, they are treated with disrespect, have few promotion opportunities, and suffer from severe discrimination.²⁸¹ Only a few employers allow maternity leave and accommodate pregnant women.²⁸² Additionally, many employers prefer not to hire pregnant women or dismiss them.²⁸³ Working women suffer from abuse, and many don't control their own wages.²⁸⁴ Women do not receive equal pay for equal work.²⁸⁵

The PA laws protecting women from rape and domestic violence are inadequate. For years, PA judges used Jordanian law Articles to reduce sentences and exempt murderers in cases of “family honor”.²⁸⁶ Although the PA cancelled some of these articles, it did so only partially and the practice was not eliminated.²⁸⁷ The enforcement of these laws is also lacking, and the police do not make efforts to catch suspects.²⁸⁸ Sometimes, the police even extort women who have “violated the family honor”.²⁸⁹ Such legislation, enforcement, and adjudication send the clear message to Palestinian society that murder for “family honor” is legitimate.²⁹⁰ Such murder cases are common in the PA, with at least 23 such cases recorded in 2018²⁹¹, and at least 26 cases recorded in 2021 (until November).²⁹² The PA has no laws against sexual harassment, and authorities often blame the victims when they complain.²⁹³ Thus, sexual harassment is routine and common across all age groups.²⁹⁴

The PA has no legislation against domestic violence.²⁹⁵ 23.3% of women in Judea and Samaria reported domestic violence, while 61.7% reported psychological violence, and 10.9% reported sexual violence.²⁹⁶ These numbers might be even higher, with some places reporting that 59% of married women experienced violence in the twelve months prior to the study.²⁹⁷ Domestic violence is not prohibited by any specific law, and 22% of men in the PA reported that they believed using violence against women in the family was legitimate.²⁹⁸ 63% of men and 50% of women in the PA expressed the view that women should endure violence to preserve their family.²⁹⁹ The PA even broadcast videos explaining exactly how it is permissible to beat a woman according to Islam.³⁰⁰ The PA does not recognize spousal rape as rape,³⁰¹ and only investigates such cases when additional violence is involved.³⁰² In general, the PA avoids investigating rape cases, with only 11 such cases opened in 2021.³⁰³ Many women don't report violence at all, out of their desire to preserve family honor, and because authorities often side with the attacker.³⁰⁴ This is certainly true for married women, as having sexual relations outside of marriage is a criminal offense.³⁰⁵ Other obstacles affecting women's ability to complain include the legal period to submit a report being no more than three months from the time of injury, and the fact that a case of violence will be opened only if the injury is such that causes the woman to suffer for at least ten days. Additionally, the Jordanian law that allowed rapists to escape punishment if they married the victim, applicable in Judea and Samaria territories, was abolished only in 2018.³⁰⁶ However, its abolition did not solve the problem, because many families, with police mediation,³⁰⁷ still reach marriage arrangements with attackers, and force female victims to marry them

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An anonymous individual from Judea and Samaria told the Jerusalem Institute of Justice about a case in which a woman who cheated on her husband was tied up and left without food and water until she died of hunger and thirst. One of the most horrific stories is of a 14-year-old girl who was sold by her father for 10,000 NIS into forced marriage with a 35-year-old man, from whom she fled to shelter in Israel.

in order to avoid sully the family honor.³⁰⁸ This is partly due to legislation preventing citizenship for children born out of wedlock.³⁰⁹ The attempt to amend some of the laws allowing violence against women met with fierce opposition from PA authority figures and religious elements, with the result that despite the drafts prepared in 2020, such amendments did not pass.³¹⁰

As a result of the above, violence and discrimination against women in Judea and Samaria are very common. A divorced woman reported that she struggles to find an apartment because no landlord wants to rent to a divorced woman, and she experiences violence and social ostracism.³¹¹ On August 22 2019, a well-known makeup artist was beaten to death by her family, apparently over “family honor.” Authorities arrested three suspects only after protests and civil demands to increase punishment for such violence.³¹² On July 28 2021, a woman was murdered near Ramallah, apparently over “family honor.” The authorities did not file charges in this matter as the families reached an agreement on financial compensation for the murder.³¹³ An anonymous individual from Judea and Samaria told the Jerusalem Institute of Justice about a case in which a woman who cheated on her husband was tied up and left without food and water until she died of hunger and thirst.³¹⁴ One of the most horrific stories is of a 14-year-old girl who was sold by her father for 10,000 NIS into forced marriage with a 35-year-old man, from whom she fled to shelter in Israel.³¹⁵

However, the violence is not limited to civilians in Judea and Samaria; the Palestinian police also harm women in various ways. Female protesters reported that police officers and collaborators would come to demonstrations against the PA to harass female protesters and provoke a response from the men, thereby justifying a violent dispersal of the demonstration.³¹⁶ During protests against the PA in 2021, female protesters reported they noticed an increase in the harassment and abuse of female protesters by the police.³¹⁷ Even after arrest, the violence and harassment don't stop: arrested female protesters reported that officers beat them and grabbed their breasts.³¹⁸ These attacks were especially directed at female students, journalists³¹⁹, and lawyers³²⁰ who oppose the PA's regime. One detainee said that during her arrest and interrogation, investigators threatened to bring a doctor to check if she was a virgin, to rape and harass her, and abused her and hit her in the chest.³²¹

Another phenomenon that violates women's rights in the PA is prostitution. There are laws that partially prohibit prostitution and punish prostitutes and their employers.³²² Only at the end of 2022 did the PA begin working on a law against prostitution. However, many accuse the PA of ignoring customers and employers while focusing on criminalizing and arresting the prostitutes themselves.³²³ The lives of women in the PA who sink into prostitution are abysmal: PA law prohibits soliciting a woman for illegal sexual relations,

“unless she is a prostitute or a woman known for her immoral character.” Thus, prostitutes are exposed to severe sexual violence.³²⁴ Many women commit suicide, are murdered, or meet their death in other ways, as engaging in prostitution creates social rejection.³²⁵ This phenomenon is also accompanied by trafficking in women who are sold into prostitution roles and marriages with elderly and wealthy men.³²⁶ Women who deteriorate into the cycle of prostitution and human trafficking report experiencing severe violence and abuse. One woman recounts that her employers found her after she left home, prevented her from any contact with the outside world and created financial dependency on them, sending clients to her. Another interviewee recounted how since she was 13-14, her father would sell her and her sister into marriages with Palestinians inside Israel and cause them to divorce within a few months, while he collected the money.³²⁷ This situation and these difficult stories are a direct result of Palestinian authorities' refusal to address the phenomenon, and their denial of the exploitation and deterioration of women into these worlds.³²⁸

C.3.4 The Palestinian Authority Violates LGBT Rights

Many international conventions, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ICCPR to which the PA is a signatory, establish an obligation to protect LGBT rights.³²⁹ Although homosexuality and other behaviors related to LGBT identity expression are not officially forbidden in the PA,³³⁰ they are prohibited in practice. First, the Palestinians' “Dar al-Ifta”, the official religious law, views “LGBT behavior” as a “serious crime against Islam, which must be severely punished”.³³¹ Additionally, the proposed Palestinian criminal law draft includes a prohibition on same-sex relations.³³² The PA does not prevent discrimination against LGBT people, but rather the opposite.³³³

Palestinian public opinion also opposes homosexuality. In one poll, 81% of Palestinians professed the belief that homosexuality is an action that should be condemned and not tolerated, and 82% thought it should be illegal.³³⁴ In another study, these numbers were even higher, with 93% opposing LGBT acceptance.³³⁵ LGBT Palestinians suffer from constant persecution, and their LGBT identity is seen as violating family honor.³³⁶ Sometimes they marry, either by force or out of fear and a desire to conceal their identity.³³⁷

LGBT individuals reported that their relatives violated their privacy and spied on them on social media, while other LGBT people were blackmailed on social media with the threat to tell their families after their identity was discovered.³³⁸ Many LGBT people report that their families raped them, attempted to murder them, pursued them after they left home, and more.³³⁹ The PA does not provide protection from persecution. Palestinian security mechanisms neglect complaints from LGBT individuals and sometimes even

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Despite the absence of a law against LGBT behavior, the PA often accuses LGBT people of various criminal offenses in order to convict them. The police sometimes assist families in searching for LGBT people trying to escape, thus helping them murder them. Palestinian LGBT individuals are often accused of collaborating with Israel.

blame them.³⁴⁰ This treatment causes many LGBT people to live in such desperate conditions that they flee to seek refuge in Israel.³⁴¹ Even escape to Israel doesn't always protect them, as their family members often continue to search for them with the intention of killing them,³⁴² and sometimes find them or cause them to return, after which they are murdered.³⁴³ Cases of conversion therapy, abuse, forced "medical" treatments and more to "prevent LGBT identity" are very common in PA territories.³⁴⁴ In one case, after a 13-year-old child was gang-raped, the Palestinian court even accused him of "seducing" the boys who did it.³⁴⁵

The persecution of LGBT individuals is not carried out by family members alone, and many LGBT people report being persecuted by the PA itself.³⁴⁶ LGBT people under the PA's jurisdiction undergo torture, interrogation, harassment, and are beaten nearly to death.³⁴⁷ Despite the absence of a law against LGBT behavior, The PA often accuses LGBT people of various criminal offenses in order to convict them.³⁴⁸ The police sometimes assist families in searching for LGBT people trying to escape, thus helping them murder them.³⁴⁹ Palestinian LGBT individuals are often accused of collaborating with Israel.³⁵⁰ When arrested, the PA blackmails them with threats to reveal their sexual orientation, causing them to report on their LGBT friends and on Israelis.³⁵¹

In one case, an LGBT person who fled to Jordan reports that the police came to his home one night, arrested him, and twelve officers severely tortured and beat him.³⁵² Another Palestinian reports that after being arrested, his skin was cut with glass shards and cleaning solution poured on his wounds.³⁵³ Palestinian LGBT people say they fear Israel returning them to Judea and Samaria, because there their family members will find and murder them.³⁵⁴ Another Palestinian relates that after being raped at age 13 by his cousin and undergoing a medical examination to verify this, his family began abusing and beating him, locking him up without food for four days. After fleeing to Israel, he returned one day to Judea and Samaria for Christmas celebrations, where he was arrested and tortured by the PA. Only after paying a bribe to the officer who arrested him did he manage to escape.³⁵⁵

In other cases, Palestinian LGBT people describe how people in their environment reported them for associating with other men, after which the PA arrested, tortured, and interrogated them, leading to family rejection and persecution with the intent to kill.³⁵⁶ In another case, PA police officers stood and watched while an extremist mob attacked, beat, and abused Palestinian LGBT people who were protesting against the violence against LGBT people.³⁵⁷ These cases

paint a vivid picture of persecution from all possible elements in the lives of Palestinian LGBT people, while the PA refuses to protect them and sometimes even participates in this wrongful persecution.

LGBT civil society organizations are also persecuted by the PA. In Palestinian society there are two such organizations, and both operate from within Israel.³⁵⁸ The Palestinian LGBT organization al-Qaws attempted to organize a meeting of Palestinian LGBT people, but the PA prohibited the meeting from taking place.³⁵⁹ Subsequently, the PA outlawed the organization,³⁶⁰ and the security forces spokesperson promised to arrest and prosecute all those involved in organizing and planning the meeting.³⁶¹ That is indeed what happened: many Palestinian LGBT people were arrested in the months following the meeting's cancellation and were tortured and beaten by the PA's security forces.³⁶² Even without the PA's involvement, many understood these actions as approval and a call to harm members of the LGBT community, who suffered abuse and violence from civilians as well.³⁶³

C.3.5 The Palestinian Authority Violates the Rights of Christians and Religious Minorities

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights imposes an obligation on states to protect religious minorities and their rights.³⁶⁴ So too, to some extent, does Article 4 of the Palestinian Basic Law, that stipulates that while Islam is the official religion of the PA, the dignity of other religious minorities shall be preserved.³⁶⁵ However, the PA does not fulfill these commitments.

Christians, and especially Christian women, experience physical attacks and sexual harassment,³⁶⁶ authorities refuse to help them when crimes are committed against them, and their economic rights are not protected.³⁶⁷ Palestinian Christians frequently undergo forced conversions to Islam in secret.³⁶⁸ Christian-owned businesses are attacked and set on fire.³⁶⁹ Churches are attacked, and people seeking to visit them are assaulted and beaten for being Christian.³⁷⁰ The PA does not investigate such incidents and pressures Christians to remain silent and not report the violations against them.³⁷¹

These are not isolated incidents or from the distant past: in October 2022, Muslims raided a church and threw stones at it and its worshippers. Earlier that year, at least two priests were attacked during their stay in Jericho.³⁷² In 2019, at least two churches were attacked, and armed men raided a Christian village and fired at terrified residents.³⁷³ In this case, the PA did not intervene for many

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The PA has racist laws preventing the sale of land to Jews, and this law is actively enforced. Many Christians claim that Muslims interpret the law as prohibiting the sale of land to any non-Muslim, thus affecting Christians as well.

hours, even while the attackers demanded Christians pay “jizya,” a discriminatory tax imposed on non-Muslims according to Sharia, the Islamic religious law (to be further discussed below).³⁷⁴ Additional incidents from 2022 included shootings directed at a church, attacks on Christians with clubs and stones, and the arrest of a Christian under false pretenses of “aiding Israel.”³⁷⁵ Also in 2022, Palestinians continue to suffer abuse and forced religious conversion, with Muslims who choose to convert to Christianity at the highest risk of harm,³⁷⁶ beyond the fact that conversion is against the law.³⁷⁷

An additional and unique form of persecution against Palestinian Christians is the “jizya,” a tax imposed on non-Muslims in Muslim countries as payment for the protection they receive from Muslims.³⁷⁸ Although the PA does not officially impose this tax, it levies various discriminatory fines and payments on Christians, thus creating a hidden jizya.³⁷⁹ Additionally, there is a social perception among Palestinian Muslims and Christians that Christians must pay “lip service” and constantly attack Israel in order to protect themselves from the surrounding Muslim population.³⁸⁰

Reports from local Christians show that senior officials in the PA's security system sometimes extort Christians and demand payment for “protection” as an unofficial jizya.³⁸¹ In one case, a Christian girl whose uncle was murdered spoke out publicly against the persecution of Christians, claiming that her family pays jizya, and after these statements, she and her family members suffered violence and harassment.³⁸²

Furthermore, the PA has racist laws preventing the sale of land to Jews,³⁸³ and this law is actively enforced.³⁸⁴ Many Christians claim that Muslims interpret the law as prohibiting the sale of land to any non-Muslim, thus affecting Christians as well.³⁸⁵

C.3.6 The Palestinian Authority Violates the Right to Due Process and Tortures Detainees and Prisoners

The PA is committed to refrain from torture, on the strength of both international law and domestic PA law.³⁸⁶ It is furthermore a signatory to the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture³⁸⁷, as well as the Rome Convention³⁸⁸ in which torture is declared to be a crime against humanity.³⁸⁹ The responsibility for making use of this practice belongs not only to those who carry out the torture but to their superiors and commanders who order its use.³⁹⁰

Palestinian legislation appears to provide protection from torture, but these laws do not meet the PA's international obligations for various reasons. The definition of torture in PA law, for instance, does not meet the Convention's standards.³⁹¹ The Committee Against Torture has determined in the past that these disparities constitute a failure to meet the obligations imposed by signing the convention.³⁹² So too, the crime of torture is categorized as a light offense, in complete contravention of the Convention's stipulations.³⁹³ Moreover, the PA's failure to protect vulnerable populations such as women and LGBT from torture (as previously described) contradicts their obligations under Article 2 of the Convention.³⁹⁴

In point of fact, the practice of torture and abuse during arrests are common throughout the PA, alongside other violations of the right to due process and other detainees' rights, as well as despicable detention conditions.³⁹⁵ The PA does not, of course, report such cases; the only data is from witness accounts and NGOs.³⁹⁶ According to the human rights organization Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, 1,274 Palestinians were arrested by the PA in 2015, 476 of whom were students, 35 human rights activists and 67 teachers and academics.³⁹⁷ Of these arrests, in 179 cases – 14% of all arrests – torture and abuse were reported.³⁹⁸ The torture reported included beatings, beatings with clubs and whips, kicks and slaps to the face, sleep prevention and isolation, alongside verbal abuse.³⁹⁹ In 2019, 1,510 cases of politically motivated investigations were reported in the Palestinian territories.⁴⁰⁰ The Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR) reported 7 cases of death, 9 cases of torture and ill-treatment, and 17 cases of unfair trial in May 2017.⁴⁰¹ In January 2019, 7, 15, and 24 cases respectively⁴⁰² were reported, and in April 2019, 4, 13, and 27.⁴⁰³ Cases of severe torture were described, including beatings with a stick on the fingers of the hands and stepping on the toes of the feet,⁴⁰⁴ hanging in a crucifixion position for 15 hours,⁴⁰⁵ kicking a man with a knee injury in the knee, and more.⁴⁰⁶ One detainee reported that for three weeks during his arrest, he was subjected to hours of physical abuse, beatings and torture every day.⁴⁰⁷

The PA does not address any of these cases.⁴⁰⁸ As mentioned, until 2011 only a single case was brought to trial and all parties involved were exonerated.⁴⁰⁹ Even following widespread protests following the death of Nizar Banat, as mentioned above, only fourteen low ranking policemen were investigated for causing his death, and they were acquitted. No one was ever convicted for the violence.⁴¹⁰ Even when the judiciary intervenes and determines that detainees should be released, the authorities ignore them and suffer no consequences.⁴¹¹

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Children suffer from domestic violence, and approximately 50% of children in the PA experience violence and abuse within their families. A study conducted by UNICEF found that 44% of teachers in the PA hit students in the past year, and 51% declared that they consider this a legitimate form of education. 70% declared that they carried sticks or other hitting implements to school.

In addition to all the above, capital punishment is still legal.⁴¹² In practice, the sentence is usually softened and not carried out.⁴¹³ However, it does not follow that the PA does not violate the right to life: in many cases, instead of sentencing prisoners to death, the PA abuses its victims and they die in prison, without ever standing trial.⁴¹⁴

Detainees subjected to abuse often suffer death or permanent injuries.⁴¹⁵ In one such case, a man was detained for the second time after his spinal disc was ruptured, and the investigators used this injury to target that spot, causing him to suffer a nervous breakdown and causing irreversible physical damage.⁴¹⁶ In another case, a man who converted to Judaism was severely beaten and his limbs burned.⁴¹⁷ Another man interrogated lost his speech following the beatings he endured.⁴¹⁸ In another case, witnesses reported that an interogatee was so severely abused he could not lift his arms, drink or walk, and received beatings from police for failing to do so. Ultimately, his acute medical condition and the abuse he suffered led to his death.⁴¹⁹

C.3.7 The Palestinian Authority Violates Children's Rights

Beyond violation of the rights detailed extensively in previous pages, the PA also violates the rights of children and minors. Children receive very low-quality education, and children with intellectual or physical disabilities often suffer abuse from their peers, without significant steps being taken to address this problem.⁴²⁰ Children are often recruited for military action.⁴²¹ Children suffer from domestic violence,⁴²² and approximately 50% of children in the PA experience violence and abuse within their families.⁴²³ A study conducted by UNICEF found that 44% of teachers in the PA hit students in the past year, and 51% declared that they consider this a legitimate form of education. 70% declared that they carried sticks or other hitting implements to school, and 41% of students claimed they were hit by their teachers in the year prior to the study.⁴²⁴ Furthermore: child labor exists in the PA, although there are no clear statistics regarding its prevalence.⁴²⁵ In a 2010 PA report, it was estimated that there are approximately 15,000 children working, with children aged 5-11 and 12-14 comprising 4.2 and 4.6 percent, respectively, of the workforce.⁴²⁶ The U.S. Embassy in Israel reports that 3% of children aged 10-17 in Judea and Samaria work.⁴²⁷

Alongside these problems, there is also a widespread phenomenon of child marriage⁴²⁸ - 20%-30% of women aged 18-49 reported that they were married before age 18,⁴²⁹ and approximately 1% were married before age 15.⁴³⁰

C.4 The Palestinian Authority is Deeply Afflicted with Corruption

Another sign of dysfunction in the Palestinian Authority is the severe governmental corruption, which is considered to be deeply embedded in its organizational DNA.⁴³¹ Since 1993, many Palestinians have viewed the peace process between Israel and the PA as being aimed solely at providing financial benefits to PA leaders and lining the pockets of its senior officials and their families. Some PA citizens claimed that the Oslo Accords' purpose was not to improve their lives, but rather to advance the interests of Arafat and his corrupt associates.⁴³²

Moreover, PA citizens perceive the security cooperation between Israel and the PA as a direct product of corruption among PA senior officials. In their view, the senior officials are afraid to stop security cooperation due to their fear of losing the privileges they and their families enjoy.⁴³³

This perception of their leaders' corruption on the part of PA citizens is based on the grim reality in the PA since its early years. An audit conducted in 1997, for example, found that approximately 40% of the PA's budget was used for personal rather than public purposes.⁴³⁴

Another example of corruption among PA leadership was the Palestinian Resilience Fund. While the fund's declared purpose was to support the education, agriculture, health, and housing sectors, it was revealed that the main beneficiaries were various associates, who received generous housing loans.⁴³⁵

Another symbol of corruption in the early years was the Jericho casino, which opened before the outbreak of the Second Intifada. The casino was perceived by the public as a joint venture between Israelis and corrupt PA officials, who enriched themselves at the expense of ordinary Palestinian citizens.

The corruption that spread throughout the PA was so severe that in 1999, twenty prominent figures in the PA - intellectuals and members of the Legislative Council - signed a declaration entitled "The Homeland Calls Us," which accused Arafat of opening the door to opportunists to spread corruption in the PA. Many of the signatories were arrested by Palestinian security forces.⁴³⁶

This corruption is considered a very significant factor in Hamas's victory in the 2006 parliamentary elections.⁴³⁷ Hamas's electoral list was called "Change and Reform," and one of their main promises was to end corruption, which they claimed was a significant weakening factor for Palestinians. Hamas also promised to fight nepotism in appointments and promotions, as well as the waste of public funds.⁴³⁸

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Claims of corruption, from the PA's early years and during Yasser Arafat's reign, continue to plague the PA today, during Mahmoud Abbas' era.⁴³⁹ Even though Abu Mazen frequently talks about fighting corruption, the public doesn't believe he is acting seriously on the matter,⁴⁴⁰ and no apparent change has occurred during his tenure.⁴⁴¹ A 2014 public opinion poll, for example, found that around 25% of Palestinians consider corruption to be a severe problem, second only to "occupation".⁴⁴² According to a December 2022 public opinion poll by the Palestinian polling institute PCPSR, 81% of the Palestinian public thinks there is corruption in PA institutions.⁴⁴³ Similar results emerged in previous surveys.⁴⁴⁴

An additional survey conducted in December 2022 by a Palestinian anti-corruption organization (AMAN) showed that 85% of Palestinians consider the efforts to fight corruption insufficient.⁴⁴⁵ These issues don't remain at the perception level but translate into daily reality. A 2011 survey, for instance, revealed that 53% of respondents in the PA reported paying bribes in the last 12 months.⁴⁴⁶

The image of corruption that has come to be associated with Abbas wasn't built in a vacuum, and he himself was also linked to corruption scandals. For example, in 2009, Reuters published an extensive investigation revealing that Abu Mazen's sons - Tarek and Yasser - became very wealthy through business deals totaling tens of millions of dollars. Yasser is, among other things, the CEO of a construction project management company that built roads and schools for the PA, with some of the money coming from U.S. government financial support. Tarek also became a very wealthy businessman, and he is, among other things, the vice chairman of a large shopping mall company in the PA, as well as the owner of an advertising company that operates also in the PA, partly using funds received from the U.S. government.⁴⁴⁷

However, corruption was not linked only to Abu Mazen, and numerous corruption cases can be found among many senior officials and in various places in the PA. For example, common forms of corruption in the PA are the payment of salaries to public employees who don't actually work, the provision of government vehicles to associates, and the distribution of fuel coupons.⁴⁴⁸ A July 2022 report revealed that two PA ministers each appointed his daughter to a key position in the ministry the other headed.⁴⁴⁹

Another example is a corruption scandal exposed by the Palestinian Intelligence's corruption investigation commissioner, involving Fatah senior officials who reported inflated land purchase prices and pocketed the difference. The same senior official reported that high-ranking officials in the Palestinian Ministry of Finance were also involved, and he was later suspended from his position due to his role in exposing corruption cases.⁴⁵⁰

Moreover, the existing corruption in the PA extends far beyond financial corruption. A 2019 study revealed that 21% of PA citizens were exposed to sexual extortion when seeking government services or knew someone else who was exposed to such.⁴⁵¹ The report was presented at a press conference held by the AMAN organization, and immediately caused an uproar, with forceful attempts to silence the criticism.⁴⁵²

The PA declares it will fight corruption, but in practice does very little.⁴⁵³ For example, it established the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission, responsible for receiving public complaints and referring appropriate cases to special corruption courts that were established for the expedited and efficient handling of serious corruption cases. However, although the body is described as independent, its president is appointed by presidential decree, and many members of its advisory council previously held official positions as ministers, ambassadors, and presidential advisors. According to reports, corruption investigations conducted by the Commission are characterized by selectivity, and public opinion is accordingly losing faith in the Commission, with many coming to believe that the presidency, the security services, and political parties regularly interfere with its work.⁴⁵⁴

Moreover, in 2022, most cases being heard in the special corruption courts were cases that had been dragged over from previous years, and the vast majority of defendants were junior officials, only one being a senior PA official.⁴⁵⁵ The obvious conclusion is that the PA is not acting seriously to eradicate corruption.

Moreover, not only does the PA not do enough to fight the plague of corruption, it actively persecutes those who expose it.⁴⁵⁶ In June 2020, for example, PA forces arrested journalist Sami al-Saie for three weeks, on suspicion of managing a Facebook page that published information about corruption in the PA. A month later, PA forces in Ramallah arrested close to twenty activists who were on their way to protest against PA corruption, imprisoned them for over a week, and prosecuted them for illegal assembly.⁴⁵⁷ Another example published in April 2021 is that of a Palestinian activist who received death threats from Fatah gunmen due to his activities in exposing corruption in the PA.⁴⁵⁸

Another well-known example, which still resonates in the PA today,⁴⁵⁹ is the murder case of Nizar Banat, a human rights activist and prominent critic of corruption in the PA. On June 24 2021, PA security forces broke into Banat's home, beat him with sticks, and took him with them. Hours later, Banat was found dead. The senior PA officials responsible for the act have yet to be prosecuted.⁴⁶⁰ Subsequently, Banat's family suffered repeated harassment for attempting to call for justice. Several family members were arbitrarily arrested multiple times and even fired from various

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In practice, during the last two decades, Abbas hollowed out the judiciary's independence, partly through legislative powers derived from a "state of emergency" partly through other measures.

government positions, solely for their calls to prosecute those responsible.⁴⁶¹ As reported on Al-Monitor, many journalists know hundreds of stories of unmistakable corruption in the PA, including some involving Abu Mazen's sons, but cannot publish them or even talk about them publicly.⁴⁶²

The fact that corruption is deeply embedded in the organizational culture of the PA, that there is an absence of a functioning parliament (something that began with Hamas's electoral victory in 2006 and has not changed since), and the absence of freedom of speech and press, makes it difficult to see how the corruption situation in the PA can change.⁴⁶³

C.5 The Palestinian Authority has no Independent Judiciary

The independence of the judiciary in the Palestinian Authority is a matter that has accompanied the Palestinian high courts from their inception.⁴⁶⁴ In the PA Judicial Authority Law, there are articles that ensure independence, both in terms of the absence of any authority aside from the law and in terms of budget.⁴⁶⁵ In the original version of the law, it was determined that judges would serve until the age of 70, and restrictions were placed on their dismissal.⁴⁶⁶ Additionally, the law requires the establishment of a High Judicial Council with a majority of judges, responsible for overseeing the judiciary and making recommendations regarding matters related to the promotion, dismissal, and appointment of judges.⁴⁶⁷ The power to appoint all judges was granted to the President of the PA, although this must be done based on the nomination ("tansib") of the High Judicial Council.⁴⁶⁸

The Palestinian Basic Law also established the separation of powers,⁴⁶⁹ the subjection of all authorities and individuals to the law,⁴⁷⁰ the right of access to courts, and a lack of immunity from judicial oversight.⁴⁷¹ The law further established that the judiciary and the judges are independent,⁴⁷² that a High Judicial Council would be established, which must be consulted when legislating matters concerning the judicial system, and that the limits of judges' authority, their dismissal, the composition of the system, and the manner of establishing courts would be determined by law.⁴⁷³

In practice, during the last two decades, Abbas hollowed out the judiciary's independence, partly through legislative powers derived from a "state of emergency" partly through other measures,⁴⁷⁴ as will be briefly detailed below. The Palestinian Basic Law estab-

lishes that a High Constitutional Court would be established, with the authority to rule on the legality of laws, regulations, and orders, as well as to decide on questions of interpretation of basic laws and conflicts between branches of government.⁴⁷⁵ Already at the beginning of his term in office, Abbas acted to remove Judge Al-Surani, who served as its president, and appoint his own judge, his associate Issa Abu Sharar.⁴⁷⁶

During Sharar's tenure, there were no conflicts between the president and the judiciary.⁴⁷⁷ Thus, among other things, the High Court under Abu Sharar approved Abu Mazen's move to assume legislative authority, a move that rendered the Legislative Council powerless.⁴⁷⁸ After Abu Sharar retired, Abbas appointed another associate of his, Farid Jallad, his personal legal advisor.⁴⁷⁹ Jallad continued his predecessor's tradition and approved Abu Mazen's continued hold on legislative powers, despite Abu Mazen postponing parliamentary elections, and despite the fact that after four years there was no apparent lawful justification for the delay.⁴⁸⁰ After Jallad resigned in 2014 from his position due to disagreements with Abbas regarding his successor,⁴⁸¹ Abu Mazen tried to appoint an associate for the third time - Ali Mahana - but this move met resistance,⁴⁸² and Mahana resigned.⁴⁸³

After the establishment of the Constitutional Court, Abbas made a series of moves to eliminate the court's independence. In 2019, he issued two decrees, supposedly based on recommendations from a committee he had established. The first decree lowered the retirement age of judges to 60 (thereby removing many of the High Court's veteran judges from their positions). In the second decree, the High Judicial Council was replaced, many departments of the High Court and the Courts of Appeals were abolished, and in their stead, a "Transitional High Judicial Council" was established, which was authorized, among other things, to recommend the dismissal of judges.⁴⁸⁴ Abu Mazen's associates were appointed to head the Council.⁴⁸⁵ Some of its powers were revoked by a Constitutional Court ruling,⁴⁸⁶ but in practice, the important powers remained in Abu Mazen's hands, and thus, on September 15, 2019, based on a recommendation from the Transitional Judicial Council, he ordered the early retirement of nineteen judges from the High Court and Courts of Appeals,⁴⁸⁷ including judges who had previously ruled to limit his power. The judges' attempts to oppose this were unsuccessful,⁴⁸⁸ and two of them were even summoned for questioning.⁴⁸⁹ Petitions submitted to the Constitutional Court on this matter were rejected on the grounds of various strained legal reasoning.⁴⁹⁰

Despite the commitments established in basic laws and regular legislation, Abbas has worked throughout his years in power to eliminate the independence of the judicial system and to consolidate his rule using it. Over the years, the judiciary lost its independence, and through a series of forceful actions, directly subordinated to Abbas' will and authority.

In fact, the Constitutional Court today is nothing but Abbas' long arm. It generally aligns with the government, while trying to find excuses and avoid decisions that contradict Abu Mazen's needs. This reality was formed, among other things, due to an amendment to the Constitutional Court law published by Abu Mazen, in which judges' tenure was limited to six years, their number limited to nine judges, and Abbas granted the authority to appoint three judges to this court every two years. Thus, Abbas ensured control over this element of the judiciary as well.⁴⁹¹

In conclusion, despite the commitments established in basic laws and regular legislation, Abbas has worked throughout his years in power to eliminate the independence of the judicial system and to consolidate his rule using it. Over the years, the judiciary lost its independence, and through a series of forceful actions, directly subordinated to Abbas' will and authority.



Summary

This document exposes the Palestinian Authority's true face as an entity committed to an ideology that fundamentally negates Israel's existence and works to implement this ideology in every possible way. It is also a corrupt government that lacks democratic legitimacy and does not work for the benefit of its citizens but rather for the survival of its rule.

This reality is neither a thing of the past nor some new development. Even before the PA was established, the organizations from which it emerged worked to destroy the State of Israel, and since its establishment, it has done so with greater intensity. This was the banner Arafat marched under, and this same banner guides Mahmoud Abbas. Both promote the route of terrorism and jihad, despite at times paying lip service to the condemnation of terrorism. Their roadmap was and remains the phases doctrine. Obviously, concern for the PA's citizens and their prosperity is not at the top of their priorities.

Bringing the PA or any "upgraded" PA to rule in Gaza means building another terroristic, Israel-hating entity on the state's southern border. As a starting point, it must be assumed that the PA's character will not change by replacing its President, or appointing some other "Ra'is" [boss] to Gaza. The PA's ideological infrastructure is clear and long-standing, dating back to the establishment of Fatah and later the PLO, and it would be a mistake to expect this to change.

Many in Israel, including many from the security establishment, see the PA as a body that Israel can "work" or "have dialogue" with. As this document shows, however, the difference between the PA and Hamas is not one of substance as far as the desire to destroy Israel. Both cheered the perpetrators of the October 7 massacre. This applies not only to the PA leadership but also to the majority of its citizens, who are indoctrinated from infancy to hate Israel, in line with the PA's educational program and with the ideology that has guided it since its inception.

Even before the PA was established, the organizations from which it emerged worked to destroy the State of Israel, and since its establishment, it has done so with greater intensity. This was the banner Arafat marched under, and this same banner guides Mahmoud Abbas.





Endnotes

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- 10 *Ibid*.
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- 15 Compare also to UNRWA's definition of who is included as a Palestinian refugee, eligible for the organization's protection (emphasis added):“These are **persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period of June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict**. Palestine Refugees, and **descendants of Palestine refugee males**, including legally adopted children, are eligible to register for UNRWA services”.
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- 40 The memo, dated January 2, 2001, was written by the legal unit at the Negotiation Support Unit and addressed to Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), available [here](#).
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- 43 Dalal Mughrabi was a terrorist who commanded the deadly attack on the Coastal Road, in which 35 people were murdered, including 12 children, and 77 were wounded. Due to the attack's scale and 'success', Mughrabi became a role model in the Palestinian Authority. As will be shown later in the paper, many schools are named after her and PA-sponsored ceremonies are held in her memory.
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