



Why the Palestinian Authority Should Not Control the Gaza Strip

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This paper reviews the proposed option of having the Palestinian Authority (PA) take control of the Gaza Strip the day after the war, by an in-depth study of (i) the ideology that fuels its component organizations, (ii) the stance it takes towards Israel, (iii) its share in initiating and promoting terrorism, (iv) the way it treats its own citizens and (v) its leaders' conduct, leading to the conclusion that the idea of handing the Gaza Strip over to the PA is a dangerous idea – first and foremost to Israel, but also to the Gazan residents themselves.

The **first chapter** examines the PA's ideological infrastructure, reviewing its early history and ideology as Fatah, the establishment of the PLO and its takeover by the Fatah, the PLO's national charter and the transition from PLO to the Palestinian Authority.

The **second chapter** discusses the PA's application of this ideology by the promotion of hatred towards Israel and the killing of Jews, as well as an active role in terrorism, scrutinizing its education system indoctrinating children to hatred and terrorism; its refusal to recognize Israel and its right to exist; its explicit calls to terror; the monetary compensation it grants terrorists and their families; and the involvement of Fatah and PA personnel in terror attacks.

The **third chapter** explains how the PA does not govern properly over its own citizens, highlighting its lack of public legitimacy, its lack of control over parts of its territory, its severe violation of Palestinian human rights, its corruption and the absence of an independent judiciary.

Summary:

The question of who will control the Gaza Strip "the day after" has been repeatedly invoked both in Israel and the international arena since the war broke out in October 2023.

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

The ideological infrastructure guiding the PA's actions can be traced back to the establishment of Fatah by Yasser Arafat and others in 1959. Fatah's basic charter counted among its goals the complete destruction of the state of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state that would be part of the greater Arab nation. It also determined that the only way to "liberate Palestine" was armed resistance. In 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established, instigated by Gamal Abdel Nasser, and intended to take advantage of the Palestinian struggle to boost pan-Arabism and Egyptian control. However, it was soon taken over by the Fatah movement, mostly due to the popular appeal of its active terrorist activity, and the national Palestinian charter was changed as a consequence. This charter also saw its primary goal as the violent struggle against the "Zionist entity", denying the connection between the Jewish people and their homeland and identifying the Palestinian struggle with the pan-Arab one. The PLO engaged in an increasing number of terror attacks, as well as destabilizing Jordan and Lebanon, until after the Yom Kippur war, when 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. In 1998, the Palestinian National Council announced the establishment of a Palestinian state based on the 1947 Partition Plan as well as its opposition to terror attacks abroad. Despite this apparent vague recognition of Israel, explicit rhetoric as well as other components in their declaration - such as the call for Palestinians to fight to end occupation, the insistence on the right of return, and the declaration of Jerusalem as their capital- point to this being part of the "phases" plan, where pushing Israel back to the 1967 borders is only one step towards its ultimate destruction, rather than a way to settle the conflict. This holds true for Arafat's subsequent declarations of recognition and rejection of terrorism - PLO promises that led to the 1993 Oslo Accord and the establishment of the PA as the governing body for Palestinians.

Since then, **the PA has repeatedly refused any attempt to accept a long-term solution that involves recognition of the state of Israel.**

In practice, the PA works to promote its murderous ideology. The first way it does so is by indoctrinating its citizens with hatred and terrorism from early childhood. 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, such as the Fatah summer camps named after Dalal

Mughrabi, who led the 1978 Coastal Road massacre that killed 13 children and 25 adults.

The second is the absolute refusal to recognize Israel, erasing its name from official maps, addressing Israeli cities as Palestinian ones and refusing to participate in events with Israelis or to normalize relations with Israel.

Thirdly, PA senior officials take every opportunity to encourage and glorify terrorism and the struggle against Israel – including explicit support of the October 7 Hamas massacre, such as Fatah Tulkarem Branch Secretary Iyad Jarrad declaring on October 10 that after "the act carried out by our fighters and our people...we stand alongside our brothers in the Gaza Strip, because truly they are a source of pride, heroism, and honor".

Fourthly, the PA directly sponsors terrorism by paying salaries to Palestinians and their families who have committed acts of terror; in practical terms, the most lucrative (and tenured) employment is killing Jews. These payments are codified in law, and the PA takes pride in and prioritizes this financial sponsorship.

Finally, Palestinian Security Services personnel have repeatedly been discovered to be directly involved in terrorist attacks against Israel, such as Captain Bilal Rawajba of the Palestinian Preventive Security, who shot IDF soldiers near Nablus on November 4, 2020.

In short, the PA promotes, sponsors and actively participates in acts of terrorism against Israel.

The PA is also no champion of their own citizens. From the viewpoint of the Arab population in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, 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 a 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]. Moreover, the PA does not actually govern significant portions of its own territory. Aside from losing all control in Gaza, chaos and lawlessness have been spreading throughout Judea and Samaria, with the PA unable to maintain order or enforce laws in Jenin, Hebron, Northern Samaria and more.

Not only is the PA illegitimate in the eyes of its own population and does not *de facto* govern its own territories, systematic, severe abuse of the residents' human rights proliferates wherever they do. PA violation of human rights includes: (i) the curtailment of the freedom of speech; (ii) the violation of the freedom of association; (iii) violation of due process rights, as well as the use of torture against prisoners and

detainees (including political dissidents) (iv) harm to the Christian and other minorities, (v) severe violation of women and children's rights; and (vi) LGBT persecution.

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.

Briefly put, the PA's governance of its own citizens is abysmal by any measure.

Recommendations:

Despite many Israelis, including many in the security forces, viewing the PA as a body that Israel can "work" or "have dialogue" with, there is no difference between them and Hamas as far as the desire to destroy Israel. Both cheered on the massacres of October 7. This is true of both the leaders and the populace, indoctrinated from early childhood to hatred and violence against Israel. The PA is committed to an ideology that fundamentally rejects the right of Israel to exist and is active in achieving that objective. This has been the case from its earliest days and has never changed, despite their leaders paying occasional lip service to denouncing terrorism. Their roadmap has ever been the phases plan, using moderation as a step ladder to achieve extremist goals. They also have no interest in caring for the well-being or prosperity of their own citizens.

Bringing in the PA – even in some improved iteration– to govern the Gaza Strip means establishing another terrorist entity on the Southern border. The PA must not gain control in Gaza in any form.

Note from the Authors:

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.

[For the full Hebrew paper](#)