



BRIEFING NOTES

ORGANIZED TERROR INFRASTRUCTURE UNDER PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY CONTROL

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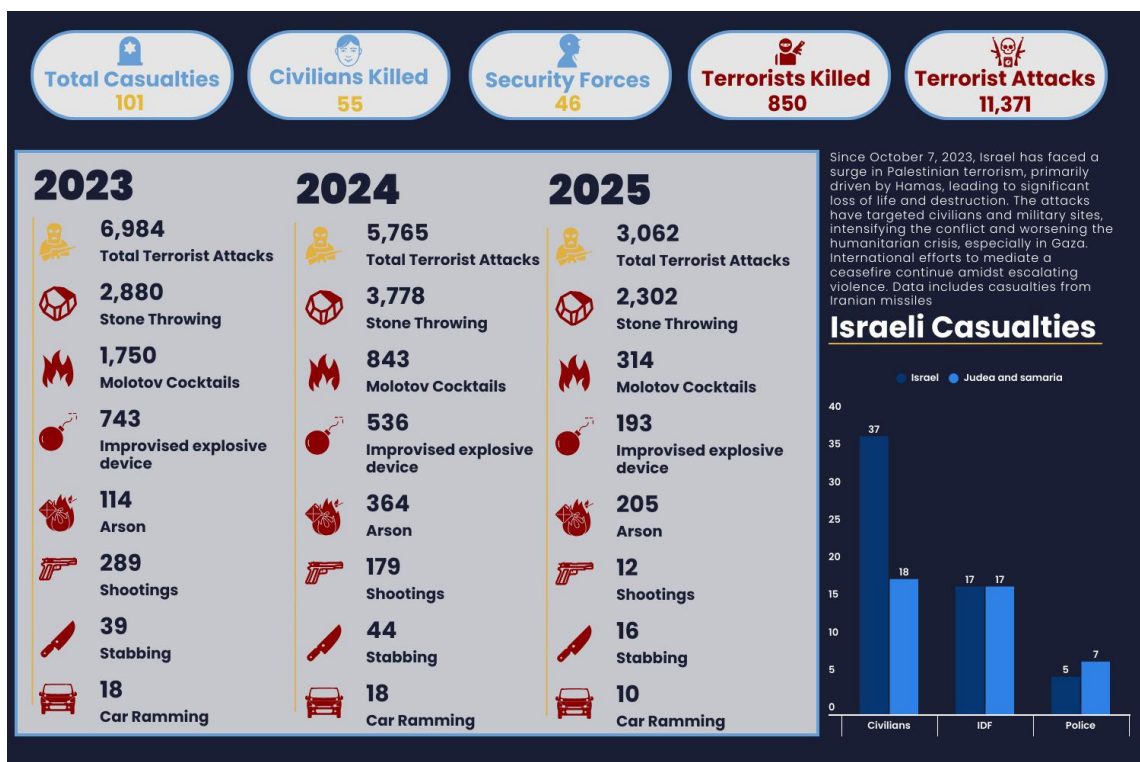
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ORGANIZED TERROR INFRASTRUCTURE UNDER PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY CONTROL

- ◆ The two terror infrastructures uncovered in 2025, within merely six months of each other, operated under Palestinian Authority (PA) control. Their discovery, especially nearly two years after the October 7 massacre and amid intensified IDF operations against Hamas, underscores the difficulties faced by military forces in thwarting terrorist organizations.
- ◆ Moreover, the PA has repeatedly demonstrated its incapacity, and at times unwillingness, to prevent terror activities. In practice, these sophisticated terror networks have grown covertly overtime under a seemingly civilian facade.
- ◆ These findings highlight that even in PA-controlled areas, the absence of effective Israeli security control leads to renewed terror entrenchment, not calmness.



1. EXPOSURE OF TERROR INFRASTRUCTURE, FEBRUARY 2025:

- ◆ The planned attack was intended to occur simultaneously in five separate locations, spread across at least three different cities, and targeted civilians during busy Friday morning shopping hours. Due to a timing error – explosives set to detonate at 9 PM instead of 9 AM – a major disaster that could have claimed hundreds of lives was narrowly avoided.
- ◆ Three bombs exploded on buses in central Israel, with two additional devices found and neutralized. The buses were parked empty in a depot, preventing casualties. On one of the devices, weighing five kilograms, was written: "Revenge from the Tulkarm refugee camp."
- ◆ The Shin Bet assessed that terrorists intended the bombs to detonate at 9 AM but mistakenly set them for 9 PM. It was also estimated that the planning and financing of these devices were Iranian, manufactured in laboratories in Tulkarm, in northern Samaria.
- ◆ An unofficial Telegram channel titled "Tulkarm Battalion of Al-Qassam" declared: "Martyrs' revenge will not be forgotten as long as the occupier remains on our land. Joint Operations Room, Tulkarm Battalion." This referenced a joint Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades command center in Nur a-Shams refugee camp.



2. EXPOSURE OF TERROR INFRASTRUCTURE, JULY 2025:

- ◆ Israeli security forces successfully thwarted one of the largest terror infrastructures uncovered in Judea and Samaria in the past decade, operating from the city of Hebron with immediate plans for attacks throughout Israel. Sixty terrorists operated within ten separate terror cells, each cell consisting of approximately ten members operating under unified command while maintaining strict compartmentalization. Large caches of weapons, improvised explosive devices, explosives, and firearms were seized. Additionally, the group had constructed underground infrastructure used for concealment.
- ◆ Most operatives were former security prisoners, previously incarcerated in Israeli prisons for terror activities, including those convicted for murder. These individuals possessed substantial operational and intelligence experience and had the resilience to withstand prolonged interrogations. These infrastructures alone could have caused mass casualties involving hundreds of dead and injured individuals. Yossi Amarosi, a former senior Shin Bet official, emphasized that the terror infrastructure could have executed a large-scale, simultaneous terror assault, similar to the operational details revealed during the interrogations of Hamas elite operatives following the October 7 massacre. During these interrogations, captured commanders explained that "each cell had specific missions, and terrorists were divided into small groups to maintain operational secrecy." Amarosi warned that the exposure of this infrastructure raised a severe alarm regarding the magnitude of the security threat posed by Judea and Samaria, chillingly evidencing that the next "October 7" could potentially emerge from there.



SECURITY SIGNIFICANCE OF ISRAELI CONTROL ON THE GROUND

- ◆ The massacre on October 7 directed attention to Judea and Samaria, serving as a stark warning about the region's threat potential-particularly if supported or protected as a sovereign state. During the initial 100 days of Operation "Iron Swords," the IDF conducted extensive counter-terrorism activities in Judea and Samaria.
- ◆ Over 2,600 suspects were arrested, including more than 1,300 Hamas affiliates. Security forces seized approximately 400 firearms and firearm components, dismantled thousands of explosives, weapons laboratories, military equipment, and explosive materials. Tens of millions of shekels designated for terror activities-cash, digital currencies, and safes-were also seized, and wanted individuals holding terror funds were arrested.
- ◆ Over 2,000 illegally modified vehicles used by terrorists to carry out attacks and sometimes involved in fatal road accidents were also confiscated. In refugee camps, potentially becoming terrorist sanctuaries, the IDF conducted over 150 operations, neutralizing over 130 terrorists, arresting over 500 suspects, and confiscating over 160 firearms along with a massive quantity of explosives that were destroyed.



- ◆ According to the IDF, 2023 saw a 350% increase in terror attacks in Judea and Samaria compared to 2022. There were 608 recorded attacks involving shootings, vehicle-ramming, stabbings, and explosive attacks, compared to 170 in 2022. In just half a year, over 50 shooting attacks originated from the Jenin area. Additionally, 20 printing houses, some owned by Hamas, participated in terror activities. Twelve weapon workshops and repair shops were located, and computers, documents, and hundreds of thousands of shekels disguised as "charitable funds" earmarked for terror were seized. A senior IDF reserve official stated that "incitement to terrorism, even after the murderous October 7 massacre, continues to rise."
- ◆ In 2024, security forces thwarted 1,040 significant terror attacks—shootings, explosives, infiltration attempts, and other planned attacks in Judea, Samaria, and Jerusalem. They arrested 3,682 terror operatives, including organized terror network members and lone actors. Although the number of arrests decreased from 5,100 in 2023, this does not necessarily indicate diminished terror infrastructure depth or threat intensity, reflecting a constant necessity for targeted and efficient counter-terror operations. In November 2024, during a ceasefire with Hezbollah in the north, Israeli security intercepted a shipment of advanced Iranian weapons via Jordan into Judea and Samaria, potentially causing mass casualties. Since early 2024, terror activities have increasingly concentrated in northern Samaria, notably Jenin, the Jenin refugee camp, Tulkarm, Nur a-Shams, Nablus, and Balata. Notably, explosive attacks targeting IDF forces have risen significantly.
- ◆ In areas near Tulkarm, shooting attacks targeting Israeli communities have increased, mainly without casualties. In southern Judea and Samaria, terror activities focus around Hebron, including attacks inside Israeli territory.





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Credit: The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center

- ◆ The seizures of weapons and the arrest of terror operatives are critical in preventing future terror activities.
"In most areas of Judea and Samaria, the IDF is present—and where the IDF is, the Shin Bet is also there. Therefore, the Shin Bet can generate intelligence that prevents terrorism from organizing at the scale we saw in Gaza (which led to the October 7 events)," said Lt. Col. (Res.) Yaron Buskila, who serves as Operations Officer of the Gaza Division in reserve duty.



THREATS TO CENTRAL ISRAEL AND STRATEGIC ASSETS FROM JUDEA AND SAMARIA

- ◆ In 2024, residents of Bat Hefer near Tulkarm reported subterranean digging noises similar to those heard by Gaza border residents before the October 7 massacre. Residents also reported bullets in structures, sightings of infiltrators from Palestinian territories (both for work and terror), and fears of surprise attacks akin to Gaza border communities. Similar concerns were expressed by residents of Sha'ar Efraim and Kfar Yona, prompting IDF ground inspections, though no extensive tunnels were identified at this stage.
- ◆ Major General Rafi Milo, commander of the Home Front Command, alerted Gaza border municipal leaders in June 2025 that Bat Hefer faces significant security threats, defining it as a "forward core," highlighting the urgent need for a revised security policy in Judea and Samaria.
- ◆ In late 2021, the State Comptroller report identified severe security failures along the seam line near Sharon, especially near Ephraim and Menashe regional brigades. Given the concerning annual statistic of approximately 1.4 million illegal crossings into Israel, this threat necessitates immediate and stringent attention. In the photo, it shows how easily one can cross the fence.



Credit: Srugim.co.il



- ◆ Considering Hamas's breach of the barrier in Gaza, it is clear that learning lessons and constructing a significant and deterrent barrier will require time. Thus, the IDF's presence on the ground is essential and irreplaceable for the foreseeable future.
"During Operation Protective Edge, a battalion commander and I were assigned to Qalqilya. Just five minutes before approximately 5,000 individuals breached the fence on their way to Route 6, we managed to prevent it. They were 200 meters from the fence, and a massacre could have occurred. From Route 6 to Kfar Saba is just a five-minute walk," stated Lt. Col. (Res.) Buskila.
- ◆ The threat is real, not theoretical. Additional proof is the alarming events reported in 2024 in Bat Hefer, where terrorists from Tulkarm approached the security fence, wearing Hamas headbands, and opened fire at homes within the community – likely as an attempted attack or training for a future operation. The head of the local council warned of an escalating trend along the seam line, which she stated was growing increasingly sharp. Given these incidents, which serve as open-source intelligence about potential scenarios, the necessity for Israeli security control in the region cannot be ignored.
- ◆ In September 2024, the IDF uncovered the beginnings of a tunnel excavation near Tulkarm. The digging was carried out adjacent to the city's hospital – a known tactic exploiting civilian humanitarian infrastructure, similarly employed by Hamas in the Gaza Strip – and was directed toward the separation fence. At this stage, the tunnel was at an initial stage of development, and no additional exit point had been located.
- ◆ These findings, along with Hamas's attempts to launch rockets from Judea and Samaria toward the cities of Sharon and central Israel just one month after the October 7 massacre, combined with Iran's longstanding ambitions to exert control over Judea and Samaria, indicate an operational attempt to transform Judea and Samaria into the next significant front threatening Israel. This Iranian ambition took a notable turn during Operation Protective Edge in 2014, when Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, personally instructed to "arm Judea and Samaria like Gaza," explicitly intending to equip it with missiles.



- ◆ In Jenin, two years ago, there were attempts to launch three rockets that failed and landed within Judea and Samaria. This happened because we were not present there at the time. But then we carried out operations in northern Samaria. The absence of our presence brought us to early stages of local preparations for building rockets locally – rockets capable of turning cities in the Sharon and central region into a Gaza-border scenario in terms of rocket capability," said Lt. Col. (Res.) Yaron Buskila.
- ◆ "Intensive military presence on the ground, along with high-level security vigilance and effective counter-terror operations, currently make it challenging to realize such intentions," noted Lt. Col. (Res.) Tal Nir, engineering officer of the Judea and Samaria Division in reserve duty.
- ◆ Iran is fully aware of the topographical and strategic importance of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank), labeling it as Israel's "soft underbelly" and marking it as the next target for military buildup and influence. The alarming events in Bat Hefer highlight that control over Judea and Samaria is strategically critical to Israel, given the region's high mountain ridges directly overlooking the coastal plain, where Israel's economic, industrial, and population centers – such as Tel Aviv, Ben-Gurion Airport, and the Gush Dan region – are concentrated. Hostile control of Judea and Samaria would allow direct threats via rocket and missile fire and direct gunfire toward key transportation infrastructure such as railways and major highways, severely disrupting civilian, economic, and military movement. Moreover, Ben-Gurion Airport's proximity to the border places it at genuine risk, potentially endangering its operations and security.
- ◆ Given Israel's geographic positioning as an isolated "island," maintaining the operational functionality of the airport during an internal emergency significantly increases its strategic importance. Past experiences in the Gaza Strip have proven that withdrawal and the relinquishing of territories subsequently used for terror activities lead to severe threats; therefore, secure and robust control over Judea and Samaria remains essential for Israel's national security.





Terrorist shoots over Bat-Hefer | Credit: Ynet



Map which demonstrates the easiness of access from Tul-Karem to Bat-Hefer and from there to Tel-Aviv

