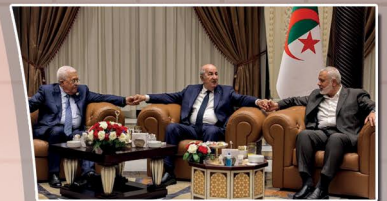


The Palestine Strategic Report 2022 – 2023



Edited By

Prof. Dr. Mohsen Mohammad Saleh



Al-Zaytouna Centre For Studies & Consultations

E-mail: info@alzaytouna.net

Website: www.alzaytouna.net

You can contact us and view the center's pages by clicking on the applications below:



Chapter Four

*The Courses of Aggression, Resistance
and the Peace Process*

The Courses of Aggression, Resistance and the Peace Process

Introduction

During the period covered by this report, Palestinian resistance reached its peak since the establishment of Israel in 1948. Operation al-Aqsa Flood, carried out by Hamas' military wing Al-Qassam Brigades, represented the most potent, sophisticated and impactful form of resistance against Israel. It shattered Israel's national security doctrine, struck at the core of its existence and functional role, deprived the Israelis of their sense of safe haven, disrupted normalization projects, and strengthened the armed resistance option amidst the collapse of the peace process. The unprecedented Israeli brutality in its attack on GS, the strong Palestinian resistance in response, and the widespread popular support for the resistance played a significant role in reshaping Arab, Muslim and global consciousness regarding the Palestine issue.

This chapter examines the trajectories of Israeli war and Palestinian resistance, highlighting the ferocity of the occupation under the most extreme Israeli government in history. It chronicles the rise of resistance in WB and GS in the period 2022–2023, detailing various resistance operations and battles, particularly Operation al-Aqsa Flood. Additionally, it reviews the conditions of prisoners in Israeli prisons, while the final section focuses on the evolution of the peace process during the period covered by the report.

First: Resistance Operations and Escalation in WB

In 2022 and 2023, Israel continued its occupation and aggression against the Palestinian people, who, in turn, persisted in their resistance. In WB, despite security coordination between the PA security forces and the Israeli army, individual “lone-wolf” operations escalated, and daily confrontations and various forms of popular resistance endured.

In GS, Palestinian resistance witnessed development in its defensive strategy in response to the attacks on Jerusalem and *al-Aqsa* Mosque. This was exemplified by Operation al-Aqsa Flood (dubbed by the Israelis Operation Swords of Iron), carried out by Hamas' military wing Al-Qassam Brigades on 7/10/2023. It was preceded by two major Israeli offensives against GS, in which it allegedly targeted the PIJ and its military wing, Al-Quds Brigades. The first was called Unity of the Arenas Battle (dubbed by the Israelis Operation Breaking Dawn), on 5–7/8/2022. The second was Revenge of the Free Battle (dubbed by the Israelis Operation Shield and Arrow), on 9–13/5/2023.

As a result of these three operations, GS saw, in 2022 and 2023, a sharp increase in Palestinian rocket launches towards Israeli communities in the 1948 occupied territories, where 1,245 rockets were launched in 2022, most of which were during Unity of the Arenas Battle (1,233 rockets). In 2023, and by the end of August 1,671 rockets were launched, with the majority launched during Revenge of the Free Battle (1,582 rockets),¹ while after that, during Operation al-Aqsa Flood, over 12 thousand missiles were launched from the besieged Strip,² as per Shabak and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Israel also continued to close the GS crossings and tighten the siege in 2022 and 2023, completely sealing them off during its war on GS following Operation al-Aqsa Flood. It cut off electricity and water to Gaza entirely and frequently disrupted internet access, intensifying the land and sea blockade. This created an unprecedented level of economic and social suffocation for Gaza's residents, leading to the displacement of nearly two million people from their homes. The return of these displaced individuals was prevented through massacres, property destruction and starvation tactics, including blocking access to basic necessities.

The pace of resistance operations remained high throughout 2022 and 2023. In 2022, the Shabak recorded 3,825 attacks in WB, including East Jerusalem, GS and the 1948 occupied territories. This number increased to 4,578 in 2023, excluding the attacks during Operation al-Aqsa Flood.

The Shabak recorded 2,152 attacks in WB (excluding Jerusalem) in 2022, compared to 2,657 in 2023. In East Jerusalem, it recorded 392 attacks in 2022, compared to 305 by the end of August 2023. Within the 1948 occupied territories, 30 attacks were recorded in 2022, compared to 18 by the end of August 2023.

Notably, most of the recorded attacks in WB involved clashes, stone-throwing and Molotov cocktails, indicating a rise in the spirit of resistance despite a challenging and complex security environment with systematic and organized pursuit of resistance for many years, fully coordinated between the PA and Israel. In GS, the Shabak recorded 1,251 attacks in 2022, compared to 1,598 by the end of August 2023. Most resistance actions in GS involved rocket launches (mainly during Unity of the Arenas and Revenge of the Free battles), amounting to 2,916 rockets.³

Table 1/4: Geographical Distribution of Palestinian Resistance Operations 2022–2023, According to Shabak⁴

Year	WB (excl. Jerusalem)	East Jerusalem	1948 Occupied Territories	GS	Total
2022	2,152	392	30	1,251	3,825
2023 (until August)	2,657	305*	18*	1,598**	4,578***
Total	4,809	697**	48*	2,849**	8,403***

* After August 2023, the Shabak has reported the attacks of East Jerusalem and the 1948 occupied territories with those of WB.

** No statistics were issued by the Shabak for GS attacks after August 2023.

*** Excluding the attacks of Operation al-Aqsa Flood.

The annual reports of the Palestine Information Center—Mo3ta have mentioned that the popular and armed Palestinian resistance in WB, including East Jerusalem, have significantly developed both quantitatively and qualitatively. In 2022, Palestinians carried out 12,188 resistance acts in WB, including East Jerusalem, of which 1,380 were impactful attacks (armed, stabbings, vehicular attacks). The report stated that the impactful attacks in 2022 more than quadrupled compared to 2021.

According to the report, the governorates of Jenin, Nablus and Hebron witnessed the highest frequency of significant resistance operations, particularly shootings, with 445, 382 and 131 incidents, respectively. Resistance actions in various areas of WB and Jerusalem in 2022 were highest in Nablus (2,420), Hebron (1,943), Jerusalem (1,854), Ramallah (1,724) and Jenin (1,308). The report stated that 31 Israelis were killed, predominantly soldiers, and 525 others were injured.⁵

In 2023, resistance operations increased qualitatively as well. Palestinians carried out across WB, a total of 14,183 resistance acts, including 3,258 impactful

attacks (armed). This marks a more than twofold increase in the number of impactful attacks compared to 2022.

According to the report, the governorates of Jenin, Nablus and Tulkarm witnessed the highest frequency of significant resistance operations, particularly shootings, with 1,066, 704, and 338 incidents, respectively. Resistance actions in various areas of WB and Jerusalem in 2023 were highest in Nablus (2,700), Jenin (2,162), Hebron (1,899), Ramallah (1,815 and Jerusalem (1,675). The report stated that 43 Israelis were killed, and 507 others were injured.⁶

Table 2/4: Development of Resistance Action in WB 2020–2023⁷

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023
Popular Resistance Actions*	5,433	10,189	10,808	10,925
Impactful Attacks**	97	404	1,380	3,258
Total	5,530	10,593	12,188	14,183

* Includes clashes, stone throwing, Molotov cocktails, strikes, protests, etc.

** Includes shooting, stabbing, and run-over...

Table 3/4: Development of Significant Operations by Type 2020–2023⁸

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023
Shooting	29	171	848	2,053
Stabbing or attempted stabbing	27	36	37	46
Vehicular assault or attempted vehicular assault	11	18	18	25
Deployed or dropped improvised explosive device (IED)	30	53	222	653
Arson targeting military facilities, vehicles and posts	–	106	65	109
Destroying military vehicles and equipment	–	17	187	336
Downing a drone	–	3	2	26
Twin bombings	–	–	1	–
Rocket launch	–	–	–	10
Total	97	404	1,380	3,258

Security coordination in WB led to the exposure of numerous resistance cells and the prevention of numerous resistance operations. Indeed, Israeli Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi claimed that in 2022, his forces “prevented around 400 terror attacks” in WB.⁹

This occurred despite ongoing Israeli crimes and aggression against the Palestinian people and the despite the PCC announcement on 9/2/2022, of the “cessation of all forms of security coordination.”¹⁰ It also continued despite the PA declaration of suspension of security coordination following Israeli military operations in Jenin and its RC in January and July 2023.¹¹ The PA leadership later reaffirmed the continuation of the suspension due to the war on GS following Operation al-Aqsa Flood.¹²

Analysts and national security think tanks agree that security coordination is a mutual “interest” for both the PA and Israel. The PA recognizes that without coordination, it risks dissolution and loss of control in WB. Conversely, Israel aims to prevent “armed operations” and weaken Palestinian resistance through this coordination. Because it serves the interests of both parties, security coordination has persisted even during crises and tensions between the two sides, becoming a tool for exerting pressure and blackmail.¹³

According to Israeli estimates, the role and importance of security coordination were highlighted during Operation “Break the Wave,” which began on 31/3/2022. As part of this operation, the Israeli army conducted large-scale raids, searches and arrests in WB on a daily basis, “based on intelligence from the army and Shabak, and in coordination with Palestinian security forces to avoid clashes with military forces,” according to the Israeli side.¹⁴ As a result, on 19/9/2022, Palestinian security forces arrested active resistance members, including Mus‘ab Shtayyeh, a commander in Al-Qassam Brigades who is wanted by Israeli forces.¹⁵

Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz confirmed ongoing sporadic communications with President ‘Abbas on security issues, emphasizing the utmost importance to “continue maintaining an open channel of security and civilian coordination, which serves the security of Palestinians and Israelis and enables economic and civil well-being.”¹⁶ In an article on the Israeli Channel 13 website, Colonel (Reserve) Moshe Elad described the cessation of security coordination as an empty and useless threat, explaining that the threats and discussions within the

Fatah movement led by Mahmud ‘Abbas are merely attempts by the PA to improve ‘Abbas’s image among the Palestinian public.¹⁷

In the same context, on 8/9/2022, two senior Israeli security officials secretly met with Hussein al-Sheikh, secretary-general of the PLO Executive Committee, and GIS Chief Majid Faraj, to deploy security forces aimed at preventing potential escalation during the Jewish holidays.¹⁸ On 19/2/2023, the PA reached understandings with the Israeli government, mediated by the US, to “reduce tensions and prevent a wide-scale security escalation in the West Bank.”¹⁹

Palestinian and Israeli officials pledged, on 26/2/2023, at the conclusion of the ‘Aqaba security summit—the first of its kind in years—to “reduce escalation on the ground and prevent further violence.” The summit was attended by GIS Chief Majid Faraj, Shabak Chief Ronen Bar, Israeli National Security Advisor Tzachi Hanegbi, and White House Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa Brett McGurk, with the presence of security officials from Jordan and Egypt.²⁰

During Operation al-Aqsa Flood, some Israeli voices called for restructuring the PA security system, in line with a US proposal to rebuild the PA in preparation for a potential future takeover of governance in GS, referring to the so-called “day after the war.” According to an assessment by the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) in Tel Aviv, Reem Cohen, coordinator of the Israeli-Palestinian Program at the institute, stated, “As the war in Gaza continues, with one of its principal goals being the elimination of Hamas’s military and governing capabilities, Israel should help realize a functional Palestinian Authority able to govern in Gaza the ‘day after’ the war—a task that neither Israel nor the international system is eager to assume.”²¹

In the same context, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, during a press conference on 5/11/2023, emphasized that “The PA is playing a very important role right now in the West Bank in trying to keep stability there. That’s hugely important because no one wants another front in the West Bank or anywhere else. And they’re really stepping up under very difficult conditions to do the necessary work.”²²

Second: Key Resistance Groups in WB

In 2022 and 2023, WB experienced a new trend of armed resistance marked by the emergence of armed groups in specific areas. These groups differed in their formation and development, creating a structure distinct from traditional Palestinian political parties. They established field leadership, and members from various Palestinian factions joined these groups without severing ties with their original organizations. These groups began forming in the northern WB in late 2021 and spread to a lesser extent to the south and center. Notable among them are the Jenin Battalion in Jenin RC, the Lions' Den and Balata Battalion in Nablus, the Tulkarm Battalion in Tulkarm and Nur Shams RCs, and the Aqabat Jabr Group in Jericho...²³

1. Jenin Battalion

The Jenin Battalion is the first of these formations, with its name first appearing on 7/9/2021, in Jenin RC following the Freedom Tunnel jailbreak when six Palestinian prisoners escaped from Gilboa Prison. The group was formed to protect and defend the prisoners. The battalion's actual presence was established after the killing of Jamil al-'Amuri, from the Jenin RC, on 10/6/2021, who is considered its first founder. Al-Quds Brigades, the PIJ military wing, is the strongest component of the Jenin Battalion. Its activities have not been limited to Jenin RC but have expanded to include some areas in rural Jenin, settlements and inside the Green Line.²⁴ Since its inception, the battalion has engaged in direct confrontations with the Israeli forces, resisted incursions and downed Israeli military drones.²⁵

Since the battalion was announced, Israel has systematically targeted its leaders, implementing various measures, including targeted incursions, assassinations and arrests. A prominent operation was the Battle of Jenin's Might (dubbed by Israel Operation Home and Garden) in July 2023, where Israeli forces attacked Jenin RC using an entire brigade. However, they failed to eliminate the emerging force, leading to increased resistance operations.²⁶ The Jenin Battalion affirmed that "the resistance journey will not stop, and the blood of the martyrs will fuel the ongoing struggle until liberation and return."²⁷

The exact number of battalion members is unknown, but Al-Quds Brigades leader Akram al-'Ajouri stated in an interview on "What is Hidden is Greater"

(*Ma Khufia A'tham*) program aired on 6/1/2023, that the Jenin Battalion is in the process of building and evolving, with dozens of fully armed and experienced members. He said the battalion's core consists of about 100 fighters. Battalion field commander Abu al-Hasan mentioned that the battalion comprises three units: the monitoring and surveillance unit, the explosives unit, and the confrontation and engagement unit.²⁸ The Israeli army estimates its members at around 300.²⁹ Notable figures in the Jenin Battalion, in addition to al-'Amuri, include the assassinated members Na'im al-Zubaidi, Muhammad al-Sa'di, Faruq Salameh, Ahmad al-'Amer, Samih Abu al-Wafa, Majdi 'Ar'arawi, Aws Hanun, 'Ali al-Ghoul and Ra'd Khazem...³⁰

In a related context, the Jenin Battalion accused the Palestinian security forces of assaulting its members, pursuing them, arresting them and shooting at them. The Battalion called on "the honorable members of the Fatah movement, Al-Aqsa [Martyrs'] Brigades, and the security forces" to fulfill their religious, ethical and national responsibilities by pressuring the PA agencies to end what it described as the "farce of arrest and pursuit."³¹ In response, the PA Ministry of Interior and Jenin Governor Major General Akram Rajoub, affirmed that they would not tolerate or be lenient in enforcing the law and maintaining public security in the Palestinian governorates, and would cut off any hand that disturbs security.³² Notable battalion members detained by the PA include Murad Malaisheh, Muhammad Barahmeh, 'Eid Hamamreh, Muhammad 'Alawneh, Muhammad Malaisheh, Mu'men Fashafsheh, 'Imad Khaliliyyeh, Khalid 'Ar'arawi, Jamil Ja'ar and Salameh 'Abdul Jawad.³³

2. Nablus Battalion (Lions' Den)

The Nablus Battalion was formed in late 2021, and from it emerged the Lions' Den group. The Lions' Den officially took on its name less than a month after the killing of Ibrahim al-Nabulsi on 2/9/2022. This development followed a shooting incident in which the group claimed responsibility for targeting a car driven by a settler near the village of Huwara. The group's name gained prominence through a series of surprise attacks against Israeli forces. Abu Mujahid (Abu Palestine), the leader of the Lions' Den, discussed the group's formation and key operations³⁴ in an interview on "What is Hidden is Greater" (*Ma Khufia A'tham*) program, which aired on 6/1/2023. Members of the group come from various Palestinian factions but maintain their original organizational affiliations.

In response, Israeli forces launched a series of systematic assassinations and arrests targeting the Lions' Den leadership. The most notable operation was

Operation “Break the Wave” in Nablus, which began on 31/3/2022, and involved substantial Israeli forces deployed in WB. This operation resulted in the killing of numerous Lions’ Den members, including Muhammad al-Dakhil, Ashraf Mubasalat, Adham Mabruka, Ibrahim al-Nabulsi, Islam Sabuh, Hussain Taha, ‘Abdul Rahman Subuh and Muhammad al-‘Azizi.³⁵

Despite Israel’s efforts, it failed to contain the rising armed resistance in WB. Consequently, it relied on security coordination with the PA to manage the situation. Nablus witnessed violent clashes between Palestinian security forces and protesters enraged by the PA’s arrest of Mus‘ab Shtayyeh, a prominent activist in the Lions’ Den and a leader in Al-Qassam Brigades. Fakhri Barghouthi, a member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council, confirmed that the PA is opposed to the emergence of any resistance force in WB and is seeking negotiations with the Lions’ Den and the Jenin Battalion.³⁶ Some members of the Lions’ Den surrendered to the PA in an attempt to end Israel’s pursuit of them.³⁷

Following Operation al-Aqsa Flood, the Lions’ Den declared that the war was a battle for all Palestinians and a war for liberation. They stressed the importance of shifting from defense to offense in WB.³⁸ The group sent a message to Muhammad Daif, Saleh al-‘Aruri and all resistance leaders, asserting that “the West Bank will only be a sword and shield for you, God willing.”³⁹

3. Tulkarm Battalion

The Tulkarm Battalion was established in March 2022 by a group of young men from Tulkarm, led by Saif Abu Labdeh and Muhammad Jaber, known as Abu Shuja‘. Based in Tulkarm and the adjacent Nur Shams RC, it included members from various Palestinian factions. The battalion has carried out numerous significant military operations against the occupation. In February 2023, a faction founded by Amir Abu Khadijah, known as the “Rapid Response Group,” joined them.⁴⁰

Tulkarm and Nur Shams RC were subjected to numerous raids, which significantly increased following Operation al-Aqsa Flood. The Tulkarm Battalion improved its tactics, combat methods, individual training and the manufacturing of explosive devices, enhancing their capability to cause direct damage. This enabled them to carry out significant operations against the Israeli forces at contact points and military checkpoints and to confront military incursions, sometimes fighting outside the RC’s boundaries.⁴¹

In the same context, members of the Tulkarm Battalion were pursued by Palestinian security forces, and some were killed by their gunfire during these pursuits.⁴² Tulkarm witnessed a series of protest activities and marches opposing this. The battalion called on the Palestinian security forces to “correct their course and stop pursuing members of the military formations.”⁴³ They also sent messages to the Palestinian security forces, affirming their position of not wanting to confront them.⁴⁴

Third: GS Before Operation al-Aqsa Flood

The years 2022 and 2023 saw numerous rounds of fighting and escalation in GS, with some incidents lasting days and others months, marked by a significant increase in rocket and mortar fire. This section focuses on Unity of the Arenas Battle (dubbed by the Israelis Operation Breaking Dawn), Revenge of the Free Battle (dubbed by the Israelis Operation Shield and Arrow) and Operation al-Aqsa Flood (dubbed by the Israelis Operation Swords of Iron).

1. Unity of the Arenas Battle (5–7/8/2022)

After days of tension following the arrest of senior PIJ leader Bassam al-Saadi in Jenin on 1/8/2022, PIJ in GS declared a state of “alert” and heightened the “readiness” of its fighters.⁴⁵ On 5/8/2022, Israel launched Operation Breaking Dawn against the movement, which the Palestinian resistance referred to as Unity of the Arenas Battle. The operation began with the Israeli army assassinating a member of the Al-Quds Brigades military council, the northern front commander Taysir al-Jabari, and the rocket unit commander ‘Abdullah Qaddum, targeting several sites of the movement in GS.⁴⁶

Immediately following the Israeli aggression, PIJ declared, “No mediations now, and no talk of any truce.” They asserted that Israel bears full responsibility for the crime and that they would not hesitate to respond to the aggression, which they viewed as a declaration of war. PIJ Secretary-General, Ziad Nakhleh, issued a direct order to all members of Al-Quds Brigades to respond to the Israeli crime in GS. Nakhleh emphasized that there are no red lines in this battle and that Tel Aviv would be a target for the resistance’s rockets. PIJ spokesperson stated that “communications with Egyptian officials took place an hour before the bombing,

and the responses were positive,” stressing that the assassination of al-Jabari was aimed at thwarting Egyptian efforts to de-escalate the situation.⁴⁷

Conversely, the Joint Operations Room of the Palestinian factions held Israel fully responsible for the aggression on GS, asserting that it had miscalculated. In a statement, the Joint Operations Room confirmed that this aggression would not go unchallenged and that the resistance’s response was imminent, as determined by the leadership. They announced that they were “in continuous session, assessing the situation in coordination with all military wings, and would not allow the enemy to prey on our people or break their resilience and resistance.”⁴⁸

On 1/8/2022, PIJ agreed to a ceasefire with Israel, reached through Egyptian mediation. PIJ claimed success in imposing its conditions on Israel during indirect negotiations. From Tehran, PIJ Secretary-General Ziad Nakhleh stated that popular support and the Joint Operations Room of the resistance provided backing, “but the Jihad carried out the bulk of the fighting.”⁴⁹ Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid informed Israeli municipal leaders in the Gaza Envelope area that “Israel had met its goals in the three days of fighting and that there was no real benefit to continuing the operation.” Shabak Chief Ronen Bar had “advised ministers to start wrapping up the operation before an ‘accident or mistake’ by the military complicates the situation.”⁵⁰

During the aggression, the Israeli army conducted 147 airstrikes against targets in GS.⁵¹ According to Shabak estimates, the Al-Quds Brigades, the PIJ military wing, fired 1,233 rockets towards Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, the Gaza Envelope and other “central Israeli cities” in response.⁵²

As a result, the Palestinian Ministry of Health in GS reported that 46 Palestinians were killed, including 16 children and 4 women, and 360 were injured, including 151 children and 58 women.⁵³ Al-Quds Brigades announced in a statement that among the dead were 12 of their members, including two prominent leaders, “senior commander Taysir al-Jabari, the northern region commander, and senior commander Khalid Mansur, the southern region commander.”⁵⁴ Meanwhile, it was reported that 70 Israelis were injured due to rocket fire from GS.⁵⁵

Statistics from the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in GS showed that the Israeli forces destroyed 18 housing units completely, 71 partially but uninhabitable, and 1,675 partially but still habitable during the aggression.⁵⁶

2. Revenge of the Free Battle (9–13/5/2023)

On the early morning of 9/5/2023, the Israeli army conducted airstrikes in GS using 40 fighter jets. This operation resulted in the deaths of 13 Palestinians, including three senior leaders of Al-Quds Brigades, along with their wives and several children. The leaders were Jihad al-Ghannam, secretary of the Military Council of the Al-Quds Brigades, Khalil al-Bahtini, Northern Region commander, and Tariq Muhammad ‘Ezzedein, a military commander in WB.⁵⁷

The aggression continued until the evening of 13/5/2023. During this period, the Israeli army reported targeting 422 PIJ sites, which bore the brunt of the conflict, supported logistically and shielded by Hamas and other resistance factions. According to Shabak estimates, the resistance, particularly PIJ, retaliated by launching 1,582 rockets toward Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, the Gaza Envelope and “central Israeli cities.”⁵⁸ The attacks resulted in one Israeli fatality and 77 injuries. Meanwhile, 33 Palestinians were killed, and 190 were wounded.⁵⁹ Among the deceased were 11 members of Al-Quds Brigades’ military leadership.⁶⁰

The Gaza Government Media Office reported that 2,041 housing units were damaged, resulting in estimated losses of \$9 million. This figure includes the complete destruction of 31 houses, totaling 93 housing units, with an additional 128 units rendered uninhabitable and 1,820 units partially damaged. Agricultural sector losses were estimated at \$3 million, contributing to a total economic disruption of \$40 million over the five-day aggression period.⁶¹

In summary, the Unity of the Arenas and Revenge of the Free battles achieved significant milestones for the resistance. The overall power balance favored the resistance, a point underscored by the remarkable success of Operation al-Aqsa Flood.

Fourth: Operation al-Aqsa Flood and Israeli War on GS

1. The Execution of Operation al-Aqsa Flood

On 7/10/2023, the Ezzedein al-Qassam Brigades, affiliated with Hamas, launched a comprehensive and intense assault targeting the Israeli military division stationed around GS. They successfully breached this division, seized

control of its positions, and overran settlements in the Gaza Envelope, covering an area more than twice the size of the GS itself. Approximately 1,400 Qassam fighters accomplished this within hours, resulting in the deaths of around 1,200 Israelis and the capture of about 250 others. The PIJ and other resistance factions also participated in Operation al-Aqsa Flood from the first day. Hamas initiated this operation to halt the ongoing crimes of the occupation against the Palestinian people, and its repeated incursions into *al-Aqsa* Mosque. Another objective was to secure the release of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli prisons, as declared by Muhammad Daif “Abu Khalid,” the commander of Al-Qassam Brigades, at the outset of Operation al-Aqsa Flood on 7/10/2023.⁶²

Operation al-Aqsa Flood marked an unprecedented strategic and qualitative blow to Israel since its establishment 75 years ago. The operation combined elements of surprising military and strategic security actions, meticulous planning and execution, and the invasion of a significant area of the 1948 occupied territories. It resulted in the highest number of casualties and captives compared to any previous Palestinian battles or most Arab-Israeli wars. Israel, appearing confused and shocked, felt humiliated as it witnessed the collapse of its national security doctrine and the breakdown of both physical and psychological deterrence. Al-Qassam fighters stormed 20 settlements and 11 military sites within hours, demonstrating their capabilities.⁶³ A closer look at Operation al-Aqsa Flood, particularly evident during the ground war, reveals a highly sophisticated Palestinian military leadership, the likes of which has not been seen before.

2. The Strategic Implications of Operation al-Aqsa Flood

- a. Collapse of the Israel’s national security doctrine: This doctrine, based on the principles of deterrence, early warning and decisive capability, had a fourth principle, defense, was added in 2015. All four principles crumbled during this operation.
- b. Undermining the concept of Israel as a “Safe Haven for Jews”: Security is fundamental to Zionist ideology and the structure of the Israeli state, which claims to provide a safe haven for Jews worldwide and asserts its ability to crush and deter all forces and armies in its strategic environment. This severe blow to this core will diminish the Zionist project, weaken the allure of the “Promised Land,” and prompt Jewish residents to consider reverse migration and returning to their countries of origin.

- c. Failure of Israel’s image as a Western stronghold: Israel’s inability to effectively handle Palestinian resistance, the collapse of its national security doctrine, and the exposure of its vulnerability have led to genuine concerns in the West about Israel’s reliability as a regional hegemon. This has undermined Israel’s functional role and foundational purpose, disrupting the Western hegemonic system in the region, where Israel serves as a cornerstone of US and Western policy implementation.
- d. The Israeli normalization projects with the Arab and Muslim world have suffered a severe setback. The effective resistance and exposure of the brutal and savage actions of Israel, including massacres against civilians, have halted the drive towards normalization by ruling regimes
Moreover, normalization has lost a key justification, as Israel has long marketed itself as a reliable force in managing regional conflicts and tipping the balance in favor of its allies. The significant impact made by a small group of fighters on October 7th has severely damaged Israel’s deterrence capability, making it less able to present itself as a trustworthy power to resolve conflicts and disputes.
- e. Operation al-Aqsa Flood has shaken Israel, and raised questions about the very existence and survival of the Israeli state. The Israeli leadership has referred to this battle as a “second war of independence”⁶⁴ or an “existential war.”⁶⁵ Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant stated, “If the fate of Hamas is not complete dismantlement, we will not be able to live in the State of Israel.”⁶⁶ The operation has also disrupted the internal political landscape, particularly the ruling Likud party, which has dominated the political scene for 15 consecutive years. Polls indicate that Likud would lose about half its seats in any upcoming elections.
- f. The significant achievement of Operation al-Aqsa Flood has sparked unprecedented hope among Arabs and Muslims for the possibility of liberating the holy land and holy sites. Many now view Israel as a “spider’s web,” fragile and defeatable, challenging the perceived inevitability of its dominance and occupation, and questioning the justification for the weakness of Arab and Muslim regimes.
- g. Operation al-Aqsa Flood reinforced the Islamic project for Palestine. Hamas, which carried out the attack and has been managing GS for 17 years, is an Islamic movement that adopts Islam as a creed, thought and method, serving as a reference for the project of liberating Palestine. Hamas has borne the brunt of

facing Israeli aggression. Alongside Hamas stands PIJ, its younger counterpart, which adopts the same principles and reference.

- h. Operation al-Aqsa Flood underscored the centrality of *al-Aqsa* and Jerusalem in Palestinian, Arab and Muslim consciousness, serving as significant sources of mobilization and inspiration. The persistent Israeli aggression on Jerusalem and attempts to Judaize *al-Aqsa* have, over the decades, fueled incitement and confrontation against the Zionist project. This was a primary catalyst for Operation al-Aqsa Flood, named after the holy site.
- i. The battle firmly established the resistance project as the effective and correct pathway for reclaiming Palestinian rights and expelling the occupation. This coincided with the collapse of the peace process and the failure of the PLO and PA to establish an independent Palestinian state based on the Oslo Accords, over the past 30 years, on the 1967 occupied territories.
- j. The battle highlighted the Israeli failure to subjugate the Palestinian people. Throughout 30 years of British occupation and 75 years since the establishment of Israel, the Palestinian people have not ceased resisting and revolting. These movements ebb and flow, yet they persist. None of the oppression, displacement, destruction and suffering inflicted upon them has succeeded in breaking their resolve.
- k. Operation al-Aqsa Flood exposed and highlighted the failure of the Western value system to the world. Although many of these values and their falsity have long been recognized in our Muslim world, this war has blatantly revealed them.

3. Developments of the Battle and the War on GS

Israel tried to pull itself together in order to comprehend the colossal historical magnitude of an attack that shocked it to the core, and recalled the “existential threat” to its survival and project in a hostile environment. Israel would first strive, with a great sense of urgency, to unify its internal front to demonstrate societal unity and cohesion. It sought to restore the powerful deterrent image destroyed by Operation Al-Aqsa Flood. Israel attempted this through launching a massive, devastating military campaign and assassinating several political and military resistance leaders, especially those of Hamas. Israel benefited from the full support of the US and Europe, who put aside any reservations about the extremist Israeli government and provided, from day one, both moral and material assistance and a cover for the aggression on GS.⁶⁷

Operation al-Aqsa Flood and the subsequent Israeli war on GS were characterized by the following:⁶⁸

- a. The form of the battle:** The battle began as an offensive initiative by Al-Qassam Brigades, using different weapons, tools and objectives than those associated with previous military confrontations, specifically taking the battle to “enemy territory.”
- b. Mass killing of civilians:** The response to Operation al-Aqsa Flood was marked by mass atrocities against civilians, which are considered war crimes and illegal acts of genocide that do not fall within the laws of war or can ever be justified by Operation al-Aqsa Flood.
- c. Objectives of the military operation:** These include eliminating the leadership of Hamas and its resistance in GS, plans to displace GS residents and depopulate it of Palestinians, ending it as a political entity, and reoccupying it if possible. Israel views this battle as an existential war linked to its fate. Thus, it seeks to achieve permanent deterrence by inflicting the maximum amount of losses while becoming more tolerant of casualties it would not have accepted in previous confrontations.
- d.** There are striking parallels between current developments and the establishment of the Zionist project in Palestine during the *Nakbah* (catastrophe) of 1948, particularly regarding the massacres, destruction and displacement caused by the occupation.
- e. Dehumanizing the people of GS** serves to justify their targeting from a different perspective. Examples include Israeli President Isaac Herzog’s assertion that “It is an entire nation out there that is responsible. It is not true, this rhetoric about civilians not aware, not involved. It’s absolutely not true. They could have risen up...,”⁶⁹ while Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said, “We are fighting human animals and we are acting accordingly.”⁷⁰
- f. Positions:** The “Western position,” led by the US, supports the occupation, viewing the war as its own. In contrast, the “Arab-Muslim countries’ position” can be best described as unable to assist Gaza, let alone support it, with some countries even accused of collusion and alignment with Israeli objectives, particularly in relation to the overthrow of Hamas.

Al-Qassam Brigades surprised Israel with Operation al-Aqsa Flood, launching a massive rocket barrage from GS towards the 1948 occupied territories early on

Saturday, 7/10/2023. Muhammad Daif announced that “the initial strike targeted enemy positions and fortifications with over 5 thousand rockets and shells,”⁷¹ alongside ground, naval and aerial attack. Al-Qassam fighters infiltrated settlements around Gaza. Several videos depicted Al-Qassam fighters entering “Israeli cities,” engaging in combat with Israeli forces, seizing control of key facilities and areas. Activists broadcast footage of resistance forces setting an Israeli tank ablaze near the GS border. *Yedioth Ahronoth* reported that Al-Qassam militants seized Israeli army armored vehicles and transported them to GS.⁷²

The Israeli army declared a “state of war alert following the shocking infiltration of hundreds of terrorists from Gaza into Israeli cities and kibbutzim.”⁷³ Defense Minister Yoav Gallant declared “an emergency situation within a range of 80 kilometers from GS.” The *Haaretz* newspaper confirmed that “The attack by Hamas, which caught Israeli intelligence agencies by total surprise, completely demolished the operational defensive conception on the Gaza Strip border.” Israel’s military said, “Palestinian fighters had penetrated at least three military installations around the frontier—the Erez border crossing, the Zikim base and the Gaza division headquarters at Reim.”⁷⁴ Israeli Police Commissioner Kobi Shabtai announced in a statement that “We’re in a state of war. We are under a massive attack from the Gaza Strip. There are currently 21 active high confrontation locations in southern Israel.”⁷⁵

Al-Qassam Brigades stated that their air force participated with 35 Zouari kamikaze drones in all combat sectors, contributing to the preparatory bombardment that enabled their fighters to cross into the occupied territories.⁷⁶ Al-Qassam spokesperson Abu ‘Ubaidah confirmed in a televised speech on 8/10/2023, that Al-Qassam fighters reached the Mavki‘im area, south of Ashkelon, and engaged in fierce clashes that resulted in numerous Israeli casualties. He revealed that several fighters successfully withdrew from the Urim base, which houses Unit 8200 of the military intelligence division, after completing their mission there. Abu ‘Ubaidah announced that “a group of Al-Qassam fighters successfully captured new enemy prisoners and brought them to Gaza on Sunday,” and disclosed that “Al-Qassam fighters in combat zones documented cases of the enemy killing several of their own captives after they were taken hostage.”⁷⁷

Clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian fighters continued for several days in areas within the settlements around GS. Israeli army radio announced the

decision to evacuate 25 settlements and kibbutzim in the Gaza Envelope. The Hebrew channel Reshet Kan reported that Hamas fighters infiltrated 20 settlements and 11 Israeli military sites, breached the fence at 80 points, and estimated the number of infiltrators to be between 800 and one thousand. It was noted that Hamas had been planning this operation for over a year without any partners in their secret plan.⁷⁸

Abu ‘Ubaidah confirmed that Hamas had meticulously planned Operation al-Aqsa Flood.⁷⁹ He stated, “The number of Israeli captives held by the Palestinian resistance ranges between 200 and 250. Al-Qassam holds about 200 captives, while the rest are distributed among other resistance factions.” Abu ‘Ubaidah acknowledged the presence of captives of other nationalities, asserting that they are guests of the Palestinian people. He added, “Foreign captives will be released when the conditions on the ground allow.”⁸⁰ PIJ Secretary-General Ziad Nakhleh confirmed that his movement held more than 30 Israeli captives at this time and declared, “They will not return to their homes until our prisoners are liberated.”⁸¹ In a related context, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced the appointment of retired Brigadier General Gal Hirsch as Coordinator for the Captives and Missing.⁸²

More than 1,200 Israelis were killed during the Gaza Envelope incursion on 7/10/2023, after initial government estimates had indicated more than 1,400 casualties. Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lior Haiat stated on 10/11/2023, that the number of casualties was revised on 9/11/2023, because “there were lot of corpses that were not identified” belonging to individuals who participated in the 7/10/2023 attack.⁸³

Muhammad Daif emphasized that the leadership of Al-Qassam Brigades decided to put an end to all occupation crimes, declaring, “The time for unchecked aggression is over.” He stated, “Today, the wrath of *al-Aqsa* and the anger of our *Ummah* and our noble fighters erupts. This is your day to make the enemy understand that their time is up.” He asserted that “starting today, security coordination ends, and anyone with a weapon should bring it out, as its time has come.” Daif called on people to “begin the march now towards Palestine and not allow borders, regimes or constraints to deprive you of the honor of jihad and participation in liberating *al-Aqsa* Mosque.” Addressing the people of Jerusalem and the 1948 occupied territories, he said, “Our people in Jerusalem, expel the

occupiers and demolish the walls. And to our people in the interior, the Negev, the Galilee and the Triangle, ignite the ground under the occupiers' feet."⁸⁴

Isma'il Haniyyah, the head of the Hamas political bureau, said that the Palestinian resistance in GS is fighting a "heroic epic battle for *al-Aqsa*, our holy sites and our prisoners," emphasizing the "battle of honor, resistance and dignity to defend *al-Aqsa* Mosque." He stressed that "this Flood began in Gaza and will extend to the [West] Bank and abroad, to every place where our people and our *Ummah* are present."⁸⁵ In a speech on Al-Aqsa TV, Hamas Deputy Political Bureau Chief Saleh al-'Aruri said, "We must all engage in this battle, especially the resistance fighters in the [West] Bank," asserting that WB is the decisive factor in this battle and can initiate skirmishes with all settlements there.⁸⁶ In a call with Al Jazeera, al-'Aruri stated that Operation al-Aqsa Flood was a preemptive move against an Israeli attack on GS that was planned to occur immediately after the Jewish holidays. He noted that while the plan anticipated "prolonged battles with the Gaza Division, Al-Qassam fighters were surprised by the division's complete collapse within a short time, highlighting that the defensive plan for after the operation was stronger than the offensive one."⁸⁷

In response, the Israeli Security Cabinet "approved the war situation and, to this end, the taking of significant military steps, as per Article 40 of Basic Law: The Government."⁸⁸ The Israeli army announced on the X platform the launch of Operation Iron Swords and that it "is initiating a large-scale operation to defend Israeli civilians against the combined attack launched against Israel by Hamas."⁸⁹

On 11/10/2023, Netanyahu and opposition member Benny Gantz announced in a joint statement the formation of an "emergency wartime government," with Gantz's National Unity party joining.⁹⁰ On 12/10/2023, Netanyahu declared war before the Knesset's special plenum session, which then voted to grant the "emergency government" confidence for the duration of the war. The cabinet also announced the application of Article 40 of the Basic Law concerning taking "significant military action."⁹¹

In a video speech, Netanyahu said, "Hamas has started a brutal and evil war. We will be victorious in this war despite an unbearable price. This is a very difficult day for all of us. Hamas wants to murder us all." He emphasized, "We will destroy them and we will forcefully avenge this dark day that they have forced on the State of Israel and its citizens," adding, "I say to the residents of Gaza: Leave now

because we will operate forcefully everywhere.” At the end, he stated, “This war will take time. It will be difficult. Challenging days are ahead of us.”⁹² Netanyahu told US President Joe Biden in a phone call that “We were struck Saturday by an attack whose savagery we have not seen since the Holocaust.”⁹³

The Israeli aggression on the GS was accompanied by a campaign of lies and misleading claims about the operation carried out by Hamas, including accusations of killing children, committing rapes and other false claims that were later debunked.

In a press statement, Hamas firmly denied the fabricated allegations promoted by some Western media, which unprofessionally adopted the Israeli narrative filled with lies and slander against the Palestinian people and their resistance. The latest claims include accusations of killing children, beheading them and deliberately targeting civilians. Hamas emphasized that it “targeted the Israeli military and security system in Operation al-Aqsa Flood, which are legitimate targets.”⁹⁴ Al-Qassam Brigades broadcast videos showing their fighters dealing with settler children in Kibbutz “Holit” during Operation al-Aqsa Flood on 7/10/2023.⁹⁵ An Israeli settler recounted how the Palestinian resistance fighters refused to harm her and her children during Operation al-Aqsa Flood, noting that “this surprised me and reassured me as well.”⁹⁶

In a step described by Human Rights Watch as a “call to commit war crime,”⁹⁷ Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant announced a series of measures in response to Hamas’s attack on 7/10/2023. He stated, “I have ordered a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed,” adding, “We are fighting human animals, and we are acting accordingly.” Additionally, Energy Minister Yisrael Katz stated, “I instructed that the water supply from Israel to Gaza be cut off immediately.”⁹⁸ Gallant emphasized that “Hamas made a grave mistake this morning and started a war against the State of Israel,”⁹⁹ vowing to “destroy Hamas infrastructures, Hamas headquarters, Hamas military establishment, and take these phenomena out of Gaza and out of the Earth.”¹⁰⁰

In the same context, the leaders of the United States, Germany, Britain, France and Italy issued a joint statement expressing their “steadfast and united support to the State of Israel.” The statement, issued by US President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Italian Prime

Minister Giorgia Meloni, and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, stated that “Over the coming days, we will remain united and coordinated, together as allies, and as common friends of Israel, to ensure Israel is able to defend itself, and to ultimately set the conditions for a peaceful and integrated Middle East region.”¹⁰¹

The White House announced that “The U.S. government has no intention of putting military on the ground,”¹⁰² but “The President also conveyed that additional assistance for the Israeli Defense Forces is now on its way to Israel with more to follow over the coming days.”¹⁰³ Biden affirmed, “We stand with Israel. And we will make sure Israel has what it needs to take care of its citizens, defend itself, and respond to this attack,” adding, “The United States has also enhanced our military force posture in the region to strengthen our deterrence,” and we have “moved the USS Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group to the Eastern Mediterranean and bolstered our fighter aircraft presence. And we stand ready to move in additional assets as needed.”¹⁰⁴

4. Ground Offensive

After the significant preemptive strike on Israel’s military and security establishment on 7/10/2023, Israeli statements emphasized the necessity of launching a ground war in GS. This was to achieve the objectives announced by Netanyahu and his war government members: the release of prisoners held by the resistance factions in GS, the eradication of Hamas, the end of its rule in the Strip, the displacement and depopulation of the Strip, ending it as a political entity, and reoccupying it if possible.

Despite the large and unprecedented number of killed, wounded and missing, and the extensive and comprehensive destruction of GS, Israeli forces were unable to break Hamas and its military structure. Most of the Israeli forces’ actions were directed at unarmed civilians, infrastructure and government offices. The Israeli mentality relies on violence to achieve its goals; what cannot be achieved by force can be achieved through escalating violence.

With these motives, the Israeli army began its ground operation in northern Gaza on 27/10/2023, instructing residents to move south, claiming it was a safe area. However, the course of the aggression confirmed that there is no safe place in the Strip, as Israeli massacres spread across all GS areas.

Al-Qassam Brigades announced that their readiness to confront the Israeli forces’ incursion on all fronts. Al-Qassam spokesperson Abu ‘Ubaidah stated that

the threat of a ground war is laughable and that they are prepared for a long battle and all possibilities.¹⁰⁵ Addressing Israeli leaders, Abu ‘Ubaidah said, “I foresee Netanyahu and his warlords kneeling by the end of the battle, and the war in Gaza will be his political end,” confirming that the resistance still has much in store and that Gaza will be a graveyard for the enemy and a quagmire for its soldiers and political and military leaders.¹⁰⁶ He stressed that the number of Israeli dead is much higher than what the Israeli leadership announces, promising to make Gaza “the curse of history” on this entity.¹⁰⁷ Abu ‘Ubaidah emphasized that the release of all Palestinian prisoners is the price for the large number of Israeli captives held by the resistance.¹⁰⁸

After a seven-day humanitarian truce between 23 and 30/11/2023, 240 Palestinian prisoners (75 women and 165 minors) were released, and the Palestinian resistance freed 80 Israeli prisoners (44 women and 36 minors), including some with dual citizenship and 27 foreigners. On 3/12/2023, the Israeli army announced the expansion of its ground operation in Gaza. The Israeli army radio reported a ground operation north of Khan Yunis, in the southern Strip, while the Israeli government spokesperson confirmed the focus on Khan Younis. A senior Al-Qassam Brigades source told Al Jazeera that the Israeli ground operation concentrated in the southern GS, involved limited maneuvers in the north, with 70% of Israeli forces withdrawing from northern Gaza due to unsuccessful operations and resistance strikes.¹⁰⁹

By the end of December 2023, the Israeli army expanded its ground assault to include al-Bureij, al-Nuseirat and al-Maghazi RCs in central Gaza. The Israeli army ordered the evacuation of these central Gaza areas, directing residents to move south to Deir al-Balah.

5. Casualties

The number of Palestinians killed in GS during Operation al-Aqsa Flood, from 7/10 to 31/12/2023, after 86 days of continuous Israeli aggression, reached 21,822, with 56,451 injured, and over 7 thousand missing, 70% of whom are children and women, in more than 1,825 massacres. Among the killed were around 9 thousand children, 6,450 women, 312 medical staff, 40 civil defense personnel, 106 journalists and 136 UN employees. The educational sector saw over 4,037 students killed and 209 educational staff, with 7,259 students and 619 staff among the injured.¹¹⁰

The Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor reported that by the evening of 26/12/2023, a total of 29,124 Palestinians had been killed, including 26,706 civilians, among them 11,422 children, 5,822 women, 481 health personnel and 101 journalists, with 56,122 injured, hundreds of whom being critically wounded. The latter number includes thousands of victims who are still stuck under the rubble of buildings. The Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor accused Israel of “stepping up its genocide war on Gazan civilians in an effort to intensify its enforced displacement policy, which is in violation of international laws,” and may constitute a war crime. The monitor confirmed that “Israel has deliberately targeted civilian infrastructure in order to cause as many casualties, material losses, and destruction as possible... as a form of retaliation and collective punishment.”¹¹¹

Among the prominent leaders killed in GS are the acting PLC Speaker and the Hamas leader Ahmad Bahr, Palestinian parliamentarian and Hamas political bureau member Jamila Shanti, head of Hamas’s National Relations Department in GS Zakaria Abu Mu’ammam, and head of Hamas’s Economic Department in GS Jawad Abu Shamala. Al-Qassam Brigades mourned several key leaders, including Ahmad al-Ghandour, a member of the Military Council and commander of the northern GS, Ayman Nofal, commander of the central region, and leaders Wa’el Rajab, Ra’fat Salman and Ayman Siyam.¹¹²

Isma’il al-Thawabta, director of the Government Media Office in GS, revealed to *Al-Youm al-Sabi’* newspaper, in early 2024, the extent of explosives dropped by the Israeli army on GS. He stated that more than 65 thousand tons of explosives were dropped on the Strip, equivalent to three nuclear bombs like those dropped on Hiroshima, Japan. He confirmed the Israeli army’s use of internationally banned weapons in its bombardment, adding that two-thirds of the bombs and missiles dropped by Israeli fighter jets were unguided and inaccurate, known as “dumb bombs,” leading to indiscriminate and unjustified killings in violation of international law and agreements.¹¹³

The Israeli fighter jets dropped over 45 thousand rockets and massive bombs on the GS, some weighing 2 thousand pounds (about 906 kg) of explosives. Al-Thawabta highlighted the most prominent internationally prohibited weapons used by the Israeli army, including BLU–113 and BLU–109 bunker-buster bombs, Small Diameter Bombs (SDBs) such as GBU–28 bombs (4 thousand pounds (1,814.3 kg)), GPS-guided bombs, internationally banned white phosphorus bombs,

bombs used for mass killing of civilians and destroying facilities and homes known as “dumb bombs” or unguided bombs, and Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM) equipped bombs. Al-Thawabta confirmed that the use of these weapons leads to permanent harm to the victims, such as deformities, permanent disabilities and amputations, in addition to significant environmental pollution.¹¹⁴

PCBS reported that there are about 1.9 million Palestinians in GS have been displaced from their homes. The Ministry of Public Works and Housing in GS announced that 369 thousand housing units were damaged, with at least 79 thousand completely destroyed and more than 290 thousand partially damaged, from the beginning of the war on 7/10/2023 until 9/3/2024. Over 25,010 buildings and 161 mosques were destroyed.¹¹⁵ The Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs in GS stated on 21/1/2024 that one thousand out of 1,200 mosques were destroyed, requiring reconstruction efforts estimated at about \$500 million.¹¹⁶ Additionally, three churches, 140 government headquarters, and 433 schools and universities (99 completely and 334 partially) were destroyed. Thirty hospitals and 53 health centers are out of service, with 25 hospitals damaged and 122 ambulances destroyed.¹¹⁷ Fifty media outlet headquarters were also affected.¹¹⁸ About 18% of the GS agricultural areas were damaged, with the most significant impact seen in the northern Gaza governorates. Approximately 39% of agricultural lands in North Gaza and 27% in the Gaza governorate were affected.

Furthermore, residents of GS lack basic necessities of life, such as housing, food and water. UNRWA reported that at least 40% of Gaza’s population is at risk of famine, highlighting the severe hunger crisis that has made Gaza one of the most famine-stricken areas in the world.¹¹⁹

The Israeli Army Radio indicated that military estimates suggest the war will not succeed in completely eliminating Hamas’ capabilities to launch rockets at Israel. The radio quoted army officials saying that deepening the fighting and ground operations contribute to degrading Hamas’ capabilities and those of other organizations, but do not completely eliminate them. Military officials noted that the army’s ability to intercept long-range rocket launch platforms has improved, but it is challenging to reduce short-range rocket fire on Gaza Envelope areas to zero.¹²⁰

Despite Israel’s claims of achievements, it suffered significant losses, the largest in its history, during that confrontation, which was described as unprecedented. On

7/10/2023, Israel admitted to having 242 captives held by Hamas, of which 137 are still detained in Gaza.

One of the significant achievements of Operation al-Aqsa Flood was the announcement by Al-Qassam Brigades on the first day of the operation that the “Gaza Division” had been completely defeated. This division, operating under the command of the Southern Military Region of the Israeli army, is an elite force stationed at the Re'im military base, 7 km from GS. The Re'im base was among the primary targets of Al-Qassam Brigades. The “Gaza Division” is responsible for border security adjacent to Gaza, conducting assassination operations and neutralizing discovered tunnels in the Gaza Envelope. It consists of two brigades: Northern and Southern.

Hamas Deputy Political Bureau Chief Saleh al-'Aruri (assassinated later on 2/1/2024), revealed that Operation al-Aqsa Flood was designed around Al-Qassam fighters storming the Gaza Envelope and targeting the “Gaza Division,” responsible for the Gaza siege, assassinations, and killings carried out against Palestinians in GS. Although the plan anticipated “battles with the Gaza Division to last long hours, Al-Qassam fighters were surprised by the division’s rapid collapse within a few short hours. This allowed them easy access to its command center, airport, kibbutzim and nearby settlements,” after surviving Israeli soldiers fled, while many others killed or captured.¹²¹

Nearly three months after the events, Israeli Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi “formed a team of former military officials to probe the army’s operational failures in the lead-up to” the events of 7/10/2023, focusing on security, military and intelligence aspects. The team includes several former military officials, including former Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, who will head the team, former Military Intelligence Directorate head Aharon Ze'evi-Farkash, former Southern Command leader Sami Turgeman and former Operations Directorate chief Yoav Har-Even.¹²²

The New York Times newspaper conducted an investigation “based on internal Israeli government documents and a review of the military’s cache of materials, known as Pandora, that contains tens of thousands of videos, including footage from body cameras worn” by Hamas fighters and closed-circuit surveillance cameras. The newspaper interviewed dozens of officers, enlisted troops and eyewitnesses, who reported that the military failure experienced by Israel during the 7/10/2023 attack was due to the fact that the Israeli Forces “did not even have a plan to

respond to a large-scale Hamas attack on Israeli soil,” “coupled with a series of intelligence missteps in the months and years before the attack.”¹²³

The number of Israelis killed in the conflict, whose names were allowed to be published, stands at 1,200 Israelis, with over 7,262 injured, including 5 thousand soldiers, of whom 3 thousand are expected to be permanently disabled. The Israeli military has confirmed the deaths of more than 181 of its soldiers since the start of the ground operation in Gaza on 27/10/2023, with 2,707 others injured. Additionally, they acknowledged the deaths of more than 1,200 on 7/10/2023, including 328 officers and soldiers, 57 police officers, 10 Shabak members and 845 “civilians.”¹²⁴ The Israeli Ministry of Health reported an increase in injuries to 5,431 as of 22/10/2023, most occurring on 7/10/2023.¹²⁵ Palestinian resistance factions in Gaza have caused 15 deaths and about 700 injuries by firing approximately 12 thousand rockets at Israeli cities.¹²⁶

Israeli affairs expert Muhannad Mustafa noted that the casualty rate among officers in the Israeli army is the highest in Tel Aviv’s wartime history.¹²⁷ Officers accounted for 23% of total Israeli military casualties in the war on GS as of 28/12/2023, whose names were allowed to be published. Among them were 56 platoon leaders, 43 company commanders, 8 battalion commanders and 5 brigade commanders.¹²⁸

The Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation KAN reported “that 29 soldiers were killed in ‘friendly fire and operational incidents’ during the ground offensive in Gaza.” Meanwhile, *The Jerusalem Post* revealed that “the Military Rabbinate has pronounced 15 soldiers dead, despite their bodies being missing or held by Hamas.”¹²⁹ On 18/11/2023, David Oren Baruch, director of the Mount Herzl Military Cemetery, stated in a video released by the Israeli Ministry of Defense that “Only in the Mount Herzl cemetery did we bury 50 soldiers in 48 hours,” and added “We are now going through a period every hour there is a funeral, every hour and a half a funeral.”¹³⁰

Reports from the battlefield by Palestinian resistance factions at the end of 2023 indicate that the resistance disabled more than 896 military vehicles, including tanks, bulldozers and troop carriers, either partially or completely, since the beginning of the ground incursion. The Palestine Information Center—Mo3ta analyzed 885 announcements by Al-Qassam Brigades about operations carried out by their fighters across various fronts during the ground battle. These included

38 announcements confirming the killing of 278 officers and soldiers in targeting infantry soldiers, special units and rescue teams. Another 42 announcements confirmed that 299 officers and soldiers were either killed or injured, and 92 announcements indicated that officers and soldiers were either killed or injured without specifying numbers, using phrases like “a large number,” “dozens,” “all members of the force,” “all fallen,” or “eliminating the remainder.” Additionally, the fate of the crews of destroyed vehicles, whether wholly or partially, was not mentioned.¹³¹

Highlighting the discrepancy between the casualty numbers announced by the Israeli army and those estimated by Palestinian resistance factions, *Haaretz* revealed that discrepancies arose as the numbers of wounded Israeli soldiers reported by the Israeli army were found to be significantly lower than figures reported by Israeli hospitals. The Israeli newspaper noted that the army announced 1,593 wounded since the beginning of military operations in Gaza by 10/12/2023, while partial lists released by hospitals showed they received 4,591 wounded during the same period. This coincided with *Yedioth Ahronoth*'s report that the number of wounded soldiers reached 5 thousand, with more than 2 thousand officially recognized as disabled, before the newspaper retracted the report and reduced the number to 2 thousand instead of 5 thousand. Soroka Hospital in Beersheba announced that it had received 2,034 wounded soldiers with varying degrees of severity since the start of the ground war on 27/10/2023.¹³²

The Israeli Mental Health Center Directors' Forum sent a desperate letter to the relevant authority “concerning the difficult situation of the mental health system in Israel,” noting the growing demand for psychiatrists since the outbreak of the Gaza war. They stated that “the events of October 7 resulted in an estimated 300,000 additional patients who require treatment by a trained professional,” warning that the mental health consequences of the war are concerning.¹³³ Military sources reported that about 1,600 soldiers have suffered from signs of stress, shell shock, and combat fatigue since the start of the war in Gaza. Most of the soldiers sought treatment in the first four weeks after October 7, before the start of the ground operation in GS. About 3 thousand soldiers and reservist soldiers called the Israeli army mental health hotline, and 90 soldiers have been discharged from service due to psychological difficulties.¹³⁴

The Israeli economy experienced substantial losses, detailed in Chapter 5 of this report.

6. The WB During Operation al-Aqsa Flood

As previously mentioned, the WB experienced an unprecedented escalation in resistance activities during 2022–2023, unseen for many years. The Israeli occupation feared an uprising in WB in response to Operation al-Aqsa Flood, especially since most of the reasons for such an uprising were present: Most of the prisoners are from WB, and *al-Aqsa* Mosque and Jerusalem are geographically within WB, where these two issues are the main drivers of Operation al-Aqsa Flood. Additionally, the involvement of WB in Operation al-Aqsa Flood would likely be more painful for Israel, given the intermingling of Palestinian towns and settlements and the relative possibility of entering the 1948 occupied territories. Therefore, the Israeli authorities quickly imposed a comprehensive lockdown on WB, isolating cities from each other with military checkpoints, and unleashed settler militias to spread terror in the contact areas.¹³⁵ Meanwhile, the PA attempted to suppress any signs of escalation and uprisings, closed universities, and continued its security coordination with Israel.

From the start of Operation al-Aqsa Flood until the end of 2023, 319 Palestinians were killed in WB, including 74 children, five elderly people and nine prisoners, with the occupation still holding the bodies of 34 of them. Additionally, 3,822 were injured and 4,876 were arrested.¹³⁶ During the same period, WB, including East Jerusalem, witnessed a series of significant events demonstrating the Palestinian people's will to continue resisting and defending their legitimate rights. The Palestine Information Center—Mo3ta documented 4,438 resistance acts, including 1,360 impactful attacks (armed). These various resistance actions across different areas of WB resulted in the killing of eight Israelis and injuries to more than 122 others. These figures reflect the steadfast determination and defiance prevailing in WB, overcoming the Israeli efforts to neutralize it from the scene of resistance and support for GS.¹³⁷

Throughout Operation al-Aqsa Flood, daily shootings targeted settlements and military checkpoints, accompanied by popular confrontations, particularly in contact areas, and demonstrations in city centers. The intensity of unrest escalated daily. There is no doubt that the general mood in WB is supportive of resistance and highly agitated, with particularly hot spots in Jenin, Nablus, Tulkarm and Jericho.¹³⁸

7. Lebanon

Since the beginning of Operation al-Aqsa Flood, attention has turned towards Hizbullah in southern Lebanon and its stance on joining the confrontation, as its level of participation represents a significant factor in the course of the war. The group began targeting the occupied Lebanese Shebaa Farms on the morning of the second day of the war. On 8/10/2023, the “Imad Mughniyeh Groups in the Islamic Resistance,” affiliated with Hizbullah, announced they had “bombarded three Israeli occupation sites in the occupied Lebanese Shebaa Farms with a large number of artillery shells and guided missiles, hitting the sites directly,” according to a resistance statement. This was followed by a political announcement by the head of Hizbullah’s Executive Council, Hashem Safieddine, declaring, “The resistance in Lebanon is not neutral in the ongoing battle between the Palestinian resistance and the occupation forces.”¹³⁹

Subsequently, the intensity of the mutual attacks between Hizbullah and the Israeli army along the southern Lebanese border escalated, becoming the most violent since 2006. The attacks expanded to include deep areas within Lebanese territory, clearly violating UN Resolution 1701. These military operations raised questions about the outbreak of war on a second front... Hizbullah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah agreed with Hamas Deputy Political Bureau Chief Saleh al-‘Aruri and PIJ Secretary-General Ziad Nakhleh to “continue coordination and daily follow-up on developments in the ongoing war since 7/10/2023.”¹⁴⁰ In his first speech since Operation al-Aqsa Flood, Nasrallah said on 3/11/2023 that the Gaza war had extended to more than one front, stressing that it was a fully legitimate battle both humanly and morally. He emphasized that Israel should worry about the war’s expansion and escalation, and that Hizbullah succeeded in relieving pressure on the Gaza front by forcing the Israeli army to move a significant portion of its ground, air and naval forces to the northern front.¹⁴¹

Hizbullah announced that 147 of its members had been killed in confrontations with the Israeli army at the border as of 4/1/2024.¹⁴² The Israeli army acknowledged the killing of nine soldiers in attacks claimed by both Hizbullah and the Palestinian Islamic Resistance at the Lebanon border since the fighting began.¹⁴³

Nasrallah stated that the “Islamic Resistance carried out more than 670 operations over 3 months, targeting 48 border sites multiple times” since 8/10/2023. In a speech on 5/1/2024, he confirmed that “the Islamic Resistance conducted

494 attacks, including targeting 50 border points more than once.” He noted that “the Islamic Resistance also targeted and completely destroyed technical and intelligence equipment along the border.” Nasrallah announced the destruction of a large number of vehicles and tanks along the border, stating that “the operations were very exhausting for the enemy, which exercised extreme secrecy about its significant losses.”¹⁴⁴

In the same context, al-Fajr Forces, the military wing of *al-Jama‘ah al-Islamiyyah* in Lebanon, announced their support for the Palestinian people in Gaza. They reported launching multiple rocket attacks on Israeli sites, claiming direct hits. They confirmed that “our rocket salvos will continue and increase as long as the Zionist enemy persists in its aggression against our people in southern Lebanon and Gaza Strip,” also asserting “our ability to expand our response to deter their aggression.”¹⁴⁵ The Secretary-General of *al-Jama‘ah al-Islamiyyah*, Sheikh Muhammad Takkoush, said in an interview with *al-Akhbar* newspaper that the number of operations carried out by the al-Fajr Forces, against the Israeli forces after years of hiatus was “greater than announced,” indicating that the group is establishing a framework for those wishing to join the resistance. He noted that what Hizbullah and other Lebanese and Palestinian factions are doing on the southern front is effective in engaging the enemy and supporting the people of GS.¹⁴⁶

In Lebanon, the military wings of Hamas and PIJ have engaged in military operations from Lebanon, targeting Israeli sites and launching rocket barrages toward Israeli cities.

Since 7/10/2023, Hamas in Lebanon has intensified its operations along the southern Lebanese front, culminating in the establishment of Al-Aqsa Flood Vanguard on 4/12/2023. Alongside Hizbullah, Al-Qassam Brigades in Lebanon have played a prominent role in launching operations targeting Israeli sites and settlements along the Lebanese border. This underscores Hamas’s growing influence in Lebanon in recent years. Al-Qassam Brigades in Lebanon have claimed responsibility for multiple rocket launches toward Israel on several occasions. ‘Ali Baraka, head of the Hamas Department of National Relations Abroad, described these actions as “a symbolic show of solidarity with the Palestinian people, and a message to the Zionist enemy that we will not allow the Gaza’s resistance to be isolated.”¹⁴⁷

Al-Qassam Brigades in Lebanon launched concentrated rocket attacks, firing hundreds of rockets in multiple volleys towards cities and settlements in Galilee from southern Lebanon as part of Operation al-Aqsa Flood. In a military statement, the brigades described these attacks as “a step towards liberation and return,” “a show of solidarity with Jerusalem and the blessed *al-Aqsa* Mosque,” and a response to the massacres of Palestinian civilians in Gaza.¹⁴⁸

Hamas and Al-Qassam Brigades also reported that 11 of their members were killed in Lebanon. On 14/10/2023, Al-Qassam Brigades announced that three of their members from the Palestinian RCs in Lebanon were killed: Ahmad ‘Uthman, Yahya ‘Abdul Razzaq and Suhaib Kayed. They were killed during an operation against Israeli forces in the northern occupied territories, after successfully infiltrating the area and engaging in combat with the Israeli army.¹⁴⁹ Additionally, on 21/11/2023, Al-Qassam Brigades announced the killing of Al-Qassam commander Khalil Hamed Khraze (Abu Khalid), who was assassinated by Israeli treachery in southern Lebanon, along with four others in an Israeli airstrike.¹⁵⁰

On 2/1/2024, Israel assassinated Hamas Deputy Political Bureau Chief Saleh al-‘Aruri and 6 of his comrades in an airstrike on the southern suburbs of Beirut. Hamas Political Bureau Chief Isma‘il Haniyyah described al-‘Aruri’s assassination as “an act of terrorism and a violation of Lebanon’s sovereignty,” and announced that Israel had also assassinated Al-Qassam Brigade leaders Samir Fendi and ‘Azzam al-Aqra‘, along with four other Hamas members: Mahmud Shahin, Muhammad Bashasha, Muhammad al-Rayyis and Ahmad Hammud.¹⁵¹

The PIJ reported that 7 of its fighters were killed, on the Lebanese southern border. The group stated that during the ongoing Operation al-Aqsa Flood, fighters from Al-Quds Brigades infiltrated an Israeli northern site on 9/10/2023. They engaged in a close-quarters combat, resulting in the killing of two Israeli officers, including the deputy commander of the 300th Brigade, and injuries to five soldiers. During the operation, two Al-Quds Brigades fighters, Hamzah Musa and Riyad Qablaway, were killed.¹⁵² On 21/10/2023, the brigades announced that Muhammad Musa was killed in southern Lebanon while performing his resistance duty in support of Gaza.¹⁵³ On 30/10/2023, they also announced that Ibrahim ‘Uthman and Mustafa Hussain were killed during a firefight near the Lebanese border while attempting to breach the Israeli security fence at the Hanita military site.¹⁵⁴ On 29/12/2023, Ahmad Jibril and Muhammad al-Farij were killed on the borders in southern Lebanon, while fulfilling their duties in Operation al-Aqsa Flood.¹⁵⁵

8. Yemen

On 31/10/2023, the 25th day of the Israeli war on GS, Yemen, through the caretaker government affiliated with the Ansar Allah Movement (Houthis), officially announced the entry of Yemeni forces into Operation al-Aqsa Flood. This announcement came after targeting Israeli sites with missiles and drones in two operations, stating that it was “in support of our oppressed brothers in Palestine and that the Yemeni forces will continue to carry out more qualitative strikes with missiles and drones until the Israeli aggression stops.”¹⁵⁶

The leader of the Ansar Allah Movement in Yemen, ‘Abdul Malik al-Houthi, confirmed in the early days of Operation al-Aqsa Flood that there was coordination among the “Axis of Jihad and Resistance,” and that “the coordination includes defined levels for events and [clear] red lines, including if the US intervenes directly, we are ready to participate with missile and drone strikes and military options.”¹⁵⁷ The head of the Caretaker Government of the Ansar Allah Movement in Yemen, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz bin Habtour, also threatened to target Israeli ships in the Red Sea.¹⁵⁸

Subsequently, the military operations carried out by the Houthis from Yemen increased, reaching the point of intercepting ships heading to Israel, and prompting the activation of the Israeli missile interception system in southern Israel.¹⁵⁹ On 14/11/2023, Ansar Allah announced the start of a new phase of targeting Israel, involving “taking all practical measures to implement the issued directives regarding the appropriate handling of any Israeli ship in the Red Sea,” until the war on GS stops. The group declared that it would target all types of ships flying the Israeli flag, operated by Israeli companies, or owned by Israeli companies. They urged all countries to “withdraw their citizens working on the crews of these ships, avoid shipping on these ships or dealing with them, and notify their ships to stay away from these vessels.”¹⁶⁰

Indeed, on 19/11/2023, Ansar Allah seized an Israeli ship and tugged it to Yemeni shores.¹⁶¹ Subsequently, the number of operations against these ships increased. On 4/1/2024, US Vice Admiral Brad Cooper stated that the Houthis had carried out 25 attacks in the Red Sea since that date. The Houthi attacks disrupted international shipping, prompting some companies to suspend Red Sea transit operations and switch to longer, more expensive routes around Africa.¹⁶²

The repeated Houthi attacks increased pressure on the US president to respond militarily. On 18/12/2023, the US, UK and other countries launched Operation Prosperity Guardian to protect ships targeted by the Houthis in the Red Sea.¹⁶³ Ten Yemenis were killed, and two others were injured on 31/12/2023, in a US strike targeting boats that attacked a container ship in the southern Red Sea.¹⁶⁴

9. Syria and Iraq

Following Operation al-Aqsa Flood and the continuous Israeli war on GS, missile and drone attacks on US targets in both Iraq and Syria intensified. These attacks followed threats from Iraqi factions to target US interests in Iraq due to US support for Israel in its war on GS. Under the banner of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq (IRI), a coalition that announced its formation and mission post-Operation al-Aqsa Flood, expanded its target scope. Its factions claimed responsibility for targeting critical locations in Eilat, the Israeli Karish gas rig off Israel's northern coast,¹⁶⁵ and a "critical target" in Haifa using al-Arqaq upgraded long-range cruise missile.¹⁶⁶ They also launched rockets towards the occupied Syrian Golan, asserting that the attacks hit their targets directly.

These operations pressured the US administration, with increasing potential losses among US soldiers. In the period from 17/10 to 31/12/2023, US forces had faced at least 128 attacks in Syria and Iraq. The IRI and others targeted several US bases with missiles or drones, including Ayn al-Asad, Kharab al-Jir, al-Shaddadi, Harir, al-Tanf, al-Rmelan, al-Malikiyah, and around the Conoco and Omar oil fields, as well as US forces near Erbil Airport and the Green Village.¹⁶⁷ In response, the US carried out multiple strikes on those factions.

10. Tunnels in GS

Tunnels in GS play a crucial role in ground warfare, shifting defenders into attackers and vice versa. Israeli forces entered GS with their tanks encountering no initial resistance or front lines, allowing the resistance to seize the initiative. These tunnels have significantly challenged Israeli tanks, aircraft and drones, disrupting their traditional superiority. They have been pivotal in bolstering the resistance's resilience during past wars with Israel, enabling the resistance to emerge with minimal losses each time. During Operation al-Aqsa Flood and the subsequent Israeli war, the resistance maintained its military capabilities and surprised the Israeli army, inflicting heavy losses.

These tunnels have remained effective, despite the fact that at the end of 2021, Israel completed a 65-kilometer “upgraded barrier” with GS. The fence includes an underground barrier that stretches along the entire border with Gaza, along with a maritime border wall. It has a system of advanced sensor and monitoring devices to detect tunnels, and is combined with a 6-meter high above-ground fence similar to the one that runs along the Israeli-Egyptian border. Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz said the barrier “deprives Hamas of one of their capabilities, and places an iron wall, sensors and concrete between it and the residents of the South.”¹⁶⁸

It is estimated that there are three main types of tunnels used in GS:¹⁶⁹

- a. Offensive tunnels:** These tunnels are utilized for border penetration and launching attacks behind Israeli forces’ lines. They also serve as launch sites for rocket launchers and mortar positions.
- b. Defensive tunnels:** Within Palestinian territories, these tunnels are employed to set up ambushes and transport fighters away from the view of Israeli aircraft and raids.
- c. Logistical tunnels:** Functioning as command and control centers, these tunnels oversee operations and direct fighters. They accommodate field commanders, store ammunition and military equipment, and assemble forces. Internal communication rooms within these tunnels facilitate coordination among resistance members.

The Israeli military failed to detect Hamas’ offensive tunnels aimed at settlements in the “Gaza Envelope” as part of the preparations for Operation al-Aqsa Flood. On 17/12/2023, the Israeli army announced the discovery of a 4 km tunnel north of Gaza near the Envelope settlements, presenting it as an achievement despite uncovering it 60 days into their incursion.

A military expert highlighted that Gaza has approximately 1,300 tunnels, deeming the discovery insignificant after more than two months of conflict.¹⁷⁰

The “tunnel failure” was highlighted in an investigative report published by *Yedioth Ahronoth* on 24/12/2023, authored by investigative journalist and military and intelligence affairs specialist Ronen Bergman. The failure became evident when the Al-Qassam Brigades announced that the discovered tunnel was an offensive one, prepared and used in Operation al-Aqsa Flood. Bergman reviewed

the failure to uncover the offensive tunnels leading toward the “Gaza Envelope” that Hamas continued to dig in March 2023, in preparation for the surprise attack on 7 October, without detection by the various Israeli security agencies. Bergman emphasized that the Israeli army was not adequately prepared for tunnel detection and destruction operations.¹⁷¹

When the ground campaign began on 27/10/2023, most Israeli security agencies had two primary estimates: first, that Hamas had 100–200 km of tunnels under Gaza; second, that by the end of 2020, it had no offensive tunnels toward the “Gaza Envelope” settlements. However, according to the Israeli newspaper report, these estimates were proven incorrect when, in the early days of the war, a Hamas tunnel near the Beit Hanoun/ Erez crossing was discovered.¹⁷²

Regarding the initial estimates about the tunnel network length, the newspaper’s investigation revealed they “were not correct,” and the Israeli army now estimates that Hamas has 500–600 km of tunnels under GS. The failure was not only in estimating the tunnel network’s length but also in its width, depth, fortifications, the extent of its winding paths, sudden directional changes (zigzags), and the amount of fuel, food and water reserves stored in them, thus determining the duration Hamas militants can endure in them. The investigation added that the Israeli army admitted the difficulty of detecting and demolishing tunnels without endangering its soldiers while also ensuring their destruction without causing the collapse of entire residential neighborhoods. The Israeli army plans to implement a work plan lasting up to two years to “dismantle the tunnels.” However, Bergman wrote that the plan is vague and unclear, especially regarding “deepening” Israeli control over the Strip. This goal is unlikely to be achieved due to battles and international pressures, pushing the army to withdraw to the security fence, leaving the plan unfulfilled.¹⁷³

The aftermath of the ground war highlights the preparedness of the resistance leadership behind Operation al-Aqsa Flood, anticipating the ground assault amidst unprecedented levels of genocide and destruction in Israel’s 75-year history. The meticulous preparation of tunnels was evident. Six months post-war, the resistance maintains readiness with sufficient equipment and resources, reflecting the sacrifices in lives, finances, engineering and years of effort. This underscores the advanced leadership within Gaza’s resistance.

Fifth: The Killed and Wounded

In 2022, a total of 224 Palestinians were killed (see table 4/4), including 53 in GS and 171 in WB. The Palestinian Ministry of Health reported that 53 children were among the dead.¹⁷⁴ In 2023, a total of 22,404 Palestinians were killed, with 22,141 from 7/10/2023 until the end of the year, 98% of whom were in GS (21,822 killed), including about 9 thousand children and 6,450 women. In WB, 319 were killed since 7/10/2023, including 111 children and 4 women. Additionally, over 7 thousand people were reported missing in GS, 67% of whom were children and women.¹⁷⁵ In 2022, 10,500 Palestinians were injured,¹⁷⁶ while more than 60,273 Palestinians were injured in 2023 (56,451 in GS and 3,822 in WB).¹⁷⁷

The Shabak recorded the killing of 31 Israelis in 2022, while in 2023, it recorded the killing of 43 Israelis¹⁷⁸ (excluding those recorded during Operation al-Aqsa Flood, which indicate the killing of about 1,400 Israelis),¹⁷⁹ due to operations carried out by Palestinians. In 2022, 281 Israelis were injured, compared to 181 Israelis in 2023¹⁸⁰ (excluding those recorded during Operation al-Aqsa Flood, which indicate over 7,262 injuries)¹⁸¹ (see table 4/4).

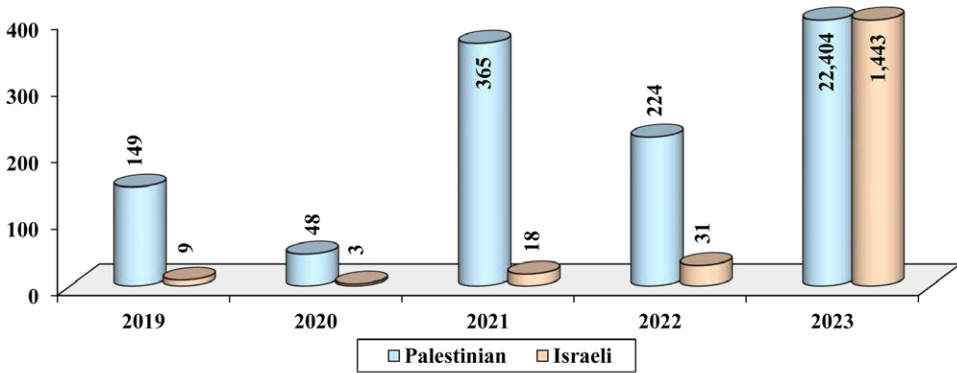
Table 4/4: The Killed and Wounded Among Palestinians and Israelis in WB and GS 2019–2023¹⁸²

Year	Killed		Wounded	
	Palestinian	Israeli	Palestinian	Israeli
2019	149	9	15,287	65
2020	48	3	2,614	46
2021	365	18	17,042	190
2022	224	31	10,500	281
2023	22,404*	1,443**	60,273	7,443**

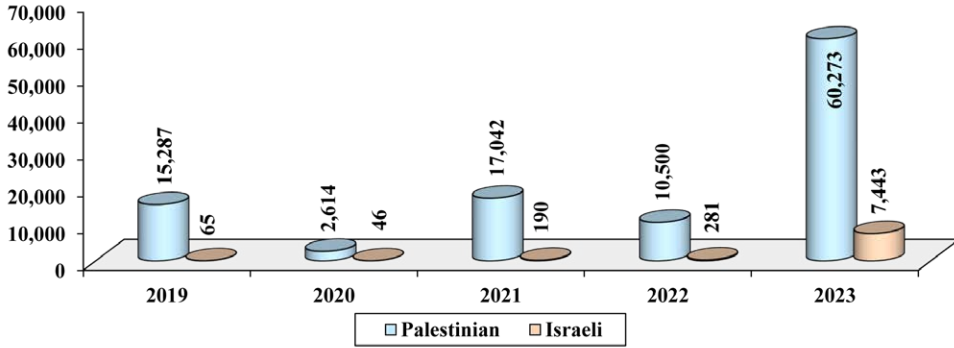
* Additionally, more than 7 thousand are missing.

** Information released by Israeli authorities until the report was prepared.

Palestinians and Israelis Killed in WB and GS 2019–2023



Palestinians and Israelis Wounded in WB and GS 2019–2023



Sixth: Prisoners and Detainees

In 2022 and 2023, there were significant changes in the arrest operations carried out by Israeli forces, primarily related to the increasing resistance against the occupation. Systematic arrest operations have always been a central Israeli policy in its attempts to undermine the resistance that could contribute to the realization of self-determination and freedom for the Palestinian people.

On 12/12/2022, there were 4,700 prisoners in Israeli prisons, including 34 women, 150 children, and 5 PLC members. Of these, 4,400 were from WB, including 400 from East Jerusalem, 200 from GS, and 100 from the 1948 occupied territories, along with dozens of Arab detainees of various nationalities. 835 were classified as administrative detainees, or detainees pending trial, or what Israel calls “unlawful combatants” (see table 5/4).

By the end of December 2023, the number of prisoners had reached 8,800, excluding detainees from GS after 7/10/2023. Precise statistics for categories such as children, women (62 women in Damon prison alone), and elderly prisoners are not available. The number of administrative detainees was 3,291 and those classified by Israel as unlawful combatants were 661. This indicates the total number of prisoners increased by 3,550 since before 7/10/2023, and the number of administrative detainees increased by 1,971 (see table 5/4).

The Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association—Addameer reported a significant increase in arrests in 2023, with the issue of Palestinian prisoners and detainees undergoing major changes not seen since the years of the *Intifadahs*. This change coincided with the rise of the most extreme government in the history of the Israeli state at the beginning of the year, with the most significant shift occurring after 7/10/2023, due to ongoing comprehensive aggression against the Palestinian people and the genocide in GS.

Addameer stated that the Israeli forces conducted about 11 thousand arrests in 2023 in WB, including East Jerusalem, and GS before 7/10/2023. This included 1,085 children and 300 women.¹⁸³ Furthermore, there were over 2,600 arrests in GS after 7/10/2023,¹⁸⁴ reflecting a 95% increase compared to 2022, which saw 7 thousand arrests, including 882 children and 172 women.¹⁸⁵

The number of Palestinian prisoners from GS detained by Israeli forces has reached record levels since the war began on 7/10/2023. The Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor noted that the Israeli army permitted its soldiers to carry out arbitrary, random and widespread arrests in GS under the provisions of the “Unlawful Combatants Law.” This law “deprives prisoners and detainees of all rights accorded to them by international humanitarian law and human rights standards, including legal protections.” Amended at the start of the genocide in GS, it allows for the detention of Palestinians from GS for a maximum of 75 days, “with the possibility of an indefinite extension, based on secret evidence that neither the detainee nor his attorney is allowed to view, depriving them of their right to a fair trial and legal presentation.” According to data provided by the Israel Prison Service (IPS) cited by the monitor, the number of Palestinians detained from Gaza under this law reached about 800 detainees by 9/3/2024, alongside thousands more held in military detention facilities.¹⁸⁶ The Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor reported on 23/2/2024 that the number of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons from GS since the beginning of the aggression had reached 3,120.¹⁸⁷

The arrests in 2022 and 2023, as in previous years, affected all segments and groups of Palestinian society, including children, women, academics, released prisoners, patients, the elderly, human rights activists, journalists and parliamentarians. These arrests involved storming homes or hospitals, abductions from the street and workplaces, the kidnapping of the sick and injured, or abductions by “Arabized undercover security units,” as well as detentions at crossings and checkpoints. Moreover, dozens of fishermen were arrested at sea in GS.

The pattern of arrests fluctuated throughout 2022, averaging 583 arrests per month, or about 19 daily arrests. In 2023, the arrest rate was significantly higher than 2022, with a monthly average of 1,133 detainees and a daily rate of about 37. The largest number of arrests in 2022 and 2023 occurred in the Jerusalem area, with over 3 thousand arrests in 2022, accounting for about 43% of total arrests, and 3,261 arrests in 2023, comprising about 24% of total arrests.¹⁸⁸

The Israeli authorities issued 2,409 administrative detention orders in 2022, including new orders and renewals, marking a significant aspect of the changes that year. Administrative detention saw a sharp increase in 2023, with the highest numbers in over 30 years, exceeding 5,500 orders, including 3,819 new orders and 1,689 renewals. More than 2,670 orders were issued after 7/10/2023, accounting for about 49% of the orders issued in 2023.¹⁸⁹

In 2022, the Israeli courts issued five life sentences, followed by seven life sentences in 2023. The tally of death from the prisoner movement rose to 243, with six prisoners dying in 2022 and 10 in 2023. Notably, 17 killed from the prisoner movement had their bodies withheld by the Israeli authorities until the end of 2023, including eight who died in 2023. Among these was Khader ‘Adnan, who died on 2/5/2023 after an 86-day hunger strike in protest against his arbitrary detention. Additionally, six prisoners died inside Israeli prisons after 7/10/2023. Israeli media reported that other detainees from GS died in the Sde Teiman detention camp in Beersheba, but Israeli authorities refuse to disclose any information about the fate of GS detainees.¹⁹⁰

In 2022 and 2023, there was an increase in raids and searches by special units in the sections housing prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention centers. This increase was particularly noticeable after the extremist Itamar Ben-Gvir became Minister of National Security of Israel and oversaw prison administration. Prisoner organizations documented numerous testimonies of prisoners subjected

to assaults and abuse by special repression forces, including direct beatings and severe mistreatment amounting to torture. In 2023, significant shifts occurred, with prisoners conducting comprehensive protest actions in all prisons in response to these measures. Ben-Gvir aimed to strip prisoners of their remaining rights, affecting basic rights such as the allowed duration for showers and the amount of water reaching their sections. In addition, there was an escalation in repeated raids, suppression, isolation and imposition of punishments such as fines, denial of family visits and denial of access to the cantina. These measures affected all prisoners, including women and children.

With the start of the GS war, Israeli authorities and IPS tightened their grip and retaliated against Palestinian prisoners. The repression and brutality peaked since 7/10/2023, with numerous injuries recorded among male and female prisoners assaulted by repression units. The abuse methods included deprivation of water and food, withdrawal of essential life supplies, leaving only the bare minimum, isolation from the outside world, and placing dozens of detainees in small, cramped cells. As winter set in, the harsh conditions in the prisons worsened. Israeli forces prevented the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) from conducting any prison visits, and family visits were completely halted.¹⁹¹

As a result of the IPS policies towards prisoners, including medical neglect, violations, administrative detention and unjust trials, prisoners conducted numerous hunger strikes, both collective and individual, during 2022 and 2023. The hunger strikes and “Battles of Empty Stomachs” were used as a weapon to mitigate oppressive policies, regain their freedom and secure their rights.

Table 5/4: Prisoners and Detainees in Israeli Prisons 2019–2023¹⁹²

Year	Total no. of detainees	WB*	GS	Serving life sentences	Women	Children
2019	5,000	4,634	296	541	41	180
2020	4,400	4,075	255	543	41	170
2021	4,550	4,250	230	544	32	170
2022	4,700	4,400	200	551	34	150
2023	9,000**	8,520	280**	561	70	200

* Approximate figures according Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association—Addameer.

** Does not include GS detainees after 7/10/2023.

Administrative Detention

Despite being prohibited under international law and violating basic human rights, the Israeli forces continued to issue administrative detention orders throughout 2022 and 2023 targeting various segments of Palestinian society, including PLC members, human rights activists, workers, students, lawyers and traders. As of 6/11/2023, the number of administrative detainees held by Israel without specific charges or trial had risen to 2,070, including 16 PLC members, compared to 835 at the end of 2022, including 5 PLC members; 500 at the end of 2021, 380 at the end of 2020, and 461 at the end of 2019.¹⁹³

Table 6/4: Administrative Detainees 2019–2023¹⁹⁴

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Administrative detainees	461	380	500	835	2,070

In opposition to this criminal practice of administrative detention, 50 administrative detainees initiated an open hunger strike on 25/9/2022 under the slogan “Our strike is freedom.” Concurrently, these detainees boycotted all military court hearings related to administrative detention. Throughout 2022, approximately 75 prisoners undertook multiple hunger strikes to protest various oppressive measures imposed by the Israeli authorities. Some of these strikes successfully met the prisoners’ demands, many of which were aimed at ending administrative detention. In 2023, notable events included the death of detainee Khader ‘Adnan and a 75-day hunger strike by administrative detainee Kayed al-Fasfous, which ended with the onset of Operation al-Aqsa Flood.¹⁹⁵

Seventh: Israeli GS Siege

Israel maintained a continuous siege on GS for the 17th consecutive year, marking the longest such blockade in modern history. The measures included heightened restrictions on both commercial crossings and individual movement, with no significant structural changes observed in 2022 and 2023. Despite purported easing by Israeli authorities, the core restrictions on movement of people and goods remained unchanged.

In 2022 and 2023, the Rafah border crossing remained open for humanitarian cases and returning individuals stranded outside GS. However, operational capacity was severely limited and slow in 2022, allowing only 144,042 departures and 132,162 returns. Meanwhile, Egyptian authorities refused travel for 5,476 Palestinians, while those registered with the Palestinian Ministry of Interior faced ongoing barriers to exit, according to the Gaza Crossings and Borders Authority. Returnees to GS endured prolonged, repetitive and unjustified inspection procedures by Egyptian authorities.¹⁹⁶

Regarding the movement of goods and commercial commodities, Israel maintained strict restrictions on the import of goods classified as “dual-use materials” throughout 2022 and 2023. These materials, despite their civilian applications, are deemed by Israeli authorities as potentially enhancing the combat capabilities of Palestinian resistance groups. The official list encompasses 62 types of dual-use materials, which include hundreds of essential goods and materials. For instance, the category of “communication equipment” alone encompasses dozens of specific items. The presence of these materials on the dual-use list is crucial for daily life, and their restricted import contributes to deteriorating conditions in infrastructure, economics, health and education. The materials include communication equipment, pumps, large generators, rebars, steel pipes of all diameters, metal welding devices, welding rods, various types of wood, X-ray imaging devices, cranes, heavy machinery, batteries of various types and numerous fertilizers...

For the 17th consecutive year, Israeli authorities maintained a ban on exporting all goods from GS to WB, the 1948 occupied territories, and elsewhere globally. The only exception was a limited allowance for the export of minimal quantities of Gazan products, predominantly agricultural commodities. In 2022–2023, these exports accounted for just 12.7% of the Strip’s total monthly exports before closure was imposed in June 2007. This export ban has significantly worsened economic conditions, leading to the closure of thousands of factories and contributing to rising unemployment and poverty rates.¹⁹⁷

The Israeli authorities remained its naval blockade along the GS shores, as they denied fishermen’s access to fishing breeding areas. Despite the proclaimed authorization for fishermen to fish at a distance between 6–15 nautical miles, the Israeli authorities decreased the fishing area or closed the sea completely dozens

of times alleging the security situations and the launch of incendiary balloons and rockets from Gaza.¹⁹⁸

In a move that resulted in a severe deterioration of the humanitarian, economic and social conditions for more than two million Palestinians living in the Strip, a step described by Human Rights Watch as a “call to commit war crime,”¹⁹⁹ Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant announced a series of measures in response to Hamas’s attack on 7/10/2023. He stated, “I have ordered a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed.” Additionally, Energy Minister Yisrael Katz stated, “I instructed that the water supply from Israel to Gaza be cut off immediately.”²⁰⁰

These actions amount to an official Israeli acknowledgment of deliberate starvation and dehydration, alongside acts of killing and widespread destruction, under an unprecedented cloak of international silence that borders on complicity. Since the onset of aggression on 7/10/2023, GS has been subjected to a total blockade by Israeli forces, severely restricting the entry of essential supplies like food, water and medicine. Only a handful of trucks were permitted access, primarily designated for the southern GS. Moreover, the Israeli forces have not hesitated to bomb bakeries, shops, markets, food warehouses, poultry farms and vast agricultural areas, directly targeting Gaza’s farmers. These actions suggest a deliberate policy aimed at exhausting the Strip’s remaining food resources and intentionally starving its civilian population.

On 11/10/2023, GS plunged into complete darkness as its sole power plant ceased operations. Only facilities and houses equipped with alternative energy sources remained powered... This outage significantly impacted various services in GS, including water supply, telecommunications and internet access, leaving Gaza in almost complete isolation from the world with strict closures at entry and exit points. The Israeli bombing also damaged numerous municipal facilities, impairing their ability to provide water and essential services to residents. This has led to the breakdown of waste disposal systems and portends an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe. Hundreds of thousands have been forced to use contaminated water due to the lack of clean water sources, posing serious health risks.²⁰¹

Before Operation al-Aqsa Flood, individual movement in GS was heavily restricted by Israeli authorities at the Beit Hanoun/ Erez crossing in northern GS.

Most residents were denied exit or re-entry, with limited exceptions made for specific groups: critically ill patients and their companions, Palestinian citizens holding Israeli citizenship, foreign journalists, staff of international humanitarian organizations, merchants, businessmen, families of prisoners in Israeli prisons, and some travelers via al-Karamah border crossing.²⁰²

Israel imposed restrictions even on those eligible to travel under the few exceptions to the closure policy, and most residents of GS do not qualify for these exceptions. They also prevented young Palestinian Christians in GS from visiting Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth during the Christmas holidays for religious observances.²⁰³

In addition to the regular stringent restrictions on Palestinian movement, Israel frequently uses border closures as punitive measures. For instance, during the GS war in August 2022 and May 2023, and Operation al-Aqsa Flood, Israel completely shut down the Beit Hanoun/ Erez crossing and maintained additional restrictions on movement even after reaching a ceasefire.

Eighth: The Peace Process

During the period covered by this report, there were no significant efforts or initiatives aimed at reviving the “peace process.” Instead, statements were made by US President Joe Biden and his administration, as well as the EU, affirming their commitment to the “two-state solution.” However, these statements were coupled with the assertion that progress would be delayed indefinitely, without specifying which party primarily obstructs advancement towards this goal. During a visit to Israel on 18/10/2023, just days after Operation al-Aqsa Flood, Biden reiterated his commitment to establishing a Palestinian state despite the ongoing war between Israel and the resistance in Gaza, stating, “As hard as it is, we must keep pursuing peace. We must keep pursuing a path so that Israel and the Palestinian people can both live safely, in security, in dignity, and in peace.”²⁰⁴

The European stance consistently supports the “two-state solution,” as reiterated by the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, at the 8th Regional Forum of the Union for the Mediterranean, “There will not be peace or security for Israel without a Palestinian state.”²⁰⁵

When discussing this topic, both parties involved often face blame for the ongoing stalemate in the peace process. The Israeli government is not ready, and the Palestinian side remains divided, lacking a unified Palestinian representative. However, an objective evaluation reveals that the primary obstacle to resuming negotiations and reaching an agreement has been the successive Israeli governments. In early 2023, a new Israeli government adopted a programmatic goal of annexing “Judea and Samaria” to Israel, viewing them as an integral part of Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel). This coalition included the Religious Zionism party, which promotes a “Decisive Plan,” asserting that the Israeli government can achieve what previous administrations have not—resolving the conflict outright rather than managing or mitigating it, swiftly and decisively pursuing colonial, settlement, racist and aggressive goals.

The official Palestinian side continued to pursue negotiations as its approach to the conflict, calling for talks to resume from where they left off, advocating for an international peace conference, and requesting the UN and other countries to recognize the full membership of the State of Palestine. They also demanded that the Israeli government commit to negotiations and obligations stemming from the Oslo Accords and its annexes, even though Israeli governments have long unilaterally undermined the Oslo Accords, reneging on their commitments. The Israeli governments have not officially withdrawn from the Oslo process to avoid bearing responsibility for its demise and to maintain an excuse for the official Palestinian side to cling to it. This stance also helps avoid angering the US, Europe and other international community members. Israel’s reluctance to officially repeal the Oslo Accords has not prevented it from effectively bypassing them through continued creeping annexation, gradual land grabs, and creating occupation, settlement and racist realities on the ground, imposing a situation that makes the Israeli solution the only practically possible outcome.

President Mahmud ‘Abbas touched on these demands in his speeches during 2022 and 2023, especially at the UN General Assembly. In the 77th session of the General Assembly on 23/9/2022, he said:

Israel, which disavows the resolutions of international legitimacy, has decided not to be our partner in the peace process. Israel is the one that destroyed the Oslo Accords it signed with the Palestine Liberation Organization. It is the one that, with its current policy, has premeditated and determined to destroy the two-state solution, which proves with conclusive



evidence that they do not believe in peace, but in the policy of imposing a *fait accompli* by brute force and aggression, and therefore there is no longer an Israeli partner with whom to talk. It thus ends the contractual relationship with us, and makes the relationship between the State of Palestine and Israel a relationship between an occupying state and an occupied people, and nothing else. We will not deal with Israel except on this basis, and we demand the international community to deal with it on this basis as well.²⁰⁶

Despite the criticism in ‘Abbas’s speech, the official leadership’s policies remained focused on waiting and survival. This effectively led to an increasing coexistence with Israel’s occupation policy as a *fait accompli*, pursued by successive Israeli governments.

‘Abbas also requested the implementation of “General Assembly resolution 181, which formed the basis for the two-state solution in 1947, as well as resolution 194 calling for the right of return of Palestine refugees.” He praised the speeches of US President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid for supporting the two-state solution, noting that “this is positive,” but pointed out that the:

real test of the seriousness and credibility of this position is for the Israeli government to sit at the negotiating table immediately to implement the two-State solution on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative and the cessation of all unilateral measures that undermine the two-state solution.²⁰⁷

The president also renewed his call for holding an international peace conference, during the first China-Arab summit held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 9/12/2022, and to “achieve international protection for the Palestinian people, and implement UN resolutions related to the Palestinian cause.”²⁰⁸

A Chinese initiative for a solution was proposed, indicating a bid to activate the Chinese role. During his meeting with Palestinian President Mahmud ‘Abbas, Chinese President Xi Jinping renewed his country’s desire to mediate between Palestinians and Israelis for a comprehensive, just and durable solution to the Palestine issue.

President Xi put forward a three-point proposal:

1. The establishment of an independent state of Palestine that enjoys full sovereignty on the basis of the 1967 borders and with east Jerusalem as its capital.

2. Palestine's economic and livelihood needs should be met, and the international community needs to step up development assistance and humanitarian aid to Palestine.
3. The historical status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem should be respected, and excessive and provocative words and actions should be avoided. A large-scale, more authoritative and more influential international peace conference should be convened so as to create conditions for the resumption of peace talks.²⁰⁹

The Chinese peace envoy made multiple visits to the region and met with several officials, including the Palestinian president. However, this had little impact as the primary player in the “peace process” has always been the US, which has effectively frozen peace efforts in accordance with Israel's wishes.

The official Palestinian leadership threatened to replace the US as the sponsor of the “peace” process or invite new sponsors to the international Quartet, but this remained rhetorical and did not materialize.

The European powers, in cooperation with Arab countries, attempted to launch a political initiative to revive the “peace process.” They held several meetings on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, calling it “Peace Day.” These efforts aimed to address the Palestine issue and prevent other players from stepping in. However, they did not result in significant progress or an initiative capable of advancing the so-called “peace process,” which has long been an endless endeavor without achieving “peace.”

In this context, the EU, Saudi Arabia and the Arab League, in cooperation with Egypt and Jordan, launched the Peace Day Effort for Middle East Peace. A joint statement was issued in September 2023 regarding this initiative, at the UN headquarters in New York, attended by about 50 foreign ministers from around the world. The initiative aimed to “to produce a ‘Peace Supporting Package’ that will maximize peace dividends for the Palestinians and Israelis once they reach a peace agreement.”²¹⁰

According to the statement, “The renewed effort is based on the urgent need to preserve the Two-State Solution,” “respect for international law” and the “respect for and full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) related to the Palestinian question.” It stressed the importance of “upholding unchanged the Status Quo of Jerusalem's Holy Sites,” and revitalizing “a meaningful peace process to achieve the Two-State Solution, in accordance with international

law, UNSC resolutions, the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative and the 2013 EU peace supporting offer.” The statement added that the Peace Day Effort wants to lay out a “vision for a comprehensive regional peace,” and that this effort aims to halt “unilateral measures that undermine the Two-State Solution.” The conveners called on all “to support Palestinian economic development and overcome all obstacles in that regard.”²¹¹

Russia also made efforts and held meetings, calling for the revival of the “peace process,” yet these efforts proved futile.

President Mahmud ‘Abbas reiterated these and other demands in his speech at the 78th session of the General Assembly on 21/9/2023, where he called for “holding of an international peace conference, in which all countries concerned with achieving peace in the Middle East will participate,” which “may be the last opportunity to salvage the two-State solution and to prevent the situation from deteriorating more seriously, threatening the security and stability of our region and the entire world.”²¹² He also called for “practical steps on the basis of the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy and international law,” and called on “the States that have not yet recognized the State of Palestine to declare their recognition and for the State of Palestine to be admitted to full membership in the United Nations.” He added:

I can neither understand, nor accept, that some States, including America and European States, are reluctant to recognize the State of Palestine, which the United Nations has accepted as an observer State. These States confirm every day their support for the two-State solution, but they recognize only one of them, which is Israel. Why? What is the danger posed by the State of Palestine obtaining full membership in the United Nations?²¹³

As expected, all these demands remained unimplemented, with no steps taken to change course, despite the decisions by the PCC and PNC from the former’s session in March 2015 until the writing of this report.

The persistence of the official leadership in maintaining the same failed policy and its continuous reproduction can be attributed to their reliance on a singular strategy without supplementing it with additional approaches, particularly those aimed at consolidating power and exerting pressure. This includes various forms of resistance, notably armed resistance, and tactics such as boycotts, which have proven effective. Additionally, resorting to international courts like the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the ICJ has not been sufficiently leveraged.

National unity, although used as a tactical pressure tool, has not been adopted as a permanent strategy due to fears of potential confrontations resulting from policy changes. Furthermore, the preservation of interests, influence, power, and extensive networks built over decades of occupation and nearly 17 years of division plays a crucial role in maintaining the same failed policy. An integrated structure and diverse interest groups have emerged, with their interests, roles and even survival intricately linked to maintaining the current status quo.

Israeli governments have gone further, especially since Benjamin Netanyahu took office in Israel in 2009. They have invested in the Palestinian schism, as Netanyahu has repeatedly stated, and in separating WB from GS, imposing economic and security “peace” as the only solution and ceiling for dealing with Palestinians in WB and GS. This has reached the point of refusing to hold any political meeting with President Mahmud ‘Abbas or any Palestinian leadership; indeed there has been no political meeting, and the few meetings that were held were security and economic in nature without the president’s participation. This is what the official Palestinian leadership practically dealt with, although it officially rejected it. However, as noted above, this leadership has not implemented the decisions of the Palestinian consensus, including those of the PCC and PNC, over which it has complete control. Hamas and PIJ have not been admitted to these councils, and key factions, most notably the PFLP, have boycotted them in opposition to the unilateral approach and the failure to implement decisions aimed at reconsidering the relationship with Israel and abandoning the Oslo Accords and their political, economic and security obligations.

In this context, the ‘Aqaba security summit and Sharm El-Sheikh summit were held with a focus on security and economic issues. The final statement of the Sharm El-Sheikh summit stated, “The five Parties held thorough discussions on ways and means to de-escalate tensions on the ground between Palestinians and Israelis, in order to pave a way forward towards the peaceful settlement between the Israelis and Palestinians.”²¹⁴

The statement added:

The Parties reaffirmed their commitment to advancing security, stability and peace for Israelis and Palestinians alike, and recognized the necessity of de-escalation on the ground, the prevention of further violence, as well as of pursuing confidence building measures, enhancing mutual trust, creating political horizon, and addressing outstanding issues through direct dialogue.²¹⁵

Israel and the PA “reaffirmed their joint readiness and commitment to immediately work to end unilateral measures for a period of 3–6 months. This includes an Israeli commitment to stop discussion of any new settlement units for 4 months, and to stop authorization of any outposts for 6 months.”²¹⁶

Participating in the ‘Aqaba security summit and Sharm El-Sheikh summit indicates a continued reliance on the security approach. These are also new attempts to strengthen the increasingly weak PA, which continually loses its legitimacy due to the failure of its political program and its avoidance of elections to maintain power. The PA has practically become the end rather than the means, neglecting the objective of ending the occupation and realizing the independence of the State of Palestine, which was recognized as a non-member observer state by the UN, with the US using its veto in the UN Security Council to prevent full membership.

1. Operation al-Aqsa Flood and the Peace Process

Without a doubt, Operation al-Aqsa Flood had a significant impact on the peace process, changing everything. It brought the Palestine issue to the forefront as never before and strongly reaffirmed that all attempts, initiatives and plans to liquidate the Palestine issue, bypass it, or imagine that Arab-Israeli normalization could marginalize it, have failed. Operation al-Aqsa Flood shattered Netanyahu’s dream of completing normalization and reaching an agreement with Saudi Arabia, which announced the suspension of talks and reaffirmed its commitment to the Arab Peace Initiative and the implementation of the “two-state solution.”

After Operation al-Aqsa Flood, regardless of the ultimate outcome of this war, the Palestine issue will impose itself on various international players. This does not signify a great opportunity to reach an agreed-upon solution between the official Palestinian and Israeli leaderships. Any opportunity is constrained by the lack of an Israeli partner for “peace,” the absence of international will, especially from the US, to pressure Israel, and the Biden administration’s adaptation to the reality of right-wing Israeli governments opposed to “peaceful settlement” and the very principle of establishing a Palestinian state, even a nominal one. Washington’s only demand from Tel Aviv is to show some flexibility regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state without actually establishing it, to lure Saudi Arabia and other Arab and Muslim countries into normalization.

The Biden administration does not want a Palestinian state because if it did, it would have pressured Israel. It knows that creating a de facto reality of settlements

in WB, where the number of settlers has reached about a million, makes the establishment of a state very difficult, if not impossible.

What exacerbates the situation is the weakness of the official Arab stance, which coexists with the reality created by Israeli governments, leading to a continuous lowering of the Arab position's ceiling. Normalization with Israel has become an open secret, and the trend towards joining the Abraham Accords without solving the Palestine issue has become dominant. The final touches for Saudi-Israeli normalization were almost completed before 7/10/2023, in exchange for improving the lives of Palestinians and starting a political process that would end—rather than start—with the establishment of a Palestinian state.

This approach means attempting the same strategies that have failed before, but under even less favorable conditions and with full knowledge of their likely outcome. In other words, there are no grand illusions or risky gambles. A significant portion of the official Arab leadership now believes that normalization with Israel is inevitable, even if it comes at the expense of the Palestine issue.

In this context, it is important to understand the strong push for the so-called “two-state solution,” even during the height of the war, and the ongoing calls for its implementation. The frequent emphasis on the “two-state solution” in statements from President Biden and members of his administration has, as reported by Israeli media, drawn criticism from the Israeli government. Figures such as Benny Gantz and Yair Lapid, the opposition leader, have urged the White House to cease this rhetoric, arguing that it raises Palestinian and Arab expectations, embarrasses Israel and undermines its position. Additionally, the EU's insistence on the two-state solution—without initiating its own proactive measures—has remained consistent with the US stance. Despite the EU's needs and interests, which might have warranted a broader maneuvering space, as evidenced by Borrell's initiatives aimed at imposing “peace” rather than merely advocating for it, the EU has continued to align with the US position.²¹⁷

However, experience has taught us that Europe does not stray far from the US position and only acts, in the interim, when the US administration is preoccupied, to prevent other undesirable players from filling the void.

In contrast, Isma'il Haniyyah, the head of Hamas's political bureau, stated in a speech on 1/11/2023, at the height of the war, that his movement presented a comprehensive vision. This vision began with stopping the aggression, opening the

crossings, negotiating a prisoner exchange deal, and concluded with “opening the political path towards establishing an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital and the right to self-determination.”²¹⁸ This was to be achieved while maintaining Hamas’s principles, foremost of which is non-recognition of Israel.

2. Will the “Two-State Solution” Materialize?

There is little chance that the “two-state solution” will materialize after the war ends, despite any political movement that might arise. The current level of support, interaction and pressures is insufficient to realize this solution. It is more likely that the situation will revert to a status similar to pre-war conditions, with increased efforts towards a peaceful settlement. This could potentially lead to an international conference and a new political process aimed at reaching an agreement, which may serve to justify the actions of Israel and attempt to revive the normalization process.

It is also possible that proposals may emerge for a Palestinian state akin to the one proposed by Donald Trump in the “Deal of the Century.” Such a proposal would fall short of achieving true statehood and could be seen as a means to further dilute the Palestine issue from various dimensions.

Here, caution is essential. Any attempt to return to or reproduce negotiation processes must be rejected, as these have contributed to the current crisis. Instead, the Palestinian and broader Arab side should insist that any negotiation or international conference should focus on shifting the balance of power, gathering leverage and pressure, primarily through resistance, and establishing a clear political framework from the outset. Negotiations should not involve compromising Palestinian rights or leaving them in the hands of Israel, which rejects these rights and seeks to undermine the Palestine issue.

This approach requires holding the US and Western countries, and all countries advocating for the two-state solution accountable. We must demand recognition of the Palestinian state within the 1967 borders with Jerusalem as its capital, and seek UN recognition in the Security Council to obtain full membership. Only then can a serious political process begin to establish and ensure the sovereignty of the Palestinian state.

The reason this scenario is unlikely to be the first or most probable is that Israel, with its diverse factions and shifting directions—not just the Netanyahu

government—lacks any faction committed to a “peaceful settlement.” Even if the current Israeli government collapses and is replaced by one led by Benny Gantz, it would still be unlikely to engage seriously in a political process with a real prospect of achieving a comprehensive agreement. While a new Israeli government might agree to resume “peace” negotiations under pressure from the Biden administration, Biden’s re-election is not guaranteed. The potential success of Donald Trump or any Republican candidate in the upcoming US presidential election diminishes the likelihood of reaching a settlement.

3. Challenges to the Peace Process

Several significant challenges hinder the initiation of a meaningful path toward a peaceful settlement, including:

- a. The reality on the ground in WB, shaped by the Israeli occupation and the presence of nearly a million settlers, along with the physical barriers and various challenges this creates, makes any settlement consideration require substantial pressure on Israel, both internally and externally, which is currently lacking. While there are some pressures, they only permit new interim solutions with the promise of future final agreements.
- b. Continued Palestinian schism, for despite the indiscriminate nature of the war waged against Palestinians, and Netanyahu’s refusal to return to the Oslo Accords or any similar agreements (viewing Oslo as the root of all problems), the schism among Palestinians persists. Netanyahu rejects both “Fatahstan” and “Hamastan,” refusing to allow the PA to return to GS. His national security advisor, Tzachi Hanegbi, has suggested that the government might reconsider if the PA makes substantial changes to align with Israeli conditions and interests, effectively transforming the PA from a collaborator with the occupation to a client authority.
- c. Palestinian resilience and support for resistance: The steadfastness of the Palestinians and their widespread support for resistance, exemplified by the surprise attack on 7/10/2023, and the ongoing resistance during the ground war, have prevented a decisive defeat for either side. Victory is expected to be gradual, with the Palestinians paying a significant price. However, this also signifies a form of victory, as the weaker side has thwarted the stronger side’s objectives, indicating that the war has not ended despite entering a new phase. The failure of

previous stages to meet the goals of the Israeli emergency government suggests that the war will evolve into new political, military and economic dimensions. These changes aim to achieve objectives that could not be met through military means alone, potentially extending the conflict for several months or even years.

- d. As of the time of writing, Netanyahu’s emergency government remains in power and could stay until the end of the war, which might last several months or even over a year. This government rejects any political proposals or initiatives that could lead to reunification of WB and GS. It bets on the US administration entering a “lame duck” phase (start of the election campaign) after three months and postponing all matters to the elections, betting on the victory of Donald Trump or any other Republican candidate who would support it to varying degrees and adopt a plan similar to the “Deal of the Century.”

The most crucial factors influencing the peace process and all other paths are the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and the strength of the resistance; the significant losses inflicted on Israel and the efforts to transform popular and field unity into political and institutional unity. This should be based on a new comprehensive vision and unified leadership with a minimum common program, aiming for a national democratic militant unity. This unity should be founded on genuine partnership and temporary national consensus, with goal of appealing to the people through elections as soon as possible thereafter.

Proposing a comprehensive political, economic, cultural and resistance program for the current phase, can outline achievable goals, even if fully realizing them may be unlikely. However, it can help avert dangers, reduce costs and obstruct Israeli plans. The battle on the ground and in politics revolves around the fate of WB and GS. The political struggle must be fought to the end with the same competence shown by the military resistance, ensuring that political movements do not infringe upon or contradict fundamental rights. Instead, these movements should be a crucial step and an indispensable lever in the long conflict, where Operation al-Aqsa Flood is just a phase—a significant one, yes, but followed by more rounds.

A unified stance and a single Palestinian leadership could garner Arab and global support, leveraging various forms of struggle to end the occupation, achieve freedom, ensure the right of return and attain independence paving the way toward the liberation of all of Palestine and the dismantling of the racist settler colonial project.

Conclusion

The 2022–2023 period represents one of the most significant stages of military resistance since the establishment of Israel in 1948. The resistance in WB saw substantial qualitative leaps not witnessed in nearly twenty years (since *al-Aqsa Intifadah*). For the first time, resistance strongholds were established in Jenin, Nablus and Tulkarm, and the number of quality operations and Israeli losses doubled.

In GS, there were intense confrontations during the Unity of the Arenas and Revenge of the Free battles. However, Operation al-Aqsa Flood marked the most significant resistance action within the occupied territories over 75 years, shaking the foundations of Israel, toppling its national security doctrine, and shattering the concept of a safe haven for Jews. It struck at Israel's functional role as a forward bastion of the Western project and a regional policeman.

Despite the brutal and intense Israeli offensive on GS, which resulted in tens of thousands of casualties, and widespread destruction of infrastructure, Hamas and other resistance forces demonstrated exceptional military capability. They inflicted unprecedented losses on Israeli forces and thwarted their objectives. This resistance showcased innovative tactics in military strategy, guerrilla warfare and urban combat. A notable aspect of their efforts was the substantial popular support they garnered, which effectively countered Israeli attempts to isolate the resistance from its civilian base. The harsh realities of the occupation have undoubtedly derailed efforts toward normalization in the Arab region, isolating Israel on the international stage and branding it as a pariah.

The 2022–2023 period demonstrated the effectiveness of the resistance project, significantly increasing its support among Palestinians inside and outside Palestine. During this time, the PA's credibility diminished, with the majority of the Palestinian people losing trust in it. In opinion polls, the PA garnered minimal support compared to the resistance.

Under these circumstances, the failure of the peace process was solidified, the Oslo Accords collapsed, and Israel has moved beyond them, effectively abandoning the two-state solution, and seeking to impose its Zionist vision to close the Palestine issue. The Palestinian people have shifted away from this path. Despite calls from Western leaders and others to revive the two-state solution,

those with power to influence and apply pressure, particularly the US, are not genuinely committed (and it is unlikely under current conditions) to supporting the establishment of a fully sovereign Palestinian state in WB and GS, including East Jerusalem, or to upholding the long-recognized right of return—rights that have long been universally recognized. Consequently, resistance remains the option that nearly all Palestinians support.

Endnotes

- ¹ For more see Monthly and Annual Reports of Israel Security Agency—ISA (*Shabak*), <https://www.shabak.gov.il/english/publications/Pages/monthlyreports.aspx>
- ² Israel-Hamas Conflict 2023: Humanitarian Efforts, site of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel, 16/12/2023, <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/israel-hamas-conflict-2023-humanitarian-efforts>
- ³ Shabak Monthly and Annual Reports.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2022, Mo3ta, 3/1/2023.
- ⁶ Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2023, Mo3ta, 2/1/2024.
- ⁷ For more, see Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2022, Mo3ta, 3/1/2023; and Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2023, Mo3ta, 2/1/2024.
- ⁸ Ibid. For more, see Periodic Reports, Mo3ta, https://mo3ta.ps/?page_id=826
- ⁹ Army chief spurns Smotrich's W. Bank powers: IDF reports only to defense minister, The Times of Israel, 13/1/2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-chief-denounces-governments-west-bank-plans-in-farewell-interviews/>
- ¹⁰ Wafa, 9/2/2022, <https://www.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/41150> (in Arabic)
- ¹¹ Wafa, 26/1/2023, <https://www.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/63659> (in Arabic); and Wafa, 3/7/2023, <https://www.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/74132> (in Arabic)
- ¹² Wafa, 18/10/2023, <https://www.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/82112> (in Arabic)
- ¹³ Security coordination between the occupation and the Palestinian Authority What does it mean and will it continue?, Aljazeera.net, 26/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Aljazeera.net, 19/9/2022. (in Arabic); and *Asharq al-Awsat*, 27/10/2022. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁶ Israel's DM Gantz speaks with Palestinian leader Abbas, stresses cooperation, site of i24NEWS, 28/12/2022, <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/diplomacy/1672248663-israel-s-gantz-speaks-with-palestinian-leader-abbas-stresses-cooperation>
- ¹⁷ See Security coordination between the occupation and the Palestinian Authority What does it mean and will it continue?, Aljazeera.net, 26/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁸ Raialyoum, 13/9/2022.
- ¹⁹ Arab 48, 19/2/2023.
- ²⁰ *Asharq al-Awsat*, 27/2/2023. (in Arabic)
- ²¹ Security coordination between the occupation and the Palestinian Authority What does it mean and will it continue?, Aljazeera.net, 26/12/2023. (in Arabic)
See also Reem Cohen, A Functional Palestinian Authority: An Essential Israeli Interest, Insight No. 1796, INSS, 11/12/2023, <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/functioning-pa/>
- ²² Secretary Antony J. Blinken Remarks to the Press, site of U.S. Department of State, 5/11/2023, <https://www.state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-remarks-to-the-press-16/>
- ²³ Alaa 'Amleh, Resistance Groups in the West Bank... Details of Emergence and Development, Masarat, 19/9/2023.

- ²⁴ Jenin Battalion.. Established to Defend Escaped Prisoners and Became the Jenin RC’s Shield, Aljazeera.net, 22/12/2023, <https://aja.ws/15er94> (in Arabic)
- ²⁵ For more, see Quds Press, 8/6/2023; Aljazeera.net, 2/7/2023, <https://aja.me/nfte9n> (in Arabic); and Aljazeera.net, 21/8/2023, <https://aja.me/8gqupe> (in Arabic)
- ²⁶ Mahmud Rantissi, The Evolution of Resistance in the West Bank, Aljazeera.net, 22/8/2023, <https://aja.me/jc8nx> (in Arabic)
- ²⁷ *Al-‘Arabi al-Jadid*, 4/7/2023; Quds Press, 5/7/2023, <https://qudspress.com/61864/>; and Felesteen Online, 18/8/2023.
- ²⁸ The Jenin Battalion and the Lions’ Den Exclusive interviews, details and secrets about the escalating resistance in the West Bank, Aljazeera.net, 8/1/2023, <https://aja.me/22ojca> (in Arabic)
- ²⁹ Jenin Battalion.. Established to Defend Escaped Prisoners and Became the Jenin RC’s Shield, Aljazeera.net, 22/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ For more, see Quds Press, 27/11/2022, <https://qudspress.com/9342>; Quds Press, 2/5/2023, <https://qudspress.com/44485>; *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 18/7/2023; and Aljazeera.net, 18/7/2023, <https://aja.me/ned545> (in Arabic)
- ³² *Alquds*, 17/7/2023 (in Arabic); and *Asharq al-Awsat*, 19/7/2023. (in Arabic)
- ³³ Jenin Battalion.. Established to Defend Escaped Prisoners and Became the Jenin RC’s Shield, Aljazeera.net, 22/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ³⁴ The Jenin Battalion and the Lions’ Den Exclusive interviews, details and secrets about the escalating resistance in the West Bank, Aljazeera.net, 8/1/2023. (in Arabic)
- ³⁵ Alaa ‘Amleh, Resistance Groups in the West Bank... Details of Emergence and Development, Masarat, 19/9/2023.
- ³⁶ Shehab News Agency (@ShehabAgency), site of X (Twitter), 26/10/2022, 6:37 p.m., <https://twitter.com/ShehabAgency/status/1585294483071160320>
- ³⁷ *Asharq al-Awsat*, 29/4/2023 (in Arabic); and *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 3/5/2023.
- ³⁸ Al-Mayadeen Channel, 9/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ³⁹ Al-Mayadeen Channel, 9/11/2023. (in Arabic)
- ⁴⁰ Aljazeera.net, 25/4/2024, <https://aja.ws/p3xgdo> (in Arabic)
- ⁴¹ Aljazeera.net, 17/12/2023, <https://aja.ws/ijo90v> (in Arabic)
- ⁴² Aljazeera.net, 30/8/2023, <https://aja.me/kkz8x1> (in Arabic)
- ⁴³ Aljazeera.net, 18/7/2023. (in Arabic)
- ⁴⁴ For more, see Quds Press, 6/3/2023, <https://qudspress.com/30392>; and Quds Press, 6/10/2023, <https://qudspress.com/82119>
- ⁴⁵ *Asharq al-Awsat*, 3/8/2022. (in Arabic)
- ⁴⁶ *Asharq al-Awsat*, 6/8/2022 (in Arabic). See also *Haaretz*, 5/8/2022.
- ⁴⁷ Al-Mayadeen Channel, 5/8/2022 (in Arabic); and Aljazeera.net, 6/8/2022. (in Arabic)
- ⁴⁸ Arabi21, 5/8/2022.
- ⁴⁹ *Asharq al-Awsat*, 7/8/2022 (in Arabic); and Aljazeera.net, 8/8/2022. (in Arabic)
- ⁵⁰ Prime Minister’s Office, Israel, 8/8/2022. See also The Times of Israel, 7/8/2022, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/with-gaza-ceasefire-imminent-lapid-tells-mayors-israel-has-achieved-its-goals/>
- ⁵¹ Ceasefire Between Israel, Palestinian Militants ‘Fragile’, Middle East Coordinator Tells Security Council, Urging All Parties to Uphold Truce, Safeguard Past Gains, UN, Security Council, 9107TH Meeting (PM), SC/14994, 8/8/2022, <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14994.doc.htm>

- ⁵² Monthly Report August 2022, Shabak, <https://www.shabak.gov.il/media/xkxf3fws/082022.pdf>
- ⁵³ Felesteen Online, 8/8/2022. See also Ceasefire Between Israel, Palestinian Militants ‘Fragile’, Middle East Coordinator Tells Security Council, Urging All Parties to Uphold Truce, Safeguard Past Gains, UN, Security Council, 9107TH Meeting (PM), SC/14994, 8/8/2022.
- ⁵⁴ Aljazeera.net, 8/8/2022. (in Arabic)
- ⁵⁵ Ceasefire Between Israel, Palestinian Militants ‘Fragile’, Middle East Coordinator Tells Security Council, Urging All Parties to Uphold Truce, Safeguard Past Gains, UN, Security Council, 9107TH Meeting (PM), SC/14994, 8/8/2022.
- ⁵⁶ Felesteen Online, 8/8/2022.
- ⁵⁷ Aljazeera.net, 9/5/2023. (in Arabic)
- ⁵⁸ Monthly Report May 2023, Shabak, <https://www.shabak.gov.il/media/iwcjetrv/%D7%90%D7%A0%D7%92%D7%9C%D7%99%D7%AA-%D7%9E%D7%90%D7%99.pdf>
- ⁵⁹ *Asharq al-Awsat*, 14/5/2023 (in Arabic); and Quds Press, 14/5/2023, <https://qudspress.com/48677>
- ⁶⁰ *Al-Ayyam*, Ramallah, 15/5/2023.
- ⁶¹ Felesteen Online, 14/5/2023.
- ⁶² PIC, 7/10/2023, <https://palinfo.com/?p=852723> (in Arabic); and Safa, 7/10/2023, <https://safa.ps/p/363487>
- ⁶³ Mohsen Mohammad Saleh, Al-Aqsa Flood... Dealing with the Day After, al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies and Consultations, 16/10/2023, <https://eng.alzaytouna.net/2023/10/16/political-analysis-al-aqsa-flood-dealing-with-the-day-after/>
- ⁶⁴ Maayan Jaffe-Hoffman, Netanyahu: Israel fighting second War of Independence, *The Jerusalem Post*, 27/10/2023, <https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-770514>
- ⁶⁵ Netanyahu: ‘We are in an existential war, Israel has to win,’ The Times of Israel, 7/3/2024, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/netanyahu-we-are-in-an-existential-war-israel-has-to-win
- ⁶⁶ Emanuel Fabian, Gallant: If Hamas isn’t totally dismantled, we won’t be able to live in Israel, The Times of Israel, 17/1/2024, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/gallant-if-hamas-isnt-totally-dismantled-we-wont-be-able-to-live-in-israel/
- ⁶⁷ Mohsen Mohammad Saleh, Al-Aqsa Flood... Dealing with the Day After, al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies and Consultations, 16/10/2023.
- ⁶⁸ Sa’id al-Haj, Facts about the occupation that bode well for its demise, Aljazeera.net, 1/1/2024. (in Arabic)
- ⁶⁹ Paul Blumenthal, Israeli President Suggests That Civilians In Gaza Are Legitimate Targets, site of Huffpost, 13/10/2023, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/israel-gaza-isaac-herzog_n_65295ee8e4b03ea0c004e2a8
- ⁷⁰ Emanuel Fabian, Defense minister announces ‘complete siege’ of Gaza: No power, food or fuel, The Times of Israel, 9/10/2023, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/defense-minister-announces-complete-siege-of-gaza-no-power-food-or-fuel/
- ⁷¹ PIC, 7/10/2023, <https://palinfo.com/?p=852723> (in Arabic); and Safa, 7/10/2023, <https://safa.ps/p/363487>
- ⁷² Felesteen Online, 7/10/2023.
- ⁷³ Israel at War: Over 1300 murdered, dozens of civilians taken hostage, in surprise Hamas attack, site of Calcalistech, 7/10/2023, <https://www.calcalistech.com/ctechnews/article/bjudnkrla>

- ⁷⁴ Emanuel Fabian, Gallant declares emergency situation in south, center; gatherings restricted, *The Times of Israel*, 7/10/2023, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/gallant-declares-emergency-situation-in-south-center-gatherings-restricted/; Amos Harel, Analysis | Israel-Gaza War: A Catastrophic Failure That Will Send Political Shockwaves, *Haaretz*, 8/10/2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-10-08/ty-article/.premium/a-failure-of-all-systems-with-political-shock-waves-like-73/0000018b-0c06-dae3-a1cb-bd0f3be90000>; and Dan Williams, How the Hamas attack on Israel unfolded, site of Reuters News Agency, 7/10/2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/how-hamas-attack-israel-unfolded-2023-10-07/>
- ⁷⁵ Israel's police chief: "We're in a state of war," *Haaretz*, 7/10/2023, https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-10-07/ty-article-live/israel-under-attack-terrorists-infiltrate-from-gaza-amid-massive-rocket-barrages/0000018b-088b-dae9-adcb-abbff50f0000?liveBlogItemId=1317892253&utm_source=site&utm_medium=button&utm_campaign=live_blog_item#1317892253
- ⁷⁶ Quds Press, 8/10/2023, <https://qudspress.com/82969>
- ⁷⁷ PIC, 9/10/2023, <https://palinfo.com/?p=853173> (in Arabic); and site of Ezzedeen al-Qassam Brigades, 8/10/2023, <https://www.alqassam.ps/arabic/news/details/19625>
- ⁷⁸ *Alquds*, 9/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ⁷⁹ Aljazeera.net, 12/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ⁸⁰ Aljazeera.net, 16/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ⁸¹ Alray—Palestinian Media Agency, 8/10/2023, <https://alray.ps/ar/post/282783> (in Arabic)
- ⁸² PM's Office Statement from Coordinator for the Captives and Missing Brig.-Gen. (Ret.) Gal Hirsch, Prime Minister's Office, Israel, 9/10/2023, <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/spoke-pmo091023>
- ⁸³ Jacob Magid, Israel revises death count from Oct. 7 Hamas onslaught, dropping it from 1,400 to 1,200, *Times of Israel*, 10/11/2023, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/israel-revises-death-count-from-oct-7-hamas-onslaught-dropping-it-from-1400-to-1200/; and Emine Sinmaz, Gaza's largest hospital being bombarded, WHO says, *The Guardian* newspaper, 10/11/2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/nov/10/netanyahu-says-israel-is-not-seeking-to-occupy-gaza>
- ⁸⁴ PIC, 7/10/2023, <https://palinfo.com/?p=852723> (in Arabic); and Safa, 7/10/2023, <https://safa.ps/p/363487>
- ⁸⁵ Felesteen Online, 7/10/2023.
- ⁸⁶ Quds Press, 7/10/2023, <https://qudspress.com/82193>
- ⁸⁷ Aljazeera.net, 12/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ⁸⁸ Security Cabinet approves war situation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel, 8/10/2023, <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/security-cabinet-approves-war-situation-8-oct-2023>
- ⁸⁹ Israel Defense Forces (@IDF), X (Twitter), 7/10/2023, 11:59 a.m., <https://x.com/IDF/status/1710580568302223374>
- ⁹⁰ Jeremy Sharon, Carrie Keller-Lynn and Amy Spiro, After days of indecision, Netanyahu, Gantz agree to establish emergency war government, *The Times of Israel*, 11/10/2023.
- ⁹¹ Carrie Keller-Lynn, Knesset okays war cabinet; PM: Saturday "most horrible day for Jews since Holocaust," *The Times of Israel*, 12/10/2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/knesset-okays-war-cabinet-pm-saturday-most-horrible-day-for-jews-since-holocaust/>
- ⁹² Correction: Statement by PM Netanyahu, Prime Minister's Office, Israel, 7/10/2023, <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/event-statement071023>
- ⁹³ PM Netanyahu to US President Joe Biden: "We've never seen such savagery in the history of the State. They're even worse than ISIS and we need to treat them as such," Prime Minister's Office, Israel, 10/10/2023, <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/spoke-biden101023>

- ⁹⁴ Anadolu Agency, 11/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ⁹⁵ *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 13/10/2023.
- ⁹⁶ Aljazeera.net, 10/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ⁹⁷ Human Rights Watch (@hrw), X (Twitter), 9/10/2023, 7:54 p.m., <https://x.com/hrw/status/1711424885908791505>
- ⁹⁸ Emanuel Fabian, Defense minister announces ‘complete siege’ of Gaza: No power, food or fuel, The Times of Israel, 9/10/2023; and Energy minister instructs authorities to cut off water to Gaza, The Times of Israel, 9/10/2023, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/energy-minister-instructs-authorities-to-cut-off-water-to-gaza/
- ⁹⁹ Emanuel Fabian, Defense Minister Gallant: ‘Israel will win this war,’ Hamas made ‘grave mistake’ with surprise attack, The Times of Israel, 7/10/2023, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/defense-minister-gallant-hamas-made-grave-mistake-with-surprise-widespread-attack/
- ¹⁰⁰ Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III Joint Press Conference With Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant in Tel Aviv, Israel, site of U.S. Department of Defense, 13/10/2023, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/3556642/secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iii-joint-press-conference-with-israeli-def/>
- ¹⁰¹ Joint Statement on Israel, site of The White House, 9/10/2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/10/09/joint-statement-on-israel/>
- ¹⁰² U.S. not planning to put military on ground following attack on Israel, Reuters, 10/10/2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-not-planning-put-military-ground-following-attack-israel-2023-10-09/>
- ¹⁰³ Readout of President Biden’s Call with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel, The White House, 8/10/2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/10/08/readout-of-president-bidens-call-with-prime-minister-netanyahu-of-israel/>
- ¹⁰⁴ Remarks by President Biden on the Terrorist Attacks in Israel, The White House, 10/10/2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2023/10/10/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-terrorist-attacks-in-israel-2/>
- ¹⁰⁵ Aljazeera.net, 10/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁰⁶ Aljazeera.net, 31/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁰⁷ Aljazeera.net, 2/11/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁰⁸ *Al-‘Arabi al-Jadid*, 28/10/2023.
- ¹⁰⁹ Aljazeera.net, 3/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹¹⁰ Aljazeera.net, 31/12/2023. (in Arabic); and Aljazeera.net, 1/1/2024. (in Arabic)
- ¹¹¹ Nearly 30,000 Palestinians killed during 82-day Israeli genocide in Gaza, site of Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, 27/12/2023, <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6064/Nearly-30,000-Palestinians-killed-during-82-day-Israeli-genocide-in-Gaza#:~:text=The%20death%20toll%20of%20Israel’s,the%20human%20rights%20organisation%20said.>
- ¹¹² Aljazeera.net, 26/11/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹¹³ *Al-Youm al-Sabi*’, 2/1/2024.
- ¹¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁵ See Israeli Occupation Aggression on Palestine since 7/10/2023, PCBS, <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps> (Accessed on 9/3/2024)
- ¹¹⁶ Aljazeera.net, 22/1/2024, <https://aja.ws/lz7og0> (in Arabic)
- ¹¹⁷ See Israeli Occupation Aggression on Palestine since 7/10/2023, PCBS. (Accessed on 9/3/2024)

- ¹¹⁸ Aljazeera.net, 31/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹¹⁹ For more, see H.E. Dr. Ola Awad, President of PCBS presents a brief on the status of the Palestinian people at the end of 2023, PCBS, 31/12/2023, <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4676>
- ¹²⁰ Aljazeera.net, 31/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹²¹ Aljazeera.net, 12/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹²² Emanuel Fabian, IDF to probe operational failures in lead-up to Oct. 7, drawing rage from ministers, *The Times of Israel*, 5/1/2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-announces-probe-of-failures-in-lead-up-to-oct-7-drawing-rage-from-ministers/#:~:text=Israel%20Defense%20Forces%20Chief%20of,criticism%20from%20right%20Dwing%20ministers>.
- ¹²³ *The New York Times* newspaper, 30/12/2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/30/world/middleeast/israeli-military-amas-failures.html>
- ¹²⁴ For more, see Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2023, Mo3ta, 2/1/2024; site of the Israeli Army, <https://www.idf.il> (in Hebrew); and *The Times of Israel*, 8/10/2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/authorities-name-44-soldiers-30-police-officers-killed-in-amas-attack> (accessed on 3/1/2024)
- ¹²⁵ Anadolu Agency, 23/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹²⁶ *The New York Times*, 27/12/2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/27/world/middleeast/israel-amas-gaza-rockets.html>
- ¹²⁷ Aljazeera.net, 26/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹²⁸ Aljazeera.net, 28/12/2023 (in Arabic); and site of the Israeli Army (in Hebrew). See also *The Times of Israel*, 3/1/2024.
- ¹²⁹ Abdelraouf Arnaout, 29 Israeli soldiers killed in ‘friendly fire, operational incidents’ during Gaza battles, Anadolu Agency, 1/1/2024; and Yaki Adamker, Over 15 IDF soldiers pronounced dead in Gaza without bodies, *The Jerusalem Post*, 28/12/2023, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-779893>
- ¹³⁰ Aljazeera.net, 19/11/2023 (in Arabic); *The Palestine Chronicle* (@PalestineChron), X (Twitter), 20/11/2023, 1:14 a.m., <https://x.com/PalestineChron/status/1726378376389165155>
- ¹³¹ Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2023, Mo3ta, 2/1/2024.
- ¹³² Ido Efrati and Yaniv Kubovich, IDF Reports 1,593 Wounded Since October 7, but Hospital Data Is Much Higher, *Haaretz*, 10/12/2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-12-10/ty-article/.premium/idf-reports-1-593-wounded-since-october-7-but-hospital-data-is-much-higher/0000018c-552d-df4b-a78e-d52f47ac0000>; and Aljazeera.net, 11/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹³³ *Haaretz* newspaper, 31/12/2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-12-31/ty-article/.premium/as-mental-health-system-in-israel-collapses-psychiatrists-are-leaving-for-britain/0000018c-c026-d3e0-abac-d8af89aa0000>
- ¹³⁴ Ido Efrati, 1,600 Israeli Soldiers Suffer From PTSD Since Start of War; 90 Discharged From Service, *Haaretz*, 3/1/2024, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-01-03/ty-article/.premium/1-600-israeli-soldiers-suffer-from-ptsd-since-start-of-war-90-discharged-from-service/0000018c-cfb7-d4e1-ad8f-ffb7ac230002>
- ¹³⁵ Ahmad Abu al-Haija, The West Bank and the Conflict of Paths.. Why is It Absent From the “Al-Aqsa Flood” Scene?, Aljazeera.net, 14/11/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹³⁶ See Israeli Occupation Aggression on Palestine since 7/10/2023, PCBS. (Accessed on 31/12/2023)
- ¹³⁷ Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2023, Mo3ta, 2/1/2024.
- ¹³⁸ Ahmad Abu al-Haija, The West Bank and the Conflict of Paths.. Why is It Absent From the “Al-Aqsa Flood” Scene?, Aljazeera.net, 14/11/2023. (in Arabic)

- ¹³⁹ *Al-Akhbar*, 9/10/2023, <https://al-akhbar.com/Politics/370817>
- ¹⁴⁰ Aljazeera.net, 25/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁴¹ *Asharq al-Awsat*, 3/11/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁴² Anadolu Agency, 4/1/2024 (in Arabic); and see Martyrs on the Path to Jerusalem, site of al-Manar TV, 4/1/2024, <https://www.almanar.com.lb/qods-martyrs>
- ¹⁴³ For more, see site of the Israeli Army (in Hebrew). See also The Times of Israel, 3/1/2024.
- ¹⁴⁴ Site of al-Manar TV, 5/1/2024, <https://www.almanar.com.lb/11488160>
- ¹⁴⁵ For more, see PIC, 18/10/2023, <https://palinfo.com/?p=855481> (in Arabic); and NNA, 29/10/2023.
- ¹⁴⁶ *Al-Akhbar*, 27/10/2023.
- ¹⁴⁷ Aljazeera.net, 12/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁴⁸ NNA, 10/10/2023; Quds Press, 19/10/2023, <https://qudspress.com/87482>; Quds Press, 29/10/2023, <https://qudspress.com/90578>; NNA, 2/11/2023; NNA, 6/11/2023; and Anadolu Agency, 19/12/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁴⁹ PIC, 14/10/2023, <https://palinfo.com/?p=854466> (in Arabic)
- ¹⁵⁰ NNA, 22/11/2023.
- ¹⁵¹ Aljazeera.net, 2/1/2024. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁵² NNA, 10/10/2023.
- ¹⁵³ Site of Elnashra, 21/10/2023, <https://www.elnashra.com/>
- ¹⁵⁴ Aljazeera.net, 30/10/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁵⁵ NNA, 29/12/2023.
- ¹⁵⁶ *Al-'Arabi al-Jadid*, 1/11/2023; and Arabi21, 1/11/2023.
- ¹⁵⁷ Site of al-Alam TV, 10/10/2023, <https://www.alalam.ir/>
- ¹⁵⁸ Arabi21, 22/10/2023.
- ¹⁵⁹ For more, see *Al-'Arabi al-Jadid*, 6/11/2023; and *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 9/11/2023.
- ¹⁶⁰ Site of al-Manar TV, 5/12/2023, <https://www.almanar.com.lb/11339957>
- ¹⁶¹ Aljazeera.net, 19/11/2023. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁶² Aljazeera.net, 5/1/2024 (in Arabic). See also Erin Banco, Lara Seligman and Alexander Ward, The war in Gaza may widen. The Biden admin is getting ready for it, site of POLITICO, 4/1/2024, <https://www.politico.com/news/2024/01/04/war-gaza-widen-biden-getting-ready-00133949>
- ¹⁶³ Statement from Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III on Ensuring Freedom of Navigation in the Red Sea, U.S. Department of State, 18/12/2023, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3621110/statement-from-secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iii-on-ensuring-freedom-of-n/#:~:text=Therefore%2C%20today%20I%20am%20announcing,security%20in-%20the%20Red%20Sea.>
- ¹⁶⁴ Site of Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), 31/12/2023.
- ¹⁶⁵ PIC, 3/11/2023, <https://palinfo.com/?p=859299> (in Arabic); and PIC, 28/12/2023, <https://palinfo.com/?p=869485> (in Arabic)
- ¹⁶⁶ RT, 7/1/2024. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁶⁷ Michael Knights, Amir al-Kaabi and Hamdi Malik, Tracking Anti-U.S. Strikes in Iraq and Syria During the Gaza Crisis, site of Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 16/5/2024, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/tracking-anti-us-strikes-iraq-and-syria-during-gaza-crisis>
- ¹⁶⁸ Anna Ahronheim, Israel completes upgraded barrier with the Gaza Strip, *The Jerusalem Post*, 7/12/2021, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/israel-completes-upgraded-barrier-with-the-gaza-strip-688089>

¹⁶⁹ TRT, 21/10/2023.

¹⁷⁰ Aljazeera.net, 21/12/2023. (in Arabic)

¹⁷¹ *Yedioth Ahronoth* newspaper, 25/12/2023, <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/yokra13729290> (in Hebrew)

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Annual Report 2022: The Israeli Aggression Against Palestinians in 2022, Palestinian Ministry of Health: Emergency Operation Center, Facebook, 2/2/2023, <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=548011950759105&set=a.274345968125706>

¹⁷⁵ See Israeli Occupation Aggression on Palestine since 7/10/2023, PCBS. (Accessed on 31/12/2023)

¹⁷⁶ Annual Report 2022: The Israeli Aggression Against Palestinians in 2022, Palestinian Ministry of Health: Emergency Operation Center, Facebook, 2/2/2023.

¹⁷⁷ See Israeli Occupation Aggression on Palestine since 7/10/2023, PCBS. (Accessed on 31/12/2023)

¹⁷⁸ For more, see Shabak Monthly and Annual Reports.

¹⁷⁹ For more, see Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2023, Mo3ta, 2/1/2024; and site of the Israeli Army, (in Hebrew). See also *The Times of Israel*, 3/1/2024.

¹⁸⁰ For more, see Shabak Monthly and Annual Reports.

¹⁸¹ For more, see Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2023, Mo3ta, 2/1/2024; and site of the Israeli Army (in Hebrew). See also *The Times of Israel*, 3/1/2024.

¹⁸² As for the number of Israelis and Palestinians killed and wounded in 2019–2021, see Mohsen Mohammad Saleh, *The Palestine Strategic Report 2018–2019*, p. 213; and Mohsen Mohammad Saleh (ed.), *The Palestine Strategic Report 2020–2021* (Beirut: Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies and Consultations, 2022), p. 218.

For the number of Israelis killed and wounded in 2022–2023, see Shabak Monthly and Annual Reports; Annual Report on Resistance Activities in the West Bank for the Year 2023, Mo3ta, 2/1/2024; and site of the Israeli Army (in Hebrew).

For the number of Palestinians killed and wounded in 2022–2023, see Annual Report 2022: The Israeli Aggression Against Palestinians in 2022, Palestinian Ministry of Health: Emergency Operation Center, Facebook, 2/2/2023; and Israeli Occupation Aggression on Palestine since 7/10/2023, PCBS. (Accessed on 31/12/2023)

¹⁸³ During 2023: About 11,000 Palestinians were detained by the Israeli occupation forces, half of them after October 7, site of Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association—Addameer, 3/1/2024, <https://www.addameer.org/ar/news/5257> (in Arabic)

¹⁸⁴ See Israeli Occupation Aggression on Palestine since 7/10/2023, PCBS. (Accessed on 31/12/2023)

¹⁸⁵ 2022 In Review, Addameer, 1/1/2023, <https://www.addameer.org/media/4968>

¹⁸⁶ Palestinian prisoners are victims of torture and systematic executions as international organisations are silent, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, 9/3/2024, <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6215/Palestinian-prisoners-are-victims-of-torture-and-systematic-executions-as-international-organisations-are-silent>

¹⁸⁷ The Israeli Genocide in the Gaza Strip: 7 October – 23 February 2024, Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, 23/2/2024, https://euromedmonitor.org/uploads/IMG_8905.png

¹⁸⁸ 2022 In Review, Addameer, 1/1/2023; and During 2023: About 11,000 Palestinians were detained by the Israeli occupation forces, half of them after October 7, Addameer, 3/1/2024. (in Arabic)

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

- ¹⁹¹ During 2023: About 11,000 Palestinians were detained by the Israeli occupation forces, half of them after October 7, Addameer, 3/1/2024. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁹² See Statistics of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons, Addameer, <http://www.addameer.org/ar/statistics> (in Arabic); and for the year 2023, figures published on 5/2/2024 were used.
- ¹⁹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁵ 2022 In Review, Addameer, 1/1/2023; and During 2023: About 11,000 Palestinians were detained by the Israeli occupation forces, half of them after October 7, Addameer, 3/1/2024. (in Arabic)
- ¹⁹⁶ For more, see “Annual Report 2022,” site of Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), 26/6/2023, <https://pchrgaza.org/en/annual-report-2022/>; see also the monthly reports about the closure of the crossings in Gaza Strip, PCHR, <https://pchrgaza.org/en/category/closure-update-other-publications/>
- ¹⁹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁸ Ibid. (1 nautical mile = 1.852 km)
- ¹⁹⁹ Human Rights Watch (@hrw), X (Twitter), 9/10/2023, 7:54 p.m., <https://x.com/hrw/status/1711424885908791505>
- ²⁰⁰ Emanuel Fabian, Defense minister announces ‘complete siege’ of Gaza: No power, food or fuel, The Times of Israel, 9/10/2023; and Energy minister instructs authorities to cut off water to Gaza, The Times of Israel, 9/10/2023, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/energy-minister-instructs-authorities-to-cut-off-water-to-gaza/
- ²⁰¹ Initial reporting on the ongoing Israeli retaliatory attacks on Gaza: (Reporting Period, 7–28 October 2023) based on preliminary documentation, site of Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, 13/11/2023, <https://www.mezan.org/en/post/46305>
- ²⁰² For more, see “Annual Report 2022,” PCHR, 26/6/2023; and see also the monthly reports about the closure of the crossings in Gaza Strip, PCHR.
- ²⁰³ *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 24/12/2022.
- ²⁰⁴ Remarks by President Biden on the October 7th Terrorist Attacks and the Resilience of the State of Israel and its People, The White House, 18/10/2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2023/10/18/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-october-7th-terrorist-attacks-and-the-resilience-of-the-state-of-israel-and-its-people-tel-aviv-israel/>
- ²⁰⁵ Israel/Gaza: Opening remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the 8th Regional Forum of the Union for Mediterranean, site of European Union External Action, 27/11/2023, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/israelgaza-opening-remarks-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-8th-regional-forum-union_en
- ²⁰⁶ President Abbas at UNGA: Our confidence in achieving peace based on justice and international law is waning, Wafa, 23/9/2022, <https://english.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/130977>
- ²⁰⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁰⁸ President Abbas calls for not dealing with any Israeli government that does not recognize international legitimacy, Wafa, 9/12/2022, <https://english.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/132282>
- ²⁰⁹ Xi Jinping Holds Talks with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, site of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The People’s Republic of China, 14/6/2023, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202306/t20230618_11099414.html#:~:text=On%20the%20afternoon%20of%20June,partnership%20between%20China%20and%20Palestine.
- ²¹⁰ MEPP: The European Union, Saudi Arabia, the Arab League, in cooperation with Egypt and Jordan, launch the Peace Day Effort for Middle East Peace, and invite the world to join, European Union External Action, 18/9/2023, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/mepp-european-union-saudi-arabia-arab-league-cooperation-egypt-and-jordan-launch-peace-day-effort_en

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² President Abbas calls on UN to convene international peace conference on Palestine, provide protection for Palestinians, WAFA, 21/9/2023, <https://english.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/137702>

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Joint Communique from the March 19 meeting in Sharm El Sheikh, U.S. Department of State, 19/3/2023, <https://www.state.gov/joint-communique-from-the-march-19-meeting-in-sharm-el-sheikh/>

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Europe between two wars, European Union External Action, 3/1/2024, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/europe-between-two-wars_en; and Josep Borrell, The urgency to put an end to the fighting in Gaza, European Union External Action, 13/1/2024, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/urgency-put-end-fighting-gaza_en

²¹⁸ Haniyyah: Hamas Presented a Comprehensive Concept to Stop the Aggression and Netanyahu is the Cause of the War, Aljazeera.net, 1/11/2023. (in Arabic)

This Report

Al-Zaytouna Centre is pleased to present The Palestine Strategic Report (PSR) 2022–2023, now in its 13th consecutive edition. This report provides an academic, objective and comprehensive analyses of the developments related to the Palestine issue across various dimensions. It offers up-to-date and accurate information and statistics through the end of 2023, complemented by analytical insights and forecasts.

This PSR, prepared by 12 specialized professors and researchers, consists of eight chapters that explore various aspects of the Palestinian situation. It examines the internal Palestinian scene, demographic and economic indicators, and the status of Jerusalem and its holy sites. The report also analyzes the courses of aggression, resistance and the peace process, while providing insights into the Israeli political, demographic, economic and military landscape. Furthermore, it discusses Palestinian, Arab, Islamic and international relations. Notably, Operation al-Aqsa Flood has significantly influenced the report's findings and perspectives.

The PSR has consolidated its position as an essential reference in Palestinian studies, serving as an indispensable resource that provides invaluable insights for those interested in Palestinian affairs. Al-Zaytouna Centre aspires for this PSR to make a significant qualitative contribution to the field of Palestinian studies.

Prof. Dr. Mohsen Mohammad Saleh

The Palestine Strategic Report 2022 – 2023



Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations

مركز الزيتونة للدراسات والاستشارات

P.O. Box: 14-5034 Beirut - Lebanon

Tel: +961 21 803 644 | Tel-Fax: +961 21 803 643

info@alzaytouna.net | www.alzaytouna.net



ISBN 978-614-494-057-0



9 786144 940570



Al-Zaytouna Centre For Studies & Consultations