## Additional Findings In The Examination Of The Names Of Palestinians Killed In Operation Protective Edge - Part Eight \*

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**Overview**

**Hamas operatives whose names were not included in the Palestinian lists of fatalities in Operation Protective Edge**

1.   **During the examination of the names of Palestinians killed in Operation Protective Edge carried out by the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (ITIC), 50 names of terrorists were identified, all of whom were Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades operatives, who did not appear on the various Palestinian lists of fatalities** issued by entities affiliated with Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (for the nature of the various lists, see below).

2.   In the ITIC’s assessment, the dead terrorists whose names were not included on the various Palestinian lists fall into **several categories**: bodies of terrorists that remained in Israeli territory after clashes with IDF forces; bodies that remained buried in tunnels that were blown up or under the ruins of buildings that were attacked by the IDF; bodies of terrorists who died of their injuries in hospitals and bodies that could not be identified during the operation and when the lists were published. Therefore, the ITIC believes **that the 50 names that it has identified are only a partial list and that there are still many other terrorist operatives whose names were not included on the various lists of fatalities.**

3.   Prominent among the fatalities whose names were not included on the various Palestinian lists are operatives who belonged to elite units of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades (Al-Nukhba and the naval commando). Those missing from the Palestinian lists include, among others, **four operatives in the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades naval commando** who were killed in Israeli territory while infiltrating **the area of Kibbutz Zikim** by sea (July 8, 2014). Also missing from the Palestinian lists are **10** **Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades operatives** killed in Israeli territory while infiltrating **the area of Kibbutz Nir-Am** (July 21, 2014). This indicates that Hamas **deliberately refrains from including the names of terrorist operatives whose bodies are in Israeli hands (nearly 20) in the lists of fatalities in Operation Protective Edge.** This despite the fact that in its affiliated media channels and social networks, Hamas has publicized specific information about the dead in Kibbutz Zikim and Nir-Am and the circumstances of their deaths (see Appendix A).

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| 4.   The exclusion of many names of operatives - mainly Hamas operatives - on the Palestinian lists of fatalities, and Hamas’s failure **to issue a comprehensive and up-to-date list of fatalities**, stem from **Hamas’s policy of concealment, which is designed to serve the political, propaganda and lawfare campaign against Israel.**On the other hand, Hamas **makes internal use**of the deaths of operatives whose names are not included in the various official and unofficial lists, by **publishing detailed information about the dead and the circumstances of their deaths. The purpose is to please the families of the dead, glorify Hamas’s military capabilities and establish the myth of the “victory” over Israel** (see Appendices A and B).[1] |

**The number of Palestinians killed in Operation Protective Edge and the ratio between involved terrorists and non-involved civilians (findings of an examination by a security source)**

5.   According to an examination of the names of Palestinians killed in Operation Protective Edge, carried out by an Israeli security source, **2,140 Palestinians** were killed in Operation Protective Edge. This figure includes the names of terrorist operatives that Hamas refrained from including on the lists of those killed in the operation, as part of its policy of concealment. It is highly likely that this figure also includes Palestinians who died of natural causes or in accidents during Operation Protective Edge. **Additional fatalities** may be added to this figure once the bodies found under the rubble in the various battle sites have been identified (the findings of the examination are up-to-date as of December 21, 2014).

6.   According to the findings of the examination performed by the aforementioned security source, **the fatalities in Operation Protective Edge can be divided into three categories:**

A.  **Category A, which includes at least 886 fatalities who have been identified as terrorist operatives.** Most of them are **Hamas operatives** (590 operatives, representing about 67% of the terrorist operatives killed). The other organization with a significant number of fatalities is the **Palestinian Islamic Jihad** (PIJ) (197 fatalities, representing about 22% of the terrorist operatives killed). The remaining fatalities (99, representing 11% of the terrorist operatives killed) belonged to a number of small terrorist groups operating in the Gaza Strip.[2]

B.  **Category B, which includes at least 712 fatalities who have been identified as non-involved civilians.** Of these, 345 children and 268 women have been identified. The names of the women and children up to age 15 were automatically included in the category of non-involved civilians, although there have been incidents in which terrorist organizations involved teenage boys and women in fighting the IDF.

C.  **Category C, which includes 542 fatalities** whose status (i.e., terrorist operatives or non-involved civilians) could not be determined so far. There is potential for additional information that will enable the identification of some of the fatalities included in this category as terrorist operatives or as civilians who provided logistical support to terrorist operatives (without formally belonging to one of the terrorist organizations).

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| 7.   The number of fatalities whose names have identified by the aforementioned security source (i.e., the first two categories) is **1,598 (about 75% of the fatalities).**Of the fatalities who could be identified, **about 55% are terrorist operatives**, most of them Hamas operatives, **and about 45% are non-involved civilians.** These findings are similar to the interim findings of the examination carried out by the ITIC, which is based on 1,165 names of fatalities (representing about 54% of the names). According to the findings of the ITIC, terrorist operatives represent **about 52% of the names of the fatalities who have been identified, and non-involved civilians represent about 48%** (this ratio may change in the future).[3] |

**The Palestinian lists of the fatalities in Operation Protective Edge and the differences between them**

8.   According to Dr. Ashraf al-Qudra, the Palestinian Health Ministry spokesman in the Gaza Strip, **2,157 Palestinians** were killed in Operation Protective Edge (Al-Quds Al-Arabi, September 14, 2014). A similar number of fatalities (2,145) was reported in October 2014 by the Health Ministry of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah. Out of the total number of 2,157 fatalities, Dr. Ashraf al-Qudra and the Palestinian Health Ministry published a **basic list including the names of 1,032 fatalities.** Two additional supplementary lists appeared in Hamas bulletins in the Gaza Strip: a list of **1,281 names** in the newspaper **Felesteen**, and a list of **1,452 names** in the newspaper **Al-Rai**. Thus, **during the operation, two organs in the Gaza Strip affiliated with Hamas published lists that included the names of about two-thirds of the Palestinian fatalities in Operation Protective Edge.**

9.   **The only list** that pertains to **the total number** of fatalities **was published by the Palestinian Health Ministry in Ramallah, via the Palestinian News Agency (WAFA), on September 14, 2014 (about two and a half weeks after the end of Operation Protective Edge).** The list includes the names of 2,128 fatalities (i.e., almost all of the fatalities), along with the ID numbers of most of them, and the date and place of death. In general, the list was arranged in chronological order, but this became harder and harder to maintain towards the end of Operation Protective Edge. During the two and a half months that have passed since then, **an updated list of fatalities was not issued**, despite the fact that in the meantime, the identity of many other terrorist operatives, whose names were not listed, has been clarified.

10.    In the ITIC’s assessment, the list published by the Palestinian Health Ministry relies largely on Hamas’s basic lists published in the Gaza Strip, to which names that do not appear in the Gazan lists have been added. The advantage of this list is **that it is the only comprehensive list**, as opposed to the **partial lists** issued by Hamas-affiliated entities. However, the degree of reliability of the list published in Ramallah is lower than that of the lists published by the Hamas-controlled entities, **since it was compiled and published after the fact by a secondary source** that relied on sub-sources in the Gaza Strip, whose reliability is doubtful.

11.   **Hamas, on its part, has refrained from publishing a final authorized list of the casualties of Operation Protective Edge, despite the fact that it may need to do so** (for example, in order to pay the families of the shahids). **Why, then, did Hamas make do with publishing only partial lists of names of those killed in Operation Protective Edge and refrain from publishing a comprehensive and authorized list including all the names of the dead at the end of the operation? In the ITIC’s assessment, there are two reasons for this, one technical and the other political:**

A.  **Technically**, Hamas officials had trouble dealing with the significant increase in the number of fatalities the longer the fighting continued. Evidence during the operation indicated a large number of bodies on the ground and in hospitals, making it difficult to obtain, identify and document the information about the fatalities in real time (or shortly thereafter). This was reflected in the poor quality of the basic lists issued by Hamas-affiliated entities, which are characterized by disorder and negligence.

B.  **Politically**, after disseminating around two-thirds of the names of the fatalities, Hamas had exhausted the **assimilation of the message** that most of the fatalities were non-involved civilians, **for the purpose of the political, propaganda, and lawfare campaign against Israel.** The United Nations, human rights organizations and international media relied in many cases on the incomplete and biased information published by the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Health Ministry. Thus, from Hamas’s perspective, continuing to publish the names of those killed would not have been politically advantageous; On the contrary – it might have obligated Hamas to provide explanations about the “disappearance” of many of its operatives who did not appear on the lists of fatalities due to Hamas’s policy of concealment.

12.       Following is a table summarizing the various lists of Palestinians killed in Operation Protective Edge:

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| **Nature of the list** | **Type of list or lists** | **Number of fatalities whose names are listed** | **Remarks** |
| Hamas-affiliated lists, which were published in the Gaza Strip during the first half of Operation Protective Edge | Lists issued by the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Health Ministry in the Gaza Strip. The lists were published by the ministry spokesman, Dr. Ashraf al-Qudra. | 1,032 | These are the basic lists that have served as the basis for the ITIC’s examinations to date. These lists include 1,032 names. Subsequently, Dr. Al-Qudra reported specific names and general figures but did not publish a comprehensive and authorized list of all the names of the dead. |
|  | The Hamas organ Felesteen, published in the Gaza Strip | 1,281 | The list is updated to July 19, 2014. It is based on Dr. Al-Qudra’s basic lists plus additional names. |
|  | The Hamas organ and the news agency Al-Rai in the Gaza Strip | 1,452 | The list is updated to August 11, 2014. It is based on Dr. Al-Qudra’s basic lists plus additional names. |
| List issued by the Palestinian Authority’s Health Ministry after Operation Protective Edge[4] | List issued by the Palestinian Authority’s Health Ministry in Ramallah, distributed by the Palestinian News Agency (WAFA) | 2,128 | This is the most comprehensive list published **after the operation,** on September 14, 2014. It is based on lists of names of those killed that appeared on Dr. Ashraf al-Qudra’s lists and in the Hamas organs, plus additional names. |

**Summary**

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| 13.   **The absence of an authorized and comprehensive basic list,** the existence of **a number of lists of fatalities** issued at different times **by entities with differing interests**, the lack of transparency regarding the manner in which the names of those killed were included in the lists and the discrepancies between the various lists - **all pose many difficulties in the examination of the names of the Palestinian fatalities in Operation Protective Edge.**This state of affairs serves **Hamas’s policy of concealment, which aims to highlight the number and proportion of non-involved civilians killed during the operation.**As a result, many entities, including UN agencies, human rights organizations and the international media, **rely on unreliable and often incomplete Palestinian lists**and on biased and unreliable information designed to attack Israel. |

**Appendices**

14.       Two appendices are attached:

A. **Appendix A** - Hamas operatives killed while infiltrating into Israeli territory in the area of Zikim and Nir-Am, whose names are not included in the Palestinian lists of fatalities.

B. **Appendix B** - additional Hamas operatives killed in Operation Protective Edge, whose names are not included in the Palestinian lists of fatalities.