Dozens of Palestinian Authority security personnel involved in terror, report finds

March 15, 2024

By Ohad Merlin

The Jerusalem Post

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-792133>

A report released by Regavim earlier this week identified dozens of examples of armed personnel from the Palestinian Authority involved in terror.

The report, titled ‘Officers by Day, Terrorists by Night,’ sheds light on the involvement of [Palestinian Authority](https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-792032) Security Forces (PASF) in both perpetrated and attempted acts of terrorism, as well as planning, providing help, and inciting them, all in addition to their glorification by the Palestine Authority itself.

According to the report, 46 PASF members were killed while perpetrating terrorist acts targeting or attempting to target the lives of dozens of innocent Israelis, in addition to 25 who were arrested and at least who were seven wounded, indicating systemic wrongdoing within the PA's ranks.

The Palestinian Authority, the report shows, not only fails to condemn terrorism perpetrated by its security forces but also actively glorifies such acts, financially supporting terrorists and their families. The report also criticizes the Israeli political and security establishments for allegedly concealing the extent of PASF members' involvement in terrorism, thus implicating a significant intelligence and policy failure.

Examples of such involvement in terrorism include Lieutenant Colonel Saud Al-Titi, a PASF officer who took part in a drive-by shooting attack in April 2023; Captain Ziad Al-Zar’ini, officer at the PA’s Customs Police who gave shelter to a Hamas terrorist who murdered Israeli brothers Yigal and Hillel Yaniv in February 2023; Captain Hamdi Abu Dayah, an officer at the PA’s Civil Police, who shot at an Israeli civilian bus in January 2023; Captain Ahmad Ya’aqub Taha, member of the PA’s National Security Apparatus, who attempted to perpetrate a car ramming and stabbing attack against Israeli civilians in April 2023, and many, many more.

According to Regavim, the evidence presented in their report challenges the viability of the PA as a peace partner, calling for an honest re-evaluation of its governance potential and highlighting the urgency of addressing this security threat and the need for Israel to confront the reality of PA-sponsored terrorism directly, moving beyond past failures to a more transparent and realistic policy approach. Acknowledging the PA's active involvement in terrorism, the report claims is crucial for developing effective strategies to ensure Israel's security and the region's stability.

The report also claims that the involvement of PA security forces in terrorism is not a potential future threat but a current and escalating reality, presenting a grave security threat to Israel, reminiscent of the failures that led to the [October 7](https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-791800%5D) massacre, also warning from a misguided optimism regarding the potential for PASF personnel to turn against Israeli civilians and soldiers.

**'Listen to their own words and believe that they mean them’**

Regavim describes itself as a non-profit public policy research and think tank. Though Regavim’s areas of specialty usually revolve around land use policy as an expression of Israeli sovereignty, this report slightly differs from their approach, focusing on evidence showing that PA personnel actively participates – and is actively encouraged to participate – in terrorism.

Naomi Kahn, International Director at Regavim, explains that Regavim’s approach relies on letting first-hand sources tell the story, stressing that they ‘don’t say what we want them to believe, but rather actually listen to their own words and believe that they mean them.’ In this case, stresses Kahn, there is a combination of statements made by PA security forces themselves and PA officials taking credit for acts of terror or glorifying terrorists, echoing the phenomenon of the PA’s well-known ‘pay for slay’ policies, which encourage and endorse acts of terrorism.

‘Personnel on the payroll of the PA, part of the forces supposedly ‘fighting terror’ – are the ones carrying out acts of terror themselves, and the PA, instead of decrying it – encourages it!’ adds Kahn angrily, also reminding that the PA names buildings after terrorists glorify them and turn them into heroes and role models for next generations. ‘It’s completely antithetical to the entire concept of the PA police forces, trained, funded, and armed by the US and Europeans, and it must force us to question our ways,’ she adds.

When asked about the meaning of the report within the current context of talks about a revitalized Palestinian Authority taking over control of the Gaza Strip, Kahn answers: ‘It only makes it clear that it’s a dead letter. There is nothing to talk about if you have another leadership who supports the same goals of Hamas – armed combat against Israel and Jews, eradication of Israel, and replacement of Israel with an Islamic state. I can’t fathom putting them in charge of a Palestinian state; this idea is ludicrous.’

**What are the most significant findings of the report in your view?**

‘The report starts off by pointing out the data; the numbers are absolutely shocking but provide for a tiny portion of actual reality since it only points to proven and published acts of terrorism by people clearly identified as being PA security forces on the payroll. There are many more who have not been apprehended or have not carried out their plans, as well as others who couldn’t be identified in terms of their official position,’ says Kahn, adding: ‘This is but a sample of a much larger reality.

‘The next step is glorification within society. How can we exchange a ‘reformed’ PA when they do not desire to carry out their duties? This shocking report should be keeping every sane person who doesn’t want to see more bloodshed awake at night. The US should reevaluate whether their money is well spent,’ Kahn adds.

Kahn also says that Regavim is planning to take the report ‘everywhere we can’ – to the UN, the EU, embassies in Israel, and even [the US administration](https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-791654) and Capitol Hill, urging elected officials in the West to take ‘a long hard look at where their money is being spent. Hopefully, others will read and internalize this, too.

‘People need to begin to take the PA at its word and demand not only transparency but also adherence to international law and to the same objectives for which it was founded,’ concludes Kahn.