**IDF Thwarts PA Terror Attack, 2 Terrorists Killed**

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IDF troops thwarted Palestinian Authority terrorists from carrying out an attack Sunday afternoon, killing two of the perpetrators in the process.

"During a routine patrol carried out by IDF forces southeast of Nablus (Shechem) two Palestinians tried to stab a soldier," said the IDF spokesperson. "The forces opened fire in response, killing both terrorists. No soldiers were hurt and the circumstances of the incident are currently under investigation."

The incident occurred next to the Arab village of Awarta, near Shechem, while the soldiers from the Nachshon Battalion were protecting a field in which PA farmers were working. The area is just south of the Jewish community of Itamar, in Samaria, and it is believed that the pair may have intended to infiltrate the community to carry out an attack there.

Two PA Arabs disguised as farmers, one brandishing a pitchfork and the other holding a broken glass bottle, were spotted by the soldiers, who asked to see their identification.

The pair tried to attack one of the soldiers, with one of the Arabs trying to stab him with the pitchfork. Other soldiers on duty immediately opened fire.

“The force was in the area to protect the Palestinian [Arabs] who were plowing their fields, and the terrorists chose to use the opportunity to try and hurt the soldiers,” an officer from Central Command pointed out, according to Channel 10 TV news.

Both attackers were critically wounded. Magen David Adom medics tried but failed to resuscitate them and pronounced both men dead at the scene. According to the PA-linked Ma’an news agency, they were identified as Muhammad Faisal and Salah Muhammad Qawariq, both of them age 19 and residents of Awarta.

Meanwhile, disturbances have continued in Judea and Samaria as hundreds of PA Arabs clashed on Sunday with security forces in Gush Etzion, hurling rocks at soldiers who were forced to respond with riot dispersal means. As the result of a similar scenario that took place on Friday, also under investigation is the death of two Arab teens who died while rioting last Friday in the Samarian village of Iraq-Burin near Shechem, not far from the area of Sunday's attempted terror attack.

The IDF has been on heightened alert due to ongoing Arab riots that followed a visit to the region by U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, who issued a scathing public condemnation of an eastern Jerusalem housing project during his stay.

The two Arab teens died after routine riot control measures had failed and IDF soldiers were forced to use rubber bullets to control a mob of more than 100 rioting Arabs. The incident occurred despite intensive negotiations between IDF officials and PA leaders prior to the event, in which Israeli officers asked the PA to exert control over its population in order to prevent a riot and avoid just such a tragedy.