

Spotlight on Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict September 24 – October 6, 2026

Trending

- ▶ **The IDF continued to target terrorists involved in the October 7, 2023 invasion and massacre while damaging Hamas' ability to rebuild its capabilities.**
- ▶ **Data from the Hamas ministry of health in the Gaza Strip undermine the claims of alleged "genocide."**

Overview¹

- ▶ IDF forces destroyed two tunnels in the south and north of the Gaza Strip and eliminated 20 terrorist operatives, including the commander of Hamas' northern Gaza Strip brigade, terrorists involved in the atrocities of the October 7, 2023 invasion and massacre and in holding hostages, and Hamas money changers. An attempt to kill Ali al-'Amoudi, the most senior Hamas figure in the Gaza Strip, failed.
- ▶ The head of the Hamas political bureau, Khalil al-Hayya, claimed that the movement was prepared to implement the ceasefire roadmap, but demanded it be viewed as a single, indivisible package and accused Israel of obstructing progress. He said the movement was trying to establish an alliance with other organizations ahead of the Palestinian elections.
- ▶ A report by the Hamas ministry of health in the Gaza Strip noted that in 2025 the population of the Gaza Strip increased and the number of deaths not resulting from war was identical to the figures recorded through 2023.
- ▶ According to reports, the elections for the Hamas leadership in the Gaza Strip were suspended because of appeals and disagreements and because blank ballots had been cast in the first round of voting between Ali al-'Amoudi and Nizar Awadallah.
- ▶ The American Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on a network financing Hamas which operated from France.

¹ Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

- ▶ A stabbing attack at a farm in north of Ramallah was prevented. Two Palestinian terrorists trying to run over IDF soldiers near Hebron were eliminated.
- ▶ Jewish settlers and Palestinian olive harvesters clashed.
- ▶ Senior Fatah figure Jibril Rajoub said elections for the Palestinian presidency were planned for the first quarter of 2027, adding that Hamas would be able to participate without the precondition of membership in the PLO.

The Fighting in the Gaza Strip

The IDF

- ▶ IDF forces continued operations to locate and destroy terrorist infrastructure in the Yellow Line area in the Gaza Strip, destroying a tunnel approximately two kilometers long in the southern Gaza Strip and one approximately 1.5 kilometers long in the northern Gaza Strip. At least 20 terrorist operatives were eliminated, including the commander of Hamas' northern Gaza Strip brigade, Izz al-Din al-Bick, field commanders in Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and terrorist operatives involved in the atrocities of the October 7, 2023 invasion and massacre and in holding hostages in captivity. Operatives who assisted in financing Hamas activity were also eliminated (IDF spokesperson, September 24-October 6, 2026). According to the IDF, at least 4,000 of the 6,000 terrorists who participated in the invasion of Israel in the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre have been eliminated to date (Israeli media, October 5, 2026).
- ▶ On October 3, 2026, an attempt was made to eliminate Ali al-'Amoudi, deputy chairman of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, who is currently considered the most senior figure in the movement in the Gaza Strip, while he was in an apartment in Gaza City (IDF spokesperson, October 4, 2026). Palestinian sources said five people were killed in the attack, including four women, two of whom were members of Gaza's Christian community (Hamza al-Masri's Telegram channel, October 3, 2026). Senior Hamas figure in the Gaza Strip Ghazi Hamad said that the information received confirmed that al-'Amoudi had survived the assassination attempt (al-Arabiya, October 5, 2026).
- ▶ The IDF published footage of a terrorist operative in the central camps area of the Gaza Strip using a child as a human shield to transfer weapons into a civilian home (IDF spokesperson, September 27, 2026). In response, the Hamas-affiliated Khalik Wa'i channel, claimed that the rifle the child was holding was a "toy" (Khalik Wa'i Telegram channel, September 27, 2026).



From the video (IDF spokesperson, September 27, 2026)

► Hamas spokesperson Hazem Qassem denied a report by Israeli TV news channel N12 that Hamas had approximately 25,000-30,000 operatives remaining in its military wing, the movement continued to maintain and reinforce existing tunnel routes, and operated workshops for manufacturing rockets in areas where the IDF had not maneuvered and within population centers. According to Qassem, the report was false and its objective was to justify the ongoing attacks in the Gaza Strip. Qassem stressed Hamas' commitment to the ceasefire agreement (Hazem Qassem's Telegram channel, October 1, 2026).

► The IDF published the names of 170 Palestinians who were eliminated during the war who were represented as "journalists" or "media personnel" but in fact were operatives in the military wings of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. The findings were based on verified evidence, including photographs and documents produced by the terrorist organizations, some of which were found in the field, which indicated the terrorists' organizational affiliation and the positions they held in the military wings (IDF spokesperson, October 1, 2026). The publication followed three studies by the Amit Institute which found that at least 60% of those eliminated who were allegedly media personnel in fact belonged to or were affiliated with terrorist organizations.²

² For further information, see the February 2024 ITIC (Amit Institute, beginning in May 2026) report, [More than half of the Palestinian journalists killed in the Gaza Strip during Operation Iron Swords were affiliated with terrorist organizations \(Full version\)](#), the December 2025 ITIC report, [About 60% of the Gazans Classified as "Journalists" and Other Media Personnel Killed in the Gaza Strip War Belonged to Hamas and Other Terrorist Organizations](#), and the Amit Institute July 2026 report, [The disclosure of the names of fallen military operatives by Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad confirms the Amit Institute's Research findings on the double roles of "journalists" in the Gaza Strip](#).



The terrorist media personnel in the IDF publication (IDF spokesperson, October 1, 2026)

Negotiations for the Second Phase of the Ceasefire Agreement

► In his first interview since taking office, Khalil al-Hayya, chairman of the Hamas political bureau, claimed the movement was prepared to implement the roadmap presented by the Board of Peace representative Nikolay Mladenov and the mediators, but demanded it be viewed as a single, indivisible package. Al-Hayya accused the Israeli government of delaying tactics and undermining previous opportunities for an agreement and claimed the continuation of the fighting, closure of the crossings and difficulties in bringing in aid indicated failure to comply with the understandings. He said Hamas expected Mladenov and international actors to play a more active role in enforcing the agreement. He said he had held more than four meetings with American officials during 2025 and 2026, during which Hamas had presented its positions regarding the conflict, Israel's conduct and Palestinian rights. He claimed the meetings had been described as "positive" and there was some understanding of the humanitarian and political aspects, but from Hamas' perspective, practical steps were required from Washington, not merely listening and understanding (al-Araby channel, September 27, 2026).



Al-Hayya (Shehab Agency, September 26, 2026)

► Senior Hamas figure Ghazi Hamad claimed that the movement had made "significant concessions" to stop the war, but the "occupation" continued to violate the ceasefire. He rejected calls to wait until after the elections in Israel, calling the idea "distorted, illogical and unacceptable," since in the meantime Netanyahu wanted to profit from the ongoing fighting. Hamad accused the UN and the Board of Peace of failing to act against the "Zionist violations" and added that what could stop the Zionists was a courageous decision by the American administration, the mediators, the Arab states and the European Union to take "serious measures" (Al Jazeera, October 5, 2026).

► Hamas spokesperson Hazem Qassem attacked the Board of Peace announcement that it would not work with UNRWA and the agency would have no role in the Gaza Strip. He said the position was consistent with Israeli policy, whose objective was to undermine UNRWA's activity, assistance to the Palestinians and the [so-called] "right of return."³ Qassem added it was puzzling that the Board of Peace took that position while it was unable to provide aid to the Gaza Strip or compel Israel to comply with the ceasefire agreement. He also questioned the position of the national committee for the administration of Gaza, which is based in Cairo, regarding UNRWA's future role (Hazem Qassem's Telegram channel, September 26, 2026).

The Gaza Strip

The Civilian Situation

► The Hamas ministry of health in the Gaza Strip published a report on mortality data in the Gaza Strip in 2025, which refuted claims of an alleged "genocide" or a policy of "deliberate hunger" by Israel. According to the report, a total of 24,650 people died, of whom 17,286 (70.1%) died as a result of the war, 1,584 (6.5%) as a result of various accidents and 5,780 from natural causes such as old age and chronic illnesses. By comparison, in 2022, before the war, the total number of deaths was 6,061, while a year earlier 7,140 deaths were recorded. Excluding those eliminated in the war, the mortality rate in 2025 was 3.46 per thousand people, compared with 2.8 per thousand in 2022 and 3.39 per thousand in 2021. The report also showed that the highest mortality rate (28.8% of all cases) was among those aged 20 to 34, followed by those aged 35 to 44, the main age groups to which terrorists in the Gaza Strip belonged. The report also noted that 50,227 births were recorded in 2025, more than twice the number of deaths, meaning that the population increased (Hamas ministry of health, September 30, 2026).

³ The "right" of the Palestinian refugees and all their descendants to return to their places of residence in 1948, effectively destroying the State of Israel.

► Willy Nyeko, head of emergency operations for the World Food Programme (WFP) in Gaza, said the program provided assistance to an average of approximately 1.5 million people a month through August 2026, but funding constraints would force it to reduce the number to approximately 1.1 million beginning in October 2026. Most of the cuts would be in direct food assistance, with the number of beneficiaries expected to decline from approximately 1.1 million to 600,000. He added that the funding crisis not only reduced the number of people receiving assistance, but also forced the program to reduce the amount of food provided to families and the value of financial assistance in some cases, in an attempt to use the available resources to reach as many needy people as possible (Arabic-language UN News website, September 28, 2026).

► The director of the al-Kuwait Radiology Center in Deir al-Balah, Abd al-Rahman al-Nakhla, said the center had ceased operations and shut down its CT scanner after running out of the fuel needed to operate its generators. He added that it was the only CT scanner in the area and received follow-up cases from outpatient clinics throughout the Gaza Strip, meaning that its shutdown would affect a large number of patients. He said other imaging services at the center, including X-rays, mammography, panoramic dental X-rays and ultrasound, had also been suspended because of the fuel shortage (Anadolu Agency, September 29, 2026).

► On the occasion of Pink October events to raise awareness of breast cancer, the Hamas ministry of health in the Gaza Strip claimed that the breast cancer diagnosis and treatment system in the Gaza Strip had collapsed and that early detection services were "almost completely" paralyzed because of severe shortages and malfunctions in mammography equipment and laboratories, with the almost complete absence of medications and treatments (Telegram channel of the ministry of health in the Gaza Strip, October 1, 2026).

► The World Health Organization reported severe impairment of the functioning of the health system in the Gaza Strip, with no hospital in the Gaza Strip operating at full capacity. The organization accused Israel of imposing bureaucratic obstacles and frequently changing permit procedures, with the result that a quarter of all medical equipment and diagnostic devices were not being allowed into the Gaza Strip and approximately 40% of essential devices, such as X-ray machines, had been held up at the crossings for approximately six months. The UN agency claimed the number of aid trucks was not a reliable measure of success, but rather whether the critical medications themselves reached the population in need (Al Jazeera Mubasher, October 2, 2026).

► On World Teachers' Day Hamas claimed that more than 90% of schools and universities in the Gaza Strip had been damaged during the war and that more than 1,050 male and female teachers had been killed (Hamas Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria, October 5, 2026).



The state of education in the Gaza Strip (Facebook page of Alaa al-Laqtia, Hamas' inhouse cartoonish, October 5, 2026)

Civilian Governance

► Given the numerous internal disputes in the Gaza Strip and the increasing use of firearms on the streets, the Hamas police launched a new public awareness campaign with the slogan, "Everything can be resolved except blood." The objective was to curb family violence and blood feuds, which threaten public stability. Posters based on religious and moral narratives were used, alongside increased community policing activity and closer cooperation with tribal leaders (Hamas police Telegram channel, September 27, 2026).

► Hamas operatives are reportedly in severe financial distress, since most receive their salaries in cash, and merchants in the Gaza Strip gradually stopped accepting cash from Gazans because the banknotes are worn, and shifted to using apps and electronic wallets. Employees of the Hamas civil administration receive part of their salary, approximately 1000 shekels every 100 days, generally in worn banknotes, while military wing operatives receive approximately 60% of their salary every 40-50 days in banknotes in good condition. The current situation prompted the Hamas police in Gaza to issue a circular warning shop owners and others not to refuse cash and instructing them to accept all types of banknotes provided they were not damaged. The circular noted that the police would begin monitoring compliance with the directive and would take legal measures against violators. An official source in the Hamas police said harsh measures would be taken against any merchant who refused to accept banknotes. He said the issue did not concern only government employees or Hamas operatives, but also families of orphans, war victims, the wounded and prisoners who received financial assistance from various aid organizations and could not find anyone willing to accept

their cash. Hamas media outlets launched a media campaign against banks in Ramallah, accusing them of encouraging merchants to switch exclusively to electronic payments (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, September 27, 2026).

Military Governance

► Hamas "resistance security" claimed to have exposed a plot planned by the "collaborating gangs" against Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis. Large cells from the "collaborating gangs" in Rafah, Khan Yunis and Deir al-Balah were supposed to attack the hospital with Israeli intelligence and air support. According to "resistance security," Israel supervised the training of "gang members" at military bases, including training for a scenario simulating a large-scale joint attack on vital civilian centers in the Gaza Strip. "Resistance security" arrested several collaborators whose role was to establish and organize sleeper cells in areas near the centers in Khan Yunis and Deir al-Balah in preparation for participating in the plot. "Resistance security" called on Gazans to immediately report any suspicious behavior or "important information" (al-Akhres Telegram channel, September 26, 2026).

► The Hamas-affiliated Khalik Wa'i channel rejected a report by anti-Hamas activist Hamza al-Masri that the security forces of the Hamas government, which use Nasser Hospital as an operations headquarters, had opened a rear door at the hospital to serve, in an emergency, as a safe passage to the Akka School in Khan Yunis, which shelters displaced persons. The report claimed that the school administration said there were no exits from the hospital to the school (Khalik Wa'i Telegram channel, September 30, 2026). Throughout the war, Hamas used Nasser Hospital and various other civilian institutions as bases for military activity and as weapons depots.⁴

► The Facebook page of an officer in Ghassan al-Dahini's Popular Forces militia reported that a special force from the *nukhba* of the counterterrorism apparatus (the militia's military wing) shot at one terrorist and arrested another in two separate incidents. The force failed to carry out a third mission because the presence of children at the site prevented it from taking control of the target (Minister of The Leader Facebook page, October 1, 2026). Sources on the ground in the Gaza Strip confirmed several attacks: a young Palestinian was abducted at the entrance to the al-Bureij refugee camp by unidentified persons in a vehicle which sped toward the Yellow

⁴ See the November 2023 ITIC report, [Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis, Southern Gaza Strip](#), the November ITIC report, [Hamas use of the civilian population as human shields and Gaza's civilian facilities for terrorism](#) and the August 2024 ITIC report, [The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip exploit the civilian infrastructure for terrorist activities](#).

Line; a young man was shot; and a young man survived an attempted abduction in the al-Mawasi area of Khan Yunis (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 1, 2026).

Hamas Elections

► Four Hamas sources inside and outside the Gaza Strip said the second round of elections for chairman of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip had been suspended after no winner had been declared in the first round, in which Ali al-'Amoudi (who is in the Gaza Strip) ran against Nizar Awadallah (who is abroad), and because eligible voters had cast blank ballots. According to three of the sources, the suspension of the second round of elections came after Awadallah appealed certain procedures of the second round. The fourth source, who was outside the Gaza Strip, said that other disagreements had led to the temporary suspension of the elections, which, he said, would resume soon after "appropriate arrangements" had been made (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, September 24, 2026).

International Hamas Activity

► Khalil al-Hayya, chairman of the Hamas political bureau, claimed the movement had offered to act as a mediator between the warring sides in Yemen and was working with several countries to advance the initiative. He called on the Arab states and the Islamic world to reduce internal disagreements and claimed Hamas sought to maintain balanced relations with regional countries while avoiding interference in their internal affairs (*al-Araby channel*, September 27, 2026).

International Activity against Hamas

► The American Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on a Hamas financing network through which more than \$2 million was raised, approximately \$1.5 million of it since October 7, 2023, through cryptocurrency channels and fictitious charitable associations in France. The network was operated by Salim Abdullah Salim al-Zaq, a deputy battalion commander in Hamas' military wing and a member of the Hamas information bureau, who collaborated with Fawzi Baraka and Amal Walid, both of whom operated from France. The two managed two associations under humanitarian cover and transferred hundreds of thousands of dollars in cryptocurrency directly to al-Zaq for transfer to the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades (American Department of the Treasury website, October 2, 2026).

Israel, Judea and Samaria

Terrorist Attack

► **Stabbing attempted near Ramallah:** On October 5, 2026, a Palestinian terrorist set fire to an Israeli vehicle near Hanania Farm, close to the village of Ramon, east of Ramallah. He then threatened residents of the farm with a knife, and they hit him with a vehicle; there were no Israeli casualties. Another terrorist who fled the scene was detained after a pursuit (IDF spokesperson and police spokesperson, October 5, 2026).

Counterterrorism

► Israeli security forces continued extensive counterterrorism activity in Judea and Samaria, detaining dozens of wanted persons, including a terrorist cell and a Hamas operative, as well as suspects involved in terrorist activity, weapons trafficking and incitement propaganda. Weapons, UAVs and materials used to manufacture explosive devices were confiscated, and memorials erected in memory of terrorist leaders and perpetrators of terrorist attacks were demolished. The forces also shot a terrorist who attempted to throw an explosive device at them. On the eastern border, smuggling weapons using a UAV was prevented (IDF spokesperson and Israel Police spokesperson's unit, September 24-October 6, 2026).

► On October 5, 2026, a vehicle with three Palestinian suspects accelerated toward an IDF force operating in the Bani Na'im area, near Hebron. The soldiers shot and hit the vehicle; there were no Israeli casualties and the circumstances are under investigation (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, October 5, 2026). Palestinian media reported one person killed and two wounded, one of whom later died, who were shot at the entrance to Bani Na'im (Wafa and Quds Agency, October 5, 2026).

► During riots on the outskirts of the village of Yasuf, east of Salfit, an Israeli civilian was wounded by rocks. IDF forces carried out suspect detention procedure and shot at terrorists who threw rocks (IDF spokesperson, October 2, 2026). A 51-year-old Palestinian was reportedly killed the gunfire and another person was wounded (Wafa, October 2, 2026).

Settler Terrorism

► On September 28, 2026, there were riots in the village of Jalud in Samaria, after a coordinated attempt to return a Palestinian family to its home; the family had been forced to leave following several incidents of nationalist crime. More than 100 Israelis went to the village, blocked roads, set tires on fire, threw rocks at the security forces and set fire to buildings, vehicles and Palestinian property. Israeli security forces called to the scene to protect the

villagers had to disperse the rioters, but because of the scale of the violence the family could not be returned to its home. During the clashes, three Border Police officers were wounded and a security vehicle was damaged. Two suspects were detained (IDF spokesperson, September 29, 2026).

► The ministry of health in Ramallah reported that a 19-year-old Palestinian from the village of Aqab was killed by settler gunfire in the village of Kobar, near Ramallah (Wafa, October 3, 2026).

► Palestinian sources reported several incidents during the olive harvest. In Beita, it was reported that armed Jewish rioters attacked olive harvesters and several journalists were detained and assaulted by IDF forces; in the village of Osarin injuries were reported following an attack by Jewish rioters on olive harvesters; in al-Mughayyir in the Ramallah area Jewish rioters reportedly entered the vicinity of residents' homes; east of Jenin, the theft of an olive crop land was reported (Al Jazeera Palestine, October 3, 2026).



**Burning of olive trees attributed to Jewish rioters in the village of Arabuna, near Jenin
(Quds Agency, October 3, 2026)**

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Diplomatic Activity

► The EU and several European countries, including France, Germany and Denmark, pledged €20 million in emergency assistance for development programs in Area C for the PA government to address the needs of residents in Area C, particularly vulnerable populations. The pledge is included in an agreement signed by Palestinian minister of finance and planning Estifan Salameh and EU director for Middle East affairs, Henrike Trautmann. The agreement is intended to support urban development, strengthen local government and improve public and social services and facilities. The programs will be carried out by the ministry of local government and the Palestinian Land Authority (Wafa, September 29, 2026).

► Consuls and diplomats from 15 European countries toured the Umm al-Khair and al-Rifa'iyyah areas of Masafer Yatta and examined the situation of the Palestinians and the schools in the area which are threatened with demolition. They visited al-Rifa'iyyah School, which has faced the threat of demolition since July 2026, and al-Najada School near Umm al-Khair. Bassam Jabr, head of the education department for Yatta, Masafer Yatta and Badia Yatta, said that 15 schools were threatened with demolition, several had received Israeli demolition notices and legal precautionary measures had been taken to protect two schools. Jabr called on the EU to support education in Masafer Yatta, ensure students' regular access to their schools, provide protection for students and teachers and halt the demolition of schools (Anadolu Agency, September 30, 2026).

Elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council

► Khalil al-Hayya, chairman of the Hamas political bureau, said Hamas had agreed to participate in the Palestinian elections and was promoting an electoral alliance with other organizations and individuals. He said Hamas had also proposed establishing a single joint national slate, but not all Palestinian parties supported the proposal. He said that even if the elections were postponed, cooperation should continue and the time should be used to rehabilitate the Palestinian political system and promote unity between the Gaza Strip, Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem (al-Araby channel, September 27, 2026).

► Hamas spokesperson Hazem Qassem accused the PA leadership of attempting to shape the electoral process according to Fatah's interests and of managing it based on partisan considerations. He claimed the continuing delay in holding elections for more than 20 years had eroded the legitimacy of the Palestinian institutions (Hazem Qassem's Telegram channel, September 27, 2026).

► Jibril Rajoub, secretary of the Fatah Central Committee, announced that the Palestinian presidential elections would be held in the first quarter of 2027, following the elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council scheduled for November 28, 2026, noting that the transfer of power had to take place exclusively through the ballot box. He said Fatah was committed to renewing the legitimacy of the political system and to national unity based on an agreed political program, the principle of one authority, one law and one weapon, and ending the schism. He said Hamas would be able to run for the presidency without the precondition of membership in the PLO, subject to a commitment to the national program, and despite his disagreements with PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas, he would not permit his legitimacy to be

undermined. Finally, he warned against regional and international attempts to engineer the Palestinian political future and insisted that the shaping of the system had to stem from an independent Palestinian initiative (al-Mashhad, October 1, 2026).