



Spotlight on the Israel-Palestinian Conflict January 28 – February 4 , 2025

Overview¹

- ▶ The ceasefire in the Gaza Strip continues: Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) released a female soldier and ten civilian hostages, five Israelis and five Thais, in exchange for 293 Palestinian prisoners, some of whom were serving life sentences; some were deported abroad. The Rafah Crossing was opened for the exit of patients and wounded; the return of displaced persons to northern Gaza continued.
- ▶ Hamas accused Israel of "humanitarian violations" of the ceasefire, claiming the movement was ready to begin negotiations on the second phase of the agreement. Hamas confirmed the deaths of Muhammad Deif, head of the military wing, his deputy and other senior terrorist operatives. The Palestinian Authority (PA) worked to recruit international aid for the Gaza Strip.
- ▶ Two IDF soldiers were shot to death in the Jordan Valley; the terrorist was killed. Israeli security forces continued a large-scale counterterrorism operation in northern Samaria, eliminating more than 50 terrorist operatives.
- ▶ Nine countries announced the establishment of a group to assist the Palestinians in legal warfare against Israel. The Palestinian Authority and Hamas welcomed the initiative.

The Ceasefire

- ▶ On January 30, 2025, the third phase of the ceasefire agreement was carried out. The military wings of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) released three Israeli hostages (a female soldier and two civilians) and five Thai hostages. The release of the civilians in Khan Yunis, near the ruins of Yahya al-Sinwar's house was accompanied by public disturbances, and therefore Israel delayed the release of 110 Palestinian prisoners (including 33 serving life sentences and 47 sentenced to long prison terms) for several hours. The release was carried out after the mediators promised that future releases would be conducted in an orderly fashion. Thirty of the prisoners were deported from Israel and the rest were transferred to Gaza, Judea and Samaria (Israeli media, January 30, 2025).

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

► On February 1, 2025, the fourth phase was carried out, during which the military wings of Hamas and the PIJ released three Israeli male hostages. In return, Israel released 183 Palestinian prisoners, including 18 serving life sentences. Eight of the released prisoners were deported to Egypt, 32 were transferred to Gaza, and 32 were released to Judea and Samaria (Israeli media, February 1, 2025).

► "Hamas sources" denied that the 88 Palestinian prisoners deported to Egypt were unable to leave the hotel where they were staying or that Egyptian authorities restricted their movement and the number of visitors allowed. According to the report, an agreement was reached with Turkey to accept released prisoners who had lived in East Jerusalem, while Qatar would take in the largest number of deportees, and some released prisoners would remain in Egypt. There were also talks with Algeria about accepting some of the deportees. However, it has not yet been determined how many prisoners will be sent to each country. Meanwhile, Jordan and several European countries refused to accept released prisoners who held their citizenship (al-Araby al-Jadeed, February 3, 2025). Fifteen Palestinian deportees reportedly arrived in Turkey (journalist Yassin Qadi's Telegram channel, February 4, 2025). "Security sources" said the deportees had been accepted in accordance with directives from the Turkish president (Anadolu Agency, February 4, 2025).

► On February 1, 2025, the Rafah Crossing was opened for the first time since IDF forces took control in May 2024. According to the agreement, the crossing will be used solely for the exit of Gazan patients and wounded for medical treatment in Egypt, including terrorist operatives with approval from the Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet). On-site supervision was conducted by Palestinians not affiliated with Hamas and by European Union forces in accordance with the 2005 crossings agreement (al-Sharq al-Awsat, February 2, 2025). A "senior Palestinian source" said "a small group" of PA employees was managing the crossing alongside EU representatives (al-Mayadeen, February 2, 2025).

► Meanwhile, this past week Gazans continued moving to the north along two pedestrian and vehicle routes which were opened on January 27, 2025, following a partial IDF withdrawal from the Netzarim Corridor. On January 29, 2025, it was reported that more than 500,000 people had returned to northern Gaza within 72 hours (Hamas government media information office Telegram channel, January 29, 2025).

IDF operations in the Gaza Strip

► IDF forces fired warning shots at suspicious individuals who approached them and posed a threat. Israeli aircraft fired at suspicious vehicles moving toward northern Gaza without inspection and on a route not authorized for vehicle passage. An Israeli civilian was killed due to mistaken identity while working in central Gaza (IDF spokesperson, January 28 – February 4, 2025). "Palestinian sources" reported several injuries in an Israeli strike on a car on al-Rashid Street, west of the al-Nuseirat refugee camp (journalist Mahmoud al-Louh's Telegram channel, February 2, 2025).

Hamas

► Hamas addressed the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and justified the "ceremonies" the movement held when it released Israeli hostages. They also accused Israel of "violating" the agreement and claimed the movement was ready to negotiate the second phase of the deal to bring an end to the war.

◆ A "Hamas source" claimed the movement had informed the mediators of its willingness to enter the second phase of negotiations, in accordance with what had been agreed on during negotiations for the first phase in Doha (al-Araby al-Jadeed, February 1, 2025).

◆ Senior Hamas figure Taher al-Nunu claimed that the pictures from the hostage releases "proved" that the Palestinian public stood with the "resistance"² and fully supported it. He claimed that the presence of "resistance" operatives in the hostage release ceremony indicated that Hamas was prepared for further confrontation. However, he said the release also signaled Israel that the movement was prepared to advance to the next phase of the agreement and meet its commitments to the mediators, while calling on the international community to pressure Israel for a complete withdrawal from Gaza (al-Jazeera Mubasher, February 1, 2025).

◆ Hamas representative in Lebanon Ahmed Abd al-Hadi admitted that the next phase of negotiations would be difficult. However, he said he was confident the results would be more favorable for the "resistance," as the current atmosphere was more positive than before and strengthened the "resistance's" position. He added that the Israeli soldiers and officers held by the "resistance" were a "bargaining chip" and nothing indicated the agreement would collapse, as the American president had made the ceasefire

² The Palestinian terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip.

agreement a "strategic vision" for his new administration (al-Mayadeen, February 1, 2025).

◆ Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem accused Israel of delaying the implementation of the aid and reconstruction promised in the ceasefire agreement. He claimed Israel had not allowed reconstruction or the entry of necessary medical equipment, and the quantity of fuel entering was still far below what was stipulated in the agreement. He also claimed that the machinery agreed on had not been delivered, preventing the retrieval of the bodies of Palestinian shaheeds and the retrieval of the bodies of the dead [presumably the bodies of Israeli hostages] which were supposed to be part of the current phase of the exchange deal. Qassem called on the mediators and the Arab states party to the ceasefire agreement to compel Israel to allow the entry of the agreed-on aid materials, especially tents, fuel, food supplies and heavy machinery, and to stop all other "violations" (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, February 2, 2025).

◆ A " Hamas source " claimed the movement was prepared to " facilitate " negotiations for the next phase of the agreement to prevent the resumption of fighting in Gaza. The source claimed the movement argued from a position of strength and a desire to protect the Gazans, as well as from the " resistance's " holding " strong bargaining chips, " including the Israeli " prisoners. " He warned that Israel might manipulate the negotiations to resume the war for a short period and harm the " resistance, " and they were alert to every possibility (al-Sharq al-Awsat, February 3, 2025).

◆ Hamas spokesman Abd al-Latif al-Qanua said the movement was " committed to the success of the second phase " of the ceasefire agreement, provided Israel met its commitments from the first phase. He accused Israel of deliberately delaying the delivery of tents, caravans, aid and shelter materials, claiming there was no justification for stalling. He said Hamas would not allow Israel to delay the aid or sabotage the agreement and that they were in contact with the mediators on the issue (Abd al-Latif al-Qanua's Telegram channel, February 3, 2025).

◆ Senior Hamas figure Osama Hamdan stated that the mediators, including the United States, had begun contacts for negotiations on the next phase of the ceasefire agreement. He said Hamas was monitoring the first phase and documenting Israeli " delays, " warning the mediators that it would " take action " if Israel did not uphold the agreement. He said the second phase included issues such as reconstruction, a

permanent ceasefire and prisoner exchange arrangements, including prisoners serving life sentences, Palestinians arrested after October 7, 2023 and Hezbollah prisoners. Regarding the Rafah Crossing, he said the issue of Palestinian entry into Gaza and the full opening of the crossing would be discussed in the next phase. He dismissed claims that wounded Gazans who left the Strip had been required to commit not to return, noting that the agreement was transparent and contained no secret clauses (alresala.net, February 3, 2025).

► Hamas military wing spokesman Abu Obeida **announced the death of "senior military commander" Muhammad Deif, the late head of the military wing**, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike on July 13, 2024. He also confirmed the deaths of other senior commanders in the military wing, including **Deif's deputy, Marwan Issa; the commander of the Central Gaza Brigade, Ayman Nofal; the commander of the Northern Gaza Brigade, Ahmad Ghandour; the commander of the Khan Yunis Brigade, Rifat Salama; the head of the manpower directorate, Raed Thabet; and the head of the weapons and combat services directorate, Ghazi Abu Tama'a** (Hamas Telegram channel, January 30, 2025).



Mourning notice issued by Hamas for senior "political" and military operatives (Hamas Telegram channel, January 30, 2025)

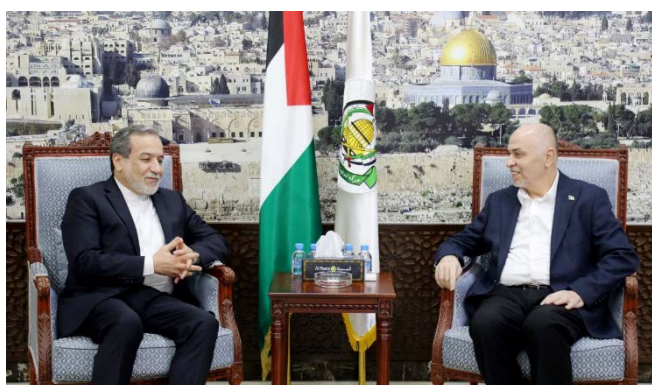
► This past week Hamas delegations held several international meetings during which they discussed the implementation of the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the entry of humanitarian aid. They also condemned American president's proposal to evacuate Gazans and the IDF operations in Judea and Samaria.

◆ A delegation led by Muhammad Darwish, head of the Shura Council, and including Khaled Mashal, Hamas leader "abroad," met in Cairo with the head of Egyptian General Intelligence, Lt. Gen. Hassan Rashad, to discuss the ceasefire and the prisoner exchange. Hamas expressed its appreciation for Egypt's efforts to facilitate the entry of humanitarian aid and its opposition to the "expulsion" of Palestinians, demanding Israel

meet its commitments without delay. Talks also dealt with efforts to promote Palestinian unity and various options, especially the formation of a national unity government or the establishment of a community support committee (Hamas Telegram channel, January 28, 2025).

◆ A Hamas delegation led by Muhammad Darwish, head of the Hamas Shura Council, along with Khaled Mashal, the Hamas leader "abroad," and other senior figures, met with the Turkish president in Ankara. The Hamas representatives reportedly dwelt on the "suffering" of the Gazans caused by the "Israeli war of extermination" and their need for shelter, humanitarian aid and reconstruction. They also noted the Palestinian people's opposition to displacement and their "commitment to their land, their right to freedom, independence and their full sovereign state with Jerusalem [sic] as its capital." The Turkish president praised the firm stance of the Palestinian people and reiterated his support for Palestinian rights (Hamas Telegram channel, January 29, 2025).

◆ A Hamas delegation led by Muhammad Darwish, head of the Hamas Shura Council, met in Qatar with Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi. Darwish praised Iran for its support of the Palestinians and condemned the plans for "the displacement of our people from their land." He called Operation al-Aqsa Flood [the October 7, 2023 terrorist attack and massacre] a milestone in the Palestinian people's "struggle to defeat the occupation." Araghchi reiterated Iran's continued support for the Palestinian people and factions and congratulated Hamas on its "achievements" in the war (Hamas Telegram channel, January 30, 2025).



Right: The president of Turkey with the Hamas delegation (TRT, January 29, 2025). Left: Darwish (right) with the Iranian foreign minister (Hamas Telegram channel, January 30, 2025)

◆ Abu Alaa' al-Walaa'i, secretary general of the pro-Iranian Iraqi militia Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhadaa, hosted Osama Hamdan in Lebanon. According to reports the two discussed

regional security and politics and the outcomes of Operation al-Aqsa Flood. Hamdan said support from the "unity of the fronts" had been a key factor in achieving "victory" (Abu Alaa' al-Walaa'i's Telegram channel, February 1, 2025). Hamdan also met with the head of the Justice and Charity Movement and leaders of the Jihad and Construction Movement (movement websites, February 1, 2025). Meeting with the head of Iraq's Supreme Islamic Council, Hamdan discussed the "shared visions and challenges" of the "resistance axis,"³ stating that Operation al-Aqsa Flood had been an achievement for the entire Arab-Muslim nation (Hamas X account, February 1, 2025).

◆ A Hamas delegation led by Muhammad Darwish met in Qatar with Turkish foreign minister Hakan Fidan. They discussed the implementation of the ceasefire agreement in Gaza and preparations for talks on the second phase. Hamas representatives accused the "occupation" of delaying the implementation of the humanitarian protocol provisions and expressed appreciation for Turkish support. Fidan condemned the American president's plan for the "expulsion" of Gazans to Egypt and Jordan (Hamas' Telegram channel, February 2, 2025).

◆ A Hamas delegation, led by Musa Abu Marzouq, senior political bureau member and head of the movement's international relations office, met in Moscow with Mikhail Bogdanov, deputy foreign minister and the Russian envoy to the Middle East. They discussed developments in Gaza, the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the "occupation's" [alleged] ongoing "violations," particularly regarding humanitarian issues and infrastructure reconstruction. Bogdanov expressed Russia's support for Palestinian rights, its backing of the ceasefire agreement and the need for the unrestricted delivery of humanitarian aid. He said Moscow rejected any attempt to impose solutions on the Palestinians and continued its international efforts in support of the Palestinian cause (Hamas Telegram channel, February 3, 2025).

Hamas governance

► Hamas political bureau member Bassem Na'im stated that since the beginning of the war Hamas had been planning for the "day after." He said there were several options, among them the establishment of a temporary national unity government for specific purposes or tasks until the "Palestinian house" and political system were organized, or the creation of a

³ Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian organizations, the Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq.

Palestinian body composed of professionals and technocrats from Gaza to temporarily manage civil affairs in the Strip with specific tasks such as aid, providing shelter, reconstruction and security. He said that if none of the options were viable, Hamas would take responsibility and discuss with its partners in the Gazan "factions" and civilian society how to manage affairs and rebuild Gaza (aljazeera.net, January 29, 2025).

► Senior Hamas figure Taher al-Nunu said Hamas would continue to rule Gaza until an agreement had been reached with the PA regarding the "community support committee" or a national unity government (AP, January 31, 2025).

► The commander of the Hamas internal security forces, Major General Mahmoud Abu Watfa, claimed the security situation around the Rafah Crossing was under full Hamas control and that security forces were deployed along Salah al-Din Street. He said the forces would be redeployed according to Israeli withdrawals, adding that the police and internal security forces had completed their preparations to maintain public order and secure aid convoys, noting that "lawbreakers" and convoy looters had been "neutralized" (al-Jazeera, February 2, 2025).

► According to reports, Hamas' civilian and security employees have resumed near-routine work in facilities designated as "security and governmental headquarters" to serve the population. "Palestinian resistance sources" said they were preparing for the possibility of renewed fighting by Israel, which they claimed could be motivated by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's coalition considerations. The "sources" added that the "resistance" was prepared and had redeployed its operatives to areas near the Israeli border in anticipation of Israeli activity, including incursions or intelligence operations (al-Sharq al-Awsat, February 3, 2025).

► **Criticism of Hamas' governance:** Following pictures of armed American contract fighters at vehicle inspection points for traffic heading north in Gaza, Palestinian social media users expressed skepticism about Hamas' "victory." A social media user named Majed Odeh claimed Hamas had brought the Palestinian cause to its end and the ceasefire agreement had brought "more occupiers into Palestine's territories." He wondered, "Where is Jerusalem in all this? And where is the road leading now?" Another user, Amjad Ainbousi, complained that people did not want the PA in Gaza, so instead they brought in the Americans (Ramallah News Facebook page, February 2, 2025).

The situation in the Gaza Strip

► The Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) reported that in the second week of the ceasefire, until January 31, 2025, 4,200 aid trucks had entered the Gaza

Strip carrying food supplies, fuel, medical equipment, tents and materials for shelters. So far 8,400 trucks have entered Gaza since the beginning of the ceasefire (COGAT X account, January 31, 2025). "Palestinian sources" reported that by the 11th day of the ceasefire, only 7,926 trucks had entered Gaza, a number considered "limited" relative to humanitarian needs. The shortage of tents was particularly important, as only 208 trucks brought them, while no caravans had been delivered. In addition, no heavy machinery necessary for clearing rubble and searching for bodies had entered, nor had construction materials (al-Jazeera, January 31, 2025).

► Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim announced that in collaboration with the public and private sectors, his country planned to establish a hospital, a school and a mosque in Gaza as an initial effort to assist in the Strip's reconstruction. He added that further cooperation with Japan was expected to continue the reconstruction efforts (Malaysian News Agency, January 29, 2025).

► A Hamas delegation led by Issa al-Nashar, one of the movement's founders, visited the UAE field hospital in Gaza. The delegation was received by Hamad al-Niyadi, head of the UAE delegation and director of Operation Gallant Knight 3. Hamas expressed its gratitude to the UAE and President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan for their humanitarian support for the Palestinian people. The delegation praised the UAE's relief efforts, noting that they reflected its historic commitment to assisting Palestinians "during this difficult period" (Shehab, February 1, 2025).

► UNRWA spokesperson Adnan Abu Hasna reported that the agency was operating throughout the Gaza Strip with 23,000 employees. He said UNRWA had reopened its clinics in Gaza City, the Jebalya refugee camp and Rafah, and they received approximately 20,000 patients daily. He added that UNRWA's headquarters in Gaza City had resumed operations and the agency had reached more than one million Gazans, providing them with food, blankets and tents (aljazeera.net, January 29, 2025; UNRWA News Facebook page, February 1, 2025).

► Salama Maarouf, head of the Hamas government media information office, declared the Strip a disaster area. He said initial estimates indicated that direct damages and losses exceeded \$50 billion. He said 450,000 housing units had been damaged, including 170,000 which were completely destroyed, and 34 hospitals were inoperative. He added that for the Gaza reconstruction plan, formulated in partnership between government institutions, civil society organizations and with the knowledge of international institutions, urgent assistance and

rapid shelter solutions were needed, primarily the delivery of 200,000 tents, 60,000 caravans, and all necessary shelter supplies (Hamis government media information office Telegram channel, February 2, 2025).

Activities of the Palestinian Authority (PA)

► Senior PA figures held international meetings to recruit aid organizations and the international community for the reconstruction of Gaza, part of the PA's attempt to assume responsibility for the Strip once the war ends.

- ◆ PA Prime Minister Muhammad Mustafa met with Katarina Kaag, head of the Office for Humanitarian Coordination and Gaza Reconstruction; diplomatic representatives; international organizations operating in "Palestine" and Tom Fletcher, UN under-secretary general for humanitarian affairs. Mustafa described the government's efforts to assist the Gazans and emphasized the need for joint coordination through the governmental situation room to optimize aid distribution (Wafa, January 28 – February 4, 2025).



Mustafa and representatives of international organizations (Wafa, January 30, 2025)

- ◆ Hussein al-Sheikh, secretary of the PLO Executive Committee, met in Saudi Arabia with Steven Witkoff, the American envoy to the Middle East, marking the first meeting between a senior Palestinian official and a representative of the new American administration. According to reports they discussed bilateral relations and the administration's regional plans. The meeting also included the presentation of the PA's plan for control over Gaza, including efforts to counter Hamas. According to reports Ziad Abu Amr, an advisor to Mahmoud Abbas, will head the committee for managing Gaza, while Muhammad Mustafa will serve as his deputy (Sada News Agency, January 29, 2025; Hussein al-Sheikh's X account, January 29, 2025; Middle East Eye, February 1, 2025).

◆ Hussein al-Sheikh met in Cairo with the foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, as well as the secretary general of the Arab League. The meeting concluded with support for the ceasefire agreement in Gaza and the exchange of "prisoners," while praising Egypt, Qatar and the United States for their mediation efforts. The participants called for the full implementation of the agreement, the removal of obstacles to the entry of humanitarian aid, the rapid reconstruction of Gaza and preventing any attempt to partition the Strip or displace its residents (Egyptian foreign ministry Facebook page, February 1, 2025).

► Mahmoud al-Habbash, an advisor to Mahmoud Abbas, said Hamas had to prioritize the interests of the Palestinian people and acknowledge its failure in governing Gaza, claiming the PA and the PLO would take control of the Strip. He accused Hamas of dragging Gaza into six devastating wars and providing Israel with justifications to launch military operations (Sky News Arabia, January 30, 2025).

► Fatah spokesman in Gaza Mundher al-Hayek, said the PA had to be present in Gaza to unite Palestinian geography and governance, adding that reconstruction could not begin without it. He called on Hamas to relinquish control of Gaza and transfer authority to the PA government, which was capable of governance and reconstruction. He said that would eliminate the need for the establishment of a popular committee to manage Gaza (Radio Alam Telegram channel, February 4, 2025).

Israel, Judea and Samaria

Terrorist attacks

► **Shooting in the Jordan Valley:** On February 4, 2025, a Palestinian terrorist opened fire inside an IDF post near the Tayasir checkpoint, killing two IDF soldiers and wounding five others. He was shot and killed (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, February 4, 2025).

Counterterrorism activities

► Throughout the week, Israeli security forces continued Operation Iron Wall in the Jenin and Tulkarm areas, expanding it to include Tubas and Tamun. According to reports, since the operation began on January 21, 2025, more than 50 terrorist operatives have been eliminated in air and ground strikes, and over 100 wanted persons have been detained. Hundreds of explosive devices were neutralized, bomb-making labs and numerous weapons were exposed and buildings used as terrorist facilities were destroyed. An IDF soldier was killed in a clash in

Jenin; the houses of two terrorists were demolished (IDF spokesperson, January 28 – February 4, 2025).



Right: Map of IDF activities in northern Samaria. Left: IDF forces in the Jenin refugee camp (IDF spokesperson, February 2, 2025)

- ▶ Palestinian media reported at least 25 fatalities and the demolishing of more than 20 buildings during Israeli security force operations in the Jenin area. They also claimed that more than 1,500 families had been forced to leave the Tulkarm refugee camp and that detentions were carried out and facilities was destroyed in Tamun and the al-Faraa refugee camp (Wafa, February 3, 2025; Nablus Mountain of Fire Telegram channel, February 3, 2025).
- ▶ The military wings of Hamas, the PIJ and the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades confirmed that their operatives had been killed and claimed responsibility for attacks against Israeli security forces (Telegram channels of Hamas in Judea and Samaria, al-Quds Brigades and the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, January 28 – February 4, 2025).

Activities of the Palestinian security forces

- ▶ According to reports, Palestinian security forces carried out arrests in Tamun, Tubas, Jenin and the Jenin refugee camp at the same time as the Israeli security force operations. Among those arrested were Faiz Ghanam, a wanted operative from Hamas' military wing in Tubas, and Mahmoud Abd al-Jalil and Muhammad Kamil in Jenin, who were wanted by Israel (Quds News Agency, January 28 – February 4, 2025).
- ▶ The PA security forces neutralized improvised explosive devices which had been prepared for use against IDF forces in the al-Faraa refugee camp, south of Tubas (Quds News Agency, February 1, 2025).



**PA security force activities in the al-Faraa refugee camp
(al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, February 2, 2025)**

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Diplomatic activity

- ▶ Muhammad Mustafa, PA prime minister, spoke with Fuad Hussein, Iraqi foreign minister, about developments in the Palestinian arena following the ceasefire and ways to strengthen coordination in support of the Palestinians. Hussein noted Iraq's opposition to any attempt to displace Palestinians and reiterated that Iraq was committed to the Palestinian cause and would work to ensure it remained a priority at the Arab League summit scheduled to take place this year in Baghdad. Mustafa thanked Iraq for its support and noted the importance of continued bilateral cooperation (Iraqi News Agency, January 29, 2025).
- ▶ Hussein al-Sheikh, secretary of the PLO Executive Committee, met in Egypt with Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty to discuss the ceasefire in Gaza and the transfer of humanitarian aid. Al-Sheikh expressed appreciation for Egypt's efforts to support the Palestinians. Abdelatty committed to continuing contacts to ensure compliance with the ceasefire agreement. He added that efforts should be made to unify Gaza and Judea and Samaria and expressed support for the PA government and its reform plans (Egyptian foreign ministry Facebook page, January 29, 2025).
- ▶ Muhammad Mustafa, PA prime minister, met in Ramallah with Greek Foreign Minister Georgios Gerapetritis. According to reports they discussed recent developments in the Palestinian arena in light of the [alleged] escalation of Israeli "aggression" and military activity in Judea and Samaria. Mustafa also recounted the PA government's efforts to provide emergency aid to Gaza residents. He thanked Greece for its humanitarian assistance and its contribution to UNRWA (Wafa, February 3, 2025).

Palestinian lawfare against Israel

► Nine countries⁴ announced the establishment of The Hague Group to support the PA in the international legal arena. The PA foreign ministry welcomed the initiative, calling it a significant step in upholding international law (Wafa, January 31, 2025). Hamas political bureau member Bassem Na'im also welcomed the group's formation, claiming that its objective was to work toward ending the "occupation in Palestinian territories" and prosecuting "war criminals" (journalist Yassin Qadi's Telegram channel, February 2, 2025).

⁴ Malaysia, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Honduras, Namibia, Senegal and South Africa.