



Spotlight on Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

December 2-9, 2025

Overview¹

- ▶ The IDF continued operating within the areas of the Yellow Line in the Gaza Strip and eliminated terrorists who posed a threat. Five soldiers were wounded during attacks on underground facilities in Rafah.
- ▶ The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) announced the closure of the "Israeli prisoners file" after the return of the body of a Thai civilian who was murdered and abducted in the October 7, 2023 attack. Hamas' military wing continued searching for the body of the last murdered Israeli hostage remaining in the Gaza Strip.
- ▶ Yasser Abu Shabab, leader of the largest militia opposing Hamas and supported by Israel, was killed in a clan dispute. Hamas claimed that several "collaborators" turned themselves in during a window of time for "repentance," however militia leaders announced that they would continue the combat against Hamas.
- ▶ Hamas' leader abroad, Khaled Mashal, called for the "weapons of the resistance" to be "protected" and refused to accept any form of guardianship over the Gaza Strip, while other Hamas figures attempted to present pragmatic positions regarding the future of the movement's weapons. Hamas reportedly proposed a ten-year *hudna*.
- ▶ A terrorist was killed carrying out a ramming attack targeting IDF forces in Hebron in which an IDF soldier was superficially injured. Israeli security forces continued counterterrorism activity in Judea and Samaria and completed their extensive operation in northern Samaria. A terrorist network in Tulkarm which had been preparing rockets was exposed.

The Ceasefire in the Gaza Strip

The IDF

- ▶ IDF forces continued operating within the areas of the Yellow Line (the area under IDF control) in the Gaza Strip, in accordance with the ceasefire agreement, and eliminated

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

terrorists who crossed the Line or approached and posed a threat. The IDF attacked a Hamas terrorist who violated the ceasefire agreement after five IDF soldiers were wounded, one of them seriously, during an activity in eastern Rafah targeting underground facilities (IDF spokesperson, December 2–9, 2025). "Sources" claimed that Israel tried and failed to kill the commander of the Rafah Brigade's intelligence apparatus (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, December 4, 2025).

► The Hamas government media information office claimed that Israel had committed 738 "violations" of the agreement since October 10, 2025, causing the deaths of 386 people and wounding 980. According to the claim, 205 of the "violations" were live fire incidents, 138 involved the destruction of buildings and 37 were "incursions" beyond the Yellow Line (Telegram channel of the Hamas government media information office, December 9, 2025). Hamas called on the mediators and the countries guaranteeing the ceasefire agreement to restrain Israel and prevent it from evading its responsibilities towards the agreement, especially to cease attacks on "civilians,"² residential areas and displaced persons camps (Hamas Telegram channel, December 3, 2025).



Infographic of the Israeli "violations" (al-Risalah, December 9, 2025)

Returning Bodies of the Murdered Hostages

► Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) transferred to Israel the body of a Thai civilian who was held in the Gaza Strip after he had been murdered and abducted from Israel in the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre. one body of a murdered Israeli hostage in the Gaza Strip remains in the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, December 3, 2025).

► The spokesperson of the PIJ military wing, Abu Hamza, said that following the transfer of the body, the organization had "closed the enemy prisoners [*sic*] file." He said they had closed it as part of the "honorable" agreement that was the result of a "heroic" battle, and claimed

² Terrorist operatives.

that the Jerusalem Brigades and the other "resistance" factions³ were complying with all the articles of the first phase of the agreement. He urged the mediators and the guarantor countries to exert pressure on Israel to meet its commitments (Shehab News Agency, December 9, 2025).

► Teams from Hamas' military wing and the Red Cross continued searching for the body of the last murdered Israeli hostage in the al-Zeitoun neighborhood of Gaza City, in an area under IDF control within the Yellow Line. However, "Palestinian sources" said the searches were fruitless and claimed that security and logistical challenges hindered the operation (Quds News Agency, December 8–9, 2025).

The Gaza Strip

Security Governance

► According to reports, on December 4, 2025, Yasser Abu Shabab, who headed the Popular Forces militia in Rafah, which enjoyed Israeli support and was the largest militia opposing Hamas in the Gaza Strip, was killed while attempting to resolve a family dispute. His deputy, Ghassan al-Dahini, was appointed as new commander, and said that they would continue the campaign against Hamas. Hussam al-Astal, who commands a militia in Khan Yunis affiliated with the Popular Forces, visited Abu Shabab's grave with al-Dahini, where he said they were determined to continue the campaign against Hamas (Jasor News Facebook page, December 7, 2025). Hamas and the "resistance" factions stated that Abu Shabab's death was an example of the fate of anyone who collaborated with the "occupation." The Hamas ministry of the interior announced it was granting all "collaborators" a ten-day period for "repentance" to surrender. An "officer in resistance security" claimed that a number of "collaborators" had surrendered and claimed that the "mercenaries" were in "a state of disintegration" (al-Harres Telegram channel, December 8, 2025).⁴

³ Terrorist organizations.

⁴ For further information, see the December 2025 ITIC report, "[The Gaza Strip Following the Killing of Yasser Abu Shabab](#)."



Al-Astal and al-Dahini near Abu Shabab's grave (Jasor News Facebook page, December 7, 2025)

- A "source in resistance security" claimed that several attempts to abduct [terrorist-] operatives were recently foiled, which he alleged had been carried out by "occupation gangs," adding that the security services had apprehended those involved, taken control of their weapons and exposed information relating to the murder of a field commander by "agents." According to the "source," they also reached key figures and central members in networks linked to the "gangs," which concentrated in areas under IDF control. The "source claimed" that some of those involved were arrested and some surrendered (*al-Akhbar*, December 5, 2025).
- The Hamas police force continues its activities. Its "rapid response" and criminal identification units handled 252 reports in November 2025 of unexploded ordnance in areas from which the IDF withdrew, Rafah police reported 632 field missions in November 2025 in the areas of market supervision, enforcement of municipal regulations, removal of hazards and prevention the illegal seizure of public space (Hamas police Telegram channel, December 3, 2025).
- Anti-Hamas activist Hamza al-Masri reported that the Deir al-Balah police had attacked displaced persons sheltering at the Development Center in al-Madfa Square to expel them. Subsequently, dozens of Palestinians demonstrated and chanted anti-Hamas slogans, such as "Hamas get out." Al-Masri wrote that the attacks on the displaced were carried out by Hamas militias, whose objective was to take over the site and turn it into an illegal detention center, where they would torture civilians and displaced persons as they did in other places, such as al-Ahli Hospital, the University of Applied Sciences, Nasser Hospital and the General Security building (Hamza al-Masri's Telegram channel, December 3, 2025).

Civilian Governance

► Following reports about renovations at al-Shifa Medical Center, the director, Muhammad Abu Salmiya, said the renovations dealt with no more than 30% of the needs and operational capacity the hospital had before the war. He claimed that the renovated buildings still lacked medical equipment, laboratories and medications, and they were therefore unable to provide adequate services. He noted that the hospital currently had about 300 inpatient beds out of the 700 which had been available before the war and operated with only nine operating rooms out of 22, claiming that Israel had destroyed 70% of laboratory equipment which was unavailable in any other hospital or medical center in the Gaza Strip (Anadolu Agency, December 3, 2025). The director general of the Hamas ministry of health, Munir al-Barsh, added that the renovation of some hospitals did not mean a full return to service, and that no hospital provided 100% of its services (al-Araby Channel Facebook page, December 3, 2025).

► The Gaza Municipality announced that about 300,000 cubic meters of waste had accumulated in the city, but because of a shortage of fuel, garbage trucks would soon cease operating (Sama News Agency, December 6, 2025). A "source in Khan Yunis municipality" reported that about 85% of the city's area had been destroyed and there were more than 400,000 tons of rubble and about 350,000 tons of waste requiring urgent removal (Shehab News Agency, December 8, 2025).

► The spokesperson of the Hamas ministry of transportation, Anis Arafat, said that 70% of the vehicles in Gaza had been fully or partially destroyed, and the ministry did not currently have the capacity to remove them. He said that because most streets in the Strip had been destroyed, removing total-loss vehicles would be limited to Gaza City, as its streets were less damaged than other districts. He said that what was important now was clearing the main streets of Gaza City of the vehicles, as they were an obstacle to reopening roads and shops and to renewing normal life (Safa, December 6, 2025).

The Rafah Crossing

► An "official Egyptian source" denied reports in Israel about coordination to open the Rafah Crossing in the coming days for the exit of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to Egypt, and said that if an agreement were reached to open the Crossing it would be in both directions in accordance with the American plan (Egyptian state information service Facebook page, December 3, 2025). The head of the Egyptian state information service, Diaa Rashwan, said Egypt would not allow Palestinians to leave the Gaza Strip forever and regarded their

"expulsion" as a red line. He added that Egypt would not accept the unilateral opening of the Rafah Crossing, and had the right to impose a "political veto" (al-Jazeera Mubasher, December 3, 2025).

► The "Palestinian factions and forces" called on the mediators and the guarantor countries to force Israel to meet its commitments under the ceasefire agreement and ensure that the Rafah Crossing opened in both directions, as stipulated in the Sharm el-Sheikh Agreement and UN Security Council Resolution 2803 (Hamas Telegram channel, December 3, 2025). The Fatah spokesperson in the Strip, Munther al-Hayek, also said his movement opposed opening the crossing in one direction (Munther al-Hayek's Facebook page, December 3, 2025).

Negotiating the Ceasefire Agreement and "The Day After"

► Hamas leader abroad Khaled Mashal said Hamas opposed any form of guardianship over the Gaza Strip, adding that the Gazans themselves had to govern. In a recorded speech to the Pledge to Jerusalem conference in Istanbul, he said the "resistance project"⁵ and its weapons had to be "protected" and called for the mobilization of all efforts to assist the Gaza Strip by ending the war, breaking the "siege" and opposing "displacement." He called for efforts to be exerted to free the Palestinian prisoners and detainees still held in the "enemy's" prisons, and said he opposed any form of normalization with Israel. He claimed Israel was not a "state" or part of the region, and called to pursue the "Zionist entity" and its leaders in the international arena and bring the leaders to trial (Hamas Telegram channel, December 6, 2025).



Mashal speaking at the conference in Turkey (Hamas Telegram channel, December 6, 2025)

► Shortly afterward, attempting to ameliorate the impression created by Mashal's hardline statements, Hamas released a recorded statement by the head of the political bureau in the

⁵ Terrorism and violence whose objective is to destroy the State of Israel.

Gaza Strip, Khalil al-Hayya, who said Hamas would not give Israel a pretext to renew the war. He claimed he had told the American envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, that Hamas "sought stability" and that America was capable of "restraining the Israeli occupation." Regarding the future of Hamas' weapons, he reiterated that the weapons of the "resistance" were linked to the continuation of the "occupation and aggression," and that if the "occupation" ended, the weapons would be transferred to the ownership of the "state."⁶ He claimed the issue of weapons was still under discussion with the "factions" and the mediators, and agreement was still at an early stage. He also claimed that they accepted UN forces as separation forces and as monitors of the borders and the ceasefire (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, December 6, 2025).

► Other Hamas figures also attempted to present a pragmatic position regarding the issue of Hamas' weapons and the activity of the technocratic committee which is supposed to manage the affairs of the Strip:

- ◆ A "senior Hamas official" said that the movement agreed to establish a technocratic committee to administer the Gaza Strip, and had already agreed on the names of its members. He added that the presence of international forces would be limited solely to monitoring the ceasefire, with separation between the sides to prevent friction and clashes, and that the mediating countries were the guarantors and supporters of the monitoring role (alarabiya.net, December 5, 2025).

- ◆ Hamas political bureau member Bassem Na'im claimed they were "very open-minded" regarding the issue of weapons. He said they could talk about "freezing" them, storing them or setting them aside, with Palestinian guarantees not to use them during the ceasefire. Na'im also said they did not agree that the international forces deployed in the Gaza Strip would have a mandate allowing them to operate or integrate within Palestinian territory (AP, December 8, 2025).

- ◆ "Sources" reported that Hamas and the mediators traded views regarding the issue of weapons, and the perspectives between Hamas leadership and several Palestinian "factions" were approaching those of the Arab mediators regarding the possibility of transferring the weapons to a "Palestinian entity" as part of an agreement ensuring the weapons would not fall into the hands of Israel or the United States. The "sources" also

⁶ Al-Hayya's office told Agence France-Presse that when he said "state," he meant the future sovereign Palestinian state.

said Hamas was prepared to transfer control of the Strip to a technocratic committee "immediately and without obstacles." The report claimed that Hamas even proposed an agreement on a ten-year *hudna* (temporary cessation of fighting), while agreeing to freeze the use of weapons if there were reliable guarantees. The "sources" also said that preparations were being made for a Palestinian national meeting to be held in Cairo, with the objective of reaching internal agreement on critical issues relating to governance and the management of the Gaza Strip. The talks are reportedly meant as a forum for the presentation of ideas regarding the deployment of the international stabilization force and its missions, alongside discussions on the fate of the "factions' " weapons without forcible disarmament (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, December 8, 2025).

◆ Senior Hamas figure Taher al-Nunu said that the weapons of the "resistance" would become part of the arsenal of the Palestinian state once it had been established, and claimed Hamas was prepared for a long-term ceasefire, provided that "the occupation abides by it." He claimed that the idea of an international force which would forcibly disarm the "resistance" had never been discussed. He called the report that the appointment of Tony Blair to the American peace council for the Gaza Strip had been canceled under Arab and Islamic pressure, "a step in the right direction," adding that Hamas opposed Blair's presence "due to his blatant sympathy for Israel" (*al-Jazeera*, December 8, 2025).



The difficulty in implementing the second phase. The Arabic on the bricked-up door reads, "The second phase" and on the suitcase, "Saving Gaza" (cartoonist Amjad Rasmi in *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, December 6, 2025)

- Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan warned that failure to implement the second phase of the agreement in the Gaza Strip would be a "huge failure" for the world and for the American administration. He claimed that for Hamas "to be able to disarm," a credible Palestinian civil administration first had to be established, headed by a technocratic committee, followed by

the establishment of a Palestinian police force without Hamas members which would supervise the Strip with the backing of an international stabilization force. Fidan noted that Turkey, as a signatory guarantor of the agreement and a central mediator, was prepared to join the monitoring force and even deploy forces if required, which was strongly opposed by Israel, but he said Washington was pressing it on the issue (Reuters, December 6, 2025).

Hamas terrorist Activity Abroad

► The IDF and the Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet) revealed documents showing that under Iranian direction and with Iranian support, Hamas operates a clandestine currency exchange network in the heart of Turkey, composed of Gaza expatriates who exploit the country's financial structure for terrorist purposes.⁷ The network cooperates with the Iranian regime and transfers huge sums of money to Hamas and movement figures. The confiscated documents showed transfers amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars as a small part of the activity. The names of three Gazan terrorist operatives active in Turkey were exposed, they were Tamer Hassan, an employee in Hamas' finance office in Turkey operating on behalf of Khalil al-Hayya, head of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, and Khalil Farwana and Farid Abu Dair, two money exchangers in the Hamas network (Telegram channel of Avichay Adraee, the IDF spokesperson in Arabic, December 7, 2025).



Right: members of the network. Left: Document of transferred funds
(Telegram channel of Avichay Adraee, the IDF spokesperson in Arabic, December 7, 2025)

Israel, Judea and Samaria

Terrorist Attacks

► Vehicular ramming attack in Hebron: On December 7, 2025, a Palestinian terrorist drove his vehicle at an IDF force stationed at the HaShoter checkpoint in Hebron; he was shot and killed.

⁷ For further information, see the Facebook 2025 ITIC report, [Turkey as a Center for Hamas Activity](#)

A local worker was caught in the gunfire and killed (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, December 7, 2025).

Counterterrorism

► This past week Israeli security forces continued counterterrorism activity throughout Judea and Samaria, especially in Qalqilya and the village of Surif. They detained dozens of wanted individuals, terrorists and suspects involved in terrorist activity, including terrorists who planned to carry out attacks. Terrorists who threw rocks were eliminated, and weapons and funds intended for terrorism were exposed and seized. The offices of the Union of Agricultural Work Committees in Ramallah and Hebron were raided and wanted individuals were detained. The IDF stated that in practice the organization was an arm of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. An attempt to smuggle weapons across the Jordanian border was foiled. The IDF also announced the completion of its operations in northern Samaria, during which aerial attacks were carried out, six terrorists were eliminated, dozens of wanted individuals were detained, and weapons and funds for financing terrorism were exposed and seized. According to reports, in November 2025 Israeli security forces exposed a terrorist network in Tulkarm, terrorist operatives who had carried out attacks were detained and unfinished rockets, explosive devices and components for manufacturing explosives were exposed (IDF spokesperson, December 2–9, 2025).



Unfinished rockets in Tulkarm (IDF spokesperson, December 9, 2025)

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

► PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas spoke with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz to discuss strengthening bilateral relations. He thanked Germany for its support for the two-state solution, humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip, UNRWA and reconstruction efforts. He reiterated the claim that the Palestinian leadership condemned attacks on civilians, including the October 7, 2023 attack [and massacre], and noted the need to end Hamas rule in the Gaza Strip

and to disarm it. He also demanded a full Israeli withdrawal in accordance with the second phase of the plan to end the war and declared commitment to recognition of Israel and to the two-state solution (Wafa, December 6, 2025).

► The PA foreign ministry welcomed the five resolutions in favor of "Palestine" passed by the UN General Assembly, including the renewal of UNRWA's mandate for three more years. The ministry said it regarded the UN actions as broad international support and solidarity with the Palestinian people and a rejection of Israel's policy in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria, and east Jerusalem. The ministry called for strengthening the work of UN investigative committees, ensuring international protection and humanitarian access, and supporting the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, and thanked the states which supported the resolutions while calling on opposing states to reconsider their positions and promote practical steps that would strengthen the right to self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian state within the June 1967 borders with east Jerusalem as its capital (Wafa, December 5, 2025).