

[About](#)[Terrorism portal](#)[History](#)[Cyber and technology](#)[עברית / english / العربية](#)

Israel Security Agency - Terrorism Portal

Organizational Glossary

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)

A fundamentalist Islamic terror organization that developed from the Islamic Jihad in Egypt, a radical branch of the Muslim Brotherhood striving to create an "Islamic caliphate" through violent struggle ("jihad"). The Palestinian Islamic Jihad was founded in 1981, in the Gaza strip, under the influence of the Egyptian branch. It was headed by Dr. Fathi Shqaqi, who is considered to be the organization's founder. Another prominent activist, which is also consider to be among the founders of PIJ, is Sheikh Abd al-Aziz 'Odeh. The PIJ combines extremist nationalist ideology with Islamic views; the destruction of the state of Israel and its replacement with an Islamic Palestinian state, to be established on all of the territory of Palestine. The group's ideology views the "liberation of Palestine" as a first step in the "redemption of Islam," and the means of achieving it are "jihad" and uncompromising terror activity against Israel. Shqaqi and 'Odeh (as students in Egypt, the two were influenced by the views of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic revolution in Iran (1979)), were expelled from the Gaza Strip to Lebanon in 1988, following a series of severe terror attacks carried out by members of their organization. Since that time, the organization's headquarters have been in Syria. Following the death of Shqaqi in Malta (October 1995), he was replaced by Ramadan Shalah. In Damascus, the ruling regime allows the PIJ leadership a wide freedom of action. The PIJ also receives significant support from Iran, both financial and operational. In practice, the PIJ serves as a key Iranian tool in the struggle against Israel, and in the strengthening of the Iranian influence on the Palestinian agenda. In the 1980s, the PIJ was, the most active terror organization carrying out terror attacks against Israeli targets. Following the signing of the Oslo Accords, which the organization vehemently opposed, its members adopted the use of suicide attacks and carried out a number of severe attacks within Israel. During the Second Intifada (since September 2000), PIJ activists, particularly from Samaria, featured significantly in a series of suicide bombings and explosives attacks, in which dozens of Israelis were killed and hundreds were wounded. As a result of Israeli counter-terror activity in Judea and Samaria and the establishment of the "buffer zone" in Samaria, the organization's ability to carry out terror attacks decreased. In recent years, in addition to the continued efforts to execute suicide attacks in Israel, its members, mainly in the Gaza Strip, have focused on high-trajectory fire towards Israel (mortar fire and rockets), including the firing of standard manufactured Grad rockets toward Ashkelon. These attacks have been

carried out alongside shooting attacks, explosives attacks, and involvement in a suicide attack in Eilat (January 29, 2007). The PIJ has a civilian infrastructure, which includes educational, cultural, social and religious institutions, dependent on charity funds subordinate to the PIJ. In practice, this infrastructure is the major tool in the achievement of the organization's goals it allows the organization to aid the families of terror activists who were killed or wounded, as well as the families of prisoners, and to identify and cultivate activists and supporters from a young age.

[ISA website](#)