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JOURNALS + DIGITAL PUBLISHING



Quarterly Update on Conflict and Diplomacy

Source: *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Spring 2002), pp. 118-141

Published by: [University of California Press](#) on behalf of the [Institute for Palestine Studies](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/jps.2002.31.3.118>

Accessed: 25/03/2015 16:07

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QUARTERLY UPDATE ON CONFLICT AND DIPLOMACY

16 NOVEMBER 2001–15 FEBRUARY 2002

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The Quarterly Update is a summary of bilateral, multilateral, regional, and international events affecting the Palestinians and the future of the peace process.

BILATERALS

PALESTINE-ISRAEL

Despite a flurry of cease-fire initiatives at the opening of the quarter, Israeli-Palestinian hostilities continued to escalate, bringing the al-Aqsa intifada to new heights by the close of the quarter. Meanwhile, hopes for renewed American engagement evaporated when the U.S. issued a weak policy statement and then disengaged completely following the *Karine A* arms ship affair, tacitly allowing Israel to escalate its attacks to levels not seen since the 1967 war. Israel and the U.S. ignored Palestinian Authority (PA) head Yasir Arafat's near total acquiescence in demands to punish Palestinian opposition groups, which caused significant division within the Palestinian community.

As the quarter opened, Israeli-Palestinian clashes entered their fourteenth month, with tensions still very high following the 10/17/01 assassination of Israeli tourism minister Rehavam Ze'evi by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Israel's reoccupation of six Palestinian cities in mid-10/01, one of which (Jenin) was held until 11/26. Some 849 Palestinians (including 21 Israeli Arabs), 187 Israelis (including 52 IDF soldiers and security personnel, 59 settlers, 76 civilians), and 6 foreign nationals had been killed, and as many as 30,000 Palestinians and 2,000 Israelis had been injured.

Israeli-Palestinian clashes witnessed a relative lull between 11/16 and 11/19 (see Chronology for details), in anticipation of the first major policy statement on the Middle East by U.S. Pres. George W. Bush's administration, slated for 11/19. Meanwhile, Israeli PM Ariel Sharon continued to demand (11/18) seven days of complete Palestinian quiet before he would implement the Tenet cease-fire plan (see Doc. D2 in *JPS* 121) and the Mitchell Committee recommendations for resuming negotiations (see Doc. A2 in *JPS* 120) and specified that at most he would agree to a long-term interim arrangement

rather than a full peace treaty (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 122).

U.S. Secy. of State Colin Powell's 11/19 speech (which reportedly went through 35 drafts as the administration debated up to the last moment whether to "gamble" on a new initiative) ultimately offered little that was new (see Doc. D3 in *JPS* 122). He promised "active American engagement" and reaffirmed plans to send special envoy Anthony Zinni and Asst. Secy. of State William Burns to the region to broker a cease-fire but otherwise merely urged Israel and the PA to implement the Tenet and Mitchell recommendations. Powell called on the PA to do everything possible to halt "violence and terror" and to definitively acknowledge the "legitimacy of Israel as a Jewish state," while stating that Israel "must be willing to end its occupation" and "accept a viable Palestinian state" as well as halt settlement expansion, which he said "cripples chances for real peace and security." In response, Israel announced (11/20) plans to expand Jewish settlements in Hebron and to replace temporary structures there with permanent homes, began (11/21) offering Israelis free housing in 18 Jordan Valley settlements, where vacancies were up 8% since 9/00, and unveiled (11/25) a new East Jerusalem settlement project that would displace 10s of Palestinian families from al-Yaman and link the area to the Jewish enclave in Ras al-Amud.

Between 11/20 and Zinni and Burns's arrival on 11/26, Israel stepped up military actions against the Palestinians, announcing (11/21) that it would "resume guerrilla warfare tactics" to seize wanted Palestinians. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) raided Tulkarm (11/21) and arrested a PA Preventive Security Force (PSF) officer and his brother; demolished 18 houses in Rafah (11/20) and one in Hebron (11/22); bulldozed 25 acres of Palestinian land near Netzarim settlement (11/20); and raided and shut the PA Interior Min. offices in Azariyya (11/21, 11/22), confiscating files. In addition, five Palestinian children were killed (11/22) in Khan Yunis by a mine

planted by the IDF along a well-known path to school for local youngsters, and a 13-year-old Palestinian stone thrower was shot dead (11/25) at the heavily fortified Rachel's Tomb outpost in Bethlehem.

The Abu Hanud Assassination: A Turning Point

Amid this general intensification, the IDF assassinated (11/23) the head of Hamas's Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades Mahmud Abu Hanud near Nablus, firing a missile at his car. In response, Hamas members fired (11/24) mortars at Kefar Darom settlement, killing one IDF soldier and wounding two. Israel retaliated (11/25) by destroying the PA military intelligence headquarters in Khan Yunis, a naval police post in Sudaniyya, and a Fatah office in Dayr al-Balah, as well as bulldozing three Palestinian homes in Dayr al-Balah.

As was likely anticipated given the spate of suicide bombings following Israel's assassination of Abu Hanud's predecessor, Yahya Ayyash, in 1996 (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 100), the Palestinian response to Abu Hanud's murder did not end with the mortar attacks. While Zinni and Burns held fruitless talks with Israeli and PA officials and Sharon traveled (11/29) to New York, a Hamas suicide bomber detonated (11/26) a device near Erez crossing, wounding two Israeli border policemen. On 11/27, two Palestinian gunmen (from Islamic Jihad and the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade [AMB], a Fatah offshoot) opened fire on a crowd in Afula, killing two Israelis and wounding 14, and an Islamic Jihad suicide bomber blew up (11/29) a bus in Hadera, killing three Israelis and wounding seven. On 12/1, two Hamas suicide bombers staged a synchronized attack in Jerusalem's Ben Yehuda Market and a car bomb exploded nearby, killing a total of 10 Israelis and wounding 180. Within hours, another Hamas suicide bomber detonated (12/2) a device in Haifa, killing 14 Israelis and a Filipino and injuring more than 40, and a Hamas gunman fatally shot (12/2) a Jewish settler in Gaza.

The string of attacks overshadowed the precipitative assassination and dramatically altered the political playing field, most importantly by undermining the position of those in the Bush administration lobbying for increased U.S. intervention in the peace process and by intensifying U.S. endorsement of Israeli conduct. Israel, which had barely responded during the week-long onslaught while Sharon was in the U.S., received hardly any criticism, whereas the Palestinians re-

ceived nearly universal condemnation. The European Union (EU) and Russia, as well as Britain, France, Germany, and Italy individually, joined the U.S. in demanding (12/1) that the PA immediately punish the organizations behind or supporting the attacks. Zinni declared (11/30) that Palestinian militants were undermining his peace mission. Bush, who met (12/2) with Sharon briefly in Washington before he cut short his visit to return to Israel, pointedly did not urge Israeli restraint, while Powell stated (12/3) that the U.S. was "not about to tell Mr. Sharon what he should do as a freely elected leader of a democratic country." Sharon himself stated that Israel would "do what we have to do to protect our citizens. . . . Just as the United States is conducting its war against international terror, using all its might against terror, so will we too."

For his part, Arafat immediately condemned each incident and repeatedly called for a cease-fire. On 11/28, he ordered the PSF to detain AMB, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad militants, arresting 90 by 12/2. Following the 12/1–2 attacks, he issued (12/2) an order outlawing "any movement, organization, or gathering" not abiding by the cease-fire call, declaring a state of emergency in the PA areas, and ordering the confiscation of all illegal weapons. Although the arrests sparked major clashes between Palestinians and the PSF (see below), Israel dismissed (12/2, 12/3) them as "a stunt" and "a show for international consumption." The U.S. concurred (12/3), saying the arrests "seemed like a business-as-usual response" and "half measures," and demanding that the PA "root out the infrastructure of the groups that support terrorists."

Upon his return to Israel, Sharon convened (12/3) his inner cabinet and full cabinet to discuss how to respond to the escalating violence. The full cabinet declared the PA "an entity that supports terrorism" and authorized Sharon to launch a "war against terror" that would include a "much broader scope" of military activity than at any time in the previous 14 months. The cabinet also added Force 17, Arafat's "presidential guard," to Israel's list of terrorist organizations. Labor party MKs, including FM Shimon Peres, walked out of the meeting to protest the statement but after internal discussions (12/5) decided against withdrawing from the coalition government.

With this cabinet authorization, the IDF launched (12/3) a massive air campaign (in-

cluding F-15s and F-16s), hitting Arafat's headquarters and other PA sites around Gaza City, destroying the main PSF barracks and Arafat's two personal helicopters; bulldozing the runways of Gaza airport; sending troops into PA-controlled Ramallah to surround Arafat's headquarters there, where he was staying; and destroying the PA governorate building, jail, and PSF headquarters in Jinin. Two senior Fatah members, both on Israel's wanted list, were killed (12/3) in a mysterious explosion in Bethlehem, thought to have been an IDF assassination. Asked for comment, the White House stated that Israel "obviously has the right to defend itself. The president understands that very clearly."

The massive Israeli retaliation, which lasted from 12/3 to 12/10, left 28 Palestinians dead (see Chronology for details). F-16s targeted Force 17, PA military intelligence, and PSF targets across the West Bank and Gaza, while the IDF conducted arrest raids to capture wanted Palestinians. During this period, there was another Islamic Jihad suicide bombing (12/5) in Jerusalem, lightly injuring five Israelis; a Hamas suicide bombing (12/9) in Haifa, lightly injuring 11 Israelis; and an IDF assassination attempt (12/10) against senior Islamic Jihad member Muhammad Sidir. In a briefing to Likud MKs on the government's plan of action, Sharon vowed (12/5) to step up assassinations, banned all Palestinian vehicles on interurban West Bank roads, barred Arafat from leaving Ramallah, and suspended VIP passage for all PA officials. The Israeli cabinet authorized the IDF to intensify strikes on 12/9.

Meanwhile, Arafat carried on with his own crackdown, taking another 150 mostly Hamas and Islamic Jihad members into custody by 12/5, placing Hamas spiritual leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin under house arrest (12/6), and urging all groups to abide by the cease-fire. On 12/9, the AMB, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad issued a joint statement offering to suspend attacks inside Israel if Israel agreed to halt assassinations and bombardment of PA areas. Israel rejected the offer (12/9) and continued to dismiss Arafat's efforts, even as Palestinian protests against the crackdown turned into sizable anti-Arafat, anti-PA demonstrations (see below).

Zinni continued his mediation throughout, pressing the sides to reconvene the CIA-Israeli-PA trilateral security committee on 12/7 and 12/9. The meetings were described as "heated" and unproductive, with Israel demanding that the PA take stronger action

against militants and the PA asking Israel to lift its blockades and suspend its military actions for several days to allow the PSF to mount its crackdown more effectively. At the 12/9 session, Zinni threatened to call off his mission if the sides did not make serious efforts to implement a cease-fire within 48 hours, but Powell assured Arafat and Sharon on 12/10 that Zinni would stay on regardless. At the subsequent trilateral security meeting on 12/11, Zinni told the PA that it must "destroy the infrastructure of the terrorist organizations" and that "coexistence with these organizations . . . is simply not acceptable." The EU issued (12/10) a similar statement, calling on Arafat to dismantle the "terrorist networks" of Hamas and Islamic Jihad and to make a declaration in Arabic ending the "armed intifada."

Sharon Declares Arafat "Irrelevant"

On 12/12 Hamas and the AMB staged a joint attack on a Jewish settler bus in the West Bank, killing 10 and wounding 30, while two Hamas suicide bombers detonated devices outside a Jewish settlement in Gaza, wounding four. In response, Sharon severed all contact with the PA, declared Arafat "irrelevant," and said that Israel would no longer wait for the PA to "wipe out terror networks" but would do the job itself. With no indications of any international moves to restrain Israel, Sharon upped the ante. The inner cabinet authorized (12/12) him to "rapidly deploy" the IDF for "massive and continuous" operations "in cities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip." (Peres again [12/14] criticized the government's decision but said he would not leave the coalition.) The IDF tightened the encirclement of Arafat's Ramallah headquarters, moving tanks within 300 yards of the complex, began F-16 strikes on targets in al-Bireh, Gaza City, Jinin, Nablus, Qalqilya, Ramallah, and Tulkarm, and reinforced its closure of the Palestinian towns, sending tanks briefly into Jinin. The White House and State Dept. squarely blamed (12/12) Arafat, repeated that "Israel has a right to defend herself," and announced that the U.S. had advised the EU states not to invite or host Arafat so as to increase pressure on him to act. The State Dept. declared (12/13) that Arafat must "destroy the formal and informal structures that perpetuate terrorism" and recalled Zinni to Washington on 12/15 to "reevaluate" the U.S. mediation. Arafat complied (12/12) by ordering the closure of all Hamas and Islamic Jihad offices, schools, and clinics.

The intense Israeli barrage continued through 12/15 (see Chronology), with the IDF cutting electricity to Gaza City and Ramallah and sending tanks and F-16s to shell the control tower at Gaza airport, the PA headquarters in Gaza City and Ramallah (Arafat was unharmed), the PA naval offices in Bayt Lahia, and the Fatah, Force 17, and PSF offices in Bayt Hanun, Gaza City, Jinin, and Ramallah. It also blew up the main Palestinian radio and TV transmitters and bulldozed the Palestine Media Center offices in Ramallah; confiscated equipment at the Voice of al-Quds radio station, also in Ramallah; bulldozed 36 houses in Khan Yunis (leaving 350 Palestinians homeless), 5 in Bayt Hanun, and 3 in Salfit; occupied (for 24 hours) the home of Fatah *tanzim* leader Marwan Barghouti (who was not there at the time); conducted arrest sweeps, detaining scores of Palestinians; and made incursions into PA-controlled areas across the West Bank and Gaza.

Arafat Presses His Cease-Fire Call

With the prospect of continuing Israeli assaults and with no international support, Arafat on 12/16 made a televised address (aired by the Palestine Media Center's Gaza bureau, which the IDF had not destroyed) urging an end to attacks on Israeli targets, especially suicide bombings, and vowing that "any violation . . . will be seen as a trespass against our supreme national interest . . . [and] will be penalized firmly and strongly." He noted that he had already declared the military wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad illegal in his 12/2 order (see above), closed their newspapers and 25 of their offices, and arrested some 180 individuals. Israel dismissed the speech as too little too late, while the U.S. said the words must be matched by actions that "result in the diminution of the violence that is plaguing Israel."

From 12/16 to 12/19, Arafat stepped up the PSF arrest campaign (even arresting PSF officers for participating in "anti-Israeli activity"), continued closing Hamas and Islamic Jihad offices, and shut down workshops where homemade mortars were allegedly made. The PA also revived talks with the Palestinian factions, stressing the grave dangers of even greater Israeli military action and securing (12/17) a pledge from all groups to halt attacks inside Israel for one week, conditional on Israel suspending assassinations. The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and

the PFLP rejected appeals to declare a halt to attacks within the territories but in practice began to scale back operations. Hours after the 12/17 pledge was announced, Israel again attempted to assassinate Islamic Jihad's Sidir, firing missiles at his car in Hebron, fatally shot wanted Hamas member Yakub Idkaydik, and detained PLO Jerusalem affairs coordinator Sari Nusseibeh for several hours on charges of holding a "dangerous and illegal" gathering in East Jerusalem—a tea for foreign diplomats to mark the end of Ramadan.

With no letup in Israeli attacks by 12/18, Arafat directed PSF Gaza head Muhammad Dahlan to phone Peres to demand that Israel take steps to lift the siege and resume negotiations, halt its assassination campaign, and cease its bombardment of PA areas. PA Planning M Nabil Shaath urged (12/18) EU foreign policy director Javier Solana and special envoy Miguel Moratinos to press Israel to make some gesture to reciprocate Arafat's efforts. The result was an Israeli-Palestinian bilateral security meeting (12/19) on possible new security arrangements in the West Bank, though Israel stressed that it still considered Arafat irrelevant. The IDF also pulled out of parts of Nablus and Ramallah early on 12/20 but reentered later in the day.

Through the end of 12/01, the PA kept up efforts to quell the violence and actively coordinated with the Palestinian factions to contain popular discontent caused by this crackdown. (Notably, the PSF fired on Islamic Jihad members preparing to launch a mortar in Gaza on 12/20, killing one, and arrested four PFLP members on 12/29 in connection with Ze'evi's assassination.) This markedly reduced the number of incidents but elicited no policy change by Israel, which kept up incursions, arrest raids, air strikes, and bombardments and relaxed open fire regulations (see Chronology for details). From 12/16 to 12/31, 2 Israelis and 26 Palestinians were killed, bringing the overall toll since 9/28/00 to 233 Israelis and 974 Palestinians. Another Israeli-PA security meeting was held, at Erez on 12/26, during which Israel agreed to extend the hours of the Rafah crossing into Egypt (where 100s of Palestinians were stranded awaiting reentry into Gaza) and to allow the PA to make repairs at Gaza airport. Sharon continued to bar Arafat from leaving Ramallah, even to attend Christmas services in Bethlehem, insisting (12/21) that restrictions on his movement would not be eased until he arrested and

tried or extradited all those responsible for the Ze'evi assassination. The EU, Vatican, and U.S. repeatedly urged Sharon to allow Arafat to go to Bethlehem, arguing that it would be a gesture to the PA, but Sharon refused, stating (12/21), "People go on vacation on holidays if they worked throughout the year."

The Peres-Qurai' Peace Initiative

During December, the significant diminution in Palestinian violence resulted in several initiatives to break the impasse and revive peace talks. On 12/23, the Israeli press leaked news that Peres and Palestinian Council speaker and PA negotiator Ahmad Qurai' had drafted a "letter of understanding" calling for Israel to recognize a Palestinian state within two months on the 40% of the West Bank and 60% of Gaza technically under the PA's full and partial control (areas A and B). Recognition would be part of an interim agreement and would come after full implementation of the Tenet and Mitchell plans, including a cease-fire, a Palestinian crackdown on "terrorist groups," a freeze on Israeli settlement activity, and a lifting of the Israeli blockades. Issues of settlements, refugees, Jerusalem, and final borders would be settled "later."

Arafat and Sharon both stated (12/23) that they had not seen the draft and could not accept it as reported, though they admitted they knew the talks (rumored to have been going on since mid-11/01) were being held and said they expected them to continue. Qurai' acknowledged (12/25) that the gaps between his and Peres's positions were still wide, especially regarding a declaration of a Palestinian state (Peres refused to refer to the 1967 lines, agreeing only to refer to UN Res. 242 and 338), but that the draft at least implied Israeli recognition that there must be "a political path to return to peace outside the security framework." Likud Central Committee chairman Tshai Hanegbi, angered that the talks were held despite Sharon's stated policy of "no negotiations under fire," warned (12/26) that he would lobby for a Likud party resolution opposing the establishment of a Palestinian state. Sharon replied (12/27) that the draft letter was without "weight or validity" and contained too many problematic sections to be considered seriously at the moment.

Meanwhile, EU Pres. Guy Verhofstadt (Belgium), Solana, and Moratinos traveled (12/19) to Washington, where they urged senior U.S. officials to revive the quadripartite

mediation efforts with Russia and the UN (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 122) to press Israel to resume official contacts with the PA and both sides to implement the cease-fire. The U.S., however, won a pledge from the EU to "speak with one voice" on the Middle East and to focus pressure on Arafat.

The Karine A Arms Ship

By the end of 12/01, Palestinian violence had been drastically reduced, despite two apparent IDF assassinations (12/28, 12/30): even according to the IDF's own account (12/30), the average number of incidents per day was down to 11 in the last week of 12/01. Consequently, pressure was up for Sharon to take some significant step to move the cease-fire forward: Israeli pres. Moshe Katsav, for example, asked (12/31) Sharon's approval to address the Palestinian Council and offer a cease-fire bid. Sharon called (12/31) the idea "stupid" and stated (12/30) that the diminution of violence since 12/16 did not warrant a shift in strategy or the easing of restrictions on the Palestinians.

Nonetheless, encouraged by the relative quiet, the U.S. announced (1/1) that it would send Zinni back to the region for a four-day visit aimed at implementing the Tenet cease-fire steps. Zinni arrived on 1/3 and met first with Sharon, who wanted Arafat to be pressed to take harsher action against militant groups.

The Zinni visit was completely overshadowed by the *Karine A* "terrorist ship" affair. Just 15 minutes into Zinni's first meeting with Arafat on 1/4, Israel publicly announced that at dawn on 1/3 it had captured a cargo ship, the *Karine A*, loaded with 50 tons of weapons—including 2 tons of C-4 explosives and TNT, 62 Katyusha rockets, 1,525 mortars, 735 grenades, 311 mines, antitank missiles, and sniper rifles—en route from Iran to the PA. (Sharon, Peres, and Ben-Eliezer reportedly briefed Zinni on the raid over breakfast the morning of 1/4, before Zinni met with Arafat.) According to Israel's account as revealed over the next few days, the boat had been purchased in Lebanon with PA funds by PA naval police officer Adil Mughrabi (a close Arafat associate), was registered in the name of an Iraqi based in Yemen (an arrangement organized by another close Arafat associate, PSF Maj. Gen. Fuad Shubaki, during a trip to Iraq), and was sailed by senior PA naval police officer Omar Akawi first to Sudan and then to Iran, where it was loaded by Hizballah members with Iranian arms (either purchased by the PA or donated by Iran

or Iraq). The ship then sailed to Yemen for repairs, after which it departed for Gaza, being captured just before reaching the Suez Canal. A third Arafat insider, naval police officer Fathi Razim, was also accused of involvement. Sharon vowed (1/10) not to resume ties with the PA or ease Arafat's confinement until those behind the *Karine A* shipment, as well as those connected to the Ze'evi assassination, had been arrested.

The PA and Iran immediately denied involvement, with the PA claiming it was a media stunt meant to undermine Zinni's efforts for a cease-fire: besides the perfect timing of the ship's capture, conspiracy theorists pointed out that when the seizure was announced, there had not been a significant act of Palestinian violence for six days (see Chronology), nearly meeting Sharon's demand (reiterated 1/1) for seven days of total quiet, and that the alleged participants in the shipment conveniently meshed with Israel's "wish list" of potential targets for the U.S. war on terror—Hizballah, Iran, Iraq, the PA, and by extension, Lebanon and Syria. Finally, Israel reportedly used small vessels similar to the *Karine A* to smuggle arms to Iran in the 1980s during the Iran-Iraq War.

Since the U.S. could not immediately corroborate the details of the *Karine A* shipment (on 1/4, it had said that it had been involved in tracking the ship but had no evidence it was intended for the PA and suggested that the ship's origin and cargo were more characteristic of a Hizballah rearming operation), Zinni went about his tour more or less as if nothing had happened. He held meetings with Israeli and PA officials independently and convened a trilateral security meeting (1/6). The Israeli and Palestinian teams argued over the *Karine A* affair and Israel's siege of Palestinian areas but agreed to strengthen security coordination. Zinni returned to the U.S. on 1/6 as planned.

After reviewing its own intelligence, being briefed (1/9) by Israeli officials, and hearing the jailhouse testimony (1/7) of Akawi stating that he was a Fatah "soldier" who "obeyed orders" received from Mughrabi, the U.S. was prepared to say (1/10) that the PA was "linked" to the ship but could not claim proof that Arafat knew about the plan or ordered it. Washington ordered (1/4) Arafat to investigate the incident and report back but said (1/10) it would still send Zinni back to the region on 1/18.

The Immediate Aftermath

Despite the unfolding *Karine A* affair, the PA continued its campaign of arrests, and

Palestinian violence remained low (see Chronology). The calm broke on 1/9, when two Hamas gunmen claiming revenge for Israel's capture of the arms ship attacked an IDF post in the Negev, killing four soldiers and wounding two. After seizing two PSF posts on the Gaza-Negev border on 1/9, Israel responded in force on 1/10, sending tanks into Rafah in a predawn operation to demolish at least 54 Palestinian houses, damaging another 20 and leaving more than 500 Palestinians homeless. Israel claimed that the houses were used by "terrorists" to shoot at IDF troops and that they concealed tunnels used for smuggling arms from Egypt. During the night of 1/11–12, the IDF blew up another 19 houses in Rafah and damaged nearly 100 others, leaving 21 families homeless and temporarily displacing 100s; shelled PA naval police targets in Gaza, sinking Arafat's yacht; and destroyed the remaining runways at Gaza airport, which Israel had just allowed the PA to begin repairing (see above). Citing the house demolitions, Islamic Jihad (1/10) suspended its halt to attacks inside Israel.

In its first acknowledged assassination since the Abu Hanud killing on 11/23, Israel on 1/14 assassinated wanted AMB member Ra'id Karmi, detonating a bomb as he left his Tulkarm hideout. (The IDF had previously attempted to kill Karmi on 9/6/01.) Within hours, the AMB ambushed an IDF convoy outside Tulkarm, killing one soldier and wounding two. On 1/15, AMB gunmen ambushed, abducted, and fatally shot a Jewish settler near Bayt Sahur. Unidentified gunmen shot dead a second settler and wounded a third near Givat Ze'ev the same day. Both murdered settlers held U.S. passports.

Meanwhile, the PSF arrested (1/11) Shubaki in connection with the *Karine A*, issued warrants (1/11) for the arrests of Mughrabi and Razim (who reportedly were outside the territories), and detained PFLP head Ahmad Saadat (1/15) in connection with the Ze'evi assassination. Israel dismissed (1/11, 1/15) the arrests as insufficient, while the U.S., citing the increasing violence, put (1/15) Zinni's 1/18 visit on hold. Frustrated by the total lack of acknowledgment of its generally successful efforts to reduce violence and comply with Israeli and U.S. demands, the PA quietly discontinued its crackdown on opposition groups, though it did not allow their offices to reopen or release those who had been arrested. By 1/15, the comprehensive death toll had reached 978 Palestinians and 240 Israelis.

Israel Escalates Again

Early on the morning of 1/17, Sharon convened the inner cabinet. Though details of the session were not released, soon afterward the IDF sealed Bethlehem, Jinin, Nablus, Qalqilya, and Tulkarm and assassinated wanted AMB member Khamis Abdallah. That afternoon, the Labor Central Committee met again to debate whether to withdraw from the coalition government; DM Benjamin Ben-Eliezer successfully argued that doing so would guarantee a full-scale war against the Palestinians.

Late on 1/17, an AMB gunman, retaliating for the assassination earlier in the day, opened fire with an M-16 at a bat mitzvah celebration in Hadera, killing six Israelis and wounding at least 25 before being beaten unconscious by partygoers and then shot dead by a policeman. In retaliation, F-16s rocketed the PA Interior Min. and PSF offices in Tulkarm, killing two PSF officers and injuring 61 officers and civilians; IDF tanks, armored personnel carriers (APCs), paratroopers rolled into Ramallah to tighten the encirclement of Arafat's headquarters to within 100 yards, placing Arafat, restricted to Ramallah since 12/5, under de facto house arrest inside the compound. The operation continued on 1/18 in Ramallah, with the IDF confiscating the Voice of Palestine Radio archives and blowing up its five-story building, searching the home of PA intelligence chief Tawfiq Tirawi, and searching and occupying the Episcopal Diocese's Arab Evangelical School. Elsewhere in the West Bank, the IDF killed wanted AMB member Faraj Hani Abu Odeh Nazzal.

Over the next two days (1/19–20) the IDF tightened the blockades around major Palestinian population centers and prepositioned forces, including some 70 tanks, in the Ikrama region near Tulkarm. In a predawn operation on 1/21, the IDF sent infantry, tanks, APCs, and armored bulldozers into Tulkarm, totally reoccupying the city, seizing numerous buildings (including a college and the mayor's office) and apartments in the city center as observer posts, hoisting Israeli flags, imposing a 24-hour curfew, conducting house-to-house searches, and detaining at least 30 Palestinians. Soldiers reportedly responded to "scattered resistance," leaving two Palestinians dead and 15 wounded. The IDF also sent tanks deep into Nablus. Although the IDF withdrew to the outskirts of Tulkarm within 24 hours, the incursion, in size and scope, marked Israel's largest mili-

tary operation in the West Bank and Gaza since 1967. Senior IDF officials suggested (1/21) that Israel was preparing to make additional and longer incursions into PA areas than its reoccupation of Palestinian cities in 10/01 and 11/01 (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 122) "to destroy more infrastructure and to kill more terrorists. And if the international pressure on . . . Arafat fails, at the end of the day we'll find ourselves controlling all of the territories."

The high level of violence continued over the next two days. On 1/22, the IDF raided an alleged explosives factory in Nablus, killing most-wanted Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades West Bank head Yusif Suragji and four other Hamas members in what the PA declared was an assassination. Hamas vowed (1/22) an "all-out war" on Israel. Within hours, an AMB gunman opened fire in West Jerusalem, wounding 16 Israelis before being fatally shot by police; two of the injured later died. On 1/24, Israel assassinated senior Hamas member Adli Hamdan (Bakr Hamdan), firing missiles at his car in Khan Yunis, and fatally shot a PA intelligence officer in Ramallah. During the one-week period 1/17–24, 20 Palestinians and 7 Israelis were killed, bringing the toll since 9/28/00 to 999 Palestinians and 249 Israelis.

The U.S. Reevaluates Its Role

Meanwhile, the U.S. was undertaking a "strategic reassessment" of its mediation in light of the *Karine A* affair and the increase in violence and was waiting for Arafat's report on his investigation into the arms shipment. Sometime between 1/21 and 1/24, Arafat sent Powell a brief letter merely reasserting that the PA had no connection with the *Karine A*. The administration reportedly was "incredulous." Bush told King Abdallah of Jordan on 2/1 that he felt "lied to" and "betrayed" by Arafat. On 1/23, the U.S. began turning up the heat on the PA. Powell phoned (1/23) Arafat to say that the U.S. was still waiting for his report on the *Karine A* and rejected his request to send Zinni back to the region. (It was unclear whether Arafat's letter was in response to Powell's call or the reverse.)

The U.S. raised its level of rhetoric sharply over the next week, increasingly laying blame for the deteriorating Israeli-Palestinian situation on the PA (see Washington Watch in this issue). The White House and State Dept. spokesmen asserted (1/23) that the derailment of cease-fire efforts was a result of the "arms shipment received and paid

for by the Palestinian Authority," that the "justifying of the targeting of innocents in return for land is an argument for terrorism," and that there was not "any excuse for [the PA] not taking effective steps to stop that terrorism." Regarding Israel's confinement of Arafat to his office in Ramallah, the White House said (1/24), "The president understands the reason that Israel has taken the action that it takes, and it is up to Chairman Arafat to demonstrate the leadership to combat terrorism."

At the same time, the U.S. invited (1/24) Sharon to come to Washington on 2/7 for his fourth meeting with Bush in less than a year. Bush and his senior policy advisers followed up with internal discussions (1/24–25) on what new steps should be announced before or during Sharon's visit. A number of senior officials, including VP Dick Cheney and Defense Secy. Rumsfeld, were reportedly leaning toward sanctioning or severing ties with Arafat, the PA, and the PLO, but the team ultimately decided for the time being to increase public criticism of Arafat and to "redouble" efforts to get Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia to put pressure on him. Burns immediately convened (1/25) a meeting with all Arab ambassadors to urge them to press Arafat to curb Palestinian attacks.

After the 1/25 policy meeting, Bush told the press that Arafat must "make a full effort to rout out terror. Ordering up weapons that were intercepted on a boat headed for that part of the world is not part of fighting terror; that's enhancing terror." The White House clarified (1/25) that Bush did not mean to accuse Arafat of direct involvement in the *Karine A* affair, stating that evidence showed only that senior PA officials were involved. But in an interview on 1/27, Cheney affirmed his belief that Arafat had personally orchestrated the shipment, saying, "What he's done is gone to a terrorist organization, Hizballah, and a state that supports and promotes terrorism, that's dedicated to ending the peace process, Iran, and done business with them." The White House did not qualify his remarks. Powell warned (1/25) that Arafat had reached a "moment of truth."

The Sharon-Bush Meeting

The U.S. had no stated objective for the Bush-Sharon meeting, and the invitation was widely seen as a symbolic gesture of solidarity with Israel and a high-profile reprimand to Arafat. Once the visit was announced (1/24), Israel attenuated its large-scale incursions and bombardments and curtailed its

usual retaliation policy. For example, when an Islamic Jihad suicide bomber on 1/25 detonated a device in Tel Aviv, wounding 18 Israelis, and Hamas on the same day fired for the first time a Qassam-1 rocket (though without damage), Israel did not stage the type of massive responses it had on 1/10 or 1/18 but "limited" itself to air strikes on Gaza City and Tulkarm. When the first female Palestinian suicide bomber struck in West Jerusalem on 1/27, killing one Israeli, the IDF merely flew low-level sorties over Gaza City, breaking the sound barrier and shattering windows. Nonetheless, the IDF kept up its assassination policy, killing a wanted DFLP member on 2/4 and apparently making a failed attempt on a senior Fatah member on 2/3. Overall, Israeli-Palestinian clashes continued at a moderate level between 1/24 and 2/7.

Israel also made some moves on the diplomatic level. Sharon sent (1/27) senior political adviser Danny Ayalon to Egypt reportedly to offer ideas on how to emerge from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but these were never elaborated. On 1/29, he secretly sent (1/29) his son Omri to meet with Arafat in Ramallah, where a secret meeting was arranged for Sharon and Qurai', senior PA negotiator Mahmud Abbas, and Arafat financial adviser Muhammad Rashid in Jerusalem on 1/30. Sharon reportedly only reiterated his position that if Arafat halted Palestinian violence completely, he would be willing to consider a long-term interim plan along the lines of the Peres-Qurai' draft (see above), which he expected would take seven years to complete. Peres and Qurai' consequently held more talks (2/1–2) about their draft on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in New York. When the PA leaked (2/1) news of the secret meetings, Sharon initially refused to comment, announcing instead (2/1) that he planned to advise Bush that the U.S. should "ignore Arafat, boycott him, not hold any contacts with him. . . . Any granting of legitimacy to Arafat and the Palestinian Authority weakens the fight against terrorism." When he finally acknowledged (2/3) the talks, he said they had nothing to do with Arafat, whom he still considered irrelevant, and noted that he was opposed to the ongoing Peres-Qurai' discussions.

At the same time, the pressure to isolate Arafat continued unabated: At the UN on 2/5, DM Ben-Eliezer said that Arafat was "not a partner for peace" and that the U.S. should open talks with more "realistic" Palestinians,

such as Abbas, Qurai', or PSF chiefs Dahlan and Jibril Rajub. Furthermore, Sharon openly stated (1/31) that he regretted that Israel did not kill Arafat in Beirut in 1982. (The State Dept. said [1/31] it did not have "any particular comment" on the remark.)

Meanwhile, Arafat sent a second letter to Powell regarding the *Karine A* affair. Reports circulated in the Hebrew press as early as 2/4 that Arafat had submitted a 17-page document to the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem (possibly a "white paper" separate from the second letter), but the State Dept. did not publicly acknowledge receipt of any correspondence until 2/11. In the letter, Arafat reportedly stated that although he was not personally involved with the *Karine A*, as leader of the PA, he was answerable for the incident and vowed to punish those responsible, listing steps he planned and had taken to date. In the days before the Sharon-Bush meeting, Israeli papers (e.g., *Ma'ariv* 2/4, *Ha'Aretz* 2/6) thus billed Arafat as admitting or taking responsibility for the arms shipment. The PA did not correct that impression and never released the text. The U.S. said (2/11) only that the letter was positive and that it hoped Arafat would follow through.

On 2/3, the *New York Times* ran an op-ed by Arafat outlining the Palestinians' vision of peace as a two-state solution (see Doc. B1). Though the article hit all the points demanded in Powell's 11/19 speech—secure final borders, a refugee solution taking Israel's demographic concerns into consideration, preventing "attacks carried out by terrorist groups against Israeli civilians"—Sharon dismissed (2/3) it completely, saying, "Arafat is irrelevant." His spokesman Ranaan Gissin claimed (2/3) Arafat offered nothing new, while some Palestinians accused him of ceding refugee rights and denounced his references to "terrorist groups" (see Doc. B2).

In the end, the Sharon-Bush meeting was a photo opportunity. In the press conference that followed, Sharon reiterated his contention that Arafat had "chosen a strategy of terror and formed a coalition of terror" and hoped that pressure on Arafat might result in "an alternative leadership in the future." Bush promised to keep pressure on the Palestinian leader but said he had no intention of severing contacts with him or the PA.

The Third Intifada?

Immediately upon his return to Israel on 2/10, Sharon convened his inner cabinet to discuss how to react to incidents of Palestinian violence that had occurred before and

during his trip to Washington, especially Hamas's infiltration (2/6) of Hamra settlement, killing two Jewish settlers and a soldier, and its firing (2/10) of at least one Qassam-2 (equivalent to a large mortar with a range of up to 5 miles). The next day (2/11), the IDF sent 20 tanks into Nablus, declared a curfew, and retook Joseph's Tomb, which had been abandoned during the first month of the al-Aqsa intifada. At midday, as schools were letting out, IDF helicopters and F-16s struck a PSF compound in Gaza City, injuring at least 40 Palestinians, including a number of children. Israel said the strikes were part of a "rolling response" to the "new level of threat" presented by Hamas's rockets. When Hamas fired two more Qassam-2s toward a settlement in Gaza on 2/13, causing no damage, the IDF sent tanks into Jinin briefly and temporarily seized the towns of Bayt Hanun, Bayt Lahia, and Dayr al-Balah as well as Jabaliya refugee camp in Gaza; conducted searches, detaining at least 12 Palestinians; and exchanged gunfire with Palestinians, leaving five PSF officers dead.

On 2/14, Palestinian gunmen ambushed a Jewish settler convoy escorted by IDF trucks heading to Netzarim settlement, detonating a roadside bomb and opening fire but causing no injuries. When the IDF sent in a tank for support, the gunmen detonated a shaped charge underneath it, killing three IDF soldiers, wounding two, and marking the intifada's first successful attempt to destroy an IDF tank. The Salahadin Brigade (reportedly a recently formalized "military wing" of the Palestinian Resistance Committees in south and central Gaza, made up of AMB, Fatah, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad members) took responsibility. In response (2/15), the IDF twice bombed the PSF headquarters in Jabaliya, killing one PSF officer and wounding 30 officers and civilians. In addition, Palestinians threw (2/14) two pipe bombs at an Israeli border police post in Hebron, and AMB members fired (2/15) on an IDF post near Ramallah, killing one soldier.

At the close of the quarter, the Israeli-Palestinian situation seemed headed for some sort of breaking point, and there was talk on the Palestinian street that a new, conscious strategy for a "third intifada" was forming among some Palestinian groupings based on sharply escalating armed attacks against IDF and Jewish settler targets inside the West Bank and Gaza only, staying strictly within international law's definition of a legitimate national liberation movement. Meanwhile,

Sharon's popularity fell below 50% after his return from the U.S., as more Israelis concluded that Sharon's approach had not succeeded in reducing attacks on Israeli targets and arguably had led to more incidents.

Overview of the Clashes

As of 2/15, some 1,033 Palestinians (including 21 Israeli Arabs), 262 Israelis (including 69 IDF soldiers and security personnel, 77 Jewish settlers, 116 Israeli civilians), and 7 foreign nationals had been killed. By comparison, in 4/94, PM Yitzhak Rabin had estimated (see Doc. C3 in *JPS* 93) that since the outbreak of the first intifada in 12/87, 1,045 Palestinians had been killed by the IDF, while 219 Israelis (68 security personnel and 151 civilians) had been killed by Palestinians. According to the Health Development Information Project (HDIP), of those Palestinians killed in the current intifada, 85% were civilians and 15% members of the PA security services or militant groups; 61% were killed by live ammunition and 23% by Israeli shelling; 25% were age 18 or younger; 13% were age 15 or younger.

On 11/29, the PA Health Min. reported that since the beginning of the intifada, at least 33 kidney dialysis patients had been denied passage through IDF checkpoints to hospitals and at least 22 women had given birth or miscarried at checkpoints because they had been denied passage. On 12/6, the HDIP reported that since 9/28/00, 30 Palestinians had died because the IDF barred their crossing checkpoints to reach medical care; at least two more incidents occurred after 12/6, one involving a dialysis patient.

Israel carried out 12 killings (down from 14 last quarter) that were certainly or almost definitely assassinations: AMB's Abdallah (1/17), Karmi (1/14), and Nazzal (1/18); DFLP's Ayman Bihdari (2/4); Fatah's Rafat al-Bajali and Nidal al-Dirbani (both 12/3); Hamas's Abu Hanud (11/23), Hamdan (1/24), Idkaydik (12/17), and Suragji (1/22); Islamic Jihad's Mahmud Burai (12/28); and the Palestinian Resistance Committees' Ismail Abu al-Qumsan. At least another eight deaths (down from 11 last quarter) had the markings of assassinations (12/3, 12/7, 1/4, 1/24, 1/26, and 2/7; see Chronology for details). Two attacks on Islamic Jihad's Sidir (12/10, 12/17) and one on Fatah's Imadi Assaf (2/3) were clearly assassination attempts that failed.

The Israeli High Court rejected (1/29) three petitions seeking to stop the government's assassination policy on the grounds that it constitutes authorizing "executions

without trial" and is counter to international legal norms, with justices arguing that the court does not usually rule on security matters. But Israel's Judge Advocate General set (2/5) conditions on Israel's assassination policy, specifically banning assassinations in retribution for past attacks but ruling them permissible if (1) there is well-supported evidence that the individual plans to stage an attack, (2) appeals to the PA for the individual's arrest have been ignored, and (3) IDF attempts to arrest the subject have failed. The Israeli government claimed (2/5) it was already adhering to such standards.

While the incidence of Palestinian violence was significantly lower overall this quarter, the number of suicide attacks nearly doubled to 20. Indeed, 81% of Israeli fatalities this quarter (61 of 75) were the result of suicide attacks, compared to 44% last quarter (18 of 41), whereas Israeli fatalities from nonsuicide attacks were down nearly 40% (from 23 to 14). There were 10 suicide bombings (11/26, 11/29, 12/1, 12/2, 12/5, 12/9, 12/12, 1/25, 1/27, 1/30, including two dual attacks on 12/1 and 12/12, and the first by a Palestinian woman on 1/27) and one failed bombing on 2/6. Another 10 attacks (12/12, 12/25, 1/9, 1/17, 1/21, 1/28, 2/6, 2/10, plus two on 11/27) could be called "suicide" insofar as they were certain to result in the death of those who staged them. Moreover, the attacks were 50% more deadly than last quarter, killing a total of 61 Israelis and injuring nearly 300, compared to 12 suicide attacks last quarter that killed 18 Israelis and injured around 200. Palestinian use of grenades and roadside bombs remained low this quarter. While the use of mortars was down slightly, for the first time (11/24) a mortar strike caused an Israeli fatality and, also for the first time, Hamas fired Qassam-1 (1/25) and Qassam-2 (2/10, 2/13) rockets, causing no injuries but marking an escalation. There were also several Palestinian attacks showing greater military sophistication than anything carried out previously during the al-Aqsa intifada. These included the synchronized Hamas dual suicide bombing and car bombing (12/1), the joint AMB and Hamas attack (12/12) on a settler convoy, and, most significantly, the Salahadin Brigade incident (2/14) in which Palestinians lured a Merkava tank into a trap, destroying it with a shaped charge.

As noted above, Israel adopted a more aggressive policy of incursions this quarter, staging military operations of an intensity not

seen since the 1967 war in major Palestinian population centers and temporarily reoccupying areas. Indeed, such incursions and re-occupations, as well as the IDF's use of F-16s, considered shocking by the U.S. when they first occurred in 4/01 and 5/01 (see Peace Monitors in *JPS* 120 and 121), had come to be viewed as legitimate self-defense by the U.S. and were now regular occurrences. Meanwhile, Israeli house demolitions, concentrated mostly in Rafah, were also up sharply this quarter: At least 107 homes in Rafah, 36 in Khan Yunis, 11 in Issawiyya, 5 in Bayt Hanun, 3 each in Bayt Hanina, Dayr al-Balah, and Salfit, 2 in Hebron, and 1 each in Anabta and Saida were completely destroyed. The IDF also seemed to temporarily occupy more buildings, houses, and apartments as observer posts, most significantly in Nablus (2/10) and Tamun (2/8). Israel once again (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 121) acknowledged (1/23) using tank shells packed with (internationally banned) flechettes, killing three Palestinians on 12/30. Jewish settler violence continued at the same level this quarter, with two more hit-and-run incidents (11/28, 12/22) against Palestinians (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 122).

The Bank of Israel reported (1/13) that the al-Aqsa intifada had cost the Israeli economy \$3.2 b. from 10/00 to 12/01. During that period, tourism revenues dropped 45% (\$1.8 b.), trade with the Palestinian territories fell 45.7% (\$500 m.), construction sector revenues dropped 8% (\$650 m., primarily a result of the loss of 45,000 Palestinian workers), agriculture sector revenues dropped \$120 m. (also primarily a result of the loss of Palestinian workers), and the budget deficit more than doubled, reaching \$3.8 b. (3.3% of GDP). The political uncertainty also caused a crisis in the high-tech sector and led to an overall drop of 0.5% in GDP for FY 2001, marking Israel's worst economic performance since 1953. By comparison, Israel's GDP grew 6.4% in FY 2000, despite the onset of violence in 9/00. Similarly, Israel's standard of living dropped 2.9% in 2001, after growing by 3.6% in 2000.

The Israeli Prime Minister's Office (PMO), in consultation with the DMin., decided (1/30) that instead of transferring to the PA the more than \$400 m. in taxes that Israel has collected on its behalf since 10/00, it would use the funds to pay the PA's debts to various Israeli suppliers. For example, Israel claimed that the PA owed \$15 m. for electricity provided to the territories and \$1.7 m. for

"urgent treatment of Palestinians in Israeli hospitals." The PMO set up a special committee to discuss Israel's unilateral disbursement of these funds.

Independent Peace Initiatives

This quarter witnessed a modest revival of independent initiatives to stop the violence and restart the peace process. For example, when the situation deteriorated following the 11/23 Abu Hanud assassination, Peace Now began holding weekly protest rallies outside Sharon's Jerusalem residence that were attended by 100s of people; these continued through the end of the quarter. Peace Now also organized (12/10) a brainstorming session on ending the current crisis that was attended by 60 Israeli and Palestinian officials and public figures.

As in previous quarters, Palestinians and "internationals" (foreign nationals typically from the U.S. and Europe) staged nonviolent marches on IDF checkpoints in the territories, sometimes attempting to clear roadblocks and frequently being met with tear gas, rubber-coated steel bullets, and stun grenades; such events occasionally (e.g., 12/27) attracted people in the 1,000s. In 12/01, members of a new ad hoc group of 100 internationals called International Checkpoint Watch began positioning themselves at IDF crossings on the Bethlehem-Birzeit road to act as nonviolent observers to protect Palestinians traveling the route; they were also attacked (e.g., 12/29) by IDF troops attempting to disperse them. Israeli Arabs held solidarity rallies in Sakhnin (1/26) and Umm al-Fahm (1/27).

On 12/31, some 2,000 Palestinians and 300 internationals, including members of the EU and Italian parliaments, staged a nonviolent march from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, where they planned to meet up with 100s of Israeli peace activists for a rally against the ongoing Israeli siege of the PA areas. The West Bank marchers, organized by the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, were temporarily blocked by the IDF outside Bethlehem but eventually were allowed to proceed to the Jerusalem checkpoint, where only the internationals were permitted entry into the city. The IDF declared an area around Kefar Etzion settlement a closed military zone from 12/30 until 1/9 to prevent the 300 internationals from making a separate solidarity visit to Palestinians in Hebron.

On 1/25, 56 officers and soldiers in the IDF combat reserves published a petition in *Ha'Aretz* stating that they refused to "fight

beyond the Green Line for the purpose of occupying, deporting, destroying, blockading, killing, starving, and humiliating an entire people" (see Doc. C4). They reissued the petition on 2/1 with 102 signatures. By the end of the quarter some 230 reservists had signed the online petition, and another 400 had expressed their support. Since the al-Aqsa intifada began in 9/00, more than 500 Israelis have refused to serve in the occupied territories. Of these, 40, including 12 reserve officers, have been sentenced to brief prison terms.

On a semiofficial level, Israeli and Palestinian experts met (1/9–11) in South Africa to discuss alternative ways of halting Israeli-Palestinian violence and reviving peace talks. The Israeli delegation was headed by former MK and Oslo architect Yossi Beilin and opposition MK Yossi Sarid, while the Palestinian team was led by PA Local Government M Saeb Erakat. The sides agreed on several general principles, including (1) that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be resolved through violent and military means, (2) that the only guarantee for stability and security is genuine peace, (3) that channels of communication should remain open at all times and under all circumstances, (4) that the sides should not allow the process to be held hostage by extremists or their actions, and (5) that negotiations should not be viewed as a zero-sum game. Participants held a follow-up meeting in al-Ram on 1/14, where they agreed to organize as the Israeli-Palestinian Coalition for Peace, begin monthly meetings, initiate a media campaign promoting nonviolence and political moderation, and organize nonviolent protest activities.

On 12/28, more than 700 Palestinians and Israelis marched in Jerusalem, calling for a renewal of peace talks, supporting the creation of an independent Palestinian state, and announcing the formation of a new peace coalition to be led by PLO Jerusalem affairs coordinator Sari Nusseibeh. Participants included representatives of the DFLP, the Labor party, and the Jahalin bedouin.

Christian, Muslim, and Jewish clerics met (1/20–22) in Alexandria, Egypt, and issued an unprecedented joint declaration to use their moral authority to break the cycle of Israeli-Palestinian violence and revive peace talks. They also formed a permanent committee to boost peace prospects by bolstering intercommunal ties and lobbying political leaders. The meeting, organized by Archbishop

of Canterbury George Carey, was attended by (among others) Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron (one of Israel's two chief rabbis), former Israeli dep. FM Rabbi Michael Melchior, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Michel Sabah, and PA M without portfolio Shaykh Talal Sidr.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Moledet leader and Tourism M Benny Elon announced (2/2) that his party was beginning a campaign to "stop the censorship and to permit expression to be given to the . . . various possibilities for transfer." The campaign included erecting billboards around Tel Aviv that state "Only Transfer Will Bring Peace." Elon specified Jordan and Sinai as possible transfer sites and vowed to Palestinians that "I will make your lives difficult until you want to leave." Israeli atty. gen. Elyakim Rubenstein, who on 1/31 had banned the frequently used slogan "No Arabs, No Terrorist Attacks" to allow the police more leeway to arrest right-wing demonstrators, took no action to block the Moledet billboards.

Jerusalem

Israel continued to take actions asserting its authority over all of expanded Jerusalem. In addition to barring the PLO's Nusseibeh from holding a tea for diplomats on 12/17 (see above), Israeli authorities also arrested Palestinian physician and human rights activist Mustafa Barghouti twice on 1/2—once on charges of entering Israel illegally from Ramallah (he held a briefing in East Jerusalem for EU diplomats on the effects of Israeli closures on Palestinian health conditions) and then for disrupting traffic at the "border" to the West Bank.

The IDF raided, confiscated the files of, and shut several Palestinian offices in the greater Jerusalem area, including the PSF and Interior Min. offices in Azariyya (11/21, 11/22), the Information Min.'s main and subsequently temporary offices in Azariyya (11/21, 1/31), the al-Quds Open University student union office in Azariyya (1/31), and the Land Research Center (part of the Arab Studies Society) and the Multisectoral and Technical Offices of the Welfare Association in East Jerusalem on 2/6. Israel also extended (2/7) the closure order on Orient House for six months (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 121). The IDF demolished Palestinian houses in Bayt Hanina (2/6), Issawiyya (1/14, 2/4), and Shu'fat (2/6) and announced plans for the expansion of Ras al-Amud settlement (11/25; see above).

Following Palestinian attacks in Jerusalem on 1/22 and 1/27, Israel's Internal Security M Uzi Landau presented (1/28) to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee his ministry's new "Enveloping Jerusalem" plan to ring West Jerusalem with barriers to keep Palestinians out. Officials say the "barriers" would not be walls but checkpoints, security patrols, and monitoring devices (e.g., thermal sensors, security cameras) along the 1948 armistice line; they also planned to dig trenches and add 100s of additional border guards around the 54 km "border" between East Jerusalem and the West Bank. A cheaper option being considered was to surround and place closures on "Palestinian areas in East Jerusalem, in much the same way as dozens of towns and villages are in the West Bank and Gaza." A Likud representative clarified (1/28), "We are not talking about ghettos. People will be able to enter and exit through a security gate." The Israeli cabinet approved the plan on 1/30, but it was still uncertain that it would move forward given the costs involved.

Palestinian Authority

Due to the closures and IDF raids, the PA ministries almost completely ceased functioning this quarter. In addition to the closures of the Information and Interior Min. offices in Azariyya mentioned above, the IDF also raided (12/5) the PA Central Bureau of Statistics, confiscating files, computers, financial records, and raw survey data (especially on political and social issues), along with the names and addresses of survey respondents on the pretext that it was looking for financial links to "terrorist groups." On 12/28, PSF West Bank head Rajub estimated that Israel had destroyed 70% of PSF offices and 90% of PSF barracks since 9/00. By the end of the quarter, the IDF, in some areas, was carrying out air strikes on targets that had already been demolished.

The devastation of the PA security infrastructure this quarter was such that the PA could not carry out basic security functions, such as safely holding trials. In Jinin on 2/5, a mob of more than 1,000 Palestinians, enraged by reduced sentences handed down by a judge, stormed a makeshift PA security courtroom and lynched three Palestinians convicted of murdering a popular PSF officer in an intrafamily feud. Since 9/01, the IDF had demolished Jinin's two police headquarters, its security headquarters, two prisons, the governor's administrative offices, and its military courtroom, leaving the PA without a

secure compound to hold the controversial trial. The military court had sought to move the trial to Jericho but could not due to Israeli closures.

INTRA-PALESTINIAN RELATIONS

Intra-Palestinian tensions were particularly high this quarter as a result of Arafat's decision, under extreme international pressure, to undertake preventive arrests of Palestinians likely to stage attacks on Israeli targets (11/28), to declare the armed wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad illegal (12/2), and to close all offices affiliated with Hamas and Islamic Jihad, including 79 newspapers, schools, and charity organizations (12/12). The roughly 200 Palestinians detained during the quarter were mostly Hamas and Islamic Jihad members, but also AMB and PFLP cadres and even PSF officers.

From the start of the arrest campaign, angry Palestinians would rally at the first attempt to arrest a prominent local activist, frequently forcing the PSF to retreat (e.g., 12/2, 12/3, 12/19, 12/20, 1/8). By 12/20, PSF officers routinely donned masks or otherwise covered their faces during arrests so they could not be identified by local residents and sought out for retribution. Israel, however, dismissed (12/20) the rioting as "a show for international consumption."

The PSF twice (12/3, 12/5) tried to take Hamas's Shaykh Yasin into custody but was thwarted by violent crowds numbering in the hundreds. During the 12/5 clash, the PSF fatally shot one Palestinian and wounded two, and the funeral (12/6) for the murdered Palestinian turned into a large anti-Arafat protest. The PA was ultimately forced to ask the National and Islamic Higher Committee for the Follow-up of the Intifada (NIHC) to negotiate (12/6) a "voluntary house arrest" agreement with Yasin, with permission to leave his home to attend the local mosque. Hundreds of Palestinians also clashed violently with PSF officers attempting to arrest Hamas spokesman 'Abd al-'Aziz Rantisi on 12/19 and 12/20.

Similarly, following the funeral (12/21) for an Islamic Jihad member shot by the PSF on 12/20, hundreds of masked Islamic Jihad members broke away from the funeral procession to attack the local PSF office, smashing a police car and opening fire on PSF officers, sparking a riot involving 1,000s of Palestinians and an exchange of gunfire that left at least six dead and more than 80 injured. That evening, 60 of Gaza's local politi-

cal leaders held an emergency meeting on how to prevent such incidents. They agreed that future funeral processions would be routed away from PSF posts, that members affiliated with the same organization as the deceased would not wear masks, that mourners would not discharge weapons, and that PSF officers would stay out of view.

Among the other senior members of factions detained by the PSF were the DFLP's Khalil Abu Zarfi (12/30), the head of Islamic Jihad's military wing, Shadi Muhana, and his senior aide, Mahmud Judeh (12/22), Islamic Jihad's Fawaz Khulayif (1/5) and Ali Safuri (1/6), National Islamic Salvation Party (NISP) secy. gen. Jamal Talab Salih (1/5), and PFLP Secy. Gen. Saadat (1/15). The arrest of the NISP's Salih was particularly controversial since the NISP is a full-fledged political party that participated in the 1996 Palestinian Council elections. When the NISP threatened (1/21) to stage a mass sit-in in front of the Palestinian Council, the PA released Salih.

On 1/17, a leaflet issued in the name of the PFLP's military wing threatened to assassinate Arafat if he did not release Saadat. The PFLP political wing initially distanced (1/17) itself from the call and later stated (1/24) that the leaflet was a fake. On 1/23, Palestine National Council Speaker Salim Zanun also appealed to Arafat for Saadat's release. When the PA did not respond, the PFLP suspended (2/1) its membership in the PLO in protest. Saadat was still in PSF custody at the end of the quarter.

Numerous protests against the political arrests and in support of continued attacks on Israeli targets were held: 1,000 Hamas supporters rallied in Gaza on 12/2 and Jabaliya on 2/8; 100s of Palestinians attended rallies sponsored by the NIHC in Nablus on 12/2 and Shati' on 2/8; a number of rallies specifically against the arrest of PFLP head Saadat were attended by scores of Palestinians (e.g., 1/15, 1/16, 2/15). Unable to curb the demonstrations, Arafat banned (12/8) Palestinian media from reporting on them. Fatah attempted to organize a pro-Arafat rally in Gaza on 12/6, but only a 1,000 Palestinians turned out. It was not until after Sharon placed Arafat under house arrest in Ramallah on 1/17 that pro-Arafat rallies numbering in the 1,000s were held to show solidarity with him and protest his confinement (e.g., 1/18, 1/20, 1/25, 1/26, 2/1).

Palestinian protests became larger as the quarter progressed. On 1/22 in Nablus, some

2,000 Hamas supporters, angry over Israel's apparent assassination of Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades head Suragji and suspecting the PA of complicity, marched on the local PA headquarters and PSF office, demanding the release of 28 detained Hamas members and torching three PSF cars. The PSF opened fire on the crowd with tear gas and live ammunition, killing one Hamas supporter. To calm the crowd, the PSF temporarily released the brother of one of the Hamas members killed along with Suragji to attend the funeral. Attended by some 15,000 Palestinians, the funeral turned into a massive demonstration calling for revenge against Israel.

By the end of the quarter, protesters were actively trying to break detainees out of jail. On 2/7, tens of armed Palestinians raided a makeshift jail in a Jinin apartment building, freeing 10–15 detainees without meeting PSF resistance. When the IDF bombed (2/6) two prisons in Nablus, wardens released 25 Hamas and Islamic Jihad members (including two of Israel's most wanted) for their safety but kept 103 suspected collaborators in custody. In a similar incident on 2/11, 100s of Palestinians raced to a PSF jail in the main PA headquarters in Gaza City, fearing it would be shelled by the IDF. PSF officers fired into the air to disperse the crowd and immediately began transferring prisoners to detention elsewhere, but in the melee several prisoners escaped or were freed. Later the same day, 300 Palestinians stormed a jail in Hebron, freeing 16 Hamas and Islamic Jihad members. The Hebron incident reportedly sparked a heated argument between Arafat and PSF West Bank head Rajub in which Arafat drew a gun on Rajub and accused him of undermining his authority by allowing his PSF officers to release detainees. Arafat dismissed the PSF's Tulkarm chief, who had freed six Islamic Jihad members in a similar incident on 12/4.

There were also a handful of national unity efforts this quarter. FIDA, the Palestinian People's Party (PPP), and the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF) launched (12/21) a "national initiative" aimed at creating a comprehensive strategy for the Palestinian situation. Their five-point plan called for a halt to all armed confrontation, continuation of the intifada "in its popular form," reactivation of PLO institutions, support for the absolute authority of Arafat and the PA, and a focus on ending the occupation, removing settlements, and creating a Palestinian state

on areas occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem.

On 12/21, reps. of all Palestinian factions and 100s of Palestinians staged a peaceful march to a local IDF checkpoint meant to symbolize nonviolent national unity in the struggle against occupation. When a handful of demonstrators threw stones at the IDF tanks, soldiers opened fire on the group with rubber-coated steel bullets, injuring two.

Around 1/1, 31 Palestinian Council members and Palestinian intellectuals issued a petition calling for immediate PA reforms to fix and improve political institutions and ensure an independent judiciary.

PALESTINIAN OPINION

The following data are excerpted from a poll conducted by the Birzeit University Development Studies Program (DSP) between 7 and 9 February 2002. Results are based on a survey of 1,198 men and women from the West Bank and Gaza. The poll, sixth in a series, was taken from the DSP's Web site at home.birzeit.edu/dsp.

During your life, have you been exposed to the following practices as a result of Israel's military control over the West Bank and Gaza? (% answering yes)

	West Bank & Gaza	West Bank	Gaza
a. Physical abuse (e.g., beating, shaking)	38.7%	47.2%	42.0%
b. Humiliation (e.g., verbal abuse, being asked to undress)	50.0%	52.8%	51.1%
c. Being banned from crossing at roadblocks	71.9%	48.6%	62.8%
d. House entry and search	57.3%	73.0%	63.4%
e. Arrest	18.9%	18.4%	18.7%
f. Injury	12.2%	18.6%	14.7%
g. House demolition or property damage	21.0%	18.5%	20.0%
h. Land or property confiscation	22.8%	6.2%	16.4%

JORDAN-ISRAEL

Jordan continued to keep interactions with Israel to a minimum this quarter, concentrating instead on its own security. When

Israeli-Palestinian violence escalated in late 11/01 and Sharon pronounced (12/13) Arafat "irrelevant," King Abdallah declared (12/13) that Jordan would not take part in an Israeli-Palestinian war or allow more Palestinian refugees into the kingdom, stating that he had already issued orders to close the border if a full-scale war erupted.

In an incident on 12/25, gunmen apparently fired across the Jordanian border into Israel, north of Beit Shean, wounding two Israeli border policemen. The assailants then fired on and threw grenades at IDF soldiers arriving on the scene, killing one and wounding two. IDF helicopters strafed the border area and no-man's-land, killing two gunmen, and entered Jordanian territory after getting permission from the Jordanian security liaison in keeping with the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty. No group claimed responsibility, and information on the identity of the gunmen killed was not released. Amman denied (12/25) that they were Jordanian and said there was no proof that they had infiltrated from the kingdom, though it acknowledged an increasing number of attempts by Jordanian youths to cross into Israel in recent months.

In late 12/01, Jordanian authorities reportedly arrested three Lebanese Hizballah members planning to smuggle arms into the PA areas, with Israel and Lebanon discreetly demanding their extradition. Lebanon denied (2/22) the story, and Jordan and Israel declined to comment. According to the Israeli press, King Abdallah told Secy. of State Powell in their meeting on 2/1 that Jordan had prevented as many as 70 "terror attacks" against Israel from the kingdom (not further defined but probably including attacks on Israeli targets inside Jordan) and that Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants, trained in Iran and Lebanon, had tried to attack Israel 17 times from Jordanian territory. Jordan refused to confirm or deny the report.

The State Dept. reported (1/31) that Abdallah, in his meeting with Powell on 1/31, "tacitly backed" Israel's confinement of Arafat to his headquarters in Ramallah, saying that "putting Arafat in a corner" was a good idea and that he had "no problem" with U.S. pressure on Arafat. The Jordanian FMin. denied the report.

Jordan sentenced (2/11) U.S. citizen Raed Hijazi to death by hanging for plotting attacks on U.S. and Israeli targets in Jordan and for being a member of al-Qa'ida. Hijazi had been given a life sentence when tried in ab-

sentia in 9/00 but, under Jordanian law, had to be retried after being extradited from Syria in 11/00. The U.S. used its diplomatic immunity to bar U.S. Consul General Les Hickman from testifying that Hijazi appeared to have been beaten when he visited him in a Jordanian jail, raising suspicions that his confession was forced.

Jordanian and PLO officials in Amman complained again this quarter (e.g., 11/29, 12/30) that Israel was impeding the transportation of humanitarian goods to PA areas across the King Hussein Bridge. Items such as blankets were said to be getting through, but foodstuffs were often being delayed until they went bad (particularly if donated by Iran). For example, Israel banned the importation of unpitted dates (the vast majority of dates sent to the PA areas) and barred entry of 10 ambulances donated to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society because they used leaded gas.

The Jordan Press Association (JPA) announced (1/3) plans to take action to revoke the credentials of *al-Hilal* journalist Abdallah Etum for interviewing FM Peres in Israel in late 12/01. (Etum also interviewed Arafat on the same visit.) The JPA dropped the case on 1/22 after Etum wrote a letter denouncing the Israeli occupation and all forms of normalization with Israel, regretting his own "normalizing" with Israel, and promising not to visit Israel or engage in any further dealings with the Jewish state.

SYRIA-ISRAEL

Throughout the quarter, rumors circulated that with the Israeli-Palestinian track eclipsed by violence, Israel and the U.S. were exploring reviving Israeli-Syrian negotiations. FM Peres confirmed (1/1) that Israel would be interested in resuming talks but was pessimistic that any progress could be made. On 1/30, DM Ben-Eliezer on a visit to Cairo formally asked Mubarak to pass a message to Damascus expressing Israel's interest in resuming talks. Syria rejected (2/2) the appeal as a "maneuver to pressure the Palestinians," claiming that Ben-Eliezer's message also included six conditions for resuming talks, including the demand that Syria halt support to Hizballah. Syria did not reveal the other five points.

The U.S. pressed Syria to clamp down on Hizballah. This, along with a general discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian situation, was the topic of Assistant Secy. Burns's meeting with Asad in Damascus on 12/12 and of a

congressional delegation that visited around 11/17. An EU delegation in Damascus on 11/19 also urged Syria to restrain Hizballah.

The U.S. Navy stopped and searched (1/29) two Syrian-registered vessels off Cyprus as part of the U.S. antiterrorism campaign, but nothing suspicious was found. Syria lodged a strong protest with the U.S.

LEBANON-ISRAEL

The Israeli-Lebanese border remained relatively quiet this quarter, though the disputed Shaba' Farms region continued to be a friction point. Hizballah fired mortars at IDF posts in Shaba' Farms once this quarter, on 1/23, causing no damage. The IDF responded with air strikes on Hizballah targets in southern Lebanon, but no damage was reported.

Israel continued to make routine overflights of Lebanese territory, including an incident on 12/17 in which Israeli warplanes, helicopters, and drones overflew Lebanon in what the UN called "the most serious violations of Lebanese air space since the May 2000 Israeli withdrawal." The EU asked (11/18) Israel to halt the violations of Lebanese air space, but Israel contended (11/18) that the surveillance was a necessary precautionary measure. Beginning on 1/31 through the end of the quarter, Hizballah occasionally fired anti-aircraft missiles at overflying Israeli planes. The shells had no chance of hitting the planes and were meant as symbolic harassment, though on one occasion (2/3) shrapnel fell on the Israeli town of Kiryat Shimona, causing no damage.

Israel announced plans (11/28) to build an electric fence south of the disputed village of Ghajar, straddling the UN blue line marking the unofficial border with Lebanon. Israel claimed the move was to prevent "terrorists" from infiltrating Israel, but rumors circulated that it was a prelude to an Israeli withdrawal from Shaba' to be made in return for a prisoner exchange with Hizballah, though both sides denied this. Israel postponed construction of the fence on 11/29 after Ghajar families protested to the UN.

Hizballah leader Hassan Nasrallah claimed (11/16) that he had recently rejected a U.S. offer for political recognition in exchange for halting military action against Israel. This sparked still more rumors suggesting that the U.S. had offered to secure Israel's withdrawal from Shaba' Farms if Hizballah agreed to give up armed struggle. The organization staged (12/14) a controver-

sial Jerusalem Day march, calling for support for the intifada. The highly politicized event sparked debate in Lebanon, with critics arguing that Pres. Emile Lahoud should not have permitted it, since it could give the U.S. an excuse to target Lebanon in its campaign against terror.

On 12/9, U.S. Amb. to Lebanon Vincent Battle told Lahoud that the U.S. considered Hizballah a "terrorist organization" that is "capable of . . . a vast global reach." Assistant Secy. Burns also expressed (12/13) concerns about Hizballah in talks with PM Rafiq Hariri but reportedly stated U.S. awareness that Hizballah had "a number of different dimensions to it," including legitimate roles as a political party and a social welfare organization. On 2/3, however, Hariri stated that the U.S. had fully adopted Israel's position that Hizballah is a terrorist organization and had received from Iran 8,000–10,000 missiles for deployment in Lebanon (an accusation first raised by Israel on 1/30, after Pres. Bush named Iran as a member of the "axis of evil"; see below). On 2/5, DM Ben-Eliezer took Israel's accusations one step further, claiming that al-Qa'ida members had been relocating to Lebanon to join forces with Hizballah. The same congressional (ca. 11/17) and EU (11/19) delegations that visited Syria also urged Lebanon to rein in Hizballah.

The UN renewed (1/29) the mandate of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for six months, also approving Secy.-Gen. Kofi Annan's recommendation to reduce the size of UNIFIL from 3,600 troops to 2,000 by 7/02. This plan represents a compromise between the UN's wish to reduce UNIFIL troops to 1,600 by that date and Lebanon's request to maintain the presence at 3,600. The Finnish, Irish, and Nepalese battalions have departed since 7/01 (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 121).

Around 11/29, 70 Lebanese, including 35 members of Israel's disbanded proxy militia, the South Lebanon Army, returned to Lebanon from Israel, where they had sought refuge during the IDF's 5/00 withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL

Egypt was the only Arab state to hold direct contacts with Israel this quarter, in an effort to calm Israeli-Palestinian tensions. Following Israel's declaration of a broad

"war against terror" on 12/3, Pres. Mubarak dispatched (12/6) FM Ahmad Maher to press Sharon to relax his demand for a seven-day quiet period and to urge both sides to implement an immediate cease-fire and resume talks. Sharon dismissed the recommendations and instead gave Maher a list of demands to transmit to Arafat, reportedly offending Mubarak, who viewed Maher's visit as a step just below returning Egypt's ambassador to Israel and one that required a reciprocal gesture. Mubarak and DM Ben-Eliezer held equally fruitless talks on 1/30, as did Mubarak adviser Osama al-Baz and Sharon adviser Ayalon on 1/27.

In mid-1/01, Saudi Arabia threatened not to take part in the U.S.-organized International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan if Israel attended. Japan, the host, did not invite Israel as a result. The U.S. reportedly told Israel that it could request an invitation from Tokyo if it wanted but that Washington would be "relieved" if it did not. Israel did not do so. Saudi Arabia participated, pledging \$220 m. for reconstruction efforts.

INTER-ARAB HIGHLIGHTS

Inter-Arab efforts continued to focus on supporting and mediating on behalf of the Palestinians, but the Arab states proved incapable of taking decisive joint action to influence the situation. When Israel escalated attacks on the Palestinians following the 12/1–2 bombing and Sharon trivialized Egyptian FM Maher's 12/6 visit, Pres. Mubarak flew (12/9) to Damascus, where he and Pres. Bashar al-Asad issued a symbolic but operationally ineffective joint statement warning that the Israeli-Palestinian situation was extremely dangerous, rejecting Israeli attempts to equate Palestinians' legitimate right to struggle against occupation with terrorism, and calling on the international community to force Israel to halt its aggression.

Reportedly under pressure from Egypt and Jordan, the Arab League postponed two scheduled emergency sessions (12/9, 12/13) to discuss the deteriorating situation. When the FMs finally met on 12/20, Egypt and Jordan toned down the final statement, blocking a motion by Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria to censure Arafat for his 12/16 cease-fire call. The final text was more emphatic than previous statements on the intifada but did not differ in content: it supported the PA's positions, declared Sharon's government unqualified as a peace partner as long as it treated

Arafat as irrelevant, and urged Palestinians to adopt a united stand and avoid infighting.

On 12/10, a long-planned meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) was held in Qatar to discuss the situation in the West Bank and Gaza. The final statement was mild: it condemned the U.S. for failing to rein in Israel, asked the U.S. to set a detailed proposal and timetable for creation of a Palestinian state, rejected labeling Palestinian organizations fighting Israeli occupation as "terrorists," called on Palestinians to rally behind Arafat, urged the creation of an international monitoring mechanism for the occupied territories, and appointed a seven-member committee to lobby foreign governments on behalf of the Palestinians. Arafat, who called the session, did not attend, fearing that Israel would not allow him to return to the territories afterward. Qatar had sought U.S. assurances that Israel would allow Arafat back into the territories, but none was received.

The Jerusalem Committee of the OIC met (1/25) in Morocco and issued a statement calling on the international community to help end Israel's attacks on the Palestinians. For the first time since the committee was formed in 1979, Arafat was unable to attend.

The Gulf Cooperation Council shelved (12/31) plans for a multimillion-dollar PR campaign to promote the Palestinian position on the al-Aqsa intifada (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 121) and improve the image of Arabs and Muslims in the wake of 9/11. The plan had envisioned setting up three new satellite stations in English, French, and Spanish. Delegates said the plan was postponed because of differences over who would fund the stations and how much independence would be allowed. Egypt's Nile TV satellite channel, however, began (1/1) broadcasting a daily 30-minute news program in Hebrew.

The Arab states, however, did continue to support the PA financially. The Islamic Development Bank transferred \$5 m. to the PA on 12/28, bringing to \$405 m. the total amount received from the Arab states from the two funds set up in 10/00. They also agreed (ca. 11/01) to continue sending \$45 m. monthly payments to the PA to cover budget expenses, which had been set to run out by the end of 11/01.

INTERNATIONAL

ISRAEL'S INTERNATIONAL PR CAMPAIGN

As noted in previous quarters (see Peace Monitors in *JPS* 120, 122), soon after the outbreak of violence in 9/00, Israel increased efforts to shape American public opinion of the al-Aqsa intifada, including hiring six U.S. public relations firms and establishing a privately funded think tank, Emet.* This quarter, Israel expanded its PR efforts not only in the U.S. but globally, paying particular attention to building sympathy for Israel among evangelical Christians and to associate Israel's actions against the Palestinians with the U.S. global war on terrorism.

One of the government's core projects was the establishment (1/6) of the International Commission to Combat Anti-Semitism (ICA). The Israeli FMin. described (1/6) the "new anti-Semitism" as attacking "primarily the collective Jew, the State of Israel" but also as "an existential threat to the basics of civilization," saying, "it is a threat against any decency and any democracy. It always begins with the Jews and never ends with the Jews. Therefore, we need international cooperation." The FMin. hopes that every country will set up a national forum to the ICA and that, while Jewish groups and the Israeli government would "provide inspiration," the majority of the ICA would be non-Jewish. The ICA's goal is to make sure that all nations "acknowledge the anti-Semitism in their countries in a sufficient way." To achieve this, the ICA plans to coordinate educational and "public" efforts—targeting in particular politicians, diplomats, and editors in chief—on the importance of fighting against the "new anti-Semitism" and for human rights, "truth and justice," including lobbying for "legal actions against ideological terrorism."

The Israeli embassy in Washington held (1/8) a meeting for 18 American evangelical leaders, including representatives from the Christian Coalition, on why Christians should support Israel. This was the first of a series of events and projects to revive Israel's tourism industry and strengthen grass-roots Christian support for Israeli policies. Other planned initiatives include persuading the top 30 evangelical Zionists to visit and promote Israel, sending letters and postcards to 450,000 evangelical churches urging congre-

* For more on Israel and the U.S. media, see Seth Ackerman, "Al-Aqsa Intifada and the U.S. Media," *JPS* 118, pp. 61-74.

gants to visit Israel, financing trips to Israel for some evangelicals (modeled on the Birth-right Israel program), organizing "Israel Solidarity Days" in 100 U.S. cities between 2/24 and 3/1 for Christians to hold public "prayer ceremonies" promoting Israel's biblical importance, and urging Christian college students to lead pro-Israel events on their campuses. This multimillion dollar marketing initiative was drafted by one of the U.S. marketing firms hired and paid for by the Israeli government.

On 1/6, the Israeli government flew 100s of diplomats and journalists to Elat to view a display of the weapons seized from the *Karine A*. During the nationally televised unveiling of the cache, Sharon, flanked by foreign diplomats, declared, "When Arafat gave the instruction to purchase the firearms discovered on the ship, he made a strategic choice to bring about regional deterioration which would lead to war." The ambassadors of Belgium, Britain, France, and Italy reportedly declined invitations to attend and sent lower-ranking representatives instead, seeing the event as primarily a PR campaign against the PA. The Israeli government also arranged an interview (1/7) with *Karine A* captain Akawi for select media outlets only. The Zionist Organization took out a full-page ad in the *New York Times* on 1/30 claiming, without official U.S. confirmation, that U.S. intelligence had given Congress a "briefing that showed with '100 percent certainty' that Arafat and the PA sponsored" the *Karine A*.

In mid-1/02, around the time Sharon confined Arafat to his Ramallah headquarters, Israel pulled the credentials of all Palestinian journalists, taking away any special travel privileges or access they may have been granted during closures as members of the press. During the first intifada, press access allowed Palestinian journalists to play a key role in getting news and images from the occupied territories to Israeli and foreign journalists inside Israel, spreading facts on Israel's occupation worldwide.

Israel dispatched (late 1/02) a group of senior Israelis, including Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg and former Israeli PM Ehud Barak, on a tour of the U.S. to promote and defend Israel's perception of the al-Aqsa intifada. The group met (1/22) with senior administration officials, including Powell, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, and Dep. Defense Secy. Richard Armitage.

The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE) stepped up marketing of two

quick reference guides on the Arab-Israeli conflict this quarter, hoping to capitalize on Americans' sudden interest in the Middle East following the 9/11 attacks. *Myths and Facts: A Guide to the Arab-Israeli Conflict* and the *Complete Idiot's Guide to the Middle East Conflict*, both edited by AICE director and former AIPAC employee Michael Bard, purport to offer the uninitiated reader handy, objective facts about the conflict in an encyclopedia-style format, but in fact offer purely right-wing Zionist propaganda.

UNITED STATES

As noted above, the U.S. began the quarter by stepping up efforts to secure an Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire, motivated in large part by concern that the escalating violence undermined its ability to form an antiterror coalition. Following the string of Palestinian attacks in response to the 11/23 Abu Hanud assassination, however, the U.S. placed full blame on the PA for the deteriorating situation and lent outright support to Israel's stepped up assault on the Palestinians following the capture (1/3) of the *Karine A*. The U.S. also felt less pressure to remain engaged in the Israeli-Palestinian situation as the initial phase of its military action in Afghanistan wound down and an interim government was installed in Kabul in late 12/01, making Arab and Muslim support less necessary to Washington.

On 12/10, Bush held the first menorah-lighting and Hanukkah party ever hosted by the White House, during which he met privately with American Jewish leaders. According to transcripts leaked to *Yedi'ot Aharanot*, Bush said of Arafat, "If he can't do what he has to do, then he will be gone. It's as simple as that." He also reportedly said that winning the war on terror meant getting rid of groups like Hamas, Hizballah, and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad; that if he were Sharon, he would act exactly like him; and that the State Dept. is irrelevant and he intends to rid it of Arabists once and for all.

Such comments by Bush and other U.S. officials fueled speculation about future U.S. targets of its war on terrorism. Bush seemed to up the ante with his State of the Union address (1/29), in which he declared Iran, Iraq, and North Korea an "axis of evil, threatening the peace of the world" and referred to a "terrorist underworld, including groups like Hamas, Hizballah, [and] Islamic Jihad." CIA Dir. George Tenet also cited (2/6) Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the PFLP as "ter-

rorist groups" that, though lacking ties to al-Qa'ida, could be future U.S. targets because they have "displayed anti-U.S. sentiments" and threatened U.S. interests overseas.

On a solidarity visit to Israel (12/9), New York governor George Pataki, outgoing New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani, and mayor-elect Michael Bloomberg toured the sites of various Palestinian suicide bombings, visited Israelis injured in the 12/1–2 attacks, and attended a memorial for bombing victims. At a Hanukkah candle-lighting ceremony, Pataki went beyond official U.S. policy by declaring Jerusalem Israel's "united and eternal capital, and no one will ever divide it." He also stated, "I think we're in agreement that there's absolutely no moral equivalency between the acts of Israel to try to protect its people, its civilians from barbaric terrorist attacks and the acts of those evil terrorists."

On 11/16, 89 senators sent a letter to Bush, urging him not to restrain Israel from "retaliating fully" against the Palestinian violence and to express publicly his solidarity with Israel (see Doc. D2 in *JPS* 122). They also praised Bush for refusing to meet with Arafat at the UN on 11/10 (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 122). Senators timed the letter to prevent Powell from including direct or indirect criticism of Israel or offering inducements to the Palestinians in his 11/19 speech. On 12/5, the House passed (384-11) a resolution urging the U.S. to break relations with the PA unless it cracked down on militants (see Doc. D2). The Senate passed the bill (12/5) by unanimous consent.

As part of its post-9/11 efforts to curb financing for "terrorist" organizations, the U.S. froze (12/4) the assets of the Texas-based Holy Land Foundation (HLF), the largest Muslim charity in the U.S., as well as those of two other smaller groups (al-Aqsa International Bank and Bayt al-Mal Holding Co.) suspected of funneling money to Hamas (see Doc. D1). The U.S. began investigating HLF in 1996; up until 8/00, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) worked with HLF on relief projects.

USAID acknowledged (1/16) that it had ordered American NGOs that funnel the \$75 m./year in USAID assistance directly to Palestinian organizations to obtain the names, birth dates, and other details of the board members and ranking staff of these Palestinian organizations. This information was to be "vetted" by government investigators to make sure that none of the Palestinians have connections to Hamas, Islamic Jihad, or the

PFLP, which are all on the State Dept.'s list of terrorist organizations. The PA Health Min. and USAID signed (11/25) a three-year, \$5 m. public health grant to fund the training of Palestinian medical relief workers and to improve emergency medical care.

Meanwhile, Israel and the U.S. reportedly were discussing (ca. 1/1) ways for Israel to receive additional economic aid to offset the "difficult economic situation" created by Israel's military campaign against the Palestinians. Israel urged Washington to somehow "repackage" the \$800 m. aid package promised by the Clinton administration to subsidize its withdrawal from Lebanon (\$450 m. in the first year, \$350 m. in the second). The issue may have been discussed again in a U.S.-Israel Joint Economic and Development Group meeting in Washington on 2/13 (details of the session were not released), but nothing was agreed by the end of the quarter. The U.S. did find (ca. 1/8) \$28. m. in the Pentagon budget, which it reallocated to the State Dept. to give to Israel for the purchase of counterterrorism equipment (primarily robots that perform controlled detonations of bombs).

On 12/12, the same day Sharon declared Arafat "irrelevant," the U.S., acceding to a three-year lobbying effort by the Zionist Organization of America, agreed to offer rewards for "Palestinian terrorist suspects" wanted in connection with the deaths of as many as 21 Americans in Israel and the occupied territories over the past decade. The rewards are publicly posted on the Internet at www.rewardsforjustice.net.

A U.S. federal court awarded (2/6) \$56 m. to the family of an American killed in a suicide bombing in Jerusalem in 1996. The family sued Iran for the attack, staged by Hamas.

RUSSIA

Russia was less involved in mediating the peace process this quarter. Special envoy Andrei Vdovin kept in close contact with the sides (touring the region in mid-12/01, mid-1/02, and late-1/02) and with the EU and UN special envoys, but undertook no major initiatives. Russian pres. Vladimir Putin phoned Arafat (1/21) and Sharon (2/5) to urge them to resume contacts. A Russian Duma delegation also toured (1/6–12) Israel, the PA areas, and Jordan.

EUROPEAN UNION

While the EU was actively involved in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

throughout this quarter (sending envoys to the region 11/17–19, 12/18, 1/7–9, 1/15–17, 2/6, 2/14–15), the differences in policy positions among member states grew increasingly apparent as the situation deteriorated after the 11/23 Abu Hanud assassination. Britain and Germany echoed the one-sided U.S. criticism of the PA, aligning themselves with the U.S. global counterterrorism effort, whereas France and Sweden were openly critical of Israeli and U.S. policy. Spain and Italy tended to back France in promoting efforts that could lead to a resumption of negotiations, while emphasizing balanced criticism of both sides. Such differences occasionally resulted in contradictory EU statements. For example, the EU issued statements saying (12/5) it did not support Israel's 12/3 position that the PA supports terrorism and rejected (12/14) Sharon's 12/12 claim that Arafat had become irrelevant, but a harsh 12/10 declaration called on the PA to dismantle "terrorist networks"—a product of British and German lobbying. And while Britain acquiesced in the inclusion of a clause in the 12/14 EU statement calling for the establishment of a monitoring mechanism in the territories, it abstained (12/15) from voting on a UN resolution, citing a similar provision (see below).

An EU FMs meeting in Brussels reaffirmed (1/28) support for Arafat, urged Israel not to weaken the PA, urged the PA to take further steps to halt violence, and criticized the U.S. for publicly siding with Israel, saying that doing so was "dangerous" and could only increase tensions. Swedish FM Anna Lindh, the former rotating head of the EU, declared (1/28) that the hardening U.S. position toward Arafat was "inappropriate and stupid" and characterized calls by some in the U.S. to close the PLO office in Washington, cease mediation efforts, and classify Arafat's security forces as terrorist organizations as "just insane. It contradicts the entire peace process . . . and can only lead to outright war in the Middle East." French FM Hubert Vedrine also called (2/6) U.S. policy dangerously "simplistic" and said that U.S. isolation of Arafat was "another error" that the EU could not support (see Doc. A6).

At an EU meeting in Spain on 2/9, FMs supported a draft plan by France, based on the Peres-Qurai' ideas (see above), that called for Palestinian elections and the immediate creation of a Palestinian state with undefined borders that would quickly be recognized by Israel and admitted to the UN.

Israel rejected the idea; the PA accepted it. FMs also criticized Israel's isolation of Arafat and blamed the current impasse on the U.S. and Israeli fixation on security matters at the expense of the political dimensions of the conflict. After the State Dept. said (2/9) that the U.S. felt that "introducing other elements that divert attention from that focus [on Arafat . . . doesn't] really move the situation forward," British FM Jack Straw stated (2/13) that Britain did not support the 2/9 French proposal and believed that responsibility lay with the PA to clamp down on the "terrorism" in the occupied territories. He also denounced the statements by Lindh and Vedrine.

The EU published (12/27) its own list of 18 groups and 29 individuals supporting "terrorism." Significantly, the list did not include Hizballah, though three Lebanese—Imad Mughniya (an alleged Hizballah intelligence officer), Hassan Izz al-Din, and Ali Atwi—were included for their role in hijacking a U.S. airliner. The list also included Islamic Jihad and the Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades, the latter of which was termed the "terrorist wing of Hamas," but not Hamas itself. The position paper accompanying the list defined a "terrorist act" as any intentional act that is "committed with the aim of," among other things, seriously intimidating a population; unduly compelling a government or international organization to perform or abstain from any act; seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic, or social structures of a country or international organization; or interfering with the supply of water, power, or any other fundamental natural resource the effect of which is to endanger human life.

On 12/19, the EU agreed to extend through 3/02 its monthly grants of \$9 m. to the PA to cover recurrent expenses and approved an additional \$9 m. in aid to Palestinian towns most affected by Israeli closures. The EU took the decision despite Israeli claims (12/18) that the PA was using monthly transfers to finance attacks on Israelis.

The EU stated (1/22) that Israeli forces had caused between \$14.7 m. and \$17.2 m. in damage to donor projects funded by the EU, not including the destruction of the Voice of Palestine radio station on 1/18. The figure covers 17 EU-funded projects (including schools, labs, water networks, and a forestry project) that have been destroyed or seriously damaged since 9/28/00. The EU was considering suing Israel for damages.

At the EU-Israel Association meeting in Brussels on 11/20, the EU decided to issue an "advisory note" warning European importers that they may face retroactive duties on Israeli products made in the occupied territories. While Israeli products have received preferential customs status since 1995, the EU has not attempted to ascertain whether goods labeled "made in Israel" are actually made in settlements in the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, or the Golan Heights. Since 1998, the EU has warned Israel that it might revoke the preferential customs status altogether unless Israel makes the differentiation on origin. At the association meeting, the EU deemed this step too controversial, deciding to issue an "advisory note" instead as a warning to Israel. The note was circulated on 11/22.

On 2/5, EU foreign policy dir. Solana told the EU that Israeli allegations that the PA was behind the *Karine A* shipment might be true and that it seemed "likely that there was some link between someone in the Palestinian Authority and Iran."

A Belgian war crimes case against Sharon for his role in the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacre was virtually scuttled this quarter when the International Court of Justice (ICJ) threw out (2/14) a similar Congolese case, ruling that a sitting government official is immune from prosecution. By the time of the ICJ decision, the Belgian court of appeals had heard testimony (11/28, 1/23) on the Sharon case but had not yet ruled on whether Belgium could claim jurisdiction. Further hampering the case, former Lebanese Force militia leader Elie Hobeika, the senior Lebanese commander present during the massacre, was assassinated (1/24) in a car bombing in Beirut. Lebanese pres. Lahoud speculated (1/24) that Israel was behind the killing, noting that Hobeika had met with Belgian attorneys on 1/22 and agreed to testify against Sharon.

A group of Israelis, using the same 1993 law that permitted the charges to be brought against Sharon (see Peace Monitor in *JPS* 121), filed (11/27) a complaint in a Belgian court against Arafat and various Palestinian organizations, charging them with crimes against humanity. Some weeks earlier, Israeli attorney general Rubenstein had sent letters to the Mossad, Shin Bet, and IDF Intelligence Branch asking them to assist as much as possible "any body or private individual" filing suit against Arafat in Belgian court. It was unclear to what degree the 11/27 filing was

orchestrated by the Israeli government. A second case against Arafat was filed on 12/20, accusing him of crimes against humanity, genocide, and incitement to genocide.

UNITED NATIONS

On 12/13, the UN Security Council (UNSC) convened an emergency session to discuss issuing a resolution on the deteriorating Israeli-Palestinian situation. Participants debated a draft but adjourned without taking a vote. When the session reconvened on 12/15, the U.S. vetoed the final resolution calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from PA-controlled areas, condemning acts of "terrorism" against civilians on both sides, underlining the "essential role" of the PA in the peace process, and urging establishment of a "monitoring mechanism" to watch for human rights violations in the territories. Britain and Norway abstained.

Switzerland convened (12/5) a one-day meeting of Geneva Convention signatories to discuss Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian territories. Of the 188 signatories, 114 sent representatives, with Israel and the U.S. boycotting. Participants approved (with Australia, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway abstaining) a final statement calling on Israel to "refrain from committing grave breaches" of the convention, including "willful killing, torture, and unlawful deportation" (see Doc. A1). UN Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robinson reiterated her call for the creation of an international monitoring presence in the territories.

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) reconvened (12/20) its tenth emergency special session to discuss the Israeli-Palestinian situation, with members overwhelmingly adopting two resolutions (see Doc. A4). The first was almost identical to the UNSC statement vetoed on 12/15. The second endorsed the 12/5 statement of the Geneva Convention signatories.

The UNRWA launched (1/31) its fifth emergency funding appeal since the start of the intifada, stating that it needed \$117 m. immediately from international donors to provide food, medical care, and work programs to alleviate "the worst suffering" among the 1.4 m. Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza. The UNRWA noted that more than 50% of Palestinians in the territories (65% in Gaza) are living in acute poverty and that more than 4,500 refugees

had been made homeless or had their homes severely damaged by the IDF since 9/28/00.

Israel appeared (11/20) before the UN Committee Against Torture (UNCAT) in Geneva to defend itself against charges by Amnesty International and the World Organization Against Torture that it uses methods amounting to torture (including beatings, sleep deprivation, shackling, prolonged solitary confinement, denial of medical treatment) during interrogation of Palestinian detainees. Israeli representative Yaakov Levy claimed that force is only used in isolated cases, producing consequences that merely cause discomfort or lack of sleep. After reviewing Israel's written defense (submitted 11/21), UNCAT ruled (11/23) that while Israel has made progress in ending some practices that amount to torture, it should install an "effective complaint, investigative, and prosecution mechanism" to handle allegations of abuse.

In its first public appearance of its two-year term on the UNSC, Syria angered (1/18) the U.S. by equating Israel's destruction of Palestinian houses in Rafah on 1/10 with the 9/11 attacks on the U.S. Syria's amb. to the UN, Faisal Makdad, stated, "Foreign occupation is the most brutal form of terrorism. Therefore, resisting such foreign occupation, particularly the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, is a legitimate form of struggle." Britain's amb. to the UN, Jeremy Greenstock, criticized Syria, saying the UN campaign should focus on practical steps to combat terrorism and not become stuck on the issue of "who is a terrorist," adding that the UN counterterrorism committee had no plans to set a legal definition of "terrorism."

VATICAN

Pope John Paul II denounced (12/13, 1/10) Palestinian and Israeli extremists for "disfiguring the face of the Holy Land" and called on both sides to respect international law and return to negotiations (see Doc. A5). The Vatican also criticized (12/24) Sharon for barring Arafat from attending Christmas services in Bethlehem.

Catholic bishops from North America and Europe held (1/22–24) meetings in Jerusalem to investigate the situation of Christians in the Holy Land. They urged Israelis and Palestinians to halt the cycle of violence and work toward a just peace for the Palestinians.

IRAN

Following Iran's implication in the *Karine A* affair (1/4), Israel stepped up its public and private criticisms of Iran, portraying it as a menace to the region that should be marginalized and contained. Sharon openly accused (1/10) Tehran of threatening to "drag Israel into war" on three fronts, by supplying arms to Hizballah in Lebanon, trying to arm the PA, and making unspecified "inroads into the Israeli Arab population." He then phoned (1/12) Russian pres. Putin to discuss the "dangerous connection" between Iran and the PA. Israeli FMin. officials met (ca. 1/14) with State Dept. officials in Washington to discuss concerns regarding Russia's role in Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, reportedly influencing the administration's decision to name Iran as part of the "axis of evil" in Bush's 1/29 State of the Union address. Through the end of the quarter, Israeli officials repeatedly accused Iran of installing missiles in Lebanon that targeted Israel (1/30, 2/5, 2/6) and of developing a nuclear bomb to threaten the Jewish state (2/7).

Iran hosted (1/29) an Islamic media forum for the support of the Palestinians, attended by 140 independent media representatives from 30 countries. Participants discussed the importance of reporting on the intifada as a tool to sway U.S. policy, combat the Western media's pro-Israel bias, curb Israeli violence, and encourage Muslim nations to support the Palestinians.

TURKEY

Between 12/4 and 12/8, PM Bulent Ecevit held extensive phone conversations with Arafat, Sharon, and Powell to ease tensions following the 11/23 Abu Hanud assassination. On 12/8, he revealed that Sharon had told him that Israel wanted to "be rid" of Arafat and that he found Powell "indifferent" to appeals to intervene with Israel to halt its escalation.

Israel, Turkey, and the U.S. held (12/3–6) their annual Reliant Mermaid joint naval and aerial maneuvers in the Mediterranean. This marks the fourth year they have held the search-and-rescue exercises and the second year that Jordan has declined invitations to participate as an observer to protest Israel's military actions against the Palestinians.

Turkey canceled (12/1) talks with Israel on having Israel modernize its 170 U.S.-made M-60 tanks, saying the sides could not agree on cost or the level of Turkish inputs. On

3/20/00, Turkey had announced a preliminary deal with Tel Aviv under which Israel would be the sole contractor for modernizing Turkey's tanks. As of 12/1, Turkey planned to bid out the deal to Israel, Turkish, and U.S. firms.

During his trip to Washington 2/6, DM Ben-Eliezer asked the U.S. to allow Israel to sell Arrow missiles to Turkey. The U.S. was considering the request at the close of the quarter.

OTHER

Some 220 South African Jewish leaders, including famous anti-apartheid activists Ronnie Kasrils and Max Ozinsky, issued (12/8) a "Not in My Name" declaration comparing Israel's treatment of the Palestinians with apartheid and asserting that the Israeli occupation is the root cause of escalating violence in the Middle East (see Doc. A2). The tract sparked a hostile debate in the South African Jewish community. On 1/1, South African Muslims and Jews led by Kasrils and Ozinsky led a protest in Johannesburg against Israel's occupation of and military action in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. Banners at the event read "Don't fight Palestinian resistance, fight Zionism occupation."

DONORS

Donors met formally (at the Joint Liaison Committee and Local Aid Coordination Committee level) and informally this quarter to discuss ways of ensuring that their actions and support were properly coordinated so as to provide maximum assistance to the Palestinians. To augment the monthly assistance provided by the EU and Arab states (see above), the World Bank prepared an emergency support services project to provide \$105 m. for nonsalary items, such as medicine, aid for schools, and municipal water, electricity, and waste management support. The World Bank is providing \$20 m., with the remainder pledged by Britain, Denmark, the EU, Finland, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden. At the end of the quarter, an Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting had been planned for early 4/02.

A French-Dutch consortium that won the \$70 m. donor-financed contract to build the Gaza port canceled (ca. 12/3) the project, saying that Israel's destruction of Gaza port structures, the Gaza airport, and other donor-financed sites during the al-Aqsa intifada has led the consortium to conclude that the "persistent insecurity in the Gaza Strip makes construction activity, which has been suspended since last October, impossible."



More than 10,000 Palestinians attend a Hamas rally in Gaza, 8 February, in support of continuing the armed intifada. (Reuters/Ahmed Jadallah)