



Canadian Institute for Jewish Research  
Prof. Frederick Krantz, Director

# ISRANET DAILY BRIEFING

Tuesday January 15, 2013    Volume XI, No. 2,981    Yom Shlishi 4, Shevat 5773

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## WHAT'S BEHIND ABBAS' NEW TONE?

*Dore Gold*

*[Israel Hayom](#), Jan 11, 2013*

Mahmoud Abbas delivered a speech on Jan. 4, on the anniversary of the founding of Fatah, that may have marked a turning point in the relations between the Palestinian Authority president and the State of Israel. Using extremist rhetoric that he has not adopted before, Abbas spoke about the need of the Palestinians "to renew an oath to the heroic martyrs and to walk in their path."

In his list of Palestinian "martyrs" are not only recent leaders of Hamas, like Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and of the pro-Iranian Islamic Jihad, like Fathi Shkaki, but also figures from the 1930s, like Izzedine al-Qassam, and especially the notorious Jerusalem mufti, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, who openly collaborated with the Nazis during World War II.

What happened to Mahmoud Abbas? Hasn't he been regarded by Israeli leaders for the last twenty years as a moderate who was interested in reaching a peace agreement? What is important is not the vapid debate over whether Abbas can still be regarded as a partner for peacemaking, but rather understanding the hard fact that conditions have changed influencing the declared intentions of leaders. What is essential to internalize is that the political environment in 2013 no longer resembles what the Middle East looked like when Israel began talking to the Palestinians in 1993.

There were three very specific geostrategic conditions that prevailed when the political process of the last two decades was originally launched in 1991. These are now undergoing dramatic changes.

First, the Soviet Union was collapsing leaving the U.S. the sole superpower dominating the Middle East. With the U.S. armed forces deployed across the region after the American victory in the first Gulf War, the supremacy of American power was not theoretical but very real.

Second, with the defeat of Saddam Hussein, the most powerful member of what had been known as the "Rejectionist Front" was no longer a significant factor in the Middle Eastern balance of power. The pro-American Arab pragmatists were the predominant regional force.

And third, Iran, which had not yet recovered from its eight-year long war against Iraq in the previous decade, was not in any position to exploit the collapse of the 40-division strong Iraqi Army and assert itself as the new hegemonic power. These three conditions set the stage for the convening of the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991 and later for the signing of the Oslo Agreements in 1993.

Yet, in 2013, that unique international constellation plainly no longer exists. The oil-rich Arab states, especially in the Persian Gulf, were concerned that the American withdrawal from Iraq at the end of 2011, marked a new period in which the U.S. would have far less to do militarily with the region and could no longer be depended upon to assure their security.

Qatar effectively jumped from the ship of American protection and made up with Tehran already in 2007, when the Bush administration published its National Intelligence Estimate on Iran. This move was interpreted as meaning that Washington was not going to dedicate military resources to resolve the problem of the Iranian march to nuclear weapons.

Moreover, with the uprisings in the Arab world since 2011, a new rejectionist front has come to power through Islamist parties that are now ruling from Tunisia to Egypt. Hamas, which already ousted the Palestinian Authority in the Gaza Strip in 2007, serves as a Palestinian affiliate of the Muslim Brotherhood and hence has a built-in advantage over Abbas, given the new regional map that was emerging.

Abbas, who in the past looked to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak as his key ally, now had to contend with a Muslim Brotherhood government in Cairo, which worked in favor of his Islamist rival, Hamas. In Middle Eastern capitals, it became widely believed that this shift came about with Washington's approval. This was a huge overstatement, but nonetheless it was a shared perception across the region.

Finally, despite the losses it faces in Syria (including Lebanon), Iran has been demonstrating an enhanced ability to project its influence with weapons, training, and in some cases, special forces, by inserting itself into multiple Middle Eastern conflicts, from Iraq to Yemen and from Sudan to the Gaza Strip. Its activism is likely to only increase, should it cross the nuclear threshold.

Israel does not have to reach the conclusion that it has no diplomatic options with the Palestinians and that an impasse is inevitable. But to proceed with any initiative in the future it needs to make several important adjustments in its approach. First, the next Israeli government must accept that given what is going on in the Middle East, it is completely unrealistic to propose negotiations to reach a full-blown final status agreement with the Palestinians.

Second, given the regional dangers that are on the horizon, any political arrangement in the future must have a much stronger security component than what was proposed in the past. It is unfortunate that in the internal political debate in Israel, politicians often take out of the file cabinet old diplomatic ideas that did not work, without reconsidering whether they are still applicable, if they ever were. More than ever, Israel needs to preserve the ability to defend itself, by itself, no matter how the declared intentions of its neighbors change.

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## INTELLECTUAL SAVAGES?

**Giulio Meotti**

[Jerusalem Post](#), Jan.13, 2013

Benighted humanists in Israel and in the West believe that Hamas's terrorists are brainwashed, poor or illiterate, when in fact the best minds of Palestinian society are at the top of Islamic terrorism. Is it inconceivable that people who have the holy mission of returning to Jaffa and Ashkelon on a carpet of Jewish bodies are also well-educated surgeons, academics and writers? Ask Hamas about the paradox of Josef Mengele, a doctor of philosophy, a medical doctor, a refined man who enjoyed music and poetry, but didn't hesitate to experiment on an order the death of a million of Jews.

The Palestinian hatred has not been deciphered by our writers and intellectuals. It's because we have been told that "they hate us" is the language of xenophobes, the illiberal, the intolerant; that genocidal anti-Semitism was buried in the ashes of Auschwitz; that we have to be polite and self-critical. A seductive combination of post-colonial white guilt mixed with liberal condescension has dulled our moral senses and made us blind to an Islamism that conveys unleashed hatred, contempt, physical aggression, the desire to expel, to destroy and to eliminate the Jews.

Nizar Rayan was not only a Hamas terrorist leader. He was a fine historian, academic and intellectual. Author of more than 10 books on Islam, Rayan was killed in Jabalya along with his wife and three children. They remained in the house even after the Israelis had warned them of the raid. Rayan had sent a son on a suicide mission against a Jewish town in northern Gaza and had taken part in an attack on the Israeli port of Ashdod, which killed 10 "sons of pigs and monkeys," as Rayan call the Jews. Rayan was a gem of the Islamic University of Gaza, he had studied at the prestigious faculty of Um Dorman and had written an essay on the life of the Prophet, titled "Medina becomes Dark," a best-seller in Saudi Arabia. His library, destroyed in the Israeli raid, contained 10,000 books.

Palestinian terrorism is led by academics, surgeons, scientists, scholars, intellectuals, people with an enviable curriculum vitae. Their biographies are the Palestinian version of al-Qaida. They are like Ayman al-Zawahiri, al- Qaida mastermind and a surgeon; Omar Sheikh, the mastermind in the

execution of Daniel Pearl, who had studied at the London School of Economics; and the planner of the September 11 attacks, Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, who attended US universities.

The head of the July 7 suicide bombers, Muhammad Siddique Khan, taught in Leeds, while the English doctor Bilal Abdullah, who participated in the failed attacks in London and Glasgow in June 2007, was born into one of the richest families in Baghdad. The Hamas leadership is the most educated in the Arab world, with 500 high-level degrees between them. Its leader, Khaled Mashaal, is a professor of physics and was an academic in Kuwait. Gaza's prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh, was dean of a university and his strongman for religious affairs, Muhammad Tartouri, is a dean of the College of Shari'a in Hebron, epicenter of jihad against the Jews.

Even among the Palestinian Arab "secular" terrorists you find many PhDs. Ahmed Sadat, who ordered the killing of Israeli minister Rehavam Ze'evi, is a professor, while terror mastermind George Habash was a doctor. That is because there is no difference between the Hamas Covenant and the Covenant of the PLO. They both want Israel's territorial truncation and eventual annihilation.

Fathi Shaqaqi, the late founder of Islamic Jihad, was a physician. The last of the Hamas's founders still alive, Mahmoud Zahar, is an excellent doctor, a well-known specialist in the thyroid who founded the Palestinian Medical Society, his wife is a teacher, one of their children had a degree in finance and a daughter is a professor of English.

These two doctors are responsible for scores of children, women and elderly being incinerated on Egged buses in Israel; cafes and pizzerias destroyed; malls turned into slaughterhouses; mothers and daughters killed in front of ice cream shops; families exterminated in their own beds; infants executed with a blow to the base of the skull; fruit markets blown to pieces; nightclubs eviscerated along with hundreds of students; rabbinic seminarians murdered during their studies; husbands and wives killed in front of their children; children murdered in their mothers' arms.

A well-known pediatrician was the Hamas leader Abdul Aziz Rantisi, a senior manager of the Arab Medical Society known for his tireless campaign to "kill as many Jews as possible." Doctor Rantisi ordered that pieces of metal should be added to the explosives in the terrorist's vest or backpack, with blasts often severing limbs completely. Israeli children have had their faces burned or their hands rendered useless; some have had their sight ruined forever.

A talented mathematician is Siyaam Saeed, Minister of the Interior. A former education minister, Nasser Eddin to Sha'er, studied in Manchester and New York. Ibrahim Hamed, the planner of brutal attacks such as the Moment Café, Ben-Yehuda Street and Hebrew University murders has a BA magna cum laude. Baseem Naeem became a surgeon in Germany, Atif Adwan owes its formation to the most brilliant scientific universities in the United Kingdom, while Aziz Dweik learned perfect English at the University of Pennsylvania. Mousa Marzook, accused by Israel of involvement in the murder of Israeli civilians between 1990 and 1994, studied at Louisiana Tech and Columbia University.

Of the Palestinian suicide bombers, 47 percent had a college degree, 29% a high school diploma, 24% attended primary school. People like Dia Tawil, who came from a "bourgeois" family with no financial problems, "only" dreamed of killing Israelis. Tawil's last words were: "Their bones will know the taste of death."

Israel is confronting Islamic revolutionaries ready to drench the holy land with blood and Palestinian Arab pediatricians who send their angels of death to kill Israeli children. But we also live in a time when death – of Jews – is celebrated and romanticized in the "civilized" democracies. These ferocious Palestinian anti-Semites have been sanitized by the Western public opinion which calls them "militants," as The New York Times did last week.....

## **JEWISH-ARAB DEMOGRAPHY DEFIES CONVENTIONAL “WISDOM”**

*Yoram Ettinger*

*Israel Hayom, Oct. 19, 2012*

Jewish majority west of the Jordan River is secure, benefitting from a tailwind in defiance of conventional “wisdom,” which once again is detached from reality. In 2012, Israel’s Jewish demography continues the robust surge of the last 17 years, while Muslim demography, west of the Jordan River and throughout the Middle East, increasingly embraces Western standards.

According to a June, 2012 study by the Washington-based Population Reference Bureau (PRB), 72% of 15-49 year old Palestinian married women prefer to avoid pregnancy, as are 78% in Morocco, 71% in Jordan, 69% in Egypt and Libya, 68% in Syria, 63% in Iraq and 61% in Yemen. The PRB study states that “a growing number of women are using contraception, as family planning services have expanded in the Arab region.”

The unprecedented fertility decline in the Muslim world was documented in June, 2012 by Dr. Nicholas Eberstadt, a leading demographer at the American Enterprise Institute, and Apoorva Shah of the Hoover Institute. According to Eberstadt and Shah, “Throughout the worldwide Muslim community, fertility levels are falling dramatically.... According to the UN Population Division estimates and projections, all 48 Muslim-majority countries and territories witnessed fertility decline over the last three decades.... The proportional decline in fertility for Muslim-majority areas was greater than for the world as a whole over that same period, or for the less-developed regions as a whole.... Six of the ten largest absolute declines in fertility for a two-decade period yet recorded in the postwar era (and by extension, we may suppose, ever to take place under orderly conditions in human history) have occurred in Muslim-majority countries.... Four of the ten greatest fertility declines ever recorded in a 20-year period took place in the Arab world.... No other region of the world — not highly dynamic Southeast Asia, or even rapidly modernizing East Asia — comes close to this showing.... The remarkable fertility declines now unfolding throughout the Muslim world is one of the most important demographic developments in our era.”

The key developments yielding a drastic decline in Arab fertility, in the Middle East including west of the Jordan River, have been modernity and its derivatives. For instance, urbanization (70% rural Arab population in Judea and Samaria in 1967 and 75% urban in 2012), expanded women’s education and employment, a record high divorce rate and wedding age, all time high family planning, rapidly declining teen-pregnancy, youthful male net-emigration, etc.

The Palestinian Authority (PA) has inflated the actual number of Arabs in Judea and Samaria (1.65 million) by one million, since the arrival of one million Olim from the USSR. Thus, in contrast with internationally accepted demographic standards, the PA counts some 400,000 overseas residents, who have been overseas for over a year, as de-facto residents. Some 300,000 Israeli I.D. card-bearing Jerusalem Arabs are doubly-counted as Israelis (by Israel) and as Palestinians (by the PA). The number of births is over-reported, the number of death is under-reported, emigration is ignored, etc.

In 2012, Israel’s Jewish fertility rate (three births per woman) is trending upward, boding well for Israel’s economy and national security, exceeding any Middle Eastern Muslim country, other than Yemen, Iraq and Jordan, which are trending downward. Iran’s fertility rate is 1.8 births per woman, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States – 2.5, Syria and Egypt – 2.9 and North Africa – 1.8. The average fertility rate of an Israeli-born Jewish mother has already surpassed three births. In 2012, the Israeli

Arab-Jewish fertility gap is half a birth per woman, compared with a six birth gap in 1969. Moreover, young Jewish and Arab Israeli women have converged at three births, with Arab women trending below – and Jewish women trending above – three births.

In 2012, Jewish births have expanded to 77% of total Israeli births, compared with 69% in 1969. While the ultra-orthodox Jewish fertility rate has declined, due to growing integration into the workforce and the military, the secular Jewish fertility rate has risen significantly. Since 2001, the number of Jewish emigrants has decreased and the number of returning Jewish expatriates has increased. Aliya has been sustained annually since 1882, while Arab net-emigration – especially from Judea and Samaria – has been a fixture, at least, since 1950.

The current 66% Jewish majority in the combined area of the pre-1967 Israel, Judea and Samaria would catapult to an 80% majority in 2035, if Israel realizes the clear and present dramatic Aliyah (Jewish immigration) window of opportunity. At least 500,000 Olim from the former USSR, France, Britain, Argentina and the USA could reach Israel during the next five years, in light of Israel's economic indicators, the intensification of European anti-Semitism, the Islamic penetration of Europe and the growth of Jewish-Zionist education. The suggestion that Jews are doomed to become a minority between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean is either dramatically-mistaken or outrageously-misleading.

## **ON TOPIC**

**The Arabs' Betrayal of the Palestinians:** Joseph Puder, *Front Page Magazine*, Jan. 14, 2013—At least one Palestinian leader is honest enough to blame his “brotherly” Arab states for the cash crisis faced by the Palestinian Authority (PA) in Ramallah. PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, in an interview with the Associated Press on Sunday, January 6, 2013 complained of an immense financial crisis in the PA, largely due to the Arab countries' failure to dispatch promised millions of dollars in aid.

**The Legal Basis of Israel's Rights in the Disputed Territories:** Alan Baker, *JCPA*, Jan. 8, 2013—Upon Israel's taking control of the area in 1967, the 1907 Hague Rules on Land Warfare and the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) were not considered applicable to the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) territory, as the Kingdom of Jordan, prior to 1967, was never the prior legal sovereign, and in any event has since renounced any claim to sovereign rights via a vis the territory.

**Abbas Reinstates a Radical Political Doctrine:** Lt. Col. (ret.) Jonathan D. Halevi, *JCPA*, January 10, 2013—Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), chairman of the Palestinian Authority and leader of the PLO and the Fatah movement presented a radical political doctrine in his speech on January 4, 2013, honouring the anniversary of Fatah's establishment.

**Protecting the Contiguity of Israel: The E-1 Area and Maale Adumim:** Nadav Shragai, *JCPA*, May 24, 2009—The E-1 area is a part of the Israeli city of Maale Adumim, located immediately adjacent to Jerusalem. There is an E-1 construction plan that was devised in order to link Maale Adumim and its 36,000 residents to Jerusalem. Every Israeli prime minister since Yitzhak Rabin has supported the plan. The E-1 site covers an area of largely uninhabited, state-owned land.

**The Arabs Fear a 'More Jewish' State of Israel:** Dr. Mordechai Kedar, *Jewish Press*, January 13th, 2013—The elections are approaching in Israel, and polls are predicting what the Arab media calls, with great dread, “the meteoric rise of the radical right in Israel.” Every article about the Israeli political map has the latest polls, showing the obvious trend that all of us here are aware of.

**Israel Investing in Disputed West Bank Sites:** *YNet News*, Jan15.13—Israel is advancing a plan to invest in places it considers part of its national heritage, including nine West Bank sites, the government said Monday in an announcement that could appeal to hard-line voters a week ahead of elections. It triggered an angry Palestinian response.

**The Palestinian Authority's Inconvenient Truths:** Khaled Abu Toameh, *Gatestone Institute*, January 3, 2013—Western journalists, funders and decision-makers need to know that there are many truths being hidden from their eyes and ears. The truth sometimes hurts; that is why the Palestinian Authority has been working hard to prevent the outside world from hearing about many occurrences that reflect negatively on its leaders or people.

**A View From The Hills: Mainstreaming Annexation:** Josh Hasten, *Jerusalem Post*, Jan. 14, 2013—In 2011, Women in Green, a grassroots organization dedicated to safeguarding the Land of Israel for the Jewish people, hosted a conference to discuss applying full Israeli sovereignty over Judea and Samaria. The inaugural event was held in a small banquet hall in Hebron, adjacent to the Cave of the Patriarchs.

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