



Palestinian Authority Support for Imprisoned, Released and Wounded Terrorists and Families of 'Martyrs'

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Mr. Chairman, Ranking Members, and Members of the Committee,

My testimony today is dedicated to a persistent problem: the financial and other support given by the Palestinian Authority (PA) to those who have continued their terrorist activities after the Oslo Accords, in which Yasser Arafat made a commitment, on behalf of the Palestinian people, to stop all terrorist activity.

By providing this support, the PA is encouraging terrorism in violation of its Oslo commitment.

Furthermore, the PA has been using money granted by donor countries for this purpose, and by doing so, has made them complicit in encouraging terrorism as well.

The details of this support, which I will cite in my testimony, may sound somewhat tedious, and I apologize for this in advance. They are taken both from the Palestinian media and from official PA records, available online.

MEMRI, as you may know, has been monitoring and analyzing the Middle East media for nearly 20 years. My testimony today is based not only on an analysis of the PA 2016 budget, but on years of research.

Details of the PA Support for Terrorists

The PA transfers the funds through two PLO organizations:

- The National Palestinian Fund, which transfers moneys for the prisoners and released prisoners (further to be disbursed by the Commission for Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs)
- The Institute for Care for the Families of Martyrs, which transfers moneys for the families of martyrs.

This financial support for prisoners is anchored in a series of laws and government decrees, chiefly Laws No. 14 and No. 19 of 2004, and Law No. 1 of 2013.¹ The prisoners are described as "a fighting sector and an integral part of the weave of Arab Palestinian society" and it is stated that "the financial rights of the prisoner and his family" must be assured. It is also stated that the PA will provide the allowance to "every prisoner, without discrimination."

According to the laws, the PA must provide prisoners with a monthly allowance during their incarceration and salaries or jobs upon their release. They are also entitled to exemptions from payments for education, health care, and professional training. Their years of imprisonment are calculated as years of seniority of service in PA institutions. It should be noted that whoever was imprisoned for five years or more is entitled

to a job in a PA institution. Thus, the PA gives priority in job placement to people who were involved in terrorist activity.

Palestinian President Mahmoud 'Abbas has stressed more than once that "the prisoners are top priority."² As a result of this commitment, the PA invests significant sums in underwriting the expenses of the prisoners and their families - \$137.8 million according to the PA's 2016 budget (about 7% of which is for officials' salaries and operating expenses) (see Appendix, Figure 1).³ Over the years, the Palestinian government has taken a series of decisions implementing the laws.⁴

The allowances are currently paid based on PA Government Decision No. 23 of 2010, which specifies the prisoners' monthly allowance according to length of sentence. It ranges from \$364 a month for up to three years imprisonment to \$3,120 for 30 years and more. There is a \$78 supplement for terrorists from Jerusalem and a \$130 supplement for Arab Israeli terrorists. (For the full chart, see Appendix, Figure 2):⁵

The PA also provides prisoners with a monthly allowance for canteen expenses, totaling \$780,000 per month.⁶

Although the law states that prisoners should be given allowances "without discrimination," sometimes the PA has cut allowances for political reasons. For example, in December 2015, allowances were cut from \$338 to \$208 for released prisoners who are members of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, and, recently, for members of the PFLP as well, following political tension between these organizations and the PA.⁷

This political decision aroused the protest of the director of the Commission for Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, 'Issa Qaraq, who said that "it is unacceptable for the Ministry of Finance to cut a prisoner's salary."⁸ His statement proves two things: that it is the PA that is funding these allowances and that the PA can and does cut allowances to prisoners when it wishes.

In May 2014, an administrative change took place

'Abbas issued a presidential order according to which the payments to prisoners would no longer be made by the PA's Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs. Instead, they would be disbursed by a PLO Commission for Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs.

The aim of this deliberately misleading move was to alleviate pressure on the PA by donor countries that do not wish their money to be channeled to support terrorism. However, the offices remained the same and the official in charge remained the same under a new job title. The source of the money remains the PA, which receives them from donor countries, and the overseeing body remains none other than the PA.

Several high-ranking Palestinian officials have addressed this change:

In June 2014, the former Deputy Minister for Prisoners' Affairs, Ziyad Abu 'Ayn, explained that "the national interest requires" this change because the donor countries "have established dozens of investigative committees focusing on the issue of [their] funds that are transferred from the PA to the prisoners."⁹

PA officials have admitted that the PA remains the financier and the decision-maker in all things pertaining to support for the prisoners and the martyrs' families.

For example, in September 2014, the director for detainees and ex-detainees affairs in Hebron, Ibrahim Najajra, said that the change of status from ministry to commission "would not detract from the prisoners' value or from their legal, moral, or political status, since the services extended to them are anchored in law." He added that the commission would be under the direct supervision of the Palestinian presidency, and that the payments would be made directly by the PLO's National Palestinian Fund.¹⁰

In December 2015, PA Cabinet Secretary 'Ali Abu Diyak announced that the PA government was committed to continuing to pay allowances to fighters imprisoned for their national struggle and to the families of the martyrs, the wounded, and the prisoners.¹¹

Let me move to the PA support for families of "martyrs"

The 2016 budget describes the PLO's Institute for Care for the Families of Martyrs as the body "responsible for ensuring a dignified life to the families of all those martyred and wounded as a result of being participants or bystanders in the revolution."

It is allocated just under \$173 million (\$172,534,733) for families of martyrs and the wounded within the homeland and outside it. The Institute's operating expenses comes to about \$1.5 million. (See Appendix, Figure 3).

The budget also states that the Institute provides allowances "without discrimination" – in other words, also from Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and so on.¹²

Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah said recently, on June 17, 2016, that "the government will continue to act together with the PLO institutions to improve the allowances of the families of the martyrs as soon as possible."¹³

What are the details of the payments to the families of the martyrs?

According to reports from 2011 in the Palestinian media, the family of every "martyr" receives a one-time payment of \$1,560, as well as a monthly allowance of \$364. There are also additional payments based on various criteria, including family status – the family of a married martyr receives an additional \$104, and if he has children, the family receives \$52 per child¹⁴ – whether the martyr was a civilian or a member of the PA military force, and on his or her rank. (For some of the criteria, see Appendix, Figures 4, 5).

In Conclusion

Let me stress again that as in the case of the support for prisoners, support for the families of martyrs who committed their acts prior to the signing of the Oslo Accords and the PLO commitment to end all forms of terrorism could perhaps be understandable in the context of an overall reconciliation process.

However, the fact that such payments are also given to families of people from various organizations who continue to commit acts of terrorism in violation of the peace accord constitutes deliberate encouragement of terrorism. Consequently, money that originates from donor countries and is used for this purpose makes these countries complicit in the encouragement of terrorism.

APPENDIX

Fig. 1: PA payments to prisoners (in NIS) – 2016 Budget¹⁵

برنامج: برنامج حماية و رعاية الأسرى و أسرهم و دعم و تأهيل الأسرى المحررين
تكالفة الموازنة التشغيلية والرأسمالية 2016

بند الموازنة	الاسم	موازنة 2016
رواتب وأجور		36802.280
211	الرواتب والاجور	36,802.280
مصاريف تشغيلية		5165.411
221	السفر والمهمات الرسمية	400.000
222	النفقات التشغيلية	1,690.000
223	إيجارات	1,200.000
224	أخرى (تشغيلية)	510.000
225	بدل تنقل	1,265.411
226	مكافآت للموظفين	100.000
مصاريف تحويلية		488371.806
212	المساهمات الاجتماعية	2,371.806
272	منافع المساعدات الاجتماعية	486,000.000
مصاريف رأسمالية		200.000
311	الاصول الثابتة	200.000
اجمالي		530539.497

Fig. 2: Monthly allowances for prisoners (in NIS) – PA Government Decision No. 23, 2010¹⁶

مادة (12)
الصراف وفقاً للجدول

يتم صرف الراتب للأسير استناداً للسنوات التي أمضاها في الأسر وفقاً للجدول التالي :

علاوة أسرى الداخل	علاوة القدس بالشيكل	علاوة الأبناء حتى سن 18 سنة بالشيكل	علاوة الزوجة بالشيكل	الراتب الأساسي بالشيكل	عدد سنوات الأسر
500	300	50 لكل ابن / ابنة	300	1400	من بدء الأسر وأقل من 3 سنوات
500	300	50 لكل ابن / ابنة	300	2000	من 3 سنوات وأقل من 5 سنوات
500	300	50 لكل ابن / ابنة	300	4000	من 5 سنوات وأقل من 10 سنة
500	300	50 لكل ابن / ابنة	300	6000	من 10 سنة وأقل من 15 سنة
500	300	50 لكل ابن / ابنة	300	7000	من 15 سنة وأقل من 20 سنة
500	300	50 لكل ابن / ابنة	300	8000	من 20 سنة وأقل من 25 سنة
500	300	50 لكل ابن / ابنة	300	10000	من 25 سنة وأقل من 30 سنة
500	300	50 لكل ابن / ابنة	300	12000	من 30 سنة فما فوق

Fig. 3: Budget of the Institute for Care for the Families of Martyrs for 2016 (in NIS)¹⁷



أبعاد الموازنة للوزارة للسنة المالية 2016

مؤسسة رعاية أسر الشهداء			وزارة / مؤسسة	44		
اجمالي	برنامج 4403	برنامج 4402	الاسم	بند الموازنة		
5,735.000	2,685.697	3,049.303	الرواتب والاجور	211	رواتب وأجور	
590.448	590.448		النفقات التشغيلية	222	مصاريف تشغيلية	مصاريف جارية
460.000	460.000		إيجارات	223		
100.000	100.000		أخرى (تشغيلية)	224		
381.552	151.499	230.053	بذل تنقل	225		
50.000	50.000		مكافآت للموظفين	226		
594.000	278.228	315.772	المساهمات الاجتماعية	212	مصاريف تحويلية	
660,000.000		660,000.000	منافع المساعدات الاجتماعية	272		
50.000	50.000		مخزون	312	مصاريف رأسمالية	
667,961.000	4,365.872	663,595.128	اجمالي			
			حماية ورعاية وتمكين أسر الشهداء والجرحى داخل الوطن وخارجه	4402	أسماء البرامج	
			البرنامج الإداري لمؤسسة رعاية أسر الشهداء والجرحى	4403		

Fig. 4: Allowance for families of martyrs, by family status (in NIS) ¹⁸

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ


 منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية
 مؤسسة رعاية أسر الشهداء والمجاهدين

PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION
 M * F . & I . C . E .

مقرر المالي الجديد لمخصصات أسر الشهداء والمجاهدين بالقبيل

الشهيد المتزوج	
أساسي	1300
عائلة الزوجة	100
عائلة كل ابن تحت الإحالة	25

الشهيد الأعمى	
أساسي / وبدون أي عائلات	1000

الشهيدة المتزوجة	
أساسي / وبدون أي عائلات	1000

الشهيد المدني المتزوج	
أساسي	650
عائلة الزوجة	100
عائلة كل ابن تحت الإحالة	25

الشهيد المدني الأعمى	
أساسي / وبدون أي عائلات	400

الشهيدة المدنية المتزوجة	
أساسي / وبدون أي عائلات	400

الشهيد الذي يحمل رتبة عسكرية -- يتقاضى مخصصه بناء على رتبته العسكرية حسب النظم المالي الجديد لترتيب العسكرية

Fi5. 5: Allowance for families of martyrs, by military rank (in NIS)¹⁹



النظام المالي الجديد لمخصصات الشهداء المتزوجين والجرحى العسكريين المعتمدين بالمؤسسة

أساسي الراتب	الرتبة العسكرية
1300	جندي
1380	عريف
1460	رقيب
1540	رقيب أول
1670	مساعد
1800	مساعد أول
1930	ملازم
2060	ملازم أول
2260	نقيب
2540	رائد
2790	مقدم
3290	عقيد
3590	عميد
3990	لواء

المتزوج : تصنيف العائلات الإجتماعية إلى أساسي الراتب على النحو التالي :-

- عائلة زوجة : 100 شيكل .
- عائلة كل ابن تحت الإعاقة : 25 شيكل .

تم تطبيق هذا النظام على مخصصات الجرحى اعتباراً من: 2008/5/1، وعلى مخصصات الشهداء المتزوجين اعتباراً من: 2009/1/1.

Endnotes:

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- ¹ For Law No. 14 of 2004, see: <http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/pg/getleg.asp?id=14741>;
for Law No. 19 of 2004, see: <http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/pg/getleg.asp?id=14777>; for Law No. 1 of 2013, see
<http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/pg/getleg.asp?id=16458>.
- ² See for example <http://www.wafa.ps>, February 21, 2005; *Al-Rai* (Jordan), April 28, 2013; www.shasha.ps, April
27, 2013.
- ³ For the budget, see: [http://www.pmf.ps/documents/10192/654283/BUDGET+BOOK+2016.06.22.pdf/1b8b37ef-
fe73-4ea8-80b3-2ab3bd8c3c68](http://www.pmf.ps/documents/10192/654283/BUDGET+BOOK+2016.06.22.pdf/1b8b37ef-fe73-4ea8-80b3-2ab3bd8c3c68), pp. 753-760.
- ⁴ See for example Government Decision No. 19 of 2010, <http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/pg/getleg.asp?id=16255>;
Government Decision No. 21 of 2010, <http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/pg/getleg.asp?id=16257>; Government Decision
No. 22 of 2010 <http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/pg/getleg.asp?id=16258>; Government Decision No. 23 of 2010,
<http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/pg/getleg.asp?id=16259>; Government Decision No. 15 of 2013,
<http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/pg/getleg.asp?id=16556>.
- ⁵ *Al-Waqi' Al-Filastiniyya*, Issue No. 90, March 30, 2011, p. 106.
- ⁶ <http://maannews.net>, September 9, 2014.
- ⁷ *Al-Resala* (Gaza) December 15, 2015. <http://pnn.ps>, April 14, 2016.
- ⁸ www.paltimes.net, December 9, 2015.
- ⁹ <http://www.eqtesadia.ps>, June 4, 2014.
- ¹⁰ <http://hr.ps/ar>, September 1, 2014.
- ¹¹ <http://feneegnews.com>, December 9, 2015. For the budget, see:
- ¹² For the budget, see:
[http://www.pmf.ps/documents/10192/654283/BUDGET+BOOK+2016.06.22.pdf/1b8b37ef-fe73-4ea8-80b3-
2ab3bd8c3c68](http://www.pmf.ps/documents/10192/654283/BUDGET+BOOK+2016.06.22.pdf/1b8b37ef-fe73-4ea8-80b3-2ab3bd8c3c68), pp. 729-736.
- ¹³ <http://www.palestinecabinet.gov.ps/WebSite/AR/ViewDetails?ID=37799>.
- ¹⁴ <http://www.lajeen-db.ps>, August 9, 2011.
- ¹⁵ [http://www.pmf.ps/documents/10192/654283/BUDGET+BOOK+2016.06.22.pdf/1b8b37ef-fe73-4ea8-80b3-
2ab3bd8c3c68](http://www.pmf.ps/documents/10192/654283/BUDGET+BOOK+2016.06.22.pdf/1b8b37ef-fe73-4ea8-80b3-2ab3bd8c3c68), p. 760.
- ¹⁶ *Al-Waqi' Al-Filastiniyya*, Issue No. 90, March 30, 2011, p. 106.
- ¹⁷ [http://www.pmf.ps/documents/10192/654283/BUDGET+BOOK+2016.06.22.pdf/1b8b37ef-fe73-4ea8-80b3-
2ab3bd8c3c68](http://www.pmf.ps/documents/10192/654283/BUDGET+BOOK+2016.06.22.pdf/1b8b37ef-fe73-4ea8-80b3-2ab3bd8c3c68), p. 735.
- ¹⁸ <https://www.aman-palestine.org/data/itemfiles/b3dd98a029db76be614d1a64dd10604e.pdf>, p. 16.
- ¹⁹ <https://www.aman-palestine.org/data/itemfiles/b3dd98a029db76be614d1a64dd10604e.pdf>, p. 17.