



PLO DELEGATION

TO THE UNITED STATES

Monthly Report on Israeli Incitement

December 2015 Issue

In order to facilitate an environment that is conducive for peace and security, it is important to mitigate factors that contribute to keeping both Palestinians and Israelis from achieving progress. Incitement is one of those factors.

In this respect, the Palestinian Authority has undertaken initiatives that curb and diminish incitement against Israel; By 2006, the Palestinian Ministry of Education revised textbooks to ensure the removal of incitement. Additionally, President Abbas has repeatedly called for the activation of the trilateral incitement monitoring committee that was stipulated in the Wye River Memorandum of 1998.

In an effort to urge the Israeli government to condemn and redress incitement against Palestinians¹, this report highlights major incidents of Israeli incitement in public, media, and governmental spheres that occurred in October 2015

In addition, this report traces Israeli actions and policies, even if not verbal, that amount to incitement. In fact, Israeli incitement, whether from official bodies or the public, happens mostly through wrong-doing rather than bad-mouthing. Finally, incitement is a symptom and a consequence of Israel's prolonged military occupation and therefore, to eradicate incitement, it is vital to address its root cause: the occupation.

Each story is followed by a brief assessment of how and why a particular incident amounts to Israeli incitement against Palestinians, titled *Inciting Elements*.

¹ Note: This report relies on Western, Israeli, and Arabic news sources reporting directly from Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. Preference is given to news stories in English, but in the event that a story is only available in Arabic, the headline of the original story is translated and posted in this report. In the event that a link becomes inactive or dysfunctional, please contact the PLO Delegation in Washington, DC, and an alternative link will be provided.

Monthly Report:

December 1st, 2015

Israelis protesting against Christmas

Benzi Gopstein (leader of the racist anti-miscegenation group Lehava) and a dozen teenagers gathered outside the YMCA to protest against the "abomination" taking place inside. The police, who knew in advance that Gopstein and friends were planning to show up, were prepared and kept them on the other side of the street, next to the King David Hotel. And thus, inside the YMCA many dozens of families celebrated and sang together in brotherhood and joy; outside, a sad congregation listened to Gopstein ramble off slogans into a megaphone: "The children of Israel want Hanukah, not fir trees! The children of Israel want to learn 'Shema Israel'! Don't send our children to be forcibly converted! Christians, go back to Europe! We don't want your gifts and candies!"

[Read Article](#), **972 Magazine**

Inciting Elements:

Israel's increasingly heated racist and ethnocentric rhetoric as purported by the Israeli government has encouraged groups such as Lehava to stage a "War on Christmas." This act of protesting that took place, luckily, did not become violent. However, this attack on Christians celebrating Christmas in the Holy Land, the birthplace of Jesus is disturbing. Israel's continued efforts to make life unbearable for non-Jews, Palestinians in Israel (Christians and Muslims) must stop. Israel must cease classifying Palestinians and non-Jews as "demographic threats" and provide their countrymen with the same democratic rights.

December 5th, 2015

Akunis to Austrian minister: 'Austria will not divide Jerusalem'

An encounter between Austrian-Israeli ministerial counterparts was cancelled due to the east Jerusalem location of the proposed meeting. Mitterlehner countered by offering to relocate the talk to the Israeli Knesset or the nearby King David Hotel, both located in west Jerusalem. However, Akunis was firm on the position and demanded that the meeting "be held in the office of the Minister of Science or nowhere." Akunis added that "Austria will not divide Jerusalem. With all due respect to the Austrian Minister of Science, united Jerusalem, the capital of Israel for over 3,000 years, stands above any consideration."

[Read Article](#), **Jerusalem Post**

Inciting Elements:

Akunis' refusal to accommodate the visiting Austrian minister's simple request to not meet in occupied East Jerusalem is very undiplomatic. Akunis also insinuated that Israel has existed for over 3,000 years and has always been the capital for a Jewish state, which intentionally deludes himself of the Palestinian population that has existed in East Jerusalem for centuries, as well as the fact that in creating Israel in 1948, it was agreed

that Jerusalem was to be an international city, not a capital. Furthermore, to pretend that Jerusalem is not divided is not ministerial conduct and it should be expected of government officials to recognize the political situation of all people it represents.

December 5th, 2015

Netanyahu: We could destroy Al-Aqsa — if we wanted to

“If the Jews wanted to destroy Al-Aqsa it wouldn’t take much effort, not at all,” the prime minister told party members in a closed meeting. “But that goes against what we stand for.” To be clear, Netanyahu was saying that Israel has no intention of destroying Al-Aqsa. But there is probably a far more calming way of doing so than saying that it wouldn’t be very hard to destroy Al-Aqsa.

[Read Article](#), 972 Magazine

Inciting Elements:

Netanyahu’s utterly destructive rhetoric that Israel could destroy Al-Aqsa is extremely harmful. This assertion of means (if there was a will) bolsters anti-muslim and anti-Palestinian groups in their claims and cries for destroying Al-Haram Al-Sharif. By uttering such absurdities, Netanyahu is perpetuating what the Palestinian leadership has been warning against; turning the conflict into a religious one.

December 8th, 2015

Returning to the Mount (Chozrim L’Har) T-shirt released on Facebook



Returning to the Mount (Chozrim L’Har) is an organization of students who are frustrated with the current lack of understanding and education about the Temple Mount and seek to promote higher awareness of important issues related to it. They work to stop the desecration of the Temple Mount and seek to promote higher awareness of important issues related to it. They work to stop the desecration of the Temple Mount and encourage visitors to return to the Mountain of the Lord. The organization also made headlines in October when it offered to pay Israeli-Jews 2,000 shekels (\$516) for those who were detained while praying at Temple Mount.

[Read Article, Al-Jazeera](#)

[Read Article, Temple Mount Heritage](#)

Inciting Elements:

Chozrim L'Har, or Returning to the Mount, an Israeli student Zionist organization has long held the stance and claim that the *Haram al-Sharif* (what they refer to as the Temple Mount) should be cleared of the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa Mosque to make room for the Third Temple, long believed by many Israeli Jews to have been originally located where the Dome is today. Recently, the organization on their Facebook page announced the release of their new shirts that members and supporters could purchase to wear to future protests at the site. The shirts design depicts the proposed design of the Third Temple, and a bulldozer knocking down the Dome, with the caption saying (in Hebrew) "It's time to clear the filth from Temple Mount". With the increasing tensions between the Palestinians and the Israelis surrounding the Al-Aqsa Compound, the release of the shirt along with the rhetoric coming from the group increases the dehumanization of the Palestinians and Muslims, playing into the the long standing notion that there is a design to destroy the Dome and instead replace it with the Third Temple.

December 10th, 2015

Habayit Hayehudi MK: The Duma Murders Are Not Terrorism

MK Bezalel Smotrich (Habayit Hayehudi) published a column on Thursday morning in the B'Sheva weekly newspaper in which he said the attacks carried out by Jews known as "price tag" attacks should not be considered terrorism. "Someone in the Shin Bet [security service] has lost their way," he wrote. "Terrorism is only violence carried out by an enemy within the framework of war against us, and only that justifies taking severe steps who are out of place in normal situations. All the rest are serious crimes, abominable crime, nationalist crime, but not terrorism," he wrote. "The murder in Duma, with all its severity, is not an incident of terrorism. Period. Whoever calls it terrorism is deviating from the truth, causing mortal and unjustified harm to human and civil rights ... Cheapening the term terrorism, and as a result at the end of the day damaging the effectiveness of the battle against it. We are not in a war against Jews," he wrote.

[Read Article, Ha'aretz](#)

Inciting Elements:

Hayehudi creates a false and racist narrative here when he implies that Jews cannot be terrorists when they commit heinous crimes against Palestinian civilians. If terrorism is only violence carried out by enemies, then this definition should work the other way, as well. Violence carried out by enemies of Palestinians should also be considered terrorism because it projects a clear, political message that Palestinians are not welcome there. Terrorism is not a word that only refers to Arabs or Muslims and to assume so is grossly racist and incorrect. Jews have committed innumerable acts of terrorism toward

Palestinians that to go unrecognized is to make Jews a superior human class compared to their neighbors.

December 11th, 2015

Deputy Israeli defence minister donated \$12,000 to build 'Third Temple'

Settlement organisation the Temple Mount Institute, which promotes the construction of a third temple in Al-Aqsa Mosque's courtyards, founded by an extremist from the legally banned movement Kahane Chai, is receiving indirect government support. Haaretz reported that supporters of this institute include Israeli Deputy Defence Minister Eli Ben-Dahan who donated \$12,000 to the organisation five years ago when he was head of Israel's Rabbinical courts. The newspaper added that the institute is receiving indirect financial support from the US and that two American organisations donated over \$50,000 to the institute two years ago. It explained that the official position of the government was expressed as wanting to preserve the status quo at Al-Aqsa Mosque but the government is funding of the Temple Mount Institute by through the Ministry of Education amounting to \$600,000 over the past five years.

[Read Article](#), **Middle East Monitor**

Inciting Elements:

Israel's inciting rhetoric paired with financial assistance to fanatical groups seeking to destroy Al-Aqsa Mosque is dangerous precisely because it aims to alter the conflict and turn into a religious one. Providing government funding is expressly tantamount to supporting the project. This effort to strengthen groups behind such a project, could lead to unwanted consequences and high levels of tension. The ongoing effort to erase Palestinian and Muslim presence and identity in Jerusalem must stop, sacred places must be protected in the Holy city.

December 10th, 2015

Benjamin Netanyahu 'threatens to strip Jerusalem residency from 230,000 Palestinians'

Plans to strip Jerusalem residency rights from Palestinians in the wake of recent violence could affect more than 230,000 people, according to reports. Identity cards give around 350,000 Palestinians in East Jerusalem the right to work and move freely across the city, and are used by residents both inside and outside the separation wall built in 2003. The Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has previously hinted at the prospect of taking away residency rights from some Palestinians, seemingly manipulating public fears about the current wave of Israeli-Palestinian violence.

[Read Article](#), **The Independent**

Inciting Elements:

According to official Palestinian figures, 145,000 Palestinians live outside the Jerusalem separation wall, while 195,000 live inside of it. Palestinians outside Jerusalem are already denied the right to freedom of movement in Jerusalem, If Palestinians inside are also stripped of their rights, they will be turned into criminals in their own homes. Palestinian Neighbourhoods in Jerusalem already suffer significant neglect and a total lack of public services. This attempt to void Jerusalem of Palestinians has been ongoing project supported by the Israeli government in order to create (false) facts on the ground to undermine Palestinian dreams of a future capital in East Jerusalem.

December 22nd, 2015

Ban Christmas and Christian 'vampires', says far-right Israeli leader

Benzi Gopstein, who heads the far-right Lehava organisation and has been arrested a number of times, made the comments in an article on the ultra-Orthodox Jewish website Kooker. "Christmas has no place in the Holy Land," wrote Gopstein, who lives in a Jewish settlement in Hebron in the occupied West Bank. He spoke of the "fall of the line of defence of the Jewish people for hundreds of years against our enemies, the Catholic Church." "The mission of those vampires and bloodsuckers remains. If Jews cannot be killed, they can be converted," he wrote. "We must remove the vampires before they drink our blood once again."

[Read Article](#), **Middle East Eye**

Inciting Elements:

Gospstein's blatantly racist comments and declarations are disgusting. Claiming that Christmas has no place in the Holy Land is ironic, considering that Jesus Christ was born in the Holy land. For decades, Israel has discriminated against the Christian Minority, by not providing them with social services, treating them like second class citizen (precisely because they Arabs) and now attempting to ban Christmas. The shift in Israeli society, where racist statement are made without fear, signals a dangerous path on which the Israeli society is travelling. unfortunately, Gopstein has made similarly abominable comments when he condoned torching churches and the firebombing terrorist attack against the Dawabsheh Family

December 26th, 2015

Likud Minister: 'Israel is whole, there is no Palestine'

"The land of Israel is whole. There is no Palestine," he said, emphasizing that Judea and Samaria are part of Israel just like any other region in the Jewish state. "Let the Palestinians go to Jordan, to Gaza, to Saudi Arabia, to Kuwait, to Egypt and to Iraq. They don't want peace and don't want us here. They are manipulating our weakness. The Palestinians know how to play. They stick to their place." Katz concluded by saying he opposes a new bill to close businesses on Shabbat, saying, "I will vote against it in the government. We don't need

religious coercion in Israel. Everyone should live in their own portion from God." Many have argued for the bill so as to protect and strengthen the Jewish nature of the state.

[Read Article](#), **Israel National News**

Inciting Elements:

By saying Palestine doesn't exist is to completely ignore a constant truth and millions of people who have history to the land they are grasping to. The minister makes it sound easy to displace and replace millions of Palestinians, but as humans they have the right to their property and freedom of movement. The minister does not speak for religious higher beings and whatever they may or may not have implied thousands of years ago. To make land distinctions based on this assumed Godly division is ludicrous and shouldn't be tolerated on a government level. Palestinians have every right to their land, homes, and property and shouldn't be subjected to completely uprooting their lives just so colonizers can take what's left.

December 27th, 2015

Benjamin Netanyahu: No Room for Comparison Between Jewish and Arab Terror

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stressed Sunday that despite the arson-murder of a Palestinian family and recent reports of growing Jewish extremism, there was no room for comparison between Jewish acts of terrorism and Arab acts of terror. "There is a difference between Arab terror and Jewish terror," Netanyahu said at the beginning of the government's weekly meeting. "Here we condemn and they [the Palestinians] praise," the prime minister said. Netanyahu noted that unlike Jewish terror, which is limited in scope, Arab terror "attacks us incessantly and is wide-spread." According to Netanyahu, while in Israel both the government and informal leaders condemn Jewish terror, in the Palestinian Authority they name squares and streets after terrorists.

[Read Article](#), **Ha'aretz**

Inciting Elements:

Netanyahu is falsely accusing an entire population - all Palestinians - of agreeing with or encouraging acts of terrorism, which is simply untrue. There are copious Jewish populations, particularly among the settlers, who participate in, encourage, and praise Jewish acts of terrorism toward Palestinians that occur on a regular basis. To ignore this reality is irresponsible and perpetuates an incorrect stereotype that Palestinians teach their children to be terrorists.

December 30th, 2015

Benjamin Netanyahu: Israel will remain in Hebron 'forever'

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu opened a cabinet meeting Wednesday by vowing that Jews would "remain forever" in Hebron's Tomb of the Patriarchs. "I say to anyone who wants to uproot us from the Tomb of the Patriarchs: Except for a few years in the last century,

we've been there almost 4,000 years. We will remain there forever. You cannot defeat us." The Tomb of the Patriarchs, shared by Jews and Muslims who both revere it as the final resting place of the biblical patriarch Abraham and his kin, has been a particular source of tension in the city.

[Read Article](#), **The Times of Israel**

Inciting Elements:

While Netanyahu recognized that the Tomb of the Patriarchs was not a Jewish destination for many years, his use of permanent terms is offensive and inconsiderate of the massive Palestinian population living in Hebron. Not even 1,000 Jewish settlers live in Hebron, yet their presence has been torturous for Palestinians who face verbal and physical harassment, and other dangers, from them on a daily basis. Hebron is a historical city for all Abrahamic religions and to speak of it in terms limiting it to Jews is ethnocentric.

December 31st, 2015

Habayit Hayehudi MK: No such thing as a Palestinian people

Hayehudi along with MK David Amsalem (Likud), was presenting a compensation bill for owners of land transferred to the Palestinian Authority, which was approved in a preliminary reading. "The Oslo Accords were a great injustice, and this great injustice was accompanied by smaller ones -- one of which we have the chance to correct today," he said in reference to the bill. He then declared that there never had been a Palestinian people, adding, "You have to understand that we don't simply want to cancel the Oslo Accords, we want to apply the law and the sovereignty of the state and of the Jewish people in Judea and Samaria. "Members of the Opposition, we will annex [Judea and Samaria], whether you like it or not. This is our Israel, it was given to us by God. We will annex all regions of the motherland.

[Read Article](#), **Israel Hayom**

Inciting Elements:

Hayehudi again uses religion to ignore human rights and strip those who aren't Jewish of any political voice in Israel. He uses threatening language to say that Palestinians who haven't already been displaced will be sooner or later because he's certain that his biblical claims to land are enough for him to trample on the rights and lives of others. This extremely inconsiderate and false statement implies that the people who were living in Palestine before Jewish colonization aren't real and didn't exist, which is a frightening, Orwellian concept of changing history to benefit those at the top.

APPENDIX:

Articles XXII (1) and XXII (2) of Chapter 4 of the *Interim Agreement between Israel and the Palestinians* of 1995 stipulates that:

1. Israel and the Council shall seek to foster mutual understanding and tolerance and shall accordingly abstain from incitement, including hostile propaganda, against each other and, without derogating from the principle of freedom of expression, shall take legal measures to prevent such incitement by any organizations, groups or individuals within their jurisdiction.

2. Israel and the Council will ensure that their respective educational systems contribute to the peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples and to peace in the entire region, and will refrain from the introduction of any motifs that could adversely affect the process of reconciliation.

The Wye River Memorandum of 1998 further reaffirms the above stipulations as noted in Section II (3) *Preventing Incitement*:

- a. Drawing on relevant international practice and pursuant to Article XXII (1) of the Interim Agreement and the Note for the Record, the Palestinian side will issue a decree prohibiting all forms of incitement to violence or terror, and establishing mechanisms for acting systematically against all expressions or threats of violence or terror. This decree will be comparable to the existing Israeli legislation which deals with the same subject.

- b. A U.S.- Palestinian-Israeli committee will meet on a regular basis to monitor cases of possible incitement to violence or terror and to make recommendations and reports on how to prevent such incitement. The Israeli, Palestinian and U.S. sides will each appoint a media specialist, a law enforcement representative, an educational specialist and a current or former elected official to the committee.

