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USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2019 - Chapter 5 - Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)

Aka PIJ; PIJ-Shaqaqi Faction; PIJ-Shallah Faction; Islamic Jihad of Palestine; Islamic Jihad in Palestine; Abu Ghunaym Squad of the Hizballah Bayt al-Maqdis; Al-Quds Squads; Al-Quds Brigades; Saraya al-Quds; Al-Awdah Brigades

Description: Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. Formed by militant Palestinians in Gaza during the 1970s, PIJ is committed to the destruction of Israel and to the creation of an Islamic state in historic Palestine, including present-day Israel.

Activities: PIJ terrorists have conducted numerous attacks, including large-scale suicide bombings, against Israeli civilian and military targets. Between 2008 and 2011, PIJ conducted rocket attacks and used other explosive devices to target southern Israel. Throughout 2014, PIJ operatives carried out attacks on Israeli buses in Tel Aviv. In March 2014, PIJ carried out a wave of rocket attacks into Israeli territory; up to 60 rockets may have reached Israel.

In 2015, PIJ revealed that its militants were smuggling weapons, including Gaza-made rockets and mortars, through tunnels in Gaza, in preparation for future attacks against Israel. In May 2015, Israeli forces blamed PIJ for firing a rocket that landed in Gan Yazne, a region close to the Gaza border. In August 2015, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) claimed PIJ operatives in Syria fired four rockets at the Golan Heights and Upper Galilee.

Throughout 2016, PIJ continued to strike Israel, primarily through light arms fire directed at IDF patrols. In September 2016, Israeli authorities arrested PIJ operative Mahmoud Yusuf Hasin Abu Taha upon his entry into Israel from Gaza, interrupting a PIJ plot to abduct and kill an IDF soldier and carry out a mass-casualty attack on a reception hall in Beersheba. In 2017, PIJ praised numerous shootings, bombings, and other attacks in Israel that resulted in multiple deaths. PIJ claimed responsibility for launching rockets into Israel throughout 2018 and 2019. In a November 2019 video, PIJ’s Al-Quds Brigade introduced a new rocket to its arsenal and thanked Iran for its support.

Strength: PIJ has close to 1,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank

Funding and External Aid: PIJ receives financial assistance and training primarily from Iran. PIJ has partnered with Iran- and Syria-sponsored Hizballah to carry out joint operations.

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of the
Palestine Islamic Jihad (Excerpt of
chapter 5 of the country report on
terrorism 2019)

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