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aka PLF; PLF-Abu Abbas; Palestine Liberation Front

Description: The Palestinian Liberation Front – Abu Abbas Faction (PLF) – was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. In the late 1970s, the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) splintered from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC); it later split into pro-Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), pro-Syrian and pro-Libyan factions. The pro-PLO faction was led by Muhammad Zaydan (a.k.a. Abu Abbas) and based in Baghdad prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Activities: The PLF was responsible for the 1985 attack on the Italian cruise ship *Achille Lauro* and the murder of U.S. citizen Leon Klinghoffer. The PLF was suspected of supporting terrorism against Israel by other Palestinian groups into the 1990s. In April 2004, Abu Abbas died of natural causes while in U.S. custody in Iraq. After not claiming an attack for 16 years, the PLF claimed responsibility for the March 14, 2008 assault against an Israeli military bus in Huwarah, Israel, and the shooting of an Israeli settler. Following the attacks, a PLF Central Committee member reaffirmed the PLF's commitment to using "all possible means to restore" its previous glory and to adhering to its role in the Palestinian "struggle" and "resistance" through its military. On February 18, 2010, the PLF claimed responsibility for an IED attack against an Israeli Defense Forces patrol, which caused minor injuries to a soldier; another IED was discovered during a search of the area. The group did not publicly claim any attacks in 2015, but continued to maintain a strong presence in many refugee camps in Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria.

Strength: Estimates have placed membership between 50 and 500.

Location/Area of Operation: PLF leadership and membership are based in Gaza, Lebanon, and the West Bank.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

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