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USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2019 - Chapter 5 - Palestine Liberation Front–Abu Abbas Faction (PLF)

Aka PLF; PLF–Abu Abbas; Palestine Liberation Front

Description: The Palestinian Liberation Front–Abu Abbas Faction (PLF) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. In the late 1970s, the PLF splintered from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command. It later split into pro-Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), pro-Syrian, and pro-Libyan factions. The pro-PLO faction was led by Muhammad Zaydan (aka Abu Abbas) and was based in Baghdad before 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. Throughout the 1990s, the PLF was suspected of supporting terrorism against Israel by other Palestinian groups. 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 2008 assault against an Israeli military bus in Huwarah, Israel, and the shooting of an Israeli settler. In February 2010, the PLF claimed responsibility for an IED attack against an IDF patrol, which caused minor injuries to a soldier; another IED was discovered during a search of the area. The PLF has not claimed responsibility for any attacks since 2016, but continues to maintain a strong presence in many refugee camps in Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria.

Strength: Precise numbers are unknown.

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

Funding and External Aid: Sources of funding are unknown.

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of the Palestine Liberation Front–Abu Abbas Faction (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2019)

Countries:

Israel, Lebanon, State of Palestine

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Austrian Red Cross
Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and
Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien
[T \(Telephone\) +43 1 589 00 583](tel:+43158900583)
[F \(Fax\) +43 1 589 00 589](tel:+43158900589)
info@ecoi.net

Contact
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