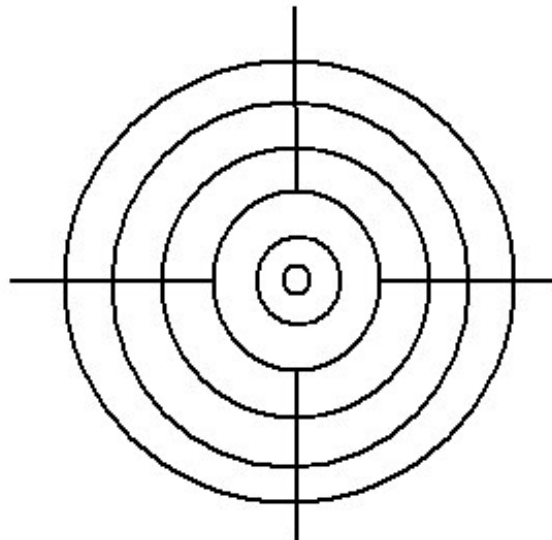


Assassination of Palestinians ... An Israeli Official Policy

Report on Extra-Judicial killings Committed by the Israeli
Occupation Forces
September 29, 2000 – September 28, 2001



The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

**Consultative Status with the ECOSOC of the United Nations
Affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists – Geneva
Member of the International Federation for Human Rights – Paris
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Introduction

This is the second in a series of report published by the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) on assassinations committed by Israeli occupation forces during the al-Aqsa Intifada. Drawing from data collected by human rights organisations and media, this report documents assassinations from 29 April to 28 September 2001, the first anniversary of the outbreak of the Intifada.¹ In the first year of the Intifada, there were a total of 41 operations,² killing 36 targeted Palestinians and 15 bystanders. Moreover, 65 Palestinians were injured in these attacks, including 13 who were marked for elimination and 52 bystanders.

The Centre's first report on assassination operations, covering 29 September 2000-28 April 2001, documented 13 assassinations that killed a total of 13 targeted Palestinians and 6 bystanders.³ Although assassinations were one of the early responses to the Intifada under Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, this policy escalated upon the election of his successor, Ariel Sharon. Furthermore, the Sharon government decided on 21 June to resume assassinations of Palestinian activists despite the cease-fire declared on 13 June. Between 21 June and 29 September, the Israeli government executed 21 assassination operations, killing 18 targeted Palestinians and 11 civilian bystanders; there were also 8 failed assassinations. In addition, there were 7 explosions in which 16 Palestinians were killed, including two brothers, for which responsibility could not be attributed.

Over the past few months, there has been a quantitative and qualitative escalation in assassination attempts by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinians. Israeli occupation forces carried out 26 assassination operations during the period under study, killing 20 targeted Palestinians and 12 bystanders, including children, and injuring 50. Among the 50 wounded, 13 were targeted and 37 were bystanders. Also, Israeli occupation forces carried out 10 failed assassination attempts. In these attacks, 11 targeted Palestinians were injured (4 critically), while 3 escaped injury.

¹ This report does not include incidents in which Palestinians were killed in unclear circumstances.

² During the preparation of this report, Israeli occupation forces carried out four assassination operations against Palestinian activists from Hamas and Fateh movements in the West Bank, killing six targeted Palestinians and three bystanders. On 14 October 2001, Israeli occupation forces at an outpost between Galilee and Israel open fire on Abdul Rahman Said Hamad, 35, from Galilee, killing him. Hamad was belonged to the military wing of Hamas. The following day, Israeli occupation forces assassinated Hamas activist Ahmed Hassan Marshoud, 29, from Balata camp in Nablus, with a car bomb, injuring a bystander. On 18 October, Israeli occupation forces assassinated three Fateh activists in Bethlehem with a car bomb: Aatif Ahmad Abeyat, 32, from Bethlehem; Eissa Al-Khatib Abeyat, 28, from Bethlehem; Jamal Abdullah Abeyat, 35, from Bethlehem. On 22 October, Israeli occupation forces assassinated Ayman Halawa, 26, from Nablus, with a car bomb, injuring two civilians. Israeli occupation forces accused Halawa of being a leader in the military wing of Hamas in Nablus, and responsible for the death of 48 Israelis.

³ The report is available upon request from the Centre, or at www.pchrgaza.org.

Crucially, there was also an escalation in the kinds of Palestinians targeted by occupation forces, widening the circle of targets to include high-ranking political leaders in Palestinian nationalist and Islamic movements. Israeli occupation forces carried out two assassinations targeting political leaders. On 31 July, an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship launched missiles at the Palestinian Centre for Studies and Media in a house in the middle of Nablus, killing eight people, including 2 prominent local Hamas political leaders: Jamal Mansour, 41, and Jamal Salim, 41. On 27 August, an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship launched missiles at the office of the Secretary-General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Mustafa al-Zabri (Abu Ali Mustafa), in Ramallah, killing him and injuring nearby staff members.

In addition, there have been numerous incidents of explosions in houses, grocery stores, cars, and other circumstances in which Israeli occupation forces were suspected of responsibility. There were 13 such incidents in which 28 Palestinians were killed, including 2 children. On 19 August, an explosion occurred in a house in Rafah city in the Gaza strip, killing a Palestinian activist and two of his children. On 30 July, another explosion in Jenin killed six Palestinian militants. On 28 September, an explosion in a residential neighbourhood near Hebron killed an Islamic Jihad activist.

The Israeli government openly claims responsibility for liquidations and unapologetically claims that such acts are part of a policy of “self-defence.” Israeli President Moshe Katsav has described such operations as “Self-defence operations against those who plan or commit acts against Israeli targets.”⁴ Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced in a special statement published in *al-Quds* 14 May 2001 that Israel declares its responsibility for some operations and keeps silent on others. Sharon added in an interview on Israeli television on 2 July 2001 that Israeli occupation forces had committed extra-judicial killings of Palestinian activists in Tulkarm, Nablus, and Jenin and would not hesitate in the future to kill whoever it suspected of terrorism if it deemed it in the interests of the state of Israel.⁵ Two days later, the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Aharanoth* reported that Israeli occupation forces had produced a list of 26 Palestinians whose killings the government had approved, including members of Fateh, PFLP, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad.

The circumstances and conditions in which some assassination operations are committed by Israeli occupation forces undermine Israeli claims that these operation are carried out in “self-defence.” For example, on 23 July a special force of Israeli commandos killed Mustafa Yassin, 26, from Jenin, in front of his wife and child after Israeli forces released him from their custody two days earlier. The evidence also indicates that Israeli occupation forces shot him and left him injured until he died, without providing any medical care or allowing his wife to do so. This matter confirms that there was an intention to kill Yassin and not in self-defence, otherwise they would have held him in custody.

⁴ *al-Quds*, 3 July 2001.

⁵ *al-Ayyam*, 24 July 2001.

The circumstances of other incidents confirm that the Israeli government is indiscriminate as to the “collateral damage” of such assassination operations. Israeli occupation forces have not hesitated to use missiles residential buildings in which Jamal Mansour and Jamal Salim Damouni were killed, along with 6 bystanders.

International Humanitarian Law and Assassinations

Assassinations constitute extra-judicial executions under international humanitarian law and are thus illegal; they represent a distinct subset of willful killings insofar as they are clearly premeditated and targeted.

Assassinations violate the right to life as enshrined in international human rights and humanitarian law. Article 6(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Israel is a party, provides:

Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.

Article 3(1) of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention), the overriding instrument of international humanitarian law governing occupation, similarly provides:

[T]he following acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever...:

(a) Violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture...

Under Article 5 of the Geneva Convention, an individual engaged in armed activity against the Occupying Power is not entitled to the same measure of protection as other civilians. This provision, however, does not justify assassinations. As the ICRC commentary on Article 5 points out:

The [derogable] rights referred to [in Article 5] are not very extensive in the case of protected persons under detention; they consist essentially of the right to correspond, the right to receive individual or collective relief, the right to spiritual assistance from minister of their faith and the right to receive visits from representatives of the Protecting Power and the ICRC.

Moreover, under Article 27 of the same convention, “protected persons are entitled, in all circumstances, to respect for their persons” and that “they shall be at all times humanely treated, and shall be protected especially against all acts of violence or threats thereof.”

If Israeli occupation forces suspect an individual of planning armed activities, they are entitled to seek the detention of such a person for trial and punishment according to due

process. Outside of actual armed combat, resort to lethal force is clearly restricted to very specific circumstances, as stipulated by Principle 9 of the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials:

Law enforcement officials shall not use firearms against persons except in self-defense or defense of others against imminent threat of death or serious injury, to prevent perpetration of a particularly serious crime involving grave threat to life, to arrest a person presenting such a danger and resisting their authority, or to prevent his or her escape, and only when less extreme means are insufficient to achieve these objectives. In any event, intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life.

The fact that some of those assassinated had recently been released by Israeli forces or were inside of Israeli controlled areas at the time of death clearly indicates that resort to armed force was not necessary in these cases. Furthermore, Israeli occupation forces have not presented any evidence to support claims that the individuals targeted were involved in the activities of which they were accused, either before or after they have been killed. Suspects have no opportunity to defend themselves or to appeal such decisions. This closed system is completely unaccountable to judicial processes. The Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal and Summary Executions prohibit all extra-legal, arbitrary and summary executions. Principle 1 provides:

Governments shall prohibit by law all extra-legal, arbitrary and summary executions and shall ensure that any such executions are recognized as offences under their criminal laws, and are punishable by appropriate penalties which take into account the seriousness of such offences. Exceptional circumstances including a state of war or threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency may not be invoked as a justification of such executions.

Assassinations of political activists or armed militants in the OPT are a subset of willful killings under international humanitarian law. Willful killings are considered a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention under Article 147. Grave breaches are considered war crimes, punishable under the principle of universal jurisdiction. Under Article 146 of the Convention, all High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention are obligated to seek and prosecute anyone in its territory alleged to have committed or to have ordered to be committed grave breaches, and to enact appropriate domestic legislation for this purpose.

Assassination of Palestinians, 29 April-29 September 2001

- **5 May 2001: Ahmad Khalil ‘Eissa Assad,**
38, from Ertas, Bethlehem

At approximately 8.10 on 5 May 2001, Israeli occupation forces at a military outpost on Tel Abu Zaid, to the south of Attas in the West Bank, opened fire on Assad, an activist of Islamic Jihad in Bethlehem, killing him instantly. The incident occurred when he was standing in front of his house, located 250m from an Israeli military outpost. He was hit by 15 bullets in different areas of his body. His niece, Ala, 6, was injured in the legs. The victim’s brother, Ismail ‘Eissa Assad, a 39-year-old farmer, said in an affidavit:

[Ahmad Khalil ‘Eissa Assad] left the house at about 8.10 on 5 May 2001 while on his way to work in Bethlehem, where he worked in the Ministry of the Interior. After he stepped outside, he stopped for a few minutes to talk with his brother Mahmoud, who runs a store by the house, as well as with another neighbour, Walid Abu Souwi. As he resumed his way to work, standing 20m from the house, he was hit by an intense barrage of bullets. He was killed instantly. The bullets penetrated the store and led to the injury of Mahmoud’s daughter, Ala, who inside.

Ismail added, and eyewitnesses confirmed, that a group of Israeli soldiers were seen behind a nearby tree at the entrance of a cave on Tel Abu Zaid, at the time Ahmad Khalil ‘Eissa Assad was shot. Israeli Arabic radio later mentioned that Israeli occupation forces had not commented on the accusations of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) that Israel was behind the killing, but Israeli affirmed that the “General Security Service has information that affirmed that the victim was planning to carry out a series of armed operations inside Israel in the immediate future.”⁶

- **12 May 2001: Mutassam Mohammed al-Sabagh,**
28, from Jenin

At approximately 11.00, an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship fired three missiles at a car passing near the office of the Palestinian Ministry of the Interior in Jenin. Inside the car were: Abdel Karim Ratib al-Awyas, 27, from Jenin, an officer of the Palestinian General Intelligence Service (GIS); Yusuf Abu Ali al-Rashid al-Qaissi, 26, from Jenin, also in the GIS; and Mutassam Mohammed al-Sabagh, 28, from Jenin, and an activist from Fateh based in Jenin. The three, upon seeing the helicopter, got out of the car but they were too late. The three missiles completely destroyed the car. The two GIS officers were wounded and al-Sabagh was critically injured in the head, chest, and throughout the body. He was pronounced dead later. PCHR was informed that al-Sabagh had been unable to walk due an injury to the pelvic area during the first Intifada.

⁶ *al-Quds*, 6 May 2001.

A fourth missile from the helicopter hit a Palestinian police car which was passing nearby, killing Sergeant Aalam Nasri Abdel al-Raziq al-Jaloudi, 26, from Jenin. Another Palestinian police officer, Lieutenant Tariq Mohammed Amin al-Haj, 32, from Jenin, was injured throughout the body. Two civilian bystanders were also injured: Mohammed Suleiman Abu al-Rob, 43 and Mohammed Yusuf al-Samoudi, 18, both from Jenin, both suffered head wounds.

Lieutenant al-Haj testified that:

At about 11.30 on that day, I was in a police car on patrol, sitting in the front passenger seat, next to Sgt. al-Jaloudi. We were passing through the main road between al-Zahra School and the Ministry of Education, towards the square where the offices of the Interior Ministry are located. Just a few minutes from the square, we heard the sound of loud explosions outside Dr. Jamil's building, which was to the left. Then I saw several long, thin pieces of metal slam through the driver's side of the car, hitting Sgt. al-Jaloudi in the head and throat. He shouted in pain, and a piece of these projectiles injured me in the left leg.

Brigadier Tawfiq al-Tirawi, GIS Director in the West Bank, accused Israeli occupation forces of responsibility for the attack and of intentionally targeting Abdel Karim al-Awyas.⁷ An Israeli military spokesman refused to comment on the incident, but Israeli Army Radio accused those riding in the car of belonging to the military wing of Fateh and of planning to fire mortars at settlements near Jenin. It also quoted an Israeli military spokesman as saying that the three were deemed responsible for planting landmines and carrying out numerous shooting attacks against soldiers and settlers in Jenin.⁸

Israeli Minister of Science Meton Vilnai affirmed to Israeli Army Radio that "this operation was part of a long-term campaign by Israeli forces to stop violence." He added that these attacks were targeted with the aim of avoiding civilian deaths. "I believe that it's one of the options available to us because otherwise we would be to carpet bomb the territories in a way which may lead to many civilian deaths."⁹

- **24 June 2001: Osama Fatih al-Jawabra,**
29, from Nablus

At approximately 10.20, al-Jawabra entered a telephone booth to make a call in the old city of Nablus. As he picked up the receiver, the phone exploded and he was killed

⁷ After the incident, Palestinian security forces arrested a suspected collaborator who confessed that Israeli occupation forces intended to kill al-Sabagh. Meanwhile, Israeli Arabic Radio said that the intended target was Abdel Karim al-Awyas.

⁸ *al-Quds*, 13 May 2001.

⁹ *al-Quds*, 14 May 2001.

instantly. Medical sources at Rafidiyah Hospital in Nablus said that al-Jawabra's body arrived missing the left arm and parts of the head, with deep injuries in the left side of the back, and other parts of the body. Two brothers passing nearby were injured: Malik Abdul Nasser Shabaro, 2 and Amar Abdel Nasser Shabaro, 4.

Moatez Zaher al-Salibi, 23, who runs a store in the neighbourhood in which the incident took place, witnessed the explosion. He said in an affidavit:

At about 10.20 on 24 June 2001, while I was in my store, al-Jawabra came in to buy a telephone card. Twenty minutes after he left, I heard a huge explosion outside. I went outside to see what happened. I saw the remains of the telephone booth, only one meter outside my store, and al-Jawabra's body was lying 5 meters away. His left arm was cut off, and I noticed injuries in his back.

Al-Jawabra was a known Fateh activist in Nablus and was accused by Israeli occupation forces of participating in attacks against soldiers and settlers. Israeli sources said on 25 June that al-Jawabra's name was on a list submitted by Israel to the PNA of individuals they wanted arrested.

The PNA accused Israel of responsibility for the assassination of al-Jawabra, but the Israeli government denied responsibility. Israeli Defence Minister Benymain Ben Eliezer, however, hinted that Israeli forces were responsible while answering questions put to him by the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee in the Knesset. "Israel has no relation with the assassination of this person [al-Jawabra] but he was a terrorist and was providing bombs to terrorists and his death is a good thing." He added that Israel does not commit assassinations but attacks "terrorists" who are on their way to carrying out attacks.¹⁰ It should also be noted that this was the first assassination after the 13 June cease-fire agreed to by the government of Israel and the PNA.

- **1 July 2001: Mohammed Ahmad al-Bisharat,**
28, from Jenin;

Walid Rasmi Sadiq al-Bisharat,
20, from Jenin;

Samih Nour al-Din Abu Hanish,
22, from Nablus

At approximately 23.15, an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship fired several missiles at a car traveling from Jenin to Tamoun, killing three Palestinian activists inside. Information received by PCHR indicates that the three were on their way back home after visiting the

¹⁰ *al-Quds*, 26 June 2001.

family of a Palestinian killed earlier by Israeli occupation forces. This contradicts Israeli military and government claims that they were on their way to carry out an armed attack against Israeli targets.

One of the three, Mohammed al-Bisharat was the target of a failed Israeli assassination attempt on 3 June but the bomb exploded 5 meters from his car. It is believed that an Israeli helicopter flying above at the time detonated the bomb by remote control.

- **13 July 2001: Fawaz Bashir Badran,**
27, from Deir al-Ghasoun, Tulkarm

At approximately 14.35, Badran, a teacher, was on his way home from the western area of Tulkarm after Friday prayers. Suddenly, a bomb planted in a nearby car exploded, killing him. Palestinian sources mentioned that the bomb was detonated by remote control and considered Israeli forces responsible. Badran was a Hamas activist.

- **17 July 2001: Omar Ahmed Sa'adeh,**
45, from Bethlehem

At approximately 15.00, two Israeli Apache helicopter gunships fired missiles at Sa'adeh's house in Bethlehem, totally destroying it. Sa'adeh, a Hamas activist, and three other civilians inside were killed. Seventeen others were injured, including a number of women and children. PCHR was informed by a number of Sa'adeh's relatives that he was waiting for his brother Khalid Sa'adeh, who had been released by Israeli forces that morning. At this time, the two Apaches fired the missiles at the house. The following Palestinians were killed:

1. Omar Ahmed Sa'adeh, 45
2. Taha 'Eissa al-Arrouj, 37
3. Hamad Saleh Sa'adeh, 29
4. Izhaq Ahmed Sa'adeh, 51

- **23 July 2001: Mustafa Yusuf Hussein Yassin,**
26, from Jenin

At approximately 16.30, Israeli undercover units invaded 'Anin area, west of Jenin and laid siege to the house of Mustafa Yusuf Hussein Yassin. Yassin, who was unarmed, was killed in front of his wife and children. He had been released from an Israeli prison earlier that day. His wife, Imam Abdullah Mohammed Yassin, 26, said in an affidavit:

At about 16.30 on 23 July 2001, while I was with my husband and 2-year-old child in our house watching television, we heard voices outside. My

husband opened a window to see what was happening when he saw a number of soldiers surrounding the house. There were about 40 in total, including some in civilian clothes. Then, once the soldiers saw him, they asked him to come out of the house. When he opened the door, an Israeli soldier shot him in the chest from about 1 meter away. Other soldiers shot him in the back after he fell down on the ground, his body lying across the doorway. I was beside my husband, holding my child, when he fell. I asked the soldiers to give him medical care, but they threatened me at gunpoint and forced me to go outside the house. My husband was lying there for 40 minutes without any medical assistance at all. I was screaming and begging the soldiers to help him. They waited until he died until they placed his body in one of his cars and left.

Israeli later authorities claimed that Yassin had planned to carry out a bombing of Israeli targets.¹¹

- **25 July 2001: Salah Nour al-Din Khalil Darwouza,**
38, from Nablus

At 12.15, while Darwzoua was driving towards the al-Tamimi gas station on Haifa street in Nablus, an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship fired two missiles at the car that missed. Darwouza took evasive action before another four missiles from the helicopter hit the car, destroying it completely.

The Israeli army admitted responsibility for the attack. In a statement, the spokesman said that a special unit had killed Darwouza, whom they accused of being a “terrorist” in Hamas and a Hamas leader in Nablus, planning bomb attacks in the French Hill settlement in occupied Jerusalem in February 2001 and bombings in Netanya inside Israel.¹²

- **31 July 2001: Jamal Abdul-Rahman Mohammed Mansour,**
41, from Balata camp, Nablus;

Jamal Salim Damouni,
42, from Nablus

At 13.50, two leading Hamas activists in Nablus and six bystanders were killed, including two children, by Israeli forces. Jamal Mansour and Jamal Salim Damouni, well-known Hamas activists, were giving an interview to journalists in the Palestinian Centre for Studies and Media, located on the second floor of a residential building in Nablus, at the

¹¹ *al-Ayyam*, 24 July 2001.

¹² *al-Hayat*, 26 July 2001.

time. An Israeli Apache helicopter gunship fired two missiles which entered through the windows and completely destroyed the office inside. Six people inside were killed:

1. Jamal Mansour, 41, from Balata camp
2. Jamal Salim Damouni, 42, from Nablus
3. Mohammed Abdel Karim al-Bishawi, 28, from Balata camp
4. Othman Abdul Qadir Qathnani, 25, from Askar camp
5. Omar Mansour Mohammed Mansour, 28, from Balata camp
6. Fahim Ibrahim Mohammed Dawabsha, 32, from Nablus

In addition, two children outside the building were also killed:

1. Bilal Abdel Minam Khalil Abu Khader, 8, from Jenin
2. Ashraf Abdel Minam Khalil Abu Khader, 5, from Jenin

Three civilians were injured: Jihad Salim Damouni, 25, Ahmad Ismail Abu Shilal, 31, a researcher with the International Solidarity Institute, critically injured in the head; and Taghrid Fayeze Abu Ghatib, 42, from Nablus, injured in the left side of the head as she was passing by in the street below.

- **5 August 2001: Aamer Mansour al-Hudairy,**
22, from Tulkarm

At approximately 16.45, an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship fired missiles at a white Suzuki en route towards the centre of Tulkarm from the north. The missile exploded in front of the car, causing it to spin out of control before another missile hit the car directly, setting it aflame. Bystanders were unable to provide assistance. Al-Hudairy died from burns. He was a student activist in an Islamist movement at Al-Quds Open University. Three civilians were injured:

1. Abdel Jabar Adib Taher, 21
2. Firas Khashani, 25
3. Rashad Abdel Raziq al-Matour, 27

Israeli occupation forces claimed responsibility for the assassination. A spokesman for the Israeli army accused al-Hudairy of being a leading Hamas activist in Tulkarm, who had committed shooting and bombing attacks against Israeli targets. He also accused al-Hudairy of planning numerous suicide operations in Israel and training others to carry out such operations. He claimed that al-Hudairy was killed while carrying explosives for such operations in his car.¹³

¹³ *al-Ayyam*, 6 August 2001.

- **13 August 2001: Nasser Ismail Zaydiah,**
22, from Qalandya camp

At approximately 16.30, while Zaydiah was driving his car near an Israeli military installation between Ramallah and Jerusalem, north of Qalandya camp, an Israeli undercover unit began following him in an unmarked car and opened fire on him. Zaydiah was hit and his car came to a stop. A car with Israeli license plates arrived and two men in civilian clothes took Zaydiah out of his car. Eyewitnesses testified that he was alive, but bleeding severely. An Israeli military vehicle arrived and tried to offer medical support before taking him to an unknown destination.

Israeli radio claimed that Zaydiah was killed after Israeli police officers pursued a stolen car attempting to bypass military checkpoints. It accused him of running over soldiers with the car and refusing to comply with orders to stop, which forced the soldiers to open fire in the air and to shoot the tyres of the car. Later on, Israeli radio said that Zaydiah was killed by Israeli occupation forces after being suspected of having killed an Israeli citizen from Psagot Ze'ev three weeks earlier.¹⁴

An eyewitness said in an affidavit:

At approximately 16.30 on 13 August 2001, while I was at working on a construction site in Sameer Amis neighbourhood, I heard gunshots. After a while, I saw a red car passing by at high speed, entering a bypass road behind a windmill located 100m from an Israeli military installation in Aqib neighbourhood. I saw a white car carrying two people following, with one of the passengers leaning out the window, shooting at the red car. I also saw the driver of the red car swerving the car to enter a closed area. He stopped 5m from me and I saw the driver inside, unconscious. The gunman continued to shoot and then he left the place a minute after the red car stopped. Then a car with Israeli license plates arrived and two people with civilian clothes got out, perhaps intelligence agents. They hauled the body, bleeding from the left arm, from the red car at gunpoint. An Israeli military vehicle offered medical care for 30 minutes before they took him away.

- **15 August 2001: 'Emad Suleiman Abu Sneineh,**
27, from Hebron

At approximately 19.30, Abu Sneineh stopped his car in front of his house, located in Umm al-Dalia neighbourhood on the road leading to the Israeli civil and military liaison office south of Hebron. An Israeli undercover unit opened fire on him from 100m, killing him with five bullets. An eyewitness testified that the gunmen were operating from inside of a white car and escaped in that car towards the Israeli liaison office.

¹⁴ *al-Ayyam*, 14 August 2001.

Medical sources in Alia government hospital in Hebron affirmed that Abu Sneineh was hit by five bullets, one of which went through his left eye and three went through his chest, while the fifth hit him in the right leg. Abu Sneineh's house is located in the PNA-controlled area of Hebron, 500m from the dividing line. He was a well-known Fateh activist.

- **22 August 2001: Bilal al-Ghoul,**
18, Gaza city

At 18.00, two civilian cars were traveling from al-Zaytoun neighbourhood in Gaza City, towards the middle area of the Gaza strip. The first car was driven by Bilal al-Ghoul, a Hamas activist. The other is reported to have been carrying Yihya "Adnan" al-Ghoul, Bilal's father, Mohammed al-Deyf, and Said al-Arabid. Al-Deyf is one of the highest ranking militants wanted by Israel and a leader in the military wing of Hamas; Yihya al-Ghoul, also a high-ranking member of Hamas' military wing, is considered a bomb-making expert.

As the first car entered Salah al-Din street, an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship fired a missile, penetrating the rear windshield and killing Bilal instantly. The other car turned around and the passengers immediately ran into a nearby olive grove to seek cover before their car was destroyed by a barrage of three missiles. Immediately after the incident, the PNA placed responsibility for the assassination on Israel and for the attempted assassination of Yihya al-Ghoul and his associates. Israeli security forces confirmed that Yihya al-Ghoul was the main target, and that they were unsure if al-Deyf had been present.¹⁵ Minister of Defence Binyamin Ben Eliezer later ordered an investigation behind the failure to investigate the failed assassination.¹⁶

- **27 August 2001: Mustafa Ali Zabri (Abu Ali Mustafa),**
62, from Jenin

Abu Ali Mustafa's death marked a major turning point in Israel's assassination policy. As Secretary-General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Abu Ali Mustafa was one of the most prominent Palestinian political leaders, and the first political activist of such high rank to be targeted since the start of the al-Aqsa Intifada. According to information obtained by PCHR, at approximately 11.15, an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship fired two missiles at Abu Ali Mustafa's office. The missiles destroyed his office, located on the third floor of an apartment building near the offices of the governorate of al-Bireh. One of these missiles slammed through the window of the office from the east and exploded inside his office, killing him. The second missile came

¹⁵ *al-Quds*, 24 August 2001, quoted from *Ha'aretz*.

¹⁶ *al-Hayat*, 24 August 2001.

through the northern window. Six Palestinians living in the building, including two women, were injured:

1. Aaqid Ahmad Mohammed Salah, 32, from Nablus, a director in the office, injured in the neck
2. Rayd Rashid Batat, 23, from al-Dughriya, Hebron, a worker in the office, injured in the head
3. Mayen Abdu Nasrallah, 31, from Ramallah, an administrative worker in the office, injured in the left leg
4. Ahmed Salim Massaid, 28, from Nablus, an administrative worker in the office, injured in the right foot
5. Zahra Hamid Ali al-Suleh, 52, from al-Bireh, living in the building, injured in the abdomen
6. Nada 'Emad al-Suleh, 19, from al-Bireh, living in the building, injured in the neck and left arm

Palestinian security sources claimed that an Israeli helicopter had been flying in the area at the time and believed it had carried out the attack. In a press release issued that day, PCHR strongly condemned the killing and considered it, as well as the overall assassination policy, a clear violation of international humanitarian law. The Centre reiterated its call for the international community to immediately intervene to prevent further deterioration of the area and to secure protection for the civilian population.

- **6 September 2001: Omar Mahmoud Subah,**
22, from Tulkarm;

Mustafa Ahid Ambas,
from Tulkarm

At approximately 12.20, two Israeli Apache helicopter gunships fired three missiles at two cars driving near the eastern entrance of Tulkarm city. Omar Subah and Mustafa Ambas were inside the first, and Rayd Mohammed Said al-Karmi, 26, from Tulkarm and Hazim Wa'il Subhi Hatab, 20, from Tulkarm were in the car behind it. The four are well-known members of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, a militia associated with Fateh. Two missiles hit the first car, killing Subah and Ambas. The other missile missed the second car and hit the street. The two inside the second car managed to escape, although they were injured. Three civilian bystanders were also injured:

1. Saher Naim Hussein al-Zoghel, 31, from Tulkarm, injured in the face and abdomen
2. Malik Zuhdi Salim Yassin, 59, from Tulkarm, injured in the left hand and face and back
3. Riyaaq Zuhdi al-Masri, 55, from Nablus, injured throughout the body

- **12 September 2001: Sufiyan Ahmad Tawfiq al-Ardah,**
28, from Arrabeh, Jenin;

Wa'el Mutlaq Assef,
20, from Arrabeh, Jenin;

Asaad Abdul Rahman Abu Daqa,
25, from 'Atil, Tulkarm

At approximately 05.00, Israeli tanks invaded Arrabeh village near Jenin. The occupying forces arrived at the house of Sufiyan al-Ardah, a well-known Islamic Jihad activist. Al-Ardah was on the second floor with his colleagues Assef and Abu Daqa when the soldiers opened fire on the house, killing all three men. Israeli occupation forces did not allow al-Ardah's relatives to offer him any medical assistance and prevented ambulances from evacuating him. Two other people who went to the house to offer help were injured: Naim Izz al-Din, 28 and Ahmad Al-Ardah, 21.

Failed Assassination Attempts 29 April-28 September 2001

- **3 June 2001: Mohammed Ahmed Bisharat,**
27, Tamoun, from Jenin

Bisharat survived an assassination attempt by Israeli occupation forces while driving through Tamoun village. A roadside bomb exploded nearby, but Tamoun was not hurt. Eyewitnesses said that an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship was flying in the vicinity when the bomb was detonated. The PNA blamed Israel for the attack but Israeli sources denied any responsibility.¹⁷ Bisharat was later killed in an attack by an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship on 1 July 2001.

- **11 June 2001: ‘Emad Mahmoud Abu Diyab,**
24, from Tulkarm

At 15.00, a bomb exploded in Abu Diyab’s car when he started the engine, 50m from his house. Abu Diyab, an Islamic Jihad activist, was severely injured. A bystander, Mahmoud Abu Sayat, 19 was injured in the head. Islamic Jihad blamed Israel for the attack.¹⁸

- **20 June 2001: Ahmed Abdullah al-Ma’ani,**
45, from Nablus

Al-Ma’ani, a well-known Fateh activist, was injured when a mobile phone he was holding exploded. Al-Ma’ani, who runs a mobile phone repair shop, was handed the phone by a customer. He was injured throughout the body and moved to Rafida governmental hospital in Nablus, where he was listed as being in stable condition.

- **4 July 2001: Hazim Falah al-Natsh,**
30, from Hebron

al-Natsh was injured while standing in the centre of Hebron by Israeli occupation forces firing with guns equipped with silencers. Al-Natsh was injured in the side and treated at Aliya governmental hospital in Hebron, where he was listed in stable condition after surgery. Al-Natsh is a known Fateh activist in Hebron and had escaped two previous assassinations attempts. He was an ex-prisoner and was under Israeli surveillance for

¹⁷ *al-Ayyam*, 4 June 2001.

¹⁸ *al-Ayyam*, 12 June 2001.

conducting armed operations against soldiers and settlers in Hebron. Israeli Army Radio said that there had been a failed attempt to kill an important Fateh activist.¹⁹

- **6 July 2001: Sharif Omar Aqnibi,**
25, from Hebron

Aqnibi was injured in the back by an Israeli sniper while in a street standing in the centre of the city. He was evacuated to hospital. Fateh blamed Israel for the attack, mentioning that Aqnibi was a field leader for Fateh in Hebron and said that he was targeted as part of a deliberate plan to eliminate Palestinian activists.²⁰

- **22 July 2001: Ibrahim Hassan Ali Jaber,**
39, from Jenin

At 22.00 an explosion occurred on the ground floor of Jaber's house. Jaber, a Hamas activist, was not injured. According to information received by the Centre, he was with his family outside the house when the explosion occurred in the bathroom. No one was injured, but the bathroom was destroyed and set the ground floor on fire.

- **4 August 2001: Muhannad Munib Abu al-Halawa,**
23, from Ramallah

At approximately 14.25, Israeli occupation forces fired two missiles at a convoy of cars accompanying Marwan Barghouti, the secretary general of Fateh in the West Bank and member of the Palestinian Legislative Council. One of the cars accompanying him was hit and the driver, al-Halawa, was injured in the face and chest. Omar Saleh 'Eissa, 70, was injured in the right hand and legs and other bystanders suffered superficial injuries. The convoy had just left Fateh headquarters in al-Bireh; when it was approximately 150m from the office, a projectile was fired from at one of the cars, missing it. Abu al-Halawa was able to escape from the car before a second shell or missile hit the car and completely destroyed it.

It is unclear as to whether the attack was carried out by helicopter, from a tank, or by some other means. Media sources stated that an Apache helicopter gunship fired the missile but LAW affirms that it was fired from nearby Psagot settlement, to the east of al-Bireh and 1km from the site of the attack. Israeli Army Radio quoted Israeli sources saying that the attack on the car was not targeting Barghouti but Abu al-Halawa, who is a

¹⁹ *al-Ayyam*, 5 July 2001.

²⁰ *al-Ayyam*, 7 July 2001.

Fateh activist wanted by Israel for killing 8 Israelis. His name was included in the list of wanted militants presented by Israel to the PNA for arrest.²¹

- **17 August 2001: Shahir Munjid al-Qani,**
35, from Nablus

al-Qani survived an assassination attempt while he was driving his car on the road leading to Jerusalem from Nablus, near Kofar Kalil village. Soldiers at an Israeli military installation on Mt. Atour opened fire on him, causing the car to spin out of control and flip over. Al-Qani, a known Fateh activist, was injured throughout the body.²²

- **17 August 2001: Ahmed Mustafa al-Bisharat,**
26, from Tammoun, Jenin

al-Bisharat survived an assassination attempt by Israeli undercover units in the centre of the city. They opened fire on him and injured him with three bullets in the arm, chest, and right leg near his house. Al-Basharat managed to return fire, and upon the arrival of other armed Palestinians, the attackers fled.²³

- **23 August 2001: Jihad Abdullah al-Masimi,**
46, from Balata camp, Nablus

At 10.00, an Apache helicopter gunship fired a missile at al-Masimi, a brigadier in the PNA security services, while he was riding in his car near the offices of the Ministry of religious Affairs in Nablus. The missile hit the front of the car. Masimi and a passenger escaped before a second missile exploded nearby. Al-Masimi was seriously injured in his left leg while his companion Saber al-Masimi, 30, was injured in the head and arm. Another bystander, Ghazi Aqubeh, 45, who worked at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, was injured in the left leg. Israeli Radio claimed that al-Masimi was responsible for a number of attacks against Israeli soldiers and settlers and that he was part of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade. It also accused him of planning a military operation in Nablus and that the attack was intended to prevent this.²⁴ The Israeli Prime Minister ordered an investigation into why the attempt failed.

²¹ *al-Quds*, 5 August 2001.

²² *al-Hayat*, 18 August 2001.

²³ *al-Hayat*, 19 August 2001.

²⁴ *al-Quds*, 24 August 2001.

Assassination Operations Claimed by Israeli occupying forces in the OPT, 29 September 2000-28 September 2001

Number	Date	Place	Victims				Notes
			Name ¹	Age	Residence	Wound	
1	9.11.2000	Beit Sahour	1. Hussein Mohammed Abayet 2. Aziza Hussein Danoun Jabran 3. Rahmi Rashid Shubiyat	37 52 50	Bethlehem Beit Sahour Beit Sahour	Shrapnel in head Shrapnel in body Shrapnel in body	Two helicopter gunships fired three missiles at a car, killing an activist inside and 2 bystanders; 9 others injured
2	22.11.2000	Rafah	4. Jamal Abdel Qadir Abdel Raziq 5. Aouni Ismail al-Dhir 6. Na'el Salim al-Litdawi 7. Sami Naser Abu Laban	30 38 22 29	Rafah Rafah Rafah Sheikh Radwan (Gaza city)	Bullets throughout body (all)	Soldiers at a checkpoint near Rafah fired at two cars stopped by tanks on the road; driver of the second car was lightly wounded, arrested, and released the same day
3	23.11.2000	Nablus	8. Ibrahim Abdel Karim Bani Oudeh	34	Tammoun	Shrapnel in head	Remote-controlled bomb in the headrest of the seat of his car
4	11.12.2000	Nablus	9. Anwar Mohammed Humran	28	Arraba	Bullets throughout body	Shot by soldiers shooting from an outpost 500m away while exiting al-Quds Open University
5	12.12.2000	Al-Khader (Bethlehem)	10. Yusef Ahmad Abu Suwi	28	Al-Khader	Bullets throughout body	Shot while standing near his house
6	13.12.2000	Hebron	11. Abbas Etwan Othman al-Aywiwi	26	Hebron	3 bullets in head, neck, and chest	Shot by soldiers stationed in Hebron while he was walking near a military outpost

¹ Boldfaced names are targeted individuals

7	14.12.2000	Deir al-Balah	12. Hani Hussein Abu Bakra 13. Abdullah Eissa Abu Qanan	32 40	Rafah Khan Yunis	Bullets in head, neck, chest Bullets in neck and stomach	Israeli soldiers at a checkpoint near Deir al-Balah shot at Abu Bakra while he was driving a taxi; 3 others injured, including Abu Qanan, who died later
8	14.12.2000	Nablus	14. Said Ibrahim Kharuf	32	Nablus	2 bullets in left thigh, hand	Israeli undercover unit ambushed him while he was driving his car; they denied him medical treatment after he was wounded
9	31.12.2000	Tulkarm	15. Thabet Ahmed Thabet	49	Tulkarm	6 bullets chest, back, hand	Israeli forces fired at him from military vehicles while he was outside his home, near the green line
10	13.2.2001	Jabalya	16. Massoud Hassan Ayyad	57	Al-Zaytoun (Gaza city)	Shrapnel in head	Helicopter-launched missiles hit his car while he was on his way to work near Jabalya
11	19.2.2001	Nablus	17. Mahmoud Suleiman al-Madani	25	Balata camp (Nablus)	Bullets in stomach, chest, shoulders	Killed at close range by an Israeli commando unit while he was exiting a mosque
12	2.4.2001	Rafah	18. Mohammed Atwa Abdel-'Aal	26	Rafah	Burns throughout body	Two helicopter gunships fired two missiles at his car while driving in al-Brazil neighbourhood
13	5.4.2001	Jenin	19. Eyad Mohammed al-Hardan	26	Arraba	Shrapnel in head	Explosion in telephone cabin near governorate building in Jenin
14	12.4.2001	Ramallah					Nasser Abu Humeid, 32, from al-Amari camp in Ramallah survived when his car exploded five minutes after he exited it near Preventative Security office; he has suspected that explosives had been placed inside after he received it as a present from a suspected collaborator

15	25.4.2001	Hebron					Wa'el Sharif, 40, from Hebron was fired by Israeli forces, who instead injured one of his companions; he is a Fateh activist and director of Fateh office in Hebron
16	5.5.2001	Arqas, Bethlehem	20. Ahmed Khalil Assad	38	Arqas, Bethlehem	Bullets throughout body	Shot by soldiers stationed in a military outpost located 150m from the village while accompanied by his nephew, Alaa, who was injured
17	12.5.2001	Jenin	21. Mutassam Mohammed Sabagh 22. Aalam Nasri Al-Janudi	28 26	Jenin camp Fagua neighbourhood, Jenin	Shrapnel throughout body Shrapnel in head	Two helicopters fired at a car while it was driving in the city
18	3.6.2001	Jenin					Mohammed Ahmed Bisharat, 28, from Tamoun, an Islamic Jihad activist, survived an explosion on the road near the village as he was passing in his car
19	11.6.2001	Tulkarm					Emad Mahmoud Abu Diyab was in his car when it exploded; severely injured by shrapnel in head and chest
20	20.6.2001	Nablus					Ahmad Abdullah al-Ma'ani, 45, was injured when the mobile phone he was holding exploded in his shop
21	24.6.2001	Nablus	23. Osama Fatih Jawabra	29	Nablus	Shrapnel in head	Explosion in telephone booth he was using; 2 children nearby wounded

22	1.7.2001	Tammoun	24. Mohammed Ahmad Bisharat 25. Walid Rasmi Bisharat 26. Sameh Noori Hanish	28 20 22	Tammoun Tammoun Beit Dujin (Nablus)	Burns (all)	Their car was hit by missiles from an Israeli helicopter between Tammoun and Jenin
23	4.7.2001	Hebron					Snipers in a military outpost in the centre of Hebron fired with silenced guns at Hazem Falah al-Natsh, who was injured in the side
24	6.7.2001	Hebron					Israeli forces in a military outpost in the centre of the city fired at Sharif Omar Aqnibi, 25, injuring him in the back
25	13.7.2001	Deir al-Ghassoun	27. Fawaz Bashir Badran	27	Deir al-Ghassoun (Tulkarm)	Burns throughout body	Bomb exploded in a car while he was walking
26	17.7.2001	Arqas (Bethlehem)	28. Omar Ahmad Sa'adeh 29. Izhak Ahmad Sad 30. Mohammed Saleh Sa'adeh 31. Taha Eissa al-Aruj	45 51 29 37	Arqas (all)	Burns throughout body (all)	House bombarded by helicopters while they were waiting for relatives to return from prison; 10 civilians injured
27	22.7.2001	Jenin					A bomb exploded in a bathroom in the house of Ibrahim Hassan Ali Jaber, 39; no injuries reported
28	23.7.2001	Anin (Jenin)	32. Mustafa Yusuf Yassin	26	Anin (Jenin)	2 bullets in chest	Shot by Israeli undercover unit after hearing suspicious noises outside house
29	25.7.2001	Nablus	33. Salah al-Nouradin Darouza	38	Balata	Shrapnel throughout body	Car hit by missiles launched by Israeli helicopters

30	31.7.2001	Nablus	34. Jamal Abdel Rahman Mansour 35. Jamal Salim Damouni 36. Mohammed Abdel Karim al-Bishawi 37. Othman Abdul Qadir Qathnani 38. Omar Mansour Mansour 39. Fahim Ibrahim Dawabsha 40. Bilal Abdel Minam Abu Khader 41. Ashraf Abdel Minam Abu Khader	41 42 28 25 28 32 8 5	Balata Ein Beitma Balata Askar Balata Nablus Jenin Jenin	Shrapnel throughout body (all)	Israeli helicopter gunship fired a missile at the Palestinian Centre for Studies, killing two targeted Hamas activists while they were being interviewed by a local journalist. The missile destroyed the office and killed 6 bystanders, including 2 children outside; 3 other bystanders were injured
31	4.8.2001	Ramallah					Muhammed Said Abu Halawa, 22, wounded by a missile fired at his car; another civilian nearby injured
32	5.8.2001	Tulkarm	42. Aamer Mansour Hudairy	22	Tulkarm	Burns throughout body	2 helicopters fired 2 missiles at his car; 3 civilians injured
33	13.8.2001	Ramallah	43. Nasser Ismail Zaydiah	22	Qalandya	Bullets in the left shoulder	Fired at by soldiers at a checkpoint while he was passing through
34	15.8.2001	Hebron	44. 'Emad Suleiman Abu Sneineh	27	Hebron	5 bullets in head, chest, leg	Israeli commando unit fired at him from close range while he was on his way home
35	17.8.2001	Kufor Kalil (Nablus)					Shahir Munjid al-Qani, 35, was fired upon by Israeli soldiers; he took evasive action with his car, running it off the road and suffering injuries

36	18.8.2001	Tammoun					Israeli undercover units fired at Ahmed Fateh Bisharat, 27, while he was leaving his house; he returned fire and was injured by two bullets in the shoulder and leg
37	22.8.2001	Al-Bureij	45. Bilal Yihya al-Ghoul	19	Al-Mughraqa	Burns throughout body	Helicopter gunships fired missiles at his car and that of his father, a senior Hamas activist wanted by Israel; his father was unhurt, but one of his companions was injured
38	23.8.2001	Nablus					Helicopter gunship fired missiles at car of Jihad Abdullah al-Masimi, 46, a brigadier in the PNA security services, while he was driving near Ministry of Religion; he and two others were injured by shrapnel
39	27.8.2001	Al-Bireh	46. Mustafa Ali Zabari (Abu Ali Mustafa)	62	Arraba (Jenin)	Burns throughout body	Helicopter gunships fired missiles at his office while he was inside; 6 others injured
40	6.9.2001	Tulkarm	47. Omar Mahmoud Subah 48. Mustafa Ahid Amba	22	Tulkarm Tulkarm	Shrapnel throughout body	Killed by missiles fired from helicopter gunships; 2 were Fateh activists; 2 other Fateh activists and 3 bystanders injured
41	12.9.2001	Arraba	49. Sufiyan Ahmad Tawfiq al-Ardah 50. Wa'el Mutlaq Assef 51. Asaad Abdul Rahman Abu Daqa	28 20 25	Arraba Araba 'Atil (Tulkarm)	Bullets (all)	Killed by Israeli soldiers during an incursion into Arraba that targeted al-Ardah's house