

Palestine Chronology

2001

JANUARY

Jan. 1: At the last minute, Israel has signed the treaty to establish an international war crimes court, after Pres. Clinton also instructed US representatives to sign the treaty and promised Israel that its interests would not be harmed.

- Israeli forces close Gaza International Airport and Al-Karama Crossing between the West Bank and Jordan, completely preventing the travel of Palestinians abroad.

Jan. 2: Israeli forces fire artillery shells and bullets at Palestinian residential areas in Hebron, causing severe damage to houses.

- Arafat-Clinton talks begin in the US in a bid to achieve a peace deal prior to Clinton leaving office. Afterwards, Arafat says Clinton's proposals could serve as "parameters" for resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (rather than the earlier PA decision to reject them).

Jan. 3: PM candidate Ariel Sharon vows he will not dismantle any settlement in the WBGS if elected.

Jan. 4: Arafat is in Cairo to attend a meeting of the Arab League Monitoring Committee, which will discuss the Clinton proposals. At the close of the meeting, the chairman - Egypt's FM Amr Musa - says the ministers considered the right of the Palestinian refugees to return to Israel to be "sacred."

- Beit El settlers occupy an outpost on the Jerusalem-Ramallah road, stating they will not move until the IDF takes over the site.

Jan. 7: In Cairo, a security coordination meeting takes place with representatives from the US (CIA head George Tenet), Israel (GSS Chief Avi Dichter and Amnon Lipkin-Shahak) and the PA (Preventive Security Service heads Mohammed Dahlan and Col. Jibril Rajoub, and Amin al-Hindi, Head of General Intelligence Services).

- PA Information Min. Yasser Abed Rabbo declares Clinton's proposals "cancelled" saying the Palestinians will not sign "for the sake of Ehud Barak's re-election campaign."

Jan. 11: Mohammed Basiouni, currently recalled Egyptian Amb. to Israel, says in an interview with AP that if Ariel Sharon was elected PM, a Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement would not be reached before 20 years

Jan. 12: In Hebron, Israeli soldiers kill Shaker Hassouneh, 23, then drag his body while rejoicing until they disappearing into the Bet Hadassah settler compound. The scene was captured by a cameraman and shocked TV watchers all over the world.

Jan. 13: PA state security court in Gaza founds Majdi Makawi from Rafah guilty for aiding Israel in the killing of Fateh leader Jamal Abdel Razek and the court in Nablus charges Alam Bani Odeh from Jenin for assisting in the killing of his cousin Ibrahim Bani Odeh. Both men are sentenced to death and executed by firing squads and hanging respectively.

Jan. 15: Israelis close Gaza's border with Egypt and the airport, ban all trade through the Karni crossing and cuts off electricity and water supplies to Khan Younis. Hundreds of settlers rampage, torching Palestinian greenhouses, destroying trees and irrigation.

Jan. 17: Three masked men shot dead the head of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation, Hisham Mikki, 54, in a hotel in Gaza. The "anti-corruption" unit of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade claims responsibility, saying PA Chairman Arafat had failed to punish corrupt officials.

- An Israeli youth, 16, from Ashqelon is found murdered in Ramallah. It is later revealed that he had been lured by a Palestinian girl, he knew from the internet to Ramallah, where he was ambushed by a number of Palestinians

Jan. 21: Two Israeli courts issue two sentences, one for a Jewish settler Nahum Korman to 6 months community service and a 70,000 NIS fine for the beating to death of 11 year-old Hilmi Shushah from Husan, the other for a 17-year old Su'ad Ghazal from Sebastia to 6 ½ years for trying to stab a Jewish settler.

- Israel and the PA begin marathon talks at Taba aimed at reaching a final status agreement before the 6 Feb. elections for prime minister. The talks continue for a week before ending with no agreement.

Jan. 24: In Tulkarem, Israelis Etgar Zeituni and Mordechai Dayan, restaurant owners from Tel Aviv, are shot and killed after coming to buy plants and plant pots in the city. Israel suspends talks in Taba in response.

Jan. 25: Sharon confidants - his son Omri, atty. Dov Weissglass and former FM dir.-gen. Eitan Ben-Tzur - meet with Arafat advisor Khaled Salam (Mohammed Rashid) in Vienna.

Jan. 27: The Taba talks conclude without reaching an agreement.

Jan. 30: PM Barak presents ways for the implementation of a unilateral separation plan from the Palestinians in the event that the peace talks fail to reach an agreement.

Jan. 31: The IDF announces plans to distribute maps to settlers demarcating roads on which travel forbidden due to violence, roads that are officially open but require special security coordination, and roads open to travel.

FEBRUARY

Feb. 1: The IDF imposes a ban on private Palestinian cars traveling on roads controlled by Israel in the Etzion bloc.

Feb. 4: The IDF announces that more vehicles will be stationed on the roads in the West Bank. All entrances and exits to Palestinian cities will be "encircled" and Palestinians will only be permitted to travel by public transportation. All dirt roads used to by pass closed roads will be off limits.

- The IDF destroys six Palestinian homes near the Karni crossing in Gaza in an effort to prevent shootings at Israeli targets.

Feb. 6: Ariel Sharon defeats Ehud Barak in the election for PM of Israel.

Feb. 9: Barak informs Pres. George W. Bush that "nothing is agreed until it's all agreed," asserting that concessions he made during negotiations with PA Pres. Arafat do not commit PM-elect Sharon to the same.

Feb. 12: A Fateh activist declares, "the settlements that Sharon spent his life building at the expense of Palestinian land will be turned into hell and fire. The downfall of Sharon and his settlements is our goal and the goal of our bullets and our resistance."

Feb. 13: In Gaza, Israeli forces assassinate Force 17-member Masoud Ayyad with missiles shot from a helicopter at the car he was driving in. Six passers-by are wounded in the attack. In the evening, Khan Younis is bombed, leaving over 120 Palestinians wounded.

Feb. 14: 8 people are killed and 21 injured in Azur south of Tel Aviv when Gaza bus driver Khalil Abu Olbeh transporting Palestinian workers rams his bus into a packed bus stop. Israel imposes a complete closure on the WBGS.

Feb. 17: UN special envoy Terje Larsen warns that the PA institutions may soon collapse due to the closure, which would lead to chaos in the Palestinian territories.

Feb. 21: Human Rights Watch accuses the Israeli military of using indiscriminate force in response to Palestinian gunfire, causing excessive civilian casualties, and calls on Israel to prosecute or discipline responsible soldiers.

- The Fateh Supreme Council calls for an end to firing on Israeli targets from residential Palestinian areas, stating the firing "gives the IDF an excuse to open fire with machine guns and tanks into Palestinian neighborhoods."

Feb. 26: A Yesha Council spokesman states "Arafat is an enemy... After seven years of war and him sending his own people to kill, we need to assassinate him."

MARCH

March 1: A car bomb explosion near the Mei Ami junction in Wadi Ara near Afula kills one Israeli and injures nine others. A Palestinian group calling itself the 'Return Brigades' takes responsibility.

- In the Ramallah district, settlers confiscate over 4,000 dunums of agricultural land owned by villagers from Sinjil.

March 2: The Israeli Army digs deep trenches around Jericho, turning it into an isolated prison.

- US Amb. Martin Indyk says the Palestinian economy is on the brink of collapse and the PA about to disintegrate, both of which bears a risk of "an even bigger explosion."

March 6: In a farewell statement to the Gen. Staff, Barak states that any kind of separation will entail abandoning isolated settlements.

March 7: Within the frame of tightening closure measures on Palestinian villages and towns, Israeli forces block the Birzeit-Ramallah road with ditches and sand barriers and completely cut off villages west of Al-Bireh.

March 8: Marwan Barghouti, head of Fateh in the West Bank, states, "If [Israel] want[s] occupation and settlements, they can't have security."

March 11: Hebron settlers celebrate the 1994 massacre of 29 Palestinians in the Ibrahimi Mosque, vandalizing property and pelting Palestinians with stones and bottles.

March 12: *Yediot Ahoronot* reports the approval of new army tactics in the West Bank, incl. the division of the West Bank into 60 cells, each receiving individual treatment according to local events, and the detachment of rural from urban areas, segregation of the big cities, and entry into Areas A for combat operations, incl. the use of tanks.

- Peace Now Dir. Moria Shlomot: "The day will come when we'll have to explain to our children why the State of Israel starved a whole civilian population and how the army of a people who experienced the ghettos cut off entire villages with ditches and barbed wire. Any rational person understands that this measure will not improve security. Determined terrorists will cross any obstacle, but the despair caused by poverty and starvation will only serve to push more and more people into the hands of Islamic fundamentalists. Sharon's assistants, Benjamin Ben Eliezer and Shimon Peres, will never shake off the permanent stain caused by a policy whose only purpose is to appease the settlers."

March 14: Arab League Sec.-Gen. Ismat Abdel Majid has sent a letter to UN Gen.-Sec. Kofi Annan and the UNSC requesting the establishment of an international protection force for the Palestinians.

March 20: A fact-finding committee into Israeli-Palestinian violence, led by former US Senator George Mitchell, arrives in the region for talks with officials.

March 21: The Bush Admin. ends the CIA's role as broker between Israeli and Palestinian security services.

March 26: The collapse of an Israeli irrigation water reservoir at the Nahal Oz Kibbutz floods Palestinian agricultural lands in the northern Gaza Strip, drowning thousands of chicken and other livestock. PA Min. of Environment Yousef Abu Safiya declares the region a "disaster area."

- In Hebron, Palestinian gunmen kill 10-month old settler baby, Shalhevet. The IDF places Hebron under curfew and responds with heavy shelling, injuring over 16 Palestinians. Settlers vandalize Palestinian cars and torch the Waqf office.

March 28: Former GSS head Carmi Gillon, states, "The security situation would not be improved if Abu Sneineh, Beit Jala, or any other places were taken back. Israel would have tens of thousands Palestinians to contend with and control. Similarly, the idea of separation is an impossible mission when you have 200,000 Jews living in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, and a mixed Jewish-Arab population in Jerusalem. It would only become feasible when a decision is reached over Israel's borders."

March 30: In protest marches commemorating the 25th anniversary of Land Day all over the country, Israeli troops kill five Palestinians in Nablus and one in Ramallah with live ammunition and injure over 170.
- Denmark declares a boycott of Israeli settlement products and demands that the EU freeze cooperation agreements with Israel.

APRIL

April 2: Meretz chairman Yossi Sarid states that Jews should be evacuated from Hebron immediately. "People that bite the hand that protects them, the hand of police officers and soldiers, cannot be considered balanced or normal people ... Whoever does not evacuate the Jews from there is bringing danger on himself, not just in the territories, but in the entire region."

-After the funeral of the baby killed on 26 March in Hebron, Sharon declares the Hebron settlement will remain "forever."

April 4: Intense Israeli shelling by air, sea and land, in Khan Younis and Rafah, Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Hebron, Nablus, Tulkarem and Salfit, leave over 70 people injured and many homes destroyed or damaged.

April 5: US State Dept. spokesman Richard Boucher criticizes Israeli settlement policy stating, "Continuing settlement activity by Israel does risk further inflaming of an already volatile situation in the

region. This is provocative and we have consistently encouraged both sides to refrain from provocative acts."

- Sweden, which holds the EU presidency, condemns Israel's settlement policy, stating, "All settlement activities are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to peace."

April 10: On the pretext that shooting came from the area, Israeli forces attack Khan Younis RC and demolish 30 houses, leaving over 500 Palestinians homeless.

April 11: The IDF invades PA-held territory and destroys Palestinian houses and an olive grove in the Khan Younis RC in Gaza, claiming that the area was used to fire mortar shells at settlements.

April 16: According to an Israeli Housing Min. report, most of the housing units constructed in public projects in Givat Ze'ev and Ma'ale Adumim over the past six years remain unsold and empty. Of the 3,470 units offered in Ma'ale Adumim, 1,610 or 47% remain unsold; 790 of the 810 units constructed in Givat Ze'ev remain unsold (97%), and 76% of the housing units offered in Har Homa between 1999-2000 (2,200) remain unsold. According to the Israeli CBS, there are currently 6,130 units under construction in settlements.

- Arafat issues orders to his security forces to stop attacking Israeli settlements with mortars.

April 17: Israel attacks Gaza by sea, land and air and splits it into three sections. IDF Maj.-Gen. Tov Samia says "Quite a large bite was taken out of Area A ... [the goal] is for Arafat to get up in the morning and understand that a strip one kilometer wide and three kilometers long, with all of its bases and Palestinian police stations, has been wiped off the map."

April 18: A resolution adopted by the UN Commission on Human Rights calls for the cessation of settlement expansion. A second resolution calls for Israel to stop imposing its laws and jurisdiction over Syrian citizens in the Golan Heights.

April 23: In a meeting with Gush Katif settlers, Sharon says that "not one home would be dismantled, ...and that every house and community are exactly where they should be and that we must continue to grow."

April 28: Arafat orders his police to end mortar attacks from Palestinian-held territory, for the second time in a month.

April 30: At night, an explosion in a building shakes Ramallah's Ein Misbah area, killing 7-year old Shahid Jamal Barakat and his 4-year old sister Malak, as well as Fateh member Hassan Mohammed Hassan Al Qadi, 27, from Beitunya.

MAY

May 1: Israeli forces shell Palestinian houses and the offices of the PA Min. of Local Governance, the PCBS and the Wafa News Agency in Al-Bireh.

May 2: Settlers from Beit El erect an outpost on the Ofra-Jerusalem road where a settler was killed on May 1. Meretz leaders call on the IDF to evacuate the settlers and dismantle the new outpost.

May 5: Israeli forces assassinate Islamic Jihad activist Ahmed Ismail, 38, while leaving his house in Irtas near Bethlehem, raising the number of extra-judicial assassination since the beginning of the Intifada to 13.

May 6: Yasser Abed Rabbo says that the Palestinian leadership considers the Mitchell Report as a suitable and appropriate base for discussions concerning the current conflict. PM Sharon states that Israel would not accept the settlement freeze recommended by the Commission.

- For the first time since Sept., the Israeli army invades Palestinian-held territory in Beit Jala in retaliation for gunfire on Gilo.

May 7: A four-month-old infant, Iman Mohammed Hejju, is killed in Khan Younis after artillery shell shrapnel hit her.

- Israel Radio reports govt. plans to build five new towns in the northwest section of the Negev Desert to prevent future land swaps with the PA.

May 8: Two Israeli boys are found stoned and stabbed to death in a cave near the Tekoa settlement.

May 10: Israeli Pres. Moshe Katzav states that "there is a huge gap between us [Jews] and our enemies- not just in ability but in morality, culture, sanctity of life, and conscience. They are our neighbors here, but it seems as if at a distance of a few hundred meters away, there are people who don't belong to our continent, to our world, but actually belong to a different galaxy."

May 11: Housing Min. Natan Sharansky, states, "There's no real demand [for new housing]. The construction industry is on the verge of bankruptcy and there's no demand in Ashdod, Carmiel, or Ariel."

May 12: Two Israeli helicopters fire missiles at a Palestinian vehicle in Jenin, targeting a Fateh activist and two PA Gen. Intelligence officers. Mu'tasim As-Sabagh and a transport police officer die in the attack.

May 14: In the early morning, Israeli soldiers fire without any provocation at 6 members of the Palestinian National Security Forces (NSF) from Gaza at their post in Beitunia, near Ramallah, killing five of them, four of whom had been preparing a meal inside their tin makeshift room.

May 15: Israeli troops respond with excessive force to peaceful demonstrations held by Palestinians throughout the WBGS to commemorate the 53rd anniversary of An-Nakba, killing four Palestinians, two in Al-Bireh's Al-Balu' quarter, one in Tulkarem, and one at Beit Hanoun crossing; over 100 are injured.

May 17: Rene Kosirnik, Head of the ICRC delegation in Jerusalem states, "The installation of a population of the occupying power in occupied territory is considered an illegal move, it is a grave breach of [law]. In principle it is a war crime."

May 18: A suicide bomber blows himself up in a shopping mall in Netanya, killing six and wounding over 100. In response Israeli F16 fighter jets launch an air strike on police stations in Nablus and Ramallah. In Nablus, the attack leaves 11 Palestinian police officers dead and 47 injured; in Ramallah's Masyoun area a Force 17 headquarter is targeted, killing one officer, injuring 16. There is international condemnation of Israel's excessive strikes.

May 20: The Mitchell Report, calling for an immediate ceasefire, a freeze on Jewish settlements and more determined action against terrorism by the Palestinian authority, is published.

- In retaliation for gunfire on Psagot, an IDF tank fires shells into the home of PA Preventive Security chief Jibril Rajoub.

May 21: Israeli forces fire heavy and light bullets at Alia Hospital in Hebron.

May 23: Labor Min. Shlomo Benizri recommends in a security cabinet meeting that the first row of Palestinian homes in Beit Jala be destroyed.

- The Knesset upgrades the status of the Atarot industrial area to a frontline community, giving businesses special benefits and their products higher priority ratings.

- UN Middle East envoy Terje Larson states that an Israeli settlement freeze would be "one of the most important confidence-building measures."

May 24: Israeli forces, stationed in and near Gilo, fire missiles and artillery shells at residential areas in Beit Jala and Aida RC inflicting much damage to residential neighborhoods and injuring at least 10 people.

May 26: A Gallup survey published by *Ma'ariv* reveals that most Israelis not only agree to unconditional freezing of settlement construction but to an end to all settlements.

May 28: Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, is quoted by a Spanish daily newspaper as saying that settlement construction, including what Israel refers to as "natural growth", should be put to an end, adding that the size of settlements built are enough to handle the "natural growth".

May 30: Norwegian expert on international law Terje Lund accuses Israel of practicing state-sponsored terrorism and claims that PA Chairman Arafat holds no responsibility for Palestinian terror attacks.

May 30: PA Finance Min. Mohammed Zuhdi Nashashibi confirms that financial losses since the beginning of Intifada amount to \$5 billion.

May 31: Faisal Hussein, PLO Exec. Committee member and in charge of the Jerusalem portfolio, dies suddenly of a heart attack in Kuwait, where he was to participate in a conference against normalization with Israel.

- A settler from Mevo Dotan is killed in a drive-by shooting near Tulkarem. He is the fourth settler killed on West Bank roads within a week. Fellow settlers burn the fields of nearby Palestinian villagers and attack them.

- Settlers from Efrat block the Jerusalem-Gush Etzion highway to Palestinian traffic. Settlers attack Palestinians traveling along the Qalqilya-Nablus road, injuring at least two people and closing the highway.

JUNE

June 1: Sa'id Al-Hawtari, 22, from Qalqilya blows himself up outside a beachside disco near the Tel Aviv dolphinarium, killing 19, and injuring over 80. Having heard the news, hundreds of Israeli demonstrators carrying Israeli flags and racist anti-Arab slogans gather outside Jaffa's Hassan Bek Mosque, trapping over a dozen Palestinians inside the mosque for hours. Pres. Arafat condemns suicide bombing, while

Israel gives Arafat 24 hours to avoid military response by ordering a ceasefire, re-arresting all Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants, and handing over to the Americans all mortars held.

June 3: Israeli authorities ban all private Palestinian vehicles from traveling on Israeli-controlled roads in the occupied territories and set up additional roadblocks around Palestinian villages.

- *Ma'ariv* reports that the Israeli intelligence service, Shabak, has resumed using physical torture while interrogating Palestinian detainees, after receiving permission from the Israeli govt.'s legal advisor.

June 4: Over 40 American citizens of Palestinian origin are denied the right to leave Israel and return home to the US after Israeli security officials cancel their exit visas.

- In the interests of "security," Israel initiates the first steps of "unilateral separation" to divide the West Bank into eight districts. Roadblocks and closures prevent movement between these districts.

- The inhabitants of Al-Khader village near Bethlehem stage a sit in, objecting to the new settlement points established around the village.

- Israeli forces break into Deir Estia village, near Salfeet, destroying water networks and property, while closing the village with additional military checkpoints.

- PA leader Arafat issues orders to his forces and all paramilitary organizations to stop firing at soldiers and settlers in the WBSG and keeping Palestinians away from friction points and preventing bombs and bombers from entering Israel.

- Yesha Council head Benny Kashriel states, "Almost all of Judea and Samaria was built out of struggles with the government, unfortunately; it is strange that our own government, and especially this one, should fight against settling the Land of Israel, but if that's how it is then that's how we'll do it."

June 5: At midnight, the Israeli occupation forces break into Housan village near Bethlehem and arrest two Palestinian civilians, Ramzi Rebhi Hamada, 24, and 'Abdel-Hakim Ismail 'Abdel-Sabour, 19. The two are taken to a military site in "Kfar Etsion" settlement.

June 6: Israeli PM Ariel Sharon describes Arafat as a murderer and pathological liar.

- Israeli DM Benjamin Ben-Eliezer presents a new proposal for defending the 1967 Green Line border zone. Military forces will be stationed on the eastern side of the 1967 Green Line border, and police forces would operate on the western side. An electric fence would also be constructed.

- In Ramallah, EU Middle East envoy Miguel Angel Moratinos tells reporters, "Settlers attacking villages and destroying houses is not the best element to create confidence between the two sides."

June 7: Birzeit University students organize a peaceful march that moves from the university towards an Israeli roadblock near Sarda village at Ramallah-Birzeit road. As soon as the march arrives at the roadblock, Israeli soldiers fire rubber-coated metal bullets at the students, wounding two of them.

- *Yediot Ahronot* publishes a plan prepared by the Israeli army to protect "demarcation line" areas, aimed at preventing Palestinians from sneaking within the 'Green Line.' The plan, to be implemented especially in the area between Tulkarem and Qalqilya, will cost around NIS 2 billion.

June 8: The Arab Labor Organization reports that the Palestinian economy has suffered losses up to US \$5 billion since September 2000.

June 9: UN Sec.-Gen. Kofi Annan declares that a "window of opportunity" exists for progress between Israel and the PA and urges Israel to follow proposals made by the international commission led by former US Senator George Mitchell.

June 10: Israeli authorities, for the first time in many years, prevent Palestinian students detained in Israeli prisons from sitting their Tawjihi exams. Imprisoned students declare an open hunger strike in protest.

June 12: MK Azmi Bishara at a memorial service in Syria marking the first anniversary of Pres. Hafez Al-Assad's death, calls for greater Arab unity in support of the Palestinian struggle for independence, causing a political storm in Israel, which leads to a Knesset vote stripping Bishara of his immunity on 7 Nov. 2001 in order to have him stand trials. Right-wing MK Michael Kleiner says that "in any normal country, they'd put him before a firing squad."

June 18: Pres. Arafat maintains that the "war-crazed" Israeli govt. of Ariel Sharon is not serious about resuming peace talks. "I stress that the ceasefire and any measures, agreements and security meetings can not possibly last if the Israeli side does not take swift measures on the ground."

June 24: Israeli forces assassinate Fateh activist Osama Jawabreh from Nablus when the public phone he is using explodes.

- *Ha'aretz* reports that when asked whether Israel was better off with or without Arafat, Ariel Sharon replies, "If he were not here, it would be easier. Israel should not take steps [against Arafat personally]; it

is not up to us to decide who leads the Palestinians. But more and more of our intelligence people believe he is an obstacle to peace... I think Arafat is an obstacle."

June 27: UN Special Envoy Terje Larsen announces that the Palestinian daily loses stand at more than \$10.5 million.

JULY

July 4: Head of the Palestinian Workers Union, Shaher Sa'd, declares that the closure has resulted in 400,000 unemployed Palestinians.

July 5: UN Sec.-Gen. Kofi Annan urges Israel to end its policy of assassinating Palestinian militants, claiming it violated international law and threatened peace efforts.

July 8: An Israeli special force kidnaps Hamas leader Ayoub Ash-Sha'rawi, 35, in Hebron.

July 12: Fawaz Wajih Badran, 25, from Tulkarem, is assassinated outside his house when a booby-trapped Mitsubishi car explodes.

July 13: Fawaz Bashir, 27, is killed in a car explosion near a Force 17 checkpoint west of Tulkarem.

- The Israel army announces that it will soon hand over to the PA the bodies of two Palestinians taken into Israel two weeks previously from the vicinity of Jenin. The IDF rejects the Palestinian claim that the two were taken alive and later killed, saying they were killed in an exchange of fire.

July 15: Israeli special forces, disguised as vegetable salesmen, kidnap a high-ranking Jihad member Mahmoud Suleiman, 42, from Rakhma village, Bethlehem.

- Palestinian children march in Jenin calling for the end of the imposed military closure and continuous Israeli aggression against Palestinians.

- *Yediot Ahronot* reports that many WBSG settlers are leaving the territories due to the deteriorating situation. Peace Now estimates that some 15,000 settlers have submitted requests to leave.

July 17: In an unprecedented style of political assassination, Israeli forces shell the home of 45-year-old Hamas leader Omar Ahmed Sa'adeh, killing him and three of his friends and family and injuring at least ten others.

July 22: Israeli forces fail in their assassination attempt on Ibrahim Jabr. Missiles damage the first floor of his home in Jenin while he is praying at the local mosque. Hamas's spokesman describes the incident as "an unjustified assassination attempt and a crime against Jabr. He is known only for his social activities in the party and he has absolutely no involvement in military activities".

- Palestinian NGOs Min. Asfour claims that the PA has information, which reveals the involvement of two Israeli ministers, Rehavam Ze'evi and Avigdor Lieberman, with a settler "terrorist organization" responsible for the attack on Palestinians near Hebron which left a 3 month old baby dead.

July 23: In Nablus District, the Israeli army burns hundreds of dunums of olive trees and bulldozes an area of land that is surrounding the bypass road in Qusin-Al Juneid.

July 24: PLC Speaker Ahmad Qrei'a describes previous PM Barak's "generous offers" at the Camp David summit as the greatest lie of the past century.

July 25: Israeli forces assassinate Hamas member Salah Eddin Darwaza, 36, from Nablus, by firing five anti-tank missiles at his car while he is driving within PA territory near Ein Beit Al-Maa' RC.

July 26: Israeli army radio reports that the PM's office has hired a Belgian attorney in order to battle the possible legal consequences of a lawsuit filed in Belgium against Ariel Sharon for responsibility in the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres.

- In response to reports that army Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz and his air force commander, Maj.-Gen. Dan Halutz, could be tried for alleged human rights violations tied to IDF operations in the territories, the Israeli FM has begun "mapping" the criminal justice systems of European countries, trying to identify "problematic states" where prominent officials in the Israeli security services might face legal action because of wide-ranging local authority to prosecute suspected human rights violations.

July 27: Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Israel Meir Lau gives his blessing to IDF liquidations, maintaining that they are justified under Jewish law.

July 31: An Israeli combat helicopter fires three missiles at the Islamic Studies Center run by Jamal Mansour. Four Hamas leaders, two journalists and two young brothers, aged 8 and 10, are killed in the attack. In response, Orthodox Church Archbishop Dr. Atallah Hanna, the Church's spokesperson in Jerusalem and the holy land says, "Israel is practicing ethnic cleansing against our youths and freedom fighters because it wants our people to give up their rights and to kneel." The PA announces a general strike to mourn the victims.

AUGUST

Aug. 2: President Yasser Arafat meets with His Holiness Pope John Paul II at the Pontiff's summer residence, in Castel Gandolfo southeast of Rome.

Aug. 5: An Apache helicopter fires two missiles at a car, blowing it up and immediately killing Hamas student activist Amer Hasan Al-Hudheiri from Tulkarem. The attack also injures three civilians who were present near the car.

Aug. 6: Egyptian FM Ahmed Maher describes the government of PM Sharon as a "gang of assassins."

Aug. 7: Yasser Arafat calls on the US "to move expeditiously to persuade Israel and Mr. Ariel Sharon to stop the killing, the assassination of community leaders and to stop illegal practices, such as demolition of houses and the economic state of siege."

Aug. 10: Israeli F-16 fighter jets fire four air-to-surface missiles at the police headquarters in the At-Tireh suburb of Ramallah, destroying it completely.

Aug. 12: A Palestinian suicide bomber kills himself and wounds 15 people at the Wall Street restaurant in Kiryat Motzkin, north of Haifa.

- Egyptian FM Ahmed Maher blames Israeli policy toward the Palestinians for the Haifa bombing, saying "Israeli policy is what leads to acts such as these."

Aug. 15: 27-year-old Imad Suleiman Abu Sneineh is killed when Israeli Special Forces shoot him as he gets out of his car in Hebron.

Aug. 17: Asserting that American diplomacy has failed to stop the violence, Egypt urges the US to send a monitoring force to try to revive a cease-fire between Israel and the Palestinians.

Aug. 19: In an interview with Yedioth Ahronot, Dep. Israeli Internal Security Min. Gedeon Azra calls for the "liquidation" of relatives of future suicide bombers and demands that suicide bombers should be buried in pig skins.

Aug. 25: Israeli forces, reinforced by tanks and military vehicles, intrude into two areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian National Authority in Rafah. During the incursion Israeli occupation forces fire artillery shells and heavy and medium caliber bullets at Palestinian houses, stores and civilian facilities. Israeli forces also bulldoze the headquarters of the Palestinian National Security Force, NSF, in Rafah and an NSF outpost at a branch of Salah El-Din Street leading to Sofa Crossing, east of Rafah.

Aug. 26: Israeli F-16 and F-15 fighter jets attack the Palestinian police headquarters in Gaza City. Israeli fighter also attack the Palestinian Military Intelligence Service in Deir Al-Balah and the police headquarters in Salfit.

Aug. 27: Israeli forces assassinate PFLP Sec. Gen. Mustafa Zabri, 62, known as Abu Ali Mustafa. Two missiles are fired at his office in Ramallah from a US manufactured Apache helicopter.

Aug. 27: UN Sec.-Gen. Kofi Annan asserts that Israel's assassination of Abu Ali Mustafa has exacerbated the Middle East crisis.

Aug. 30: Pres. Arafat arrives in Durban, South Africa, to take part in the UN anti-Racism conference.

Aug 30: In an interview with *Le Figaro*, French FM Hubert Vedrine blames the US for not getting more involved in the Middle East conflict "given their responsibilities and the exceptional influence they wield on the protagonists of the conflict" and adding "Their wait-and-see policy risks making them look like Pontius Pilate."

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 1: Taysir Khatab, the director of the office of Palestinian Intelligence, is killed when a bomb explodes in his car.

Sept. 2: Israel is branded a "racist apartheid" state by thousands of NGOs meeting in Durban, South Africa at the UN conference on racism. In the opening address UN Sec.-Gen. Kofi Annan, referring to the Middle East conflict, states that Israel cannot use "the ultimate abomination" of the Holocaust from examining its own behavior.

Sept. 3: Israeli PM Ariel Sharon travels to Moscow for discussions. He declares that he intends to ask Russian Pres. Putin to exert pressure on the PA to stop the violence.

Sept. 5: 62 Israeli high-school students express their determined refusal to join the Israeli army in protest against the severe violations of human rights carried out by Israel in the WBSG.

- After meeting with the EU High Commissioner Javier Solana, Pres. Arafat confirms that the PA is against operations that target civilians, Palestinian and Israeli.

Sept. 6: An Israeli military helicopter fires two missiles at a car killing two Palestinian men, and injuring four others. The attack in Tulkaram kills Mustafa Onbas, 19, and Omar Subuh, 21. The alleged 'target' of the extra judicial execution was Ra'ed Al Karmi. He escapes without serious injuries.

- UN Special Envoy Terje Roed Larsen claims that the Israeli closure had a "disastrous effect" on the Palestinian economy, saying that half the Palestinian population would live in poverty by the end of 2001.

Sept. 7: A Belgian court suspends its war crimes investigation into Israeli PM Sharon while an appeals court rules if Belgium has any jurisdiction in the case.

Sept. 8: The UN Conference on Racism adopts a global action plan against racism.

Sept. 10: Israeli forces place a number of new caravans on Palestinian land south and east of 'Kfar Darom' settlement, established on confiscated Palestinian land in Deir Al-Balah.

Sept. 11: Terrorists attack the Pentagon and World Trade Center in Washington and New York. Pres. Arafat expresses shock, maintaining that he is ready to help Washington hunt down those responsible. "It's an unbelievable disaster. It is touching our hearts. It is very difficult to explain my feelings. God help them, God help them."

Sept. 12: Nine Palestinians are killed and dozens others injured during Israeli penetration of and shelling in Jenin. Israeli forces use F-16, F-15, Apache helicopters, tanks and armored vehicles in the attack.

Sept 12: Pres. Arafat participates in a national Palestinian campaign to donate blood at a blood donation center especially established for this purpose in Dar Ash-Shifa Hospital in Gaza.

Sept. 13: Israeli forces destroy underground wells of Hablah village, causing damage of wide areas of cultivated agricultural land.

Sept. 14: Pres. Arafat emphasizes to the Arab League Sec.-Gen. that the Arab nations must join the international coalition against terrorism.

Sept. 22: Israeli PM Ariel Sharon declares in front of representatives of Israeli teachers that Israel is ready to "give" the Palestinians the "possibility" of establishing a Palestinian independent state, saying "Neither the Turks, the English, the Egyptians or the Jordanians gave them such a possibility."

Sept. 27: The US asks Israel to cease demolishing Palestinian homes, end incursions into Palestinian territory and refrain from provocative acts in the WBSG that escalate tension.

Sept. 29: LAW publishes a Special Report on the First Year of the Palestinian Intifada, stating that to date 678 Palestinians have died and 10,596 were injured, while 384 Palestinian homes were demolished and 5103.7 acres of agricultural land destroyed.

OCTOBER

Oct. 8: A student demonstration in protest of US air raids against Afghanistan, Palestinian turns violent when Palestinian police tries to disperse the crowd with tear gas, clubs, and later gunfire, which leaves two demonstrators – aged 19 and 14 – dead, and dozens injured.

Oct. 14: Israeli troops assassinate Hamas member, Abdul Rahman Hammad, 35, from Qalqilya., claiming he was responsible for the suicide attack at the Dolphinarium in Tel Aviv in June.

Oct. 15: Two far-right Israeli cabinet members, Tourism Min. Rehavam Ze'evi and National Infrastructure Min. Avigdor Lieberman, leaders of the ultra-hawkish National Union - Yisrael Beiteinu bloc, announce their resignations from the Sharon govt.

Oct. 16: Hamas activist Iyad Al-Akhras, 28, is killed in a bomb blast at his home in Rafah RC.

- International Solidarity Institution for Human Rights reports that since the beginning of the Intifada, Israel has assassinated 67 Palestinians.

Oct. 19: The Palestinian leadership says that the reoccupation of the cities in the WBSG will lead to destructive repercussions.

- The Bethlehem City Council appeals to the international community, humanitarian organizations and the UN to act urgently in pressuring Israel to halt its aggression against civilians, and to oblige it to withdraw immediately from occupied areas.

Oct. 20: Israeli forces enter Tulkarem and Qalqilya, killing four people in both towns and a fifth in Beit Jala.

- Following his meeting with the Russian envoy to the peace process, André Vidovin, Pres. Arafat claims that Israel is completely disregarding and disrespecting international efforts exerted to save the peace process and push it forward.

Oct. 22: Israel assassinates Hamas activist Ayman Halawa, 26, from Nablus, with a car bomb.

Oct. 24: Israeli forces raid the village of Beit Rima, northwest of Ramallah, allegedly a hiding place for PFLP activists involved in the Ze'evi murder, killing ten Palestinians.

Oct. 25: Wael Abayat, 22, is killed in the shelling of Bethlehem by Israeli forces.

Oct. 25: Salama Ad-Dibis, 38, from Aida RC is shot dead by Israeli forces while standing in front of his house.

Oct. 27: 22 Palestinians have been killed and over 100 injured in one week of Israeli military incursions on Bethlehem.

Oct. 28: Palestinian gunmen kill four Israelis and wound at least 20 others in two drive-by shootings within the Green Line. Islamic Jihad and the Fateh faction claim responsibility.

Oct. 31: *Ma'ariv* reports on a peace proposal by Shimon Peres that recommends the creation of a Palestinian state: Israel would withdraw from Gaza, dismantle all settlements, and each side would manage its own holy sites, while the overall question of Jerusalem would be postponed. Joint security teams would be created and an international committee (UN, EU, US and Russia) would tackle the problem of Palestinian refugees and the payment of compensation.

- Israeli forces assassinate two Hamas activists in separate incidents in the West Bank, Jamil Jadallah and Abdallah Al-Jaroushi.

- A tight military closure continues to be imposed on Qalqilya, Tulkarem, Jenin and Nablus.

- US State Dept. spokesman Richard Boucher renews the US demand that Israel withdraw its forces from all PA-held areas on the West Bank.

NOVEMBER

Nov. 1: Israeli helicopters fire several air-to-surface missiles at a Palestinian taxi near Tulkarem killing Hamas activists Yasser Asida and Fahmi Abu Aisha and injuring three others, which are subsequently abducted.

Nov. 5: The Israeli govt. authorizes the establishment of Be'er Milka, a first settlement in the Halutza dunes - an area in the Negev adjacent to the Egyptian border considered by the Barak govt. for transferral to the Palestinians as land swap.

Nov. 7: The Palestinian High Court of Justice in Gaza orders the immediate release of the PFLP leaders lawyer Younis Al-Jaru and Dr. Rabah Mahanna, arrested on 18 Oct. in the wake of the killing of Israeli Tourism Min. Rehavam Ze'evi

- Pres. Arafat says he will not declare an independent Palestinian state when he addresses the UNGA in New York on 11 Nov., adding "the state has been declared in 1988 in Algiers. Are we going to declare it twice?"

- Switzerland announces that it will call a Geneva Convention Conference on the Middle East conflict for Dec. 2001. Israel's Amb. to the UN in Geneva Ya'akov Levy asserts Israel's opposition to such a conference, saying "This is an attempt to make political gains through the use and abuse of humanitarian instruments."

Nov. 8: Saudi Arabia's FM Saud Al-Faisal, asserts that his govt. is "angrily frustrated" that the Bush admin. has failed to begin a promised new peace initiative in the Middle East and that Bush could not become an "honest broker" until he agrees to meet with PA Pres. Arafat.

- A Palestinian suicide bomber kills himself and injures two Israeli soldiers while both are part of a wider raid on Baqa Al-Sharqiyya.

- The White House announces that Pres. Bush would not meet Arafat at the UN in two days because he does not believe that Arafat is serious about the American-led war on terrorism. National Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice asserts: "There are responsibilities that come with being the representative of the Palestinian people," Rice asserts, "and that means to make certain that you do everything you can to lower the level of violence, everything that you can to root out terrorists. These are responsibilities that we have asked Chairman Arafat to take and to take seriously. We still don't think there has been enough in that regard."

Nov. 11: 'Palestine' enters the US gov't.'s lexicon after Pres. Bush's speech to the UN on 10 Nov., where he says that the US is "working toward the day when two states - Israel and Palestine - live peacefully together within secure and recognized borders as called for by the Security Council resolutions." Previously, US officials have referred to the possibility of a "Palestinian state," but have never called it "Palestine." US Sec. of State Powell says that Bush's use of "Palestine" is deliberate and reflected his policy.

Nov. 14: Sa'eb Erekat dispatches letters to international Middle East Envoys, calling on the international community to intervene immediately in putting an end to Israeli attacks against the Palestinians and to give international efforts a deserved chance, especially now that the world is united in support for an everlasting conclusive peace in the area based on international legitimacy, especially UNSC Res. 242 and 338.

Nov. 18: Whilst Belgium's PM Guy Verhofstadt is touring the Middle East, hoping to revive the peace process, the Belgian TV airs a BBC program detailing Sharon's responsibility for the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres. Under a 1993 law, Belgian courts can receive cases from non-Belgians against any person or leader accused of war crimes or crimes against humanity.

- Meeting with an EU delegation in Jerusalem, PM Sharon refuses to drop his demand for one week of quiet before implementing the Mitchell Report recommendations and repeats his accusation against Pres. Arafat as leading "a coalition of terrorism in cooperation with Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hizbullah, Fateh, Tanzim, and Force 17".

Nov. 19: Sec. of State Powell states that Israel must end its occupation and "accept a viable Palestinian State in which Palestinians can determine their own future on their own land and live in dignity and security."

Nov. 23: The UN Committee Against Torture states that the Israeli gov't.'s house demolition and closure policies "may, in certain instances, amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" in violation of Art. 16 of the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.