

Special Report:

**PMW exposes Abbas' latest deception:
PA salaries to terrorists are not social welfare**

- **12 facts that refute the PA's claim that its payments to terrorists and Martyrs families are social welfare**
- **PA vows to continue paying salaries to terrorists**

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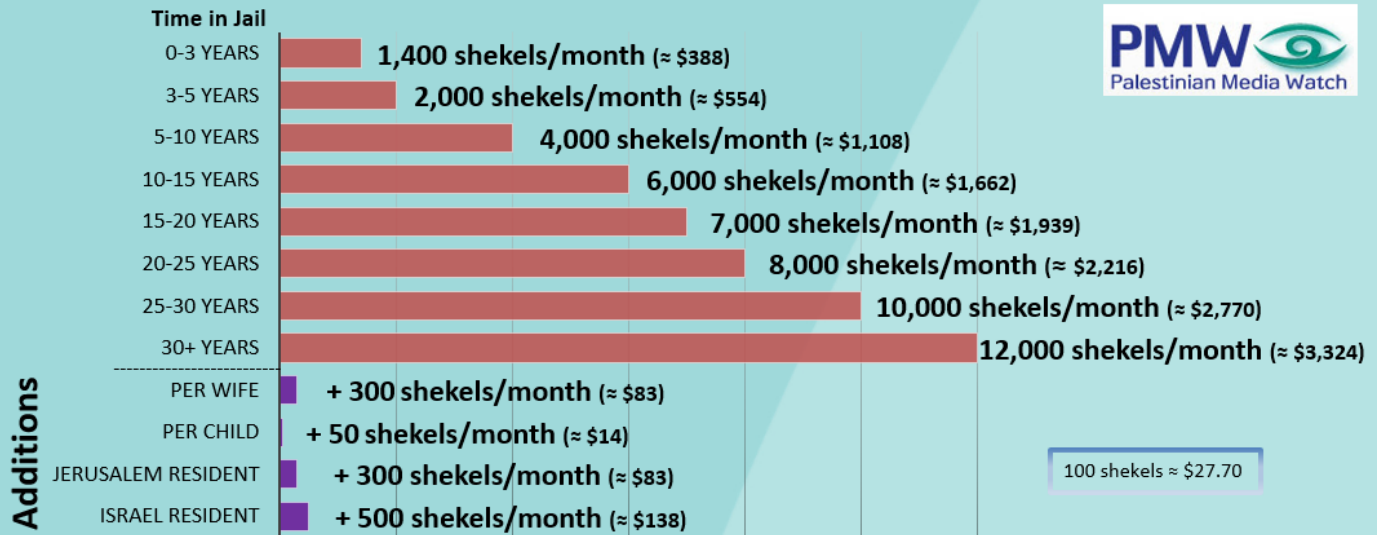
Introduction

Essential facts and figures about PA payments to terrorists and their families

The Palestinian Authority's "Law of the Prisoners" (2004) and subsequent PA regulations grant monthly salaries to all Palestinians arrested for security and terror offenses – acts defined in PA law as "struggle against the occupation." The salaries increase according to the amount of time the terrorist remains in prison, ranging from 1,400 shekels (\$388) to 12,000 shekels (\$3,324)/month. In 2016, the PA budgeted 488 million shekels (\$135 million) for salaries to terrorist prisoners (numbering 6,300, July 2017), as shown in the following chart:

Palestinian Authority Salaries to Terrorist Prisoners

A prisoner's salary increases with jail time

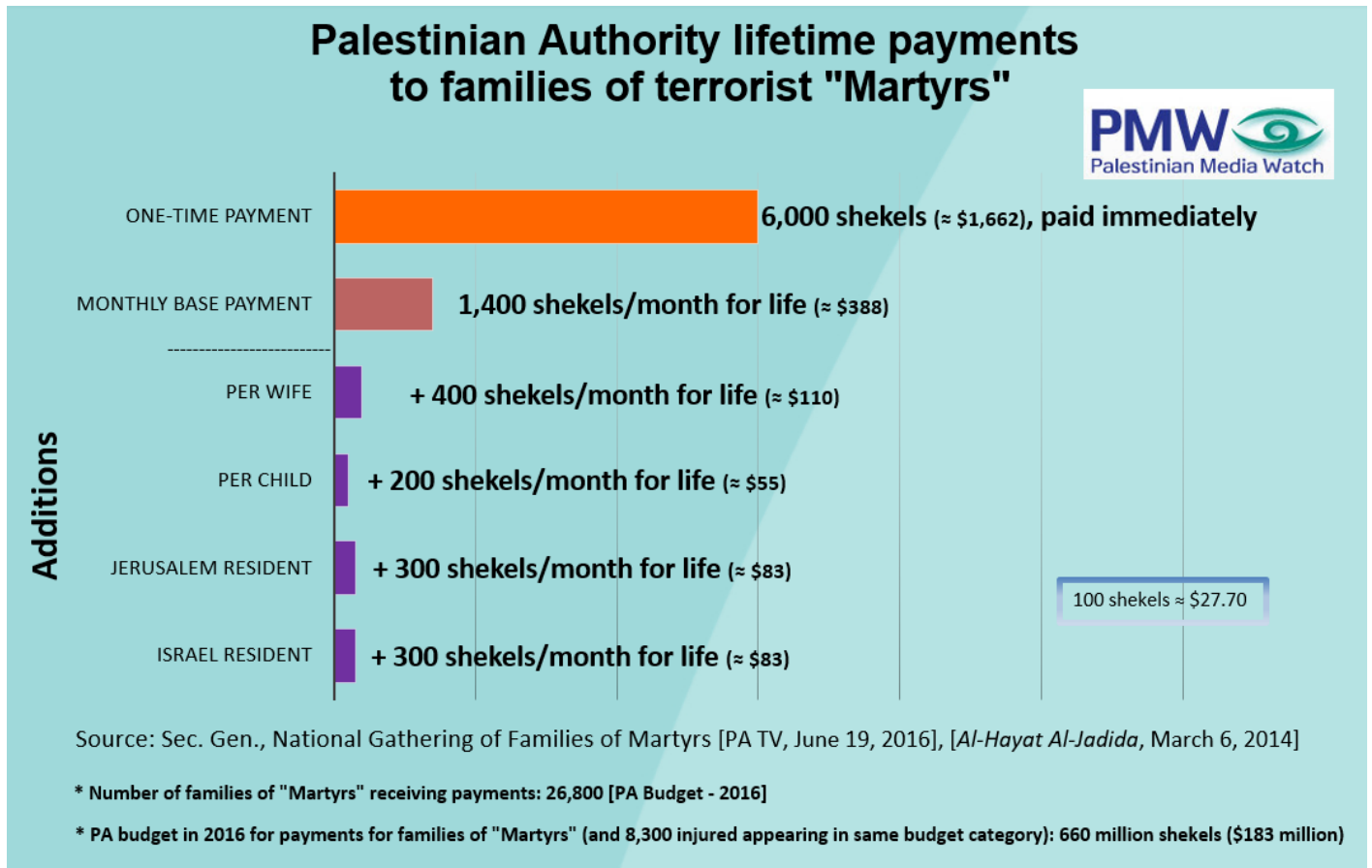


Source: Regulation of Payment of the Monthly Salary to the Prisoner and His Family, No. 18, 2010, still in effect in 2017

* Number of prisoners: 6,300 [PLO Commission of Prisoners' Affairs, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, July 12, 2017]

* PA budget in 2016 for salary payments to prisoners: 488 million shekels (\$135 million)

The PA also pays the families of so-called “Martyrs” a monthly allowance for life. The term “Martyr” includes all terrorists and suicide bombers who were killed while attacking Israelis in addition to others who were killed in confrontations with Israelis. These families receive an immediate one-time payment of 6,000 shekels, and then monthly payments of 1,400 shekels/month plus additions. In 2016, the PA budgeted 660 million shekels (\$183 million) for payments to more than 26,800 families of so-called “Martyrs” (and 8,300 injured, who appear in the same budget category):



PA claim: Salaries are social welfare

As foreign governments pressure PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas and the PA to stop paying salaries to terrorists and their families, the PA has claimed that these payments are not rewards for terror but are social welfare intended to provide families with a means of support in the absence of its primary breadwinner. At the June 2017 Herzliya Conference, Mahmoud Abbas repeated this claim in his speech read by his advisor:

"I'm honored that President Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, the Palestinian Authority, has asked me to read you his speech. So in effect I will be his messenger in delivering his speech to you... **Payments to support families are a social responsibility to look after innocent people affected by the incarceration or killing of their loved ones as a result of the military occupation.**"

[Mahmoud Abbas' speech read by Nabil Shaath, his advisor on Foreign Affairs and International Relations, June 22, 2017]

The PA's use of this claim to foreign audiences to hide the fact that it is rewarding terror is not new. Already in 2012, UK Minister of State Alan Duncan [repeated this PA defense](#) in response to PMW reports exposing the PA's terror rewards.

However, this PMW report documents conclusively that the PA payments to prisoners are salaries and not social welfare for the families. This report will show that it has been ongoing PA policy for many years to define and treat these payments as rewards for terror.

The PA vows to continue paying salaries to terrorists

Despite the growing international pressure on the PA to stop the salaries, PA leaders, including PA Chairman Abbas himself, adamantly vow to continue rewarding terror no matter what.

Part 1: 12 facts that refute the PA's claim that its payments to terrorists are social welfare

1. PA law defines the payments to prisoners as salaries

1. The payments to prisoners are defined by the Palestinian Authority in law "Government resolution # 23 of 2010" as a "salary" – in Arabic *Ratib* (راتب). Nowhere in the PA law do the words "social assistance," "welfare" or related terms appear. Instead, the word "salary" appears repeatedly:

"Government resolution # 23 of 2010 concerning the amendment on payment of a monthly **salary** to the prisoner: Every prisoner will be granted a monthly **salary**... on condition that he does not receive a **salary** from a [different] governmental [body]... The **salary** will be paid to the prisoner from the date of his arrest... The minimum **salary** for a prisoner..."

[Official PA daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, April 15, 2011]

2. PA officials and prisoners' representatives deny that salaries are social welfare and continue to refer to the payments as "salaries"

In 2012, when the international community first put pressure on the PA to stop paying salaries to terrorists, a suggestion was made to rename the payments as "social welfare." Even considering this superficial change, created an outrage among Palestinians. As a result, the PA Minister of Prisoners' Affairs rejected out of hand the proposal to change the "salary" payments to "social welfare":

"Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Issa Karake denied the stories and rumors that the [Palestinian] prisoners' salaries would be changed to social welfare payments.

In a press release Karake clarified that prisoners receive their stipends in accordance with regulations and the law, and their rights are protected so that it is impossible to hurt them. He noted that the government headed by Salam Fayyad considers the prisoners' cause central, and has authorized regulations to support and protect them out of esteem for their sacrifice and struggle."

[Wafa news agency, Dec. 27, 2012, emphasis added]

Chairman of the PA-funded Prisoners' Club Qadura Fares likewise confirmed that the government would not exchange the word "salaries" with any other term:

"[The PA-funded] Prisoners' Club Chairman Qadura Fares said that the government has given final approval for what is stipulated in the Prisoners' and Released [Prisoners'] Law of 2004, **which considers payments made to prisoners 'salaries,' to which no other term applies...**

The Ahrar Center for Prisoners' and Human Rights Research had demanded that President Mahmoud Abbas intervene immediately to reverse the government's decision to replace the term 'prisoner salary' (Arabic: *ratib*) with the term 'prisoner assistance' (Arabic: *i'anat*)."

[*Al-Quds* Internet edition, Dec. 27, 2012, emphasis added]

Until today, the PA continues to use the term “salary” to refer to the monthly payments rewarding terror, and vowed to continue paying them:

"Spokesman for the [PLO] Commission of Prisoners and Released Prisoners' Affairs Hassan Abd Rabbo emphasized to the [independent Palestinian news] agency Ma'an that it is the right of all of the prisoners and Martyrs who have struggled and sacrificed for Palestine to receive their full salaries (*rawatib*) from the PA. He also emphasized that all of their **salaries** are paid by the PLO-affiliated Palestinian National Fund, and not by the Palestinian [PA] government.

'Approximately 7,000 prisoners within the prisons and thousands of released prisoners receive monthly **salaries** of more than 1,400 [Israeli] shekels, in addition to canteen money that the prisoner receives in order to buy food and essentials within the prison,' said Abd Rabbo.

The prisoner's **salary** changes according to the years of imprisonment, social situation, and the number of his family members, as the **salary** of some of the prisoners reaches 10,000 shekels, particularly those who have served more than 10 years of imprisonment.

Abd Rabbo denied that there are clauses in the Oslo Accords signed between the Israeli government and the PLO that forbid providing **salaries** to prisoners and the Martyrs' families.

PLO Executive Committee member [and Secretary-General of the Palestinian Liberation Front] Dr. Wasel Abu Yusuf emphasized that the PA and the Palestinian leadership will not neglect the Martyrs, prisoners, and wounded who have made sacrifices for Palestine and its cause."

[Ma'an, independent Palestinian news agency, April 5, 2017]

3. Prisoners, and not their families, have complete control over the transfer of the salaries

The prisoners have complete control over their salaries through the appointment of a personal representative. *Regulation of Payment of the Monthly Salary to the Prisoner and his Family No. 18, 2010* states that an “authorized agent” or “power of attorney” will be appointed by the prisoner himself to determine the agent to receive his salary on his behalf. The regulation explicitly gives the prisoner the right to designate people other than his wife or parents. Additionally the prisoner has the power to change the representative during his imprisonment. If the PA had wanted this to be a welfare payment for the prisoners' families, it would have given the money directly to the families.

Appointment of an “agent” can be authorized only by the prisoner's signature on a special form. The following are excerpts of the text of the *Regulation of Payment of the Monthly Salary to the Prisoner and his Family No. 18, 2010*:

Paragraph 1

“Authorized agent: The person who is authorized to receive the salary in the name of the prisoner.”

Paragraph 5

“1. If the prisoner is married, his wife will be his authorized agent, unless the prisoner appoints someone else instead of her.”

2. If the prisoner is not married, one of his parents will be the authorized agent. If there is an argument about it, the prisoner will determine which one of them or any other person will be the authorized agent.

3. Authorization of an agent is done by an authorization of agent [form] issued by the Red Cross, that is signed by the prisoner, or by a personal authorization of agent [form] signed by him and approved by a lawyer of the Ministry [of Prisoners' Affairs] and by the General Administration for Legal Matters of the Ministry. The form will be valid only for the Ministry for the purpose of the salary."

[*Regulation of Payment of the Monthly Salary to the Prisoner and his Family No. 18, 2010*, PA Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, <http://freedom.ps/attachments/25-5-2011/02.pdf> accessed Oct. 30, 2012]

PMW has documented this rule in practice. Official PA TV interviewed a prisoner's wife whose husband chose not to transfer his salary to her. She was struggling to support her children as a result. She explained that the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs refused to transfer her any money because it was her husband's salary:

Prisoner's wife: "It's not just me, this problem, many of the prisoners' wives and children suffer from it, from the transfer of his salary, the prisoner's salary... My husband is sentenced [to prison] and I have five children."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "Until when is your husband sentenced? We wish him freedom, Allah willing."

Prisoner's wife: "About eight years. It's already a year I suffer greatly, because he transferred the salary (*Ma'ash*, another word for "salary"), that is the allowance, to his family... I went to the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs and told them my problem. They told me: 'We cannot do anything unless he personally transfers it to you.'"

Prisoners' wife: "A year and a half ago, I went to the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, and to the Prisoners' Club... Their answer was: 'Your husband transfers it to the person he wants. It's in his power not to transfer [it to you] and we can't do anything about it.'"

[Official PA TV, Feb. 17, 2013]



4. Salaries rise based on years spent in prison and not based on financial need

The level of a prisoner's salary is not determined by his family's financial need, but rises as the terrorist spends more time in prison. The longer in prison - reflecting the severity of the crime - the higher the terrorist's salary:

Government resolution # 23 of 2010

"The minimum salary for a prisoner, to be paid to him from the beginning of his detention and for up to 3 years, is 1,400 shekels (\$388). Prisoners who have been imprisoned between 3 and 5 years will receive 2,000 shekels. Those imprisoned between 5 and 10 years will receive 4,000 shekels. Those imprisoned between 10 and 15 years will receive 6,000 shekels. Those imprisoned between 15 and 20 years will receive 7,000 shekels.

Those imprisoned between 20 and 25 years will receive 8,000 shekels. Those imprisoned between 25 and 30 years will receive 10,000 shekels. Those who have been imprisoned 30 years or more will receive 12,000 shekels (\$3,324).”

[Official PA daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, April 15, 2011]

5. Social welfare considerations add only small payments to the base salary

The standard salary payment cited above is not related to the family status of the terrorist prisoner. Single and married terrorists receive the same base salary, with an additional small benefit for married prisoners, and for prisoners with children. This is the only portion that can be seen as a function of social need:

“A supplement of 300 shekels will be added to the salary of every married prisoner, as well as a supplement for children up to the age of 18 in the amount of 50 shekels.”

[Official PA daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, April 15, 2011]

In 2010, nearly two thirds, 62%, of the prisoners were unmarried with no dependents [*Al-Quds*, Jan. 3, 2010], yet they received the same base salaries as married terrorist prisoners.

This division makes it clear that there are really two payments – one is a substantial basic monthly salary, as high as 12,000 shekels (\$3,324) /month, as a reward for terror, and the second, a mere 50 shekels (\$14) per child, is a tiny supplement as social welfare for the family.

6. Salaries to prisoners are treated with the same status as salaries to civil servants

When salary payments were delayed to all civil servants of the PA in 2013, Chairman of the PA-funded Prisoners’ Club Qadura Fares emphasized that prisoners’ salaries are of exactly the same status as civil servants’ salaries:

Chairman of the PA-funded Prisoners’ Club, Qadura Fares:

“What is spent on the prisoners is exactly what is spent on me and you. These are salaries. Therefore, when the salaries are paid to those working in [government] ministries and institutions, they will also be paid to the prisoners.”

[Official PA TV, Jan. 17, 2013]



7. Prisoners pay income tax on their salaries, like all government employees

Another confirmation that the PA views payments to prisoners as government salaries is that income tax is deducted from the prisoners’ salaries, as is standard with all government salaries:

“A meeting was held between the Ministry of Prisoners’ Affairs and the Ministry of Finance. Several issues were clarified: The [withholding] tax applies to every citizen who receives income from the PA treasury; it is within the framework of the Income Tax Act, and begins with salaries over 2,400 shekels per month. The initial rate is 5% for salaries over that amount. The tax rate is graduated, reaching at most only 10% of prisoners’ salaries. The

Minister of Prisoners' Affairs said that the prisoners in the Israeli prisons and their families are subject to the [tax] law."

[Official PA daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, June 19, 2011]

Were these welfare payments, there would be no withholding taxes.

8. Prisoners' salaries are higher than salaries of PA civil servants

In 2011, when the current rates of monthly salaries to prisoners started, the average prisoner salary was higher than the salaries of PA civil servants and military salaries:

"The average salary for a civil servant in the Palestinian Authority is 2,882 shekels...
The average salary for members of the PA military personnel is 2,704 shekels...
The average prisoner salary is 3,129 shekels."

Salary recipients	Average monthly salary
Civil servant	2,882 shekels
Military personnel	2,704 shekels
Prisoner	3,129 shekels

[*Life and the Market*, supplement to official PA daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, June 19, 2011]

Clearly, social welfare payments would not be higher than average government salaries

9. Payments to families of terrorist "Martyrs" are higher than social welfare for those in need

The payments to families of terrorist "Martyrs" are also significantly higher than the PA's actual social welfare payments. Ma'an news agency reported on a case in which the family of a deceased officer of the PA National Security Forces asked Abbas to award them the allowance of a Martyr's family, which is paid by the PLO Families of the Martyrs Institution, instead of the pension awarded to them by the Pension Authority:

Headline: "A family calls on the [PA] president [Abbas] to move its wage earner's salary to the Families of the Martyrs [and Wounded] Institution"

"The family of late Alaa Al-Din Darwish Al-Qabbani (i.e., Fatah member who died of an illness) from the Bureij refugee camp in the center of the Gaza Strip asked [PA] President Mahmoud Abbas to act to move its wage earner's salary (*ratib*) from the [PA] Insurance and Pension [Authority] to the [PLO] Families of the Martyrs [and Wounded] Institution.

The deceased's son Aed Al-Qabbani said that his father worked in the [PA] National Security Forces at the rank of soldier until his death as a result of a medical error, and he left behind a family of ten people, most of whom are children and school students.

The deceased's son Al-Qabbani added: 'We as a grief-stricken family were struck with shock when the [PA] Organization and Administration Bureau in Ramallah determined that our father is a Martyr (*Shahid*) but moved his allowances (*mukhassasat*) to the Insurance and Pension Authority, because the sum of this allowance does not exceed 850 [Israeli] shekels [per month], and does not cover the expenses of a family of 10 people.'

He asked the president to give an order to move his father's salary from the Pension Authority to the Families of the Martyrs Institution."

[Ma'an, independent Palestinian news agency, March 27, 2017]

A Martyr's family is awarded a base payment of 1,400 shekels per month, plus an additional 400 shekels per wife and 200 shekels per child. (See source below.) Thus a family of 10 (presumably consisting of a wife and nine children) receiving the allowance of the family of a "Martyr," would receive at least 3,600 shekels a month -- significantly more than the 850 shekels awarded in pension to the family of a PA National Security Forces officer.

10. Released prisoners continue to receive monthly salaries

Another indication that payments to prisoners are not social welfare is that released prisoners continue to collect PA salaries even though they could work and provide for their families. PA Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Issa Karake estimated in 2012 that about 4,000 former Palestinian prisoners were receiving monthly salaries from the PA government.

TV host: "You speak of a permanent salary for every [released] prisoner who was in prison for more than five years, and he gets his salary while he sits at home. Some of them are in the prime of their lives and could get a job and work. Why not use him in the workforce and give him a salary?"

Minister Issa Karake: "That's right. I presented it to the government and we decided to give preference to employ these prisoners... in order to make the prisoner into a productive person..."

Host: "Do we have the number of prisoners who get full monthly salaries?"

Karake: "About 4,000."

Host: "That's an army."

Karake: "Yes, that's a big number, and it's growing."

Host: "They don't work. They just collect a salary."

Karake: "Some work."

Host: "A small number."

Karake: "Some volunteer and work in different institutions."



[Wattan TV, (Palestinian private channel), Dec. 29, 2012]

If these payments were intended as social welfare to tide families over until their main breadwinners were released from jail, the cash flow would cease once the terrorists were released, or they would instead receive unemployment benefits. The fact that the salaries continue after the terrorist prisoners are released indicates that these salaries are not related to the family's "loss of breadwinner."

11. PA officials openly declare that prisoners receive salaries because they are "heroes"

The PA itself communicates to its people that these payments are rewards for committing terror attacks, and not a function of their family's welfare needs. On official PA TV, PA Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Issa Karake mocked international concerns that foreign aid money was being used to pay terrorists, stating that all Palestinian prisoners are "heroes":

PA Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Issa Karake:

"The Europeans want their money that comes to us to remain clean -- not to go to families of those they claim to be terrorists. [They] need to renounce this occupation mentality. **These [prisoners] are heroes**, *fedayyeen* (self-sacrificing fighters), and fighters who fought so that we could live in dignity... These **heroes**, whom you are applauding, must live in dignity, so that we will continue to hold our heads high. We appreciate the people of the revolution and are proud of them."



[Official Palestine Live TV, Nov. 4, 2013, emphasis added]

A Fatah official confirmed this view:

"Regarding the salaries (*rawatib*) of the Martyrs and prisoners, [Fatah Central Committee member] Dr. [Jamal] Muhaisen emphasized that this **is not a financial matter**, but rather a matter that is connected to the Palestinian historical narrative, according to which the prisoners and Martyrs represent our Palestinian people's struggle."

[Wattan, independent Palestinian news agency, July 2, 2017, emphasis added]

12. Released prisoner demanded undiminished salary because: "I personally killed Jews"

Significantly, the following PA TV interview by phone with a released prisoner is a striking indication that the terrorists themselves understand that they are receiving a PA salary as a reward for committing terror attacks.

Iyad Abu Khaizaran, a member of the Islamic Jihad terror organization, was sentenced to life in prison in 1991 for murdering 76-year-old Israeli Shlomo Yahya near Tel Aviv. Khaizaran was released from prison in 2011, when Israel released 1,027 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, who had been held hostage by Hamas for more than 5 years. The released terrorist called a PA TV talk show to complain that while he and other prisoners all received full salaries in prison, since his release he had only received a partial salary. The terrorist explained that the reason he and other released prisoners deserve a full salary was because they attacked and killed Jews:

Murderer Iyad (on phone): “Hello. Since the day we were released from prison, we were given [only] half a salary... We killed Jews. I personally killed Jews. I killed settlers and I injured soldiers. My house was destroyed. I have 11 bullets in my body. I served 22 years in Israeli prisons. The PA that presents itself as responsible for the nation must be faithful to everyone.”

PA TV host: “You, like the other [prisoners], did you receive salaries in the prisons?”

Murderer Iyad: “Yes. After about the year 2000, [the salaries] were organized.”

Host: “In other words, from 2000, I mean, all the organizations, without exception, whether it was Fatah, or Hamas, supporters of Abbas or not supporters of Abbas, they [all] received salaries or not? ...”

Murderer Iyad: “Yes, yes they did.”

[Official PA TV, March 29, 2012]

This interview shows that the terrorists themselves understand it both as a salary and as a reward because they “personally killed Jews.”

Part 2: The PA pledges to continue payments to terrorists and their families

Responding to the widespread international pressure to stop rewarding terror, Mahmoud Abbas vowed that he won't stop paying salaries to imprisoned terrorists and the families of the Martyrs even if it costs him his presidency:

"Even if I will have to leave my position, I will not compromise on the salary (*rawatib*) of a Martyr (*Shahid*) or a prisoner, as I am the president of the entire Palestinian people, including the prisoners, the Martyrs, the injured, the expelled, and the uprooted."

[PA] President Mahmoud Abbas."

[Official Fatah Facebook page, July 2, 2017]

A member of Fatah's Central Committee, Jamal Muhaisen, also recently quoted Abbas' promise, and emphasized that the payment of salaries to terrorist prisoners and "Martyrs" **is not an issue of money**, but rather is about the "Palestinian historical narrative":

"Regarding the salaries (*rawatib*) of the Martyrs and prisoners, Dr. Muhaisen emphasized that this is **not a financial matter**, but rather a matter that is connected to the Palestinian historical narrative, according to which the prisoners and Martyrs represent our Palestinian people's struggle. He praised the position of [PA] President Mahmoud Abbas, who responded to the American administration: 'Even if I will have to leave my position, I will not compromise on the salary of a Martyr or a prisoner, as I am the president of the entire Palestinian people, including the prisoners, the Martyrs, the injured, the expelled, and the uprooted.'"

[Wattan, independent Palestinian news agency, July 2, 2017]

Recognizing that there will be financial repercussions to the PA's continued funding of terror, PLO Commissioner of Prisoners' Affairs Issa Karake stated that other sources of funding will be found if current financial support is lowered or stopped:

"He [Karake] also emphasized that the Palestinian leadership will continue to support the prisoners and the [families of] the Martyrs... He noted that it is possible that the Palestinian

leadership will turn to the Arab and Islamic states to compensate for the deduction of the money meant for the prisoners and the [families of the] Martyrs."

[Donia Al-Watan, independent Palestinian news agency, June 11, 2017]

Meeting with families of "Martyrs," PA Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah, on behalf of Abbas, assured them that they will continue receiving the monetary rewards, and further emphasized the PA's admiration for the "Martyrs":

"On behalf of [PA] President Mahmoud Abbas and our Palestinian people, I salute all of the Martyrs' (*Shahids*) families... I emphasize to them that their rights are protected, and we will continue our diligent work with the relevant PLO institutions to fulfill our basic, humanitarian, and national obligations towards them... We remember the sacrifices and struggle of the pure Martyrs, guardians of the land and identity who have turned our people's cause into a historical epic of struggle and resolve."

[*Al-Ayyam*, June 17, 2017;

Official PA daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, June 16, 2017]

Responding to US demands which threaten to cut off all funding to the PA if they continue rewarding terror, senior Fatah official Abbas Zaki said that the PA will not submit to American pressure:

"In a speech that he gave on behalf of the Palestinian leadership, [Fatah Central Committee member] Zaki emphasized that the prisoners' issue is one of the top priorities of the Palestinian leadership, and that the leadership will not submit to the American and Israeli pressures in any attempt to harm the salaries (*rawatib*) of the families of the Martyrs (*Shahids*) and prisoners."

[Facebook page of Fatah Central Committee member Abbas Zaki, June 23, 2017]

PLO official Ahmed Majdalani also stressed that the payments will continue:

"PLO Executive Committee member Ahmed Majdalani emphasized that the issue of the prisoners' salaries (*rawatib*) is not up for negotiations, and it is unacceptable to turn it into a precondition for a political process, as it is a political, national, and moral issue."

[Donia Al-Watan, independent Palestinian news agency, June 19, 2017]

"Among those who are more precious than all of us, the children of the Martyrs (*Shahids*) and prisoners, we emphasize before them - on the instructions of President [Abbas] - that we will always help and assist the members of our people and we will stand by them at all times. The talk taking place here and there about stopping the allowances (*mukhassasat*) of the prisoners and Martyrs is not true at all."

[PNN, independent Palestinian news agency, June 22, 2017]

Summary:

1. Under PA law, Palestinian terrorists in Israeli prisons receive monthly salaries and allowances are given to the families of Palestinian terrorist “Martyrs” who were killed in confrontations with Israel.
2. These payments are not social welfare to support wives and children, but salaries granted to prisoners because they committed terror attacks. The Arabic language of the written PA law uses the word that means “salary.” The words “social assistance” and “welfare” do not appear at all in any text of any of the laws.
3. The monthly salary amount is based on the number of years the terrorist has been in prison, and is not based on family status or family need. The salary for prisoners reaches as high as 12,000 shekels a month for those who have served more than 30 years in prison.
4. The base salary is the same for single and married terrorist prisoners. The additions for wives and children, which could be considered a kind of social welfare, are a mere 300 shekels a month for wives and 50 shekels per child.
5. The salaries to prisoners have same status as salaries to civil servants. When the salaries of civil servants are affected in some way, so are the prisoners’ salaries.
6. The prisoners are subject to the PA tax law and must pay income tax of the salaries.
7. This salary is the prisoner’s money, not the family’s social welfare. The prisoner, not his family, controls the money and determines who should receive it through an “authorized agent.” No one can force a prisoner to give his wife and children his salary.
8. The average prisoner salary is higher than the salary of a PA civil servant and military personnel. A prisoner serving more than 30 years receives a monthly salary of 12,000 shekels, approximately four times the salary of a civil servant.
9. The average payments to families of Palestinian “Martyrs” are significantly higher than the pensions granted to the families of deceased officers of the PA National Security Forces.
10. Released prisoners continue to receive monthly salaries.
11. Terrorist prisoners are rewarded with the salaries because they are “heroes,” not because they or their families are needy.
12. Terrorist prisoners themselves see the payments as “salaries” and rewards for “killing Jews.”

The PA has no intention of ceasing the payments of salaries, regardless of diplomatic or political pressure. If necessary, they will look for new sources of funding for the terrorists’ salaries.

In 2016, the PA paid 488 million shekels (\$135 million) in salaries to Palestinian terrorist prisoners and an additional 660 million shekels (\$183 million) in payments to the families of so-called “Martyrs” [Official PA Budget, 2016]. The PA has publicly confirmed to its own people that these payments are financial rewards for terror, and no statement in the PA law or by an official in the PA media has ever implied that these payments are social welfare. Claims to the international media and to donor countries that PA payments to terrorists and their families are “social welfare” are just another of the PA’s disingenuous attempts to deceive the international community in order to continue receiving financial aid.

The following are longer excerpts from the sources cited above:

PA terrorist salaries are not social aid for families confirms wife of prisoner, long version

PA TV journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "She suffered in silence and we couldn't stand there and do nothing. [Is control over the money] her right? - Yes! Is [this] her children's urgent need? - Absolutely! Do they have control? Unfortunately not."

Journalist interviewing the prisoner's wife: "We respect your request not to show your face and to alter your voice... In addition, I am telling the viewers that we did not film in your house. What is your story, dear sister?"

Prisoner's wife: "It's not just me, this problem, many of the prisoners' wives and children suffer from it, from the transfer of his salary, the prisoner's salary (Arabic: *Ma'ash*)... My husband is sentenced [to prison] and I have five children."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "Until when is your husband sentenced? We wish him freedom, Allah willing."

Prisoner's wife: "About eight years. It's already a year I suffer greatly, because he transferred the salary (*Ma'ash*), that is the allowance (*Mukhassas*), to his family."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "You have five children. How old is the oldest?"

Prisoner's wife: "17 and a half."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "And the youngest?"

Prisoner's wife: "Seven years."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "When did he transfer the power of attorney for the allowance (*Mukhassas*) [to his family]? How long after his arrest?"

Prisoner's wife: "It's been four years. At first I did not have it [power of attorney] and later on I had it. After that, it was transferred to a different person. That other person is from his family. There are conditions, that is, when they send me money... They delay [the money] and make excuses: 'Today, tomorrow...' It's hard for me and I suffer greatly. I tried to work."

Issa Karake, Minister of Prisoners' Affairs: "It makes no sense that a free and noble nation will abandon the families of the victims, the families of the fighters, without a provider and without standing beside them so that they can live with dignity and pride..."

[Journalist Roba Al-Najjar interviews the prisoner's wife]

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "Do you know what your husband's allowance (Arabic: *mukhassas*) was?"

Prisoner's wife: "Don't know."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "You have no idea?"

Prisoner's wife: "I have no idea."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "How much money does your husband's family send you each month?"

Prisoner's wife: "Each month they send two checks. Sometimes it's as my husband tells them: 'Transfer this' and sometimes, depending on the circumstances, that is, he decides in a phone conversation... They made me feel that 'this isn't yours'. That is, enough, I don't want it [the money], now I don't want to receive what he sent."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "What do they say, what do they tell you?"

Prisoner's wife: "I feel like they're doing me a favor..."

PA Minister Issa Karake: "Some of the prisoners are not aware, some of the prisoners are influenced by the social situation and social problems in the family. We try the best we can to distance the prisoner from these problems, and we speak with all family members..."

Prisoner's wife: "I went to the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs and told them my problem. They told me: 'We cannot do anything unless he personally transfers it to you.'"

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "In other words, for nearly four years, the prisoner's allowance from the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs and the official institutions has not reached your hands and your children's hands... Did it ever happen, for example, that one of the months, they didn't send you [anything]?"

Prisoner's wife: "[For] almost a year."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "A whole year?"

Prisoner's wife: "Yes, some months, if I add them up - approximately a year and a half they didn't send [it] as a means of pressure."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "Do you send him a message with your children during their visits or when you are able to visit your husband: 'Our situation is such and such, and we suffer, please return the power of attorney to me?'"

Prisoner's wife: "Yes, I asked many times, and I myself told him this before. He told me: 'If you do what I want, it will return to you. As long as you are like this, it won't return to you.' [...]"

Journalist interviewing Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Issa Karake: "Can we speak candidly Mr. Issa [Minister of Prisoners' Affairs], about the issue of transferring the power of attorney? We know that legally the prisoner has the right to give the power of attorney to a family member that he considers suitable..."

PA Minister Issa Karake: "In the past few years, there have been social problems and the current procedure in the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs is that the prisoner determines who has the power of attorney. We decided that this will be on condition that the person with the power of attorney must be a first-degree relative. Meaning that if he is married, the wife [is given the power of attorney]; and if he is unmarried, the mother or father. If the mother or father is deceased, it is transferred to the brother or sister. If the wife has passed away, [the power of attorney goes] to the son, i.e., it stays among first-degree relatives. But the criteria - it is the prisoner himself who gives the power of attorney, by means of the International Red Cross or through an attorney by means of a power of attorney [form] signed by him, in which he gives the power of attorney to whomever he wants from within this group - first-degree relatives - to receive his monetary allowances."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "Did you try to turn to the authorities?" [...]"

Prisoners' Wife: "A year and a half ago, I went to the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, and to the Prisoners' Club... Their answer was: 'Your husband transfers it to the person he wants. It's in his power not to transfer [it to you] and we can't do anything about it.'"

PA Minister Issa Karake: "Problems occur, that is, this is natural. This is a large sector, a very large sector in our society. When we are presented with this kind of a problem, we first of all clarify things with the prisoner himself, try to understand the family's situation and the nature of the dispute, the nature of the problem."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "Mr. Issa, can I understand from your words that transferring the power of attorney is included in the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs' legal authority, to interfere in a decisive manner? I mean, that it is not the prisoner's absolute right."

PA Minister Issa Karake: "In principle, this is the prisoner's right, but we are looking into it. If the request to transfer the power of attorney to another person is illogical or is not objective, we don't approve it."

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "Can we understand from your words that if, for example, this mother will come to you -"

PA Minister Issa Karake: "I will change this. This is an injustice!"

Journalist Roba Al-Najjar: "I delivered a letter to Issa Karake, Minister of Prisoners' Affairs, and he in turn studied your problem in detail, and decided to transfer the power of attorney for the salary [*ma'ash*] back to you."

[Official PA TV, Apr. 17, 2014]

Note: This program was first broadcast on February 17, 2013. It was rebroadcast on April 17, 2014.

Official PA TV daily program Palestine This Morning reports on an Iftar meal to break the Ramadan fast held for 300 families of "Martyrs" (Shahids) in Ramallah, which was attended by PA Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah.

Secretary-General of the National Association of the Martyrs' Families of Palestine

Muhammad Sbeihat: "We are optimistic regarding what [PA] Prime Minister [Rami Hamdallah] said, because we met with him in recent weeks and we requested to increase the allowances of the Martyrs' (*Shahids*) families, the monthly allowances..."

Currently a discussion is being held between the [National] Association [of the Martyrs' Families of Palestine] and the [PLO's] Families of the Martyrs and Wounded Institution on one side and the [PA] Ministry of Finance on the other, in order to determine the amount of the monthly increase [for families of Martyrs] and the date it begins. In his speech, his honor the prime minister [Hamdallah] emphasized... that the government will work to implement this, and that gives additional hope to the [National] Association [of the Martyrs' Families of Palestine] that the increase will be achieved during the coming period. [...] There is understanding from all sides. Even the [PA] Ministry of Finance knows that the current allowance, or the base allowance, that stands at 1,400 shekels a month, is very low. This amount was determined and implemented in mid-2011, which is to say around five years ago. Naturally this amount has started to erode when we talk about its purchasing power, and therefore what has been proposed is not just an increase in the allowance, but rather to connect the base allowance to the cost-of-living index. There is understanding on the part of the [PA] Ministry of Finance regarding this demand. However, the discussion is currently revolving around the exact amount... The [PA] Ministry of Finance says that there is no allocation in the 2016 budget to increase the allowances, because this is supposed to start at the beginning of next year [2017], but on the other hand the [PLO's] Families of the Martyrs and Wounded Institution says that there is a surplus in the budget and therefore we can start implementing this [increase] before the end of the year... The Palestinian Authority gives allowances to roughly 30,000 families of Martyrs and wounded inside the homeland and in the diaspora, and we must not forget that the diaspora takes a large portion of the allowances, although that in no way exempts the PA from its full obligation to these families [in the diaspora].

There is an issue that remains unresolved, and that is the issue of the families of the Martyrs of the Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip in 2014 (i.e., Operation Protective Edge, Israel's response to Hamas' firing of thousands of rockets at Israel). These families have not yet received their allowances. That is a big problem. We raised this issue in the last meeting,

in the last speech we gave before his honor the prime minister [Hamdallah], and we also raised this issue in our meeting with the prime minister several weeks ago. It is essential to resolve this problem. There are about 2,000 Martyrs' families in the Gaza Strip who still have not received their allowances. ... His honor the prime minister promised [action] in a previous meeting, and also in an unofficial conversation two days ago with sister Um Jihad [Intisar Al-Wazir, Chairwoman of the Families of the Martyrs and Wounded Institution], at the Iftar [fast-breaking] meal. This issue must be dealt with. We hope that this problem will indeed be dealt with, because it is the greatest challenge of the government at this time, its obligations towards the Martyrs' families.

Regarding the families of the Martyrs of the popular uprising (euphemism for Palestinian wave of terror attacks 2015-2016, including stabbings, and shootings -Ed.) and the rest of the Martyrs in general, these families receive their allowances at the most two or three months after the Martyrs' death. Likewise, the families also receive a set amount of 6,000 shekels aside from the monthly allowance that they receive... When you're talking about an allowance for the family of a Martyr that is comprised of four people, that is to say the wife of the Martyr and three people, for example, we are talking about an amount of 2,400 shekels. This amount definitely is not enough, definitely not. It is true that there is free education as well as medical insurance for the Martyr's family, but this definitely is not enough."

[Official PA TV, June 19, 2016]

"An agreement exists, signed in 2011 with former prime minister Dr. Salam Fayyad, which states that priority must be given to the salaries of the Martyrs' (*Shahids*) immediate families in the following manner: A Martyr's salary is 1,400 shekels, with an addition of 400 for his wife and 200 for his son or daughter, as well as an addition of 300 shekels for [residents] of Jerusalem and the interior (i.e., Israel). In addition, [families] of Martyrs in the diaspora are to receive a salary of 350 dollars, with an addition of 100 [dollars] for [the] wife and 50 for [the] son or daughter."

[*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, March 6, 2014]