

# THE MAKING OF THE PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT 2005

By Michael Widlanski<sup>1</sup>

## Scope and Purpose of Study:

The Palestinian Presidential Elections of January 2005 are an important milestone in Palestinian state-building for several reasons.

Palestinian elections are a critical point in the transition between Israeli military rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Palestinian self-government, a process that began with the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles in September 1993 and the first Palestinian presidential elections of January 1996.

With the death of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in November 2004, both Israel and the Palestinians recognized that the transition to a Palestinian successor to Arafat would be a crucial test of what many hope will be a process of peaceful democratization, political reform and stability. This is especially true because, despite the high hopes of 1993 and 1996, Arafat's rule had come to be recognized by many – including many Palestinians—as more authoritarian than democratic.<sup>1</sup>

The current study is not meant as an exhaustive encyclopedic examination of the Palestinian elections. It is not meant to offer a blow-by-blow account of events or media coverage, but it is aimed at providing a clear picture in “real time” of the internal Palestinian political process as reflected in the Palestinians' own political experience and media. The official campaign began on Dec. 26, 2004, and it was scheduled to conclude with elections on January 9, 2005.

The writer of this study closely followed daily Palestinian radio, television and newspaper accounts, in order to determine the way the media were employed.<sup>2</sup>

This study gives a detailed picture of the campaign and the media from Dec. 25, 2004 through January 4, 2005, while providing some background material on the “unofficial” campaign that began with Arafat's perceived decline in October, 2004 and through his departure and death in November, 2004.

## Definitions of Democratization and Reform

There are many definitions of democratization and reform, but this study will rely heavily on the definitions offered by “democracy specialists” writing in The Journal of Democracy:

While there is no absolutely objective way of laying out a single framework for gauging democratic quality, there are eight dimensions on which democracies vary in quality: freedom, the rule of law, vertical accountability, responsiveness, equality, participation, competition, and horizontal accountability. These dimensions are closely linked and tend to move together, either toward democratic improvement and deepening or toward decay.<sup>3</sup>

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## Executive Summary

The Palestinian election campaign January 2005 has been fairer than the campaign of January 1996, but it was still far from fair by Western standards. The election campaign of 2005 was still dominated by dramatic unfair domination of the media by the campaign of Dr. Mahmoud Abbas, known widely by his *kunya* (nickname) as Abu-Mazen.

In 1995 and 1996, Arafat's competitor, Samikha Khalil was not mentioned in the official Palestinian broadcast media at all, except briefly during the announcement of election results. In the current 2004-2005 campaign, the official Palestinian broadcast media not only allowed the names of the competitors of Abu Mazen to be mentioned several times in news broadcasts, but also allocated one television appearance to each candidate. It appears, however, that Abu-Mazen, sometimes with the help of Israeli authorities, was far more able to reach Palestinian voters physically and electronically than his competitors—something which gave him a great advantage.

The Palestinian media favored Abu Mazen's campaign by constant positive press coverage on Voice of Palestine radio (*Sawt Filasteen*) as well as official Palestinian television—PBC. Abu Mazen was mentioned frequently and favorably daily during news broadcasts on VOP and PBC, while the competitors appeared not to have been mentioned during the major news cycles. Indeed, the media did not appear to give much coverage to the campaign itself but focused on the issues as framed by Abu Mazen: his continuing devotion to the principles of the Palestinian revolution and its leader, Yasser Arafat. The issue of Palestinian official corruption was almost not seen nor heard on the airwaves or front-pages, although Mustafa Barghouthi raised the issue in several campaign appearances.<sup>4</sup>

In large measure, Abu Mazen's focus became the focus of the media coverage of the campaign, concentrating on three issues: a full Israeli withdrawal and an end to Israeli rule, full rights to return for Palestinian refugees, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

While Israeli and Western media often reported that Abu-Mazen was opposed to Palestinian violence, attacks on Israel and the "militarization of the Intifada," the Palestinian media—especially the broadcast media controlled by the PLO headed by Abu-Mazen—actually broadcast official support for "resistance operations" (*'amaliyyat muqawwima*).<sup>5</sup> On the rare occasions when such statements of Abu-Mazen's were mentioned, they were placed in the context of Abu-Mazen's desire to unify weapons control over the various "Palestinian elements" in order to limit "anarchy" and self-inflicted Palestinian casualties.<sup>6</sup>

In many respects, the prism of the Palestinian media made it appear that Abu-Mazen and his closest colleagues from the Fatah Movement (Ahmad Qreia, Saeb 'Arikat and Nabil Sha'ath) were campaigning against Israel.

Particularly from Dec. 31 and thereafter, the campaign coverage seemed overwhelmed by anti-Israeli rhetoric as when Saeb 'Arikat repeatedly declared on Voice of Palestine on Jan. 3 and Jan. 4 that Israel was conspiring to thwart the Palestinian elections.<sup>7</sup> Although some elements of anti-Israeli and anti-American incitement declined during the election period, others actually increased, as when VOP even broadcast a report that "Israeli troops famous for their crimes" had joined American forces in Iraq.<sup>8</sup> [This item is discussed at further length later.]

### Background to the Palestinian Presidential Election Campaign

With the decline in Yasser Arafat's condition and his departure for medical treatment in France (October-November, 2004), the Palestinian community in the West Bank and Gaza prepared to choose a successor to Arafat.

Mahmoud Abbas, widely known as Abu-Mazen, was selected to head both the Fatah movement and the PLO, which had been led by Arafat, but the law of the Palestinian National Authority (PA), also headed by Arafat, provided that elections be held within 60 days to determine Arafat's legal successor as head of the PA.<sup>9</sup>

Abu-Mazen had a very difficult and complicated situation. Israel and the Palestinians were still involved in a war, some of whose tactical aspects, Abu-Mazen opposed.<sup>10</sup> In addition, Abu-Mazen had been in Arafat's shadow for many years, and he needed to establish his own identity and legitimacy. These were difficulties which Arafat himself—who supported the war and was accepted as a Palestinian symbol even by his Palestinian opponents—never faced. As if to underscore the problems faced by Abu-Mazen, he and his security chief, Muhammad Dahlan, found themselves in the middle of a gun-fight in which one of Abu-Mazen's bodyguards was killed. It is not clear what was the exact cause of the battle between rival Palestinian gunmen during a public mourning session held in Arafat's memory on November 14, 2004 in Gaza. Another man was also killed, and several were wounded. The Palestinian media largely downplayed the incident, and the official media denied that there had been an assassination attempt on Abu-Mazen.

The date for elections was set for January 9, 2005 and the official start of campaigning was set for December 25-6, 2004, but unofficial campaigning and jockeying for position began even before Arafat was declared dead officially.

This time, as with the campaign and the elections of 1995-6, the leading candidate (then Arafat, now Abu-Mazen) worked hard to prevent popular candidates from running against him. In 1995, Arafat and his supporters put pressure on Dr. Heidar Abdul-Shafi, former head of the Palestinian Red Crescent in Gaza, not to run for President. This time, Abu-Mazen and his backers in the Fatah movement put pressure on Marwan Barghouti (who was near the popularity of Abu-Mazen in some polls) not to run, even though many inside the Fatah movement saw him as the most appropriate man to succeed Arafat. Barghouti enjoyed this Fatah popularity even though—or perhaps because—he had been convicted by an Israeli civilian court on five different charges of murder.

Barghouthi had been the leader of the Fatah's *Tanzeem* militia as well as a leading force in its suicide bomber squads known as *Kata'ib Shouhada Al-Aqsa*: The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. Israel wanted to see him stay in jail. However, Barghouthi, however, had several things going for him:

1. He was more charismatic than Abu-Mazen
2. He was 30 years younger than Abu-Mazen
3. He was a grass-roots representative of the West Bank, while Abu-Mazen, born in what is now northern Israel and therefore was not well-connected to "the Palestinian street."

It is not difficult to see where the interests of Israel and Abu-Mazen met: both saw Barghouthi as dangerous, but for different reasons. For several weeks, Barghouthi's campaign was on-again and off-again. Eventually, Barghouthi remained in jail, but Abu-Mazen pledged to demand the release of his "brother struggler" (*al-akh al-munadil*), and he even said he would welcome his joining the Palestinian leadership.<sup>11</sup> Several other Palestinian candidates also recanted their candidacy, leaving only six men facing Abu-Mazen.

Over the next few weeks, it became clear that the Israeli government led by Ariel Sharon saw in Abu-Mazen someone who might fulfill the original hopes of the Palestinian-Israeli agreements of the 1990's, and Israel began working with Abu-Mazen in several ways—sometimes to the detriment of other Palestinian candidates.

Abu-Mazen enjoyed the kind of freedom of movement not enjoyed by Arafat in his later years, and not enjoyed by the other candidates: Abu-Mazen was allowed near unfettered movement among West Bank towns, helicopter travel to and from Gaza, and even access to Jerusalem. The other candidates sometimes had difficulty getting Israel to allow them complete freedom of movement as when the popular independent candidate Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi (a distant relative of Marwan Barghouthi) was held up at an Israeli check-point for two hours on December 27, 2004 when he tried to reach Jerusalem where Israel had agreed to allow limited Palestinian campaigning. Some of the opponents of Abu-Mazen grumbled that Israel was helping Abu-Mazen, the new PLO chairman.

Abu-Mazen began his unofficial campaign by traveling throughout the Arab world to shore up his pan-Arab support, first, in early December to Syria, and later to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries. In his visit to Damascus, he met with Syrian president Bashar Assad. Perhaps more important, he also met the political leaders of Islamic movement, HAMAS, traditionally the main "opposition" to the more secular, Fatah movement headed by him and Arafat. Abu-Mazen publicly stressed the need for Palestinian unity and for closing ranks, and he urged HAMAS not to boycott the coming elections. Similar messages were reinforced by Palestinian radio and Palestinian television, as well as Palestinian newspapers.

Some political observers in Israel suggested that Abu-Mazen's meetings with Khaled Mashal, one of the leaders of HAMAS (whom Israel had once tried to kill), was designed to obtain a *hudna*—a kind of ceasefire between the Palestinians and Israel, but within days of the Abbas visit, HAMAS actually stepped up its attacks on Israel and Israeli settlers. Abbas did not condemn the HAMAS attacks, and the

official Palestinian broadcast media extolled the attackers, calling them heroic martyrs and “resisters.”

On the other hand, this pre-election period was also marked by a general decline in some of the most vicious anti-Israeli and anti-American propaganda that had become a hall-mark of the Palestinian media during the Arafat era. Vicious cartoons showing blood-thirsty Israelis and Americans largely disappeared from the Palestinian newspapers, and the Palestinian broadcasts on November 29 (the anniversary of the UN decision to partition Palestine and create a Jewish state) and November 2 the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration (calling for a Jewish homeland in Palestine) were more sedate than in previous years. Some of these developments were reversed in coming days, as we shall see.

#### The Days Before the Palestinian Presidential Campaign

Early in December, a Palestinian minister referred to Israel as a “cancer” in a VOP radio broadcast, and another minister Intizaar al-Wazir, better known as Um\_Jihad (the widow of Khalil al-Wazir, the late PLO military wing commander known as Abu-Jihad), a friend of Arafat, appeared on an hour-long broadcast on Palestinian television calling for the renewal of the Palestinian Revolution. The militant tone of Ms. Wazir, who frequently refers to Israel only as “the enemy,” was apparent. Her words were re-broadcast for two days running.<sup>12</sup>

On December 13, 2004, the official Palestinian media opened their Monday morning broadcasts by lionizing the Palestinian Arab tunnel bombers who blew up an Israeli border checkpoint, killing five Israelis and wounding several others. The Voice of Palestine radio, run by Abu Mazen’s PLO, described as “martyrs” two Palestinian gunmen who first blew up a tunnel under the Israeli checkpoint and then shot at Israeli rescue team that tried to save one of the soldiers who was buried alive.

There was no condemnation of the Palestinian attack, which was described as an act of “*istish-haad*” –“heroic martyrdom” in Arabic. There was also no linking of the attack to the HAMAS movement with whom Abu Mazen (full name Mahmoud Abbas) has been conducting intensive “unity talks.” Palestinian state television from Gaza also announced the names of the “martyred” tunnel bombers, describing them as “youths” who were attacked by the Israelis after their tunnel exploded near the Gaza border crossing.

What was not included in the official Palestinian broadcasts was as revealing as what was: it did not mention the dramatic increase in Palestinian tunnel attacks in Gaza or the sharp rise in rocket and mortar attacks against Israeli settlers in Gaza and Israeli settlements inside Israel, such as the towns and kibbutzim of Sderot and Sa’ad.

“The heroic martyrdom of the youth Sabr Jullouth killed by the bullets of Israeli occupation troops who entered his home in Rafah in Gaza, and the heroic martyrdom of the youth Muayyad Ara in a clash with Occupation troops near the Rafah Border Pass,” declared the opening headline on Palestinian radio.<sup>13</sup>

Tunnels have become the main way for terrorists to attack Israeli border troops in Gaza as well as the means of smuggling anti-tank missiles, automatic weapons and explosives from Egypt towards Israel. The Palestinian state radio condemned Israeli

helicopter and ground attacks on Rafah that followed the tunnel attack, and it not explain that the terrorists' tunnels were usually dug from inside their own homes.

The next day, VOP radio's main anchorman opened the morning broadcasts claiming that the tunnel attack was a joint Fatah-HAMAS operation, which he described proudly as a "resistance operation" and "sacrificial operation." This was a conscious expansion of official Palestinian Authority lexicon which had previously referred to such attacks with the somewhat more neutral term "*amaliyyat tafjeeriyya*": explosive attack. From then on, the Palestinian broadcast media, and the Palestinian newspapers as well, have come to refer to almost any attack on Israelis as a "resistance operation"--and to those who carry out the attack as "resisters." One of many cases in point was the headline in the Dec. 16 *Al-Hayat al-Jadeeda* proclaiming "the martyrdom of two resisters" who had attacked Israeli cars and been shot by the Israeli army.

On December 15, much of the Israeli press and The New York Times reported that Abu-Mazen was opposed to the armed violence of the Intifada and was curtailing anti-Israeli incitement in the Palestinian media. However, that was not the message in the Palestinian broadcast media. <sup>14</sup>On the same morning (Dec. 15, 2004), Radio Voice of Palestine opened its broadcasts with extensive quotations from the new PLO Chairman who was touring Gulf countries. In fact, the radio—as well as official PA television—quoted Abu-Mazen's strong opposition to any kind of limitations of the Palestinian "right of return." The Palestinian media asserted that Abu-Mazen said—and with him the entire PLO/PA leadership—that they would not tolerate leaving any Palestinian refugees inside Arab countries.

During this pre-election period, the main coverage of the potential opponents of Abu-Mazen was linked mostly to the withdrawal of Marwan Barghouti from the presidential race.

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#### Palestinian Campaign Scorecard

In the week of December 18- December 25, the Palestinian media gave extensive coverage to public meetings and ceremonies of the Fatah movement in which Abu-Mazen pledged his devotion to the principles of Yasser Arafat, stressing the unfinished business of the Palestinian Revolution. Abu-Mazen underscored his devotion to the rights of the refugees "to return to their homes," complete withdrawal of all Israelis from the West Bank and Gaza, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

One meeting of the Fatah with Abu-Mazen was broadcast live in Voice of Palestine radio, including the speech by Abu-Mazen.

As the official campaign opened on December 25/26, 2004, VOP radio and PBC television devoted great attention to the upcoming anniversary of the "launching of the revolution" (Arabic *intilaq al-thawra*), with intense coverage to Abu-Mazen, the leader of Fatah and the PLO. The actual anniversary—January 1—marks the Fatah's first official military strike against Israel: the January 1, 1965 attack on the Israeli National Water Carrier.

Throughout this first week of the official election campaign and the previous unofficial week, Abu-Mazen generally appeared in one or two major articles on the front pages of the Palestinian daily newspapers, while appearing in one or two of the first five items in the broadcast news. During this period, Abu-Mazen and his colleagues in the Fatah leadership (Arikat, Qreia) stressed how they would fight for the rights of Palestinian prisoners to be released unconditionally and for them to vote in the current election. Similarly, the Palestinian state media, and later the Palestinian newspapers, focused on the struggle to get full campaigning and voting in Arab sections of Jerusalem.

Beginning with December 27/28, VOP and PBC noticeably began exhibiting more anti-Israeli material with a concomitant tougher line by the Palestinian leadership. On December 27 and 28, PBC broadcast an hour-long program with Palestinian cartoonist Omayya Jaha, featuring some of her work, including depictions of Israelis as blood-suckers and as eaters and cooks of Palestinian children. Although Jaha's work has not been visible in the last month in *Al-Quds* or *Al-Hayat al-Jadeeda* (as in the past) where she had an audience of 20,000 paid readers, she was here given a concentrated audience of many more viewers.

Ms. Jaha was shown educating about 20 students how to create effective cartoons. She described how her husband died a "martyr's death" fighting the Israelis, and pictures of her husband's bloodied body were displayed on air.

The entire show was repeated again on January 4 in the early afternoon hours (3:15-4:15), enabling maximum exposure to children. Some examples of Ms. Jaha's cartoons, shown on the show, appear below. One shows Ariel Sharon feasting on Palestinian children, while another shows him cooking Palestinian child while a Jew watches contentedly.<sup>15</sup>







Al-Hayat-al-Jadida May 6 2004

Also on December 28, there was major front-page newspaper coverage of Abu-Mazen's campaign rallies in Jenin and Jericho. The Jenin rally featured a public embrace of Zakaria Zbeideh, the local leader of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade—and the man the Israelis have seen as responsible for several of the most notorious suicide bomb attacks in Israeli cities. Hooded and armed members of his organization were shown at the speaker's lectern under banners of Arafat and Abu-Mazen.<sup>16</sup>

Several pro-Abu-Mazen rallies in the northern in the northern West Bank towns of Jenin and Nablus became both a pictorial focus and the subject of several stories between Dec. 28, 2004 and Jan. 1, 2005.



جنين - زكريا الزبيدي قائد كتائب شهداء الأقصى في المدينة يلقي كلمة خلال مسيرة تأييد لمرشح الرئاسة محمود عباس، أبو مازن، رئيس اللجنة التنفيذية لمنظمة التحرير الفلسطينية. صورة من (أ.ف.ب) خاصة بـ «القدس»

Al-Quds, Page 2, December 29 2004

Caption reads: JENIN: Zakariah al-Zbeideh, commander of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in the city giving an address at a rally in support of presidential candidate Mamoud Abbas, “Abu-Mazen,” chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Picture from Agence France Presse, Special to Al-Quds.

*For additional pictorial material on the “Martyr Brigades” role in the Abu-Mazen campaign, see pictures and captions at end of report.*

The Jericho rally featured hard-line promise from Abu-Mazen “not to give up a grain” of Palestinian land and not to back off on the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes.<sup>17</sup>

Israeli Arab parliament member Muhammad Baraka denounced the “American-Zionist conspiracy against the Palestinian people” on the PBC talk show “*BISIRAAHA*”.<sup>18</sup> Later that evening on the main television news show, PA Prime Minister Ahmad Qreia, also known as Abu ‘Ala, declared: “We expect Israel to release all the strugglers in its jails.”

On December 29, 2004, PBC began showing anti-Israeli newsreel material as background to official promotional advertisements urging election participation. For example, Local Affairs Minister Jamal al-Shubaki appeared with repetitive background pictures of Israeli soldiers stopping and harassing Palestinian children.

VOP radio featured its star anchorman Nizar al-Ghul making fun of Israeli requests for an end to violence: “Israeli occupation forces continue their aggression while Sharon calls for an end to what he calls terror.”<sup>19</sup> Throughout the day, VOP also reported vaguely about Israeli “plots” on Islamic holy places in Jerusalem. PA official Adnan Husseini, in charge of Islamic endowments, charged Israeli attempts to destroy al Al-Aqsa, one of the holiest sites for Muslims.<sup>20</sup> Similar material had also been aired, in somewhat less drastic form, in the previous week. This was incendiary material indeed.

It should be noted that charging Israel or the Jews with conspiring to destroy Al-Aqsa is a particularly dangerous motif, and it was used to inflame Palestinian emotions in September 1996, when a mini-war began between Israel and the PA over charges that the re-opening of an ancient Hasmonean passage-way 1,000 yards from the Al-Aqsa precincts was really an Israeli attempt to undermine the foundations of the Al-Aqsa mosque itself. At least 18 Israelis and more than 50 Palestinians died in three days of rioting and shooting battles that ensued.<sup>21</sup>

PA official Husseini mentioned both Israeli police and Israeli settlers in his charges of Israeli attempts to attack Al-Aqsa. However, it was not clear exactly what the accusations were, although Israeli officials have objected to widespread digging on the Temple Mount because it has undermined the structural stability of the area as well as destroying much valuable archeological material.

Sometimes, material with the potential for incitement to violence and hate appears in strange even comical form as when VOP broadcast charges from an Arab newspaper in London (*Al-Quds al-Arabi*) accusing Israel of sending soldiers to fight for America in its battles in Iraq. The three-minute was repeated twice more on VOP, even though it is widely known to be a recycled tale.<sup>22</sup>

The evening broadcasts of PBC television on Dec 30 featured a three-minute major item on Abu-Mazen in a campaign appearance, but there was no mention of the other candidates. Similarly, from January 1-January 3, 2005, there was intense daily coverage of Abu-Mazen on the airwaves and on the front pages, but almost no sighting or sound of other candidates.

For example, on January 1, the front pages of all three major dailies carried huge pictures of Abu-Mazen lighting a torch with accompanying lead stories about the fortieth anniversary of the “launching of the revolution” or “the launching of Fatah.” Beginning on Jan. 2, there was an evening talk show with one of the candidates, but this was the exception to the rule of Abu-Mazen’s air wave domination.

While the other candidates did sometimes get their faces in the newspapers, this was almost only after paying for it as an advertisement. Meanwhile, on television, the Abu-Mazen monopoly on the news programs was somewhat remedied beginning with the airing of advertising spots on the evening of January 4, 2005, following the 9PM evening news. Several candidates used their air time to demand a continuation of armed “resistance operations” against Israel. The independent candidate Sayyid Baraka went further, citing Islamic sources as justifying the killing of Jews generally.

Several candidates showed harsh film footage showing Israeli soldiers brutalizing Palestinians, but Abu-Mazen’s television advertisement also showed the destruction of Palestinian buildings as a result of what he called the over-use of the Palestinian military option. At the same time, Abu-Mazen’s advertisement showed him against the background of famous Palestinian fighters and “martyrs” such as Khalil al-Wazir, also known as Abu-Jihad, the military commander of the PLO killed by Israeli commandos in Tunisia. The clear message conveyed by the Abu-Mazen advertisements was that “armed struggle” was legitimate but was now, for the time being, an unwise course.

Aside from these television advertisements, the clear domination of the news shows on radio and television by Abu Mazen remained.

From January 2-January 4, PBC television gave extensive coverage to visits by Abu-Mazen to various hospitals in Gaza, one of which was a new building dedicated to “the martyr, leader, Yasser Arafat.”

On January 4, 2005, the official Palestinian broadcast media ignored an indirect call by Abu-Mazen (on January 3 in Gaza) not to launch rocket and mortar attacks because it led to Palestinian casualties. When four Palestinian rockets landed in the Israeli town of Sderot and several mortar rounds fell near an Israeli school bus in one of the Gaza settlements, injuring two Israel responded and at least eight Palestinians were killed, according to Palestinian reports which described the Israeli action as a “vicious massacre.”

PBC Television from Gaza broke into its regular programming, and its anchorman said:

“This is a new year and a new day, and it is soaked in Palestinian blood. This enemy does not distinguish between man, woman, child or old man.

“Sharon who carried out Sabra and Chatilla, Sharon who did Jenin... is doing it again. And then as now, the world did nothing.”<sup>23</sup>

The increased use of the term “enemy” to describe Israel, with whom the Palestinians agreed to make peace, coincided with the use of the term “Zionist enemy” by Abu-Mazen in an evening election rally in Gaza on January 3, 2005.

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<sup>1</sup> See *inter alia* Glenn E. Robinson,, Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1997; and Robinson, “The Growing Authoritarianism of the Arafat Regime,” Survival, Vol. 39, No. 2, Summer 1997, pp. 42-56.

<sup>2</sup> The broadcasts of Voice of Palestine in Arabic were monitored at 7-8:30 AM, the morning news show, 2-3PM, the afternoon news show, and at several times during the day. Similarly Palestinian television was monitored at 7 and 9AM as well as at least two of three news broadcasts at 3, 7 and 9PM. The internet and PDF editions of *Al-Quds*, *Al-Hayat al-Jadeeda*, and *Al-Ayyam* were examined daily.

<sup>3</sup> Larry Jay Diamond and Leonardo Morlino, “The Quality of Democracy: Social Aspects,” (from abstract), Journal of Democracy Volume 15, Number 4, October 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Khaled Abu Toameh, The Jerusalem Post, “Where's our \$6.5 billion, asks candidate Mustafa Barghouti,” Dec. 30, 2004, page 1; see also the much more muted coverage in Al-Quds of a Barghouti appearance in Jenin, page 2 Dec. 31, 2004. Barghouti raised the issue in general terms in his one TV talk show appearance and in his TV advertising spot.

<sup>5</sup> See for example, *Ha'aretz*, page one, Dec. 15, 2004 commentary by Danny Rubinstein as well as news story by Arnon Regular, discussing Abu Mazen’s opposition to Intifada; Voice of Israel broadcast by Avi Yissacharov, Jan. 4, 2005, 6:15 and 7:15 AM and throughout day on Abu-Mazen’s opposition to missile attacks, among others. For the many Palestinian broadcasts on “resistance” during the campaign, see references in the body of the study.

<sup>6</sup> Al-Quds, Dec. 15, 2004, mentioned of the demilitarization of the Intifada as part of its coverage of Abu-Mazen’s talks in the Gulf, but only in the context of limiting Palestinian anarchy and exercising unified control. The other papers ignored the story on this day. The issue re-emerged to haunt Abu-Mazen as Tayseer Khaled tried to insinuate that Abu-Mazen was against “resistance” during his tv show appearance on January 2, 2005 on PBC television. A PBC viewer who tried to do the same thing a on a call-in show on January 4, PBC 11:15 AM was cut off in mid-sentence, as was another viewer on PBC on December 28, 2004 at 2:11PM. On Jan. 4, 2005, Voice of Israel reporter Avi Yissacharov aired a partial recording of Abu-Mazen calling for an end to missile attacks, condemning them because they led to missiles and mortars falling on Palestinians themselves. The comments were apparently not broadcast on VOP or PBC.

<sup>7</sup> VOP broadcasts 8:10 AM Jan. 4 and 7:15 and 2:00 PM on Jan. 3.

<sup>8</sup> VOP Jan. 3, 10 AM, unusually long three-minute item in news summary quoting Arab newspaper from London, Al-Quds-al-Arabi, verbatim.

<sup>9</sup> Arafat, too, had originally been supposed to participate in elections within two months but, with the support of Israel, put off the elections for nearly two years. See Daniel Polisar, Electing Dictatorship: Why Palestinian Democratiation Failed, doctoral thesis presented and approved by the Department of Government of Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 2001.

<sup>10</sup> See interviews in Arabic with Abu-Mazen in Al-Sharq al-Awsat (London), March 4, 2003, and Al-Ra'i (Jordan), September 3, 2004, *inter alia*. Some of this material is available in translation at [www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org).

<sup>11</sup> Reports from Al-Ayyam, December, 2004.

<sup>12</sup> PBC Television, 7:30-8:15 AM, Dec. 17, 2004 and the previous evening in prime time.

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<sup>13</sup> VOP radio Dec. 13, 2004, morning broadcasts.

<sup>14</sup> *Haaretz*, Dec. 15, 2004, page 1, lead story: Abu Mazen: The Use of Weapons in the Current Intifada has hurt us and has to stop"; *The New York Times*, page A-1, Greg Myre, "On the Air, Palestinians Soften Tone on Israelis" (Dec. 15, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> Material on Jaha's cartoons is available at her web site: [www.odayya.com](http://www.odayya.com).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, major coverage with accompanying picture of Zbeideh in *Al-Quds*, December 29, 2004, page 2, with similar picture of hooded armed "Martyrs Brigade" members in page 2 picture of *Al-Hayat al-Jadeeda*.

<sup>17</sup> *Al-Ayyam*, Dec. 29, page one.

<sup>18</sup> PBC Dec. 28, 2004, 1:52PM.

<sup>19</sup> VOP, Dec. 29, 7:05 AM.

<sup>20</sup> VOP, Dec. 29, 2004, 2:20 PM.

<sup>21</sup> A similar tactic and similar results had been employed by Haj Amin al-Husseini when he ignited riots against Jews in Mandatory Palestine in 1920, 1921 and 1929—all on the theme of encroachment of Islamic holy places.

<sup>22</sup> VOP radio, January 3, 10:03 AM and subsequent broadcasts.

<sup>23</sup> PBC Television Jan. 4, 2004 10:55AM

التقى قائد كتائب شهداء الأقصى وزار مقبرة شهداء مجزرة مخيم جنين

## « ابو مازن » يحظى باستقبال حار في جنين ومخيمها

وقال «نحن مررتنا بتجربة ديمقراطية توقع الكثيرين في العالم أن نفضل فيها، سواء بالنسبة لنقل السلطات أو إجراء الانتخابات المحلية. ورائنا مشاركة للراة في الانتخابات المحلية، فهي تشكل نصف المجتمع ولها الكثير في قلوبنا».

وتابع «أبو مازن»، «نحن نرى، والعالم يقول، إن الشعب الفلسطيني شعب الشباب، وهم مستقبلنا، وسنهتم بجيل الشباب ونرعا».

وأشار إلى أن حركة فتح قررت أن تعقد مؤتمرها السادس في الرابع من آب القادم، وهو يصادف عيد ميلاد الرئيس الراحل، الشهيد ياسر عرفات، من أجل إتاحة الفرصة للشباب لأخذ دوره. «نحن نريد أن نعمل ونضعل»، وقال تعالى، «وقل اعملوا فسيرى الله عملكم ورسوله ولأؤمنون».

وأشاد «أبو مازن»، بصمود مدينة جنين ومخيمها أمام العدوان الإسرائيلي، هذه للدينة التي أطلق عليها الرئيس الراحل، جنين جرد». لكننا، ونحن ندخل جنين، لا ننسى بيقية لندن والقرى والمخيمات الفلسطينية، التي تقتل من أجل الحق والحرية.

ويحث «أبو مازن»، بتحياته إلى الأشقاء العرب، الذين ساهموا في دعم وإعادة إعمار ما دمره الاحتلال في جنين ومخيمها.

ومن جهته، قال الطيب عبد الرحيم، رئيس الحملة الانتخابية للسيد «أبو مازن»، إن الأخ أبو مازن يسير على خطا الرئيس الخالد ياسر عرفات، ونحن على ثقة بأنكم ستكونون على قدر المسؤولية لنقيم دولتنا المستقلة وعاصمتها القدس الشريف. وشكر الحضور على حسن الاستقبال.

وحضر المهرجان حشد كبير من المسؤولين المدنيين والعسكريين، فضلا عن وزراء ونواب من المجلس التشريعي، وعشرات الآلاف من المواطنين الذين حضروا من مختلف بلدات وقري المحافظة لتأييد ومبايعة عباس.

تلقا على اصرو الشعب الفلسطيني على موافقه التي التزم بها عرفات .

وقال الناشط، لقد اوضحنا لابو مازن الا يتنازل عن الخطوط الحمراء ويجب ان تكون قضية السجناء على راس سلم اولوياته.

«أبو مازن» يجدد تأكيدده على التمسك بالثوابت الوطنية

وكان «أبو مازن»، قد أكد تمسكه بالثوابت الوطنية، وتبني خيار السلام على أساس الحقوق المشروعة لشعبنا الفلسطيني.

وقال «أبو مازن»، في مهرجان خطبي كبير، دعت إليه حركة فتح، ومنظمة الشبيبة الفتاوية في جنين، إن مطالبنا هي دولة فلسطينية مستقلة وعاصمتها القدس الشريف، وإنهاء الاحتلال، وإزالة الاستيطان، وحل مشكلة اللاجئين حسب القرار ١٩٤.

وأضاف «أبو مازن»، مخاطبا آلاف المواطنين، الذين احتشدوا في باحة مدرسة ذكور جنين الثانوية، أن أبرز همومنا هي «الأمن والأمان للمواطنين، والحياة الاقتصادية الكريمة في ظل دولة القانون وللؤسسات، حيث يسود القانون ولا أحد فوق القانون».

وشدد على الوحدة الوطنية، قائلاً: «سنحافظ عليها بدمائنا، ولا بد أن نعرفوا أن الشعب الفلسطيني، مهما اختلعت مشاريه ومواقفه، سيحافظ على وحدته الوطنية». وتابع «أبو مازن»، إن أسرانا الأبطال هم في قلوبنا ووجداننا، وكما حرر أبو السكر سيحرر جميع الأسرى بإذن الله.

وأوضح أننا، عندما نطالب بالأمن والأمان لكل مواطن، فإننا نطالب بالأمن والأمان والحياة الكريمة للأخوة المطاردين من قبل إسرائيل، ونريد لهم حياة كريمة، ولحافظ على أرواحهم الغالية لأنهم ذخيرة المستقبل. وشدد «أبو مازن»، على ضرورة رعاية عائلات وأسرة الشهداء لتحييا حياة كريمة، وكذلك رعاية الجرحى.

جنين - لمراسل النشرة الخاص - حظي محمود عباس، أبو مازن، مرشح فتح للرئاسة، باستقبال الأبطال خلال لقائه عناصره في مجموعة كتائب شهداء الأقصى للذبيقة عن حركة فتح، في جنين التي وصلها في إطار حملته الانتخابية.

وشاهد «أبو مازن»، في سوارع المدينة ومخيمها مسكاً بيد زكريا الزبيدي (٢٩ عاماً) قائد كتائب شهداء الأقصى في منطقة جنين

وتوجه عباس الى مقبرة الشهداء في المخيم حيث دفن شهداء مجزرة جنين التي ارتكبتها الجيش الإسرائيلي في ربيع العام ٢٠٠٢، وقرأ الفاتحة على ارواحهم الطاهرة.

وحمل رجال كتائب شهداء الأقصى، مرشح فتح، للرئاسة عباس (٦٩ عاماً) على كتافهم في القبرة.

والتقى «أبو مازن»، بالاضافة الى الزبيدي قادة ونشطاء فتح، في مخيم جنين وشاهد وهو يعانقهم ويصافحهم.

ولقي عباس هذا الاستقبال الحار بالرغم من تصريحاته الاخيرة التي دعا فيها الى وقف عسكرة الانتفاضة والتي رفضتها كتائب شهداء الأقصى في جنين. وحرص مرشح حركة فتح على عدم التمرق الى هذا الموضوع خلال زيارته الى المدينة التي بدأت ينظر الفلسطينيون رمزا للمقاومة ضد الاحتلال.

### المهرجان الوطني

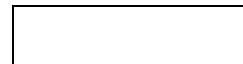
وقامع ناشطو كتائب شهداء الأقصى مرارا الكلمة التي القاها عباس ممثلين رشقات رشاشة في الجو.

وذكر الزبيدي ضمنا في كلمة القاها معارضته لوقف عسكرة الانتفاضة التي يدعو اليها عباس، مرددا ثلاث مرات، عندما تتكلم المقاومة تخرس كل الالسن.

وقال احد نشطاء حركة فتح، ان اللقاء مع «أبو مازن»، كان ايجابيا جدا وان الجنين



Thu Dec 30, 9:42 AM ET



Interim Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, the front-runner in the upcoming January 9 presidential elections is carried by the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades leader in the West Bank, Zakaria Zubeidi, center left, during a campaign visit to the Jenin refugee camp, Thursday Dec. 30, 2004. Abbas on Thursday shook hands with Zubeidi, an armed militant leader wanted by Israel, and prayed with the fugitive at a West Bank cemetery for those killed in fighting with Israel. (AP Photo/Enric Marti)





Thu Dec 30, 7:49 AM ET



Palestinian presidential candidate Mahmoud Abbas (R) and Zakaria Zubeidi, commander of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in the West Bank city of Jenin, meet during a campaign stop December 30, 2004. Armed Palestinians carried Abbas on their shoulders on Thursday in a West Bank refugee camp where the front-running presidential candidate was welcomed by a leading militant on Israel's most-wanted list.

REUTERS/Saeed Dahlah



Fri Dec 31, 5:38 AM ET



Palestinian presidential favorite Mahmud Abbas (R) and Tayeb Abdelrahim (L), Abbas' campaign manager and the former secretary of the presidential office under the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, are carried on the shoulders during their visit to al-Faraa refugee camp in the West Bank town of Jenin. (AFP/Awad Awad)