

PA Chairman Abu Mazen announced the forced retirement of thousands of officers of the PA security forces – i.e., Fatah – many of whom are terrorists and other prisoners released from Israeli prisons.

1

It is not yet clear how many of them are connected to Jerusalem, or to what extent they will influence how Fatah will organize itself in the city.

It is, however, evident that there will be certain ramifications in Jerusalem, especially in that while Fatah is being weakened, other Islamist bodies will not be similarly affected. It could also be that the newly-unemployed men will turn to, or will return to, terrorist activities outside the official groups. This development must be taken in context with the issuance of an Israeli restraining order preventing PA Minister of Jerusalem Affairs Ashraf Alawar from entering Judea and Samaria; this move, as well, will have an effect on PA activity in the city.

2

The Knesset has outlawed UNRWA and its activities in Israel – but enforcement is measly. The UNRWA compound outside Ammunition Hill in the Ramat Eshkol neighborhood was served with evacuation orders, but the UN flag still waves above it. Nor does it appear that the building has been transferred back to the hands of the Israelis who own it.

The law illegalizing UNRWA is not being enforced at all in Jerusalem – neither by Israel, and certainly not by the UN; this is just another example of the ongoing flouting and disregard by international bodies in Jerusalem of Israeli law.

3

The Christian Quarter in the Old City was lively with visitors during recent holy week; many of the stores were open and tourists were noticeably present. This is as opposed to the stores in the Muslim Quarter, which remained mostly close despite the clear increase in tourists, especially pilgrims.

This is likely to increase Arab frustration in the city, in that they see others experience minor economic recovery while they do not benefit at all. It will be recalled that efforts were made by various bodies to help these businessmen during Ramadan, but their success seems to have been limited at best. The distinct drop in the number of Muslims who came to worship in Jerusalem during Ramadan certainly did not help them either.



4

The former Mufti of Jerusalem, Akrameh Tsabari, was very miffed at the significant increase in the number of Jews visiting the Temple Mount in recent weeks (including the Passover holiday). Tsabari said that this is part of a concerted effort to transfer holy Muslim sites to Jewish hands.

His words reflect apparently-ongoing frustration

with the situation on the Mount ever since the beginning of the war in Gaza. Similar sentiments have been expressed publicly both by various figures and at the grassroots level.

5

Voices are being heard calling to pay more attention to the escalating acuteness of the situation in Isawiya, in the wake of increasing Israeli law enforcement and arrests. The Al-Busawla website sees the Israeli activity as an “unreasonable” response to the support shown in the neighborhood for the Arabs of Gaza on the backdrop of the renewed fighting there. In general, the Arabs see every act of Israeli law enforcement in their neighborhoods as “revenge” for the war in Gaza, and as a show of what they see as Israeli “frustration” at not managing to successfully ending the war.

SOCIAL MEDIA



The festive opening of a new luxurious mall in Ramallah has elicited protests by some web surfers, in light of the suffering in Gaza. This approach jibes with the sense of some Jerusalemites that they are not doing enough for Gaza. There is even some anger that the PA and its leaders in the capital – Ramallah – are simply out of touch. When a call was made for a public strike in Jerusalem, many cooperated. Some of them also see themselves as the “Jerusalem orphans,” sensing that no one seems to care that they are between a rock and a hard place, and sometimes the only ones who care about issues that are important to the Arabs of Judea and Samaria, such as the Temple Mount on a daily basis.

