

**PMW Special Report**

***The Jibril Rajoub File***  
***Special report for FIFA***

**“Fascists can learn a lesson from this state [Israel].  
This government -- there is none more brazen in human history...  
We'll suspend their [FIFA] membership and this way we'll screw them...  
I won't agree to any joint game between Arabs and Israel.”**

[Jibril Rajoub on PA TV, July 1, 2013]

**Jibril Rajoub, Chairman of the Palestinian Football Association and  
Chairman of the Palestine Olympic Committee**

- **promotes hatred, glorifies terror, and incites murder**
- **prohibits the use of sports as a vehicle for peacebuilding**
- **violates the fundamental principles of FIFA**
- **is trying to use FIFA to achieve his anti-Israel agenda**

**PMW is calling on FIFA to:**

- ***Demand Mr. Rajoub's removal from the position of Chairman of the Palestinian Football Association***
- ***Condition the Palestinian Football Association's membership in FIFA on the removal of Mr. Rajoub from his post***
- ***Disqualify Mr. Rajoub from participating in any activities related to FIFA, including all meetings and events organized by FIFA or in which FIFA participates***
- ***Demand the appointment of a new Palestinian Football Association chairman who is not a terror supporter, but rather, facilitates peacebuilding through sports and is fit to represent the PA at FIFA***

**[Video overview of Rajoub's statements](#)**

by Itamar Marcus and PMW staff

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## Introduction

This report documents Jibril Rajoub's hate promotion, terror support, and terror glorification with examples spanning several years. It demonstrates that his terror promotion and incitement to murder reflect his fundamental ideology as an opponent of peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

In appearances on the official Palestinian Authority TV, Rajoub has promoted the shooting and stabbing of Israeli civilians. Rajoub also glorifies terrorists by naming sporting tournaments and events in their honor. Last year, Rajoub referred to murderers of civilians as "heroes and a crown on the head of every Palestinian." In a TV interview, he said, "If we had a nuke, we'd have used it this very morning."

This report further documents that in his various political and leadership roles, Rajoub prohibits peacebuilding sports activities between Palestinians and Israelis, actively countering the spirit of FIFA as set forth in its mission statement. For example, following the 2014 Gaza War, Rajoub condemned a successful peacebuilding event between Israeli and Palestinian youth sponsored by the Peres Center for Peace as a "crime against humanity."

Currently, Rajoub claims that his complaints about Israel are focused on Israeli sports teams and stadiums in the West Bank. However, looking at his behavior and statements over the past five years, it is clear that Rajoub has an anti-Israel agenda and this is merely a pretext. Already in 2013, Rajoub expressed his goal to "screw" Israel by isolating it from international sports through expulsion from FIFA. It had nothing to do with the location of Israeli football teams and everything to do with his inherent prejudices against Israel:

"Fascists can learn a lesson from this state [of Israel]. This government -- there is none more brazen in human history... We'll suspend their [FIFA] membership and this way we'll screw them... I won't agree to any joint game between Arabs and Israel."

[Official PA TV, July 1, 2013]

Rajoub is now trying to gain international support for this political agenda by asking FIFA to adopt his anti-Israel policies.

Jibril Rajoub currently holds the following positions: Chairman of the Palestinian Football Association, Chairman of the Palestine Olympic Committee, Deputy Secretary of the Fatah Central Committee (headed by PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas), and Head of the Supreme Council for Sport and Youth Affairs. Rajoub is also one of Mahmoud Abbas' possible successors as Chairman of the Palestinian Authority.

Rajoub abuses his status as the representative of a FIFA member to further his own political agenda. Furthermore, Rajoub's statements and activities are diametrically opposed to the positive values that FIFA stands for, among them "to inspire communities and break down barriers" and "to touch, unite and inspire the world through its competitions and events." It is unthinkable that a person who glorifies and encourages the murder of civilians should disgrace FIFA by serving as the chairman of a FIFA member association. Permitting Rajoub to participate in activities related to FIFA when he cheers Palestinian terrorists for murdering Israeli civilians brings disgrace on FIFA and its other members.

## **Part 1: Jibril Rajoub promoted Palestinian terror and incited murder during the 2015-2016 terror wave**

Jibril Rajoub, chairman of the Palestinian Football Association, actively promoted Palestinian killing of Israelis during the wave of terror that started in September 2015 and lasted well into 2016. The terror wave was characterized by hundreds of Palestinian terror attacks against Israelis, including stabbings, shootings, throwing of Molotov cocktails, and car rammings, which killed over 40 people and injured hundreds. Jibril Rajoub has been one of the most outspoken Palestinian leaders in honoring, encouraging, and inciting terror.

In December 2015, soon after the terror wave broke out, Rajoub sponsored a sporting event named after terrorist Muhannad Halabi. Halabi was a 19-year-old Palestinian who murdered 2 Israelis, Rabbi Nehemiah Lavi and Aharon Bennett, as they walked to the Western Wall in Jerusalem on Oct. 3, 2015. Halabi also stabbed Bennett's wife, Adele, and their 2-year-old son, before he was shot and killed by Israeli police.

The picture below shows Palestinian athletes standing next to the banner of the tournament, which displays the picture of the murderer Halabi on both sides. The words on the banner of the event express Rajoub's endorsement of the killing:

**“Under patronage of the leader Jibril Rajoub, head of the Palestine Olympic Committee Palestine Cup – Martyr Muhannad Halabi Table Tennis Tournament 2015”**



Both the banner and the accompanying article identified Rajoub as the sponsor of the event: “Vice President of the Palestine Table Tennis Association, Radwan Al-Sharif, crowned the Hebron Al-Ahli Club team as the Palestine Cup Champion for 2015 – the Martyr (*Shahid*) Muhannad Halabi Tournament... **The championship was held on Friday under the patronage of Jibril Rajoub, head of the Palestine Olympic Committee... in Bethlehem.**”

[Ma'an (independent Palestinian news agency), Dec. 19, 2015]

Rajoub's terror glorification continued as the terror wave progressed. In January 2016, Rajoub referred to the terrorists as "crowns" and "heroes" twice in the same week. He further encouraged Palestinians to continue killing:



Rajoub: "Yesterday in Hebron, they escorted 17 Martyrs (among them murderers of civilians –Ed.) to burial. **This is of course a source of pride for all of us. I say that whoever carried out individual acts of heroism, we in the Fatah movement bless and encourage them. We consider them heroes and a crown on the head of every Palestinian.** At this point, when there is weakening and frustration, there is a group of people, beginning with our brother **Muhannad Halabi (who murdered 2 – Ed.)** and ending with the last Martyr... There is a competition between individuals. This is one of the issues we need to address - are we for or against it? **I say that we in the [Fatah] Central Committee have discussed this matter, and we are in favor.**"

[Official PA TV, Jan. 2, 2016]

The 17 "Martyrs" brought to burial, who, according to Rajoub, were a "source of pride" and performed "individual acts of heroism," included terrorists.

Just four days after this statement on official PA TV, Rajoub again called terrorists "heroes" and a "crown on our heads," adding that the basis of the relationship with Israelis should be violence:



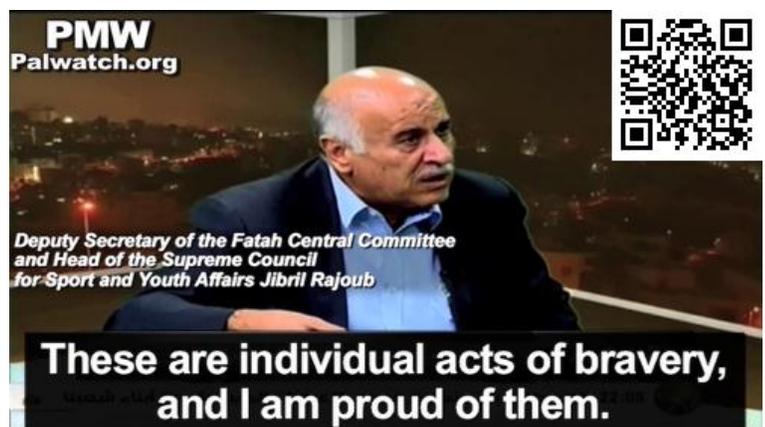
**“And from here we say to the 145 Martyrs (Palestinians killed from Oct. 2015 – Jan. 2016, most during their terror attacks –Ed.) – you are heroes and we bless you and strengthen your families, and say to you: You are a crown on our heads, until the Hour [of Resurrection] comes. And Allah will lengthen the lives of your family members, on the principle that Allah will honor them through you.”**

[Official PA TV, Jan. 6, 2016]

In another speech, at the outset of the terror wave, Rajoub glorified terror attacks as "acts of bravery":

**Jibril Rajoub: "These are individual acts of bravery, and I am proud of them. I congratulate everyone who carried them out. I say to you, we are proud of you... Whoever confronts, fights, dies as a Martyr, is arrested or injured – his identity is known. What I mean is that the fighter, the prisoner, or the Martyr, they are assets to the entire Palestinian people."**

[Official PA TV, Oct. 17, 2015]



Significantly, Rajoub has been very calculating in defining the terror he supports, calling on Palestinians to murder only individuals and not to commit suicide bombings on buses in Tel Aviv. The international community, Rajoub explained to Palestinian TV viewers, would accept

Palestinian murder of individual Israelis “in the occupied territories” – a term which the Palestinians use to refer at times to all of Israel and at times to the West Bank and Jerusalem. Terror attacks during the 2015-2016 Palestinian terror wave took place all across Israel in areas that are recognized by the international community as undisputed land belonging to Israel, such as Tel Aviv, Be’er Sheva, Afula, and West Jerusalem, and Rajoub never criticized or condemned even one. However, Rajoub warned Palestinians that the international community would reject “exploding” buses in Tel Aviv, and therefore he opposed that kind of killing:

**Rajoub: “The international community does not agree to a bus exploding in Tel Aviv. But the international community does not ask what happens to a settler or soldier in the occupied territories at the wrong time and in the wrong place. No one asks about him! Therefore, we want to fight in a way that the world and the international community will remain by our side.”**

[Official PA TV, Oct. 17, 2015]

Rajoub called on Palestinians to continue murdering Israelis in a way that he believed would not be condemned internationally. Rajoub’s calculated murder tactics cannot be dismissed as irrelevant chatter. Rajoub's statement was an explicit call for murder.

## **Part 2: Jibril Rajoub has consistently incited terror and glorified terrorism through sports and other means**

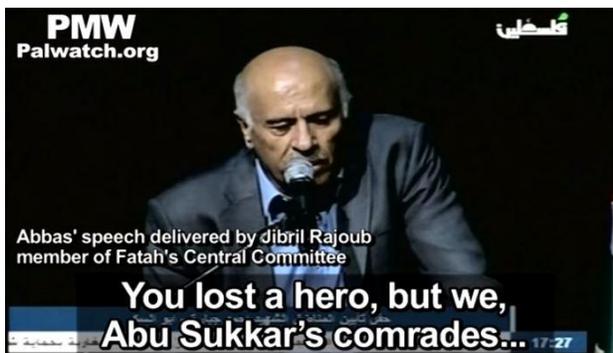
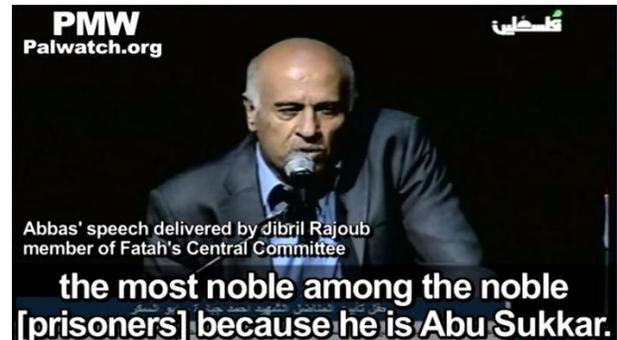
Jibril Rajoub’s incitement during the 2015-2016 terror wave followed the pattern of statements he has made over the past five years. Rajoub, in his capacity as chairman of the Palestinian Football Association, regularly promotes violence and terror as an integral component of the Palestinian political strategy in the conflict with Israel. Rajoub is himself a convicted prisoner who was sentenced to life in prison for throwing a grenade at an Israeli army truck in 1970. He served 15 years of his sentence before he was released in a prisoner exchange. Rajoub’s behavior in recent years shows him to be unrepentant. His terror ideology and promotion of murder is completely inconsistent with the FIFA goal to promote peacebuilding “to inspire communities and break down barriers” and “touch, unite and inspire the world through its competitions and events.”

On several occasions in 2013, Rajoub eulogized Palestinian terrorist Ahmad Jabarah Abu Sukkar, who planned a bombing attack in 1975 in which a refrigerator filled with explosives was detonated in a public market in Jerusalem. 15 people were killed and over 60 people were wounded. Rajoub promised “to continue his [Abu Sukkar’s] way of struggle”:

“Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Sport and Youth Affairs, Chairman of the Palestinian Olympic Committee and Chairman of the Palestinian Football Association, Jibril Rajoub, eulogized veteran released prisoner, fighter Ahmad Jabarah Abu Sukkar: “Ahmad Jabarah Abu Sukkar... **Before his pure soul, we emphasize our adherence to the principles and goals that he dedicated his long life to protect.** Before Allah and our magnificent nation, **we commit to continue his way of struggle,** the way of the esteemed Martyrs (*Shahids*).”

[Ma’an, independent Palestinian news agency, July 17, 2013]

Rajoub also represented Mahmoud Abbas in a speech in which he glorified this same murderer of 15 as a “hero,” a “beacon,” and a “giant”:



**Moderator:** “The speech of President Mahmoud Abbas will be delivered by Jibril Rajoub, member of Fatah’s Central Committee.”

**Rajoub:** “**Abu Sukkar, the legend who walked on earth**, Abu Sukkar, who with the sweat of his brow, with his faith, with his sincere belonging **outlined a path for us and wrote a page [of history] that is unforgettable and indescribable...** Believe me that **Abu Sukkar is worthy of being named the most noble among the noble [prisoners] because he is Abu Sukkar.**

**To the people of [village] Turmus Ayya and to Abu Sukkar’s family, I say: ‘You lost a hero, but we, Abu Sukkar’s comrades... in Fatah and in the Palestinian National Movement, lost a beacon...’ Abu Sukkar lived as a giant and died as a giant. He should remain in our hearts with this glory, this greatness...”**

[Official PA TV, Sept. 26, 2013]

Honoring, justifying, and glorifying terrorism assures potential terrorists of respect and fame, thus creating a social environment that generates more terrorists. Just as those who provide weapons or logistical support to terrorists facilitate terror attacks, those who glorify and honor terrorists provide the impetus for terror attacks. Jibril Rajoub takes advantage of his positions as chairman of the Palestinian Football Association and chairman of the Palestine Olympic Committee to promote and glorify murder. Rajoub sponsors sporting events named after terrorists who targeted and murdered Israeli civilians.

For example, terrorist **Dalal Mughrabi** led the most lethal terror attack in Israel's history, known as the Coastal Road massacre, in 1978, when she and other Fatah terrorists hijacked a bus on Israel's Coastal Highway. The terrorists killed 37 civilians, 12 of them children, and wounded over 70. The 12 children murdered in the attack are pictured below.



Galit Ankwa (2)   Yoav Meshkel (6)   Yitzhak Ankwa (10)   Liat Gal-On (6)   Tali Aharonovitch (14)   Naomi Elichai (18)



Ilan Hohman (3)   Roi Hohman (6)   Erez Alfred (5)   Mordechai Zit (9)   Naama Hadani (5)   Omry Tel-Oren (14)

In 2013, Rajoub sponsored a tennis tournament named after Mughrabi. The event was specifically for women and young girls, highlighting Mughrabi as a female role model to be honored and emulated.

"The Beit Iba Youth Sports Club finished its preparations for hosting **The Martyr Dalal Mughrabi Women's Table Tennis Tournament...** The tournament that will be sponsored by Chairman of the Olympic Committee Jibril Rajoub and by the Palestinian Table Tennis Association... The tournament is intended for three groups: Women, young women and girls."

[Ma'an, independent Palestinian news agency, Sept. 26, 2013]



**Text on photo:** "The Palestinian Table Tennis Association"  
"The Martyr (*Shahida*) Dalal Mughrabi Tournament"  
"The Beit Iba Sports Club"

During the tournament, Vice President of the Palestinian Table Tennis Association Radwan Al-Sharif **conveyed the greetings of Chairman of the Olympic Committee Jibril Rajoub:**

"The Martyr (*Shahida*) Dalal Mughrabi Table Tennis Tournament comes to a close... organized by the Table Tennis Association... Vice President of the Association, Radwan Al-Sharif, spoke at the closing ceremony. **He conveyed the greetings of Chairman of the Olympic committee Jibril Rajoub... Al-Sharif stated that the tournament achieved many national, regional and athletic goals. He mentioned the glorious deeds of hero Martyr Dalal Mughrabi (i.e., murder of 37)** and noted that the Table Tennis Association acts in accordance with the Olympic Committee's agenda."

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Oct. 1, 2013]

Rajoub's glorification of murder encourages Palestinians to turn to terror and impedes the peace process. The following are additional examples of Rajoub's violence promotion and glorification, demonstrating how terrorism is fundamental to Jibril Rajoub's ideology:

**Fencing tournament named after terrorist who murdered 125 is held "under the auspices of Head of the Palestine Olympic Committee Jibril Rajoub"**

Khalil Al-Wazir "Abu Jihad" headed the PLO terror organization's military wing and planned many deadly Fatah terror attacks in the 1960's - 1980's. The PA has credited him with responsibility for killing a total of 125 Israelis. The official PA daily announced that a fencing championship in his name took place under the auspices of Rajoub:

"The [Palestinian] Fencing Association has confirmed that a **Martyr Abu Jihad Fencing Championship** will take place ... on Friday [April 24, 2015] **under the auspices of Head of the Palestine Olympic Committee Jibril Rajoub.**"

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, April 20, 2015]

**Car race named after arch-terrorist Abu Jihad is held "under the auspices of Jibril Rajoub"**  
Rajoub has glorified Abu Jihad more than once by naming a sporting event after him:

Headline: **“Car race - The Martyr Khalil Al-Wazir [Abu Jihad] Race - opens on Friday”**  
“The [racing] tournament, which is being organized by the Palestinian Auto, Motor, and Bicycle Racing Association **under the auspices of Jibril Rajoub, Chairman of the Olympic Committee... will be named the Martyr Khalil Al-Wazir [Abu Jihad] Race.**”  
[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, April 17, 2014]

**Rajoub glorifies hijacker as “hero” and “symbol,” emphasizes that all Palestinian terrorists are “sacred”**

Using plane hijacker Laila Khaled as an example, Rajoub stressed that “the fighter, the Martyr, and the prisoner” are “sacred”:

**Rajoub:** "I was at Al-Quds University on Student Day. Someone asked me: 'Who is Laila Khaled (i.e., plane hijacker)?' So I spoke about **Laila Khaled, the fighter, the hero, the symbol**, etc. After a while, someone spoke about Yasser Arafat... and he spoke disrespectfully. I told them: **'There are three sacred things that should not be maligned - the fighter, the Martyr, and the prisoner. They are sacred. We should always speak positively about them, whether they are from the PFLP, Fatah, Hamas, etc.'**"  
[Official PA TV, Aug. 16, 2015]

**Jibril Rajoub is patron of racing tournament named after terrorist**

Terrorist Abu Ali Mustafa ordered numerous attacks against Israeli civilians during the Palestinian terror campaign of 2000-2005 (the Intifada). Rajoub was the patron of a sporting event in his honor.

“The fifth round of the 2014 Palestine racing tournament, **the Abu Ali Mustafa Tournament**, has ended. It was organized by the Jericho Race Car and Bicycle Union, with the participation of 24 competitors, **under the patronage of Chairman of the Olympic Committee Jibril Rajoub** and with the support of the leadership of the National Security Forces.”

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Dec. 16, 2014]

**Rajoub looks forward to “battle” in which “all members of the Palestinian people will participate”**

"Jibril Rajoub stressed that the Palestinian leadership had decided to close the subject of bilateral relations with the occupation (i.e., Israel)... **Rajoub stressed that [although] the Palestinian leadership would not oppose the weapons of the resistance, 'they must remain in storage**, without military demonstrations in the streets, **and when there is an attack, the battle will be one in all the Palestinian territories, in which all members of the Palestinian people will participate.'**" [*Al-Quds*, Oct. 3, 2014]

**Rajoub calls on the Palestinian terror organization Hamas to store its weapons until the proper time: "The weapon of the resistance is sacred... we will all fight together."**



"They [ Hamas ] tell you: 'The weapon of the resistance'. Brother [ Hamas ], your weapon, the weapon of the resistance, is sacred to us. We will not harm it, go after it, or keep track of it. But could you store it away? **At the moment of truth, we will all enlist together, we will all fight together.**"

[Official PA TV, Sept. 30, 2014]

**Rajoub supports Hamas policy of kidnapping Israeli soldiers and holding them captive under conditions contrary to international humanitarian law**



"**If Hamas wants to kidnap soldiers, let them kidnap soldiers. Let them kidnap.** Let them kidnap if they [ the Israelis ] don't want to release prisoners, but want them as prisoners forever, so [ the prisoners ] will come out as ghosts and skeletons. **The Israelis need to understand. It's clear that kidnapping is the language they understand. On the contrary, we encourage them [ Hamas ]. When they kidnapped [ Israeli soldier Gilad ] Shalit, we congratulated them.** When they concluded the Shalit [ exchange ] deal, in spite of our having a few reservations about it, we also congratulated them."

[Official PA TV, Jan. 2, 2014]

**Rajoub honors two released murderers**

Ziyad Mahmoud Ghneimat and Mustafa Ghneimat were convicted of shooting and murdering two Israelis in a forest in 1985, and Najeh Muqbil participated in stabbing and murdering his Israeli employer in 1990. After their release from prison in October 2013, Jibril Rajoub awarded the murderers with plaques of honor.

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Nov. 20, 2013]



Photo from the event: Jibril Rajoub honoring released prisoners Ziyad and Mustafa Gheiman and Najeh Muqbil. [Al-Jazeera, Nov. 20, 2013]

**Rajoub: “I swear that if we had a nuke, we'd have used it this very morning”**

**Rajoub:** "There is no going back to negotiations unless the source of authority is the international resolutions, with a time frame and with the freezing of all unilateral Israeli steps: Jerusalem, the fence, settlements and prisoners."

**TV Host:** "You've heard Israel's refusal."

**Rajoub:** "That doesn't matter. Listen. We as yet don't have a nuke, but I swear that if we had a nuke, we'd have used it this very morning."

[Al-Mayadeen TV (Lebanon), April 30, 2013]



Even after Palestinian Media Watch exposed Rajoub's call to "nuke" Israel, he refused to retract his statement. When questioned about this on official PA TV, he responded that Hitler could learn from Israelis:

**PA TV interviewer:** "The statements you made in Beirut on the Al-Mayadeen TV station had a lot of impact, according to them 'We are Israel's enemies and if we had a nuke we'd have used it...'"

**Rajoub:** "True, the interviewer asked me, and I answered in the same manner and with those words and even now I say to the Israelis: If there won't be a reexamination of your

conduct on your part, a saying in Hebrew states: 'kill or be killed.' We won't be killed... I'm certain that if Hitler would come again he would learn from them..."

[Official PA TV, *Circle of Events*, May 23, 2013]

**Rajoub legitimizes shooting Israelis as "Fatah's strategic right"**



"Whoever invades our territory, will leave in a wooden plank (i.e., in a coffin). **This land is our land...** Out of loyalty to your blood, Yasser Arafat, you who died during this month, **we will not return the sword to its sheath until there is a state... Resistance is Fatah's strategic right - in all its forms... We are ready - if there's shooting, we'll shoot.** If there are demonstrations, we'll demonstrate."

[Official PA TV, Nov. 29, 2012]

**Rajoub: "No one has removed the rifle from the equation"**

"This is a popular struggle. We still believe in all forms of the struggle. **No one has removed the rifle from the equation.** However, for us, the struggle is a means, and the end is freedom and independence."

[Official PA TV, Nov. 5, 2012]



**Jibril Rajoub representative attends sports tournament named after terrorist Abu Jihad**

"With huge success and excellent organization, the events of the third classification tournament for youth and men, the 'Martyr Abu Jihad Tournament,' were organized by the Palestinian Boxing Association... **The championship was attended by [Member of Fatah**

**Central Committee] and Chairman of the Al-Istiqlal University board, Tawfiq Tirawi... and Yusuf Lafi, representing and Chairman of the Olympic Committee, Jibril Rajoub.”**

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, April 22, 2012]

**Jibril Rajoub representing PA Chairman Abbas: “We salute those who captured [Israeli soldier] Shalit”**

*In October 2011, the Israeli government agreed to release 1,027 Palestinian prisoners from Israeli prison in exchange for Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, who had been held hostage by Hamas for more than 5 years. During that time, Shalit was denied visits from the International Committee of the Red Cross and was not allowed communication with his family, in violation of his rights under the Geneva Convention.*



*Ceremony honoring released Palestinian prisoners following the prisoner exchange deal:*

**Ceremony moderator:** "We shall now hear the address by the representative of the President [Abbas], to be delivered by Jibril Rajoub, member of the [Fatah] Central Committee."

**Jibril Rajoub:** "I say in the name of the Fatah Movement -- we salute those who dug the tunnel [to capture the Israeli soldier]; we salute those who captured the captive [Gilad Shalit], and salute those who guarded the captive until this deal was completed [Applause]."

[Official PA TV, Oct. 30, 2011]

**Rajoub equates building a school to killing Israelis**

"Building a school and throwing a hand grenade, in my opinion, are resistance. I build the school in order to strengthen the reasons for my people's resolve, as one of several aspects of the resistance, and **when there is a need to throw a grenade [or launch] a rocket, I'll do that as well out of my belief in the inevitable victory of my cause** and its justness."

[Official PA TV, May 12, 2010]

**Paradoxically, Rajoub, the Chairman of the Palestine Olympic Committee, attends a sporting event named after a terrorist who planned an attack against the Olympics**

In August 2010, Rajoub attended a boxing tournament named after Ali Hassan Salameh. Salameh was a commander of operations for the Black September terror group, which planned and carried out the massacre of 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972.

**Headline:** "In the presence of [Jibril] Rajoub - successful conclusion to the Second Palestine Boxing Tournament for youth and men in Hebron"

“The tournament [was] held at the Shari’ah School for Boys in Hebron, and **was named by the Palestinian Boxing Association after Martyr (Shahid) Ali Hassan Salameh**, the ‘Red Prince.’”

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Aug. 9, 2010]

### **Part 3: Rajoub and the Palestine Olympic Committee prohibit using sports as a bridge for peace between Palestinians and Israelis**

One of the key principles of FIFA’s international football competitions is that the sport can be used to cultivate peace. FIFA’s mission states that:

“Football can inspire communities and break down barriers. Football is for all. FIFA believes that everybody has the right to play football free from discrimination or prejudice and we are striving to ensure that this is the case.”

In contrast, Jibril Rajoub prohibits the use of football as a peacebuilding activity. Rajoub has threatened to take legal measures against Palestinian athletes who participate in matches against Israel. He condemns peacebuilding sporting events as “normalization” with Israel. Rajoub takes a leading role in prohibiting sport interactions with Israelis and undermining the foundational objectives of FIFA.

For example, after the Gaza War in 2014, the official PA daily printed an article by *Agence France – Presse* reporting that “Palestinian and Israeli children participated in friendly football matches” organized by the Israeli organization Peres Center for Peace. The event was successful and achieved sincere peacebuilding:

“[Israeli] Ofer, 11, from Sderot, a town in southern Israel where many rockets had landed, said: ‘It’s great to come back here and enjoy our time, after weeks of being stuck at home during the war.’ And [Palestinian] Qusai, 11, said: ‘I love it when we play together like this. I hope that one day there will be peace between Arabs and Jews and that there will be no more wars and death.’”

[From *Agence France-Presse*, reprinted in *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Sept. 3, 2014]

The Palestine Olympic Committee’s response to this peacebuilding activity indicates how adamantly the committee members oppose sports as a means to foster peace:

**“Abd Al-Salam Haniyeh, a Palestine Olympic Committee member, denounced the match held between Palestinian and Israeli children. He considered it a crime and an unpatriotic and immoral act... Haniyeh said these matches are completely unacceptable to the sports community, the Olympic Committee, the Supreme Council for Sport and Youth Affairs and the Palestinian Football Association... Haniyeh demanded that Chairman of the Palestinian Football Association Jibril Rajoub immediately interrogate the [Palestinian] organizers of the match, settle the account with them and prosecute them on charges of serious treason.”**

[*Sama*, independent Palestinian news agency, Sept. 3, 2014]

Three days later, Rajoub condemned this peacebuilding match for children and all other peacebuilding football matches as **"a crime against humanity"**:

**Headline: "Rajoub: 'Normalization in sports with the Zionist occupation is a crime'"**

"Chairman of the Olympic Committee, and Chairman of the [Palestinian] Football Association **Jibril Rajoub said any activity of normalization in sports with the Zionist enemy is a crime against humanity.** He said that the position of the sports leadership on the issue is perfectly clear.

Rajoub's statements were made in response to a sports activity held a few days ago (i.e., between Palestinian and Israeli children sponsored by the Israeli Peres Center for Peace)... **[Rajoub said] 'I demand that all individuals and institutions distance themselves from such activities, especially because their recurrence would arouse disgust and aversion towards all members of the [Palestinian] sports community.'**"

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Sept. 8, 2014, Kooora.com, Palestinian sports site, and Jibril Rajoub's official Facebook page, Sept. 6, 2014]

Since prohibiting the use of sports to build peace violates a fundamental principle of international sports, Rajoub has to hide this ideology when communicating with FIFA and with other international sports leaders. One example of Rajoub's duplicity was his words to Mr. Joseph Blatter, then President of FIFA, in which Rajoub stated that sports can "bridge the gaps between peoples":

"It is my great honor and pleasure to warmly welcome Palestine's esteemed guest, Mr. Joseph Blatter, President of FIFA, on behalf of the Palestine's sports community... We definitely believe that presenting Palestine through sports and practicing different sport games by youth, along with your boundless encouragement and enforcement have made it more possible for Palestine to realize its desired goals and aspire (sic., inspire) its promising youth with new expectations and dreams; such youth that strongly believes in **the noble values and humane message of sports which can bridge the gaps between peoples** and help in achieving their expectations and aspirations; this is a hope that we will not give up until the last moment!"

[Original English version as printed in official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, July 7, 2013]

This statement by Rajoub to then FIFA President Blatter completely contradicts Rajoub's statements to Palestinians in Arabic. Prohibiting peacebuilding through sports is a long-term policy of Rajoub's. For example, he has threatened to expel anyone from the PA football team who engages in joint sports activities with Israelis:

"This state [Israel] is a state of bullies. Fascists can learn a lesson from this state. This government -- there is none more brazen in human history... **Anyone who joins any joint [sports] activity with the Israelis -- I'll take him off the [Palestinian Football] Association's lists, whether he is a player, coach, judge or, God**



**forbid, a team...** Did we act correctly and convince [FIFA's] General Assembly? Yes. Yes, we'll suspend their [Israel's] membership [in FIFA] and this way we'll screw them... **I won't allow and won't agree to any joint game between Arabs and Israel.**" [Official PA TV, July 1, 2013]

The following are additional examples of Rajoub prohibiting and condemning peacebuilding through sports in recent years:

**Rajoub: "There will be no youth or sports activity of any kind with the Israeli side"**

"A joint meeting was held in the Al-Ram Football Association headquarters between the league's board of directors and the heads of the professional and semi-professional clubs in the presence of Jibril Rajoub, Chairman of the [Palestinian] Football Association...

**Rajoub said: 'There will be no youth or sports activity of any kind with the Israeli side, and we will not renounce our goal of building a free and independent national sports entity.'**"  
[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Jan. 5, 2014]

**Rajoub rejects "any kind of direct coordination" with Israelis**

**"The Palestinian Football Association will not agree to any kind of bilateral relations or direct coordination [with Israelis].** As far as we are concerned, FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) – with the Europeans and the Asian Football Confederation as part of it – is the authority and the intermediary, and it (i.e., FIFA) serves as a communications transfer point with us."

[*Al-Ayyam*, Sept. 23, 2013]

**Rajoub adamantly rejects football match with Israel**

"[Chairman of the Palestinian Football Association, Jibril] Rajoub described the extent of pressure put on him personally so that a joint tripartite match would take place to join together the Catalan team, Palestinian players and Israeli players. He emphasized that he had insisted all along that the match be Palestinian-Catalonian only.

He said: 'Many people pushed towards [FC Barcelona player Lionel] **Messi, Muhammad and Shlomo (i.e., stereotypical names for an Arab and a Jew) playing in a joint match, but we didn't agree and we will never agree to anything other than Messi and Muhammad playing** in a way that will reflect the glory of our nation, despite its daily suffering.'"

[*Al-Ayyam*, Aug. 1, 2013]

**Rajoub: Boycott all Israeli youth activities in Jerusalem**

"Chairman of the Palestinian Football Association Jibril Rajoub... asked the Arab League to support the [Palestine] Olympic Committee's position and efforts in jointly boycotting any activity for youth, whether social, tourist, or sports [activities], that Israel organizes in the occupied city of Jerusalem."

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, June 20, 2013]

## Rajoub rejects an activity between Israelis, Palestinians and the Barcelona football team as “stupid”

**TV host:** "Mr. Jibril, does the visit of Barcelona's [football] team include a visit to the occupied lands?"

**Rajoub:** "They are coming to the occupied lands. All of Palestine - from the [Jordan] river to the [Mediterranean] sea (i.e., all of Israel) - it's all occupied."

**TV host:** "I mean the Israeli occupied lands."

**Rajoub:** "You mean [occupied in] 1948 (i.e., Israel's establishment)?"

**TV host:** "Yes."

**Rajoub:** "On August 3 [2013] they are coming to us. Where they go after that - I'm not responsible for them... **There was a stupid Israeli attempt to do something (i.e., a sports activity) together.** Of course, they try to use Barcelona as a fig leaf to hide their crimes against the Palestinian sports. "



[Al-Kass Sports Channel (Qatar), June 2, 2013]

## Rajoub objects to “joint meetings or games” with Israelis

“Head of the [Palestinian] Football Association [and Deputy-Secretary of the Fatah Central Committee and Chairman of the Palestine Olympic Committee] Jibril Rajoub met with economic Vice President of the Barcelona Football Club Javier Faus. He discussed a few issues related to organizing the Catalan team’s future visit to Palestine, in addition to ways of strengthening cooperation between the Palestinian Association and the old club.

**Rajoub reiterated his complete objection to holding joint meetings or games of any kind that would be attended by Israeli players or administrators.”**

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, May 23, 2013]

## Rajoub rejects sports contacts with Israelis

**PA TV host:** “He [President of the Barcelona Club] also came with a message of peace, and the visit was related to sports with a political side, and he spoke about a game between an Israeli and Palestinian team against Barcelona. What do you have to say about this?”

**Rajoub:** “**Impossible, impossible, impossible that there be any sport-related contact with the Israeli side, in any situation.**”

[Official PA TV, sports program *Pulse of the Fields*, Feb. 25, 2013]

## Rajoub calls for Israel to be removed from international sports associations and for Palestinian “national sports” to serve as “means of resistance” to Israel

“Chairman of the Football Association and head of the Palestine Olympic Committee, Jibril Rajoub, called to remove Israel from all world Olympic associations and committees if it continues to act stubbornly and not honor international agreements and conventions. In his speech yesterday... he emphasized that he is prepared to lead this move himself, but with the support and assistance of the Arab states... He praised the decision of the political

system to reconstruct **national sports, such that it will be one of the means of resistance** and will strengthen the resolve, in order to achieve the goals, in both strategic and tactical terms."

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, May 18, 2012]

**Rajoub: No normalization with Jews – they are “Satans” and “Zionist sons of bitches”**



*Live broadcast: Opening of the first Forum for Arab women sports journalists, in the presence of PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and Deputy-Secretary of the Fatah Central Committee, Chairman of the Palestine Olympic Committee Jibril Rajoub:*

"I say also – and on behalf of Palestine: **Something that has no place in the dictionary of Palestinian sportsmen is the subject of normalization with the occupation. Impossible, impossible, impossible... I understand by normalization that the relationship between me and you will be normal, that we'll play [sports] together and there'll be a joint program. I say to you: Under no circumstances will there be normalization.** Next time we are prepared to bring the Executive Committee in helicopters... **so they will see no Jews, no Satans, no Zionist sons of bitches.** Come by helicopter and go back by helicopter."

[Official PA TV, May 17, 2012]

**Rajoub against “normalization” with Israel in sports**

"In response to a question about recent reports on Internet sites concerning normalization, [Chairman of the Football Association and Chairman of the Olympic Committee, Jibril] Rajoub said: 'Normalization is when there's a friendly match between some player or some sports team [and a player or team from Israel], whether [it takes place] in the territories occupied in '48 (i.e., in the recognized state of Israel) or [those territories occupied] in '67...'  
He noted that **the Palestinian teams that are under the responsibility of the Olympic Committee have not played, and will not play under any circumstances, inside the Green Line (i.e., inside Israel),** and that no Israeli company is sponsoring these teams."

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Jan. 16, 2012]

**Rajoub rejected “normalization” with Israel "in all its forms," including sports**

*Headline:* "Rajoub: We will not agree to normalization, which some elements are trying to introduce into the realm of Palestinian sports"

"Chairman of the Palestine Olympic Committee and the Palestinian Football Association, Jibril **Rajoub**, **once again yesterday expressed his opposition to normalization in all its forms, including normalization in the realm of sports.**"

[Official PA daily, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, Jan. 8, 2012]

### **Rajoub: The Palestinian team will not play against Israel**

"The Israeli flag will not, not, not be raised in the Palestinian territories, and the Palestinian team will not play against any team within the Green Line (i.e., inside the state of Israel)."

[Official PA TV, Jan. 2, 2012]

### **Rajoub: "Normalization with Israel is treason"**

*Official PA TV broadcast of an interview by Egyptian TV channel ONTV with Deputy Secretary of the Fatah Central Committee Jibril Rajoub*

**Rajoub:** "We say to the Arabs: It is forbidden for anyone to create normalization with Israel! Normalization with Israel is treason. We also say to members of the Egyptian press and [address] the Egyptian public opinion : You must distinguish between reaching us (i.e., traveling to the PA areas) - and after all we are your relatives and loved ones, and we are on our land and want you to come to us, and that is an important message – and normalization with Israel. There is no normalization with Israel!"

[Official Palestinian Authority TV, Sept. 2, 2016]

Rajoub's rejection of sports as a vehicle for peacebuilding violates one of the fundamental principles of FIFA. Moreover, Rajoub makes a mockery of FIFA as an organization by praising FIFA's peacebuilding attempts in English to FIFA officials while categorically rejecting the use of sports to achieve peace in his Arabic statements to the Palestinian public. His terming of Jews as "Satans" and "Zionist sons of bitches" reveals the underlying Antisemitic and anti-Israel ideology that are driving his current campaign to expel Israeli football teams from FIFA.

## **Conclusion**

This PMW report documents unequivocally that Jibril Rajoub promotes terror and incites murder, and that he also does so using his title as chairman of the Palestine Football Association, a member association of FIFA. Rajoub absolutely rejects building peace through sports activities with Israelis. Furthermore, given his status as the head of a FIFA member country's football association, every time Rajoub has expressed his support for terrorists, he has brought dishonor to FIFA. Given Rajoub's blatant anti-Israel prejudice, including support for murder of civilians, FIFA should recognize his current petition for what it is: an attempt to manipulate FIFA policy in order to further an anti-Israel political agenda.

Allowing Rajoub to remain in any position connected to FIFA and to use the title of chairman of a FIFA association dishonors the FIFA games and makes a mockery of FIFA's principles. PMW calls on FIFA to demand Rajoub's dismissal and ban his participation in FIFA activities. Taking these steps would show that FIFA rejects Rajoub's glorification of Palestinian terror and would reaffirm its commitment to using football as a bridge to peace.