

Abbas ' Terrorist-Release Demand Raises Red Flag

Ma'an News Agency has reported that the Palestinians claim zero progress was made toward restarting peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority when Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas met U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in Turkey.

This is because the Istanbul meeting did not address the Palestinians' two main preconditions for restarting negotiations with Israel: halting construction of Jewish communities within Judea and Samaria and, even more disturbingly, the release of 4,500 Palestinian security prisoners held within Israeli jails.

According to an article on Israel's Homeland Security Home (IHSH), a website whose main focus is Israeli security, the Israeli Prison Service says that Abbas insists on the release of all Palestinian security prisoners, regardless of the fact that 50 percent of them have blood on their hands.

In fact, according to the IHSH, "Among the security prisoners one finds senior members of Palestinian terrorist organizations, terrorists who were on their way to a suicide mission and were apprehended by the defense forces; dispatchers; attack planners; those responsible for preparing the explosives, etc."

Nevertheless, Abbas has stated there will be no peace with Israel until these very terrorists are released. This demand in itself should be a red flag that Abbas is no true partner for peace.

Any careful examination of the biographies of various Palestinian terrorists serving time in Israeli prisons whom Abbas has personally praised should cause one to ponder

whether Abbas is any better than his Hamas adversaries. For example, one of the Palestinian prisoners Abbas has praised is Marwan Barghouti, who is serving five life sentences for orchestrating suicide bombings against innocent civilians.

Some of the terror attacks for which Barghouti was directly responsible were the murder of a Greek Orthodox monk en route to Ma'ale Adumim; the slaughter of six Israelis celebrating a bar mitzvah in Hadera; a shooting spree on Jaffa Street in Jerusalem that resulted in the murder of two Israelis; the killing of an Israeli in a coffee factory in Jerusalem; the suicide bombing perpetrated by Darine Abu Aisha at the Maccabim checkpoint; a shooting spree at a Tel Aviv seafood restaurant that led to three Israeli deaths; and more.

Another Palestinian prisoner whom Abbas has praised is Abbas Al-Sayyid, who is serving 35 life sentences plus 150 years for planning suicide bombings. According to the Investigative Project on Terrorism, Al-Sayyid is responsible for the Passover Massacre, "a 2002 bombing of Netanya's Park Hotel that killed more than 30, mostly elderly Israelis attending a Seder. Al-Sayed had planned the Park Hotel bombing down to the minutest details ... helping bomber Abdel-Basset Odeh check his explosives, write a will, and make his 'martyrdom' video." Al-Sayyid also planned another suicide bombing in 2001, which killed five and wounded 100 others.

These are merely two of the many examples of Palestinian terrorists who have been honored by Mahmoud Abbas, who routinely not only praises Palestinian terrorists sitting in Israeli prisons, but also deceased Palestinian terrorists, the families of suicide bombers and recently released Palestinian terrorists.

For example, Samer Issawi, a Palestinian hunger-striker who is going to be released, was imprisoned for violating the terms of his release as part of the Shalit prisoner swap deal. According to the Israeli Prison Service, Issawi was sentenced

to 26 years for attempted murder, belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing weapons illegally.

Yet despite all of these facts, Abbas called out to the international community to assist all of the Palestinian hunger-strikers, including Issawi, asserting that their hunger strikes were “an honorable example of our people’s struggle for freedom and independence.” One must ponder, is it possible to strike a peace deal with people who view terrorists in such a manner?

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