Militia Patronage vs. the Diffusion of Professionalism:
The Palestinian Authority Security Forces

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are completely my own, however, and do not necessarily reflect the views of any organizations
or individuals named here, nor should anyone but me be blamed for any remaining factual errors.
Israel proclaimed Jerusalem as its capital in 1950, but the US, like nearly all other countries, maintains its Embassy in Tel Aviv.

The West Bank and Gaza Strip are Israeli-occupied with current status subject to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement – permanent status to be determined through further negotiation.

Israel: International boundary
District (meqaz) boundary
National capital
District (meqaz) center
Railroad
Divided highway
Other road

Mediterranean Sea
	
EGYPT
	
SINAI
	
JAHDAN

BASE #02833 (A08653) 9-01

U.S. CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY MAP, COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PERRY-CASTAÑEDA LIBRARY MAP COLLECTION
The recent development of the Palestinian Authority Security Forces (PASF) in the West Bank is often lauded as a success story for the diffusion of professional military norms. The U.S. government regularly touts its work to help turn the patronage-based militia system of the old Palestine into a highly capable, state-building set of military and security forces today. A review of the evidence, however, shows that the PASF, in spite of generous international assistance that has markedly improved its operational capabilities, and in spite of the potential promise of Palestinian statehood under a Ramallah-based government, is still beset by continuing violent patronage-based behavior. Operational quality is not really the same thing as professionalism, in the classic, Huntingtonian sense of the word.

MOVING TOWARD PROFESSIONALISM

Samuel P. Huntington in his classic work on U.S. military professionalism, *The Soldier and the State*, defined military professionalism as involving three components: trained expertise in the unique and specialized skills of warfare; a sense of duty and responsibility to one’s nation and society; and a sense of corporateness or group solidarity among officers and soldiers.1 The key component of Huntington’s understanding is the civil-military bargain suggested by Carl von Clausewitz’s theory of war: military professionals must be given the autonomy to train for and fight war according to their own expert understanding of what is needed to win, while the political purpose of their fighting must be left to the civilians who are the legitimate rulers of the society.2 In particular, Huntington argued that “subjective” civilian control over the military, where various political groupings within society attempted to woo and use the military against

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each other for private gain, was incompatible with military professionalism. Military professionalism requires the military to stay out of politics.  

This means that it is impossible to have a truly professional state security force without the cooperation of that state’s political leaders and security force commanders. As we shall see in the narrative that follows, that is the fundamental problem with the PASF. They were formed in a patronage-based political system, and have been used in the decades since for internal political purposes, not just security purposes, by their civilian masters. The patronage system appears still to be supported by some external donors, and meanwhile Israel is not putting much effort into encouraging PASF development or patriotism. U.S., Jordanian, and other international trainers can do their very best to transmit professional norms to the PASF units they train; but in the absence of a legitimate, unified, and law-based civilian authority, there is little hope that such norm diffusion will stick.

**BACKGROUND: PATRONAGE AND THE PALESTINIAN SECURITY FORCES**

The Palestinian territories have been subject to a patrimonial system of rule since the time of Ottoman Empire tax-farming, when individuals paid the center for the privilege of collecting imperial taxes on territories that were largely self-governing. As in other Arab cases, the system of external patronage was strengthened by the British Empire. In the early twentieth century, the new Zionist movement in what would become Israel followed similar patronage tactics, and

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3 Huntington, Soldier and the State, pp. 80-83.
the state of Israel continued the practice towards its own Arab residents after 1948. After Israel captured Gaza and the West Bank in the Six-Day War of 1967, Israeli occupation authorities doled out favors and preferences to Palestinian power-brokers there who collaborated with them as a way of gaining local influence. Nearby Persian Gulf Arab states and Iran similarly used their oil wealth to build local Palestinian clients.

The PASF had its origins in militias formed by Yasser Arafat, one of the chief founders of the Fatah Party in approximately 1959 and chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) from 1969 to his death in 2004. Fatah never had a unified ideology. It was instead an umbrella organization for various Palestinian groups waging armed struggle against Israel, and Arafat was “the glue that linked the movement’s disparate and sundry pieces.” Arafat’s major sources of funding were foreign and opaque, but it is known that he relied on Arab oil money. Like many of his counterparts who led states in the twentieth-century Arab world (including Saddam Hussein of Iraq and Muammar Qaddafi of Libya), Arafat created multiple militias with ambiguous and overlapping duties and authority structures. He apparently believed that this would make him indispensable, since the fractious and competing security forces would be loyal to him and no one else, preventing him from being overthrown by force. In 1983, Arafat’s


8 Brynen, “Neopatrimonial Dimension of Palestinian Politics.”


patronage appointments in the security forces led to a brief civil war within Fatah, as two individuals who were loyal to him were given command positions despite having deserted their posts during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.\textsuperscript{11} In other words, under Arafat, patronage ties trumped real security concerns.

For many years Arafat and his supporters lived in exile, enforced by the Israelis as an alternative to prison or assassination. The First Palestinian Intifada (which lasted from 1987 to 1993) occurred at a time when Arafat and much of his extended PLO circle lived in Tunisia. A number of new militias rose up in Palestine that, while recognizing Arafat’s leadership of the PLO, challenged his cultural authority over the Palestinian resistance. They were led by young people who disdained Arafat’s “Tunisians” for being out of touch and out of the line of fire. These groups included Hamas and Islamic Jihad, but also secular militias such as the Fatah Black Panthers and the Fatah Hawks, and the leftist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) Red Eagles.\textsuperscript{12}

The First Intifada ended with the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993. For the first time, Israel officially recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and the PLO recognized Israel’s right to exist, forswearing violence and acts of terrorism against Israel. Arafat and the PLO returned to Gaza and the West Bank in 1994, with 10,000 foreign-trained security forces in tow.\textsuperscript{13} Under a series of agreements reached over the next five years,

\begin{itemize}
  \item[Brynen, “Neopatrimonial Dimension of Palestinian Politics,” p. 28.]
\end{itemize}
the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) progressively allowed Arafat’s militias to become the foundation for the official PASF, and to take responsibility for aspects of internal and public security on selected portions of Palestinian territory.\textsuperscript{14} Local Fatah youth militias, including the 500 Nablus-based Black Panthers and several hundred Gaza-based Hawks, were integrated into the PASF as well.\textsuperscript{15}

By 2000 the PASF had sole administrative and security control of about a fifth of Palestinian territory, in non-contiguous (including most urban) areas scattered around the West Bank and Gaza (referred to as “Area A”). The PA had civil administrative responsibility under IDF security control in other places (“Area B”), where the PASF was allowed to operate only in special circumstances and with the explicit permission of Israel. Israel retained sole administrative and security control in more than half of Palestinian territory (“Area C”), but these areas contained only 10% of the Palestinian population, and were centered on rural Israeli agricultural settlements.\textsuperscript{16} In return for being granted some authority, the PASF cooperated with the IDF and the Israeli Shin Bet (or Shabak) intelligence organization to control Palestinian terrorism, and especially to put down the activities of Hamas. (Hamas was an independent offshoot of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, created in 1987 by a religious scholar who was disgusted with Arafat’s patronage politics and corruption.) Unlike the PLO, Hamas did not accept Israel’s right to exist and refused to renounce violence and terrorism against Israel.


\textsuperscript{15} Parsons, \textit{Politics of the Palestinian Authority}, p. 39, 138.

Hamas labeled Arafat and Fatah as Israeli collaborators and traitors to the Palestinian people, heirs to those who had collaborated after 1967.\textsuperscript{17} Arafat’s return to Palestine was delayed for a year as Hamas attacked the returning PLO, until the IDF could put down the Hamas attacks.\textsuperscript{18} In other words, with the signing of the Oslo accords and the creation of the PASF, Arafat had in effect accepted a new form of Israeli patronage, trading life in Palestine for security cooperation.

The PLO militias were not well-disciplined military forces. Reflecting the earlier practices of Arafat while in exile, multiple PASF units had overlapping responsibilities, competing mandates, and no clear lines of control. At one time they included 17 different organizations, “all of which operated without any legal foundation.”\textsuperscript{19} Several of them operated outside of the written guidelines established by the Oslo agreements, but Israel “tolerated the creation of these organizations…because they believed that their less formal nature might give Arafat a freer hand to neutralize terrorist activity.”\textsuperscript{20} They and their commanders were famed for their corruption and brutality.

Throughout the Oslo period the PASF were seen as a mechanism for sopping up unemployed former PLO members, and as an enforcement tool against Arafat’s competitors and critics.\textsuperscript{21} Almost half of the over 100,000 individuals that Arafat employed in the PA—around 47,000 men—were in the security forces, in an area smaller than the U.S. state of Delaware.\textsuperscript{22} Some

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  \item[18] Shachar, \textit{Gaza Strip}, p. 130.
  \item[20] Zanotti, \textit{U.S. Security Assistance}, p. 5.
  \item[22] Shachar, \textit{Gaza Strip}, p. 145.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
units sought their own external patronage when they felt sidelined by Fatah party dominance of the PLO. For example, the 2,000-man Badr Forces of the Palestinian National Liberation Army (PNLA) in 1994 reached out to King Hussein of Jordan for funding, after having been stationed in Jordan for 12 years while in exile.\(^{23}\) It is hence not surprising that Palestinian militia leaders who were now PASF commanders took advantage of that situation to become what amounted to mafia bosses or warlords.\(^{24}\) Gaza in particular was riddled with competing gangs, including many who ran protection rackets from individual street corners. Reportedly the price of the permit for crossing the border into Israel proper from Gaza “depended on where [the Palestinian worker] acquired it, and from which of Arafat’s [then] fourteen security services.”\(^{25}\)

The two most powerful armed local power-brokers were Mohammad Dahlan and Jibril Rajoub. Dahlan was from the Khan Yunis refugee camp in Gaza. He was the founding commander of the Fatah Hawks, and established a base in Gaza City in 1995 by uniting competing Fatah militias into the new Preventive Security Organization (PSO) for the Gaza strip.\(^{26}\) Rajoub was commander of the counterpart PSO in the West Bank. His home base was in Dura, a village near the city of Hebron.\(^{27}\) Both PSO branches were dominated by younger locals who had spent years in jail while Arafat’s generation was in exile, but Dahlan and Rajoub had later joined Arafat in

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\(^{23}\) Parsons, *Politics of the Palestinian Authority*, p. 112.


exile in Tunisia, and both knew him well. They were fierce competitors for his attention and loyalty.

Each branch of the PSO officially had 1,500 men, responsible for an immense range of activities that included combating anti-Israeli terrorism, maintaining intelligence about Israel, and overseeing the PA prison networks and prisoner interrogations (including counterintelligence against informers). They also had the authority to levy taxes on all Palestinians that did business with the Israeli security sector, and to monitor all imports and exports through the territories, which gave them a huge base for graft. Dahlan was known to run a protection racket in Gaza for gasoline and cigarette imports, to charge illegal fees for those who wished to cross the border into Israel proper, and to control cement, construction, and agricultural businesses in Gaza because of his oversight of imports and exports across the Israeli line of control.

Both Dahlan and Rajoub were also key negotiators with Israel. They had gained many connections with their Israeli interlocutors because of their long prison stints, and had strong cooperative relationships with Israeli defense and intelligence agencies. Dahlan reportedly arrested 2,000 Hamas members in the Gaza strip in 1996 in cooperation with Israeli authorities after a wave of Hamas-supported suicide bombings in Israel. Dahlan and Rajoub were also famed for their connections to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The CIA had

29 Parsons, Politics of the Palestinian Authority, pp. 136-7.  
maintained direct negotiating ties to the PLO since 1970. It trained “hundreds” of PASF officers after Oslo, including in the United States, and helped finance the activities of both Dahlan and Rajoub. The administration of President Bill Clinton provided tens of millions of dollars in covert assistance to the PASF, bypassing the Oslo rules. Hence the patronage networks of Dahlan and Rajoub were maintained by clear links not just with IDF patrons, but with U.S. ones as well.

The initial arrangements for the PASF were undone by the Second Intifada in 2000. While the uprising was led by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, youth movement leaders (known as Tanzim) inside Fatah also denounced “the Tunisians’ ” cooperation with the IDF. They called for attacks against Israeli security forces, and Fatah fragmented as a result. The PASF lost all semblance of discipline. Several new Fatah-associated militia groupings, including the Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades (AAMB), claimed responsibility for attacks on Israeli military sites and civilian settlers that were carried out by uniformed PASF personnel. Some AAMB units were reputed to get significant funding from Iran and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah party in Lebanon. The AAMB also claimed responsibility for the planning of twenty suicide attacks against targets (including at civilian locations like shopping malls) in Israel, and is suspected of involvement in more than a

33 Zanotti, “U.S. Security Assistance,” pp. 5-6.
34 ICG, Who Governs the West Bank?, p. 17.
35 ICG, Who Governs the West Bank?, p. 22.
hundred more. Some of those involved in planning suicide bombings were reported by Israeli sources to have been members of the elite PASF General Intelligence Service.

The IDF immediately began carrying out retaliatory strikes against PASF installations, especially those located in the West Bank. (The Gaza-based forces of Dahlan were less involved in anti-Israeli violence.) In July 2002 the IDF reoccupied all territory that had been given over to PASF control in the Oslo process. PASF headquarters buildings throughout Palestine were destroyed by IDF shelling and air strikes in what was known as Operation Defensive Shield. Rajoub’s home was shelled by Israeli tanks while he was in the shower. The CIA-built headquarters of his PSO forces near Ramallah was also shelled, and there the IDF “discovered rooms full of sophisticated electronics supplied by the CIA, which had enabled the Preventive Security organization to monitor Israeli military and civilian communications.”

The majority of PASF personnel were detained for interrogation for at least brief periods by the IDF.

With the decline of anything resembling PASF authority after 2002, militias began providing mafia-like “protection” throughout the West Bank, just as they had always done in Gaza. They ran extortion rackets and threatened local political leaders to obtain favors, but also provided a

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39 ICG, Who Governs the West Bank?, p. 4.
41 Ephron, “The Next Arafat.”
42 Shpiro, “CIA as Middle East Power Broker?”, p. 105.
43 ICG, Who Governs the West Bank?, p. 4.
form of law and order at a time when the PA could not do so. Even the fearsome AAMB was not a unified organization. Instead it operated as a fragmented network under multiple commanders with separate local patronage networks.

A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR PROFESSIONALIZATION

This could have been the end of the story. Instead it became an opportunity for Israel to try to force change within the PA. Arafat had been put under what amounted to house arrest in his compound in Ramallah since 2001. His hand now forced by overwhelming Israeli military action, under strong Western pressure he officially declared his support for reform of the PASF. The international community took this as a signal that change was possible as the Second Intifada wound down.

In April 2003 the US, the United Nations, the European Union, and Russia (the so-called Quartet) launched what was called the Performance Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution (“the Roadmap”). PASF reform was a key plank in establishing the security preconditions necessary for Palestinian statehood. Reform efforts were supported by Arafat’s newly appointed finance minister, Salaam Fayyad, who had an MBA from a U.S. university and a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Texas at Austin, and had previously been the International Monetary Fund area director in the West Bank. He was well regarded as an honest reformer. Fayyad instituted a payroll reform in 2004 that deposited all security sector salaries

46 ICG, Who Governs the West Bank?, p. 25.
directly into individuals’ bank accounts, in an effort to thwart patronage-based hiring and command relationships.48

The US and Israel were disappointed, nonetheless, that despite his oral support for PASF reform and Fayyad’s efforts, Arafat seemed to resist any real structural or institutional change. One unfortunate result was an internecine clash among two branches of PASF troops in Gaza City in July 2004. Musa Arafat (Yasser’s cousin, the former head of his military intelligence organization, and a man widely suspected of corruption49) led what amounted to an attempted coup against Dahlan’s PSO authority in the area.50 This was interpreted by some as a battle between Arafat’s aging “Tunisians” and Dahlan’s Tanzim supporters.51

Then in November 2004 Yasser Arafat died. Two months later Mahmoud Abbas, Arafat’s former prime minister, won elections that were universally regarded as free and fair to become the new president of the PA. With the death of Arafat and the popular mandate of a reformist leader, the PASF could finally, it was thought, move toward professionalism. The creation of a democratizing and reformist proto-state might inspire a new sense of patriotism that would overcome old patronage habits. Hope soared with the passage of a law in April 2005 that demanded the restructuring of Arafat’s multiple and competing security forces into a streamlined

49 Inbari and Diker, “The Murder of Musa Arafat and the Battle for the Spoils of Gaza.”
51 Shachar, Gaza Strip, p. 165.
new hierarchy with three branches—internal policing, national defense, and intelligence—although in practice six separate forces with some overlapping jurisdiction remained in place. Dahlan resigned as the Gaza PSO commander, saying that he was disgusted over the lack of reform, to accept a position in the central PA government (which was then still located in Gaza).

As noted above, the CIA had long provided covert financial and training support for the PASF. Now, however, the US made its support public, sending Lt. Gen. William “Kip” Ward as the official new US Security Coordinator (USSC) for the Palestinian National Authority, by order of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The official USSC mandate (which involved cooperation with Canada, the UK, and at one point officials from five other countries) included help to rein in the militias and undertake security sector reform and retraining, with the ultimate goal of convincing Israel that a viable Palestinian security partner existed. This was seen as central to the Roadmap. One key indicator would be the success of the PA in regulating and controlling the border crossings between Gaza and Israel proper. That summer Ward testified before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the PASF practiced “loyalty to individuals, chieftains, [and] fiefdoms.” He was promoted and reassigned to the U.S. Africa Command shortly thereafter, and his replacement was Gen. Keith Dayton, the man whose name continues

52 ICG, Squaring the Circle, p. 2-3, including fn. 13 and 14.
55 ICG, Squaring the Circle, p. 3; U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), Palestinian Authority: U.S. Assistance Is Training and Equipping Security Forces, but the Program Need to Measure Progress and Faces Logistical Constraints, Report to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, GAO-10-505, May 2010, pp. 10-11.
to be most associated with USSC programs. In parallel with the USSC’s establishment, the European Union established an office for Palestinian Civilian Police (PCP) training reform, EUPOL COPPS, led by the United Kingdom.57

In August and September 2005, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon led a unilateral disengagement of all IDF forces from the Gaza strip, as well as from four Israeli settlements near the northern West Bank city of Jenin. It amazed some observers that the Palestinian militias in Gaza held together during the pullout. 58 This was seen as an encouraging sign that a new sense of patriotism had triumphed. As soon as the pullout was over, though, various Palestinian militias that had previously been reined in by the threat of IDF action in Gaza began fighting each other for control.

THE ABSENCE OF PROFESSIONALISM IN GAZA, 2005-7

Neighborhood clan-based gangs that had long challenged PLO authority were strengthened, and the PASF found themselves paying these gangs for their own protection.59 Musa Arafat was assassinated when his compound was surrounded by a neighborhood clan militia in Gaza City; he was dragged out in his pajamas and shot by masked men. 60 Some believe the gang that killed him supported Hamas. 61 Others believe that Dahlan’s men were getting payback for Arafat’s coup attempt the year before, especially since Dahlan had suddenly left Gaza for emergency

57 ICG, Squaring the Circle, p. 3.
58 Barnard, “Slaying Lays Bear Chaos.”
61 Shachar, Gaza Strip, p. 175.
herniated disk surgery in Jordan (and had taken his entire family with him) the week before. Dahlan was rumored to have several palatial homes scattered around various foreign capitals.

The infighting became much worse after Hamas defeated Fatah in free and fair parliamentary elections a few months later. Despite having supported the elections process, both the US and the EU refused to recognize the validity of the results because Hamas refused to recognize Israel and foreswear violence. US security assistance was transferred away from the new Palestinian Authority government, centered in Gaza and now under Hamas control, to the presidential administration of Abbas and his Presidential Guard Forces in the West Bank. EU police training on Palestinian territory was halted. Hamas in turn established its own official security forces in Gaza under the leadership of the new Interior Minister Said Siyam. The armed wing of Hamas, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades (IQB), had apparently long been infiltrating the PASF and PCP forces in Gaza. Now it could use that experience to set up its own internal security and police team.

Several attempts were made to form a unity government between the PLO and Hamas over the next year, but in April 2006 those efforts began to collapse, leading to more than a year of bloody infighting, street battles with machine guns, attacks on each other’s civilian educational

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61 ICG, *Squaring the Circle*, fn. 20, p. 3.
64 Shachar, *Gaza Strip*, p. 171.
and media organizations, and targeted kidnappings and torture in the Gaza strip. A common torture technique was to shoot opponents in the extremities with machine guns, sometimes amputating feet or legs in the process, so that victims would be disabled for life. Dahlan’s PSO forces had long been accused of torturing Hamas militia members in Gaza. This pattern extended back to the actions taken by his Fatah Hawks against accused collaborators in the early 1990s. Now some reports claimed that the ferocity increased because the U.S. and Israel were backing Dahlan in a coup attempt against Hamas, something that U.S. and Israeli official sources vociferously denied.

By spring 2007 the tide had turned in favor of Hamas. In May Hamas attacked a unit of USSC-trained PASF troops near Gaza’s border with Israel proper, withdrawing only when three Israeli tanks approached. The violence peaked on June 7. Reportedly some of this fighting was not only between the two movements but within them, including within the PA Fatah forces in Gaza. Several of Dahlan’s top commanders were killed, after Dahlan himself had relocated to Cairo. (Once again, he was conveniently out of the picture.) The relatively small Hamas forces in quick order routed tens of thousands of PASF forces, launching “systematic attacks against headquarters and sites” of the PASF, and taking over the entire Gaza strip.

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67 Hundley, “Fatah Hawks.”
71 Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Annual Report 2007, p. 73.
Abbas appointed a commission of inquiry to investigate what had happened. Its 2008 report blamed Fatah rivalries for a lack of command cohesiveness in Gaza. Hamas was able to exploit the factionalism, according to the report, by painting its activities as a battle against Dahlan’s men. An Israeli summary of the report states: “This tactic, according to the committee, turned out to be particularly successful to the point where senior figures in the [Fatah] movement publicly stated that they would not take part in ‘Dahlan’s battle.’” Senior Fatah members “stood idly by” while PASF headquarters were destroyed. Meanwhile, Dahlan’s men were unimpressed with the new PASF commander that had replaced him, and Dahlan had attempted to command the tactical battle from abroad. Dozens of leading Fatah members fled; Hamas forces arrested and tortured dozens more who remained, killing a few.

FAYYADISM IN THE WEST BANK, 2007-10

The old criminal gang militias had never disappeared in the West Bank. The only area that was spared gang violence during the chaos of the early 2000s was the city of Hebron, where familial clans reached an accord to keep the peace among each other. Because of its strong traditional clan base, though, Hebron had long been resistant to PA control. The absence of violence there did not indicate loyalty to the Palestinian proto-state.

Abbas was still the elected president of the PA, now relegated to his headquarters on the rebuilt ruins of Arafat’s complex in Ramallah in the West Bank. The PASF, though, were technically

75 Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Annual Report 2007, pp. 82-5.
76 ICG, Squaring the Circle, fn. 62, p. 8.
77 ICG, Who Governs the West Bank?, p. 8.
under the control of their ministries, which were now under Hamas parliamentary control. As a result, Abbas relied on his own Presidential Guard to protect PA facilities and officials in the West Bank and control the border crossings with Israel. He appointed Fayyad, the Western technocrat, as his prime minister under heavy Western pressure, and without getting the legal approval of the Hamas-dominated parliament elected in 2006.

Neither Abbas nor Fayyad had the kind of political support at home that Arafat had had. Abbas was one of the founding members of Fatah, and hence a logical heir to Arafat’s legacy. But the secretary general of Fatah, Faruq Qaddumi, had long opposed the Oslo accords and also opposed Abbas, who had come to rely more on the international community for his support as a result. Fayyad had never joined the Fatah party, and remained more a Western-supported technocrat than an indigenous political player. By this time Fatah did not matter much to the population as a whole, since it was seen as corrupt and had done a bad job in recruiting new members. But the old Fatah patronage networks still operated inside the PASF. The PASF had been founded by Arafat, reflected his leadership style, and was filled with members of local militias.

The 2007 events jolted the West Bank-based PA into action, and encouraged both Israel and the Western donor community to do more to support the PASF as the only perceived alternative to chaos in Palestine. Fayyad’s most important stated purpose was to eliminate the corruption practiced under Arafat, so that the PA would be perceived (both among its residents and by the Western donor community) as a legitimate, law-abiding, and high-functioning state. His state-

78 ICG, Palestine: Salvaging Fatah, p. 3.
building efforts were called “Fayyadism” by pundit Thomas Friedman in 2009, and the label stuck.\(^{79}\) Within the PASF, this meant replacing the patronage links of the old Fatah leadership with new loyalty to the PA government as an institution.\(^{80}\) For example, the government negotiated with members of the AAMB, asking them to switch their loyalties to the proto-state out of a sense of duty. It promised them dignity, petty crime forgiveness, and targeted social welfare payments and reconstruction assistance in return.\(^{81}\) The goal was to use Fayyadism to build patriotism.

It appeared that Israel was supporting this initiative. Fatah gunmen, including 178 AAMB members\(^{82}\) who had participated in the Second Intifada and other anti-Israeli actions, were amnestied by Israel. The IDF and Shin Bet were full partners with the PASF in this effort, which involved intelligence sharing over the vetting of particular individuals. In some cases the PA sheltered what Israel referred to as “fugitives,” including AAMB members, in its own facilities, while negotiating with Israel to include them on the amnesty list. Israel agreed to full or partial amnesty for 343 Fatah militia members in return for their demobilization in 2007, and over a hundred more individuals were added to the program later on. Some went through a transitional three-month period, where they could live at home but had to report to PASF facilities in Area A for daily monitoring.\(^{83}\) Many of them were absorbed into the PASF and even became PASF commanders, in a process that occasioned controversy at home, given the possibility of Israeli

\(^{80}\) ICG, Squaring the Circle, p. 33.
\(^{81}\) ICG, Ruling Palestine II, pp. 6-7.
\(^{83}\) ICG, Ruling Palestine II, p. 7.
infiltration through prisoners that had been turned. Col. Maher Faris, deputy commander of PASF Military Intelligence, said in 2009, “The world over, the prisoner does not return to his security unit. But in Palestine, we name him commander.”

For the new PA to survive, the Hamas threat had to be eliminated in the West Bank. The PA integrated its anti-Hamas activities with its anti-crime drive. Anyone suspected of pro-Hamas tendencies within the PASF was purged, just as recalcitrant AAMB members were also purged out of the PASF. Hamas charities and businesses in the West Bank were seized by PASF troops, and pro-Hamas civil society leaders (including religious preachers and NGO officials) were arrested. By one estimate, between mid-June and the end of September, 1500 Hamas affiliates in the West Bank were arrested. AAMB units cooperated with the PASF in the West Bank anti-Hamas actions. Reportedly some arrestees were tortured. Presumably this drive against Hamas ideology was part of the effort to build a new proto-state identity based on secular Fayyadism rather than Hamas’s interpretation of Islam.

The U.S. State Department allocated $99 million over the next several years to assist in the renovation and construction of PASF facilities in the West Bank. It also allocated $392 million to train and equip the PASF. The training took place in Jordan, in part to get the PASF out of Palestine and the temptations of old network connections for the several months that they were

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85 ICG, Squaring the Circle, p. 6.
86 ICG, Squaring the Circle, p. 6.
87 ICG, Squaring the Circle, p. 6.
89 GAO, Palestinian Authority, p. 19.
being reoriented. In 2008 Fayyad initiated an early retirement incentive program for the PASF, to try to rid the forces of “less-motivated and undesirable officers” and free up spaces for new recruits, while shrinking the bloat of the Arafat era. New recruits were often funneled into the U.S.-trained battalions. But the two arguably most powerful PASF branches, the old PSO and the General Intelligence Service (with their CIA connections) were not covered by USSC activities. While it is not known whether CIA support continued, it appears that U.S. agencies did not work together to ensure that patronage-based factionalism was overcome.

By early 2010, four National Security Forces (NSF) special battalions had been trained in Jordan, along with one Presidential Guard battalion. There were plans over the next two years to train a total of 10 NSF battalions for deployment in each West Bank governorate, a process that was reportedly close to completion by 2012. In June 2007, the EU also resumed police training in the West Bank. Meanwhile, to move forward in the anti-Hamas and anti-crime drive, Fayyad pushed for a series of major PASF campaigns. The first, in November 2007, targeted both Hamas supporters and criminals from the Fatah militias in the city of Nablus. PASF actions there were taken without external support, and indeed USSC Dayton recommended against the operation. Nablus was a traditional Fatah stronghold, but Hamas had won municipal elections there in 2006 as part of its overall electoral victories in Palestine. After the 2007 Hamas seizure of Gaza, Fatah militias “rampaged through Nablus, looting and burning offices

90 Zanotti, U.S. Security Assistance, p. 18.
91 Zanotti, U.S. Security Assistance, p. 17.
92 Zanotti, U.S. Security Assistance, p. 32.
93 GAO, Palestinian Authority, p. 3, 15; Zanotti, U.S. Security Assistance, p. 16.
94 ICG, Squaring the Circle, fn. 99, p. 12.
95 ICG, Who Governs the West Bank?, p. 9.
and institutions associated with Hamas and storming City Hall.”\textsuperscript{96} This helps explain why Fayyad made it his pilot project. One of his goals was to rid the city of stolen cars, since they were frequently used to commit other crimes.\textsuperscript{97} The campaign appeared to concentrate on petty criminality and quality of life issues, while avoiding major confrontations with armed and recalcitrant AAMB members.\textsuperscript{98} The campaign worked, and by 2010 Nablus residents were celebrating the return of normal life to the area.\textsuperscript{99}

The second operation, in May 2008, targeted Jenin and its surrounding areas, a West Bank city where Hamas and the even more extreme Islamic Jihad movement had been able to establish themselves during the Second Intifada.\textsuperscript{100} The 2008-9 Jenin operations were conducted by USSC-trained troops with strong IDF cooperation, and both the U.S. and Israel consider them to have been a success. They captured “scores” of criminals and Hamas members and sympathizers and their weapons,\textsuperscript{101} cleared more illegal cars, and succeeded in restoring a sense of law and order on the streets.\textsuperscript{102} (More will be said about Jenin below.) A third campaign in late 2008 targeted Hebron, where despite the success of the clans in keeping relative order, significant Hamas operatives remained. This was also done in cooperation with the IDF, although Dayton again expressed his reservations.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{97} ICG, \textit{Squaring the Circle}, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{98} ICG, \textit{Ruling Palestine II}, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{99} Kershner, “Stability in West Bank.”
\textsuperscript{100} ICG, \textit{Who Governs the West Bank?}, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{101} ICG, \textit{Squaring the Circle}, p. 8; GAO, \textit{Palestinian Authority}, pp. 25-6.
\textsuperscript{102} ICG, \textit{Ruling Palestine II}, p. 9; Zanotti, \textit{U.S. Security Assistance}, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{103} ICG, \textit{Squaring the Circle}, pp. 8-9, 12.
The extent of PASF and Israeli cooperation in all of these efforts was most clearly revealed in late December 2008. On December 27, in response to repeated rocket fire against Israeli civilian targets, Israel launched Operation Cast Lead, which amounted to war against Hamas in Gaza. In spite of calls from the Hamas leadership, then based in Syria, to launch a Third Intifada in the West Bank, the PASF controlled protest activity so effectively that the IDF was able to redeploy its forces to the west to concentrate on Gaza.\textsuperscript{104} As the years went on, the PASF continued to work with the IDF to identify and arrest those accused of terrorist acts against Israeli West Bank settlers, including through the use of informants cultivated by the PASF’s General Intelligence Service.\textsuperscript{105} Israel in return increasingly expanded the areas where the PASF were allowed to operate.\textsuperscript{106}

**A Success Story for Professionalism?**

The general sense by 2010 was that the PASF were remarkably effective, given their past history. The amnestied prisoners and former militia heads seem to have accepted Abbas’s and Fayyad’s PA authority, over that of their old Fatah links.\textsuperscript{107} The militias were seen to be exhausted from their years of fighting and running, as well as smarting from popular support for Hamas and their loss of control in Gaza. An example of the apparent loyalty switch was the PASF’s success in capturing and holding a well-connected Fatah member in early 2008, in spite of his friends’ efforts to spark a riot in Ramallah in response to his imprisonment.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{104} ICG, *Squaring the Circle*, pp. 9-10; GAO, *Palestinian Authority*, p. 26.


\textsuperscript{106} ICG, *Squaring the Circle*, p. 13.

\textsuperscript{107} ICG, *Palestine: Salvaging Fatah*, fn 23, p. 4; *Squaring the Circle*, pp. 6-7.

\textsuperscript{108} ICG, *Ruling Palestine II*, fn. 52, p. 8.
The acceptance of the new order may have been helped by the fact that Israel refused amnesty requests for some individuals, re-arrested 33 of the men whose names were on the amnesty list (including in one case from a PASF installation), and killed nine others in operations. In other words, it was very clear that the amnesty was conditional, and based on perceived individual acceptance of the new ideological order, in a situation where the PASF had to rely on Israel for its own defense against Hamas. The international donor community took credit for contributing to success through the high quality of the training programs provided by both the USSC and EUPOL COPPS. The population was behind the reformed PASF because of their success in reestablising order and putting down the militias.

The PASF and the PCP did not always abide by international human rights norms. Nonviolent Hamas supporters were targeted for arrest. Shootouts with Hamas supporters sometimes led to popular rioting against the PASF. Unarmed protestors and NGOs that opposed PA policies were quashed. PCP sensitivity to civil policing norms in general left something to be desired. Everyone also believed that there were probably still significant weapons caches

109 ICG, Ruling Palestine II, p. 15.
114 I witnessed a very minor, if shocking, example of this in Bethlehem in May 2012. Inside the lower level of the Church of the Nativity, where displays underneath the floor indicate the purported places that the Virgin Mary
scattered around the West Bank as a sort of insurance policy for the future. Yet many believed that these were blips on the way toward professionalism. Two more recent sets of events cast some doubt about the PASF’s trajectory, nonetheless.

**ABBAS’ FIGHT WITH DAHLAN, 2011**

In June 2011, the Fatah Party Executive Committee expelled Dahlan from party ranks, accusing him of corruption and murder (a bit ironic, given that accusations of both corruption and murder had dogged him since at least the early 1990s, and never prevented him from being named to high-level security positions or the Fatah Central Committee). It announced that it was sending his file for investigation to the attorney general. The real explanation was apparently that Dahlan was “accused of masterminding a plot to topple Abbas,” and the commission of inquiry was stacked with Abbas supporters. Some believed that Abbas came down so hard on Dahlan simply because Dahlan had criticized him and his sons publicly for their weakness and corruption.

In July 2011 the PASF staged a commando-style raid of Dahlan’s home in the Ramallah suburb of Tira. They temporarily arrested a dozen of his bodyguards and seized their weapons. PA tended the infant Jesus and the Three Wise Men watched, tourists were told to pass through quickly so that an important Armenian service could proceed in the sanctuary above. One stout, middle-aged woman wearing a headscarf, an apparent religious pilgrim from southern Europe, spent too long peering down into the Three Wise Men area. A uniformed Palestinian Civil Police officer roughly grabbed her by the arm, pulled her up, and forced her to move on with a shove.

115 ICG, *Squaring the Circle*, p. 6.
116 “Fatah to Expel Controversial Strongman Dahlan,” AFP, June 12, 2011.
119 Toameh, “Abbas-Dahlan Spat.”
officials said that Dahlan was not authorized to use bodyguards, and that “such armed phenomena” threatened to drag the West Bank back into “anarchy and lawlessness.” This was followed by a vitriolic PA campaign against Dahlan, who had meanwhile fled abroad once more. The famous November 2012 exhumation of Arafat’s body, to determine whether his death in 2004 was the result of Polonium-210 radiation poisoning, seems to have had its origin in this conflict with Dahlan, whom the PA had accused of poisoning Arafat shortly after the PASC raid on Dahlan’s home. (Arafat’s widow submitted some of Arafat’s belongings to Swiss scientists for testing later that summer.)

By February 2012, several high-ranking Fatah officials who had been based in Gaza and were known as Dahlan’s supporters claimed on a Hamas website that they were being harassed by the PASF. They also complained that Abbas was not providing them and their families with the income and social services that they had been promised when they fled to the West Bank, and that they were denied access to rental housing and jobs. This pro-Dahlan faction apparently got its revenge on January 4, 2013, at a much-publicized Fatah rally in Gaza City that marked the latest round of Fatah’s repeated unity bids with Hamas. Abbas had staked a lot of political capital on these events. But there were embarrassing violent scuffles among the Fatah participants. The rally had to be cancelled early when “hundreds of Dahlan supporters jumped onto the stage and clashed with Abbas supporters,” according to an unnamed Fatah official.

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121 Toameh, “Abbas-Dahlan Spat.”
THE FIGHT IN JENIN, 2011-2012

The 2008 PASF Jenin clean-up effort was followed by the announcement of an agreed “Jenin Plan,” created jointly by the Jenin Governorate, the United Nations Development Program, and Israel to make Jenin a model city for the West Bank. The U.S. State Department contributed significant funds to improve criminal prosecution there as well.\textsuperscript{124} Israel saw it as a pilot project, to assess whether “economic, civil and security assistance which allows more responsibility to be transferred to the Palestinian Authority” could strengthen PA moderates.\textsuperscript{125} Jenin was seen as a good starting point because it was one of the West Bank areas evacuated in 2005, alongside Gaza. There were no Israeli settlements nearby as a result. Further, the security barrier between the Jenin area and Israel was completed and had been functioning well for some time, so restrictions could be lifted experimentally to encourage trade with nearby areas of northern Israel.\textsuperscript{126} The Israeli government provided agricultural and irrigation assistance to the area, gave additional Israeli work and special border crossing permits to local residents, and eased the operation of nearby border checkpoints. Israel also offered to provide expedited approval for Palestinian takeover of security functions in the area.

But in April 2011 violence resumed in Jenin. A well-known Israeli-Arab actor, director, and peace activist, Juliano Mer-Khamis, was shot dead by five masked men outside the theater he co-

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\item \textsuperscript{124} Zanotti, \textit{U.S. Security Assistance}, p. 27.
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owned in the Jenin refugee camp. Some residents believed that local PASF officers might be involved, since there was never any progress in the investigation about who was responsible. Over the coming months Jenin saw a resurgence in gang-style shootings, and the United Nations temporarily suspended its activities there. Finally in May 2012 the home of Jenin Governor Kadura Musa, the local man who led and symbolized the success of the Jenin model, was attacked by gunmen one night. While some saw this as a revenge attack for recent PASF successes, others believe that it reflected infighting within the PASF forces themselves, where rogue officers were protected by their Fatah party ties. Musa died of a heart attack later that day, while continuing to battle the gang that had attacked his home.

The former AAMB commander in the area, Zakaria Zubeidi, was arrested by the PASF for participation in the attack on Musa, and held in a PA prison. Another Fatah leader in Jenin claimed that the gun used in the shooting at Musa’s home was found in Zubeidi’s possession—something his friends and family denied. The reason that the arrest is significant is that Zubeidi had earlier acted as the warlord of Jenin. He told a Western reporter in 2004—in other

133 Brulliard, “Drama in West Bank City of Jenin.”
words, at the time that so much hope had originally been expressed for the future of the PA—“I am the highest authority.”134 To another journalist Zubeidi had said at about the same time:

I’m in charge. The police? They just disturb the traffic. If there’s a problem, people come to me. If I catch a thief, I make him return what he steals - and sometimes we get him to join the brigades, so he can help us catch the other thieves. A while ago, someone shot at me, so I broke his hands.135

His rise to power in Jenin had reportedly involved revenge attacks by the youthful AAMB members he commanded against the old Fatah elite.136 In early 2005, during a presidential election campaign visit to Jenin, Abbas had to pay Zubeidi homage, as crowds chanted Zubeidi’s name and not Abbas’s while they went about the city together.137 There is no doubt that Zubeidi’s very presence in Jenin could have motivated continued Fatah infighting.

In 2007 Zubeidi had been amnestied by the Israelis. He was the co-owner of the peace-themed theater in the Jenin refugee camp with Mer-Khamis. Their mothers had earlier run a similar children’s theater there as both were growing up, and they were fast friends.138 In other words, the gangland-style killing of Mer-Khamis in April 2011 was probably directed against Zubeidi and his network. Zubeidi’s amnesty was suddenly revoked by Israel in late December 2011 as gang activity heightened, and his brother and a coworker at his theater were arrested. Zubeidi was told that he needed to stay inside a PASF facility in protective custody, or otherwise he

136 Bennet, “The Interregnum.”
137 Toomey, “Date with Terror,” p. 52.
138 Toomey, “Date with Terror,” p. 52.
would be re-arrested by the IDF.\textsuperscript{139} (It is not clear from press reports whether Zubeidi was still living in PASF custody when he was arrested the following May for the attack against Musa.)

After Musa’s death, 2,000 PCP officers (who were reportedly brought in from the clans of Hebron, so that they would not have any local connections) also arrested dozens of current or former PASF and PCP security officers, including the former commander of the National Security Forces in the region and two members of the powerful, allegedly CIA-supported General Intelligence Service.\textsuperscript{140} At least two of the National Security Force members arrested were senior officers who had undergone the USSC-sponsored training program.\textsuperscript{141} Reportedly those arrested were connected to Zubeidi’s network, including a branch based in Nablus, the old Fatah stronghold that had witnessed gang rampages in 2007.

Abbas led some observers to believe that the arrests were broadly focused on “overdue accounts,” and directed more against political opponents than any real crooks in the PASF. The PASF commander in Jenin, Radi Asideh, who had been a strong ally of U.S. assistance efforts in the Jenin plan,\textsuperscript{142} blamed “Fatah outlaws” inside the PASF for Musa’s death.\textsuperscript{143} He was then removed from his position and reassigned to a different, less visible governorate.\textsuperscript{144} The next

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\item \textsuperscript{139} Avi Issacharoff, “Palestinian Pardoned by Israel Put Back on Wanted List,” \textit{Ha’aretz}, Dec. 29, 2011.
\item \textsuperscript{140} “P.A. Forces Arrest Dozens of Fatah Members,” CBN.com, May 7, 2012.
\item \textsuperscript{143} Khaled Abu Toameh, “PA chief fired after blaming Fatah for Jenin chaos,” \textit{Jerusalem Post}, May 11, 2012.
\item \textsuperscript{144} “PA Arrests Suspects in Jenin Governor Shooting,” \textit{Jerusalem Post}, May 11, 2012.
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day, the PA officially announced that three of Dahlan’s former associates were fugitives, wanted for questioning in the incidents leading to Musa’s death.\(^\text{145}\)

**AN ASSESSMENT OF WEST BANK CASES**

Both of these recent West Bank cases might be interpreted as success stories for professionalism. The Palestinian proto-state drove off Dahlan to show that no one is above the rule of law (whatever the “rule of law” might mean in a territory whose elected president’s term expired in January 2009, and whose appointed prime minister was never confirmed by parliament). The PCP then arrested the former warlord of Jenin as well as some bad Fatah apples connected to him inside the PASF, demonstrating the strength of institutionalized loyalty to the PA over old factional ties.

Yet it is notable that both of these cases involved power struggles over violent patronage at the very top of the PASF, and both involved personal challenges to Abbas. Dahlan, USSC-trained NSF officers, EUPOL COPPS-trained PCP officers, and allegedly CIA-supported General Intelligence Service officers were assumed to be some of the most pro/proto-state and professionally oriented leaders that the PASF had to offer. Dahlan was famed for the personal backing he had by senior members of the George W. Bush administration and by General Dayton.\(^\text{146}\) All of these people were supposed to be the cutting edge of the ideational reform toward Palestinian patriotism.

\(^{145}\) Palestinian Information Centre website, “Palestinian security forces pursue suspects involved in Jenin incidents,” May 12, 2012, as reported by the BBC Worldwide Monitoring service, May 14, 2012.

\(^{146}\) Rose, “Gaza Bombshell.”
EXPLAINING THE FAILURE OF PROFESSIONALIZATION

Instead of being a set of professional security forces, the PASF are hampered by politicization and infighting. A number of factors, both internal and external, help explain the weakness of the PASF and PCP as participants in the state-building project.

First and fundamentally, there is no institutionalized command hierarchy overseeing PASF activities. While in part this dual presidential/ministerial system reflects the presidential emergency powers that Abbas decreed after the Gaza debacle of 2007, the ambiguity of command and control is also reflected in the PA Basic Law of 2002. The president is listed in this law as commander in chief of the security forces, but the council of ministers (and thereby, the prime minister) has “the responsibility to maintain the public order and internal security.” 147 Presidential Decree no. 12 from 2002 restructured the internal security forces and put them under the control of the interior minister, but the status of the most powerful “proto-army” organizations (the National Security Forces, the Presidential Guard [an elite group of 2,300 personnel in four battalions], Military Intelligence, and General Intelligence [the group most strongly linked to the CIA]) were “left untouched.” 148 The 2005 restructuring law demands that all organizations must report to three main services (Internal Security, National Security, or General Intelligence), but leaves “the mission and powers” of several of these organizations (especially National Security) “not defined.” 149

149 Friedrich, Luethold, and Milhem, Security Sector Legislation, p. 25.
When Abbas declared presidential emergency authority in 2007 after Gaza fell to Hamas, the Interior Ministry “lost its entire staff, leaving the newly appointed minister the task of building an entirely new ministry.”\textsuperscript{150} The U.S. State Department allocated $22 million to support capacity building in the new Interior Ministry by creating a Strategic Planning Directorate.\textsuperscript{151} Yet it is not clear what this directorate would accomplish, in the face of unclear lines of legal command, and the PA later asked for the external Western consultants to be removed. USSC Dayton himself was criticized for maintaining “direct and informal contacts with PA commanders throughout the West Bank,” although these were reportedly curtailed after complaints by Fayyad in 2009.\textsuperscript{152}

The General Intelligence Service, under the control of the President, had a mandate that overlapped with that of the Interior Ministry’s Preventive Security Organization.\textsuperscript{153} The Presidential Guard by 2010 had “assumed gendarmerie tasks beyond its original mandate,” competing with official National Security Force duties\textsuperscript{154} in a pattern reminiscent of the Arafat era. Some analysts believe that the CIA continued to train the presidential forces off the books, without keeping even the USSC (much less other international donors) informed.\textsuperscript{155} In other words, throughout these recent events, the US has continued to act like a patron of the old

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\textsuperscript{150} GAO, \textit{Palestinian Authority}, p. 24.
\textsuperscript{151} GAO, \textit{Palestinian Authority}, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{152} Zanotti, \textit{U.S. Security Assistance}, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{153} GAO, \textit{Palestinian Authority}, Table 1, p. 13.
\textsuperscript{154} GAO, \textit{Palestinian Authority}, p. 27.
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factional networks, as has Abbas, right alongside their public faces of supporting PASF reform and proto-state patriotism.

This meant that the president and the prime minister (and by extension, the interior minister) were left in a competitive legal limbo over command and control. By April 2010 the Interior Ministry had started to host weekly or biweekly meetings outside of Abbas’s presidential headquarters, in what was seen as an effort by Fayyad to wrest reform efforts away from Fatah. But even within the government ministerial structures there were unclear lines of authority, with individual commanders consulting Fayyad rather than the Interior Minister, especially on financial matters.\textsuperscript{156} Reportedly Fayyad himself had to get Fatah approval when he wished to take on a Fatah-supported militia.\textsuperscript{157} Infighting also plagued the top levels of the PCP.\textsuperscript{158}

Not surprisingly, the security services were believed to be still corrupt and to benefit from practices of personal favoritism. They received approximately one-third of the PA budget in 2011, but with little institutionalized mechanism for the oversight of detailed expenditures.\textsuperscript{159} Hiring was politicized in the positions that mattered most. Promotions to command positions appeared to reflect rank within the Fatah party more than experience or merit.\textsuperscript{160} While hiring data has not been made public, it is believed that many local branches of the security forces continue to hire other locals for their units, reinforcing the patronage networks even as the

\textsuperscript{156} ICG, \textit{Squaring the Circle}, p. 14, including fn. 122 and 125.
\textsuperscript{157} ICG, \textit{Squaring the Circle}, p. 34.
\textsuperscript{158} Kristoff, \textit{Policing in Palestine}, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{160} Sayigh, “Policing the People, Building the State,” p. 17.
generations change. The more covert the security agency is, the easier nepotism is to hide, so the intelligence forces are thought to be particularly subject to patronage hiring.\textsuperscript{161} Abbas is known for promoting his cronies above those with longer experience in the trenches, as well as for moving commanders with experience in one security service into command positions in another, where their previous skills are less relevant.\textsuperscript{162}

While the PA leadership can be blamed for its continuing patronage-based power struggles, Israel also actively detracted from the PA’s state-building possibilities. After the Second Intifada the IDF never displayed much real confidence in the PASF. Many international partner states (including the US) complained that the Israeli Ministry of Defense agency responsible for PA territorial oversight, the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), failed to approve the shipment or delayed the delivery of agreed non-lethal equipment to the PASF, leaving the forces underprepared for their security duties.\textsuperscript{163} For example, even though the NSF and the PCP received training in joint operations, there was little coordination between them by 2010, in large part because COGAT refused to approve communications equipment like radios (and use of the frequencies on which to operate them) that would have allowed more joint work.\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{161} Sayigh, “Policing the People, Building the State,” p. 18.
\textsuperscript{162} An example is provided by Zanotti, \textit{U.S. Security Assistance}, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{163} GAO, \textit{Palestinian Authority}, pp. 32-5.
In addition, COGAT placed stringent geographic and time-of-day restrictions on PASF activity.\textsuperscript{165} While over time COGAT eased movement into the West Bank and lifted some curfews and internal roadblocks, the areas where the PASF and PCP were allowed to operate remained limited. This posed special challenges in controlling crimes against Palestinians in Areas C, or against criminals from Areas A or B who escape into Area C locales before Israeli security officials choose to act on Palestinian requests.\textsuperscript{166} Many believe that the IDF routinely turned a blind eye to ordinary crimes committed in Area C. The IDF’s mandate centers on anti-terrorism and protection of Jewish settlers, not on fighting crimes committed by one Arab Palestinian against another.

Given the participation of PASF forces in the Second Intifada, given PASF weakness in the face of the Hamas challenge in 2007, and given the continuing problems of factionalism and corruption inside the PASF, it is completely understandable why Israeli security officials would be reluctant to trust them. It is also completely understandable why COGAT might want to undercut PASF military and intelligence effectiveness by denying them equipment. Yet many international observers argue that COGAT has effectively broken international agreements that Israel made (including with the U.S.). Israeli actions have undercut the PASF’s perceived effectiveness in front of the home Palestinian population, even though the PASF is almost universally agreed to have been responsive to Israeli security requests since 2007, and to have accomplished things that Israel could not do on its own (such as finding and dismantling a major Hamas weapons laboratory in the West Bank town of Qalqilya, and killing the local Hamas

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\textsuperscript{165} Zanotti, \textit{U.S. Security Assistance}, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{166} ICG, \textit{Squaring the Circle}, p. 19.
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commander who had eluded capture for a decade.\footnote{Zanotti, \textit{U.S. Security Assistance}, p. 23.}

The general sense of many analysts is that the only issue area where Israeli and PASF interests have recently converged is in controlling Hamas-led terrorism.\footnote{ICG, \textit{Squaring the Circle}, p. 24.} That leaves PASF officers subject to accusations—sometimes even by their own family members—that they are just doing Israel’s dirty work.\footnote{Levinson, “Palestinian Support Wanes.”} It also undermines the ideological basis for patriotism that might have replaced patronage as the dominant norm.

Three things would be necessary for the diffusion of professional norms to transform the PASF. First, all international agencies and actors—American, European, Arab, and Persian—would have to stop providing financial support to favored factions or individuals in Fatah and the PLO, and instead direct all security assistance toward central West Bank PA offices. Second, Abbas and his PLO colleagues would have to stop competing against Fayyad and the West Bank PA ministries for command and control over the security forces, and commanders who practiced patronage would have to be relieved of their command through centralized judicial process. Finally, the IDF and COGAT would have to allow the PASF truly (if gradually) to assume the duties normally associated with state security forces, rewarding trustworthy behavior with increasing levels of trust so that patriotism could become self-reinforcing. At the moment it does not seem likely that any of these three things will happen anytime soon.