



# The Terror Attack in the Tel Aviv Sarona Market

By Dr. Robert Friedmann | June 10, 2016 | Flashpoint 29

By now there is wide coverage in various media outlets of the terror attack in Tel Aviv close to IDF Headquarters. The *Atlanta Journal & Constitution* – which did not report on the shooting – [reported today](#) on a few reactive measures enacted by Israel. The confusion of the first moments was understandable and initially some reports stated that the perpetrators were “dressed as orthodox Jews” in order to blend into the area. That report was wrong and anyone who knows the area would have known that this was highly unlikely as orthodox Jews do not frequent the area. But more egregious errors were found in the framing of the news. CNN initially tweeted (and then [retracted and apologized](#)) that “terrorists” attacked, implying that Israeli reports were unsubstantiated. This despite the fact that live videos were streaming from the area. Some ridiculed this reporting by exaggerating known historical facts (see: [New hashtag roils against anti-Israel media bias](#)). The lesson from this: cross reference news items and do not rely on a single source.

A “dry” factual (if incomplete) account is available in a report issued by [The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center](#).

This is the second largest shooting attack in Tel Aviv in six months (the first was on January 1, 2016) that was carried out in open public places, by people who were familiar with the area, blended in, did not attract any attention/suspicion, and then went on with a shooting spree aimed at killing and maiming as many people as possible.

A few observations:

- These two attacks appear to be the outcome of “inspired” terrorism rather than “initiated” terrorism. So were the majority of the attacks in the recent wave of stabbings, shootings, ramming cars into pedestrians, and throwing stones at vehicles.
- While [celebrated by many Palestinians with candy and fireworks](#) (and leaving [UN Secretary General “Shocked”](#)) there is no evidence that these are organized activities by terrorist groups even if quickly embraced by terrorist organizations. These are individual “efforts” that are the direct result of the [heinous and crude institutional incitement](#).
- Rather than being planned, organized and initiated by terrorist groups (like the attacks on 9-11, Paris, Brussels, Istanbul and many others by Hamas, Hizballah, Al Qaida, ISIS and often sanctioned by Iran) these are actions of individuals from the “bottom up.”
- This does not mean that terrorist organizations do not “jump” on the opportunity to adopt these new “assets.” Hamas, for example, immediately “embraced” a Fatah operative because it fit its agenda.
- This means that it is far more difficult to have prior intelligence on the intent and preparations of such attacks and hence greatly limits the ability to thwart them in time.
- While many such attacks (against the public and against security forces) have been stopped by alert and well-trained security forces, and even the public, Israel had 38 of its citizens murdered and more than 450 injured in 151 stabbing attacks, 92 shootings, 43 vehicular attacks and one bus bombing in this latest wave of terror. See an up to date [MFA report](#).
- Palestinian propaganda reverses the sequence of events claiming that Israel is killing innocent Palestinians and then officers/soldiers place knives in their hands to frame them; this despite obvious video [evidence to the contrary](#).

- The level of resilience of Israelis is well known. After atrocious bombings of bus and public places between 2000 and 2004 Israelis continued with life. This time was not different. Within 12 hours not only that restaurants in Sarona market were opened for business but they were packed with customers.
- The parents of the two terrorists (cousins) reported to the Palestinian Authority that their children were missing but the Authority did nothing. Partly because of incompetence and partly because they are flooded with concerned parents who report their missing children because they are afraid they might commit a terrorist act.
- Investigators will be examining whether there were any telltale signs of acquiring weapons, training, and illegally entering Israel as well as finding out if there was any relationship to any terrorist organization. A relative of the cousins is in Israeli prison serving four life sentences for murdering Israelis.
- Given the high level of incitement it is expected that such attacks will continue. Not only in Israel but worldwide.
- At the same time, Israel has admitted the 6 year old nephew of the Palestinian terrorist leader of Hamas (Gaza) to a hospital to treat complications from the medical treatment he received in Gaza. Obviously, the terrorists do not mind receiving quality medical care from those they want to murder. Hanniyah's daughter was treated in Israel in 2004, Abbas's younger brother was treated earlier this year.
- One interesting twist in these attacks: One of the terrorists fled the scene and tried to blend with people running away. He was invited by a cop (at that time in civilian attire) to his apartment and received a glass of water. The cop then got his weapon and ran out to the street to help. When he saw the other terrorist in a similar suit he understood who was in his apartment. He rushed back – fearing his family was victimized by the terrorist – and overcame the terrorist and detained him. Another officer accidentally discharged a bullet that scraped the cop who was slightly injured. The twist: the cop's wife (who was in the apartment with her mother, and her friend, and the terrorist) is the daughter of a former Israel Police Commissioner (who was also the third commander of the special anti-terrorist unit). Her mother's friend is a former division head in the Mossad. A Hollywood script suggesting this turn of events would be laughed out as an impossibility. Another twist: Two recently honorably discharged Israeli soldiers had a photo on Facebook with suits that made them look "similar" to the terrorists....

While security forces excel in thwarting attacks, they are unable to provide 100% security. While the public shows tremendous resilience no one can bring the victims back to life and undo the tragedy experienced by many families. For the long term a far greater effort needs to be placed on curbing incitement and seeing the link between incitement and violence.

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