**Retranslation Humint – 10448**

Rajab Daka, who was 34 at the time of his arrest, is the son of an Israeli woman who lives in Lod. In 2017 he applied for an Israeli passport. He moved to Israel, but was allowed to visit the Gaza Strip from time to time, as his wife and five children continued to live there. He was also recruited to Hamas, by an activist named Mithqal Rasei from Beit Lahiya. He was instructed to purchase a cellphone and SIM card to communicate with his handlers. From October 2019, he was assigned intelligence missions by Hamas and carried them out for the organization. He photographed and documented military bases and locations, such as the site of an Iron Dome battery in the center of the country (in the Jaljulye area), and passed the photos and locations on to Hamas operatives. He also sent reports about other sites, including the Dan regional headquarters of the Home Front Command in Yehud, Beit Hashoter (a police dormitory) in Tel Aviv, the headquarters of the Lahav 433 Israel Police Unit in Lod, an IDF base near Ramallah and a prison in the Hasharon detention complex. During a round of fighting in November 2019 dubbed “Black Belt” in Israel following the assassination of a senior officer of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in the Gaza Strip, Rajab was asked to identify the landing locations of rockets fired at Israel and report the findings to Hamas operatives. He did report on rocket hits in the Gush Dan area, and in Ashdod, Ashkelon, and in the Eshkol region. He was furthermore asked to point out other potential candidates for recruitment to Hamas, and passed on the details of a man he worked for, whom he suspected was a member of Israel’s General Security Service.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Similarly, Rami al-Amoudi, 30 years old at the time of his arrest, was also recruited by Hamas. His mother was an Israeli Jew, and his father was a Palestinian. He had lived in Khan Yunis all his life, and had severed ties with his mother. He restored contact in late 2017, and after a process that lasted many months received an Israeli identity card, enabling him to move to live with his mother in Tel Aviv-Yafo in November 2019. Before entering Israel, he was contacted by a Hamas operative who recruited him to work for the organization and briefed him on how to communicate securely with his handlers. To that end, al-Amoudi bought a cell phone in December 2019 and installed the software as instructed (Telegram). He even contacted his handlers, but apparently did not manage to gather any information before being arrested.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Murad Kamal, a resident of Jerusalem, was a pharmacy student in Jordan when he was drafted into the military wing of Hamas by Murad Nimr, also a Jerusalemite, whom he had known since high school. After finishing his studies in Jordan, Kamal moved to Dubai and stayed in touch with Nimr and other Hamas operatives in Turkey. In June 2009, Nimr was asked by Hamas operatives to gather information on sites in Israel, including major highways. He invited Kamal to join him. During June of 2009, the two traveled around Israel every weekend by car, driven by Nimr’s cousin as neither Kamal nor Nimr had a driver’s license. They told the cousin that they were collecting the information for an academic project. During these trips, they reviewed Israel’s main highways (Jerusalem-Tel Aviv, Trans-Israel, the old and new coastal road, Trans-Samaria Road and Route 3). They took over 100 photos. In August 2009, Nimr travelled to Saudi Arabia, where he passed the information to Hamas operatives. He was paid for his work and received funding to continue.[[3]](#footnote-3)

In November 2009, Kamal passed a driving test and received a motorcycle license. Two days later, Kamal and Nimr set off to tour sites in the country, including the central bus station in Jerusalem, the bus stop on French Hill and other crowded locations. They also went into sites to take a closer look at security arrangements and examinations and to evaluate the level of security. They filmed the places they visited with a video camera. After editing and adding other data (such as maps and aerial photographs), they were ready to pass on the information to Hamas operatives in Turkey. In January 2010, they were arrested by Israeli security forces.[[4]](#footnote-4)

In 2007, while in Mecca for the Haj pilgrimage, Eyad Abu Arja met a Hamas operative named Abu Nazmi, introduced by Abu Arja’s longtime friend Saleh Abd al-Karim Altamoni. Abu Arja lived in Saudi Arabia and held dual Australian and Jordanian citizenship. At the meeting, Abu Nazmi suggested that Abu Arja help Hamas and probed him on his knowledge of encryption. Abu Arja replied that he had no knowledge of encryption, but said that since he worked with computers he would look into the field. Abu Nazmi gave Abu Arja a codename (Bashar), and they decided to conduct future communications through Altamoni. After trying to learn more about encryption, he informed Altamoni that the field was too complex for him, and that he would not be able to help. Saleh therefore arranged for a Hamas emissary to meet with Abu Arja in Riyadh. An emissary did indeed arrive, and questioned Abu Arja about his life and activities.[[5]](#footnote-5)

During 2009-2010, Abu Arja was asked by Altamoni to obtain encrypted technologies, including encrypted mobile devices, panoramic photography devices and missile fire detection and guidance technologies. Abu Arja agreed and tried to source what was needed. He finally purchased a tripod and a panoramic camera for Altamoni. Abu Arja was also asked to find an Israeli Arab with dual Australian and Israeli citizenship for Hamas recruitment. In the month of Ramadan 2010, another Hamas envoy (codenamed Dr. Barhan) arrived in Mecca in coordination with Altamoni, and gave Abu Arja a new codename.[[6]](#footnote-6)

In 2011, Abu Arja planned to visit to Israel and informed Altamoni and Abu Nazmi of his upcoming trip. After a failed attempt to arrange a preliminary meeting in Syria, Dr. Barhan arrived in Riyadh. Abu Arja was asked to pay close attention to how he was treated at the Israeli airport on arrival and upon departure and see if he aroused suspicion. He was also told to attend several computer and high-tech expos during his stay in Israel and to make contact with Israeli companies. In addition, he was asked to walk around commercial centers and take photographs and to bring back maps and publications about tour routes. At this meeting, Abu Arja gave Dr. Barhan the panoramic camera that he had purchased for Hamas. Abu Arja was arrested immediately after landing in Israel on March 24, 2011.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The first method was through impersonation and creating fictitious profiles. In July 2019, the IDF exposed attempts by Hamas to elicit information from IDF soldiers. Hamas operatives contacted the soldiers via WhatsApp, introduced themselves as IDF soldiers and asked their interlocutors questions about their daily activities. In this way, for example, a soldier in the 890th Paratroopers' Battalion received a message from an unknown WhatsApp number identified as Israeli (with the area code +972). The unknown contact claimed that he was also a soldier. He asked to receive a training graph and dates of the battalion's operational activity. To enhance his credibility, the Hamas operative sent the soldier a copy of the unit’s training schedule, a document obtained by the organization. Similar activities were carried out against other soldiers in field units, such as Golani and Nahal.[[8]](#footnote-8)

Hamas also uses WhatsApp as a platform for humint operations among groups of Palestinians and Israeli Arabs run by the organization. These groups contain propaganda messages and content related to Hamas activities. They are also used for intelligence gathering. A prominent example of this is from the period following the General Staff Reconnaissance Unit’s operation in Khan Yunis in November 2018. In this covert operation, dubbed Spearhead by Hamas, an IDF special force was exposed by Hamas operatives. In the firefight, one of the force’s soldiers was killed, while the others who had taken part in the operation managed to escape into Israeli territory. Hamas security operations conducted an in-depth investigation of this incident, in the course of which they attempted to gather information about the details of the operation and its participants, also via humint.

Hussain Huari, 20, lived for most of his life with his father in Nablus before moving to his mother’s home in Jatt in July 2018. On the advice of a friend, Karim Issa, he participated in a Kutlah Islamiyah activity, that included propaganda on behalf of Hamas. After the incident in Khan Yunis, he began to take great interest in the activities of the organization, gathering information from the internet and social media. In 2018 he joined four WhatsApp groups affiliated with the organization, one of which was called Kata’in al-Shahid Izz al-Din, the name of Hamas’ military wing, and corresponded with one of the administrators of these groups. After the IDF’s operation was exposed in Gaza as described above, a man known as Abu Ubaidah, a Hamas operative living in Gaza whose real name was As’ad and who was the administrator of one of the groups, asked group members to obtain information about the identities of General Staff Reconnaissance Unit fighters who had participated in the operation. Huari, who thought he knew one of the fighters, contacted the group administrator and told him what he knew. He said the information was passed on to a Hamas body called the "Military Communications Administration."[[9]](#footnote-9)

1. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. According to the particulars of the indictment, published in several outlets, including: Gilad Morag and Yoav Zeitun, “Charge: Hamas recruited two Israeli agents from Tel Aviv and Lod” (Hebrew), *Ynet*, January 27, 2020. <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5667215,00.html>; Carmella Menasheh and Tsah Shpitsman, “Shin Bet exposes Hamas espionage activity on Israeli soil” (Hebrew), *Kan*, January 27, 2020, <https://www.kan.org.il/item/?itemid=65652> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Serious Criminal Case 312/10, *State of Israel vs Murad Kamal*, pp. 1-2 (published in *Pador*, January 31, 2011). (Hebrew). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Criminal Case 27905/11, *State of Israel vs Eyad Abu Arja*, pp. 1-2 (published in *Pador*, January 5, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Based on information submitted by the IDF and published, inter alia, in: Yoav Zeitun, “Hamas intelligence targeting soldiers via WhatsApp: ‘What’s up, bro? Have the sked?’” (Hebrew) *Ynet*, July 14, 2019, <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5550055,00.html>; Hanan Greenwald, “Terrorists tried to attain classified information from soldiers” (Hebrew), *Israel Hayom*, July 14, 2019, <https://www.israelhayom.co.il/article/674013> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Detention until the End of Proceedings 19-02-18951, *State of Israel vs Hussain Huari (Detention)*, pp. 1-2, 4-5 (published in *Nevo*, March 26, 2019). It is unclear if the meaning is “Information Office”, or another entity connected to communications. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)