

## al-shabaka executive summary

# THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY SECURITY FORCES: WHOSE SECURITY?

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*From the outset, the Palestinian Authority (PA) security establishment has failed to protect Palestinians from the main source of their insecurity: The Israeli military occupation. Nor has it empowered Palestinians to resist that occupation. Instead, the PA has contributed to a situation in which the Palestinian struggle for freedom has itself been criminalized.*

- This dynamic can be traced back to the 1993 Oslo Accords, but it has been galvanized over the last decade through the PA's evolution as a donor-driven state. The enhanced effectiveness of the PA security forces as a result of massive donor investment has created additional ways of protecting the Israeli occupier, creating spaces that are "securitized" within which the occupier can move freely in the execution of its colonial project.
- Security collaboration between Israel and the PA enables Israel to fulfil its colonial ambitions while claiming to be pursuing peace. This is [manifested](#) through such actions as the PA security forces' arrest of Palestinian suspects wanted by Israel, the suppression of Palestinian protests against Israeli soldiers and/or settlers, and intelligence sharing between the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and the PA security forces.
- Change will be difficult to achieve, as the system has created a segment of Palestinian society that will seek to maintain it. This segment is composed not only of security personnel in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but also of those Palestinians benefiting from institutional arrangements and a network of collaboration and domination. However, change is not impossible.

## Policy Recommendations:

**The PA** must take gradual but firm steps to freeze or suspend security coordination with Israel, including: Putting a stop to Palestinian security apparatus intervention in political issues, reducing security allocations in the annual budget, and disbanding parts of the security apparatus and restructuring the remainder.

**Palestinian civil society** must form more effective coalitions and intensify efforts to hold the PA accountable for its human rights violations. It must also address the PA discourse in which Palestinian resistance is reframed as criminal insurgency or instability, and it must scrutinize the international security bodies, such as the United States Security Coordinator, that dominate the PA security realm without accountability or transparency.

**Policymakers in donor states** and Palestinians who facilitate donor programs should address how "securitized aid" has transformed a liberation movement into a subcontractor to the colonizer, and has resulted in PA authoritarianism.