

A man in a dark uniform stands in a rubble-strewn area, holding three black signs with white text. The signs read "Building", "Arafat's", and "Police". The background shows a construction site with a tower and a building under construction.

Brynjar Lia

Building

Arafat's

Police

The Politics of  
International Police  
Assistance in the  
Palestinian Territories  
after the  
Oslo Agreement

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*The Politics of International Police Assistance  
in the Palestinian Territories  
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in the Palestinian Territories  
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**BRYNJAR LIA**

**ITHACA**  
**P R E S S**

**BUILDING ARAFAT'S POLICE**  
*The Politics of International Police Assistance in the  
Palestinian Territories after the Oslo Agreement*

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*To my daughter Ane*

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## Glossary

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AFP	Agence France Presse
AHLC	Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, main policy-making coordinating committee for international aid to the Palestinians, established in November 1993
AI	Amnesty International
AP	Associated Press
B'Tselem	The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories
CG	The Consultative Group, a World Bank coordinating structure for donor programmes
CIA	(US) Central Intelligence Agency
COPP	Coordinating Committee for International Assistance to the Palestinian Police Force
CPRS	Center for Palestine Research and Studies, Nablus
DAC	Development Assistance Committee, OECD
DCO	District (Security) Coordination and Liaison Office
DoP	The Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements for the West Bank and Gaza Strip (known generally as the Oslo Accords)
DPA	Deutsche Presse-Agentur
Fafo	Institute for Applied Social Science, Oslo
Fatah	The Palestinian National Liberation Movement ( <i>harakat al-tahrir al-wataniyyah al-filastiniyyah</i> )
Fatah Hawks	Paramilitary resistance organization, primarily in Gaza, linked to Fatah
FBI	(US) Federal Bureau of Investigation
FCO	(The British) Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FFI	The Norwegian Defense Research Establishment
Force-17	Palestinian security agency with primary responsibility for Chairman Arafat's security
GAO	(The US) General Accounting Office

GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GIS	(Palestinian) General Intelligence Service <i>(al-mukhabarat al-'ammah)</i>
GSS	The General Security Service (the Israeli internal intelligence agency), also known as Shin Beth or Shabak)
Hamas	The Islamic Resistance Movement (in Palestine)
ICITAP	US International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
IDF Radio	Israeli Defense Forces Radio (Tel Aviv, in Hebrew), via SWB
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMRA	Independent Media Review and Analysis, Aaron Lerner, Israeli rightwing media source
IPS	Inter-Press Service
JMCC	Jerusalem Media and Communication Center, Shaykh Jarrah, East Jerusalem
JSC	(The Palestinian–Israeli) Joint Security Coordination Committee
LACC	The Local Aid Coordination Committee
LAW	The Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment
MEED	<i>Middle East Economic Digest</i>
MENA	Middle East News Agency, Cairo
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (if not specified, it signifies the Norwegian MFA)
MOPIC	(or MPIC) The Palestinian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIS	New Israeli shekel, the Israeli currency
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PA/PNA	The Palestinian Authority or the Palestinian National Authority
PACC	Palestinian Police Assistance Coordination Committee

PECDAR	Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP-GC	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command
PHRMG	Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group
PLO	The Palestine Liberation Organization ( <i>munazzamat al-tahrir al-filastiniyyah</i> )
PMGD	The Political and Moral Guidance Department ( <i>mudiriyyat al-tawjih al-siyassi wa'l-ma'nawi</i> )
PNSF	The Palestinian National Security Forces ( <i>quwwat al-amn al-wataniyyah</i> ), the largest paramilitary police branch, corresponding roughly to the Palestinian Directorate for Public Security in the Oslo Accords
PPF	The Palestinian Police Force or the Palestinian Directorate for Public Security and Police ( <i>mudiriyyat al-amn al-'amm wa'l-shurtah</i> )
PSA	(Palestinian) Preventive Security Agency ( <i>jihaz al-amn al-wiqai</i> ), sometimes called the Preventive Security Service (PSS, PPSS) or the Preventive Security Force (PSF)
PS/Force-17	Presidential Security/Force-17 ( <i>amn al-ri'asah</i> )
SCNS	Supreme Council for National Security
SSC	The State Security Court, established by the PNA in February 1995
SWB	BBC Summary of World Broadcasts
SWG	Sectoral Working Group
SWG/PPF	Sectoral Working Group for Police
TIP	Temporary International Presence (for Gaza and Jericho)
TIPH	Temporary International Presence in the City of Hebron
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UD	The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Utenriksdepartementet)
UD-RG	The Norwegian Representative's Office in Gaza
UD-TE	The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Tel Aviv
UD/TIP-files	Selected MFA correspondence on the TIP-negotiations, 1994–5

UNC	Unified National Command of the Uprising, a PLO-led body directing the intifada from 1988 onwards
UNCHR	UN Center for Human Rights, Geneva
UNCivPol	UN Civilian Police Unit at the UNDPKO
UNCPCJB	UN Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, at the UN Secretariat
UNDHA	United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNRWA	The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees
UNRWA/ PPF-files	UNRWA correspondence and internal memos on donor payment of salaries for the Palestinian Police, 1994–5
UNSCO	Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories
UPI	United Press International
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value Added Tax
VOI	Voice of Israel Radio (Jerusalem, in Hebrew), via SWB
VOI-A	Voice of Israel Radio (Jerusalem, in Arabic), via SWB
VOI-E	Voice of Israel Radio (Jerusalem, in English), via SWB
VOI-Ex	Voice of Israel Radio, external service (Jerusalem, in English), via SWB
VOP-A	Voice of Palestine Radio (Algiers, in Arabic), via SWB
VOP-J	Voice of Palestine Radio (Jericho, in Arabic), via SWB
VOP-R	Voice of Palestine Radio (Ramallah, in Arabic), via SWB
VOP-Y	Voice of Palestine Radio (via Yemeni Republic Radio, San'a', in Arabic), via SWB
Xinhua	Xinhua News Agency

## Notes on Transliteration and Terms

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With regard to the transcription of Arabic terms and names, I have made no distinction between emphatic and non-emphatic consonants; only ‘and’ have been used to indicate alif and ‘ayn. As I refer to many names that have no agreed English transcription, I have in general transcribed the names of people and places according to how they are spelt in written Arabic. This means that a few names may not look familiar to all readers: for example, I have preferred Sari Nusaybah to Sari Nusseibeh and Sa’ib ‘Urayqat to Saeb Erikat. (I have admittedly deviated from this rule with regard to Yasir Arafat’s name (not ‘Arafat) and to widely known geographical names.) Regarding the Norwegian letters æ, ø and å, I have chosen not to transcribe them when used in names. (My experience is that non-Norwegian readers mispronounce such names anyway.) On the other hand, English translations have been provided in footnote references to sources in Arabic and Norwegian.

When the text or footnotes refer to the MFA, the Cairo Embassy, the Tel Aviv Embassy, the Gaza Office etc., they should be understood as the Norwegian MFA, the Norwegian embassy in Cairo, the Norwegian Representative’s Office in Gaza etc.

The ‘Palestinian Police’ (with upper-case initial letters) is used as a generic term to refer to all Palestinian police organizations – from the Civilian Police and the National Security Forces to the various intelligence and security agencies – operating as part of Palestinian self-rule, but it excludes exile-based security organizations such as the Palestine Armed Struggle Command (PASC) in Lebanon. When referring to the blue-uniformed Palestinian Police, I prefer the term ‘Civilian Police’ although the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) often only uses the term ‘police’ (*shurtah*) for these units. I have referred to Palestinian ‘security forces’ in contexts in which army-like formations such as the Public Security (or National Security) Forces are involved, and I use the term ‘intelligence’



or 'security agencies' or 'security services' where typically plainclothes units are involved, such as the Preventive Security and the General Intelligence.

I refer to the 'Palestinian National Authority' (PNA), not the PA, as is the common term in Palestinian–Israeli agreements, because the former term is how the PNA refers to itself. For the sake of simplicity, I use 'the PLO' until May 1994, when the PNA Council was formed, and 'the PNA' at later stages, although I fully acknowledge that these two bodies were interwoven and that decision-making on the PLO level affected the PNA and vice versa. I use the term 'Fatah' about the majority mainstream wing of the PLO, although other common terms exist in English such as Fath, Fateh or al-Fatah.

## Foreword and Acknowledgements

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shared with me in the course of my research. All errors and flaws in this book are of course my responsibility alone.

I have dedicated this study to my daughter, who was born during the final steps of this book project.

**Brynjar Lia**

# 1

## Introduction

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When the Palestine Liberation Organization and the State of Israel signed the Declaration of Principles (DoP) on the White House lawn on 13 September 1993, a process was set in motion that led to the formation of a Palestinian self-government authority and a number of Palestinian state-like institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The largest and most resource-intensive of these was the Palestinian police force. An integral part of this formation process was international donor involvement. Shortly after the signing ceremony, representatives of a large number of states and donor institutions gathered in Washington, DC and pledged \$2.4 billion to assist the implementation of the peace accords, believing that the Palestinian self-rule experiment would succeed only if it were bolstered by solid economic and technical assistance.

Despite the extensive academic literature on Palestinian–Israeli relations and the Palestinian self-rule experiment, little has been published so far on the Palestinian police and security agencies (hereafter ‘the Palestinian Police’ or ‘the Police’) and the role of the donor community in establishing and developing the Police.<sup>1</sup> This is rather surprising given the relevance of the Palestinian case in understanding the role of international police aid in war-to-peace transitions. The paucity of academic studies of the Palestinian case has a parallel in the dearth of studies of Third World policing, reflecting the tendency of police studies to concentrate on Western societies.<sup>2</sup>

The overriding theme of this study is the role of the international donor community in establishing the Palestinian Police. The time frame is roughly 1993–2000, beginning with the early donor consultations following the Oslo Accords and concluding with the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada in September 2000, when most police donor programmes were brought to a halt. As the critical establishment period is of most interest, less attention is given to developments after 1996, when the Palestinian Police’s deployment to the West Bank cities and the Palestinian elections ended the first phase of self-rule.

An underlying theme of this book is how a police force can be created without the framework of a state. Inspired by the theoretical literature reviewed in the Introduction, this work attempts to answer two basic questions. First, how were the police donor efforts affected by the fact that the Palestinian Police was created by a liberation movement in the wake of an armed conflict (the intifada) and as part of a non-state entity still under territorial dispute? Second, given this unique political setting, what was the evolving triangular interplay in the formation of the new police between PLO demands and priorities, donor preferences and constraints and the interests of Israel as the hegemonic power? Put in simple terms, what kind of police force(s) did the PLO leadership promote and how did this fit with donor preferences and Israeli security interests? These two themes will remain at the forefront of our discussion in subsequent chapters.

The PLO was no newcomer in the area of policing and security. In 1993, it was still one of the world's largest and wealthiest national liberation organizations, with a long history of informal policing in Palestinian refugee camps and with extensive experience in protecting PLO fighters, personalities and institutions worldwide. Therefore, it was not a tabula rasa in the realm of policing; it possessed certain policing cultures. Its emphasis on armed struggle, the protection of the leadership and the prevention of infiltration and collaboration was a typical insurgent policing model in which the security needs of the resistance fighters rather than services to the community were given priority. This legacy inevitably influenced the new Palestinian Police, and manifested itself clearly in the PLO's initial preparations, for example its recruitment and training policies. This posed a tremendous challenge to the donor community, which at least in principle favoured a civil-democratic policing model.

The new political order created after the signing of the Oslo Accords presented another formidable obstacle to police donor efforts. As the occupying and colonial power in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel viewed the Palestinian Police through the prism of its territorial interests in the Occupied Territories and the omnipresent terrorism threat. The dominance of Israel over the PNA in nearly every walk of life made its preferences and policies a major determinant of the evolution of the Palestinian Police, and hence also of the ability of foreign donors to offer relevant assistance. There was a fundamental anomaly in Palestinian

policing in that the Palestinian Police's main duty, according to the signed agreements, was the protection of Israeli security and colonial interests in the Occupied Territories.

The complex political setting and the conflictual relationship between the parties created a difficult environment for external donors and their development aid agencies, which in 1993 had little experience in working with foreign police and paramilitary organizations in conflict areas. A number of factors constrained their willingness and ability to offer effective assistance. One problem was the PLO's military units, upon which the Palestinian Police was built. Given their history as guerrilla armies and secretive terrorist organizations, they were unfamiliar with Western donor politics and often proved to be unable to meet stringent aid requirements. Also, the donors were extremely sensitive to any signs that Palestinian Police structures and policing practices violated the terms of the Palestinian–Israeli agreements. Still, as will be seen in this study, the fact that the Palestinian Police was understood as key to the success of the Oslo process induced reluctant donor agencies to go to considerable lengths in meeting its needs. In doing so, their policy approaches were determined by the triangular Israel–PLO–donor relationship, which offered more challenges than a bilateral framework.

This book seeks to answer the following questions: how did the police donors approach the difficult obstacles of mobilizing and channelling aid to a non-state entity with a 'terrorist' past that was dominated by a colonial power? How did donors organize themselves in order to overcome political constraints, technical obstacles and policy differences? How did the police aid process develop from early programmatic declarations to the actual delivery of aid on the ground? To what degree was donor aid effective in supporting essential donor goals such as democratic policing and/or support for the Middle East peace process?

Donor involvement in establishing police forces in war-torn societies is not unique to the Palestinian case, and I shall briefly review some of the recent literature devoted to this topic in order to provide a broad background for understanding the Palestinian process. It will also allow us to identify key themes and dilemmas in more detail.

## Police Reform and Police Aid in War-to-Peace Transitions

### The New Peacekeeping

The centrality of police reform in societies emerging from violent conflict has been underscored repeatedly in academic writing on international peacekeeping in the 1990s.<sup>3</sup> The reorientation of peacekeeping literature towards the issue of police reform was rooted in the growing international involvement in mitigating and resolving violent conflicts within states, as opposed to conflicts between states, which were the primary context for international peacekeeping during the Cold War.<sup>4</sup>

Starting in the late 1980s, there was a marked increase in international peacekeeping involvement, measured, for example, by the number of UN peacekeeping operations worldwide. The “new interventionism”<sup>5</sup> reflected the changing geopolitical climate of the post-Cold War era and the emergence of vastly different concepts of peacekeeping. These appeared under a wide variety of new labels, such as ‘non-traditional peacekeeping’, ‘the new peacekeeping’, ‘second-generation peacekeeping’, ‘wider peacekeeping’ and ‘peace support operations’.<sup>6</sup> The Cold War concept of peacekeeping was one of lightly armed peacekeepers trying to minimize hostilities through ceasefire monitoring along a demarcation line.<sup>7</sup> In the late 1980s, however, a growing number of peacekeeping operations attempted to deal with the underlying causes of conflict rather than with simply avoiding its aggravation. Consequently, the new peacekeeping that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s involved a wide range of measures and transcended the limited objective of maintaining a ceasefire. It gave rise to the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding, introduced by the UN secretary-general Boutros-Ghali in *An Agenda for Peace* in 1992 and defined as “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict”.<sup>8</sup>

The new peacekeeping missions often had a substantial or predominant non-military mandate and composition, and involved a wider range of actors and tasks, sometimes termed the increased ‘breadth’ and ‘depth’ of non-traditional peacekeeping.<sup>9</sup> In *An Agenda for Peace*, Boutros-Ghali mentions weapons seizure and destruction, restoration of order, refugee repatriation, training police and security personnel, election monitoring, protection of human rights, reform of government institutions and promotion of political participation.<sup>10</sup> Peacebuilding has

also included demobilization and the reintegration into civil society of former combatants, economic reconstruction efforts and training or re-educating civil servants, judges, court officials, prison guards etc. In short, peacebuilding contains a broad variety of forms of international assistance and involvement.

### **Police Reform as Peacebuilding**

In the myriad peacebuilding tasks and efforts, police reform was a priority. During the 1990s, the literature on the new peacekeeping increasingly acknowledged that police reform was an important and overlooked aspect of peacebuilding. Reforming brutal, corrupt or ineffective police forces or, alternatively, creating entirely new police forces gradually came to be accepted as perhaps one of the most central issues on the post-conflict rehabilitation agenda. The argument was that states and societies emerging from civil wars and protracted violent conflict suffered from a partial or total breakdown of elementary law enforcement and public order maintenance. This 'security gap' encouraged crime, fuelled discontent and heightened the risk of a resumption of hostilities.<sup>11</sup>

The surge in international police assistance during the 1990s was not only a result of a new peacekeeping agenda and greater international interventionism in internal conflicts. After the Cold War, development aid donors and institutions grew more attuned to the idea of spending funds to encourage police and military reforms, seeing them as basic preconditions for economic development. The increased emphasis in donor attitudes on human rights and democratization encouraged such aid too.<sup>12</sup> Otwin Marenin attributes the increase in US international police aid programmes to two main factors. First, the collapse of communism, especially the post-Cold War political changes in the former Eastern bloc states, paved the way for democratization, and assistance to police reform was seen as crucial to consolidate democracy in those states.<sup>13</sup> Second, increased police aid was also motivated by the need for more international cooperation to face the perceived risks associated with growing networks of transnational organized crime and international terrorism. Responding to the new threat environment, the US offered to provide more training and assistance to states fighting terrorism and various forms of organized crime, especially drug trafficking.<sup>14</sup>



Parallel to the growth of international police assistance, multilateral instruments for police reform became more important, in particular the operations of the UN Civilian Police (UNCivPol).<sup>15</sup> Academic attention also expanded, with a growing interest in the integration of reforms in all sectors of internal security. The term 'security sector reform' was introduced; it denoted integrated reforms of the state's coercive instruments: military, police and the judicial and penal systems.<sup>16</sup> A number of policy-orientated studies and reports from the late 1990s proposed making security sector reform a top-priority issue on the development aid and peacekeeping agendas.<sup>17</sup> In the military and policy-making community, the rebuilding of a local police and a professional national army came to be seen as the key element of a peacekeeping force's 'exit strategy'. By 2002, from East Timor, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan to Kosovo and Bosnia, international assistance in the training and rebuilding of national police and security forces figured prominently in external support for long-term consolidation of peace and political stability.

### **The Goal of Democratic Policing**

Democratic policing is, at least in official rhetoric, the ultimate aim of peacebuilding efforts in promoting police reform. What constitutes democratic policing is seldom clearly defined, however. Cottam and Marenin make a useful distinction between the procedural and the substantive aspects of policing. In other words, policing can be democratic or undemocratic both in style and substance: "Procedural democratic policing abides by the norm that the police are subject to laws, rules, and professional codes and do not act arbitrarily, capriciously, corruptly, or brutally when they exercise power to coerce . . . Substantive democratic policing is defined by the range of social interests served and protected by the police."<sup>18</sup>

For policing to be democratic in style, it must be truly accountable for possible violations of citizens' procedural rights. Such violations cover the entire range, from technical errors in filling out papers to torture and mistreatment.<sup>19</sup> The concept of legitimacy is often used to describe democratic policing. Reiner has suggested that policing should be seen as legitimate when "the broad mass of the population, and possibly even some of those who are policed against, accept the authority, the lawful right, of the police to act as they do, even if disagreeing with or regretting

some specific actions”.<sup>20</sup> The discourse on legitimacy is complex, however; and there is no simple and clear-cut boundary line between legitimate/democratic and illegitimate/non-democratic policing.

Civilian oversight and professionalism are key words in reforms promoting democratic policing. National police organizations and internal security agencies are often powerful institutions, and the development of adequate measures for civilian oversight is difficult. Wright and Mawby correctly point out that it is “not sufficient to simply use civilian oversight as a post hoc means of investigation and blame”.<sup>21</sup> A wide range of constitutional, legal and organizational mechanisms have to be in place and operate at a variety of levels. Achieving civilian oversight of policing, then, is seen as an ambitious project that aims at a dynamic interaction between police institutions and a broad range of actors including state institutions, community groups, non-governmental organizations and the media.<sup>22</sup>

For various reasons, civilian oversight is usually dependent upon the separation of internal and external security functions, i.e. of the police and the army. This is seen as a key precondition for democratic policing, and assumes particular importance in societies emerging from violent conflict. Getting the armed forces back to their barracks has been one of the prime political objectives in post-conflict peacebuilding and security sector reform.<sup>23</sup> A number of specific proposals have been advanced to promote this goal. They range from various military reform programmes to measures aimed at improving civilian control of the armed forces, especially through new budgetary practices and civilian control over business and enterprises owned and run by the military.<sup>24</sup>

At its most basic, however, democratic policing is about the political will of the reconstituted national government and its law enforcement capacity and resources. A combination of these attributes will need to be in place in order to achieve democratic policing in post-conflict situations. First, the structural components of indigenous public security – police, judiciary or legal code and prisons – must achieve at least a basic ability to maintain law and order. Training must be sufficient to ensure a minimum level of competence and professionalism.<sup>25</sup> Second, and perhaps the most challenging task, the structures and institutions of public security must be imbued with an ethos of public service and impartiality. This is what Hansen and Lia have termed “the behavioural reform” of the security sector.<sup>26</sup> This can only happen if political elites

have the political will to bolster political, judicial and societal mechanisms of accountability.<sup>27</sup>

### **Effectiveness versus Due Process**

Reinstating democratic policing in post-conflict societies is fraught with difficulties and dilemmas. One of the most pressing dilemmas is how to strike a balance between popular demand for police effectiveness, on the one hand, and the rule of law and human rights, on the other. The effectiveness versus constitutionalism dilemma facing a newly created police force in a post-conflict society will be more acute if crime rates and ethnic tensions are high and/or a culture of violence prevails. Popular norms in war-torn societies are often in strong dissonance with both national legislation and international human rights standards. The legacy of war has usually produced vociferous demands for summary retribution against criminals and wartime collaborators. Rama Mani also reminds us that the choice of repressive policing may be seen as a “lesser evil” when more fundamental objectives (as perceived by the national leadership) are at stake, such as avoiding a relapse into civil war, preventing genocide or achieving independence.<sup>28</sup> But reforming the police does not automatically translate into lower levels of crime and violence. In fact, the opposite seems true. In the case of Latin America, Charles Call has observed that “contrary to what one might expect, judicial and police reforms embedded in dramatic transitions from war to peace have coincided with more, rather than less, violence”.<sup>29</sup>

The effectiveness versus constitutionalism dilemma illustrates broader peacebuilding and state-building dilemmas facing societies emerging from violent conflict. Roland Paris has argued that the potential for economic liberalism and the rule of law in post-conflict societies is limited because the envisioned societal system – a liberal democratic polity and a market economy – is an ill-suited model for war-torn states and is ineffective with regard to establishing a stable peace.<sup>30</sup> The introduction of a market democracy model is accompanied by its inherently destabilizing side-effects stemming from its competitive character. A post-conflict society cannot afford too much competition because it still contains strong internal conflicts and lacks institutional structures capable of peacefully resolving internal disputes. In the Palestinian case, the venerable objective of creating a rule of law was always measured against the need

to subdue radical factions which aimed at “derailing the peace process” through political violence. Similarly, strong popular demands for ‘swift justice’ against informers, quislings and criminals caused the Palestinian authorities to frequently ignore the basic requirements of due process. More generally, a number of studies indicate that post-conflict societies often experience a conflict transformation when new conflicts among former allies emerge and threaten both the civil peace and the peace settlement.<sup>31</sup> Thus, effective and authoritarian policing appears to be a necessary stopgap measure to contain strong internal tensions and disputes in the post-settlement environment.

The problem with a developmental paradigm that emphasizes the importance of a strong state is that it requires a determined developmental elite, not an exploitative praetorian class, to firmly hold the reins of power.<sup>32</sup> This is usually not the case, and hence it is reasonable to challenge the common assumption that as soon as internal order in states ravaged by internal conflict has been restored, democratization and economic prosperity will follow.<sup>33</sup> In fact, democratization often occurs as a result of internal crisis, when the ruling elites are forced to enter into a power-sharing arrangement after their attempts at repressing popular unrest have proved to be futile.<sup>34</sup> Conversely, when the incumbent regime and its coercive apparatus become stronger relative to the country’s civil institutions and ‘street’-level forces of popular mobilization, they continue to suppress perceived subversives and, as a result, political participation declines and the prospects for democracy diminish.

In the course of the twentieth century, technological innovations have revolutionized policing and police organizations and have greatly enhanced the physical instruments of surveillance and repression.<sup>35</sup> Charles Tilly and Keith Krause consider Third World authoritarianism to be at least partly a result of “the transplantation of unprecedented means of institutionalised violence and surveillance into political arenas that were empty of the countervailing checks”.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, students of international police aid have warned against police assistance that stresses technology without pressing for a parallel process of political and social reform. Such aid “will only make the police more capable of doing what they are asked to do by the powers that be. Altering technology without changing either procedural norms or the substantive range of policing is the most harmful form of aid.”<sup>37</sup> Both Paris’s argument and the counter-arguments illustrate the dilemmas faced by providers of police aid in post-conflict regeneration.

### **The Time Frame and Institutional Basis for Police Reform**

One of the reasons why the effectiveness versus constitutionalism dilemma is acute in immediate post-conflict situations is that rebuilding a professional police force is a time-consuming process. Informed estimates about how long this takes are bound to be uncertain and will depend on a host of uncertain variables. A former head of UNCivPol, Halvor Hartz, has judged in a recent study that “at least five years are needed to create a new law enforcement agency from scratch, until it is fully operational”.<sup>38</sup> The entire recruitment process, involving announcing positions and selecting and vetting candidates, would take at least several months. Then, a basic training course designed to give the selected personnel the basic minimum knowledge of police techniques and knowledge of the law would require between 6 to 12 months. At the very earliest, the first group of police officers would be ready for active policing one year after the first announcements were issued, according to Hartz’s estimates. Similar estimates are found in the comprehensive study by Oakley et al., and were widely supported by police experts at a conference held in Washington, DC in October 1997 on the issue of peace operations and public security.<sup>39</sup> There seems to be general agreement that judicial and penal system reform would take even longer than police reform.<sup>40</sup> Hence, societies just emerging from violent internal conflict will not have a system of professional law enforcement. Instead, police forces will be inexperienced, untrained and underpaid; they will operate without stringent judicial oversight and restraint; and even with the best of intentions, serious police abuses are bound to occur, provoking popular unrest and jeopardizing the legitimacy of the police.

Both the peacekeeping literature and the more specialized police research literature are explicit in warning against the assumption that police reform alone is sufficient to produce democratic policing. Of particular importance are reforms in the judicial and penal systems. The impact of police reform efforts will be diminished if the judicial process is corrupt and abusive behaviour is rampant within correctional institutions.<sup>41</sup> A case study of the establishment of a new independent police force in Haiti after the restoration of the Aristide government in 1994 argues that the relative success of the new force was reduced by the weakness of the judiciary and the prison system: “Police officers complained that when offenders were intercepted, they either evaded prison because the penal system was dysfunctional and inadequate, or escaped trial because

the courts were too inefficient to try them or so corruptible that suspects could buy their freedom.”<sup>42</sup>

Holiday and Stanley observed in their study of peacebuilding in El Salvador in the early 1990s that the most harmful deficit in the peace accord was the lack of an international mandate to promote adequate judicial reforms, which stalled the progress made in reforming the police.<sup>43</sup> Studies have also shown that frustration within the ranks of the reformed or newly created police forces often comes as a result of the incapacity of the courts and the prosecutors to deal with the huge backlog of cases, which in turn stems from the paralysis of the judicial system during the preceding conflict. Police involvement in and support for vigilantism has occurred in several post-conflict situations.<sup>44</sup>

### **Ex-Combatants in the New Police Force? The Recruitment Dilemma**

The most critical security challenge to post-conflict societies is perhaps the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of former combatants.<sup>45</sup> The peacekeeping literature strongly emphasizes “the potentially destabilizing role” of disgruntled soldiers and ex-combatants whose status in society has been reduced and who often face economic hardship in the post-conflict economic crisis.<sup>46</sup> They form a security challenge as potentially dangerous recruits to the world of organized crime, and may easily instigate insurrection in the volatile post-agreement period.<sup>47</sup>

International monitoring of compliance with a peace accord’s provisions for demobilization and disarmament, combined with substantial aid packages to support long-term reintegration programmes, is often seen as the key solution to the ex-combatant problem. An incentive structure must be in place for former soldiers and guerrillas, either in the civilian sector or in a reformed army and police. Rapid demobilization may prove to be counterproductive and may exacerbate the security dilemma by providing little safety for the disarming and demobilizing guerrilla movement. For the newly established or reconstituted police forces, the dilemma lies in the politics of recruitment. Procedures for screening or ‘vetting’ the new forces in order to weed out unqualified and undesirable individuals are important but are difficult to carry out owing to political constraints.<sup>48</sup> Although a clear and workable separation of military and police institutions is judged to be an essential condition

for democratic policing, the need to provide employment for demobilized combatants and militants, in addition to a lack of other trained personnel, often dictates the inclusion of significant numbers of former guerrillas and military personnel into the police. Rama Mani has put it succinctly: "If ex-combatants trained for warfare are inducted into the police . . . precisely at the moment when the distinction between the military and the police is sought to be reinforced – will the police reform ever be possible? . . . doing so may reinforce the nexus between police and military doctrine, and thereby perpetuate the military's influence over the police."<sup>49</sup>

As William Stanley points out in his case study of the El Salvadorian and Guatemalan police reform processes, the inclusion of members of old police structures into the new police force, the *Police Nationale Civil*, constituted a major obstacle to democratic policing. He comes to the conclusion that new personnel are likely to produce better policing than 'recycled personnel' from the old regime.<sup>50</sup> In the Palestinian case, the major recruitment problem was not personnel from the old regime but the large influx of guerrillas and street fighters with a history of vigilantism and political violence. Although their induction was politically important, their presence had a clearly negative impact on the policing culture of the new police.

### **Why International Police Aid is Unlikely to Produce Democratic Policing**

A number of studies of international police aid have emphasized the political aspects of this aid and have addressed the interests and motivations underlying "the burgeoning business of police reform" which more often than not have centred on specific policy goals such as combating terrorism and transnational crime or bolstering regional allies rather than on the noble aim of democratic policing.<sup>51</sup> The bulk of recent peacekeeping literature has nevertheless been relatively optimistic that well-designed and well-monitored police aid programmes can have a beneficial effect on promoting democratic policing. It is rarely pointed out, however, that this requires a complete departure from a long tradition in US military and security assistance policy in which forging alliances with native elites to face common threats has been more important than promoting democratic policing.



Students of the history of international police aid programmes, and especially their role and impact during the Cold War, tend to doubt the professed views of Western governments, and the United States in particular, that the promotion of democratic policing was the primary aim of police aid.<sup>52</sup> Studies of US police assistance in Central America in the 1980s and also of earlier US police aid programmes to Africa and Asia show that such aid usually failed to achieve its stated goals of enhancing effective and democratic policing in the target countries.<sup>53</sup> The reasons for this failure were a combination of the overall anti-communist thrust of US foreign policy, the politics of the recipient countries and the organizational means to deliver the aid, which distorted its implementation and impact.<sup>54</sup> As will be alluded to below, there are several reasons for assuming that the recent peacekeeping literature has not given sufficient consideration to the politics of international police aid and the difficulties of reforming police organizations.

### **Entrenched Policing Cultures**

Police studies acknowledge that police reform is a long-term and difficult process and that good policing is difficult even in police systems that are strongly committed to democratic policing. Marenin writes: “the police are a resilient organization and occupation. Continuities in policing will span massive social and political changes, and can be disrupted and reformed only with great difficulty.”<sup>55</sup> One reason for the difficulties in exporting democratic policing is the way police culture, and ultimately a policing style, is formed. Police cultures are strong and entrenched. They guide discretion and are shaped largely by the contingencies of police work, not by training.<sup>56</sup> Formal training plays a marginal role in moulding police culture. Instead, work cultures are produced by the police themselves as they struggle to cope with the multiple pressures they find themselves under. Any reform effort that ignores the power of existing police cultures “is simply rhetorical tinkering and pious hope”, according to Marenin.<sup>57</sup> With regard to South African police reform, Mark Malan has called for investments to educate serving police officers in policy formulation and strategic management “*within* their unique professional and bureaucratic environment”, but such an approach necessitates a high degree of intrusiveness, which may often be resisted.<sup>58</sup>



Another dimension of the problem of transmitting a new policing culture is the fact that many recipient countries often have strong and deep-rooted community mechanisms for dealing with crime and deviancy. They are based on customary law and clan allegiances, without the interference of the official public police. International police assistance has rarely shown much appreciation of these mechanisms, in particular because customary law usually offers highly inadequate protection for human rights, especially with respect to women.<sup>59</sup> By focusing on national-level judiciaries and police forces, international police aid may strengthen central law enforcement but perhaps fail to address the adaptation of a public police service to local customs and norms.

### **Conflicting Foreign Policy Agendas**

Perhaps more than any other foreign aid, assistance to police forces has the potential to alter the balance of power and change the political landscape of a country. For this reason, there is ample reason to examine donor motivation. Over the past decades, conflicting foreign policy agendas have usually characterized international police aid programmes. In the case of Latin America, Charles Call has observed that “international reform attempts have been driven by several, often competing interests such as suppressing communist guerrilla movements, improving the climate for investment, generating stability abroad, fighting drug trafficking, promoting peace processes, consolidating democracy, and advancing human rights”.<sup>60</sup>

In the case of US foreign police assistance, Marenin finds that such aid has primarily followed “two quite different tracks, in terms of goals, policy designs, implementation, and expected results”.<sup>61</sup> One is technical and managerial, driven by US national interests and concerned with eliciting support for US efforts to fight transnational crime such as the trade in drugs, money laundering, terrorism and smuggling. The second track seeks the creation of civil, domestic police and criminal justice systems that are humane and democratic and adhere to the rule of law.

The returns to the United States on its ‘second-track’ investments are not easy to identify; and for this and other reasons, the second track has been prominent mainly only in the rhetoric of policy statements and programmatic declarations. During the implementation stages, however, the agendas of the specialized agencies have dominated, and their goals of

fighting international terrorism, anti-Western insurgencies and transnational organized crime have gained priority.

The history of US international police assistance goes back to the post-World War II reconstruction of the German and Japanese police and criminal justice systems. During the early Cold War period, the United States' police aid programmes gradually assumed strategic importance in its containment policies, with the shift in focus away from purely military aid programmes and alliances towards a new approach that made police and security forces in friendly Third World countries the first line of defence against communism.<sup>62</sup> A worldwide programme of police training was in planning from 1954, and expanded dramatically during the next two decades. The Office of Public Safety (OPS) programmes, established by the Kennedy administration in 1962 and discontinued by the Congress in 1974, provided more than \$340 million worth of equipment, advisers and training to Third World police.<sup>63</sup> Although the OPS was officially established within the civilian USAID organization, the intelligence community and military agencies were heavily involved.<sup>64</sup>

Despite programmatic declarations about promoting democratic policing, the biggest portion of the OPS's training curriculum for foreign police dealt with counterinsurgency, and included equipment and training in surveillance techniques, interrogation procedures, methods of conducting raids, riot and crowd control and intelligence.<sup>65</sup> Aid and training was provided to security forces operating under repressive regimes.<sup>66</sup> Owing to rampant human rights abuses by forces trained by US personnel, Congress imposed a ban in 1974 which prohibited US agencies from using "economic or military assistance funds to assist foreign police".<sup>67</sup> Despite the ban, numerous exemptions were granted to permit various forms of police assistance that supported US law enforcement goals, especially in the field of narcotics control and counter-terrorism.<sup>68</sup> For instance, in the early 1980s the administration was allowed to reinstitute foreign police assistance and training to counter what President Reagan called Nicaraguan and Cuban "terrorism". In particular, CIA and US military advisers resumed the training of police counter-terrorism units in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.<sup>69</sup> From then on, training and assistance to police forces became an important part of the counter-terrorism policy of the US administration. The Office of Counter-Terrorism and Emergency Planning was established in

the State Department, and provided advice and training to foreign officials through its Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program from 1984. Obviously, promoting democratic policing was not the primary aim of these police aid programmes. In August 1986, it was reported by America's Watch that four of the officers who were receiving training through the Office of Counter-Terrorism were known participants in one of Latin America's numerous death squads.<sup>70</sup>

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the notion of police aid as an instrument for promoting democratic policing had reappeared on the US foreign policy agenda, and there were various attempts to lift the police aid ban completely.<sup>71</sup> The establishment of the International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) in 1986, and also the Administration of Justice programmes, were specifically designed to encourage democratic reforms of police and court systems in Third World countries, with a focus on Latin America.<sup>72</sup> The general goal of US police assistance shifted somewhat towards reconstructing collapsed and discredited police and court systems in areas emerging from violent conflict such as Panama, Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia and El Salvador and towards supporting police reform and democratic transitions in the former communist bloc.<sup>73</sup> Still, during the early 1990s the main aim of US police aid, which affected more than a hundred countries, remained focused on meeting US law enforcement needs. It was managed mostly by specialized agencies, primarily in the fields of counter-narcotics and anti-terrorism. Only 10–20 per cent of the annual budgets of more than \$100 million in 1990 and 1991 went to police assistance aiming to promote democratic policing. Significantly, a number of countries friendly to the US in the Middle East – Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Tunisia – received police assistance from both the Anti-Terrorism Assistance and the International Narcotics Control programmes but nothing from ICITAP.<sup>74</sup> In the Palestinian case, ICITAP was involved briefly at the end of the 1990s, but again its training assistance (on illegal small arms collection) was formatted into the general and much larger CIA-led anti-terrorism programme for the Palestinian Police.<sup>75</sup>

Several studies have addressed the gap between expressed intentions in US foreign policy statements and the substance of its police and security assistance policies with regard to supporting democratic policing in the Third World.<sup>76</sup> In trying to explain this gap, Marenin has made the point that it is easier to achieve international cooperation in crime

fighting than to create proper policing and street work in other countries through aid and assistance programmes. Both the history of the OPS and more recent experience with police assistance in Panama, Haiti and El Salvador make this clear. Under political pressure, transmitting a civil–democratic policing model is inherently difficult. The option of confining police assistance to transmitting resources, hardware and new technical skills is therefore likely to win out.<sup>77</sup>

### **Distorted Implementation and the Politics of Police Aid Recipients**

The way in which international police aid programmes are implemented is of paramount importance, especially in a climate of competing foreign policy agendas. It is a well-established fact that policy is distorted in implementation by both top-level and street-level bureaucrats and by the practicalities of organizing numerous agencies in a common effort. Implementation organizations are not neutral tools, but distort mandated policies towards preferred practices.<sup>78</sup>

Cottam and Marenin’s study of US police assistance to Central America reveals that police aid was delivered largely through functionally specialized agencies, such as the Drug Enforcement Administration, anti-terrorist work groups, military assistance programmes and probably the CIA.<sup>79</sup> As each of these organizations taught distinct, separate and preferred models of policing, owing to the nature of their work, they were more interested in policing that was effective for their purposes than in promoting democratic policing in general. Violations of law and human rights were often seen as regrettable but necessary. US agencies also failed to coordinate their programmes, and they “competed for clients” and “sought to shift priorities and value[s] towards their way of defining the problems that required police interventions”.<sup>80</sup>

In addition to the tendency of policy aims to be distorted during the implementation stage, a second factor, namely the recipients, also contributed to making police aid largely irrelevant in terms of promoting democratic policing. Recipients’ goals and interests in using police aid are different from those of the supplier. National authorities which are not explicitly committed to democratic rule tend to use the repressive resources of the state – the police in their various organizational forms and the military – to strengthen their power vis-à-vis society while bowing

occasionally to international demands to improve their human rights records and democratic credentials.<sup>81</sup>

In an illustrative example of the implementation dilemma, Robert Bruce's case study of the Office of Public Safety programmes shows to what degree US police officials misperceived the impact of their programme.<sup>82</sup> OPS officials clearly applied "flawed methods of assessment". For example, they interpreted trainees' enthusiasm for the whole training experience at the International Police Academy (IPA), which included travelling to and living in the United States, as indicating their adoption of the IPA's teaching, including its human rights programme.<sup>83</sup> OPS officials also used promotions of former trainees as a measure of the IPA's persuasiveness. There were strong indications, however, that those trainees simply ignored the IPA training they did not like, want or understand . . . the trainees knew that promotions were more likely to measure their ability to conform to the ideas espoused by their superiors within their home countries . . . Trainees said they could not adopt ideas inconsistent with their police leaders' interpretation of police work and had neither the power nor the inclination to introduce new ideas to their police forces . . . They did not understand how OPS officials could expect them, as middle ranking officers, to be reformers. Possessing neither authority nor responsibility for change, they could only be conformers.<sup>84</sup> Bruce therefore argues that US attempts to persuade foreign police officers to protect rather than abuse human rights through its training must fail: "if police abuse human rights already, it is unlikely US training alone will reverse that without changes within the police operational context".<sup>85</sup>

### **Concluding Remarks**

A review of international police aid literature is a useful counterweight to the optimistic peacekeeping policy-orientated literature. But admittedly, the former is strongly informed by the US experience during the Cold War and less by the growing European experience with police reform in war-to-peace transitions, which is more explicitly orientated towards promoting democratic policing. It is important to bear in mind the significant progress that the UN, the EU and other international actors have made in recent years in terms of heightened awareness, new doctrines,

more experience and better capabilities for police reform. However, the notion of police reform as peacebuilding was still in its infancy in the early and mid-1990s, when donors made their first steps to establish and reform the Palestinian Police. As will become clear in this study, international police assistance to the Palestinian Police was coloured by many competing agendas, and the noble aim of democratic policing was only one goal. Counter-terrorism was another goal, and was pursued with increasing vigour largely via covert programmes that circumvented the established donor coordination framework.

This Palestinian case study will illustrate some of the general lessons already learned about the (lack of) effectiveness of international police assistance. It will also provide interesting insights into important new themes, policy dilemmas and conflicts, especially with regard to the politics of international police aid mobilization, the problems of disbursement and implementation of such aid in a conflict area and the interesting donor–recipient dynamics in a political context in which international assistance was used mainly to promote and support the political negotiation process, not the reconstruction process.

### **Review of Primary Sources**

Studies of contemporary police forces outside the Western world have often been hampered by a paucity of primary sources.<sup>86</sup> Fortunately, this study has benefited from a wealth of primary material, in particular archival sources on police donor involvement with the Palestinian Police. I have had nearly unlimited access to the relevant files at the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the period between 1993 and 1999. These files are essential sources owing to the strong Norwegian involvement in the police donor efforts. From 1993, Norway chaired the main policy-making body responsible for coordinating aid to the Palestinians; and from early 1994, it also headed the various coordination committees which dealt with assistance to the Palestinian Police. Further, it participated actively in the police donor efforts through the secondment of Norwegian police officers as advisers to the PNA and to the United Nations' activities in supervising donor-sponsored police training in the self-ruled areas. I have also gained access to relevant donor documents, in particular on the UN's involvement, via personal contacts.

Press sources are generally weak and somewhat unreliable with regard to donors' efforts and to their consultations, which more often than not occur behind closed doors. Still, the mass media, including wire reports, newspapers, periodicals, television and radio broadcasting, have been useful. Owing to the intense international, Israeli and Arab media attention paid to the Palestinian Police, it is probably safe to say that no other police force in the Arab world has been scrutinized to the same extent. Printed sources are also available from the Palestinian Police, as most of its branches published their own monthly journals. A third type of published primary source originates from the very active and sizeable community of local and international human rights organizations, which have been heavily involved in monitoring the Palestinian Police's performance and documenting abuses.

Finally, I have conducted more than thirty formal interviews and several dozen informal interviews in Gaza City, Khan Yunis, Rafah, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Hebron, Ramallah, Jericho, Cairo, Oslo, Lillehammer, Geneva, Boston and Washington, DC. The interviewees include Palestinian police commanders, foreign police advisers, foreign diplomats, UN officials, Palestinian politicians, local correspondents and human rights activists.

## NOTES

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- 1 A number of works have been published examining aspects of the Palestinian Police, but there is very little with regard to the police donor efforts. See Edwards (1996), Edwards (1997), Edwards (1998), Grange (1998), Meyers (2000), Peake (1998), Usher (1996), Usher (1998), Luft (1998), Luft (2000), Lia (1998) and Brynen (2000). None of these studies has been based on the broad range of archival and other primary source material used for this study.
- 2 Marenin (1996), p. 8 and Hills (2000), pp. 2–3.
- 3 Eide and Holm (2000); Oakley et al. (1998); Mani (1998); and Hansen and Lia (1998).
- 4 This shift was triggered in part by the surge in civil wars after the end of the Cold War. Significantly, the number killed in intra-state conflicts in the period 1974–94 exceeded for the first time the number killed in interstate conflicts. Wallenstein and Sollenberg (1996), p. 356.
- 5 The term is borrowed from Mayall (1996).
- 6 For a more detailed discussion of these concepts, see Dobbie (1994); Ratner (1995); Mayall (1996); and Daniel and Hayes (1995).
- 7 Ratner (1995), p. 22 and Tharoor in Daniel and Hayes (1995), p. xvi.



- 8 Boutros-Ghali (1992), p. 10. ONUSAL, the United Nations Mission to El Salvador, is often described as the first peacekeeping mission to incorporate the new concept, known as post-conflict peacebuilding. Holiday and Stanley (1993).
- 9 First-generation peacekeeping usually included only two sets of participants, the warring states and the peacekeeping military personnel, with the troop-contributing countries and the UN Security Council hovering in the background. The new generation peacekeeping, however, involved a much greater variety of actors, ranging from regional organizations, international financial institutions, foreign investors and local and international non-governmental organizations to private foundations and academic institutions. Daniel and Hayes (1995), p. xx.
- 10 Boutros-Ghali (1992), p. 32.
- 11 The term 'security gap' was introduced in Oakley et al. (1998).
- 12 Chalmers (2000), Introduction. See also World Bank (1997).
- 13 Marenin (1998a), p. 153.
- 14 Marenin (1998b) and (1998a).
- 15 Since 1964, the UNCivPol units have been part of over 15 peacekeeping operations, on four continents, and they have formed monitoring units ranging in size from 26 monitors to *c.* 3,500 monitors from more than 50 UN member states. Hartz (2000), p. 27. See also the more recent Hansen (2002).
- 16 Eide and Holm (2000) focus on "the civilian side of the coercive apparatus", i.e. they exclude the military (p. 2). Chalmers (2000) offers a broader definition:

The security sector is taken to mean all those organisations which have authority to use, or order the use of, force, or the threat of force, to protect the state and its citizens, as well as those civil structures that are responsible for their management and oversight. It includes: (a) military and para-military forces; (b) intelligence services; (c) police forces, border guards and customs services; (d) judicial and penal systems; (e) civil structures that are responsible for the management and oversight of the above.

- 17 Ball (1998); OECD/DAC and Government of Canada (1998); OECD/DAC (1998); Eide et al. (1999); and Chalmers (2000).
- 18 Cottam and Marenin (1989), p. 592.
- 19 *Ibid.*, pp. 592–3.
- 20 Reiner (1992), p. 5, quoted in Wright and Mawby (1999), p. 338.
- 21 Wright and Mawby (1999), pp. 338, 340.
- 22 The balance between government control and police independence is a fine one. In democratic countries, the government usually has a role in police accountability in (a) financial accountability, (b) the legislative basis of formal accountability procedures and (c) the appointment of the chief of police, but the government should not have operational control. Although the independence of the police as a body is to be valued, strong police independence may itself create a policing problem. Some police studies have pointed to the potential for police abuses in democratic societies when chief officers of police are beyond the control of the government. Edwards (1999), pp. 180, 186.
- 23 Ball (1998); Berdal (1996); and Chalmers (2000).
- 24 For example, retraining soldiers for conventional warfare, the development of a professional military ethic within the newly integrated forces and securing the



- loyalty of high-ranking officers to democratic institutions and practices. Berdal (1996), p. 56 and Ball and Halevy (1996), pp. 74 ff.
- 25 Bayley (1995) and Wright and Mawby (1999).
  - 26 Hansen and Lia (1998) and Eide et al. (1998).
  - 27 Oakley et al. (1998), p. 524, citing a presentation by Prof. David Bayley at a Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) conference in October 1997.
  - 28 Mani (2000b).
  - 29 Call (2000), p. 15.
  - 30 Paris (1997). For a similar debate, see Frisch and Hofnung. They discuss the balance between state-building versus economic development in international development aid policies and conclude that “the lesson is that first, the legitimate monopoly over use of force must be secured, then the building of state capacity, followed by a selective development strategy. Only then may considerations of broad based and diffuse economic welfare be taken into account.” Frisch and Hofnung (1997) p. 1253.
  - 31 Stephen J. Stedman argues that almost every peace process ending a civil war faces the challenge of radical factions aiming to destroy the alliance between the parties to the peace settlement. Stedman (1997). See also Atlas and Licklider (1999).
  - 32 Frisch and Hofnung (1997), p. 1244 f.
  - 33 See, for example, Shirley (1997).
  - 34 An acknowledged theorist of democratization processes, Dankwart Rustow, has pointed out that democratization may often be the by-product of a stalemate in a struggle in which the main protagonists may seek democracy as a second-best choice. According to Rustow, democracy is not necessarily established by committed democrats but may come “as a fortuitous byproduct of the struggle [to] get rid of tangible evils”. Rustow (1970), p. 353.
  - 35 Edwards (1999), pp. 261 ff.
  - 36 Cited in Krause (1998), p. 136. See also Tilly (1985).
  - 37 Cottam and Marenin (1989), p. 594. See also Bayley (1995).
  - 38 Hartz (2000), p. 33.
  - 39 This author attended the Washington, DC conference. The contributions to this conference were subsequently published in Oakley et al. (1998). The authors argue that “reformation of the police force alone is normally at least a five year proposition”. *Ibid.*, p. 526.
  - 40 Oakley et al. conclude that “compared to policing, judicial reform takes longer and is even more difficult because of its intimate connection with national sovereignty and the distribution of power in any regime”. *Ibid.*, p. 511.
  - 41 The interdependence of police reform efforts and other peacebuilding efforts and the necessity of “reforming all parts of the security sector triad” are therefore a major topic in the literature on police reform and post-conflict peacebuilding. Eide et al. (1999), p. 19. See also Mani (2000a) and Eide and Holm (2000).
  - 42 Cited in Mani (2000a), p. 16.
  - 43 Holiday and Stanley (1993) and Stanley and Loosle (1998), p. 135.
  - 44 Stanley refers to the involvement of El Salvador police officers in the “Black Shadow” vigilante organization. Stanley (2000), p. 123.
  - 45 Demobilization refers to the process of reducing the number of military personnel in national or irregular armed forces. Reintegration is the process of assimilating

- demobilized personnel into the economic, social and political life of the civilian community. Definitions are taken from Chalmers (2000). For studies of demobilization and disarmament after civil wars, see Berdal (1996); Ball and Halevy (1996); UNIDIR (1996); and Spear (1999).
- 46 Berdal (1996), pp. 54 ff. and Spear (1999), pp. 5 ff.
- 47 Spear (1999), p. 6; Oakley et al. (1998), pp. 521–2; and Woods (1998), p. 145 f.
- 48 Berdal emphasizes the need to monitor those bodies previously associated with the secret security and intelligence agencies particularly closely. Berdal (1996), p. 53.
- 49 Mani (2000a), p. 15.
- 50 The new *Police Nacional Civil* (PNC) included personnel with no previous police training, retrained personnel from the old police structures, as well as two special units that were transferred directly into the PNC. Of these groups, those without any previous training performed best, according to their advisers, because they, unlike the units they replaced, were committed to carrying out effective investigations. Transferring already existing units proved to be highly problematic: they performed badly, and some of their members engaged in criminal activities, including the hired murder of a prominent opposition member. Stanley (2000), p. 119.
- 51 Mani (2000a), p. 10.
- 52 Marenin (1998a) and (1998b).
- 53 Huggins (1991); Shirley (1997); Bruce (1988); and Cottam and Marenin (1989).
- 54 Cottam and Marenin (1989), p. 598.
- 55 Marenin (1998a), p. 160; Bayley (1985); Bayley (1995); and Wright and Mawby (1999).
- 56 Marenin (1998a), p. 159.
- 57 *Ibid.*
- 58 Malan, n.d.
- 59 One exception is a number of donor-sponsored initiatives in the wake of the 1996 peace accords in Guatemala aimed at studying, strengthening and expanding recognition of indigenous legal practices. Call (2000), pp. 15, 50.
- 60 *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- 61 Marenin (1998a), p. 155.
- 62 Huggins (1991), p. 229 f.
- 63 Bruce (1988).
- 64 It is likely that the head of the OPS, Byron Eagle, was from the CIA. Huggins (1991), p. 234, citing Robert Amory, a deputy director of the CIA under Kennedy.
- 65 Marenin (1998a), p. 156 f. and Huggins (1991), p. 234.
- 66 Looking back at the history of public safety assistance to Guatemala, a 1971 Senate minority report complained that this assistance had been given even though “the Guatemalan police operate without any effective and juridical restraints. How they use the equipment and techniques which are given them through the public safety program is quite beyond U.S. control.” Huggins (1991), pp. 235–6.
- 67 GAO (1992), p. 2.
- 68 *Ibid.*
- 69 During the 1970s and 1980s, a common form of circumvention was to transfer police assistance to military assistance programmes. In the early 1990s, at the time of the US-led humanitarian intervention in Somalia Operation Restore

- Hope, the legislation was still in place. As a result, in order to circumvent the ban UNITAF was forced to label the revived Somali police force an “Auxiliary Security Force” rather than a police force. Kelly (1998), p. 411.
- 70 Cottam and Marenin (1989), p. 608.
- 71 In the late 1980s, for example, the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, chaired by Henry Kissinger, recommended that the United States should provide training to police in Central America and revive aid to police previously banned by Congress. Bruce (1988).
- 72 Marenin (1986), p. 156.
- 73 Marenin (1998a), p. 157.
- 74 For example, according to the US General Accounting Office (GAO), during fiscal year 1991, the United States provided about \$107 million in foreign assistance to police in a hundred countries, which included International Narcotics Control programmes – \$56 million; Anti-terrorism Assistance programmes – \$12 million; ICITAP – \$11 million; and DoD programmes to assist national police forces, primarily counter-narcotics police in Latin America – \$27 million. Most programmes were in Latin American and Caribbean countries. These figures are admittedly not accurate, because agencies did not regularly report on police assistance funded from their regular budgets, but they give a good estimate of priorities. GAO (1993) and GAO (1992).
- 75 For more details, see Chapter 9 of this book.
- 76 A number of studies have examined this issue: Travis (1995); Bruce (1988); Huggins (1991); and Cottam and Marenin (1989).
- 77 Cottam and Marenin (1989), p. 599
- 78 Pressman and Wildawski (1979).
- 79 Cottam and Marenin (1989), p. 595.
- 80 *Ibid.*, p. 599.
- 81 Democratic window-dressing, so-called ‘illiberal’ or ‘demonstration’ democracies, increased in number during the first part of the 1990s. Zakariya (1997).
- 82 Bruce (1988).
- 83 Cited in *ibid.*, p. 54.
- 84 Cited in *ibid.*, p. 55.
- 85 Cited in *ibid.*, p. 55. See Marenin (1986) for a similar account.
- 86 See, for example, Hills (2000), p. ix. For an in-depth discussion of primary sources, see the original PhD thesis by Lia (2003), pp. 42–50.

## 2

# **Donor Diplomacy and the Politics of Police Aid after Oslo**

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Foreign aid played a fundamental role in the establishment of the Palestinian Police. The PLO's financial crisis and the high costs of creating an entirely new police force from scratch meant that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) quickly became heavily dependent on donor assistance for maintaining its police. This book deals with various aspects of donor involvement, beginning with the first police aid consultations in the wake of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements for the West Bank and Gaza (DoP) (also known as the Oslo Accords), concluded on 13 September 1993. It looks at issues such as aid mobilization, aid delivery mechanisms, donor–PLO relations and police training, and ends with a chapter on the shift towards anti-terrorism assistance after 1996. A key theme throughout this study is the gap between the PLO and donors with regard to the nature of the police force. The PLO's ambitions for a strong, army-like liberation force clashed fundamentally with donor ideals of a civil, community-based police service. Another recurrent motif is the continuous and pervasive impact of Israeli priorities and policies, for which reason the trilateral PLO–donor–Israel relationship assumed a critical role in the delivery of police assistance. A third, equally important theme is the very complexity of international cooperation in police reform efforts, as effective and permanent frameworks for burden-sharing, decision-making and priority-setting and for accountability procedures are difficult to establish and maintain over time. Hence, general pledges rarely translate into rapid delivery and disbursement.

### **Donor Aid and Diplomacy after Oslo**

Assistance for the establishment of the Palestinian Police formed only a small part of the overall donor effort after the conclusion of the DoP.

Considering the relatively small population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the limited geographical areas they inhabited (see Table 2.1), donor pledges were prodigious. On 1 October 1993, representatives of more than forty donor countries and institutions met in Washington, DC at the Conference to Support Peace in the Middle East, where they pledged some \$2.4 billion over five years in support of Palestinian self-government and the peace process.<sup>1</sup> The Washington aid package made the Occupied Territories, already a popular destination for foreign development assistance, one of the most aid-intensive areas in the world. Similar large-scale pledges were given in 1995 and 1997, sustaining a high level of donor involvement in Palestinian self-rule during the 1990s.

**TABLE 2.1**  
**Basic data on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, early–mid-1990s**

	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza Strip</b>
Population (1994)	1,400,000	800,000
Area (square km)	5,800	340
GDP* (1991)	\$1,668	\$560
GNP* (1991)	\$2,134	\$864

Note: \*\$ million

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel and Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, East Jerusalem.

There were many reasons why economic aid was seen, and portrayed, as fundamental to the successful establishment of Palestinian self-rule and the implementation of the DoP. First, the donor pledges were meant to be a strong political message by the US-led international community underlining its commitment to promote the peace process.<sup>2</sup> Second, a large donor package made sense in view of the PLO's economic crisis in the wake of the Gulf War, caused primarily by the termination of Arab aid. The Organization was seen as incapable of assuming the substantial economic costs involved in setting up and running a self-government administration. Third, and perhaps most importantly, donors believed, or at least promoted the assumption, that economic improvement of the lives of ordinary Palestinians was crucial to the success of the autonomy experiment.<sup>3</sup>

Behind the rhetoric of ‘economic growth equals peace and security’, one could discern another and more powerful donor motivation. The Occupied Territories were a high-profile aid area, both in terms of media attention and international involvement, providing a large potential for political returns on aid investments. The political implications of the manifold increase in foreign funding, filling the vacuum created by a shrinking Arab aid flow, were obvious. For the first time, it made the PLO dependent on aid from a bloc of US-aligned and pro-Israeli countries, giving a degree of US leverage over the PLO that had hitherto been unimaginable.

A hectic diplomacy followed the breakthrough in Oslo, centred on the distribution of positions in leading and coordinating donor efforts. The jostling for high-profile roles came to a head during the consultations leading up to the Washington Conference in October 1993 at which a political high-level coordinating committee was appointed, subsequently termed the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC).<sup>4</sup> Several donors coveted the chair position. The main line of conflict was between the United States and the European Union (EU), which blocked each other’s candidatures.<sup>5</sup> A third country, Japan, also seemed eager to gain the position; but it was prepared to accept the United States as AHLC chair, having expressed opposition to the EU candidacy.<sup>6</sup> The United States and the European Union also disagreed on the lead multilateral agency for coordinating donor efforts: the former wanted the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (hereafter the World Bank) in that position, insisting that the UN agencies should play only subordinate roles; the EU opposed this, seeing the World Bank as too US-loyal.<sup>7</sup>

The stalemate between the United States and the European Union led to a temporary compromise in which Norway became the first AHLC chair at the suggestion of Saudi Arabia, under an arrangement of rotating chairmanship.<sup>8</sup> But Norway’s authority as AHLC chair was never undisputed. In the autumn of 1994, for example, the US was dissatisfied with the “slow” Norwegian donor diplomacy following the departure of the MFA’s energetic Middle East adviser Terje Rød Larsen to the UN, and threatened to “hand the AHLC chair position over to Canada” if the MFA did not put more effort into its AHLC responsibilities.<sup>9</sup> On several occasions, key EU member states publicly called for replacing Norway, or at least appointing an EU co-chair in the AHLC, in order to gain more influence and visibility in the Middle East process.<sup>10</sup> Eventually,

at the end of the 1990s, it was agreed that the European Union and Norway should co-chair the committee.

The EU–US rivalry in the donor process reflected obvious disagreements over the two sides' respective role in the Middle East. The United States had a strong sense of ownership of the peace process, but could not afford to disregard the European Union's economic muscle in funding the Palestinian self-rule experiment. The European Union wished to realize political returns for being the largest aid provider in the Territories, and it also considered its regional involvement an important testing ground for its new Common Foreign and Security Policy. In many ways, Norway was well placed to play a balancing role between the two powers. Its foremost asset, however, was the unique confidence in it of the two parties in the Palestinian–Israeli conflict and its impeccable reputation for being a disinterested and honest facilitator.

### **The Delicate Issue of Police Assistance**

The provision of police aid does not appear to have preoccupied donors significantly during their early consultations after Oslo. The issue was discussed intermittently, especially in the framework of start-up and recurrent costs financing, which soon emerged as an important challenge.<sup>11</sup> In retrospect, the initial lack of interest in police assistance contrasted sharply with the major preoccupation with that issue a year later.<sup>12</sup>

The paucity of donor interest in the Palestinian Police reflected uncertainty about the final purpose of the force and its requirements. Furthermore, donors seemed to avoid the issue, owing to concerns about its political implications. An MFA memorandum noted in early December 1993 that the police aid issue “is obviously so sensitive that none of the major donors, the US, the EU and the World Bank, wish to take the initiative”.<sup>13</sup> As will be seen below, donors failed to deliver substantial assistance to the Palestinian Police before it deployed in Gaza and Jericho. I have found no evidence of implemented donor programmes before mid-April 1994, apart from a mixture of police, security and military training offered by the Jordanian and Egyptian governments in 1993–4, some very limited VIP protection training in the United States and human rights awareness courses offered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).<sup>14</sup>

In the donor community, Norway gradually adopted a leading role in mobilizing and coordinating police aid, responding primarily to PLO wishes rather than actively seeking this role for itself. Following a PLO request to the UN for police training assistance in September 1993, the MFA seconded a police superintendent from the Norwegian Police Academy, Per S. Bleikelia, to a UN fact-finding mission to the Occupied Territories in early autumn 1993.<sup>15</sup> The turning point in Norway's police aid involvement came after Foreign Minister Johan J. Holst visited Tunis in November 1993 for donor aid consultations with the PLO leadership.<sup>16</sup> During these talks, Chairman Arafat raised the issue of police aid, expressing great concern that the Palestinian Police might not be fully operative and ready by 13 December 1993, when the Israeli redeployment was scheduled to begin. Holst noted in particular the concerns that the PLO leader had about the stepped up efforts of the rejectionist factions to foil the peace talks and challenge the PLO's authority. Both Arafat and the Tunisian foreign minister bin Yahya told Holst that Hamas, the PFLP, the PFLP-GC and the Abu Nidal group received financing, equipment and support from Syria, Libya and Kuwait. The PLO chairman felt that his authority and credibility would dissipate if he were unable to establish a visible and effective presence following the Israeli withdrawal. The PLO leader was also concerned about the policing role of his army of exile-based fighters, the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA). They had to be socialized into their new roles in support of law and order, otherwise they might become estranged from the Palestinians in the Territories.

Arafat pointed out that there was a lack of means to train, equip and operate the Palestinian security forces and that international aid pledges in this regard were inadequate. He warned of the problems that would arise as a consequence of weak institutions for handling security challenges, using his oft-repeated phrase that instability in the Occupied Territories "might spread to the entire region".<sup>17</sup> The PLO leader therefore requested that Norway should look into the police aid issue, and Holst received a very comprehensive list of what the PLO considered to be legitimate aid requirements, encompassing everything from uniforms to light armoured vehicles. During their meeting, Holst promised Arafat that he in his capacity as AHLC chair would contact the United States, the European Union and other donor countries in order to find ways of contributing to the establishment of the Palestinian Police. Police aid



remained a prominent topic in subsequent consultations between the PLO leadership and Norway.

### **Norway's Proposal for a US-Led Police Aid 'Consortium'**

The day after the Tunis meeting, the Norwegian foreign minister consulted with his US counterpart Secretary of State Warren Christopher on his talks with the PLO leader. His impression from the meeting was that the organization of the Palestinian Police following Israel's withdrawal "seems to overshadow all other concerns at PLO headquarters for the moment".<sup>18</sup> Holst himself had some reservations regarding the PLO's projected police, for example that the donor countries should avoid becoming "supporters of a Fatah hegemony posed by arms".<sup>19</sup> (Holst's concern about the dominant role of Fatah in planning for the police reflected his intimate knowledge of Palestinian politics. As the director of the Norwegian Institute of Foreign Affairs, he had overseen a series of research projects on peacekeeping in Lebanon during the 1980s.<sup>20</sup> Holst's comment about Fatah was exceptional in donor discussions, and there is little evidence that donors seriously discussed Fatah's role vis-à-vis the Palestinian Police in formal meetings.)

Despite his reservations, Holst nevertheless stressed that serious and legitimate requirements existed that were not being dealt with by the donor community. He feared that the World Bank did not possess the relevant competence in the field of police assistance, reflecting a widespread ideological hostility on the part of international development aid institutions to involvement in aid efforts for police and security forces. Holst urged Christopher to support the establishment of alternative mechanisms for supporting the Palestinian Police, referring to the considerable US experience in this field. Stressing the need for American leadership in this important matter, the Norwegian foreign minister called upon the United States to consider the establishment of a "consortium" designed to assist the PLO in putting into place an appropriate security force.<sup>21</sup>

Holst's vision of a speedy US-led police aid effort was soon dashed. The PLO had previously contacted the United States with a view to obtaining police assistance, but without receiving much support.<sup>22</sup> Christopher did not share Holst's sense of urgency and dismissed the consortium idea as "not useful" at this time.<sup>23</sup> He appeared rather

uninterested in the police aid issue. His primary concern was that donor discussions in this field, especially with regard to size, scope and equipment, should not interfere with the ongoing Palestinian–Israeli negotiations. During recent talks, police-related issues had been the subject of a number of controversies, including conflicting views about its size as well as the future role of the PLA units stationed in Arab countries.<sup>24</sup> The United States feared that as long as the PLO and Israel were still in disagreement, any high-profile donor involvement would complicate the political talks and would encourage the PLO to put forward unreasonable demands.

Christopher was very candid when characterizing the PLO position on the size of the projected police force and its funding requirements. These were completely unrealistic: “a grandiose concept that doesn’t fit the realities”, and he urged Holst to try to get Arafat to focus on “the real security problems” and form a small force that was effective.<sup>25</sup> The US also conveyed these views to the Norwegian delegation at a donor meeting in Paris on 16 December 1993, and added that it was of utmost importance that the Palestinian Police did not develop into a military force. Any attempts at militarizing the force must be checked. With regard to the budget for the police force, the United States considered existing PLO proposals to be “very inflated”, and accused the PLO of “exploiting” the police issue so as to “impose” donor financing of the PNA’s recurrent costs.<sup>26</sup>

Apart from the United States, the MFA contacted the World Bank and the European Union about possible police assistance. There had already been consultations with the World Bank regarding the possible creation of a trust fund for start-up and recurrent costs, and there appears to have been discussions about a proposal for establishing a World Bank-administered ‘Police Fund’.<sup>27</sup> These efforts were not very successful. Both the World Bank and the European Union were rather negative about giving financial support.<sup>28</sup>

The MFA was concerned about the cool responses regarding the police aid issue, as it was then clearly the PLO’s top priority. It feared that the US views, which contrasted sharply with PLO preferences, would hamper further aid efforts in this field.<sup>29</sup> Despite US reservations, Norway continued consultations on the police aid issue, but it was hesitant to pursue the consortium idea without US backing and sponsorship. The MFA confined itself to low-profile aid consultations and preparations. Its Middle East unit convened a police expert group,

to be dispatched on a fact-finding mission to the region at short notice. The Defence Department was instructed to prepare a package of second-hand military equipment, such as uniforms and vehicles. The MFA also contacted its Scandinavian neighbours in an effort to establish aid cooperation on police equipment and training.<sup>30</sup> The Moscow embassy was instructed to make speedy contact with the Middle Eastern desk in the Russian MFA in order to work out the possibility of Russian in-kind assistance, apparently as a follow-up to previous PLO pleas.<sup>31</sup> Still, there was considerable scepticism in the MFA with regard to a Norwegian involvement in this sector. The Middle East unit, for example, recommended that the foreign minister “be extremely careful to not convey the impression that we are willing to shoulder any tasks in this field. This might create expectations that we are prepared to assume a leading role in this field, too. ... Technically, we may not have much to contribute. Moreover, the issue of aid to the PLO regarding military and police related needs ... also raises political questions for example *vis-à-vis Stortinget* [the Parliament].”<sup>32</sup> In the absence of strong US leadership, Norwegian lobbying on the Palestinian police issue was bound to be weak and half-hearted.

### **An About-turn in the US Position on Police Aid**

In early December 1993, the United States made a sudden about-turn on the police aid issue, despite having rebuffed Norwegian and PLO pleas for its support. There were several reasons for this shift. The PLO had made several requests to Russia about obtaining military equipment as well as training for its police forces. The Russian MFA promised to give priority to such assistance, pledging to start technical consultations with the PLO on aid requirements.<sup>33</sup> The prospect of a Russian-trained and -equipped Palestinian police might have been a contributing factor in precipitating the shift in the US position. In what seemed to be an attempt to forestall a prominent Russian role in underpinning the Palestinian Police, Secretary of State Christopher announced on 6 December 1993 after his meeting with Arafat in Tunis that the United States would provide substantial assistance to the Palestinian Police. Significantly, its aid package would consist of non-lethal military equipment, such as vehicles, drawn down from Pentagon surpluses in Europe.<sup>34</sup> This was exactly the kind of aid that Russia was expected to

contribute. Christopher also promised that he would urge other donors to assist with training and in-kind equipment. By appealing to both Russia and the United States, the PLO tried to play the two powers off against each other, a well-known strategy of developing countries and liberation movements during the Cold War era.

The main reason for the US change on the police aid issue, however, was that Jerusalem had given the green light to it.<sup>35</sup> The MFA, which enjoyed excellent relations with top Israeli policy-makers, had probably conveyed via informal channels its own and the PLO's frustration over the US attitude, which at times appeared to be less flexible than the Israeli position.<sup>36</sup> By December 1993, both Israel and the PLO declared that they were in broad agreement on the need for a relatively large Palestinian police force, and downplayed their disagreements on outstanding issues. These were, after all, minor issues compared to the controversial issues of border control, Israeli settlements and the size of the Jericho district, which led to the failure of the Rabin–Arafat summit in Cairo in mid-December. The surge in violence in the Territories in late 1993 strengthened the Israeli government's belief that the PLO would need a strong security force to assert control over the rejectionist factions. Israel was also reasonably satisfied with Arafat's control over his Fatah forces inside the Territories, and even more so when he instructed top PLO security officials to meet for the first time with the head of the Israeli Shin Beth in late 1993. All in all, a new political momentum was created that allowed for a speeding up of police aid efforts.

### **The First Step: The Oslo Police Donor Conference, December 1993**

December 1993 witnessed a number of new developments in police aid diplomacy. First, it became evident that the technical aid coordination body set up by the World Bank, the Consultative Group (CG), was unsuitable for accommodating Palestinian needs regarding police assistance and that an alternative donor forum was needed.<sup>37</sup> At the CG meeting on 16 December 1993, the issue of police aid was referred to only in very general terms. Both the United States and Israel had opposed detailed discussion of such aid.<sup>38</sup> Despite its more forthcoming attitude, the United States continued to prefer that police donor efforts be kept on an ad hoc, informal level, outside the formal donor coordination structure.

In the light of the new US position, Norway now received support for its proposal to convene a separate police donor conference in Oslo on 20 December. It would preferably have capital-level representation, and 14 selected donor countries in addition to the European Union, the World Bank, the PLO and Israel were invited.<sup>39</sup> Foreign Minister Holst hoped that this meeting would create a better understanding of needs and requirements and that donors would feel more obliged to make specific contributions.<sup>40</sup> In preparation for the conference, the MFA hastily dispatched its expert team to Tunis for consultations with PLO police officials, resulting in a needs assessment report which was presented at the conference.<sup>41</sup>

Although the Oslo meeting was important in that it represented the first concerted donor endeavour in this sector, it bore all the hallmarks of being an ad hoc and hasty affair. The invitations to the conference were dispatched to donor capitals less than a week in advance, and donor delegates complained about the short notification, which in effect precluded proper preparations.<sup>42</sup> Others questioned the wisdom and necessity of a separate police donor meeting only four days after the CG meeting in Paris, which, after all, was the designated all-donor forum for technical aid consultations.<sup>43</sup>

The short deadline was clearly a part of US donor policy, which aimed at keeping police aid efforts on a low level for the time being. The US continued to be deeply sceptical of the PLO's police ambitions, and exerted significant influence on Norway's stage-managing of the conference, insisting, for example, that the UN should not be invited to the meeting, excluding even the possibility of allowing it to participate as an observer.<sup>44</sup> The PLO had formally requested that the UN and a number of European donors assist in training the Palestinian Police, and the United States obviously feared that the donors would embolden the PLO and antagonize Israel if they pledged solid support for a strong police force and if the UN had some kind of police reform and/or peacekeeping role.

The PLO sent Dr Nabil Sha'th, its chief political negotiator, to the Oslo conference, a sign of the importance which it attached to the police aid issue. Dr Sha'th impressed upon the donors the wisdom and usefulness of police assistance, arguing, for example, in his opening statement that establishing a Palestinian police force would in fact be a contribution to improving the abysmal human rights situation in the

Occupied Territories. Both Sha'ath and the Israeli representative at the conference, General David Agmon, stressed that the PLO and Israel were in broad agreement on the basic principles concerning the force, and called upon donors to start their aid efforts immediately with regard to training and equipment. Agmon cautioned, however, that "concrete support for structures" was still too early.<sup>45</sup> Prior to the donor meeting, the two parties had met in Oslo for political negotiations in order to revive the talks after the failed Arafat–Rabin summit in Cairo. During the negotiations, they had apparently agreed not to exaggerate their differences about the police force in front of the donor community.

At this point, there were very few concrete aid pledges, and only one country, Norway, had been willing to make in-cash aid pledges to support the start-up police costs. Most donors awaited more information from the parties on the final structure and size of the police or were in the process of making needs assessments based on bilateral consultations with the PLO. None of them had clarified the final form and substance of their aid packages, let alone committed themselves to a delivery date. Several participating donors had not contemplated aid programmes in this sector at all.<sup>46</sup>

The absence in Oslo of the PLO's traditional sponsors Saudi Arabia and other wealthy Gulf states reflected the continued rift in the relationship between the PLO and these countries. Only Egypt and Jordan participated, and the size and speed of their police assistance contrasted sharply with that of Western donors. Egypt and Jordan were heavily involved in supporting police training; and at the time of the Oslo meeting, several thousand Palestinian police recruits were being trained by these two countries.<sup>47</sup> As donors, Egypt and Jordan's role was contradictory, however, because they were also prominent recipients of Western, especially EU, development aid. Jordan in particular considered itself eligible for additional Western aid as a reward for moving towards a peace agreement with Israel. In late November 1993, when aid consultations had begun in earnest, it therefore forwarded a request to Western donors in the hope that they would "reimburse" the costs of a six-month training programme for 1,000 Palestinian police officers totalling \$6.5 million.<sup>48</sup> The donors failed to respond, despite their diplomatic support for Jordan's efforts, and there does not seem to have been much follow-up on what one European diplomat sarcastically termed "the Jordanian 'offer'".<sup>49</sup> Western donors never

seriously considered the possibility of training or sponsoring the training of Palestinian police personnel in Jordan or Egypt.

The Jordanian Ministry of Planning did not abandon the idea. It sent another letter to the AHLC chair on 17 August 1994 in the wake of the Jordanian–Israeli peace accord, expressing the hope that donors would be more forthcoming following Jordan's show of goodwill and peace towards Israel. The new request, amounting to \$8.94 million, was also turned down.<sup>50</sup> The AHLC chair suggested to his advisers that the MFA should perhaps discuss the matter further with Jordan; but after consultations with the US State Department, the MFA dismissed the idea that donors had ever promised reimbursement for Jordan's police training expenditures.<sup>51</sup>

### **Obstacles to the Mobilization of Police Assistance**

The deliberations in Oslo reflected a number of constraints inhibiting donor support for the establishment of the Palestinian Police. In an internal assessment of the police donor conference, the MFA noted that “very few countries had made specified contributions”.<sup>52</sup> It considered this to be the result of donors' lack of experience in aiding foreign police forces as well as the PLO's incomplete documentation on needs and costs. This was not the entire picture, however, especially with regard to the United States, Russia and the former European colonial powers, who had a long history of training, advising, equipping and even funding developing countries' police and security forces.<sup>53</sup> Security assistance had been a key component of superpower politics during the Cold War, and was an important ingredient in the building of alliances with other countries for military, intelligence and law enforcement purposes, especially in the field of drug control and anti-terrorism.<sup>54</sup> But deliberating upon security assistance in relatively transparent donor committees was rather unusual. Donor representatives at the Oslo meeting were most likely not those people who were authorized to negotiate security assistance packages with developing countries, anyway, and especially not with controversial national liberation or ‘terrorist’ organizations such as the PLO.

The lack of openness about certain police aid programmes was a potential problem for donor coordination, especially if important programmes and plans were shrouded in complete secrecy. Some donors clearly preferred to keep police aid on a predominantly bilateral level.



France was a case in point. It had long been one of the PLO's closest European partners in intelligence sharing, reflecting the close relationship between Tunisia and France in military and security affairs.<sup>55</sup> (Arrangements for intelligence sharing on radical anti-Arafat Palestinian groups also existed between the PLO/Fatah and several European countries, among them Austria, France, Germany, Spain and Turkey; and this cooperation had earned the PLO valuable political support and recognition in Europe.<sup>56</sup>) France had indicated a willingness to support the training of a Palestinian police force as early as late 1992; but at the conference in Oslo, the French representative declined to elaborate, noting only that such aid was not a part of "its ordinary aid programme".<sup>57</sup> Months later, at a UN meeting on police training in Geneva, France declared that "the French Gendarmerie has already started a bilateral programme with the Palestinians", but further details on the programme were not given.<sup>58</sup> In other donor organizations, France was known for divulging little information even on its ordinary development aid programmes.<sup>59</sup>

The United States also failed to disclose the full extent of its police aid programmes. In January 1994, several news agencies learned that the PLO's bodyguards and security officials were being sent to the United States for training under an agreement reached between Arafat and Secretary of State Christopher during the latter's visit to Tunis in early December.<sup>60</sup> Officially, the agreement included only a US pledge of military surplus equipment, to be transferred to Israel for use by the Palestinian Police. At Christopher's request, Arafat named a Palestinian team to work with the Pentagon, paving the way for considerable US involvement in assistance and training programmes, in particular for the Palestinian security services.<sup>61</sup> Very little information about these programmes was shared with the donor community, however.

Another important obstacle to police aid mobilization was the failure of the Oslo conference to create a specific police aid committee and to designate a lead-nation. Norway, which chaired the conference, had suggested the formation of such a committee and offered to "assist in coordinating contacts between the parties, donors and the relevant international organizations".<sup>62</sup> The conference participants disagreed on the preferred solution, however. Several donors argued that existing coordination mechanisms, the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR), the CG and the AHLC, would also do for police aid.<sup>63</sup> This proved to be utterly wrong. The



World Bank, which served as AHLC and CG secretariats, refused to deal with police assistance; and by gradually excluding this kind of aid from its surveys and assessments to the donor community, it created a lacuna which donors were slow to fill with alternative structures. Norway, as AHLC chair, carried some responsibility for police aid. By convening the Oslo meeting and by suggesting the creation of specific police aid mechanisms, it clearly signalled a willingness to shoulder a lead-nation role in this endeavour.

During subsequent consultation with World Bank and UN officials in early January 1994, it transpired that there was much confusion as to Norway's exact role apropos of police aid. The MFA still claimed that "Norway had in principle not assumed any particular role with regard to the establishment of the Palestinian police force."<sup>64</sup> In the light of its AHLC chair role, however, the MFA felt that it had to do something to address the notable lack of critical police aid; but until March 1994, it confined its role to providing a survey of existing pledges at the Oslo meeting.

As for the EU countries, traditionally the largest providers of aid for the Occupied Territories, the near complete absence of police aid commitments was striking. This position must be understood against the background of what they perceived as a concerted US-Israel attempt to exclude them from a political role in the peace process. Norway, as AHLC chair, was seen as US-loyal, and its proposal to create yet another donor aid committee under its leadership must have irked the continental EU countries.<sup>65</sup> When France, Germany and the Netherlands emphasized the need for more coordination in the field of police aid, they intended that this coordination should take place on an EU level, not under Norwegian and US tutelage.<sup>66</sup> At later police donor meetings, the European Commission and member states appeared reluctant to discuss their programmes in donor bodies dominated by the United States and Norway, stressing, for example, that there had to be more consultations within the EU community or that they would first engage in bilateral consultations with the PLO.<sup>67</sup>

An expected obstacle to police aid mobilization was the fact that domestic legislation in many donor countries banned the use of development funds to finance foreign police and paramilitary forces. There were remarkably few donors who cited this argument in Oslo or at a later police donor conference in Cairo (see below), however,

although it obviously played a role in keeping key donors such as Canada and Italy away from the police donor sector.<sup>68</sup> For most donors, domestic legislation did not ban limited in-kind donations and training assistance to foreign police forces. In the Palestinian case, political obstacles remained the most significant hindrance, not technical-legal restrictions.<sup>69</sup>

A final key factor contributing to slow progress on police aid was the PLO's, and especially its 'Tunis-based military officials', lack of experience in dealing with Western donors and their complicated aid procedures. The PLO's role came under muted criticism at the Oslo meeting; several donors hinted at its insufficient planning and its lack of transparency in the coordination of aid. When the PLO and the World Bank presented their separate analyses of future requirements, there was a wide divergence between their estimates, in particular over budget figures.<sup>70</sup> In response to the criticism, the PLO vowed to mend its ways, announcing that it would hire police experts to ensure proper and effective use of police assistance, and promised to furnish donors with an updated requirement list.

After the Oslo conference, the PLO's office in Oslo did in fact provide a list of equipment requirements to be distributed to police donors, a list apparently prepared by the PLO in Tunis. Similar requirement lists had been distributed during bilateral consultations, and it was apparently the size and equipment of the police force outlined in these documents that had triggered the US Secretary of State's remark about a "grandiose concept that doesn't fit the realities".<sup>71</sup> Although his remark did not necessarily reflect the general feeling among donors, the early PLO police requirement document had not been tailored to appeal to sceptical Western donors, to say the least. In addition to numerous stylistic weaknesses, the document profiled a very large paramilitary force, heavily emphasizing military-style equipment, including lethal weapons and expensive prestige equipment, while omitting pressing needs which donors would probably have been willing to finance, such as housing facilities.<sup>72</sup> It was evident that if the PLO were not induced to present realistic requirement priorities, it would fail to gain donor confidence and support.<sup>73</sup>

### **Donor Inaction, January–March 1994**

As has been shown above, a series of political obstacles stood in the way of a speedy mobilization of police aid. As a result, the first three months

of 1994 were characterized by donor inaction. An additional cause of inertia was the Hebron massacre on 25 February 1994, which led to a paralysis in the negotiations and prompted police donors to put their aid plans on hold. Donors generally reasoned that no police aid should be delivered before the Gaza–Jericho Agreement had been successfully concluded, even if such a political linkage had a very negative impact on the timeliness of their aid. The situation proved to be utterly frustrating for the PLO leadership. It was growing more and more worried about the lack of equipment and funds. Nabil Sha'ath, whose office in Cairo was responsible for receiving police aid donations, explicitly emphasized that they were more than happy to receive whatever the donors could offer, even if it amounted only to second-hand and old equipment.<sup>74</sup>

The time constraints clearly haunted the PLO leadership, and its police planners again and again impressed upon donors the importance of speedy delivery.<sup>75</sup> At the end of February 1994, two months after the Oslo conference, PLO officials noted with exasperation that the only confirmed in-kind police assistance was a Norwegian contribution of 10,000 military uniforms and a US grant of some 250 military vehicles from its surplus stores in Europe.<sup>76</sup> These gifts would not make a police force.

In February 1994, the US envoy to the Middle East peace talks Dennis Ross requested that the Norwegian MFA prepare an updated matrix of pledged contributions to the Palestinian Police. Despite the lack of new donations, the United States did not see any need for another police donor conference as long as a donation matrix was made available.<sup>77</sup> In February 1994, the Palestinian–Israeli talks focused on issues such as the size, weaponry and mission of the Palestinian Police, and differences on the force's strength remained significant (PLO: 10,000 vs. Israel: 6,000).<sup>78</sup> The United States probably gathered that the donors should avoid emboldening the PLO by making new pledges to the force at this point. The US position suited Norway well, as it had no particular desire to add the sensitive police aid sector to its already hectic donor diplomacy. Norway still hoped that the World Bank would include police assistance in its surveys. In the meantime, it quietly continued to follow up on police-related issues, update police donor matrices and seek out information about the PLO's preparations.<sup>79</sup>

By early January 1994, the PLO had received the green light from Egypt to use its territory as a “staging ground” for the deployment of the

Palestinian Police into the Gaza Strip.<sup>80</sup> The majority of the force would be assembled, reorganized and equipped in Cairo before deployment, and troops destined for Jericho would be assembled in Jordan. With Egypt emerging as the major destination for in-kind donations, the Norwegian embassy and Nabil Sha'ath's office in Cairo gradually became the principal venue for police aid coordination in spring 1994.

Among the European donors, Great Britain was perhaps the most active in this early period. It is known, for example, that it had consultations with PLO police officials in February 1994. Brigadier Mamduh Nawfal, a member of the PLO Military Committee, had undertaken a three-week visit to London, where he met with heads of the British police as well as with nearly a dozen private companies producing radio equipment. According to the Arab and the Israeli press, London had promised to contribute by "providing special electronic equipment" and also assistance in the areas of "restructuring, communications, training, and planning".<sup>81</sup> The British aid promises seemed very encouraging, but when Britain sent a police team to the Territories in early 1994 on a fact-finding mission, it transpired that its purpose was primarily to help prepare an executive training course in England for a few dozen senior officers.<sup>82</sup> The British police aid package fell far short of Palestinian expectations. According to PLO sources, Arafat had reportedly rebuked the Foreign Office for their "miserly offer".<sup>83</sup>

### **A New Sense of Urgency: The 'Emergency Meeting' in March 1994**

By March 1994, it was apparent that the Oslo meeting had been wholly unsuccessful in mobilizing significant aid for the Palestinian Police. The MFA noted that there had been little activity by the donor countries since the Oslo meeting.<sup>84</sup> But at the end of March, the police aid issue re-emerged on the agenda, catching most donors unprepared and ill-equipped to respond in a timely manner. When the Hebron crisis seemed to approach resolution, the US reconsidered its position on the usefulness of a new police donor conference. It was apparently time to reward the PLO for making yet another painful compromise vis-à-vis Israel. As in December 1993, the United States preferred to keep police assistance outside the formal aid coordination structure, opposing its inclusion on the agenda of the important AHLC meeting in March 1994. It

nevertheless gave the green light to Norway for calling for an “emergency meeting” of police donors at the senior expert level in Cairo on 24 March 1994. The sudden urgency stemmed from the compromise that the PLO and Israel had tentatively agreed when resolving the Hebron crisis, which had held up the Gaza–Jericho negotiations for almost a month. The package of measures included an early entry of Palestinian Police units into Hebron City, Gaza and Jericho, the deployment of an international observer mission to Hebron and accelerated implementation of the Gaza–Jericho stage. For the first time, the donors were faced with the very real prospect of an immediate police deployment.

The Cairo meeting was convened at very short notice: the formal invitations were sent on 22 March, only two days before the meeting.<sup>85</sup> This notice was even shorter than that for the previous conference, in Oslo, when donors had complained about insufficient time for preparation. The meeting was announced so late that even making contact with the relevant persons in donor capitals was difficult. Not surprisingly, a number of donor countries found it very difficult to send capital-level senior experts, forcing them to confine their representation to embassy-level diplomats.<sup>86</sup> Any serious planning for the meeting on the part of donor representatives was obviously precluded.<sup>87</sup>

The reason for the short notice is not entirely clear. An MFA press release justified it by referring to the urgency created by the converging PLO–Israel consensus on accelerating the Palestinian Police’s deployment.<sup>88</sup> In reality, the underlying cause was most probably the US policy of tailoring international aid in support of the political negotiating process, even if this conflicted with long-term aid planning. Aid should be used to elicit PLO compromises at difficult stages in the talks. The oft-heard US catchphrase that ‘aid efforts should not come in front of the political negotiations’ illustrated this line of thinking.<sup>89</sup> It seems clear that the orchestration of the emergency meeting in late March 1994 was a deliberate move to prevent donor consultations in case they might lead to demands for a more prominent coordination role by US rivals, particularly the European Union, in this key sector. The short notification of the ‘emergency meeting’ in Cairo was not exceptional; and at later stages in the donor process, for example in autumn 1994, the EU countries again complained that they were summoned to donor meetings with only a few days’ notice, which deprived them of the possibility of making sufficient preparations.<sup>90</sup>

Although other donors found it difficult to field capital-level representatives, the US State Department dispatched a large, very senior-level delegation to the conference on a private jet.<sup>91</sup> The US delegation included the Special Envoy Dennis Ross as well as Martin Indyk, Daniel C. Kurtzer and Aaron Miller, all top-level officials in US Middle East diplomacy. This, and the fact that Ross insisted at the last minute on moving the conference venue to a hotel closer to the airport, created some irritation over US donor diplomacy. The high-level US participation set the stage for yet another US-orchestrated meeting. The US-Norwegian axis came to dominate the conference. After the *tour de table* on donor pledges, only the MFA's special adviser Terje Rød-Larsen, who chaired the meeting, the PLO's Nabil Sha'ath and Dennis Ross participated in the official discussions, according to the meeting minutes.<sup>92</sup>

The Cairo emergency meeting was attended by 21 countries, in addition to the World Bank, the UN, the EU, the PLO and Israel. Some 73 official participants attended. The participation at the conference both in terms of the number and level of representation, in spite of the time constraints, demonstrated the importance which the donor community attributed to it. The inclusion of the UN represented an important development from the Oslo meeting, when the organization had been excluded at US insistence. The World Bank, on the other hand, clearly intended to avoid any formal responsibility and sent only a local Resident Mission representative to participate "in an observer capacity".<sup>93</sup> The agenda of the meeting included a discussion of the requirements of the Palestinian Police, with introductions by the PLO and Israel, a presentation of donor contributions and a discussion of start-up costs and other practical arrangements.<sup>94</sup> Even more than at the Oslo conference, the PLO and Israel did their best to demonstrate that they were in full harmony regarding the police issue, calling upon donors to "share Israel and PLO's opinion about the urgency of establishing the Palestinian police force".<sup>95</sup>

Although the amount of donor pledges was somewhat higher in Cairo than it had been in Oslo three months earlier, very little was translated into concrete and specified commitments, actual donations, disbursements or training courses. A closer look at the police donor matrix revealed that very few donors had been able to specify any delivery date for their possible in-kind donations.<sup>96</sup> Their planned training programmes were mostly unspecified promises and pledges. On the start-up and

recurrent cost issue, little had changed since the Oslo meeting.<sup>97</sup> In an attempt to speed up donor pledges, especially on financial aid, Norway, which chaired the Cairo meeting, proposed to dispatch a joint high-level Norway–PLO mission to donor capitals. The proposal met with immediate approval from Dennis Ross and Nabil Sha‘th. There were apparently no official reactions from the rest of the donor community. Their silence reflected perhaps their lack of enthusiasm for the American and Norwegian dominance, which left them out of the decision-making loop.<sup>98</sup>

### **The Formation of the COPP and Norway’s Lead-Nation Role**

Despite the lack of new aid commitments, the Cairo conference was crucial in creating a new coordination structure, which over time stimulated police aid efforts greatly. This was the most important practical outcome of the ‘emergency meeting’.<sup>99</sup> A multilateral body, termed the “Co-ordinating Committee of International Assistance to the Palestinian Police Force”, aptly acronymed the COPP, was established. It had representatives from the United States, Russia, the EU, Norway, Japan, Egypt, the PLO and Israel, and its simple mission was “to speed up the mobilisation of international assistance”.<sup>100</sup> Strongly backed by the United States and the PLO, Norway gained acceptance for its proposal to assume both the secretariat and the chair position in the new committee.<sup>101</sup> The COPP’s composition obviously reflected a political agenda. The EU’s representation was confined to the European Commission. None of the EU member states were invited to join the COPP, not even Britain, which had displayed considerable willingness to contribute police assistance to the Palestinian self-rule authorities. Neither had an invitation been extended to the UN, which at this point had begun coordinating police training programmes. An indication of how indistinguishable the Norwegian embassy in Cairo and the COPP actually were in the eyes of many donors occurred when the EU chair in mid-1994, Germany’s foreign minister Klaus Kinkel, at one point referred to the COPP as “[das] norwegische Koordinierungsbüro in Kairo”.<sup>102</sup>

The Cairo meeting conclusively moved Norway into the lead-nation role in the police sector, a role that the MFA previously had been reluctant to take on. After having gained the chair position in the AHLC, Norway reasserted itself in yet another top position in aid diplomacy. The EU



donors, who were eager to gain a more visible role in the Middle East peace process, could not have been very enthusiastic. They saw no reason for upgrading police aid on their priority list only in order to underline the splendor of Oslo's peace diplomacy. Although MFA officials at the Cairo meeting characterized it as "a smashing success,"<sup>103</sup> certainly in terms of enhancing Norway's visibility in regional diplomacy, it was less so with regard to aid for the Palestinian Police. Indeed, the Cairo embassy conceded that "the meeting did unfortunately not lead to substantive additional pledges".<sup>104</sup> The foreign minister pledged to raise the issue with EU officials, hoping that the EU "can take its share of this task".<sup>105</sup> But without any significant role or position in police aid diplomacy and with little prospects for visibility and prestige, EU donors remained reluctant to give top priority to the issue.

### **Police Training Assistance**

Donor-sponsored police training before May 1994, when the Palestinian Police arrived in Gaza and Jericho, was very limited; but it was not completely absent, as will be seen below. A more important development in spring 1994 was the emergence of the UN's involvement in this field, foreshadowing its role as the major vehicle for donor coordination of police training assistance during the mid- and late 1990s.

### **VIP Protection and Humanitarian Law**

Early donor-sponsored training efforts were confined to US-sponsored courses in VIP protection and to courses on humanitarian law by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). According to the Associated Press, the United States started bodyguard training for a small group of Arafat's "most trusted men" in early 1994.<sup>106</sup> The group reportedly consisted of "several dozen men", and was headed by the commander of PLO naval units in Yemen. The remainder of the group had been selected from among Arafat's other bodyguards. Another press source corroborated this, but added that one group of Palestinian bodyguards had already completed a three-week training course in the United States and that in fact a second group, some 15 men based in Yemen and Libya, were now being sent to the United States.<sup>107</sup> The



agreement on bodyguard training was concluded during Secretary of State Christopher's visit to the PLO's headquarters in Tunis on 6 December 1993.<sup>108</sup>

During late 1993, most west European countries received PLO requests for police training assistance, but I have found no evidence that training courses were implemented before May 1994. Reports in local Palestinian newspapers stated in November 1993 that a group of 12 Palestinian youths designated by the PLO headquarters in Gaza had recently crossed the border to Egypt and were heading for an unnamed "European capital" to take training courses in VIP protection.<sup>109</sup> At the time of the Palestinian Police's deployment in May 1994, there were reports that a few of the exile-based Palestinian forces had received "special [police] training" in Britain and Russia before arriving in Gaza.<sup>110</sup> The MFA files on police donor contributions for this period do not mention any such training programmes, however. Perhaps VIP protection was thought to fall outside the purview of the police donor community.

Although VIP protection training was shrouded in secrecy, this was not the case with regard to a series of three-day courses on humanitarian law and human rights offered by the Geneva-based ICRC. Fear of an abusive police was a recurrent theme in the Palestinian debate on self-rule. The PLO leadership and PLA commanders felt the need to counter criticism of the Organization's lack of human rights awareness. Arafat had reportedly signed agreements with several human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, organizations which were important supporters of Palestinian rights under Israeli occupation.<sup>111</sup> In interviews, the PLO leader reiterated that respect for human rights "would be a pillar" of the new self-rule administration.<sup>112</sup> As part of this PR campaign, human rights training courses were useful, and Arafat arranged for groups of up to fifty senior PLA officers to attend ICRC courses on humanitarian law in Geneva, Amman, Cairo and Baghdad.<sup>113</sup> The courses dealt with the application of humanitarian law in policing, focusing on issues such as the minimal use of force and procedures for arrest and interrogation. The ICRC representative in Amman, Marco Sassoli, who supervised the training, stressed in his lectures to PLA commanders that the police must not "treat civilians as combatants on the frontline" and that their "military thinking must disappear".<sup>114</sup>

The impact of the ICRC courses is impossible to gauge; but as other police studies have shown, police cultures and policing styles

are not learnt through books and lectures but by daily practices and experiences of individual police officers. Senior PLA commanders were usually veterans of the PLO semi-state in Lebanon of 1973–82 in which the practices of policing and justice had been summary and harsh. Many had received most of their training from Soviet and Arab army schools, in addition to combat training in PLA camps. It was highly unlikely that a three-day course in humanitarian law would bring about radical changes in their perspectives on law and order. PLA commanders paid the necessary lip service by praising the ICRC courses to press reporters, pledging that “our presence [in the autonomous areas] must be a police presence and not a military one”.<sup>115</sup> In many other respects, however, the PLO made every effort to bolster the military dimension of the Palestinian Police, believing that only a strong, military-like force would command sufficient respect from the population and the rejectionist factions and that only a force with some combat capability would stand a chance in deterring Israel from re-entering the self-ruled areas.

### **The Beginning of a UN Coordination Role**

The UN came to play a central role in Palestinian Police and donor-sponsored training, but this role was not unanimously welcomed. In fact, the marginalization of the UN had been a hallmark of the Middle East negotiations from the time of the Madrid conference in October 1991. Strong US and Israeli opposition to enhancing its involvement meant that a UN framework for police assistance coordination was bound to face obstacles. On the other hand, during the early 1990s the UN had improved its instruments for police reform and peacekeeping, and the PLO attached great importance to a UN involvement in supervising the training of the Palestinian Police. Donors’ unwillingness to face combined US and Israeli opposition, and their more general reluctance to get heavily involved in the police sector, resulted in delays and in a much smaller UN contribution than the PLO had hoped for in September 1993. It was a far cry from other UN police reform programmes in conflict areas in the Balkans, Latin America and Asia during the 1990s.<sup>116</sup>

At the early stage, from September 1993 to May 1994, the UN’s focus was centred primarily on how to respond to a request by the PLO to assist in police training that Arafat had conveyed to UN

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on 14 September 1993. The possibility of establishing police training camps in the Occupied Territories under UN supervision was also discussed.<sup>117</sup>

The UN secretary-general promised to respond to Arafat's call, and Norway agreed to second a Norwegian police expert, Superintendent Per Bleikelia, to the UN in order to assist in preparations.<sup>118</sup> On 3 November 1993, Bleikelia submitted a preliminary report ('feasibility study') following his visit to the Middle East in the second half of October 1993. His visit was part of a broader UN mission led by Peter Hansen, a Danish diplomat and the representative of the secretary-general at the newly established Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in Geneva.<sup>119</sup> The mission had held discussions with PLO police experts and officials in Tunis. They had also visited Cairo, Amman and the Occupied Territories, where they met with local Palestinian leaders and Israeli authorities.

This early fact-finding mission revealed strong Palestinian support for a UN involvement but a less forthcoming attitude from Israel.<sup>120</sup> Given the latter's well-known opposition to an international peacekeeping presence in the Territories, the UN officials were careful to avoid the notion of 'peacekeeping'. Significantly, there were no attempts to bring in the UNCivPol unit at the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO), perhaps the most appropriate UN agency for police reform in post-conflict situations. Instead, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs became the venue for further UN meetings on police training, and the police training initiative was handled directly by the office of the secretary-general.

Following the first feasibility studies, the UN police training initiative gained momentum.<sup>121</sup> On the fringes of donor meetings in late 1993 and early 1994, several European donors approached the UN, asking it to coordinate their efforts at providing future police training for the Palestinian Police. In response to these "informal suggestions", Hansen called for an informal meeting at the DHA offices on 21 February 1994.<sup>122</sup> A follow-up meeting, taking in both the technical and political-diplomatic levels, was also held there two months later, on 11 April 1994.<sup>123</sup> The attendance at these meetings was small compared to that at the 'emergency meeting' in Cairo. The February meeting consisted of representatives from six west European countries: the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Spain, France, Sweden and Norway,

all of which had been approached by the PLO with requests for police training assistance. In addition, the UN Centre for Human Rights (UNCHR) and the UN Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch (UNCPCJB) were invited to propose training courses.<sup>124</sup> The purpose of the meetings was to “establish a technical, preparatory network” of police donors, enabling them “to compare notes on bilateral [PLO] requests for training” so as to avoid duplication of programmes.<sup>125</sup>

The ambitions of the UN and this small group of European donors were rather modest. The idea was to offer training courses for “future instructors and senior officers of the Palestinian civil police force” and to start this training only after its deployment.<sup>126</sup> For the moment, the idea was simply “to be in the highest-possible state of readiness”.<sup>127</sup> Such timing was surprising given the expected difficulties of freeing up personnel for training during the critical transition process which would follow deployment. Pre-deployment training would make more sense from a professional-technical perspective. There is no indication, however, that European donors seriously considered this option, probably because it would be politically risky as the Palestinian Police was subject to political negotiation. Whatever the Europeans may have expected to come out of their projected training, Egyptian and Jordanian police institutions, with fundamentally different policing traditions from those of the Europeans, came to provide the overwhelming part of the Palestinian Police’s training in its early, formative period. The absence of Western-sponsored pre-deployment aid and training reinforced the PLO’s reliance on Arab policing experience. It was in Amman and Cairo, not in European capitals, that the concepts, training methods, policing styles and organizational principles of the Palestinian Police were studied and adopted.<sup>128</sup>

At the Geneva meetings, the donor group, which had shrunk to include primarily the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK and two UN agencies, agreed to modify their different areas of police training into 11 (and later 12) defined courses.<sup>129</sup> The UN took upon itself to prepare standardized summaries of these courses, which would be presented in a report to the parties and other potential donors upon finalization.<sup>130</sup> The idea was that the standardized summaries would represent a recognizable module system for police training. Such a system, the police donors argued, would make it easier for other donors to identify gaps and to offer relevant courses. Hence, the UN created a donor coordination

framework with a view to encouraging more vigorous efforts in this area.<sup>131</sup> In late May 1994, the final product was ready for presentation.

The American position on the UN police training initiative was somewhat negative. Initially, it had indicated an interest in participating.<sup>132</sup> Prior to the April meeting, however, the United States decided not to take part, ostensibly because the meeting would deal only with training, in contrast to the official US aid programme, which was confined to in-kind donations only. Despite this, the US demanded that the UN meeting should refrain from coordinating or discussing police equipment contributions.<sup>133</sup> It preferred that coordination should take place only in the newly established COPP, in which the UN had no representation.

The separation of police training and police equipment was an artificial one, however. Participants at the meeting argued that their training courses could hardly be discussed without clarifying which equipment the Palestinian Police would be using. The UN police donor group foresaw their role primarily in the field of specialized training, using advanced police equipment. Courses in crime scene investigation, for example, would appear rather meaningless to Palestinian police officers if they had no chance of obtaining equipment for that purpose back in Gaza. The US *démarche* on the police equipment issue must have heightened the sensitivity that surrounded police assistance issues, and it clearly added to the caution with which European donors pursued their aid efforts.<sup>134</sup>

Where the training should take place also became the subject of some discussions. The UN fact-finding report had concluded that "there are no facilities available" in the Occupied Territories.<sup>135</sup> The donors' police experts had advised, however, that the training should take place locally, preferably in Gaza or a nearby country. The diplomatic representatives expressed support for this suggestion, based on both practical and financial considerations. Nevertheless, the PLO had expressed in recent bilateral consultations a preference for the training to be conducted at the donors' own police training facilities in Europe.<sup>136</sup> It probably considered that if training courses were held abroad, they would become more attractive for senior police commanders as a much-wanted vacation. After all, the cramped and besieged Gaza Strip offered few recreational opportunities. In the end, almost all courses offered in the first UN package (apart from those offered by the UN agencies) took place

in the donor countries, contrary to the police experts' recommendations; but at later stages, most donor-sponsored training took place locally.

The UN group's relationship with the Arab police training sponsors was not very close. In late February 1994, the UN reportedly explored or intended to explore the possibilities of training Palestinian police personnel in Egypt and Jordan, and sought information about what kind of training the Palestinians were receiving in these countries.<sup>137</sup> It was indicative of a certain 'Euro-centricness' of the UN police donor group that even at this late point, it had not yet established contact with its Arab counterparts. When proposals were raised for bringing in donors from outside western Europe, there appears to have been considerable scepticism in the group.<sup>138</sup>

The discussions at the UN meetings in Geneva also shed light on the dilemmas faced by donors when selecting candidates for their training courses. At one meeting, the UN Centre for Human Rights raised the issue of admission criteria, an issue that the academic literature on international police assistance often singles out as a critical factor in police reform.<sup>139</sup> Although the participants noted the importance of these criteria, one representative commented that terms such as "minimum standards" for participation should be avoided because they would probably "offend the Palestinians".<sup>140</sup> According to the minutes of the meeting, there was no further discussion on that issue, and the final UN document did not specify any particular selection criteria for trainees. It appears that the issue was left largely to the PLO's own discretion. At later stages, it evolved into a significant problem owing to the large number of professionally unfit candidates in specialized courses: they either lacked the necessary qualifications or would not need the skills that the courses taught for their future work.

On 24 May, shortly after the Palestinian Police had assumed authority in Gaza and Jericho, the UN group presented its official training assistance package to the PLO, the donor community and other interested parties.<sup>141</sup> The beneficiary of the training courses was "the Palestinian civil police"; and the inclusion of the term 'civil' was hardly accidental, although the PLO attributed much less significance to the civilian police than to its paramilitary 'public' or 'national security' forces and intelligence units. The tension between conflicting priorities was a recurrent theme in later PLO-donor relations.

The UN report presented a curriculum encompassing 12 courses (see Table 2.2). These ranged from 5 days to 12 weeks but usually lasted only two weeks. Each course included from 12 to 50 participants. Sweden was the most heavily committed of the donors. It offered half the courses in the curriculum, foreshadowing its and Scandinavia's prominent role in UN police reform efforts in Gaza and the West Bank.

**TABLE 2.2**  
**The UN police training curriculum presented to the PLO, May 1994**

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Human Rights and Police Ethics	UNCHR
Police and Criminal Justice Management	UNCPCJB
Traffic Police	Sweden
Crime Scene and Laboratory Investigation	Sweden
Criminal Investigation	Sweden
Management for Chiefs of Police – Mid-Level	Sweden
Forensic Science for Chiefs of Police	Sweden
Instructor Training	Sweden
Maintenance of Public Order and Special Duty	The Netherlands
Courses for Senior Officers at the Executive Level	United Kingdom
Rescue Service	Norway
Canine Service	Norway

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Source: UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, Appendix, 24 May 1994.

The PLO's response to the training curriculum was generally positive, although it pointed out the need for specialized training in explosive ordnance disposal and VIP protection. These were the two most immediate challenges as the PLO leadership moved into the war-torn Gaza Strip but they were not included in the UN curriculum. Apart from that, it did not present any priorities, expressing only a desire "to see as many police officers, at all levels, trained as possible".<sup>142</sup> When presenting its final report, the UN (Mr Chinmaya R. Gharekhan, Under Secretary-General) urged the PLO to undertake a rapid selection of suitable candidates for the training courses. The appeal for a speedy nomination process must have sounded somewhat ironic, as it took the UN and the donors more than eight months (14 September 1993–24



May 1994) to come up with a concrete package and another three months to start training. (The possible starting date of the courses ranged from two weeks to four months after a formal request, but usually were more than three months.) As already alluded to, this tardiness weakened the impact of Western-sponsored training. Only in October 1994, five months after deployment, did the training courses start in earnest. As the Palestinian Police slowly took shape and its policing culture was formed in response to the realities in Gaza and Jericho, its organizational structure and culture got little inspiration from Western police training institutes and democratic policing traditions.

In April 1994, it was far from certain that the UN would assume a permanent role in police training coordination, but several donors favoured the formation of a local UN mechanism supported by some infrastructure for police training in the Territories. They called for an administrative position, preferably a UN police adviser office in Gaza. The UN (Gharekhan) cautioned against such a commitment, however, and declined to arrange another meeting of the UN police donor group.<sup>143</sup> Even so, Norway was requested to extend the secondment of Mr Bleikelia, who had served as Gharekhan's police adviser. He subsequently became the first UN Police Training Coordinator in Gaza, officially appointed in September 1994 as part of the newly formed Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO). His appointment inaugurated a growing UN and donor involvement in police training, which will be reviewed in Chapter 8.

### **'The Only COPP in Town': Norway's Energetic Aid Efforts in Cairo**

Although established later than the UN police donor group, the so-called COPP (Coordinating Committee of International Assistance to the Palestinian Police Force) rapidly assumed a more high-profile role and encompassed far more extensive activities in terms of diplomatic participation and donor aid. The importance of the COPP's vigorous efforts in the critical months from March to June 1994 in mobilizing police assistance cannot be underestimated. It played an indispensable role in enabling the Palestinian Police to function during the early stages of self-rule.



After the Cairo emergency meeting on 24 March, police donors lost no time in moving ahead. On 25 April 1994, the COPP met for the first time and agreed upon its terms of reference.<sup>144</sup> From the very beginning, the committee members set themselves a busy and ambitious agenda, with nearly weekly meetings of both the COPP and its logistics sub-committee.<sup>145</sup> The latter, headed by Egypt, was formed to handle technical issues related to transportation to the Gaza Strip and clearances of in-kind deliveries in Egypt.<sup>146</sup> The COPP was not an all-donor forum. It included only a few essential donors: the EU, Norway, Japan and Egypt, in addition to the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, the United States and Russia, and the two parties, the PLO and Israel. Cairo became the COPP's main venue; and the Norwegian Embassy there carried out the COPP's chair and secretariat responsibilities, acting as "recipient and distributor of information on donor activities".<sup>147</sup> The COPP was expected to coordinate donor efforts in most police-related areas, ranging from in-kind donations, training and technical assistance to cash contributions for running costs, buildings and equipment.<sup>148</sup> Although its main efforts were focused on in-kind aid, the terms of reference gave the COPP a relatively wide mandate, including monitoring functions and fund-raising efforts.<sup>149</sup>

In early April 1994, COPP took over responsibility for distributing police donor information and updating aid matrices, a key instrument in its donor coordination policy.<sup>150</sup> This role had formerly rested uneasily with the MFA in Oslo. The COPP's chair conducted separate bilateral meetings with selected donors in Cairo and also dispatched a steady flow of letters, information sheets and status updates to donor embassies and capitals.<sup>151</sup> Obviously, the chair and secretariat functions involved a significant increase in workload for the Cairo Embassy, a hitherto relatively peripheral outpost in Norwegian diplomacy. Ambassador Haugestad decided to leave all other diplomatic activities in the hands of one of his two councillors. Together with his other councillor, Per Egil Selvaag, he worked around the clock for the next two months to make the COPP work. The momentum which the police donor process gained in April and May 1994 was in no small measure due to Haugestad's perseverance and devotion. The embassy was also much aided by the subsequent arrival of two police experts, Police Major-General Arnstein Øverkil and his assistant Police Major Egil Nærum.<sup>152</sup>

### **PLO–Donor Relations in the COPP**

The success of the early police donor efforts hinged on the establishment of good cooperation with the Palestinian side, as that would allow for joint aid mobilization efforts. The relationship between PLO representatives and the Norwegian chair and his police advisers appears to have been very close, in particular in the field of aid mobilization. The COPP endorsed a suggestion that its chair and the PLO's Nabil Sha'ath should jointly conduct meetings with donor representatives in Cairo in order to elicit more aid. Their joint mission became a model for a capital-level fund-raising campaign in April 1994 in which Norway financed the fund-raising tours and offered guarantees of accountability and diplomatic discretion while the PLO carried the political message (see below).<sup>153</sup>

The PLO's own preparations for self-rule were clearly not as thorough and timely as many donors would have liked.<sup>154</sup> Its inability to speed up technical preparations was part of the problem, and caused delays in implementing donor programmes. (Slowdowns in police aid deliveries were also caused by the PLO's disagreement with the World Bank on procedures for accountability and transparency in spending donor aid.<sup>155</sup>) The COPP's decision to convene weekly meetings was a deliberate measure to exert pressure on the PLO in this regard. The frequent meetings served an important function for donors in eliciting essential and authoritative information from the PLO.<sup>156</sup>

### **The PLO's Police Budget: From Grandiose Plans to Tough Priorities**

In COPP, one major difficulty was the excessive PLO police budget, and estimating the costs of establishing and running the Palestinian Police. It ran as high as about \$250 million, divided between \$87 million in annual costs and nearly \$163 million in start-up investments.<sup>157</sup> In comparison, the total GDP/GNP for the Gaza Strip in 1991 was \$560/\$864 million. The gap between the PLO's demands and potential donor funds for such purposes was quite wide. Basically, the PLO figures were much too high and lacked the detailed information needed to encourage donor support. Moreover, the PLO budget included figures that had not been agreed upon in the political negotiations with Israel or that were in excess of agreed upon figures.<sup>158</sup> There was also much uncertainty as to the PLO's own budget: most donors would have preferred that it

covered police expenditures itself while external development aid was channelled towards less controversial areas. After all, the PLO was still one of the world's most wealthy national liberation movements and had an extensive political, economic, social and military infrastructure.<sup>159</sup> Donors nevertheless came to accept the PLO's insistent plea that the organization was nearly bankrupt and that they would have to step in and save the self-rule experiment. Significantly, when the PLO told police donors that "it had at present no resources to draw upon", the two leading police aid donors, the United States and Norway, responded by making in-cash contributions a top priority.<sup>160</sup> Another issue in the PLO police budget that created problems for the development aid community in donor capitals was the heavy allocation of resources to paramilitary and intelligence units, resulting in an apparent underallocation to the civilian police and civil defence, to which most donors were far more sympathetic.<sup>161</sup> The general PLO police budget estimates were also criticized on a number of other points at the early COPP meetings (April 1994), in particular by Israel.<sup>162</sup>

Although this criticism may have been technically correct, the danger was that the COPP and the donors would be dragged into a Palestinian–Israeli political dispute over the size, composition and status of the Palestinian Police. The COPP chair and police adviser decided to work with the PLO in order to find a compromise that satisfied donor sensitivities and averted a potentially paralysing dispute on budget figures. They were frustrated by the PLO's police requirements extravagant lists, which they believed would only weaken donor confidence.<sup>163</sup> On the other hand, they would have been ill-advised to scrap the PLO budget proposals entirely, which would only damage their excellent working relationship with the PLO. Hence, the COPP worked hard to induce the PLO police planners to come up with a more reasonable budget, which they finally did on 11 April 1994.<sup>164</sup> To enhance the budget's credibility, the COPP secretariat and police advisers spent considerable time and effort in ascertaining the appropriateness of estimated costs.<sup>165</sup>

The COPP basically adopted the PLO budget proposal only as a formal framework; and although it referred to this in donor meetings, it focused instead on budget estimates of short-term basic needs, which in effect postponed the tricky question of total costs. This enabled the COPP to present much lower figures of in-cash and in-kind requirements to donors. The shift towards short-term priority needs took place in early

and mid-April 1994, when the COPP endorsed a draft proposal of 'priority requirements' for the Palestinian Police, followed by new planning documents suggesting 'a build-up in phases' of police equipment and funds. Costs and requirements were divided into Priority I needs, covering the next six weeks, and Priority II needs, for the subsequent four months.<sup>166</sup> The short-term or priority needs assessments were merged with the current police aid status matrix in which available donations, commitments and pledges were updated continuously, providing a single donor status document.

The idea of introducing the concept of 'priorities' and 'a build-up in phases' came from the newly arrived Police Major-General Øverkil, who had taken part in previous consultations with Palestinian Police officials in Tunis in mid-December 1993. It was a clever move, which ended the fruitless discussions about the Palestinian Police's legitimate needs, and focused attention instead on what was absolutely necessary in the short term for the force to carry out its basic functions.<sup>167</sup> The new focus on practicality and technicality had strong support in donor capitals.<sup>168</sup> The sober assessments and surveys by the COPP police adviser also enhanced donor confidence. Unfamiliar with Western donor politics, PLO police and military officials had failed to provide the kind of information and assurances that donors needed for implementing their aid programmes in this sector, and the COPP's energetic efforts were therefore indispensable.

### **Chairman Arafat's Police Adviser**

Norway–PLO cooperation in the COPP was close, with Norway playing the essential role as a bridge between the PLO and the donor community. In acknowledgement of this effort, Arafat appointed Øverkil, the COPP's senior police adviser, as Special Adviser to Chairman Arafat in Police Matters, a position that would potentially give him a direct input into the PLO decision-making process on police-related developments. The exact assignments of Øverkil were not specified on paper, however.<sup>169</sup> When he raised the issue with Arafat as to where he should be stationed – he was not going to abandon his position as the COPP's and the AHLC's police adviser, Arafat responded in his usual non-bureaucratic manner: "You go with me into the Territories!"<sup>170</sup> The COPP saw no conflict of interest in this highly unusual appointment, which involved

no monetary compensation. One member considered it entirely as a move by Arafat to increase Øverkil's authority and influence vis-à-vis Palestinian Police commanders rather than an attempt to impose PLO control over the COPP. In the view of its chair, Ambassador Per Haugestad, and his team at the Cairo embassy, the appointment was also a token of the PLO's appreciation.

At the time, Øverkil expected that this unusual assignment would not last much longer than the beginning of September 1994. He was not the only one whom Arafat had involved as a police adviser or consultant, but he was undoubtedly the most authoritative adviser on the interface between the PLO and the donor community in mid- and late 1994. The fact that Øverkil and Ambassador Haugestad were invited to attend the Palestinian–Israeli Joint Security Committee meetings was an indication of the trust and confidence that the COPP enjoyed.<sup>171</sup>

After establishing themselves in Gaza in autumn 1994, Øverkil and his assistant Egil Nærum continued to focus on traditional COPP tasks, such as coordinating police equipment assistance and facilitating the transit and delivery of this aid. In correspondence with donors, they presented themselves as the “Office of the Adviser to the Palestinian Police Force” with telephone and fax numbers in Gaza and Oslo; but they were also the MFA's police advisers, making vital contributions to the AHLC and the new UNSCO office in Gaza. Their activities were scaled down at the end of 1994: Øverkil returned to Norway, visiting Gaza roughly one week every month. Nærum remained in Gaza until mid-1995. During this period, they played a complementary role to the new UN Police Training Coordinator.<sup>172</sup>

In mid-1995, the MFA decided to scale down its involvement in the police aid sector. It instructed Øverkil to end his role as police adviser to Arafat, a role the ministry apparently thought might become a liability given the publicity surrounding police brutality in the PNA. Owing to the informal character of the appointment, neither the MFA nor Øverkil himself sent a formal letter to Arafat to this effect. A letter was drafted in October 1995; but after long delays and another round of internal consultation, the MFA found that “such a letter . . . would not serve its purpose”.<sup>173</sup> One gathered that it would be considered a sign of Norwegian disapproval, which the MFA did not want to give. The appointment of Øverkil as Arafat's police adviser was therefore never formally rescinded.

### **The COPP and the UN Police Training Group**

There is some uncertainty about the extent of the coordination and contact between the COPP and the UN police training initiative. The MFA's correspondence reveals that there was at least one consultation meeting involving representatives of both groups.<sup>174</sup> Some information flow between the two police donor groups was bound to pass through the MFA, which had seconded the police adviser Bleikelia to the UN and which also chaired and ran the secretariat of the COPP.

A minor episode in April–May 1994 suggests that there might have been some rivalry between the two groups because of their overlapping mandates. The MFA wanted the UN police adviser Bleikelia to participate in an upcoming high-level meeting of the COPP in Cairo on 5 May 1994 that aimed to shore up donor support. He had been asked to participate primarily as a 'technical expert' in order to give an update on the UN group's projected police training assistance. In order to avoid any controversy regarding the UN's involvement, it was stressed that Bleikelia "should not have any mandate to discuss or 'defend' the UN's role at the meeting".<sup>175</sup> Gharekhan at the UN Secretary-General's office initially agreed to this, but subsequently reversed his decision, instructing that there should be no UN participation at all. The reason was ostensibly that the UN group's report had not been officially submitted for final approval and that the UN group's members were different from those represented in the COPP. The UN therefore feared that donors without representation in the COPP "would not be particularly enthusiastic" about Bleikelia's participation.<sup>176</sup>

The fact that the UN police adviser was unable to attend may not have made much difference with regard to the inter-donor information flow given the relatively small size of these two groups. But the affair did show that the emergence of different bodies for donor coordination also entailed some diplomacy in drawing boundaries of responsibility and authority. In this game, occasional friction and rivalries were inevitable. After the Palestinian Police deployed and police donor coordination gradually shifted from Cairo to Gaza, there was a palpable degree of conflict in the police donor sector involving the COPP, the World Bank, the PLO and UNSCO.<sup>177</sup>

## **Fund-Raising and Aid Mobilization**

A particularly difficult issue was the question of direct financial (in-cash) aid. The donor community generally accepted that the PLO would incur substantial new expenditures in setting up the self-rule administration and that its tax revenues would not be sufficient. Ways had to be found to respond to the need for funds to cover recurrent police expenditures, in particular salaries and start-up costs during the early phases of self-rule. This was a hard battle, however, and donors only very reluctantly accepted the role of financier for the Palestinian Police.

### **The Issue of Start-up and Recurrent Costs**

By December 1993, it was acknowledged that finding available donor funds for recurrent police costs was a major difficulty.<sup>178</sup> At the Oslo police donor meeting in January 1994, only two countries, Norway and Japan, were prepared to designate direct financial support for start-up and recurrent police costs. But the Japanese pledge had strings attached, complicating its use.<sup>179</sup> In reality, Norway's \$2 million grant was the only in-cash commitment so far. The PLO's Nabil Sha'th dwelt at length on the recurrent cost issue in his opening statement, apparently attempting to allay donor fears of getting stuck with never-ending recurrent cost payments to the self-rule administration. According to Sha'th's estimates, the Palestinian Police would consist of between 6,000 to 10,000 members, a much lower estimate than other PLO officials were making in public statements at the time, and a self-financing economy based on tax incomes would be in place in two to three years at the most. Sha'th's predictions proved to be utterly wrong, although he could not be blamed for failing to foresee the dramatic changes in Israeli closure policies that would devastate the Palestinian economy. Characteristically, his predictions reflected the early optimism regarding the 'peace dividends' and the Palestinian economy's growth potential.

The Norwegian chair of the Oslo meeting claimed to discern "a certain willingness to consider the issue" of in-cash grants.<sup>180</sup> In December 1993, it was still expected that some kind of multilateral mechanism with the World Bank would be established and that this mechanism would include recurrent police costs.<sup>181</sup> At the CG meeting in December 1993, however, the World Bank itself had been rather reserved on this



issue. It promised to consult with the Palestinian leadership and the donors, but emphasized that “it did not commit itself to participate in such an interim multilateral mechanism”.<sup>182</sup> Still, it had attended the meeting in Oslo, and now presented its estimates of police expenditures (salaries, recurrent costs, buildings and equipment) for 1994, signalling a willingness to include police costs in its donor coordination efforts.<sup>183</sup> The Bank also agreed to prepare a more detailed survey of police costs, to be discussed at an upcoming donor meeting in Paris, at the end of January 1994. It even told delegates that when exploring with their home governments the extent to which they were able to contribute in-cash aid for recurrent police costs, they should be able to count on a satisfactory mechanism for the channelling of those funds.<sup>184</sup>

At the high-level donor meeting in Paris on 27–28 January 1994, the so-called Johan Joergen Holst Peace Fund was established, in honour of the Norwegian foreign minister, who had died earlier that month. The Holst Fund was a World Bank-administered trust fund, designed to facilitate the disbursement of donor funding of recurrent costs in a manner that assured donors of sufficient transparency and accountability. The donor countries now agreed to pledge \$120 million for start-up and recurrent costs, covering about 75 per cent of the expected PNA budget deficit for 1994.<sup>185</sup> The Palestinian delegation, headed by Nabil Qassis, was clearly satisfied with the outcome, and press reports from the donor conference erroneously announced that “much of the money was earmarked for the Palestinian police force”.<sup>186</sup> The police cost problem had not been resolved, however. The board of the World Bank declined to endorse the modalities of the Holst Fund as long as it included police costs, and it did not relent on this issue despite considerable arm twisting and pressure from major donors. The Holst Fund nevertheless became an important instrument for donor funding of recurrent costs to other parts of the self-rule administration. This meant that as soon as it began disbursement, the PNA would have more of its own funds (from taxation, clearance etc.) freed up to cover recurrent police costs. Against this background, it is not surprising that donors discussed how a ‘switching of funds’ might assist the funding of the police force: by pouring more funds into the Holst Fund, the donors would indirectly assist in financing the police.<sup>187</sup> This idea was floated on later occasions as well, but in 1994 the rate of the Holst Fund’s disbursement was slow, creating a cash crisis in the PNA administration.



Leading donors therefore remained convinced that funds earmarked for the Palestinian Police were indispensable for saving it from collapse.

### **The Joint PLO–Norway Fund-Raising Mission**

At the time of the Cairo emergency meeting, there was no donor funding for police costs apart from the \$2 million Norwegian grant. In response to this situation, a new fund-raising campaign for police costs was launched. The Cairo meeting had endorsed a proposal to form a joint high-level PLO–Norwegian mission, which would tour donor capitals with a view to encouraging financial contributions to the Palestinian Police. To facilitate the mission, the Norwegian foreign minister Godal sent letters to his colleagues in donor capitals pointing out the critical importance of police funding at this juncture.<sup>188</sup> On 13 April 1994, the mission was scheduled to have its first meeting, in Paris. But it concentrated only on selected capitals. Although initially it was supposed to visit Paris, London, Bonn, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Tokyo, Moscow, Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, its itinerary was subsequently shortened.<sup>189</sup>

The mission was divided into two separate teams, the first consisting of the Head of the PLO's Information Department, Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh, and the MFA's special adviser on the Middle East negotiations, Ambassador Terje Rød-Larsen. The second team included Dr Sa'ib 'Urayqat, a chief Palestinian negotiator (who at the last moment replaced Faysal al-Husayni) and the Norwegian ambassador to the UN in New York, Hans J. Biørn Lian.<sup>190</sup> The teams were "personal envoys" of Arafat and the Norwegian foreign minister.<sup>191</sup>

### **EU Police Funding**

When visiting the main EU capitals – London, Paris, Bonn and Brussels – the Joint High-Level Mission devoted much attention to shoring up diplomatic support for redirecting European Commission funds already committed to Palestinian self-rule, in particular some ECU 10–15 million (c. \$11–17 million) which still remained in the 1994 budget. Although this sum had been earmarked for other projects, the Joint High-Level Mission hoped that the European Union during its upcoming Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Luxembourg on 18 April 1994 would

endorse a proposal to reallocate these funds for the Palestinian Police. The issue of an EU role in police funding had been discussed in October 1993, but the Commission had turned down a PLO request, saying it was up to member states to provide such aid.<sup>192</sup>

In Paris, ‘Abd Rabbuh and Ambassador Rød-Larsen were generously received by the French foreign minister Alain Juppé on 14 April 1994.<sup>193</sup> The issue of reallocation was not new to him; France was in fact actively working with its EU partners to change their attitudes towards police funding. However, there was no precedent for such a use of development aid, and many EU member states were therefore sceptical. Juppé nevertheless pledged to fully support the reallocation of 10 million ECU, as ‘Abd Rabbuh had asked for.<sup>194</sup> France also made several important in-kind aid pledges. A PLO press release was exuberant over the successful meeting in Paris: “This was a kick start of tremendous importance for the Joint Mission”, Ambassador Larsen was quoted as saying; and the energetic scholar-turned-diplomat announced that within days they would “make a whirlwind diplomatic tour” to raise funds.<sup>195</sup>

The second team of the Joint High-Level Mission had started its tour in Bonn, where they met with Staatsminister Schäfer, one of the German foreign minister’s deputies, on 14 April 1994. The delegation consisted only of Ambassador Lian, COPP police adviser Øverkil and the PLO’s representative in Germany ‘Abdallah Ifranji. The Palestinian celebrity Faysal al-Husayni, the official PLO counterpart in the High-Level Mission, was unable to attend, which disappointed the Germans.<sup>196</sup> The absence of high-level PLO representation was a recurrent feature of the fund-raising campaign, forcing local PLO ambassadors to step in. In a few cases, the PLO was unable to find suitable representatives, which caused several important meetings to be cancelled altogether.<sup>197</sup> This weakened the political impact of the fund-raising campaign and sowed doubt about the high priority that the PLO leadership had given to financing the Palestinian Police.

Regarding the European Commission funding, Paris, London and Bonn appeared very supportive. London even claimed to have played “a leading role in stimulating” the contribution.<sup>198</sup> The German MFA reported that the EU foreign ministers at their meeting in Greece on 15–16 March 1994 had reached an understanding to support the establishment of the Palestinian Police. But the Commission had then “surprised” everyone by opposing this, saying that Arafat wanted this

money for another project.<sup>199</sup> Schäfer therefore advised the PLO to restate its priorities unambiguously in order to enable the foreign ministers to reallocate the ECU 10 million. The German MFA also believed that the European Commission's inflexible attitude on the issue was nothing but an attempt to put pressure on EU ministers to allocate more funds to the Commission instead of redirecting existing funds. Besides this new insight into the intricacies of EU donor politics, the High-Level Mission received a promise from Staatsminister Schäfer that he would advise the German foreign minister to give top priority to the reallocation issue.

The main EU capitals now seemed in favour of reallocation, and the United States was also supportive, promising to make diplomatic representations in support of the proposal.<sup>200</sup> The European Commission remained far less forthcoming, however. When Larsen and 'Abd Rabbuh met with the director-general of the European Commission Juan Prat on 14 April 1994, the tone did not leave much room for optimism.<sup>201</sup> The European Commission argued that only some ECU 10 million remained in the European Commission budget for 1994 and that there were explicit limitations on the use of these funds. Funding the establishment of a police force was normally outside the domain of development aid, and the allocation of funds to recurrent costs was certainly excluded. Prat categorically declined appeals for such aid. There was the possibility of allocating some ECU 1–2 million to a specified project, for example investment in vehicles, administrative equipment, computers etc. But such a project needed to be specified and a tender would have to be made; and the entire process, even in urgent cases such as this, would take three months or more.<sup>202</sup>

The seemingly inflexible position of the European Commission did not win the day at the EU foreign ministers meeting four days later. Political backing for the reallocation proposal was already sufficient to effect a resolution to spend the entire ECU 10 million (\$11.3 million) "in order to contribute actively and urgently to the creation of a Palestinian Police force".<sup>203</sup> Appeals from many quarters, the PLO in particular, had created the impression that a strong police force "was a matter of survival" for the PLO leader.<sup>204</sup> Moreover, the use of aid funds for political- and security-related purposes was in tune with the EU's new drive to take joint foreign policy action, called for in the Maastricht Treaty and the EU's 'Redirected Mediterranean Policy'.<sup>205</sup> In fact, the

police funding resolution was hailed as “one of the first actions taken by the Union under the Maastricht treaty’s second pillar Common Foreign and Security Policy”.<sup>206</sup> It also received much support from the Euro–Arab dialogue.<sup>207</sup>

How much of the ECU 10 million would be available for recurrent costs was not clarified at the foreign ministers’ meeting. Subsequent consultations between Arafat and the EU’s Development Commissioner Manuel Marin in May 1994 determined how the funds would be spent: ECU 5 million were set aside for recurrent costs and the rest for investment in equipment and training.<sup>208</sup> By late June 1994, more than half of this amount had been disbursed. At that point, the EU was also in the process of committing another ECU 10 million for recurrent police costs, and police funding was well under way.

Bilateral in-cash contributions proved to be very difficult to elicit. Paris, Bonn and London all excluded such aid, stating that their support would be confined to the EU grant reallocation. The fact that France, one of the PLO’s staunchest supporters in western Europe, also declined underlined the difficulties of raising this aid. Several capitals promised to consider new in-kind assistance, however. The French foreign minister Juppé said that he was ready to support a reallocation of France’s development aid to the Palestinian areas in order to finance an advanced internal police communication system at an estimated cost of \$1.5–2.5 million.<sup>209</sup> For its part, Germany had a DM 600,000 fund that could be spent on police equipment and possibly training, and it promised to explore the possibility of donating surplus material from its own police and military forces.

In the light of a seemingly strong British interest in the Palestinian Police, the Joint High-Level Mission entertained hopes that the United Kingdom would consider financing high-cost equipment such as helicopters for VIP transportation and rescue services and also vessels for patrolling the Gaza Sea. On this issue, they were given the cold shoulder, however. The British Foreign Office promised to consider further assistance, but preferred to see “men on the ground rather than men in the air or on the sea”.<sup>210</sup> The PLO had raised the issue before, during Arafat’s meeting with Prime Minister Major and Foreign Minister Hurd; but for the moment, Britain confined its aid to a projected training programme in senior-level management and an in-kind donation of 200 sets of riot control gear.

Although the fund-raisers had been favourably received in London, Bonn and Paris, they encountered much scepticism in several other important donor capitals. During informal preparatory consultations, one EU donor questioned the wisdom of the entire police fund-raising campaign, querying whether a meeting with the PLO–Norway delegation would be “useful”.<sup>211</sup> An important objection concerned Israel’s responsibility for facilitating sufficient revenue for the PNA. Israel had attempted to turn the financial burden over to the international community, and this was unacceptable, one donor argued, especially as it levied taxes on the Palestinians in the Territories. The underlying message was that the fund-raisers were doing Israel’s bidding. Also, the prominent role of Norway and its diplomatic newcomer Ambassador Rød-Larsen appeared to have been a source of some donor envy and irritation.<sup>212</sup> Finally, there was the traditional opposition to the use of development funds to finance police forces. These reservations appear to have been quite prevalent in the donor community.

Even among the COPP’s member states, it was hard to elicit more in-kind and in-cash pledges. When the Joint High-Level Mission, represented by Dr ‘Urayqat and Ambassador Lian, met with the director-general of the Middle East Department Takaya Suto in the Japanese MFA on 22 April 1994, no new pledges of in-cash aid were made.<sup>213</sup> Japan confined itself to suggesting an in-kind donation of some 5,000 second-hand police uniforms. Its response was positive but non-committal on a plea for administrative equipment and computers. The meeting in Tokyo even raised doubt about whether a previous Japanese pledge of \$3.5 million could be used for covering recurrent police costs. Japan had donated the amount to be used by the Holst Fund as administered by the World Bank; and as long as the Bank refused to channel funds to the Palestinian Police, this money would not be available.

### **The Role of the United States**

The US role was a key factor in raising aid funds for the Palestinian Police. In contrast to its cool response in November 1993, the United States took great interest in promoting assistance to the Palestinian Police in late spring 1994. As evidence of its strong backing for the PLO–Norway mission, it offered to “be helpful by reinforcing Norwegian démarches in capitals”, and did so on a number of occasions.<sup>214</sup> The US

Embassy in Oslo also requested a status report on the MFA's aid mobilization efforts, asking the latter "to give a sense of which donors offer the best prospects" with a view to directing US lobbying efforts accordingly.<sup>215</sup> The MFA dispatched the travel plan for the two delegations to the State Department as soon as it had been completed and continued to consult the United States frequently on the police donor efforts.<sup>216</sup>

The close but asymmetrical nature of US–Norway aid consultations is evident from the minutes of a meeting on 15 April 1994 between the Joint High-Level Mission and the US State Department, led by Dennis Ross. The mission's visit to Washington, DC was not a regular fundraising meeting. The State Department was more preoccupied with giving guidance and direction to Norway (and the PLO) than with informing them about its future plans for police assistance. The meeting was described as "a two hour detailed review of the status of pledges", and dealt with identifying prospective donors and sources of funding.<sup>217</sup> Although the issue of further US contributions was raised by the Palestinian–Norwegian delegation at one point, this resulted in no further discussion: the State Department said only that it "precluded" any direct financial assistance.<sup>218</sup> Less than two weeks later, the United States nevertheless announced a \$5 million grant to the Palestinian Police (see below). It probably did not want the grant to be made public until other sources of funding had been exhausted, even if this meant keeping Norway in the dark about its plans. The episode was similar to the shift, discussed above, in late 1993, when it had made a sudden about-turn without informing Norway beforehand. The State Department clearly viewed Norway as a junior partner whose role was to act under the general direction of US Middle East diplomacy.

### **Russia's Police Aid Involvement**

As one of the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process and a member of the COPPP group, Russia was expected to play a role in aiding the Palestinian Police. On a political level, the PLO had long sought a more active Russian diplomatic role as a counterweight to the United States. Russia–PLO contacts in late 1993 had indicated the possibility of a substantial Russian aid package, and the Joint High-Level Mission therefore included Moscow among its destinations. The Russian MFA welcomed a meeting with the delegation, but the latter cancelled its visit in the

light of Arafat's visit to Russia on 17–19 April 1994, at which the issue of police assistance would be raised.<sup>219</sup> The PLO leader's visit was his first since the collapse of the Soviet Union, in sharp contrast to the Soviet era, when he had been a regular visitor to Moscow. It seemed to set the tone for a renewal of PLO–Russia cooperation. President Yeltsin was quoted as saying that a Middle East peace was now one of Russia's top strategic priorities.

Among his many meetings in Moscow, Arafat met with Interior Minister Viktor Yerin to discuss possible police assistance. According to press reports, an agreement on in-kind aid had been reached during these talks, and a joint committee for cooperation “in the domains of national security and police” was established.<sup>220</sup> Sa'ib 'Urayqat was “very satisfied” with the goodwill and positive attitude the Russian president had conveyed over this issue.<sup>221</sup> Two weeks later, COPP reported on detailed Russian–Palestinian discussions “on delivery of light weapons, communication equipment and wheeled armoured vehicles”.<sup>222</sup> Although it was slow in implementing its aid promises, Russia became probably the largest in-kind donor to the Palestinian Police with its delivery of 45 armoured personnel carriers in late 1995.

### **In Search of Arab Sources of Funding**

A key issue in the aid consultations was the potential role of the Arab states, especially the wealthy Gulf countries, who historically had been foremost among the PLO's financial supporters. Western donors had hoped that these states would play a large role in the aid efforts, and this belief manifested itself in considerable diplomatic lobbying aimed at increasing Arab assistance to Palestinian self-rule.<sup>223</sup> Western donors also put pressure on the PLO to work hard to repair its relations with the Gulf countries. This issue assumed particular importance because after Operation Desert Storm and the PLO's unfortunate diplomacy in support of Iraq, the Gulf monarchs allowed significant aid to flow to the Islamist movement in the Occupied Territories instead of to the PLO.<sup>224</sup>

At the donor conference in Washington, DC on 1 October 1993, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states made substantial aid promises, and Saudi Arabia was among the top donors with a total pledge of \$100 million. In subsequent consultations, it was apparent that Saudi diplomats wished to keep their country's aid efforts to a low profile. For this reason,



Saudi assistance to the projected Palestinian police force was not very likely. And when the first police donor conference convened in Oslo in December 1993, none of the GCC states attended. At the subsequent Cairo emergency meeting in March 1994, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and even Kuwait were specifically invited. But only the UAE attended, without making any pledges.

All the same, Norway and the PLO must have received signals that police assistance from the Gulf countries was a distinct possibility, because Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Abu Dhabi were eventually included among the destinations of the Joint High-Level Mission. Various high-level EU and US *démarches* were made in preparation for the fund-raising visits. Support for these diplomatic moves had been stimulated during the meetings with the Joint High-Level Mission in Europe.<sup>225</sup> During the third week of April 1994, a PLO–Norway delegation headed by Lian and ‘Urayqat met with the Saudi, UAE and Qatari MFAs. The meetings produced no immediate results, apart from solemn promises to give consideration to the plea for financial and material assistance.<sup>226</sup> Of the GCC countries, only Saudi Arabia came round after much US lobbying and offered significant in-kind and financial aid to the Palestinian Police in mid- and late 1994.<sup>227</sup>

In tandem with the Joint High-Level Mission, the COPP made fund-raising efforts *vis-à-vis* the Arab League, whose headquarters was in Cairo. Following a meeting between Arafat and the secretary-general of the Arab League Dr ‘Ismat ‘Abd al-Majid in which the former had raised the issue of financial assistance for the Palestinian Police, Ambassador Haugestad and Nabil Sha‘th sought a meeting with al-Majid as a follow-up to Arafat’s request.<sup>228</sup> These efforts were not particularly successful, as the secretary-general evidently did not find time in his schedule to meet with them.<sup>229</sup> When the COPP’s chair finally obtained an audience with Dr ‘Abd al-Majid on 30 June 1994, the latter indicated that the League had no budgetary resources of its own available in 1994. However, he offered to contact member states and invite them to contribute.<sup>230</sup>

Lobbying for an Arab League role apparently continued throughout 1994, but reached a dead end when the Arab League’s Council of Arab Interior Ministers decided in their February 1995 meeting not to support multilateral funding for the Palestinian Police. The decision could not have been particularly surprising given the strong opposition to the Oslo Accords by many Arab League member states. The PLO had



hoped that the Arab League would agree to facilitate and coordinate police aid to the PNA through the Council for Arab Interior Ministers' secretariat, but this proposal was strongly opposed by Syria and Lebanon, which argued that involving the secretariat would imply the League's endorsement of the DoP. With the help of Saudi intervention, a compromise resolution was reached whereby Arab states were urged to "back and assist the Palestinian Police in a bilateral way, each according to its capabilities and circumstances".<sup>231</sup> The Arab League decision illustrated the Arab world's increasingly peripheral role in police funding and assistance, compared with Egypt and Jordan's extensive assistance in 1993–4.

### **A Final Push: The COPP High-Level Conference in May 1994**

During April 1994, the Joint High-Level Mission in its quest to raise funds for the Palestinian Police visited nearly a dozen donor capitals, but the immediate results were not very tangible. Apart from the important reallocation of the ECU 10 million of European Commission funds, and a few in-kind donations, it appeared to have failed in its primary aim of encouraging increased financial aid by donor capitals. Judging by its records, the MFA was not seized by any sense of apathy, however. Ambassador Lian, for example, stressed that the lack of pledges only underlined the importance of the work Norwegian diplomacy was accomplishing in cooperation with the PLO.<sup>232</sup> The MFA moved on to consider additional measures to encourage more police assistance, in particular the convening of another donor conference.<sup>233</sup>

The idea of a new fund-raising conference had been discussed at least since mid-April. The Joint High-Level Mission had raised the issue during their visit to Paris, apparently hoping that France would be willing to host such a conference, but the French foreign minister thought that the idea was still "premature at this point".<sup>234</sup> The MFA therefore decided to settle for something less, namely an expanded COPP meeting with capital-level ("high-level") representation. This convened in Cairo on 5 May 1994.<sup>235</sup> The conference was attended by some thirty representatives from the US, Russia, the EU Presidency, the European Commission, Japan, Egypt, Israel, the PLO, the World Bank and Norway. The United States and Russia fielded the largest teams (after Norway, which held the secretariat and the chair).

In an internal MFA review in late April of the Joint High-Level Mission's results, Ambassador Lian concluded that their visits had probably "contributed to 'heightening the consciousness' in a few donor capitals and that this might lead to more pledges".<sup>236</sup> This assumption was not entirely misplaced. At the end of April and into early May, there was a sudden flow of both in-kind and in-cash contributions. The COPP's chair noted with satisfaction that "substantial new contributions" had followed in the wake of the Joint High-Level Mission.<sup>237</sup> The political context was also important for triggering new police aid pledges. The upcoming signing ceremony of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, on 4 May 1994, would be followed by a near immediate deployment of the Palestinian Police, putting pressure on the donor community to respond.

US aid efforts were probably the major factor in triggering the new influx of aid. After the conclusion of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, the United States had decided to be more forthcoming on the issue of financial assistance to the Palestinians in general and the Palestinian Police in particular. The PLO now deserved rewards for making peace with Israel, and at the COPP high-level meeting the day after the signing ceremony in Cairo, the United States announced a \$5 million grant for start-up and recurrent police costs. It also supported a PLO plea for more donor flexibility on the recurrent cost issue. Largely as a result of US lobbying efforts, Saudi Arabia agreed in principle in June 1994 to make a \$5 million grant available for recurrent police costs. In addition, it stepped in at a critical point by providing free air transportation to the staging area in Sinai for the most distant PLA units, those stationed in Yemen and Algeria.<sup>238</sup>

Other donors also stepped forward with new aid pledges. Japan, for example, would offer some \$250,000 in computer equipment. Greece was considering further in-kind donations, such as various forms of police equipment, including helicopters, that Arafat wanted very badly.<sup>239</sup> (It later turned out, however, that Greek police aid pledges had so many strings attached that they proved to be mostly unfeasible.)<sup>240</sup> South Korea wished to assist the PNA with a soft loan of \$10 million, and indicated that a grant of \$2 million earmarked for police costs would probably be forthcoming as well.<sup>241</sup> In late April 1994, Finland also agreed to give assistance, promising aid "in-cash or in-kind, or both".<sup>242</sup>

Summing up the new contributions and the pledges, the COPP's chair noted proudly that "more than 50 per cent of the need for funds to

cover recurrent costs [for] the first six months have now been committed, as opposed to less than 10 per cent when the last donor conference was held, on 24 March this year".<sup>243</sup> On in-kind contributions, he felt that the Palestinian Police "in certain fields are about to reach a level where at least the minimum requirements are met".<sup>244</sup> All in all on the eve of the Palestinian Police's deployment in Gaza and Jericho, the progress on assistance had been so great that the COPP's chair felt it warranted the description "a very positive development".<sup>245</sup>

The PLO was not so impressed with the donor efforts, however. The problem with the new aid pledges was that they were only pledges, and very little aid was ready for delivery or disbursement. The PLO representative at the Cairo high-level meeting stated that the dire need for cash contributions and quick disbursement at the present stage "compelled him to make a very urgent plea" for more donor flexibility in transferring funds.<sup>246</sup>

As pledges failed to transform into delivered aid and as thousands of unpaid, ill-equipped and insufficiently trained policemen streamed into Gaza and Jericho, the COPP's optimism vanished and was replaced by strenuous support for PLO demands for more funds and accelerated implementation.<sup>247</sup> In a COPP report to the AHLC in early June 1994, for example, the situation was depicted as very gloomy: existing funds would last only until the end of the month, essential equipment such as an internal communications system was non-existent and living conditions for Palestinian policemen were very unsatisfactory. The report predicted grave implications for the future of the peace process if the situation were not immediately addressed.<sup>248</sup> The search for in-cash aid, including acceptable disbursement channels for it, and the potential implications of an under-resourced police were two of the most pressing donor concerns in the immediate post-deployment period, and will be discussed in some depth in the following two chapters.

## Conclusion

Assistance to the establishment of the Palestinian Police emerged as a particularly intractable issue in donor efforts for a variety of reasons. One major cause was the lack of a precedent for such assistance in the development aid community. This prompted the World Bank, the lead

donor agency, to exclude police assistance from its coordinating system, thereby creating a lack of mechanisms for mobilizing and implementing the aid. In response to urgent pleas from Arafat and in its capacity as AHLC chair, Norway gradually assumed more responsibility for mobilizing police aid. It allocated substantial in-cash and in-kind pledges at an early point in order to encourage donor contributions; it convened police donor conferences, updated donor pledge matrices and joined the PLO in joint fund-raising campaigns. It also seconded police advisers to the UN, to assist in coordinating police training assistance, and to the COPP, the new police aid committee in Cairo that became the major vehicle for police donor coordination in 1994.

It is uncertain whether Norway's high profile in this sector discouraged other donors from a more active involvement, but the EU's opposition to US dominance in donor efforts was a problem from the very beginning. In the police sector, US–Norway cooperation and consultation were close, with the United States setting the agenda. The way meetings were convened and donor participants were selected demonstrated that the United States strove to maintain significant influence over police donor efforts so as to match them with its mediation in the peace process. During the early stages, it discouraged police aid in order to counter PLO demands for a large police force. But at later stages, especially after the PLO made compromises with Israel over the Hebron issue and moved to conclude the Gaza–Jericho Agreement, the United States made significant lobbying efforts in support of police assistance. Strong US backing had a decisive impact on the outcome of joint Norway–PLO fund-raising and aid mobilization efforts in spring 1994.

The UN was kept on the sidelines at US insistence, and PLO efforts to involve the organization heavily in police training were unsuccessful. A UN coordination group was nevertheless established, and paved the way for a significant UN role in coordinating police training assistance during the post-deployment period. In the light of the near absence of police aid in early 1994, the status of pledges had improved markedly by May 1994, although it was still far from satisfactory. Although eliciting new pledges remained a challenge, the most pressing problem as the Palestinian Police deployed in Gaza and Jericho was to translate the various pledges into aid delivery and/or disbursement.

**NOTES**

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- 1 "Co-Sponsors' Summary", Conference to Support Middle East Peace, 1 October 1994.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 In the wake of the DoP, that was a main theme in the public discourse on donor assistance. For a critique of the "aid equals security" assumption, see Lia (1998) and Esman (1997).
- 4 The creation of the AHLC was announced publicly following a meeting of its founders in Paris on 5 November 1993. It was regarded as the most senior-level donor mechanism, acting as a sort of political steering committee responsible for general guidance and policies of the aid process. It was formally established by the Multilateral Steering Group of the Multilateral Talks on the Middle East Peace as one of its working groups, but in practice it functioned separately from the multilateral tracks. The AHLC consisted of the major donor countries, including the United States, Russia, the European Union, Japan, Canada, Norway and Saudi Arabia. The World Bank served as the secretariat and the PLO, Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and the UN were associate members. During much of the 1990s, the AHLC held formal meetings up to three times a year. Hooper (1998a) and UNSCO and World Bank (1996), p. 4.
- 5 The European Community was merged into the more comprehensive European integration effort and renamed the European Union (EU) on 1 November 1993.
- 6 UD 25.11.19T Vol. 2, Tokyo Embassy to Oslo, 10 November 1993.
- 7 UD 25.11.19T Vol. 2, EC delegation to Oslo 27 October 1993.
- 8 The Saudi proposal seems to have been presented in response to informal requests from Norwegian and US diplomats. Saudi support for Norway's candidature was also motivated by an interest in avoiding a strong chair, which might translate into strong diplomatic pressure for increasing Saudi aid to the Palestinians and the PLO. At the very least, Saudi diplomats expressed their preference for keeping their country's aid efforts to a low-profile technical level. UD 25.11.19T Vol. 3, Riyadh Embassy to Oslo, 24 November 1993 and Hooper, Sevje, interviews.
- 9 Hansen, interview.
- 10 In autumn 1994, several EU countries, with France being the most vocal, aired their misgivings about the AHLC, complaining that owing to a degree of Norwegian inertia over the summer, the United States had completely seized the initiative in the donor process, marginalizing the European Union in the committee's decision-making process. At the EU Foreign Affairs Council meeting in Luxembourg on 4–5 October 1994, France reiterated this criticism, voicing particular concern over the leading role of the World Bank. In response, Norway increased its consultations with the EU member states, promising a more systematic exchange of information on the informal donor talks. For the time being, this was apparently sufficient to avert a French proposal for institutional changes in the donor hierarchy. UD-TE, internal memo by the Middle East Unit, 17 October and 22 October 1994; Minutes of EU Foreign Affairs Council Meeting in Luxembourg 4–5 October 1995, undated; and P. Christiansen, "Want to coordinate assistance to Palestine on their own" (in Norwegian), *Aftenposten* (Oslo), 2 March 1998.

- 11 For early discussions in which police aid was mentioned, see UD 25.11.19T Vol. 2, Tokyo Embassy to Oslo, 10 November 1993 and D. Davis, "Britain to help PLO establish intelligence, anti-terrorist units", *Jerusalem Post*, 13 September 1993.
- 12 For example, when the European Union, the largest donor to the Palestinians, issued its usual press statement on the "International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People" on 29 November a year later, it chose to highlight its contribution to the establishment of the Palestinian Police. UD 308.87 Vol. 4, UN delegation to Oslo, 25 November 1994.
- 13 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, internal memo by Coordinator of Peacekeeping Operations to the FM, 3 December 1993.
- 14 Lia (2006), Chapter 5 ("Arab Brothers: The Politics of Police Training and Recruitment in Exile").
- 15 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UN Secretary-General's Office (Aimé) to Norway's UN delegation, 17 November 1993.
- 16 The main topic during the consultations was the AHLC members' reservations about the organization of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR), particularly with regard to accountability, transparency and professional autonomy.
- 17 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Minutes of Foreign Minister Holst's meeting with Yasir Arafat on 26 November 1993, 13 December 1993.
- 18 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, FM Holst to US Secretary of State W. C. Christopher, 17 November 1993.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Holst also published articles himself on the peacekeeping experience in Lebanon in the late 1970s and the 1980s. See in particular Marianne Heiberg and Johan-Jorgen Holst, "Peacekeeping in Lebanon: comparing UNIFIL and the MNF", *Survival* 28 (5), August–September 1986, pp. 399–422.
- 21 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Foreign Minister Holst to US Secretary of State W. C. Christopher, 17 November 1993.
- 22 The issue had been raised in a meeting with the US ambassador in Tunis in mid-November 1993. "Arafat has talks with US Ambassador in Tunis on peace process", VOP-Y, 1800GMT, 21 November 1993.
- 23 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, US Secretary of State W. C. Christopher to Foreign Minister Holst, 27 November 1993.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Paris Embassy to Oslo, 15 December 1993.
- 27 UD 25.11.19T Vol. 3, MFA to World Bank (Chopra), Washington, 3 December 1993.
- 28 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to Moscow Embassy, 3 December 1993.
- 29 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Internal memo from the Middle East Adviser, 1 December 1993.
- 30 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to Moscow Embassy, 3 December 1993.
- 31 Russia had so far not made public any aid contributions, and it is uncertain whether the PLO or the MFA contacted the Russian MFA first on the police aid issue. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to Moscow Embassy, 3 December 1993.
- 32 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, internal memo to the Foreign Minister from Coordinator of Peacekeeping Operations, 3 December 1993.

- 33 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Moscow Embassy to Oslo, 8 December 1993.
- 34 “Christopher informed Arafat that the United States will support the decision to equip the Palestinian police force” (in Arabic), *al-Hayat* (London), 10 December 1993; A. La Guardia, “Father and son killed by gunmen in Hebron”, *Daily Telegraph*, 7 December 1993, p. 11; and D. Makovsky, “Christopher tells Arafat he won't intervene”, *Jerusalem Post*, 7 December 1993.
- 35 Haugestad, interview.
- 36 I have not seen any formal correspondence providing evidence of an informal communication, but I find it very likely given the closeness of Norwegian–Israeli consultations on the negotiations and aid issues and in view of later examples of Norwegian requests to Israel to effect a change in US positions.
- 37 The Consultative Group (CG) was a typical World Bank coordinating structure for donor programmes. It was used to win support and funding for detailed aid programmes, and included senior and technical representatives of all donors and UN agencies. Brynen (1996a).
- 38 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Paris Embassy to Oslo, 16 December 1993.
- 39 These were Britain, Germany, Spain, Greece, Russia, Japan, South Korea, the United States, Sweden, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Jordan, Egypt and Israel. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, MFA to embassies, invitation to police donor meeting in Oslo, 15 December 1993.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 The delegation was headed by the former Chief-of-Staff General (ret.) Martin Vadset. They met in Tunis with PLO police officials, including Brigadier Ghazi al-Jabali, who later became the head of the Palestinian Civilian Police. Øverkil, interview and UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 42 At the CG meeting in Paris on 16 December, the Norwegian delegation handed out invitations to the Oslo meeting to selected donors and gave bilateral briefings to those donors who were not invited to Oslo.
- 43 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Paris Embassy to Oslo, 16 December 1993.
- 44 US opposition to a UN role was nothing new, and reflected Israel's hostility to the organization. In early November 1993, when the AHLC was formed, the United States had initially insisted that the UN be entirely excluded from the committee, and it was only after a compromise had been negotiated by Norway that the UN was allowed to participate, under the “fully associated member” category with additional adjustments put in place. Hooper (1998a).
- 45 Cited in UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994. See also “PLO envoy discusses Oslo meeting and the talks on forming Palestinian police”, VOI-A, 1056GMT, 20 December 1993.
- 46 On the other hand, Sweden considered police training programmes, especially in the field of human rights. The Netherlands also considered specialized police training programmes, as did Germany, which voiced support for the establishment of a Palestinian police academy. Greece planned to offer a \$15 million commercial loan for the establishment of Palestinian self-rule that might be used for the projected police force.
- 47 At the conference, it was reported that some 422 Palestinians had graduated from Egyptian police training courses and that 567 police were undergoing other training programmes in various security disciplines, with a third group of 235 personnel



- starting training in the near future in various police tasks. Additional assistance was currently being considered. The Jordanian delegation reported that it had completed the training of nearly 1,000 police soldiers and would be willing to assist in providing more police training, if necessary.
- 48 This amount included weapons and ammunition costs, vehicle fuel costs and anti-riot equipment costs, as well as other costs related to furniture, clothing, communication equipment, housing facilities, training aids and catering. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, “The Jordanian Paper on Costs of Police Training”.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, “Training of 1,000 Palestinian policemen in Jordan, project document” and UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Jordanian Minister of Planning to MFA, 17 October 1994.
- 51 The MFA considered Jordan’s police training expenditures to be “Jordan’s contribution to the [peace] process”. It responded in a formal letter on 2 January 1995, arguing that there was no precedent for such reimbursements and that such a practice would be very difficult to handle as long as no in-advance commitments existed. UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Jordanian Minister of Planning to MFA, 17 October 1994, with the MFA’s comments and UD 308.87 Vol. 5, Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland to the Jordanian Minister of Planning, 2 January 1995.
- 52 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 53 With regard to the United Kingdom, it reportedly provided police assistance programmes to many African countries during the 1990s, including Botswana, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Chalmers (2000).
- 54 For more on this, see Lia (2006), Chapter 10.
- 55 Bits and pieces of this relationship are mentioned in M. Theodoulou, “Top PLO man shot dead – colonel Anwar Madi”, *The Times*, 1 July 1992; C. Richards, “Yasser Arafat curbs PLO security arm”, *Independent*, 8 August 1992, p. 9; P. Webster and I. Black, “PLO chief in Paris hides from hit men”, *Guardian*, 21 January 1993, p. 10; “The truth about the story of Arafat’s assassination” (in Arabic), *al-Watan al-Arabi*, 22 October 1993; R. Fisk, “Palestine policeman’s lot may not be a happy one”, *Independent*, 18 September 1993, p. 12; and J. Randal, “Assassination of PLO man leaves trail of shadows”, *Guardian*, 13 July 1992, p. 9.
- 56 See the investigative report by Jonathan Randal, “Assassination of PLO man leaves trail of shadows”, *Guardian*, 13 July 1992, p. 9. See also Robert Fisk’s interview with As’ad Abdul Rahman in R. Fisk, “Palestine policeman’s lot may not be a happy one”, *Independent*, 18 September 1993, p. 12.
- 57 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 58 Cited in UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UN delegation (Geneva) to Oslo, 12 April 1994. See also UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, French Embassy in Oslo to MFA, 15 April 1994 and Paris Embassy to Oslo, 15 April 1994, meeting minutes.
- 59 Sharf, interview.
- 60 “Arafat bodyguards to receive training in US” (AP), *The Jerusalem Press*, 26 January 1994.



- 61 E. Sciolino, "Christopher sees Arafat at PLO headquarters", *New York Times*, 11 December 1993, p. 6 and "Arafat bodyguards to receive training in US" (AP), *The Jerusalem Press*, 26 January 1994.
- 62 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 63 Israel informed the donors that there was already an agreement on a common Palestinian–Israeli security coordinating structure, but donors were free to agree with the Palestinians on other mechanisms for improving police aid coordination. The PLO supported this, noting that the Israeli–Palestinian Joint Security Committee would be the source for technical information on the Palestinian Police.
- 64 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 65 Britain's active role in the police aid issue reflected its historical role in the former British-led Palestine police.
- 66 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 67 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994 and COPP meeting minutes, 20 April 1994.
- 68 Canadian and Italian representatives stated that they were unable to make any pledges because domestic legislation prevented the use of development funds for such purposes. None of the other donor countries referred to such legal restrictions, however. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994 and UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade to Oslo, 15 April 1994.
- 69 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994.
- 70 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 71 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Warren C. Christopher to J. J. Holst, 27 November 1993.
- 72 The PLO requested some 17 helicopters for the first stage. Considering the PNA's small geographical area and the high costs of maintaining modern helicopters, this was obviously a very unrealistic figure.
- 73 Øverkil, interviews.
- 74 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 20 January 1994.
- 75 When General 'Abd al-Razzaq Yahya in consultations in late January 1994 with the Norwegian Embassy in Cairo raised the issue of the Norwegian pledge of some 10,000 uniforms and possibly Land Rovers, he explicitly stressed the importance of a speedy delivery. The importance that the PLO attributed to speeding up the police aid deliveries was further underlined when Yasir Arafat himself raised the issue with the Norwegian ambassador in Cairo in early February 1994 about a promised delivery of the military uniforms. He said that he would "appreciate if the uniforms could be delivered rapidly", and he wished to be personally informed when the equipment could be delivered. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 25 January 1994 and 14 February 1994.
- 76 Sha'th may have downplayed the extent of in-kind donations in order to stress the urgency of the matter, but his statement is corroborated by press reports on

- in-kind donations in this period. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 27 February 1994.
- 77 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, internal memo (Ræder), 25 February 1994.
- 78 On 23 February, Israel seemed to ease its stance somewhat, as Rabin suggested that the compromise number would probably end up near 8,000. Unable to iron out differences, the negotiators referred the issue to the upcoming Rabin–Arafat summit, which was postponed following the Hebron massacre. B. Hutman, “Progress in talks on Palestinian police”, *Jerusalem Post*, 16 February 1994; “Israel, PLO near accord on Palestinian police force”, *Jerusalem Post*, 17 February 1994; “Taba delegates predict two more weeks of talks”, *Jerusalem Post*, 18 February 1994; L. Lahoud and A. Pinkas, “Talks begin in Cairo on Palestinian police”, *Jerusalem Post*, 21 February 1994; D. Makovsky and A. Pinkas, “Rabin: we’ll accept 8,000 Palestinian police”, *Jerusalem Post*, 24 February 1994; and R. Powell, “Rabin – Palestinian security force could be 8,000”, Reuters, 23 February 1994.
- 79 In January 1994, the MFA asked its Cairo embassy on several occasions for updated lists of needs and requirements, and in February it instructed the embassy to contact Nabil Sha’th’s office to clarify whether the PLO/PECDAR had any surveys or coordinating mechanism for in-kind donations. It enquired whether any ‘recipient organization’ existed for the storing, checking and transport of equipment etc. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to Cairo Embassy, 12 January 1994 and 23 February 1994.
- 80 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 20 January 1994.
- 81 The quotations are taken from the following two press reports respectively: “A delegation from the British police visits the Occupied Territories” (in Arabic), *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 19 February 1994 and “British to help Palestinian police”, *Jerusalem Post*, 22 February 1994. See also A. Rabinovich, “A kinder, gentler tradition of policing”, *Jerusalem Post*, 18 February 1994.
- 82 Ibid.
- 83 “Arafat rejects ‘miserly’ British aid”, *Jerusalem Post*, 24 March 1994.
- 84 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994.
- 85 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Press release, 57/94 22 March 1994.
- 86 The Turkish MFA, for example, declared that they attributed great importance to the establishment of a Palestinian police force and that they would consider contributions to it. The short notice, however, precluded their participation on a senior level at the meeting, as any Turkish aid efforts in this area had to be thoroughly coordinated with the Ministry of Interior and the political level. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Ankara Embassy to Oslo, 23 March 1994. See also UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Copenhagen Embassy to Oslo, 23 March 1994.
- 87 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to embassies, 22 March 1994.
- 88 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Press release 62/94, 24 March 1994.
- 89 See, for example, UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, internal memo from the Middle East Adviser, 1 December 1993 and US Secretary of State W. C. Christopher to Foreign Minister Holst, 27 November 1993.
- 90 UD-TE, internal memos from the Middle East Unit, 17 and 22 October 1994.
- 91 P. Beck, “Norway to lead establishment of police” (in Norwegian), *Aftenposten* (Oslo), 25 March 1994, p. 6.

- 92 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994.
- 93 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, World Bank (Chopra) to MFA, 22 March 1994.
- 94 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to embassies, 22 March 1994.
- 95 According to the minutes, the parties had reportedly “almost arrived at an agreement on the establishment of the Palestinian police force. Only very few problematic areas need some clarifications (the size of the police force, arming and the number of Armed Personnel Carriers (APCs)). A gradual deployment of police forces before the Gaza-Jericho Agreement is signed cannot be excluded.” UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 6 April 1994 and Minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994.
- 96 For police donor matrices, see *ibid.*
- 97 Four countries so far had pledged financial assistance to the start-up and recurrent costs: Norway, a \$2 million fund; Japan, a \$10 million grant for housing for policemen and a \$3.5 million grant which might be used for recurrent police costs (Japan insisted, however, that both pledges should be channelled through the UNDP, and this proved to be an obstacle); Greece, a \$15 million loan on concessional terms for ‘immediate needs’; and Finland, a pledge of some \$250,000 in financial aid. South Korea also contemplated a financial contribution. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 6 April 1994 and Minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994.
- 98 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Press release 62/94, 24 March 1994.
- 99 *Ibid.*
- 100 *Ibid.*
- 101 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 6 April 1994 and Minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994.
- 102 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel to Foreign Minister Godal, 19 July 1994.
- 103 P. Beck, “Norway to lead establishment of police” (in Norwegian), *Aftenposten* (Oslo), 25 March 1994, p. 6.
- 104 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, talking points for the FM, 25 March 1994.
- 105 Foreign minister’s comments written on Ræder’s copy of *ibid.*
- 106 “Arafat bodyguards to receive training in US” (AP), *The Jerusalem Post*, 26 January 1994.
- 107 “U.S. train Arafat’s bodyguards”, AFP, 31 January 1994.
- 108 “Arafat bodyguards to receive training in US” (AP), *The Jerusalem Post*, 26 January 1994.
- 109 *Al-Balad lil-Sahafah*, cited in “12 Palestinian youths go to Europe to train in security” (in Arabic), *al-Quds*, 12 November 1993, p. 5.
- 110 S. Aboudi, “Palestine Liberation Army responds to call of duty”, Reuters, 12 May 1994.
- 111 “Members of the projected Palestinian police force receive training in international law” (in Arabic), *al-Quds*, 21 November 1993, p. 2.
- 112 Cited in R. Sabbagh, “PLO soldiers prepare to police Gaza, Jericho”, Reuters, 21 November 1993.
- 113 *Ibid.* See also “The graduation of the first group of Palestinian police” (in Arabic), *al-Hayat* (London), 23 November 1993; J. Redden, “Future Palestinian

- police learn human rights”, Reuters, 23 November 1993; “Palestinian police force trained by ICRC in Iraq”, Reuters, 5 December 1993; and “The Palestinians train in Switzerland on the human side of police work” (in Arabic), *al-Hayat* (London), 18 November 1993.
- 114 “The graduation of the first group of Palestinian police” (in Arabic), *al-Hayat* (London), 23 November 1993 and J. Redden, “Future Palestinian police learn human rights”, Reuters, 23 November 1993.
- 115 “The graduation of the first group of Palestinian police” (in Arabic), *al-Hayat* (London), 23 November 1993.
- 116 See Chapter 1.
- 117 The request was formally conveyed in a letter from the PLO leader to the UN secretary-general on 10 December 1993. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UNDHA (P. Hansen) to MFA, 17 February 1994.
- 118 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UN Secretary-General’s Office (Aimé) to UN delegation, 17 November 1993.
- 119 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Norwegian Police Academy to MFA, 26 August 1994.
- 120 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UNDHA (P. Hansen) to MFA, 17 February 1994.
- 121 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UN Secretary-General’s Office (Aimé) to UN delegation, 17 November 1993.
- 122 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UNDHA (P. Hansen) to MFA, 17 February 1994; UN Secretary-General’s Office (Aimé) to MFA, 17 February 1994; and UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, Annex, 29 April 1994.
- 123 The second UN meeting on 11 April 1994 included a technical discussion to be attended by police experts and chaired by Police Superintendent Per Bleikelia and a second part chaired by Gharekhan himself that also included political representatives of the donors’ MFAs.
- 124 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, internal memo (Lehne), 23 February 1994.
- 125 Cited in UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UNDHA (Hansen) to MFA, 17 February 1993 and UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, 5 April 1994.
- 126 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, Annex, 29 April 1994.
- 127 S. Nebehay, “UN held talks on training Palestinian police force”, Reuters, 23 February 1994.
- 128 ‘Asfur, interviews.
- 129 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UN delegation (New York) to Oslo, 5 April 1994; UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, 5 April 1994; and UN delegation (Geneva) to Oslo, 12 April 1994.
- 130 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, Annex, 29 April 1994.
- 131 Ibid.
- 132 Peter Hansen had told reporters after the February meeting in Geneva that “the United States is indirectly involved in the preparations”. Cited in S. Nebehay, “UN held talks on training Palestinian police force”, Reuters, 23 February 1994.
- 133 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, internal memo (Lehne), 23 February 1994.
- 134 The issue never turned into a real conflict because the UN police training initiative was still at the planning stage when self-rule was established in Gaza and Jericho. At that point, however, Israel had already agreed to compromise on its opposition to a larger UN involvement in the establishment of the self-rule institutions.
- 135 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, internal memo (Lehne) and attached excerpt of UN fact-finding report, p. 11.

- 136 In late April, there were still “divergent views on the advisability of conducting the training in the region, i.e. in Gaza or Jericho, or in the respective donor countries” according to Gharekhan, and he asked the donor countries to clarify their positions on this issue. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, Annex, 29 April 1994.
- 137 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, internal memo (Lehne), 23 February 1994.
- 138 For example, Turkey and Tunisia had indicated interest in contributing to the police training, but donors declined to invite them “without knowing what kind of police training they had in mind”. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UN delegation (Geneva) to Oslo, 12 April 1994.
- 139 For example, a general lesson learnt in US-sponsored police training programmes was that developing country police trainees receiving higher police training at US institutes were far more likely to return home and remain conformers and supporters of status quo than they were to become the kind of vigorous police reformers that US police advisers hoped for. See Chapter 1.
- 140 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UN delegation (Geneva) to Oslo, 12 April 1994.
- 141 The final UN report on the police training curriculum was presented to the PLO on 24 May 1994, with copies of the document sent to Israel, Jordan, Egypt, the two co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, Russia and the United States, as well as to prospective donors. Particularly Egypt and Jordan were invited to establish cooperation with the UN on training the Palestinian Police in view of their role as the main providers of training for Palestinian police personnel. The UN also informed other prospective donors – Spain, France, Germany, Turkey, Tunisia, Denmark, Italy and Belgium – about the training course curriculum, referring to the subjects that were not yet covered in the programme. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, Annex, 24 May 1994.
- 142 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, Annex, 29 April 1994 and UN (Gharekhan) to MFA, Annex, 24 May 1994.
- 143 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, UN delegation (Geneva) to Oslo, 12 April 1994.
- 144 COPP meeting minutes, 25 March 1994.
- 145 Ibid.
- 146 Ibid.
- 147 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to UN delegation, 11 April 1994, Annex: COPP – terms of reference.
- 148 Ibid.
- 149 The terms of reference for COPP included “co-ordinating and promoting assistance efforts of individual donors ..., promoting transparency, accountability and practicality ..., providing a forum for dialogue ..., informing donors of its activities, monitoring the development of the Palestinian police force, reviewing reports by the secretariat and pledges by the donors, responding to the need for assistance to the establishment of a PPF in the context of the DoP and subsequent Israeli–Palestinian agreements”. Committee members had equal status, and the committee operated on the basis of consensus. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to UN delegation, 11 April 1994, Annex: COPP – terms of reference.
- 150 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 5 April 1994.
- 151 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 13 April 1994 and Haugestad, Øverkil, interviews.

- 152 Haugestad, interview and UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 16 May 1994. See also Selvaag, interview.
- 153 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 8 April 1994 and COPP meeting minutes, 7 April 1994.
- 154 There were many examples of this. At the time of the formation of COPP, the Palestinian ‘recipient mechanism’, with which COPP was expected to cooperate on donor efforts, had yet to be established, although such a mechanism had been called for since December 1993. Donors were often kept waiting for a long time before the PLO in Tunis responded to their request for information needed for implementing their police aid programmes. One example was the British offer to train twenty senior Palestinian police commanders at Bramshill Police College in Hampshire. In early April 1994, British officials stated they were “still waiting to hear from Tunis about who would participate in the Bramshill courses – and complained that the PLO was proving very disorganized”. The Japanese representative in COPP also complained of a lack of PLO documentation necessary to release a Japanese fund of \$10 million for police housing. In late May 1994, the European Commission complained that it lacked a detailed budget from the PLO for the use of the \$5.7 million committed towards covering police recurrent costs, as well as a detailed request for police equipment, although the PLO representative avowed that this information had been sent to Brussels. COPP meeting minutes, 30 May 1994, p. 2 and I. Black, “British teach beat to PLO bobbies”, *Guardian*, 8 April 1994, p. 11.
- 155 The PLO leadership argued that it was being blackmailed by the World Bank and by extension the United States, which deliberately slowed down the aid process to make the PLO more amenable to compromises with Israel. Only in late 1994 was the PLO–World Bank dispute resolved, after having contributed to a general fund scarcity for most of the year.
- 156 Haugestad, interview.
- 157 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 13 April 1994, annexes.
- 158 One example was the number of armoured personnel carriers and helicopters. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 13 April 1994, annexes.
- 159 One estimate put the PLO budget at \$250 million before the Gulf War and some \$120–150 million after it. S. al-Khalidi, “PLO moves employees to Libyan desert camp”, Reuters, 26 May 1993.
- 160 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 6 April 1994 and Minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994.
- 161 Three District Intelligence Directorates and the General Directorate of Public Security, its headquarters and branches were set to receive four times more funding than the civilian branches, which included 24 police posts, 15 police stations, three District Police Directorates and five Civil Defence centres. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 13 April 1994 and Attachments, “PLO Cost Estimate for the Palestinian Police Force: Annual Expenditures, Start-up and Equipment Expenditures”.
- 162 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 13 April 1994 and COPP meeting minutes, 12 April 1994.
- 163 The PLO had, for example, requested 7,000 sets of anti-riot equipment, some 1,400 vehicles and 6,500 pistols for only the first stage of self-rule. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, PLO’s Oslo office to MFA, 31 December 1993.



- 164 The COPP chair recollected on later occasions that one of the most difficult issues at the COPP's inception in March 1994 was to induce the PLO to produce a reasonable, detailed police budget. Haugestad, interview and UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Haugestad to Trolle Andersen (personal letter), 25 September 1994.
- 165 Ibid.
- 166 "Status in the International Coordination of Assistance to the Palestinian Police Force", COPP Information Report to the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee Meeting 9–10 June 1994.
- 167 Øverkil, interviews.
- 168 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 13 April 1994.
- 169 Øverkil received an official written statement from the PLO Chairman confirming his status as a 'Special Adviser to Chairman Arafat in Police Matters'.
- 170 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, internal memo (Wibe) to the Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland, 14 June 1994.
- 171 For more details on the JSC, see Chapter 7 in Lia (2006).
- 172 For a discussion of the police donor efforts and the role of the former COPP advisers during the Gaza period, see Chapter 6 of this book.
- 173 UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749-6, Øverkil to the MFA, 9 October 1995, with the MFA's comments, 30 September 1996.
- 174 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN delegation (New York) to Oslo, 24 April 1994.
- 175 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN delegation (New York) to Oslo, 27 April 1994.
- 176 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN delegation (New York) to Oslo, 28 April 1994.
- 177 For more on these issues, see Chapters 5 and 6 of this volume.
- 178 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 179 It was contingent on the resolution of a PLO–World Bank dispute over PECNDAR's authority and procedures for accountability.
- 180 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 181 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Paris Embassy to Oslo, 16 December 1993.
- 182 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 183 World Bank estimates for Palestinian police costs for 1994 were \$92 million for a 7,000-strong force, \$121 million for 10,000 and \$196 million for 15,000. Figures were presented by the PLO's economist Ahmad Quray' (Abu 'Ala') to the CG meeting in Paris on 15 December 1993, and included a police cost estimate for 1994 of \$104 million, which apparently excluded start-up investments. A later PLO–donor agreement in COPP put the monthly recurrent police cost (including salaries) at about \$7 million (\$84 million annually). UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994 and A. Spurrier, "Palestine – going for growth", *MEED*, 7 January 1994.
- 184 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, minutes of the Oslo police donor conference, 11 January 1994.
- 185 The European Union pledged the largest single contribution to first-year running costs: \$36 million. Japan pledged \$17.1 million and the United States promised \$16 million, of which \$6 million was reportedly "earmarked for security expenditure". P. Taylor, "Donors to fund most Palestinian start-up costs", Reuters,

- 28 January 1994 and “Gaza/West Bank – donors to finance budget deficit”, *MEED*, 11 February 1994.
- 186 Ibid.
- 187 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 6 April 1994 and Minutes of Emergency Meeting of Police Donors in Cairo, 24 March 1994.
- 188 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to embassies, letter from Foreign Minister Godal, 11 April 1994. See also UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, COPP meeting minutes, 7 April 1994.
- 189 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 10 April 1994; Oslo to embassies, 12 April 1994; London Embassy to Oslo, 12 April 1994; and Oslo to Riyadh and Abu Dhabi embassies, 13 April 1994.
- 190 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to embassies, letter from Foreign Minister Godal, 11 April 1994.
- 191 Ibid.
- 192 According to senior PLO economic official Samir Hullaylah. S. al-Khalidi, “EC pledges emergency aid for West Bank”, Reuters, 18 October 1993.
- 193 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Paris Embassy to Oslo, 15 April 1994.
- 194 Ibid.
- 195 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, General Delegation of Palestine in France, Press Release, 14 April 1994.
- 196 Abdallah Ifranji was a Fatah Central Committee member and a key figure in the PLO intelligence apparatus, but was not a political figure of Faysal al-Husayni’s stature.
- 197 The Joint High-Level Mission was originally supposed to have two meetings in Sweden and Denmark, two Scandinavian countries known for their generous aid budgets and longstanding sympathies with the PLO and the Palestinians. The Mission was to meet with Vice-Minister Lars Åke Nilsson in the Swedish MFA in Stockholm on 15 April 1994, and another meeting was scheduled in Copenhagen at the same time. Owing to the PLO’s inability to find a representative in time for the meetings, both meetings were cancelled, however.
- 198 Cited in Mr Douglas to Mr Sykes in *Commons Written Answers, House of Commons Hansard Debates* for 4 May 1994, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, via UK government website. See also UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, London Embassy to Oslo, 15 April 1994.
- 199 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Bonn Embassy to Oslo, 15 April 1994.
- 200 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 20 April 1994, annex: meeting minutes, 18 April 1994.
- 201 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, EU delegation to Oslo, 19 April 1994.
- 202 Ibid.
- 203 Cited in “Middle East – details on joint action decided by Council of Union in support of peace process”, *Agence Europe*, 20 April 1994. See also “EU to help create Palestinian police force”, Reuters, 18 April 1994 and J. Gaunt, “EU to spend \$11.3 million on Palestinian police force”, Reuters, 19 April 1994.
- 204 Cited in J. Gaunt, “EU to spend 10 million Ecu on Palestinian police force”, Reuters, 19 April 1994. See also “The European Commission contributes 8 million ECU to equip the Palestinian security forces” (in Arabic), *al-Hayat* (London), 5 May 1994.
- 205 J. Gaunt, “EU to spend \$11.3 million on Palestinian police force”, Reuters, 19 April 1994.



- 206 Citation from “EU to help create Palestinian police force”, Reuters, 18 April 1994.
- 207 The decision on Palestinian police funding was welcomed by the Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Cooperation (APCEA) and the Inter-Parliamentary Arab Union (UIPA), which was organizing the twentieth anniversary of the Euro-Arab Parliamentary Dialogue in Paris at the same time. These annual conferences were among the few existing instruments for an EU dialogue with the Arab world until the Barcelona conference framework was established in late 1995. “Euro-Arab parliamentarians say powerful police force is needed in Occupied Territories”, *Agence Europe*, 18 April 1994.
- 208 “EU commissioner to discuss police aid with Arafat”, Reuters, 4 May 1994 and “Commission grants ECU 10 million in aid to help create a Palestinian police force”, *Agence Europe*, 5 May 1994.
- 209 The Mission also raised the issue of a possible in-kind donation of lightly armed APCs and equipment for riot police, but received no pledges in that regard. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Paris Embassy to Oslo, 15 April 1994.
- 210 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, London Embassy to Oslo, 15 April 1994.
- 211 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Haag Embassy to Oslo, 12 and 13 April 1994.
- 212 Ambassador Terje Rød-Larsen was perhaps the main facilitator; he chaired the Cairo police donor meeting in March and played a key role in diffusing the Hebron crisis.
- 213 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN delegation to Oslo, 24 April 1994.
- 214 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, US Embassy in Oslo to MFA, 5 April 1994.
- 215 Ibid.
- 216 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, MFA to US State Department, 13 April 1994.
- 217 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 20 April 1994, annex: meeting minutes, 18 April 1994.
- 218 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 20 April 1994.
- 219 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Moscow Embassy to Oslo, 12 April 1994 and UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Moscow Embassy to Oslo, 15 April 1994.
- 220 Cited in “Russia offers help to PLO in setting up police force and security services”, VOP-A, 1702GMT, 19 April 1994. See also “Arafat arrives in Russia”, Reuters, 18 April 1994; “Russia to help set up Palestinian police force”, Reuters, 19 April 1994; ITAR-TASS World Service, 1451GMT, 19 April 1994; and “Yasir Arafat in Moscow; Russia agrees to equip Palestinian police force”, Radio Moscow International (in Arabic), 1500GMT, 21 April 1994, via SWB.
- 221 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Oslo to Moscow Embassy, 20 April 1994.
- 222 Minutes of COPP High-Level Meeting in Cairo, 5 May 1994, p. 1.
- 223 M. Binyon, “Saudis promise cash backing for Arafat”, *The Times*, 9 September 1993; UD 25.11.19T Vol. 2, Tokyo Embassy to Oslo, 10 November 1993; and Riyadh Embassy to Oslo, 8 September 1993.
- 224 Sayigh (1997), pp. 651–2.
- 225 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 20 April 1994, annex: meeting minutes, 18 April 1994; Riyadh Embassy to Oslo, 23 April 1994; and London Embassy to Oslo, 15 April 1994.
- 226 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Riyadh Embassy to Oslo, 18 April 1994; Abu Dhabi Embassy to Oslo, 20 April 1994; and UN delegation to Oslo, 24 April 1994.
- 227 The COPP noted that the United States had carried out “active ... support, and follow-up of, the [high-level] missions to donor capitals”, and Saudi Arabia had

- even asked for the Mission “to return to Riyadh in the near future”. Minutes of COPP high-level meeting in Cairo, 5 May 1994, p. 1. For more on Saudi aid to the Palestinian Police, see Chapter 5 of this book.
- 228 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 8 and 13 April 1994; COPP meeting minutes, 7 April 1994; and COPP meeting minutes, 20 April 1994.
- 229 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 19 June 1994.
- 230 COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 4.
- 231 Cited in “Lebanon-based pro-Arafat guerillas may join Palestinian police in Gaza–Jericho”, *Mideast Mirror* 9 (4), 6 January 1995. See also “Arab assistance to the Palestinian police agencies” (in Arabic), *al-Abram* (Cairo), 23 September 1996 and “Arab support for the Palestinian police all according to their capabilities” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 5 (January–March 1995), p. 13.
- 232 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN delegation to Oslo, 24 April 1994.
- 233 Ambassador Lian suggested a number of further steps. More visits should be made, preferably by the MFA Special Adviser Ambassador Rød-Larsen and a high-level PLO figure, to additional donor capitals. Moreover, the MFA should send a follow-up letter to those donor capitals that had been visited and supply them with additional information on donor pledges, existing needs and requirements, especially on COPP’s continuous work in Cairo in preparation for the establishment of the police force, and all necessary contact information. It appears that these recommendations were followed, apart from the proposal for new joint delegation visits. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN delegation to Oslo, 24 April 1994.
- 234 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Paris Embassy to Oslo, 15 April 1994.
- 235 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Oslo to embassies, invitation to COPP meeting in Cairo, 29 April 1994.
- 236 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, UN delegation to Oslo, 24 April 1994.
- 237 Minutes of COPP high-level meeting in Cairo, 5 May 1994, p. 1.
- 238 According to the Arab press, Saudi Airlines had by mid-May undertaken some 13 flights, carrying a total of 760 Palestinian police officers from Saudi Arabia to the Egyptian border town of al-‘Arish in Sinai. Another group of Palestinian police personnel from Algeria was also transported by the Saudi Royal Air Force to Sinai. The overwhelming majority of Palestinian police personnel travelled by bus over long distances to reach the autonomous areas. (The PLA forces arrived there over land from Yemen.) “The Authority: 15 from Inside and 10 from the Outside” (in Arabic), *al-Hayat al-Misriyyah* (Cairo), 15 May 1994.
- 239 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Athens Embassy to Oslo, 27 April 1994.
- 240 Donor officials, interview.
- 241 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 27 April 1994 and Seoul Embassy to Oslo, 29 April 1994.
- 242 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Finnish Foreign Minister to MFA, 29 April 1994.
- 243 Minutes of COPP high-level meeting in Cairo, 5 May 1994, chair’s summary.
- 244 Ibid.
- 245 Ibid.
- 246 The dispute between the World Bank and the PLO on the PECNDAR’s powers and accountability procedures was still unresolved, but the PLO representative held that in the light of the urgency of the situation, donors should be flexible and use other satisfactory ways of transferring funds. Minutes of COPP high-level meeting in Cairo, 5 May 1994, p. 1.

- 247 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 16 May 1994.
- 248 A. Øverkil, "Visit to the Palestinian Police Forces (PPF) in Gaza 2–5 June 1994", COPP Information Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Meeting 9–10 June 1994.

### 3

## **“We Began From Zero”: A Never-Ending Equipment and Accommodation Crisis**

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At the beginning of our arrival, we did not have any resources whatsoever, that is, we began from zero. No cars, no weapons ... we don't have a criminal laboratory nor any technical equipment. ... When our patrol cars arrive, we will be at the market-places, at traffic junctions, in the streets so that the average citizen in Gaza, Jericho and the West Bank will feel secure and safe.<sup>1</sup>

**Brigadier Ghazi al-Jabali, Civilian Police Chief, August 1994**

As the Palestinian Police began deploying in Gaza and Jericho in mid-May 1994 and assumed law enforcement responsibilities in these areas, the status of the force with regard to equipment, training and funding was no longer a distant and theoretical issue with no immediate political implications. On the contrary, given the high priority that the Israeli government attributed to PNA efforts at ending anti-Israeli violence, the Palestinian Police's performance became a vital factor in furthering implementation of the Oslo Accords. To what degree was the Palestinian Police prepared for the task of elementary law enforcement, let alone effective counter-terrorism, in the autonomous areas? What was its status with regard to basic police requirements? What were the politico-security implications of shortages of various kinds of equipment and of other needs? In this chapter, these issues will be explored in more detail.

Numerous donor reports on status and needs assessments convey a gloomy picture of a severely under-resourced police in nearly every aspect of basic needs.<sup>2</sup> A state of emergency was perhaps the most accurate description, and this critical situation lingered on throughout the early stage of self-rule. The most fundamental problem during the summer and autumn of 1994 was no longer the lack of donor pledges but the slow pace of disbursement and delivery. The COPP noted in June 1994 that “very little has so far arrived in Gaza and Jericho”; and as a result, the Palestinian Police “experienced serious operational problems”.<sup>3</sup> Delays

were caused by a host of factors. For example, donor contributions were held back owing to the PLO's failure to provide satisfactory project proposals. On other occasions, bureaucratic obstacles in donor capitals or in Israel were to blame, or PNA–Israel disagreements held up important donations.

### **Policing without Communication Equipment**

Perhaps the most critical piece of police equipment is an effective communication system. Without it, a modern police force cannot function properly. Donors and parties alike seemed to agree that this was “the weakest point on the equipment side” of the Palestinian Police, and hence the provision of this equipment was singled out as a main priority area for police donors.<sup>4</sup> At the COPP meeting on 6 April 1994, a joint communication system, to be used by joint Palestinian–Israeli patrols, was agreed upon. At the PLO's request, Spain provided a \$130,000 grant to finance the equipment, which was put in place in mid-July 1994, two months after the joint patrols had started.<sup>5</sup> (Until then, Israel had provided the necessary equipment.)

An internal Palestinian communication system was not forthcoming with the same promptness, however. This was one of the Palestinian Police's greatest handicaps as they moved into the Gaza Strip and Jericho, and was a source of much frustration for Palestinian commanders.<sup>6</sup> During the early clashes in the Gaza Strip, high-ranking officers complained bitterly about their lack of a communication system. It prevented them from functioning effectively as a police force, for example by crippling their ability to coordinate large-scale anti-riot operations or to engage in an effective manhunt.<sup>7</sup> The lack of internal communication played a role in exacerbating the July 1994 riots at Erez, when Palestinian policemen and Israeli soldiers exchanged fire for the first time. Circumstances surrounding the tragic events in Beit Lahiya in early January 1995, when three Palestinian officers were shot dead at their police station by the Israeli army, also suggested that the equipment crisis played a role. Lacking radio equipment, the Palestinian unit was unable to contact either their HQ or liaison officers at the nearby District Coordination Office (DCO) in order to clarify the reason for the IDF incursion and bring in negotiators.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the lack of an internal

communication system probably weakened the authority of the Palestinian Police Command, reinforcing the development towards a fragmented organizational structure with semi-autonomous police branches. (Political factors such as Arafat's leadership style were probably a more decisive factor in this regard.)

The severe delays in the delivery of communication equipment were caused by a host of factors. The most important obstacle was Palestinian–Israeli disagreement on radio frequencies to be used by the Palestinian Police. The Israeli authorities insisted on their ‘right’ to monitor all radio communication by the Palestinian Police, and refused to grant a range of frequencies, which would complicate surveillance. The PNA, on the other hand, wished to set up a closed radio system, preferably an encrypted one, in order to evade Israeli eavesdropping. Attempting to arrange a compromise, the COPP recommended that the Palestinian Police accept an open radio system for traditional law enforcement operations, in which communication was less sensitive, and postponed the issue of closed radio systems, but to little avail.

In April and May 1994, a number of donors promised to consider funding the purchase or providing in-kind donations of communication equipment, among them Japan, South Korea, Spain and Greece.<sup>9</sup> It is uncertain why none of these aid pledges materialized, whether it was due to a lack of PLO initiative or bureaucratic resources to fully utilize existing aid pledges or whether it was caused by a general failure on the part of police donors to deliver on their promises. Most probably, these donors decided to focus their attention on other priority issues as a result of a well-publicized French pledge of 14 million francs (more than \$2 million) to purchase a communication system.<sup>10</sup>

It transpired that France wished to donate a highly advanced and expensive communication system (Matra), but this was insufficient to cover Palestinian needs because of the steep price per set. The French grant would cover only a base station and approximately 300 multi-purpose handsets. By contrast, the COPP estimated a total need of 3,285 handsets, with at least 775 as priority I equipment.<sup>11</sup> The French donation was only one example of a series of over-ambitious donor projects in the police sector.

In July 1994, the PNA and the Matra company concluded a contract on delivery, but negotiations over the terms of the agreement subsequently broke down.<sup>12</sup> The contract was also held up by the continued PNA–Israel

disagreement over radio frequencies.<sup>13</sup> Even by August 1995, on the eve of West Bank deployment, the parties were still at loggerheads over this issue.<sup>14</sup> Although more donors (Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany) had by then come forward with promises of communication equipment, the failure to reach agreement on the frequency issue presented the most significant obstacle, causing, for example, the British government to ship a number of previously pledged police patrol vehicles to the Palestinian Police without radio communication systems. Israeli authorities also physically removed police radios from a number of Spanish police cars donated in 1995.<sup>15</sup> Arafat noted with exasperation in an interview with *Uktubar* magazine in Cairo that “They expect me to achieve security in six or nine months. How, when I do not even have radios for the Palestinian police? Even the 40 cars that we have received as a gift from the Spanish Government to organize traffic, they took the radios out of them. And yet they ask us to achieve security. Despite all this, I am doing the best I can but I do not have Moses’s magic wand!”<sup>16</sup>

The high hopes attached to the French Matra project constrained other donors, who had to make sure that their in-kind donations were compatible with the French system.<sup>17</sup> The COPP police advisers and the Palestinian police commanders seemed to agree, however, that a mix of radio communication systems from different countries was “not an insurmountable problem”, as the different parts of the Palestinian Police would all require different communication systems.<sup>18</sup> And yet, by doing so, donors tacitly contributed to the growing fragmentation of the Palestinian Police, with each branch establishing a separate communication infrastructure.

In the light of the communication equipment crisis, the COPP tried to alleviate the situation by stopgap measures. At the COPP’s suggestion, the Motorola communication system used by the temporary international presence in Hebron (TIPH), an international observer mission in Hebron whose mandate expired on 8 August 1994, was transferred to the Palestinian Police and became its first field communication system. It included two repeaters and some 95 radio sets; and after some consultations, the MFA agreed to allocate about \$11,500 to upgrade the system with three more base stations in order to enhance its efficiency in the Gaza Strip.<sup>19</sup> (According to one police adviser, the Motorola system was the only field radio system available to the Police during the early stages of Palestinian self-rule.<sup>20</sup>) In early 1995, the COPP estimated that only 20

per cent of the Palestinian Police's most basic communication needs had been met and that requirements would increase exponentially with redeployment in the West Bank.<sup>21</sup> The director-general of the police, Major General Nasr Yusuf, impressed upon the donors in August 1995, when the beginning of redeployment was imminent, that telecommunications were among “the most pressing priorities”.<sup>22</sup> The COPP's police adviser noted gloomily in one report that “I can not see how they can handle their new tasks in the West Bank without considerable support in this field.”<sup>23</sup>

On 4 January 1996, during a visit to Gaza by Jeremy Hanley, the British minister of state for foreign and Commonwealth affairs, a donor agreement was signed for establishing a communication network for the Civilian Police in the West Bank at an estimated cost of \$2 million. The British minister promised that the aid would arrive within the next few days.<sup>24</sup> The new-found donor urgency in giving communications equipment was linked to the forthcoming Palestinian elections, to which the donors in general and the European Union and Britain in particular attributed the utmost importance. In a rare show of effectiveness, the equipment was successfully delivered and installed just ahead of the election, providing an essential contribution to Palestinian policing during this critical period.<sup>25</sup>

There remained, nevertheless, a significant gap between needs and availability with regard to communication equipment, and this gap was reinforced by a weak maintenance capability and the prohibitive cost of spare parts.<sup>26</sup> The problem of sustainability was not limited to the communication sector, and it limited the value of other in-kind donations, in particular vehicles (see below).

### **Personal and Unit Equipment Status**

At its most basic, personal police equipment includes a complete set of uniforms, handcuffs, a short baton and, in most countries, a pistol. The most basic unit equipment for dealing with public order disturbances consists of vests, helmets, shields, long batons and first aid kits. It is hard to see how a modern police force can function effectively without such basic equipment. Apart from uniforms, the COPP identified 1,000 sets of each of these items as priority I equipment for the Palestinian Police.



### Uniform Donation Failures

Proper uniforms are essential in order to maintain a chain of command, internal morals and discipline and to enable the public to clearly identify police personnel. In the Palestinian case, proper uniforms were also important in order to dissipate the image of the Palestinian Police as a ragtag and powerless army of beggars and refugees, which seemed a distinct possibility given the poor living conditions of most police personnel in the summer of 1994. Several donors, including Norway, Greece, the United States, Belgium and Japan, pledged to donate uniforms and/or uniform items; and at the time of deployment, the Palestinian Police had roughly one set of uniforms each, thanks to a Norwegian donation of 9,000 military uniforms made available in April 1994. Some policemen arriving from Outside also had either Egyptian or Jordanian military uniforms with Palestinian Police insignia. Some 1,800 pairs of military boots were donated by the United States in May 1994, and another 5,000 pairs arrived from Belgium four months later.<sup>27</sup>

Uniforms given to the Palestinian Police by the donors, first and foremost Norway and Japan, were generally a failure. The always optimistic Nabil Sha'ath had generously lauded the Norwegian military uniforms after he had tried one on during a visit to Oslo in March 1994, saying that "we will have the best-dressed police force in the Middle East".<sup>28</sup> For various reasons, these uniforms turned out to be inadequate, and the COPP's police adviser complained bitterly about their bad quality: some were too small and others were outworn or damaged by paint and stains. As a result, at least 2,000 of them were stored in the transit camp in Rafah and not used.<sup>29</sup> Another drawback was their striking resemblance to IDF uniforms, undermining PNA efforts to dispel the widespread suspicion among Gazans that the Palestinian Police would become an IDF collaborationist militia. The military green fatigues also contributed to enhancing the military outlook of the Police, a trend the COPP and UN police advisers struggled to reverse. Such uniforms were obviously unfit for a civilian police force, and the decision to adopt blue police uniforms for the Palestinian Civilian Police in early autumn 1994 was unanimously welcomed by donors.

A quantity of 9,000 complete new summer and winter uniforms from Japan, delivered in mid-September 1994, were also largely a failure, but for quite different reasons.<sup>30</sup> Their tiny sizes made them unfit for

anyone except the smallest police recruits. Most of the Japanese uniforms ended up in storage or were handed out to children in Gaza.<sup>31</sup> With hindsight, the COPP and UN police advisers would have preferred that all uniforms had been sewn locally using donor funds, in order to ensure that uniforms suited local conditions. This would also have had a positive effect on local industry.<sup>32</sup> To some extent, this had happened, as early donor funding was used for uniform purchases. Gradually, as donors gave more attention to the funding of recurrent costs, the Palestinian Police took care of their own uniform needs.<sup>33</sup> This also eliminated the problem of incompatibility between various uniform item donations. Given the importance that police and security forces traditionally attach to their outlook and uniforms, in-kind donations could hardly be more than a temporary measure.

### **Handcuffs, Batons, Weapons?**

Donor pledges of personal police equipment such as pistols, handcuffs and batons were almost non-existent. Donors probably gathered that such equipment could more easily be purchased locally.<sup>34</sup> Weapons were rarely discussed in the COPP, highlighting the taboo on lethal equipment in the development aid community. At the police adviser's insistence, the COPP's matrices of priority-needs assessments nevertheless contained the item 'pistols', reflecting his belief that the Kalashnikov assault weapons, which were used in nearly all branches, including the Civilian Police, should be phased out and be replaced by pistols. He and the UN police adviser argued that the omnipresent Kalashnikov militarized the police force but that smaller, less visible weapons would be an important step towards civilianizing the police.<sup>35</sup> In July 1994, the Palestinian Police still had far fewer pistols than the ceiling specified by the Accords.<sup>36</sup> The COPP's police adviser raised the pistol issue in his status and progress reports and also in his informal discussions in some donor capitals, but without much success.<sup>37</sup>

The many reports in early 1994 that Gaza was inundated by small arms must have contributed to donor caution on the weapon issue. Nobody would donate aid that contributed to Palestinian violations of the peace agreements. As far as the COPP's records indicate, Russia was the only country to indicate a willingness to donate light weapons.<sup>38</sup> What further discouraged donors from involving themselves in this area was

the fact that the Palestinian side did not give much priority to police weapons. A donor state diplomat recalled that when the issue of weapons was brought up in informal discussions, PLO police officials used to respond: "Don't worry. We will take care of that."<sup>39</sup> I have found no evidence that donors were ever involved in equipping the Palestinian Police with small arms.

### **Anti-Riot Equipment and Training**

The police donors appear to have taken a serious interest in providing basic protective equipment for handling public order disturbances, which were so frequent during the Israeli occupation. The Palestinian Police received some elementary training in riot control in Jordan and Egypt before deployment but lacked elementary protective gear for nearly all their personnel. The COPP had suggested that about 1,000 complete sets of vests, helmets, shields, long batons and first aid kits should be priority I equipment, with another 1,000 sets to become available during the next build-up phase. As usual, pledges fell far short of even priority I estimates. At the time of deployment, none of the promised donations had been delivered. A British pledge of some 200 sets of anti-riot gear was handed over in July 1994, and more limited pledges by Finland (bullet-proof vests) and Spain (100 batons) appear to have been made available in late 1994 or early 1995.<sup>40</sup> Egypt also stepped in, providing Palestinian anti-riot units with tear gas canisters and guns. Beginning in late 1994, the Netherlands, the most active Western donor in this sector, began a series of training courses in riot control for senior officers and instructors, to enable them to teach that skill to their men. The Dutch programme was complemented with valuable equipment donations. Aided by persistent training and assistance efforts, the Civilian Police gradually developed a large and relatively professional public order maintenance unit.

During the early phase of self-rule, however, the Palestinian Police were sorely unprepared for dealing with serious public order disturbances. This had grave political implications, as Palestinian policemen on several occasions resorted to excessive force when confronted with rioters, leading to numerous casualties. The Erez riots on 17 July 1994, for example, escalated out of control and led to the first lethal gun battle between Palestinian and Israeli troops. The Palestine Mosque tragedy of 18 November 1994 in which Palestinian security forces shot down and

killed 13 demonstrators plunged the PNA into the worst political crisis of its first year of existence. These two events demonstrated the political risks of a poorly equipped and untrained police.

### **Technical and Administrative Police Equipment**

Technical and administrative police equipment spans a broad range of items. As a bare minimum, it includes fingerprint sets, cameras and a simple crime laboratory on the technical side and copying machines, typewriters and computers on the administrative side. The COPP identified one crime laboratory, ninety cameras and forty fingerprint sets as an absolute minimum, with ten copying machines and 100 typewriters for administrative purposes and an estimated \$250,000 for a basic computer infrastructure for both administrative and criminal investigative purposes.

The lack of criminal investigative equipment and expertise had significant political and human rights implications in the light of strong external pressure on the PNA to prosecute and convict Palestinians suspected of involvement in political violence. In consultation with donors, the Palestinian police director Nasr Yusuf often reiterated that many arrests resulted in early releases because the Police lacked the necessary facilities to develop or secure evidence, such as criminal laboratories, evidence storage etc.<sup>41</sup> During the early stages of self-rule, suspects were simply released, usually after brief interrogations; but as pressure for effective anti-terrorism increased, the Palestinian Police increasingly resorted to physical force so as to extract confessions from suspects, or detainees would remain locked up indefinitely without charge. A weak investigative capacity undermined the PNA's credibility when it argued that released suspects were found innocent or that the case lacked evidence, and it exposed the PNA to accusations of harbouring and abetting 'terrorists'.

Apart from the terrorism problem, its weak criminal investigation capabilities affected the Palestinian Police's ability to deal with crime. In the summer of 1994, for example, a murder investigation was undermined by its inability to examine and match murder weapon and bullets.<sup>42</sup> Anti-drug efforts were also severely hampered, for example by the lack of forensic capacity to analyse narcotic substances.<sup>43</sup> The UN police training coordinator noted in August 1995 that "the absence of a forensic lab has already severely limited investigative work in drug smuggling

and other crimes as fingerprinting results had to be obtained from Egypt and Israel, thus delaying the process and forcing [the] police to release suspects before evidence was confirmed".<sup>44</sup>

In mid-1994, the COPP contacted key police donors specifically to elicit donations for forensics and criminal investigation equipment.<sup>45</sup> A large seizure of heroin in the summer of 1994 suggested that drug trafficking was on the rise, and this prompted donors to devote more attention to this issue, although they felt it would be a waste of resources to donate equipment while the Palestinian Police still lacked personnel trained in forensic methods and equipment. Hence, this equipment primarily accompanied donor-sponsored training in these areas. Significantly, the first donation of crime scene investigation kits was given by Sweden as part of a training course for instructors in forensic science in late 1994.<sup>46</sup> The United Kingdom later donated similar equipment as part of its "Palestinian Civil Police Project", which was started some time in 1995. In September 1995, Spain announced that it would provide \$500,000 in forensic science equipment to the Palestinian Police.<sup>47</sup>

The idea of building a forensic laboratory began to be discussed, especially after the idea of establishing a Palestinian police academy gained support in the donor community from 1995 onwards.<sup>48</sup> But only towards the end of the 1990s was such a laboratory donated, and Palestinian criminal justice continued to suffer from a lack of competence in modern criminal investigation. After the much publicized Khalidi–Abu Sultan feud in 1998, leading to the first execution under the PNA, a top Palestinian officer involved in the investigation privately admitted that the Palestinian Police had been unable to determine beyond reasonable doubt who had fired which shots because they lacked microscopes and other equipment necessary to match bullets with guns.<sup>49</sup>

Computer equipment was another possible field of assistance for the donors. The Palestinian resistance and the PLO in Tunis had compiled hundreds if not thousands of files on Palestinian criminals and collaborators during the intifada. Palestinian police officials, such as Ibrahim Muhanna in Gaza, had called for a quick computerization of these files as soon as the PNA was established in Gaza.<sup>50</sup> The Palestinian Police would benefit from donations for this purpose. A COPP status report of June 1994 noted that "a computerized national register was still not available", and the Police also lacked elementary administrative equipment such as typewriters and copying machines.<sup>51</sup> Several donors

pledged contributions, including South Korea and Japan, although delivery appears to have been held up well into 1995 by the PNA's failure to produce the necessary project plans and specifications in order to release the donations.<sup>52</sup> But early in-cash donations for start-up and recurrent police costs made it possible to purchase some computer equipment.<sup>53</sup> In particular, the Palestinian Police's financial department demonstrated remarkable professionalism in computerizing personnel files, greatly facilitating the disbursement of donor aid to cover police salaries. In other fields, however, progress was much slower, especially with regard to computerizing and storing fingerprinting evidence and criminal files and to establishing crime statistics databases.<sup>54</sup> Over time, the main obstacle was perhaps not so much a lack of infrastructure but a lack of coordination between various Palestinian Police branches. By late 1998, there was still no nationwide register of criminals and their profiles, and systematic storage of fingerprints was not available to all branches.<sup>55</sup>

### **Buildings, Accommodation, Provision of Food**

Providing accommodation and food for the Palestinian Police was perhaps the greatest challenge for the PNA and the police donors during the summer of 1994. The number of policemen arriving from exile in 1994–6 reached nearly 12,000, not including their families, creating an acute accommodation crisis. They were part of a greater repatriation effort, which ultimately included about 52,000 people by 1997. Of these, 38,000 were administrative or police personnel and their families.<sup>56</sup>

#### **Food and Police Salaries**

In May and June 1994, a number of actors stepped in to support the newcomers. The UNRWA in Gaza had taken steps to alleviate the most immediate need for food. Its role in providing humanitarian aid to Palestinian policemen underlined the refugee repatriation dimension of police deployment.<sup>57</sup> The Israeli side was reported to have contributed some 60,000 meals to police personnel during their lengthy stays at the border crossings.<sup>58</sup> The most forthcoming hand was the local population, which generously offered Palestinian policemen free food, furniture for their camps, blankets, mattresses and even funds for pocket money and

salaries. Palestinian mayors in Gaza and the West Bank held fundraising drives to support the police while shopkeepers and restaurant owners offered the newcomers meals and merchandise for free.<sup>59</sup>

Such exceptional displays of goodwill could not last for ever, although upon their arrival the Palestinian Police were probably the most popular police force in the Arab world. Already, in May and June 1994, press reports suggested that the constant stream of voluntary contributions was taking its toll on the patriotic spirit of merchants and shopkeepers. Palestinian commanders promised that they would be reimbursed, but by August 1994 the Police had run up \$900,000 of debt to local traders for food, clothes and other necessities.<sup>60</sup>

The COPP was seriously concerned about the implications for police–society relations, fearing that the financial crisis would “demotivate the policemen” and create “an unfortunate relationship of dependence between the inhabitants and the police”.<sup>61</sup> Israel too worried that the economic situation would give rise to police corruption and extortion practices. Again and again, it joined the Palestinians in urging donors to commit funds and speed up disbursement. In July 1994, the PNA decided to slash police salaries by 25 per cent or more, bringing the minimum monthly salary down to \$260, less than the average Gazan wage for unskilled manual labour. At donor meetings, Israel criticized the PNA’s decision, maintaining that salaries must ideally be kept somewhat above the average salary in order to reduce the risks of policemen “attending to other business than strictly police matters”.<sup>62</sup> Correspondents reported signs of “cracks in police morale”: policemen resigned for financial reasons and asked to go back to their families, who were still in exile; four policemen were court-martialled after having sold their weapons for money; and others were taking bribes.<sup>63</sup> In an obvious message to the donors, Nasr Yusuf hinted at the possibility that “the opposition can win some [police]men over”.<sup>64</sup>

As long as salaries were paid regularly, even with the reduced wage scale, it appears that Palestinian policemen were relatively satisfied. Unemployment was soaring in post-Oslo Gaza, and most Gazans faced the prospect of a further economic downturn.<sup>65</sup> When donors pulled their efforts together and managed to provide significant funding for police salaries in 1994–5, this contributed to a greatly improved level of income for many of the returning PLA fighters, as they had been without regular salaries and compensation for years due as a result of



the PLO's economic crisis. The police salary funding was perhaps the most successful early intervention by donors. In spite of numerous press reports to the contrary, the disbursement began as early as April 1994. By July 1994, around \$10.5 million in donor funds from Norway, the United States and the European Commission had been spent on start-up and recurrent police costs. After a temporary pause owing to problems of accountability, donor disbursement resumed in early October 1994, and provided an additional \$39 million in direct funding until mid-1995. Although these funds fell short of covering the entire Palestinian Police budget, they were more than a one-time booster, and provided more than 50 per cent of the official budget for recurrent police costs (including salaries) for this period. The police salary funding was an exception in terms of donor police aid because it matched actual needs to a significant degree and represented something more than a mere apanage.<sup>66</sup>

### **Accommodation, Buildings and Camps**

Police accommodation proved to be a more intractable problem than police salaries. Although acknowledging the scope of the problem, donors complained that the problem had been exacerbated by the PLO's failure to respond to requests for satisfactory project proposals so as to release a \$10 million Japanese grant earmarked for police housing through the United Nations Development Programme. The problem of police accommodation and office space had not been made easier by the way in which the Israeli army abandoned Gaza. The Israeli authorities had pledged to hand over buildings utilized by the IDF, the Israeli police and the civil administration complete with furniture and some equipment.<sup>67</sup> After the IDF withdrew in mid-May, however, their abandoned installations in the Gaza Strip were just shells, with only the walls remaining. A correspondent in southern Gaza reported in mid-May that “before they left Deir el Balah, the Israelis stripped the civil administration building of telephones, chairs, tables, curtains ... even electric wiring”.<sup>68</sup> This was unfortunately not an isolated example. Another reporter described the depressing conditions for some 53 policemen whose quarters were in the previous Jabaliya civil administration centre:

Some sleep on single thin mattresses on the concrete floor of a garage. Others are packed into small rooms near the ransacked



kitchen block. No cooking is possible, because there is no equipment. Sanitary facilities are primitive and recreational ones non-existent. ... Now it [the civil administration centre] is a wreck. When the Israelis pulled out on May 14, they took everything that was not cemented into place – and some things that were. They took the Portakabin-type buildings in which most of the work was done. There are just two usable buildings left in the compound, which is roughly the size of two football pitches.<sup>69</sup>

In August 1994, a donor evaluation consultant described the facilities of the abandoned al-Ansar detention camp in Gaza, which was to become the Palestinian Police's main training site, as "mainly a heap of rubble"; and despite Palestinian renovation efforts over the summer, the camp was still "in a very disorderly state".<sup>70</sup> The Israeli side had obviously not exerted itself in welcoming the Palestinian Police, to say the least. To make matters worse, abandoned IDF installations were also bugged with listening devices which exploded on discovery, killing at least one Palestinian officer and causing several other casualties in 1996.<sup>71</sup>

The Palestinian leadership faced criticism by PLO and Fatah supporters for not having made plans for accommodating police personnel.<sup>72</sup> It was also criticized for utilizing former Israeli security compounds, detention camps and jails as police headquarters. These buildings, in which many Gazans had been incarcerated and tortured, brought back painful memories, and some Palestinians understandably called for their destruction.<sup>73</sup>

Given the abysmal conditions in the vacated Israeli compounds, senior Palestinian officers moved into hotels; but unable to pay their bills, they were instead offered accommodation at the headquarters of the Gaza Strip Charitable Society, headed by Gaza's newly appointed mayor Mansur al-Shawwa.<sup>74</sup> Finding private accommodation was difficult, however. Landlords in Gaza generally avoided renting apartments to policemen, fearing the rent would not be paid.<sup>75</sup> Police personnel were also scattered at various other available locations, especially at local schools, which were largely empty as it was the summer vacation. When the school year started in August, they had to evacuate.<sup>76</sup>

After several fact-finding missions to Gaza in May and early June 1994, the COPP used the term "emergency situation" with regard to housing conditions.<sup>77</sup> "Again and again the officers pointed to the need for satisfactory accommodation for the policemen. We saw policemen

sleeping on blankets in the open. Most of the policemen did not even had a bed to rest on, hardly a mattress. The officers impressed upon us that it was almost impossible to maintain morale under such circumstances.”<sup>78</sup>

The situation had several obvious security implications. Because of the shortage of police housing and bases outside Gaza’s main cities, the Public (or National) Security Forces (PNSF) – paramilitary units which were supposed to be deployed mostly along the border areas and demarcation lines – were very slow in deploying to their designated places. This meant that Palestinian policing in these areas was ineffective; and in the COPP meetings, Israel complained that it experienced serious problems, especially smuggling and other activities across the demarcation line.<sup>79</sup> Second, by remaining in the cities and involving itself in active policing duties there, the PNSF contributed to distorting the organizational structure of the Palestinian Police. The COPP’s police adviser was particularly concerned that the fine balance between the branches would be disrupted and that the Civilian Police would be displaced as the main police agency in the cities. This eventuality would be “most unfortunate if it occurs in an initial phase when everybody should find their position in a police structure there”.<sup>80</sup> For these reasons, he recommended to donors and the PNA that the erection of prefabs as temporary quarters for the PNSF should be a main priority area.<sup>81</sup>

The PNA and Norway explored several avenues for accommodation, including a proposal for transferring temporary housing/prefabs used during the Winter Olympic Games at Lillehammer in 1994, but this came to nothing.<sup>82</sup> The main relief came from a European Commission project approved in 1994 to finance the construction of eight camp quarters for housing some 2,000 PNSF personnel, although the first camp complex would be ready only at the end of 1995. By late 1996, the entire camp construction project was completed.<sup>83</sup> Japan also stepped in and financed the building of about 280 apartments for Palestinian police families at an estimated cost of \$10 million.<sup>84</sup> This was an important contribution. The lack of regular housing had so far made it impossible for policemen from Outside to bring back their families. In another attempt to boost police morale, Sweden financed the building of a few dormitories to replace the tents in which many policemen were forced to live.<sup>85</sup> Local Palestinians also offered much assistance in the building of police facilities and housing.<sup>86</sup>

Although the accommodation crisis was gradually addressed, conditions remained far from satisfactory. By January 1995, many PNSF units had acquired small cabins for their posts along the demarcation lines. But these lacked windows or doors, and many continued to camp in tents. A COPP report noted that the PNSF continued to live under “very poor conditions ...; mattresses and blankets directly on the concrete floors is common. The sanitary facilities are also bad. In the winter-time it has been tremendously difficult.”<sup>87</sup> Even as late as December 1996, the UN police training coordinator noted that Civilian Police personnel often slept in tents or at their offices or lived in other cramped locations.<sup>88</sup> During a visit to Gaza at that time, this author witnessed that even top-level officers such as Brigadier Ziyad al-Atrash and Brigadier Samih Nasr, the head of the Joint Security Committee and the head of the Training Directorate respectively, maintained their offices and headquarters in tents. Their makeshift office facilities were at least in tune with Gazan society, in which most people were refugees who had camped in tents for years after their expulsion during the 1948 and 1967 wars.

### **Vehicle Status**

Vehicles for transport and patrolling appear to have been the easiest in-kind donations to secure, although a relative lack of vehicles posed a sizeable problem during the early stage of self-rule when policemen were heavily dependent on local civilian transportation to reach their stations and posts.<sup>89</sup>

A crucial vehicle contribution was the delivery of about 200 military vehicles from US surplus stocks in Europe, consisting of 100 pick-up trucks, fifty utility vehicles and fifty two-and-a-half tonne trucks.<sup>90</sup> The donation had been pledged in late 1993, and all vehicles were delivered prior to or immediately after deployment. Egypt also promised to make vehicles available for an initial period in case the US vehicles did not arrive in time. Both Jordan and Egypt donated a small number of police cars.<sup>91</sup> Although the early vehicle donations covered the most urgent transportation needs, cars equipped for patrolling were lacking.<sup>92</sup> The US-donated cars were not equipped as police cars, and the COPP urged donors to effect “the quickest possible delivery” of patrol cars.<sup>93</sup> By early July 1994, the number of vehicles had increased to some 345, but only five were equipped for patrolling.<sup>94</sup>

A number of donors pledged to finance or donate more specialized vehicles. Spain, the United Kingdom and South Korea offered police patrol vehicles. Spain and Germany pledged police motorcycles.<sup>95</sup> The European Commission and Japan financed vehicles for the Palestinian Police's civil defence department, in particular fire engines, water tanks and ambulances.<sup>96</sup> During 1995, there were also significant vehicle pledges from other countries, including Italy and the United States.<sup>97</sup> Donor efforts in the vehicle sector appeared to have been a success. With many donations on the way, the COPP already judged in July 1994 that the most basic need for vehicles was “temporarily resolved”.<sup>98</sup> A January 1995 status report observed that “the only area on the equipment sector which seems to be fairly satisfactory is the situation concerning vehicles”.<sup>99</sup>

The reasons for the particular generosity with regard to vehicles were several. Donors obviously considered cars uncontroversial in-kind gifts compared to most other police equipment. Moreover, the serious car theft problem in Israel, where most stolen cars ended up in the autonomous areas, and the disclosure of Palestinian officers riding stolen Israeli cars probably prompted donors to step in with a view to preventing the car theft issue from complicating the peace talks.<sup>100</sup> There was obviously a perceived linkage between donor stinginess and police involvement in car thefts, as a British correspondent reported in mid-December 1994:

A brief visit to the parking compound of Gaza police headquarters reveals an astonishing range of Subarus and Mitsubishis, Mercedes and even a Volvo 940 saloon. Each car is equipped with sirens and is painted sky blue, with yellow Israeli licence plates displaced in favour of red ones copied from the Israeli police. Some Palestinian police officers, who privately admit their cars have been bought from questionable sources, nevertheless shift the responsibility on to wealthy Western governments for not providing the funds to buy cars and other police equipment in legitimate business transactions. ‘Don't blame us for using stolen cars,’ said Colonel Abu Raed, who recently graduated from a police training course at Bramwell in Hampshire. ‘We don't have money to buy cars.’<sup>101</sup>

New pledges and a speed-up in the delivery of police vehicles also came in response to the crisis in the peace talks in the early months of 1995, when anti-Israeli attacks had brought the negotiations to a

virtual standstill and pressure was mounting on the PNA and Arafat to take stronger action against Palestinian militants. In mid-February 1995, the United States mediated a resumption of the stalled peace talks. As a sign that “the US would do its part”, President Clinton announced an aid package, which, *inter alia*, included the dispatch of a second fleet of 200 surplus military vehicles with spare parts at a value of up to \$5 million.<sup>102</sup>

Shortly afterwards, the British prime minister John Major visited Gaza as the first west European head of government to do so, giving the PNA not only much-needed international recognition but also more aid, including police vehicles: 25 Land Rovers and 25 Ford Transit vans at an estimated cost of £1 million.<sup>103</sup> The donation came at a point when the United Kingdom was profiling itself “as the main international backer of the [Palestinian police] force”.<sup>104</sup>

The presence of a large number of different vehicle models and brands inevitably raised the issue of maintenance. The Palestinian Police was making progress in establishing maintenance workshops, despite a lack of qualified workers, but this was clearly not sufficient. In early 1995, the COPP police adviser reported that a “lack of spare parts and tools, different types of cars, and to some extent lack of knowledge among the staff of mechanics are already a problem”.<sup>105</sup> By February 1995, police donors noted that “many vehicles were already out of commission” and that cars were being cannibalized for maintenance.<sup>106</sup> Donors were now requested that each vehicle be sent with extra spare parts, including an extra engine, in order to alleviate the maintenance crisis. From 1995 onwards, donors seem to have paid more attention to this problem.<sup>107</sup>

Another case of donor programmes being out of touch with local needs was the German package of police motorcycles consisting of advanced and expensive BMWs, perhaps more suited for export purposes and public relations than the reality of the impoverished Gaza Strip. COPP police advisers managed to convince the Palestinian Police and donors to acquire a far simpler motorcycle, which could be purchased in far greater numbers and which also could be maintained in Gaza at a much lower cost.<sup>108</sup> Øverkil recalled later that it took considerable time and effort to persuade Palestinian police commanders to abandon the tempting but impractical BMW offer.<sup>109</sup> Instead of a dozen BMWs, they agreed to settle for a package of forty MZ motorcycles produced in the former East Germany.<sup>110</sup> By September 1994, the motorcycles began to

arrive despite a long delay at the Egyptian–Gazan border.<sup>111</sup> Training in the use and maintenance of the MZs was unfortunately severely delayed: a German team of Border Police officers arrived in Gaza more than a year later, in October 1995, to train members of the Palestinian Presidential Security (PS/Force-17) in motorcycle handling and escort driving. By that time, however, most of the MZs were in disrepair with flat batteries, and parts of the machines had rusted.<sup>112</sup>

### **Armoured Personnel Carriers**

Armoured personnel carriers (APCs), a rarely used police vehicle in most Western democracies, were assumed to be an indispensable tool for the Palestinian Police. Israel was surprisingly eager to see the Police be equipped with APCs, and immediately allowed the PLO to bring in six of its own large Russian-produced BTR eight-wheeled armoured vehicles. But as these were old, in bad condition and not very well suited to police purposes, Israel recommended that Russia, one of two donors with an interest in such donations, contribute “newer, faster, and smaller types”.<sup>113</sup>

Progress in Russian–PLO consultations on the APCs and other possible in-kind donations was slow.<sup>114</sup> Ahead of the Police’s deployment in May 1994, there were reportedly detailed Russian–Palestinian discussions on the delivery of light weapons, communication equipment and APCs; and at a COPP meeting in July 1994, Russia stated that it would deliver 45 APCs to the PLO, a pledge that was repeated during Arafat’s visit to Moscow in mid-September 1994.<sup>115</sup> The 45 APCs of the BRDM-2 type arrived only in mid-October 1995, after the Interim Agreement was concluded. They were reportedly in good condition and were equipped with machine guns which Israeli officers dismantled and studied meticulously before handing them over to the Palestinian Police at the border crossings.<sup>116</sup> The large BRDM-2s added a further military dimension to the Palestinian Police, and were operated by the military branches, such as PS/Force-17 elite units. They were deployed for policing duties only on rare occasions such as in March 1996 when the PNA declared martial law and staged a massive manhunt for Hamas militants after four suicide bombings inside Israel.<sup>117</sup> The vehicles never played a significant role in Palestinian policing, apart from making appearances in front of the PNA’s headquarters and security installations and at parades during graduation ceremonies for PS/Force-17 recruits.<sup>118</sup>

### Helicopters and Boats

Helicopters were meant primarily for VIP transportation, not police operations. The PLO and Israel had agreed on two helicopters, despite the former's early demands for as many as 17. In May 1994, Greece had indicated a readiness to supply the two helicopters, but this donation came to nothing, partly because the US vetoed it.<sup>119</sup> The quota of two helicopters was covered by the PLO's own helicopters, which were registered in August 1994 and put in operation at a later stage.<sup>120</sup> The PNA was also allowed to have small transportation aircraft; but by mid-1997, the aviation fleet consisted of only two MI-8 and two MI-17 helicopters, half of them not functional according to IDF figures.<sup>121</sup>

The lack of boats proved to be a more formidable obstacle. The accords allowed up to eight Coastal Police boats in Gaza, but apart from a Canadian Coast Guard programme beginning in 1995, donors showed scant interest in this sector. For a relatively long time after deployment, the Coastal Police had no functional patrol boats at all. It was one of the many bitter ironies of the Palestinian Police's early experience. The Coastal Police's resources improved only very slowly after 1994. The two boats that had been acquired by January 1995 had flat bottoms and were not fit for the rough Mediterranean Sea.<sup>122</sup> In mid-1995, Canada pledged two rescue boats as part of a package which included training in the use and maintenance of both boats.<sup>123</sup> In September 1995, it also pledged to sponsor programmes for eight Palestinian officers to train with the Canadian Coast Guard.<sup>124</sup> This and other gifts increased the PNA's modest coastguard fleet, but by mid-1997 it was still very rudimentary: two Volvo guard boats and 11 Zodiac rubber boats, six of them out of use according to IDF figures.<sup>125</sup>

The lack of patrol boats had obvious implications for the Palestinian Police's efforts to prevent drug trafficking in Gaza. Palestinian-Israeli security relations were also affected. In 1994-5, Israel strongly supported the PNA's call for patrol boat donations, referring to numerous illegal offshore incidents requiring Palestinian intervention.<sup>126</sup> In the late 1990s, however, when the Palestinian Police acquired more boats and started to build a small harbour, relations between the two parties deteriorated. The Israeli authorities became wary of the PNA's naval ambitions, fearing an influx of illegal arms and explosives. The fact that the PLO's former elite forces staffed the Coastal Police only added to Israel's suspicions.



## Conclusion

In the Palestinian Police's early experience in Gaza and Jericho, there are a number of interesting aspects emanating from the donor's sluggish involvement in supplying equipment to the Police. The political ramifications of a poorly equipped and trained police force were obvious, both in terms of police–society relations and with regard to the PNA's relationship with Israel. But some of them were probably unforeseen by donors and the PNA alike. The lack of accommodation created a security problem with Israel and distorted the organizational structure of the Police. The lack of anti-riot training and equipment and the shortage of communications equipment were contributing factors in several of the most serious political crises in 1994–5, such as the Erez riots in July 1994, the Palestine Mosque riots in November 1994 and the Beit Lahiya killings in January 1995. Similarly, a shortage of criminal investigation expertise and equipment made it difficult to produce the technical evidence necessary to convict or release suspects. It increased the Police's reliance on physical force to extract confessions, weakened its credibility *vis-à-vis* Israel and the international community when it released suspected 'terrorists' owing to lack of evidence and exposed the PNA to accusations of abetting 'terrorism'.

The difficulties of implementing speedy delivery were another conspicuous feature of the early police aid efforts. Donors were often slow in their own decision-making. Further delays were caused by Israeli bureaucratic hold-ups or perhaps intentional delays at the border crossings and by the PLO's slowness in producing the necessary information to release donor assistance. Aid efforts were also held up by Palestinian–Israeli disputes over issues such as radio frequencies and other security-related matters, despite the significant negative impact that this had on the Palestinian Police's performance.

Police donor efforts often reflected a broader concern for the peace process rather than the Palestinian Police. Donors responded relatively more promptly to needs and requirements that were deemed essential for the immediate continuation of the peace talks than to police needs based on a long-term strategy. The strong focus on unequipped cars and transportation vehicles in an attempt to reduce the Palestinian Police's involvement in Israeli car thefts was a case in point. Donors also focused relatively more on humanitarian needs (police salaries) and non-specialized,



often military surplus equipment and articles (uniforms and vehicles) than on specialized police equipment, reflecting their preference for humanitarian aid rather than security assistance. If a small portion of the \$53 million in donor funding spent on recurrent costs and salaries between May 1994 and July 1995 had been spent on anti-riot measures, criminal investigation and communications, then improvements in the Police's performance would perhaps have been better. Instead, the humanitarian aid focus served to reinforce the evolution of the Palestinian Police into an employment and patronage vehicle rather than an effective and professional police organization. In this sense, the donor response mirrored the PNA's policy of absorbing social unrest by quickly integrating a large number of Palestinians into the police and security forces, diverting resources from investment in training and equipment to recurrent costs. Again, it was the short-term political context, not professional police considerations, which came to determine the Palestinian Police's evolution.

### NOTES

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- 1 Cited in "Maj.-Gen. al-Majaydah: our duty is to put all things in order" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 2 (August 1994), pp. 4–8.
- 2 One of the COPP's main tasks was to update the police donor community on the status of assistance to the establishment of the Palestinian Police, and the chair sent regular letters to donors almost every fortnight from April 1994 onwards. These reports, in addition to numerous press reports by correspondents who closely followed the new police force, give a fairly broad picture of the situation of the Palestinian Police, although admittedly often through the eyes of donor representatives and police advisers.
- 3 Cited in "Status in the International Coordination of Assistance to the Palestinian Police Force", COPP Information Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Meeting, 9–10 June 1994 and UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 2 June 1994 respectively.
- 4 Cited in COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 2. See also UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, US Embassy in Oslo to MFA, 5 April 1994.
- 5 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 8 April 1994; COPP meeting minutes, 7 April 1994; and UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 6 September 1994, COPP matrix, 6 September 1994.
- 6 A. Øverkil, "Visit to the Palestinian Police Forces (PPF) in Gaza 2–5 June 1994", pp. 3–4.

- 7 “Status in the International Coordination of Assistance to the Palestinian Police Force”, COPP Information Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Meeting, 9–10 June 1994.
- 8 D. Brown, “Israelis claim Palestinians fired first shot”, *Guardian*, 6 January 1995, p. 14.
- 9 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to Cairo Embassy, 12 April 1994, Annex: draft police donor matrix.
- 10 There were very high expectations in the COPP after the French pledge, which had been announced to the high-level mission by the French foreign minister in person in mid-April, and the COPP chair erroneously judged at the time that “the problems in this field are about to be resolved”. Cited in UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 16 May 1994.
- 11 COPP matrices, 6 September 1994 and 6 January 1995.
- 12 A. Øverkil, “Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress”, 31 January 1995, p. 3.
- 13 It is uncertain whether the French donation was ever delivered. A UN police training coordinator noted in December 1996 that the French donation of communication equipment to the Palestinian Police came to nothing. Petersen, interviews. See also SWG/Police meeting minutes, 9 February 1995 (draft), pp. 3–4 and SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 March 1995, p. 4.
- 14 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 10 August 1995, p. 2.
- 15 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 March 1995, p. 4.
- 16 “Interview with PLO Chairman Yasir ‘Arafat” (FBIS title), *Uktubar* (Cairo), 19 March 1995, pp. 17–20, via FBIS.
- 17 See, for example, COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, p. 2.
- 18 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 9 February 1995 (draft), p. 4.
- 19 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 27 July 1994; MFA to TIPH, 3 August 1994; Oslo to Cairo and Tel Aviv embassies, 30 August 1994; and also UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 7 September 1994.
- 20 Øverkil, interview.
- 21 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 9 February 1995 (draft), p. 4.
- 22 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 10 August 1995, p. 2.
- 23 UD-RG, A. Øverkil to Tel Aviv embassy and SWG/Police, 10 October 1995. (File not found in MFA archives in Oslo.)
- 24 “British Minister of State Jeremy Hanley meets Arafat, signs aid agreement”, VOP-J, 1000GMT, 4 January 1996.
- 25 ‘Asfur, interviews.
- 26 Sab’awi, interview.
- 27 A Greek pledge of navy uniforms had not been implemented by January 1995. COPP matrices, 6 September 1994 and 6 January 1995 and “Trucks, jeeps for Palestinian police reach Egypt”, Reuters, 15 May 1994.
- 28 A. Doyle, “PLO enlists Norway’s support to salvage peace deal”, Reuters, 6 March 1994.
- 29 Øverkil, interviews and UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 27 June 1994.
- 30 COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 2 and “Nine thousand Japanese uniforms to the Palestinian Police” (in Arabic), *al-Hayat* (London), 12 September 1994.

- 31 There were contradictory reports with regard to how many of the Japanese uniforms were in use. At the SWG/Police meeting, Japan's representative stated that owing to the problem of size, the actual number used by the Palestinian Police had been reduced to half, i.e. down to 4,500. The UN police training coordinator and the COPP's police adviser claimed that only 2,000 were in use. SWG/Police meeting minutes, 9 February 1995 (draft), p. 4; A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 31 January 1995, p. 3; and Bleikelia, Øverkil, interviews.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 For example, the PNA spent \$46,206 of a Norwegian grant of \$2.5 million between 10 April and 3 October 1994 for the purchase of military uniforms. Coopers and Lybrand (1994b), pp. 3, 5.
- 34 It appears that Spain had donated some 100 batons at an early stage. The Netherlands included a small number of handcuffs as part of its anti-riot training programme and the United Kingdom also had pledged a donation of 225 handcuff sets. But as of January 1995, none of these latter pledges had been implemented. A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 31 January 1995 and COPP matrices, 6 September 1994, and 6 January 1995.
- 35 Øverkil, Bleikelia, interviews.
- 36 Under the Gaza–Jericho Agreement, they were allowed to have as many as 2,000 pistols/revolvers. According to Israeli estimates provided to the COPP in July 1994, the Palestinian Police possessed roughly 5,000 rifles, mostly AK-47 Kalashnikovs and 260 machine guns but only 403 pistols. COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, pp. 2–3.
- 37 Bleikelia, Øverkil, interviews. Øverkil raised the issue of hand weapons during his visit to the MFA in Rome in late 1994. UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Rome Embassy to Oslo, 25 November 1994; "Report to COPP on the Palestinian Police Force: Progress and Status", 4 July 1994, p. 4; and A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress," 31 January 1995, p. 4.
- 38 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 16 May 1994.
- 39 Sevje, interview.
- 40 A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 31 January 1995, p. 3.
- 41 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 9 February 1995 (draft), p. 4.
- 42 COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 3.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 10 August 1995, p. 4.
- 45 A. Øverkil, "Visit to the Palestinian Police Forces (PPF) in Gaza 2–5 June 1994", p. 4 and "Report to COPP on the Palestinian Police Force: Progress and Status", 4 July 1994, p. 3.
- 46 A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 31 January 1995, p. 4.
- 47 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 September 1995, p. 3.
- 48 For more on the Police Academy project, see Chapter 8 of this book.
- 49 Interview, name withheld on request.
- 50 According to interviews in January 1994 with a leading Palestinian police official in the Gaza Strip, Ibrahim Muhanna, the embryonic Palestinian police organization

- already had an archive of files of Palestinians with criminal records, in addition to security files of Palestinians suspected of collaboration. The security files had been compiled during the intifada and were continuously updated, especially as recruitment to the Palestinian Police necessitated a security clearance of recruits. “A Palestinian police official in Gaza to *al-Sharq al-Awsat*: our forces will never become an instrument for repression” (in Arabic, *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 27 January 1994. For Fatah’s intelligence archive, see also B’Tselem (1994), p. 139.
- 51 A. Øverkil, “Visit to the Palestinian Police Forces (PPF) in Gaza 2–5 June 1994”, p. 4.
- 52 COPP matrices, 6 September 1994, and 6 January 1995 and “Japan supplement – Japan’s role in the Middle East peace process”, *Saudi Gazette*, 13 September 1995.
- 53 At least some \$100,000 of the \$5 million US grant in May 1994 had been spent on computer equipment.
- 54 Petersen, Sørensen, interviews.
- 55 Sørensen, interviews.
- 56 Tansley (1996).
- 57 For a discussion of this aspect, see Chapter 5 of Lia (2006).
- 58 In January 1996, Israeli media also claimed that Israel was helping the Palestinian Police during the West Bank deployment phase, donating beds, blankets and even food to the new police personnel. “Israeli Civil Administration transfers 15m shekels to Palestinian Authority”, VOI, 0505GMT, 11 January 1996.
- 59 See, for example, R. Mahoney, “Guns, goodwill but not much cash for Gaza police”, Reuters, 26 May 1994 and “Israeli cabinet briefed on difficulties faced by Palestinian police”, VOI-E, 1500GMT, 22 May 1994.
- 60 S. Bhatia, “Who will clear up when the party is over?”, *Observer*, 22 May 1994 and J. West, “We can stop Hamas if PLO lets us, commander says”, Reuters, 24 August 1994.
- 61 A. Øverkil, “Visit to the Palestinian Police Forces (PPF) in Gaza 2–5 June 1994”, p. 5.
- 62 Cited from COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 2. The PLO had responded that its lowest salary level was \$350 a month, admitting, however, that trainees were given lower compensation. But later reports confirmed that the lowest salary had been cut back to \$260. See also “Police wages reportedly cut by 25 per cent”, MENA, 1425GMT, 20 July 1994 and J. West, “We can stop Hamas if PLO lets us, commander says”, Reuters, 24 August 1994.
- 63 S. Bhatia, “Dream shatters for Palestinians”, *Observer*, 28 August 1994, p. 13.
- 64 J. West, “We can stop Hamas if PLO lets us, commander says”, Reuters, 24 August 1994.
- 65 Ibid.; J. Immanuel, “Wanted: civilians for jobs now done by police”, *Jerusalem Post*, 10 June 1994, p. 2; and S. Bhatia, “Dream shatters for Palestinians”, *Observer*, 28 August 1994, p. 13.
- 66 For more on police funding, see Chapter 5 of this volume.
- 67 According to COPP meeting minutes and reports, Israel pledged that “installations, furniture, and equipment will be immediately available to the Palestinian side when Israel withdraws ... [and Israel had] submitted a list of furniture and equipment that will be left behind”. UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Oslo to Cairo Embassy, 12 April 1994 and Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 13 April 1994.

- 68 S. Bhatia, "Palestine police on trial as Gaza holds its breath", *Observer*, 15 May 1994, p. 16.
- 69 D. Brown, "Gaza's new guardians start from scratch", *Guardian*, 25 May 1994, p. 12.
- 70 Kukler (1995), p. 4. For a similar account, see M. 'Asfur, "The police service takes pride in the achievements of the National Authority" (in Arabic), *al-Ra'i* (Gaza), May 1996, pp. 20–1.
- 71 I. Kershner, "US helps Palestinians analyze 'Israeli' bugs", *Jerusalem Post*, 17 October 1996, p. 11. See also Chapter 9.
- 72 See, for example, "Interview with Gaza Mayor Mansur al-Shawwa by Huda al-Husayni in London" (FBIS title), *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 20 May 1994, p. 8, via FBIS.
- 73 S. Nakhoul, "Arafat visits former Israeli Gaza prison", Reuters, 4 July 1994. For new findings based on Israeli comptroller Miriam Ben-Pora's investigation strongly supporting previous human rights reports about Israeli torture practices during the first intifada, see P. Reeves, "Israel admits Shin Bet tortured Palestinians", *Independent*, 11 February 2000, p. 14.
- 74 "Interview with Gaza Mayor Mansur al-Shawwa by Huda al-Husayni in London" (FBIS title), *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 20 May 1994, p. 8, via FBIS.
- 75 S. Ghazali, "Doubts grow about Palestinian Police, once symbol of hope", AP, 13 August 1994.
- 76 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 26 August 1994, annex: Report from Dina Abu-Ghaida to Spiros Voyadzis, World Bank, "Palestinian police recurrent expenditures to date", 23 August 1994.
- 77 A. Øverkil, "Visit to the Palestinian Police Forces (PPF) in Gaza 2–5 June 1994", COPP Information Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Meeting, 9–10 June 1994.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 4.
- 80 This was a recurrent theme in Øverkil's police reports. Cited in A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 31 January 1995, p. 2.
- 81 A. Øverkil, "The Palestinian Police (PPF) – Aid" (in Norwegian), 9 September 1994.
- 82 See, for example, UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 27 July 1994.
- 83 Smith, interviews. At an SWG/Police meeting in September 1995, the European Commission reported on its involvement in the construction of housing at police camps. The so-called Jabalia Beach Camp was to be ready by December 1995. Three of eight blocks were structurally complete and the remaining five were in various stages of construction. Construction at two other sites was to begin on 23 September, and completion of these camps was expected by April 1996. Two more sites were to be identified. The procurement of beds, kitchens and laundry equipment were to be included as part of the project. SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 September 1995, p. 3.
- 84 The bidding was scheduled for August, and construction was to start in September 1994. COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, pp. 2–3. See also "Japan's role in the Middle East peace process", *Saudi Gazette*, 13 September 1995.
- 85 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 11 April 1995, p. 2.
- 86 See, for example, D. Brown, "Gaza's new guardians start from scratch", *Guardian*, 25 May 1994, p. 12.

- 87 A. Øverkil, “Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress”, 31 January 1995, p. 2.
- 88 Petersen, interviews.
- 89 Øverkil, interviews.
- 90 “Trucks, jeeps for Palestinian police reach Egypt”, Reuters, 15 May 1994.
- 91 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 8 April 1994 and COPP meeting minutes, 7 April 1994.
- 92 The COPP police adviser reported from Gaza in early June that the Palestinian Police had some twenty vehicles from Palestinian units in Jordan and Egypt, in addition to the 200 US-donated cars and that the situation was not critical.
- 93 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 16 May 1994 and “Second group of Palestinian policemen arrives in Gaza Strip”, MENA, 1534GMT, 11 May 1994.
- 94 This is according to figures presented by the Israeli side at the July meeting of the COPP. This increase may be attributed to a Greek pledge of 56 vehicles, which were expected to arrive in Egypt in mid-May 1994. “Trucks, jeeps for Palestinian police reach Egypt”, Reuters, 15 May 1994 and COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 3.
- 95 “Report to COPP on the Palestinian Police Force – Progress and Status”, 4 July 1994; UD 308.87 Vol. 3, South Korean Foreign Minister to MFA, 27 September 1994; and A. Øverkil, “Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress”, 31 January 1995.
- 96 COPP matrices, 6 September 1994 and 6 January 1995.
- 97 Ibid. and SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 March 1995, p. 3 and 19 September 1995, p. 3.
- 98 “Report to COPP on the Palestinian Police Force – Progress and Status”, 4 July 1994, p. 2.
- 99 A. Øverkil, “Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress”, 31 January 1995, p. 1.
- 100 On Palestinian Police officers riding in stolen cars, see “Israel battles soaring rate of car thefts”, *Insurance Day*, 6 February 1996; “PLO to license stolen cars in Gaza”, Reuters, 2 April 1995; S. Bhatia, “Where stolen car salesmen do a roaring jihad”, *Observer*, 18 December 1994, p. 15; “PNA ask Israel police to hand over Arafat guard caught with stolen Israeli car”, VOI-Ex, 1100GMT, 20 September 1994; and “Israeli police detain Palestinian police officer”, Reuters, 20 September 1994.
- 101 S. Bhatia, “Where stolen car salesmen do a roaring jihad”, *Observer*, 18 December 1994, p. 15.
- 102 Cited in R. Wright, “Mideast leaders agree to Palestinian industry zones”, *Los Angeles Times*, 13 February 1995, p. 1. See also I. Brodie, “Israel and PLO agree to resume talks after White House pressure”, *The Times*, 13 February 1995 and “Clinton orders \$5 million for PLO police”, Reuters, 17 March 1995.
- 103 P. Cockburn, “Major offers more Gaza aid”, *Independent*, 15 March 1995, p. 13; C. Walker, “Major to present vehicles to PLO”, *The Times*, 2 March 1995; and C. Walker and A. Leathley, “PLO dismayed by Major ‘climbdown’ on Jerusalem visit”, *The Times*, 14 March 1995.
- 104 C. Walker, “Major to present vehicles to PLO”, *The Times*, 2 March 1995.
- 105 A. Øverkil, “Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress”, 31 January 1995, p. 3.

- 106 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 November 1995, p. 3.
- 107 For example, the United States, which was the largest vehicle donor, had donated 400 second-hand US army vehicles with no maintenance follow-up, but it promised in 1995 to send a maintenance team to train workers in Gaza and the West Bank and to assist the Palestinian Police to set up a maintenance schedule. SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 November 1995, p. 4.
- 108 Øverkil, interviews.
- 109 Ibid.
- 110 L. Lahoud, "Germans train Palestinian police", *Jerusalem Post*, 25 October 1995, p. 5.
- 111 COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, p. 1.
- 112 L. Lahoud, "Germans train Palestinian police", *Jerusalem Post*, 25 October 1995, p. 5.
- 113 Spain had pledged 14 wheeled APCs, but they never arrived. COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 2.
- 114 The first PLO–Russia consultations on in-kind assistance began during the autumn of 1993. See Chapter 2 of this book.
- 115 Minutes of COPP High Level Meeting in Cairo, 5 May 1994, p. 1; COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 2; and UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Moscow Embassy to Oslo, 22 September 1994.
- 116 "PLO receives armoured vehicles from Russia", Reuters, 18 October 1995.
- 117 "Arafat announces outlawing Hamas' armed wing", Xinhua, 3 March 1996.
- 118 In the thousands of press reports and donor documents used for this study, this author has found only one reference to the use of APCs in active riot control or for policing purposes other than display at Police headquarters and at parades. "Graduation day for Arafat's Force-17 presidential guard", AFP, 9 April 1996 and "Arafat announces outlawing Hamas' armed wing", Xinhua, 3 March 1996.
- 119 Donor officials, interview.
- 120 UD 25.11.19Z Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 16 May 1994; UD-RG, document "Kjøreplan, COPP-møtet", 31 August 1994; and COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, p. 2; and COPP matrix, 6 January 1995.
- 121 "Minister of Defense replies to questions about PA police", IMRA website, 30 May 1997.
- 122 A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 31 January 1995, p. 4.
- 123 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 6 June 1995, p. 3.
- 124 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 September 1995, p. 3.
- 125 "Minister of Defense replies to questions about PA police", IMRA website, 30 May 1997.
- 126 In July 1994, Israel reported that "more than ten illegal offshore incidents had been recorded each week" in the PNA's area of responsibility off the coast of the Gaza Strip. COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, pp. 2–3.



## 4

### **In Search of Donor Mechanisms for Recurrent Police Costs**

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Considerable pressure is being put on the Bank to agree to act as paymaster for the Palestinian police. We would argue that an activity of this kind cannot be construed as developmental, and does not correspond with our role.<sup>1</sup>

**Vice-President Koch-Weser, the World Bank, July 1994**

After the COPP high-level meeting in Cairo in early May 1994, the recurrent costs issue emerged as the most pressing challenge facing police donors. In a memorandum written in preparation for the upcoming AHLC meeting in June, the COPP's chair warned that the Palestinian Police "might face an imminent collapse" if more funds were not forthcoming.<sup>2</sup> Similar predictions were heard at donor meetings throughout the summer and early autumn of 1994.<sup>3</sup> Although leading police donors devoted considerable attention to fund-raising, the most important issue was nevertheless the establishment of new funding mechanisms to guarantee accountability and thereby encourage greater donor participation. As more earmarked funds gradually emerged over the summer, there was no satisfactory way of disbursing them because donors generally refused to put their grants directly into PLO-controlled accounts. The donors grappled with this problem until it was resolved towards the end of 1994.

This chapter will discuss the evolution of donor responses to the PNA's cash crisis, which affected the Palestinian Police during the summer and autumn of 1994. Particular attention will be devoted to the negotiating process in the donor community leading up to the establishment of a donor channel for police salaries operated by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA).



## Fund-Raising and the Problem of Accountability

### Early Donor Funding for Police Costs

Contrary to numerous press reports and statements by PNA officials accusing donors of renegeing on their promises, donor funding for police start-up and recurrent costs was significant.<sup>4</sup> Although it was certainly true that the general donor disbursement for recurrent costs was somewhat unsatisfactory during the summer and autumn of 1994 owing to the slow launch of the Holst Fund, this was not the case with regard to early police funding. The myth that donors refused to pay police costs was unfortunately perpetuated by top PNA officials. Major General Nasr Yusuf, for example, claimed erroneously in August 1994 that donors "have donated only \$880,000 in cash"; but as a matter of fact, between April and June 1994 more than \$10 million had been transferred to the Palestinian Police (see Table 4.1).<sup>5</sup> The funding came from three sources: the US, the European Commission and Norway, each of which channelled their funds bilaterally, carrying all responsibility for accountancy and transparency themselves.<sup>6</sup>

TABLE 4.1  
Donor funding of the Palestinian Police, summer 1994

Funds received (\$m)						
Donor	Total	April	May	June	July	August
Norway	2.500	2.000	0	0	0	0.500
United States	4.950	0	4.950	0	0	0
European Commission	3.452	0	0	3.452	0	0
Total	10.902	2.000	4.950	3.452	0	0.500

Funds disbursed (\$m)						
Item	Total	April	May	June	July	August
Salaries (paid Outside)	2.344	1.360	.984	0	0	0
Salaries (paid Inside)	6.540	0	3.806	2.734	0	0
Other recurrent costs	2.018	0	1.699	0.029	0.170	0.120
Total	10.902	1.360	6.489	2.763	0.170	0.120

Source: Palestine Police, Financial Department.

### **Fund-Raising Strategies**

Despite these disbursements, there was nevertheless a strong sense that the Palestinian Police faced a looming cash crisis in the summer of 1994. Police funding had largely stopped after June 1994, recurrent police costs (including salaries) were estimated at \$7–9 million a month and tax revenues were clearly insufficient despite a significant improvement in the tax collection system. (Monthly revenues rose from only \$100,000 in May 1994 to \$3.8 million in August 1994.<sup>8</sup>)

Fund-raising strategies were discussed at several donor meetings over the summer. A PLO–World Bank aide-memoire, for example, stressed the importance of “a major fund-raising campaign” undertaken jointly by the PNA, the United States, the World Bank and Norway. Its objective would be to “mobilize additional funds for the police by requesting specifically donors to the Host Fund to switch their Holst pledges to the Palestinian police account, and also by approaching other donors to commit part of their unallocated 1994 pledges towards police recurrent costs”.<sup>9</sup> This strategy of reallocation to finance police costs was pursued throughout the summer and early autumn.<sup>10</sup>

Fund-raising also preoccupied the COPP, which pressed for a more active fund-raising policy in the wake of the high-level meeting in Cairo. As for the MFA in Oslo, Ambassador Haugestad outlined an ambitious fund-raising plan. He proposed a follow-up letter from the Norwegian foreign minister in his capacity as AHLC chair and a second follow-up from Secretary of State Warren Christopher to a group of selected donors, a new joint Palestinian–Norwegian fund-raising tour and a new COPP meeting with capital representation. It would be held preferably in Gaza in order to confront donors “with a situation that demands an immediate solution”.<sup>11</sup> Haugestad also proposed exploring with the parties whether the VAT and other tax revenues levied on Palestinian workers in Israel could be used to cover police expenditures.

The MFA declined to endorse most of these well-intended proposals from the COPP chair, and there were several reasons for its refusal. Donors had already committed sizeable amounts to the Holst Fund for recurrent cost purposes, and it probably feared that another fund-raising drive might create donor irritation and fatigue. Oslo was even more wary about raising the issue of VAT and tax revenues, which it regarded to be outside the AHLC’s “mandate”.<sup>12</sup> The MFA endorsed the idea of a COPP fund-raising meeting, however, which was then set to convene

on 4 July 1994 in Gaza.<sup>13</sup> In preparing for the meeting, the COPP prepared a list of the arguments supporting the notion of a desperate cash crisis, focusing in particular on the need to include a 'field trip' in order to show donor representatives the seriousness of the crisis.<sup>14</sup>

The conference proposal foundered on US objections. The State Department did not think that such a meeting "is the best way to trigger donors to provide increased [police] contributions".<sup>15</sup> For the moment, the United States preferred to concentrate lobbying efforts in donor capitals.<sup>16</sup> The US position was unrelated to Israel's attitude.<sup>17</sup> Its objection to another fund-raising meeting was in tune with the fact that over the summer of 1994, the main problem was no longer the absence of police funding pledges but mechanisms for disbursing available funds in a satisfactory manner. By July 1994, pledges were available from the United States, Norway, Saudi Arabia, the European Commission and the United Kingdom estimated at \$15.9 million, which would cover more than two months of recurrent police costs.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Palestinian Police's Finances in Disarray, Lack of Accountability**

The main cause for the abrupt end to police funding during the summer of 1994 was that the accounting for already disbursed funds for police costs proved to be less than satisfactory. Because of the World Bank's refusal to deal with police costs, the only existing recipient mechanism for police funding was Dr Nabil Sha'th's office in Cairo, in other words the PLO itself. The first donor grants were paid directly into a PLO account in Cairo, and PLO officials, either Nabil Sha'th himself or the PLO's Cairo ambassador, brought the grants in cash to pay for expenditures and salaries in Gaza. Inevitably under the chaotic conditions in the early days of self-rule, accounting procedures were not and could not be followed meticulously.<sup>19</sup> As a result, the United States declined to release its second pledge of \$4 million, because of Congress's dissatisfaction with the PLO's accounting for the previous \$5 million grant – this in spite of repeated Israeli assurances of the importance of continued US aid to the PNA.<sup>20</sup> (The US grant was never released for police purposes.)

With regard to the European Commission's grant, the first ECU 5 million (\$5.7 million) had not been fully released owing to the PNA's

lack of promptness in submitting an audit report.<sup>21</sup> In response, the Commission, which had long opposed police funding in principle, decided to withhold the second instalment, equivalent to \$2.25 million.<sup>22</sup> In contrast to the European Union and the United States, Norway made no complaints about the accounting for its \$2 million grant. In August 1994, when all other donors were awaiting better accountability mechanisms, it dispatched a second bilateral police aid grant of \$500,000, originally a Holst Fund pledge, alleviating what it clearly perceived was an emergency situation. Norway's position was exceptional, and reflected its close working relationship with the PLO and the Palestinian Police command. Given its lead-nation role in the police sector, it was willing to take greater risks than other donors.

### **Towards a Multilateral Mechanism for Financing Recurrent Police Costs**

The donors' early experience with police funding must have reinforced concern that their requirements for accountability would not be met if money were put directly into a PLO-controlled account. What was required was a multilateral mechanism for in-cash contributions because this would improve transparency and accountability procedures and share responsibility and political risks among all donors.

The World Bank had been designated as the lead donor coordinating agency for assistance to the Palestinians after Oslo. During the summer of 1994, its position was that donor funding for police costs could not be channelled via the Holst Fund, which at this point had begun to disburse funds for other recurrent costs. It held that the PNA in cooperation with the AHLC would have to assume responsibility for police expenditures, although it conceded that tax revenues were still insufficient. In response to US pressure and donor dissatisfaction, the World Bank proposed that a special 'Police Fund Account' be established to cover recurrent police costs. Responsibility for this account was now pushed over to Norway in its capacity as chair of both the AHLC and the COPP. A PLO–World Bank aide-memoire in late June 1994 stipulated that the Bank would "provide advice to Norway/the COPP on establishing a funds management system similar to the Holst Fund".<sup>23</sup> At the same time, the World Bank took steps to distance itself from any responsibility for disbursing police

funding. The aide-memoire created a formal separation between the civilian and police budgets for donor funding and explicitly banned the use of the Holst Fund to cover police expenditures.<sup>24</sup>

### **The Proposed 'Police Fund' Mechanism – Norway Alone Responsible?**

The World Bank's position created a situation in which Norway as AHLC and COPP chair was apparently left alone with the entire responsibility for operating the donor account for the Palestinian Police. Understandably, the MFA was very dissatisfied. It felt that the World Bank had been unfair in allowing such a situation to emerge.<sup>25</sup> The Bank already had the necessary infrastructure to operate a police funding account, but the MFA, on the other hand, would probably have to establish new administrative units to take on this responsibility. The Norwegian-led COPP did not have much experience in operating a 'Police Account' either, having dealt primarily with police equipment coordination and fund-raising.

The donor mechanism for police costs assumed a very high priority in donor diplomacy in mid-1994.<sup>26</sup> In trying to resolve the issue, a senior-level meeting in Washington, DC was convened on 8 July 1994. It gathered together US Special Envoy Dennis Ross and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Tony Verstandig, World Bank officials and Norwegian diplomats. Although the technicalities of the funding mechanism were not controversial – donors in general agreed that this would have to be an exceptional arrangement, and a specific deadline would have to be clarified – the dispute revolved around the issue of who should operate the mechanism and carry the ultimate responsibility. The financing model, which was sketched out during the meeting on 8 July 1994, included a multilateral account ('Main Account'). It would be operated by the AHLC chair in the role of 'administrator' and would be supported by a secretariat and an international accountancy agency as 'Field Auditor'. It would have some informal technical assistance from the World Bank and possibly the US Agency for International Development in Cairo. Two local 'Special Accounts', one for recurrent costs and one for salaries, would be formed and there would be a ceiling of \$7 million, equivalent to one month's need. The field auditor would verify a representative sample of expenditure claims and procurement transactions

and, on that basis, recommend to the administrator payment or non-payment from the two Special Accounts. Signatures from the Palestinian implementing agency and the field auditor would be required prior to disbursement from these accounts. The Police fund would be a short-term exercise, lasting from mid-August to December 1994. There was also some discussion about fund-raising at the meeting, and a general consensus was reached that the AHLC had that responsibility but would receive some assistance from the World Bank Secretariat.

A number of alternatives were proposed. The World Bank and the United States attempted to induce Norway to assume responsibility for the police fund account. Norway, on the other hand, wanted the Bank to do the job via its Holst Fund. The Bank strenuously opposed this, arguing that it was “completely impossible”.<sup>27</sup> A third proposal was that a UN agency should assume responsibility: for example, the UN Development Programme was judged to be “not unwilling” to take on this task.<sup>28</sup> The United States vigorously opposed this proposal, however, believing that the Israelis would be upset. American diplomats characterized it as a “non-starter”.<sup>29</sup>

Given the World Bank’s refusal and the UN’s political unsuitability, Dennis Ross made it clear that he viewed Norway’s management of the Police Account as the only reasonable alternative. Norway’s role would then be to bestow credibility on the account and be a guarantor that donor money was not abused. There was no way the United States could accept such a role or any direct responsibility, because of the usual objections by the Congress. The US promised, however, to provide technical assistance to Norway in operating the Account.

After the 8 July meeting, an MFA memo to Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland summed up the various alternatives he had. Norway might shelve the whole issue, but then it would probably lose some credibility as AHLC chair. This would presumably force the United States to step in and assume more responsibility. But even if Norway refused to take responsibility for the Police Fund Account, the financing of the Palestinian Police could not be considered a task entirely outside the AHLC chair’s domain. Alternatively, Norway should accept responsibility for the proposed Police Fund Account. The MFA judged that the account, at least in principle, divided responsibility among all AHLC members, although the chair would be most exposed. The MFA memo recommended to Egeland that the Police Account proposal be developed

further with a view to sharing political responsibility more equally among the main AHLC members, especially the United States and the European Union, and to eliciting as much technical support from the United States and the World Bank as possible.<sup>30</sup>

When Egeland acted on these recommendations, suggesting a shared responsibility arrangement, he met strong opposition, especially from the US State Department.<sup>31</sup> Norway then responded by demanding that the United States apply more pressure on the Bank to make it accept responsibility for police costs through the Holst Fund. If this again proved to be impossible, Norway suggested that the United States and Norway make a joint request to Israel that a UN agency, preferably the UNDP, be accepted as a multilateral 'Police Fund' mechanism.<sup>32</sup> At this point, Norway had sensed a change in Israel's attitude towards the issue of greater UN involvement in donor efforts.

### **Towards a UN-Operated Donor-Recipient Mechanism**

The MFA now began pursuing both tracks. On 20 July, the Norwegian minister of development aid Mrs Nordheim-Larsen met with Managing Director Sandström of the World Bank to press the issue at the highest level. The minister argued that Norway had "gone to great lengths" in resolving the donor mechanism issue and that others should do the same.<sup>33</sup> Norway could not possibly shoulder such a multilateral mechanism alone. The Bank was unwavering, however, and the managing director did not think it could be pressured on the issue. It repeated its willingness to consider a substantial technical role in supporting the AHLC chair and the COPP in operating the proposed police account, and pledged to assist in fund-raising, although explicitly ruling out any responsibility for fund-raising for police costs.<sup>34</sup>

At the World Bank Executive Directors' meeting on 28 July 1994, Vice-President Koch-Weser discussed the Bank's involvement in the West Bank and Gaza at length, including its position on police funding. He argued that the Bank had made far-reaching compromises, in particular with regard to the Holst Fund and its principle not to become involved in the political rule of a recipient country. It had already incurred much criticism for going too far in that direction. "At some point, though, we have to draw a line", he stated, referring to "the administration of police recurrent expenditures".<sup>35</sup>



The second track, involving the UN, proved to be more successful. On 18 July 1994, Jan Egeland wrote an official letter to his friend and colleague Yossi Beilin, who was then deputy foreign minister in Israel, proposing that “the United Nations through one of its agencies, should be responsible for administering a Police Fund”.<sup>36</sup> Only this would make further fund-raising for the Palestinian Police possible, he argued. The Israelis turned out to be very forthcoming.<sup>37</sup> On 4 August 1994, Beilin formally confirmed that Israel accepted Egeland’s proposal.<sup>38</sup> This was a victory for Norwegian diplomacy, which strongly supported a more visible UN role in peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts. Not without some satisfaction, the MFA communicated Israel’s new position to Washington.<sup>39</sup> The US attitude towards the UN’s involvement had not been particularly constructive. Indeed, in certain respects the United States appeared to be more “Catholic than the Pope”, as the PNA’s chief negotiator Sa’ib ‘Urayqat once put it.<sup>40</sup>

The issue of the UN’s involvement was delicate, however, although the police fund mechanism was at first thought of as a short-term technical arrangement without an enhanced political role for it.<sup>41</sup> The new Israeli position may have been influenced by the fact that the new UN Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, Terje Rød-Larsen, appointed in June 1994, enjoyed an unparalleled level of confidence and trust among top politicians in the Israeli MFA and also that he worked very closely with the US State Department, in particular Dennis Ross and Tony Verstandig. More importantly, with the establishment of the PNA, Israel’s new policy was to allow the Palestinians to draw more upon UN agencies in soliciting reconstruction and emergency aid as long as the UN did not involve itself directly in Israeli–Palestinian relations. The director-general of the Israeli MFA, Uri Savir, who was Israel’s top representative at the donor–PLO interface and a close friend of both Rød-Larsen and the PLO’s Ahmad Quray‘ (Abu ‘Ala’), had a very pragmatic attitude towards the UN’s involvement. For him, increased donor funding was a top priority, not whether the UN or the World Bank distributed the donor money.<sup>42</sup>

Responding to the shift in Israel’s position, the United States also made an about-turn, virtually embracing the notion of an enhanced UN role in the donor efforts. At an informal AHLC meeting in Washington, DC on 2 September 1994, for example, Dennis Ross stressed the importance of close UN and World Bank cooperation on



the ground in the Territories. He referred to the “unique resources” of the newly established UNSCO and sought support for a proposal that UN Special Coordinator Rød-Larsen be appointed an official “adviser” to the AHLC chair, next to the World Bank secretariat.<sup>43</sup> (Later, UNSCO also came to assume a larger role than previously anticipated in the new local aid coordination structure, for example as co-chair of the Local Aid Coordination Committee.)

After having secured consensus on the principle of UN involvement, the MFA moved ahead to designate a UN agency for the job, focusing primarily on the UNDP.<sup>44</sup> The Norwegian foreign minister made a formal request to UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali on 29 August 1994 proposing that the UNDP should “be entrusted with the monitoring and auditing of these [police] funds”.<sup>45</sup> Boutros-Ghali promised to consider the proposal seriously, although he cautioned that the issue was both unusual and complex, especially with regard to the possible legal implications of such a role for the UN.<sup>46</sup>

A UN-operated mechanism now seemed a distinct possibility, but its creation would take weeks if not months. Given the perceived emergency situation, the MFA decided to take exceptional measures in order to facilitate the flow of donor funds. In mid-July 1994, following consultation with the United States, Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland wrote a letter to the Saudi foreign minister offering a Norwegian facilitator role in disbursing to the Palestinian Police a Saudi pledge variously estimated at \$5–8.5 million which the Saudis would not release directly to the PLO. In concrete terms, Norway offered to “make a bank account available, in the name of the Norwegian government, through which the financial contributions to the Palestinian police accounts could be transferred” and in a manner which provided full accountability for the use of those funds.<sup>47</sup> This was meant as an exceptional and purely interim arrangement, for July and August, although it clearly raised some perhaps unfortunate expectations in the donor community that Norway was willing to “provide a temporary financing channel for [police] donor support”, as a (draft) World Bank letter put it.<sup>48</sup> I have found no evidence that this transfer actually took place.

## **An Exercise in Innovation: The UNRWA Police Salary Mechanism**

The final breakthrough in setting up a UN-operated donor–recipient mechanism for police costs came in the aftermath of the Peres–Arafat summit in Oslo on 13 September 1994, the DoP’s first anniversary. It was mostly the work of UN Special Co-ordinator Rød-Larsen, who facilitated the talks.<sup>49</sup>

### **The UNRWA ‘Emergency Mechanism’**

The Peres–Arafat meeting led to the signing of the so-called Oslo Declaration, a trilateral PLO–Israel–donor agreement resolving several key conflict issues. It stipulated that the parties should not bring unresolved bilateral issues into donor discussions, but also mentioned the donors’ responsibility for covering police costs.<sup>50</sup> In this regard, the declaration suggested that Peres and Arafat should jointly approach the UN secretary-general to request that the UNDP serve as the police funding mechanism.<sup>51</sup>

At the time of the Oslo meeting, the Palestinian Police had not received significant donor funding since June, and the UN special coordinator took the initiative to arrange for a temporary ‘emergency mechanism’ in anticipation of the outcome of the request to the UNDP. For this purpose, UNRWA’s commissioner-general Ilter Türkmen was contacted; and after “exceptionally quick decision-making” in Vienna, Türkmen agreed to this role.<sup>52</sup> UNRWA had the necessary cash reserves to provide the required advance funds immediately. As legal justification for this unusual task, UNRWA referred to UNGA Resolution 48/40, which noted that “the new context created by the Israeli–Palestinian accord of 13 September 1993 will have major consequences for the activities of the Agency, which is henceforth called upon ... to make a decisive contribution towards giving fresh impetus to the economic and social stability of the occupied territories”.<sup>53</sup> UNRWA judged that the facilitation of police salaries “fits in with the wording and intent of this resolution, in particular with regard to ‘stability’”.<sup>54</sup>

On 15 September, the MFA announced that the AHLC chair and the UN had reached an agreement whereby “as a provisional emergency measure”, UNRWA would serve as a multilateral bridging mechanism

for donor funding of Palestinian police salaries and other recurrent police costs from July to the end of October 1994.<sup>55</sup> The conclusion of the Oslo Declaration and the subsequent agreement with UNRWA was no small victory for the MFA. The foreign minister received from his US counterpart a letter congratulating him on “this latest achievement which demonstrates once again that Norway can and does play a central role in the Middle East peace process”.<sup>56</sup>

### **A Role for the UNDP?**

During the consultations in Oslo in mid-September, it was intended that arrangements would soon be in place for a UNDP payment mechanism, making the UNRWA ‘emergency mechanism’ redundant. It was known already at that time, however, that the head of the UNDP, James Gustave Speth, was sceptical about this request.<sup>57</sup> But a UNDP role was important because several key donors, in particular Japan, channelled much of their development aid via the UNDP. The issue was also urgent because the deadline for the UNRWA emergency mechanism expired at the end of October and the MFA needed clarification in view of the need for a UNGA resolution legitimizing the UN’s role in this area.

As it turned out, the UNDP board declined the request, apparently owing to a totally unrelated affair.<sup>58</sup> As a result, the UNRWA emergency channel gradually developed into a more permanent arrangement. The choice of UNRWA was a good one for many reasons, not least because it was the largest UN agency in the Occupied Territories and had by far the most developed infrastructure on the ground, with as many as 5,000 local employees.<sup>59</sup> In early 1995, the UNDP appeared to have modified its position when the UNRWA mechanism seemed to work well and it agreed to channel Japan’s contributions to police funding via that mechanism.<sup>60</sup> The UNDP also began to participate in the new local police assistance committee (the SWG/police working group) (see Chapter 6).

### **Should UNRWA Advance Payments on Behalf of the Police Donors?**

The MFA’s understanding of the UNRWA–AHLC agreement was that UNRWA should “advance payments” for police expenditures, drawing

upon the UNRWA General Fund “on the understanding that the fund will be reimbursed accordingly”.<sup>61</sup> Hence, UNSCO and the AHLC chair made efforts to secure written fund pledges to UNRWA from prospective donors.<sup>62</sup> On 21 September 1994, the MFA sent a letter to UNRWA pledging a \$3 million grant for police salaries. Norway’s pledge was subject to parliamentary approval, however, and would be released only at the end of December 1994, highlighting the dilemma that UNRWA might make payments that would never be reimbursed.<sup>63</sup> Donors also discussed a proposal that UNRWA should pay in advance the entire police budget deficit for the July–October 1994 period, estimated at \$12.7 million.<sup>64</sup> Given the frequent and considerable disparity between donor pledges and actual fund disbursement, this caused serious worry in the UN. The secretary-general feared that UNRWA was about to become a *de facto* funding source instead of being only a payment mechanism, and he established two conditions for accepting the UNRWA payment channel. First, the General Assembly should adopt a resolution to endorse this mechanism and, second, all funds that were to be disbursed should be made available to UNRWA by donors in advance – in other words, UNRWA should not advance funds from its own resources.

In order to persuade the UN secretary-general to accept the advance payment arrangement, Norway gathered that it probably had to guarantee the reimbursement of all advance payments, and that was a gamble.<sup>65</sup> In mid-October, during consultations with the UN Secretariat in New York, the secretary-general requested that in order to ensure that the UN would not be left with the bill, an amount equivalent to six months of police expenditure should be “paid up front” to a UN account.<sup>66</sup> This was entirely unrealistic, and would have put an end to the whole initiative. He was persuaded to drop this demand, but he remained very sceptical about the UN payment channel.<sup>67</sup> His unease stemmed in part from his feeling that it was “difficult to obtain precise figures on the issue” and that this task was the “direct responsibility” of the PNA in coordination with the AHLC and donors.<sup>68</sup> When, in December 1994, he learned that UNRWA had been persuaded to advance funds to avoid further delay in police salary payments against Norwegian and Swedish pledges and that there had been irregularities during the first two payment operations, he wrote a letter to UNRWA mildly castigating Commissioner-General Türkmen for not adhering to

his policy. It said, "Regarding future payment, I must insist that future salaries and running costs be channelled by the United Nations *upon receipt* of the donor money. If this money is not forthcoming, it should be made clear that this is the responsibility of the donors and not the United Nations."<sup>69</sup>

The UN secretary-general now demanded monthly accounts of the donor money made available to and disbursed by UNRWA for this purpose.<sup>70</sup> He also instructed that the language of the September 1994 memorandum of understanding (MOU) (see below), which guided the payment procedures, be revised to take into account his requirement that funding from donors had to be received in advance by UNRWA.<sup>71</sup> In his reply, Türkmen defended his decision, emphasizing that "no risk was involved since an official pledge by the government of Norway would surely be honoured".<sup>72</sup> He assured the secretary-general that despite UNRWA's budget deficit, "our cash situation is comfortable" and promised that the Norwegian case would remain the only exception.<sup>73</sup> UNRWA received full reimbursement from the MFA on 4 January 1995, and no more advance payments were made.

### **Donor Misgivings about the UNRWA Emergency Channel**

The UN secretary general was not the only one in the donor community who raised misgivings about the unorthodox arrangements of the UNRWA payment mechanism. The Japanese MFA was also unhappy that the UNRWA board and general governing council had not been consulted thoroughly, and it questioned the formal legality of this ad hoc arrangement.<sup>74</sup> Commissioner-General Türkmen defended his decision, referring to UNGA Resolution 48/40 giving UNRWA the task of "contributing to stability in the Palestinian areas" (see above).<sup>75</sup> The hasty decision-making on this issue and the reference to an admittedly vaguely worded resolution was not the kind of thorough legal exactitude and formal accuracy that the Japanese MFA expected.<sup>76</sup> Japan held that a resolution by the UNRWA governing board was necessary before a police salary payment mechanism could be established; and until this was done, it declined to contribute extra funds.<sup>77</sup> Most of the police donors, including the European Commission, were less critical, however, characterizing the mechanism as "innovative and undoubtedly useful for some donors".<sup>78</sup> On the whole, there was strong donor support for any

measure that would speed up the disbursement rate. With the passing of an UNGA resolution on 2 December 1994 endorsing the payment channel and with the relative success of the first payment operations, criticism of formal irregularities virtually disappeared.

### **Agreement on the Technical Implementation of the UNRWA Mechanism**

There is little doubt that donors' demands for fully accountable payment procedures were a crucial factor in making their efforts to expedite police funding so complicated and time-consuming. Police funding was an extraordinary undertaking for most donor countries, and donor representatives were under much pressure from their domestic sponsors to avoid the slightest suspicion of abuse of funds.<sup>79</sup> For these reasons, the technical implementation of the UNRWA mechanism assumed particular importance. Consultations on a modus operandi for the payment channel were held both in Europe and in Gaza. In Vienna at UNRWA headquarters, a meeting was held between the COPP's chair and police adviser, representing the AHLC, and UNRWA representatives for the purpose of issues such as interest rates and time lags for reimbursements.<sup>80</sup> The main talks were held in Gaza, where the UN special coordinator obtained Arafat's blessing for the new police funding arrangement and negotiated an MOU between UNRWA and the Palestinian Police, signed on 26 September 1994.<sup>81</sup> When the United Kingdom immediately agreed to allocate its pledge for the first UNRWA-operated police salary disbursement, covering the September 1994 salaries, the new mechanism was finally put in operation.<sup>82</sup>

In contrast to the low-profile COPP in Cairo, the more media-wise UNSCO issued a press release following the conclusion of the MOU, as it had done on many similar occasions, highlighting the individuals who had made this breakthrough possible. It congratulated, for example, the UK government, the PNA and UNRWA "for their professionalism and perseverance in reaching the agreement. ... it shows what can be done when there is the political will to succeed".<sup>83</sup>

The MOU contained a detailed, step-by-step outline designed to enhance and guarantee full accountability for the use of donor funds. It stipulated that the Palestinian Police would prepare lists of members of the force showing name, rank, unit, gross salary and other necessary

information for payment of salary. The lists would then be authenticated at a meeting to be held each month at the Palestinian Police HQ attended by UNRWA, the AHLC and UN representatives. Also present would be a donor representative (in practice an accountancy agency) who would also accompany paying teams, monitor payments and prepare the audit report.<sup>84</sup> Based on the payroll lists, the individual in-cash salaries were to be counted and packeted in sealed envelopes carrying the names of the individual policemen. Then 15 paying teams, all of which were to include at least one UNRWA staff member and two Palestinian Police officials, would make the payments over a period of three days. Each salary payment would be handed over to the policemen upon proof of their identity and against their signatures. In practice, the subsequent payment operations did not always adhere to the letter of the MOU. As will be seen in the next chapter, on at least two occasions the MOU had to be modified and amended. Still, it proved to be a very successful formula for donor disbursement, despite the considerable logistical apparatus that had to be put in place.

### **Seeking a UN General Assembly Mandate**

The last stage in establishing the UNRWA payment channel was endorsement by the UN General Assembly in the form of an UNGA resolution. The secretary-general had set this as a condition for extending the mechanism beyond November 1994.

On 7 October, the UN special coordinator presented a short proposal for the resolution's text to the AHLC chair, starting a two-month consultation process leading up to the final vote on the resolution in the General Assembly on 2 December 1994 as part of the traditional resolution on "Assistance to the Palestinian people".<sup>85</sup> Another long resolution proposal was discussed thoroughly with the United States; but because of time constraints, the MFA decided to drop it and go instead for a very brief version. The Norwegian permanent delegation to the UN was then instructed to sound out responses to the proposal among all the key actors in New York: the UN Secretariat, Israel, the PLO, the United States, Russia, the European Union and Egypt, beginning with the UN Secretariat.<sup>86</sup> The early proposals talked about requests to the UN "to take appropriate measures to support a [Palestinian] police force" or about welcoming UNSCO's effort "to establish a multilateral



fund to channel international assistance to the Palestinian police”.<sup>87</sup> After consultations with the UN Secretariat, the text became more explicit in emphasizing that the UN’s role was limited to facilitating the payment of funds placed at its disposal by the donors and that it should bear no financial responsibility.<sup>88</sup> It was also agreed that the resolution should be vague as to which UN agency should operate the mechanism, pending further negotiation with UNRWA and the UNDP on that issue.<sup>89</sup>

The circle of parties for consultation was gradually expanded.<sup>90</sup> Israel and the PLO seemed rather indifferent, and the latter found it unnecessary to bring the resolution before the so-called Arab group in the UN.<sup>91</sup> The proposal nevertheless had to be adjusted to take into consideration a variety of suggestions for modification. A French proposal to replace funds to the payment channel with “voluntary contributions” was approved.<sup>92</sup> US preoccupation with bringing about more “accountability” in the UN system led to a reformulation, to reflect such concerns in general terms.<sup>93</sup> It was indeed a paradox that those UN member states which displayed the strongest interest in reformulating and adjusting the resolution according to their preference, France and the United States, never came to use the payment channel for their bilateral aid to the PNA. The consultation process was also coloured by the ongoing competition over influence in the Middle East peace process between the United States and the European Union; and Norway’s choice of sequence of consultation partners on the resolution, among whom the United States had been the first in line, met with disapproval. France and the United Kingdom in particular were dissatisfied that the European Union had not been consulted at an earlier stage.<sup>94</sup>

On 21 November, the text of the resolution was finalized; and as a co-sponsor, Norway was able to elicit the support of EU member states, the United States, Russia and Egypt. On 2 December 1994, the resolution was passed with consensus. But Iran in a statement to UNGA on its vote noted that the DoP and the Gaza–Jericho Agreement would not give full rights to the Palestinian people and indicated that the present consensus on the resolution should not be interpreted as an Iranian recognition of the State of Israel.<sup>95</sup> The resolution (see Box 4.1) endorsed the UNRWA mechanism only until the end of March 1995; but by that time, a new UNGA resolution approved a prolongation until the end of the year.



**BOX 4.1**

**The UNGA resolution on financing the Palestinian police force**

The General Assembly, recalling its resolution 48/213 on 21 December on assistance to the Palestinian people ...

- 1 Requests the Secretary-General to designate a United Nations agency to disburse, with due attention to the need for thorough accounting, the voluntary contributions given by donors in light of the activities of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for salaries and other start-up costs of the Palestinian Police Force, for a period ending not later than the end of March 1995;
- 2 Encourages all Member States to contribute funds for this purpose through the designated United Nations agency;
- 3 Requests the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution.

Source: UNGA Resolution A/49/L.30, 21 November 1994.

**Conclusion**

Since the beginning of Palestinian self-rule in Gaza, the funding of the Palestinian Police had been one of the fundamental problems facing the PNA and the donors alike. The United States, the European Union and Norway in a common effort to overcome the most pressing needs donated more than \$10 million in cash directly to the PNA between April and June 1994. Owing to the difficult and somewhat chaotic situation in the early transition period, the PNA's accounting for these funds was inadequate and slow, and no more funding for police costs would be available unless a new multilateral payment mechanism could be found that provided accountability, transparency and shared responsibility for donors. Much pressure was brought to bear on the World Bank to include police start-up and recurrent costs in the Holst Fund, but to no avail. A new and innovative solution was then found with the designation of UNRWA, the UN's largest agency in the Occupied Territories, as a payment channel. Several obstacles had to be overcome to reach this unorthodox arrangement: Israel had to be persuaded to accept a larger UN involvement in donor efforts; the UN secretary-general had to be

convinced that the UN would not incur any extra expenditure; and sceptical donors had to be consulted and reassured that the new mechanism was foolproof and fully accountable. Creating the UNRWA payment channel was a significant undertaking, and consumed considerable time and resources, in particular on the part of the AHLC chair and the UN special coordinator in Gaza, who were the main driving forces behind the new arrangements.

The technical implementation of the UNRWA payment channel and the general development of the Palestinian Police's organizational structure and branches raised a host of new difficulties for the PNA–donor interface, as will be shown in the next chapter. Even so, the existence of the UNRWA payment channel was critical for the Palestinian Police. During its operation, the donors paid close to half of all recurrent police costs, and the Police more than doubled in strength. Thousands of youths were given uniforms and jobs, absorbing much economic and social discontent at this important stage in the negotiating process. Moreover, the Palestinian Police reached a force level that made it capable of assuming authority over the West Bank towns in the second part of self-rule.

### NOTES

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- 1 Cited in UD-TE, "Executive Directors' Meeting – July 28, 1994: World Bank Work on West Bank and Gaza – Statement by Mr Koch-Weser", 28 July 1994.
- 2 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 2 June 1994 and COPP meeting minutes, 30 May 1994, p. 2.
- 3 See, for example, UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Oslo to embassies, 6 September 1994, minutes of informal donor meeting in Washington, 2 September 2002.
- 4 See, for example, J. West, "PLO facing cash crisis as it tries to go it alone", Reuters, 25 May 1994; S Helm, "Cash crisis grips Palestinian enclaves", *Independent*, 30 May 1994, p. 8; W. Amr, "PLO says funds must be paid to its government", Reuters, 6 June 1994; and J. West, "We can stop Hamas if PLO lets us, commander says", Reuters, 24 August 1994.
- 5 Figures provided by the Palestinian Police's Financial Department. The COPP's estimates showed similar figures. UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 19 and 26 June 1994; documentation provided by the COPP, Reference No. COPP 35/01.09.94; and Nasr Yusuf, He is cited in J. West, "We can stop Hamas if PLO lets us, commander says", Reuters, 24 August 1994.
- 6 The earliest Norwegian grant, of \$2 million, was audited through the Coopers and Lybrand/Farid S. Mansour and Co. accountancy agency. The US grant of \$5 million was channelled through USAID.

- 7 Documentation provided by the COPP, Reference No. COPP 35/01.09.94. See also UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 19 and 26 June 1994.
- 8 UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Oslo to embassies, 6 September 1994, minutes of informal donor meeting in Washington, 2 September 2002.
- 9 Cited in UD-TE, World Bank/MENA Country Department II document "West Bank and Gaza – Aide Memoire", 29 June 1994.
- 10 During a meeting in Washington, DC in early July, it was suggested that US and Norwegian commitments to the Holst Fund (\$4 million and \$500,000 respectively) should be transferred to cover police costs. It was hoped that further funding would be found from the remaining European Commission fund of \$2.25 million, a Saudi pledge of \$5 million made at the Paris meeting in June as well as from the reallocation of Holst Fund pledges by donors such as the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Spain. During a meeting in Washington, DC in September, the World Bank and the United States again recommended that donors consider reallocating or "switching" some of their fund pledges from the Holst Fund to the Palestinian Police, because there existed available funds at the Holst Fund that could not be disbursed owing to a lack of documentation. Documentation existed for the Palestinian Police. UD 308.87 Vol. 1, internal memo (Hildan) to Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland, 10 July 1994; UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 3 August 1994; and UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Oslo to embassies, 6 September 2002, minutes of informal donor meeting in Washington 2 September 2002.
- 11 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 2 and 19 June 1994.
- 12 The MFA wrote: "The AHLC does not have a mandate to discuss these issues. This is within the Palestinian jurisdiction, and they would decide by themselves what kind of priorities they would make." Cited in UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Oslo to Cairo Embassy, 22 June 1994.
- 13 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Oslo to Cairo Embassy, 22 June 1994.
- 14 Ibid. and UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 26 June 1994.
- 15 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, US Embassy in Oslo to MFA, 27 June 1994.
- 16 The United States was actively involved in fund-raising for the police. For example, the secretary of state sent a letter to donor capitals in which he stressed the need for funds for start-up costs, including police salaries. UD 308.87 Vol. 1, US Embassy in Oslo to MFA, 27 June 1994 and Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 28 June 1994.
- 17 Israel's representative in the COPP had in fact been very positive at a police donor meeting in Gaza. COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994, p. 4.
- 18 These pledges included £3 million from the UK; \$5 million from Saudi Arabia; another \$4 million from the United States; and ECU 2 million (\$2.25 million) from the EU, the latter part of a previous pledge not yet released. UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Riyadh Embassy to Oslo, 28 August 1994; "Extra British aid for the Palestinians", Hermes – UK Government Press Releases, 11 July 1994; and UD-TE, "British Aid to the Palestinians", FCO Briefing Note, August 1994.
- 19 Coopers and Lybrand were employed to audit the use of funds. Coopers and Lybrand (1994a) and (1994b).
- 20 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 4 and 11 August 1994.
- 21 The sources are somewhat contradictory regarding that audit report. The Crown Agents reported in 1995 that the PNA had apparently not completed a report on the use of the first EU grant, disbursed in June 1994, although the release of

- a report had been a requirement for the release of the next EU grant in late 1994. However, Coopers and Lybrand had apparently dispatched to Nabil Sha'ath on 22 November 1994 its audit report related to the use of the first grant. This stated that they had found no misuse of funds. Coopers and Lybrand (1994b), p. 1 and Crown Agents (1995).
- 22 COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, p. 2.
  - 23 Cited from the aide memoire between the World Bank and the PLO, June 1994. The document was sent to the MFA in Oslo as an annex in UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 4 July 1994, but it is no longer available in the MFA's archives. This author was able to see Ambassador Per Haugestad's personal copy of the document.
  - 24 The aide memoire stressed, however, that the civilian and police budgets "should be seen as one unified budget", that there was one budget gap and that funding it should be approached in a unified manner. UD 308.87 Vol. 1, MFA to the World Bank, 5 July 1994.
  - 25 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, MFA to World Bank, 5 July 1994.
  - 26 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, internal memo (Hildan) to Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland, 10 July 1994.
  - 27 Ibid.
  - 28 Ibid.
  - 29 Ibid.
  - 30 It suggested that the United States, the European Union and Norway should assume joint responsibility for the management of the Police Fund Account and preferably sign together disbursement orders and agreements with donors. Moreover, the World Bank should be requested to second one person for a 6–8 month period to assist in the technical operation of the account and technical assistance should be sought, especially from the USAID mission in Cairo. Ibid. and UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Oslo to embassies, 12 July 1994, annex: "Aide Memoire".
  - 31 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Egeland to US State Department (Ross), 12 July 1994 and Oslo to Washington Embassy, 13 July 1994.
  - 32 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Oslo to Washington Embassy, 13 July 1994.
  - 33 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Washington Embassy to Oslo, minutes of Nordheim-Larsen's meeting with the World Bank (Sandström), 20 July 1994.
  - 34 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 3 August 1994, annex: draft World Bank letter (Sandström) to MFA, 2 August 1994; Oslo to Washington Embassy, 10 August 1994; and Washington Embassy to Oslo, 11 and 25 August 1994.
  - 35 UD-TE, "Executive Directors' Meeting – July 28, 1994: World Bank Work on West Bank and Gaza – Statement by Mr Koch-Weser", 28 July 1994.
  - 36 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Oslo to Tel Aviv Embassy, 18 July 1994 and Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland to Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin, 18 July 1994.
  - 37 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Oslo to Washington Embassy, 2 August 1994.
  - 38 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin to MFA (Egeland), 4 August 1994.
  - 39 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Oslo to Washington Embassy, 10 August 1994 and Washington Embassy to Oslo, 11 August 1994.
  - 40 Chief negotiator Sa'ib 'Urayqat in conversation with Norwegian diplomats.

- 41 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 4 August 1994.
- 42 H. Goller, "Israel says West Bank accord close with PLO", Reuters, 14 August 1994.
- 43 UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Oslo to embassies, 6 September 1994, minutes of informal donor meeting in Washington, 2 September 1994.
- 44 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Oslo to Washington Embassy, 2 August 1994.
- 45 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Norwegian Foreign Minister to UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, 29 August 1994 and UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Oslo to embassies, 6 September 2002, minutes of informal donor meeting in Washington, 2 September 2002.
- 46 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali to the Norwegian Foreign Minister, 31 August 1994.
- 47 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Oslo to Riyadh Embassy, 15 July 1994 and Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland to Saudi Foreign Minister al-Faisal, 15 July 1994.
- 48 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 3 August 1994, annex: draft World Bank letter (Sandström) to MFA, 2 August 1994.
- 49 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, internal memo, 29 September 1994.
- 50 A previous donor meeting in Paris had broken down over Israeli protests against the PNA bringing development projects in East Jerusalem into donor discussions. On police costs, the Oslo Declaration stated that "the emergency financial needs, including existing arrears, of the Palestinian Police should be financed by the donor community preferably until the end of 1994 only and not exceeding the end of March 1995". "Oslo Declaration", 13 September 1994, pp. 1–2.
- 51 UNGA (1995a).
- 52 Cited in UNRWA/PPF-files, Rød-Larsen to Türkmen, 21 September 1994.
- 53 Cited in UNRWA/PPF-files, UNRWA (N. Hasan) to UNSCO (M. Taylor), 13 September 1994.
- 54 According to a memo by the Chef de Cabinet in Vienna, Ms Nasra Hasan. Cited in *ibid*.
- 55 "Norway and the United Nations implement new Oslo Declaration on assistance to the Palestinians", MFA – Press Release, 15 September 1994.
- 56 UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Warren Christopher to Norwegian Foreign Minister Godal, 19 September 1994.
- 57 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, internal memo, 29 September 1994 and UD-TE, Oslo to embassies, 10 October 1994, annex: internal memo by the Middle East Unit, 30 September 1994.
- 58 In an MOU on aid to be signed by the UNDP and the PLO's Faruq Qaddoumi, the head of the PECДАР and the chief of the PLO's Political Department, the latter was referred to as the PLO's 'foreign minister'. According to UN officials, "this created a big fuss" between the UNDP, the Israelis and the United States, and it was a strong contributing factor to the UNDP board formally refusing to be a payment channel. Hooper, interviews.
- 59 In the mid-1990s UNRWA provided "essential health, education and relief and social services to 3.1 million Palestinian refugees located in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the West Bank and Gaza. Some 410,000 elementary and preparatory school pupils were enrolled in the Agency's 643 schools during the academic year 1994–5. The agency handled nearly 6.5 million patient visits during 1994 through its network of 123 health centres and health points. More

- than 181,000 of the neediest Palestine refugees received special assistance from the agency during the year, including food rations, shelter rehabilitation and subsidized medical care. Additional facilities and services provided on an ongoing basis through the agency's core programmes included vocational training, graduate scholarships, family planning services, special infant care, community rehabilitation centres, women's programme centres and income-generation schemes. UNRWA's regular and emergency cash budget for the biennium 1994–5 was \$570 million." From the UNRWA's website.
- 60 The UNRWA report to the General Assembly in late November 1995 praised "the good cooperation" with UNDP. Cited in UNGA (1995b).
  - 61 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Letter from Norwegian Foreign Minister to donor capitals, dated 16 September 1994.
  - 62 UNRWA/PPF-files, Rød-Larsen to Ilter Türkmen, 16 September 1994.
  - 63 UNRWA/PPF-files, Norwegian Foreign Minister to Ilter Türkmen, 21 September 1994.
  - 64 At this point, key donors (the UK, the EU, the US and Saudi Arabia) had committed themselves to cover \$15.9 million of the \$28.5 million Palestinian police budget in that period, but there remained a deficit of \$12.7 million. UD 308.87 Vol. 3, internal memo to Deputy Foreign Minister Mathisen, 13 September 1994.
  - 65 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, internal memo to Deputy Foreign Minister Mathisen, 13 September 1994.
  - 66 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, UN delegation (New York) to Oslo, 12 October 1994.
  - 67 Hooper, Taylor, interviews.
  - 68 UNRWA/PPF-files, Boutros-Ghali to Ilter Türkmen, 9 December 1994.
  - 69 Ibid.
  - 70 Ibid.
  - 71 UNRWA/PPF-files, UN Secretary-General's Office (Buttenheim) to Ibrahim A. al-Assaf (Executive Director Saudi Arabia, the World Bank), 19 December 1994.
  - 72 UNRWA/PPF-files, Ilter Türkmen to Boutros-Ghali, 9 January 1995.
  - 73 Ibid.
  - 74 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Tokyo Embassy to Oslo, 19 and 21 September 1994.
  - 75 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Tokyo Embassy to Oslo, 19 September 1994.
  - 76 The AHLC chair had probably also contributed to creating a sense that formal rules were being bent and evaded by 'assuring' donors, who were prevented from allocating development funds for police or paramilitary forces, that their "reimbursements to UNRWA will be earmarked as general contributions to UNRWA and not be designated or earmarked for the PPF [Palestinian police]". UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Letter from Norwegian Foreign Minister to donor capitals, 16 September 1994.
  - 77 Japan also insisted that if UNDP were to be used as a future multilateral channel, an UNGA resolution would be needed to approve this. UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Tokyo Embassy to Oslo, 21 September 1994.
  - 78 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, EU delegation to Oslo, 22 September 1994.
  - 79 See, for example, UNRWA/PPF-files, European Commission (Marin) to UNRWA (Türkmen), 2 February 1995.
  - 80 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 20 September 1994.

- 81 It was witnessed by UNSCO and the COPP's police adviser Øverkil on behalf of the AHLC. UD 308.87 Vol. 3, UNSCO to MFA, 26 September 1994 and "Memorandum of Understanding", Gaza, 26 September 1994.
- 82 UNRWA/PPF-files, "Agreement on Funding for Police", UNSCO press release, 27 September 1994.
- 83 Ibid. Similar press releases followed the Oslo Declaration and the AHLC-UN agreement on 15 September 1994.
- 84 UNRWA official's statement cited in SWG/Police meeting minutes, 9 February 1995 (draft), p. 2.
- 85 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 7 October 1994.
- 86 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, UN delegation to Oslo, 10 October 1994 and Oslo to UN delegation, 11 October 1994.
- 87 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 7 October 1994 and UN delegation to Oslo, 10 October 1994.
- 88 UD 308.87 Vol. 3 and 4, UN delegation to Oslo, 12 and 17 October 1994.
- 89 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, UN delegation to Oslo, 12 October 1994.
- 90 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, UN delegation to Oslo, 17 October 1994.
- 91 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, UN delegation to Oslo, 3 November 1994.
- 92 Ibid.
- 93 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, UN delegation to Oslo, 8 and 16 November 1994.
- 94 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, UN delegation to Oslo, 31 October 1994.
- 95 UD 308.87 Vol. 5, UN delegation to Oslo, 2 December 1994.



## 5

### **The Politics and Technicalities of Police Funding**

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The Gaza massacre on Friday, 18 November 1994, emphasizes what we have come to. Thirteen martyrs died, and close to 200 were wounded, ... the donor countries and Israel outdid each other to disburse the funds – which they had delayed – to the Palestinian Authority as a reward for that massacre and to support Arafat’s strength and stability after they saw that the ground was shaking under the Palestinian Authority ...<sup>1</sup>

**Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the Hamas movement**

Police donor diplomacy during the summer and early autumn of 1994 had focused on the financial crisis facing the Palestinian Police and the tug-of-war over the ultimate responsibility for operating a payment mechanism for police costs. By September 1994, this issue had been resolved with the establishment of the UNRWA emergency mechanism, and donor attention turned again towards fund-raising and the practicalities of fund disbursement. Although issues and disputes now assumed a more technical character, they were never entirely devoid of political content, as they involved issues in dispute between the parties and between the donors and the PNA as well as inter-donor differences. For donors and their development agencies, the payment of police salaries was “from every angle a highly unusual operation”, as one European Commissioner put it.<sup>2</sup> It took place within a rapidly shifting context of violent conflict that threatened to turn this funding into a highly charged political affair.

#### **Fund-Raising for the UNRWA Police Salary Mechanism**

Following the Oslo Declaration on 13 September 1994 resolving key contentious issues in donor–PLO–Israeli relations and the agreement on the UNRWA mechanism, there was considerable progress in fund-raising for the Palestinian Police. The MFA was heavily involved in these efforts; and in coordination with the PLO and with the backing of US lobbying



efforts, it dispatched letters and maintained telephone contact with a range of potential donors.

The first targets for the new fund-raising drive were a number of UNRWA donors, some of whom had stayed away from the police sector, referring to legal constraints on the use of their development funds. On 16 and 20 September 1994, the Norwegian foreign minister sent letters to Austria, Canada, Japan and South Korea informing his colleagues about the UNRWA mechanism and urging them to “consider a contribution” to UNRWA in order to alleviate the Palestinian Police’s budgetary strains.<sup>3</sup> The AHLC chair and UNSCO in Gaza had apparently hoped that the new mechanism would allow these donors to circumvent legal restrictions, and suggested that funds for the Police “should be made in un-earmarked donations” to UNRWA.<sup>4</sup> Austria, Canada and South Korea did not change their position on police aid, however. With the wisdom of hindsight, the AHLC chair was perhaps overly optimistic when presuming that the new funding mechanism would make a difference in this regard.<sup>5</sup>

By contrast to respectfully asking Austria, Canada and South Korea to contribute “an appropriate sum”, the Norwegian foreign minister asked his Japanese colleague for as much as “a sum in the range of ten million dollars”.<sup>6</sup> Such a large request apparently annoyed the Japanese MFA, which was already unhappy about the legal formalities surrounding the UNRWA mechanism.<sup>7</sup> Japan nevertheless confirmed a pledge of \$3 million to the Palestinian Police but insisted on channelling the money via the UNDP, the procedures for which needed clarification.<sup>8</sup> The Japanese MFA had previously been opposed to funding recurrent police costs but had found a possible opening in the fact that the Palestinian Police had a significant civil defence unit. In donor consultations, Japan announced that it would explore ways to fund monthly salaries of civil defence personnel, and, later, traffic police personnel were also found to be eligible for Japanese support.<sup>9</sup> No large sums came out of this – only about \$700,000, which represented only 1.4 per cent of the UNRWA police salary funding, a far cry from the \$10 million request by the AHLC chair in September 1994.<sup>10</sup>

Among the converts, the group of already committed police donors, the new fund-raising drive met with greater success. One reason for this was probably the criticism raised in many European capitals of donor intransigence in releasing funds for much needed operational

expenses. For example, in the *Frankfurter Rundschau* on 9 August 1994, Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, the Middle Eastern expert of the German Social-Democratic Party (SDP), who had visited Gaza on behalf of the Socialist International, called for a more active German role as EU chair. This was necessary in order to remedy the “catastrophic” situation in Gaza, especially for the estimated 7,500 policemen, whose salaries were confined to food and some in-kind donations from the local population.<sup>11</sup> The EU Ad Hoc Working Group on the Middle East peace process, chaired by Germany, acted very swiftly after the agreement on the UNRWA channel and decided to reallocate ECU 10 million (around \$13 million) for recurrent police costs, ignoring the European Commission’s strong opposition as a matter of principle to such aid.<sup>12</sup> The EU foreign ministers’ meeting on 4–5 October 1994 approved the reallocation. Unlike the United States, the technical-bureaucratic process preceding the release of EU development aid funds was time-consuming; but accelerated procedures were applied, and the first EU tranche was disbursed in early January 1995, covering the December 1994 salaries.<sup>13</sup>

Individual European donors played an important role in police funding. Apparently to set an example for other donors, Norway immediately announced a pledge of \$3 million after the UNRWA mechanism was in place. At the same time, the United Kingdom made available its £4 million pledge for the first disbursement operation, and Sweden also came forward with a pledge of 8 million kronor (\$1 million).<sup>14</sup> Fund-raising efforts in early October 1994 showed pledges covering nearly three months of recurrent police costs. There was also a tentative \$1 million Danish pledge. In addition, the US Consul-General in Jerusalem indicated that the United States might offer another \$6 million grant to recurrent police costs; but this pledge was never fulfilled, primarily owing to the usual hostility to the PLO in the US Congress (see below).<sup>15</sup>

On 8 November 1994, the Norwegian foreign minister dispatched another letter to donor capitals. It informed them about the progress made with regard to new pledges and the disbursement rate and highlighted the success of the UNRWA payment channel. The letter was accompanied by a joint appeal from Nabil Sha’th and Shimon Peres for recurrent cost funding.<sup>16</sup> This apparently triggered some movement on the long-awaited Saudi pledge. On 9 November, the Saudi Fund for Development confirmed to UNRWA that a grant would be made available for police salaries.<sup>17</sup> Finally, just ahead of the AHLC meeting at

the end of November 1994, the Netherlands decided to contribute NLG 6 million (\$3.1 million) for the same purpose.<sup>18</sup> The stream of new pledges seemed to confirm the UNRWA channel's effectiveness in facilitating donor funding to the Palestinian Police.

### **Arab Funding for the Palestinian Police**

Fund-raising for the UNRWA payment mechanism was mostly directed towards west European countries, in addition to the two Asian donors, Japan and South Korea. Although Arab countries had traditionally been the PLO's main financiers during the period of 'struggle', they remained relatively marginal in the new phase of 'peacebuilding' after Oslo. Total Arab disbursement for the Palestinian areas, including the PNA administration, remained low, at only \$240 million or 8.6 per cent of total donor spending between 1994 and 1998, which was less than Norway's donor spending alone.<sup>19</sup>

Being perceived as a main enforcer of the post-Oslo order, the Palestinian Police was not particularly popular in the Arab world, where anti-DoP sentiment was strong. None of the Arab countries which had hosted and trained PLA fighters during the 1970s and 1980s were willing to contribute funds to these men after they returned to Palestine as policemen. The only hope seemed to be the wealthy Gulf countries, which had been visited as part of the police fund-raising campaign in April 1994. Efforts at eliciting funds from these countries, Saudi Arabia in particular, continued during the autumn of 1994. Following an appeal from the AHLC chair to exert more pressure on Saudi Arabia to release funds to the Palestinian Police, Secretary of State Warren Christopher sent a letter to his colleague in Riyadh with that purpose.<sup>20</sup> Repeated US and Norwegian efforts followed with a view to encouraging an accelerated disbursement.<sup>21</sup> Unlike the United States, the Norwegian embassy in Riyadh did not have direct access to the highest circles in the Saudi MFA, and the embassy found it difficult to locate an appropriate person in the Saudi MFA to whom it could give the MFA letters.<sup>22</sup> It was evident that Saudi funding could be encouraged only through the good offices of the United States.<sup>23</sup>

Judging from the MFA's correspondence, there was an extraordinary amount of confusion about the status of the expected Saudi funding, indicating that the donors' working relationship with the Saudi Kingdom

in donor politics was not well established. A complicating factor was the fact that the flow of funding from Saudi Arabia to the PLO and Palestinian causes had multiple sources and did not have the kind of transparency that Western donors had adopted. Local coordination with the Saudis was more difficult because Saudi Arabia, owing to its non-recognition of the State of Israel, had no embassy in Tel Aviv with a local consulate or representative office in the PNA-ruled areas, as most donors had or were in the process of establishing in late 1994.<sup>24</sup>

In the autumn of 1994, contradictory figures circulated with regard to the Saudi pledges. In a survey of donor funding of police costs distributed to donors in late October 1994 by the World Bank Secretariat, a Saudi fund of \$8.5 million had reportedly been received in August 1994 and had been disbursed together with the Norwegian pledge of \$500,000.<sup>25</sup> This contradicted the COPP's figures as well as PNA statements that there had been absolutely no donor funding (except the small Norwegian grant) for recurrent police costs in July and August 1994. The COPP endeavoured to clarify the issue with the AHLC chair in Oslo and the UNSCO office, which was heavily involved in checking the status of various pledges so as to speed up the disbursement process. According to UNSCO, the Saudi contribution was transferred directly to the PNA or to Arafat without being earmarked for police purposes. The Saudi contribution was therefore dropped from police donor surveys.<sup>26</sup>

The COPP also asked the MFA in Oslo to investigate the issue with the World Bank; and a few days later, the MFA reported that according to World Bank representatives, Saudi Arabia had transferred the \$8.5 million grant to the PNA several months previously in order to cover police expenditures, most probably during Arafat's visit to Riyadh. (It should be recalled that despite the rupture in PLO–Saudi relations after the Gulf war, the PLO continued for the most part to receive so-called liberation taxes levied upon Palestinian workers in the Saudi Kingdom as well as private donations.) The Saudi government had also pledged another \$5 million (later increased to \$7.5 million) to the Palestinian Police, which would probably be disbursed through the UNRWA mechanism, the World Bank reported.<sup>27</sup>

The revelation of the contribution of extra funds aroused some donor suspicion that the PNA was trying to trick them into 'double-funding', especially in the light of its insistence that donors should reimburse its 'arrears', which it had incurred during July and August

when allegedly no donor funding had been available. The revelation also raised the sensitive issue of whether PLO funds, whenever available, should be channelled into the PNA. Donors chose not to pursue this issue further, seeing PLO funding as something outside their purview.

Another minor complication concerning the Saudi disbursement was that when the Saudi Fund for Development contacted UNRWA on 9 November 1994 to transfer its contribution, the mandate for the short-term UNRWA emergency channel had formally expired.<sup>28</sup> This issue was quickly resolved when the UN secretary-general decided to prolong the emergency channel by one month. The Saudi grant was nevertheless transferred to UNRWA only in early 1995, and arrived just in time to be disbursed prior to the Muslim feast of 'ayd al-adha, which was in line with the kingdom's international Islamic profile.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to the Saudi grant, the COPP and the AHLC had looked for other potential sources of Arab funding for police costs. As any multilateral Arab aid effort via the Arab League was out of the question,<sup>30</sup> the immediate focus for bilateral Arab aid other than Saudi Arabia was a United Arab Emirates pledge for police costs made in 1994.<sup>31</sup> It was also known that the UAE's president Shaykh Zayid bin Sultan al-Nayhan had promised Arafat another \$5 million during their meeting in Geneva in mid-1994, although UNSCO and Norway understood that these funds were direct funding for the PLO and not earmarked for police costs.<sup>32</sup> For the AHLC chair in Oslo and the police donor community in Gaza, there was much uncertainty surrounding the UAE pledges, and the MFA had serious problems in eliciting hard information about their status. The Norwegian ambassador to the UAE stayed in continuous contact with the US embassy on this issue. The latter regularly received instructions from Washington to press for more information on the status of the UAE's aid pledges and to urge a more rapid disbursement, in particular of the \$4 million police pledge. These efforts appeared to have had little success, and there is no indication in the MFA's correspondence that the UAE had transferred funds to cover police costs in 1994–5.

### **Facts and Figures on Donor Police Funding and Disbursement**

Donor funding did not cover the entire Palestinian Police budget in this period. As far as can be ascertained, between April 1994 and August 1995 donors contributed about \$52.1 million for recurrent police costs,

of which \$44.6 million covered salaries (see tables 5.1 and 5.2). According to figures from the PNA Ministry of Finance, the total police salary costs for this period were almost twice as high as the donor contribution. This meant that the PNA paid approximately half of the total recurrent police costs during the first 15 months of self-rule. The PNA covered much of its recurrent police costs (excluding salaries), which amounted to about \$1.9 million per month.<sup>33</sup> It also carried the bulk of the projected pensions and health and social security payments, as many donors preferred to cover only net salaries.<sup>34</sup> Donor funding to police costs via the UNRWA channel came to an end after March 1995, with the exception of July 1995 when donors (the Netherlands, Norway and Greece) disbursed about \$5.5 million.

The European Union was the largest donor in this sector, covering more than a third of total donor funding for police costs; Norway and Saudi Arabia shared second place, with about 14 per cent each. Traditionally generous donors to the Occupied Territories, most notably Canada, were absent from this sector owing to domestic legislation. Per capita, Norway was by far the largest donor, and the profile of the police donors was markedly Scandinavian and north European, apparently a reflection of the fact that Norway as AHLC chair often relied on its closest friends and neighbours for support in its Middle East diplomacy.

**TABLE 5.1**  
**Donor countries involved in police funding, 1994–5**

Donor country	Total contribution (\$)	Percentage of total donor funding
European Union	18,204,202 (+ 2.25 m) <sup>a</sup>	34.91
Saudi Arabia	7,500,000 (+ 8.5 m)	14.38
Norway	7,419,140	14.23
The Netherlands	6,520,801	12.50
United States	5,000,000	9.59
United Kingdom	4,672,887	8.96
Sweden	1,074,868	2.06
Denmark	945,430	1.81
Japan	719,875	1.38
Greece	89,286	0.17
Total	52,146,489	100.00

**Note:** <sup>a</sup>There is contradictory information as to whether this fund was disbursed for police costs.  
**Sources:** COPP documents, PNA Ministry of Finance, and the Norwegian MFA.

**TABLE 5.2**  
**Donor funding for police salaries/recurrent costs, 1994–5**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Salaries/Total (\$)</b>	<b>Donor country grants (\$ m)</b>
April–June 1994	8,916,638/13,401,800	Norway (2.5 <sup>a</sup> ), United States (5) and European Union (5.9)
July 1994	–	–
August 1994	–	Saudi Arabia (8.5), Norway (0.5) and European Union (2.25 <sup>b</sup> )
September 1994	3,517,374/3,517,374	United Kingdom (3.5)
October 1994	4,225,543/4,225,543	Norway (2.9), United Kingdom (1.1) and Sweden (0.2)
November 1994	3,933,902/3,933,902	Sweden (0.8) and the Netherlands (3.1)
December 1994	4,627,546/6,086,691	European Union (6.1)
<b>Total for 1994</b>	<b>25,221,003/31,165,310</b>	
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January 1995	4,673,696/6,215,711	European Union (6.2)
February 1995	4,709,282/4,709,282	Saudi Arabia (4.7)
March 1995	4,537,349/4,537,349	Saudi Arabia (2.8), Denmark (0.9), Japan (0.7) and United Kingdom (0.08)
July 1995	5,518,837/5,518,837	Norway (2), the Netherlands (3.4) and Greece (0.09)
<b>Total for 1995</b>	<b>19,439,164/20,981,179</b>	
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<b>Total donor</b>	<b>44,660,167/52,146,489</b>	
<b>PNA payment</b>	<b>45,676,302</b>	The PNA's Ministry of Finance (June 1994–July 1995)
<b>Total payment</b>	<b>90,336,469</b>	The PNA and the donors (April 1994–July 1995)

**Note:** <sup>a</sup>The pledge was granted in two portions: \$2 million on 29 March 1994 and \$500,000 on 29 July 1994. <sup>b</sup>These amounts are not mentioned in the PNA budget but are listed in a World Bank survey. See previous section on the Saudi funds for the Palestinian Police. The \$0.5 million of the \$2.5 million Norwegian pledges was disbursed in August, not in June. It is uncertain whether the latter part (\$2.25 million) of the \$5.9 million EU pledge was disbursed at all. It was withheld owing to EU dissatisfaction over PNA accountability for the first part of the grant.

**Sources:** COPP documents, PNA Ministry of Finance, and the Norwegian MFA.

**TABLE 5.3**  
**The increase in Palestinian Police personnel, 1994–2000**

Month	Personnel on payroll	Preventive security personnel
May 1994	5,450	–
June 1994	7,250	–
July 1994	7,580	–
	( <i>c.</i> 5,000 in Gaza/Jericho)	–
August 1994	9,000	–
	( <i>c.</i> 7,700 in Gaza/Jericho)	–
September 1994	<i>c.</i> 10,800 (8,978 in Gaza)	<i>c.</i> 600
October 1994	11,629	685
November 1994	13,522	806
December 1994	15,053	1,351
January 1995	16,821	–
February 1995	17,515	–
March 1995	17,809	–
May 1995	–	<i>c.</i> 2,500
July 1995	18,715	–
August 1995	19,000	–
September 1995	19,500	–
October 1995	<i>c.</i> 19,000	–
End of direct donor funding via the UNRWA mechanism		
December 1995	24,000	–
March 1996	26,700	–
June 1996	30,200	–
September 1996	32,600	–
December 1996	34,027	–
September 1997	<i>c.</i> 38,000	<i>c.</i> 5,000
May 1998	<i>c.</i> 39,000	–
September 2000	<i>c.</i> 41,000	–

Source: The figures in this table are gathered from a large number of sources, which are too numerous to be cited here.

### **Donor Funding and Palestinian Police Recruitment**

It is noteworthy that the pace of police recruitment (see Table 5.3) slowed down significantly when donor funding came to a temporary halt between April and July 1995. There was a monthly growth rate of 1,000–2,000 between August and February 1995, dropping sharply to



an average of 300 per month after February 1995. Rapid recruitment pushed monthly salary payments up to \$7.3–7.9 million, in addition to some \$2 million in other recurrent costs. The slowdown in recruitment was not only a result of financial constraints; it stemmed too from PNA concern about the political implications of expanding the police force excessively before an interim agreement had been reached. Average growth after the Interim Agreement until December 1996 was also very high, more than a thousand per month, but it slowed down remarkably during the late 1990s.

The initially high growth rate was a result of a combination of factors: a growth in tax revenues and the steady influx of budgetary support funding from donors. Perhaps the most important factor was the fact that growing unemployment in the private sector as a result of the unprecedentedly harsh Israeli closure policies during most of 1996 made the relatively low-paid jobs in the police and security forces an attractive option, especially in the Gaza Strip, where high unemployment was chronic.<sup>35</sup> In the West Bank, however, the Palestinian Civilian Police branch experienced a net outflow of personnel in 1998 owing to improved opportunities for employment in Israel.<sup>36</sup> In May 1996, when the Netanyahu government came to power, it was rumoured that the new government was about to reverse Labor's closure policies and allow a large number of Palestinian workers into Israel. The PNA allegedly threatened to issue a decree banning Palestinian policemen in Gaza from resigning from the force with a view to working in Israel. Israeli closure policies changed very little, however, and there were no mass resignations.<sup>37</sup>

### **The PLO's Police Budget and Donor Funding**

Ever since the COPP was formed in Cairo in late March 1994, there had been a tug-of-war between the committee and the Palestinians over the Palestinian Police budget figures, and this controversy was never fully resolved. The problems linked to the budget estimates were complex, because the PNA and its police forces constantly expanded. A whole range of considerations were involved, such as the number of policemen eligible for donor support, which police branches were legitimate recipients, the handling of accumulated arrears and debts, the time schedule for phasing out donor funding for police costs etc.

### **Funding What?**

Various factors contributed to heighten donor concern over funding Palestinian Police costs. Owing to the protracted deployment period, a considerable portion of the force was slow to arrive from exile. The PNA had nevertheless “taken responsibility for salaries to all projected 9,000 Palestinian policemen from 4 May 1994, even if they still were outside Gaza–Jericho”.<sup>38</sup> It also turned out that April 1994 had been included in the official Palestinian Police budget, and donor funds had been disbursed as salaries to personnel in the diaspora in both April and May 1994. The reason for this was that the first Norwegian grant of \$2 million was transferred to the PLO as early as 29 March 1994.<sup>39</sup> Politically, it was probably important that donors assisted the PLO in paying and transporting police personnel to Gaza and Jericho; but in a strictly formal sense, the funding of Palestinian Police or PLA personnel before the conclusion of the Gaza–Jericho Agreement and before the formation of the PNA was ultimately the responsibility of the PLO. As a result of the cash crisis, the issue did not seem to have worried the COPP.<sup>40</sup> However, by allocating some of the early donor funding to costs incurred outside Gaza and Jericho and by including April 1994, the PLO upgraded the overall Palestinian Police budget. This was probably done to illustrate the depth of the cash crisis and to create the impression that there had been no donor funding for July and August and that police costs for June had only partly been covered. This did not correspond entirely to the actual disbursement pattern, however, and thereby created somewhat contradictory reports on donor funding.<sup>41</sup>

PNA officials also increased the monthly police budget estimates, arguing that the force turned out to have more high-ranking officers and that their salaries were higher than previously assumed.<sup>42</sup> At the same time, Arafat decided to slash police salaries by 25 per cent, reducing police wages to the salary scale used by the PLA in exile.<sup>43</sup> The new monthly scale reportedly ranged from \$225 to \$1,167, with an average of \$531, i.e. 25 per cent less than the original average salary of \$720.<sup>44</sup> The effect of this salary reduction was that monthly recurrent police costs (including salaries) fell from \$7.1 million to \$6.3 million.<sup>45</sup> However, the previous \$7.1 million monthly budget estimate was not reduced. On the contrary, during the early autumn, the PNA, backed by the World Bank/Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR) made several attempts to increase the budget figure to \$9 million (see

below). These measures were apparently taken in order to make room for an expansion of the Palestinian Police. It had become the most important vehicle for reintegrating and rewarding ex-intifada street fighters and paramilitaries who otherwise would have been more difficult to control. Already in September 1994, the number of policemen exceeded the 9,000 limit stipulated in the Accords, posing another significant obstacle to the donors, who were greatly concerned about funding a police force whose size was not in accordance with what the two parties had agreed.

### **The Cash Crisis in 1994 and the Question of PLO Funds and Assets**

The fund-raising efforts in mid- and late 1994 were based on the premise that the PLO/PNA had no funds available for its police forces and thus faced a serious cash crisis. The perception of crisis was the motive force behind the police donors' hectic fund-raising. Donor reports from mid-1994 stated that the Palestinian Police had managed to scrape by only through loans, overdrafts and tax advance payments levied on local business people and that police salaries had not been paid in full.<sup>46</sup> But the impression of acute crisis was not universally shared, for a number of reasons. As the PNA could not promptly handle donors' requests, they sometimes waited months for a response to their aid proposals, leading them to assume that the Palestinian budgetary situation was not as difficult as PNA representatives claimed.<sup>47</sup>

The greatest uncertainty, however, was linked to the PLO's own funds and assets. Since the 1970s, it had been one of the world's wealthiest liberation organizations, with an extensive network of political offices, guerrilla bases, and social and economic institutions, including significant economic activities in the Occupied Territories, Lebanon and elsewhere.<sup>48</sup> The PLO's general economic activity remained substantial despite the considerable scale-down that took place after the Gulf war, and its annual revenues were still estimated at \$120–150 million (down from \$250 million). The sources of revenue included surplus properties and business enterprises, direct bilateral support from friendly Arab governments to PLO institutions and the 5 per cent 'liberation taxes' collected by the Gulf states from the salaries of Palestinian guestworkers.<sup>49</sup> The PLO's funding for the Occupied Territories declined, however.<sup>50</sup> Its finances were the subject of much controversy. A British criminal intelligence report from early 1994 allegedly put its assets at \$8–10

billion, with annual revenues of up to \$1.5–2 billion, which seemed highly exaggerated.<sup>51</sup> This prompted the US Congress to request an investigation by the General Accounting Office; but its report sowed doubts about the existence of vast PLO fortunes, stating that “media allegations of tangible assets proved difficult to confirm or refute”.<sup>52</sup> (In 1997, the Israeli press and anti-PLO lobby groups in the United States again produced investigations of PLO “secret accounts” and an “economic empire” overseas.<sup>53</sup> By then, Palestinians too criticized the lack of accountability of PLO funds.<sup>54</sup>)

Given the controversies and secrecy surrounding PLO finances, it was impossible for donors to make any reliable assumptions about how much of its revenues the PLO would be able to channel into the PNA. Donors generally preferred not to take any stance on that issue, on the premise that the PLO had incurred new financial obligations with the formation of the PNA and that these would not be met without donor funding. Although donors never received specific documentation on the PLO’s finances, there was ample evidence of a cash crisis at most PLO-funded institutions and offices in exile, and a few donors even stepped in to assist the PLO in maintaining these institutions. Norway, for example, covered the expenditures of the PLO office in Oslo. However, unconfirmed reports in mid-1994 of Saudi and UAE funds apparently intended for recurrent costs or police salaries going directly to Arafat instead (see above) must have heightened donor concern about how to deal with the complex PLO–PNA relationship in terms of direct financial assistance.

The PLO was not a bureaucratic state-like organization with rigid and transparent accountancy in which budgeting was strictly followed, funds largely earmarked and discretionary financing minimal. In fact, the PLO leadership was known for its discretionary use of funds for patronage purposes.<sup>55</sup> Compounding this problem was the fact that the PLO and the new PNA overlapped to a large extent, with the latter gradually superseding and overshadowing PLO Headquarters in Tunis. Although the flow of donor funding and tax revenues to the PNA enjoyed a significant degree of transparency, this was not the case with funds flowing to the PLO. Despite the financial crisis, the PLO still funded activities in the Occupied Territories; and with the transfer of PLA fighters to Gaza and Jericho, the reduced salary and compensation expenditures in exile freed up funds that might be used for police

salaries. Hence, how serious the cash crisis actually was in mid-1994 will inevitably be a matter of judgement, but it was certainly exaggerated in order to put extra pressure on the donors. For many PLA fighters, now policemen in Gaza, their salaries were in fact a pleasant surprise after years of financial starvation. A Reuters correspondent who described the poor living conditions of Palestinian policemen in June also noted their reactions to their first pay cheques: "To their surprise it was \$450, double what they were making before. For some, it was the first money they had seen in six months."<sup>56</sup> The PNA's ability to rapidly expand the numerical size of the Palestinian Police to close to 17,500 in February 1995, nearly doubling the personnel on the police payroll in six months, also made the cash crisis seem less credible.

### **The World Bank–COPP Dispute over the Palestinian Police Budget**

A complicating factor in Palestinian Police budget estimates and financial needs was the uneasy division of responsibility for the police sector and the continuous pressure exerted on the World Bank to accept a greater role in support of the Police. The Bank had agreed to assist the AHLC chair in raising funds for police costs, and it contacted donors about gathering an overview of in-cash contributions to the Police.<sup>57</sup> With the prospect of a growing technical role in the police sector, it evidently felt that it needed to gather first-hand information on needs and requirements. In mid-August 1994, local World Bank representatives made a field trip to Gaza, obtaining several meetings with senior PNA police officials as well as with COPP officials. Based on the information gathered, they wrote a report critical of the police aid coordination and the COPP's role: "the issue is far more serious than perceived by the donor community and ... the COPP's approach should be complemented by additional efforts (maybe in the context of the CG), because of the need to go beyond ad hoc measures to deal with this issue and because of the budgetary dimension of the problem".<sup>58</sup>

Neither the recurrent police costs nor the police equipment aspect was adequately handled, the World Bank paper concluded.<sup>59</sup> The Bank subsequently distributed a memorandum on the Palestinian Police that diverged substantially from the assessments made by the COPP and its police advisers. The COPP's chair was greatly annoyed, and sent angry telefaxes to the AHLC chair in Oslo, lambasting the Bank's delegation to

Gaza, who, “after a brief visit to Gaza, to gather some impressions, then formulate[d] a completely different budget for the Palestinian police than COPP ... have used as a planning document”.<sup>60</sup> The World Bank had “suddenly turned up in Gaza and had conducted some conversations which appeared highly superficial, but nevertheless resulted in an increase in the monthly police budgets from \$7 million to \$9 million, in addition to an unconcealed criticism of the COPP”.<sup>61</sup>

The World Bank’s estimates, not the COPP’s, were now used as the basis for donor discussions at the informal AHLC meeting on 2 September 1994 and the CG on 7–9 September, and the COPP understandably felt that its well-established authority and reputation for professionalism had come under attack.<sup>62</sup>

In a personal letter to the Middle East coordinator in Oslo, the COPP’s chair Ambassador Haugestad elaborated at length on the complications which the World Bank’s police aid deliberations reportedly had created.<sup>63</sup> During the CG meeting in Paris on 7–9 September 1994, the PNA, supported by the World Bank and PECDAR, had attempted to gain acceptance for a much higher police budget, requesting \$9.2 million monthly until the end of 1994 and \$15 million per month in 1995, as opposed to the \$7.1 million monthly estimate approved by the PLO and the COPP since mid-April 1994. In a paper on “Budgetary Support for the West Bank and Gaza 1994–5” presented to the CG meeting in Paris, PECDAR justified the increase by referring to the fact that “the force turned out to be relatively well endowed in senior and high-ranking policemen”.<sup>64</sup> (It later appeared that for a 9,000-strong force, the \$7.1 million estimate was in fact generous, even with the large number of officers. According to UNSCO officials involved in the UNRWA police salary mechanism in 1995, the budgeted figures of \$5.2 million in salaries and \$1.9 million in other recurrent costs “appeared to be high and should be viewed as a ceiling”.<sup>65</sup>)

At the subsequent Oslo meeting on 13 September, there had reportedly been a “confrontation” between the PLO’s Nabil Sha’ath and the COPP’s police adviser Øverkil and another COPP diplomat, Per Egil Selvaag, on the budget figures. The PLO backed down, tacitly accepting the status quo.<sup>66</sup> The \$9 million figure reappeared on the agenda during the informal donor consultations in Washington, DC on 21 September 1994, but donors then agreed to revert to the COPP’s original figures.<sup>67</sup>

Since its inception, the COPP had worked hard to win PLO/PNA acceptance of a reasonable and professionally acceptable police budget that would gain donor confidence. As the COPP saw it, World Bank/PECDAR interference had reopened the difficult issue of budget estimates and had created an unfortunate situation in which more than one donor body was responsible for coordinating and negotiating the police budget with the PLO.<sup>68</sup> Little was heard from the World Bank on the police issue after September 1994, when the UNRWA payment mechanism was put in place. By then, the COPP–World Bank dispute was replaced by another turf battle between the Cairo-based COPP and UNSCO in Gaza over the future of the police aid coordination committee.<sup>69</sup> Both disputes were related to uncertainties about the future of the COPP owing to its expected transfer from Cairo to Gaza and reorganization, as a result of which more consideration would have to be given to Palestinian representation.

### **Too Many Policemen**

Although the COPP's position, to stick to the original budget estimates, might have been formally correct *vis-à-vis* the donor community (and Israel), the World Bank/PECDAR position was perhaps more in tune with the realities on the ground. Given the expected expansion of Palestinian self-rule to the West Bank, the Palestinian Police would necessarily have to recruit, train and hence pay thousands of new personnel in excess of the agreed-upon 9,000 policemen. Palestinian commanders argued that they were ill-advised not to start recruitment and training immediately.

Donor consultations in Washington, DC on 20 and 21 September 1994, which dealt with the PNA budget for the next six months, highlighted the problem of making budget estimates at a time when the PNA administration, and its police forces in particular, was expected to grow substantially.<sup>70</sup> The Palestinians were, for example, opposed to any donor agreement that excluded the possibility of West Bank redeployment within six months. For their part, the donors were concerned about the PNA presenting a steady stream of additional elements to be included in the budget whose deficit the donors were expected to cover.<sup>71</sup> For this reason, donors found it safest to insist that they should use the budget figures agreed upon in Oslo, i.e. \$7.1 million, not the increased PNA estimates of \$9.2 million or actual or alleged Palestinian



disbursements. If donors agreed to fund actual police costs, a whole range of controversial issues would arise regarding the legal and factual basis of these expenditures.<sup>72</sup>

The issue was further complicated because the Israeli side seemed adamant that it would not accept any reference to an enlarged police force in the donor-funded budget. For Israel, it was a matter of principle that donors should not deal with costs related to Palestinian–Israeli agreements, which were not yet concluded, as this would prejudice future negotiations. At the donor meeting in Washington, DC on 20 and 21 September 1994, Israeli intervention on this issue provoked the Palestinians, who objected to what they perceived to be an Israeli veto of a Palestinian budget. The Norwegian embassy noted that “the exchange developed into the familiar pattern of political gymnastics between the two parties”.<sup>73</sup>

The donors tried to find a way out, and discussed several alternatives, for example including the extra police costs in the election budget or hiding the costs of the extra police force somewhere in the budget. But in the end, the donors found it safest to refer to the Oslo Declaration, appealing to the parties to agree between themselves before bringing controversial issues before the donor community.<sup>74</sup> The outcome was that the donors would only fund costs related to 9,000 policemen as long as Israel and the PLO did not agree on an expansion.<sup>75</sup> In the light of the many controversies surrounding the recurrent police cost issue, the donors increasingly felt that such funding should be phased out as soon as possible. In the meantime, however, they showed much flexibility in the way they disbursed available funds through the UNRWA mechanism with a view to maximizing the disbursement rate within the confines of the agreement.

By the end of January 1995, the total number of Palestinian policemen was reported to be 16,821, which had raised gross police salaries to \$6.8 million, in contrast to the total salary costs of the 9,000 ‘legal’ policemen, estimated at only about \$4.7 million.<sup>76</sup> Although this created an extra strain on the PNA budget, which the donors were expected to underwrite, they wished to avoid the issue becoming a bone of contention between the parties. In discussions in late 1994 and the spring of 1995, the donors made repeated appeals to the PNA that it should approach Israel with a view to obtaining a statement approving donor funding of a larger force.<sup>77</sup> The issue remained unresolved, how-



ever; and the Interim Accord (concluded on 28 September 1995), which allowed for a Palestinian police force of 24,000 (increasing to 30,000 after the completion of further withdrawals), does not seem to have translated into automatic donor acceptance of underwriting a budget based on a police force of that size. In fact, it appears that donors expected to support only a budget based on a 15,000-strong force (i.e. 9,000 for Gaza and an additional 6,000 for the West Bank).<sup>78</sup> By the end of 1996, the Palestinian Police had grown to 36,000, and the issue of how revenues for its various forces were raised became a key theme in the public debate on alleged corruption in the PNA.

### **The Issue of Paying Arrears**

At the Washington, DC meeting on 21–22 September 1994, much time was spent in discussing how to handle and present ‘arrears’ related to the recurrent police costs that the PNA reportedly had covered through overdrafts and loans in July and August 1994, when earmarked donor funding had largely been absent. The donors had apparently been indecisive on this issue and sent mixed signals to the PNA, frequently raising hopes that arrears would somehow be repaid by them. The Oslo Declaration, for example, had specifically stated that “the emergency financial needs, including existing arrears, of the Palestinian Police should be financed by the donor community preferably until the end of 1994 only and not exceeding the end of March 1995”.<sup>79</sup> This pledge was reiterated on several occasions, for example in Norway’s speech to the General Assembly on 23 November 1994 on the occasion of its resolution on UNRWA’s payment mechanism.<sup>80</sup>

When the donors began to release funds for police salaries via the UNRWA mechanism in early October 1994, they put in various restrictions, for example that it had to be demonstrated that net salaries for the donated amount were due and had not been covered by other funds.<sup>81</sup> When the United Kingdom queried its contribution in September, PNA officials were very unhappy because they had hoped that part of the UK’s contribution might be used to cover a \$2 million loan that the Palestinian Police reportedly had incurred over the summer of 1994. After a series of meetings in September and October 1994, the donors finally decided to pay none of the arrears, much to the chagrin of the PNA.<sup>82</sup> Undoubtedly, the PNA felt somewhat betrayed by the mixed

messages from the donor community, and, as will be seen below, donor participants in UNRWA's payment channel experienced a series of difficulties resulting from the PNA's distrust of the donors.

### **From Direct Police Funding to Budgetary Support: The Tripartite Agreements**

Fund-raising for police costs in 1994–5 was part of a general fund-raising effort to cover the PNA's budget deficit. It took place amid negotiations on a tripartite PNA–Israeli–donor understanding specifying donor support for recurrent costs, the PNA's responsibility for generating increased tax revenues and Israel's role in facilitating PNA revenue generation by easing its closure policies and transferring tax clearances (such as VAT, customs, excise and taxes levied on Palestinian workers and goods).

The negotiations on increased donor funding for recurrent costs, including police expenditures, met with some success at the AHLC meeting in Brussels on 30 November 1994. At this meeting, a tripartite "Understanding on revenues, expenditures and donor funding for the Palestinian Authority" was signed by the PLO and by Norway on behalf of the donors, with Israel signing a letter in reference to it. The understanding was followed by a new tripartite action plan (TAP) in April 1995 and a revised TAP at the end of the year, all of which specified the responsibilities of donors, the PNA and Israel in facilitating and bridging the transition to a self-financing PNA administration. In particular, the PNA pledged to stop expanding public sector employment, including the police and security forces, in order to reduce its budgetary deficit.<sup>83</sup>

Neither of the parties adhered scrupulously to their commitments. Israel dealt devastating blows to the Palestinian economy by imposing unprecedented levels of closures; and in September 1997, it also temporarily withheld tax clearances as a way of exerting pressure on the PNA. The PNA, on the other hand, expanded its police and security forces far beyond the limits set out in the Accords. Combined with rapid population growth and demands for higher public service salaries, these factors created a situation in which the planned phasing out of donor funding for budgetary support had to be postponed.

As for the rapid phasing out of the funding of police costs, the donors were also forced to review their initial assumption that such funding would be phased out by the end of 1994. The AHLC meeting

in late November 1994 agreed that police funding would not be necessary after the end of March 1995, which was also the end date for the UN mandate to operate the UNRWA police salary mechanism. In April 1995, with donor funding of police salaries grinding to a halt, the PNA again warned of an imminent crisis and a possible “loss of control” over their police personnel.<sup>84</sup> Few donors were willing to come forward with new contributions, however. One thought it was correct to send a strong signal to the PNA that from now on it would have to shoulder the police costs, drawing upon its expanded tax and clearance revenues.<sup>85</sup>

At the AHLC meeting in Paris on 27–28 April 1995, the donors agreed to include a reference to continued assistance in paying recurrent police costs in the new tripartite action plan, which also identified an accumulated deficit, or arrears, of \$15.85 million in overdrafts and loans by the PNA to cover police costs. The AHLC chair felt that it still had some fund-raising responsibility in this regard; and together with UNSCO, he sought an extension of the UNRWA mechanism until the end of 1995 and allocated an extra \$2 million to police salaries. By doing so, however, the AHLC chair and UNSCO perhaps inadvertently created unrealistic expectations in the PNA that further direct police funding would be forthcoming. Only the Netherlands and Greece were willing to join Norway, and the last UNRWA-operated payment for police salaries was made in early August 1995. It covered \$5.5 million of the July salaries, and was the first payment operation since the sequence of monthly UNRWA payments had come to a halt in April 1995 with the disbursement of the March salaries.<sup>86</sup>

Despite the end of direct donor funding for police costs, the donors nevertheless remained involved in what may be termed the indirect funding of the Palestinian Police, because of their continued involvement in financing the PNA's public sector spending. The principal instrument of donor support for such costs was the Holst Fund. Over the summer and autumn of 1994, both the size and the time frame of the Holst Fund were expanded. The World Bank had “reformulated the grant agreement to cover a broader range of expenditures, including all central administration payroll”, and the monthly ceiling was raised to \$13 million.<sup>87</sup> The World Bank also softened its policy with regard to police costs, agreeing to include the police budget in discussions of the PNA's budget and donor countries' support of it. At the Paris meeting in April 1995, the Bank also agreed to consolidate the police budget and the overall

PNA budget. In doing so, it ended the separation that had necessitated the AHLC chair to establish the UNRWA police salary payment mechanism in the first place. Donor financing of the PNA budget deficit paid via the Holst Fund would still be channelled to parts of the PNA budget other than police costs.<sup>88</sup> This consolidation was important because it meant that police costs within the framework of a donor-approved PNA budget would be covered. (The wage bill for the Palestinian Police represented over 20 per cent of the PNA's recurrent cost expenditures as shown in Table 5.4.) By June 1997, the Holst Fund had disbursed more than \$170 million in support of PNA salaries and operating costs.<sup>89</sup> As the Holst Fund was gradually phased out, donor funding in support of the PNA budget went directly to the PNA Ministry of Finance, monitored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

TABLE 5.4  
The financing of PNA recurrent costs (\$ m)

	1994	1995	1996
Current expenditures (total)	117	492	779
Wage bill – police	30 (25) <sup>a</sup>	111 (23)	156 (20)
Wage bill – civil service	44	194	257
Foreign financing of recurrent costs	65	135	84
PNA revenues – total	52	425	684
Revenue clearances from Israel	25 (49)	266 (63)	420 (61)

Note: <sup>a</sup>All figures in brackets are percentages of total current expenditures or total PNA revenues.

Source: Diwan and Shaban (1999), Annex, Table A.6, pp. 208–9.

The donors' budgetary support did not entirely resolve the Palestinian Police's economic crisis. Police costs for personnel exceeding the limits set by the donor community remained a problem. In spite of solid donor funding of recurrent costs in 1995 (\$135.2 million) and a dramatic increase in the PNA's revenues compared to 1994 (see Table 5.4), there continued to be much Palestinian pressure on the donors to continue funding the police, although the situation was clearly not as difficult as it had been in 1994. In the light of PNA grievances over the end of direct funding, Norway and UNSCO brought the issue to the AHLC, but there is no indication that the donors agreed to start

another fund-raising drive for the Police.<sup>90</sup> The issue of direct police funding never disappeared entirely from the donor agenda; and the European Union reportedly allocated limited funds for police salaries out of a total fund of ECU 195 million transferred as budgetary support in 1996–8, hoping that this would improve political stability and security performance.<sup>91</sup>

Substantial donor support of the PNA's recurrent costs was widely accepted as a necessary condition for further progress in the Palestinian–Israeli negotiations. At various points, most notably in late 1994, spring 1995 and spring 1996, the PNA was widely thought to be threatened with financial collapse in the absence of donor funding.<sup>92</sup> Some donor officials demurred at the alleged financial crisis, complaining that “Arafat blackmails us: pay up, or see my whole government collapse”.<sup>93</sup> On the other hand, the PNA's steady progress in establishing a credible Ministry of Finance and significant institutional developments in other key ministries contributed to increased donor confidence. At the same time, key factors inhibiting an increase in PNA revenues, in particular closures and demographic growth, were seen as outside the PNA's direct control.

From 1996 onwards, however, charges of corruption in several ministries and the revelation of financial irregularities, especially the existence of commercial monopolies and the maintenance of PNA bank accounts outside the Ministry of Finance's purview, raised donor concern about continued funding of the PNA's budget deficit.<sup>94</sup>

Because the PNA had police and security forces in excess of what Israel and the donors had approved, the financing of these extra forces would necessarily have to be done outside the Ministry of Finance, which was monitored by the IMF. This dilemma may ironically have contributed to establishing unofficial channels of revenues, while the Palestinian Police were encouraged to raise their own funds via unofficial ‘taxation’.

With the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada in September 2000, donors once again stepped up their budgetary support funding, to avoid a collapse of the PNA after Israel stopped transferring tax clearances, the single largest source of PNA revenues. The new conflict opened the door to an impressive influx of Arab funding of up to about \$55 million a month; the EU contributed \$9 million a month.<sup>95</sup> The Arab states now came to dominate as the PNA's financial backers, a position similar to

the pre-Oslo situation. Similarly, the logic of donor funding also changed: it went from the Oslo mantra of ‘demonstrating the benefits of peace’ back to the pre-Oslo doctrine of ‘strengthening Palestinian steadfastness (*sumud*)’. Not surprisingly, Israel began to accuse external donors of funding ‘terrorism’, referring to the involvement of Palestinian security personnel in anti-Israeli attacks.

### **Auditing, Accountability, Corruption Charges**

The earliest Norwegian, EU and US grants, disbursed between April and August 1994, had all been audited by the Farid S. Mansur/Coopers & Lybrand Accountancy Agency in Cairo.<sup>96</sup> US and EU disapproval of this accounting led to a halt in American and EU direct bilateral disbursements. During the UNRWA-operated police salary payments scheme, the donors had also hired their own accountants in order to assure the maximum accountability of funds, and the British government’s accountancy agency, the Crown Agents, came to play a prominent role in this regard, auditing funds for the United Kingdom, Norway, the European Union and others.

The Palestinian Police’s Department of Finance, also called the Central Financial Department (*al-idarah al-maliyyah al-markaziyyah*), was originally the PLA’s financial department.<sup>97</sup> With the transfer to the Territories and the start-up of donor funding, the previously secretive department was forced to make significant changes so as to accommodate the donors. Its organization was affected by the difficult transfer process from San’a to Gaza, and faced difficulties in keeping track of personnel arriving from various PLO bases and outposts. The Crown Agents had encountered a number of problems during their first review and disbursement exercises in 1994, primarily owing to “lack of disclosure of information, fragmented organization, unclear reporting lines within the Palestinian Police and a constantly changing payroll”.<sup>98</sup> In doing their audit report, the Crown Agents had to take special measures to ensure a satisfactory level of confidentiality in order to elicit cooperation from suspicious PLA commanders.

In the course of the first three months of the UNRWA payment mechanism, there was a marked improvement of the Palestinian Police’s handling of the disbursement process, however.<sup>99</sup> This was largely due to two factors. First, a financial control and audit department was created

within the PNA's Ministry of Finance. It was dedicated solely to Palestinian Police affairs, and all original documents relating to recurrent police costs (except personnel files) were stored there. Second, the computerization of the Palestinian Police payroll at the end of 1994, the completion of financial records for each policeman and the availability of personnel records within the Palestinian Police's Finance Department had greatly improved the degree of accountability and the degree of access for external review and auditing. The Crown Agents lauded the very cooperative staff and their new commitment to full disclosure.<sup>100</sup> Their overall impression was that the Palestinian Police "has considerably changed its financial control structure and strengthened its procedures. The Ministry of Finance has also tightened up the control of Palestinian Police expenditure ... The controls are being rigorously imposed and accurate figures are being submitted to UNRWA/donors relating to Palestinian Police costs and expenditures."<sup>101</sup> Similarly positive characteristics of growing accountability and accuracy were found in UNRWA audit reports in late 1994 and in mid-1995.<sup>102</sup> Improvements were still desirable, but the general impression was that both departments were becoming increasingly professional and remained committed to continued reform.<sup>103</sup>

The donors' close follow-up on the operations of the Police's Finance Department was probably a driving force behind the reform process, exposing the department to external checks on a regular basis. (The PNA's Ministry of Finance, for example, continued to be closely monitored, *inter alia* by the IMF, and was described as "very clean".<sup>104</sup>) During the latter 1990s when direct donor funding of police salaries no longer took place, the Police's Finance Department came under criticism for mismanagement and corruption, and was said to pay salaries to personnel with only nominal employment in the Police. An underground leaflet in Gaza, widely believed to have been written by disgruntled officers in the security forces, claimed that "the financial department headed by Fou'ad al-Shobaki includes a list of eighty names of people on the payroll, of whom only a few come to work".<sup>105</sup> Such a development was hard to avoid without stringent controls given the anti-institutionalist and neo-patrimonial leadership style of Arafat.

The corruption problem was part of the broader complex of the PNA's expansive employment policies. As already alluded to, those policemen in excess of the donor- and Israeli-approved quotas had to be



paid for via unofficial sources. By giving top priority to co-opting intifada fighters and absorbing social and political discontent through publicly paid jobs, the PNA also gave rise to the phenomenon of ‘disguised unemployment’, especially in the police and security forces, in which nominal employment was regarded as a sort of pension or social welfare.<sup>106</sup> Muhammad Jaradah, the assistant under-secretary of the Ministry of Finance, readily admitted that “the number of employees at PNA institutions exceeds the actual need”.<sup>107</sup> The PSA chief in Gaza went further, stating that “although we only need 10,000 people in the security organ, we have over 30,000 .... This huge number is a burden on the PA and a burden on the security organ. We view it as a social issue because I cannot tell a prisoner who has spent 15 years in jail that I have no job for him.”<sup>108</sup>

A “struggle record” entitled people without special qualifications or education to high positions and well-paid jobs in PNA institutions. On the big gaps in the salaries of PNA employees and the fact that the wage scale did not consider academic qualifications, Jaradah said, “All those who joined the ranks of the Palestinian revolution since the sixties and early seventies are subject to special standards. ... Appointing them in advanced jobs is therefore a kind of reward for what they offered.”<sup>109</sup>

For many donors, such practices were unhealthy favouritism, and reinforced suspicion of widespread corruption in the PNA. Donors made efforts to link their budgetary support funding to improvement and reforms in the PNA’s financial management, and their anti-corruption focus was perhaps unparalleled compared to the average practices of donor involvement.<sup>110</sup>

On the other hand, donor spending on recurrent costs, especially police salaries, was extraordinary, and needed more stringent accounting in order to be justified. The early period, in 1994–5, when donors monitored virtually every pay cheque, was the ultimate expression of a donor-driven aid process in which confidence in the recipient was minimal and the ideal of encouraging ownership was absent. Such time-consuming and intrusive arrangements could not be sustained for ever, and more authority had to be delegated, which meant increased scope for irregularities.<sup>111</sup>

Donor funding for police salaries was generally justified as a necessary measure to prevent corruption and a loss of loyalty. As it turned out, however, there was not a direct relationship between the regularity of salary payments and corruption. Even when solid donor



funding was available, there were reports of police involvement in illegal taxation and extortion, although such practices apparently became more prevalent at later stages.<sup>112</sup> The fact that such reports surfaced in the early months of 1995, at a time when the donors covered nearly all police salaries, suggested that the problem was far more complex than they had envisaged. The general weakness of the PNA's taxation system and the omnipresent checkpoints offered numerous incentives to indulge in unofficial 'taxation'. Extortion had been a common practice by Palestinian paramilitaries during the previous intifada, and was justified as a necessary part of the struggle for national liberation.<sup>113</sup> With many of the same people now in police uniforms, it was easy to see why this practice survived.

### **Palestinian Police Involvement in 'Economic Corruption'**

The extent of Palestinian Police involvement in economic corruption and extortion is unknown, but it was sufficiently extensive to warrant a series of publicized legal measures, such as a PNA ban on donations and gifts to the Police, high-profile arrests of corrupt police officials and a declaration of war on government corruption.<sup>114</sup> In reality, however, little came from these measures; and by 2000, few police officers had been prosecuted for economic corruption.<sup>115</sup>

Most cases of corruption in the Palestinian Police in Gaza centred on the issue of freedom of movement, as Gazans tried to bribe their way around Israel's tight security in the Strip.<sup>116</sup> The abysmal state of the Police's accommodation and offices also encouraged corruption. Wealthy businessmen were advised that generous financial or in-kind donations would be good for their businesses, and police officials sometimes boasted that 'voluntary gifts' had financed most of their start-up expenses. Several of the Police's branches in Gaza, the PSA in particular, were suspected of involvement in the numerous semi-legal commercial monopolies, of extracting *backshish* in exchange for drivers' exit permits from Gaza and of extorting money for various protection services.<sup>117</sup> The PSA reportedly manned an economic security unit. This operated at the border crossings into Gaza, primarily conducting security checks, but it also made sure that cargoes did not compete with the PNA's lucrative monopolies. The Police's other branches in Gaza, such as the smaller Military Intelligence branch, PS/Force-17 and the GIS, also acquired a reputation for involvement in economic corruption, notably in illegal tax collection and the kidnapping

of suspected tax evaders (see below).<sup>118</sup> In the West Bank, the PSA was frequently suspected of economic corruption and extortion practices.<sup>119</sup> In Bethlehem, wealthy merchants complained that they were pressurized to pay protection money to police officers, and some property owners had reportedly been threatened into selling real estate to the PNA.<sup>120</sup>

By the end of the 1990s, the extent of economic corruption involving Gaza's security forces had reached "saturation point" according to Palestinian businessmen and foreign diplomats, and 'connections' (*wasta*) and bribes were allegedly "required to carry out almost any business activity".<sup>121</sup> The outspoken 'Abd al-Jawad Salih, a former PNA cabinet minister heavily involved in the anti-corruption protest, asserted that the PNA had by 2000 become "a mafia state" as a result of the extortion practices of the Palestinian Police.<sup>122</sup> Especially those suspected of collaboration were exposed to extortion, and some had properties confiscated on that charge.<sup>123</sup>

The 'mafia' nature of the PNA semi-state was most visible in the direct and heavy-handed involvement of the Palestinian Police in tax and VAT collection. In the early days of self-rule, it was the Palestinian Police which collected taxes in the absence of a Palestinian taxation system.<sup>124</sup> This involvement did not cease even after the PNA's tax authorities assumed formal responsibility for all tax and VAT collection. An unknown number of people were illegally detained for up to a year and a half without arrest orders or charges on suspicion of non-payment of taxes, and sometimes they were tortured as a way of pressurizing their families to pay in return for their release. A PHRMG investigation in 1998 revealed 29 such cases, involving mainly the Public Prosecutor in Jericho, the PSA and the GIS, in which money collected from detainees and their families was not immediately transferred to the Ministry of Finance.<sup>125</sup> The delays were blamed on technical-bureaucratic obstacles, and the PHRMG's criticism was directed mostly at the procedural aspect, that due process, human treatment and legal defence were wholly inadequate and that the appropriate government agency, the Customs and Excise Directorate, should have been responsible for VAT collection, not the security services. The PHRMG in fact emphasized that most detainees were probably guilty of tax fraud.<sup>126</sup>

Since the beginning of self-rule, tax evasion, VAT embezzlement, trading in VAT invoice forgeries and other tax frauds had assumed sizeable proportions. This economic crime also had a national security

dimension: it was estimated that between 1995 and 1998, the PNA lost an estimated NIS 50 million, primarily due to joint Palestinian–Israeli VAT frauds, which forced the PNA treasury to transfer funds to Israel in return for VAT that had never been collected. The Civilian Police in Gaza reportedly investigated 2,600 cases of tax receipt forgeries during the same period.<sup>127</sup> Owing to the scope of the problem, the PNA's Customs and Excise Directorate “asked for help from the security forces” in collecting unpaid taxes.<sup>128</sup> The Palestinian Police had Arafat's solid backing when using harsh methods against tax evaders and tax receipt forgers, some of whom ‘collaborated’ with Israeli white-collar criminals. This was in line with the PNA's general emphasis on effectiveness, not procedurally correct policing.<sup>129</sup> The problem was that the weakness of the judicial system in handling tax fraud allowed corrupt individuals in the security agencies to embezzle money during their tax collection campaigns. The incentive to siphon off funds was high because the official PNA budget did not have sufficient funds to pay all police personnel. The Police's heavy-handed practices had a chilling effect on legal businesses, especially in Gaza, where some businessmen reportedly feared to leave their homes without a bodyguard “because they are frightened of being kidnapped by the security forces and held for ransom”.<sup>130</sup> Policing in this field also undermined donor efforts at reviving the Palestinian economy and transforming the PNA into a self-sufficient tax-financed self-rule administration.

### **Funding ‘Illegal’ Security Forces?**

A major source of concern for police donors in 1994–5 was the emergence of ‘security services’, militias or police branches which reported directly to Arafat and which operated outside the police structure and chain of command set out in the Gaza–Jericho Agreement. The donor community therefore considered these forces ‘illegal’, which in turn greatly complicated their endeavours to fund police salaries.

### **Initial Donor Responses to Irregular, Shadowy Police Units**

From mid-1994, one finds a number of press reports about the proliferation of extra-legal Palestinian Police branches. A *New York Times* report in August 1994 stated, for example, that Arafat had “installed a

700-member presidential security force, a general intelligence force of several hundred, a preventive security force, and another intelligence division – in addition to the uniformed police”.<sup>131</sup> The largest of these was the Preventive Security Agency (PSA). In addition, ahead of Arafat’s return to Gaza in July 1994, a number of his personal guard forces had returned, the so-called Force-17 and Presidential Security (these apparently merged before or just after his return).<sup>132</sup> Although they did not belong to the official police structure outlined in the agreement, they received salaries from donor funds in mid-1994.<sup>133</sup>

Donor concern was heightened when the popular Palestinian Police Director Major-General Nasr Yusuf publicly complained about Arafat’s political interference in his efforts to confiscate illegal arms, prosecute Islamist militants and enforce the ceasefire with Israel and about his approval of the PSA’s existence outside Yusuf’s command. Reuters quoted the general as saying that “The Preventive Security Apparatus controlled by Mohammed Dahlan is not specified in any agreement (with Israel) and there are differences over it. ... Good security requires continuity and unified institutions which complement each other. Officially, we can say we have gathered all the agencies together under one command with the exception of the Preventive Security Apparatus.”<sup>134</sup>

Donors were clearly aware of the irregularities in the command structure. In late August and September 1994, the local and international press carried stories of armed clashes involving ‘security services’ not referred to in the Accords.<sup>135</sup> A confidential report from late September 1994, apparently with some circulation in the donor community, offered an in-depth analysis of the evolving drama. It noted that since Arafat’s return to Gaza, the Palestinian Police had developed into two main branches: the official public police organization and a number of smaller militia-like organizations operating both in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip and reporting directly to Arafat. The militias, coalescing mainly around the PSA, were mostly former Fatah paramilitaries and activists and were numerically much smaller than the official police. They were a significant, if not the most important, source of instability, particularly in the Gaza Strip, where the PSA was closely aligned with local forces such as the powerful Abu Samhadanah clan in southern Gaza and challenged the authority of the official police.<sup>136</sup>

By this point, the PSA had already been responsible for one death in detention and several shooting deaths, and it was aggressively pursuing Palestinians charged with collaboration with Israel. A situation of competition between various legal and illegal police branches was developing in the Gaza Strip in the context of a weak 'state' authority and no judicial accountability or restraint. The confidential report noted that both the Palestinian Police and the PSA "have identified 'infiltrators' from opposite services in their ranks".<sup>137</sup> The competitors made political gains from perceived mistakes by each other. When the Palestinian Police picked up Hamas activists after an attack on Israeli soldiers in August, PSA officers ordered their release.

Although many donor representatives probably lacked detailed and reliable information about the evolution and intricacies of these police branches at this early point, it was obvious that the two PSA chiefs in Gaza and Jericho operated independently of Police Director Nasr Yusuf and were answerable only to Arafat himself. Ever since summer 1994, there had been press reports of strong competition between Yusuf and Colonel Jibril al-Rajub, the PSA chief in Jericho.<sup>138</sup> After the bloody Palestine Mosque riots on 18 September 1994, the PNA grew more dependent on the PSA and its network of Fatah activists and paramilitaries in order to prevent Islamists from ruling the streets. Recruitment to the PSA grew quickly, from some 685 paid personnel in October 1994 to 1,351 men on the payroll in December 1994, and reached an estimated 4,500 in 1997.<sup>139</sup>

The issues of illegal police branches and human rights abuses were raised at donor meetings in late 1994, for example at a coordination meeting in Cairo in early October 1994 that gathered together EU donor countries and Norway. One donor representative reported that after a three-week fact-finding visit to the PNA, he had received ominous information about irregularities in the Police. In addition to the normal uniformed police branches, "there were as many as seven separate security services and nearly daily there were new reports of human rights abuses, some of them serious, perpetrated by the Palestinian security apparatus".<sup>140</sup>

Donors grew increasingly concerned that their endeavours would be discredited if it transpired that aid funds had inadvertently been channelled into the payrolls of various shadowy militias which should not exist according to the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. Norway, whose chairmanship of the AHLC, the COPP and the UNSCO made it a

lead-nation with regard to police aid, was challenged on various occasions to respond to donor concern about these irregularities. It usually defended its position referring to the fact that its support for the UNRWA payment mechanism was motivated by a desire to make sure that funds were channelled only to the 9,000-strong official police, not to unofficial militias and illegal police branches. The MFA was not entirely sure whether the issue had been handled with sufficient care, and instructed its police advisers to pursue the matter further.<sup>141</sup>

The COPP's police advisers reported repeatedly about the existence and expansion of the PSA in late 1994 and 1995. In fact, Øverkil in his January 1995 status report singled out the independent nature of the 'illegal' PSA branch as "the most significant problem in the security field today", warning that "this can develop into an embarrassing situation" for the PNA and the donors.<sup>142</sup> At this point, Oslo instructed that there should be no official or formal contacts with the PSA as long as it was not part of the police structure outlined in the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. Øverkil therefore avoided the PSA, but his assistant Egil Nærum nevertheless met informally with Colonel al-Rajub, the PSA commander in Jericho, on at least one occasion, and it was obvious to him that the PSA was acting as an independent police unit. It performed the most basic policing functions apart from directing the traffic and had its own training school in Jericho. Colonel al-Rajub had spoken of Major-General Nasr Yusuf in derogatory terms while referring to the PSA as the only 'real police force' in the West Bank.<sup>143</sup>

Because the PSA largely ignored the official Palestinian Police command, Øverkil noticed that Nasr Yusuf had grown more defensive and disillusioned about his job. Another worry was that the PSA hampered the development and authority of the Civilian Police, which gradually became the primary recipient of donor training and equipment and which most donors wanted to see as the predominant police branch. Civilian Police commanders may have played on these fears; their common refrain was that the PSA was "destroying during the night what we are building up during the day".<sup>144</sup>

In response to these reports, the MFA judged it appropriate that Øverkil in his capacity as adviser to Arafat on police affairs should raise the issue with the PLO leader and convey to him the concern that donors had about the PSA. He did this on several occasions, but to no avail.<sup>145</sup> The MFA then decided to put more pressure on the PNA. During his

visit to the region in March 1995, Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland expressed grave concern about the extra-legal security agencies in his meetings with Arafat, and continued to do so on later occasions. There was a strong sense that Arafat would not take much notice of it, however. The message was that he would not be instructed about how to organize his own security forces, especially not in view of the pressure on him to crack down on terrorism.<sup>146</sup>

In early March 1995, Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland also raised the issue of "the existence of parallel police forces on the Palestinian side" with Foreign Minister Peres, but did not receive much support.<sup>147</sup> Peres responded that Israel was not in a position to intervene in this issue. It would be highly unfortunate if the Palestinian Police somehow appeared to be under Israeli control. Israel might assist in the economic field; but in such sensitive issues as the police organizations, it was better for it to refrain from intervening.<sup>148</sup>

This was not entirely true, however. The Israeli side frequently did intervene vis-à-vis the PSA, especially in an attempt to contain the widespread informal policing and vigilante activities throughout the West Bank and especially East Jerusalem whose source was the PSA headquarters in Jericho.<sup>149</sup> At a news conference following his meeting with Arafat in February 1995, Prime Minister Rabin stressed that the PNA "must take all the necessary steps to make sure that there is a single armed law-enforcing body in the PA".<sup>150</sup> Hence Peres's response that Israel would not deal with this issue should probably be understood as a signal to the European donors that they should not meddle in security affairs, as these could be negotiated and handled only by Israel and the Palestinians.

In the donor community, there was a sense that Israel was comfortable with tacitly accepting the PSA and found it useful to exploit the lack of formal recognition as leverage in the political negotiations.<sup>151</sup> Israel appeared more interested in effective Palestinian counter-terrorism than in strict compliance with the letter of the Accords. It seemed to appreciate the heavy recruitment of local Palestinians into the Police via the PSA because the latter proved to be the most effective counter-terrorism unit on the Palestinian side.<sup>152</sup> Against this background, the donor policy of excluding the 'illegal' police branches may ironically have contributed to weakening the impact of their funding and training programmes. By choosing to deal only with the legal branches, the



donors restricted their attention to those units that were dominated by the old guard from exile. The higher echelons of most branches, in particular the large Public (or National) Security unit, were staffed with veteran PLA fighters schooled in guerrilla warfare and military training, not policing. They were most probably harder to retrain and re-educate than youth activists and former street fighters from the Inside who for the most part staffed the PSA right up to the top echelons.<sup>153</sup>

### **A Rough Start: Leaking Funds to ‘Illegal’ Police Units**

The issue of ‘illegal’ police units was a major stumbling block for the donors’ police funding efforts. The very first payment exercise via UNRWA in October 1994 threatened to unravel the entire channel after it was discovered that a significant number of PSA personnel had been included in the payroll.

The chain of events which led to the abuse of police donor funds in October 1994 was thoroughly explained in UNSCO’s correspondence with the British consulate in Jerusalem dated 10 October 1994.<sup>154</sup> From 30 September 1994, in anticipation of the so-called authentication meeting in which UNSCO was expected to participate with UNRWA and Palestinian Police representatives, the office was on a 24-hour stand-by. (The ‘authentication meeting’, called for in the memorandum of understanding, was to guide the UNRWA mechanism; it would serve as the ‘kick-off’ meeting for the disbursement process, gathering representatives of the Palestinian Police, the AHLC, UNRWA, UNSCO and the donors involved.) However, on 3 October, Major-General Nasr Yusuf informed UNSCO that the payment process had gone ahead without the authentication meeting and that this had apparently been effected by people outside his command. UNSCO then called for an emergency meeting of the MOU signatories and witnesses at the office of General Yusuf in order to halt the payment process and ensure that no irregularities occurred. At this point, however, Arafat requested that they all moved to his office to continue the consultations in his presence. After some deliberations, Arafat confined himself to signing a “note for the record” in which he clarified the status of those units and personnel which were said to be outside the definitions of the Gaza–Jericho Agreement. According to the note, the Israeli authorities had accepted the expansion of the Palestinian Police in preparation for



early empowerment in the West Bank, and it further alleged that the PSA was a part of the General Intelligence branch of the Palestinian Police and therefore under the ultimate command of Nasr Yusuf.<sup>155</sup> In the note, Arafat stressed that donor payments had until then been used to cover PSA salaries, implying that the donors' objections were a reversal of established practice.<sup>156</sup> Although the last point was probably true, it heightened rather than eased donor worries.

Nasr Yusuf was able to identify names of PSA personnel from the available lists of personnel already paid. How this happened was somewhat unclear at the time, but UNSCO gathered that "confusion in the command structure of the PPF placed UNRWA personnel – and the Crown Agent – in a situation in which their principal PPF liaison was not directly responsible to General Nasser Yusuf".<sup>157</sup>

According to UNSCO, the main fault was that UNRWA personnel had violated the MOU by not calling for an authentication meeting before disbursement began and that, even more significantly, "they did not act to halt their participation in the paying process in Gaza when asked to do so by my office".<sup>158</sup> Apparently, UNRWA had allowed PSA personnel to enter the payrolls in violation of the MOU.

The inclusion of PSA personnel was obviously done with Arafat's blessing and with UNRWA officials' assistance. It appears that UNRWA did not share UNSCO's view of the first payment operation. According to an UNRWA inter-office memorandum detailing the payment operation in October, the issue of PSA personnel receiving salaries was not mentioned, nor was the problem of police personnel in excess of the figure specified by the Gaza–Jericho Agreement, which also was a sensitive issue for donors.<sup>159</sup> In fact, the UNRWA memo suggested that all Palestinian Police personnel (8,978 in Gaza and 1,200 in Jericho) would be paid by the funds channelled via UNRWA. It painted a rosy picture of the operation, which "was smooth and was very well received by the PPF officials".<sup>160</sup> Hinting at donors' alleged lack of sensitivity and awareness of the Palestinian situation, the UNRWA memo pointed out the wisdom of appointing "a Palestinian to carry out this assignment. ... Under the circumstances, it would have been extremely impossible [sic] for a non-Palestinian to gain the trust and friendship of the PPF officers."<sup>161</sup> For their part, UNSCO officials suspected the UNRWA representative of acting on behalf of Arafat, and not in cooperation with the donors, in a bid to undermine Rød-Larsen, the high-profile UN newcomer in

Gaza. A former UNRWA official noted wryly in an interview with this author that “Arafat’s guy in the UNRWA, a senior manager there, had promised to get the Preventive Security men on the payroll.”<sup>162</sup>

In a later correspondence with the European Commission in December 1994 concerning payment procedures for police salaries, UNRWA HQ again omitted the issues of excess police personnel and the PSA, offering various alternatives, all based on the assumption that the entire force would be paid.<sup>163</sup> In response, the Commission specifically stressed in italic that “*no payments are to be made out of the Community contribution to the Preventive Security Force*”.<sup>164</sup> It seems clear that on this particular point, UNRWA made no effort to support the position of the rest of the donor community.

During the crisis in October 1994, the irregularities leaked to the media, which decried how British aid money intended for police salaries “had been diverted to a shadowy security force”.<sup>165</sup> A scandal was quickly averted, however, when UNSCO and Rød-Larsen, backed by strong UK pressure, managed to persuade Arafat to return the amount paid to the PSA personnel. This was not easy. The UN Special Coordinator wrote on 10 October that “much of my efforts of the past week have been directed towards communicating the position of the British Government to the Chairman and negotiating a mutually agreeable solution. I am pleased that Chairman Arafat agreed to reimburse the UK Government for the salaries mistakenly paid to the Preventive Security personnel.”<sup>166</sup>

The agreement with Arafat saved the donors further embarrassment, and there were no reports of other irregularities. The PSA affair notwithstanding, they generally came to regard the first payment operation as a success. Handling irregularities and corruption was nothing new to aid officials in the Middle East. There had been several episodes of misuse of funds in other sectors in late 1994. For example, one of the UNRWA officials involved in the diversion of British aid money was later summoned to UNRWA HQ in Vienna to answer charges of embezzlement of donor funds intended for an agricultural project.<sup>167</sup>

The PSA affair reflected a broader disagreement between donors and Arafat, who wanted more leeway and discretion in the distribution of funds. Arafat’s summoning of UNSCO and the Palestinian Police Director to his office was a strong political intervention in technical Palestinian Police–donor relations. The head of UNSCO had put much

prestige into the UNRWA mechanism, which essentially was his and the MFA's invention. They would not allow it to collapse and lose donor confidence, which explains his determination to make Arafat repay the money.

### **Legalizing or Shunning the Preventive Security Agency?**

After the October payment operations, several options were discussed about how to deal with the issue of illegal police branches in a principled manner.<sup>168</sup> Arafat's position that the PSA was somehow a part of the official GIS branch was not tenable in the eyes of the donors. There were simply too many signs that this was not the case, in addition to Major-General Nasr Yusuf's own words.

The options ranged from accepting the status quo to shunning the PSA entirely or renegotiating a formal agreement between the PNA and Israel on this matter. Renegotiation was pursued by UNSCO, backed by the AHLC chair, and Arafat was called upon to obtain a written statement from Israel which acquiesced to a police structure that included the PSA and Presidential Security/Force-17 and which had a higher ceiling than the 9,000 limit stipulated in the Accords.<sup>169</sup> Apparently, the PNA was either unable or unwilling to make such an accommodation, which probably had to be reciprocated with Palestinian concessions of some kind. In response, the donors decided to stick to the original agreement and not deal with security branches unspecified in the Accords unless the parties themselves came to a formal understanding on the issue.<sup>170</sup> This decision affected not only funding but also training and in-kind assistance, in effect banning donor aid to the two PSA departments and PS/Force-17 until they were all legalized by the Interim Agreement in September 1995.

In November 1994, during the second UNRWA payment operation, it transpired that a group of special "guards" (apparently from PS/Force-17), most of whom were ex-detainees, had entered the police payrolls funded by the donors.<sup>171</sup> Again, Arafat insisted that they too had to be paid under the same conditions as the rest of the Police.<sup>172</sup> UNSCO proposed that as these 'guards' were mostly ex-detainees and that as Arafat very badly wanted them to be paid, it would perhaps be possible for some donors to pay them through a rehabilitation of ex-detainees programme that several were planning.<sup>173</sup> The proposal was an example

of how UNSCO often aired unorthodox proposals in an effort to help the PNA in times of crisis. There is no evidence in MFA correspondence that anything came out of this in terms of police funding, however.

### **Chairman Arafat's Interference in the Police Funding Operations**

In November and December 1994, the donors were forced to retract their stated principle of not reimbursing the PNA for police salaries already paid. They had pledged to disburse funds covering the October police salaries, but the implementation of this decision was delayed so as to make time for sufficient coordination between the three donors involved, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Norway. In mid-November 1994, Arafat had apparently grown impatient with donor delays, and decided to pay the salaries from PNA resources by means of a bank overdraft in violation of the MOU.<sup>174</sup> When the auditors, the Crown Agents, arrived in Gaza on 17 November 1994 together with representatives of UNRWA and UNSCO in order to start disbursement, they were all summoned to a meeting with Arafat, who informed them of his decision and his objection to the conditionality contained in the MOU with regard to reimbursements. Without further ado, the Palestinian Police's financial department began paying October salaries the same day.<sup>175</sup>

Given Arafat's *fait accompli*, the donors were left somewhat bewildered. They gathered that their options were either to withdraw their pledged funds and carry the money forward to meet the November police salaries or to arrange to reimburse the PNA, as Arafat obviously wanted, although the latter course would formally violate the MOU. Faced with these choices, the representatives of the donors, UNSCO, UNRWA and the Crown Agents met again in Jerusalem, on 19 November 1994, and agreed to attempt the reimbursement option. The Crown Agents now drafted a terms of reference for reimbursement, supplanting the previous MOU; and after another round of negotiations with the three donors, the agreement was finally approved on 22 November.<sup>176</sup>

Despite Arafat's decision to go ahead with the salary payment and not to wait for an UNRWA-organized disbursement process, the Crown Agents, together with UNRWA personnel, were nevertheless able to observe some of the payments, first and foremost those taking place on 21 November in Gaza City, Khan Yunis and surrounding areas. Some 13.5 per cent of the total pay-out was monitored, excluding all payments

made between 17 and 20 November. The disbursement process was almost identical to that outlined in the original MOU. The Crown Agents and the UNRWA team were provided with the entire payroll list on 26 November, which had 11,629 entries, and found that PSA personnel were listed as Intelligence B, enabling them to deduct their salaries from the donor reimbursement.

The monitoring team encountered a number of difficulties. For verification purposes, the auditors were supposed to take a representative sample from within the list of 9,000 and compare it with the September 1994 payroll in order to confirm that names, amounts paid and signatures were consistent. They compared four payroll sheets with twenty entries on each from units believed to have relatively stable staffing but found that even here, comparison of entries was quite difficult because the sheets were not organized alphabetically, nor were they serialized. This, together with new recruitment, meant that entries did not appear in the same place on both sheets and had to be identified by name and rank. The Crown Agents' report also noted that it was not possible to distinguish between signatures: many were no more than marks on the page.<sup>177</sup> Despite these difficulties, the report argued that the reimbursement arrangements provided almost as many safeguards in terms of accountability as the original UNRWA mechanism.<sup>178</sup> This was a somewhat surprising conclusion given the difficulties of comparing entries and the absence of monitoring of most payments.

The donors approved of the payment procedures and agreed to reimburse the PNA for the October police salaries. Moreover, in a goodwill gesture, they also agreed to reimburse the 9,000 most expensive entries on the payroll, thereby maximizing the amount reimbursed.<sup>179</sup> By excluding the lowest paid category, unmarried privates earning only \$263 per month, the donors made sure that the deficit to be paid by out of the PNA's Ministry of Finance would be as low as possible. In October 1994, the deficit was less than \$700,000 for the excess number of 2,629 police personnel (1,944 unmarried privates and 685 PSA personnel).<sup>180</sup> In addition, with or without the donors' knowledge, the deduction for the PSA salaries was calculated on the basis that these were all minimum salaries (which was \$263, compared to the average salary of \$469 in October and \$494 in December–January).<sup>181</sup> The Crown Agents' audit report did not mention this explicitly, nor did it say why this was done. Assuming that the PSA personnel were paid according to the normal

payment scale and assuming that they were not all ranked as first-year unmarried privates, donor funds must have covered a significant part of the PSA salaries. There was a slight possibility that PSA personnel were mostly recruits and trainees and therefore eligible for only symbolic allowances, hence the low average, but this seemed unlikely.

In November 1994, the donors had admittedly been slow in implementing the disbursement, and the PNA could with some justification argue that it could no longer postpone the payment operations and let its police forces remain cash-strapped and hungry. In December 1994, the same sequence of events repeated itself, the only difference being that the PNA now went ahead with the payment operation much earlier, on 8 December, using a bank overdraft from the Bank of Palestine.<sup>182</sup> Once again, UNSCO, UNRWA and the donors (the Netherlands and Sweden) accepted Arafat's *fait accompli*, confining themselves to supervising the PNA's payment operation, already underway.

According to UNRWA's authentication report, its officials witnessed payments in various locations in Gaza and Jericho to about 4,000 police personnel, more than during the earlier operation. Otherwise, the procedures largely followed the previously established pattern. As had been done with the October salaries, deductions for PSA personnel were made on the basis that they were all minimum-level salary recipients. Hence, once again the donors covered the portion of every PSA salary in excess of the minimum wage.<sup>183</sup> The same deduction procedure was also followed when an EU fund of \$12.3 million was disbursed in January and February 1995.<sup>184</sup>

It is uncertain whether the donors were aware that a portion of their funding went to the PSA. Judging by MFA and UNRWA correspondence and by the fact that none of the audit reports highlighted this point, it is unlikely that they knew. Most probably, the donors unwittingly reimbursed a significant portion of the PSA salaries despite their precautions to avoid doing so. It was one of the many ironies of this highly unusual funding process. It highlights a more general point in the literature on police aid that local recipients will distort implementation towards preferred outcomes and that even meticulous and time-consuming efforts are ineffective in preventing such distortions from taking place.

Even so, it is also very probable that the widespread sense of crisis facing Arafat and his police forces in late 1994 induced local donor diplomats to overlook irregularities during the two payment exercises in

November and December 1994. After all, they involved only small amounts of donor funding and provided a higher degree of accountability than the usual post facto audit. There can be little doubt that the donors felt tremendous pressure to accommodate Arafat on the police salary issue, especially during the November payment exercise, which took place during the worst incident of political unrest in Gaza since the Oslo Accords were signed. On 18 November, the Palestinian Police shot and killed 13 people during clashes with Hamas supporters, and every major media outlet warned of an impending civil war. As the police donors gathered for an informal meeting in Gaza on 23 November 1994, tension in the streets of Gaza City was still high, and the police forces had been ordered to stay in their barracks in order to avoid more clashes.<sup>185</sup> Symptomatic of the general mood was a statement by the UN Special Coordinator at the meeting that “in the currently difficult situation many policemen may lose their loyalty to the PNA and join the opposition”, hence maximum priority must be given to police funding.<sup>186</sup> The AHLC meeting at the end of the month also released significant new funding for the PNA. The donor response to the November crisis was not lost on the opposition. Hamas leader Ahmad Yasin noted sarcastically that donors and Israel “outdid each other to disburse the funds – which they had delayed – to the Palestinian Authority as a reward for that massacre”.<sup>187</sup>

### **The United States, Israel and the Palestinian Police Roster**

Although most donors were concerned about the existence of police branches outside the framework of the Accords, the United States adopted a more uncompromising position, announcing that when US funds were to be disbursed, only the 5,200 police personnel whose names had been reported to Israel, as specified in the Accords, should be included on the payrolls.<sup>188</sup> The announcement came in response to the Israelis’ complaints that the PNA had declined to supply them with the names of police personnel recruited from the Inside and hence that those brought in from abroad were the only ones officially known to Israel.<sup>189</sup> Press reports suggested that in November 1994, the IDF was considering punitive measures against the Palestinian Police, in particular the PSA, for recruiting “suspected murderers of collaborators” and that these possible measures included an appeal to the United States not to pay certain police salaries.<sup>190</sup>



In late 1994, it still appeared as if the United States were going to disburse its pledge for police salaries. USAID set up an account in Gaza with \$3.9 million, of which about \$2.7 million was earmarked for police salaries, and requested UNRWA to act as the disbursement channel.<sup>191</sup> The pledge was held in abeyance, however, as the police roster issue seemed to assume greater importance in Israeli–Palestinian talks. When the PLO requested the entry of another 2,000 police personnel from exile in late 1994, Israel made its approval conditional on the PNA presenting a complete list of locally recruited policemen.<sup>192</sup> (The PNA’s non-disclosure of its police roster remained a constant irritant in Palestinian–Israeli relations, and was an item in the Wye River and the Sharm al-Shaykh memorandums. In 1997, the Likud-led government issued a statement claiming that only 18,000 of 28,000 Palestinian policemen had been notified to and approved by Israel.<sup>193</sup> In 1998, the second Israeli withdrawal agreed upon as part of the Hebron Protocol was held up for the same reason. Israel now claimed that the PNA had more than 40,000 policemen; the latter maintained that the number was well below 24,000.)

The unresolved issue of the US pledge was discussed at SWG/Police meetings in spring 1995, especially in response to PNA claims that Israel had approved the roster and an increase in the size of the force.<sup>194</sup> Any US reconsideration depended entirely on the Israeli response to the PNA’s list, however.<sup>195</sup> Shortly afterwards, the United States placed the \$3.9 million pledge in the Holst Fund, announcing that there would be no US funding available for police salaries. Subsequently, this ban was extended to all budgetary support, including funding via the Holst Fund.<sup>196</sup> These decisions reflected a general hardening of attitude in the US Congress on the issue of aid to the PNA. With the advent of a Republican-majority Congress, the media campaign in the United States against the PNA had become more vicious than usual. The Israeli MFA, which mostly saw its interest best served by continuous US aid to the PNA, expressed worry about the new Congress in early 1995. Foreign Minister Peres “viewed with great concern” the possibility that it would put an end to all economic aid to the PNA.<sup>197</sup> On the Palestinian side too, there was a strong feeling that the United States, especially Congress, was “more Catholic than the Pope”.<sup>198</sup>

In the wake of a series of suicide attacks in Israel in February–March 1996, US policy on police aid shifted, and the Palestinian Police’s



counter-terrorism agencies suddenly emerged as key subjects of a large US aid programme. That assistance was part of a covert CIA programme, and it seems to have faced fewer Congressional hurdles than the early US police aid.<sup>199</sup>

## Conclusion

Although the first donor pledges in 1993 had been made under the slogan of 'economic development equals peace and security', donor funding was increasingly directed towards state capacity-building and the maintenance of political stability. This funding was intrinsically difficult because it implied a degree of donor complicity if the state authority abused its powers. Funding foreign police forces was an unfamiliar challenge for most donor agencies. And as political inhibitions in some donor capitals had gradually been overcome by mid-1994, now the issue of accountability emerged as the main obstacle. With the creation of a multilateral payment channel through UNRWA in September 1994, the flow of donor funds to police salaries gained pace. During the first year of the PNA's existence, donor funding covered more than half of police salaries. This was an impressive disbursement rate in view of the numerous political sensitivities surrounding these forces, whether human rights abuses, 'illegal' police branches, a personnel roster in excess of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement or Israeli (and consequently US) protests against police recruitment policies. The police donors wandered through a political minefield of very delicate issues, each of which could easily have blown up the police funding process. The fact that police funding continued despite controversies and a few minor irregularities attested to the high priority that a handful of donors attributed to the force.

Its relatively comfortable financial situation, which was greatly enhanced by an increased transfer of tax clearances via Israel and a high level of donor funding for its budget deficit, allowed the PNA to rapidly expand the police forces to some 34,000 by the end of 1996, a monthly net recruitment rate of nearly 1,000 since September 1994. Given the adverse economic conditions and the difficult political, legal and territorial circumstances under which the Palestinian Police operated, there can be little doubt that external financial aid was critical in its establishment.

**NOTES**

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- 1 “Interview with Shaykh Yasin by unidentified Hamas prisoners at Kfar Yona prison” (in Arabic), *Filastin al-Muslimah* (London), March 1995 pp. 24–6 via FBIS.
- 2 Cited in UNRWA/PPF-files, European Commission (M. Marin) to UNRWA (Türkmen), 2 February 1995.
- 3 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Foreign Minister Godal to foreign ministers of South Korea, Japan, Austria and Canada, 16 September 1994.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Foreign Minister of South Korea to Oslo, 27 September 1994 and UD 308.87 Vol. 4, foreign minister of Canada to Oslo, 26 October 1994.
- 6 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Tokyo Embassy to Oslo, 19 and 21 September 1994.
- 7 A similar sum had been mentioned during UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali’s visit to Tokyo. Japan promised to look further into the matter, but made no commitments. UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Foreign Minister Godal to foreign ministers of South Korea, Japan, Austria and Canada, 16 September 1994 and Tokyo Embassy to Oslo, 14 September 1994.
- 8 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, internal memo (Hansen to Trolle Andersen), 29 September 1994.
- 9 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Tokyo Embassy to Oslo, 11 October 1994.
- 10 See Table 5.1 in this chapter.
- 11 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Bonn Embassy to Oslo, 9 August 1994.
- 12 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, EU delegation to Oslo, 22 September 1994.
- 13 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, EU delegation to Oslo, 22 September and 28 September 1994 and UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 27 October 1994 with annexes.
- 14 The formal written pledge from Sweden to UNRWA came only on 16 November 1994. UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Oslo to embassies, 16 September 1994; MFA to UNRWA (Türkmen), 21 September 1994; and UNRWA (Türkmen) to the Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation (SIDA) (Markensten), 16 November 1994.
- 15 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 27 October 1994 with annexes and UD 308.87 Vol. 3, internal memo (Hansen to Trolle Andersen), 29 September 1994.
- 16 UD-TE, Letter from the Norwegian foreign minister to AHLC members, 8 November 1994.
- 17 UNRWA/PPF-files, Türkmen to Boutros-Ghali, 9 November 1994.
- 18 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Hague Embassy to Oslo, 28 November 1994.
- 19 PNA official website, Special Reports, Donor Assistance Report, 30 June 1998, [http://nmopic.pna.net/reports/aid\\_reports/150898/index.htm](http://nmopic.pna.net/reports/aid_reports/150898/index.htm).
- 20 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 4 August 1994.
- 21 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 11 and 19 August 1994; Oslo to Riyadh Embassy, 23 August 1994; and Riyadh Embassy to Oslo, 28 August 1994; and COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, p. 3.
- 22 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Riyadh Embassy to Oslo, 20 July 1994.

- 23 For unknown reasons, the Palestinian Police director nevertheless came to attribute a special importance to Norway's role in eliciting funds from the Gulf countries. During his visit to Norway in October 1995, Major-General Nasr Yusuf repeatedly highlighted Norway's critical role in mobilizing Arab financial aid for the Police. UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749, meeting minutes, Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland and Major-General Yusuf, 10 October 1995.
- 24 Germany was the first west European state to establish a representative office in the PNA areas in the summer of 1994. The Norwegian representative's office was opened only in January 1995.
- 25 UD-TE, "Monthly Summary of Donors' Assistance for the West Bank and Gaza", 24 October 1994.
- 26 UD-RG, COPP memo, "Palestinian Police Force, Plan for Financing of Recurrent Costs, September 1994–February 1995", 18 October 1994 and UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 10 November 1994.
- 27 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Oslo to Cairo Embassy, 19 November 1994.
- 28 UNRWA/PPF-files, Türkmen to Boutros-Ghali, 9 November 1994.
- 29 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 March 1995, p. 2 and SWG/Police meeting minutes, 9 February 1995 (draft), p. 2.
- 30 For a discussion of the Arab League's (non-)involvement in the police aid issue, see Chapter 2.
- 31 According to World Bank surveys in late 1994, the United Arab Emirates was expected to contribute some \$4 million to recurrent police costs. UD 308.87 Vol. 5, Abu Dhabi Embassy to Oslo, 6 December 1994.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Only the earliest grant, in May and June 1994, by Norway, the United States and the European Union and a ECU 10 million European Commission grant for December 1994 and January 1995 covered some recurrent costs, and totalled only \$7.5 million of a total of more than \$52 million in donor funding.
- 34 UNGA (1995b) and SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 March 1995, p. 2.
- 35 For a comparison of wages in the private and public sector, see Grimsrud (1997).
- 36 Asfur, Sørensen, interviews.
- 37 Hass (1999), pp. 307–8.
- 38 Cited in UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 19 June 1994.
- 39 COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, appendices and Coopers and Lybrand (1994b), p. 4.
- 40 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 19 June 1994.
- 41 For example, although the PNA repeatedly insisted that there had been no donor funding since June 1994, the Palestinian delegation at the Washington, DC meeting on 21–2 September 1994 reported that the PNA had received the following donor funding for police costs: June 1994, \$7 million; July 1994, \$2.2 million; August 1994, \$0.35 million. UD-TE, Oslo to embassies, 22 September 1994.
- 42 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 19 June 1994.
- 43 "PLO says only received \$12 million from donors", Reuters, 27 July 1994 and UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 28 July 1994.
- 44 According to figures presented in a World Bank fact-finding report. UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Tel Aviv to Oslo, 26 August 1994, annex: Report from Dina Abu-Ghaida

- to Spiros Voyadzis, World Bank, "Palestinian police recurrent expenditures to date", 23 August 1994.
- 45 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 28 July 1994.
- 46 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 26 August 1994, annex: Report from Dina Abu-Ghaida to Spiros Voyadzis, World Bank, "Palestinian police recurrent expenditures to date", 23 August 1994 and COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, p. 2.
- 47 For example, in mid-1995 the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl had pledged DM10 million for budgetary investments to the Palestinians, apparently having in mind in-kind equipment such as vehicles or communication systems, and awaited Palestinian project proposals for the spending of this grant. Two months later, however, no response to this request had been forthcoming, despite repeated reminders, and German authorities confided to the Norwegian embassy in Bonn that "perhaps the budgetary situation was not so difficult after all". The MFA considered this to be a very unfortunate situation and instructed its embassy in Tel Aviv to contact high-level PNA officials to exert some pressure on this matter. UD-RG, Bonn Embassy to Oslo, 4 August 1995. (The author has been unable to find this document in the MFA archive in Oslo.)
- 48 The Baghdad summit of the Arab League in 1979 in the aftermath of Camp David had agreed to provide up to \$150 million annually for the Territories through a PLO-Jordanian committee, although estimates of actual aid flows vary greatly. Reports have suggested that the PLO was able to inject up to \$10 million per month into the Territories during the early phases of the intifada. See the discussion of external Arab and PLO funding in Brynen (2000), pp. 45–8.
- 49 Most Gulf countries, apart from Kuwait, had agreed to resume the transfer of 'liberation taxes' after a halt in transfers between August 1990 and February 1991. By August 1992, the Saudi Support Committee had transferred some \$23 million to the PLO, mainly liberation taxes, in addition to some donations by Saudi and Arab residents in the kingdom. Fund transfers to the PLO were also reported in 1993. "The Saudi Support Committee gives US\$3.36 million to the PLO" (in Arabic), *al-Quds*, 16 August 1992, p. 1; "US\$2.7 million from Saudi Arabia to the PLO" (in Arabic), *al-Quds*, 9 June 1993, p. 2; and "The Palestinians in the Gulf countries will continue to pay 'the liberation tax'" (in Arabic), *al-Quds*, 3 September 1993, p. 2.
- 50 S. al-Khalidi, "PLO moves employees to Libyan desert camp", Reuters, 26 May 1993.
- 51 The report was allegedly produced by National Criminal Intelligence Services and was handed to the US Congress's GAO. R. Ehrenfeld, *Jerusalem Post*, 23 November 1994 and "Arafat misusing U.S. aid, GAO analysis, letters say", *Washington Times*, 5 August 1995.
- 52 GAO report of 28 November 1995, GAO/NSIAD-96-23. Cited in Kahl (1997).
- 53 R. Bergman and D. Ranter, "Flourishing deals overseas", *Ha'aretz* (Weekend Supplement), 11 April 1997, p. 14.
- 54 For example, the Palestinian legislator and former Fatah deportee Husam Khadir. Cited in *ibid*.
- 55 See, for example, Brynen (1995).
- 56 S. Ghazali, "Palestinian police impose PLO law, jail first Palestinian", AP, 6 June 1994.

- 57 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Oslo to Washington Embassy, 10 August 1994; Washington Embassy to Oslo, 11 and 25 August 1994 and MFA to the World Bank, 10 August 1994.
- 58 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 26 August 1994, annex: Report from Dina Abu-Ghaida to Spiros Voyadzis, World Bank, "Palestinian police recurrent expenditures to date", 23 August 1994.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 9 September 1994 and A. Øverkil, "The Palestinian Police (PPF) – Aid" (in Norwegian), 9 September 1994.
- 61 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Haugestad to Trolle Andresen (personal letter), 25 September 1994.
- 62 UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Oslo to embassies, 6 September 2002, minutes of informal donor meeting in Washington, 2 September 2002.
- 63 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Haugestad to Trolle Andersen (personal letter), 25 September 1994.
- 64 UD-TE, "Budgetary Support for the West Bank and Gaza 1994–1995", Note submitted by PECNDAR to the CG meeting, Paris, 7–9 September 1994.
- 65 See, for example, SWG/Police meeting minutes, 9 February 1995 (draft), p. 1.
- 66 UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Oslo to embassies, 22 September 1994, minutes of donor meeting in Washington.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Haugestad to Trolle Andersen (personal letter), 25 September 1994.
- 69 For more on this dispute, see Chapter 6 of this book.
- 70 UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Oslo to embassies, 22 September 1994, minutes of donor meetings in Washington.
- 71 UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 20 and 21 September 1994, minutes of donor meetings in Washington.
- 72 For example, the PNA continued to pay salaries to Palestinian police personnel still present outside Gaza and Jericho awaiting permits to cross into the Territories. It had by September 1994 recruited more than 9,000 men. Finally, the PNA was slow to seek Israeli approval of police personnel recruited inside the Territories, more than 1,000 of whom were former security detainees and prisoners who would probably create problems with Israel. UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 22 September 1994, minutes of donor meetings in Washington.
- 73 UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 20 September 1994, minutes of donor meeting in Washington.
- 74 Ibid.
- 75 The donors agreed, however, to include in the tripartite agreement draft a footnote referring to the fact that the agreed-upon budget "does not include financial consequences which may result from future implementing agreements". UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Washington Embassy to Oslo, 22 September 1994, minutes of donor meetings in Washington.
- 76 UD-RG, "Note to the Record, PPF Salaries – January 1995".
- 77 At the informal AHLC meeting preceding the donor summit in Paris in April 1995, it was decided to establish a working group to try to reach an agreement between Israel and the PNA on this issue. This is according to information given

- by Norway at the SWG/Police meeting in April 1995. SWG/Police meeting minutes, 11 April 1995, p. 2.
- 78 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 November 1995, pp. 2–4.
- 79 According to COPP notes from the Oslo meeting, “it was agreed to continue efforts to find funding for a one time payment to cover accumulated arrears”. Cited in Document No. COPP 38, dated 13 September 1994 and entitled “Palestinian Police Force: Annual and Monthly Recurrent Cost” and *Oslo Declaration* (Oslo, 13 September 1994), pp. 1–2.
- 80 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, UN delegation to Oslo, 23 November 1994, annex: Statement by Norway to the UN General Assembly, 23 November 1994.
- 81 From British–PNA Agreement on police salary donation in September 1994. See COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, p. 2.
- 82 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 9 November 1994, annex: “Palestinian Police Force Funding and Support: A Summary of Donor Views”, minutes from informal police donor meeting in Gaza, 27 October 1994.
- 83 Hooper (1998a), p. 31. See also “Israel pledges to avoid lengthy closures” (in Hebrew), *Ma’ariv*, 5 December 1995, p. 9, via FBIS.
- 84 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 March 1995, p. 3.
- 85 UD 308.87 Vol. 8, Gaza office to Oslo, 20 April 1995.
- 86 UD 308.87 Vol. 8, internal memo to the FM from the Middle East coordinator, 12 June 1995.
- 87 UD-TE, “Executive Directors’ Meeting – July 28, 1994: World Bank Work on West Bank and Gaza – Statement by Mr Koch-Weser”, 28 July 1994.
- 88 Hooper, Sevje, interviews.
- 89 Total disbursement for transitional costs and budgetary support in 1994–6 amounted to nearly \$450 million, a far higher proportion of donor aid than initially announced in 1993. See figures in Table 6.4, “Donor Support for PA Start-up and Recurrent Expenditures 1994–1998” in Brynen (2000), p. 180.
- 90 UD 308.87 Vol. 9, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 6 July 1995 and interview with UNSCO. Cited in L. Lahoud, “Germans train Palestinian police”, *Jerusalem Post*, 25 October 1995, p. 5.
- 91 D. Alfon, “Europe May Suspend Funding to PA: Arafat Associates Suspected of Misappropriating EU Financial Aid”, *Haaretz*, 31 January 1999.
- 92 Pedersen and Hooper (1998), p. 52.
- 93 Donor official. Cited in D. Hirst, “The axe is sharpened for Arafat”, *Guardian*, 15 April 1995, p. 21.
- 94 According to a 1997 IMF report, up to 25 per cent of the PNA’s domestic revenues passed through accounts outside the purview of the PNA Ministry of Finance. Pedersen and Hooper (1998), pp. 52–3. Also according to press reports, the PNA agreed in May 2000, after three years of intense pressure from the donors, that funds received in VAT and customs receipts collected by Israel should be funnelled through the Ministry of Finance, not through special non-transparent accounts controlled by Arafat. “Something Rotten in Palestine”, *Newsweek*, 29 May 2000, p. 36.
- 95 In 2000–2002 Norway made two annual grants of \$10 million for budgetary support. See, for example, T. Andreassen, “Alleges that Norway has financed terror” (in Norwegian), *Aftenposten* (Oslo), 8 May 2002, web edition.

- 96 The Egyptian auditors had accompanied the PNA's paymaster to verify individual payment records and to provide an overall accounting of disbursed funds. GAO, "Benefit of the Palestinian Authority" (Letter Report, 8 January 1996, GAO/NSIAD-96-18).
- 97 UD-RG, "Survey of Demands and Payments from the Donor Countries, and the Lack of Financing During the Period between 1 January 1995 to 31 July 1995" (in Arabic), by the Central Financial Department of the Palestinian Police, 9 August 1995.
- 98 Crown Agents (1995), p. 16.
- 99 Ibid., pp. 12–13.
- 100 Ibid., p. 17.
- 101 Idem.
- 102 The UNRWA staff involved in the payment mechanism reported that "at the technical level, our staff found their counterpart in the Palestinian Police Force to be exceedingly professional and efficient". UNRWA/PPF-files, Türkmen to Boutros-Ghali, 7 December 1994 and UD-RG, "Report on the Payment of Salaries to the Palestinian Police Force" by UNRWA, 16 August 1995.
- 103 For example, it was noted that although the Financial Audit and Control Department of the PNA Ministry of Finance kept all documentation related to the Palestinian Police stored securely and systematically, accessible only by staff members, in the case of the Palestinian Police's Finance Department, it still suffered from "inadequate space or resources to store all documents securely or systematically". Crown Agents (1995), p. 4.
- 104 Brynen (2000), p. 143.
- 105 See, for example, P. Cockburn, "Palestine officers denounce Arafat", *Independent*, 12 June 1999, p. 17.
- 106 K, N, M, interviews.
- 107 Interview with Muhammad Jaradah, Assistant Under-Secretary of the PNA Finance Ministry by Hamid Jad, *al-Ayyam* (web edition), 4 September 1997, via FBIS.
- 108 *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 25 April 1997, p. 4, via FBIS.
- 109 Interview with Muhammad Jaradah, Assistant Under-Secretary of the PNA Finance Ministry by Hamid Jad, *al-Ayyam* (web edition), 4 September 1997, via FBIS.
- 110 The problem of financial malfeasance in the PNA is outside the scope of this study. It suffices to say here that the heavy media focus on this issue probably created the erroneous image that corruption in the PNA was exceptionally rampant. Probably, it was less than in neighbouring countries and other post-conflict countries such as Cambodia, Haiti and Mozambique. Conversation with a former World Bank official in Cairo. For a general discussion of corruption in the PNA, see Brynen (2000), pp. 140–3.
- 111 Reports of corruption added fuel to the debate about the wisdom of channelling funds directly to the PNA administration. Funds for police salaries in particular seem to have been the first victim when donor concern about corruption reached a certain level. For example, the spokesman for the EU's Mediterranean desk, Bosco Esteroulas, commented in January 1999 with regard to the corruption charges that "we will not freeze allocations to designated projects ... but it is possible that we will not continue to transfer salary payments to the police for



- example, or for items described as ‘administrative expenses’ of the Authority”. Cited in D Alfon, “Arafat associates suspected of misappropriating EU financial aid”, *Haaretz*, 31 January 1999.
- 112 Some of the early reports were in fact published in the journal of the Palestinian security forces. See “Merchants and taxes: merchants strive to regain dignity and confidence” (in Arabic), “Take your hands off the customs!” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 5 (1995), pp. 20–1 and PHRMG (1998).
- 113 For examples of extortion practices by (ex-)intifada militants, see warning issued by the UNC in *UNC communiqué* No. 70 (1 May 1991). See also “Fatah warns of impersonators, extortion in Gaza”, Reuters, 28 December 1993; “Black Panthers betrayed in the Nablus casbah”, *Independent*, 2 December 1989, p. 14; “Nablus: Heartbeat of the Intifada (1 of 2)”, *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 November 1989, p. 6; J. Redden, “Palestinian fighters turn on each other”, Reuters, 16 June 1991; S. Helms, “On the West Bank with a license to kill”, *Independent*, 9 December 1992, p. 12; and Sayigh (1997), p. 657.
- 114 See, for example, “Arafat announces war on corruption; Palestinian officials detained”, VOI, 1200GMT, 13 September 1996; “Flashpoint (Interview with Col. Muhammad Dahlan)”, *Biladi/The Jerusalem Times*, 20 September 1996, p. 6; and “Thousands at burial of Gazan killed in PLO custody”, Reuters, 1 July 1997.
- 115 According to human rights activists cited in the press, not a single corruption case was successfully prosecuted in Palestinian courts by 2000. A number of officers were nevertheless arrested and disciplined on such charges. “Something rotten in Palestine”, *Newsweek*, 29 May 2000, p. 36.
- 116 I. Kershner, “The mysterious case of major Farid”, *Jerusalem Post*, 17 October 1996, p. 28.
- 117 Hass (1999), p. 302; “Studio talk between anchor Hayim Yavin and political correspondent Dan Scemama” (in Hebrew), Israel Television Channel 1 Network, 1700GMT, 26 August 1996; “Flashpoint (Interview with Col. Muhammad Dahlan)”, *Biladi/The Jerusalem Times*, 20 September 1996, p. 6; and I. Kershner, “One step away from chaos”, *Jerusalem Post*, 18 December 2000, p. 20.
- 118 Hass (1999), p. 303. In 1999, foreign diplomats estimated “that Military Intelligence has carried out 20 kidnappings of local businessmen and refused to release them except for cash”. Cited in P. Cockburn, “Kidnappings boom in lawless Gaza”, *Independent*, 30 March 1999, p. 12. For allegations of Military Intelligence’s involvement in “car thefts and other rackets”, see interview with Husam Khadir, former Fatah leader of the Balatah refugee camp and PLC delegate, in P. Cockburn, “Torture deaths that shame Palestine”, *Independent*, 21 February 1997, p. 9.
- 119 See, for example, “Police detain 11 East Jerusalem Arabs for working for Palestinian police”, VOI, 1400GMT, 20 July 1995 and confidential report, source withheld on request.
- 120 S. Bhatia, “Christmas in Bethlehem – No room at the inn for anyone but Arafat”, *The Guardian*, 21 December 1996, p. 12.
- 121 Cited in P. Cockburn, “Palestine officers denounce Arafat”, *Independent*, 12 June 1999, p. 17.
- 122 Cited in “Something Rotten in Palestine”, *Newsweek*, 29 May 2000, p. 36.
- 123 See, for example, *ibid.*



- 124 Then, there were also reports of a sort of 'tax farming' system in which people were recruited to do certain taxation services, and received payment according to what they were able to make out of it. Sevje, interview.
- 125 PHRMG (1998).
- 126 *Ibid.*, p. 6. Press accounts based on this report tended to exaggerate the illegal aspects of the Palestinian Police's tax collection activities while downplaying or ignoring the extent of tax fraud, which the PNA viewed as a serious threat to its economy. See, for example, P. Cockburn, "Arafat's police torture 'tax evaders'", *Independent On Sunday*, 19 July 1998, p. 17.
- 127 Asfur, interview.
- 128 Interview with Nasr Tahhub, the chief of the Customs and Excise Directorate. Cited in PHRMG (1998), p. 11.
- 129 A further indication of how serious the PNA considered this economic security threat was the fact that the powers of the State Security Courts were extended to cover cases of smuggling, VAT evasion and other "economic crimes" by civilians, even if this undermined the authority of the civilian courts. Sayigh and Shikaki (1999), p. 116.
- 130 P. Cockburn, "Palestine officers denounce Arafat", *Independent*, 12 June 1999, p. 17. See also P. Cockburn, "Arafat's police torture 'tax evaders'", *Independent On Sunday*, 19 July 1998, p. 17.
- 131 I. M. Youssef, "Some Gazans fearful Arafat could choke democracy", *New York Times*, 7 August 1994, p. 1.
- 132 "Power struggle among PLO security branches reported", VOI, 0505GMT, 31 August 1994, via SWB and "Arafat reportedly disbands presidential security body after clashes", VOI, 1200GMT, 10 September 1994, via SWB.
- 133 For example, a Coopers and Lybrand audit report detailing the use of a European Commission fund listed "Chairman Security Forces" (probably a translation of *quwat amn al-r'asah*) as the recipient of some \$119,386 in salaries for June 1994. Coopers and Lybrand (1994a), p. 6.
- 134 J. West, "We can stop Hamas if PLO lets us, commander says", Reuters, 24 August 1994. See also Salah Nasrawi, "Police chief struggle threatens Arafat's security apparatus", AP, 17 June 1994.
- 135 "Power struggle among PLO security branches reported", VOI, 0505GMT, 31 August 1994, via BBC SWB; "Palestinians cower before Arafat's new 'security' chief", *Independent*, 8 September 1994, p. 11; "Arafat reportedly disbands presidential security body after clashes", VOI, 1200GMT, 10 September 1994, via SWB; "Gaza policeman killed trying to defuse Hamas row", Reuters, 18 September 1994; and "Fatah Commission recommends end to security service activity outside autonomy", VOI-E, 0500GMT, 28 September 1994.
- 136 "Security and Political Stability in Gaza", Confidential Report, 21 September 1994 (source withheld on request).
- 137 *Ibid.*
- 138 See, for example, S. Nasrawi, "Police chief struggle threatens Arafat's security apparatus", AP, 17 June 1994.
- 139 See estimates based, *inter alia*, on classified PNA documents in Peake (1998), Annex.
- 140 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 4 October 1994.
- 141 See, for example, UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo with the foreign minister's handwritten comments, 4 October 1994.

- 142 A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 31 January 1995, p. 5.
- 143 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, internal memo from the Middle East Unit to Deputy foreign minister Egeland, 22 February 1995.
- 144 Øverkil, interviews.
- 145 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, internal memo from the Middle East Unit to Deputy foreign minister Egeland, 22 February 1995.
- 146 UNSCO officials, interviews.
- 147 UD 308.87 Vol. 7, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 3 March 1995.
- 148 Ibid.
- 149 In mid-November 1994, for example, a big controversy erupted when it was discovered that the PSA had recruited a number of militants wanted by Israel. Colonel al-Rajub portrayed it as "a positive move which allows us to control them and stop them from undermining the peace process" while the Israeli MFA's top legal adviser, Joel Singer, blasted the move as "gross violations" of the Accords. "New Palestinian police facing their biggest challenge", AFP, 18 November 1994.
- 150 "Israeli prime minister details 'differences of opinion' after talks with Arafat", VOI, 1117GMT, 9 February 1995.
- 151 Bleikelia, interview.
- 152 For example, the former IDF coordinator of the Occupied Territories, Major-General Danny Rothschild, noted in February 1995 that the locally recruited police forces "are the ones that will be best able to carry out their duties" and that with these new recruits, "the system is beginning to operate as it should". There were differences between Israeli intelligence and the IDF/Israeli police with regard to the PSA in the West Bank. Cited in "Syrkin Lecture: the Palestinian Authorities – where to?", *JCSS Bulletin*, No. 14.
- 153 The funding distribution between different branches can be seen from a Crown Agents' audit report of October 1994 salaries in which the Public Security forces alone accounted for more than 63 per cent of the salary costs and the intelligence units for another 20 per cent. The Civilian Police was allotted merely 17 per cent of the monthly salary budget. Crown Agents (1994), Appendix 5.
- 154 UD-RG, Nasr Yusuf to UNSCO, 10 October 1994 and UNSCO (Rød-Larsen) to British Consulate (Dalton), 10 October 1994.
- 155 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 9 November 1994, annex: Memorandum of Understanding, Note for the Record, 4 October 1994.
- 156 Ibid.
- 157 UD-RG, UNSCO (Rød-Larsen) to British Consulate (Dalton), 10 October 1994.
- 158 Ibid.
- 159 The memo was written by Ramadan al-Omari, an UNRWA budget officer who had been assigned to carry out the police salary payment operations on behalf of UNRWA. UNRWA/PPF-files, El-Omari to Türkmen, UNRWA inter-office memo, 13 October 1994.
- 160 Ibid.
- 161 Ibid.
- 162 Former UNRWA official, interview. This has been corroborated by two other interviews with UNRWA and donor officials.

- 163 UNRWA/PPF-files, UNRWA (Türkmen) to European Commission (Marin), 20 December 1994 and the letter in response, undated draft, faxed to UNRWA on 22 December 1994, final version dated 5 January 1995.
- 164 Ibid.
- 165 “British aid for Gaza ‘went to Arafat’s men,’” *Sunday Times*, 6 November 1994.
- 166 UD-RG, UNSCO (Rød-Larsen) to British Consulate (Dalton), 10 October 1994.
- 167 “British aid for Gaza ‘went to Arafat’s men,’” *Sunday Times*, 6 November 1994.
- 168 UD-TE, Minutes from informal police donor meeting in Gaza, 27 October 1994 and UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Minutes from informal donor meeting at the British General Consulate in Jerusalem on 25 October with participation from the Norwegian Embassy, US General Consulate, UNSCO and Crown Agents.
- 169 UD-TE, “Palestinian Police Force Funding and Support: A Summary of Donor Views”, Minutes from informal police donor meeting in Gaza, 27 October 1994; and UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Minutes from informal donor meeting at the British General Consulate in Jerusalem on 25 October with participation from the Norwegian Embassy, US General Consulate, UNSCO and a Crown Agent.
- 170 See, for example, UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 27 October 1994.
- 171 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 24 November 1994.
- 172 It is not entirely evident from the MFA correspondence to which police units these “guards” belonged, but it seems clear that they were from the Presidential Security/Force-17, a unit which also was ‘illegal’, formally speaking, under the Gaza–Jericho Agreement. But it was less controversial because it was largely seen as a much-needed bodyguard force for Arafat and other PNA officials. In reality, it was also involved in active policing, especially in sensitive areas such as pursuing the political opposition and militants.
- 173 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 24 November 1994.
- 174 Crown Agents (1994), p. 1.
- 175 Ibid.
- 176 The new terms of reference instructed the monitoring team to check that the payroll contained only 9,000 names and no PSF personnel and that all entries on the lists had been signed. The team would also take a representative sample from within the list and compare it with the September 1994 payroll to confirm that names, amounts paid and signatures were consistent. Moreover, it would request documentation from the Minister of Finance to verify that the source of the overdraft for October salaries was not the aid funds of another donor. Ibid., pp. 1–2, Appendix 4.
- 177 The Monitoring Team had checked one entry which did not have similar signatures between September and October 1994, but the recipient, a doctor at the Palestinian Police military hospital, asserted that he had personally collected his salary for both months. Ibid., p. 10.
- 178 Ibid., p. 7.
- 179 Ibid., p. 6.
- 180 Ibid., Appendix 5.
- 181 The same deduction procedures to maximize donor funding were followed when the generous EU fund of \$12.3 million was disbursed for the December 1994 and January 1995 police salaries, and the amount deducted for PSF personnel was calculated on the basis that their average salary was equal to the minimum salary of \$266. Crown Agents (1995), p. 5.

- 182 UNRWA/PPF-files, “Authentication Report on the PPF Salaries – November 1994” (al-Omari), 17 December 1994.
- 183 For example, the deduction for the 806 PSF personnel was \$211,978, i.e. \$263. Ibid.
- 184 The amount deducted for PSA personnel was calculated on the basis that their average salary was equal to the minimum salary of \$266.
- 185 S. Bhatia, “Palestinian war declared on ‘agent Arafat’”, *Observer*, 20 November 1994, p. 17.
- 186 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 24 November 1994.
- 187 “Interview with Shaykh Yasin by unidentified Hamas prisoners at Kfar Yona prison” (in Arabic), *Filastin al-Muslimah* (London), March 1995 pp. 24–6, via FBIS.
- 188 The reason for the relatively low number, 5,200, is uncertain given that 7,000 were allowed to return from exile as policemen under the Gaza–Jericho Agreement. There were several plausible possibilities: the PLO had probably been unable to bring in all 7,000 by late 1994, either because some selected cadres were denied entry on Israel’s insistence or had so far been unable to make the trip for practical reasons. Another possibility was probably that among those who did enter on the police personnel quota, there were a number of PLO/PLA veterans who were too old to serve in the police and retired upon return, or they were in fact personnel to be employed elsewhere in the PNA administration. For more on this issue, see Chapter 5, Lia (2006).
- 189 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 24 November 1994.
- 190 The *Jerusalem Post* report seemed uninformed about the police funding arrangements, and alleged that the US “pays Palestinian Police salaries”. A. Pinkas, “Army considers measures against Rajoub”, *Jerusalem Post*, 18 November 1994, p. 2.
- 191 UNRWA/PPF-files, UNRWA (Türkmen) to Boutros-Ghali, 7 December 1994.
- 192 Statement by Prime Minister Rabin after the Rabin–Arafat summit. Cited in VOI, 1117GMT, 9 February 1995.
- 193 Israeli Government Press Office, “Major PLO violations of the Oslo Accords”, 25 October 1996. Cited in “PA: no reduction in size of police force”, IMRA website, 28 January 1997. See also “Minister of Defense replies to questions about PA police”, IMRA website, 30 May 1997.
- 194 According to Israeli press reports, Israel was in the process of receiving the police roster list in February 1995, but had not approved it. D. Makovsky, “Both sides are sticking to (part of) the Oslo Agreement”, *Jerusalem Post*, 24 February 1995, p. 8.
- 195 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, Gaza office to Oslo, 12 February 1995 and SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 March 1995, p. 2.
- 196 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 11 April 1994, p. 2.
- 197 UD 308.87 Vol. 7, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 3 March 1995. See also UD 308.87 Vol. 6, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 29 January 1995.
- 198 According to Sa’ib ‘Urayqat. Cited in UD 308.87 Vol. 6, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 9 February 1995.
- 199 For more on the CIA programme, see Chapter 9 of this book.

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## 6

### **Shifting Priorities, Dwindling Leadership: Police Aid Coordination in Gaza**

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Considerable assistance is channelled directly between donors and parts of the Palestinian security forces. The character of this assistance is such that donors do not want to deliberate upon it in the SWG/Police group.<sup>1</sup>

**The Norwegian Representative's Office in Gaza, February 1997**

During the 1990s, donor efforts in the police sector were coordinated through a range of committees and agencies. Because the World Bank refused to deal with such aid, police assistance coordination had long been in a vacuum outside the formal donor aid structures. Various ad hoc interim measures had been taken to remedy the situation, from the earliest police donor conferences in Oslo and Cairo and the establishment of the COPP to the UNRWA emergency mechanism for police salaries. In the second half of 1994, there was an increasing need for a local coordination structure to address police aid issues in Gaza, especially in-kind and training assistance. As the Cairo-based COPP was abolished, the new, Gaza-based committee was slow to make its appearance. When it was finally put in place in February 1995, four months had already elapsed without any effective local coordination. The challenge of providing status updates and reliable priority-need assessments had increased exponentially in the light of the Palestinian Police's rapid expansion and diversification, and the new aid committee not surprisingly failed to assert its authority as an effective coordinating organ compared to the effective and executive-style COPP. The new body suffered from intra-Palestinian rivalries and weak leadership, causing significant frustration among donors. The fate of the new donor committee highlighted the dilemma of handing over coordination responsibility and encouraging ownership when local counterparts and recipients still lacked institutionalized organization and authority.

## The Abolishment of the COPP

The deployment of the Palestinian Police in Gaza and Jericho meant that Cairo had become less convenient as a venue for police donor coordination meetings. The transfer to Gaza and the establishment of a new local donor coordination structure there meant that the COPP in its present form would have to be reorganized or replaced. The issue of its future and its relationship with the overall coordination structure in the light of the new reality in Gaza was raised at several junctures during the summer of 1994, notably at the important AHLC meeting in Paris on 9–10 June 1994.<sup>2</sup> Ahead of the meeting, the COPP suggested that separation of police donor efforts from the overall coordination of assistance to the Palestinians should come to an end.<sup>3</sup> The AHLC, in which the World Bank held the secretariat, had some reservations about assuming full formal responsibility for police assistance, however. Although it agreed to “clarify its original mandate in order to provide oversight for the entire donor coordination effort, including police”, the Bank also made it clear that the COPP’s secretariat functions “will continue as now, separate from the World Bank”.<sup>4</sup> In practical terms, the only change that came out of the meeting was that the COPP from now on would be formally subordinated to the AHLC.<sup>5</sup>

This arrangement was thought to be temporary, in anticipation of the establishment of a local coordination structure. At the Paris meeting in June 1994, the AHLC had requested that the World Bank devise a detailed proposal for on-the-ground coordination of all sectors of assistance.<sup>6</sup> This proposal was presented in the World Bank memorandum of 24 June 1994, and it was expected that police aid coordination would become a sector within this new structure. But it took considerable time to implement the new organization; and in the meantime, during the autumn of 1994, donors started to coordinate their efforts locally through informal lead-nations within each sector.<sup>7</sup> The police sector was an exception, however, because of the COPP’s existence. Here, local coordination was in fact weakened as the COPP gradually lost its functions and authority while no new body replaced it.

At this point in the second half of 1994, it was uncertain whether Norway wanted to remain the lead-nation in the police sector.<sup>8</sup> Awaiting a final decision on the new structure, the COPP decided to continue convening monthly meetings, but they became fewer as the focus of donor

efforts gradually shifted to Gaza. The COPP held a meeting on 7 July, and its last meeting was convened in Cairo on 1 September 1994.<sup>9</sup> Thereafter, formal police donor meetings ceased completely until February 1995.

The weakness of police donor coordination in late 1994 was partly a result of the all-consuming urgency of UNRWA's payment mechanism, which took most of the police donors' attention. A series of informal donor meetings were held in the late autumn of 1994, after the COPP meetings came to an end, but these dealt almost exclusively with police salary disbursements.<sup>10</sup> Only the police advisers, not the diplomatic level, dealt with police aid. Issues related to donor strategy and long-term planning were not discussed in formal settings; or if they were, they left no trace in MFA correspondence. Donors acknowledged too that "there is an acute need to establish the secretariat and a coordination mechanism on the ground", but little was done to remedy the situation.<sup>11</sup>

### **An Internecine Tug-of-War over the COPP's Future**

Ideas on how to reorganize the COPP had been discussed at various stages. But for many reasons, the issue came to be linked to the role and functions of the newly established Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO), a high-profile position awarded to one of the leading facilitators of the Oslo Accords, Terje Rød-Larsen. During the consultations at the Oslo summit in mid-September 1994, the idea of making the COPP a part of UNSCO had been aired, and both UNSCO and the Norwegian embassy in Cairo were invited to present their views on the COPP's future.<sup>12</sup>

It appears that the COPP's future was determined by considerations other than strictly coordination effectiveness. To a large extent, the outcome was based on UNSCO's preferences, as the MFA wished to hand over responsibility to the UN for the sensitive police sector. When draft proposals of UNSCO's role and mandate were discussed, police aid coordination was listed first, and figured as one of the most important areas of early UNSCO involvement.<sup>13</sup> The draft proposed that UNSCO assume secretariat and chair responsibilities in a future police aid coordination committee, oversee the implementation of police assistance projects, monitor the development of the Palestinian Police, control the account receiving donor funding, liaise with the parties on behalf of the police donors etc.<sup>14</sup> UNSCO's role in the police sector was



comprehensive, reinforcing the impression that police aid coordination was an important part of the *raison d'être* for establishing UNSCO.

In theory, UNSCO's official mandate was to coordinate all UN activity in the Occupied Territories, but it was not likely to have much influence over the other UN agencies, especially not UNRWA and UNDP, which were among the largest UN organizations, with their own mandates, international boards, extensive field organizations, organizational culture and identity and, perhaps most important, independent budgets and financing.<sup>15</sup> Two studies on aid coordination from the mid-1990s highlighted the independent nature of these UN agencies. They were said to be "the last of the world's absolute monarchies", and they "do not take easily to centralized direction or coordination".<sup>16</sup> Coordination, if it occurred at all, usually took place "among field representatives under the very light hand of the UN Resident Representative in the country in question".<sup>17</sup> There is little doubt that UNSCO found itself squeezed between its much bigger brothers.<sup>18</sup> During the early phases, therefore, the police sector presented itself as a convenient domain where UNSCO could make a real difference.

On 21 September 1994, UNSCO in Gaza presented its proposal for a new police aid coordination structure, a "reconstituted COPP" to be based in Gaza.<sup>19</sup> As opposed to the more exclusive and executive-style COPP, the new committee should be an all-donor forum and be co-chaired by a local representative of the AHLIC, a PNA representative and a representative from the UN mechanism for the disbursement of donor money. Police training was identified as a particularly important area, diverging from the COPP's traditional focus on police equipment and funding. The secretariat function of the COPP, hitherto performed by the Norwegian embassy in Cairo, should be transferred to UNSCO.

The UNSCO proposal met with serious opposition from the COPP chair in Cairo, Ambassador Haugestad.<sup>20</sup> In a lengthy discussion on the COPP's future, he argued that the new proposal created a less effective coordinating body with an unwieldy diffusion of responsibility between the different co-chairs. He recommended that owing to the relatively short-term nature of police assistance, continuity and professionalism would be best served if the Cairo-based COPP continued to carry overall responsibility for police aid coordination until most of the basic aid contributions had been completed, which was expected by mid-1995. After all, police assistance, in particular in-kind and financial contributions,

was expected to be more short-term and less project-based than aid efforts in other sectors, and it involved local aid workers to a lesser extent. A reorganized COPP should therefore maintain its HQ in Cairo and remain under the auspices of his embassy, also as a number of key donors were unable to meet in Gaza. At the same time, a working group consisting of the PLO, Israel, Norway and UNSCO should operate on the ground in Gaza, and UNSCO should assume the secretariat functions.<sup>21</sup> An additional reason for keeping the COPP under a Norwegian chair, he argued, was that it had given Norway a position of some influence and prestige, which would be lost if it moved to Gaza and was taken over by UNSCO.

Looking at the UNSCO document and the COPP's detailed comments and criticisms, one cannot escape the conclusion that UNSCO's proposal suffered from a series of technical weaknesses. In particular, Ambassador Haugestad's emphasis on the need for an efficient, operative and executive-style donor chair with the PNA in a vice-chair position turned out to be prophetic. Such a position perhaps sounded paternalistic; but with the wisdom of hindsight, there can be little doubt that donor efforts lost much momentum because too much responsibility for coordination was transferred to the Palestinian side at a point when strong internal divisions in the Palestinian Police largely prevented unified and coherent decision-making and priority setting. The donors needed detailed planning documents, updates and surveys, which the COPP had managed to elicit from the PLO and regularly provide to them. Without such vital information, they would soon find themselves unable to plan and implement aid projects. On the other hand, Haugestad's opposition to transferring local aid coordination to Gaza was rooted less in technical-professional requirements than in his strong personal attachment to the COPP's mission.

By and large, the MFA endorsed the UNSCO proposal.<sup>22</sup> It was more than happy to delegate responsibility for the day-to-day management of police aid coordination to UNSCO in Gaza. Being a strong supporter of the UN, the MFA saw a growing UN involvement in police donor efforts as an important achievement in itself: "we should seize this opportunity to introduce the UN in yet another sector", the MFA's Middle East adviser argued.<sup>23</sup> The MFA concluded that as chair of the AHLC, Norway would have to be prepared to assume the co-chair role in the new police aid committee, but it disagreed with Haugestad that

this was necessary in order to maintain Norway's privileged position in the Middle East peace process. In fact, the MFA's Middle East adviser wrote in an internal memorandum that "we already have a sufficiently high profile in the Middle East", which was in striking contrast to the perception of most other donors, especially the European Union, of their regional position.<sup>24</sup>

When communicating its decision to abolish the COPP, the MFA repeatedly praised Ambassador Haugestad and the Cairo embassy's efforts and competence in the police aid sector, and urged the embassy to contribute actively to facilitating a smooth transfer to Gaza. The Cairo embassy seemed unhappy with the outcome of the tug-of-war over the COPP's future, however. Formally speaking, the MFA needed endorsement from the AHLC members for the proposed changes in the COPP's mandate and composition.<sup>25</sup> Haugestad therefore reacted very negatively when UNSCO immediately issued a public announcement of its 'take-over' of the COPP without having consulted the AHLC. The old COPP was now definitively dead, and only tentative plans had been made for its replacement. On 4 October 1994 in a letter to the MFA in Oslo, Ambassador Haugestad described the current status of police aid coordination as "drift[ing] into an emerging vacuum".<sup>26</sup> As UNSCO's takeover of the COPP inaugurated a four-month period without any formal police donor meetings, that description did not seem entirely misplaced.

### **The COPP Police Advisers**

With the old COPP structure gone, the two police advisers, Police Major-General Arnstein Øverkil and his assistant Police Major Egil Nærum, found themselves in limbo. But on a practical, day-to-day basis, both continued to work in their dual role as advisers to the AHLC chair in Oslo and as special advisers to Arafat in police affairs, operating increasingly in Gaza from a makeshift office in a private apartment.<sup>27</sup> They represented the main line of continuity between the COPP in Cairo and the projected police aid committee in Gaza; and they kept alive the COPP's technical activities both in Egypt, which was still important as a transit country for police equipment destined for Gaza, and on the ground in Gaza. When the new police assistance committee (SWG/Police) was established, Nærum became a part of its secretariat

with responsibility for updating equipment matrices, although he was not formally seconded to UNSCO.<sup>28</sup> One serious drawback resulting from the UNSCO takeover was that the secretariat function was not followed up with the same energy in Gaza, where fewer resources were available to the former COPP advisers while the challenges of gathering information on donor assistance had increased markedly.

UNSCO focused primarily on operating the financing mechanism with UNRWA and coordinating training via its newly appointed police training coordinator. He was seconded to UNSCO from 25 September 1994, initially for a period of six months, but the position was regularly renewed throughout the 1990s. The first UN police training coordinator was none other than the previous UN police adviser Per Bleikelia, who had assisted in developing a police training curriculum for the UN police donor group in spring 1994.<sup>29</sup> Bleikelia's appointment, together with the arrival of a Swedish police adviser to supervise Sweden's extensive package of police training courses, underscored the Scandinavian dominance in the police sector. One doctoral student researching international police aid to the PNA jokingly referred to them as "the Nordic police mafia in Gaza".<sup>30</sup>

The former COPP advisers remained in Gaza longer than anticipated. In mid-1994, it was assumed that the main police equipment programmes would last until the end of the year or perhaps until mid-1995. But as a result of substantial delays in equipment delivery and the deteriorating human rights situation, Øverkil and Nærum's contracts were extended until the end of 1995.<sup>31</sup> In addition to coordinating equipment donations and facilitating their cumbersome transit, the two police advisers gave themselves the objective of assisting the Palestinian Police to develop into a modern police institution. Øverkil identified two particular goals: to encourage senior commanders to delegate authority downwards and to improve cooperation across the branches.<sup>32</sup> Both goals were lofty ideals of modern policing which the donors attempted to impart to the Palestinian Police, but they usually encountered opposition given the unfavourable political context.

### **The Sector Working Group on Police**

As already alluded to, a locally based coordinating structure was put in place at the end of 1994 after the AHLC meeting in Brussels on 29 and 30 November 1994. Two new locally based committees were created:

the Local Aid Coordination Committee (LACC), an all-donor forum mirroring the CG on the local level, and the Joint Liaison Committee (JLC), a local counterpart to the AHLC.<sup>33</sup> Both the LACC and the JLC were co-chaired by Norway (as AHLC chair) and also the World Bank and UNSCO, underscoring Norway's near monopoly of the important chair positions in the donor hierarchy.

At the first LACC meeting, in December 1994, the donors agreed on the establishment of 12 sectoral sub-committees, known as sectoral working groups (SWGs), one of which was the SWG/Police. In theory, they were responsible for all donor efforts within their specific areas: agriculture, transport and communication, education, public works and employment, environment, health, institution- and capacity-building, infrastructure and housing, police, public finance and tourism.<sup>34</sup> The SWGs were to develop an overall view of donor-financed activities in each sector, create an annual integrated programme for donor activities in view of the PNA's priorities, give monthly updates to the LACC chair on activities and plans for that sector and monitor the implementation of projects.<sup>35</sup> The actual activities of most SWGs were a far cry from these ambitious goals, however; and in practice, many of them met only infrequently and came to focus on information exchange on specific projects and areas.<sup>36</sup>

### **The New Police Aid Group**

The structure of the SWG/Police corresponded to the prescribed organization of the SWGs: an open-ended membership and a tripartite chairmanship consisting of a donor country as 'Shepherd', a PNA ministry as 'Gavel-Holder' and a UN agency (or the World Bank) as secretariat (the terms 'Shepherd' and 'Gavel-Holder' were used in the donor community to distinguish between the co-chairmen of the donor committees). In the SWG/Police, these three positions were filled by Norway, the PNA's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) and UNSCO. Owing to strong identification with the COPP among police donors, the SWG/Police retained the COPP's name for some time in its letters of invitation and meeting minutes. This practice lasted at least until April–May 1995.

The SWG/Police met for the first time in Gaza on 9 February 1995. Some ten donors with previous involvement in the police sector

had been invited.<sup>37</sup> Among those who attended was the Palestinian Police's director Nasr Yusuf, UNRWA's financial adviser on police salaries, a senior MOPIC official, the UNSCO police training coordinator and a number of donor representatives. The World Bank participated only as an observer. Israel was absent from the first meeting for 'technical reasons' but participated at many subsequent meetings. It sent Ilan Baruch, who headed the newly established Office for Palestinian Affairs in the Israeli MFA. This differed from Israel's participation in the COPP, in which senior IDF officers had usually been present.

One intention behind the new local coordination structure was that the involvement of the PNA in donor activities should be enhanced; and as a result, the SWG/Police was much less donor-driven and executive-style than the COPP had been. In September 1994, Arafat had designated Nabil Sha'ath, now appointed to head MOPIC, as the contact for donors on the police salary issue and Nasr Yusuf as the contact for issues to do with training and equipment. In reality, a number of Palestinian generals also appeared at SWG/Police meetings, seemingly competing for donor training and equipment. Similarly, MOPIC's main rival, the Ministry of Finance, occasionally attended committee meetings.

On the donor side, the earliest SWG/Police meetings seemed to fit the description of "Das norwegische Koordinierungsbüro in Kairo", as the German foreign minister had once labelled the COPP, except that the venue was now Gaza.<sup>38</sup> Norwegians manned the 'Shepherd' or chair role in the persons of Svein Sevje from the MFA's Gaza office and UNSCO's police training coordinator Per Bleikelia. Police Major Nærum from the defunct COPP attended, as did a representative of the Norwegian Development Aid Agency. With a steady influx of new participants throughout 1995, the Norwegian and Nordic character of the working group gave way to a more multinational composition.

Although the early SWG/Police meetings were poorly attended, the meetings in August, September and November 1995 attracted a larger crowd, including donors who had previously showed scant interest in the police sector, such as Canada, Italy, Australia, Romania and Turkey.<sup>39</sup> In 1997, India also started to attend SWG/Police meetings, reflecting the start-up of training programmes for Palestinian Police personnel at a naval base in India. UN agencies such as UNDP and OHCHR also appeared in SWG/Police meetings for the first time, the

latter as a result of a comprehensive human rights programme that the donors were sponsoring for the PNA and the police force.

Encouraged by the steady growth in the number of participants, the 'Shepherd' indicated in September 1995 that each meeting would include regular updates on budgetary status, a list detailing priority needs and an update on the security situation, the last to allow the Palestinian side to present its views on the intricacies of policing the West Bank and Gaza.<sup>40</sup> Judging by the meeting minutes, discussions in the SWG/Police committee during 1995 were focused more on funding than on training and equipment needs, largely because the Palestinians devoted more time to the funding issue. The SWG/Police continued to deal with equipment; and the former COPP police adviser assistant participated in most SWG/Police meetings, distributing updated police donor matrices, although with less regularity than during the COPP era. Neither matrices nor priority plans for a further build-up of equipment, which the COPP had previously made the cornerstone of its work, circulated widely in the donor community.<sup>41</sup> With the expansion of the Palestinian Police and a growing rivalry between the main Police branches, the donors found it almost impossible to elicit detailed and reliable information on the Police's equipment inventory (see below).

In mid-1995, there was growing interest in the police sector, reflecting donor concern about the Palestinian Police's ability to police the six West Bank towns that were set to come under Palestinian self-rule after the Interim Accord. There was general interest too in ensuring sufficient security for the upcoming elections to the Palestinian 'Presidency' and Legislative Council. Palestinian Police commanders seized the opportunity and presented several comprehensive requirement lists, highlighting, for example, the need for "suitable equipment for the mountainous terrain" of the West Bank and for donor funding for "vehicles, helicopters to transport soldiers and financial support for increased salary and recurrent expenditures".<sup>42</sup> One commander stressed the special security situation presented by the West Bank geographically: "too many roads to monitor", frequent disturbances between the two sides, more people than in the Gaza Strip, the length of the border between the West Bank and Israel, more Israeli settlements and the need for strict security during the Palestinian elections.<sup>43</sup> The donors readily accepted that the Palestinian Police faced growing challenges, but its lists of requirements were not designed to identify pressing priorities.



They looked more like a complete inventory encompassing virtually everything needed for a police force: a “very comprehensive list of all requirements for 12,000 police”.<sup>44</sup> Needless to say, even dedicated donors were left bewildered and simply lacked relevant information with which to go back to their governments and request more police assistance.

### **Lapsing into a State of Semi-Dormancy**

From late 1995 onwards, there was a marked slowdown in the activities of the SWG/Police. After a relatively intensive period preceding the implementation of the Interim Accord, with nearly monthly meetings between February and November 1995, it seems to have lapsed into a much less active existence, with meetings only once or twice a year. A decision was reached first to meet every two or three months but then only on a needs basis, complemented by smaller planning meetings on specific topics, mainly the police academy project.<sup>45</sup> In stark contrast to a busy 1995, there was apparently only one SWG/Police meeting in 1996 and only two in 1997 (February and November). In mid-1996, the Gaza office noted that donor interest in the police sector was declining.<sup>46</sup> At the capital level, the erstwhile hectic police donor diplomacy largely came to a halt in 1995–6, and it has left few traces in the MFA’s correspondence. In early 1996, there were Norwegian–German consultations to resuscitate police donor cooperation, specifically in the framework of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy Working Group on the Middle East, but they do not seem to have led anywhere.<sup>47</sup>

The causes of reduced police donor coordination were manifold. Setbacks in the negotiating process affected the donors, as did serious concern about human rights violations and police abuses. The long Israeli closures in 1996 hampered donor activity. The outbreak of hostilities during the bloody al-Aqsa/Hasmonean Tunnel riots in late September 1996 also brought aid efforts to a temporary halt: the UN imposed travel restrictions on its staff in the West Bank and the Palestinian Police called for all training programmes to be halted, although the latter decision was quickly reversed.<sup>48</sup> The decline in activity mirrored to some extent the pattern of activity of other SWGs, whose meetings became less frequent as donor efforts shifted to the follow-up of ongoing long-term projects. As contact networks and information flows became



more established, it obviated the need for frequent formal meetings. There was also 'meeting fatigue'. Local embassies, consulates and representative offices were eager to reduce the workload that the meetings and activities of the 12 SWGs imposed.<sup>49</sup>

The drop in frequency of meetings was also a reflection of the wish to hand over more responsibility to the PNA. This was done by strengthening the SWG's 'Gavel Holder' (the PNA representative) and by reducing the workload of the 'Shepherd'.<sup>50</sup> The donors felt that as a matter of principle, it was important that the PNA gradually began to shoulder a larger part of the burden of donor coordination.<sup>51</sup> Norway, as 'Shepherd' for the SWG/Police, never exerted pressure on the Palestinian side to convene meetings but left that decision to the PNA. While retaining its formal position, Norway handed over the de facto chair role to the Palestinian 'Gavel Holder'.<sup>52</sup> This was a sharp change of policy from the earliest police donor efforts in the COPP. In the early phase, in 1994, the leading police donors had insisted on frequent meetings in an effort to put pressure on the Palestinians to make priorities and produce plans for the use of donor aid, but this approach, which might be perceived as overly paternalistic and intrusive, could not be maintained indefinitely.<sup>53</sup>

### **Norway's Exit Strategy**

As direct police funding came to an end in 1995, donor interest moved towards police training with a view to strengthening the rule of law. In its capacity as 'Shepherd', Norway strongly encouraged this shift, because of many disconcerting reports of police abuses. Since spring 1995, the MFA had seriously contemplated an 'exit strategy' from the police assistance sector, viewing its midwife role for the Palestinian Police as completed.<sup>54</sup> Oslo had never been enthusiastic about 'shepherding' the SWB/Police, but accepted the role because of its former involvement with the COPP in the expectation that it would be temporary and that UNSCO would take the lead in this sector. Although no public announcement to this effect was made, there were several signs of a scaling down of Norway's police aid involvement from mid- or late 1995. The last Norwegian funds for police funding were disbursed in August 1995; Norway offered far fewer police training courses than its north European neighbours (Sweden, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Denmark); and the Norwegian police training coordinator at UNSCO (Bleikelia) was

replaced by a Danish police adviser, Police Superintendent Gjess Petersen, in early 1996. Øverkil visited the region more infrequently and his assistant Nærum returned to Oslo in late 1995.

Norwegian officials had pursued their COPP responsibilities in Cairo with vigour and a strong sense of mission, enjoying strong political backing from Oslo, but the ‘Shepherd’ role in the SWG/Police committee had a lower priority. It was a sensitive task that the Gaza office took upon itself because no other donor was willing to shoulder it. Norway made several informal requests to dedicated donors, including Sweden and the Netherlands, hoping that they would be willing to take over the ‘Shepherd’ role, but without much success. A similar request was made to UNSCO, but it declined on formal grounds.<sup>55</sup> Norway saw no way of dropping this role without drawing undesired media attention and publicity to the problems of the SWG/Police group and the whole donor–Palestinian Police relationship. In early 1997, when the SWG/LACC coordination structure was under revision, both UNSCO and the Gaza office seriously considered the possibility of making the SWG/Police a part of the larger SWG/Institution Building which the European Union shepherded. This was not an entirely new idea, but the PNA opposed it, referring to the “negative political signal” such a move would convey.<sup>56</sup> However, the Palestinians did not object to the SWG/Police group simply “continu[ing] to exist in its current state of ‘semi-dormancy’”, as the local Norwegian councillor put it.<sup>57</sup> The MFA commented that “we can live with that”.<sup>58</sup> Hence, by 1996–7 Norway had clearly become disenchanted and half-hearted, a stark contrast to its active role in the COPP in 1994. In 1999, as a more comprehensive donor reorganization led to the consolidation of the SWGs into four larger working groups and the SWG/Police became a part of the EU-led SWG/Institution Building group, Norway was finally relieved of its burden.<sup>59</sup>

### **Intra-Palestinian Rivalries and the Dilemma of Ownership**

The Norwegian ‘Shepherd’ role, with its minimal intrusiveness and low commitment, was problematic, especially in the face of growing intra-Palestinian rivalries which plagued the SWG/Police from at least mid-1995. These rivalries culminated in what a donor diplomat called “a messy meeting” during which representatives of different Police branches presented widely different priorities or ‘wish lists’ to the donors.<sup>60</sup> Being

dragged into intra-Palestinian rivalries, many donor diplomats felt, made the SWG/Police meetings a waste of time.<sup>61</sup> The problem was partly a structural dilemma of stimulating ownership and handing over authority and responsibility to the Palestinians while pressurizing them to make serious and coherent priority plans that would make donor assistance possible. To strike the proper balance between these concerns was impossible, and the November 1995 SWG/Police meeting illustrated this.

At that meeting, the 'Shepherd' suggested that the group should focus attention on two main problems as he saw it: what had already been donated and what should follow. To do this necessitated a better understanding of the status quo of the various equipment and training programmes. He therefore suggested that "the status of equipment already delivered be made available at the next meeting to eliminate some of the confusion" and that a matrix incorporating all the various lists be made available.<sup>62</sup>

Without taking much notice of these requests, the three Palestinian generals at the meeting, a civil defence brigadier, the Civilian Police brigadier and the public security director in Gaza Major-General al-Majaydah, presented their highly immoderate wish lists, which had little regard for realistic priority needs.<sup>63</sup> In order not to offend the generals, the 'Shepherd' politely promised to send the requirement lists to donor capitals, only to incur serious protests from a number of donor representatives. The British representative argued that "there was a need to see what the Palestinian Authority are getting against what has already been given. To have an idea of the funding required the shortfall must be known otherwise it was very difficult to go back to the donor governments."<sup>64</sup> The European Commission representative seconded this opinion: "a clearer picture was needed on paper of the problems faced so far and the directions we are going".<sup>65</sup> When the Palestinian commanders seemed to balk at making any commitments in this regard, one donor simply announced that "the meeting was not a productive use of time".<sup>66</sup> One could discern a veiled criticism of the 'Shepherd' for weak donor leadership, as he had failed to pressurize the Palestinian Police command to make serious plans and priorities, although most donors faulted the PNA for encouraging and acquiescing to a multi-headed and fragmented Palestinian Police organization.

Only sustained donor pressure on Arafat could possibly have changed this state of affairs; and in view of the problems faced during

the police funding operations in late 1994, it is uncertain whether donor pressure would have worked. Donors were already leaning heavily on Arafat to crack down on Palestinian militants and at the same time to improve the Palestinian Police's human rights performance. Additional donor requests about how he should manage his security forces would probably have been met with indifference.

In late 1995 or early 1996, UNSCO's secretariat formally abandoned plans to update equipment matrices after having experienced serious difficulties in eliciting hard information on equipment status and in-kind gifts.<sup>67</sup> Given the lack of status updates, less police equipment was channelled to the Palestinian Police after an initial period of generosity in 1994–5; donors were no longer willing to donate much technical equipment beyond what accompanied their police training programmes.<sup>68</sup> There was a steep decline in donor assistance to the police sector, from \$54.4 million in 1994 to \$10.6 million in 1996 (see Table 6.1). Total donor assistance to the Palestinian Police between 1993 and mid-1996 was estimated at approximately \$72 million of total aid disbursed of around \$1.3 billion, and constituted only 5.5 per cent of donor assistance.<sup>69</sup>

**TABLE 6.1**  
**Donor police assistance, 1994–7**

	1994	1995	1996	1997
Total commitments	64,500	23,100	7,800	13,200
Total disbursement	54,400	20,000	10,600	4,100
Donors and their commitments/disbursement:				
Japan (16,030/16,030)			United States (5,000/2,000?)	
European Union (11,364?/10,886?)			Russia (4,000/4,000)	
Sweden (13,777/787?)			France (2,234/2,234)	
The Netherlands (9,950/8,240)			Spain (1,266/1,266)	
Norway (8,087/8,087)			Greece (430/430)	
United Kingdom (7,905/7,155)			Germany (349/349)	
Saudi Arabia (7,500/7,500)			Canada (311/94)	
Jordan (7,519/7,519)			Belgium (200/200)	
Denmark (6,650/6,550)			Turkey (250/250)	
Egypt (5,300/5300)			Republic of Korea (191/191)	
Finland (60/0)				

Source: MOPIC Report, 4 October 1997. The question marks are mine, and indicate that estimates are too low. The figures for 1997 are not complete (until October only).

### **The Palestinian Police Aid Coordination Committee**

Responding to donor pressure for better intra-Palestinian coordination of police aid, the PNA established the Palestinian Police Assistance Coordination Committee (PACC) in late spring 1995. Its tentative mandate was to deal with all issues of equipment, salaries and other aid requests. The committee's leading members were Walid Siyam, representing MOPIC, and Major-General 'Abd al-Raziq al-Majaydah, formally the head of the Palestinian Police's National Security Forces in Gaza but widely seen as the PNA's top military commander.<sup>70</sup> MOPIC appears to have been a driving force behind the formation of PACC. Walid Siyam was the son-in-law of al-Majaydah, and their family ties might have consolidated al-Majaydah's control over the committee, in which he assumed the chair position and administrative and financial responsibility.

PACC was initially thought of as a channel for unifying and formalizing Palestinian requests to the donor community.<sup>71</sup> As the SWG/Police's 'Gavel Holder', Walid Siyam was eager that PACC be taken seriously in the donor community, but the latter received conflicting signals about its authority and composition.<sup>72</sup> In 1996, there was a reorganization of PACC. In addition to the old members, Siyam and al-Majaydah, PACC now included Colonel Musa Arafat, Head of Military Intelligence, and Colonel Muhammad Dahlan, the PSA (Palestinian Preventive Security Agency) commander in Gaza. The Civilian Police was now represented by its chief, Brigadier Ghazi al-Jabali.<sup>73</sup> The presence of Military Intelligence and the PSA was not reassuring; donors had largely avoided these units, especially the PSA, considering them 'illegal' because they were not mentioned in the Palestinian-Israeli Accords. Although the PSA (and PS/Force-17) were 'legalized' in the Interim Accord, Military Intelligence was not mentioned anywhere. Also, the fact that the Civilian Police continuously complained that its interests were not cared for in PACC, because it was under-represented in "this military committee", also worried donors, who greatly favoured a strengthening of the Civilian Police.<sup>74</sup>

The problem with PACC was that donors generally preferred to deal with the popular Palestinian Police Director Nasr Yusuf, but he did not chair it. In the autumn of 1996, it appeared that Major-General al-Majaydah had replaced him altogether. A number of developments demonstrated Yusuf's weakened position within the Palestinian Police, in

particular the arrest of several of his closest aides, including his interpreter Farid al-Saliya, and his removal from PACC.<sup>75</sup> Given this new reality, the Gaza office sought to establish relations with al-Majaydah, and met with him in mid-August 1996. Compared to his predecessor, the general impressed the Norwegian councillor that he was less receptive to donor ideals of democratic police reform.<sup>76</sup> But Nasr Yusuf's role in donor assistance was not over, and the UN police training coordinators continued to maintain close relations with him.<sup>77</sup> In early 1997, there was another reorganization of PACC, with the appointment of new liaison officers for the donors.<sup>78</sup> Later in the year, Nasr Yusuf was rehabilitated and emerged as the head of PACC.<sup>79</sup>

The dominance in PACC of the military branches continued, however, alienating the Civilian Police and creating serious problems for those donors who wished to offer training and assistance to the Palestinian Police as one organization.<sup>80</sup> In practice, important donors such as the United Kingdom ignored PACC and chose to deal directly with Ghazi al-Jabali and his Civilian Police. In the latter part of the 1990s, when counter-terrorism programmes became more important, the United States and the European Union chose to deal directly with the Palestinian Police's intelligence branches in the framework of covert programmes, about which neither PACC nor the SWG/Police were much informed (see below).

### **The New Counter-Terrorism Assistance**

Although PACC had previously striven to prevent donors from going directly to the Civilian Police, by 1997 the new interest in counter-terrorism had created another source of donor assistance apart from PACC. In the wake of a series of anti-Israeli attacks in February–March 1996, there was a significant shift in donor focus towards counter-terrorism assistance. Much of this assistance appeared to be strictly bilateral and private in character. During the preparatory meeting ahead of the SWG/Police meeting in early 1997, the Gaza office noted that “considerable assistance is channelled directly between donors and parts of the Palestinian security forces. The character of this assistance is such that donors do not want to deliberate upon it in the SWG/Police group.”<sup>81</sup>

The more pronounced preference for bilateral cooperation without involving the rest of the donor community was clearly a result of the

new emphasis on counter-terrorism assistance, which usually involved a higher degree of confidentiality and did not fit into what the SWG/Police group was doing. In March 1996, a large CIA-operated training and assistance programme began, and rumours of these training programmes quickly spread in the donor community. But hard information about their extent and focus was not forthcoming, and the CIA did not participate in the SWG/Police meetings.

There was no obvious reason why at least some information on the new counter-terrorism assistance could not be shared with the rest of the donor community. Other donors involved in counter-terrorism assistance, for example Canada, did participate in the SWG/Police and report on its counter-terrorism assistance programme, which involved in-kind assistance and training in the use of bomb detectors, landmine detectors and bomb disposal suits etc. It called for increased dialogue and regular discussions in formal settings such as the SWG/Police group.<sup>82</sup> On the other hand, when the new EU police adviser, Nils Eriksson, who headed the EU's new counter-terrorism programme at the PNA, attended the SWG/Police meetings in November 1997, he met with a barrage of criticism for failing to share information with the rest of the donor community. Palestinian Police commanders were also upset about the EU's refusal to channel the programme through PACC, and referred to the Accords: "here is only one Palestinian police, the Palestinian Police as stipulated in the agreement with Israel".<sup>83</sup>

Eriksson came under criticism too for envisaging a human rights component without seeking meaningful assistance in the needs assessment and project formulation phases for a new OHCHR project, which was supposed to be the cornerstone of all human rights assistance activity for the PNA. (At this point, the Palestinian Police had pledged that all programmes with a human rights component should be coordinated closely with the OHCHR.) Eriksson responded that "there is room for everyone" to contribute in human rights training!<sup>84</sup> Details of the EU counter-terrorism programme were classified, and there was a strategic decision to deal directly with the two main Palestinian intelligence agencies, the PSA and the GIS, and to circumvent PACC, as did the CIA programmes. The new counter-terrorism focus undermined donor attempts to create a degree of general unity and greater cross-branch coordination.



### **A Shift Towards Rule-of-Law Assistance**

Given the multitude of problems in the police donor group, from intra-Palestinian rivalries and Israeli obstacles (see below) to donor sensitivities, a reorientation towards human rights training and rule-of-law programmes provided Norway with an opportunity to sustain donor involvement in the police sector and to make its own role more palatable for the time being.<sup>85</sup> Without changing the formal mandate of the SWG/Police, Norway proposed that police training, preferably with a “rule-of-law” emphasis, should be the main focus. It repeatedly raised the issue of the SWG/Police future role and gained broad acceptance of this shift in focus despite some Palestinian opposition to the fact that the group had abandoned the important police salary issue. Major-General Nasr Yusuf was very appreciative of the need for improved police performance in the context of human rights, and readily accepted the donors’ insistence that human rights issues should be included in all police training courses.<sup>86</sup> The inclusion of representatives of the OHCHR and also an Australian NGO (Australian International Legal Resources) in the group illustrated the new emphasis. Another new issue was a proposed police academy, which several donors wished to sponsor and which they hoped would make their training efforts more sustainable.<sup>87</sup> When the donors gathered for an SWG/Police meeting on 19 February 1997, the first meeting in more than six months, the main item on the agenda was, “to inform donors about training activities and the Police Academy”.<sup>88</sup> These two issues appear to have consumed most of the SWG/Police’s activity until it merged with SWG/Institution Building in 1999.

### **Israeli Obstructionism**

While police donors faced a series of problems in coordinating aid efforts with the Palestinians, principally Israel was a no less formidable obstacle, in the matter of bureaucratic difficulties and delays in processing the movement of donor equipment across the Israeli-controlled borders. The police advisers blamed both sides for the delays, but privately, donor representatives faulted mostly Israel.

During the COPP’s consultations in Cairo in the summer of 1994, the formalities of the transit of in-kind assistance via Egypt had been discussed thoroughly with the Israeli, Palestinian and Egyptian



authorities. But these arrangements did not work properly, and donors often incurred extra expenditure owing to long delays during the transit period.<sup>89</sup> Bureaucratic procedures and obstacles were excessively burdensome. For example, processing two hundred US military vehicles destined for the Palestinian Police to Gaza through the Rafah border crossing took eight days and the full-time efforts of two US officials. Israel even insisted that the vehicles obtain separate insurance for the time spent at the Israeli border terminal and that all headlights had to be modified to conform to Israeli standards.<sup>90</sup> A European Commission donation of 36 vehicles was held back at the border for inexplicable reasons. A quantity of German motorbikes had been in transit for more than two months before it finally arrived in Gaza. A Spanish donation of cars was held back even longer as a result of Kafkaesque disagreements about the appropriate number of digits in the cars' chassis numbers.<sup>91</sup> The UN police training coordinators often described such Israeli restrictions on training-related equipment as a very serious obstacle.<sup>92</sup>

The COPP's police advisers continued to work on the transit problem, making it a preoccupation. At the COPP meeting in September 1994, for example, a draft outline recommending procedures for transiting in-kind assistance to Gaza through Egypt, including advance notification to the Israeli authorities, was presented and discussed.<sup>93</sup> After this and other attempts at generating consensus and compliance on common procedures had failed, Øverkil in his capacity as adviser to Arafat on police affairs held several meetings in Cairo with the Israeli embassy, the PLO embassy and Egyptian authorities in April 1995 at which transit procedures were discussed. A tentative agreement was reached on a draft for improved procedures that was distributed to donors and the parties on the Joint Security Committee (JSC).<sup>94</sup> The draft agreement proposed that one body on each side be responsible for all coordination, suggesting that the JSC should play this role. Moreover, it outlined in detail the transfer procedures to be followed by all parties involved in order to ensure a speedy transit process.<sup>95</sup> The effect of this new understanding was quite modest.

The SWG/Police group repeatedly discussed transit problems. Some delays were apparently a result of inaccurate labelling of the shipment or of a lack of precise advance notification to the Israeli authorities; but it was also obvious that the procedures proposed at the Cairo meeting, that

one body within each party should deal with shipments, were not being implemented.<sup>96</sup> In 1995, Israel did not often appear at SWG/Police meetings; but its MFA representative had little authority to implement changes in the Israeli customs and border control system anyway, and this bureaucratic disconnection obviously lessened his effectiveness. Some transit problems were coordinated and clarified through the Joint Security Committee, and this appears to have facilitated more speedy procedures despite the heightened security concerns surrounding police equipment. The problems encountered at the border crossings were not confined to police assistance, however; they covered all donor sectors and were a formidable obstacle. Deliberate obstructionism by right-wing customs and other border officials hostile to the peace process were one source of the delays. Another was the omnipresent security thinking on the Israeli side that made the most innocuous piece of equipment look like a potential threat.<sup>97</sup>

### **Conclusion**

With the transfer of the police aid coordination organization from Cairo to Gaza in late 1994, much of the early momentum was lost and the challenges and difficulties of donor coordination increased. Its reduced effectiveness was largely a result of UNSCO's failure to establish an effective successor to the COPP after it effected the latter's abolishment in the beginning of October 1994. After the COPP's demise, reliable status updates and realistic priority-need assessments quickly vanished and were replaced by a stream of unrealistic wish lists from various Palestinian generals. As a result, police assistance declined and the volume of in-kind equipment was reduced. Only police training (for which there existed an additional coordinating structure) experienced a significant expansion. In view of the new policy of encouraging Palestinian ownership and strong intra-Palestinian rivalries in the Palestinian Police, this development was perhaps unavoidable.

The new aid coordination group was fairly active during its first year of existence, but lapsed into a state of semi-dormancy in 1996–7. The early priority issues of police equipment and funding, which had characterized the build-up stages in 1994–5, gave way to a stronger emphasis on police training with an explicit focus on the rule of law and

improved human rights performance. Donor involvement also shifted towards more sectoral and specialized areas, in particular counter-terrorism aid for the Palestinian intelligence branches. Long-term police reform was difficult to pursue because of the fragmented nature of the Palestinian Police organization as well as intra-Palestinian rivalries. Palestinian attempts at forming a police aid coordination committee were not very successful, as donors often circumvented the committee and dealt directly with their preferred branches, in particular the Civilian Police and the intelligence agencies.

### NOTES

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- 1 Telefax from Gaza office to Oslo, 14 February 1997, accessed via the MFA's Regional Adviser for the Middle East Rolf Willy Hansen's personal records. The author has been unable to locate the document in the MFA's archive in Oslo.
- 2 COPP meeting minutes, 30 May 1994, p. 2.
- 3 Minutes of COPP High Level Meeting (Cairo), 5 May 1994, p. 1.
- 4 Cited in UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 22 September 1994 and COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994.
- 5 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 22 September 1994.
- 6 Cited in *ibid.* See also COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994.
- 7 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 27 September 1994.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 COPP meeting minutes, 7 July 1994.
- 10 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 10 November 1994; Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 27 October 1994, 9 November 1994 and 24 November 1994; and Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 9 November 1994, annex: "Palestinian Police Force Funding and Support: A Summary of Donor Views", Minutes from informal police donor meeting in Gaza, 27 October 1994.
- 11 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 9 November 1994, annex: "Palestinian Police Force Funding and Support: A Summary of Donor Views", Minutes from informal police donor meeting in Gaza, 27 October 1994.
- 12 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, internal memo (Hansen to Trolle Andersen), 29 September 1994.
- 13 Other priority areas for UNSCO were the implementation of short-term 'high-impact' projects, such as the Gaza clean-up projects and emergency employment schemes, and a role in the AHLC as "Special Adviser" on all donor coordination in the Occupied Territories. UD-RG, "A New Role for the UN (draft)", undated.
- 14 Furthermore, in July 1994 the UN secretary-general expected that the newly appointed UN Special Coordinator Terje Rød-Larsen "will follow up [on the police training issue] when he moves to the occupied territories in August". UD 308.87 Vol. 1, UN Secretary-General's Office (Aimé) to MFA, 11 July 1994.

- 15 The “Big Four” are the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) as well as the UNDP, the United Nations Development Programme.
- 16 Cited in Findlay (1997) and Marks (1996), s. 7, respectively.
- 17 Marks (1996), s. 7.
- 18 UNSCO officials and police advisers, interviews.
- 19 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, UNSCO to MFA, 21 September 1994.
- 20 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 27 September 1994 and UD 308.82 Vol. 3, Haugestad to Trolle Andersen (personal letter), 25 September 1994.
- 21 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 22 and 27 September 1994.
- 22 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, internal memo, 29 September 1994 and Oslo to Cairo Embassy, 3 October 1994.
- 23 Internal MFA memo (Hansen to Trolle Andersen), 28 September 1994, accessed via the MFA’s Regional Adviser for the Middle East Rolf Willy Hansen’s personal records. The author has been unable to locate the document in the MFA’s archive in Oslo.
- 24 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, internal memo, 29 September 1994.
- 25 *Ibid.*, and UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Oslo to Cairo Embassy, 3 October 1994.
- 26 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 4 October 1994.
- 27 Øverkil, Nærum, interviews and UD 308.87 Vol. 3, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 11 October 1994.
- 28 UNSCO repeatedly pressed the case that Nærum should be formally transferred, but as his work was very much related to facilitating the transit and clearance of police equipment donations via Egypt into Gaza, he greatly benefited from his Cairo-registered diplomatic car and his formal attaché position at the Gaza office and the embassy. UD 308.87 Vol. 8, Gaza office to Oslo, 20 April 1995.
- 29 For more on this process, see Chapter 2 of this book.
- 30 Conversation with Gordon Peake. See also Peake (1998).
- 31 UD 308.87 Vol. 8, Gaza office to Oslo, 20 April 1995.
- 32 Øverkil, interviews.
- 33 The LACC consisted of a PNA representative and all donor countries with representation in the area (some thirty local donor representatives). It was co-chaired by Norway, the World Bank and UNSCO, and used to meet more frequently than the AHLC. The JLC was designed to handle policy matters of immediate concern in donor–recipient relations. The JLC embraced the major donors and multilateral institutions; its discussions and recommendations were reported to both the AHLC and the LACC. UNSCO and World Bank (1996), pp. 5, 32.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 35 UD-RG, “Terms of Reference for the Sector Working Groups (SWG) and Their Shepherds” and UNSCO and World Bank (1996), p. 29.
- 36 See the useful discussion in Brynen (2000), pp. 105–6.
- 37 These were Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States, in addition to the European Commission and the EU (Presidency), Israel, the UN and the PNA. UD-RG, “Invitation to Local COPP Meeting”, 30 January 1995.
- 38 UD 308.87 Vol. 2, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel to Foreign Minister Godal, 19 July 1994.

- 39 The August meeting was attended by Norway, Australia, the UK, Canada, Egypt, the European Commission, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Russia, Sweden and the US. The September 1995 meeting included donor representatives from Norway, Australia, the UK, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, the European Commission, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the US. SWG/Police meeting minutes, 10 August 1995, 19 September 1995 and 13 November 1995.
- 40 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 September 1995, p. 2.
- 41 The last police donor matrix available in MFA correspondence is from January 1995, although the MFA in 1995–6 requested that such status reports should be made available.
- 42 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 10 August 1995, p. 2.
- 43 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 November 1995, pp. 1–2.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 45 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 February 1997 and UNSCO and World Bank (1996), p. 180.
- 46 UD 308.87, Gaza office to Oslo, 6 August 1996.
- 47 UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749-21, Bonn Embassy to Oslo, 9 January 1996.
- 48 UD-RG, UNRWA (Peter Hansen) to Gaza office, 9 October 1996; al-Majaydah to Swedish Consulate (Roxman), 15 October 1996; Samih Nasr to Swedish Consulate (Roxman), 8 October 1996; and al-Majaydah to UNSCO (Petersen), 15 October 1996.
- 49 UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749-28, Gaza office to Oslo, 6 August 1996.
- 50 These changes came directly in response to a joint review of the LACC's structure in April 1997, and also included minor changes in the organization of working groups and subgroups. Brynen (2000), p. 89.
- 51 UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749-28, Gaza office to Oslo, 6 August 1996.
- 52 Sevje, interviews.
- 53 Haugestad, interview.
- 54 See, for example, UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749-16-18, internal memo (Trolle Andersen to Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland), 19 May 1995 and UD 308.87 Vol. 9, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 6 July 1995.
- 55 UD 308.87 Vol. 9, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 6 July 1995 and UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749-9 MFA to Øverkil, 20 September 1995.
- 56 UD-RG, Gaza office (Sevje) to Oslo, 14 February 1997.
- 57 *Ibid.*
- 58 *Ibid.*
- 59 Brynen (2000), p. 89.
- 60 Sevje, interview.
- 61 Hooper, interviews.
- 62 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 November 1995, p. 4.
- 63 The UN police training coordinator noted in late December 1996 in an interview with this author that he was tired of Palestinian Police requests for equipment and vehicles such as airplanes, submarines and helicopters. They were neither particularly police-related nor commensurate with the donors' capabilities. Petersen, interviews.
- 64 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 November 1995, p. 4.
- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

- 66 Ibid., p. 4.
- 67 In November 1995, UNSCO still called upon the donors to provide updated information on both training and equipment. A UN–World Bank report from July 1996 reported that Norway had decided to discontinue the updating of a matrix of in-kind gifts. Ibid., p. 5 and UNSCO and World Bank (1996), p. 181.
- 68 Sevje, Petersen, interviews.
- 69 This figure included in-kind donations/equipment and training as well as contributions to cover start-up and recurrent police costs in 1994–5, according to figures given in the AHLC Secretariat and PEC DAR, *Matrix of Donors' Assistance to the West Bank and Gaza*, fifth revision, November 1996, pp. 12–14.
- 70 Heller and Shapir (1999), p. 315.
- 71 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 6 June 1995, p. 3.
- 72 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 November 1995, p. 5.
- 73 Petersen, interview and UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749-28, Gaza office to Oslo, 6 August 1996.
- 74 Sab'awi, Sørensen, interviews.
- 75 UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749-28, Gaza office to Oslo, 6 August 1996. See also S. Rodan, "A General's Fall From Power", *Jerusalem Post*, 23 August 1996, p. 9.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Sørensen, interviews.
- 78 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 February 1997.
- 79 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 27 November 1997.
- 80 For more on problems in the implementation of police training assistance, see Chapter 8.
- 81 UD-RG, Gaza office (Sevje) to Oslo, 14 February 1997.
- 82 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 27 November 1997.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Ibid.
- 85 The donors' emphasis in 1995–6 was moving from equipment towards training. In 1996, less police equipment was being donated, and it was to a larger degree linked to specific training programmes. Petersen, Nærum, interviews.
- 86 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 February 1997.
- 87 For more on the police academy project, see Chapter 8.
- 88 UD-RG, Gaza office (Sevje) to Oslo, 14 February 1997.
- 89 See, for example, UD-RG, A. Øverkil to Tel Aviv Embassy, 7 April 1995.
- 90 Brynen (2000), p. 127.
- 91 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 7 February 1995; UD-RG, A. Øverkil to Tel Aviv Embassy, 7 April 1995; SWG/Police meeting minutes, 10 August 1995, p. 4; SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 September 1995, p. 3; and Nærum, interview.
- 92 Sørensen, Bleikelia, Petersen, interviews.
- 93 COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, p. 3.
- 94 UD-RG, A. Øverkil to IDF (Brigadier Dubi Gazit), 20 April 1995.
- 95 Ibid.
- 96 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 6 June 1995, pp. 1–2.
- 97 For a detailed discussion of these issues, see Brynen (2000), pp. 126–9.

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## A Missed Opportunity? The Failure of the Police Observer Negotiations

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Perhaps gravest of all is the paragraph in the agreement which relates to “a temporary international or foreign presence.” ... Foreign forces, by their very presence, will prevent us from acting against terrorists which strike at us. Will we shell UN or other international forces?<sup>1</sup>

**Ariel Sharon, September 1993**

A cornerstone of police reform efforts in societies emerging from violent conflict is the deployment of international police observers in order to provide day-to-day guidance to the new or reconstituted police forces, oversee training and assistance programmes and monitor compliance with international standards for democratic policing. The UN Civilian Police unit at the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations has been a key instrument in such reform efforts, although non-UN police monitors have also been deployed in post-conflict areas.<sup>2</sup> In the Oslo process, the deployment of a UN or a third-party peacekeeping or observer mission in the Occupied Territories was considered unlikely owing to Israel's opposition to such an involvement.<sup>3</sup> By contrast, the Palestinians viewed the introduction of peacekeepers and observers as a cornerstone of self-rule and repeatedly called for an international peacekeeping presence, for example at border crossings, in West Bank areas lying outside Israeli settlements and Palestinian towns and villages or at the projected airport and harbour in Gaza.<sup>4</sup> In the PNA's view, observers or peacekeepers were important because they would presumably reduce its subordination to the Israelis and deter them from attempting to reoccupy the self-ruled areas if the political negotiations collapsed.

After the establishment of the PNA, the issue of deploying police observers/experts to train, monitor and guide the Palestinian Police emerged for the first time. It became a prominent item on the negotiating agenda in late 1994 and early 1995 but was put on the back burner in March 1995. The importance and content of these negotiations



have escaped the notice of scholars studying the Palestinian–Israeli talks and the PNA. In this chapter, I shall explore why the parties and the donors failed to reach an agreement on a police observer mission and briefly discuss what implications that outcome had for police reform in the PNA-ruled areas.

### **The Temporary International Presence in Hebron**

In the light of Israeli opposition to a peacekeeping presence, the deployment of an observer force with a weaker mandate was deemed more probable, especially as the DoP contained a reference to “a temporary international or foreign presence, as agreed upon”.<sup>5</sup> In the wake of the massacre in Hebron on 25 February 1994, Israel was pressured to accept the deployment of an international observer force to the city, the so-called Temporary International Presence in the City of Hebron (TIPH). As David Makovsky has noted, “this was a step Israel ha[d] assiduously avoided since gaining control of the territories in 1967 – out of fear that even something as seemingly benign as the TIPH would set a precedent that ultimately would lead to a UN trusteeship of the territories”.<sup>6</sup>

When Israel accepted the TIPH, Prime Minister Rabin justified it as an “exceptional case”, to woo the PLO back to the peace table, and as “a price” Israel had to pay because Baruch Goldstein, when perpetrating the massacre, had used an assault rifle issued to him by the IDF.<sup>7</sup> The Rabin government incurred a barrage of Israeli right-wing criticism for having agreed to an observer force in the historic city of Hebron in ‘Judea and Samaria’, and it declined to renew the TIPH’s mandate after it expired on 8 August 1994.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, PLO spokesmen hailed the TIPH agreement as an important diplomatic achievement, despite the weak mandate of the force. According to Said Ahmad Tibi, “During the past twenty years we have demanded deployment of international troops in the occupied territories, and this is the first time that Israel approves multinational armed observers ... We think this is a victory and an achievement for Palestinian diplomacy, because this presence demonstrates that the next phase will be that of full Palestinian sovereignty in the occupied territories.”<sup>9</sup>

On the local and practical level, however, the Palestinian attitude to the TIPH was less enthusiastic.<sup>10</sup> In their post-mission evaluation

report, the TIPH criticized the PLO-controlled municipality and city council in Hebron for being uncooperative and for making “no adequate preparations or thoughts [of] how to benefit from TIPH’s presence”, apparently out of lack of influence in the local community and insufficient authority delegated by the PLO leadership.<sup>11</sup>

The IDF was criticized for obstructionism and a lack of willingness to respond to specific reports conveyed by the TIPH to the IDF about common Palestinian grievances such as house searches, the closing down of homes, denial of access to the civil administration, lack of information about apprehended persons and allegations of vandalism and bad behaviour on the part of Israeli soldiers. In a demonstration of its power to circumscribe the TIPH’s operations, the Israeli army on one occasion imposed a full curfew, which extended also to the TIPH observers, in the wake of the killings of two settlers by Islamic militants just outside Hebron. Stuck at Headquarters, the TIPH spokesman was quoted as saying that “we’re just sitting in our foxholes . . . . [The situation is] a little bit frustrating.”<sup>12</sup> True, the TIPH scored some successes and was credited with having contributed to a considerably lower level of violence in the city. Arafat highlighted this each time he called for new observer forces in the Territories.<sup>13</sup> For the donors, however, the difficulties experienced by the TIPH, and the lack of PLO interest in the force once it was deployed, impacted negatively on their willingness to participate in new missions of this sort.

### **A Police Expert/Observer Mission for Gaza and Jericho?**

With the advent of Palestinian self-rule, Israel’s position on international observers seemed to change, especially if these forces remained inside the PNA-ruled areas and did not interfere with Palestinian–Israeli security relations. For example, although Israel was adamantly opposed to an armed peacekeeping presence, in a draft paper from late 1993 it had reportedly been supportive of a non-UN mission of some 100 police experts to train the Palestinian Police, hoping that this would be sufficient to fulfil the DoP’s provision for an international presence.<sup>14</sup> In the Gaza–Jericho Agreement, Israel consented to a new observer force, an expanded “temporary international presence” (TIP) of 400 members to be deployed in eight designated towns and cities in the PNA-ruled

areas: Gaza, Rafah, Khan Yunis, Dayr al-Balah, Jabalya, Absan, Bayt Hanun and Jericho.<sup>15</sup> Negotiations on a special protocol to implement this started shortly afterwards. They continued during the early autumn of 1994, during which the PNA apparently gained some acceptance for reorientating the force towards a police monitoring and assistance mission.<sup>16</sup> A protocol on TIP was concluded on 23 October 1994.<sup>17</sup> It was formally still a draft because of disagreements about the maps attached to it delineating the deployment areas of the mission, but no further modifications were expected to be needed. Unlike the TIPH mission in Hebron, the new observer force would deploy only in areas under full PNA authority, not in areas with shared security control or under direct Israeli occupation.<sup>18</sup>

For the first time, an international police observer force was called for in relatively unambiguous language. The protocol stated that “TIP personnel shall have no military and police functions” and shall not “interfere in disputes, incidents, or the activities of the Israeli security forces or the Palestinian Police”, but such restrictions were common for nearly all UN Civilian Police missions. The references to TIP personnel as “observers, experts, instructors and other staff” who would “assist in the organization and training of the Palestinian Police”, assist the PNA “in the exercise of its authority in the areas of operation”, “help promote stability” and provide “a feeling of security” all pointed in the direction of an international police expert/observer mission (see Box 7.1 for excerpts).<sup>19</sup>

Following the adoption of the TIP protocol, the two parties asked Norway as AHLC chair to invite the governments of Turkey, Norway, Finland, Australia, Canada and two other EU member states designated by the EU to participate in the TIP mission.<sup>20</sup> This request inaugurated a four-month period of hectic diplomacy between donors, the PNA and Israel to clarify the exact mandate and modalities of the observer force. This lasted until March 1995, when the issue was finally shelved.

**Box 7.1**

**Protocol on the temporary international presence**

The tasks of TIP personnel within its areas of operation will be:

- (a) to assist the Palestinian Authority through the use of TIP personnel's expertise, in the exercise of its authority in the areas of operation;
- (b) to observe the enhancement of peace and prosperity among Palestinians;
- (c) to assist in the promotion and execution of projects initiated by the donor countries ...;
- (d) to provide by their presence a feeling of security ...;
- (e) to help promote stability and an appropriate environment conducive to the enhancement of the well-being of Palestinians;
- (f) to encourage economic development and growth in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area;
- (g) to assist in the organization and training of the Palestinian Police;
- (h) to provide reports, weekly to the PNA, monthly the Joint Liaison Committee and periodically to the AHLC Chair.

While on duty TIP personnel shall wear distinctive uniforms with a special emblem ... and their vehicles shall be marked with the same emblem. The TIP personnel may carry pistols for self-defence purposes in the areas of operation.

**Norway – A Reluctant Lead-Nation**

Norway was entrusted with the task of coordinating the composition of the TIP and initiating the mission, but the MFA was not enthusiastic about this new job. The MFA's Middle East adviser recommended in an internal discussion note sounding out the possibility of an EU leadership role. However, he gathered that Norway would probably have to assume some initial responsibility, especially as the PLO attached much importance to the TIP after the TIPH mission in Hebron had ended in August 1994. (Arafat had contacted EU representatives and requested EU participation in a TIP in early May 1994. In response to this request, the EU's Ad Hoc Working Group on the Middle East formulated a draft

paper on the conditions for possible EU involvement in TIP in preparations for future discussions.) The MFA was also worried about the expenditures that a large observer mission would incur. (For example, it was estimated that Norway's presumed quota of 25 observers would cost around \$3–3.5 million for a six-month period.<sup>21</sup>) After internal discussions, the MFA decided that Norway should avoid assuming any leadership responsibility for the TIP. If this were not communicated clearly to the parties, it was feared that Norway would have to shoulder the burden if Israel refused to accept the EU in the lead-nation role.<sup>22</sup>

Initially, the EU Presidency (Germany) seemed ready to participate in and perhaps also lead the mission, proposing to Norway that the Presidency take charge of the initial coordination between the prospective participants from among EU member states.<sup>23</sup> In the spring of 1994, when the TIP issue was discussed in the EU's Ad Hoc Working Group on the Middle East, member states were generally positive, in particular the United Kingdom; and a so-called joint action resolution on EU participation in a TIP force was passed at the EU foreign ministers meeting in Luxembourg on 19 April 1994.<sup>24</sup>

When it became known that Norway wanted to hand over the lead-nation role to someone else, the PLO urged the MFA to reconsider its position, fearing that otherwise momentum would be lost. The Nobel laureate award ceremony in Oslo on 9–11 December 1994 celebrating the peacemaker triumvirate of Arafat, Peres and Rabin also gathered together top-level political delegations from both parties and a number of donor countries; it provided an occasion for further talks on the TIP, including the leadership issue. In consultations ahead of the Oslo summit, Nabil Sha'th had urged Norway not to give up the lead-nation role, arguing that "the alternative to Norwegian leadership in the establishment phase of TIP was chaos", which must have been flattering to the MFA.<sup>25</sup> Sha'th urged that Norway should instead consider transferring the leadership role at a later stage, after the mission had been established. In separate consultations with the Israelis, the MFA received specific signals that Israel too preferred a Norwegian lead-nation role, but it was not an absolute demand.<sup>26</sup>

The MFA made it clear to the PNA that although it might accept a leadership role in the establishment phase, it would not commit itself to be the lead-nation in the long run.<sup>27</sup> It continued to sound out responses to the prospect of an EU leadership role in January and February 1995,

but the EU Presidency and its member states seemed to show so little enthusiasm for the TIP that the chances were great that Norway would be left alone with the leadership burden.<sup>28</sup>

### **A Contradictory Mandate?**

Reluctant to chair the TIP mission, the MFA came to support the idea that the TIP mandate as spelled out in the protocol was ambiguous and even contradictory. A degree of ambiguity was a characteristic feature of most agreements on observer and peacekeeping mandates, but in the case of the TIP, Norway and other donors came to highlight the lack of clarity as a formidable obstacle to the implementation of the protocol.

In early November 1994, the MFA asked the parties to clarify and concretize the mandate, especially the provisions on police and security-related activities, which it found to be somewhat contradictory.<sup>29</sup> Norway was careful to consult closely with Israel and contacted Joel Singer, a legal adviser in the Israeli MFA and one of the foremost architects of the DoP. Singer argued that the TIP was simply “a waste of money”, but it was apparently important to Arafat as a way for the PNA to demonstrate international participation in the peace process.<sup>30</sup> Singer informed the Norwegian embassy that Arafat had specifically instructed the Palestinian delegation to insist that the observers might carry arms for self-defence, knowing that previously the MFA had opposed arming the Hebron observers. Singer did not refer to police instructors, but highlighted instead the importance of personnel for the health sector, in which he thought the participating states would find the most meaningful task. He impressed upon the Norwegians that the participating countries would have a far better chance of influencing the mandate than the Israelis, obviously hoping that Norway would take the lead in reorientating the mission towards civilian, non-police tasks. Norway conveyed this impression to the other prospective participating states.<sup>31</sup>

The MFA also consulted with the Palestinians, but it continued to portray the PNA's thinking as vague with regard to the mandate. Sha'ath mentioned advisers and trainers “in police matters”; and with regard to personnel, he “seemed to think of senior military personnel”, the MFA noted.<sup>32</sup> Instead of seeing the potential for making the TIP into a much-needed police training and observer mission, the MFA

chose to highlight the lack of clarity in the PNA's vision of TIP in its correspondence with other donors: "Mr Shaath was not able to clarify the mandate very much ... [He] did not seem to have any concrete ideas on how this kind of observer could fit in to assistance related activities. He would not however object to an extension of the mandate to also include election monitoring, should elections take place within the mandate period."<sup>33</sup>

Whether this influenced other European donors to make a point about the mandate's alleged vagueness or whether the MFA's writing simply reflected the prevalent opinion among other donors is difficult to determine. In any case, the result was that in late 1994, when Arafat visited donor capitals and raised the TIP issue, most donors agreed that his vision of the TIP was contradictory, reinforcing the notion of an unclear mandate – a mixture of civilian and military observers, with a preference for the latter. Although Arafat often stressed the symbolic signal of international observers to the local population, Sha'ath frequently emphasized the TIP's role in police training, especially crowd control, for which the bloody riots on 18 November had demonstrated a need. The Finnish foreign minister Heikki Haavisto cautioned in late December that "especially on the Palestinian side there still seems to be a great deal of confusion as to the desired character of the whole operation. It is of utmost importance to know exactly where we stand before we positively commit ourselves to the operation."<sup>34</sup>

The perceived vagueness of the PNA's thinking was deplorable. There is little doubt that Nabil Sha'ath attempted to make an explicit case for police observers and trainers, but donors were unable or unwilling to grasp the importance of such a mission and advocate it in an articulate and persuasive manner. Instead, the impression of a lack of mission spread and imbued Norway and other donors with a reluctance to proceed.

### **Gauging Support for the TIP**

During the informal consultations with prospective participating countries in November and early December, most were in principle favourable towards participation. On 16 December 1994, shortly after the Nobel laureate award ceremony in Oslo, the Norwegian foreign minister dispatched letters to the countries designated by the protocol. He requested a formal confirmation of their participation and, if they

did confirm, an indication of what number and kind of personnel would partake in the mission. The letters also called for a first coordination meeting in January 1995, to discuss possible contributions and to consult further with the parties on the proposed mandate.<sup>35</sup>

The responses ranged from a relatively unambiguous ‘no’ from Canada at one end of the spectrum to a ‘yes’ from Turkey at the other end. The latter indicated that it would field up to 100, preferably military, personnel and send even more to fill up the quota if necessary.<sup>36</sup> Finland also mentioned a specific number (up to a maximum of 25 observers), but stipulated that the TIP should “be a non-military operation by nature”, at least during the preparatory phase.<sup>37</sup> Most countries were non-committal, referring again to the vague mandate.<sup>38</sup> When declining to participate in the TIP, Canada referred to its policy of “concentrat[ing] our efforts in the area of traditional military peacekeeping, where Canada has considerable experience and expertise. We would prefer not to participate in a civilian peacekeeping force, an area for which we are not particularly prepared.”<sup>39</sup>

The Canadian response was perhaps indicative of the strong impression among the donors that the TIP would be an unwieldy and ill-defined ‘civilian peacekeeping’ presence similar to the ‘impotent’ TIPH in Hebron, and they clearly failed to see the potential for turning it into a much-needed police observer force. The Netherlands, for example, which declined to take part in the mission, referred to the evaluation of the Danish and Italian participation in the TIPH, which purportedly confirmed that such a mission “can only be [a] success if the mandate is absolutely clear.”<sup>40</sup>

Owing to the status of the mandate and other formal reasons, the EU countries agreed that an EU participation within the framework of the ‘joint action’ resolution of 19 April 1994 was not advisable. Internal EU discussions revealed differences, however. Some member states saw the TIP mission as an opportunity to raise the profile of the EU in the Middle East peace process.<sup>41</sup> Others warned against this, arguing that the EU’s stature would be harmed by participation in a mission that did not have the full commitment of Israel and the PLO. In the end, it was decided that EU member states might participate on a national level with political support from the EU Presidency, but not as a joint action mission.<sup>42</sup> The MFA received signals that up to five EU member states might be willing to participate.<sup>43</sup>



In an internal memorandum of late January 1995, the MFA gauged the responses to the foreign minister's letter to prospective TIP participants. He found most of the invitees to be "rather lukewarm".<sup>44</sup> The reasons for this were several. In addition to mixed feelings about the previous TIPH, the parties themselves lacked "enthusiasm" for the operation. Also, the mandate was still perceived as "unclear", and the prospective participants were worried about the PNA's emphasis on the mission's "military aspects, including its desire for an armed TIP mission".<sup>45</sup>

### **Turning the TIP into a Civil Peace Corps**

January–February 1995 witnessed a more active Norwegian role in reorientating the TIP towards its own (and incidentally Israeli) preferences. Norway went ahead with the planned coordination meeting on the TIP, and called for a meeting in Brussels on 15 February 1995. This was a week ahead of the next meeting of the EU Ad Hoc Working Group on the Middle East, where the MFA hoped a final EU decision on the TIP issue would be made.

The MFA now proposed that only prospective participating countries should attend the first part of the meeting, in order to allow them to formulate a common position before meeting with the PLO or Israel. In planning for that meeting, the MFA's Middle East Unit recommended that despite Norway's previous reluctance to assume leadership of the TIP, this job should not be avoided at any cost, and it pointed to the benefits of a relatively high-profile involvement. It further advised that as the parties were unable to offer a more precise mandate, the coordinating meeting of contributing countries should reach consensus on a new mandate among themselves and present their decision to the parties as a *fait accompli*. (This strategy departed from Norway's previous emphasis on a purely facilitator's role in Palestinian–Israeli peacemaking.) The MFA was to work out a "clarification of the mandate", to be sent out with the invitation to the coordination meeting. The TIP's mission would be reorientated towards a civil expert force focused on aid-related, not military/police-related tasks.<sup>46</sup> The Middle East Unit judged that this would make it easier for other countries to participate in the TIP. Alternatively, if a clarification were not forthcoming, it was perhaps preferable that the coordination meeting ended with the cancellation of the entire operation.

Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Egeland largely approved of these recommendations, especially the promotion of “a peace corps-like TIP”. Indeed, he seemed more enthusiastic about the TIP than the Middle East Unit, suggesting, for example, that given the current crisis in the political negotiations, its mission might become “an important *instrument* to save the peace process and prevent a social breakdown in Gaza”.<sup>47</sup> He was as well more open to the use of Norwegian military and police personnel, but primarily because they would continue to receive their salaries from the justice and defence departments. He did not think of the TIP as a police observer force.

The idea of retaining the TIP as a police-orientated observer and training mission was not completely absent in the MFA, however. In correspondence with Oslo, the former COPP team at the embassy in Cairo articulated that idea with some clarity, based on Palestinian views and preferences. In a meeting with Nabil Sha’th on 31 January 1995, the embassy was informed of his very specific expectations that the TIP should undertake only security-related tasks and should in particular contribute to the much-needed training of the Palestinian Police. Rapid recruitment had created a vast pool of poorly educated policemen, while expectations of more effective anti-terrorism and professional law enforcement were growing. A massive retraining campaign was needed, and the 400-strong TIP mission could contribute decisively in this regard and create a better *esprit de corps* in the Palestinian Police. Sha’th insisted that the TIP’s mission should consist only of police and/or military experts, and he specifically criticized the tendency to reorientate or dilute its mandate with purely civilian functions, as Israel and many of the donors were encouraging. He told the embassy that the PNA “did not want civilians, but people like Arnstein Øverkil”.<sup>48</sup> On later occasions, Sha’th repeated his call for a mission of senior police advisers of Øverkil’s calibre to work for the improvement of the Palestinian Police.<sup>49</sup>

The former COPP officials at the Cairo embassy (Haugestad and Selvaag) seconded Sha’th by arguing that the TIP seemed even more important now than previously given the crisis in the political talks caused largely by the Palestinian Police’s inability to deal firmly with the security situation. They strongly recommended that the MFA discuss the TIP’s mission with Øverkil, who apparently remained uninformed about the internal MFA consultations.<sup>50</sup>

Oslo did not take much notice of the embassy's recommendations or of Shath's insistent requests for a police-orientated TIP. Egeland noted to the Middle East Unit that "police training should be included as one of several components" in it.<sup>51</sup> In practical terms, however, the Middle East coordinator continued to pursue Israel's version of the TIP as a civil mission, disregarding the specific and explicit references to security and police functions in the protocol. In consultations with the MFA in late January 1995, Uri Savir, the head of the Israeli MFA, raised the issue of the TIP, confirming that Israel had never been "particularly interested in establishing the TIP" and would not oppose its cancellation.<sup>52</sup> These signals were adopted as policy, not the PNA's preferences. Ahead of the coordination meeting in Brussels, the Middle East coordinator held informal consultations with the EU Presidency at which the mandate issue was discussed. According to the meeting minutes, Norway conveyed the following message: "Israel was not particularly interested in TIP. With regard to the Palestinians, certain difficulties were expected since they had developed another expectation about the TIP than what was originally intended. Nabil Shath envisaged the TIP as a police/military force, assuming security responsibilities, while the TIP was originally meant to be a civil observer- and expert corps."<sup>53</sup>

The MFA's reinterpretation of the protocol was rather remarkable, and demonstrated a willingness to adopt the Israeli position wholeheartedly. This must be understood against the background of a general opposition in the EU countries to a police- or security-orientated mission.<sup>54</sup> However, as a lead-nation in the police aid sector and with Øverkil still as police adviser to Arafat, the MFA should perhaps have demonstrated a more proactive policy in utilizing the TIP for the benefit of the Palestinian Police. In spring 1995, Norway was contemplating an exit strategy from the problematic police sector, however, and this would be incompatible with a leading role in a police-orientated TIP.<sup>55</sup>

### **The Norwegian 'Non-Paper' on the TIP**

In preparation for the Brussels meeting, Norway drafted a revised version of the TIP mandate in a 'non-paper'. This was based upon the comments and responses received so far but obviously accommodated the Israeli and donor preference for a civil-orientated TIP.<sup>56</sup> It proposed a "peace corps-" type operation consisting of experts, advisers and technicians in

high-priority areas, to be made available to PNA ministries, municipalities, local NGOs etc. It proposed only 200 personnel, not the 400 called for in the protocol, with 25 in each of the eight designated localities. The TIP's activities were to include virtually every aid sector in the LACC/SWG structure, and more than sixteen different areas were listed, with "training of police" being one of them but not a priority. The 'non-paper' also called for an unarmed TIP, despite the importance which the PNA attached to armed observers.<sup>57</sup>

Not surprisingly, the 'non-paper' provoked the Palestinians' criticism for disregarding their views. Nabil Sha'ath told the Gaza office (Sevje) that the PNA was very interested in a TIP mission but that the 'non-paper' reflected only the Israeli position, glossing over several key tasks specified in the protocol.<sup>58</sup> Sha'ath therefore called upon the MFA to revise it, and promised to raise the issue with Joel Singer in order to gain acceptance for a more security-related TIP.<sup>59</sup> He now envisaged three areas for the TIP mission: (a) observation at trouble spots to calm down tensions and investigate incidents; (b) counselling and technical assistance for the Palestinian Police, especially in facilitating the difficult reform of guerrilla soldiers into police officers; and (c) police training, an expansion of the current police training activities.

Sha'ath did perhaps unwittingly sow extra confusion about the mandate by frequently referring to instances of violent clashes between the Palestinian Police and the Israeli army as examples of what the TIP mission should seek to remedy and address.<sup>60</sup> By referring to the border crossings and incidents involving the Israelis, the PNA reinforced an impression of the TIP as not so much a UN Civilian Police-type mission as a peacekeeping mission for interposition, which Israel was certain to oppose adamantly.

The Norwegian 'non-paper' raised serious criticisms from the participating countries. Australia in particular expressed "strong reservations about the usefulness" of the TIP given its new aid-related focus because it would overlap and interfere with the existing structures for aid coordination.<sup>61</sup> The UN, which claimed to have been kept in the dark about the TIP until mid-February 1995, seconded Australia's criticism. It expressed "misgivings" and "apprehensions" about an overlap with UNSCO's functions, asking whether a TIP with such a mandate was actually needed.<sup>62</sup> Another criticism (by the Netherlands) was that any reformulation of the mandate was an exclusive task for the parties.

Turkey protested against what it saw as an explicit deviation from the Palestinian–Israeli protocol on the TIP on a number of points, all of which tilted unambiguously towards the Israeli position. It was also unwilling to give up the option of arming the observers, because of security risks from militant Palestinian groups.<sup>63</sup>

### **Dropping the Ball – The TIP Coordination Meeting and Beyond**

At the coordination meeting on 15 February 1995, the original plan that the donors should first agree on a common approach before meeting the parties was abandoned. The consultations came to revolve around the existing disagreements between the PNA and Israel on the TIP's functions and mandate, although these were not necessarily insurmountable given that the protocol already was concluded. At the meeting, the Palestinians argued that the TIP from the very beginning “was intended to be a security-related operation” and that a separate protocol on the TIP would have been unnecessary if it simply meant a civil expert team on aid assistance, of which there were many already.<sup>64</sup> Sha'th restated the PNA's vision of the TIP with three distinct areas of activity: observation, counselling-guidance and training, similar to what had previously been communicated to the MFA (but apparently not communicated broadly to the donor community). He specifically pointed out that the TIP should not have executive police powers, be involved in incidents and conflicts or operate outside the PNA-ruled areas or *vis-à-vis* the Israeli side. The focus on police monitoring and police aid functions was an ultimatum. If the donors were unwilling to participate in a TIP with these functions, the PNA was not interested in establishing the mission.

### **Israeli Concerns about the Political Implications of a Third-Party Security Role**

For the Israeli side, Singer reiterated its preference for a civil operation whose main emphasis would be on aid-related activities without any security-related tasks. He then accused Sha'th of attempting to renegotiate the TIP protocol, and the exchanges between the two developed into a

heated discussion.<sup>65</sup> Singer also held that the TIP should “not function as a buffer between Israel and the Palestinians”; nor should it observe and report on the parties’ compliance with the Accords. Its advisory role in relation to the police would have to be pursued “‘behind the scenes’ in closed classrooms”.<sup>66</sup> He even warned the donors that the observers “should not be associated with the Palestinian Police”, ostensibly because this could be “dangerous for the TIP observers”.<sup>67</sup>

Evidently, Israel feared the possibility that a police observer force, even without a physical deployment for interposition, might evolve in that direction in a political sense. This was because by observing and following up on the Palestinian Police, it might well start to make judgements on the PNA’s compliance with the Accords, for example in the field of anti-terrorism; and this would make it harder for Israel to bully the PNA into taking measures that violated international standards of law enforcement. (Only a week earlier, Israeli and US pressure had finally induced Arafat to approve the formation of the notorious State Security Courts, similar to summary tribunals, whose workings made a mockery of the very meaning of fair trial and justice, according to watchdog groups.) Israel’s insistence that the TIP observer mission should deal only with the Palestinian Police in closed classrooms showed the depth of its ability to have a negative impact on Palestinian police reform.

On the other hand, the significant entanglement of Israeli and Palestinian forces, notably the joint patrols and the security coordination structure in and around the self-ruled areas, made it difficult to envisage an international police observer mission that would not have an impact on Palestinian–Israeli security relations. Israel’s position had to be understood in the light of the recent suicide attacks against Israelis, the most lethal since the West Bank and Gaza Strip were occupied in 1967, and the widespread impression that the PNA did not pursue an aggressive counter-terrorism policy. The TIP observer mission was therefore seen as a dangerous diversion that Arafat pursued in order to evade Israeli and US pressure.

### **Bridging Proposals**

Given the widening disagreements, Norway (which chaired the meeting) asked the parties to agree upon a revised mandate. Unwilling to be

blamed for dropping the TIP against the PNA's wishes, it and the participating countries did not immediately shelve the issue. The donors simply restated their support for the TIP if and when a clear mandate was presented. The civil aid-related version of a TIP as outlined in the Norwegian 'non-paper' was dropped. Characteristically, the donors still feared that Sha'th's proposals might include some executive police functions and direct involvement in Palestinian–Israeli disputes, despite his explicit rebuttal of that notion at the meeting. Obviously, the donors felt that the Israeli objections fitted into their own lukewarm feelings about the TIP project.

For several weeks after the meeting, the MFA followed up on the TIP proposal, trying to create a possible compromise between the parties by downplaying the previous civil–security dichotomy and focusing specifically on police training and observation of internal PNA law enforcement. As the PNA seemed willing to reduce the TIP mission to 200, there was hope that a compromise solution might be possible.<sup>68</sup> An informal MFA memorandum, circulated, *inter alia*, to the UN Secretariat, noted that “A possible ‘solution’ might be (to meet Palestinian concerns) to focus on training and instruction of the police force and observation as security-related functions so as to assist in improving the performance of the police and the overall security situation. On the other hand (to meet the Israeli concerns) observations should be limited to internal Palestinian matters related to the work of the Palestinian Police Force.”<sup>69</sup>

It is uncertain to what degree the Norwegian compromise proposal was discussed by the parties and in the donor community. Norway contacted Singer on 26 February to discuss the outcome of the Brussels meeting, and he now claimed that the PNA did not want the TIP after all. The kind of mandate that Sha'th had envisaged would come only as a result of new Palestinian–Israeli talks, and Israel would make no initiative in that direction. As he had done at the Brussels meeting, Singer also played on the donors' scepticism about the usefulness of a police observer mission and their fears of becoming entangled in conflicts with militant Palestinian groups, and “observation *vis-à-vis* the Palestinian Police's performance seemed complicated. Should Norwegian observers simply walk up to Palestinian policemen who were about to arrest someone and correct them? This would easily lead TIP personnel into conflicts.”<sup>70</sup>



Singer did not want to reject any TIP options bluntly, but the signals from Prime Minister Rabin seemed very clear. During the Palestinian–Israeli summit on 16 February 1995 between him and Arafat, he had declined to pursue the TIP issue any further at that point.<sup>71</sup>

### **The PNA's Futile Search for a Third-Party Security Mediator**

The TIP discussions in early 1995 coincided with a serious crisis in the peace talks following the Israeli announcement of new settlement expansions. A spate of Palestinian suicide attacks, most notably an attack near the Beit Lid settlement where 19 people were killed, led to a series of Israeli retaliatory security and economic measures against the PNA.<sup>72</sup> The difficulties experienced at the TIP talks were a reflection of this crisis.

In view of the deadlock, the PNA called for a more active Norwegian mediation role, including in the sensitive field of security cooperation. Arafat repeatedly called upon the Gaza office to convey his desire for a stronger Norwegian role, suggesting, for example, that the TIP might play a role in counter-terrorism; and to this end he called for “an expanded TIP if necessary”.<sup>73</sup> During talks with the Norwegian foreign minister on 16 February 1995, Nabil Sha‘th suggested that Norway should try to facilitate security expert meetings or consultation mechanisms involving the PNA, Israel and a few donors. They would focus on practical security issues such as improved intelligence cooperation, improved communication, improved police training etc. Sha‘th advised the MFA to make contact with Rabin’s close security advisers, such as Amnon Shahak, Matan Vilnai and Dani Yatom, who had a decisive say in all security matters.<sup>74</sup>

Although promising to consider Sha‘th’s proposals seriously, the MFA insisted that its involvement was possible only if both parties wanted it. When it discussed the possibility of a more active Norwegian role with the Israelis, it received a definite ‘no’. This saved the MFA from the problem that it had little to offer in terms of expertise and resources in the field of counter-terrorism. Furthermore, Oslo was wary of remaining heavily involved in the police sector because of the many irregularities in the Palestinian Police, from human rights violations to the existence of illegal police branches. When the issue was raised in internal consultations, the MFA advised against the establishment of



formal contacts between the Norwegian Secret Police and the Palestinian Police's intelligence agencies because of the latter's unclear chain of command. Norway was not in a position to assume a mediation role in the field of security. Only the United States had the political weight and the intelligence resources to become an effective third-party security mediator in Palestinian–Israeli relations, and its role began to emerge only after a serious campaign of violence had shaken the political landscape in Israel in March 1996.

### **The End of the TIP**

The TIP remained an issue in Palestinian–Israeli–donor discussions for some time after the Brussels meeting. It was raised when the Finnish deputy prime minister visited the Middle East for talks with the parties at the end of February 1994. Arafat reportedly expected Finland and the EU to move ahead with technical preparations, apparently in disregard of Israel's objections and the donors' reservations. However, the Israelis did not want to be blamed for vetoing the TIP, and pledged to consider further consultations on the issue, hinting that a compromise was possible.<sup>75</sup> Israel's strategy was apparently to kill the issue by fatiguing the parties. In early March 1995, it also took some air out of the balloon by informing the EU of its wish that the EU assume the leadership of a future observer team for the Palestinian elections. This was a prestigious job, offering a much-wanted opportunity to enhance the visibility of the EU in the region's diplomacy.

The TIP issue remained in limbo for much of 1995, even though Arafat never tired of bringing up the question in his talks with the 'participating' countries.<sup>76</sup> But with the election observer mission coming up in January 1996 and the beginning of a new TIPH mission to Hebron in spring 1996, the issue of a police expert/observer mission was eventually lost and forgotten. Donor diplomats interviewed by this author even claimed to recollect that the possibility of making the TIP into a police observer mission had never been on the table at all.

## **Conclusion**

The failure to deploy a police observer mission was very unfortunate for Palestinian police reform. Human rights abuses were already a widely

recognized problem, and the planned TIP mission, even with its originally 'vague' mandate, would have given the donors a legal framework and a physical infrastructure for monitoring police performance on a daily basis. This was a crucial peacebuilding task, which donors simply left to human rights organizations. The latter were very articulate in pointing out legal deficiencies and describing the brutality of police abuses, but had no capacity or expertise in providing day-to-day guidance and counselling in professional policing. A TIP mission would also have given the donor community a larger stake in police reform and placed them in a better position to gauge the PNA's counter-terrorism performance, allowing them to make professional judgements that would have underpinned their mediation efforts. Norway and the EU countries failed to see the potential opportunities for police reform that the TIP represented, and hence an important peacebuilding instrument was lost. Instead, that role was later taken over by the CIA, whose narrow focus on specialized counter-terrorism skills and effectiveness was unlikely to promote democratic policing.

Who was to blame for the collapse of the negotiations over the TIP? Disagreements between Israel and the PNA certainly played a role, but one should not discard the possibility that the MFAs in Oslo and elsewhere in Europe were simply unfamiliar with the concept of police monitors. This was after all a relatively new component of post-conflict peacebuilding, and they failed to make a persuasive case for it. Many donors did not grasp the fundamental distinction between police observer missions and peacekeeping missions with executive policing authority, probably fearing that their personnel would become involved in policing the unruly Gaza Strip or in Israeli–Palestinian clashes.<sup>77</sup> The concept was probably misunderstood; and certainly the donors made frequent parallels with the former Hebron mission (TIPH), seemingly in total disregard of the very different mandate and deployment area of the new mission. The PNA also compounded the problem by speaking with different voices, hinting at an interposition function for the TIP and failing to make an articulate case for the usefulness of a police-orientated mission.

Israel's presumed veto was certainly a factor in donor reluctance to pursue the TIP, but it also made it easier for the donors to kill the initiative. Norway in particular chose to highlight the alleged contradictions in the mandate, and made few if any attempts at bridging the gaps by linking

the TIP to already ongoing police reform efforts in Gaza. The only supportive voice was the former COPP team in Cairo, but they were apparently kept outside the decision-making loop. Instead, a deliberate choice was made to reorientate the mission towards development aid tasks, which deprived the TIP of its core functions in the eyes of the PNA and overlapped with the existing donor aid coordination structure.

## NOTES

- 1 A. Sharon, "You can't dance with a murderer", *Jerusalem Post*, 3 September 1993.
- 2 For more on UN Civilian Police operations, see Hartz (2000); Eide and Holm (2000); and Hansen (2002).
- 3 For a discussion of peacekeepers in the Occupied Territories, see, for example, Sinai (1995) and Weinberger (1994).
- 4 See, for example, "PLO ask for international supervision of the elections and transfer of authority and security affairs" (in Arabic), *al-Quds*, 5 August 1992, p. 1; "Arafat wants European force to help police territories", *Jerusalem Post*, 10 November 1993; "PLO chief calls for observers after riot deaths", Reuters, 17 July 1994; "Palestinian police commander calls for international observers at Erez checkpoint", VOI, 0900GMT, 5 January 1995; C. Walker, "Arafat asks UN to intervene as civil war fears grow", *The Times*, 11 April 1995; W. Amr, "Arafat proposes international force in West Bank", Reuters, 17 June 1995; and Weinberger (1995).
- 5 *Declaration of Principles*, Annex II.
- 6 Makovsky (1996), p. 146.
- 7 "Talks resumed in the Mideast; Pact on Hebron", *New York Times*, 1 April 1994, p. 1.
- 8 The former defence minister Ariel Sharon argued that this unfortunate precedent of international observers "will undermine our grip on Jerusalem and our ability to hold other places"; the former Likud prime minister Yitzhak Shamir saw the TIPH mission as a "mockery of the country's independence and sovereignty". He described the deployment of observers as a "catastrophe". Cited in *ibid.* and A. La Guardia, "Israel and PLO agree on Hebron observers", *Daily Telegraph*, 1 April 1994, p. 16.
- 9 H. Goller, "Israel accepts international presence in Hebron", Reuters, 31 March 1994.
- 10 For more details on the experience of TIPH, see Lia (1998), pp. 43–56 and Helland-Hansen (2004).
- 11 UD 308.882-1 Vol. 2, "TIPH Evaluation Report", 7 August 1994.
- 12 "Islamic militants slay 2 settlers in Hebron", *New York Times*, 18 May 1994, p. 14.
- 13 See, for example, UD 308.87 Vol. 6, Gaza office to Oslo, 17 February 1995.
- 14 S. Rodan, "Israel ready to accept outside peacekeepers in Gaza Strip", *Jerusalem Post*, 17 December 1993.
- 15 *Gaza-Jericho Agreement*, Art. XXI.

- 16 “Urayqat says international forces will not supervise elections”, VOP, 1515GMT, 17 September 1994 and “Sha’th says Australia to join Gaza and Jericho observer force”, VOP, 0730GMT, 26 September 1994.
- 17 The protocol was concluded at the Palestinian–Israeli Liaison Committee meeting in Cairo on 23 October 1994 and signed by Prime Minister Peres and the PNA minister Nabil Sha’th the same day.
- 18 According to information from Joel Singer, legal adviser to the Israeli MFA. UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 25 November 1994.
- 19 *Protocol Concerning the Temporary International Presence*, 23 October 1994.
- 20 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Shimon Peres and Nabil Sha’th to the Norwegian foreign minister, 23 October 1994; Israeli MFA (Savir) to Tel Aviv Embassy, 26 October 1994; and “Joint statement” by the Palestinian–Israeli Liaison Committee, Cairo, 23 October 1994.
- 21 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, internal memo by the Middle East Unit, 25 January 1995.
- 22 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Oslo to Tel Aviv Embassy, 16 November 1994, with handwritten notes.
- 23 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Middle East Coordinator, Oslo to German MFA (Dingens), 6 December 1994.
- 24 For example, the resolution from the EU foreign ministers’ meeting in Luxembourg in April 1994 included a reference to EU participation. “EU to help create Palestinian police force”, Reuters, 18 April 1994 and “Details on joint action decided by Council of Union in support of peace process”, *Agence Europe*, 20 April 1994.
- 25 UD 308.87 Vol. 5, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 9 December 1994.
- 26 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Oslo to Tel Aviv Embassy, 16 November 1994 and UD 308.87 Vol. 6, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 29 January 1995.
- 27 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, internal memo by the Middle East Unit, 25 January 1995.
- 28 For example, UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 24 January 1995 and Paris Embassy to Oslo, 2 February 1995.
- 29 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Oslo to Tel Aviv Embassy, 16 November 1994.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Middle East Coordinator, Oslo to German MFA (Dingens), 6 December 1994.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Finnish foreign minister to foreign minister, 28 December 1994.
- 35 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, foreign minister to Australia, Canada, Finland, Sweden, Turkey, Germany (the EU Presidency) and the European Commission, 16 December 1994.
- 36 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, internal memo by the Middle East Unit, 25 January 1995.
- 37 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, the Finnish foreign minister to foreign minister, 28 December 1994.
- 38 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, the Australian Embassy in Copenhagen to MFA, 4 January 1995.
- 39 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Canadian foreign minister to foreign minister, 6 January 1995.
- 40 Source withheld on request.
- 41 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Rome Embassy to Oslo, 24 February 1995.

- 42 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, French foreign minister to foreign minister, received on 30 January 1995.
- 43 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, internal memo by the Middle East Unit, 25 January 1995 and Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 24 January 1995.
- 44 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, internal memo by the Middle East Unit, 25 January 1995.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, internal memo by the Middle East Unit, 25 January 1995, with Deputy Foreign Minister Egeland's notes.
- 48 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 1 February 1995.
- 49 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, internal memo, 19 February 1995, summary of Foreign Minister Godal's meeting with Nabil Sha'ath on 16 February 1995.
- 50 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 1 February 1995.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 29 January 1995.
- 53 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Paris Embassy to Oslo, 2 February 1995.
- 54 In the MFA, there was a feeling that the EU was strongly opposed to any security-related TIP, even if they might accept "a certain police *training* component". Palestinian expectations of a security-orientated TIP were seen as greatly "exaggerated". UD correspondence (source: the MFA Regional Adviser for the Middle East Rolf Willy Hansen's papers), Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 1 February 1995, with handwritten notes.
- 55 For more on Norway's role in the police aid coordination group, see Chapter 6 of this book.
- 56 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, 'non-paper', 7 February 1995.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Gaza office to Oslo, 10 February 1995.
- 59 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, Oslo to Washington Embassy, 14 February 1995.
- 60 He particularly cited the violent incident of Beit Hanun in early January 1995 in which Israeli soldiers shot and killed four Palestinian officers and the riots and shooting incidents between Palestinian and Israeli troops at the Erez crossing point in mid-July 1994.
- 61 For example, with its new focus the TIP would have "an ambivalent relationship with the LACC"; and with its six-month renewable mandate, "the TIP may not be able to consolidate the same level of expertise or continuity as other longer established aid delivery mechanisms". UD/TIP-files, Australian Embassy in Copenhagen to MFA, 8 February 1995.
- 62 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, the UN delegation to Oslo, 14 February 1995.
- 63 UD correspondence (source: the MFA Regional Adviser for the Middle East Rolf Willy Hansen's papers), Ankara Embassy to Oslo, 13 February 1995.
- 64 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, internal memo to foreign minister, 15 February 1995.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 UD correspondence (source: the MFA Regional Adviser for the Middle East Rolf Willy Hansen's papers), handwritten notes, 15 February 1995.
- 68 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, internal memo to foreign minister, 15 February 1995 and "TIP: Main points emanating from the meeting in Brussels on 15 February 1995," informal internal memo, undated.

- 69 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, “TIP: Main points emanating from the meeting in Brussels on 15 February 1995”, informal internal memo, undated.
- 70 UD 308.882 Vol. 1, internal memo (Hansen), meeting minutes, 1 March 1995.
- 71 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, internal memo, 19 February 1995, summary of Foreign Minister Godal’s meeting with Nabil Sha’th on 16 February 1995.
- 72 C. Walker, “Rabin pledges to fight extremists in every country”, *The Times*, 24 January 1995.
- 73 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, Gaza office to Oslo, 10 and 17 February 1995.
- 74 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, internal memo, 19 February 1995, summary of Foreign Minister Godal’s meeting with Nabil Sha’th on 16 February 1995.
- 75 UD 308.87 Vol. 6, Cairo Embassy to Oslo, 23 February 1995 and UD 308.87 Vol. 7, Tel Aviv Embassy to Oslo, 3 March 1995.
- 76 For example, in early August 1995 Arafat had raised the issue with the Australian foreign minister Evans during the latter’s visit to the region. UD 308.87 Vol. 9, Canberra Embassy to Oslo, 3 August 1995.
- 77 For a discussion on post-conflict peacebuilding as it was understood in the mid-1990s, see Chapter 1 of this volume.

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## 8

# A Marriage in Trouble? Donor–Palestinian Cooperation in Police Training

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The experience gained elsewhere with projects of this kind shows that small-scale and ad hoc training courses, however essential they may be, do not lead to sustained change.<sup>1</sup>

**Strategy Plan 1995, UN police training coordinator**

Training forms an essential part of the formation of a new police force. In the Palestinian case, police training was a combination of local Palestinian and foreign efforts, mostly by European, American and Arab sponsors. Their inputs diverged considerably in terms of orientation and content as well as with regard to the recipient branches. This chapter will explore the extent and the impact of the foreign-sponsored training efforts and examine a range of problems encountered during the implementation process. In order to provide some background to the foreign-sponsored training, I shall discuss first the extent and orientation of training conducted within the Palestinian Police organization.

### **Palestinian Police Training**

Shortly after the arrival of the first Palestinian Police units in Gaza and Jericho, recruitment of new personnel began at an impressive speed: in 1994–6, there was on average a net monthly induction of well over 1,000 recruits. This necessitated massive investments in training, but the poor condition of available training facilities and the small number of qualified instructors meant that the Palestinian Police were unable to accommodate the large influx of untrained recruits into the various police branches. Moreover, the available training facilities were not consolidated into one unified organization. Instead, each branch established its own makeshift facilities to cater for its most immediate training needs. The



Palestinian Police established a training facility called the General Training Directorate for Public Security and Police, located at the former infamous Israeli al-Ansar prison camp in Gaza City. The facility was supposed to be used by every branch, but it never became the focal point of all police training.<sup>2</sup> Instead, it remained primarily a National Security Forces (PNSF) facility. The other branches, in particular the Civilian Police, PS/Force-17, the General Intelligence (GIS) and the Preventive Security Agency (PSA), each established their own training facilities elsewhere. The GIS trained its officers at the Ansar-2 installation; Force-17 used a former IDF base in the Shaykh Radwan neighbourhood in Gaza; and the PSA created its own 'academy' in Jericho. The Civilian Police gradually built their own large compound with training facilities in Gaza, called Arafat Police City. They also established a police training school and a "specialized police academy" in Jericho (the latter opened on 1 July 1996). As these facilities became available, they stopped sending their recruits and officers to the PNSF's training camp at al-Ansar.<sup>3</sup>

The pace of recruitment and retraining varied from one branch to another. It was significantly slower in the PNSF, whose ranks were staffed with PLA troops and other diaspora Palestinians, many of whom had already received some basic police training in Egypt, Jordan and elsewhere. The PNSF in Jericho, for example, completed only two basic courses for new recruits during its first year in the town, launching their third basic course in August 1995.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, the Civilian Police, which was still embryonic at the time of deployment, grew very rapidly and trained new personnel en masse. Beginning with only a few dozen officers in May 1994, the branch expanded quickly to some 2,000 policemen in August 1994 after a series of crash courses, each including from 200 to 500 trainees.<sup>5</sup> New specialized departments were formed with responsibilities for criminal investigation, narcotics, prison administration, traffic and border crossings/checkpoints.<sup>6</sup> From the very beginning, the Civilian Police pursued an ambitious plan for continuous training and retraining of its personnel.<sup>7</sup> According to Civilian Police Chief Brigadier Ghazi al-Jabali, "Our plan is to conduct the training in phases, that is train 25 per cent of the policemen, then return them to service and train another 25 per cent, and so forth until there are no more 'holes'."<sup>8</sup>

The Civilian Police experienced the swiftest growth of all branches after deployment, becoming the second-largest branch in the Palestinian Police in 1997 (the PNSF remained the largest unit). It had perhaps the

most need for general and specialized training in a wide variety of fields. In 1996–7, the Civilian Police manned 18 police stations in the main cities and 25 stations in West Bank villages (Area B). It employed from 8,000 to 11,000 personnel, with an officer core of more than 1,000. Most of its officers had a university degree in law.<sup>9</sup> By 2000, its total strength had increased to 14,000, and 23 specialized departments had been formed.<sup>10</sup>

### **Civilian Functions, Military–Nationalist Orientation**

Training at the Palestinian Police's training centres remained very basic. In the beginning, the emphasis was on quantity, and there was usually only some 45 days of elementary military and physical training and only smatterings of relevant police science.<sup>11</sup> Elite units such as PS/Force-17 usually trained their recruits for three to four months, and the Civilian Police introduced a six-month officer course in 1996 and prolonged its basic introductory course to three months.<sup>12</sup> The PNSF's courses appear to have been more militarily orientated than those given by the Civilian Police. An illustrative account of the main elements of its training was given by Major Hikmat al-Duwayk, an instructor at the Training Directorate: "Our [training] programme starts with physical exercise, infantry drill and all its movements, weapons training, regrouping, defence and attack, some aspects of engineering, military topography, and field skills, security matters, political education and moral guidance."<sup>13</sup>

Another manifestation of the explicitly military orientation of the Palestinian Police's training was the establishment of institutions such as the Military Academy of Martyr Sa'd Sayil, a PS/Force-17 training facility opened by Arafat on 25 March 1995.<sup>14</sup> PS/Force-17, an elite unit of the Palestinian Police, was poised to become Palestine's equivalent of a Republican Guard, and its training was more thorough and demanding than that of other units. By April 1996, an estimated 1,500 new PS/Force-17 recruits had graduated after a five to six month training course, and by 1997 the branch had grown to some 5,500 personnel.<sup>15</sup> Its graduation ceremonies underlined a military identity, and featured parading troops and armoured vehicles.<sup>16</sup>

A slightly more police-orientated education was evidently offered by Civilian Police instructors at the newly opened 'police academy' in Jericho in 1996. There the trainees graduated as lieutenants after a

six-month course. The embryonic academy put more emphasis on quality, as opposed to the basic courses in which graduation relied primarily on physical fitness and skills in the use of firearms.<sup>17</sup> The theoretical subjects included law, police operations, patrols and duties in general terms; leadership, general management, traffic and public relations.<sup>18</sup> It also encompassed non-programme lectures in topics such as religious and political 'guidance', human rights, organized crime, the combat of terrorism, and psychology; and specialists in civil and military law from Palestinian universities participated as lecturers. Military training nevertheless formed a quite prominent part of the course according to interviewed course instructors and participants. The academy's director Muhammad Tahir Jabr (Abu al-Tahir) summed up the course by referring to its basic aim: "to polish the personality of the trainee militarily, physically, spiritually, and discipline-wise, through physical exercise, self-defence, the use of weapons and first aid".<sup>19</sup>

In addition to the stress on military skills and preparedness, Palestinian Police training had a strong nationalist orientation, manifest in a heavy emphasis on 'political education and moral guidance'.<sup>20</sup> The underlying themes were usually the role of Fatah and the Palestinian Police in resisting the Israeli occupation and trainees' duty to defend the PNA and its political achievements and to build the Palestinian state. This military-nationalist training was part of a broader militarization of Palestinian society, most manifest during the latter part of the 1990s.

The presence of Arafat, who always appeared in military uniform, was frequent at Police graduation ceremonies, and provided an opportunity for nationalist celebrations.<sup>21</sup> The military-nationalist orientation was not confined to PS/Force-17 and the PNSF units, but extended to virtually all branches. The first batch of Palestinian Police personnel to graduate from a training course in Gaza was a group of 168 officers, who received their police certificates on 25 June 1994 after a one-month course.<sup>22</sup> They were all to be part of the new blue-uniformed Civilian Police and civil defence departments. Despite these branches' very civilian functions, pictures in *Watani* featured Civilian Police and civil defence recruits exercising in close order and conducting military drills. The first graduates were also baptized the Abu Jihad Brigades, highlighting the close association between the Police and the PLO's Fatah movement.<sup>23</sup> In the nationalist discourse, the commemoration of martyrs and heroic events in the history of the armed Palestinian organizations was central.

At the graduation ceremony of a new unit of the Border Forces Martyrs in May 1995, their top commander Brigadier Khalid Sultan delivered a long speech recollecting the glorious history and accomplishments of this unit since its establishment in Libya: its participation “in the three largest military manoeuvres in the history of the Revolution”, among which its most important operation was to find and rescue Arafat after the crash-landing of his aircraft in the Libyan desert in 1992.<sup>24</sup>

A military orientation was part of the self-image and identity of these forces, in particular the PNSF and PS/Force-17 and nationalist indoctrination and mental preparedness for armed struggle formed a key part of the political education provided by the Political and Moral Guidance Department (PMGD), whose officers were attached as commissars to most units. The PMGD apparently established its own school, patterned and named after a “revolutionary school for cadres” established by Majid Abu Sharar, a political commissar for the ‘Asifah Forces and a Fatah Central Committee member who was assassinated by Mossad in Rome in 1980.<sup>25</sup> The front pages of *Watani*, the main mouthpiece of the Palestinian security forces and published by the PMGD, often contained articles on military issues such as the “Combat Capabilities of Helicopters” and “Surprise – the Most Important Principle of War”, and it regularly devoted substantial space to a wide range of military issues.<sup>26</sup> The chief officer of the Palestinian Police’s Training Directorate, Brigadier Samih Nasir, appeared to be a wholehearted military man, and was a frequent columnist in *Watani* on military issues and military training. In a series of articles in late 1994 and early 1995, he elaborated at length on the principles and doctrines of military training.<sup>27</sup>

At times, the strongly nationalistic sentiments aired at graduation ceremonies provoked reactions from the Israeli side. A case in point was the graduation ceremony for PSA recruits at a Jericho soccer field on 14 November 1994. The graduates included a number of Fatah Hawks wanted by Israel for collaborator killings. But more disconcerting for the Israelis were the zealous speeches calling for an armed struggle that should proceed to Jerusalem, Haifa and Bet Shean; and they were combined with a military-style ceremony during which graduates fired live ammunition and jumped over burning tyres. One of the speeches described the new security force as follows: “This is the practical, the true translation of the Palestinian armed struggle and the effort to strengthen our hold inside the Palestinian Authority boundaries and on the land of Palestine.”<sup>28</sup>

Sometimes, the skills taught at training classes seemed to match poorly with future civilian police duties or with skills needed in a military confrontation with the Israeli army. Some exercises were aimed only at boosting morale, demonstrating the masculinity and power of the overwhelmingly male graduates. A correspondent attending a graduation ceremony for 300 Palestinian PNSF troops in October 1995 marvelled at the kind of skill acquired by the recruits:

Palestinian police cadets leaped through burning hoops, dodged bullets and built a human pyramid in a display of skills that seem unlikely to be needed as members of joint patrols with Israelis in the West Bank. One graduate didn't move quickly enough as his officer pumped automatic gunfire towards his feet and was drilled through the calf, much to the excitement of the crowd. Otherwise, there were no injuries Sunday.<sup>29</sup>

The rapid recruitment and training of police personnel in basic military skills was clearly a part of the PNA's strategy of deterring any Israeli attempt to retake the autonomous areas by force, an imperative which assumed more urgency when the Likud-led government came to power in 1996. In late 1997, during a graduation ceremony for new PS/Force-17 personnel in Dayr al-Balah in the Gaza Strip, the secretary-general of the PNA Presidency Tayyib 'Abd al-Rahim warned in an obvious message for Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu that "Tens of thousands of our fighters [police] graduated in the past three years ... There is a man who dreams of entering Palestinian territory. But these Palestinians swear to defend the land and dream."<sup>30</sup>

### **Rudimentary Training, Random Recruitment**

Numerous problems in the training sector, from lack of human and material resources to organizational fragmentation, a militaristic culture and a massive influx of unqualified personnel were clearly acknowledged by the Palestinian Police. Brigadier Samih Nasir addressed some of these issues in *Watani* in early 1995:

We have to acknowledge that occasional and random training will not serve our strategy in building our military, social, police and security institutions. Too random recruitment in order to create

quantity with no view to select quality, will not serve our plans in building our institutions. ... We have to unify our training and create a common understanding or language between the various departments and agencies. If the [basic] training is the same for all, it will create a spirit of harmony and cooperation, and a sense of pride in the institution, and reinforce the *esprit de corps* among the individuals and officers.<sup>31</sup>

Samih Nasir preferred that all personnel undergo a rigorous, disciplined military programme at his directorate; but given the rapid fragmentation of the Palestinian Police into semi-autonomous branches, this was clearly not a realistic possibility. Continuous rapid recruitment also prevented serious investment in quality training. Training nevertheless became more diversified and specialized, in particular in the Civilian Police. This branch, more than any other unit, came to benefit from donor-sponsored training of its senior managers and instructors. As demands for more specialized training increased, there was more need for close interaction with international donors who offered such training. This raised the difficult issue of how to translate donor-sponsored training into a sustainable learning capacity in the Palestinian Police, where the idea of police training was seen through the lenses of guerrilla fighters whose main mission was to defend the revolution and fight a national liberation struggle, not crime fighting and law enforcement.

### **The Donors and Palestinian Police Training**

Beginning in mid-1994, the donor community became increasingly involved in assisting the Palestinian Police in the field of training and education under the local advice and guidance of the UN Special Coordinator Office in Gaza (UNSCO) and its UN police training coordinator.

#### **UNSCO and its Role in Coordinating Police Training**

The early UN police training preparations have been outlined in chapter 2. In early July 1994, the UN secretary-general requested that the MFA once again second Bleikelia, to make a new field trip to Gaza to assist in coordinating police training assistance.<sup>32</sup> His long-term secondment was requested on 13 September 1994, initially for six months but later

extended to January 1996. Resuming his duties on 25 September 1994, Bleikelia became the first appointed UN police training coordinator, a position that became a permanent feature of UNSCO in Gaza during the second half of the 1990s.<sup>33</sup>

As UN police training coordinator, Bleikelia was responsible for helping donors to identify priority needs in cooperation with the Palestinian Police and for informing them of what police training assistance was being offered. To this end, the updating of donor matrices was an important task. He also assisted donor fact-finding missions in Gaza, called for meetings that would gather together donors and technical experts to consider the future direction of donor-sponsored police training and stayed in continuous contact with Palestinian Police commanders.

The office of UN Police Training Coordinator remained exclusively Scandinavian during the 1990s. In addition to Norway's secondment of Bleikelia, Sweden dispatched Chief Superintendent Nils Eriksson from the Swedish National Police College to Gaza in late 1994 or early 1995 to follow up on Sweden's considerable efforts in training the Palestinian Police. He was formally requested to support UNSCO within the UN mandate for police training for a period of 12 months.<sup>34</sup> (He remained involved in the UN's endeavours until he became the coordinator of the new EU counter-terrorism programme in 1997.<sup>35</sup>) As Bleikelia's secondment came to an end in late 1995, he was replaced by the Danish police superintendent Gjess Petersen, who in turn was followed by a Swedish police officer, Thøger Berg Nielsen, in January 1997. A year later, Superintendent Erling Sørensen from Denmark served as Police Training Coordinator for two years, 1998–9. Other donor country police advisers also frequented Gaza, primarily to plan, assess and follow up on their training programmes. In particular, British police advisers and trainers worked closely with the Palestinian Civilian Police.<sup>36</sup> From 1996 onwards, US officers became increasingly involved in training the Palestinian Police's intelligence branches.<sup>37</sup>

The impact of the UN's coordination efforts was significant. True, UNSCO was sometimes blamed for not being fully informed about all donor-sponsored training programmes and the planning of training within the Palestinian Police organization. A Dutch evaluation report from 1995, for example, called for "a more active role of the UNSCO office in this context".<sup>38</sup> The permanent presence of UN police training coordinators in Gaza nevertheless maintained a fairly



good level of coordination compared to the police equipment sector, where the updating of matrices was discontinued. The great increase in donor-sponsored training assistance from 1994 onwards was in no small measure a result of the facilitating efforts of the UN police advisers.

### **Facts and Figures about Donor-Sponsored Police Training**

Police assistance efforts with regard to equipment and direct funding decreased substantially in 1995–6, but donor aid for training increased sharply in both training courses offered and police personnel trained. By June 1995, some 470 police instructors and senior-level officers had received training via the UN-coordinated police programmes in courses covering ten different areas.<sup>39</sup> By September 1995, the number of trainees had increased to nearly 700 police officers and instructors; and by the end of 1995, it exceeded 1,000, most of them trained in Gaza but some abroad.<sup>40</sup> In 1996, there were as many as 31 courses, in which 1,176 police officers were trained in a wide range of areas (see Table 8.1).<sup>41</sup>

As a matter of principle, donor-sponsored programmes trained only Palestinian police instructors, and occasionally top senior officers, with a view to enhancing the Palestinian Police's capacity to train their own recruits in police skills. This principle was sound in most contexts, but Bleikelia noted that most donors wished to offer courses in specialized police skills although there was an urgent need for very basic training in police skills even among mid-level instructors.<sup>42</sup>

**TABLE 8.1**  
**The number of courses and trainees at donor programmes, 1994–6**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of courses</b>	<b>Number of trainees</b>
1994	11	—
1995	14	1,000 <sup>a</sup>
1996	31	1,176

Note: <sup>a</sup>An approximate figure for 1994 and 1995 combined.

Source: SWG/Police meeting minutes, 6 June 1995, p. 2.



The surveys of police training courses in tables 8.2, 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5 are based largely on the matrices compiled by UNSCO and the UN police training coordinator, with some information added on courses not reported to UNSCO.

**TABLE 8.2**  
**Donor-sponsored police training programmes**  
**before deployment in 1993–4**

Donor	Subject	Participants	Place	Duration
Egypt	misc.	several thousand	–	–
Jordan	misc.	several thousand	–	–
ICRC <sup>a</sup>	Humanitarian law	50?	Cairo	2 weeks?
ICRC <sup>a</sup>	Humanitarian law	50?	Amman	2 weeks?
ICRC <sup>a</sup>	Humanitarian law	50?	Baghdad	2 weeks?
United States	VIP protection	15–20?	United States	3 weeks?

**Note:** <sup>a</sup>No information is available on the exact figures of the number of trainees at the ICRC courses in Cairo, Amman and Baghdad or of the duration of their training. The estimates are based on press reporting.

**TABLE 8.3**  
**Donor-sponsored police training programmes**  
**after deployment in 1994**

Donor	Subject	Participants	Place	Duration
United Kingdom	Management	25 seniors	UK	3 weeks, June
United Kingdom	Management	25 seniors	UK	3 weeks, July
The Netherlands	Public order	20 seniors	The Netherlands	September–October
OHCHR/Norway	Human rights	38 seniors	Gaza	1 week, October
OHCHR/Norway	Human rights	47 trainers	Gaza	1 week, November
UNCPCJB/Sweden	Role of police	26 trainers	Gaza	1 week, November
UNCPCJB/Sweden	Role of police	25 trainers	Gaza	1 week, December
Sweden	Traffic	25 trainers	Gaza	1 week, December
Sweden	Forensic science	25 trainers	Gaza	1 week, December

Unconfirmed media reports of training of GIS personnel in Russia and France, and of three training courses sponsored by Egypt in detention and interrogation techniques and VIP protection for PSA officers.<sup>a</sup>

**Note:** <sup>a</sup>“PNA–Israeli ‘sources’ question support for Palestinian security services after ‘hostile statements’”, VOI, 0505GMT, 17 November 1994.

**TABLE 8.4**  
**Donor-sponsored police training programmes, 1995**

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Sweden	Forensic science	25 trainers	Gaza	1 week, January
The Netherlands	Public order	20 trainers	Gaza	3 weeks, January–February
The Netherlands	Public order	20 trainers	Gaza	February
Norway	Rescue service	23 trainers	Gaza	3 weeks, January–February
Sweden	Investigation	20 trainers	Gaza	1 week, March
United Kingdom	Public order	40 trainers	Gaza	March
Denmark	Community police	20 seniors	Gaza/ Denmark	April–June
Denmark	Top management	10 seniors	Denmark	April–June
Sweden	Forensic science	24	Gaza	September
Sweden	Traffic	20	Gaza	September
Canada	Coastal police	8	Canada	October
Germany	Motorcycle training	20	Gaza	October–November
Sweden	Traffic	20	Gaza	November–December
Various programmes not coordinated with the UN police training coordinator, including courses in Spain, Romania, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United States.				
United States	Police training	7	Philadelphia, US	3 months, April–June 1996

**TABLE 8.5**  
**Donor-sponsored police training programmes, 1996**

Donor	Subject	Participants	Place	Duration
United Kingdom	Training the trainers	7	Gaza	25 days, February
United Kingdom	Training the trainers	14	Gaza	2 weeks, March
The Netherlands	Public order	19	The Netherlands	4 weeks, March
Sweden	Traffic level 1	20	Gaza	11 days, March
Sweden	Traffic level 1	20	Gaza	11 days, March
Sweden	Traffic level 2	20	Gaza	11 days, April
Sweden	Police and school	20	Gaza	4 days, May
Sweden	Training the trainers, traffic	20	Gaza	11 days, May
Sweden	Basic forensic science 1	20	Gaza	11 days, May
Sweden	Basic forensic science 1	20	Gaza	11 days, May
Sweden	Training the trainers 2	20	Gaza	11 days, August
Sweden	Training the trainers 2	20	Gaza	11 days, August
Sweden	Human rights, level 1	19	Gaza	7 days, May
Sweden	Woman police management	20	Gaza	4 weeks, May-June
Sweden	Woman police management	20	Gaza	4 weeks, May-June
Denmark	Management development	22	Gaza	3 months, March-June
Denmark	Training the trainers	8	Gaza	2 months, March-May
The Netherlands	Public order	20	Gaza	2 months, April-June
United Kingdom	Drug enforcement A	20	Gaza	11 days, July
United Kingdom	Drug enforcement B	20	Gaza	?
United Kingdom	Drug enforcement C	20	Gaza	?
Sweden	Advanced driving	20	Gaza	3 days, September
Sweden	Traffic level 1	20	Gaza	11 days, September
Sweden	Traffic special	20	Jericho	3 weeks, October
Sweden	Traffic level 2	20	Gaza	11 days, October
Sweden	Advanced driving	20	Gaza	4 days, November
Denmark	Top management	20	Denmark	2 weeks, October
Denmark	Management development	20	Jericho	October
The Netherlands	Public order	20	Ramallah	October-November
Sweden	Training the trainers, traffic	20	Gaza	11 days, November

Various training programmes in the United States, Egypt, India and Turkey, not coordinated with the UN police training coordinator.

Donors quickly found their own areas of interest and speciality, and often chose to pursue these over a number of years. By 1996, Sweden had emerged as one of the main sponsors of police training, with more than 18 courses in one year alone and a specific focus on civilian policing tasks ranging from traffic police, advanced driving, police and school to basic forensics, human rights and woman police management. Sweden's solid efforts to assist and reform the Palestinian Police must be seen in the context of the long-standing and close relationship between Sweden and the PLO. This dated back to the 1970s when the Swedish prime minister Oluf Palme became the first Western leader to meet with Arafat, in 1974, and allowed the PLO to establish an information office in Stockholm a year later.<sup>43</sup> Sweden was also involved in police assistance to other post-conflict regimes such as Nicaragua and South Africa after apartheid.<sup>44</sup>

The United Kingdom was another very active contributor, and its role deserves special consideration, not only because of its historical role in establishing the Palestine Police during its mandate but also because it was the only major EU country with a strong interest in the police sector and the resources and political strength to make a difference. As a strong indication of its interest in the Palestinian Police, the UK spent some \$5 million on aid for it during 1994 and committed and disbursed new grants for police aid purposes nearly every year for the rest of the 1990s.<sup>45</sup> The UK also provided one-sixth of the total EU aid to the PNA, which included sizeable contributions to the Palestinian Police; and it offered a wide range of courses, among them senior management training, riot control, drug control and counter-narcotics, community policing, forensic techniques, English classes and counter-terrorism.

One major area of donor interest was drug law enforcement, and a series of courses was sponsored, partly in cooperation with the UN Drug Control Programme. The courses focused on combating trafficking, as both the Palestinian Police and donors seemed to agree that illicit trafficking rather than widespread abuse was the main problem. Another field of interest was basic police training. This was in response to the discovery that, as noted, even instructor-level officers often lacked knowledge in basic police skills. This programme reportedly started in the autumn of 1995.<sup>46</sup> A third major area of interest was the training of election police, a high-profile issue attracting much donor interest at

SWG/Police meetings in 1995. Arafat specifically invited the UK to provide this training. Britain had previously seconded 44 police officers to monitor the policing of the South African elections, and hoped to make use of their expertise for the benefit of the Palestinians. Two British police advisers were sent to the PNA to assist in training the election police and also in constructing a plan for administering the logistical side of the elections. The British government backed up its training programme with generous in-kind donations of patrol cars and a basic communication infrastructure for the Police in the West Bank. This was installed just in time for the Palestinian elections in January 1996.<sup>47</sup> As with most other donor programmes, the UK also introduced long-term educational courses in specialized police sciences to complement the short-term training courses in Gaza and abroad; and in 1995, it offered a one-year programme in forensic science in Britain for four Palestinian officers.<sup>48</sup>

The Netherlands was another long-term contributor, albeit with a narrower focus than the UK. The Dutch programme in public order maintenance training was launched in late 1994. The first courses were offered by the Netherlands Police Institute for Order and Security (PIOV), and included the training of top-level Palestinian officers at PIOV facilities in Hoogerheide, the Netherlands, where the focus was on concepts and leadership of large-scale police operations. Subsequent courses were aimed at trainers/instructors, with follow-up and monitoring in Gaza. The Netherlands continued to develop its anti-riot training programme throughout the 1990s, with three courses in 1996, and it became the key contributor in building and training the Palestinian Public Order Police until 2000 and the outbreak of the intifada.<sup>49</sup>

Denmark focused its training efforts on a series of courses in senior management. By 1996, this had grown to a sizeable programme with the ultimate ambition of educating as many as four hundred Palestinian managers at various levels in the Palestinian Police until the year 2000. The programme included (a) two top management seminars in Denmark for up to sixty colonels and brigadiers; (b) two management development courses in Gaza for forty officers at the rank of major or lieutenant-colonel; and (c) an instructors course in basic officer management for 300 duty officers, also in Gaza. The object was to create a pool of instructors who would staff positions at the projected police academy (see below).<sup>50</sup>

Norway had contributed with specialized courses for top-level rescue team instructors. It was asked to continue this support but decided instead to finance only multilateral programmes, in particular financial sponsorship for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and its efforts to institutionalize human rights training in the Palestinian Police and the PNA as a whole.<sup>51</sup> Two courses were held in 1994, and a series of courses in human rights training for police personnel were held in 1997–9. (Human rights training programmes for police and security personnel were also conducted by Palestinian human rights organizations, which usually received generous donor funding. The Ramallah-based Mandela Institute, headed by Ahmad Sayyad, was particularly active, organizing some 300 courses between 1996 and 1999.<sup>52</sup>) In response to a significant number of deaths in custody and reports of abuses during detention and interrogation, the training of prison staff was scheduled to be included in donor courses. But very few had the stomach to deal with this very sensitive and delicate issue. Indeed, as far as I can see, Norway with its sponsorship of a projected OHCHR programme was the only donor within this sector.<sup>53</sup> (It also financed a forensic laboratory in 1998, but training in forensic sciences was left to other donors.<sup>54</sup>)

Japan was an important contributor in training and assisting the Palestinian civil defence force, which was formally part of the Palestinian Police. Using UNDP as an implementing agency, Japan financed uniforms and equipment for the civil defence as well as firefighting vehicles. Its in-kind donations were accompanied by training programmes.<sup>55</sup> The development of a better civil defence capacity, in particular firefighting in high-rise buildings in view of their increasing number in Gaza and the absence of any corresponding civil defence capability, was identified as a priority in 1995.<sup>56</sup>

### **Bilateral Training Assistance not Coordinated with the UN**

It was no secret that the UN police training matrices were not meticulously updated, either because of occasional lethargy on the part of the UN police training coordinator or simply because getting hard information about all police training courses proved to be difficult, especially for activities involving the more secretive police branches.<sup>57</sup> The decision by the donors to ignore police agencies not recognized in

the Gaza–Jericho Accords was a strong contributing factor to excluding, for example, the important PSA branch and its foreign sponsors from the UN framework. The problems of information exchange seemed particularly difficult with regard to Arab training sponsors, who rarely participated in the SWG/Police group.<sup>58</sup> And because the donors participating in the SWG/Police meetings were interested mostly in the Civilian Police, more military-orientated branches sought assistance elsewhere. Finally, the information flow was hampered by intra-Palestinian rivalries.

The extent of police, security or military training sponsored by foreign programmes not participating in the UN-coordinated efforts is hard to measure, but by 1996–7 this probably constituted a significant part of the total foreign training assistance. Already in 1995, it was known that Palestinian officers were sent for police training “on a bilateral basis” to countries such as Romania, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Spain.<sup>59</sup> PSA and PS/Force-17 personnel also went to the US for training without coordinating with UNSCO.<sup>60</sup> The details of these programmes were not known. By the end of 1996, it was acknowledged that a substantial part of donor assistance was channelled outside the UN police training coordinator, and donors remained insufficiently informed about what other donors were doing.

An important part of the unreported assistance was programmes in counter-terrorism, and they became particularly important after 1996.<sup>61</sup> Many of the unreported courses were not necessarily of a very secretive character, however; and the UN received some information about them on an informal basis. India, for example, accepted a dozen or so Palestinian officers to train at a naval base in the country.<sup>62</sup> Both India and Turkey began attending the SWG/Police group in 1997 and seemed interested in coordinating their efforts with other donors. There were unconfirmed reports that the PNA had sent security personnel for training to China, Russia, Pakistan and even Cuba.<sup>63</sup>

### *Israel's police training assistance*

A more surprising police training sponsor for the Palestinians was Israel, as any training by it was politically extremely sensitive. In May 1995, Israel and the PNA reportedly had to cancel a seminar in riot control for Palestinian officers, supposed to take place at Israel's National Police School in Shefaram, after reports of it leaked to the press.<sup>64</sup> In less

sensitive fields, especially drug enforcement, criminal investigation and civil defence, it appears that there was some limited training cooperation. In 1997, the Israeli narcotics police ran a two-week training course for the Palestinian forensic police as part of “a forensic [training] plan”.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, on 27 August 1997 the Palestinian Police and the Israeli army held a joint exercise in dealing with bombing incidents, including treating and evacuating the wounded.<sup>66</sup>

*Arab-sponsored police and military training*

Israel remained suspicious that the Palestinian Police was receiving kinds of specialized training and expertise that might compromise Israeli counter-terrorism methods and/or give the Palestinians an unexpected edge in a future military confrontation. Foreign sponsorship of Palestinian military training provoked strong reactions, although such training was clearly what the military branches, the PNSF in particular, saw as their most pressing need. Consequently, as there had to be a very low profile in providing the training, the PNA would not find sponsors in Europe, only among its Arab and Muslim allies. At the end of the 1990s, an Israeli study reported that the PNA sent police personnel abroad for military training, with senior company and battalion commanders receiving “professional training in Egypt, Yemen, Algeria, and Pakistan as commanders of combat units”.<sup>67</sup> The extent of this military training is not known.

Arab training assistance was not confined to military training, however. It was known that the PNA sent personnel for aviation training in Algeria, where the PLO still had a military (PLA) presence.<sup>68</sup> More importantly, the PNA continued to send personnel for specialized police training in Egypt, where much of the early basic police training was carried out in 1993–4. Egypt appears to have been the most important Arab country for Palestinian Police training.<sup>69</sup> A number of Palestinian officers who underwent an intensive one-year programme at the Egyptian Police Academy came to staff the mid-level echelons of the important Civilian Police branch. The military branches continued to seek training in Egypt, with some success. In 1999, for example, a group of Palestinian officers completed an advanced staff course at the prestigious al-Nasir Military Academy as part of their training.<sup>70</sup> In the field of security service and intelligence training, Egypt was also Palestine’s main partner. The PSA, for example, sent personnel to Egypt for three



training courses in detention and interrogation techniques and VIP protection in 1994; and its Gaza commander came to describe Egypt as one of its most important venues for training.<sup>71</sup> Jordan's contribution was apparently much reduced owing to a deterioration of PNA–Jordanian relations after mid-1994, especially those between the PSA in the West Bank and Jordanian intelligence.<sup>72</sup> Civilian police training for West Bank Palestinians was nevertheless resumed following a visit to Amman by Major-General Ghazi al-Jabali in early 1997.<sup>73</sup> A military delegation headed by Major-General al-Majaydah made a visit to Jordan in 1999 in an attempt to further resuscitate Jordanian training assistance.<sup>74</sup>

In 1995 and 1996, the PNA sent personnel to Saudi Arabia for legal, intelligence and security training.<sup>75</sup> Palestinian personnel from the anti-drug branches also received training in the Saudi Kingdom.<sup>76</sup> The PNA had training links with other Arab countries too. In 1995, for example, it sent a delegation of police, intelligence and media personnel to Syria to attend a seminar on “how to prepare a media campaign against drug addiction”. This was organized in July–August in Damascus under the supervision of the Arab Centre for Security Studies and Sport Training, the first such conference of its kind with participation from most Arab countries.<sup>77</sup>

### **Implementing Donor-Sponsored Police Training Programmes**

Implementation of donor-sponsored police training began in mid- to late 1994, and raised a new set of issues and disputes in donor–Palestinian Police relations.<sup>78</sup> An important source of information about the implementation process is evaluation reports written on behalf of the police training sponsors. Donors were usually obliged by domestic legislation to follow up their aid programmes with some kind of post facto assessment. In 1994–6, donor evaluation reports were sufficiently positive to warrant a substantial increase in donor-sponsored training.<sup>79</sup> One sensed a willingness on the part of the Palestinian Police command to reform, despite serious donor concern about the human rights situation.<sup>80</sup>

Two evaluation reports have been particularly useful for this study. One Swedish–Danish–Dutch evaluation report from late 1996 came as a result of donor interest in sponsoring a police academy, and

reviewed the Palestinian Police's training capacity and the impact of donor-sponsored training.<sup>81</sup> A Dutch evaluation report from April 1995 was written by an external consultant who monitored the training courses very closely over time, resulting in a more in-depth report as compared to post facto evaluations.<sup>82</sup> In the following sections, I shall draw upon examples from these reports and from interviews with the UN police training coordinators and Palestinian commanders to illustrate some of the main obstacles that the donors encountered in implementing their police training courses. The problem-focused discussion below should not lead the reader to assume that the donor–Palestinian relationship was marred by endless problems, however. It should be seen as illustrating some of the typical challenges of the donor–Palestinian interface during the implementation stage.

### **Ownership**

A main theme of the Dutch report was the problem of transferring 'ownership', an admittedly vague concept, which became a buzzword in development aid discourse during the 1990s. (For the purpose of this study, I define 'ownership' as the willingness and capacity to adopt and/or sustain certain transmitted skills or resources.<sup>83</sup>) The report complained about Palestinian commanders not accepting 'ownership', for example by not participating actively in the programmes and not institutionalizing the acquired skills in the regular activities, routines and practices of the Palestinian Police. The involvement of senior officers "was limited to passive attendance", the report stated.<sup>84</sup> It criticized the Palestinian Police command for not providing sufficient support for the training courses, for example by failing to appoint senior officers to supervise, coach and assist the instructor-trainees and by sending the participants back to their duty stations before the end of courses, which limited their ability to practise their newly acquired skills. Similarly, the Police command was reprimanded for not providing adequate logistical and technical support for the courses conducted in Gaza.<sup>85</sup> The Dutch report was not unique. On the contrary, criticism of the Palestinian Police's lack of follow-up on training courses was rather common.

### **Selection of Candidates, Graduation of Trainees**

A part of the ownership problem was the widely observed phenomenon that the Palestinian Police command often sent the 'wrong' personnel to training courses, i.e. persons who either lacked qualifications or would not need the skills in their current or future positions. The problem was further exacerbated by the fact that most 'policemen' were in fact employed as officers and soldiers in the military branches, where the civilian policing skills taught at donor-sponsored courses were hardly needed. Even when they came from relevant branches, where their skills were needed, many graduates were not subsequently employed in positions for which their stalls were appropriate.<sup>86</sup> One police adviser went as far as saying that "sheer nepotism" guided the selection of trainees, especially for training courses in Europe, and the UN police training coordinators were criticized for not confronting the Palestinian Police command on this issue.<sup>87</sup>

The Dutch report did not highlight the issue of nepotism, but criticized donors for allowing trainees to graduate even if they had not acquired the necessary skills; participation in training programmes usually "resulted in automatic graduation".<sup>88</sup> In an attempt to establish a new precedent in this regard, the Dutch course leadership discontinued the participation of two officers because they reportedly did not possess the ability to perform effectively as instructors. That decision met with resistance from the Palestinian Police command.<sup>89</sup> The UN police training coordinator supported this policy, but selection and graduation practices remained a problem.

### **Long-term Training Strategies and Priority Plans?**

The problem of transferring ownership manifested itself most prominently in the absence of long-term police training strategies and priorities on the part of the Palestinian Police, at least on a cross-branch level, for the further development of its training capacity. The UN police trainer coordinators voiced deep frustration over this, complaining that Palestinian commanders did not present any priorities for future needs; nor did they develop a strategy for how the donor-sponsored programmes would fit into the general development of the Police. Apart from vague wishes and general appeals for assistance by Police commanders, there was little or no initiative, despite repeated requests that priority plans be made.<sup>90</sup> One police adviser graphically described the Palestinian approach as that

of “a young cuckoo bird, with a constantly open mouth satisfied with whatever he is fed”.<sup>91</sup> Also, the Swedish–Danish–Dutch evaluation report pointed to the lack of development plans in the rivalry-ridden police forces: “We have not found any plans of strategy for the PPF in the future. It seems to be very much an ad hoc driven organisation. Nobody dares, openly, to have any ideas about the future.”<sup>92</sup>

The UN police training coordinators did not want to produce a development plan on behalf of the Palestinian Police command and then attempt to induce the latter to accept it. Instead, they simply attempted to fit together donor offers with what appeared to be the most pressing needs of the moment. All UN coordinators tried to exert moderate pressure on the Palestinians in an effort to elicit more specific priorities; and in the course of 1997–8, the situation reportedly improved somewhat.<sup>93</sup>

The Dutch report called upon the Palestinian Police command to consider the establishment of a Palestinian Police “Training Coordination Committee”, including an appointed Palestinian coordinator, in order to institutionalize training activities throughout the entire organization and to ensure that needs assessment, priority setting and the planning of training were coordinated. The committee’s meeting minutes should preferably be made available to the SWG/Police and the AHLC.<sup>94</sup> Largely as a result of donor pressure, a Palestinian coordination committee for police assistance was established in June 1995, the so-called PACC, but it never came to be the kind of cross-branch coordination body that the donors had hoped for.<sup>95</sup>

### **Integrating the Civil and Military Branches?**

The single most formidable problem facing the donors in the implementation process was how to reconcile their civilian police training assistance with an overwhelmingly military-orientated Palestinian Police organization. Initially, the early police training curriculum prepared by the UN police donor group in the spring of 1994 was directed specifically at the Palestinian Civilian Police. Nearly all courses focused on civilian policing tasks. As a consequence, the donors’ training assistance was conspicuously at variance with the martial skills and military drills and exercises that Palestinian Police cadets rehearsed at their graduation ceremonies in Jericho and Gaza. Initially, the PNA seemed to go along with the notion that the Civilian Police would be the primary recipient

of UN-coordinated police training. At the very least, it sent mostly Civilian Police commanders to attend the first police donor meeting in Gaza, organized by the UN in the early autumn of 1994.<sup>96</sup>

The integration of the civilian and 'military' branches of the Palestinian Police was a daunting task, and the donors were apparently divided as to whether they should offer training to the Police as a whole or to the individual branches and whether personnel from different units should train together. At least until 1996, the SWG/Police and the UN police training coordinator dealt primarily with Major-General Nasr Yusuf in his capacity as "director-general of the Palestinian Public Security and Police", viewing him as the legitimate senior commander.<sup>97</sup> Some donors nevertheless circumvented the Palestinian Police command and established relations directly with individual branches, especially the Civilian Police and the intelligence units.

The civil-military divide in the Palestinian Police was a result of a growing discrepancy between its self-perception and the political realities on the ground. Despite the fact that the Oslo Accords allowed for a 'police' force, but one with no role in external defence, only a few of the Palestinian Police organizations, chiefly the Civilian Police, perceived themselves as a regular police service. Many branches, in particular the PNSE, PS/Force-17, the military intelligence and the coastal police, saw themselves as military formations whose mission was 'external defence', i.e. to defend the PNA and the Palestinian revolution, not day-to-day law enforcement.<sup>98</sup> In practice, however, police advisers did not find significant differences between the branches in terms of policing activities. They often made the generalization that apart from traffic policing, which was the only exclusive domain of the Civilian Police, "all police branches do more or less the same".<sup>99</sup> Although this was certainly an exaggeration, it illustrated the somewhat chaotic situation during the early phases of self-rule in which mandates and missions were still being fought over and continuously redefined. And so were the training needs of the various police branches. To the police advisers, these needs seemed to vary over time, in response to the current priorities of Arafat and the political leadership. This was understandable given the volatile political situation but unfortunate for long-term police planning and strategies.<sup>100</sup>

In order not to encourage further the fragmentation of the Palestinian Police, the UN police training coordinators, as a matter of principle,

offered training programmes to the Palestinian Police as a whole, not to individual branches, and encouraged personnel from different branches to participate in the same training courses. By doing so, however, they encountered a fair amount of opposition from the Civilian Police. By 1997, it had become the second-largest branch. It had some 11,000 personnel and a wide variety of new specialized departments and units, and its commanders no longer wished to play second fiddle to the generals in the PNSF. This resulted in a growing rivalry between the 'police' and the 'military', i.e. between Civilian Police Chief Brigadier Ghazi al-Jabali and Major-General 'Abd al-Raziq al-Majaydah, the public security chief in Gaza, who seemed to emerge as a kind of unofficial army chief of staff. A murky political–security affair in mid-1996 also weakened Major-General Nasr Yusuf, who had been a favoured figure among the donors. He appeared to have become more of a figurehead than the real commander, further undermining the existence of a unified Palestinian Police command.

The situation on the ground divided the donor community on how to handle the fragmentation of the Police. Although the UN special coordinator frequently stressed the need for an integrated approach, early evaluation reports, for example a Dutch report from late 1994, stressed that the Civilian Police and the Public Security Police (i.e. PNSF) "should be dealt with as separate groups since their tasks and responsibilities are quite different". The Dutch report recommended that participants in the instructor training programme in Gaza on public order maintenance should be selected from the Civilian Police only.<sup>101</sup> Henceforth, the important Dutch programmes in public order maintenance were confined to the Civilian Police.<sup>102</sup> In theory, public order and border patrolling were the core functions of the paramilitary PNSF branch; but in January 1995, the Civilian Police quickly established its own public order force, apparently encroaching on the PNSF's domain. (The 18 November 1994 clashes had undermined confidence in the PNSF, and the Civilian Police probably felt the need for new and more 'civilian' anti-riot forces.) The UK, whose involvement in the police sector was significant, also advocated a separate approach, and preferred initially to deal almost exclusively with the Civilian Police, seeing them as the only actual police unit in the Palestinian Police. Britain's counter-terrorism assistance went directly to the PNA's intelligence units.<sup>103</sup> At a later stage, the US-funded International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program organized training

courses in small arms collection in the wake of the Wye River Agreement and chose to focus exclusively on the Civilian Police. It accepted the Civilian Police's standard contention that they were the real Palestinian Police.<sup>104</sup>

Partly as a result of differences among the donors about how to deal with the fragmentation of the Police, individual branches were able to establish direct links with police institutions in other countries; and they started exchange programmes without fully informing either the PNA's Ministry of Planning (MOPIC) or other donors. The UN police training coordinators wanted MOPIC to take the initiative to inform all donors about existing bilateral programmes, but the various branches often guarded their bilateral contacts and programmes jealously.<sup>105</sup>

The UN coordinators were unable to gain donor consensus about their policy that because all branches were doing policing, they needed police training and that the military branches, in which abuses were more rampant, needed more training than the Civilian Police. On the other hand, the military branches appeared less receptive to donor programmes than the Civilian Police. One indication of this was the fact that donor-sponsored programmes were largely ignored in *Watani*, the monthly journal of the Palestinian security forces; and when they were mentioned on rare occasions, it was mostly by Civilian Police and civil defence commanders who were occasionally interviewed by it.<sup>106</sup> The common refrain in *Watani* was that "the donors are not fulfilling their obligations".<sup>107</sup> The contributions from Arab sponsors were highlighted, but Scandinavian and European donors were hardly ever mentioned, despite their extensive training programmes.<sup>108</sup> The lack of enthusiasm for the latter's efforts was more pronounced in the military branches, probably because they saw themselves not as part of a future police service but as part of the future Palestinian army.

Civilian Police officers displayed a keen interest in developing their organization; they had long-term strategies, but only on behalf of their branch. In terms of future planning, the Civilian Police, with a focus on non-political crime, was less affected by the ups and downs of the political situation than were the 'military' and intelligence branches. In an interview with this author in mid-December 1996, Deputy Civilian Police Chief Brigadier Salim Sab'awi outlined the key points of his branch's new five-year development plan, which it was discussing with interested donors, in particular the UK. Brigadier Sab'awi emphasized



several times that he and the Civilian Police command were not “empire builders”, but he nevertheless envisaged the Civilian Police as the dominant branch: “We are the largest branch with over 11,000 personnel. Our responsibility is the largest one.”<sup>109</sup>

The Civilian Police command was greatly disenchanted with PACC, because of the dominance of the military branches in that committee. According to Sab’awi, the Civilian Police had at times been represented only by a colonel, who could hardly be expected to raise his voice in the presence of generals from the PNSF.<sup>110</sup> In its eyes, PACC “was a military committee”, and nothing beneficial came out of it. The Civilian Police became more vociferous in insisting that donors should channel their aid directly to it and that its personnel should be trained separately, according to the preferences of the Civilian Police command. As Sab’awi put it: “We want to decide when, where, how and at which level the police training should be conducted, and we do not take orders and instructions from the Public Security Command.”<sup>111</sup>

According to the Civilian Police, military personnel were sent to donor-sponsored training courses which were relevant only for it, and, as a result, it began refusing to participate in those courses if the military branches were allowed in.<sup>112</sup> Civilian Police Chief Ghazi al-Jabali and his deputy in Gaza Brigadier Sab’awi were judged to be quite opposed to joint training, but the West Bank director Brigadier Ziyad al-’Arif was considered to be more open to the idea.<sup>113</sup> The Civilian Police did agree to participate in training with the other branches in certain fields, but only as a result of constant pressure from the donors. In 1998, al-Jabali decided to cut all contacts with Brigadier Samih Nasr and his Training Directorate at al-Ansar after a dispute about donor-funded police equipment that was destined for the Civilian Police but had been retained by the Training Directorate.<sup>114</sup> The Civilian Police’s intransigence remained an irritant in donor–Palestinian relations as the UN police training coordinator and the Scandinavian donors attempted to foster more cooperation across the branches.

The problems of cooperation were rooted partly in personalities. There was no love lost between Brigadier Samih Nasr and Civilian Police Chief Ghazi al-Jabali. Moreover, according to several donor representatives, Brigadier Nasr was not particularly qualified to be in charge of the Palestinian Police’s main training department; and by 1998, donor-funded training activities there had almost ceased.<sup>115</sup> Like many



other Fatah and PLA fighters in Lebanon and Syria, Brigadier Nasir had spent considerable time in Syrian jails under harsh conditions and been subjected to brutal torture. That experience seemed to have reduced his capacity for leading a major department, but his loyalty to and friendship with Arafat protected him from being removed.

Although it was probably true, as the Civilian Police alleged, that the PNSF needed training mainly for manning border controls and checkpoints etc., not criminal investigation training, the donors were probably ill-advised in trying to offer specialized training more in tune with their own preferences. If they had attempted to provide something as innocuous as military peacekeeping training using military instructors, such assistance would most likely have been portrayed by the media as if they were turning the Palestinian Police into an 'army'. Privately, the police advisers deplored the fact that Israel and the PNA did not try to reach agreement on the creation of an army-like 'National Guard', to facilitate the removal of the PNSF from active policing. It was perhaps a mistake that the Scandinavian donors and the UN police training coordinators did not follow the Dutch and British approach by focusing only on the Civilian Police, but their position should be understood against the background that all branches were involved in law enforcement, that inter-branch rivalries were a major problem and that there were political sensitivities involved in military-like peacekeeping training.

The promotion of one unified Palestinian Police also reflected the Scandinavian and European (not British) ideal of one national police force, as opposed to the Anglo-American model of a decentralized police, meaning multiple independent forces not controlled by a single level of government, and also as opposed to a typical "Arab *mukhabarat* state" with multiple and rival security agencies.<sup>116</sup> This projection of a domestic ideal was not incidental. Another example was the proposal that the Civilian Police should conduct its daytime patrols unarmed, a key point defining the identity of Nordic police forces. Perhaps the Scandinavian donors clung too much to the notion of one national police force, wishing to create a mirror image of their own police. David Bayley, a distinguished authority in police studies, once criticized the idea that the number and organizational structure of a country's police force(s) had anything to do with whether a police system would promote democratic policing or not. He pointed out how surprisingly resistant

police organizations are regarding changes to their national structure.<sup>117</sup> Given the PLO's long tradition of fostering multiple semi-autonomous security organizations, it was perhaps unlikely that a few west European donors would be able to reverse that trend.

### **Language Barriers, Sensitive Police Expertise, 'A Military Mindset'**

There were a host of minor technical and/or political problems at the donor–Palestinian interface. One of these was the language barrier, which was an important practical obstacle in most Western-sponsored police training courses. Providing all training manuals and materials in Arabic translation was time-consuming and impractical, and the use of police officers as interpreters was not viewed as an ideal solution. Differences in policing and management cultures, and a certain degree of mutual cultural prejudice, compounded the linguistic barriers.<sup>118</sup>

Another problem was donor wariness about providing the Palestinian Police with certain types of expertise, which they feared could be misused in the future. One case in point was training courses in how to expose document forgery. Donors feared that this expertise might fall in the hands of international smuggler leagues, which forged documents for illegal refugees, or that it might be used by militants to smuggle suicide bombers into Israel. (The problem of what kind of expertise the donors should transmit to the Palestinians was also raised about communication equipment, and in this area Israel usually stepped in to ensure that the Palestinian Police did not get their hands on advanced equipment that Israel would be unable to monitor.)

A third issue was donor frustration about the perceived lack of cooperation between Palestinian Police departments and civilian institutions with competence and expertise relevant to the Police. The issue was particularly acute in relation to forensic capabilities, which were not very developed in the Palestinian Police despite successive courses sponsored by a number of donor countries. The problem was the lack of infrastructure, in particular a laboratory, for analysing forensic tests. In late 1998, there were plans to build a forensic laboratory; but until such a capacity was established, the Palestinian Police would be better served if they made use of university and hospital laboratories for various forensic tests. As the police advisers saw it, Palestinian commanders were heavily influenced by “a military mindset”. As a result, they were

reluctant to rely on civilian institutions, preferring instead to develop all necessary capabilities within their own organization.<sup>119</sup>

### **The Police Advisers' Perspective**

The final issue to be discussed in this section on the implementation process is the police advisers' perspective on Palestinian policing, its political context and their own role in the police reform efforts. The Nordic police advisers were generally sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, appreciating the difficulties under which the Palestinian Police operated, but they were also very critical of a wide range of cultural and/or behavioural aspects of the Police. They usually resisted the tendency to view behavioural anomalies simply through the lens of a Western–Arab dichotomy, and blamed the particular circumstances of the Israeli occupation, the legacy of war, the divisive effect on the Police of the policies of Arafat, the absence of a legal–judicial and constitutional framework and the background of most senior police officers. The police advisers would typically say that “Palestinian policing is too much a copy of the Israeli apprehension and interrogation methods, practiced during the Occupation.”<sup>120</sup> Or they would refer to the army schools in communist countries, from Vietnam and Cuba to Russia and East Germany as well as PLA camps in the Arab world, where many senior Palestinian officers had been schooled in guerrilla warfare. The example of the PSA was often referred to: an agency staffed by former Fatah paramilitaries whose kneecapping practices during the intifada hardly made them qualified for police work.<sup>121</sup>

The police advisers would sometimes give typically Orientalist explanations, such as that “corruption, nepotism and violence ... seem to be inherent in the Palestinian culture”, and one of the main problems identified was the notion that “power commands respect”.<sup>122</sup> The Nordic police advisers were particularly disturbed to see repeated examples of the excessive use of force and punishments in the Palestinian Police. For example, during the Dutch course on public order maintenance, one of the candidates had taken the liberty of copying the written examination papers, and had been punished with three months' imprisonment. Another officer, who refused to participate in a donor-sponsored traffic police course, was put under house arrest. These draconian punishments, instead of dialogue and counselling, were the antithesis of the policing

model taught at Scandinavian police academies, but Brigadier Samih Nasir, who headed the training centre, saw harsh punishment as indispensable to maintaining proper discipline.

The UN police training coordinators and other foreign police advisers often saw their role as police monitors and advocates of police reforms in a broader sense than that of merely administering training courses. They believed that their steady visits to police commanders, their frequent requests for information and their interaction with senior officers would somehow imbue the latter with more vigour and willingness to reform. As one of them stated, “when we arrive and visit their stations, there is less half-heartedness and slackness”.<sup>123</sup> They would easily admit, however, that they needed more information about the organizational culture and workings of the myriad Palestinian Police branches and agencies, the responsibilities of the different branches etc.<sup>124</sup>

As for Israeli and US involvement, the Nordic police advisers were deeply suspicious, and they often expressed their disillusionment about the new Oslo order (an ‘occupation in disguise’, a new ‘apartheid’, an incremental process of ‘ethnic cleansing’ of Palestinians) and the meek objections voiced by the European donors and the US about Israeli policies. In the context of their work, they were particularly wary of the activities of Israeli intelligence, especially its detrimental effect on Palestinian policing. One of them told this author that Shabak had approached him with a view to recruiting him as an informer, and others cautioned against allowing information about their contacts inside the Palestinian Police to leak to the Israeli authorities. There is little doubt that their experience of living permanently in Gaza deeply influenced the police advisers and made them appreciate the complexities and hardships of Palestinian reality.

### **The Palestinian Police Academy Project**

From the very beginning, the donors involved in police training assistance were concerned that their input would have only a minimal and short-term effect if more institutionalized forms of police training and education were not created within the Palestinian Police. They mainly offered courses of up to a few weeks in length, and the Palestinian Police also provided mostly basic courses of 45 days owing to logistical and financial

constraints. UNSCO held that a stream of new courses would not have much long-term impact. In a strategy plan document written at the end of 1994, it stated that “capacity building efforts are entering a new stage which will be both more complex and time consuming ... the experience gained elsewhere with projects of this kind show that small-scale and ad hoc training courses, however essential they may be, do not lead to sustained change”.<sup>125</sup>

This line of thinking was the background to the idea of sponsoring the establishment of a Palestinian police academy. This idea had been part of donor discussions ever since the Palestinian Police arrived in Gaza and Jericho.<sup>126</sup> The idea gained momentum because of the many practical problems police donors faced owing to the lack of suitable infrastructure in the PNA-ruled areas.<sup>127</sup> Donor representatives hoped that an academy would somehow become an important cross-branch institution, making training and education more homogeneous throughout the Palestinian Police branches.<sup>128</sup> It would be a university-level educational institution promoting reliance on knowledge and learning and counteracting the prevailing training emphasis on military gymnastics, karate and martial arts. Finally, the donors hoped that the police academy project would improve their coordination with the Palestinian Police, streamline information exchange on police training and create a “platform for donor countries” whereby more serious training could be developed.<sup>129</sup> The fact that the Palestinian Police command strongly called for donor support for an academy might also increase donor leverage and access to commanders and the leadership.<sup>130</sup>

If the police academy were to become a real academy, not simply a school for basic training, then, it was acknowledged, foreign police experts would be required in a transitional period. For their part, the donors’ ambition was that gradually all instructors at an academy would be Palestinian. It was therefore important to educate a pool of highly qualified instructors who could fill these roles. With a police academy in mind, it made more sense to educate Palestinian officers in highly specialized fields abroad.

When the SWG/Police group gathered for the first time, in February 1995, the development of a Palestinian Police “training facility” was presented as one of UNSCO’s primary goals.<sup>131</sup> Subsequent meetings characterized the police academy project as “the greatest challenge for the moment”.<sup>132</sup> By the summer of 1995, the idea had crystallized into

concrete plans, and Sweden had emerged as the informal lead-nation. It was now thought that the main school would be in Gaza, with a smaller branch in Jericho. At the SWG/Police meeting in June 1995, the UN police training coordinator and the Palestinian MOPIC (Siyam), seconded by Sweden, presented “blueprints for a \$6 million police school”, calling upon donors to divide the costs among themselves.<sup>133</sup> According to the proposal, the police academy would serve as a training facility as well as a research centre where a forensic science laboratory would be made available for criminal investigation purposes.<sup>134</sup>

The project suffered repeated delays because of the PNA’s indecision over the exact location of the academy. The initial plans to build the school in Gaza were thwarted by a severe shortage of available public land, but the Jericho area with its extreme summer heat would not be optimal either. An alternative site was considered; and in November 1995, the PNA confirmed to the donors that the site would be in Nablus.<sup>135</sup> This decision was reversed again in 1996, with Jericho emerging as the preferred site.<sup>136</sup>

Four donors seemed fairly committed to going ahead with the police academy project, despite the PNA’s indecisiveness with regard to the location of the site. In May 1996, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark pledged to cover all construction and the necessary training equipment expenditures, at an estimated cost of \$6.3 million with the condition that the PNA cover all recurrent costs.<sup>137</sup> A long list of other requirements was also put forward.<sup>138</sup> The four donors demanded close PNA cooperation throughout the technical implementation process and retained a decisive say over the specifics of the academy’s curriculum. They required, for example, that it should include law, criminal science and investigation, traffic, crime prevention, management, languages, human rights and democracy.<sup>139</sup> Interestingly, the donors also requested an organogram of the Palestinian Police and asked that a list of training with “donors not presently listed in the UNSCO matrix be prepared, including Egypt, Jordan, India and any unlisted internal PPF training”.<sup>140</sup> Clearly, the police academy project presented an opportunity to elicit additional information on unreported training, which previously had been difficult to gain access to. Their demand for an officially endorsed organogram was thought to assist the donors in promoting a more unified police organization and thus in bringing more clarity to the command structure.<sup>141</sup>

### **The Police Academy and Civil–Military Rivalries**

There was a tug of war between the Palestinian Police and the donors over the academy project. The first Palestinian project proposals were both excessively luxurious and too ‘military’ for the donors’ liking, encompassing everything from a swimming pool and an officers club to military watchtowers.<sup>142</sup> The police advisers jokingly referred to the school as the ‘War College’, with a clear reference to the Palestinian preference for military-related rather than civilian police training. The Palestinians had originally wanted the academy to take 600–800 students, and opted for dropping the dormitory facilities in order to save funds, but the donors insisted on quality instead of quantity. The two sides reached an agreement that the academy should have some 400 students, a staff of 100, a dormitory for students and some housing facilities for instructors.<sup>143</sup> The budget was finally reduced to \$6.3 million from \$13.5 million, which was the estimated cost of the police academy were all Palestinian wishes to have been fulfilled.

There was much opposition to the academy project from various quarters, particularly the Civilian Police, which ironically was regarded as being its main beneficiary. In an interview with this author in December 1996, Brigadier Sab’awi stated bluntly that “Donors focus too much on their own way of thinking. They should ask us more about what we need. The donors’ academy idea is ‘funny’. How can one make one academy for all those different units?”<sup>144</sup>

He was adamant that the Civilian Police needed its own academy, claiming that it had already designated a plot of land where this academy could be built. In response to the negative reactions from the Civilian Police, donors and UNSCO agreed that the Civilian Police should be in charge of the new academy. After all, they wanted to make sure that it became a police academy, not a “war college or an intelligence training centre”.<sup>145</sup> The sponsors wanted the other police and security branches to participate in selected training courses there, and even to have a floor available to them, but the responsible party would be the Civilian Police branch.<sup>146</sup>

### **Donor Conditionality on Human Rights Performance**

Another obstacle to the police academy project was the donors’ resort to aid conditionality in an attempt to encourage better human rights



compliance by the Palestinian Police. In 1997, the Swedish consulate and the Dutch Representative's Office were instructed by their respective MFAs to freeze their planned contributions to the academy pending an improvement in the human rights situation.<sup>147</sup> Nearly all members of the SWG/Police criticized this decision. The PNA and Egypt argued that the freeze was incompatible with the two European countries' complaints about police abuses. Others, including UNSCO and the OHCHR, pointed out the importance of counteracting human rights violations by more police training. The local Swedish and Dutch representatives were apparently very unhappy with the new instructions from their ministries, and expressed hope that the decision would soon be reversed.<sup>148</sup> This was a classic example of how local diplomats often see things differently and are more in tune with local perceptions than their home base.

Denmark now took over the lead-nation role from Sweden and approached Norway with an informal request to assist in the financing of the academy. The MFA initially declined in view of the human rights situation. However, the Gaza office argued that funding the projected academy was something the MFA in Oslo should seriously consider because it offered opportunities to emphasize human rights and the rule of law in a more systematic fashion. Besides, Palestinian human rights groups and the OHCHR all supported the idea.<sup>149</sup> In May 1998, Norway decided to support the academy project on condition that the other four donor countries involved, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands and Germany, also contributed.<sup>150</sup> Further consultations followed, but despite some progress on the project at the end of the 1990s, it had not materialized when the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada put an end to all police reform efforts.<sup>151</sup> It was a tragic irony that the academy idea, which had served to justify the expansion of donor-sponsored police training, remained at the drawing board stage. The very idea that a centralized police training institution would sooner or later be established had had considerable impact on donor willingness to finance a large number of police training courses at significant expense.

## Conclusion

From mid-1994, the donor community offered a wide range of police training programmes to the Palestinian Police, seeing more training as



the main vehicle for police reform and the promotion of democratic policing. The political and institutional framework for police reforms was not ideal: for example, donors lacked monitoring teams on the ground which could give advice and follow up on a daily basis. Evaluation of the Police's performance was therefore confined largely to the UN police training coordinator and a few other police advisers, in addition to the human rights organizations. The failure to establish a higher police education institution (the police academy) and to achieve greater Palestinian ownership of the police training efforts meant that the impact of externally sponsored training remained limited.

Adverse political circumstances negatively affected the police training efforts. Israel's continued occupation and the limited achievements of the Oslo process in terms of territorial 'liberation' and sovereignty promoted a militarization of the Palestinian Police that was reflected in its ideological orientation as well as in its training. At the various Palestinian training facilities, the emphasis was on military tactics, manoeuvres, martial arts etc. The specialized civilian policing skills taught at the donor-sponsored instructor courses were seen as somewhat irrelevant for most branches, which, apart from the Civilian Police, saw themselves as military formations. The civil–military divide proved to be a major hurdle, as many donors wished to uphold the notion of a unified Palestinian Police. Because donors attributed growing importance to the PNA's counter-terrorism performance and because the security/intelligence branches operated largely independently of the civil and military branches of the Police, another area of the donor–PNA interface emerged. The next chapter will therefore explore donor assistance to and interaction with the intelligence branches.

## NOTES

- 1 UD-RG, "Strategy Plan 1995, Police Training and Technical Unit, UNSCO (draft)", undated.
- 2 For more details on the PNSF, see Chapter 8 in Lia (2006). The Arabic name for the training centre was *al-mudiriyyah al-'ammah l-quwwat al-amn al-'amm wa al-shurtah*.
- 3 Cited in "The police academy: a step towards the independent state" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 15 (November–December 1996), pp. 78–81. When commenting upon training in the various police branches, Palestinian Police Director Nasr Yusuf noted that "every unit is improvising". Cited in N. MacFarquhar, "How Palestinian policemen were drawn into the conflict", *New York Times*, 29 September 1996, p. 1.
- 4 "The President oversees the graduation of National Security Forces candidates in Jericho" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 7 (August 1995), p. 9.
- 5 The first officers included 52 law degree graduates who had received specialized police training in Egypt, around thirty VIP-protection officers and some 165 police officers, formerly employed in the Israeli Police, according to the deputy Civilian Police Chief in Gaza Mahmud 'Asfur. See his article "The police service takes pride in the achievements of the National Authority" (in Arabic), *al-Ra'i* (Gaza), May 1996, pp. 20–1.
- 6 "Major-General al-Majaydah: our duty is to put all things in order" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 2 (August 1994), pp. 4–8.
- 7 The plan was followed up according to the deputy Civilian Police commander in Gaza. 'Asfur, interviews.
- 8 "Major-General al-Majaydah: our duty is to put all things in order" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 2 (August 1994), pp. 4–8.
- 9 M. 'Asfur, "The police service takes pride in the achievements of the National Authority" (in Arabic), *al-Ra'i* (Gaza), May 1996, p. 21.
- 10 Interview with Major-General Ghazi al-Jabali in S. Abu Ramadan, "Official: Police on alert once state is declared", UPI, 8 July 2000. See also *ibid.*, pp. 20–1.
- 11 Øverkil noted in his reports that most policemen "have only provisional training of a few weeks". A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 31 January 1995, p. 5.
- 12 "Activities" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 14 (October 1996), pp. 10–12 and "The police academy: a step towards the independent state" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 15 (November–December 1996), pp. 78–81.
- 13 Cited in "Intensive activities by the Political Commissariat in Jericho" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 8 (October 1995), pp. 8–9.
- 14 Brigadier Sa'd Sayil (Abu al-Wahid) was a leading Force-17 commander who was assassinated in Lebanon, presumably by Israeli agents, in October 1983. "Opening of the first Palestinian police academy" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 5 (January–March 1995), p. 13 and "List of Palestinian Organizations, Officials", *FBIS Daily Report Near East and South Asia*, 14 February 1995, Supplement, FBIS-NES-95-030-S.
- 15 "Graduation day for Arafat's Force-17 presidential guard", AFP, 9 April 1996.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 "Activities" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 14 (October 1996), pp. 10–12.

- 18 “The police academy: a step towards the independent state” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 15 (November–December 1996), pp. 78–81.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Although I have been unable to access the detailed curricula of these training programmes, other sources, such as press coverage of graduation ceremonies, my interviews with police commanders and police recruits and the publications by the Directorate of Political and Moral Guidance, an important department in all Palestinian Police branches, all confirm that the training effort had a strong military and nationalist orientation.
- 21 For example, the first graduation ceremony for the new PS/Force-17 cadres trained in Gaza, held on 9 November, just six days ahead of the sixth anniversary of the declaration of independence, was presided over by “Commander Abu ‘Ammar”. “Activities”, *Watani* (November–December 1994), p. 18. Abu ‘Ammar was Arafat’s nom de guerre.
- 22 “First Palestinian police graduate in Gaza”, Reuters, 25 June 1994.
- 23 The names of well-known Palestinian martyrs were adopted as names for many Civilian Police units. In March 1995, for example, a new batch of Civilian Police recruits graduated in Gaza and adopted the name “The Sons of the al-Karameh Martyrs”. “First Palestinian police graduate in Gaza”, Reuters, 25 June 1994 and “Graduation of a new batch of police forces” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 5 (January–March 1995), pp. 28–31.
- 24 “Graduation of the Border Area Martyr Course” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 6 (25 May 1995), p. 6.
- 25 “The Political Guidance Command inspects the forces heading for the West Bank” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 8 (15 November 1995), pp. 14–15.
- 26 Cited in *Watani*, No. 6 (25 May 1995), p. 1. As a case in point, issue No. 7 devoted 16 pages to military issues. See *Watani*, No. 7 (August 1995).
- 27 See, for example, S. Nasr, “Systematic training and the building of a human being” (in Arabic), *Watani* (November–December 1994), pp. 43–4.
- 28 Cited in “Voice of Israel highlights ‘zealous’ speeches at passing-out parade in Jericho”, VOI, 0800GMT and 0505GMT, 16 November 1994.
- 29 D. M. Targovnik, “Police cadets graduate, show off their training in Jericho”, AP, 9 October 1995.
- 30 Cited in “Palestinian official warns of violence if occupation continues”, AFP, 22 December 1997.
- 31 S. Nasr, “Systematic training and the building of the human being” (in Arabic), (2) *Watani*, No. 5 (January–March 1995), pp. 51–3.
- 32 UD 308.87 Vol. 1, UN Secretary-General’s Office (Aimé) to MFA, 11 July 1994.
- 33 UD 308.87 Vol. 3, UNSCO to MFA, 13 September 1994; internal memo, 19 September 1994; and UNSCO to MFA, 11 October 1994.
- 34 UD-RG, “Strategy Plan 1995, Police Training and Technical Unit, UNSCO (draft)”, undated.
- 35 For example, he worked with the UN police training coordinator in assessing the requirements for a police academy, and was heavily involved in the police training evaluation project in 1995–6.
- 36 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 September 1995, p. 2 and UD 308.87 Vol. 4, London Embassy to Oslo, 25 November 1994.
- 37 For a detailed discussion of this involvement, see Chapter 9 of this book.

- 38 Kukler (1995), p. 8.
- 39 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 6 June 1995, p. 2.
- 40 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 September 1995, p. 3 and 13 November 1995, p. 5.
- 41 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 February 1997.
- 42 Bleikelia, interview.
- 43 Sweden's behind-the-scenes mediation efforts in the late 1980s, leading to US recognition of the PLO in 1988, was another illustration of the historical bonds between Sweden and the PLO. The US ambassador to Tunisia Robert Pelletreau claimed that "the PLO had more confidence in Sweden than in any other country in the world". For a brief account of Swedish mediation efforts in the Palestinian–Israeli conflict and Swedish–Palestinian relations, see Waage (2000), pp. 56–62. Quotation from *ibid.*, p. 61.
- 44 Hallqvist, interview.
- 45 UD 308.87 Vol. 4, London Embassy to Oslo, 25 November 1994.
- 46 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 10 August 1995, p. 4.
- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 4 and UNSCO official, interview.
- 48 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 September 1995, p. 2.
- 49 The unit was also called 'Forces of Public Order and Intervention' (*quwwat hafz al-nizam wa al-tadakhkhul*).
- 50 Sørensen, Petersen, interviews.
- 51 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 6 June 1995, pp. 1–2.
- 52 Meehan (1999), pp. 25–6.
- 53 The prison staff training programme was still "pending" in 1999. See surveys in UNSCO (1997) and (1999), pp. 48–9.
- 54 Sørensen, Sevje, interviews.
- 55 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 November 1995, p. 3; UD-RG, UNDP to Gaza office, 27 April 1995; and Petersen, interview.
- 56 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 19 September 1995, p. 3.
- 57 Owing to problems of information exchange, the UN police training coordinator confided in an interview in 1996 with this author that his coordination efforts had been confined largely to the Nordic countries, with some occasional contacts with the UK, Germany and the Netherlands. Petersen, interviews.
- 58 *Ibid.*
- 59 A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 31 January 1995 and A. Øverkil, "Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress", 5 March 1995.
- 60 Petersen, interview.
- 61 For an overview and discussion of counter-terrorism assistance to the Palestinian Police, see Chapter 9 of this volume.
- 62 Petersen, interviews.
- 63 A number of Palestinian officers had received higher military education in the Soviet Union/Russia. These relations, dating back to the pre-Oslo period, appear to have continued after Oslo. In March 1996, for example, *Watani* reported a reception held in honour of Lieutenant-Colonel Ahmad Abu 'Ilbah by the Section of Mass Activities in the Political Guidance Directorate "on the occasion of his doctoral degree in military sciences from Moscow". Cited in "News and activities" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 11 (March 1996), p. 17.

- 64 According to Israeli media reports in May 1995, the Palestinian Police had seriously considered an Israeli offer to organize an all-day seminar on riot control for 25 Palestinian police officers in Israel, including training in the use of tear gas and rubber bullets. According to the newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth*, the Israeli police “kept the visit a secret for fear of negative public repercussions”. As the report nevertheless leaked to the press, PNA officials were apparently forced to deny that such training cooperation ever existed, illustrating the very sensitivity of police cooperation with Israel. The commander of the Civilian Police, Brigadier Ghazi al-Jabali, went so far as to suggest that the report was fabricated by the Israeli media to tarnish the image of the Palestinian police. “PLO denies Israeli police to teach it riot control”, Reuters, 16 May 1995; “Israeli cops to lecture PLO on Gaza riot control”, Reuters, 16 May 1995; “PLO denies Israeli police to teach it riot control”, Reuters, 16 May 1995; “Israel police to train Palestinian police”, VOI-E, 0400GMT, 16 May 1995; and “Arafat adviser denies Palestinian police to be trained in Israel”, VOP, 1730GMT, 16 May 1995.
- 65 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 27 November 1997.
- 66 *Palestine Report* 3(13), 5 September 1997.
- 67 Luft (2000), citing “PA officers train for war overseas”, *Haaretz*, 12 July 2000.
- 68 Petersen, interviews.
- 69 Hijazi, interview. For example, a group of 22 policewomen were trained in criminal forensics in Cairo in 1997. “Policewomen: earning their stripes”, *Biladi/The Jerusalem Times*, 16 January 1998, p. 7.
- 70 H. Huberman, “Palestinian officers complete training at Cairo Academy” (FBIS title), *Hatzofe*, 13 June 1999, p. 1, via FBIS.
- 71 “PNA–Israeli ‘sources’ question support for Palestinian security services after ‘hostile statements’”, VOI, 0505GMT, 17 November 1994; L. Lahoud, “Germans train Palestinian police”, *Jerusalem Post*, 25 October 1995, p. 5; and “Interview with Muhammad Dahlan” (FBIS title), *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 22 January 1999, p. 3, via FBIS.
- 72 See, for example, “PNA–Israeli ‘sources’ question support for Palestinian security services after ‘hostile statements’”, VOI, 0505GMT, 17 November 1994; S. Qallab, “Two Jordanian ministers convey to Arafat al-Kabariti’s assurances that Amman does not lend any support to Hamas or its leaders” (in Arabic), *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 6 March 1996, p. 3, via FBIS; “Palestinian Preventative Security head says no role for Jordan role in West Bank”, VOI, 0405GMT, 26 July 1996; “Palestinian Security head denies Arafat weaker, says Jordan spreads rumours”, VOI, 0405GMT, 15 August 1996; “Palestinian Authority–Jordan ‘struggle’ over influence in Territories”, VOI, 0405GMT, 18 August 1996; “Interview with Colonel Jibril al-Rajub, Head of Palestinian Preventive Security in the West Bank by Khalid Mahmud in Cairo on 22 April 1999” (FBIS title), *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 24 April 1999, p. 6, via FBIS; and “Washington urges Amman to open dialogue with al-Rajub” (in Arabic), *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 22 July 1999, p. 3.
- 73 M. S. ‘Asfur, “The police: The experiences, challenges, future perspectives, and the relationship with the citizens” (in Arabic), undated, p. 3.
- 74 “Palestinian military team visits Jordan to discuss bilateral cooperation” (in Arabic), *al-Hayat al-Jadidah*, 26 August 1999 via SWB.
- 75 Petersen, interviews; “Training stints for agents from 12 Arab countries”, *Intelligence Newsletter*, 26 June 1996; Heller and Shapir (1999), p. 316; and M.

- S. 'Asfur, "The police: The experiences, challenges, future perspectives, and the relationship with the citizens" (in Arabic), undated, p. 3.
- 76 Interview with Colonel Isma'il al-Shafi, director-general of the Anti-Drug Public Administration of the Palestinian Police in "Drugs: a security problem", *Biladi/Jerusalem Times*, 27 March 1998, p. 6.
- 77 The Palestinian delegation reportedly included representatives from the Political Commissariat, the Criminal Investigation Department, the Custom Service, TV and Media and General Intelligence. *Watani*, No. 8 (October 1995), p. 9.
- 78 As the general problems of intra-Palestinian rivalry and donor-recipient coordination have been dealt with in a previous chapter, I shall focus only on problems related to police training assistance.
- 79 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 27 November 1997.
- 80 UD-RG, The Netherlands Representative Office in Gaza to UNSCO (J. Petersen), 28 February 1996.
- 81 I have accessed only a draft version, but it was reportedly more candid and outspoken than the stripped down and diplomatically worded final report. Sørensen, interviews; Wagenaar et al. (1996); and UD-RG, Letters to Major-General Nasr Yusuf, 6 May 1996 and "Joint Evaluation Team", undated but early 1996.
- 82 Owing to a lack of experience in training police forces from the Arab world, the Netherlands appointed an external monitor who followed the Dutch-sponsored training programmes very closely over time. Kukler (1995), Appendix I.
- 83 An evaluation report of Norwegian aid for poverty reduction noted, for example, that "in recent years, the Norwegian emphasis has been on 'recipient responsibility' and local 'ownership' and with a focus on institutional development and donor coordination as important instruments". Ofstad and Tjønneland (1999), executive summary.
- 84 Kukler (1995), p. 1.
- 85 *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 86 Sørensen, Eriksson, Øverkil, interviews.
- 87 Police adviser, interview.
- 88 Kukler (1995), p. 5.
- 89 According to the report, "several consultations were needed to convince the PPF senior management that such selection procedures are beneficial for the quality of the future training programmes of the PPF". *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 90 Petersen, Sørensen, Bleikelia, interviews.
- 91 Police adviser, interview.
- 92 Wagenaar et al. (1996).
- 93 Sørensen, Petersen, Bleikelia, interviews.
- 94 Kukler (1995), p. 2.
- 95 For a discussion of PACC, see Chapter 6 of this book.
- 96 See, for example, UD 308.87 Vol. 2, UN Secretary-General's Office to MFA, 29 July 1994.
- 97 Bleikelia, Hooper, Øverkil, interviews.
- 98 Sørensen, interviews.
- 99 Sørensen, Petersen, interviews.
- 100 Sørensen, Eriksson, Petersen, interviews.
- 101 Cited in Kukler (1995), Appendix I.

- 102 Ibid.
- 103 Petersen and Scotland Yard official, interviews.
- 104 Lang, interview.
- 105 Petersen, interviews.
- 106 See, for example, interview with Colonel Ziyad al-Surani, a political commissar in the Civilian Police for the Northern (Gaza) Region, who stated that “we have succeeded in building important relations with a number of police agencies in the world, for example with the group of Scandinavian countries and the European police and others. And this has given our police the benefit from international police experience and the newest and most modern equipment used by these forces”. A ceremony in honour of the first UN police training coordinator, Per Bleikelia, and the donor-sponsored police training contributions were briefly mentioned in the January 1996 edition. “Our brave soldiers – high morals and small salaries!!” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 8 (15 November 1995), p. 32 and “Activities of the Political and Moral Guidance Directorate” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 10 (January 1996), pp. 14–17. See also interview with Brigadier Muhammad Abu Marzuq, Civil Defence in “The security and safety of the citizens ... a national and sacred duty – the Civil Defence has limited capabilities but continuous activities” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 12 (May 1996), pp. 59–63.
- 107 As cases in point, see B. Jabr, “Together we will build the homeland” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 2 (August 1994), p. 10; “The vision of the current stage and its new challenges” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 7 (August 1995), p. 44; and “Activities of the Political and Moral Guidance Directorate” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 10 (January 1996), pp. 14–17. For three articles in which donor assistance is briefly mentioned in more positive terms, see “Exclusive reception of John Major by President Arafat on the first liberated land” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 5 (January–March 1995), p. 6; “Graduation of the second special course for the security forces and police in human rights compliance” (in Arabic), *Watani*, (November–December 1994); and “The President” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 11 (March 1996), pp. 5–9.
- 108 See, for example, “Arab support for the Palestinian Police all according to their capabilities” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 5 (January–March 1995), p. 13; (No title), *Watani*, No. 8 (October 1995), p. 9; “The police academy: a step towards the independent state” (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 15 (November–December 1996), p. 80; and M. S. ‘Asfur, “The police: The experiences, challenges, future perspectives and the relationship with the citizens” (in Arabic), undated. See also “Drugs: a security problem”, *Biladi/The Jerusalem Times*, 27 March 1998, p. 6.
- 109 Sab’awi, interview.
- 110 Ibid.
- 111 Ibid.
- 112 Ibid.
- 113 Sørensen, interviews.
- 114 Ibid.
- 115 Ibid. and Eriksson, interview.
- 116 The US had well over 12,000 police forces in 1990; but in the United Kingdom by the mid-1990s, this number had declined to some 43 operationally independent police forces. Bayley (1995), pp. 83–4. The expression ‘*mukhabarat* state’ is taken from Picard (1993), p. 270.



- 117 Bayley (1995), p. 83.
- 118 Wagenaar et al. (1996).
- 119 Sørensen, interviews.
- 120 Petersen, interviews.
- 121 Ibid. and Øverkil, Bleikelia, interviews.
- 122 UN police training coordinator, interviews.
- 123 Petersen, interviews.
- 124 Sørensen, interviews.
- 125 Cited in UD-RG, “Strategy Plan 1995, Police Training and Technical Unit, UNSCO (draft)”, undated.
- 126 A. Øverkil, “Report on the Palestinian Police Force: Status and Progress”, 31 January 1995, p. 5. See also COPP meeting minutes, 1 September 1994, p. 3.
- 127 Kukler (1995), p. 4.
- 128 Petersen, interviews.
- 129 Wagenaar et al. (1996).
- 130 UD 308.87 Case No. 95/03749-45, Gaza office to Oslo, 16 December 1997.
- 131 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 9 February 1995 (draft), p. 4.
- 132 Cited from statement by the UN police training coordinator. See SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 March 1995, p. 4.
- 133 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 6 June 1995, p. 3.
- 134 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 10 August 1995, p. 4.
- 135 Ibid., p. 2 and SWG/Police meeting minutes, 13 November 1995, pp. 3, 5.
- 136 Apparently, the Nablus site was not suitable, because it was located in Area B, and it needed far more investment to link it to public utilities etc. than the Jericho site. In late 1996, a construction architect had inspected the site in Jericho, and a detailed project document was under way that would be sent to the donors for approval in February 1997. Petersen, interviews.
- 137 There had also been discussions about whether UNDP should be involved in the financing of the Police Academy, but they came to nothing. Hooper, interviews and UD-RG, Letters to Major-General Nasr Yusuf, 6 May 1996.
- 138 Ibid.
- 139 Ibid.
- 140 Cited in *ibid.* with attachment, “Joint Project Formulation Team”.
- 141 As an illustration of the confusion about the Palestinian Police branches, it is interesting to notice that the donors in their “Joint Project Formulation Team” document erroneously referred to the ‘Interim Agreement’ listing of the various branches of the Palestinian Police as Public Security Force, Civilian Police, Coastal Police, Intelligence, Preventive Security, National Security (which is not mentioned), and Civil Defence, while omitting PS/Force-17, which is mentioned there. *Ibid.*
- 142 Petersen, Eriksson, Sørensen, interviews.
- 143 *Ibid.*
- 144 Sab’awi, interview.
- 145 Sørensen, interviews.
- 146 *Ibid.*
- 147 Germany and Denmark were still willing to go along with the project. SWG/Police meeting minutes, 27 November 1997 and *Palestine Report 3* (26), 5 December 1997.



- 148 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 27 November 1997.
- 149 The Norwegian minister for development aid also discussed the issue with Palestinian human rights groups, including Iyad al-Siraj, during his visit to Oslo in 1997. UD 307.87 Case No. 95/03749-45, Gaza office to Oslo, 16 December 1997 and al-Siraj, interview.
- 150 UD-RG Gaza office to the Danish Representative Office in Gaza, 7 May 1998 and UD 307.87 Case No. 95/03749-51, internal memo (Middle East Unit), 19 June 1998.
- 151 See the last MFA file on the Police Academy Project in UD 307.87 Case No. 95/03749-63 Danish MFA to Oslo, 23 May 2000.

## The Politics of Anti-Terrorism Aid

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There is nothing altruistic in all of this. It is one of the keys to apprehending the problem of Islamic terrorism. Behind all the official agreements the Americans and the Europeans are doing their own secret deals.<sup>1</sup>

**European intelligence official, 1998**

Counter-terrorism assistance gradually became an important part of the international police aid involvement with the Palestinian Police.<sup>2</sup> As a significant part of this assistance was channelled via covert bilateral programmes, it is impossible to present an exhaustive overview of its sources, content, magnitude and recipients. It is somewhat easier to explore the policies underlying this assistance. The available sources about this part of donor involvement are basically limited to press reports and a few personal interviews. Despite the dearth of quality sources, the information available nevertheless provides a surprisingly detailed view into the closed world of international intelligence assistance.

Training in intelligence work and covert operations was nothing new to the PLO. During the pre-Oslo period, PLO fighters were often trained in covert operations skills in camps in the Arab world, especially in Lebanon until 1982 and in Libya during the 1980s. This training was offered too in friendly communist countries, including China, the Soviet Union, Vietnam and elsewhere. The Palestinian Force-17, which operated several special commando units, was trained in Tunis and Libya by a variety of foreign advisers.<sup>3</sup> Such instruction involved both training in commando attacks and guerrilla warfare and techniques in evading intelligence detection. The PLO intelligence agencies in Tunis also used to receive training assistance from friendly states and allies. Colonel Amin al-Hindi, who rose from the ranks in the PLO security agencies in Lebanon from the mid-1970s, took several training courses in intelligence work in Moscow, Berlin and Sofia in the early 1980s before he became Abu Iyad's right-hand man in Tunis, according to one report.<sup>4</sup> 'Atif Bsaysu, the chief PLO liaison officer with Western

intelligence in the early 1990s until his assassination in 1992, had received extensive training by east European security services.<sup>5</sup>

After Oslo, new relationships were established; and by late 1995, the Palestinian General Intelligence (GIS) chief claimed to have made significant progress in forging new bonds with security agencies outside the Arab world.<sup>6</sup> After 1996, these relationships expanded to include specific training and equipment courses in counter-terrorism, particularly from the US and, to a lesser extent, the EU countries.

### **The Evolution of US Counter-Terrorism Assistance**

The CIA was not a newcomer to US–Palestinian relations, and had maintained contacts with the PLO since the early 1970s. According to Henry Kissinger's memoirs, the PLO chairman and the CIA deputy director met secretly on 3 November 1973 and concluded "a non-aggression pact" in the wake of a crisis created by the assassination of the US ambassador to Sudan by gunmen from the Palestinian Black September Group.<sup>7</sup> The Force-17 commander 'Ali Hasan Salamah, the 'Red Prince', a revered figure within the PLO and an arch-terrorist in Israeli eyes, was appointed by Arafat to administer the PLO part of the deal. According to one study, Salamah became a "regular visitor to CIA Headquarters at Langley", and the CIA station chief in Beirut considered him "a super informer" who provided invaluable intelligence on the Middle East and especially Lebanon to the CIA for several years until his assassination by Mossad.<sup>8</sup> Reflecting the new relationship of trust, the CIA helped to broker the PLO evacuation from Beirut in 1982. CIA–PLO contacts were reportedly downgraded during the 1980s under the Reagan and Bush administrations owing to their misgivings about the PLO's stand on terrorism. After the Oslo Accords, however, the Clinton administration quickly upgraded and expanded CIA contacts with the PLO. The CIA sent Stanley Moscowics, described as a "negotiator", to man the station chief position in Tel Aviv. His mandate was to build up an understanding with the PLO and to assist the organization in setting up effective security agencies to contain Palestinian Islamists.<sup>9</sup>

The United States' counter-terrorism assistance to the Palestinian Police was intimately linked to its mediation role in the Middle East conflict. But it was also related to increased concern about Islamist terrorist

groups harming US nationals and interests at home and overseas after the World Trade Center bombing in New York in 1993, which had demonstrated their vulnerability to such groups. The US administration probably judged that counter-terrorism assistance to the moderate PLO would serve several purposes: it would provide new avenues for intelligence gathering, counteract the spread of radical Islamism and increase the prospects of a peaceful solution to the conflict.

In 1993–4, the US was reluctant to enter into direct mediation because it had had no midwife role in the DoP. But its involvement increased; and in January–February 1995, when the talks were stymied by deadly suicide bombings, the first Palestinian–Israeli understanding was mediated through its good offices. President Clinton had personally taken part in the meetings, which Arafat saw as a great step forward.<sup>10</sup> The February 1995 understanding was an important precursor of future trilateral security cooperation. It included a Palestinian commitment to crack down on the rejectionist groups and prosecute them in military tribunals (hence the formation of the State Security Courts). Israel offered to uphold the Accords and to continue the talks. For its part, the US promised various economic incentives, in-kind police assistance and reportedly some counter-terrorism assistance.<sup>11</sup>

US counter-terrorism assistance to the PNA had started in late 1994. It consisted of specialized training for Palestinian security personnel in the US in skills ranging from infiltrating terrorist groups to clandestine communication techniques and interrogation methods. Lessons in computer technology and intelligence processing were also given.<sup>12</sup> Several sources have corroborated the existence of this programme, which was a logical extension of the previous US involvement in VIP protection training of Arafat's bodyguards that reportedly began in early 1994.<sup>13</sup> The preservation of Arafat's life and the reduction of anti-Israeli violence were judged to be vital to the continuation of the peace talks.

In 1995, there was also a small US-sponsored programme for the Preventive Security Agency (PSA). It was apparently devoted to a wide variety of police work, and not specifically to counter-terrorism skills.<sup>14</sup> On 10 April 1995, a group of seven West Bank PSA officers arrived at the Philadelphia Police Department for three months of police training. It is uncertain whether the US government was involved in setting up this programme, although its start-up coincided roughly with the

PNA–Israeli understanding in February 1995 when the US supported the deal by pledging increased police assistance to the PNA. Officially, it was organized and paid for by the local Palestinian- and Arab-American community; it enjoyed the assistance and blessing of Philadelphia's Jewish mayor Edward Rendell; and it had been facilitated through Colonel al-Rajub's close relations with top Israeli security officials.<sup>15</sup> (It nevertheless provoked criticism from the Jewish community in the US which claimed that the Palestinians would use their skills in "a war to liberate Jerusalem".<sup>16</sup>) The Philadelphia Police Department had a long history of hosting foreign police officers and had few qualms about obliging the Palestinians. The programme was an example of agency-to-agency interaction facilitated by the transnational bonds of ethnicity without the formal permission or intervention of national governments. This was a common but little recognized feature of international police training and police exchanges in many parts of the world.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Sharm al-Shaykh Summit and a New CIA Programme**

In the wake of a string of suicide attacks in Israel in late February and early March 1996, the Clinton administration significantly upgraded its aid programme to the Palestinian Police. A summit in Sharm al-Shaykh, Egypt gathering together most world leaders involved in the Middle East process provided the context for inaugurating the programme for additional aid. While political leaders made their official statements solemnly pledging to support 'the fight against terrorism' and the peace process, counter-terrorism officials from several countries met behind closed doors to outline a strategy for dealing with the new situation. They also gathered for a follow-up meeting on 29 March to coordinate "practical measures".<sup>18</sup> Washington was now attempting to bring about "a joint American–Israeli–Jordanian–Palestinian intelligence alignment" in addition to upgrading its own counter-terrorism expert teams in Israel.<sup>19</sup> The US continued to strengthen its regional presence, and in early 1997 the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) opened new offices in Israel, Jordan and Egypt during a Middle East tour by FBI Director Louis Freeh.<sup>20</sup> It is doubtful whether it had much success in bringing all of Jordan, Israel and the PNA on board, because of the hostile relationship between the PSA's West Bank chief Jibril al-Rajub and Jordanian intelligence. (There were nevertheless signs of more joint

efforts at the inter-Arab level in combating Islamist violence following the Sharm al-Shaykh meeting.<sup>21</sup>)

There was better progress in setting up trilateral Palestinian–Israeli–American counter-terrorism cooperation.<sup>22</sup> In a series of meetings and consultations ahead of and during the Sharm al-Shaykh summit, including talks in Gaza between Arafat and a team of US anti-terrorism experts headed by the CIA’s deputy director George Tenet, Arafat presented the Americans with a list of requests for his security agencies ranging from equipment and funds to specialized training.<sup>23</sup> It is unclear exactly what was agreed upon but the CIA was swift to act. A counter-terrorism official interviewed by this author recalled that only two weeks after the Sharm al-Shaykh summit, the CIA was on the ground implementing a train-and-equip programme for the PNA’s intelligence agencies.<sup>24</sup> It appears that the programme was gradually upgraded to reward the PNA for making new concessions in the peace talks. For example, in May 1997, when the Palestinian side was insisting on an end to Israel’s settlement project in Jabal Abu Ghunaym/Har Homa before any serious counter-terrorism cooperation with Israel could be resumed, the CIA apparently offered a package of “sophisticated equipment” to Palestinian intelligence in order to sweeten the deal.<sup>25</sup> And only days after the conclusion of the Wye River Agreement in October 1998, CIA experts began daily training courses for Palestinian intelligence personnel in the West Bank.<sup>26</sup>

The size of the US programme was not made public but it appears to have been quite substantial. According to a *New York Times* investigation, President Clinton “had signed a presidential order creating a covert programme to provide tens of millions of dollars to increase the professionalism of the Palestinian security services and help combat terrorism”.<sup>27</sup> The financing source is not known, but it must have presented something of a political challenge for the US administration. The State Department had been forced to end funding for the PNA’s recurrent costs and terminate several aid programmes in the PNA-ruled areas in early 1996 after the US Congress had refused to renew the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act. This legislation made US aid to the Palestinians conditional on the findings of a biannual assessment by Congress of the PLO’s compliance with the Palestinian–Israeli Accords. In the wake of the crisis in March 1996, Clinton had publicly announced an immediate \$100 million counter-terrorism assistance

package to Israel. Because Congress had basically blocked further aid to the PNA, the new US programme for Palestinian intelligence was presumably part and parcel of the \$100 million aid package for Israel. To channel assistance via Israel was the most efficient way of overcoming Congressional hurdles, and it had been done twice before for some 400 military surplus vehicles that had been donated to the PNA in 1994–5.

### **The Content of the CIA Programme**

The content of the CIA programme is not publicly known, but according to the *New York Times* investigation cited above, the Palestinian intelligence agencies had been “showered with advanced radio communications and X-ray equipment, bomb detection scanners, computers, vehicles and other equipment”.<sup>28</sup> One part of the CIA aid was something as innocuous as a “mine clearance programme”.<sup>29</sup> The presence of numerous mines, which were left behind after the numerous wars in and around the borders of Gaza and the West Bank, was primarily a humanitarian problem, as each year Palestinians were killed in mine explosions.<sup>30</sup> Other donors, including Canada, began assisting the PNA in mine clearance and explosives disposal in 1996–7. The reason for the CIA’s interest in clearing mines was apparently that it feared that if they were not found and removed, Palestinian militants might use them as bombs.<sup>31</sup>

With regard to other technical equipment, one report suggested that Palestinian intelligence had acquired surveillance equipment enabling it to better monitor the Palestinian opposition. One much-publicized example was the transfer of an electronic eavesdropping system at an estimated value of \$160,000. This equipment, capable of monitoring mobile telephone conversations over a range of many kilometres, was delivered to the PSA. The Israeli right-wing press highlighted this transfer as particularly dangerous, because the system allegedly was capable of monitoring IDF military mobile phones.<sup>32</sup>

In the area of training, the CIA reportedly ran courses in covert information gathering and non-violent interrogation techniques and it assisted in organizing computer-based intelligence files. The emphasis on non-violent interrogation techniques was important because of the strong media focus on police abuses during detention in the PNA and on the CIA’s disreputable history of teaching physical torture techniques

during the early years of the Cold War.<sup>33</sup> There is little doubt that human rights were emphasized during the CIA-sponsored training courses.<sup>34</sup> It is uncertain to what degree this translated into operational conduct, however; and in March 1998, two years after the CIA programme began, there was still little tangible evidence that interrogation abuses had diminished.<sup>35</sup>

Who actually trained Palestinian intelligence personnel and where the training took place is not known. Several reports indicate that FBI agents working at the CIA's counter-terrorism centre established in 1986 at Langley, Virginia, were heavily involved as instructors. Retired army intelligence officers working under contract to the US government were also involved as advisers.<sup>36</sup> According to intelligence sources interviewed in 1998, a group of Palestinian officers were trained at "Harvey Point Defense Testing Activity", which was a cover name for a CIA base some nine miles from Hertford, where the agency had run secret paramilitary and counter-terrorism courses for thousands of its officers and selected foreigners since 1961.<sup>37</sup> The first Palestinian intelligence training sessions in late 1994 reportedly had taken place at Fort Bragg in South Carolina, a Green Beret training centre that played host to special forces from many countries.<sup>38</sup>

Much of the training took place in Gaza and the West Bank as soon as facilities were put in place, as was the case with the other police training programmes, but Palestinian cadres continued to be sent for specialized training to the US.<sup>39</sup> The conclusion of the Wye River Memorandum inaugurated stepped-up training efforts in the West Bank: on 29 October 1998, only days after the signing ceremony in Washington, DC, daily courses for PSA and GIS personnel resumed in Jericho and Ramallah on issues such as explosive ordinance disposal and intelligence collection.<sup>40</sup>

### **The New Mediator? Towards a Broader CIA Involvement**

During the late 1990s, the CIA expanded its presence and infrastructure in Israel and the self-rule territories. Its director George Tenet visited the West Bank four times between 1996 and 1998, opening a CIA communications office in Gaza and four 'operational rooms', in Jericho, Hebron, Ramallah and Nablus. These were essentially "liaison centres" inside Palestinian Police bases, and came in addition to existing staff



in Tel Aviv and (most probably) a network of agents and informers inside the Occupied Territories.<sup>41</sup> The expansion of the CIA's operational infrastructure in Gaza is corroborated by several independent sources.<sup>42</sup>

After 1996, the CIA's involvement with the Palestinian Police rapidly expanded beyond technical assistance in counter-terrorism: it now established itself as an important interlocutor in Palestinian–Israeli security relations. Terms such as “mediator”, “facilitator”, “judge” and “referee” were increasingly used to describe its role, especially from mid-1997. Judging by press reports, the mediating role gradually became more permanent, in response to successive crises in the peace talks. CIA officials were instrumental in bringing together security officials from both sides after the March 1997 crisis when the PNA, in response to Israeli settlement expansions, severed security coordination and downgraded its policing of anti-Israeli activities.<sup>43</sup> An illustrative example of the expanded CIA involvement is given in a *New York Times* report published in the aftermath of a Palestinian bomb attack in Jerusalem in late July 1997:

The Israeli and Palestinian authorities have agreed to report all they have learned about the suicide bombing at a Jerusalem market to a three-way panel whose American representative will be the CIA station chief in Tel Aviv ... The mechanism will in effect allow the United States to serve as referee and arbiter in a dispute that has raged since the bombing on July 30 about whether the Palestinians are doing enough to co-operate with Israeli demands to crack down on suspected Islamic militants.<sup>44</sup>

A ‘tripartite panel’ had existed prior to the Jerusalem bombing; but until July 1997, security meetings between Israeli and Palestinian intelligence officials had taken place mostly without a US presence.<sup>45</sup> The CIA's role was now being elevated to a more permanent status. Following a triple suicide attack in Jerusalem on 4 September 1997, the Israeli government responded by cancelling the trilateral meetings, demanding that “those who have to act, have to act now, not talk”.<sup>46</sup> The CIA was nevertheless instrumental in drawing the two sides together, and the trilateral meetings resumed.<sup>47</sup> CIA officials involved themselves more openly by taking an active part in the investigations of Islamic militants, for example by visiting crime scenes such as uncovered bomb factories and laboratories.<sup>48</sup> As a further sign of the political importance that the US now attributed to the new CIA cooperation with the

Palestinian intelligence agencies, the PSA's West Bank chief Colonel al-Rajub was invited to Washington, DC in October 1997 to meet with the CIA, the FBI and the National Security Council.<sup>49</sup>

The United States had several motives for expanding the CIA's role in the Middle East peace process. First, it would allow the Clinton administration more leeway in political mediation efforts by insisting that its judgements on security cooperation were based on facts and had nothing to do with politics. Second, the new tripartite security coordination system was believed to improve intelligence exchange between the parties. At previous security coordination meetings without a US third-party presence, the Palestinians and Israelis often accused each other of bad faith; but with a CIA presence, the US hoped that some of the imbalance between the parties might be offset and that the process would assume a more technical character.

The CIA's role in Palestinian–Israeli security cooperation led to the near conclusion of a trilateral security memorandum in early 1998, but it foundered on Israeli objections to some of the wording in the agreement.<sup>50</sup> The US continued to pursue this track, however; and in March 1998, it went public about the CIA's new role in the Middle East conflict, confirming for the first time that CIA agents were “working closely” with Palestinian intelligence.<sup>51</sup> With the conclusion of the Wye River Memorandum on 23 October 1998, both bilateral American–Palestinian and trilateral American–Palestinian–Israeli committees were formed to deal with a wide range of security issues, from counter-terrorism and the prohibiting of illegal arms to the prevention of incitement to violence. (The package also included substantial economic rewards for both parties, with \$400 million of US aid for the PNA.)

The CIA's high-level involvement was unprecedented, especially its more visible role as mediator, which aroused some criticism. Its director was reported to have made more than ten trips to the region between 1996 and 2000, first as deputy director and then as director, to shore up the complicated security coordination between the parties.<sup>52</sup> CIA officers regularly visited Palestinian jails and police headquarters, checking to see whether jailed militants were still behind bars, discussing the projected cuts in the size of the Palestinian Police and progress in the collection of illegal arms. These were all commitments made in the Wye Memorandum (see Box 9.1), which also contained a secret appendix detailing additional obligations of the three parties.<sup>53</sup>

**Box 9.1****The Wye River Memorandum, a summary**

The Memorandum aimed to speed up the implementation of the Interim Agreement. It offered far more specific and detailed mechanisms with strong US participation in the follow-up on Palestinian security responsibilities in return for Israeli commitments to carry out two of the three further redeployments. The Palestinian side committed itself to:

- “Outlawing and combating terrorist organizations”
- “Prohibiting illegal weapons”
- “Preventing incitement”
- Pursuing “bilateral security cooperation ... which will be continuous, intensive and comprehensive”.

In each of these areas, the Palestinians pledged to work closely with the US and Israel. For example, a counter-terrorism “workplan” would be shared with the US and implemented immediately in order “to ensure the systematic and effective combat of terrorist organizations and their infrastructure”. A bilateral US–Palestinian committee would meet biweekly to review these steps, and the Palestinians “will inform the USA fully of the actions it has taken”. Two US–Palestinian–Israeli trilateral committees were established to monitor cases of possible incitement to violence etc. and to enhance cooperation in preventing arms smuggling. Finally “a high-ranking trilateral US–Palestinian–Israeli committee” would meet not less than biweekly in order to “assess current threats, deal with any impediments to effective security cooperation and coordination and address the steps being taken to combat terror and terrorist organizations”.

Israel feared that the growing US involvement in security affairs would obliterate the essentially bilateral character of the Oslo Accords and strengthen US ability to exert pressure on it in security matters.<sup>54</sup> These fears were offset by the significant security improvement after Wye, but the CIA’s new hands-on approach provided US diplomats with ammunition and determination to check the validity of Israeli allegations against the PNA and made it more difficult for Israel to falsely accuse the PNA of failing to combat political violence. In a much-publicized

confrontation during a panel discussion organized by the Jewish Council for Public Affairs in February 1999, Martin Indyk from the US State Department responded to Israeli claims that the PNA had released “known terrorists and murderers”. He said, “That is not true. ... We checked on it, we checked your information, we checked their information and we got our own information and it’s simply not true. On the basis that they did not have any grounds for holding these people, they released them. Israel releases people as well. You have to be very careful about making those kinds of charges unless you’re on sure ground.”<sup>55</sup>

Israel was concerned too that the new counter-terrorism technology and training transferred to the Palestinian security agencies would make them more professional and harder to defeat in an eventual military confrontation and that their expertise might leak to terrorist groups and weaken Israeli capabilities to combat those organizations. In 1999, during the Barak government, Israeli officials asked the United States to cut its aid programme, prompting an outcry from Palestinian intelligence chiefs, who called the Israeli request a “show of arrogance”.<sup>56</sup>

The high degree of direct CIA involvement yielded significant results in terms of improved Palestinian counter-terrorism efforts. Between the Wye River Memorandum and the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada 23 months later, there were no major suicide attacks inside Israel.<sup>57</sup> The improvement was widely acknowledged by Israeli officials, who repeatedly praised Palestinian counter-terrorism efforts.<sup>58</sup> A significant degree of de-politicization of Palestinian policing had been achieved by then. The PNA had adopted what it termed “a zero-tolerance policy of terrorism”, issuing clear orders that the Palestinian Police would “continue to co-operate with Israel on the security level, whatever the political situation”.<sup>59</sup> A discussion of the reasons for the failure to translate significant security progress into a political agreement would take us far beyond the scope of this study, but it is interesting to note that key participants in the Camp David and Taba talks have emphasized how close the parties were to a final agreement.<sup>60</sup>

### **The CIA’s Role and the Palestinians**

The CIA’s experience in non-public mediation during sensitive crises in the Middle East was probably a contributing factor to its success in bringing about more Palestinian–Israeli cooperation, thus leading to a

significant reduction of anti-Israeli violence at the end of the 1990s.<sup>61</sup> There can be little doubt, however, that its success hinged very much on it being perceived as even-handed by the Palestinians. In fact, during 1996–7 it was the Palestinians, not Israel, who insisted on CIA involvement. The PNA wanted the CIA “to act as a witness and a judge”, to verify the seriousness of its anti-terrorism effort.<sup>62</sup> There were many Palestinian calls for direct US (and EU) participation in the security coordination mechanisms in which Palestinian intelligence officials felt that they were always at a disadvantage and unable to satisfy what they regarded as Israel’s impossible demands. By contrast, senior Israeli intelligence officials repeatedly expressed their concern about the CIA presence, viewing it as a threat to Israel’s leverage over the PNA.<sup>63</sup> The CIA’s success was also in no small measure due to its very active involvement in equipping, training and assisting the Palestinian intelligence agencies. Its officials assisted and advised the Palestinian Police in a number of practical matters as well as in security policy affairs not directly related to the counter-terrorism campaign, and even in areas that furthered PNA and not Israeli security interests. This even-handedness on the part of CIA officials probably cemented important ties of friendship.

One example of the CIA’s helpful wider involvement was its policy of assisting the PNA to restructure and reform its somewhat confusing and anarchical security agency structure. For example, it recommended to Arafat in 1998 that he establish a central Palestinian national security organ in order to bring down the level of conflict between the various agencies and that he instruct the heads of the intelligence branches to refrain from making any press statements.<sup>64</sup> The PSA and GIS chiefs were undoubtedly the most publicly exposed intelligence chiefs in the entire region, and the CIA typically felt that they would do their job better as bureaucrats and professionals behind closed doors than in their current roles as officers-cum-politicians.

Another example of the CIA’s wider role was its assistance in removing booby-trapped bugging devices that Israeli intelligence had apparently planted in the Saraya compound in Gaza City before its departure in May 1994. This housed the main headquarters of the PNSF, the Presidential Security/Force-17 unit, the GIS and a prison. The devices were discovered in September 1996 when members of the PNA engineering corps dug underground to investigate a malfunction in the telephone system. The devices were booby-trapped and exploded

upon discovery, resulting in the death of a Palestinian officer just a few metres outside the telephone exchange room.<sup>65</sup> Subsequently, some five more wiretapping systems were found. To make its case, the Palestinian Police invited CIA officials from the US embassy in Tel Aviv and also European officials to inspect and remove the devices, and demanded that Israel supply them with maps of all booby-trapped listening devices so as to avert further loss of life. Israeli intelligence denied any involvement in this and later discoveries of bugging devices in the PNA's and Arafat's offices, offering only its usual Orientalist explanation that "these claims are a figment of the Palestinians' developed imagination".<sup>66</sup> CIA experts also assisted Palestinian counter-intelligence in analyzing the eavesdropping capabilities and range of the discovered devices.<sup>67</sup> By assisting the PNA in this regard, the CIA clearly won much goodwill among Palestinian security officials.

On the other hand, there were numerous sources of tension between the PNA and the CIA. Although little is publicly known about the implementation of the CIA-run training courses and how they were received by individual Palestinian trainees, the US role in the Middle East conflict and its generally pro-Israeli bias probably made an impact. One incident suggests that this was the case. According to Jordanian press reports, there had been a fistfight between US trainers and Palestinian officers at one of the training courses at the GIS base in Ramallah in October 1999. Several US officers were seriously injured, and the CIA insisted that the four Palestinians involved in the brawl be dismissed from the course. The fight apparently started when the Americans "insulted the Palestinian officers and affronted their national struggle".<sup>68</sup> Another, more specific source of contention was Palestinian suspicions that the CIA leaked vital information to Israeli intelligence that the latter used to assassinate Palestinian militants and embarrass the PNA.<sup>69</sup> In general, the CIA's involvement aroused mixed and often negative feelings among PNA officials and the Palestinian public, and the demand for an end to CIA 'interference' was a popular slogan among Palestinian demonstrators, particularly from the Islamist opposition.

The chief of the PSA in Gaza, Colonel Dahlan, acknowledged that "the name CIA is repugnant to the Arab citizen and the Palestinian in particular".<sup>70</sup> However, he highlighted the CIA's role as judge and witness, which served to "remove the Israelis' excuse" for cancelling further withdrawals.<sup>71</sup> Despite the intrusiveness of the CIA's monitoring,

Palestinian intelligence chiefs usually dismissed the view that the CIA interfered in Palestinian affairs.<sup>72</sup> To stress that point, Colonel Dahlan even denied that the CIA had opened new offices in the PNA areas: "I assert that no such offices have been opened as of this moment ... So far the United States does not want to open trade, economic, security or other offices in the PA areas. Therefore, exaggerating the CIA's role in these areas is part of a campaign targeting the PA."<sup>73</sup>

As for the level of bilateral security cooperation between the Palestinian security agencies and the CIA, Dahlan stressed that the US-sponsored training of Palestinian cadres "has not so far reached the level of the cooperation that exists between us and Egypt, which is the main center for training the Palestinian security cadres".<sup>74</sup> He pointed out too that European countries had also sponsored training programmes, resulting in many options of which cooperation with the CIA was only one. Thus there was no relationship of dependence. Although he obviously belittled the CIA's role for public relations purposes, it seems true that Palestinian intelligence had developed important relations with a wide range of foreign countries by the late 1990s. Among these the EU countries were particularly important.

### **The EU's Counter-Terrorism Involvement**

An EU counter-terrorism involvement appears to have been contemplated before the Sharm al-Shaykh summit. In early 1996, it was suggested that the EU Ad Hoc Working Group on the Middle East should discuss EU police aid coordination with the PNA.<sup>75</sup> The initiative came from Germany but reflected a broader sense that the coordination efforts were not in optimal shape, as the EU representative in the SWG/Police had explicitly indicated at its last meeting in 1995. With Norway looking for an exit strategy from the sensitive police sector, there was clearly a void that needed to be filled. Some EU countries probably saw this as an opportunity for the EU to make an impact in a sector that provided both visibility and influence.

The idea of expanding the EU's police aid involvement received strong support following the Sharm al-Shaykh summit in March 1996. According to a statement following the informal EU foreign ministers' meeting in Palermo on 9–10 March, the EU agreed to examine technical counter-terrorism assistance and training "as a matter of priority", but



progress was very slow.<sup>76</sup> In contrast to the US, which began implementing its assistance programmes only weeks after the summit, the EU spent more than a year on internal consultation and preparations.<sup>77</sup> Only on 29 April 1997 did the Foreign Ministers Council adopt Joint Action 97/289/CFSP on an EU counter-terrorism programme for the PNA.<sup>78</sup>

### **From Policy Programme to Implementation**

As part of the preparatory activities, a large EU expert mission was dispatched to Gaza and the West Bank in October 1996.<sup>79</sup> The mission consisted of police experts from ten EU member states, and they spent one week in the Territories, divided into three groups, discussing counter-terrorism needs and requirements. They met with most of the Palestinian Police branches, including the Civilian Police, but the PSA and the GIS eventually became the main recipients. The Civilian Police had until then enjoyed an unrivalled position as the most favoured police branch among the donors, and watched the shift in donor priorities to the intelligence branches and the counter-terrorism business with growing frustration.

The preliminary project outlined by the EU expert team recommended a train-and-equip programme taking in the use of various kinds of intelligence equipment, such as surveillance and eavesdropping systems, computer systems for the creation of intelligence files and communication equipment and the establishment of an investigation bureau with forensic capabilities. As of December 1996, it was assumed that some \$10 million would be allocated to the counter-terrorism project. There was strong political backing for it in donor capitals, especially in London, which repeatedly highlighted this new EU contribution to the Middle East process, and in Paris, which strongly supported the PNA's efforts to neutralize Islamic terrorists. (The position of the European Commission in Brussels is not known, but it had previously resisted involvement in the police sector and acted only when prodded by the member states.)

The new EU counter-terrorism programme was dubbed 'COTER'. It was supposed to use existing facilities in Gaza and Jericho and did not aim to build new training centres. One important focus of COTER was to help the Palestinian intelligence services build an organization with both intelligence gathering and analytical capabilities. According to the UN police training coordinator, who escorted and participated in



the EU expert mission in late 1996, the information facilities in Palestinian intelligence branches were not particularly impressive: documentation and criminal files were neither stored in databases nor systematically compiled and registered, making cross-checking and analyses difficult.<sup>80</sup>

There were many limitations to the COTER programme. Already at the planning stage, donors expressed concern that if the Palestinian intelligence services could get their hands on very advanced surveillance and eavesdropping equipment and learn sophisticated methods of intelligence work, they might use these methods against Israel or other states. For their part, the Israelis apparently told the donors that they would oppose in-kind donations of advanced communication equipment that would hamper their eavesdropping. As of 1996, the Palestinian Police still had only one legal radio frequency.

The EU counter-terrorism programme gained more momentum in mid-1997. On 4 July, the European Commission appointed "an EU special adviser", Nils Eriksson, to take charge of it and coordinate the various contributions from the EU member states.<sup>81</sup> A Swedish police chief superintendent with wide experience in international police assistance and previous experience as the police adviser/training coordinator for Sweden and the UN in Gaza, Eriksson was well qualified to fill the position. He arrived in the Occupied Territories in mid-August 1997.<sup>82</sup> Roughly at the same time, the UK assigned Alastair Crooke, an experienced security official on secondment from the British intelligence service MI6, to the team of the EU's Middle East envoy Miguel Moratinos.<sup>83</sup> In late 1997, it was still uncertain where and how the programme would operate. In late November, Eriksson told the SWG/Police group in Gaza that the project "will be run by the EU office in Jerusalem and a proposal is being scrutinized in Brussels and will be finished next year. It is not clear how it will finally look."<sup>84</sup> However, apparently after Israeli pressure to remove every manifestation of a PNA presence in East Jerusalem, it was decided that the EU special adviser should operate from an office in Ramallah.<sup>85</sup> By April 1998, the EU had agreed on the outline of the counter-terrorism programme.<sup>86</sup>

In mid-1997, an estimated budget of ECU 3.6 million was allocated for the programme, and would apply until April 2000.<sup>87</sup> This sum covered only the expenditures of the new EU counter-terrorism assistance office in Jerusalem and Ramallah, not the actual training courses and accompanying equipment donations; these were to be carried by each

member state. In a highly unusual arrangement, the EU special adviser Eriksson would report directly to Brussels and would not be subordinated to the EU's Middle East envoy Moratinos. With an annual budget of some ECU 1.2 million, he would coordinate the various ongoing or projected counter-terrorism programmes of some ten EU member states, including the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Spain, Sweden and the Netherlands. These programmes reportedly covered areas from surveillance and eavesdropping, communication and the principles of establishing an intelligence organization to forensic capabilities, investigation and interrogation techniques, personnel management, handling the media, explosive ordnance disposal and human rights.<sup>88</sup>

Public EU statements on the programme in 1997 strongly emphasized that "specific training will be provided ... to ensure that the security and police services concerned are fully aware of the principles of human rights", but it is uncertain whether that dimension remained the guiding principle throughout implementation.<sup>89</sup> Donor-sponsored police training had a tendency to 'outsource' human rights training to watch groups rather than to integrate it into the general training. The European Commission, for example, funded a two-year human rights training project with a budget of ECU 650,000. This was run by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute in Sweden and its Palestinian partner the Mandela Institute for Human Rights in Ramallah. The latter had long experience of interaction with the PNA's security agencies.<sup>90</sup> For this reason, it was tempting for other police assistance projects to regard the human rights part of their programme as already implemented.

The coordination of COTER and similar programmes presented problems. Although Eriksson was supposed to coordinate all EU contributions to the PNA in the field of counter-terrorism, he soon discovered that several EU member states ran parallel covert programmes with one or several of the Palestinian intelligence agencies without coordinating these with his office. Because the Palestinians were not very secretive about foreign assistance, the EU special adviser was informed. When he took the unusual step of confronting representatives of those member states who had covert bilateral programmes, he was usually met with flat denials.<sup>91</sup> Also, Eriksson initially coordinated the EU counter-terrorism programme with both the CIA representatives and Israeli intelligence through more or less regular meetings in Tel Aviv. Later, coordination with the CIA ran into problems for unknown reasons, and the EU was kept on the sidelines.<sup>92</sup>

In 1998, the COTER project dealt primarily with the PSA and the GIS, not with the more military-like security agencies such as Presidential Security/Force-17 and Military Intelligence.<sup>93</sup> Both the US and the EU channelled much aid to the PSA. According to the Israeli media, the PSA was also busy establishing relations with Russian intelligence services, which evoked some concern among the EU advisers.<sup>94</sup> The timing of the Israeli press leak, April 1998, coincided with the conclusion of the PNA–EU Security Memorandum (see Box 9.2 below), which Israel was unhappy about. This suggested that reports about “growing intelligence cooperation between the Russian and Palestinian security services” might well have been planted by Israel in order to deter the Europeans from cosying up too much to Palestinian intelligence.<sup>95</sup>

The COTER programme faced the usual hurdles concerning transiting equipment into the Territories. By May 1998, much of the training had not yet started owing to the problems of setting the required police equipment in place. Clearance was one issue about which Israeli obstructionism often caused considerable friction. Another problem the COTER encountered was that the PNA surprisingly attempted to levy customs on the donations, which was unacceptable to the donors. A third irritant was the criticism levelled against COTER for not coordinating the human rights profile of its programme with the OHCHR, as the latter was mandated to review the entire human rights policy of the PNA.<sup>96</sup> There were other, more political problems too, and the complications surrounding COTER during its early phases in 1998–9 prompted the European Commission to refer the project to the EU Council of Ministers for further review. At the EU foreign ministers meeting on 6 July 1999, an EU role in this field was deemed sufficiently important for COTER to be extended until 31 May 2002, but there would be a further review by the end of June 2000 in which a new indicative budget would be adopted on top of the ECU 3.6 million already committed to the project.<sup>97</sup>

### **The PNA–EU Security Memorandum**

After the finalization of the COTER programme, a bilateral PNA–EU security understanding was concluded. It provided for a joint security committee that was to meet regularly in order to assess Palestinian counter-terrorism efforts and review cooperation.<sup>98</sup> The agreement was

concluded in April 1998 during Prime Minister Tony Blair's visit to the Middle East shortly after the UK assumed the EU Presidency, and the counter-terrorism programme was a cornerstone of the EU's renewed efforts to enhance its visibility in the Middle East peace process.<sup>99</sup>

Although the details of the PNA–EU security agreement were formally secret, it was leaked to the press by Palestinian sources, who were eager to demonstrate that it was Israeli intransigence, not insufficient Palestinian effort in the field of counter-terrorism that was holding up the wider peace negotiations (for summarized excerpts, see Box 9.2).<sup>100</sup> The leaked content and the wording of the memorandum correspond with information made available to this author by other sources. The main theme in its seven articles is the formation of a permanent PNA–EU security committee and its missions and tasks. The committee would consist of the EU special adviser, the GIS director and the two PSA chiefs, Rajoub and Dahlan. Reports from subsequent meetings of the committee confirmed that the GIS and the PSA were the principals in the EU programme.<sup>101</sup> A key point of the memorandum was the PNA's acceptance of "the principle of allowing the European Union every now and then to assess all or part of the PNA's commitments on fighting terrorism".<sup>102</sup> This was a clear parallel with the informal Palestinian–Israeli–American security panel that had existed until the Wye River Memorandum.

### BOX 9.2

#### The PNA–EU security memorandum

The mission and the tasks of the PNA–EU Security Committee are:

- discussion of security matters and the obstacles impeding security cooperation and the exchange of information;
- provision of channels for communication and contacts;
- the expeditious exchange of information in times of crisis;
- the arrangement of fact-finding visits and familiarization with needs and requirements so that the European Union would be able to provide tangible and practical assistance enabling the PNA to meet its obligations in the field of counter-terrorism;
- the discussion of special measures related to safeguarding human rights.

Source: *Al-Ittihad* (Abu Dhabi), web edition, 1 May 1998, via FBIS.

An important advantage for the EU was that the PNA committed itself to facilitating the preparation and tailoring of the EU programmes. It allowed, for example, the committee to call in other official PNA representatives to participate in its work according to circumstances and the proposed agenda. The committee would meet regularly or at the request of one of the two sides in times of crisis. In addition to its core function as a security assistance coordination body, the PNA–EU Security Committee appears to have served as a meeting place for political envoys from both sides, in particular the Palestinian chief negotiator Sa'ib 'Urayqat and the EU's special envoy Moratinos.<sup>103</sup>

The EU's role in PNA security affairs took a new turn after the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada, which gave rise to increased scepticism in EU capitals with regard to assisting the Palestinian Police when the latter appeared to be directly involved in the fighting. Counter-terrorism aid was replaced by EU attempts to introduce unofficial security monitors on the ground. An EU monitoring unit with multinational participation was set up in the PNA-ruled territories to report on and assist in efforts to conclude a ceasefire.<sup>104</sup> Israel strongly resisted the move, however, seeing it as a covert attempt to introduce international observers or peacekeepers. Relations between the EU and Israel also deteriorated as a result of Israel's destruction of the EU donations to the PNA and the Palestinian Police, notably surveillance equipment, communication systems and an expensive forensics laboratory. In late 2002, the EU was still maintaining its special adviser's office, but its role was reduced to maintaining contacts with the Palestinians, gauging the possibilities for restarting police training and updating EU member states on the situation on the ground.<sup>105</sup>

### **Contributions by EU Member States**

There is little publicly available information about the specifics of the EU member states' individual contributions. According to the Spanish press, one course was offered by the Spanish military intelligence agency the Higher Centre for Defence Intelligence (CESID) in early 1999, and was apparently coordinated via the COTER programme. The CESID would “train the Palestinian security forces in the methods of combating outbreaks of low-intensity violence” at its training facilities in Spain.<sup>106</sup> Germany, which had long experience in combating political violence,

offered training in counter-terrorism techniques to PSA officers in Germany in April–May 1998, although its training of Palestinian intelligence personnel had probably begun earlier.<sup>107</sup> Interestingly, it invited an equal number of Palestinian and Israeli officers to its programme, obviously in an attempt to build bridges between the two adversaries and to defuse potential controversy about German involvement in such a sensitive field.<sup>108</sup>

The UK, France, the Netherlands and Sweden were, as noted above, also among the contributors to COTER, but little is publicly known about the specifics of their programmes.<sup>109</sup> According to a senior Scotland Yard official, the UK programmes reportedly consisted of media management, forensics and surveillance courses. Britain's counter-terrorism assistance had begun before the COTER project was finalized. For example, in June 1996 MI6 experts together with the CIA assisted in organizing the first-ever joint Arab training session on communications, computer security and encryption, bringing together in Riyadh around eighty intelligence specialists from 11 Arab countries as well as from the PNA for a three-week course.<sup>110</sup> The UK's assistance was more or less discontinued after the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada. Scotland Yard feared that the British programmes, if they were held openly at the PNA's facilities, "might be misunderstood by the Israeli side".<sup>111</sup> The Netherlands also offered courses as part of COTER, focusing on explosive ordnance disposal training. Scheduled to begin later than the UK course, the Dutch course was never implemented, because of the al-Aqsa intifada.<sup>112</sup> Sweden's contributions apparently included forensics training; and, unlike many other police donors, Sweden continued to offer training after the al-Aqsa intifada, bringing Palestinian officers to the Swedish National Police Academy for training some time in 2001.<sup>113</sup>

Historically speaking, France was probably the EU member state with the closest contacts with the PLO intelligence services, partly as a result of the special French–Tunisian relationship – Tunisia had hosted the PLO headquarters since 1982 – and partly as a result of France's promotion of a pro-Arab foreign policy towards the Middle East. With the establishment of the PNA, the previously Tunis-based intelligence service, the GIS, maintained these close contacts, and its director Colonel Amin al-Hindi reportedly sent his personnel to France for specialized training in eavesdropping and VIP protection.<sup>114</sup> This relationship of cooperation and assistance, insofar as it continued throughout the 1990s,

may well have been kept outside the coordinated EU counter-terrorism efforts, and it served to bolster the special relationship between France and the PLO/PNA.

### **Conclusion**

In the late 1990s, there was a large expansion in counter-terrorism assistance to the Palestinian Police, primarily in response to the devastating effects of repeated suicide attacks on Palestinian–Israeli relations and the peace talks. Having stayed aloof from the donor-sponsored police training efforts in Gaza, the US moved quickly after the Sharm al-Shaykh summit and established itself as one of the primary providers of training and assistance to the Palestinian intelligence agencies. Its considerable assistance programme, estimated at tens of millions of dollars, was decisive in creating new US influence with the PNA in terms of its counter-terrorism performance. The growing US involvement in this aid was mainly a product of its mediating role. Gradually it established itself as an active partner in a new trilateral security relationship with the PNA and Israel. The effect of the new relationship was startling, and there was a significant reduction in anti-Israeli violence towards the end of the 1990s.

The EU entered the counter-terrorism business later and with fewer resources than the US and remained by and large a junior partner. The difficulties of coordinating counter-terrorism aid inputs from a host of countries were great, especially in view of the sensitive and covert character of such assistance, and this accounted for the slow implementation of the project.

The overall shift towards counter-terrorism had a manifest impact on the balance between the Palestinian Police branches. The Civilian Police had previously enjoyed the undisputed position as the branch most favoured by the donors – it had expanded from near zero to some 12,000 men by 1996. But the new counter-terrorism assistance was channelled directly to the Palestinian intelligence agencies, the PSA and the GIS, undermining donor efforts to create a more unified and civil Palestinian Police.



**NOTES**

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- 1 Cited in M. Benchelah, "Secret service aid for the Palestinians" (in French), *Le Point* (Paris), 27 June 1998, p. 23, via FBIS.
- 2 The quotation "our job is to kill Hamas and Islamic Jihad" is taken from a confidential interview with an official involved in the counter-terrorism aid efforts involving the PNA.
- 3 Thomas (1999), pp. 303–4.
- 4 "Amine al-Hindi", *Intelligence Newsletter*, No. 229, 24 November 1993.
- 5 "Who was Atef Bsissou?", *Intelligence Newsletter*, No. 196, 24 June 1992.
- 6 Interview with GIS Chief Colonel Amin al-Hindi in "Palestinian security before anything else" (in Arabic), *Watani*, No. 8, October 1995, pp. 30–4.
- 7 The first sustained contacts between the CIA and the PLO were reportedly established in Morocco in 1976 and later developed by Richard Ames within the CIA. See Klovens (2001); Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, cited in Thomas (1999), p. 290; G. Seigle, "CIA too involved in Palestinian peace accord?", *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 4 November 1998; and "New twist in CIA-PLO relations", *Intelligence Newsletter*, No. 366, 23 September 1999.
- 8 Thomas (1999), p. 291. For more on the PLO's invaluable tipoffs to the CIA during the Lebanese civil war, see Gowers and Walker (1991), pp. 217–18.
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- 15 S. Rodan and B. Hutman, "Order in Jericho – Part I", *Jerusalem Post*, 19 May 1995, p. 10.
- 16 S. Gitell, "Arming Arafat", *Boston Phoenix*, 5 September 2001.
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- 21 See, for example, "Training stints for agents from 12 Arab countries", *Intelligence Newsletter*, 26 June 1996.
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- 27 E. Sciolino, "Violence thwarts C.I.A. Director's unusual diplomatic role in Middle Eastern peacemaking", *New York Times*, 13 November 2000, p. A10.
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- 35 "What the C.I.A. can teach the P.L.O.", *New York Times*, 7 March 1998, p. A12.
- 36 Interview with former US intelligence officer, name withheld on request; "PLA police: made in Philadelphia?", *The Mid-East Dispatch: Daily News From Israel*, 16 June 1997; "CIA training Palestinians in U.S.–NYT", Reuters, 5 March 1998; and Hass (1999), p. 318.
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- 62 According to an interview with Colonel Rashid Abu Shubak, the deputy director of the PSA in Gaza. N. B. Tatro, "CIA plays role in Mideast diplomacy as mediator on security", AP, 13 August 1997.
- 63 A former GSS chief Carmi Gilon, for example, stated that "every effort should be made to eliminate the CIA presence and return as soon as possible to two-party dealings". Major-General (ret.) Shlomo Gazit, a former Director of IDF intelligence was extremely critical, especially of the trilateral committees. They "are the worst items in the Wye River agreement ... For the first time in 50 years we have agreed that we shall be totally out of the process of dealing with security problems. Not in my wildest dreams did I envisage a third party, without Israel's presence, saying we have discussed it and your complaint was right. It's a horrible mistake and contrary to our long experience." Cited in N. B. Tatro, "CIA plays role in Mideast diplomacy as mediator on security", AP, 13 August 1997 and A. O'Sullivan, "Calling in the CIA", *Jerusalem Post*, October 30, 1998, p. 14.
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- 65 According to a senior Palestinian security official, “every device was planted in a 40-centimetre-long and 25-centimetre-wide aluminium box, which also included batteries and an explosive device programmed to detonate whenever anybody touched the device or tried to defuse it”. Cited in “PNA summons US embassy experts to check bugging devices ‘planted by Israel’”, VOI, 0405GMT, 8 September 1996. See also “Flashpoint (Interview with Col. Muhammad Dahlan)”, *Biladi/The Jerusalem Times*, 20 September 1996, p. 6 and I. Kershner, “U.S. helps Palestinians analyze ‘Israeli’ bugs”, *Jerusalem Post*, 17 October 1996, p. 11.
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- 67 I. Kershner, “U.S. helps Palestinians analyze ‘Israeli’ bugs”, *Jerusalem Report*, 17 October 1996, p. 11. See also interview with Amin al-Hindi in *al-Majallah* (London), 24–30 November 1996.
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- 70 “Interview with Muhammad Dahlan” (FBIS title), *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 22 January 1999, p. 3, via FBIS.
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- 77 Interview with Swedish counter-terrorism officials, June and September 2000.
- 78 European Commission (1997), pt. 923.
- 79 Petersen, Eriksson, Sevje, Sab’awi, interviews.
- 80 Petersen, interviews.
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- 83 Donor officials, interview and “Our Man’s Lonely Search for a Middle East Ceasefire”, *The Guardian*, 3 September 2002.
- 84 SWG/Police meeting minutes, 27 November 1997.
- 85 Eriksson, interview.
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- 89 *Bulletin EU* 4-1997, Mediterranean and Middle East (16/21) via <http://europa.eu.int/abc/doc/off/bull/en/9704/p104078.htm>.
- 90 The aim of that programme was to “improve knowledge of international human rights standards among security services and promote an internal human rights policy in the operational guidelines of the Palestinian security services”. European Commission (2001a) and (2001b), p. 137, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/ddh/pdf/compendium2001macro.pdf>.
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- 92 Dutch diplomats, interview.
- 93 Eriksson, interview.
- 94 Ibid.
- 95 Cited in *Yediot Aharonot*, 9 April 1998. This has been a common strategy by Israeli intelligence services. For example, Mossad’s Department for Psychological Warfare (LAP) devoted considerable resources to influencing the foreign and domestic media. (For more details on LAP, see Thomas (1999), p. 322.) There were reports in the Russian media about Palestinian Police requests for Russian equipment in May 1998, but this request apparently came from the Palestinian Police’s public order units, not intelligence. “Palestinian special purpose police want Russian equipment”, Moscow NTV, 28 May 1998, via FBIS and Luft (1998), pp. 4, 9.
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- 107 According to Amira Hass, whose book was completed in 1996, Palestinian intelligence in Gaza offered its prospective recruits the opportunity to go to Germany for training courses. Hass (1999), p. 318.
- 108 *Ha’aretz*, 4 April 1998 and M. Benchelah, “Secret service-aid for the Palestinians” (in French), *Le Point* (Paris), 27 June 1998, p. 23, via FBIS.

- 109 One curious detail from the French police training efforts, which also included a counter-terrorism component, was the French insistence that Palestinian trainees should learn French before attending the programmes. Petersen, interviews.
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- 111 Interview with Scotland Yard official, name withheld on request.
- 112 Interview with Dutch diplomat, name withheld on request.
- 113 Interview with Swedish police official, name withheld on request.
- 114 “PNA–Israeli ‘sources’ question support for Palestinian security services after ‘hostile statements’”, VOI, 0505GMT, 17 November 1994.

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## Conclusion

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This study has traced the history of international donor involvement in creating the Palestinian police and security forces from the Oslo Accords to the outbreak of the second intifada, which brought most police reform efforts to a standstill.

A recurrent theme has been the constant politicization of the aid process. This was, of course, due to the fact that the PLO/PNA was not an independent state capable of making sovereign decisions but a non-state entity dominated by a colonial power. The police donors frequently found themselves entangled in the complicated politics of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. Furthermore, the insurgent or terrorist history of the PLO and at least some of its police personnel remained a predominant concern. Unresolved issues swiftly become high politics, and the danger of escalation and a return to violence always hovered in the background. Donor assistance took place in a highly charged political context in which unresolved bilateral PLO–Israel issues constantly interfered with donor project planning and implementation. Disputes involving the Palestinian Police usually assumed a trilateral character, as the Palestinian side, the Israeli government and the donor community all had diverging agendas and interests. The limits of international assistance to the Palestinian Police were determined in a negotiation process in which Israel and its main international supporter the United States exerted a decisive impact. The high degree of politicization of even technical police issues meant that politics and trade-offs, not professionalism, common sense and practical considerations, characterized strategic decisions regarding the Police.

As the dominant external partner in the Palestinian–Israeli negotiations, the United States was uniquely placed to influence donor efforts in the police sector. From the very beginning, the US consciously formulated its police aid policies with a view to making its aid an instrument of political bargaining. This can be seen, for example, in the



manner in which the early police donor conferences, in 1993-4, were convened and the donor participants were selected. During the phase before the deployment of the Palestinian Police to the Gaza Strip and Jericho, the US specifically discouraged police aid, in order to counter PLO demands for a large police force, which it feared would complicate the wider political talks. When the PLO finally compromised with Israel over the Hebron issue in late March 1994, however, the US made significant lobbying efforts in support of police assistance. Strong US backing had a decisive impact on the outcome of fund-raising and aid mobilization efforts, in which Norway played a leading role, illustrating the degree to which police donor efforts hinged on US endorsement and support.

Many of the obstacles and hurdles inhibiting police assistance and police reform efforts in the PNA-ruled areas can also be found in other war-torn societies emerging from civil strife. The Palestinian case differed from others, however, by the near absence of the usual instruments and mechanisms by which external actors have facilitated police reform in post-conflict situations. This stemmed in large part from the asymmetrical power relationship between the parties, enabling Israel to veto the involvement of the UN and its peacekeeping and police reform instruments and any other third-party role in the realm of security. The failure of the temporary international presence negotiations, as described in Chapter 7, demonstrated that not only Israeli objections but also a lack of donor assertiveness in responding to PLO requests for police monitors contributed to this situation.

Police assistance emerged as a particularly intractable issue, for a variety of reasons. Although the first donor pledges, in 1993, had been made under the slogan of “economic development equals peace and security”, donors were nevertheless forced to direct more and more assistance towards state capacitybuilding and the maintenance of political stability in order to facilitate the continuation of the peace talks. This necessarily had to include aid to the coercive instruments of the embryonic state entity, which was a delicate issue because it implied donor responsibility if these instruments abused their powers and violated human rights. Besides, in the early 1990s there was still little precedent for police assistance in the development aid community, in which many officials were strongly opposed to it in principle. Such inhibitions prompted the World Bank, the lead donor agency in the West Bank and

Gaza Strip in the post-Oslo period, to exclude police assistance from its coordinating system, thereby creating a lack of mechanisms for mobilizing and implementing that aid. In response, Norway, as chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, the main policy-making body for organizing coordinating aid to the Palestinians, was forced to assume more direct responsibility for mobilizing and from late 1993 onwards coordinating police aid. It convened special police donor conferences, updated donor pledge matrices and joined the PLO in a special joint fund-raising campaign for police start-up costs. Norway also seconded police advisers to the UN so as to assist in coordinating police training assistance and to the COPP, the new police aid committee in Cairo that became the major vehicle for police donor coordination in mid-1994. It is possible that Norway's lead-nation role in virtually all major donor aid coordination committees, and the police sector in particular, discouraged the EU donors from a more active involvement, especially in view of EU grievances over exclusion by the US from a more prominent position in the coordination hierarchy and the closeness of US–Norway donor aid consultation.

The level of donor assistance was insufficient to cover existing police requirements, and this had a significant impact on Palestinian policing. In 1993–4, before the Police's deployment in Gaza and Jericho, very little donor aid in terms of training, in-kind donations and funding was delivered, one important exception being Egyptian and Jordanian-sponsored police training. The political implications of a poorly trained, ill-equipped and underpaid police were many, both for police–society relations and for the PNA's relationship with Israel. The most serious were the near absence of anti-riot training and equipment and a severe shortage of communication equipment. These were contributing factors in several of the most serious outbreaks of violence in 1994–5, such as the Erez riots in July 1994, the Palestine Mosque riots in November 1994 and the Bayt Lahya killings in January 1995. Similarly, a shortage of criminal investigation expertise and equipment made it difficult to produce the technical evidence needed to convict or release suspects, and that in turn increased the Palestinian Police's reliance on physical abuses to extract confessions. Its credibility as a law enforcement institution was weakened; and when it released suspected terrorists owing to lack of evidence, the PNA was accused of abetting terrorism.

Difficulties in implementing speedy delivery were a conspicuous feature of early police aid efforts. Donors were often slow in their own

decision-making as they struggled with the legal and political aspects of police assistance to a non-state entity. Further delay was caused by Israeli delays, bureaucratic if not intentional, at border crossings and by the PLO's slowness in producing the necessary information to release donor assistance. Aid efforts were also held up by Palestinian–Israeli disputes over issues such as radio frequencies and other security-related matters, despite the significant negative impact that these were to have on the Palestinian Police's performance.

Donor efforts often reflected a broader concern for the political negotiations than for the development of the Palestinian Police. Donors responded relatively more to needs and requirements that were deemed essential for the immediate continuation of the peace talks than to needs based on a long-term strategy of building a professional police force. They also gave relatively more priority to humanitarian needs (police salaries) and to non-specialized and often military surplus equipment and articles (uniforms and vehicles) than to specialized police equipment. Between May 1994 and July 1995, some \$53 million was spent in donor funding of recurrent costs and salaries, while only a small fraction of this went to equipment and training in riot control, criminal investigation and internal police communication. By their humanitarian aid focus, donors inadvertently reinforced the evolution of the Palestinian Police into an employment and patronage vehicle instead of an effective and professional police organization – a response that mirrored the PNA's policy of absorbing social unrest by giving young men jobs in the police and security forces. This policy diverted large resources from investment in training and equipment to recurrent costs. Again, it was the short-term political context, not professional police considerations, that determined the development of the Palestinian Police.

As for the implementation of police aid, especially the disbursement of police funding, this raised a host of problems both at the inter-donor level and at the donor–Palestinian interface. Funding foreign police forces was an unfamiliar challenge to donor agencies. Very few donors were willing to put their aid funds directly into PLO-controlled accounts. To alleviate the situation, the leading police donors formed a new multilateral payment mechanism in order to provide improved accountability, transparency and shared responsibility for participating donors after they had unsuccessfully lobbied the World Bank to assume responsibility for police start-up and recurrent costs. UNRWA, the largest UN agency in

the Occupied Territories, was designated as a payment channel, and this innovative mechanism was critical to the Palestinian Police's expansion. During the first year of the PNA's existence, donor funding via the UNRWA channel covered more than half of all police salaries. This was an impressive disbursement rate in view of the numerous political sensitivities surrounding the Police. During this period, the police force more than doubled in strength; it reached a level that made it capable of assuming authority over the West Bank towns following the Interim Accords in September 1995.

The technical implementation of the UNRWA payment channel and the general development of the Palestinian Police's organizational structure and branches presented new challenges to the PNA-donor relationship. Although political inhibitions against police funding had gradually been overcome in some donor capitals by mid-1994, new controversial issues emerged. These ranged from doubts about accountability, human rights abuses and the existence of 'illegal' police branches to a personnel roster in excess of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement and Israeli (and consequently US) protests against Palestinian recruitment policies. There can be little doubt that the police donors wandered through a political minefield. The fact that police funding continued despite controversies and irregularities attested to the high priority that a handful of donors gave to the force.

From late 1994 onwards, the PNA's finances were greatly enhanced by a sharp increase in tax clearance transfers from Israel and a high level of donor funding for its budget deficit. This allowed the PNA to rapidly expand its police forces to some 34,000 by the end of 1996, a monthly net recruitment rate of nearly 1,000 since September 1994. Given the downward-spiralling trend of the Palestinian economy after Oslo and the difficult political, legal and territorial circumstances under which the Palestinian Police operated, there is no doubt that external financial aid was critical in establishing the force, which in turn aided the PNA's consolidation and its efforts to monopolize violence.

Police aid other than funding was heavily concentrated on training assistance. This grew considerably from mid-1994 onwards, while in-kind donations declined after the start-up phase in 1994. The priority issues of police equipment and funding that had characterized the build-up stages in 1994-5 gave way to a stronger emphasis on police training with an explicit focus on the rule of law and improved human rights

performance. After 1996, donor involvement also shifted towards sectoral and specialized areas, principally counter-terrorism aid for the Palestinian intelligence branches. The number of police donors increased too, and this made effective coordination a more critical factor.

The early coordination efforts had taken place in Cairo under the efficient hand of the COPP and the Norwegian embassy. But the transfer from Cairo to Gaza and the new UNSCO office in late 1994 resulted in a loss of momentum while the challenges and difficulties of donor coordination increased. Largely as a result of UNSCO's failure to establish an effective successor to the COPP, donor coordination suffered a setback. The new aid coordination group (SWG/Police) came into existence in February 1995, more than five months after the COPP's demise. It had fairly frequent meetings during its first year of existence but lapsed into a state of semi-dormancy in 1996-7. The SWG/Police group failed to follow up on the COPP's important work of producing reliable status updates and realistic priority-needs assessments. Instead, donors were left with a stream of exaggerated wish lists from competing PNA police branches, and, as a result, their assistance declined and in-kind donations became fewer. Only police training, for which there existed an additional coordinating structure through the UN police training coordinator, experienced a sizeable expansion beyond the start-up phase in 1994. Long-term police reform was difficult to pursue, however, because of intra-Palestinian rivalries and the fragmented nature of the Palestinian Police organization. Palestinian attempts to form a police aid coordination committee were not very successful: for reasons of convenience, donors often circumvented the committee and dealt directly with their preferred branches, in particular the Civilian Police and the intelligence agencies.

Regarding the coordination and implementation of training assistance, the UN came to play an important role through the successive secondments of UN police training coordinators beginning in September 1994. This arrangement grew out of a PLO request for police training assistance addressed to the UN secretary-general at the time of the DoP signing ceremony in Washington, DC. This request subsequently crystallized into an informal donor group that formed the basis of the first UN-coordinated police aid efforts for the Palestinian Police. Beginning in mid-1994, the UN group implemented a wide range of police training programmes, reflecting the prevalent view among the donors that more

training was their main vehicle for police reform and the promotion of democratic policing.

The political and institutional framework for police reform was not ideal: the donors lacked, for example, monitoring teams on the ground which could give advice and follow up on a daily basis. The evaluation of police performance was therefore confined largely to the UN police training coordinator and a few other police advisers, in addition to the human rights organizations. The failure to establish a higher police education institution (a police academy) and to realize greater Palestinian ownership of police training meant that the impact of externally sponsored training remained limited.

Adverse political circumstances also negatively affected the donors' police training efforts. The continued Israeli occupation and the limited achievements of the Oslo process in terms of territorial 'liberation' and sovereignty promoted a militarization of the Palestinian Police that was reflected in its ideological orientation and its training. The specialized civilian policing skills taught at the donor-sponsored instructor courses were seen as somewhat irrelevant by most police branches, which, apart from the Civilian Police, saw themselves as military formations. The civil–military divide proved to be a major hurdle in that many donors wished to uphold the notion of a unified police force. As donors attributed steadily more importance to the PNA's counter-terrorism performance, another division in the donor–PNA relationship emerged, as the security and intelligence branches operated largely independently of the civil and military branches.

Chapter 9 of this book has examined the extent and impact of counter-terrorism assistance programmes during the latter 1990s. The expansion of this assistance came primarily in response to a series of suicide attacks that paralysed the peace talks in early 1996. Having stayed largely aloof from the donor-sponsored police training efforts in Gaza, the US now quickly established itself as one of the primary providers of training and assistance to the Palestinian Police's intelligence agencies. Its covert assistance programme was huge, estimated at tens of millions of dollars. It created new US leverage in the political talks over the PNA and Israel in terms of judging their security cooperation, notably the PNA's counter-terrorism performance and Israel's responsiveness to it. The USA effectively made itself an active partner in a new trilateral security relationship with the PNA and Israel despite much Israeli

scepticism about such a role. The EU also entered the counter-terrorism business. But its contribution came later; and with fewer resources than the US, it remained a junior partner.

The impact of the shift towards counter-terrorism assistance had several aspects. There was a significant reduction in anti-Israeli violence towards the end of the 1990s. Most probably, this could be ascribed to the increasing professionalism of the PNA security agencies as well as to the new trilateral security relationship in which the US acted as a judge because it promised tangible political gains for an improved counter-terrorism performance. On the other hand, the shift towards counter-terrorism changed the balance between the Palestinian Police branches. The Civilian Police had previously enjoyed an undisputed position as the branch most favoured by the donors, but the new counter-terrorism assistance was channelled directly to the Palestinian intelligence agencies, undermining donor efforts to create a more unified and civil Palestinian Police. Furthermore, the new emphasis on counter-terrorism inevitably weakened the credibility of donor rhetoric on the importance of the rule of law and civil–democratic policing. This is a general dilemma often underscored in the policy literature on international police assistance.

If for a moment one returns to the basic question raised at the beginning of this study, it seems pertinent to ask whether a police force can be created successfully without a state when the setting is a post-settlement environment following a protracted armed conflict. The Palestinian case has demonstrated fully the many difficulties and dilemmas facing international donors involved in police assistance in a context in which the armed conflict has not yet been fully resolved and the recipient is a national liberation organization struggling to achieve an independent state. The study shows that the political agendas of the two contending parties constantly interfere with long-term strategies for building an effective police force. Concerns other than for professional and democratic policing will affect the composition, the organizational structure and the training and recruitment patterns of the new force. An institutionalization of the criminal justice system in which the police organization should be embedded and held accountable will not, and cannot, occur except at the expense of vital political interests of the parties and to the detriment of political talks. Hence, policing in this kind of non-state setting will inevitably retain many of the characteristics



of a rebel movement's rough justice as enforced among its followers and constituencies.

Police aid efforts in this type of context can arguably provide merely temporary relief and improvement, and will constantly encounter the dilemmas generated by the non-state colonial setting. Traditional civil–democratic police aid is of limited relevance to a non-state entity controlled by a liberation movement and locked in a protracted territorial conflict with a colonial power. Only military aid, to improve its insurgent warfare capacity in the event of a new conflict, or counter-terrorism aid, to improve its security services vis-à-vis the hegemonic power, will be of strategic value to the non-state entity. Although lip-service will be paid to the need for civil–democratic policing, this ideal will quickly be sacrificed in face of the imperatives of national liberation. In the Palestinian setting, police donors were ambiguous about conceptualizing their contributions in terms of state capacitybuilding, good governance and development. Instead, when violence threatened to end the political negotiations, they were quick to redirect their aid efforts with a view to supporting the peace talks.

The challenge for police donors will ultimately be to strike a balance between an involvement that directly addresses the exigencies of the political negotiations but provides little long-term impact in terms of democratic policing and an involvement that prepares the police for a future democratic state. Whatever balance they strike, donors will have to be aware that in settings similar to the Palestinian case, with a non-state entity facing a hegemonic colonial power, their expensive donations will be of little use if hostilities resume and that their intensive police training programmes cannot prevent the trainees from using their skills in guerrilla warfare.

Finally, a few words should be said about my findings and their relevance for future research. Although the present study is far richer in detail than previous work on aid to the Palestinian Police, future research based on access to a wider range of archival sources should yield a more detailed account of many aspects of the aid process, for example the role of the US, the UK and the Arab states in setting up and developing the Palestinian Police and the specific coordination challenges involved in covert counter-terrorism assistance.

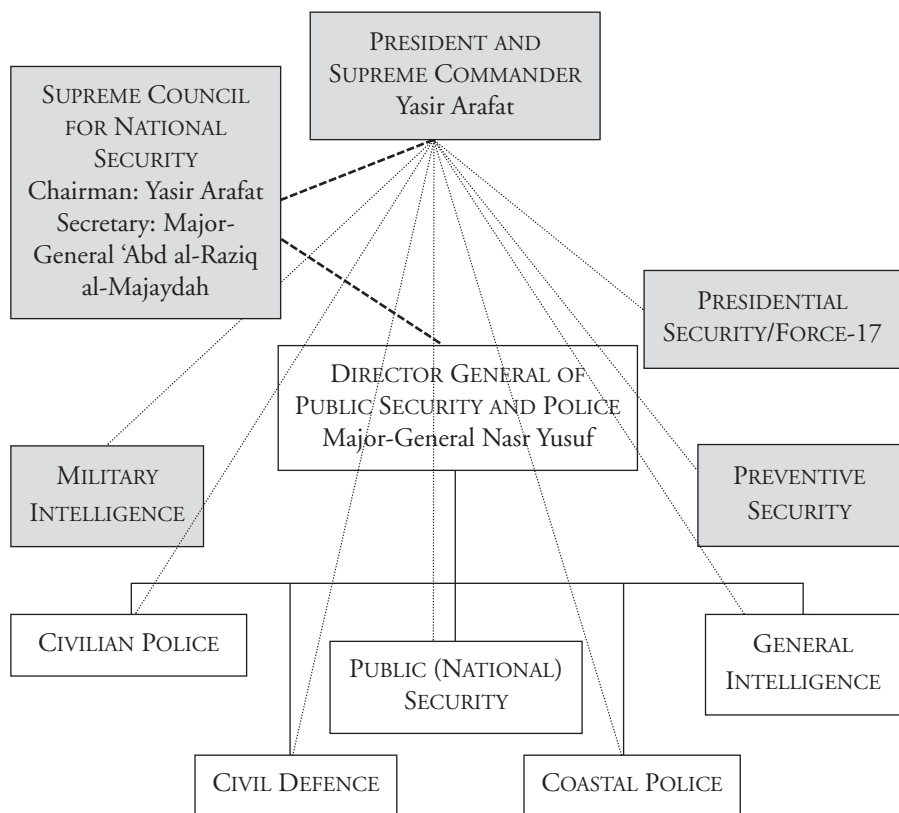
Many questions remain unanswered: for example, how did the donors respond to the growing militarization of the Palestinian Police in



the late 1990s and why were they incapable of foreseeing and preventing the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada, which has proved to be so devastating to the Palestinian Police? On a more theoretical level, future studies should compare the Palestinian case with similar donor involvement elsewhere, to gain policy-orientated lessons for practitioners. Until that happens, this author hopes that professionals and practitioners involved in aiding police forces in post-conflict societies will be able to draw their own lessons from reading this book.

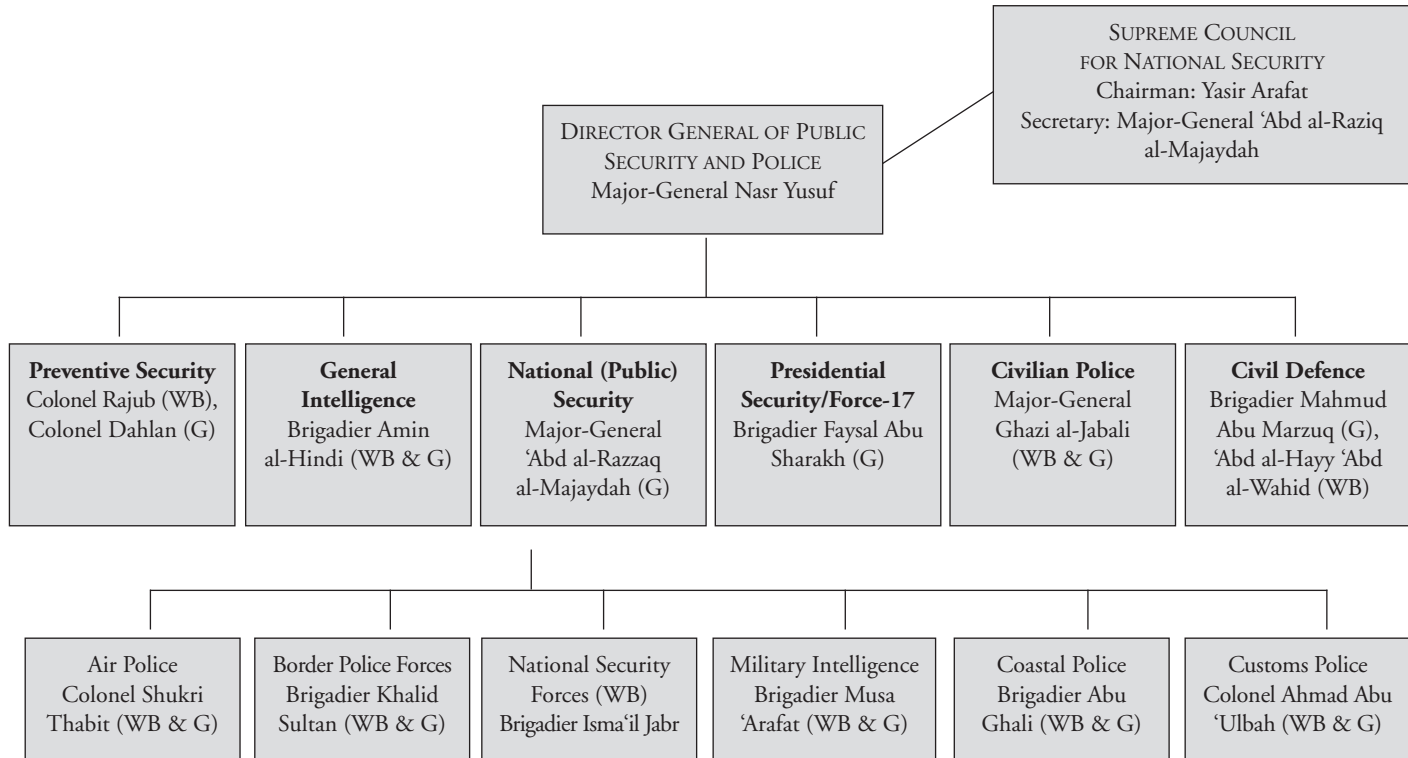
# Appendices

## Organogram of the de facto Palestinian Police Organizations, spring 1995



- De facto police branches not mentioned in the Gaza–Jericho Agreement
- Nominal chain of command as stipulated in the Gaza–Jericho Agreement
- De facto chain of command
- Coordination and policy guidance

## Official Organograms of the Palestinian Police, March 1998



**Source:** Official PNA document presented to the UN Police Training Coordinator, March 1998.

## Directorates

Directorate for Training  
Brigadier Samih Nasr

Directorate for Finance  
Brigadier Fu'ad  
al-Shubaki

Directorate for Political  
Guidance, Brigadier  
'Uthman Abu Gharbiyyah

Joint Security  
Committees, Brigadier  
Ziyad al-Attrash

Directorate for  
Armament  
Colonel al-Basha

Directorate for  
Supply and  
Provisions, Brigadier  
Muh. al-Najjar

Directorate for  
Medical Services  
Brigadier Sinwar

Directorate for  
Administration  
Brigadier Mutlaq  
al-Qidwah

Directorate for  
Research and  
Planning, Brigadier  
Nizar 'Ammar

Directorate for  
Transport, Colonel  
Hasan Khawaldi

Directorate for  
Communication  
Colonel Thayir  
Abu al-Majd

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308.87 Volume 3	1 September 1994–15 October 1994
308.87 Volume 4	16 October 1994–20 November 1994
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