

# Palestinian Islamic Jihad

Islamic Jihad, the anti-Israel group backed by Iran and Syria, has claimed responsibility for eight of nine suicide attacks in Israel and the West Bank since a ceasefire was declared in February 2005 by Israel's then Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas

## ■ Islamic Jihad:

Currently led by **Ramadan Shallah** (pictured), 48-year-old Palestinian from Gaza, now living in Syria



■ **1979-80:** Student movement – **Palestinian Islamic Jihad (Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami al-Filastini)** – founded by **Fat'hi Shkaki** and **Abd al-Aziz 'Odeh** at Zagazig University, Egypt.

■ **Ideology:** PIJ considers 1979 **Iranian Revolution** to be beginning of new era for Muslim world and seeks to destroy Israel and establish Islamic Palestinian state in its place

■ **1980s:** PIJ moves to "occupied territories" – West Bank and Gaza Strip. Shallah becomes founding member of Gaza branch

■ **1985-1990:** Shallah appointed head of PIJ's office in London, England. Studies economics at Durham University, awarded doctorate for thesis on merits of Islamic banking

■ **1987: First intifada.** PIJ has some 250 militant members and several hundred sympathizers

■ **Aug 1988:** Israel expels PIJ's leaders to Lebanon. Shkaki reorganizes faction and strengthens ties with **Hezbollah** and Iran

■ **1990:** Shallah teaches Middle Eastern studies in U.S. at University of South Florida. Becomes director of Muslim think-tank **World and Islam Studies Enterprise (WISE)**

■ **1993:** Intifada ends with signing of Oslo accords. Hamas and PIJ initiate suicide attacks within months

■ **Oct 1995:** Shkaki killed in Malta, allegedly by Israeli agents

■ **1996:** Shallah moves to Damascus and takes over as leader of Islamic Jihad. Group now believed to have around 2,000 militant members

■ **Sep 2000-Feb 2005:** Second intifada claims more than 3,500 Palestinian and almost 1,000 Israeli lives in four-year period

■ **Apr 2006:** Shallah is accused of orchestrating 174 suicide attacks – killing 523 people – in past decade