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The Palestinian Legislative Council Elections of January 25th, 2006

Results, Delegates, Formation of Government

Office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation
to the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, Ramallah

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1. Introduction

The elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) on January 25th, 2006 attracted a great deal of international attention. After prolonged negotiations, they resulted in the first government of the Palestinian Authority (PA) led by Hamas.

This brochure aims at providing the reader with information necessary for a detailed examination of the elections' results. The brief account and analysis of them is followed by an overview of Palestinian electoral law. Furthermore, the understanding of the results is aided by some statistics and the men and women elected to the PLC are introduced. Besides presenting data of a more general nature, this brochure also gives some background information as far as it is available. In the last part, the government formed and elected by the PLC in March 2006 is described.

The information presented here is based on research done by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation Ramallah. Until now, there is no official PLC handbook that might provide this sort of information. In its concise form, this compilation thus makes a contribution to the transparency of the political system of the Palestinian Autonomous Territories. It is a source of information and wants to serve as a base for further scientific and political analysis. It can be an orientation guide for political decision makers – the more so as it has been edited in German and in English.

Ramallah, April 2006

Thomas Birringer,
Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Resident Representative
to the Palestinian Autonomous Territories

2. Results of the Elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council

party / list:	constituencies:		national list:		total results:	
	seats	percentage	seats	percentage	seats	percentage
 Hamas (“Change and Reform”)	45	68 %	29	43.9 %	74	56.1 %
 Fatah	17	26 %	28	42.4 %	45	34.1 %
 “Third Way” (Fayyad and Ashrawi)	0	0 %	2	3 %	2	1.5 %
 “Independent Palestine” (M. Barghouti)	0	0 %	2	3 %	2	1.5 %
 “Popular Front” (PFLP, leftist)	0	0 %	3	4.6%	3	2.3 %
 “The Alternative” (DFLP, leftist)	0	0 %	2	3 %	2	1.5 %
 Independent members	4	6 %			4	3 %
 total	66	100 %	66	100 %	132	100 %

On January 25th the Palestinians elected for the second time since the signing of the Oslo peace agreement their representatives to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). The first election took place in January 1996. Fatah, until March the governing party of the Palestinian Authority, then gained two thirds of the vote. At that time, the elections were boycotted by Hamas, by the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and by the DFLP (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine), because they refused to accept the Oslo Accords.

The PLC's electoral system is mixed (see page 8) – one half of the council, 66 seats, are elected through national lists by means of a system of proportional representation, while the other half of the candidates are determined by the majority of the votes in the constituencies. For the elections from January 2006, eleven lists with a total of 314 candidates for half of the 132 seats were set up for a nationwide vote, while 414 candidates in 16 constituencies ran for the other half of the seats.

Besides the big parties Hamas and Fatah, which is at the same time the biggest PLO member, there were a great number of candidates with no party affiliation (who are, however, often close to a party, mostly Fatah) and some small extreme left splinter parties (mostly PLO-dissenters like PFLP). Taking part in the elections were also two new independent lists, which were formed in the course of 2005, and which could possibly develop into parties in the future.

- One of these lists is headed by former Finance Minister **Salam Fayyad**, who had been working for a long time with international finance institutions and is considered to be friendly towards the West, moderate and a person of integrity. The second place on that list was given to the Christian deputy and former Minister of Higher Education **Hanan Ashrawi** from East Jerusalem, who is also well-known in Germany.
- The leading candidate and central figure of the second independent list is **Mustafa Barghouthi**, the only rival candidate to President Abbas at his election in January to be taken serious. In European terms, Barghouthi's political position might be best described as leftist-liberal. He is among the leading figures in the field of Palestinian non-governmental organisations (NGOs). On his list, there were a number of influential persons from the Palestinian economy.

According to reports of local and international election observers, the election was fair and transparent and its rules and regulations were closely observed. There were only few incidents of violence – a clash between members of Hamas and Fatah in the village of Al-Shieukh near Hebron and an attack on a police officer in the village of Beit Awa, also near Hebron. The Palestinian security forces, however, managed to bring these incidents swiftly under control.

The Central Elections Commission (CEC) reported that no cases of fraud had happened. The party affiliated observers and the local and international election observers all agreed that the elections had taken place in proper form and according to the rules. The electoral law was slightly violated, however, when advertising material continued to be handed out in front of polling stations: on the day of the election, members of both parties dealt out material of their candidates to voters and also to the election observers.

The elections commission announced the results 24 hours after the closure of the polling stations. In the final press conference they stated that of 1,332,396 registered voters 1,011,992 had cast their vote. This makes a turnout of 74.64%.

In the West Bank people voted in eleven constituencies and in Gaza in five. In the West Bank the turnout was at 73.1% (582,471 voters), in Gaza at 76% (429,521 voters). The highest turnout, 82.65%, was reported from the constituency of Rafah.

As shown by the table, Hamas gained an absolute majority of the seats due to the results in the constituencies. Amongst the national lists, which compete with one another proportionally, Hamas resulted as the strongest party (44%), but failed to reach an absolute majority.

Besides long-term political reasons, the unexpectedly good showing of Hamas is also due to the following two factors:

1. *Protest votes:* according to previous polls (see at <http://www.pcpsr.org>), less than half of Hamas voters really want an Islamic fundamentalist order of society. They mostly have traditional attitudes but do not tend towards extremism. Hamas is attributed a high competence in the fields of “good governance” and the fight against corruption, however, which are far up on the Palestinians’ list of priorities. Thus Hamas was able to benefit from the bad performance of the previous Fatah government in these areas.
2. *Electoral law:* Hamas’ victory is mainly due to the results in the constituencies (see table). The votes for Fatah mostly spread on a multitude of candidates, since as a result of its fragmentation into diverse factions (“Old” and “Young Guard” and so forth) several representatives of Fatah ran as independent candidates beside the “official” Fatah candidates. Hamas, in contrast, nominated only one candidate for every seat available. As a result of the majority voting system, the Hamas candidates were therefore elected, although there were also many votes for Fatah, which, however, spread on too many candidates and thus neutralised one another.

The results in the constituencies:

constituency	number of seats in constituency	Fatah	Hamas	Independents
Jerusalem	6	2*	4	0
Bethlehem	4	2*	2	0
Ramallah	5	1*	4	0
Hebron	9	0	9	0
Nablus	6	1	5	0
Tulkarem	3	0	2	1**
Qalqiliya	2	2	0	0
Jenin	4	2	2	0
Tubas	1	0	1	0
Salfit	1	0	1	0
Jericho	1	1	0	0
Gaza City	8	0	5	3***
North Gaza	5	0	5	0
Der Al-Balah	3	1	2	0
Rafah	3	3	0	0
Khan Younis	5	2	3	0
total	66	17	45	4

* The seats for Fatah were apportioned by means of the quota for Christian delegates.

** The independent candidate was on the Hamas list for the Tulkarem constituency and was marked as independent.

*** The three independent candidates were on the Hamas list for the Gaza City constituency, but marked as independent, including one seat, which was apportioned by means of the quota for Christian delegates.

3. The Palestinian Legislative Council's Electoral System

Who is allowed to vote?

Entitled to vote are Palestinians of both sexes from the age of 18 who have registered with the Central Elections Commission. As for the elections of January 2006, this was everywhere possible without causing any problems.

How many members does the Palestinian Legislative Council have?

The PLC consists of 132 members.

How long is a legislative period?

The delegates are elected for four years. With the elections from the **25th of January 2006** they replaced the council that was last elected in 1996, which had formally only transitional character but lasted until 2006 due to the failure of the Oslo process. The parliament elected in 1996 was actually supposed to be in office only until the foundation of a state in 2000 as outlined in the Oslo treaty.

How are the delegates elected?

One half (66) is elected through the parties' national lists by a system of proportional representation, the other half is determined in the individual constituencies according to the principle of majority election. These delegates do not appear on party lists, but stand as individual candidates. The candidates who get the most votes in a constituency move into parliament.

How many constituencies are there in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories?

The West Bank is divided into eleven constituencies, the Gaza Strip into five.

How many seats in the PLC are attributed to the individual constituencies?

The number of seats for a constituency is calculated in accordance with the resident population.¹

Are there special arrangements for women and for the Christian minority?

There are special arrangements for female candidates, but only on the national lists. There, every party that is represented must nominate a woman for one of the first three places and subsequently for every fifth place. This regulation guarantees that women move into parliament through the lists of the big parties, but no special quota has been fixed. The representation of the Christian minority is guaranteed by the candidates' direct election in the constituencies.²

¹ West Bank: Hebron 9; Nablus 6; Ramallah / al-Bireh 5; Jenin 4; Bethlehem 4; Tulkarem 3; Qalqiliya 2; Salfit 1; Tuba 1; Jericho 1.
Gaza Strip: Gaza City 8; North Gaza 5; Khan Younis 5; Rafah 3; Der al-Balah 3; East Jerusalem: 6.

² So one of the seats for Gaza City and one for Ramallah / al-Bireh and two of the seats for Bethlehem and East Jerusalem are reserved for the most successful Christian candidate. The Jewish sect of the Samaritans have a right to one of the six seats in the Nablus constituency. Within a constituency, the minorities' candidates do occasionally leave better placed Muslims behind them.

What are the regulations for Palestinians with residence in East Jerusalem?

Technical details are set out in the Oslo II agreement and are furthermore specially negotiated with Israel before every election. Palestinians with permanent residence in East Jerusalem have full active voting rights but may, according to the Oslo II regulations, only stand as candidates if they also have residence in the West Bank or in Gaza. Israel refused permission to install polling stations, but allowed the Palestinians to put ballot boxes in special post offices in East Jerusalem. Hamas was forbidden to carry out an election campaign in East Jerusalem.

Who monitored the elections on January 25th 2006?

Civil society organisations monitored the elections. Apart from that, the international community sent election observers and also the Palestinian parties used their right of deploying election monitors.

4. Statistical Information

Regional Origin of the Delegates

constituency	Hamas	Fatah	“Independent Palestine”	“The Alternative”	“Popular Front” (PFLP)	“Third Way”	Independents	total	
Jerusalem constituency	4	2						6	11
Jerusalem list	2	2				1		5	
West Bank constituency	26	9					1	36	73
West Bank list	15	16	1	2	2	1		37	
Gaza Strip constituency	15	6					3	24	48
Gaza Strip list	12	10	1		1			24	
total	74	45	2	2	3	2	4	132	

Women in the PLC

constituency	Hamas	Fatah	“Independent Palestine”	„The Alternative”	“Popular Front” (PFLP)	“Third Way”	Independents	total
West Bank	3	4			1	1		8
Gaza Strip	3	3					1*	7
Jerusalem		1						
total	6	8			1	1	1	17
percentage of women	4.5 %	6.1 %			0.8 %	0.8 %	0.8 %	12.9 %

*All female candidates were elected through lists. On February 23rd 2006, Rawya Shawwa officially left the list “Independent Palestine”. She reproached Mustafa Barghouti with being too opinionated in his decisions and declared that she wished to be treated as an independent PLC member.

Detainees in the PLC

constituency	Hamas	Fatah	“Independent Palestine”	“The Alternative”	“Popular Front” (PFLP)	“Third Way”	Independents	total
West Bank	8	3			1			14
Gaza Strip								
Jerusalem								
total	8	3						14
percentage of detainees	6.1%	2.3%			0.8%			10.6%

Notes:

- At the time of the elections, one of the delegates, Ahmad Sa’adat, who heads the list of the “Popular Front”, was in Palestinian custody in Jericho for being accused of the murder of the Israeli minister of tourism Rehavam Ze’evi in October 2001. On the 14th of March 2006, i.e. after his election to the PLC, he was arrested by the Israeli army as part of a military action in Jericho and has been in Israeli custody since.
- All other detainees are in Israeli prisons.

5. Members of the Palestinian Legislative Council

Hamas		
Abadsa, Yahia Abdul Aziz (m)	list	Born in 1958 in Khan Younis. He studied education at the Islamic University where he worked as a lecturer. In 1979 he joined the Islamic Movement. He was arrested several times by the Palestinian Authority. A. is one of the founders of the Islamic Salvation Party, of which he was elected secretary general.
Abdeel-Jawad, Naser, PhD (m)	Salfit	Born in 1965, PhD in Islamic law. He was imprisoned for 12 years.
Abdul-Rahman, Wa'el (m)	Jerusalem	Born in 1962, he studied education. He is headmaster of the al-Nahda school in Jerusalem.
Abu-Halabiyya, Ahmad, PhD (m)	list	Born in 1952 in Gaza City. He holds a PhD in Islamic law and teaches at the Islamic University.
Abu-Hasan, Khaled (m)	Jenin	Born in 1967, he studied Islamic law and political development. He is a speaker and imam at a mosque in Jenin.
Abu-Jhesheh, Mohammad Mutlaq (m)	Hebron	Born in 1955 in Hebron. In 1992, he was deported to South Lebanon. He studied Islamic law in Saudi-Arabia and is reading for a PhD at the University of Yemen. He works as an official mediator for judicial courts. He is currently in Israeli custody.
Abu-Musameh, Sayyed Salem (m)	list	Born in 1948 in Rafah. He studied Islamic law in Saudi-Arabia. He is one of the founders of Hamas, but he is considered to be a moderate.
Abu-Ras, Marwan Mohammad, PhD (m)	list	Born in 1958 in Gaza City. He holds a PhD and teaches Islamic law at the Islamic University. He was close to Sheikh Yassin, whom he offered shelter in his home. His son Mutasem was killed by an Israeli plane in July 2005.
Abu-Saer, Daoud (m)	Nablus	Born in 1955. He owns a dry cleaning shop.
Abu-Salem, Ibrahim (m)	Jerusalem	Born in 1948 in the village of Birnabala north of Jerusalem. He studied at al-Azhar University in Cairo. A. teaches at the Islamic law College at al-Quds University. He was only recently released from Israeli custody.
Abu-Teer, Mohammed (m)	list	Born in 1951. He is from Tuba in East Jerusalem. A. is a founding member of Hamas, after first campaigning with Fatah and then PFLP ("Popular Front"). He spent 22 years in custody. His hallmark is his long beard, which he dyes red using henna.

Abu-Tous, Khaled Hamad Hamid (m)	Tubas	Born in 1949, a teacher. He holds a diploma in mathematics.
Ahmad, Ali Ahmad (m)	Nablus	Born in 1940 near Haifa. He came to the West Bank in 1948 and now lives in a refugee camp in Nablus. He read for an MA in Islamic studies at al-Najah University. In 1992 he was deported to Lebanon for one year. In September 2005 he was again taken into custody and has only recently been released.
Ala-Eddin, Mohammad Jamal (m)	list	Born in 1959. He lives in Hebron. A. studied Islamic law at the University of Jordan in Amman. He was taken to custody eight times and was deported to Lebanon for nine months in 1993. His last imprisonment started in July 2002 when he got an eight-year sentence.
Amli, Riyad Ali (m)	Nablus	Born in 1961. He has been head of the Qabalan (West Bank) municipality since 1995.
Ashqar, Ismail (m)	North Gaza	Born in 1962. He studied engineering in Istanbul. A. is one of the Hamas leaders in North Gaza. His brother was killed in 2004 during the invasion of Jabalia. He is head of the Arabic Centre for Research and Studies and he is a member of the board of directors of the Hamas journal al-Risala. He published several articles on the Intifada.
Astal, Younes, PhD (m)	Khan Younis	Born in 1956. He studied at the Universities of Cairo and of Amman (Jordan) and holds a PhD in Islamic law. A. was wanted by Israel when he joined the al-Qassam Brigades. He works as a teacher at the Islamic University in Gaza.
Attoun, Ahmad (m)	Jerusalem	Born in 1968. He holds a master's degree in modern Islamic studies. A. is head of the al-Muntada Cultural Forum Society.
Bader, Mohammad Maher Yousef (m)	list	Born in 1956 in Hebron. He teaches Islamic law at Hebron University.
Bahar, Ahmad, PhD (m)	Gaza	Born in 1949. He holds a PhD in Arabic language. B. worked as deputy to the dean of literature at the Islamic University. He is one of the secretary generals of the Islamic Society. He was imprisoned several times by both Israel and the Palestinian Authority and deported to South Lebanon in 1992. He writes for the Hamas journal al-Risalah and he published several books and articles. He is the first deputy to the speaker of the PLC.
Bardawil, Salah, PhD (m)	Khan Younis	Born in 1959. He studied at the Islamic University and at the Institute of Arabic Studies in Cairo, from which he holds a PhD in Arabic language (2001). He was formally chief editor of the al-Risalah journal. B. is a member of the Palestinian Writers' Union in Gaza and he is one of the founders of the Islamic Salvation Party. As such he was a member of the Palestinian National Council. He teaches at the al-Aqsa University and at the Islamic University in Gaza.

Bourini-Yassin, Husni (m)	Nablus	Born in 1955 in a village north of Nablus. He was deported to South Lebanon in 1992.
Dahbour, Ibrahim (m)	list	Born in 1968 in Jenin. He studied accounting and Islamic law.
Daragmeh, Ayman Hussein, PhD (m)	list	Born in 1963, from Tubas. He worked as director of the ministry of health. He is considered to be more a Hamas supporter than an active member.
Dar-Khalil, Hasan Yousef Daoud (m)	Ramallah	He is developing ties with Fatah. He has been in Israeli custody since September 2005, up to now without judgement.
Dukhan, Abdel-Fattah Hassan (m)	list	Born in 1936 in Der al-Balah in Gaza. He is head of the al-Salah Islamic Society. He lost his son during the first Intifada. D. is a member of the Muslim Brotherhood and is considered to be one of the most important leaders of Hamas.
Dwaik, Aziz, PhD (m)	Hebron	Born in 1948. He is the newly elected speaker of the PLC. He studied planning, city planning and education and holds a PhD in regional planning from Pennsylvania University. He was the dean of the department of geography at al-Najah University, head of the PR department at the Patient Friends Society in Hebron and an official at the al-Najah University Employees' Union. He published books, including "The Palestinian Society". D. was five times in custody; he was deported to South Lebanon in 1992, where he was speaker of the deportees. He is considered to be a moderate: In a recent interview he said that Hamas might accept the two-state solution under certain conditions.
Farahat, Mariam Mohammad (f)	list	Born in 1949 in Gaza. Also "Umm Nidal", known for educating her sons to be suicide attackers. F. thus lost three of her six sons in the second Intifada. She is remembered for appearing on TV in 2002 encouraging her 17-year-old son Mohammad before he attacked the Gaza settlement of Atzmona killing five civilians and injuring 23. Her son Nidal was killed in 2003 as he was readying a suicide attack and Rawad was hit in an Israeli air strike. In her electoral programme she is in favour of the continuation of the armed struggle. She wants to strengthen Islamic culture and oblige all Palestinian women to wear a headscarf.
Fuqaha, Abdel-Jaber Mustafa (m)	list	Born in 1966 in Ramallah. He works in trade and owns a shop. He studied history and economics at the University of Birzeit.
Ghoul, Mohammed (m)	Gaza	Born in 1957. He is a lawyer and represents the lawyers' association in the PLC.
Habel, Moshir (m)	North Gaza	Born in 1978. He studied political science at the Islamic University, where he now teaches. He is the Hamas spokesman for Gaza. H. was arrested several times. During his studies he represented the Islamic University's students' union.

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Halayqa, Samira Abdullah (f)	list	Born in 1964 in Hebron. She is a journalist and works with al-Haq and al-Risala journals, both associated with Hamas.
Hamdan, Fadel (m)	Ramallah	Born in 1953. He is an imam at one of Ramallah's mosques. H. was several times in custody and was deported to South Lebanon in 1992.
Hamma, Fathi Ahmad (m)	list	Born in 1961, from North Gaza. He is leader of the Izzidin al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas in North Gaza.
Haniyye, Abdul-Salam Ismael (m)	list	Born in 1962 in the al-Shati refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. He studied at the Islamic University in Gaza. After three years' imprisonment he returned to Gaza in 1992 and became dean of the Islamic University. Although he has been active with Hamas since the end of the 1980s, his position within the organisation was strengthened only during the second Intifada due to his closeness to its spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and in consequence of a number of Israeli attacks on the Hamas leadership. In December 2005 he was put on top of the Hamas list for PLC elections. H. is considered to be a person of integrity, within Hamas he stands for a moderate and realistic line. He does not exclude negotiations with Israel, but he stresses that a Palestinian state in the borders of 1967 would only lead to a temporary ceasefire and not to an acknowledgement of the state of Israel. He is the new Palestinian prime minister.
Hayyeh, Khalil (m)	Gaza	Born in 1960. He studied Islamic law and holds a PhD (1997) from a university in Sudan. H. teaches at the Islamic University. He was several times in custody.
Iskeik, Jamal (m)	list	Born in 1964 in Gaza. He is a construction engineer. I. previously worked for the Gaza municipality.
Jamal, Yousef Abdul-Rahman, Dr, (m)	Deir al-Balah	Born in 1961. He holds a PhD in Islamic law.
Kfeesheh, Hatem Rabah (m)	Hebron	Born in 1960, known as Hadj Hatem Abu Aned. He runs a travel agency in Hebron. K. was deported to Lebanon in 1992 and is at present in Israeli custody.
Khatib, Mahmoud Daoud (m)	Bethlehem	Born in 1972. He studied Islamic law.
Khudair, Hamed Suleiman Jaber (m)	Nablus	Born in 1944. He is head of the Palestinian Scientific League. He was deported to South Lebanon in 1992.
Mansour, Muna Salem (f)	list	Born in 1961 in Nablus. She is the widow of Jamal Mansour, who was reckoned one of the main Hamas leaders in the West Bank and was assassinated in 2002.

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Mansour, Yasser Daoud (m)	list	Born in 1967 in Nablus, businessman, he owns a soap factory.
Matar, Omar Mahmoud, PhD (m)	list	Born in 1958 in Salfit. He is professor of economy at al-Najah University and a researcher at MAS (a research centre for economy). He holds a PhD from the University of Iowa, USA. M. was twice in custody, the first time in 1997 for four months.
Mubarak, Ahmad Abdel Aziz Saleh (m)	Ramallah	Born in 1962. He is head of a department of the Islamic Law Court. He was deported to South Lebanon in 1992.
Musleh, Mahmoud Ibrahim Mahmoud (m)	Ramallah	Born in 1941. He is the former director of the Islamic Charity Society.
Najjar, Khamis Jawdat Khamis (m)	Khan Younis	Born in 1949. He is a physician. N. was previously a member of Fatah before he joined the Islamic Movement in the early 1990s. N. is head of the al-Nasar Hospital and director general at the ministry of health.
Nofal, Imad Mahmoud (m)	list	Born in 1970 in Qalqiliya. He studied Islamic law at al-Quds University, where he works as a lecturer. N. represents the Islamic Club Qalqiliya in the PLC.
Odwan, Atef Ibrahim, PhD (m)	North Gaza	Born in 1952. He studied economy and administration in Cairo and holds a PhD in history and political science from Great Britain. He is head of the board of the Beit Hanoun Islamic Society. O. was several times in Israeli custody and was deported to South Lebanon in 1992. His weight within Hamas is due to his position of economic and political consultant to Sheikh Ahmad Yassin. In the new cabinet he is minister without portfolio.
Qadi, Samir Saleh (m)	Hebron	Born in 1956 in the village of Soreef. He studied medicine in the USSR and is regarded as a good physician. Q. got the highest number of votes in Hebron. He was deported to South Lebanon in 1992.
Qar'awi, Fathi (m)	list	Born in 1958 in Tulkarem. He studied Islamic law at the University of Jordan in Amman. He was deported to Lebanon in 1992. He is currently in Israeli custody.
Qreinawy, Huda Naim (f)	list	Born in 1969 in Gaza. She holds a BA in social studies and works for the al-Islah Society. Q. is an activist in the Muslim Women's Movement.
Rabb'i, Khalil Musa (m)	list	Born in 1959 in Hebron. He studied accounting and administration.
Raddad, Riyad Mahmoud (m)	Tulkarem	Born in 1960. He is an imam at one of Tulkarem's mosques. He also leads the Islamic Movement in Tulkarem.
Rajoub, Nayef Mahmoud (m)	Hebron	Born in 1958 in Hebron. R. studied Islamic law. He is the brother of Jibreel Rajoub, Arafat's former national security advisor. R. was several times in custody, the last time in 2005. He is the new minister of religion.

Rajoub, Nayef Mahmoud (m)	Hebron	Born in 1958 in Hebron. R. studied Islamic law. He is the brother of Jibreel Rajoub, Arafat's former national security advisor. R. was several times in custody, the last time in 2005. He is the new minister of religion.
Ramadan, Abdel Aziz (m)	Hebron	Born in 1960. He holds an MA in Islamic studies and in law. R. is a journalist and a correspondent for al-Sharq al-Qatarieh (Qatar), al-Sabil and for al-Jazeera net. He was arrested in 2005 and has been detained in Israel since.
Ramahi, Mahmoud Ahmad (m)	list	Born in 1963 in Ramallah. He is a member of the Hamas politbureau. He works as a physician (anaesthetist). R. was elected secretary general of the PLC.
Romanin, Ali Saleem (m)	list	Born in 1971 in Jericho. He studied Islamic law at al-Quds University and teaches in Sa'ad Sael school in Jericho. He spent four years in custody.
Salameh, Salem Ahmad, PhD (m)	Deir al-Balah	Born in 1951. He holds an MA and a PhD in Quran and Suna studies from Mecca, Saudi-Arabia. He held several positions at the Islamic University in Gaza: deputy to the president of the university, dean of the Sharia College and others. He is speaker at the al-Dawa Mosque in the al-Maghazi refugee camp. S. was deported to Lebanon for nine months in 1992. He published abundantly in the field of Islamic studies. He is head of the Islamic Scientific League in Gaza.
Saleh, Jamal Talab (m)	Gaza	Born in 1958. He holds a BA in commerce from Egypt and he is head of an accounting bureau and a businessman. S. was arrested seven times. He was deported to South Lebanon in 1992.
Saleh, Mariam Mahmoud, PhD (f)	list	Born in 1952 in Ramallah. She stayed with her family for 22 years in Saudi-Arabia, returning to Ramallah in 1993. She holds a PhD in Islamic law from King Abdel-Aziz University in Saudi-Arabia and works as a lecturer at al-Quds University. She is the new minister of women's affairs.
Salhab, Azzam Numan Abdel-Rahman, PhD (m)	Hebron	Born in 1956. He holds a PhD in Islamic law from Medina, Saudi-Arabia and teaches at the University of Hebron. S. was eight times in custody and was deported to Lebanon in 1992. Since the end of 2005 he has once again been in Israeli custody.
Seyam, Sa'ed Mohammad, PhD (m)	Gaza	Born in 1959. Holding a PhD in Islamic law, he teaches at the Islamic University in Gaza. He is a member of the Hamas politbureau. S. reached the highest number of votes in Gaza. He is the new minister of the interior and of civil affairs.
Shanty, Jameela Abdallah (f)	list	Born in 1957 in Gaza. She teaches at the Islamic University and was active in establishing Islamic women's organisations.
Shehab, Rahman, PhD (m)	North Gaza	Born in 1956. PhD in pharmacology from Cairo University in 1980. Sh. is the director of a pharmacy and a medical warehouse. He is one of the founders of Hamas and was one of its military wing leaders from 1982 to 1987. Sh. heads the Islamic Society in North Gaza. He was in prison from 1984 till 1994.

Shrafi, Yousef Awwad, PhD (m)	North Gaza	Born in 1963. He studied Islamic law in Gaza and Jordan and holds a PhD from Sudan. Sh. is in close contact with the Muslim Brotherhood. He is a mosque speaker and an employee at the ministry of religious affairs.
Tal, Mohammad Ismail (m)	Hebron	Born in 1965 in the village of al-Dahrieh near Hebron. He studied medical engineering.
Thouaib, Khaled Tafesh (m).	Bethlehem	Born in 1964. He studied Islamic law at al-Quds University. He is at present in Israeli custody.
Totah, Mohammad Omran Saleh (m)	Jerusalem	Born in 1969. He studied business administration and teaches at al-Quds University.
Yahia, Khaled Abel Abdullah (m)	Jenin	Born in 1959, he studied Arabic language. He works as a lecturer and is a mosque speaker.
Za'arir, Basim Ahmad (m)	Hebron	Born in 1962.
Zahhar, Mahmoud Khaled, PhD (m)	list	Born in 1945. He studied medicine in Cairo, where he was influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood. Z. teaches at the Islamic University in Gaza. He was the medical attendant of the late Sheikh Yassin. Z. is the second most senior Hamas leader; he succeeded Rantisi, who was killed by Israeli military in 2004. Z. represents the hard line, but envisages a long-term truce in exchange for an end of the Israeli occupation. He escaped two Israeli attacks on his home, during which he lost his eldest son. He is the new Palestinian foreign minister.
Zboun, Anwar Mohammad (m)	list	Born in 1968 in the village of Ilar near Bethlehem. Z. studied physics in Great Britain. Since 1996 he has been working at the ministry of education and he also teaches at al-Quds University. He was arrested three times.
Zeidan, Abdel-Rahman Fahmi (m)	Tulkarem	Born in 1960 in Tulkarem. He studied construction engineering at the University of Alabama, USA. Z. worked for PEC DAR (Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction). He is a member of the Muslim Youth Association in North America. In 1993 he was arrested for some time by Israel, for having founded military cells in the north of the West Bank. He is the new Palestinian minister of transport.

Fatah		
Abdullah, Abdullah Mohammad (m)	list	Born in 1939. He was deputy minister of foreign affairs.
Abu-Alrub, Jamal Mohammad (m)	list	Born in 1965 in the village of Qabatiya near Jenin. A. leads the al-Aqsa Brigades in Jenin. He spent long periods of time in jail.
Abu-Baker, Najat Omar, PhD (f)	list	Born in 1962 in Nablus, PhD in political science. She was head of Consumers' Society at the ministry of economy. A. produced many political and social studies. During the first Intifada she was arrested several times.
Abu-Holy, Ahmad Hassan, PhD (m)	Deir al-Balah	Born in 1968. A. worked as director general at the ministry of the interior.
Abu-Shalha, Faysal Mohammad Ali (m)	list	Born in 1950 in Gaza. He is a physician. A. worked as director general with responsibility for hospitals at the ministry of health.
Abu-Shammala, Majed (m)	list	Born in 1962 in Rafah. He is a member of the Fatah High Committee. After working for the Preventive Security Service, he became director of the police investigative department.
Abu-Yatta, Mohammad Ibrahim (m)	list	Born in 1956. He was arrested in 1980 after killing a settler leader in al-Khalil and was sentenced twice to life imprisonment in Israel. A. is the oldest security prisoner in Israel – he has been arrested for 26 years.
Abu-Zneid, Jihad Awad Allah (f)	list	Born in 1967 in Jerusalem. She holds an MA in American studies from al-Quds University. A. is a women activist in the Shuafat camp in East Jerusalem.
Agha, Sufian Abdullah (m)	Khan Younis	Born in 1945. He is the former Rafah governor. He is a member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council.
Ahmah, Azzam Najib (m)	Jenin	Born in 1947. He was a member of the PLC and of the Fatah Revolutionary Council and former PLO ambassador in Iraq.
Akhras, Radwan Sa'ed (m)	Rafah	He is a surgeon. A. is director of the Abu Yousif al-Najar hospital.
Alhimoni, Akram Mohammad (m)	list	He is the Fatah secretary in Hebron and director general of the Political Guidance Commission.
Aloul, Mahmoud Othman (m)	Nablus	Born in 1950. He is governor of Nablus. A. is a member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council. He lost his son at the beginning of the second Intifada.

Assaf, Walid Mahmoud Mohammad (m)	Qalqiliya	Born in 1960. He studied electrical engineering in Pakistan. He worked as director general in the local government ministry. A. was arrested twice for five months.
Astal, Najat Ahmad Ali (f)	list	Born in 1955 in Khan Younis. She studied medicine at the Ain-Shams University in Cairo and holds an MA in general health from Ben Gurion University, Beer Sheba. She is director of the al-Amal hospital. A. is a member of several civil society organisations, especially in the health sector.
Balaawi, Hakam Omar (m)	list	Born in 1938. He is the former minister of the interior and former PLO representative in Tunis. B. is also a member of the Fatah Central Committee.
Baraka, Raj'ai Mahmoud (m)	list	Born in 1957. He is a chemist from Gaza.
Barghouthi, Marwan Hasseib (m)	list	Born in 1959 in Ramallah. He was one of the most important leaders during the first Intifada. He was arrested by Israel and deported to Jordan, but returned from there in 1994 due to an agreement which formed part of the Oslo accords. B. was then active in establishing Fatah as a political party. During the second Intifada he became one of the leaders of the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades. In 1992, he was arrested by Israel in Ramallah and was condemned five times to lifelong custody. He leads the Fatah "Young Guard" in the West Bank.
Barham, Abdul- Raheem (m)	list	Born in 1963 in Qalqiliya. He is a Fatah regional secretary.
Dahlan, Mohammad Yousef (m)	Khan Younis	Born in 1961. He is a member of the Fatah Revolutionary Committee and presided negotiations with Israel. D. was head of the PA's Preventive Security Service in the Gaza Strip. In the last government he was minister of civil affairs and in the Mahmoud Abbas government of 2003 he was minister of state for security affairs. He was involved in interfactional violence in Gaza to position himself politically. He is a leading representative of the Fatah "Young Guard" in the Gaza Strip.
Eileh, Abdel- Hameed (m)	list	Born in 1957 in North Gaza. He is an engineer.
Erekat, Sa'eb Mohammad Saleh, PhD (m)	Jericho	Born in 1955 in East Jerusalem. He studied in San Francisco, USA, and holds a PhD in peace studies from the University of Bradford, UK. In 1991, he was deputy to the leader of the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid peace conference, and in 1992 deputy to the leader of the delegation to peace negotiations in Washington, D.C. From 1993-1995 he headed the Central Elections Committee and from 1994-2003 he was minister for local administration, since 1994 he directed the PLO department for negotiations with Israel. He has been a member of the PLC since 1996.

Haj, Jamal Ahmad Mohammad (m)	list	Born in 1966 in Nablus. He leads the al-Aqsa Brigades in the Balata refugee camp.
Hamdan, Rabeiha Diab (f)	list	Born in 1954 in Ramallah. She studied at the University of Bethlehem. H. is a Fatah Revolutionary Council member and was director general at the ministry of youth and sport. She was arrested seven times and spent a total of over six years in prison. H. is a member of the board of „Women’s Affairs Technical Committee” (WATC), an umbrella group for women’s organisations.
Hijazi, Mohammad Suleiman (m)	Rafah	He has been a member of the PLC since 1996.
Huweil, Jamal Mustafa (m)	list	Born in 1967. He studied political science. His twin brother was killed by Israeli forces. H. has been detained by Israel since the Jenin camp invasion of April 2002.
Jarjou’i, Emil Musa Basil (m)	Jerusalem	He is a member of the PLO Executive Committee. He has been elected to one of the Christian seats for Jerusalem.
Jumaa, Ashraf (m)	Rafah	He is an al-Aqsa Brigade leader. J. studied at al-Quds University. He established the Fatah cadre school in Rafah.
Jumaa, Naser Jamil Mohammad (m)	list	Born in 1965, he is one of the leaders of the al-Aqsa Brigades in Nablus. He spent six years in prison. J. is wanted by Israel.
Kokali, Fuad Karim Saleba (m)	Bethlehem	He is from Beit Sahour near Bethlehem. K. is the former mayor of Beit Sahour. He spent five years in Israeli prisons.
Laham, Mohammad Khalil (m)	list	He grew up in the Dihesha refugee camp in Bethlehem. L. is director general in the refugees department and a senior officer in the Preventive Security Service. He spent twelve years in prison. Until 1998 he worked as director general for administrative and financial matters with the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation.
Masdar, Ibrahim (m)	list	Born in 1951. He is from Der al-Balah in Gaza.
Qaraqe’, Issa Ahmad (m)	list	Q. spent ten years in prison. He heads the Prisoners’ Club in the Aida refugee camp near Bethlehem.
Qawasmi, Sahar Fahed (f)	list	Born in 1963 in Hebron. Q. is a physician and the Hebron Fatah secretary. She is the only woman directly elected to lead Fatah in Hebron.
Sabella, Avivian Bernhard, PhD (m)	Jerusalem	Born in 1945. He is a lawyer and a university professor. S. won one of the seats for the Christian minority. He is head of the Palestinian refugees department in the “Middle East Council of Churches” (MECC), one of the committees of the Christian churches in the Middle East.

Salameh, Muhaeb Salameh Abdullah (m)	Ramallah	Born in 1965. He was elected to one of the seats reserved for the Christian minority.
Saqqa, Fayez Anton Elias (m)	Bethlehem	Born in 1951. He studied geology.
Sha'ath, Nabil (m)	list	Born in 1938 in Khan Younis. From 1994 on he served as minister for planning and international cooperation, from 2003 on he was the PA's first foreign minister and since 2005 deputy prime minister. He was head of the first Palestinian delegation to the United Nations and he chairs the PLC political committee. In 1990 he was appointed to the Fatah Central Committee. Sh. played a leading role in the Oslo process. When Ahmad Qurei resigned from office on December 15, he served as prime minister for nine days, but then returned the premiership to Qurei.
Shami, Shami Yousef Mohammad (m)	Jenin	He is from the Jenin refugee camp. Sh. is one of the founders of the Fatah youth organisation in the West Bank and its head in Jenin. He was imprisoned for five years starting in 1982.
Sheikh-Ali, Na'ema Mohammad Issa (f)	list	Born in 1964 in Rafah, but now lives in Gaza City. She studied Arabic language and psychology at al-Quds University. Sh. is head of a cultural association in Khan Younis. She is the general coordinator for women's committees doing social work.
Shreim, Ahmad Hazza' (m)	Qalqiliya	Born in 1948. He is the Fatah secretary in Qalqiliya. Sh. has been a member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council since 2004. He is a high-ranking official at the Qalqiliya municipality. He was kept in custody several times.
Thabet, Siham Adel (f)	list	Born in 1949 in Beit Fourik near Nablus, but now lives in Tulkarem. She is one of the founders of women's committees for social work. T. is a dentist; she graduated from Baghdad in 1974. She is the wife of Dr Thabit Thabit, the Tulkarem Fatah secretary, who was assassinated in 2001.
Tmeileh, Jihad (m)	list	Born in 1966. He is director general at the ministry of civil affairs and head of the al-Amari youth centre in the al-Amari refugee camp.
Wazir, Intisar Mustafa (f)	list	Born in 1941 in Gaza. She is the widow of Khalid Wazir (Abu Jihad), Arafat's deputy, who was assassinated in Tunis in 1988. W. is a member of the Fatah Central Committee and of the PLO Executive Committee. She was formerly minister of social affairs and minister for prisoners' affairs. W. is a long-term leader of the Palestinian women's movement.
Yaghi, Ala'Addin (m)	list	Born in 1964 in North Gaza. He studied social service at Birzeit University. Y. previously worked with the housing ministry as director general for public relations.

Independent members		
Abu-Amr, Ziad, PhD (m)	Gaza City	Born in 1950 in Gaza City. He holds a PhD from Georgetown University. A. was elected to the PLC for the first time in 1996 and was head of the PLC political committee. He served as a mediator during talks between the twelve major Palestinian factions. From April to September 2003 he was minister of culture. A. ran as an independent candidate, supposedly supported by Hamas. He is head of an NGO called the „Palestinian Council of Foreign Relations”.
Khreishah, Hasan Abdel Halim, PhD (m)	Tulkarem	Born in 1955. K. ran as independent candidate supported by Hamas. He is the second deputy to the PLC speaker.
Khudari, Jamal, PhD (m)	Gaza City	Born in 1955 in Gaza City. He studied electrical engineering in Egypt. K. was head of the Islamic University. He is a businessman and owns a business company. K. is no party member, but he joined the Hamas list in Gaza. He is the new minister for telecommunication.
Shawwa, Rawya Rashad (f)	list	Born in 1944 in Gaza City. She has been a member of the PLC since 1996. Sh. is a well-known journalist from Gaza, where her family has been active in politics for over 400 years. Her father was the mayor of Gaza City. S. headed the Anti-Arafat bloc in the PLC, and she is a member of the Welfare Association Consort. <i>She was elected to the PLC on the „Independent Palestine“ list, but officially left it on the 23rd of February 2006, declaring that due to arguments with Mustafa Barghouthi she wanted to be treated as an independent member of the PLC.</i>
Tawil, Husam Fuad Kamal (m)	Gaza City	Born in 1966. He studied accounting. T. has been supported by Hamas. He holds the “Christian” mandate for Gaza City.

“Popular Front” (PFLP)		
Jarrar, Khaleda Kan’an (f)	list	Born in 1963 in Ramallah. She was the executive director of Prisoners Support and Human Rights Association (Addameer) in the West Bank. She actively defends women’s rights. In 1989 she was in custody.
Majadalawi, Jamil M. (m)	list	He is a member the PLO central council representing PFLP.

Sa'dat, Ahmad (m)	list	Born in 1953 in al-Bireh near Ramallah, he trained as a maths teacher. In 1969 he joined the PFLP and has been its general secretary since 2002. In 2002 he was taken into custody in Jericho on Israel's demand due to the murder of the Israeli tourism minister Ze'evi. In March 2006, IDF troops stormed the Jericho prison in order to transfer him and other prisoners to Israeli prisons. Sa'dat is considered to be a "hardliner" within the PFLP. He determinedly refuses compromises with Israel, such as the Middle East quartet's road map. He is now in Israeli custody.
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"The Alternative" (DFLP)		
Kader, Qais Kamel Abdel-Karim (m)	List	He is a founding member of the DFLP and has been a member of its Central Committee since 1969. Israel tried to kill him in August 2001.
Salhi, Bassam Ahmad Omar (m)	List	He represents the Palestine Popular Party (PPP) on the alternative list. In 2005 he ran for presidency. In December 2004 he was detained in Jerusalem.

"Independent Palestine"		
Barghouthi, Mustafa Kamel, PhD (m)	list	Born in 1954 in Beit Rima near Ramallah. He studied medicine in the USSR and in the USA. B. founded the "al-Mubadara" movement ("the initiative"). He is spokesman for various pro-democratic blocs. B. presides the Palestinian Medical Relief Committee. He was head of the PPP and director of the Health, Development, Information and Policy Institute (HDIP). In 1996 he was candidate for the PLC for the Ramallah constituency and lost only by a small margin. After Arafat's death, B. ran for PA presidency. He received 19.8 % of the votes and was thus second after Mahmoud Abbas.

"The Third Way"		
Ashrawi, Hanan Daud (f)	list	Born in 1946 in Jerusalem, but lives in Ramallah. A. is an Anglican Christian. She has already been a member of the PLC for East Jerusalem. A. is a human rights activist and she is secretary general of "Miftah" ("The Palestinian Initiative for Global Dialogue and Democracy"). She played a leading role representing Palestine in negotiations when PLO members were excluded from the talks. From 1996 to 1998 she was minister for higher education. She was appointed spokeswoman of the Arab League with special responsibility for the Palestinians.
Fayyad, Salam Khaled (m)	list	Born in 1952. He was finance minister in the first government under Mahmoud Abbas, but resigned due to arguments with the government and in order to be allowed to candidate for the PLC. F. was the IMF resident representative in Palestine and briefly head of the Arab Bank before his appointment to cabinet. His financial reforms met with international praise.

The PLC presidency is formed by a president (also called "speaker"), his two deputies and a secretary general. Contrary to PLC conventions, the Hamas majority elected its own members or people close to it to all of these posts. Thus the incumbents are:

- PLC speaker: Dr Aziz Dwaik (Hamas)
- deputies to the PLC speaker:
 - Dr Ahmad Bahar (Hamas)
 - Dr Hasan Abdel Khreisheh (Independent, but close to Hamas)
- secretary general: Mahmoud Ahmad Ramahi (Hamas)

6. The Government Formed in March 2006

On the 19th of March, Prime Minister Ismael Haniyye handed over the names of the ministers and the program of his government to President Mahmoud Abbas. 14 members of the new cabinet are from the West Bank and ten from the Gaza Strip. The Christian population group and women are represented by one cabinet member each (Tanas Abu Eitah from Beit Sahour and Dr Mariam Saleh from Ramallah). In previous governments there used to be two representatives for the Christian minority and two women.

	ministry	notes
Haniyye, Abdul-Salam Ismael (Hamas)	Prime Minister Youth and Sport	PLC member Born in 1962 in the al-Shati refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. He studied at the Islamic University in Gaza. After three years' imprisonment he returned to Gaza in 1992 and became dean of the Islamic University. Although he has been active with Hamas since the end of the 1980s, his position within the organisation was strengthened only during the second Intifada due to his closeness to its spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and in consequence of a number of Israeli attacks on the Hamas leadership. In December 2005 he was put on top of the Hamas list for PLC elections. H. is considered to be a person of integrity, within Hamas he stands for a moderate and realistic line. He does not exclude negotiations with Israel, but he stresses that a Palestinian state in the borders of 1967 would only lead to a temporary ceasefire and not to an acknowledgement of the state of Israel.

Abu Alsubeh, Atalah, PhD (Hamas)	Culture	Born in 1948. He lives in Rafah. A. holds a PhD in Islamic law from Um-Durman University in Sudan. He teaches at the Islamic University and is a member of the Islamic Ulama League.
Abu Arafeh, Khalid (Independent)	Jerusalem Affairs	Born in 1961 in Jerusalem. He is the son of Sheikh Ibrahim Abu Arafeh, one of the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1950s. From 1981 to 1995 he was several times in Israeli custody. His brother, a leader of the armed wing of Hamas, was killed in 1994.
Abu Eisheh, Samir, PhD (Hamas)	Planning	Born in 1960 in Nablus. He studied construction engineering at the University of Jordan in Amman and holds a PhD from Pennsylvania University in engineering and road planning. Abu Eisheh is the assistant to the president of al-Najah University in planning and developing. He worked as a guest lecturer at different US American and European universities.
Abu Eitah, Tanas (Independent, Christian)	Tourism	Born in 1949 in Beit Sahour. He is a successful businessman in the tourism sector in Bethlehem and director of several hotels. During the first Intifada he was arrested several times for organising the civil resistance to the occupation in Beit Sahour.

Agha, Mohammad, PhD (Hamas)	Agriculture	Born in 1959 in Khan Younis. He studied at the Universities of Cairo (BA) and of Jordan (MA) and holds a PhD in philosophy of science from Manchester University (UK), where he taught as a guest lecturer. He also taught at the Universities of Bremen and of Virginia.
Araj, Ala' Din Mohammad (Hamas)	Economy	Born in 1964 in Gaza City. He studied engineering at al-Najah University. Today he is head of the Entrepreneurs' Association in Gaza. He is also secretary general of the Engineers' Association.
Awad, Mohammed, PhD (Hamas)	Secretary General for the Council of Ministers	Born in 1960. He is professor of engineering and deputy to the president of the Islamic University. Since 2004 he has been the deputy to the head of the Engineering Association. He is also member of the American Engineering Association.
Barghouthi, Mohammad (Hamas)	Labour	Born in 1968 in Ramallah. He is the youngest member of cabinet. Barghouthi studied mathematics and computer science at al-Quds University. He runs a printers' shop in Ramallah. B. spent a total of five years in Israeli prisons.
Ja'abari, Eissa (Hamas)	Local Government	Born in 1966 in Hebron. He studied chemistry at the University of Jordan. Today he is a well-known businessman in Hebron. J. was several times in custody in Israel.
Kabha, Wasfi (Hamas)	Prisoners' Affairs	He studied at the Wayne State University in Detroit, USA, graduating in 1984. At present he is head of the engineering department at the Jenin municipality. He spent a total of 6 years in Israeli prisons.
Khalidi, Ahmad, PhD (Independent)	Justice	He is an expert in law and dean of the Institute of Law at al-Najah University (Nablus).
Khudari, Jamal, PhD (Independent)	Telecommunication and Information Technology	PLC member Born in 1955 in Gaza City. He studied electrical engineering in Egypt. K. was president of the Islamic University for 14 years. He is a businessman and owns a business company. K. is no party member, but he joined the Hamas list in Gaza.
Naem, Bassim, PhD (Hamas)	Health	Born in 1963 in Beit Hanoun. He lives in Gaza. N. holds a PhD in medicine from Germany and he works as a surgeon in the Dar al-Shifa hospital in Gaza. He heads the Hamas medical bloc and the Palestinian Medical Forum. His eldest son was killed during an Israeli invasion of Gaza. He is a member of the Izz al-Din Brigades.
Odwan, Atef Ibrahim, PhD (Hamas)	Minister without portfolio	PLC member Born in 1952. He studied economy and administration in Cairo and holds a PhD in history and political science from Great Britain. He is head of the board of the Beit Hanoun Islamic Society. O. was several times in Israeli custody and was deported to South Lebanon in 1992. His weight within Hamas is due to his acting as economic and political consultant to Sheikh Ahmad Yassin.
Raziq, Omar Abed, PhD (Hamas)	Finance	Born in 1958 in Salfit. He holds a PhD in economy from the University of Iowa (USA) and teaches this subject at al-Najah University. He was arrested twice for brief periods of time by Israel, the last time in December 2005.

Rizqah, Yousif, PhD (Hamas)	Information	Born in 1951 in Khan Younis, lives in the Nserat refugee camp. He holds a PhD in Arabic language from Ain-Shams University (Cairo). R. works at the Islamic University in Gaza, where he is dean of the literature college.
Rajoub, Nayef Mahmoud (Hamas)	Religion	PLC member Born in 1958 in Hebron. He holds an MA in Islamic law. He is the brother of Jibreel Rajoub, Arafat's former national security advisor. R. was several times in custody, the last time in 2005.
Saleh, Mariam Mahmoud, PhD (Hamas)	Women's Affairs	PLC member Born in 1952 in Ramallah. She stayed with her family for 22 years in Saudi-Arabia, returning to Ramallah in 1993. She holds a PhD in Islamic law from King Abdel-Aziz University in Saudi-Arabia and works as a lecturer at al-Quds University. S. published on the issue of women's political rights in Islam. She founded the al-Huda Society.
Shaer, Naser al-Din, PhD (Hamas)	Deputy Prime Minister Education and Higher Education	Born in 1961 in Sabastiya near Nablus. He holds an MA in Islamic studies from al-Najah University and a PhD from Manchester University (UK).
Seyam, Sa'ed Mohammad, PhD (Hamas)	Interior and Civil Affairs	PLC member Born in 1959, PhD in Islamic law. He teaches at the Islamic University in Gaza and is a member of the Hamas politbureau. S. reached the highest number of votes in Gaza.
Thatha, Ziad (Independent)	Public Work and Housing	Born in Gaza 1955. He studied construction engineering at the University of Alexandria and worked as a construction engineer for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Th. is director of the Engineers' Association in Gaza. He is considered to be highly committed in social concerns.
Turkman, Fakhri (Independent)	Social Affairs	Born in 1940. He studied philosophy and education at the University of Damascus and teaches at a school in Jenin. He is a former PLC member. T. was on the Hamas list for the Jenin constituency, but failed to reach the necessary number of votes. He headed the economic committee of the PLC and the committee for the reconstruction of Jenin after the Israeli invasion of 2002.
Zahhar, Mahmoud Khaled, PhD (Hamas)	Foreign Affairs	PLC member Zahhar studied medicine in Cairo, where he was influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood. He is a surgeon and teaches surgery at the Islamic University in Gaza. He was the medical attendant of Sheikh Yassin. Z. is a founding member of Hamas. In the 1990s, after his return from deportation to Lebanon, he was the Hamas spokesman. When Abd al-Aziz al-Rantisi was killed in 2004, he became second highest in rank within Hamas. Z. represents the hard line, but envisages a long-term truce in exchange for an end of the Israeli occupation. He escaped two Israeli attacks on his home, during which he lost his eldest son. Z. was arrested several times by Israel as well as by the PA.

Zeidan, Abdel Rahman Fahmi (Hamas)	Transportation	PLC member Born in 1960 in Tulkarem. He studied civil engineering at the University of Alabama, USA. Z. worked for PEC DAR (Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction) as a supervisor for projects. He is a member of the board of the Muslim Youth League of North America. In 1993 he was arrested for some time by Israel, for having formed military cells in the north of the West Bank.
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