Unknown Palestinian Group Claims Jerusalem Terror Attack, Vows More to Come

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A previously unknown Palestinian group calling itself “the martyr of Baha Alyan collective” has claimed responsibility for the deadly truck-ramming terrorist attack in Jerusalem on Sunday, in which four soldiers were killed and 17 more were injured.

The group took its name from a Palestinian terorist who, with an accomplice, killed three Israelis on a bus in Jerusalem in 2015. He was later killed by security forces.

In a press statement circulating online Monday, the group said Fadi al-Qunbar, the 28-year-old East Jerusalem terrorist who plowed his vehicle into a group of soldiers in the Armon Hanatziv neighborhood in the capital, was part of its group. IDF Lieutenant Yael Yekutiel, IDF Cadet Shir Hajaj, IDF Cadet Erez Orbach and IDF Cadet Shira Tzur, who were murdered in the attack, were buried on Monday.

The group’s statement said Sunday’s attack was not the first carried out by a member — without providing details — and will be followed by “a torrent of unyielding quality attacks in defense of our Jerusalem and in revenge of our martyrs and prisoners.”

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday after the attack that the terrorist was an Islamic State sympathizer, a reference to the terror group which has claimed a caliphate in Iraq and Syria and has claimed a series of deadly terror attacks in Europe in recent years.

“We know the identity of the attacker and according to all the signs he is a supporter of the Islamic State,” Netanyahu said, adding that it was possible that there was a link between this attack and truck rammings at a Berlin Christmas market last month and in Nice earlier in the year.

The group said its members “have no links outside Palestine.”

It was impossible to immediately confirm the reliability of the claim of responsibility.

Baha Alyan was one of two terrorists who attacked a bus in Jerusalem’s Armon Hanatziv neighborhood on October 13, 2015, shooting and stabbing passengers.

The attackers killed three people. Police who arrived at the scene shot and killed Alyan. The other attacker, Bilal Abu Ghanem, was shot and taken into police custody. He was convicted of murder and [sentenced to three life terms plus 60 years.](http://www.timesofisrael.com/terrorist-given-3-life-sentences-plus-60-years-for-deadly-bus-attack/)

Also Monday, the new UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned the terrorist attack that killed the four Israeli soldiers but said he believes it shouldn’t be allowed to undermine the necessity of restarting Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

The new UN chief also warned that “violence and terror will not bring a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — quite the opposite,” UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said Monday.

Dujarric said Guterres stressed that those responsible for Sunday’s attack “must be brought to justice, condemned and disavowed.”

The UN Security Council also condemned “the terrorist attack” in the strongest terms and called for “those responsible for this reprehensible act of terrorism to be held accountable.”

A wave of Palestinian attacks on Israelis including stabbings, car-rammings and shootings that began over a year ago has largely waned over the past six months, though sporadic incidents have persisted. Sunday’s was the deadliest attack in months.

From October 2015 to October 2016, 36 Israelis, two Americans and an Eritrean national were killed in stabbing, car-ramming and shooting attacks. Sunday’s truck-ramming brings the total of Israelis killed in these attacks to 40.

According to AFP figures, some 240 Palestinians, a Jordanian and a Sudanese migrant were also killed during the violent spurt, most of them in the course of carrying out attacks, Israel says, and many of the others in clashes with troops in the West Bank and at the Gaza border, as well as in Israeli airstrikes in the Strip.