

# Activities

## Activity 1

### *Creating a Counterterrorist Team*

#### **Preparation:**

**Estimated Time:** 1.5 class periods • **Materials:** Students will need to use the information on pp. 24-27 in the *Israel 101* booklet. Students should have access to the Web for further research on the terrorist groups.

**Background:** Since September 11, 2001, American citizens have become acutely aware of radical Islamic terrorist groups bent on their destruction. Since the founding of their state in 1948, Israelis have been targeted by many terrorist groups. Terrorist groups attacked Israeli citizens during the first Intifada and after the Oslo process in 2000. In this activity, students will imagine serving on a counterterrorist team to learn more about these groups.

#### **Activity:**

- Tell the students that counterintelligence units exist all over the world to collect and act on intelligence information about terrorist groups. In this activity, they will imagine serving on a counterterrorist team to learn more about the Palestinian terrorist groups.
- Tell students that they are setting up an imaginary counterterrorist team. Have the students divide into six groups. Each group will focus on a different Palestinian terrorist group, as mentioned in the booklet:

**Hamas** (Islamic Resistance Movement)

**PLO** (Palestine Liberation Organization)

**Fatah** (with two offshoot militias: Tanzim and Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade)

**Palestinian Islamic Jihad** (PIJ)

**Hezbollah** (Party of God)

**PFLP** (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine)

- As part of their counterterrorism work, each group of students should take 30-45 minutes to prepare information on the following by using the *Israel 101* booklet (p. 24-7) and their Web-based research efforts:
  - History of the Terrorist Group
  - Ideology (See the group's charter, if possible.)
  - Location
  - Recent Operations
  - Past and Present Leaders
  - Notes of Interest

While the above list mirrors what is written in the booklet, students should try to go beyond this information and use the Web and other sources. Make sure that students have access to the charters of the various terrorist groups when possible. (See resource list at the end of this lesson plan on the above groups and on counterterrorism groups throughout the world.)

- Ask each group to make a 5-6-minute class presentation on the terrorist group they have researched. After these presentations (30-40 minutes each), have the students discuss the larger issues:
  - Why are there so many Palestinian terrorist groups? What are their differences? (The various groups and factions reflect ideological and sometimes religious differences. They often compete with each other.)
  - What do they have in common? (They are all united in their goal to destroy Israel, and they all favor attacking civilians as a means toward this end.)
  - What are their demands? Would they stop their terrorism if their demands were met?
  - What can be done to counter terrorist groups? (Here, answers will differ.)

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**Wrap-Up:** A study of Palestinian terrorist groups can help American students better understand the challenges that have faced Israel since its inception. It can also shed light on understanding the challenges that face American and Western countries today and in the foreseeable future. For example, what role does radical Islamic ideology play in fostering and supporting terrorist groups that target civilians from Israel, America and other western countries?

