

## Factsheet on forensics report concerning the late President Yasser Arafat.

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**On the evening of 12 October 2004, President Yasser Arafat developed acute gastrointestinal symptoms eventually resulting in death one month later. The numerous clinical investigations performed prior to his death did not yield a diagnosis.**

The DNA analysis performed on the personal belongings and the body remains showed that they belonged to President Arafat. The toxicological examinations did not reveal the presence of poisonous substances. The radio-analytical evaluation established the presence of abnormally high quantities of polonium-210 that led to the exhumation of the body in November 2012. Specimens of air, soil, shroud, residue of tissues and bones were collected.

More than nine months of measurements and analysis demonstrated the presence of abnormally high quantities of polonium-210 and lead-210 in various specimens collected in the tomb. Radon gas present in the tomb, tobacco smoking and body contamination with radium-226 did not explain the observations.

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Taking into account all the observations – in particular the higher than expected activities of polonium-210 and lead-210 and the impurities present in a commercial source of polonium – and considering also the analytical limitations of the study – mostly time lapse since death and the nature and quality of the specimens – **the results moderately support the proposition that the death was the consequence of poisoning with polonium-210.**

### Timeline

1. In January 2012, Mrs. Suha Arafat requested that the experts of the Center of Legal Medicine (CURML) of the Lausanne University Hospital (CHUV) make an evaluation of the medical records made during the hospitalization in Paris of her late husband, President Yasser Arafat, in October 2004. These records showed that the medical care had been fully adequate; however because there was no explanation on the cause of the death, because the thesis of poisoning was worth exploration and because all biological samples had allegedly been destroyed, Mrs. Arafat further requested that personal effects contained in a travel bag and belonging to her husband be analyzed.
2. Since conventional toxicological analysis came back negative, the Institute of Radiation Physics (IRA) was asked to analyze the content of the travel bag. Several samples containing body fluid stains (blood, urine, sweat, saliva) appeared to contain unexplained higher unsupported polonium-210 activities than reference samples.
3. On 3 July 2012, the intermediary report was made public by a broadcast of Al Jazeera in which the findings supported the possibility of President Arafat's poisoning with polonium-210. The experts have always considered that any additional conclusions could only be made from the analyses of samples taken from the body of President Arafat.
4. On 25 October 2012, the interested parties held a meeting in Geneva during which CHUV was mandated by both Mrs. Arafat and the Palestinian National Authority to carry out further analyses and prepare an independent report.
5. On 27 November 2012, President Arafat was exhumed in Ramallah. Long and complex investigations were then carried out and the final report was delivered in Geneva on 5 November 2013.