“You cannot teach people to hate and then ask them to practice peace...”

- British Prime Minister Tony Blair, addressing a joint session of the United States Congress, July 17, 2003
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Unmasking Hamas’ Hydra of Terror

“The first thing we want to teach them is their cause. They know from daily experience that their enemy is the Jew – our job is to explain why. In the Koran much is said about the bad behavior of the Jew. Some teachings say God cursed the Jews”

-Sohab Alissa, 22 director of Hamas Children’s Summer Camp Gaza City
(Los Angeles Times July 17, 2003)

INTRODUCTION

Hatred of Jews is the oxygen of Hamas. Behind the high profile scenes of carnage wrought by their young suicide bombers recruits, lies an entire system of civil institutions—from cradle to grave committed to inspire mayhem and terror permanently poison attitudes towards Israel and the Jewish people.

On July 21st, 2003 the Simon Wiesenthal Center wrote to the European Union and heads of fifteen European governments urging them to reverse a policy that refuses to label the political wing of Hamas - not only its military wing - as a terrorist organization. This, despite an urgent request by the United States and the United Kingdom to do so.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center’s Unmasking Hamas’ Hydra of Terror, reveals the structure of Hamas and shows that it is impossible to differentiate any section of Hamas from its terrorist whole.

In addition, we include the Center’s 1988 translation of Hamas’ antisemitic founding charter.

It is clear, that the European Union’s ill-advised position vis-a-vis Hamas, left unchallenged, would destroy any realistic hope for success of the Middle East Road Map for peace, co-sponsored by the EU.

Rabbi Abraham Cooper
Associate Dean
Simon Wiesenthal Center
August 2003
Hamas: Structure and Operation

HISTORY

The name “Hamas” is an acronym that in Arabic stands for “The Islamic Resistance Movement”. This name was first used in a leaflet distributed in the Gaza Strip in March 1987, urging pharmacists to assist in efforts to curb the spread of drugs amongst the youth. The second time the term Hamas was mentioned occurred in another leaflet also distributed in Gaza, in November 1987, this time advising Palestinians on how to cope with the tactics of the Israeli Security Services. In fact, both of these leaflets were issued by the local branch of the Moslem Brotherhood, a fundamentalist movement that spread during the second half of the 20th century all over the Arab Middle East and beyond, into the Moslem communities of South East Asia and Equatorial Africa.

Until the issuing of these two leaflets, the Gaza Moslem Brotherhood had operated under the title “al-Mujama’ al-Islami” (The Islamic Congregation). Under this identity, the Ikhwan (Brethren) of the Gaza Strip maintained a network of religious institutions, charitable societies, some health clinics and educational facilities. After being suppressed during the Egyptian occupation of the Gaza Strip (1948 - 1967), the Moslem Brotherhood managed to invigorate its activities in the region by strictly adhering to a policy of distancing itself from “The Armed Struggle” waged by the numerous factions affiliated with the Palestine Liberation Organization, under Yasser Arafat. This policy allowed the Moslem Brotherhood to avoid confrontation with the Israeli military government and also sowed the seeds of rivalry between the secular and religious extremes of the Palestinian political spectrum. The switch of titles from al-Mujama’ al-Islami to the new acronym “Hamas”, signalled a major turning point in the history and nature of the movement. Hamas transformed into an armed entity and preached a doctrine of full-scale, long-term confrontation with Israel, including military operations, aimed at ultimately destroying the Jewish State.

The formal establishment of Hamas was announced in December 1987, a short time after the outbreak of the first Intifada. Since that date, the term Hamas has completely supplanted the original title used by the Moslem Brotherhood. Al-Mujama’ al-Islami transformed itself into the new entity, adopting a new ideological platform. The revised doctrine was spelled out in the “Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement—Palestine (Hamas)”, officially published on August 18, 1988. (see addendum page A3) As a result, the system of institutions and associations cultivated in the previous decades became part of this new incarnation of the Palestinian Moslem Brotherhood.
Whereas the Gaza Strip branches of the Moslem Brotherhood were more closely linked to the Egyptian headquarters of the movement, a different process occurred in the West Bank, where historically the local branches of the Moslem Brotherhood were associated with the Jordanian Moslem Brotherhood. Only a strenuous effort by the Gaza leadership managed to gradually “Hamasize” the West Bank wing of the movement, leading eventually, for the first time, to a merger of all factions of the Palestinian Brotherhood. The network of religious, educational and charitable institutions, which flourished in the West Bank with tacit backing by the Jordanian government, was, by 1989-1990 taken over by Hamas.

**STRUCTURE**

Hamas therefore, incorporates the old institutions and activities of the Moslem Brotherhood in the Palestinian territories, restructured into a new framework and format dictated by the change of strategy that included armed confrontation with Israel.

Thus, at the end of 1987 a secret military wing was formed – later to be known as “The Battalions of Izz al-Din al-Qassam”. Over the years, two other secret branches were established but did not last long: “Majid”, an intelligence section entrusted with foiling attempts by the Israeli Security Services to penetrate Hamas, and – “The Special Apparatus” a group separated from the regular military wing in order to carry out special operations by members who are not recognized by the rank and file of the organization.

The military branches were styled after the model set by other Moslem Brotherhood movements that resorted at one time or another to terrorist activities. The Egyptian Moslem Brotherhood had developed in the 1940’s and 1950’s its “Secret Apparatus” which was responsible for numerous assassinations and sabotage operations. In the late 1970’s, the Syrian Moslem Brotherhood also created a similar military wing once a decision was taken to confront President Hafez al-Assad’s regime.

In this sense, the emergence of Hamas with its terrorist arm was not a departure from mainstream Moslem Brotherhood tradition, but rather followed a well-trodden path. Invariably, the military wings of Moslem Brotherhood organizations evolve as an extension of the “civilian” infrastructure and remain totally subordinated to the existing leadership, scrupulously adhering to the directives of the politico-religious leadership.

Hamas is certainly no exception. In fact, this movement never put forward the argument that the “Brigades of Izz al-Qassam” enjoyed any independence or that they effectively separated themselves from the rest of the members of Hamas. The only argument frequently used is
that the political leaders are not aware of the details of individual operations. Yet, those same political leaders are the people who present and promote the general strategies of Hamas and often announce new waves of terror attacks, publicly defend suicide bombings and openly encourage volunteers to carry the explosive belts.

**LEADERSHIP**

**The Supreme Guide:** Hamas is led by a “Supreme Guide”, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. While the blind cleric prefers not to use the grandiose title borrowed from its sister Egyptian movement, Yassin in fact, serves both as the top spiritual and political authority of the movement. It is he who took the decision to establish an armed wing and who appointed its first commander, the late Salah Shahadeh. Over the past fifteen years, it was Sheikh Yassin who directed terrorist operations, including setting targets, approving tactical methods and appointing commanders.

**The Shura Council:** The “Shura Council” (Consultations Council), is composed of the top politico-religious clergy of the movement. While it very rarely convenes, all major issues are brought to the attention of the Shura members prior to making any operational decisions. The names of the Shura members are kept confidential, but it is widely believed that some of them reside outside the Palestinian territories, mainly in the Gulf States.

**The Political Bureau:** Another institution is “The Political Bureau”, which is based in neighboring countries, initially in Jordan, then in Syria. Presided over by Khaled Mashal, this body combines the functions of a foreign ministry in–exile and information ministry. This so-called ‘political’ body has the responsibilities for maintaining contact with the military cells in the West Bank that lost communications with the Gaza command; the smuggling of weapons and explosives, and the co-ordination with Iranian Military Intelligence (MOIS) and Hizballah in Lebanon. For example: Imad al-Alami, Hamas’ representative in Iran also serves as chief of “The Intifada Committee”, the body that supervises military planning.

Those in charge of the Izz al-Din (Brigades of) al-Qassam, Shahadeh, Mohammed Deif and “The Secret Apparatus”, the late Ibrahim Maqadmeh, always took their orders from these leadership institutions and no case of insubordination was ever reported. Indeed, very often the local “military” commanders of Hamas are the same Sheikhs who are recognized as the local spiritual authorities. Some prominent examples include, the late Sheikh Jamal Salim of Nablus, Sheikh Jamal Abu al-Heija of Jenin, and Sheikh Rafiq al-Natsheh of Hebron. Thus, the distinction between the “civilian” system of Hamas and its “military” offspring is generally blurred.
The Da’awah Network: The non-military network of Hamas that has been developed since the sixties, revolves around the “Da’awah” (The Call), urging Moslems to Islamic purity. The Da’awah is the single most important element of all Moslem Brotherhood movements. It believes in long-term education and mobilization of the masses and refraining from rash clashes with existing governments. In the case of Hamas, the Da’awah network embraces a web of charitable associations collecting “Zakat” donations to be distributed amongst the poor, dozens of mosques with religious classes and indoctrination sessions, a series of clinics and a few small hospitals offering medical services to needy families. Also included are sports clubs that mainly organize soccer leagues, summer camps for children, and other welfare assistance for the needy. These activities are all orchestrated by the top leadership through the mosques and the web of associations established around them.

This “civilian” network has been allocating substantial amounts of its budget towards subsidizing “The Brigades of Izz al-Din al-Qassam”. Money coming through the charitable societies is filtered to finance terrorist operations. One way this is done is to provide monthly pensions to families of recruits to the military wing, families of homicide bomber “martyrs” and others involved in violent activities against the Jewish state. Sometimes the funds are channeled via private bank accounts or more often by directly supplying cash to operatives of the armed wing of Hamas. In many cases, large sums of money were transferred from abroad to one of the Zakat Committees and then passed on to those members of the charity organizations linked to the terrorist branch.

Furthermore, Hamas uses its “civilian” operations in order to select candidates to join the military cells and to pick up volunteers for suicide missions. In most cases of Hamas suicide bombings, whether carried out or aborted, the suicide bomber himself was affiliated to one or more of Hamas’ “civilian” infrastructure, by attending classes at a mosque, belonging to a Hamas- led student union or one of its sports clubs. One such “club” in Hebron contributed no less than six of its soccer team members as suicide bombers over the past few months.
CONCLUSION:

Hamas’ “Brigades of Izz al-Din al-Qassam” in no way constitutes an independent entity or a separate body from the rest of the Hamas organization. The military wing is totally subordinated to the political leadership and closely linked to the non-terrorist activities.

• **NO DISTINCTION EXISTS ON THE GROUND BETWEEN THE POLITICAL ECHELON AND THE MILITARY COMMAND, SINCE IN MOST CASES THE SAME PEOPLE HOLD THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR BOTH POSITIONS.**

• **FINANCES ARE EFFECTIVELY MANAGED BY THE SAME PEOPLE FOR ALL BRANCHES OF THE MOVEMENT.**

• **ANY ATTEMPT TO PRESENT AN ARTIFICIAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN HAMAS AND ITS MILITARY BRANCH IS REFUTED BY THE FACT THAT HAMAS ITSELF HAS NEVER GIVEN ANY REASON TO DOUBT ITS TOTAL AUTHORITY OVER ITS POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND MILITARY COMPONENTS.**

The bottom line: Any support for any part of Hamas’ organization aids and abets its terrorist activities and furthers Hamas’ stated goal of eliminating the state of Israel.
Hamas “Civil” Institutions

The following is a partial list of Hamas civil institutions. In addition to providing social welfare, health and educational services, they have provided subsidies and stipends to families of suicide bombers and other terrorists, pay families of prisoners as well as finance armament, mobilization and propaganda efforts:

The Charity Society, Tulkarem
The Assistance Association, Jenin
The Prisoners Association, Gaza
Al Islah Association, Bethlehem
The Islamic Association, Gaza
Al Islah Association, Gaza
The Young Moslems Association, Hebron
The Islamic Charity Association, Hebron
The Charity Committee, Jenin
The Orphans Association, Bethlehem
Al Islah Association, Al-Birah
The Charity Committee, Qalqilya
The Charity Committee, Salfit
The Islamic Block, An-Najjah University, Nablus
Dar Al-Islam Hospital, Khan Younis
Al-Ghazi Hospital, Rafah
Al Fateh Children Magazine, Gaza
Eetilaf Al Kheir, Gaza
Bayt Mal Al-Qods Agency, Jenin
The Islamic Block, Birzeit University.
Hamas Online

A key component in promoting and sustaining Hamas culture of death and hatred is the Internet. The Worldwide Web is used to recruit young people to the cause of terrorism, to provide theological validation and justification for mass murder of Israeli civilians, to vilify the “Zionist” enemy and to raise funds across the globe. Indeed, after the June 2003 homicide bombing in Jerusalem in which 17 people were killed and dozens injured, there was much online ‘traffic’ lauding the suicide bomber, Ahmed Fakia, himself an active participant in Hamas Internet Forums promoting terrorist attacks against Israelis. Indeed, Israel’s Maariv newspaper reported that after such attacks, online participants in Hamas chat groups count the number of “children of monkeys and pigs” and celebrate the latest “success”. While the civilized world recoiled in horror at the site of the mangled remains of women and children, one online forum member rejoiced, “Today I’m buying…”

Here are some representative websites run by Hamas or by their supporters:

- **www.ezzedeen.net**  
  The official site of Hamas’ Qassam Brigades (hosted in Malaysia)

- **www.alsakifah.org**  
  A prominent Hamas online discussion forum (hosted in Malaysia)

- **http://groups.yahoo.com/group/islamicresistance/**  
  U.S.-based pro-Hamas yahoo sites

- **http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Hamas-Islamic-Jihad**  

- **www.islamblock.com**  
  Hamas’ Islamic Bloc at Beirzeit (hosted in Malaysia)

- **www.rantisi.net**  
  Website of Hamas leader Abed Aziz el Rantisi

- **www.iap.org**  
  A prominent Palestinian site that supports Hamas actions

- **www.alsunnah.org**  
  A United Kingdom-based website promoting suicide bombings (hosted in U.S.)

- **www.al-fateh.net**  
  Home of Hamas’ online Children’s magazine
Addendum

Selected Translations and Analysis of Founding Charter of Hamas 1988
Charter of Islamic Resistance Movement–
HAMAS

Gaza, August, 1988

Selected Translations and Analysis

Simon Wiesenthal Center
Fall 1988
Introduction

At the beginning of September, 1988, a previously unpublished covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (otherwise known as Hamas) was leaked to the Western media based in Israel. The 40-page document rules out any compromise with the Jewish State, and says that the only solution to the Palestinian Question is Jihad (Holy War). This 4-page covenant, widely viewed by experts as a challenge to the PLO, also reflects the virulent antisemitism which is a key element of the leadership of the Intifada – the current ‘war of stones’ underway by Palestinian Arabs against the State of Israel in Gaza and the West Bank. It is also important to note that among the specific antisemitic references (i.e. to the infamous forgery Protocols of the Elders of Zion), including allegations that Israel has penetrated and used such social organizations as the Rotary Club, the Free Masons and the Lions Club, are concepts which have been carried and promoted in the mainstream Arab press over the course of the past few years, including Israel’s only peace partner – Egypt.

As such, while the antisemitic allegations which punctuate this document may be considered ludicrous by the “enlightened” readers in the West, they in fact reflect popular sentiment and popular writing not only on the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank, but among mainstream Arab societies throughout the Middle East.
Page 11; THE STRATEGY AND THE METHODS: The Islamic Resistance Movement feels that the land of Palestine is a trust which belongs to Islam throughout the generations until the day of resurrection: “No one is allowed to compromise on this land or to give up any part of this land. No king, no president, nor any Arab State, not all of them together and not any organization whether Palestinian or Arab has the right to speak for the coming Islamic generations until the resurrection.” (See below)
Page 14: Rejects any initiatives or international conferences to solve the Palestinian problem: “This contradicts the beliefs of the Islamic resistance movement that giving up any part of Palestine amounts to giving up a part of religion...There is no solution to the Palestinian problem, but through Jihad. All the rest is literally a waste of time” (See below)
Page 22: “Our community faces an enemy which is cruel as Nazi in its conduct and doesn’t differentiate between a man and a woman or the young and the old.”
(See below)
Page 24; Clause 22: “Our enemies have planned from time immemorial in order to reach the position they’ve obtained now. They strive to collect enormous material riches to be used in the realization of their dream. With money, they’ve gained control of the international media beginning with news agencies, newspapers and publishing houses, broadcasting stations...with their money, they have detonated revolutions in different parts of the world to obtain their interests and reap their fruits. They were behind the French Revolution and the Communist Revolution and were also responsible for most of the revolutions we’ve heard about elsewhere. With their money, they have created secret organizations which spread throughout the world in order to destroy societies, and to achieve the Zionist interest such as the Free Masons, the Rotary and the Lions Club. All these are destructive espionage organizations. With their money, they’ve been able to take control over the imperialist countries and push them to occupy many states in order to such the riches of these countries and spread corruption there. The same goes for international and local wars. They were behind World War I in order to destroy the Islamic Caliphate (Turkey) and make material profit. Then they obtained the Balfour Declaration (on page 25) and established the League of Nations in order to rule the world through this organization.”

“They were also behind World War II where they made enormous profits from speculation in war material; paved the way for the creation of their state and inspired the establishment of the United Nations and Security Council to replace the League of Nations in order to rule the world through them. There is no war anywhere in which their fingers do not play... The Imperialist powers in the capitalist West and the Communist East support the enemy with everything they can. And they switch roles...in the day that Islam will appear, the powers of heresy will unite to confront it because the nation of heresy is one...”

(See next page)
ال sakāda l'ashathīa wal-ushūrūn

خط الآراء منذ زمن بعيد، وأحكمو تخطيطاتهم كي يتوصروا إلى
ماوصلوا إليه، أخذين بالأصابع المزورة في مجريات الأمور، عملوا على
جميع شروط عادية هادئة ومزورة، سعوا لتحقيق حلهم، فبالأموال
سيطرة على وسائل الإعلام العالمية، من وكالات أنباء، وصحافة، ودور
نشر، وإعلانات غير ذلك، وبالأموال نجحوا الثورات في مختلف بقاع
العالم، لتحقيق مصالحهم وحتى الشمل، رفعت من ورقة الثورة الفردية
والثورة الشعبية ومعظم ما صمّته ونسع من دورنا هذا وهنا وعندنا،
وبالأموال كونوا المنظمات الصناعية التي تنتشر في مختلف بقاع العالم،
لبد للجماعات وتحقيق مصالح المهربات، كالعوادمة، ونوادي
الروتاري، والليونزي، وأبناء المهب وغير ذلك، وكثيرة منظمات تجسية
عملها، وبالأموال نشروا من السيطرة على الدول المستعمارية، ودفعوا
إلى استمرار كثير من الأقطار، لكي يستنزفوا ثروات تلك الأقطار
وبعثوا فيها فسادهم.

ومن الحرب المحلية والعالمية حدث ولا حرج، فروم من خلف
الحرب العالمية الأولى، حيث تزعم القضاء على دولتهن الخلافة الإسلامية،
وهي الأرياح المادية، وسيطروا على كثير من موارد الثروة، وحملوا
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Page 31; Clause 28: “The Zionist invasion is a cruel one and doesn’t hesitate to use every ugly and despised method to obtain its goals. They rely to a large extent in their penetration in espionage operations upon the secret organizations which grew out of it such as the Free Masons, Rotary and Lions Club...All these organizations, both secret and public, work for the sake of Zionism.”
Page 35: Clause 32: “World Zionism and the imperialist powers are trying through wise movement and careful planning to get Arab countries one-by-one out of the circle of struggle with Zionism so that finally they will face only the Palestinian people...today it will be Palestine, but tomorrow it will be some other country since the Zionist plan has no limits. After Palestine, they aspire the destruction of the areas they reach, they will still aspire to further expansion. Their plan is the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and their present [conduct] testify to the truth of what we say.”
Page 37: “The Islamic Resistance movement is the spearhead of the Jihad.”
The Wiesenthal Center has been tracking the fliers and leaflets from such groups as Hamas, throughout the course of the Intifada. Previously, fliers which have sought to incite the Palestinian/Arab population have accused the Jews of introducing “the culture of AIDS to the world.” This past spring (March and April), this group labeled Israel a “cancer” which had to be “uprooted” through a “holy war” and further stated that “exploitation and forgery are part of the Jewish nature.” But however odious the previous rhetoric of groups like Hamas were, these were exhibited predominately thought fliers, which had a limited circulation and impact. This 40-page document represents the policies and aims of Hamas, which has shown itself to be a powerful force in the ongoing Intifada. And as such, the fact that this manifest inevitable returns to the theme of hatred for the Jews, highlights that for many, the current struggle facing Israel is not only over the final demarcation of its borders, but over its very right to exist.

The question now is whether leaders in the political and religious arena, many of whom have scrutinized every Israeli action and statement during the Intifada, will quickly and specifically denounce the resurgence of this medieval type of antisemitism among Palestinian Arabs. Further, such a document challenges “moderate” Arab leaders: just what is their position on the emergence of antisemitism as an increasingly acceptable part of the Middle East geopolitical landscape?