

Hamas, leadership and leadership structure

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Hamis is one of the most prominent players of the Middle East crisis and has been well publicized due to its deadly suicide attacks on the Israeli military and civilian targets. USA, EU, ISRAEL and several other countries have enlisted the Hamis as a terrorist organization. The recent changes in political scenario in the Palestine and Israel has given Hamis a broad role especially its stunning victory in the recent presidential elections. Despite all the negative western views about Hamis it has gained popularity within the Palestinian people and now possesses a decisive power in the Palestinian legislative house.

This paper will discuss the leadership and leadership structure of Hamis.

Hamis a brief History: The word Hamis is originally an acronym of Arabic "Harakat-ul- Muqawama Al-Islamiah" which means "Islamic Resistant Movement". The word itself means zeal and enthusiasm in Arabic. The organization founds its origin and roots in the Muslim Brotherhood's "Alikhwan-ul-Muslimeen" Palestine chapter. Before the first Intifada Muslim Brotherhood was the only prominent Islamic Movement in the Palestinian Territory. The first Intifada is marked by the foundation of Hamis in 1987.

The initial meeting, which led to the foundation of the movement, was held in the house of Ahmed Yasin a Muslim Brotherhood activist with other 5 people including Rantisi on 9th December, 1987. Because Muslim Brotherhood enjoyed extensive funding from the " waqf" of the Palestinian religious lands it also used these funds in the foundation of Hamis. Formally the organization identified itself with the name Hamis on January 1987. Since its formation Hamis has been involved in violent and fatal attacks on Israeli interests.

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Hamas claims the entire Palestine as a Muslim land and has expressed in its covenant that not a single inch of the Holy Land could be handed over to No Muslims, thus eliminating the Israeli State is necessary. According to the Covenant “ Jihad” or Holy War is the only way to liberate the holy land. That is the only reason why Hamas has strongly apposed any negotiation or peace talks with Israel thus has rejected the Oslo Accord. Hamas Leader Ahmed Yasin for arrested in 1989 and released in 1997.

Hamas intensified its attacks on Israeli targets in 1989 after Yasin’s arrest and commenced its suicide bombing in 1994. Since then suicide bombing is the key weapon of the militant organization and dozens of suicide bombings have killed hundreds of Israelis and injured thousands. Hamas has strong presence and widespread popularity in the Palestinian populace due to its vast social services in the form of schools, libraries, hospitals, youth clubs etc. It is believed that nearly all of the funding generated by Hamas is used in humanitarian and social services.

Only a fraction of budget is utilized in military activities. In the second Intifada Hamas continued to launch its suicide bombings even to Israeli civilians, which designated the movement the status of a terrorist organization by the Western Countries. The founder of Hamas Ahmed Yasin was killed by Israeli forces in March 2004 followed by the assassination of his successor Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi in April. Next year Hamas boycotted the presidential elections, but took part in the parliamentary elections in January this year and won with a surprising majority.