

# Organizational structure of hamas



Unlike PLO Hamas has a rather simple organizational structure. The organization is basically composed of three main sections or wings, Political Wing, Social Wing & Military Wing. The political wing is responsible for issuing statements regarding the political situation of the region, publishing pamphlets, leaflets and brochures. This wing is responsible for policy decision-making. The Social wing provides social services like kindergartens, schools, libraries, mosques, hospitals and other charities to the Palestinian populace.

This wing plays an important role in preaching the ideology of Hamas among the common Palestinians as well as help recruiting new activists. The Military Wing is responsible of intelligence operations as well as targeting Israeli military and civilian centers. This wing is also responsible for punishing those who violate Islamic Law. This wing is known as Ezzedine Al-Qassam Battalion. Leadership of Hamas: The initial Leadership of Hamas comprised of the 6 founders of the movement. The most prominent of the founding leaders were Ahmed Yasin, Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi & Mahmoud Zahar.

In the beginning Ahmed Yasin was the central authority of Hamas. But after his arrest in 1989 al-Rantissi took the command inside Gaza while Husayn Abu Kuwik, Salih Adil and Hasan Yusuf were responsible in the West Bank inside the Palestinian territory. To fill the gap some Hamas activists from abroad came in the Palestinian territory and reestablish the movement. Musa Abu Marzuq was the leader of this group. The mass deportation of the Hamas leadership and activists in 1992 led to a great vacuum of leadership within Palestinian territory.

Ahmed Yasin being arrested and all the remaining top leadership being deported forced Hamas to establish its leadership outside the Palestinian territory. Khalid Mashaal and al-Rantissi in Jordan and Musa Abu Marzuq in US were the key leaders and decision makers of that time. Israeli forces assassinated Ahmed Yasin released in 1997 in March 2004. After his demise al-Rantissi took the charge but was killed by the Israelis in the following month. Since then Hamas has remained the name of its top leader confidential though Khalid Mashal is thought to be the most top leader of Hamas.

Inside the Palestinian territory the most prominent Hamas leaders who control the organization are Ismail Haniyah and Mahmoud Zahar. Haniyah is now the Prime Minister of the PA and virtually controls the movement within the PA territory. Zahar is now the Foreign Minister of the new Hamas led PA government. Other prominent among the inside leaders is Saeed Siyam.

Leadership Structure of Hamas: Since the foundation of Hamas was laid during the first Palestinian uprising the situation itself and growing Israeli suppression against the organization compelled the movement to become a compartmentalized and decentralized organization.

Initially the main leadership consisted on the 6 founders, which later evolved as a main governing body in the form of the majlis shura or a consultative council. The council members were both from the inside and outside of the Palestinian territory and have less or more 50 members. Another important section of the leadership comprises of the “dawa” or the preaching wing. This wing is used in spreading the Hamas ideology throughout the

Palestinian masses. The 1988-89 uprising and Israeli response jolted the leadership very badly in the form of arrests and deportations.