




Hamas

Understanding
the Iran-Backed
Terrorist Group
Ruling Gaza





THIS BOOKLET IS DEDICATED
TO ALL ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN
CIVILIANS WHO HAVE SUFFERED AS A
CONSEQUENCE OF THE ACTIONS
OF THE IRANIAN-BACKED
TERRORIST GROUP HAMAS.

In the following pages, we will review the history, ideology, and goals of this organization, which sparked a horrific round of violence in May 2021 and continues to rule Gaza with an iron fist.

This booklet is also an essential resource for you to help educate your friends, family, and community. Use it to correct misinformation in the media when you see it, whether in mainstream publications or on social media platforms. Always know that you are an important ambassador in the fight for hearts and minds!

“Let there be no mistake about it. Hamas is a unique—and evil—manifestation of **genocidal antisemitism**. These are not words that I use lightly or easily, but there are no other words to describe the **toxic convergence** of the advocacy by Hamas of the most **horrific** of crimes—genocide—anchored in the most enduring of hatreds—antisemitism—with **terrorism** as the instrumentality to pursue these goals.”

—Irwin Cotler, Former Minister of Justice
and Attorney General of Canada

10 BASIC FACTS

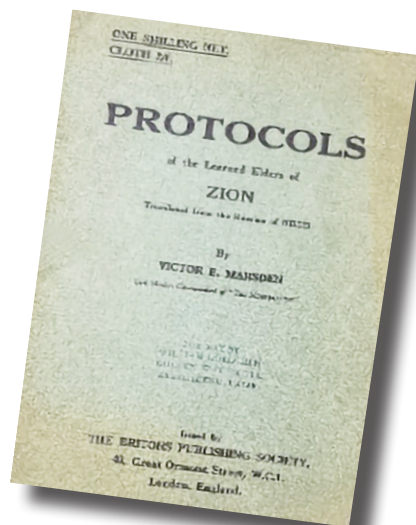
ABOUT HAMAS

1

Hamas (Arabic for the Islamic Resistance Movement) is designated as a terrorist organization by the U.S., the EU, Canada, Japan, Israel, and others. Based in the Gaza Strip, Hamas was founded in 1987 as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, a movement dedicated to promoting Islamist extremism around the world.

2

Hamas is driven by a racist and genocidal ideology, which incorporates Nazi-style antisemitism. Its founding charter combines deadly conspiracy theories taken from sources like *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a book written in 1903 in Russia that accuses Jews of plotting to take over the world, with the most toxic antisemitic interpretations of Islamic theology. (See Article 32 of the Hamas charter on page 13.) The goal of Hamas is to murder Jews, destroy Israel, and replace it with a brutal regime of religious supremacy. See the Hamas charter at hamascharter.com.



3

After Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) signed the Oslo Accords, Hamas took numerous actions that undermined this Israeli–Palestinian peace process. The first Hamas suicide bombing took place in 1993, and there were many more throughout the 1990s. From 2000 to 2005, Hamas murdered hundreds of Israeli civilians in suicide bombings as part of the brutal second intifada.



One of thousands of missiles fired from a civilian area in Gaza toward civilian areas in southern Israel

4

In 2005 Israel removed all Israeli settlements, civilians, and soldiers from Gaza, hoping to promote peace. Since then, Hamas and its allies have fired over 23,000 missiles at Israeli families and communities. The group has rejected all compromises and negotiations with Israel, consistent with its goal of eliminating the Jewish state.

5

In 2006 Hamas won Palestinian legislative elections. International powers responded by stating that they would recognize a Palestinian state only if it recognized Israel, accepted previous diplomatic agreements, and renounced violence. Hamas rejected these basic conditions, and in 2007 the group seized control of Gaza, removing its rival Fatah faction from power.

6

Hamas receives most of its funding and support from the governments of Iran, Qatar, and Turkey. Iran's regime makes genocidal threats daily to destroy Israel and the United States. It uses its funding to rule Gaza's people with an iron fist and advance its endless war against Israel at their expense.

7

Iran's regime is the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria, Ansar Allah (Houthis) in Yemen, and many other terrorist groups receive Iranian funding and weapons to promote conflict and instability across the Middle East and beyond. Iran's government and its supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, also promote a constant stream of vicious antisemitism on social media and elsewhere.

8

Hamas systematically commits double war crimes by (1) firing missiles at Israeli homes and families (2) from Palestinian civilian communities, including schools, hospitals, mosques, and apartment buildings. Consequently, Palestinians in Gaza suffer the most from every tragic round of violence between Hamas and Israel.



HAMAS EMBLEM

9

Hamas brutally oppresses Palestinians in Gaza, denying them civil, human, and political rights. It also steals international aid meant for Palestinian civilians and uses it to fuel its war machine. One especially outrageous example is taking supplies meant to build housing and using them for militarized tunnels instead. Hamas terrorists try to invade Israel through some of these tunnels or hide in them after firing missiles at Israeli civilians.

10

Hamas has chosen a path of endless war and destruction for Israelis and Palestinians alike, undermining the efforts of Israel and the international community to put an end to the violence and to help the people of Gaza thrive.



THE HAMAS IDEOLOGY

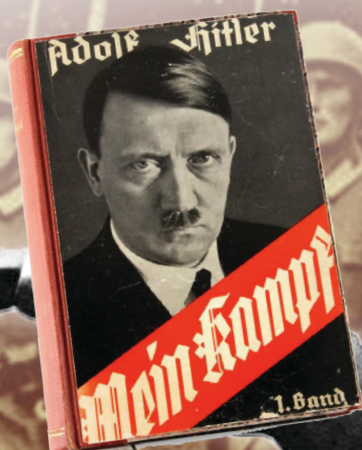
Genocidal Antisemitism and Rejection of Peace

By the late 1930s, Nazi Germany had established formal contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood, which then adopted elements of Fascism. These included unconditional loyalty to “the leader” and a militia that adopted the motto “action, obedience, silence,” which was strikingly similar to the Italian Fascist slogan “believe, obey, fight.” The idea of “heroic death” was also adapted from Fascism. The veneration of “martyrs” dying in the act of suicide bombings echoes this Fascist principle.



Egyptian-born Sayyid Qutb is to Islamism what Karl Marx is to communism. He was the Muslim Brotherhood’s chief ideologist. His works are widely distributed throughout the Muslim world. He is described in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* as “a true symbol of revolutionary Islam” and serving as an “important model for Palestinian Islamists.”

In 1950, just six years after the Holocaust, Qutb wrote *Our Struggle Against the Jews*. This book is among the primary connections between Nazism and Islamist ideology. Its title and antisemitic content echo Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle). Just as Hitler imagined “the Jews” as the central and timeless enemy of the white race, Qutb saw “the Jews” as the principal and eternal enemy of Islam. He wrote admirably of Hitler while calling for another anti-Jewish genocide:



“The Jews were enemies of the Muslim Community from the first day. ... This bitter war which the Jews launched against Islam ... is a war, which has not been extinguished, even for one moment, for close on fourteen centuries. ... The Jews again returned to evil-doing and consequently Allah ... brought Hitler to rule over them. ... Once again today the Jews have returned to evil-doing, in the form of ‘Israel.’ ... So let Allah bring down upon the Jewish people ... the worst kind of punishment.”

A prominent Muslim Brotherhood member was Haj Amin al-Husseini, the father of Palestinian nationalism. During WWII, he forged an alliance with Nazi Germany at the highest levels. He regularly spoke on Radio Berlin's Arabic broadcasts to the Muslim world, denouncing the Jews as the “most fierce enemies of Muslims.” He is recorded as voicing support for the Nazi genocide of the Jews:

**“National Socialist Germany knows the Jews well
and has decided to find a final solution for the
Jewish danger which will end the evil in the world.”**



**Haj Amin al-Husseini (left) meeting with Hitler,
November 28, 1941, in Berlin.**

**Al-Husseini inspects Bosnian
Muslim volunteers he recruited for
the Nazi Waffen SS.**

AFTER WORLD WAR II

Nazi War Criminals Go to Work for Arab Regimes

Nazi propaganda was funneled into the Arab world directly when Nazi war criminals fled justice in Europe and found refuge in Egypt, Syria, and other Arab countries. By 1953 Egypt alone gave refuge to some 2,000 Nazis. These are just a few prominent examples:

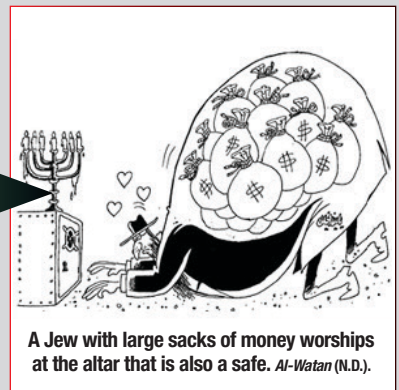
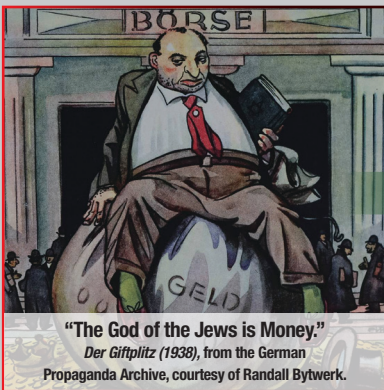
- DR. JOHANNES VON LEERS, a protégé of Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels and a major in the Waffen SS, was one of the Third Reich's most important antisemitic ideologues. He was brought to Egypt by Haj Amin al-Husseini and converted to Islam, taking the name Omar Amin. Egypt put him to work as head of its anti-Israel propaganda unit.
- HANS APPLER also worked for Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda and was brought to Egypt after the war. He worked for the Egyptian Ministry of Information, producing antisemitic propaganda. He converted to Islam and took the name Sakah Shaffar.
- ALFRED ZINGLER also worked in Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda and escaped to Egypt after the war. In Cairo he headed the Institute for the Study of Zionism, whose purpose was to "struggle against Zionism and international Jewry." He converted to Islam, taking the name Mahmoud Saleh.
- FRANZ BARTEL was the assistant chief of the Gestapo in occupied Katowice, Poland. After the war he escaped to Egypt, where he worked in Egypt's Ministry of Information. He converted to Islam, taking the name El Hussein.
- WILHELM BOERNER was a guard at the Mauthausen concentration camp. He escaped to Egypt after the war and worked in the Egyptian Interior Ministry, where he was an instructor for a Palestinian terrorist group. He converted to Islam, taking the name Ali Ben Keshir.

Through all these portals flowed Nazi Germany's genocidal antisemitism into the Arab and broader Muslim worlds.

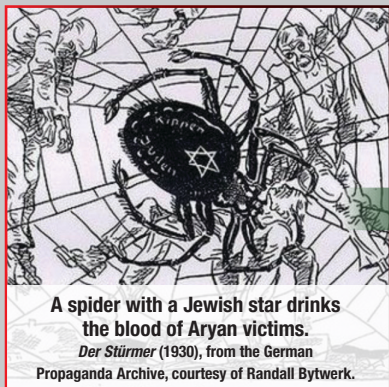
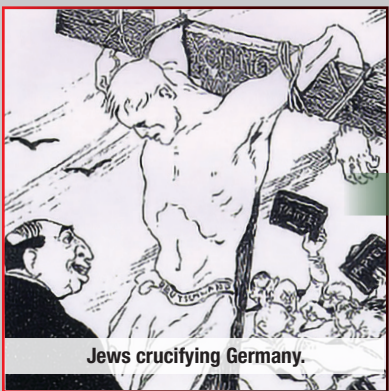
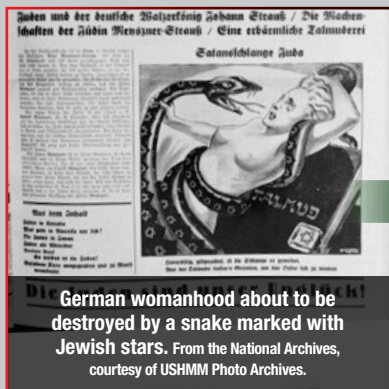
It is no surprise that Hamas also adapted Nazi antisemitism for its own purposes. Its 1988 covenant states that:

“[The Jews] have been scheming for a long time ... and have accumulated huge and influential material wealth. With their money, they took control of the world media. ... With their money they stirred revolutions in various parts of the globe. ... They stood behind the French Revolution, the Communist Revolution and most of the revolutions we hear about. ... They stood behind World War I ... and formed the League of Nations through which they could rule the world. They were behind World War II, through which they made huge financial gains. ... There is no war going on anywhere without them having their finger in it.”

NAZI GERMANY (1933–1945) VS MIDDLE EASTERN MEDIA TODAY



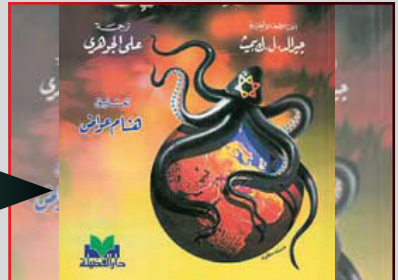
NAZI GERMANY (1933–1945) VS MIDDLE EASTERN MEDIA TODAY



NAZI GERMANY (1933–1945) VS MIDDLE EASTERN MEDIA TODAY



The Jew as an octopus with its tentacles encompassing the globe. From the Library of Congress, courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives.



Egyptian edition of *The International Jew*, with an octopus covering the globe. *Der al-Fadila* (2001), courtesy of the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center.



Jewish caricature shown ritually killing a young German woman. *Der Stürmer* (1934).



A Christian ritually murdered by Jews, as depicted on the cover of the book *The Matzot of Zion* (1983). Courtesy of the Anti-Defamation League USA.

A Nazi shoves a Jew off a cliff, saying "Go where you wanted me to go."

Der Stürmer (June 1933), from the German Propaganda Archive, courtesy of Randall Bytwerk.



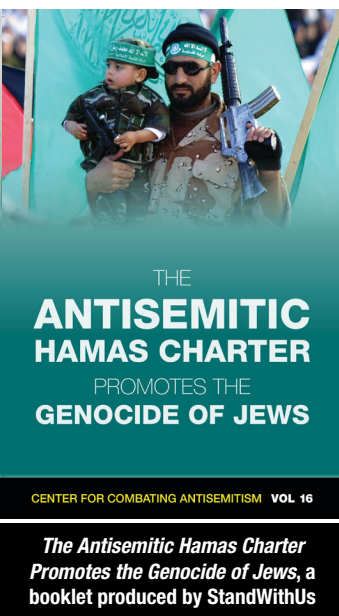
Egyptian President Nasser, backed by the armies of the Arab states, kicks the Jew into the sea. *Al-Farida* (1967).

THE HAMAS COVENANT

Call for Genocide and Never-ending War

Hamas drafted its covenant in 1988 to express its foundational ideology. In 2017 Hamas published an updated “Document of General Principles and Policies” that was touted by Hamas and its supporters in the West as demonstrating a new “pragmatism” and “moderation.” It quickly became clear that this was a propaganda ploy.

Mahmoud al-Zahar, a co-founder of Hamas, told attendees at a rally in Gaza City that the updated version “did not contradict its founding covenant.” He also said, “The pledge Hamas made before God was to liberate all of Palestine. The charter is the core of [Hamas’] position and the mechanism of this position is the document.”



Here are key points from the Hamas charter:

Preamble: “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.”

Article 6: “The Islamic Resistance Movement [Hamas] is a distinguished Palestinian movement, whose allegiance is to Allah, and whose way of life is Islam. It strives to raise the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine.”

Article 7: “The Islamic Resistance Movement is one of the links in the chain of the struggle against the Zionist invaders. It goes back to 1939, to the emergence of the martyr Izz al-Din al Kissam and his brethren the fighters, members of Muslim Brotherhood.”

Article 7: “The Day of Judgement will not come about until Muslims fight the Jews (killing the Jews), when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees. The stones and trees will say O Muslims, O Servant of God, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him. Only the Gharkad tree would not do that because it is one of the trees of the Jews.”

Article 11: “[T]he land of Palestine is an Islamic Waqf consecrated for future Muslim generations until Judgement Day. ... This is the law governing the land of Palestine in the Islamic Sharia (law) and the same goes for any land the Muslims have conquered by force.”

Article 13: “Initiatives, and so-called peaceful solutions and international conferences, are in contradiction to the principles of the Islamic Resistance Movement. ... There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad. Initiatives, proposals and international conferences are all a waste of time and vain endeavors.”

Article 15: “The day that enemies usurp part of Muslim land, Jihad becomes the individual duty of every Muslim. In face of the Jews’ usurpation of Palestine, it is compulsory that the banner of Jihad be raised. ... It is necessary to instill the spirit of Jihad in the heart of the nation so that they would confront the enemies and join the ranks of the fighters.”

Article 28: “We should not forget to remind every Muslim that when the Jews conquered the Holy City in 1967, they stood on the threshold of the Aqsa Mosque and proclaimed that ‘Mohammed is dead, and his descendants are all women.’ Israel, Judaism and Jews challenge Islam and the Muslim people. ‘May the cowards never sleep.’”

Article 32: “Today it is Palestine, tomorrow it will be one country or another. The Zionist plan is limitless. After Palestine, the Zionists aspire to expand from the Nile to the Euphrates. When they will have digested the region they overtook, they will aspire to further expansion, and so on. Their plan is embodied in the ‘Protocols of the Elders of Zion,’ and their present conduct is the best proof of what we are saying.”

IN 2021, NOTHING HAS CHANGED

**“People of Jerusalem, we want you to cut off
the heads of the Jews with knives.”**

—Fathi Hammad, Senior Hamas Official

**“This is just one of a (series) of wars. ... Israel will come
to an end just as it began. ... The day will come when
people will ask ‘where did Israel go?’”**

—Musa Abu Marzouk, Deputy Chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau



HAMAS' Forever War

Using the language of 20th century Marxist liberation movements, Hamas describes itself as a “resistance.” For Hamas, this means perpetual warfare until Israel is destroyed.

In 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, and 1982, Israel's military defeated standing Arab armies built for the purpose of defeating Israel on the battlefield. When Egyptian President Anwar Sadat realized that defeating Israel militarily was not possible, he decided to make peace with the Jewish state. Jordan did the same in 1994, followed by the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan as part of the 2020 Abraham Accords.

Hamas—and other Islamist terror groups like Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah—wants to prevent such progress. Instead, it has developed a strategy of endless, violent conflict, dressed up as “resistance.”

This strategy was identified by veteran Israeli journalist Ehud Ya'ari after the 2006 Second Lebanon War started by Hezbollah. Ya'ari pinpointed five pillars of this endless violence, summarized below:

- 1. Peace is not an option:** The Arab world must not, because of temporary hardship or setbacks, be dragged into recognizing Israel and accepting its existence through peace agreements. Since Israel cannot be defeated in the near term, immediate victory is not necessary, and ongoing warfare for generations is the strategy.
- 2. A balance of forces is not necessary:** Unlike the Arab states that sought to build large armies to achieve “strategic parity” with Israel, Hamas rejects long delays in fighting. It claims that fortitude and determination will make up the difference in military power. Suffering and loss are a symbol of victory rather than failure; death is a prize, not a disaster. Military disadvantage is not an obstacle, but in fact it turns disadvantage into advantage.
- 3. Erode the enemy's resolve:** Conquering land is not the goal, rather attacking Israeli civilians is the primary target to upend Israeli society's solidarity and resilience.
- 4. Jihad as part of a national struggle:** Hamas' narrative combines the idea of a national liberation struggle aimed at “expelling colonizers” with extremist interpretations of Islam. It refuses to accept the fact that Israel is the homeland of the Jewish people.
- 5. The Arab state is not a suitable vehicle:** Hamas views Arab states as flawed and unfit to conduct a historic, generations-long battle. Instead, the

task must be shouldered by Islamist extremist movements that, alongside their military activity, engage in societal reform through educational, health, and business institutions as a means of undermining the legitimacy of Arab regimes in the minds of the Arab public.

What does this mean? Hamas' strategy presents Israel with complicated challenges. Previously, Israel's strategy was designed to defeat large and powerful Arab armies in conventional warfare aimed at capturing territory. However, Hamas and its terrorist allies don't strive for immediate victory on the battlefield. They see their disadvantages as advantages.

Hamas does not rule Gaza as a sovereign state. Rather, it treats it as a militarized base from which to constantly attack Israelis with missiles and mortars. The strategic goal is to prod Israel into a military response that, because Hamas ruthlessly militarizes Palestinian neighborhoods, will likely cause civilian casualties and destroy civilian infrastructure.

Hamas views the misery, suffering, and loss that so many Gazans experience as a victory. This is the logic behind Hamas placing weapons depots, missile launchers, command and control centers, and tunnels within, above, and below civilian areas. It is summed up in the doctrine "death is a prize, not a disaster."

One prize is winning global public opinion by portraying Israel's efforts to protect its people as unprovoked aggression and war crimes against innocent Palestinians. In its May 2021 war against Israel, Hamas also wanted to strengthen itself politically against its main Palestinian rival—Fatah.

German-Egyptian Intellectual Dr. Hamed Abdel-Samad describes Hamas this way:

"Why isn't Hamas building bomb shelters for the people [of Gaza]? Nobody is asking this question. Because Hamas needs victims, it needs children to die in order to keep its cause alive. If Gaza was destroyed and only the leaders of Hamas died, the world would stop sympathizing with this cause. It would be over. So why isn't Hamas building bunkers for the children, instead of letting them die in order to present them in shameful pictures—pictures that violate children's rights even after they are dead—and say 'our children are dying?' Didn't you foresee this when you decided to launch missiles at Israel?"

As such, a tragic and unacceptable cycle continues.

Hamas attacks Israel for political gain, and Israeli and Palestinian civilians die. This cycle must be broken so that Israelis and Palestinians can start building a future of justice and peace, free of the genocidal racism, extremism, and violence of Hamas.

What Can You Do?

EDUCATE yourself about Hamas, Israel, and the conflict so you can teach others.

SHARE StandWithUs materials, programs, and social media content to educate your friends, family, and community. Visit standwithus.com/situationroom.

PUSH BACK against propaganda that blames Israel alone, while shielding Hamas from accountability.

URGE your elected officials to hold Hamas and its international supporters—Iran, Qatar, and Turkey—accountable for their crimes against Israelis and Palestinians.

For more in-depth reading on this complex subject, the StandWithUs Center for Combating Antisemitism

has published dozens of booklets, including a four-part introduction to antisemitism in all its permutations.

Download booklets at standwithus.com/booklets

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