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Hamas and the Peace Processⁱ

Yehezkel Shabathⁱⁱ

A. Foreword

Hamas (*Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya* – The Islamic Resistance Movement), a previously unknown movement, which was established at the start of the *intifadha*ⁱⁱⁱ (December 1987), is one of the branches of the Islamic movement (“the Muslim Brotherhood”). The Islamic movement did not consider the opposition to the “occupation” in the situation extant in Judea, Samaria and Gaza (YESH”A) from June 1967 to December 1987 as effective. At the top of its list of priorities, in the interim, until the situation would allow the beginning of resistance to the occupation, stood the improvement of the plight of the individual and the creation of an Islamist society capable of establishing an Islamic state. Due to this approach, the movement did not garner popularity among the Palestinian public and was popular only among the traditional Islamic classes. The outbreak of the *intifadha* (uprising) provided it with the opportunity to integrate into the violent side of the national struggle, and in order to remove the negative impression which it left on the Palestinian public, it not only immediately and rigidly adopted the *intifadha* but claimed that it had started the *intifadha*. This situation was well elucidated by Shaykh Jamil Hamami (a Hamas activist in Judea and Samaria) when he said that: “Before the outbreak of the *intifadha*...we were told, what have you, the band of Shaykhs, done for Palestine; we never heard anything from you other than resounding speeches, tables of food and talk.”¹

Consequently, in the “Islamic Covenant”, composed in 1988, the movement’s founder, Ahmad Yasin, and his cadre, merged the Islamic ideology of the “Muslim Brotherhood” and the national ideal of the “liberation of Palestine” – with priority given to the “liberation of Palestine” – claiming that “Palestine” is located at the heart of the Arab and Muslim world and that the Prophet Muhammad’s trek from Mecca to Jerusalem culminated there. They also claimed that the confrontation was a religious-cultural existential confrontation between Islam and Judaism and that Palestine is sacred to Islam for all generations and not one inch of it may ever be relinquished.

During the first two years of the *intifadha*, Hamas worked diligently to strengthen its infrastructure in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, it was able to take advantage of the feeble structure of the secular organizations, especially that of the *Fateh* (*Harakat al-Tahrir al-Falastiniyya* – Palestinian Liberation Movement), and provide monetary and educational support for its new

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ⁱⁱ **Yehezkel Shabath** holds a Doctorate in Middle Eastern Politics and a Master degree in Library Science, and is affiliated with the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies of Tel Aviv University and the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Bar-Ilan University.

ⁱⁱⁱ Transliteration of Arabic and Hebrew names and terms was done by Professor Shabath.

members. As to its attitude towards Israel, Hamas adopted, to all intents and purposes, the traditional position which the PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) professed until 1988 – the total liberation of “Palestine” – and stubbornly remained committed to it. Therefore, it opposed the PLO’s document of independence in which it articulated its willingness to agree to a limited Palestinian state, which would include Judea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem within the 1967 borders, and a willingness to live in peace alongside the State of Israel.

B. The Islamic Covenant

In the Islamic Covenant, published by Hamas on August 18, 1988, its ideology was elucidated, reflecting its positions regarding peace initiatives, negotiations and compromise with Israel. In all of the sections addressing this issue, a negative position opposing these initiatives, and compromise with Israel, came to bear. The Hamas’ extreme positions negating peace and its demand for total liberation of Palestine are accentuated in its covenant, beginning in the introduction and foreword and continuing in every paragraph thereafter.

The introduction is based on extreme Islamic ideology and begins with two anti-Jewish quotations, one from the Qur`an and the other from the founder of the “Islamic Brotherhood”, Hasan al-Banna:

You were the finest of nations created for humanity. Had the people of the book [the reference is to the Jews] believed, all would have been well for them. There are believers among them but most are corrupt. If they go out to battle against you they will retreat and will not emerge victorious over you... (Surat al Amran, verses 109-111).

Also in the introduction: “Israel will be established and exist until Islam liquidates it as it liquidated its predecessors” (Imam Hasan al-Banna).²

Hamas’ combative and uncompromising approach, based on very early Islamic adages and motifs, is reflected in the covenant’s foreword: “The Islamic movement began...while it battles for its God and joins hands with all fighters for the liberation of Palestine...”³

The first chapter of the covenant defines the movement and its ideology and elucidates its relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood, while emphasizing its Palestinianism, its hostility towards Israel and the Jews, and its insistent intent to fight for the “liberation” of Palestine in its totality, and its transformation into an Islamic state (paragraph 2,6). The second chapter discusses Hamas’ objectives, including the movement’s militant, radical approach to the ascent of the Islamic state to dominion over all of Palestine:

The Islamic resistance movement found itself in an era where Islam was lacking relevance...the state of truth has been toppled and has been replaced by the state of deceit...Thus, as long as Islam is not in the arena, everything is upside down... (paragraph 9).

The third chapter deals with the strategy of the Hamas movement and with the means it will utilize in its realization. It contains a clear message of adamant commitment to non-compromise and insistent belligerence for the achievement of the liberation of all of Palestine.⁴ In paragraph 11, it is written: “The Islamic Resistance Movement believes that all of the land of Palestine is Islamic *waqf* (consecration) belonging to generations of Muslims until the end of days. One may not relinquish it or any part of it...”⁵

Hamas went even further in emphasizing the liberation of all of Palestine, by subordinating “patriotism” (*al-wataniyya*) to the Islamic faith and transforming it into a part of that faith:

Patriotism, from the perspective of the Islamic Resistance Movement, is part of religious belief. There is no greater and more profound patriotism than in the situation in which the enemy gains control of Muslim land... (paragraph 12).

As a result of the fact that Hamas – in its covenant – transformed the Arab-Israeli conflict or the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from a national confrontation to a comprehensive, religious-cultural confrontation against Judaism over all of Palestine and Jerusalem. It, for all intents and purposes, ideologically ruled out any sort of territorial compromise on the Palestinian question, since it is working towards the brandishing of the Islamic flag over every inch of “Palestine” – which is treated in the Hamas Covenant with the utmost sanctity.

C. The Madrid Conference

In the wake of the outbreak of the *intifadha* in YESH”A in December 1987, the international public opinion exerted pressure on Israel to resolve the Palestinian problem. Therefore, the then Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir, introduced on May 14, 1989, an initiative whose primary articles included: a. Ending the state of war with the Arab countries and the resolution of the refugee problem; b. Holding direct talks based on the Camp David Agreements and Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. The initiative included three stages:

1. Preparatory phase: During which talks would be held with residents of the autonomy to be followed by the election of Palestinian representatives of the inhabitants of the autonomy.
2. Transitional phase: During which the Palestinian representatives would conduct a dialogue with Israel in order to reach agreement on the implementation of autonomy which would last for five years, in the course of which the Palestinians would manage their local affairs independently. Israel would remain responsible for the land, foreign relations and the settlements.
3. Final phase: Beginning in the third year of the transitional phase, during which the sides would hold talks in order to arrive at a final and mutually acceptable solution, with the objective of signing a peace treaty and determining the final borders.

The PLO leadership rejected the Shamir initiative. On September 8, 1989, the Egyptian president, Husni Mubarak, proposed a ten-point plan for the revision of the Shamir initiative in favor of the Palestinians in order to make it more acceptable to the PLO leadership. The PLO accepted the plan. However, Israel rejected it. The American Secretary of State, James Baker, subsequently proposed a five-point plan to bridge the gap between the sides and to bring them to a regional conference which would convene under the auspices of the two superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union. The American efforts concluded with the agreement of the sides to participate in the Madrid Conference which convened on October 31, 1991.

During that period, most of the Islamic factions continued in their opposition to a solution based on political compromise and peace negotiations with Israel. They remained assiduous in their path, demanding all of “Palestine”. In addition, they exerted pressure on the PLO and the members of the Palestinian delegation to refrain from participating in the Madrid Conference. On the day on which the conference was convened (October 30, 1991), Hamas declared a general strike in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip.

In order to influence local public opinion and win it over to their position, which negated Palestinian participation in the Madrid Conference, the fundamentalist Islamic factors repeatedly cited anti-Jewish verses from the Qur`an in their publications, verses which denounce the Jews and attribute extremely negative traits to them, including deep hatred of Muslims, treachery and violation of contracts and

agreements. Among these verses: “The people most hostile to the believers are the Jews and the infidels” (Surat al-Maida, verse 82), and, “Due to their breach of their own Covenant, we have cursed them and turned their hearts cruel and they distort everything...” (ibid., verse 13).

The adamant resistance of the Hamas movement and its arguments against Palestinian participation in the Madrid Conference were cited in great detail in the pamphlet, “*Fata Morgana – The Eternal Islamic Attitude Towards the Virtual Peace*” (January 1992), in which the claim was proffered that their participation was a manifestation of subjugation of the weak, acquiescence to the dictates of the victor, and, therefore surrender. Hamas further claimed that in its opinion, the Arab position at the conference from the start, would be inferior to Israel’s, and they would be forced to capitulate to American dictates and pressure which would engender extended Israeli control over the Middle East. This would deleteriously affect the Islamic cultural hegemony now extant in the region.

In the pamphlet, Hamas also articulated its thoughts *vis-à-vis* the new world order:

Since the collapse of the Eastern camp (i.e. the Soviet Union) in 1990, a new international situation and world order were created based on the exclusivity of Western control in the world arena. This new world order was plainly apparent in the Gulf War during which America succeeded in enlisting the whole world against Iraq...⁶

After the Gulf War, the United States thought that it could solve all international problems through the exercise of force against its enemies and the use of evasive and deceitful tactics towards its friends. Therefore, it has mobilized to resolve the Palestinian problem in order to placate the Jews and to exacerbate the humiliation of the Arab and Islamic nations.⁷

The Hamas movement sharpened its opposition to the Madrid Conference, observing that the Palestinian issue is the main cause of the confrontation between the Arab countries and Israel, and that the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land together with the Palestinian refugees in exile are the primary basis for the conflict. Therefore, the goal of the solutions raised to effectuate peace is to solve the Palestinian problem since Israel has been successful in transforming the primary objective of the peace negotiations from the resolution of the Palestinian problem into the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Arab countries, and that the Arabs have neglected this point while Israel has insisted upon it.⁸

Hamas added that in the matter of Jerusalem, Israel has acted to implement its policies and has vehemently rejected the participation of a representative from Jerusalem in the Palestinian delegation, claiming that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. It claimed that the Palestinian side accepted this point after Shamir suggested that Jerusalem be represented by a resident of Jerusalem in the context of the Jordanian delegation, and that the suggestion to place the issue of Jerusalem on the negotiating table was postponed due to Israel’s insistence not to relinquish one inch of Jerusalem.

An additional matter which Israel succeeded in imposing upon the Conference, according to Hamas, was the matter of separating the negotiations between Israel and the various Arab countries into bilateral negotiations in an attempt to isolate the Palestinians and compel them to accept Israeli positions so that they would not hinder the course of negotiations with the other sides, and would enable the Israelis to suspend or abrogate negotiations with the Palestinians in accordance with their own interests. At the same time, Israel would be free to continue negotiations with the other Arab countries in order to facilitate normalization with them.⁹

Hamas distinguished between the existing situation, in which the Palestinian people suffers from Zionist oppression, and a much worse situation which would be created as a result of the Conference. Therefore, Hamas contended, the present situation is more advantageous for the Palestinians than the prospect of attending a conference, which would lead the Arab countries to sign peace treaties with Israel while the Palestinians would continue to suffer under occupation for many years to come.¹⁰

Hamas opposed the participation of the PLO and the Arab countries in the Madrid Conference, because it opposes relinquishing any part of “Palestine” to Israel, and because it held that the existing international situation – in which the United States became the sole superpower and the Arabs are divided in the wake of the Gulf War – is unsuitable, from the Arab perspective, for a resolution of the Palestinian problem. The resolution of the problem at that time would be to Israel’s advantage and not to the advantage of the Arabs and the Palestinians. The existing situation should be preserved for another two or three decades, and meanwhile, an additional superpower would develop which would challenge American hegemony, or the renaissance of the Islamic world would accelerate, leading to its unification and strength. Then Palestine in its entirety could be liberated.

D. The Deportation of 413 Hamas Activists

In the wake of the Madrid Conference, eight languorous rounds of negotiations and regional and bilateral talks took place in Madrid and then in Washington, in which no substantial progress was achieved because of the difficult and complicated nature of the issues and the positions held by the protagonists being very wide apart.

Hamas, together with the rejectionist organizations headquartered in Damascus, established a front of ten organizations opposing the peace process, and employed both propaganda and diplomatic and military tactics to effectuate the abrogation of the process. It intensified its terrorist attacks against Israeli targets by its military arm “The Regiments of `Iz al-Din al-Qassam”, planted explosive devices, fired from ambushes and moving cars on Israeli citizens and kidnapped soldiers.

The straw that broke the camel’s back was the abduction and murder of the police officer, Nissim Toledano, in December 1992, resulting in the decision by the Israeli government on December 17, 1992 to deport 413 Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists to Lebanon. This deportation, which included preachers in the mosques, and lecturers from the Islamic University in Gaza and the Islamic colleges in Judea and Samaria, attempted to weaken the Hamas and Islamic Jihad infrastructure, to ease their opposition to peace and suppress their terrorist acts, by striking a severe blow against them.

The literary sources of Hamas and the Islamic personalities who support it, including Shaykh Hamid Bitawi, head of the “Association of the Religious Scholars of Palestine”, claimed that Toledano’s murder was just an excuse and a pretext to justify the deportation while the real reasons behind the Israeli government’s deportation decision were:

1. Damaging the infrastructure of Hamas by administering a severe blow to the personalities directing it and destroying the Islamic institutions in which they taught and preached.
2. Declaring war against the Islamic revival, which adopted the *jihad* and intensified the *intifadha*.
3. Strengthening the “doves” and eliminating the opponents of the peace process in order to enable the negotiating team to function undisturbed and successfully to convince the Palestinian public that theirs was the right way.
4. Calming the Israeli residents who were anxious due to the belligerent actions perpetrated against them by Hamas.

Dr. Hisham H. Ahmad, who researched the issue of the deportees and discussed it in his book *Hamas, from Religious Salvation to Political Transformation*,¹¹ reached the conclusion that “by implementing the deportation, the then Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, intended to paralyze the main infrastructure of Hamas through an act of resolute punishment for the violent acts which it perpetrated.”¹²

The Islamic, pro-Hamas sources claimed that the effect of the deportation on the Hamas infrastructure was minimal. The deportees were, indeed, a cultural elite in the Islamic faction, but their deportation primarily affected the institutions at which they worked. On the other hand, the military arm of Hamas was unharmed, and not one of its members was apprehended nor included among the deportees, and it resumed its terrorist acts after a brief respite induced by the shock of the deportation.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the decision to deport a large group, numbering more than 400 people, at once and to the same place, was a mistake. Contrary to the expectations of officials in the Israeli government:

1. The deportees rejected the suggestion that they appeal – individually – before an Israeli appellate committee.
2. The Lebanese government refused to allow them entry into its territory.
3. They, themselves, were unwilling to enter Lebanon, and insisted on remaining in the no-man's land near the border in order to be better prepared to return to their homes.
4. As intellectuals, they succeeded in maintaining a united front. Similarly, they were successful in impressing the network photographers and the foreign correspondents, who visited their camp, and managed to gain their sympathy.

The deportation placed political obstacles before the PLO. Great pressure was exerted upon it and upon the members of the Palestinian delegation by the Palestinian public inside and outside Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip – to suspend negotiations in Washington, and in the absence of any viable alternative, the PLO decided to suspend the participation of the Palestinian delegation to the talks until the return of the deportees. It was forced to adopt a more inflexible position than the one adopted by the Arab countries because its situation was troublesome from a number of perspectives:

1. During the eight rounds of talks, which took place in Washington before the end of 1992, no substantial progress in the peace process was achieved.
2. Its economic situation was dire, due to the cessation of economic aid, which it had received from the Gulf States, resulting from its support of Iraq during the Gulf War. On the other hand, the deportation strengthened the standing of Hamas. Many of those who had been receiving financial support from the PLO began shifting to Hamas in order to obtain support from it.

In the months between February and April 1993, heavy pressure was exerted on the PLO, by the factions opposing the peace process, by public opinion in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, and by the success of Hamas in perpetrating daring attacks against Israeli targets. Therefore, and in order to retrieve some of its lost prestige, not only did the PLO suspend peace negotiations and link their resumption to the return of the deportees, but it also tried to forge ties with Hamas and enlist its friendship. This was manifested in the invitation extended to Hamas to participate in the meetings of the Palestinian leadership in Tunis and in the joint statement issued by Hamas and the “United National Command” – identified with the PLO – after the meeting.

Majid Ibrahim viewed the PLO's decision to suspend its participation in the peace talks as merely a tactical step, intended to mitigate the hostility of public opinion in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip to the peace negotiations and its anger over the deportation.¹³

Ibrahim added:

The PLO leadership's objective in the decision to suspend negotiations was to save its skin and prevent the distancing of the masses of Palestinians from it and its actions by accentuating its sympathy for the issue of the deportees and its gradually tightening relationship with Hamas at the time when this movement was continually gaining strength in the political arena. At the same time, this decision was

taken in accordance with the reaction of the Palestinian public which sympathized with the actions of Hamas and condemned the Israeli decision to deport its activists. Therefore, the return of the PLO leadership to the negotiating table – even if the “Zionist entity” does not accede to the international demand to return the deportees – will not come as a complete surprise, as this leadership has already decided to continue negotiations, claiming that there is no alternative.¹⁴

Hamas acted to take advantage of the sympathy, which the deportees aroused for their predicament in international and local public opinion and the decrease in the status of the PLO, in order to pressure it to abandon peace negotiations and return to the path of armed struggle. Similarly, it attempted to utilize the minimal progress in the peace process to claim that the PLO “fell into a trap”, and that the deportation provides it with a golden opportunity to withdraw from its peace policy and honorably extricate itself from “that trap”, instead of continuing with the approach of concessions, supplication and begging at the doorways of Washington and at the useless negotiating sessions.

On December 25, 1992, Hamas sent a letter in that spirit to the PLO leadership which convened in Tunis, in which it commented that it considers the conditions appropriate...for all forces within the Palestinian people to agree on a common course of action which will lead to support the *intifadha*, “our fighting people and our heroic deportees”.¹⁵

However, the deportation led only to a temporary abatement in the mutual recriminations between the PLO and Hamas. The PLO leadership invited the Hamas leadership to a meeting in Tunis. The meeting took place in January 1993, with each of the sides intending to buy time and force the other side to adopt its position – not to reach a compromise. Hamas – in addition to the above demands – insisted upon approximately 30 percent representation in all PLO institutions, while `Arafat saw the letter as a Hamas attempt to dictate to him what to do. He did continue to adhere to the demand to repatriate the deportees, but decided that the Palestinian delegation would return to the peace negotiations in Washington even before the deportees were returned.

The meeting in Tunis did curb the friction between the sides for a short while but did not heal the breach because the distance between their positions was significant and fundamental. The PLO tended towards compromise and resolution of the conflict through negotiations, while Hamas supported a policy of not conceding even one inch of lane, and of a holy war to restore Palestine in its entirety to Muslim hands.

The PLO leadership redoubled its efforts to separate clearly between the issue of the repatriation of the deportees and the issue of the peace negotiations immediately after the Palestinian public calmed down. These efforts manifested themselves in the declaration made by Bassam Abu Sharif, `Arafat’s adviser at that time, in which he raised doubts as to whether there was any use in tying peace negotiations with the deportee issue.

Khalid al-Hurub¹⁶ praised the deportees for their unity, their ability to conduct their affairs and to maneuver between all the elements who tried to exploit them in order to attain political gains at their expense. He wrote that:

With their toughness and obstinacy, the deportees managed to confuse the new Western world order and they rejected all the deals that attempted to weaken their position, especially the deal to repatriate one hundred deportees which its sponsors thought would lead those whose names were included in the deal to deviate from the consensus and dissolve their unity. Not one of them mentioned that many Arab and Palestinian groups took interest in their cause just as a political investment...in order to reap tactical and propaganda benefits...¹⁷

After praising the deportees, al-Hurub lavished praise on Hamas for refraining from publicizing the fact that the majority of the deportees were its members and that it had the exclusive right to deal with their affairs.

From February to September 1993, the contacts and pressure continued on Israel, Hamas and the deportees to reach a compromise. Similarly, pressure was exerted on Hamas to accept the compromise and not be too stubborn. In July 1993, they accepted the compromise and in August 1993, they began preparing Palestinian public opinion to do the same.

The deportees' spokesman, `Abd al-`Aziz al-Rantisi, convened the Marj al-Zuhur camp executive committee and discussed with them the acceptance of the Israeli proposal. The committee accepted the proposal and therefore Rantisi said that he considered the proposal a "positive, healthy sign, since it contains a promise to repatriate everyone, though numerous external factors are negatively influencing the matter of the deportees and are threatening their future return".¹⁸

Hamas celebrated the deportee return, when Israel repatriated half of them in September 1993, and published a manifesto in which it depicted the return as a victory, praised the deportees and taking pride in their steadfast resistance. Similarly, it claimed that this resistance was a victory in the battle against the occupation and closed the deportation file forever.¹⁹

In December 1993, when Israel repatriated the remainder of the deportees, Hamas repeated those words of praise and pride. Notably, during the period of deportation, Hamas attempted to exploit the situation for its own propaganda purposes in order to intensify its actions against the peace process and to claim that, despite the peace negotiations, Israel continues its oppressive actions against the Palestinian residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. In fact, Hamas' victory on the issue of the deportees was limited merely to their return, while the primary objective of Hamas – to exploit the deportation as a means of attacking the PLO for its participation in the peace process, and to foster powerful public opinion to exert pressure to halt the negotiations and re-adopt the armed struggle – was not achieved. The PLO succeeded in limiting the Hamas influence and continuing along its chosen path of negotiations leading, a short time later, to the signing of the "Gaza and Jericho First Agreement" in Oslo.

E. The Oslo Accords

As a result of its desire to maintain hegemony in terms of the Palestinian issue, and because of the fiscal distress in which it was mired, the PLO leadership decided to take a step towards Israel and reach an agreement and compromise with it. Therefore, it agreed to accept the Gaza/Jericho First Program, so that it might begin to take actual control of Gaza and Jericho. It should be noted that, even after the PLO decision to return to the peace talks, while distinguishing between its treatment of the issue of the deportees and the peace negotiations, and during its participation in the ninth and tenth rounds, rumors were spread concerning secret negotiations being conducted with Israel in European capitals under European and American auspices.

The positions of the negotiating partners, which led to the finalization of the Gaza/Jericho Agreement in September 1993, was viewed and analyzed by Majid Ibrahim as early as July that year. He wrote: "Regarding the Zionist entity, the negotiations took place according to its conditions. It could not possibly realize a better opportunity to establish itself in the region than the present one..."²⁰

And in reference to the Palestinians he wrote:

The PLO leadership is interested in garnering accomplishments from its continuing participation in these negotiations in an attempt to sway the [Palestinian] public mood which rejects the negotiations claiming that it has brought nothing to the Palestinian people. At the same time, the PLO leadership aspires to limit the Hamas influence which has been steadily growing due to its adoption of the armed struggle program and the painful terrorist attacks perpetrated by its military apparatus against the Zionist entity.²¹

Ibrahim added:

As a result, both sides – the Palestinians and the Israelis – felt that they must quickly reach an agreement and, based on that feeling, the “Gaza First” proposal, which was agreed upon by both sides, took form. This proposal has special significance for the Israelis which manifests itself in: 1. Ridding themselves of the heavy security burden engendered by Gaza which served as a base for the Palestinian fighters; 2. Hastening the implementation of autonomy in Gaza, as opposed to the West Bank, in order to test the ability of the Palestinian Authority to control the security situation and to prevent the departure of Palestinian guerillas to perpetrate terrorist attacks in Israeli territory.²²

In reference to the proposal, Ibrahim wrote that the suggestion to withdraw from Gaza was raised by Israel in the wake of the escalation of armed activities perpetrated by the terrorist cells of `Iz al-Din al-Qassam, that Israel was interested in getting rid of the Gaza Strip, and the peace negotiations provide appropriate cover to withdraw honorably from the Gaza Strip.²³

It should be noted that the PLO leadership believed that by acquiring direct control over Gaza it would attain the following accomplishments: 1. Improving its popular image by claiming that the peace negotiations bore fruit and led to the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza; 2. Reinforcing the PLO’s role in the peace process through the direct management of Gaza; 3. Receiving a “certificate of experience” in the management of Gaza as a first step towards demanding a similar role in Judea and Samaria.

Hamas, on the other hand, hoped that the peace negotiations would run aground and fail, based on the gap and the chasm separating the positions of the two sides. Therefore, when the Gaza/Jericho Agreement was signed on September 13, 1993, the Hamas viewed it as an earthquake of sorts and felt that its efforts to stop the peace process were not succeeding.

Consequently, Hamas decided to take operative protest actions: strikes, demonstrations and escalating the terrorist attacks against Israeli targets, while on the intellectual level, its writers and philosophers took a stand against the agreement. They highlighted its faults, its loopholes and the infringement of Palestinian rights, and accentuated the expectations that it would fail, and the means which the Islamic opposition should exercise in order to prevent its implementation. Among these writers were Abd al-Sattar Qasim and Ibrahim al-Maqadma.

Qasim wrote that

the agreement is a general declaration of principles in the framework of which the negotiations will be conducted, resolving details which the two sides – Palestinian and Israeli – will agree upon in the future. These details will not deviate from the principles relating to the establishment of autonomy.²⁴

In dealing with the first paragraph of the agreement (which discusses the objectives of the negotiations, which is the establishment of Palestinian self-rule for a period of five years, concluding with a final status agreement based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338), Qasim wrote that these Security Council Resolutions make no mention of the Palestinian nation and its rights. On the contrary, they emphasize the fact that the solution in the Middle East is between countries because “recognition” and “security” are matters for countries alone, and since the Palestinians are not a country, the resolution does not include them and relates only to the Arab countries and Israel.

Al-Maqadma went even further in his arguments against the agreement and wrote that all of the sections dealing with the Israeli demands were very clear. They were not ambiguous at all, while the paragraphs relating to the Palestinian demands were ambiguous and were open to different interpretations, corresponding to the array of powers supporting each side during the negotiations. If the Palestinians achieved this ambiguous phraseology at the height of the *intifadha*, what would they possibly be able to achieve in the future after the alternative of an armed struggle has been denied them?²⁵

In an anonymous pamphlet published by members of Hamas, entitled: “The Gaza/Jericho Agreement – Dimensions and Results” (October 1993), it says that one of the main causes impelling Israel to rush

into an agreement with the PLO was the fear that the Islamists would succeed in assuming control of the Arab countries and uniting them into one powerful Islamic country which would be able to overcome Israel. In order to prevent this, Israel needed peace agreements with the governments of these countries with the goal of cooperating with them against the Islamic movement. To reach that situation, a Palestinian “yes” was required, and the “yes” was manifested in the Gaza/Jericho Agreement. The pamphlet’s authors argued that it was a very bad agreement for the Palestinians, in which the PLO recognized Israel and its sovereignty over 4/5 of Palestine, while maintaining control over what remained.²⁶

F. The Slaughter in the Tomb of the Patriarchs

In the wake of the Gaza/Jericho Agreement, Hamas continued its attacks against Israeli targets. This exacerbated the tension between Jews and Arabs. Hamas believed that by doing so it would succeed in undermining the peace process.

Among the Jews in Qiryat Arba`, the feelings of frustration and the desire for revenge increased. On the morning of Purim, Friday, February 25, 1994, when many Muslim worshippers were assembled on one side of the Tomb of the Patriarchs, for Ramadhan, Barukh Goldstein, a Qiryat Arba` resident and a doctor by profession, who identified with the Kakh Movement, went to the Tomb area early in the morning and murdered 29 Muslims who were praying there.

The massacre led to riots over the course of the next few days, in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip in general, and in Hebron in particular. Hamas considered this massacre a golden opportunity to pressure the PLO leadership and the peace negotiations team to stop the talks and return to the path of armed struggle. Similarly, its military arm promised the Palestinian public cruel acts of revenge against the Israeli civilian population. In this context, *al-Zaytuna* wrote that Hamas called on `Arafat to adopt a “courageous position” and withdraw from the negotiations, and the chairman of its political office, Musa Abu Marzuq, dispatched a missive to `Arafat saying:

We have informed you many times already that the settlement process through which you hope to attain some of our rights is just an illusion. We demand that you cancel the prohibition which you imposed on the “*Fateh* hawks” proscribing the use of weapons against the occupation and provide them with all of the funding and weapons necessary to strengthen the *jihād* and their participation in the defense of the Palestinian people.²⁷

In addition, Hamas published a “Special Manifesto about the Massacre in Hebron” in which it claimed that the massacre was premeditated and that soldiers and settlers took part in it. Similarly, it claimed that the Oslo agreement, in which `Arafat made many concessions, “encouraged the settlers to perpetrate the massacre”.²⁸ The manifesto incited the residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip to intensify the *intifadha*.

The Vice Chairman of “The Association of Religious Scholars of Palestine”, Shaykh Taysir al-Tamimi, unleashed a sharp attack against the Jews, the PLO leadership and the Oslo agreement when he said:

The awful massacre which the occupation gangs perpetrated against the Muslim worshippers in the honorable “Ibrahimi Mosque” is a link in the chain of the implementation of the plot whose goal is to liquidate the Palestinian issue. It is a result of the foul negotiations which enabled the “Zionist entity” to actualize all of its dreams in exchange for continuing concessions. We enter into a treaty with Allah to avenge the blood [of those slaughtered] which irrigated the most sacred land.²⁹

Under massive public pressure, the PLO leadership decided to suspend negotiations with Israel and to set conditions for their resumption: 1. International presence in YESH”A in order to convince the

Palestinians that their existence is secure; 2. Prohibition on settlers to enter Palestinian cities and areas of dense Palestinian population; 3. Conducting negotiations about the future of the settlements during this round of talks and not to defer the topic for three years as previously stipulated; 4. Increasing the number of Palestinian police.

Despite the fact that the PLO leadership suspended talks with Israel and set conditions for their resumption, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad continued in their campaign of condemnation and vilification of the PLO political position. With the advent of the Security Council deliberations, Israel firmly rejected the above PLO leadership demands, and accepted only one demand – the increase in the number of Palestinian police in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Similarly, the Israeli delegation to the United Nations indicated that Israel would accept a Security Council resolution which condemned the massacre in Hebron and decide on a non-military international presence there, on the condition that the Jerusalem issue would not be mentioned in the resolution as part of the autonomy.³⁰

The aforementioned Security Council resolution did not find favor in the eyes of Hamas. It condemned the resolution and the American position regarding the murder in Hebron and claimed that the position favors the “Zionist entity”. The pressure and activities which Hamas effected in order to undermine the peace process were ineffectual, since Security Council Resolution 904, which condemned the slaughter in Hebron and called for guaranteeing the security of the Palestinian residents, laid the groundwork for the resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab negotiations. `Arafat had no choice but to accept the American administration’s call to resume the talks, especially since before the suspension, in the wake of the massacre, the talks had reached a decisive step and were nearing conclusion.

On March 16, 1994, a meeting took place between Rabin and Clinton in Washington, after which the American administration became convinced that Israel had, in fact, taken the necessary steps to improve the security circumstances of the Palestinians. The administration was also successful in delaying the adoption of a Security Council resolution condemning the massacre, in order to give the meeting a chance to succeed, and in order to exploit it as a means of exerting pressure on the PLO leadership to return to the negotiating table in exchange for the adoption of the resolution.

In an article critical of the flexible positions taken by the PLO in preparation for the resumption of the negotiations, *al-Zaytuna* wrote:

The massacre in Hebron proved that the stamina of the PLO leadership is deteriorating from day to day. During the deportees crisis it waited four months before returning to the negotiating table and with this massacre, despite its gravity, it waited only one month, despite the fact that in the deportees crisis the Council adopted a clear resolution which called for the return of all deportees, while in the case of the Hebron massacre, a shameful resolution which met all of Israel’s demands, was adopted.³¹

Hamas continued in its resolute war against the peace negotiations even after the PLO and the Arab countries returned to the negotiating table. This war was clearly obvious in manifesto No. 110 which was published on April 3, 1994, and in which Hamas said:

When `Arafat surrenders to Rabin and the Arab rulers yield to Clinton’s threats and return to the negotiating table – one measure remains at our disposal, and that is the closing of the ranks by purging all those submissive and treacherous among us and aiming our weapons in the direction of our enemies...³²

In the wake of the manifesto, Hamas began perpetrating suicide bombings, to which they had alluded in previous manifestos.

The Muslim religious law scholars made a very fine distinction between the concepts *`intihar* and *`istishhad*. *`Intihar* (suicide) resulting from personal distress was totally rejected and was considered as an unforgivable, severe crime, and as a result, the *muntahir* would receive the most brutal punishment in the world-to-come and will be in purgatory forever.

The *`istishhad* (death in a holy war against the enemies of Islam), on the other hand, was considered by them as a great, meritorious deed. Not only does the *shahid* merit eternal paradise in return, but he also gains absolution for the sins of all of the members of his family and a place in Paradise for them as well. Some of the Muslim religious scholars limited the incidence of the concept *shahid* to those who are killed on the battlefield or in wars supporting the spread of Islam or in the defense of Islamic territory against a non-Muslim enemy, and do not consider perpetrators of suicide bombings against an innocent civilian population as *shahids*, and even oppose their actions. However, religious scholars who support Hamas and the “Islamic Jihad” consider them *shahids* and praise and encourage them.

More outspoken in his support of the Hamas suicide bomber activities was Shaykh Dr. Yusuf al-Qardhawi. In a sermon which he delivered on Friday, March 8, 1996 in the Umar ibn al-Khattab mosque in Qatar, he emphatically supported the Hamas suicide actions and characterized them as legitimate *`istishhad* activities. His sermon was entitled: “The Human Faith Bombs Are More Powerful Than the Israeli Nuclear Arsenal – The Hamas Actions Are *Jihad* and Their Casualties Are *Shahids*”, and was broadcast live on Qatar radio, and he added: “The Israelis plundered Palestine, killed its inhabitants and deported the rest. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to fight them in defense of our land and our honor.”³³

The encouragement provided by the religious scholars and Islamic literature for the *`istishhad* activities for Allah and the defense of the homeland and religion, pushed thousands of frustrated Muslim youths into the arms of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. After undergoing a brainwashing process, a powerful belief coalesced among these youths, that by perpetrating the *`istishhad* activity they would be liberated from their hardship in this world, a transient world, would achieve hero status among their compatriots and relatives (in this world) and enjoy the best of everything in the world-to-come.

Suicide bombings were perpetrated by the Islamic Jihad even before the Tomb of the Patriarchs massacre, but they were of limited scope. In a pamphlet published in 1993, entitled “Shahids with Determination”, the Islamic Jihad cited the last will and testament of a suicide bomber on his way to perpetrating his suicide bombing, which was transcribed from a cassette containing the last will and testament of `Azzam `Aziz Barahma, prior to his suicide action.

In the will, he quoted a verse from the Qur`an relating to *`istishhad*, as follows:

Be warriors for Allah...Blessed Allah purchased the souls and possessions from the believers...And the price was Paradise. The condition is that the believer battle for Allah – not for dominion or belongings. The Qur`an says: Whoever fights cannot avoid killing and being killed for Allah. Since Allah promised him paradise in exchange for the sacrifice which he sacrificed for him...Is there anything greater than this purchase?³⁴

After the massacre in the Tomb of the Patriarchs, the military arm of Hamas announced its intention to execute fierce *`istishhad* activities against Israeli targets. The man who organized these activities was Yahya `Ayyash (called “The Engineer”) from the village of Ra`fat in Samaria, who studied engineering in Bir-Zeit University and prepared the explosive devices for the suicide bombers who were members of the “Hamas military arm”. These suicide bombers committed themselves to become “live bombs” and to explode, together with the explosive they carried, on Israeli buses or other crowded areas, in order to kill as many Jews as possible and force Israel and the PLO to stop the peace process. In this framework, suicide bombers perpetrated three suicide bombings on April 6, 1994, April 7, 1994, and April 13, 1994, which caused the deaths and maiming of numerous Israeli citizens.

The suicide bombings underscored the frustration which permeated the upper echelons of Hamas, due to their lack of success in stopping the peace process, and also exposed the feeling that their status was gradually diminishing in the face of the PLO’s success in moving the process ahead, which weakened the odds of their assuming control in the autonomous areas and establishing an Islamic state there.

This disappointment clearly manifested itself in the reaction of the Hamas representative in Jordan, Muhammad Nazzal, to the suicide bombings, when he said: “The recent actions, in addition to their serving as revenge for the Hebron fatalities, are being perpetrated in the framework of the Hamas strategy to escalate the armed struggle and perpetuate the resistance.”³⁵

The second Cairo agreement which was finalized on March 31, 1994, between the then Israeli Chief of Staff, Amnon Shahak, and `Arafat’s political adviser, Nabil Sha`ath, established an international presence in Hebron which included the deployment of a force comprised of 160 observers for a period of three months, which could be subsequently renewed. The force would be armed with handguns exclusively for self-defense purposes and its members would provide periodic reports to the Israeli-Palestinian liaison committee or to the Hebron joint committee, whose members included representatives of both sides along with a representative of the international force in the city.

In its second section, the agreement determined that the negotiations on the Gaza/Jericho Agreement should resume immediately in a manner ensuring that Israel would expedite the withdrawal, and that the Palestinian police will deploy gradually, a week after the resumption of the negotiations, in order to enable the Palestinians to assume authority and responsibility. Regarding the second Cairo Agreement, the Jordanian, *al-Sabil*, wrote that the agreement limited the role of the supervisors to preparing security reports and aiding the city council in carrying out its responsibilities, which transformed their presence into something marginal which would not provide the protection required by the Palestinian people. It added that the most conspicuous significance of the agreement is that it provides justification to the PLO leadership to resume the negotiations claiming that practical steps had been taken to protect the Palestinians in Hebron, despite the fact that those were merely formal steps, which did nothing to alter the existing circumstances.³⁶

As for the Shamgar Commission, which was appointed by Israel to investigate the massacre, most Palestinian circles, especially the Islamic ones, rejected its conclusions and claimed that it just went through the motions on the matter. In that context, the Hebron mayor, Mustafa al-Natsha said:

I anticipated a result of this sort from the very beginning, but not this bad – the commission ignored the settlers in the center of Hebron and refrained from answering the question whether or not Goldstein committed the crime alone.³⁷

The slaughter in the Tomb of the Patriarchs, indeed, endangered the peace process, provided Hamas with hopes of undermining it and supplied it with the opportunity to strengthen its hold among the Palestinian public. However, the suicide bombings which elicited revulsion from world public opinion, in addition to strengthening the desire of the peace process partners to continue negotiations – all contributed to the dashing of the hopes of Hamas and the continuation of the process.

G. `Arafat’s Arrival in Gaza and Jericho

Following the suicide bombings carried out by Hamas, the sides supporting the continuation of the peace process began implementing strong measures against Hamas, including incarcerating its activists, closing its institutions and confiscating its property. At the same time, the implementation of the second Cairo agreement began, with dates set for the withdrawal of the Israeli army from Gaza and Jericho and the deployment of Palestinian police forces in their place.

Hamas was subject to considerable pressure. In order to withstand the pressure, it softened its positions and presented an alternative political program consisting of specific points, which were structured as a political initiative and phrased in a new style. This program was published in the Jordanian daily *al-Sabil* on April 19, 1994, in the name of Musa Abu Marzuq, the director of the Hamas political office in Jordan.

The plan was introduced in its entirety by Khalid al-Hurub as follows:

We, an opposition movement, believe that if the enemy's government wants to emerge from this crisis, the way to do it is not by imposing surrender upon the Palestinian people. It could be that a peace treaty or a cease-fire agreement is needed to emerge from this complicated situation, as the legal international resolutions established that the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem are occupied territories which belong to the Palestinian people who reside there. If they want the resistance to cease, the following must transpire:

1. Unconditional withdrawal of Zionist occupation forces from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem.
2. Dismantling of settlements and evacuation of settlers from the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Jerusalem.
3. Conducting free, constitutional general elections "inside" and "outside" so that the Palestinian people will choose their genuine leadership and representatives who will determine their future. If Hamas is in the minority of the chosen leadership, it will respect the majority opinion.³⁸

Regarding the plan, al-Hurub wrote:

Coalescing those points into a plan or initiative indicates a certain softening of Hamas' position, as for the first time in its history, Hamas introduced a philosophy which is not consistent with its historic ideological principles, but rather presents a defined program. The most significant point regarding the plan presented by Abu Marzuq is that it suggests the adoption of a "staged solution", previously adopted by the PLO in the Palestinian National Council in 1974, which endorsed the ten-point plan which designated the establishment of Palestinian national rule over any part of liberated Palestine.³⁹

A new point in Abu Marzuq's declaration was the mention of "legal international resolutions which established that the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Jerusalem are occupied territories", as the Hamas position until then had condemned all international resolutions concerning Palestine, beginning with the 1947 Partition Plan through Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. A third significant point in the Abu Marzuq declaration was the emphasis on "cease-fire" and not "peace treaty", which stemmed from the notion that cease-fire is acceptable in Islamic political behavior dating back to the Prophet Muhammad, and therefore, can be exploited under special circumstances in times of weakness for limited periods of time...⁴⁰

In any case, al-Hurub believes that the Abu Marzuq declaration succeeded in minimizing the pressure to which Hamas was subjected both "inside" and "outside" and provided some breathing room which enabled it to weather the crisis, to the extent that the American Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, declared in response that if Hamas had the genuine desire to join the peace process, he welcomed that development.⁴¹

In the latter half of April 1994, the Israeli army withdrew from Gaza. The Palestinian police forces began their deployment in preparation for `Arafat's arrival. `Arafat postponed his arrival in Gaza a number of times before he settled there and established the Palestinian Authority on July 12, 1994.

Hamas and the Islamic Jihad treated `Arafat's arrival in Gaza with contempt and portrayed it as an entry tainted by humiliation and submission. The writers identified with Hamas published sharply critical articles on the matter, among them Mahmud Abadin, who wrote in an article published in *al-Bayan*, that `Arafat had hurried to enter Gaza and had acceded on many principles including leaving the roads leading to the settlements in Judea and Samaria in Israeli hands, and agreeing that Israeli withdrawal from the big cities in Judea and Samaria would take place only if the experiment succeeded.⁴²

Dr. Abd al-Fattah al `Awisi was even more extreme in his criticism as he described `Arafat's return as one of the most humiliating returns in history, adding:

Arafat's return to the Gaza/Jericho protectorate was one of the manifestations of Zionist superiority and control...as he went there only after receiving official permission from his partner in signing the agreement – Yitzhak Rabin...⁴³

`Awisi further added that despite the fact that `Arafat was unsuccessful in making progress in any of the matters upon which he had made his return contingent, such as the freeing of prisoners incarcerated in Israeli prisons and receiving the funds promised him by the donor nations, he surrendered to pressure exerted by Israel and the United States in order to portray his return in the eyes of the world as the end of a phase and in order to free them from the Palestinian issue which "had been resolved".⁴⁴

After `Arafat became established in Gaza, the Palestinian opposition, led by Hamas, criticized the functioning of the Palestinian Authority. In the context of this criticism, the daily *al-Istiqlal*, published in Gaza by the Islamic Jihad, conducted a dialogue with Mahmud al-Zahhar (a leader of Hamas in Gaza), Shaykh Abdullah al-Shami (a leader of the Islamic Jihad in Gaza) and Hisham `Abd al-Raziq (a member of the *Fateh* Supreme Council).

In the dialogue, al-Zahhar said that the Palestinian Authority was extremely weak and did not measure up to the required standard in the period following the redeployment of the Israeli forces in Gaza and Jericho. On the political front, Israel could choose to implement those parts of the agreements which it decided to implement and refrain from implementing those parts in which it was not interested and incessantly harass the residents while the Palestinian Authority did nothing about it. Similarly, the Palestinian demand for Jerusalem had been weakened.

In the realm of development, al-Zahhar claimed that there had been no improvement; in the realm of administration, a struggle was underway among the various establishments over authority and command; in the realm of health, there had been a deterioration; in the realm of security, there was a clear orientation hostile to Hamas, both on the part of the Palestinian Authority and on the part of its police force.

Shaykh al-Shami unleashed criticism even sharper than that of al-Zahhar when he said that since the Palestinian Authority assumed responsibility, he had not sensed a positive or effective effort in any aspect of the lives of the Palestinian people. The circumstances remained as they were or had deteriorated:

Any observer can see that one man rules alone [meaning `Arafat]. He alone makes all the decisions. All the rest are tools in his hands which is the antithesis of the principle of democracy to which they all pay lip service.⁴⁵

As opposed to al-Zahhar and al-Shami, `Abd al-Raziq expressed satisfaction at what the Palestinian Authority had managed to accomplish in the short time since it had assumed control and under the conditions at its disposal, and he dismissed all of the allegations raised by factions in the Palestinian opposition. He added that the Palestinian Authority had successfully provided a large measure of security to the Palestinian residents in the short time since its establishment, and refuted all speculation that the Palestinians would engage in a bloody civil war in a struggle over control of the government.

As `Arafat's arrival in Gaza drew nearer, members of Hamas became concerned that `Arafat would rule as a dictator and his government would be just another example of Arab governments who persecute deep-rooted Islamic movements which aspire to overthrow the government and establish an Islamist state in its stead. The bloody confrontations in Egypt and Algeria between the governments and the radical Islamic groups were the paradigms which they feared. Their concerns were exacerbated

in the wake of friction between them and the Palestinian police, after which the police began curtailing their activities and arresting their people.

In reality, the contrasts and chasm between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority are fundamental in nature and difficult to bridge. They can be summarized as follows:

1. The Palestinian Authority was established after it was deemed fit by Israel to manage the autonomy, in the wake of its written acceptance of Israel's right to exist – the letter from 'Arafat to Rabin, while at the same time, Hamas opposes any concession even within the 1948 borders and stands for the establishment of an Islamist state in all of "Palestine".
2. The Palestinian Authority views the Oslo Agreement as a precursor to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip whose capital is East Jerusalem, while the Hamas considers the agreement an Israeli measure to stymie Palestinian efforts to liberate Palestine in its entirety, and to shift the confrontation from an Arab-Israeli confrontation to an intra-Palestinian confrontation, while at the same time being granted legitimacy for its existence.
3. The Palestinian Authority attempts to persuade the Palestinians as to the desirability of the accomplishments which it attained in the negotiations with Israel, including the economic aid from the donor nations and the consequent improvement in the economic circumstances, while the measures which Hamas employs to achieve its objectives focus on the perpetuation of belligerent activities aimed to torpedo the agreement which it considers an Israeli victory.

In relating to the issue of elections, Hamas distinguished between elections for local public institutions and the elections for the Legislative Council of the Palestinian Authority. Regarding the local public institutions, Hamas firmly demanded that free, democratic elections, in which it planned to take an active part, be conducted, in the hope that it would win a majority, due to the increase in its popularity among the Palestinian public. Therefore, it vehemently opposed the appointment of the members of these institutions by 'Arafat and his leadership.

The members of Hamas and the intellectuals and authors who support it, dealt with this issue at length, among them 'Abd al-Fattah al-'Awisi, who wrote:

Despite the fact that in the Declaration of Principles, which was signed in Washington on September 13, 1993, the conducting of elections for the Autonomy Council was mentioned, the "Protectorate Authority" was not interested in holding elections of that sort, because 'Arafat feared that he would not garner a majority. The elections were postponed again and again, from April 5, 1994 to October 15, 1994 to December 15, 1994, etc.⁴⁶

When the elections for the Autonomy Council were held, on January 20, 1996, Hamas opposed them on principle, and decided to boycott them. However, due to pressure exerted by the PLO leadership, Hamas refrained from firmly prohibiting its members from participating in the elections. As a result, and since the elections were scheduled right after the Israeli army's first redeployment in YESH'A, the voter participation rate was high, reaching 70 percent in most cities. "The election results were that most of the 88 Council seats were filled by candidates of the *Fateh* list and the independents who ran 60 candidates. As a result, over 40 *Fateh* members were elected."⁴⁷

The Hamas criticism of the elections included:

1. The elections were for an Autonomous Council and not for an independent Palestinian state.
2. The elections were conducted in the context of the Oslo Accords which address only a small number of Palestinian rights.
3. The elections took place under the occupation.

4. The objective of the elections was to grant legitimacy to the rule of `Arafat and his apparatus, which Hamas views as corrupt.
5. The objective of the elections was to establish a council which would reverse the “Palestinian Charter” and abolish the paragraphs calling for the liquidation of the State of Israel.

Hamas believes that in free, direct elections for a Palestinian Parliament “inside” and “outside”, it would garner a significant number of seats, ranging between 40 and 50 percent. It is possible that in parliamentary elections of that sort as well, `Arafat’s supporters would be unable to achieve a majority. But it is also possible that had Hamas changed its position before the Autonomy Council elections and participated, it would have garnered between 20 and 30 percent of the seats, and could have constituted a strong opposition within the Council, acting against the Oslo Accords and against the peace process and therefore making the functioning of the Palestinian Authority more difficult.

Points of friction between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority are many and fundamental, however, despite these divisions, Hamas tries to avoid open confrontation with this Authority for three reasons: 1. The Hamas ideology is deeply grounded in Islamic religious law, which forbids civil war among Muslims; 2. Hamas policy is to wage war against the Jews and Israel and not to engage in a war which will distract it from that policy; 3. Hamas is pragmatic and knows that it cannot overcome the Palestinian Authority in a war.

H. The Peace with Jordan

After the signing of the Oslo and Cairo Accords between Israel and the Palestinians, Jordan began to fear that its standing would suffer if it continued to “sit on the fence” and wait. Therefore, it began to accelerate its efforts towards reaching a peace agreement with Israel. Despite this, Jordan refrained from taking a formal, drastic and public step in that direction until `Arafat’s arrival in Gaza and the speedy, significant implementation of the Oslo and Cairo Accords. This implementation provided Jordan with a good reason and an appropriate and justified ambience to sign the Washington Declaration, which was signed at the White House on July 25, 1995, by the then Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein. At that stage, precedence was given to Jordan regarding the continuing supervision over the places in Jerusalem holy to Islam, in any final settlement determining the future of the city.

In analyzing the process which led Jordan to sign the Washington Declaration and the subsequent peace treaty with Israel, Islamic sources claimed that the Madrid Conference paved the way for bilateral negotiations between Israel and the front-line Arab countries and that Jordan had no serious problem which needed to be resolved in order to achieve comprehensive peace with Israel. Hamas did condemn the Washington Declaration, claiming that, for all intents and purposes, it recognized Israeli sovereignty over all of Jerusalem and transformed the conflict from a principled conflict between the Arabs and Israel to an internecine rivalry among the Arabs themselves, however, it placed most of the blame on the PLO which, in its opinion, by signing the Oslo Agreement, encouraged the Arab countries to settle their issues with Israel.

In his treatment of the declaration, Shaykh Jamil Hamami said that it includes a paragraph stipulating that Israel respects the present, special role played by Jordan in the places holy to Islam in Jerusalem. When negotiations regarding the final status of Jerusalem will be held, Israel will grant first priority to the historic role of Jordan in these holy places. Hamami added that this paragraph aroused sharp reactions among the Palestinian leadership, which held that it weakened their position in the final status negotiations regarding sovereignty in Jerusalem, and that in the Washington Declaration, Jordan indirectly conceded sovereignty over Jerusalem to the Israelis, and contented itself with religious supervision over its holy places.

The Washington Declaration paved the way for Jordan to sign a peace treaty with Israel, which was signed in the White House on October 26, 1994 by King Hussein and the then Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in the presence of President Clinton. In the treaty, guidelines were set for the normalization of relations, security arrangements, demarcation of borders and distribution of water. Regarding refugees, it was established in the treaty that the two sides would work to ameliorate their situation and regarding the displaced persons from 1967, it was established in the treaty that the matter will be handled by a “quadrilateral commission”, which includes Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the PLO. The section about Jerusalem, which established Jordanian precedence regarding the Islamic holy places in the city, was copied in its entirety from the Washington Declaration. Hamas expressed its disappointment with Jordan’s signing of a peace treaty with Israel. Its members sharply criticized the agreement and claimed that it was signed hastily, that Israel did not pay Jordan a real price in return for peace and that the issues of land and water were resolved by compromise. This disappointment was manifested in an editorial column published in *Falastin al-Muslima* entitled, “The Editor’s Message” in which it said:

We are unable to countenance the Arab collapse in the face of the Zionist era since the scope of the tragedy is beyond our ability to criticize and bear...The Arab countries have begun to fall like dominoes one after another into the mire of diplomatic relations with the enemy at a time when even the negotiations which we opposed on principle have not reached the objectives which were projected for them.⁴⁸

Hamas did express its disappointment and frustration over the signing of the peace treaty with Jordan and the process of normalization, which the Gulf States underwent in their relations with Israel, however, its activists and authors rationalized the motives which induced Jordan to sign the treaty. Similarly, they were careful not to sharpen their criticism against the governments in those countries in order to avoid violent confrontations with them, which would force the governments in those countries to repress and deport them. In that context, a member of the Hamas Political Office, `Imad al-`Alami, said:

Our policy is based on non-intervention in the internal affairs of any of the countries in which the movement’s activists are located or those in which its offices are located since our struggle is exclusively against our enemy. Furthermore, Hamas enjoys the sympathy and support of many residents in those countries...⁴⁹

Therefore, Hamas decided to adopt a path of passive resistance to normalization in those countries, including the establishment of popular committees to organize publicity campaigns against it.

I. The (Possible) Peace Treaty with Syria

After the PLO signed the Oslo Accords on September 13, 1993, Damascus served as shelter and center of operations for factions opposing the agreement, including Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, who, therefore, refrained from criticizing Syria for conducting peace negotiations with Israel. The sources identified with Hamas, including *al-Zaytuna*, claimed that one of the secret objectives in conducting PLO-Israel negotiations in Oslo was to exert pressure on Syria to sign a peace agreement with Israel.

Al-Zaytuna added that in the wake of the signing of the Oslo agreement, the American administration began to focus on Syria to pressure it to sign a peace agreement with Israel, because Syria really wanted to reach a peace agreement with Israel, however, it had been appalled by the secret manner in which the Oslo agreement between Israel and the Palestinians was signed. The Syrian leadership believed that the Oslo agreement weakened its position in negotiations with Israel as Syria makes any peace agreement contingent on complete withdrawal from the Golan, including dismantling settlements, while Israel demands that the withdrawal take place in stages and that the peace constitute

a total normalization of relations between the sides.⁵⁰ As for the Syrian support of the Palestinian opposition, *al-Zaytuna* remarked that this was a “card” utilized to achieve the best possible conditions in the negotiations with Israel, together with the Lebanon “card”, because together the two cards were adequate in strengthening the Syrian position.⁵¹

A similar claim, that the Oslo Accords were not really a goal in and of themselves, but rather a measure to exert pressure on Syria and weaken it in order to extract concessions from it, was suggested by Badir `Aqili, who wrote:

Syria, and not the PLO, was the objective from the beginning. If we survey the development of circumstances since the Egyptian exit from the conflict with Israel, it seems that the logic of events leads us directly to Syria and to the desire to break its ring...⁵²

`Aqili added: “Despite this, the settlement with the Palestinians was granted priority over a settlement with Syria, due to its insistent demand that Israel withdraw from all of the Golan Heights and dismantle all the settlements.”⁵³

Hamas expressed its satisfaction with the fact that Syria conducted negotiations obstinately. Similarly, it continued to hope that the Syrian-Israeli negotiations would reach a dead end because that would correspond with their policy and aspirations.

In the final months of 1994 and the early months of 1995, the publications identified with Hamas accentuated the difficulties in the negotiations between Israel and Syria, while emphasizing that the rumors about progress were spread by the United States and Israel in an attempt to exert pressure on the Jordanians and Palestinians to expedite their moves and elicit concessions from them.

American Secretary of State Christopher conducted several rounds of shuttle diplomacy between Jerusalem and Damascus, and succeeded in bringing the sides to an agreement of principles regarding mutual security arrangements – an agreement which constituted a breakthrough in the direction of a peace agreement between them. In that context, Majid Ibrahim wrote that the sides agreed on security arrangements to follow the Israeli withdrawal from the Golan, and that the agreement has two primary meanings: 1. An understanding between the sides that Israeli withdrawal from the Golan is a prerequisite for peace with Syria; 2. Syrian agreement to discuss security arrangements separately from the withdrawal process, meaning expectations that Syria will display flexibility in deliberations concerning the Israeli demand that the demilitarized zone on the Syrian side be larger than the demilitarized zone on the Israeli side.⁵⁴ Ibrahim believes that the negotiations between Israel and Syria on security arrangements will be long and exhausting due to the strategic significance of the Golan Heights both in terms of security and in terms of the water sources located therein.⁵⁵

A peace agreement between Israel and Syria – when it will be signed – will have special significance for the Palestinian opposition factions, including Hamas. This results from the fact that Syria has “hosted” the Palestinian rejectionist organizations, including Hamas, in its territory and sponsored them ever since the PLO waived its claim on all of “Palestine” in 1988. A peace agreement between Syria and Israel would certainly include sections according to which Syria will be required to forbid these organizations from launching hostile actions from its territory against Israel. Therefore, it can be anticipated that many of these organizations will accept the Syrian government’s demands and cease their hostile activities against Israel, while others will transfer their headquarters to more extreme countries, such as Libya and Iran.

As for Hamas, it can be expected to stop its hostile activities and treat the agreement as inevitable, especially if Syria achieves all of its objectives in the context of that agreement. Hamas will be forced to admit that the situation in the world and the region left Syria with no alternative. Personalities close to Hamas dealt with this issue, among them Subhi Anabtawi, who believes that “the Islamists will justify the Syrian position if it signs a peace agreement with Israel because all of the countries

surrounding Israel have done so already.”⁵⁶ And he added: “Despite this, most Islamists hope that Syria will not sign a peace agreement with Israel and will view the Palestinian matter as its own.”⁵⁷ At the same time, Jamil Hamami said that the articles of the agreement will determine the Hamas position towards it: “If these articles will be exemplary and Syria will gain all of its rights, he believes that Hamas will not oppose it.”⁵⁸

J. Summary and Assessment

Between 1994 and 1997, many palpable changes transpired in the Hamas position, in two stages. The first stage was after `Arafat's arrival in Gaza and Jericho and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in July 1994. At that point, Hamas agreed to show consideration for the Palestinian Authority and refrain from perpetrating attacks against Israeli targets from territories under Palestinian Authority control. The second stage was subsequent to the heavy blows which Hamas suffered at the hands of the Palestinian Authority and Israel, in the wake of the terrorist attacks in February and March 1996. At that point, profound, fundamental changes in the movement's policy took place. It recognized the rule of the Palestinian Authority, headed by `Arafat, and committed itself to abandon totally the armed struggle and to focus on the political alternative in the context of the Palestinian Authority.

Similarly, at the second stage, the arguments intensified among Hamas activists as to the policy which the movement should adopt. It caused the gap between the “inside” leadership and the “outside” leadership to widen, and then to a conceptual split among the movement's senior activists. At that point, four primary factions began to develop:

1. A faction leaning towards a return to the traditional modus operandi of the “Muslim Brotherhood” which was limited to the spreading of the *da`wa* and to educational and social-philanthropic activities. Among those identifying with this trend are Shaykh Sa`id Bilal and Shaykh Hamid Bitawi of Nablus. Bilal and Bitawi submitted an official proposal to `Arafat in September 1996 to establish a non-partisan group to be called “The Muslim Brotherhood Group in Palestine”. Their goal was to attract Islamists disappointed with Hamas to their group. However, their initiative was greeted with opposition from different directions and has yet to receive `Arafat's approval.
2. A moderate Hamas faction, including Hamas activists in Gaza led by Mahmud al-Zahhar and Shaykh Sayyid Abu Msamih. The members of this faction support the abandonment of the armed struggle, for the time being, and the placement of emphasis on the political struggle. They support recognition of the PLO and the Palestinian Authority and integration into its framework, as well, though not as individuals, but in the context of the movement [Hamas], or of an Islamic party. The members of this faction are working to toughen the Palestinian Authority's position in the negotiations with Israel in order to elicit the utmost from Israel.
3. A Hamas faction whose moderation is more limited. The members of this faction include activists from Judea and Samaria. They are joined by activists from the “outside” leadership, including Musa Abu Marzuq and Khalid Mash`al. These members also support suspending the military alternative for the time being and focusing on the political struggle. They are willing to advise the Palestinian Authority without joining it, just in order to toughen its position. Similarly, they continued vigorously to oppose the Oslo Agreement.
4. The fourth faction is the one which continues to adhere to the rigid ideology of Hamas and its militant ideas. The faction includes some of the members of the “outside” leadership who adopted the Iranian line, and, therefore, are referred to as the “pro-Iranian faction”. They

continue to call for the perpetration of terrorist attacks. This faction includes Mustafa Hamdan (Hamas representative in Syria) and Mustafa al-Laddawi (Hamas representative in Lebanon).

The idea to establish an Islamist party which would represent the political aspect of the Hamas movement and would function officially in the political arena of the autonomy was first raised in deliberations conducted by the Hamas leadership after the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in July 1994. Their objective was to have the party serve as the political arm of the movement, with the movement remaining a movement struggling to liberate all of Palestine, while the party would limit itself to legal, official parliamentary activities. In November 1995, the groundwork was laid for the establishment of the party, after part of the “outside” leadership became convinced of the need for its establishment. As a result, Hamas activists “inside”, among them Shaykh Ahmad Bahir and Shaykh Ahmad al-Sa`ati were convened as a *shura* council and decided to form a political Islamic party named “The Islamic National Salvation Party”. This party was approved by `Arafat on November 18, 1995.⁵⁹

`Arafat supported the formation of the party in concert with his policy of “divide and conquer” and the facilitation of erosion and division within the Islamic movement. However, after the terrorist attacks perpetrated by Hamas in February and March 1996, the Palestinian Authority security apparatus arrested the party activists together with the Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists, and it was banned. On March 21, 1996, the party was re-established and received `Arafat’s approval, after its new leader, Dr. Fuad al-Nahhal, emphasized that it recognizes the Palestinian Authority and plans to function within its framework as political opposition and would renounce the *jihad* alternative.

The Salvation Party held elections for its institutions in November 1996, in which a General Council, a *shura* council and a political office were elected. Shaykh Ahmad Bahir was elected as chairman of the *shura* council and Yahya Musa was elected as party secretary-general. Upon his election, Musa declared that he will focus on the political side and is in the same camp as the Palestinian Authority in the struggle against Israeli intransigence.

The far-reaching changes which transpired in the Islamic movement (Hamas and its subsidiary party, “Salvation”) are well reflected in the Salvation Party publications – the *al-Wa`d* and *al-Ribat* periodicals, which published articles, lectures and interviews conducted with Islamist personalities who had moderated. A few examples follow:

1. In a lecture in the Cultural Society in Rafiah on August 30, 1996,⁶⁰ Sayyid Abu Msamih [senior Hamas activist] said:

The Islamic program must work according to the reality in which the Islamic movement exists...There are many points common to the Islamic movement and the Palestinian Authority. The movement must work towards the unification of the Palestinian people around the central objective which is the removal of the enemy from our land and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state...The principle “Islam is the solution” must be abandoned at this point and focus must be placed on the problems of society...⁶¹

2. In an interview, which he granted to the *al-Ribat* periodical,⁶² Shaykh Yusuf Farahat [a member of the political office of the “Salvation Party”, a former Hamas activist in Gaza] commented that,

Of course his party believes that all of “Palestine” belongs to the Palestinians, however, it congratulates the establishment of a national authority representing the seeds of a state and sovereignty over every inch of Palestinian land from which the Zionist occupation will withdraw, because it functions within the framework of the Palestinian Authority and supports the strengthening of democracy, political freedom and the state of its institutions...⁶³

From Abu Msamih's and Farahat's remarks it is clear that one of the significant changes which transpired in the Palestinian Islamic movement is its desire to live in peace with the Palestinian Authority and to work within its framework and "under its umbrella".

In addition to the "Salvation Party", six other Islamic parties were formed subsequent to `Arafat's arrival in Gaza and with his blessing. However, most of them, at this point, are still ephemeral.

The changes undergone by most of the leading activists in Hamas in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip seem irreversible. These activists feel that Hamas did the "dirty work" for the Palestinian cause, while the PLO organizations, whose people returned from Tunis, joining those already in the autonomous territories, were rewarded with jobs and benefits. The policy of erosion and the bear-hug in which `Arafat enveloped Hamas, were extremely successful. Hamas activists and supporters changed their ways. Some joined the Palestinian Authority and even received positions in its employ, while others decided to act as spectators and observe developments. After the terrorist attacks of February and March 1996, and the blows administered to the Hamas institutions by the Palestinian Authority and Israel, the sense that Hamas had been eliminated permeated various political circles. These circles based that feeling on the fact that Hamas had suspended its terrorist attacks. Within the movement, discord and factions developed, and the Palestinian Authority successfully, to a certain degree, damaged its military arm. However, an analysis of the organizational capability of Hamas shows that its strength and condition should not be assessed merely by the number of terrorist attacks which it perpetrates but also by its standing relative to that of the Palestinian Authority, and in its performance and accomplishments in other areas (social, cultural, etc.).

There are no indications that the various political powers, which developed within Hamas, are, at this point, moving towards a schism, but rather towards internal power struggles. In addition, all the Islamic parties, which developed in recent years, have focused on the political alternative, and function within the Palestinian Authority and have attempted to elicit from it financial support and funding for their activities, but most have not abandoned their deep-rooted ideology, which claims that all of Palestine is Islamic or Palestinian property. Those parties are still ephemeral. It is possible that in the long-run one will stand out and become a large party. However, in the short-run, it can be expected that Hamas will remain the largest Islamic movement in the autonomous territories.

The central faction, which constitutes the majority of the movement, adopted a new line – a policy of compromise, of integration into a new reality. Despite this, activists in this trend continue to criticize the Palestinian Authority while utilizing and accentuating the daily suffering of the Palestinian public, and the issues which concern them, such as corruption and violations of human rights.

In fact, the position adopted by the central faction is a bridge between the traditional rigid ideology of liberating all of Palestine through *jihad*, and the existing reality which is the Palestinian Authority. The "golden mean", according to the Hamas understanding, is the acceptance of the principle of gradual implementation of the Islamic solution to the Palestinian problem, which means, for all intents and purposes, agreeing to the PLO's 1974 "step-by-step process". Therefore, the members of this faction believe that it is desirable that the Islamic movement, at this point, accompany the Palestinian Authority on the basis of common denominators on major issues left for the final settlement, in order to strengthen it and enable it to achieve better results in the negotiations concerning that settlement, and to leave the liberation of the remaining sections of "Palestine" for future generations, when conditions will be more advantageous.

Meanwhile, this policy of "walking together" is paying dividends – both for the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. If the final settlement negotiations conclude in compromise and success, then the primary disagreement between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas will center on the form of government. The chances that this disagreement would lead to a violent confrontation between them over this issue are insignificant, because the leaders of Hamas have learned their lesson from the plight of the Islamic

movements in most Arab and Islamic states in which they attempted to overthrow the governments by force. Besides, `Arafat – who was a member of the “Muslim Brotherhood” at the beginning of his career – is not a sworn enemy of the Islamic movement. According to his system, and as long as they do not endanger his government, he is not expected to bring about a confrontation of this sort with the Islamic movement, but rather to continue with the “carrot and stick” strategy and the gradual “erosion” of the movement. Therefore, Hamas will apparently adopt a policy comparable to the one adopted by the Islamic movement in Jordan, namely, functioning as parliamentary opposition within the framework of the law, and striving to increase its power and influence in order to achieve a majority and, in that way, gain control of the government.

CONCLUSION

During the year 2000, the then American President Clinton sponsored the Camp David negotiations between Israeli Prime Minister Barak and `Arafat to help reach a settlement in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. But `Arafat hardened his position and the negotiations failed. Hamas activists exploited this situation and claimed that their estimation whereby the Palestinian’s aspirations can be achieved only through *jihad* against Israel has been proven.

Shortly thereafter, in October 2000, a renewed *intifadha*, inspired by `Arafat and the Palestinian Authority broke out. During this time a rapprochement between `Arafat and the Palestinian opposition organizations was achieved, including with Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. Together, they created the “National and Islamic Committees” and collaborated in renewing the terrorist attacks against Israeli targets. In addition, `Arafat gradually released all Hamas and Islamic Jihad prisoners from Palestinian prisons.

Despite this, most Palestinian terrorist attacks in this current *intifadha* were done by the Tandhim of Fateh – `Arafat’s organization, which took from Hamas the “card” of the *jihad*. This explains why Hamas did not gain any profit or strength from this *intifadha*. Additionally, it did not succeed in imposing on `Arafat to completely abandon the “Peace Process”. Meanwhile, `Arafat has continued to “devour” Hamas by attracting to his side the Hamas’ supporters, while Hamas’ chances of establishing an Islamic state in the Palestinian Authority area continue to diminish.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Interview with Shaykh Jamil Hamami, Hamas activist in YESH`A (Acronym for Judea, Samaria and Gaza), December 1, 1994.
- 2 Hasan al-Banna was the “primary mentor” of the “Muslim Brotherhood” in Egypt. He was quoted in the pamphlet: *Hamas – Tnu`at Hahitnagdut Haislamit ve-Ha`amana* (“Hamas –The Islamic Resistance Movement and the Covenant”), Hayyim Opaz, editor, p. 6.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Hasan Manar, “On Fundamentalism in Our Land”, *News From Within*, vol. viii, no. 10-11 (October-November 1922): 24, quoted in Hisham H. Ahmad, *Hamas – From Religious Salvation to Political Transformation: The Rise of Hamas in Palestinian Society*, Jerusalem: PASSIA – Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, 1994, p. 54.
- 5 A resolution fixed in the Islamic *shari`a* law, applying to all countries conquered by Muslims. Anything inconsistent with *shari`a* concerning Palestine is null and void.
- 6 “Al-Sarab: Al-Mawqif al-Islami al-Khalid Min al-Salam al-Maz`um” (Fata Morgana: The Eternal Islamic Attitude towards the Virtual Peace) *Dirasat Fi al-Wa`i al-Siyasi*, 3 (*Studies in Political Consciousness*, 3), n.p.:n.publ., January 1992, pp. 8-9.
- 7 Ibid., p. 10.

- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid., pp. 10-11.
- 10 Ibid., p. 12.
- 11 Hisham Ahmad, *Hamas – From Religious Salvation to Political Transformation*, p. 77.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Majid Ibrahim: “Qarar Munadhamat al-Tahrir Bita`liq al-Musharaka Fi al-Mufawadhat – Khutwa Taktikiyya Am Tawajuh Haqiqi?” (“The PLO Decision to Suspend its Participation in the Negotiations – Was it a Tactical Step or a True Change of Direction?”), *Falastin al-Muslima*, January 1993, pp. 20-21.
- 14 Ibid., p. 21.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Khalid al-Hurub: Islamic author, supporter of Hamas, published numerous articles in **Falastin al-Muslima** and wrote several books.
- 17 See Khalid al-Hurub, *al-Islamiyyun Fi Falastin: Qira`at, Mawaqif wa-Qadhaya Ukhra*, `Amman: Dar al-Nashr, 1994, pp. 58, 125-129; Ibid., his article: “Almub`adun wa-Hamas wa-Munadhamat al-Tahrir”, *Falastin al-Muslima*, March 1993, pp. 22-23.
- 18 *Al-Zaytuna*, 55, August 20, 1993, p. 11.
- 19 Ibid. 57, September 17, 1993, p. 6.
- 20 Ibrahim, “Mufawadhat al-Taswiya Hal Wasalat Ila Nuqtat alla `Awda?” (“Settlement Talks: Have They Reached the Point of No Return?”), *Falastin al-Muslima*, July 1993, p. 12.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid, p. 13.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 `Abd al-Sattar Qasim, *Limadha Narfidh Ittifaq Ghazza/Ariha wa-ma Huwa al-Badil? (Why We Reject the Gaza/Jericho Agreement and What is the Alternative?)*, n.p.: n. publ., November 1993, pp. 18-21.
- 25 Ibrahim al-Maqadma, *Ittifaq Ghazza/Ariha Ru`ya Islamiyya (The Gaza/Jericho Agreement from an Islamic Perspective)*, no publ., 1994, pp. 75-133.
- 26 *Ittifaq Ghazza/Ariha Ab`ad wa-Nata`ij* (n.p.:n.publ., 1994), pp. 12-13.
- 27 *Al-Zaytuna*, 65, March 4, 1994, p. 2.
- 28 The Manifesto was published in *Falastin al-Muslima*, April 1994, pp. 25-26.
- 29 Kalimat Na`ib Ra`is Rabitat, “‘Ulamaa` Falastin Hawla Jarimat al-Haram al-Ibrahimi” (“Saying of the Deputy Chairman of the Association of Palestinian Ulema Concerning the Crime at the Tomb of the Patriarchs”), *Falastin al-Muslima*, April 1994, p. 33.
- 30 *Al-Bayan*, March 4, 1994, p. 3.
- 31 *Al-Zaytuna*, 67, April 7, 1994, p. 13.
- 32 The Manifesto was published in *Falastin al-Muslima*, May 1994, pp. 9-10.
- 33 A leaflet distributed in Ramallah on March 10, 1996 in which the sermon was quoted.
- 34 *Shuhada` Ma` Sabq al-Israr – `An Hayat al-Shahid `Isam `Aziz Barahma (Shahids with Determination – About the Life of the Shahid `Isam `Aziz Barahma)*, n.p.: al-Jama`a al-Islamiyya – Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami Fi Falastin, 1983, p. 47.
- 35 *Falastin al-Muslima*, May 1994, p. 10.
- 36 *Al-Sabil*, 24, April 11, 1994, p. 8.
- 37 *Al-Bayan*, 14, July 1, 1994, pp. 1, 7.
- 38 Al-Hurub, *Al-Islamiyyun Fi Falastin*, 38; *Al-Zaytuna*, 70, May 19, 1994, p. 2.
- 39 Ibid., pp. 38-39.
- 40 Ibid., p. 40.
- 41 Ibid., p. 41.

- ⁴² Muhammad `Abidin, “Intiqal `Arafat Ila Manatiq al-Hukum al-Dhati wa-Mufawadhat al-qahira” (“`Arafat Transfer to the Autonomy Regions and the Cairo Negotiations”), *Al-Bayan*, 17, July 22, 1994, p. 4.
- ⁴³ `Abd al-Fattah al-`Awisi, “`Awdat Sa`adat al-Ra`is wa-Lakin ka-Wirk `Ala Dil” (“His Highness the President Has Returned but With Empty Hands”), *Falastin al-Muslima*, August 1994, p. 11.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ⁴⁵ *Al-Istiqlal*, October 21, 1994, p. 5.
- ⁴⁶ `Awisi, “Al-`Asa wal-Jazra Fi Idarat Shu`un Mantiqat al-Hukm al-Dhati” (“The Stick and the Carrot in Conducting the Matters of the Protectorate”), *Falastin al-Muslima*, September 1994, p. 19-21.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, February 1996, p. 30.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, November 1994, p. 6.
- ⁴⁹ Interview held with `Imad al-`Alami by *Falastin al-Muslima* correspondent – Yasir al-Za`atra. Published in *Falastin al-Muslima*, December 1994, p. 23.
- ⁵⁰ *Al-Zaytuna*, 61, December 31, 1993, p. 14.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵² Badir `Aqili, “Surya Hiya Hadaf Ittifaqiyat Oslo” (“Syria is the Target of the Oslo Accords”), *Al-Sabil*, 15, January 31, 1994, p. 8.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁴ Ibrahim, “Hal Haqan Asbahat Altariq Mumahada Littifaqat Salam Suriyya/ Sahyuniyya?” (“Has the Groundwork Really Been Laid for Syrian/Zionist Peace Agreements?”), *Falastin al-Muslima*, July 1995, pp. 9-10.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- ⁵⁶ An interview, which I conducted with him, December 12, 1994.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁸ An interview, which I conducted with him, December 1, 1994.
- ⁵⁹ *Al-Quds*, (November 20, 1996), p. 3; *Al-Nahar*, November 20, 1996, p. 5.
- ⁶⁰ The lecture was published in *al-Wa`d*, 3, September 1996, pp. 17-18.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- ⁶² The interview was published in *al-Ribat*, 3, November 1996, pp. 4-5.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.