

The London School of Economics  
and Political Science

## **The Making of an Insurgent Group**

**A Case Study of Hamas, Vox Populi and Violent Resistance**



The photograph: Gaza City on the 25-year anniversary of Hamas (REUTERS/Suhaib Salem)

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Government for the degree of Doctor of  
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*In this and like communities, public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed.*

- Abraham Lincoln

*A certain center of gravity develops, the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends. That is the point against which all our energies should be directed.*

- Clausewitz

## **Declaration**

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

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## **Statement of conjoint work**

Each of these persons helped me produce the following for this thesis:  
Sean Smith helped produce graphic representations of the Hamas Resistance Model.  
Dr. Rumen Illiev helped conduct advanced statistical analysis and printed time series charts.  
Jacqueline Lacy helped assemble the Hamas Policy Statement dataset.  
Shira Petrack translated several Hebrew publications into English.  
Stephanie Dornschnneider translated a couple of Arabic documents used in this thesis.

## **Statement of use of third party for editorial help**

I can confirm that my thesis was copy edited for conventions of language, spelling and grammar by Rachel Murray.

## **Abstract**

*The critical gap in scholarship on power-seeking insurgent groups is to understand whether those groups adapt violent expression as a function of popular support. If such a relationship does exist, how does it work and under what conditions do violent acts increase or decrease? To understand these questions, one must understand that the ideals that make up power-seeking insurgent groups are malleable, requiring stratagem and guile in the face of internal and external violent and non-violent influence. To sustain the capacity to project violence, a power-seeking insurgent group must maintain the support of a significant portion of its host population. Without the populace's tolerance or acceptance of violence, this agenda would not be supported over time. This reality creates a dynamic between the insurgent group and its host population, which is bi-directional, and creates profound implications for the nature of violent expression and is largely based upon environmental conditions. This research delves into these questions about insurgent groups by developing a case study on the power-seeking insurgent group Hamas and its host population, the Palestinian people. The empirical examination begins with the group's formation in 1987 (and refers to foundations much earlier) and ends with the events of June 2014. During this period, the group, like other insurgent groups, has been suspended between its quest to achieve the values of its ardent supporters and the desire to grow popular support. By slightly modifying Max Weber's theoretical premise that political groups must balance values with responsibilities, we can better understand how Hamas has managed the tension between supporters who demand continued violence against Israel and those that do not. With newly assembled datasets constructed by the author on Hamas's violent acts and public statements, Israeli Targeted Killings, historical measures of popular support and extensive field interviews, the thesis offers a unique theoretical perspective on the nature of insurgent group violence by demonstrating under what conditions the group exercises violent resistance or refrains from doing so. For example, the research shows that Hamas violence against Israel follows Palestinians' support for violence, countering the commonly held idea that Hamas acts as a vanguard of the Palestinian people. It also shows that the nature and method of Hamas violence against Israel changed once it had territorial control of Gaza. Finally, the methodological approach used in this case study can serve as a model to better understand the origins and dynamics of power-seeking insurgent groups elsewhere.*



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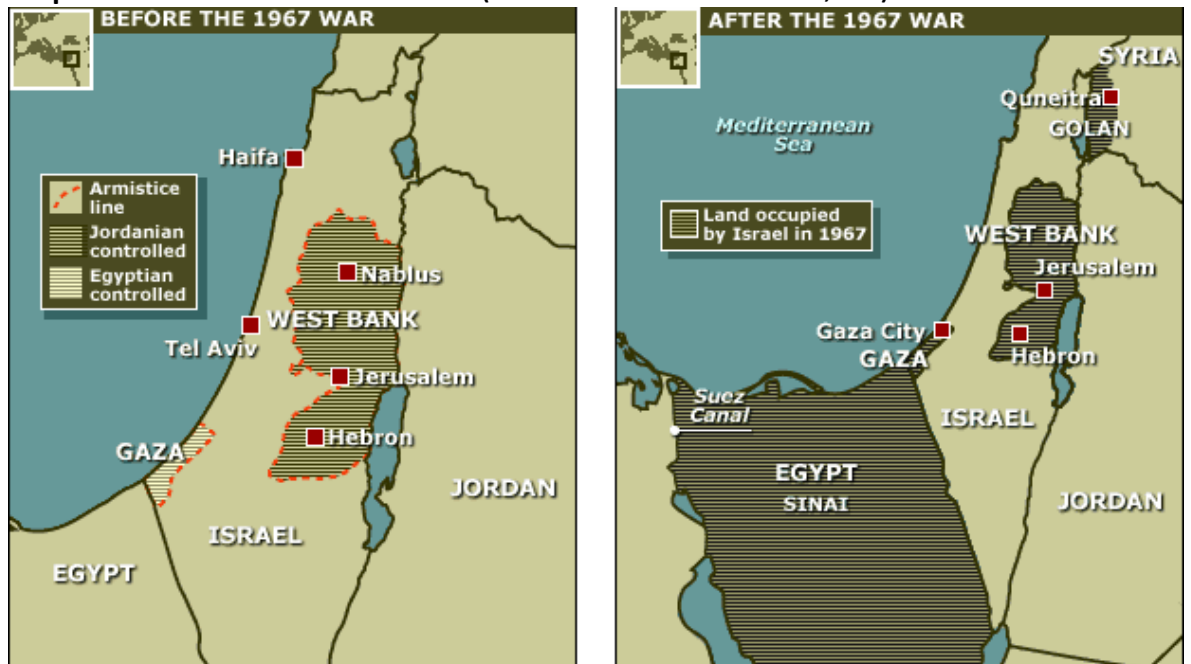
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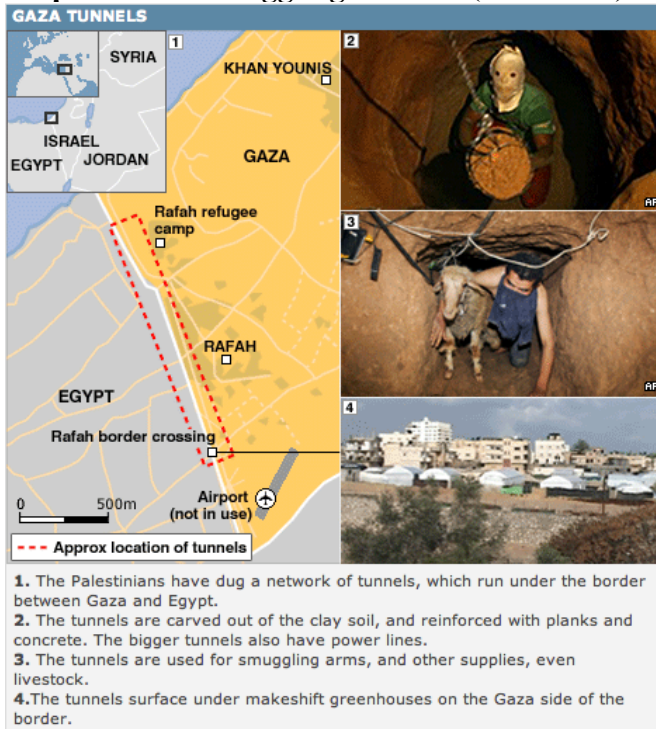
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**Map 2 - Gaza Smuggling Tunnels (Fraser 2009)**



**Map 3 - Gaza Strip (BBC Gaza Strip 6 January 2009)**



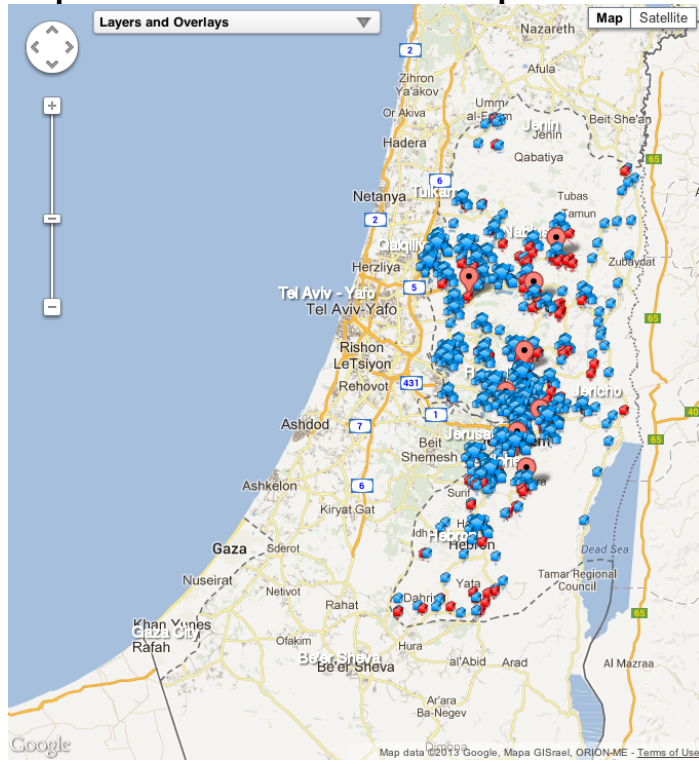




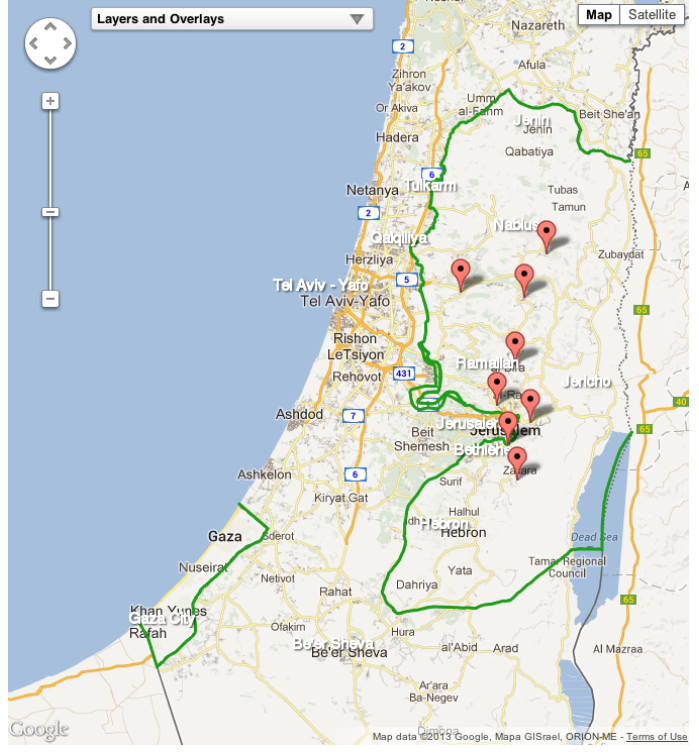
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**Map 7 - Map of Green Line (Peace Now Maps 2013)**





Map 8 - Sinai Peninsula (Google Mapmaker 2013)



Map 9 - West Bank (Univ. of Texas Library Maps 2012)



## Terminology Used in Thesis

**1967 Borders** – The borders established between Israel and the Palestinian Territories after the Six Day War. It is often used as a term related to a two-state solution.

**Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade** – Mostly known as the military wing of Fatah, but associated with a number of different Palestinian armed groups in the West Bank.

**Al Qassam Martyrs' Brigade** – The military wing of Hamas.

**Al Quds Brigades** – The military wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

**Dawa** – The social service programme of Hamas, which includes an Islamic education and training.

**Differentiated Data** – The statistical analyses performed in this study use, mostly, differentiated data. That is data that is differenced when looking for meaningful statistical relationships. For example, if  $a=5$  and  $b=9$ , the difference is found through  $b-a$  or  $9-5$ , which equals 4. Using differentiated data removes linear trends, which may be found in the data, though at times, those trends may be important to the underlying relationship. When undifferentiated data is used, it is clearly identified as such and discussion ensues to provide the reader an understanding of why it is used.

**Fatah** – A major secular political party in Palestine founded by Yasser Arafat. In Arabic, the name originates from *harakat al-tahrir al-watani al-filastini* and means Palestine National Liberation Movement. Fatah is derived from using the reverse acronym and means 'conquering' or 'victory'. The term originates from early Islamic religious activity. Armed groups associated with Fatah include al-Assifa, Force 17, Black September, Fatah Hawks, Tanzim and Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade.

**Force 17** – An armed wing of Fatah.

**Gaza Strip** – Officially recognised as part of the State of Palestine. Gaza is 139 square miles bordered to the west by the Mediterranean Sea, Israel to the north and east and Egypt to the south. It is currently governed by Hamas, but claimed as part of the Palestinian Authority governed from Ramallah. As of 2013, there are approximately 1.7million residents in Gaza.

**Green Line** – A line established on an internationally recognised Middle Eastern map during the 1949 Armistice between Israel, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. The term is often used when discussing a peace settlement between Israel and Palestine and to identify the location of where violent acts occurred (e.g. inside the Green Line).

**Hamas** – A major Islamic political party founded by Sheikh Yassin and other members of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in December 1987. In Arabic, the name originates from Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah and means 'Islamic Resistance Movement'. Its acronym is Hamas, meaning 'enthusiasm'.

**Hamas Campaign Era** – January 2005 to May 2007. The dates correspond with the time in which Hamas ran a national campaign and then tried to assure its constituencies that it was up to the governance task. The era ends when Hamas defeated Fatah in a brief civil war in Gaza, ushering in the Governance Era.



**Hamas Charter**  - Also known as the ‘covenant’, was established in 1988 and spells out the responsibilities of the group, including that of ‘violent resistance’ against Israel.

**Hamas Governance Era**  – June 2007 to Present. During this period Hamas has taken responsibility for the people of Gaza.

**Hamas Formation Era**  – December 1987 to October 1994. Hamas was establishing its identity and consolidating support during this period.

**Hamas Oslo Era**  – November 1994 to August 2000. The group was intent on destroying the Oslo Accord Peace Process between the PLO and Israel.

**Hamas Political Era**  – January 2005 to Present. The dates after Hamas entered national politics.

**Hamas Pre-Political Era**  – December 1987 to December 2004. The dates before Hamas entered national politics.

**Hamas Support**  – This metric comes from PSR survey work. A question asking about political affiliation has been asked on all surveys since 1994. PSR has accurately understood the level of  *Hamas Support*  in all elections, local and national, including the 2006 Parliamentary Elections when Hamas upset Fatah. The surprise did not come from an inaccurate Hamas and Fatah support number published by PSR, but from a projection of the district level winners by political prognosticators suggesting that Fatah would win seats in specific districts where Fatah had more than one candidate competing against only one from Hamas.

**In-Groups**  – Represents groups allied or predisposed to being friendly with Hamas.

**Intifada**  – An Arabic word that is typically understood to mean ‘uprising’, ‘resistance’ or ‘rebellion’.

**Martyrdom Bombings**  – A term typically used by Islamists to describe one who dies in the act of bombing an enemy by wearing or driving the device to its intended target and voluntarily detonating it.

**Muslim Brotherhood**  – An Islamic political and social organisation that was founded by Al-Banna in 1928 in Egypt to compete with Socialist and Communist political influence in the Islamic world. The Muslim Brotherhood has chapters established in many Arab countries and recently rose to political leadership in Egypt through democratic elections only to be deposed in July 2013 by the Egyptian Military. Members of the MB in Palestine were the founders of Hamas in 1987. The Hamas Charter pays special homage to the Muslim Brotherhood.

**Occupation**  - The term refers to Israeli military forces occupying the West Bank and previously Gaza. It is also used by Hamas to describe the existence of Israel in Palestine, described by Hamas as the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

**Optimism**  – Is used in this study to define how optimistic Palestinians are about the future. The factor is derived from surveys by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR). Generally, the Optimism referred to by this metric is represented by Palestinians that

are optimistic about the future of a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders with the reduction of violence. There are Palestinians who become more optimistic with the idea of a Palestinian state without Israel. This is discussed more thoroughly in the paper.

**Out-Groups** – Represents groups opposing or predisposed to be in conflict with Hamas.

**Palestinian Authority (PA)** – Established in 1994 through the Oslo Accords as the interim governing body of the West Bank and Gaza. Today, it claims authority over all Palestinian Territories. Mahmoud Abbas is the current President of the PA.

**Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)** – A Palestinian armed group established after the 1979 Iranian Revolution, founded by Fathi Shaqaqi and Abd al-Aziz Awda, former Muslim Brotherhood members who wanted to establish an armed group to fight for the sovereignty of Palestine. The group is primarily funded by Iran.

**Palestinian Legislative Council** – The council is the legislature of the Palestinian Authority comprised of 132 members, half being elected from 16 electoral districts in the West Bank and Gaza. The last election took place in 2006. The conflict between Hamas and Fatah in 2007 resulted in Fatah indefinitely postponing elections. The council has not met or governed since 2007 because a quorum has been impossible due to the imprisonment of many of its members by Israel.

**Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)** - Established by the Arab States in 1964 for the purpose of creating an independent Palestinian State. It was involved in armed struggle with Israel until sometime prior to 1991. In 1993, the PLO recognised Israel's right to exist.

**Prolific Violent Attacks by Hamas** – The top ten attacks perpetrated by Hamas determined by the most number of casualties.

**PSR** – Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research.

**Quartet** – Referred to in respect to the Palestinian/Israeli Roadmap for Peace. Its members include the European Union, Russia, the United Nations and the United States.

**Regression (individual and multiple)** - Regression analysis is a statistical measure to estimate the strength of the relationship between two or more variables for the purpose of forecasting or predicting events in the future. Regression between two variables shows the strength of that relationship, but multiple regression can show how much of a group of independent variables can predict a dependent variable. In this study multiple regressions were run both at time series zero and with time series lags.

**Resistance** – Most often referred to as ‘violent resistance’ by Hamas leadership. It is the identity of Hamas – to violently resist Israel whom it believes to be an occupying force in Palestine. The thesis further defines the manifestation of Hamas resistance as malleable, requiring stratagem and guile in the face of internal and external violent and non-violent influence.

**Right of Return** – Represents the right to Palestinians to return to land lost to their families in 1949. The theoretical right of return suggests that the right be maintained, but not acted upon.

**Sacred Values** – A value for an individual, group or population that is non-negotiable or impervious to material trade offs. For example, mothers would consider their children as a sacred value, something they would not sell or trade, no matter the deal.

**Safety of Family** – This terminology represents a value that comes from polling data. The Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) has been asking how Palestinian families view their safety since 2005. That metric is used widely in this study.

**Second Intifada** – September 2000 to December 2004. During this time the group led a significant violent campaign against Israel.

**Statelet** – This is a term used to describe the Gaza Strip. Gaza is not formally a state, but it has state like qualities with defined boundaries and a unique governing structure.

**Suicide Bombings** – A term used by many non-Islamists to describe one who dies in the act of bombing an enemy by wearing or driving the device to its intended target and voluntarily detonating it.

**Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders** – This measure comes from surveys conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR). The questions ask about the *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*. The question has been asked of Palestinians in different ways over the past 20 years. Only similar questions have been used for this study.

**Support for Violence** – PSR has asked survey questions since 1994 about Palestinians support for Violence against Israeli targets. The question materially changed from ‘Support for Violence against Israeli targets’ to ‘Support for Violence against Israeli civilians’. This change was the single most important factor in leading the author to use differenced statistical measures for data analyses.

**Tanzim** – An armed wing of Fatah.

**Terrorism** – ‘Premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents’ (US Dept. of State 2014:2).

**Time Periods** – This study has organised data into 59 time periods so that statistical measuring would be possible. Those time periods coincide with the publishing of 59 polls by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) (not all polls could be used for various reasons). Thousands of other data points have been collected, but for sake of analysis, only these 59 time periods made the cut because all data points were represented.

**Time Series Analysis (auto-correlation)** – A statistical measure to estimate the predictive or forecasting strength of one or more independent variables on a dependent value at a time lag of greater or less than zero. For this research, the time lag +1 is typically 3 months later, while the time lag -1 is 3 months prior. Auto-correlation is a measure testing the predictive power of itself at different time lags. For example, the change in *Support for Violence* predicts fairly accurately what the *Support for Violence* will be at time lag +1.

**Values Surrogate** – In 20 years of polling, PSR has conducted over 110 surveys, asking over 8,000 questions of the Palestinian people. Many of these questions are related to Palestinian values, like recognition, resistance, support for a two state solution and others. After months of review, it became clear that there was a relationship between some of these

values, *Support for Violence* against Israeli targets and Hamas violent acts. Therefore, I worked diligently to see which value had the strongest relationship with *Support for Violence* and *Violence Frequency*. That measure was '*Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*' (described in Chapter 4). Therefore, I have used this metric as a surrogate to represent values in statistical analyses and to build the Dynamic Model of Hamas Resistance.

**Violence Dataset** – A dataset developed from open sources on the violent acts of Palestinian groups on Israeli civilians. The data also includes Israeli data on their *Targeted Killings* of Hamas leaders.

**Violent Attack Frequency** – This metric was developed by creating a ratio between the total number of Hamas attacks between time period 1, 2, 3, etc., and the total number of days between those time periods. For example, if there were 20 attacks during a 100-day period the formula would be  $20/100 = .20$ . *Violent Attack Frequency* is demonstrated either as ground attacks (before the use of missiles and mortars) or as all attacks.

**Violent Attack Density** – This metric was developed by creating a ratio between the total number of casualties from Hamas attacks and the total number of days between time periods. For example, if there were 150 casualties and 100 days the formula would be  $150/100 = 1.5$ .

**Waqf** – This means the Palestinian historic trust land, which extends from the Jordan River to Mediterranean Sea.

**West Bank** – Officially recognised as part of the State of Palestine. The West Bank is 2,173 square miles just to the west of the Jordan River bordered on the North, West and South by Israel and to the East with the Kingdom of Jordan, though the Israelis have created a zone between Jordan and the West Bank. The Palestinian Authority governs the West Bank from Ramallah. There are approximately 2.1million Palestinians and 500,000 Israeli Settlers living in the West Bank. Major cities include Jerusalem, Hebron, Nablus and Ramallah.

# PROLOGUE

## illuminating the Research Question

On the morning of 4 February 2008 Mohammed Herbawi and a fellow soccer teammate set off on a suicide-bombing mission departing from the West Bank to the Israeli city of Dimona, the home of Israel’s nuclear facility. By 10am, Herbawi and friend made it to a shopping mall in Dimona, inside the Green Line, where one of them was able to detonate his vest killing 73-year-old Lyubov Razdolskaya and wounding 40 others. Both young men died in the operation. Herbawi, age 20, was from the University Neighborhood in Hebron, the largest city in the West Bank with a population of 165,000, located south of Jerusalem. The two teammates were following in the footsteps of ten others who in 2003 perpetrated either suicide-bombings or armed attacks where death was nearly certain. All played for the Al-Jihad Mosque soccer team and all were loyal to Hamas.

Figure 1. Hamas Poster of Herbawi and Zgyaer (Hamas 2008)



Early in the morning on 6 February, two days later, I entered Hebron on my way to visit the Herbawi home and meet with his family. As we traversed the city toward the University Neighborhood, I noticed that the main thoroughfares were adorned with posters. Upon inquiry, my driver explained that they were Hamas posters honouring the actions of Herbawi and Zgyaer (his teammate and accomplice). As we arrived at our destination, the home of Herbawi, several people had gathered outside the second story apartment, presumably

to show support for Herbawi’s actions and family. On each wall adjacent to the

entrance of the home, posters similar to the others papering the city were prominently displayed. Once we exited the vehicle, we were quickly ushered up the stairs and into the family room of a modest three-bedroom home where Herbawi's mother, younger brother, Ahmed and a family friend greeted us. Despite the circumstances, we were offered tea and fruit and provided with other comforts in the usual Arab custom for invited guests. We spent nearly two hours talking with the family. During the conversation, the mother expressed anger and stated several times that had she known of her son's intentions, she would have 'stopped him from this destiny'. Each time she followed that statement with another, 'he is a hero'. Herbawi's family and friends were outwardly grief stricken, but all articulated great satisfaction that he had become a 'martyr' and that ' Hamas was fighting the occupiers' (Mrs. Herbawi, pers.comm., 8 Feb 2008). At the end of our visit, Ahmed offered me, with pride, a Hamas poster of his brother (Figure 1).

I spent the rest of the day in the University Neighborhood with the Imam of the Al-Jihad Mosque and other families who lost their sons in the 2003 suicide bombings or attacks. During the day, it became evident that Hamas was endeared everywhere I went. This loyalty and support was clearly demonstrated by Fawzi al-Qwasmeh, the father of Hazem, a Hamas operative who was killed in a shooting attack on Kiryat Arba settlement in March 2003. Fawzi expressed anger over his son's actions and declared that his son 'ruined the family's future', claiming that he lost his mechanic's bus garage in Jerusalem and that the Israelis destroyed their \$200,000 home in response (an expensive home by Palestinian standards).<sup>1</sup> He contrasted this anger with expressed pride in his son as a 'hero' and 'martyr'. Though Fawzi and family experienced significant loss and hardship, he outwardly expressed support for Hamas as 'fighting for the Palestinians against the occupiers' (Mr. Fawzi, pers.comm., 8 Feb 2008).

Contrast this grassroots support for Hamas with the following scene, which occurred 21 years prior. On 7 December 1987, a quadriplegic sheikh invited six guests to his home in Gaza with the intent of beginning a Palestinian resistance group that would espouse Islam as a central tenet of the resistance. Although the name was not selected for a few

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The Israeli use of housing destruction of activists was learnt from Regulation 119 in the 1945 Emergency Defense Regulation during the British Mandate period where military commanders were given great latitude in the destruction of activist opposition forces.



weeks, Hamas was effectively launched at the meeting with only seven members. Birthed from members of the Muslim Brotherhood of Gaza, Hamas was a fringe militant group that at best represented the ideas of only a small minority of the Palestinian population during a time in which the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) had convinced a large majority of the Palestinian population that a secular resistance movement, led by Fatah, was in the best interest of the people. Further, Hamas was in direct competition with another Islamic militant group started years earlier, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), for the Islamic resistance support of the Palestinian people. Yet, over the course of time, Hamas developed a growing support base that allowed it to win local elections in 2004, a national election in 2006 and endear a large segment of the population to its Islamic resistance ideology, including the unwavering support of a grief stricken mother and father from Hebron who lost their children to Hamas militancy in the name of fighting the occupier. The dichotomy in the mother's anger of her son's final symbolic act and her unshakable support of Hamas is representative of many and is a testimony to the power and efficacy of Hamas's 21-year engagement with the Palestinian people.

The contrasts in these two ethnographic illustrations demonstrate a remarkable change over the course of two and one half decades. Through engagement with the Palestinian population, Hamas was able to evolve from a small group to contend for and win national leadership even though a majority of the population is more moderate than the group (PSR polls, 1993-2013).<sup>2</sup> During this evolution, the group experienced the assassination of many of its leaders, was forced to operate the movement underground, survived though traitors were in its midst, built an arsenal from a rifle to sophisticated mid-range missiles, rocket propelled grenades, cyber-attacks and TV station spoofing, fought two external wars and one civil war, developed international relations for financial sustainability and learnt when its ability to project violent resistance was being threatened by violent acts of other Palestinian groups. It did all this all this while having to adapt its language and values and use violent force to win and maintain support from the Palestinian people so that it could maintain its legitimacy as a violent resistance organisation.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: The Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR), led by Dr. Khalil Shikaki, has been conducting scientifically reliable polling of the Palestinian people since 1993. Collectively, the data demonstrates that the Palestinian people are generally more moderate than those who would identify themselves as members of Hamas.

Gross underestimation of the complexity of this evolution is often discussed through simple causations currently offered in the literature (discussed in Chapter 2). Further, policy makers do not understand how the group actually manages its dynamic relationship with the Palestinian people, which often result in significant miscalculation. For example, the United States and the European Union have determined that investment (billions of Dollars) into the Palestinian Authority (PA), its institutions and the infrastructure of the West Bank would demonstrate to the Palestinian people that leadership under the PA is better than leadership under Hamas in the Gaza Strip (a policy approach based on Rational Actor Models – assumes people respond to material benefit). Yet, in surveys conducted since the 2007 takeover of Gaza by Hamas and the established policy of the US and EU, Palestinians in Gaza feel safer than those in the West Bank even though there has been one civil war and two wars with Israel. Though support for Fatah remains higher than Hamas in both Gaza and the West Bank, Hamas led policing in Gaza has had a measurable difference in the way Palestinian families feel about their safety. In addition, Hamas has maintained its popular support in both Gaza and the West Bank over the same period. Scholars and decision makers alike have overlooked considerations like these for less complicated answers.

What will become clear in this thesis is that Hamas's identity is based on 'violent resistance'. The Hamas Charter, published in 1988, details this and so do its current actions. What is missing, is to understand how it has maintained and strengthened its ability to resist over 25 years despite the efforts of many to crush it and the host of other influences that can cause organisations to wither and die. The complexity of Hamas's actions over the years suggests that resistance requires malleability, stratagem and guile, not only towards enemies, but also in the relationship to its support base among the Palestinian people (Hamas Covenant 1988).

# Chapter One

## Hamas Resistance: An Introduction

The thesis offers a unique theoretical perspective on the nature of Hamas resistance by demonstrating under what conditions the group exercises violent resistance or refrains from doing so. Hamas entered political life and politics before they strove for ballot boxes. Their purpose of transforming Palestinian life requires this interpretation and subjects them to the standard evaluation of political actors whose conduct can best be understood by their interactions with the people for whom they seek to lead. Their stated purpose of establishing an Islamic resistance to Israeli occupation of lost land guarantees that violence or the lack thereof will be an important component of their political engagement with all Palestinians.

By slightly modifying Max Weber's framework for political group actions, represented as a balancing act between values and responsibilities (Weber 1918), it is possible to advance theoretical understanding of violent resistance as a function of popular support and other internal and external influences. The empirical examination begins with the group's formation in 1987 (and refers to foundations much earlier) and ends with events surrounding the reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah in June 2014. During this period, the group has been suspended between its quest to achieve the values of its ardent supporters and the desire to grow popular support. This tension reflects in how and when the group exercises violent resistance. With newly assembled datasets on Hamas's violent acts and public statements, historical measures of popular support and extensive field interviews, it is possible to detail the actual dynamics around the exercise of violent resistance.

The empirical investigation looks specifically at the dynamics between Hamas violent actions and internal and external influences on the group, including: 1) expressed values of the group, 2) Palestinian popular support measures, 3) leaders personalities and innovation (weapons and tactics), 4) Israeli influence and *Targeted Killings*, 5) internal and external suspicion, 6) the Palestinian Authority, 7) peace processes and 8) conflicts in Gaza, Syria and Egypt. These factors were selected because they demonstrated in the pilot study to be of importance to Hamas's use of violence. The thesis concludes with a predictive model of Hamas violence and a dynamic model of Hamas Resistance over time.

### **1.1 A Critical Case: Hamas Resistance and the Palestinian People**

Significant obstacles exist when trying to understand the dynamics of armed groups' engagement with their host populations. The relationship between these actors is not a monolithic process; there are significant influences, like states and non-state groups, intent on destroying, weakening, moderating or strengthening them. But how do these influences manifest in real conflict environments over time? And, how do the groups manage their relations with their host populations when under the stress of so many internal and external influences?

As a case study, Hamas's relationship with the Palestinian people has many unique features that can improve understanding of other insurgent groups in other conflicts. To begin with, the Palestine and Israeli conflict is considered the 'mother' of all intractable conflicts. Any lessons or understanding coming from this conflict has the potential to contribute to the scholarly thinking about other power-seeking insurgent groups in other conflicts. This case is also unique in that it is still active, so living participants of the conflict are accessible for interview and violent acts and public statements by leaders are captured in some form of archive. Further still, there are large archives of scientifically credible polling data over decades of the conflict, which have yet to be fully grasped by the academic and policy community. This polling data includes rich information like the *Support for Violence* against Israel, *Hamas Support*, religiosity, Palestinian attitudes about values like the 'right of return' and support for a 'two state solution', amongst many other data points. Evaluating the sum of this data in terms of environmental conditions allows us to see the dynamics in the relationship between Hamas and the

Palestinians particularly around violence and values and allows us to demonstrate the nature of Hamas resistance through different periods.

Mostly, conflict environments are void of good analysable data for various reasons, including safety considerations, which complicates our ability to understand the dynamics involved. It is the opposite for this case. There is a mountain of analysable data, which can further our understanding of Hamas, the nature of armed group resistance and the origins of and the dynamics within insurgent groups.

## **1.2 Research Methods: The Qualitative and Quantitative Approach**

Field based empirical investigation in conflict areas is critical to real understanding of the actual events, motivations and dynamics. As such, the research was structured to make the most of the field interviews by doing extensive open source data collection prior to going to Israel and the Palestinian Territories. For example, 25 years of data on violent acts, popular support measures and Hamas public statements was gathered and refined using various scientific best practices. The sum total of this preliminary data collection informed the interviews that were conducted in the field.

The interviews conducted for this thesis with Hamas, Fatah and Israeli leaders were not the first interviews conducted with these participants by the author. The previous interviews conducted established a base understanding and set of relationships that allowed the research to advance beyond initial queries that often accompanies first-time meetings.

Throughout the data collection process, revelation of new sources of data required expansion of the data sets in an effort to provide more clarity about Hamas's resistance. The primary motivation in the data collection was to examine the influences that shaped the group and its methods of violent resistance. Yet, honest scientific inquiry required one to conclude that it would be impossible to know all influences on Hamas and the Palestinian people. After wrestling with large amounts of information on Hamas and the Palestinian people, the author developed the confidence to limit the data sources to those described in this chapter.

All together, the data collected was assembled into seven different datasets:

1. Theoretical concepts from existing literature on Hamas, armed groups, civil wars/insurgencies, ethno-nationalism, social movements, social psychology, conflict dynamics and legitimacy;
2. Palestinian factions, including Hamas, violent acts against Israeli targets between 1987-2014, known as the ‘Verified Open-Source Violent Attack Dataset’;
3. Israeli *Targeted Killing* and Apprehension Programme of Hamas operatives in 2000-4 and Israeli legal definitions;
4. Archived data retrieval of Palestinian polls (popular support measures) from 1993 to 2014;
5. Public statements of five Hamas leaders from 1987-2014;
6. Field interviews of: a) Hamas leaders conducted in Cairo, Damascus, Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah, and by phone to Gaza City; b) Israeli leaders conducted in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv; and c) subject matter experts in Palestine and Israel; and
7. Combined dataset of violent acts and popular support measures.

### **1.2.1 Datasets Collected and Assembled for Thesis**

#### *Theoretical Concepts*

Hamas resistance is a multidisciplinary topic. Consequently, the literature review (discussed in depth in Chapter 2) crossed disciplines. The primary material to support the work was the existing literature on Hamas, followed by literature on armed groups, civil wars, insurgencies, ethno-nationalism, social movements, social psychology, conflict dynamics and legitimacy. The review provided an opportunity to construct a dataset of the theoretical concepts that relate to Hamas resistance. The most useful theoretical model came from Max Weber’s work on the foundations of social theory. Its use and implications are discussed in the following chapter.

#### *Palestinian Faction Violent Act Dataset*

The available open source data on Palestinian led violent acts against Israelis is vast. Early in the process of reviewing available data, it became evident that there was a lot of poor quality information out there claiming things that could not be verified by a second source. There was also the problem of conflicting information by research groups and government agencies. Ariel Merari (2010, p.10) writes, ‘according to the Israeli Security Agency’s statistics, in seven years of the second *intifada*, 1,065 Israelis were killed in 30,595 terrorist attacks of all kinds’. After thorough review of the publically available statistics from the Israeli Security Agency and the Israeli Defense Force, it was impossible to replicate the Agency’s data through open sources, which meant that the



Agency had material that was either classified or not publically available for cross-examination. Though the author requested access to Israeli datasets, permission was not given. The inability to cross-examine the Agency's dataset meant that another approach was required. After review of other violent datasets available from the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism in Herzliya, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Combating Terrorism Center in the United States, to name a few, the conclusion was reached that no two datasets were alike and that a new dataset would need to be developed.

Most importantly, the author desired to use a dataset that was not produced by Palestinians or Israelis because that data could be viewed as tainted or biased, whether or not they were. Since the idea of the research was to analyse popular support measures to Hamas violence, it required using those violent acts that somehow made it into the daily conscience of Palestinians. This meant not all Palestinian violence would meet this threshold. The thinking was that if Palestinians are generally aware of violent attacks by Palestinian factions on Israel, then it would likely show up in popular support measures in some way. Unfortunately, this is an impossible thing to measure over time without relying on some publically available data. As such, the author devised a plan to build a new violence dataset establishing a protocol that the violent act must be verifiable in two independent open sources where neither source referenced the other. If two independent sources could not be found, then the act was not included. The violence dataset was entitled, 'Verified Open-Source Violent Attack Dataset'.

The new dataset included violent acts of Palestinian factions against Israeli military, settlers and civilians inside Israel from December 1987 to December 2012. The methodology assumed that if two independent national or international sources report on the attack, then the attack has likely made its way into the knowledge base of the Palestinian population and influences its perceptions. Beginning in June 2007, the use of rockets and mortars by Hamas in Gaza complicated the data collection efforts because of the lack of public reporting on these incidents and on the fact that several rockets may be fired, but might only be counted as one 'launching' by the Israeli Security Service. There is little doubt that numerous attacks, particularly those interdicted or thwarted by Israelis, were excluded by the requirement of two independent open sources, but the accuracy of the high-profile attack dataset was vastly improved by this requirement.

Though the ‘Verified Open-Source Violent Attack Dataset’ is much smaller than the Israeli Security Services dataset, it is particularly focused on those acts which are demonstrated to be influential on the Palestinian mindset in that the high profile nature of each attack was written about in news articles that reached both inside and outside the Territories. As such, the dataset should not be considered an exhaustive attack dataset; rather it should be understood to be a verified open-source set of high-profile attacks by Palestinian Factions on Israelis. Upon review of the final dataset, it compared quite closely to the size and content of the IDC data from Herzilya, though it did not include thwarted Palestinian attacks.

The data collected included as many of these points as possible: date, location, type of attack (e.g. armed attack, suicide bombing, car bombing, rocket, etc.), faction responsible, name of assailant(s), hometown of assailant(s), number of deaths and number of casualties. In total, the dataset includes over 900 violent acts perpetrated by Palestinian factions and can be sorted by date, faction, type of attack or number of casualties.

There are two primary complications to the dataset, the first being responsibility. Not all high profile violent acts had a faction claiming responsibility. Approximately 20% of acts remain unclaimed. These acts were excluded from any Hamas violent activity analyses. As will be demonstrated in Chapter 4.7, these non-attributable acts provide no meaningful difference in the relationship between tested variables. Second, the introduction of rockets and mortars as part of the weapons arsenals in Gaza, which, for the most part, began in earnest after the Hamas takeover of Gaza in June of 2007, increased the number of unclaimed attacks. So, during the fieldwork, the author asked Hamas, Shin Bet and Israeli Defense Force leaders about the different factions launching the rockets and mortars. After the discussions, it became clear that Hamas was either responsible for launching the rockets/mortars or complicit in allowing other groups to fire them, since Hamas controlled the security services in Gaza. Though discussed in-depth in Chapters 4 and 6, Hamas allowed other groups to launch rockets/mortars in order to not lose the resistance identity even though they did not want conflict with Israel at the time. As a result, all rocket/mortar fire emanating from Gaza after June 2007 was credited to Hamas.

It is likely that implicating Hamas on all rocket launchings since 2007 distorts the actual events on the ground. Presumably, other groups in Gaza were able and did launch rockets at Israel without permission or complicity of Hamas. Yet, the fact that Hamas allowed or even encouraged other factions on occasion to launch rockets implicates them in many of the rocket attacks from other factions. Because the lack of open source reporting of rocket launchings materially differs from ground attacks, it makes it impossible to use the same open source data collection of high-profile attacks methodology. Crediting all rocket launchings to Hamas weakens the statistical relationships between Hamas violence and popular support measures, which means that the findings in this study are only weakened by this approach, not the opposite.

This dataset does not include violent acts by Hamas against Israeli soldiers during Gaza War I or II or when the Israeli Defense Force's (IDF) soldiers attempt to arrest a Hamas operative.

#### *Israeli Targeted Killings Dataset*

To better understand the dynamics of violence in this conflict, it is preferable to have full clarity of Israeli violent activity against Palestinians and Hamas operatives.

Collecting this data has been difficult. The first approach was to use a similar methodology to the Palestinian data by looking for open source information where two independent sources validated an Israeli operation against Palestinians that was violent. This proved challenging because the nature of Israeli actions was more difficult to understand. There are IDF actions that include roadblocks, checkpoints, targeted assassinations, arrests, home and agricultural demolitions, curfews, incursions and sieges of towns, not to mention the overt and covert actions of the Israeli Security Services.

During the field interviews, the author explored various ways to build a dataset or to acquire one from the Israeli government. For the former, attempts to construct a dataset using similar methodology of the Palestinian violent dataset proved unsuccessful. The approach provided little clarity because the news outlets did not carry the Israeli actions in a manner similar to Palestinian factional attacks. Moreover, while interviewing

Hamas leaders, many more Israeli operations were mentioned than were available in media sources, rendering such a dataset unhelpful for this thesis.

Afterwards, efforts to acquire data from the Israeli Defense Forces and the Israeli Security Agency on Israeli actions in the Territories were unsuccessful. During interviews with senior Israeli defense sources, the existence of a paper written by a former Israeli General on the efficacy of Israeli *Targeted Killings* was identified. A Hebrew copy of the paper was acquired and translated into English by a graduate student from Hebrew University. The author of the paper, General Isaac Ben Israel, was sent a copy of the English version asking for him to review the accuracy of the translation, which he did. The final source of Israeli actions came from a paper written by Keren Sharvit (2013) of the University of Haifa. The paper provided the dates and names of 39 *Targeted Killings* of violent activists of Palestinian factions, 37 of which occurred during the Second *Intifada*. The paper relies on a public dataset of 33 *Targeted Killings* by Israelis published by Zussman and Zussman (2006). According to Sharvit, six new *Targeted Killings* were added to the dataset by senior researchers from the IDC in Herzilya. Chapters 4 and 5 provide analysis of these two sources of data.

General Ben Israel's data (2006) on the targeting programme was demonstrated in charts through monthly numbers, which combined *Targeted Killings* with targeted arrests. Efforts to acquire the data behind the monthly arrests and killings were sought. Ben Israel explained that the data was classified and unable to be shared by the Israelis. Though there are limitations with this dataset, it does demonstrate a clear relationship between the targeted programme and number of successful and interdicted Hamas violent acts during the period (see Chapter 5).

### *Popular Support Measures*

In 1993, Dr. Khalil Shikaki, a Palestinian Survey Researcher, established the Centre for Palestine Research and Studies (CPRS) in 1993, which transitioned into the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) in Ramallah in 2000. Survey questions and methodology were kept in the transition between entities. In 1993, CPRS began conducting survey research on Palestinians. As of December 2014, the CPRS/PSR combination had conducted approximately 114 publically available surveys of a representative sample of the Palestinian people, which have been archived and are

available on the PSR website. In addition to those public surveys, PSR conducted other private research for teams across the globe. Their data collection methodology was and is scientifically credible (PSR Methodology 2013)<sup>3</sup>, which is why the data was used for this thesis.

The Jerusalem Media & Communications Centre (JMCC) also began conducting Palestinian surveys in 1993. These surveys were not used for three primary reasons. First, the questions asked by JMCC did not materially improve upon the PSR data on support for violence or other measures used in this thesis. In fact, the amount of variance in the JMCC questions on violence and other similar measures to PSR significantly increases the challenge to producing reliable statistical measures when attempting to combine PSR and JMCC datasets. Second, the JMCC data did not materially add to the quality or quantity of the datasets by adding additional time periods (in excess of the 59 developed with PSR) that could be used to lessen the average of slightly less than four months per time period. This is a critical point, because effort

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<sup>3</sup> Note: **PSR Survey Research Methodology**

Palestine is divided into several strata with each representing the towns, cities, villages and refugee camps in the 16 governorates (muhafazat). Palestine is also divided into 'counting areas' or clusters, with each containing a number of families (ranging from 80 to 160 families in each cluster). The number of families in each cluster designates the size of that cluster. The 1997 census provides detailed data on the families as well as detailed maps showing every house in each cluster. The total number of clusters in Palestine is 3200.

PSR **sampling process** goes through three stages (1) randomly selecting population locations (clusters or blocs) using probability proportionate to size; (2) randomly selecting households from the population locations using updated maps; (3) selecting a person who is 18 years or older from among the persons in the house using Kish tables' method. The sample should be self-weighting, but we do make sure that the age groups we obtain are similar to those in the society using data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Reweighting is done if necessary.

A sample of 127 clusters is randomly selected using probability proportionate to size. Clusters are organised according to size (number of families) and geographic location (West Bank-Gaza Strip) in order to insure representation of all strata and clusters of all sizes. After selecting the cluster samples in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, 10 homes are selected in each cluster using systemic sampling. Total size of the sample is 1270 adults. The third stage in the sampling process occurs inside the house. Using Kish table, PSR fieldworkers select an adult (over 18 years of age) from among the adults in the house for the interview. Interviewees are assured of complete confidentiality before starting the interview.

Since the sample is a multistage one, two components constitute the variance in the estimates: the within-cluster variation and variation among clusters. We reduce the within-cluster variation by increasing the sample size selected from each cluster or bloc. By increasing the number of clusters selected, the error resulting due to variation among clusters is reduced. Among-cluster variation constitutes the biggest source of sampling error, while the error resulting from the within-cluster variation is negligible relative to the one among clusters. Hence, in this case the margin of error is dependent on the number of clusters considered in the survey. The number of clusters (127) and the number of households in each cell (10) ensure a maximum 3% sampling error.

Our **non-response** rate ranges between 2% to 9%. The non-response rate is calculated based on the number of household rejections and the number of persons not willing to complete the questionnaire relative to the total sample. In order to prevent errors caused by non-response, we have used over the years three methods: (1) rigorous training of fieldworkers; (2) testing the questionnaire before going to the field; and (3) quality control measures to test the reliability and suitability of fieldworkers.

In order to encourage respondents to talk freely, we assure them of **complete anonymity**. Respondents do not give their names and filled questionnaires are placed in a folder where they are mixed with all others; it is not possible to trace a specific questionnaire to a certain respondent.

In order to maximise the chances to **enter all homes** in the sample, two fieldworkers, a male and a female or two females, conduct every interview. By this method we almost double the cost of fieldwork, but we also overcome social difficulties that may prevent a male/female from entering a home that does not have males/females at the time of interview.

was taken to see if the inclusion of JMCC data could have added additional time periods to the 59 used in this thesis. Unfortunately, the JMCC data did not regularly account for the six highly used variables analysed in this study, which meant that their data could not add materially to the number of time periods established with the PSR data. Third, attempts to cross-tabulate responses to questions by Palestinian respondents are greatly complicated when using two different datasets with different methodologies. However, the study did analyse JMCC results on political affiliation and found similar results, including the rate of change, to PSR's measures. In conclusion, the lack of material improvement to the data coupled with the challenge of introducing further variations in the public opinion data meant that adding JMCC data was not combined with PSR data for analyses in this thesis.

The work of Dr. Shikaki and that of PSR is considered unbiased and reliable. The author has intimate knowledge from his time as a policy director at The White House and as the head of a conflict research firm that Hamas, the Palestinian Authority, The White House, 10 Downing Street, the Kremlin, the Knesset, the European Union, the United Nations and the Arab League use PSR's survey work.<sup>4</sup> This is mentioned only to further establish the credentials of Dr. Shikaki and PSR since the thesis relies heavily on their survey results from 1993 to 2013. The only public criticism of the survey work of PSR is that it underestimated *Hamas Support* in the 2006 elections. This critique is incorrect because the data from the polling indicated rising *Hamas Support*, still slightly less than Fatah going into the January 2006 election. What the data does not show is that Fatah ran multiple candidates in some districts competing with only one candidate from Hamas. Consequently, Fatah's vote became split, while Hamas supporters' votes were consolidated behind only one candidate. The author even witnessed a senior Hamas official arguing with Dr. Shikaki for nearly 30 minutes on the reliability of PSR's polling and the popular support measures only to concede to Dr. Shikaki that PSR polling was good.

In the roughly 114 surveys there were nearly 8,000 questions. These surveys and questions were reviewed and analysed many times. It took months. After understanding

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<sup>4</sup> Further evidence to the credibility of PSR has been observed while conducting this research during consultations and interviews with White House staff, the UK Stabilization Unit, Palestinian and Israeli leaders.

what data was available, a database was constructed using answers to select questions that were continually asked in the surveys over 20 years. The popular support measures compiled for the thesis were:

1. *Popular Support for Hamas* and all other Palestinian political parties;
2. *Support for Violence* against Israeli targets;
3. Religiosity;
4. Support for Peace Process;
5. Willingness to recognise Israel;
6. Perceptions about the *Safety of Family*;
7. *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*;
8. Support for specific high profile attacks against Israeli targets;
9. Support for Islamists;
10. Perceptions about corruption in the West Bank and Gaza;
11. Support for the Right of Return;
12. Definition of Resistance as violent or not; and
13. Support for the act of recognising Israel.

For each measure, the data collected was divided into three categories: Total, West Bank and Gaza. Not all questions were asked on all surveys and at times questions varied slightly. These variations are described in Chapter 3 discussion because some changes required managing statistical analyses in such a way as to maintain data and statistical integrity. Further, when variations were identified, they were discussed with Dr. Shikaki to understand the intent behind the change of language. Some support measures had too much variation to provide significance and were therefore discarded. All totaled, there were approximately 6,000 data points captured from these surveys.

#### *Public Statements From Five Hamas Leaders*

This dataset consists of approximately 750 public statements in English of five Hamas leaders from 1987 to 2014. The public statements were collected from English newspapers in the region. In total, the public statements exceeded 70,000 words. The statements were made by: 1) Sheikh Yassin, Spiritual Leader and co-Founder; 2) Dr. Rantisi, co-Founder and former Chairman; 3) Mousa Abu Marzouk, fmr. Chairman and current Deputy Chairman; 4) Khalid Mishal, current Chairman; and 5) Usama Hamdan, unofficial Foreign Minister.

After collecting the first 150 public statements spanning the first 7 years, a research assistant was hired to collect the remaining statements. The assistant was instructed on

exactly what to collect and how to display the information. Since collecting this data, the author sought consultation with several textual analysis researchers in attempts to understand how it could best be analysed. Researchers at several university labs, including the London School of Economics, Arizona State University, the University of Southern California and the University of Michigan, asked for a copy of the dataset to test with various in various text analysis programmes. The data was not sent to these institutions because it required a significant amount of work by the author to provide the qualitative framework for the different approaches taken at the different labs.

This dataset is used to demonstrate the expanding and narrowing of the definitions of Hamas values. Generally, in times of higher conflict and Hamas internal election periods, the definitions narrow, while in times of lower conflict the definitions expand (see Chapter 7.3).

#### *Field Interview Dataset*

A unique contribution of this thesis comes from the 49 field interviews conducted for this research in various locations, such as Cairo, Damascus, Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Most of the interviews were ‘on the record’, while some were not. Some senior people were interviewed more than once. Friends of the author, Scott Atran and Robert Axelrod, conducted two interviews, one with the Chairman of Hamas, the other with the Chairman of PIJ at a time when the author was unavailable to make the trip. Those interview notes were provided for use in this research. Scott Atran also provided interview notes he had for an interview he conducted with Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh. These notes were helpful because the author was unable to gain entry into Gaza on three different occasions to conduct a similar interview.

Though a majority of the interviews had scripted questions based upon understanding gleaned from previously collected data, the interviews were able to deviate at times from these questions to follow up on interesting information given by the interviewee. Other questions were added once interviews were completed in an effort to advance understanding beyond the initial inquiry. For example, it was possible to trace specific events between Hamas and Israel that led to Gaza War II. The media reports on the war had little idea of the cascading events that led to the outbreak of violence. Discussion of these events can be found in Chapter 6.



Interviews used for this thesis included (See Also Appendix A):

### *Israelis*

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (prior to him becoming PM), Israeli National Security Advisor Yaakov Amidror, Minister of Justice Tzipi Livni (when she was in the opposition), four ret. Directors of the Shin Bet, a couple of senior advisors to the Shin Bet, one ret. Director of the Mossad, several retired IDF Generals, several other members of the Knesset, a few senior scientists like Ariel Merari, Carlo Strenger and Matti Steinberg, and other subject matter experts on technologies used by Hamas. These persons were selected for their intimate knowledge of the Israeli influences projected onto the Palestinian people and Hamas and the Hamas response to those influences.

### *Palestinians*

Hamas Chairman, Khalid Mishal, Hamas Deputy Chairman, Mousa Abu Marzouk, Prime Minister, Ismail Haniyeh, Ramadann Shallah, Chairman of PIJ, several other Hamas Gaza leaders including Ahmed Yousef and Ghazi Hamad. In the West Bank interviews were conducted with several elected Hamas Parliamentarians, including the Minister of Finance, Omar Abdel-Razeq and a host of other Hamas technocrats. Further interviews were conducted with Fatah leaders including, Nasser Yousef, a member of the Central Committee and former head of security in Gaza. Other interviews were conducted with families of suicide bombers from Hebron.

Several other Palestinian leaders were extremely helpful in understanding the dynamics of Hamas actions over time. Though not mentioned by name, their candor and insights made this thesis stronger.

Through these interviews, the author has been able to detail decision making, suspicion, organisation dynamics, values, value shifts, willingness to compromise and willingness to use violence. Not all of the information captured in these interviews will be discussed in this thesis, but the information contained in this dataset is both thought provoking and instructive for how scholars may better understand the origins and dynamics within insurgent groups. The specificity of the information made the fieldwork enjoyable and the historical sections of the thesis more enjoyable to write.

### *Combined dataset of violent acts and popular support measures*

When combined, the raw datasets comprised of more than 800 time periods of partial data. Over the course of a few months, it was clear that 59 specific dates over 20 years could be used to demonstrate all salient variables. This provided a robust dataset that could be used to perform advanced statistical analyses looking for relationships that were not immediately obvious through the data collection and field interview process.

The following data was brought together for the 59 time periods: 1) *Support for Violence* against Israeli targets, 2) *Hamas Support*, 3) *Optimism*, 4) *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*, 5) *Safety of Family*, 6) *Hamas Violence Frequency*, 7) *Hamas Violence Density*, 8) *Hamas Violence Frequency* before and after the publication of polling data and 9) *Israeli Targeted Killings*. Several derivatives of these data points were also used, like support for the 10 largest Hamas attacks. For the popular support questions, the data was split into all Palestinians, Gazans and West Bankers.

### **1.2.2 Data Analyses**

During the analyses phase, it became abundantly clear that enough data had been collected to write multiple dissertations. In a sense, this gave the author the liberty to look at the data through various lenses to pursue the most interesting leads. The idea of Hamas resistance as a concentrated focus emerged from the data itself after it became evident that the datasets demonstrated predictive power in Hamas violent acts. Though there can be no certainty that future actions will conform to patterns established in the past, the data provided an interesting window for which to view the nature of Hamas resistance over time.

To understand the application of violent resistance, it was necessary to first establish a time series of consequential events, policies and actions that provide a better understanding about the environment in which violent actions were conducted.

Therefore, the analysis began with the construction of a timeline which included: (1) Hamas public policy pronouncements; (2) Hamas non-violent actions; (3) Hamas violent actions; (4) Out-group one (Israelis) consequential actions (determined by in-group

response to out-group action); (5) Out-group two (Fatah) consequential actions (again, determined by in-group response to out-group action); (6) Other foreign interventions into the actions of the groups (e.g. US peacemaking efforts, UN Resolutions, the Quartet Demands, etc.); and (7) Popular support polling of Hamas, Fatah, other Palestinian factions, Settlers, Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israelis, Israeli support for settlement activity, religiosity, corruption in the Palestinian authority and support for peace.

The knowledge gained from these timelines established a deeper perspective of the environmental conditions, which therefore helped to contribute to the field interviews. The interviews added to the depth of the work by providing rich detail as to the actions and reactions of Hamas to events during different periods of time. These details have been woven throughout the thesis in order to establish a clearer understanding as to how Hamas manages its relations with the Palestinian people and the violent resistance agenda.

Advanced statistical analyses were used to test various relationships in the combined dataset. This dataset had 59 time periods and approximately 40 different variables. The approach to statistical data analyses was to use both differentiated (the change between time periods for each variable) and undifferentiated numbers to run correlations, time series analyses, regression and multiple regressions. This differentiated method was selected to isolate the relationship of change between two variables, or more, and to reduce linear trends bias (e.g. *Support for Violence* increases while Hamas violence is increasing) that would likely result. Chapter 4 demonstrates all analysis with '[differenced]' or '[undifferenced]' classification.

In the process of the conducting the quantitative analyses, correlations, regressions, multiple regressions and time series analyses were performed. Although the author understood how to perform correlations and regressions before starting the research, further study of multiple regression and time series analyses was required. To begin, the author used Microsoft Excel and StatsPlus to do the analysis, due to familiarity. This was a painstaking process because it required the manual construction of formulas for every variable for each time lag. Though time consuming, the process resulted in a greater mastery of the mechanics behind the advanced statistical analyses. An additional

problem was that the StatsPlus analytics program did not allow for the printing of time-series charts and graphs. As such, a social science statistics expert, Dr. Rumen Illiev, from the University of Michigan was hired to validate the statistical analyses performed and to print the time series charts and graphs. The author spent three days with Dr. Illiev reviewing the underlying dataset, replicating all statistical measures, producing time series graphics and building a model, using the Granger-causation method, to forecast changes in future violence based upon historical measures.

Dr. Illiev used SPSS to analyse the data and came to the same numerical conclusions performed by the author – a relief. The most sophisticated portion of the work performed by Dr. Illiev was the time series analysis of multiple regressions using different independent/dependent variables in the effort to perform Granger-causation analysis. This proved to be extremely valuable because it demonstrated quite clearly the predictive ability of the *Support for Violence* on the frequency of Hamas led violence. The predictive model of Hamas violence is described in Chapter 7. At all times, Dr. Illiev worked at the direction of the author.<sup>5</sup>

Most of the statistical analyses are contained in Chapter 4, which concentrates the technical discussion and allows for the descriptive analyses in Chapters 5-7 to reference the results of the statistics without detracting from qualitative observations being made.

Further analytical modeling is provided in Chapter 7 when a Model of Hamas Resistance (in time series graphic form) is offered to demonstrate the changes in violence, *Support for Violence*, *Optimism*, values and *Hamas Support* over time. This model has also been made into a short video, which obviously cannot be displayed in print form, but can be accessed at [www.hamainsights.org](http://www.hamainsights.org) [password: hamasresistanceLSE2014].

### **1.3 Thesis Structure: Theory, History, Periods, Causation & Models**

Designing the layout of the thesis may have been the most challenging part of the research. Great care and time was put into the outline and the presentation of the

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<sup>5</sup> Permission to seek assistance for advanced time series statistical analysis was sought and granted from the research coordinator in the Department of Government in early 2013. In compliance with departmental regulations, the author maintained the leading and directing role in the statistical inquiry.

material to advance understanding in a systematic manner while allowing for illustrative stories from the fieldwork to provide concrete examples of the observations being made.

The maps and terminology sections are provided to give the reader a better understanding of the spatial dimensions and verbiage that relate to the issues addressed in the thesis.

Chapter One establishes the overarching research question, motivations and methodology for the research.

Chapter Two discusses Hamas resistance through the lens of multi-disciplinary theories and lays the foundations for the entire study. It begins with a discussion on the existing literature of Hamas and demonstrates the novelty of this thesis. It advances the discussion through an evaluation of perspectives on Hamas and armed groups, including Max Weber's work on political group actions.

Chapter Three discusses the origin, structure and relationships of Hamas and concludes with its place in the Middle East considering the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the violence in Syria and the wave of unrest beginning commonly described as the Arab Spring. It begins with the emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the Palestinian Territories, Kuwait and the formative role of organisations like the Islamic Compound. It moves forward by providing understanding of the key founders and ideals of the group, including the role of resistance for Hamas.

The chapter then discusses the four distinct parts of Hamas: the diaspora, Gaza, the prisoners and the West Bank. It describes the organisational decision making process, the reason why its top leaders are outside Palestine, the relationship between the Jordanian activists and West Bank members of Hamas and further details the emergence of Gaza's importance and perception as centre of the Hamas wheel. The chapter then describes how the group perceives in-groups, like PIJ, and out-groups like Fatah and Israel. Chapter Three concludes with a discussion on the five distinct eras of Hamas resistance.

Chapter Four describes the relationship of popular support measures to Hamas violence and the Israeli *Targeted Killings*. The chapter is largely analytical and quantitative to provide the backdrop of how violent resistance relates to the attitudes of the Palestinians. Violent acts of Hamas against Israeli targets are analysed as both an independent and dependent variable to a host of Palestinian popular support measures. The chapter provides a significant number of charts and graphs and serves to further understand causal mechanisms for Hamas violent resistance. On this point, the reader should understand that it is hard to pinpoint actual causation without experimental design. Therefore, causation arguments are only approximations, but serve as an illumination of key factors driving the action. Subsequent chapters often reference the chapter in order to tie the qualitative understanding to the quantitative results.

Chapters Five and Six offer descriptive empirical evidence of the dynamics around specific events. These chapters provide a qualitative analysis supporting the quantitative findings in Chapter Four. Most of this evidence came from the field interviews. The structure of the two chapters is chronological, which was determined to be the best way to demonstrate the relationship between violent acts, time based events and popular support measures. Questions for field interviews were mostly constructed to understand the details surrounding critical events.

Chapter Five details events between December 1987 and December 2004. The title of the chapter is 'Pre-Political Era' because the end of the era is marked by the death of Yasser Arafat and the decision by Hamas to become active in National politics. The chapter is divided into the Formation Era, Oslo Era and the Second *Intifada* and describes key events within each era. The reason for the selection of these eras is thoroughly described in Chapter Three.

Chapter Six, entitled 'Political Era', spans January 2005 to June 2014. The chapter is divided into the Campaign Era and Governance Era. The Hamas take over of Gaza is the critical event demarcating the eras. Due to the maturity of Hamas, the amount of literature and the fact that many of the decision makers during this period were interviewed for the research, this chapter is full of stories and empirical evidence that illuminate intentional use or non-use of violent actions by Hamas. The chapter also discusses the impact of the conflicts in Syria and Egypt on Hamas and Hamas resistance.

It concludes with the recent reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah and the implications of the new PA Government.

Chapter Seven, the concluding chapter, details the broad themes of Hamas resistance that were not discussed prior. The chapter then provides evaluation of the hypotheses and corollaries and offers two different models of Hamas resistance. The first model entitled, 'Hamas Resistance Model', is a time series graphic illustration of *Violence Frequency* and density, *Support for Violence*, *Hamas Support*, *Optimism* and changing values. The model is best viewed in video graphic form, but the chapter defines its significance in understanding what Hamas resistance looks like over time. The second model is entitled 'Predictive Model of Hamas Violence'. This model demonstrates how past violence, *Support for Violence*, *Hamas Support*, *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* and *Palestinian Optimism* predicts increased or decreased future attacks by Hamas. Both models are put forth as a way to visualise the complex dynamics involved in Hamas's violent resistance. The chapter concludes with a summary of what we know about Hamas that we did not know before and how we might think about other armed movements.

# Chapter Two

## Hamas Resistance Through the Multi-Disciplinary Lens

This chapter will examine related multi-disciplinary theoretical perspectives on Hamas resistance and armed groups and will use those theoretical perspectives to develop hypotheses and corollaries to be tested by the research. Though there is a large Hamas political science and history studies literature, many other academic disciplines have published on various aspects of Hamas and Hamas violence. For organisational purposes, the chapter will first examine literature on Hamas. It will then describe the relevance of a theoretical model offered by Max Weber on political group engagement and purposes a slight modification to the model. The chapter will then discuss the hypotheses motivated by the Hamas literature, Weber's model and a preliminary pilot study conducted at the beginning of this work. The chapter will then examine multidisciplinary work on armed conflict. Subordinate corollaries of the three motivating hypotheses are derived from this multidisciplinary literature and are embedded throughout the chapter.

### 2.1 Literature on Hamas

The existing political science/history literature on Hamas has three central arguments: 1) an explanatory history of the group as an Islamic resistance movement and/or a social movement; 2) an armed group inciting violence against Israel; and 3) a civil society movement that gets its strength through the *dawa* (social welfare programme for the host population). Most of the literature advances arguments in all three areas and is quite helpful in developing a richer understanding about the group and Palestinian people. But, as the research became more mature and the fieldwork commenced, it became evident that none of this scholarship provided a systematic and empirical review of the relationship between Hamas, popular support and the use of violence over time. It is



troubling that scholarly claims about motivation and intention could be made about the group without including qualitative and quantitative examination of 20 years of popular support measures, violent acts, Hamas public proclamations and environmental conditions. Many of the claims in the literature are path dependent, meaning that they are levered to specific research questions, social networks used to generate data and are ultimately limited, like the author's own work, to what we know, not what we do not. Consequently making claims like, 'the group emphasises welfare programmes and civic restoration, not political violence' (Roy 2011: cover) leaves little room to interpret the possibility that the group's goals could be different or nuanced under changing environmental conditions for different audiences.

The argument is not that previous political science/history scholars failed to explain Hamas. To the contrary, establishing a historical account of the group's evolution is critical to understand various dynamics each scholar was able to observe and document. The historical accounts establish a range of understanding about the identity, structure and intentions of the group. Most argue that Hamas is essentially a social and political organisation (Mishal & Sela 2006) that derives its strength from its *dawa* programme (Chehab 2007; Roy 2011; Schanzer 2008; Levitt 2006; Milton-Edwards & Farrell 2010; and Yousef 2011) promoting Islamisation of the population (Tamimi 2011) while it strategically engages with international stakeholders (Hroub 2002). Other arguments suggest that the group's leaders are seduced by power (Chehab 2007), engaged in a power struggle with Fatah (Shanzer 2008), more akin to devoted actors than rational actors (Atran, Axelrod & Davis 2007) and constantly bargaining and power brokering (Mishal & Sela 2006). Some overtly classify the group as a terror organisation (Levitt 2006; and Yousef 2011) with no distinction between the political, social and military components. Many of the authors have had a front row seat to Hamas, observing them in the field, using interviews with leaders and informants within the group to cast their respective portraits; one author, Yousef, was even part of the group.

Beyond the general understanding of Hamas, it is important to understand how the literature addressed the issue of resistance and violent actions by the group. According to the group's Charter, Hamas is dedicated to violent resistance against Israel. In language espoused by the group's leaders, one can see that Hamas views violence as an extension of moral authority (Gunning 2009) that comes from being absolutely devoted

(Atran 2011) to their cause, which according to the founding documents and its leadership is the reclamation of all lands lost in 1948 – all land from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. According to Tamimi (2011), the *Ikhwan* (Muslim Brothers of Palestine) believed that a Palestinian sickness kept it from fulfilling its destiny of reclamation through violent resistance and that the medicine for the Palestinians was Islam.

It is indisputable that Hamas has engaged in violent acts against Israel. What is in dispute is whether the group emphasises violence (Levitt 2006; Yousef 2011) or welfare and civic restoration (Roy 2011) or both, like twin levers (Milton-Edwards & Farrell 2010). Many Hamas scholars make nuanced arguments claiming that the group engages in both violence and welfare programming. Sayigh (2011) suggests that a dichotomy exists between the fact that Hamas ran on a national campaign platform of ‘law and order’ while being committed to violent resistance against Israel. Levitt (2006) argues that the group uses the *dawa* in order to recruit and feed its violent destiny. Mishal and Sela (2006) suggest that Hamas uses controlled violence based upon its political needs. In McGeough’s book, *Killing Khalid* (2009: 396-414), Mishal states that armed resistance is the only source of Palestinian power in any negotiations with Israel.

Some scholars assess the methodology of violence directly. Chehab (2007) and Merari (2010) articulate a process by which young men are recruited, indoctrinated, provided with weapons and logistics in order to become suicide bombers. Further, Merari indicates that Hamas stops attacks when it is politically expedient to do so, but claims that no case of Hamas violence exists of a person that decided to carry out an attack on their own. He argues that in all cases the attacks are planned by the organisation. According to Hroub (2002), Hamas transitioned from attacking only soldiers to civilians after the Hebron/Cave of Patriarchs Massacre when a religious Zionist, Goldstein, killed 29 and wounded 125 Palestinian civilians on 25 February 1994 under the credo of reciprocity. According to the violence dataset compiled for this thesis, Hamas fighters killed Israeli civilians as early as December 1990. Major General (ret.) Isaac Ben Israel (2006) wrote that when the Israeli Defense Forces eliminated Hamas operatives in 2003 and 2004, ‘the organisation focused more time on self-preservation and less on attacks’.

Though the explanations provide a broad understanding of the group's history, identity and violence, the critical gap in the literature is an empirical investigation of the dynamics between the group, popular support and the group's emphasis on violence or non-violence. In other words, how does the group use violence or non-violence to increase support from the Palestinian people? In an interview, Ami Ayalon, a former Director of the Shin Bet, said that Palestinian *Popular Support for Violence* against Israel directly correlated with Hamas attacks and 'money spent on attacks' against Israel (Ayalon pers.comm., 2 October 2012). Yuval Diskin, also a former Director of the Shin Bet, said that when Hamas felt like it was out of step with the people the leaders would call for a meeting of senior leaders to change the course of action (Diskin pers.comm., 6 December 2012). Yet, in all the Hamas based literature, relatively little work or attention has been given to the topic of manipulating popular support. Caridi (2012: 70) argues that the Hamas identity is influenced by popular support stating that, 'people had grown tired of the violence'. Her point was that Hamas would be remiss to continue the violent campaign after the end of the Second *Intifada* because the population did not support more violence.

Merari (2005: 80) also weighed in on the issue of popular support when he stated, 'during the last six months of 1995, for example, Hamas refrained from carrying out suicide attacks, because its leadership realised that such actions would not be supported by the Palestinian population at the time and would thus have an adverse effect on the organisation's popularity'. In his book, *Driven to Death*, Merari (2010:173-191) further examines the relationship between popular support and suicide terrorism, claiming, for example, that 'Hamas has been more sensitive to public opinion than PIJ', saying that the latter, 'has carried out suicide attacks even at times when Hamas had suspended them on grounds that the Palestinian public would not support such attacks'. Merari carries the analysis further by describing the relationship between popular support for suicide bombings against Israel from 1995 to 2006 and actual suicide attacks. The conclusion he reached was that analysing the relationship between popular support measures and suicide bombings 'leaves little doubt that the community's attitude to suicide attacks has a strong influence on the volume of suicide attacks generated by community members' (2010:168).

Cardi and Merari’s conclusions on the role of popular support differ in methodology in that Cardi’s conclusions seem to be based on observations, while Merari’s are based upon empirical examination, but stop prior to quantitatively analysing the relationships for predictive ability or causation. This thesis begins where Merari’s ends in that it systematically examines the behaviours of Hamas, violence and non-violence, and popular support measures over time through both quantitative and qualitative analysis. In conclusion, the literature is not clear on whether Hamas actually adapts its violent expression as a function of popular support. If such a relationship does exist, how does it work and under what conditions do violent acts increase or decrease? This is the critical gap that the thesis attempts to contribute on Hamas and insurgent group scholarship.

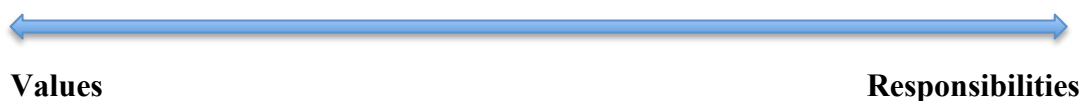
### 2.1.1 Max Weber’s Theoretical Framework Adapted for Hamas

*We must be clear about the fact that all ethically oriented conduct may be guided by one of two fundamentally differing and irreconcilably opposed maxims: conduct can be oriented to an 'ethic of ultimate ends' or to an 'ethic of responsibility'.*

- Max Weber (1918)

The idea to demonstrate the trade offs between values and responsibilities described by Weber was first mentioned to the author in a field interview with the former Director of the Shin Bet, Ami Ayalon. Since that interview, Weber’s concepts have had a large role in the execution of this thesis.

In his lecture, *Politics as Vocation (1918)*, Max Weber establishes the elements of a political spectrum, where on one side there is the idea of ‘values’ and the other ‘responsibilities’. He argues that political groups’ actions fall somewhere on this spectrum in that they may have a purpose, ‘end-game’, or set of values, which define them, but they also have a set of responsibilities to those whom they govern and for whom they will be held to account. Political groups remain suspended in tension somewhere between the two ends.



Depending upon environmental conditions, political groups move back and forth on this spectrum to strike the right chord between the larger population and ardent supporters who do not want the group to compromise its values. Armed groups that are also political actors, like Hamas, have to balance core values that define the group with the responsibilities of providing for a sizable portion of the population that may not share the same ‘end-game’ or values.

Because it is difficult to measure the relationship between esoteric terms like values and responsibilities, it becomes necessary to transform these terms into measurable variables. The idea is to find suitable surrogate variables that give us a chance to measure change within and between variables over time. For the ‘values’ function, there are several variables that could be selected, but for this thesis, ‘violent acts of Hamas’ was selected in order to understand how violent resistance changes based upon environmental conditions and popular support. The fact that the name Hamas is derived from the acronym ‘Islamic Resistance Movement’, whereby resistance is understood to be violent resistance helps to justify the decision.<sup>6</sup> As will be described clearly in Chapter 6.2.3, Hamas ardently defends its reputation as the preeminent Palestinian ‘violent resistance’ group. Since the takeover of Gaza in 2007, it has had to defend this position with other violent groups in the Strip while it worked to establish institutions of government to provide for the people of Gaza. Its defence of itself as a violent resistance organisation first and a political actor second underscores the point that violent acts are a reasonable surrogate for the ‘values’ function on the Weber Spectrum. The data used to represent this variable is derived from the Verified Open-Source Violent Attack Dataset, which represents high profile violent acts from all Palestinian factions, including Hamas, directed at Israeli targets since 1989, except for Gaza War I and II.

On the other end of the Weber Spectrum is ‘responsibilities’. Weber describes this as the ‘ethic of responsibility’ for which one or the group will be judged. Since inception, Hamas has worked through the *dawa* programme to provide for Palestinian people through welfare and education based programmes, which has gone a long way to

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<sup>6</sup> Note: Resistance as ‘violent resistance’ was used exclusively by Hamas leaders until the Arab Spring in 2011. Then, Hamas leaders began to extend their language to suggest that peaceful demonstrations could be part of resistance. After the failure of the Arab Spring to hold across the region, particularly in Egypt, the language on peaceful resistance subsided.

establish good will, but is not without pitfalls. The *dawa* programme has limited resources and therefore ebbs and flows with the increase and decrease of those resources. Provision often needs to discriminate based upon availability of resources and this discrimination, even if done in a just manner, can result in hard feelings in the community by some. So, just because the group runs a *dawa* programme to support the unmet needs of the government, it does not mean that the people will blindly support Hamas or that *Hamas Support* is ever increasing as a result of the *dawa*.

When Hamas took control of the government in Gaza in 2007 it became responsible for the functions of governance. Such responsibility elevates Hamas from a community based political group to the government. Inherent in the responsibility of governing is accountability to those whom are governed. The governed will form opinions of the quality of services provided by the government (e.g. rubbish collection, law and order, the economy, etc.). The combination of the *dawa* programme and being the government in Gaza establishes the group as a political leader of the Palestinian people. As such, Palestinians judge the performance and results achieved by the group. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the collective opinion of the people as to how well Hamas is providing for Palestinians can be understood through popular support measures for Hamas. Though the metric isn't a perfect explanation of how well the group is meeting its responsibilities to Palestinians, it is a reasonable metric to approximate this variable. As such, on the right side of the Weber Spectrum, '*Popular Support for Hamas*' will represent the 'responsibilities' function. The data will be derived from the popular support dataset, which includes over 20 years of fluctuating *Hamas Support*.

The modified version of the Weber Spectrum utilises the surrogate variables of 'Violent Acts of Hamas' on one side and '*Popular Support for Hamas*' on the other. The left side of the spectrum indicates violent acts because those acts represent the core value of the core supporters of Hamas. The right side of the spectrum indicates popular support from all supporters of Hamas, recognising that not all supporters of Hamas espouse violent acts to the degree of core supporters. The model then suggests that the leadership of Hamas will use violence or the lack thereof as the control mechanism to move back and forth across the Weber Spectrum in order to optimise the balance between core supporters and the broader population.



**Violent Acts of Hamas**

**Popular Support**

Using the modified Weber Spectrum, it would be logical to assume that Hamas is incentivised to reduce violent acts in order to appeal to a larger less violent audience in order to gain more popular support. But, this notion is tempered with the fact that Hamas will lose the support of its core members if it does so.

With the data collected for this thesis it is possible to test the relationship between violent acts and popular support over 59 different periods of time over 20 years. This allows us to create a dynamic model of the Hamas decision process as it chooses how much it should weigh values versus responsibilities.<sup>7</sup> If we add other environmental factors to the model it will become possible to see if there are recurring patterns of group behaviour along this spectrum under different environmental conditions. The environmental factors available for this model include: 1) *Palestinian Support for Violence*, 2) *Palestinian Optimism*, 3) *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* and 4) *Hamas Violence Density*. When added to the violent acts of Hamas and popular support for the group, these environmental factors can help us determine if recurring patterns happen over the 59 periods.

An ideal outcome of this model would be that it demonstrates the existence of recurring patterns of Hamas behaviours under similar environmental conditions, resulting in a model that condenses the 59 different time period into a smaller representative sample. Whether patterns exist or not, the 59 time periods allow us to build a model that is representative of Hamas resistance over time. The Weber Spectrum allows us a theoretical platform to test this data to see if we can identify how the tension between values and responsibilities is manifest between Hamas and the Palestinian people.

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<sup>7</sup> Note: the idea espoused by some that Hamas is in tension between ideology and interests, though not exactly the same, can, as will be seen in this thesis, be understood through measuring the relationship between values and responsibilities.

### 2.1.2 Hypotheses Driving the Thesis

The gaps in the understanding of Hamas motivated an initial pilot study on Hamas violence, values and popular support. Though the pilot study is fully explained in Chapter 4, the results of the pilot help motivate the research hypotheses driving this thesis. The research question for the pilot was, ‘does a significant relationship exist between Palestinian popular support measures and Hamas violence?’ The preliminary results suggested: 1) popular support measures indeed had a role on *Hamas Support* and Hamas led violence, 2) Hamas values adapt based upon environmental conditions and 3) Governance and economic improvements may not predict future *Hamas Support* or violence.

Further, the adapted Weber model suggests that Hamas will reduce violent acts against Israel in order to gain popular support from Palestinians only so long as it can maintain the loyalty of its core supporters. The tension represented in this spectrum is testable with the data available for this research. The combination of the literature, the pilot study and the adapted Weber model provided a strong basis for the development of a set of three hypotheses used to drive this study. The problem was that the multidisciplinary literature on armed groups provided a number of other important research questions, which could be tested with the data collected for this thesis. For example, Paul Collier’s generalisation (2009: 21) that violent acts will increase in a democratic state when annual per capita income is ‘below \$2,700’ is testable. Yet, it does not rise to the level of a hypothesis for this thesis. As such, the thesis attempts to test the arguments or theories that come from the literature to derive corollaries of the three main hypotheses. The corollaries thematically relate to the hypotheses but are subordinate to the larger theoretical concept contained in each. These corollaries are embedded through the literature discussion and are labelled with a corresponding alphanumeric code referring back to one of the three hypotheses. The hypotheses and one of the eleven corollaries are offered here:

*Hypothesis #1: Palestinian popular support measures predict or are predicted by Hamas led violence against Israel (Weber Spectrum).*

*Corollary #1a: Hamas use of violence against Israel predicts popular support for the group.*



*Hypothesis #2: As Palestinian governance and economic conditions improve, violence against Israel declines.*

*Hypothesis #3: The values that drive Hamas expand or narrow based upon environmental conditions.*

## **2.2 Multidisciplinary Work Related to Armed Group Conflict and Hamas**

*A certain center of gravity develops, the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends. That is the point against which all our energies should be directed. - Clausewitz*

It is necessary to establish why using popular support measures can improve our understanding of conflict dynamics and power-seeking insurgent groups. Though initial endowments of armed groups shape the way rebel leaders engage with their host populations and use violence (Weinstein 2007), the authority by which armed groups engage with their populations is a continuum, which at one extreme is the delivery of social services to produce loyalties (Chehab 2007) and to the other, violence under ‘rights of law’ (Schmidt 1950). Hamas, for example, spends a large portion of their budget to support the social needs of Palestinians (Levitt 2006), yet in Gaza since 2007 they have written laws, based upon Koranic principles, which they now enforce through their police and military force (Sayigh 2011). This continuum produces a unique set of interactions between the host population and the armed group. According to Kalyvas (2006: 12), ideology matters more than territory, ‘political actors try to shape popular support and deter collaboration with their rival’. He also argues that leaders of armed groups look to popular support as a function of group action. Where support is strong, behaviours of the group are less intrusive, while in areas where support is weak, intervention is an issue of greater concern for the groups. Typically popular support can be understood as attitudinal and behavioural agency whereby the group competes for loyalties of the host population. In most conflict environments, popular support data is weak or non-existent. This, however, is not the case in the Palestinian and Israeli conflict. Good data is available for both attitudinal and behavioural functions of popular support, yet no meaningful study of conflict has analysed this data to understand the dynamics of the group in relation to the host population and the conduct of violence.

As described by Kalyvas (2006: 93-95), the Vietcong provide a counter-factual to the importance of the relationship between the armed group and popular support measures. Many Vietnamese farmers by day were voting for the anti-communists in local elections because local authorities were monitoring their actions, while by night they were conspiring with the Vietcong, also because rebel leaders were watching. Stoll's (1993: 20) argument adds another wrinkle when considering popular support measures, 'just because an insurgency grows rapidly does not mean that it represents popular aspirations and has broad base of support'. The dichotomy represented by the actions of the Vietnamese farmer and the rapid rise of the Vietcong challenges the idea that popular support polling has demonstrable value in explaining the dynamics in armed conflict or insurgent groups. In the Vietnam context, and other contexts where the real threat of reprisal is extended to the populace for their positions of support, it is certain that the support measures are biased. Popular support measures are less useful in this case. However, in an environment where independent researchers are able to perform methodologically sound studies on popular opinion without the populace facing the threat of reprisal, the data can be useful.

Though armed groups may use intimidation as a coercive means to gain material or physical support from the populace, the approach is typically short-term and does not engender devotion and sympathy. What does create this devotion? Perhaps the most valuable lesson thus far has been the Clausewitzian realisation that the host population represents the 'center of gravity' for these groups. Like dance partners, the armed group and the host population are engaged in a give and take relationship. The partners take turns leading, but when the host population decides that the dance or rhythm must change, the groups adapt or suffer the consequences. A disastrous scenario for the armed group is to have a partner who wants to quit dancing before the group has achieved its aims. By means discussed in this thesis, Hamas has adapted their style of dance to avoid this fate.

In an interview in Cairo, Mousa Abu Marzouk, the Deputy Chairman (and former Chairman) of Hamas, commented on the dance analogy. Marzouk (Marzouk, pers.comm., 26 September 2012), with a wry smile, said, 'because of my faith, I've never learned to dance'.

Finally, Sharvit (2013) found that in 39 Israeli *Targeted Killings* of Palestinian violent activists, nearly all during the Second *Intifada*, there was no predictive relationship between Israeli killings and Palestinian led violence against except when senior leaders of the violent factions were assassinated. Sharvit argues that in those cases (between 5 and 10), the Palestinian factions launched attacks against Israel within two weeks of the assassinations.<sup>8</sup> Though helpful in developing a better understanding of Hamas violent actions, the paper offers no understanding of the relationship between violence and popular support measures.

### **2.2.1 Modern Conflict Viewed Through Ancient Understanding**

To better understand modern antagonists in armed conflict it is often helpful to refer to ancient understanding of conflict. The work of the ancient historian Thucydides (trans. Crawley 2009) offers us the idea that the Peloponnesian conflict was influenced by the philosophical principle of realism, where the inevitability of conflict persists. John Locke's (1689) work on liberalism counters the fatalistic notion of conflict is inevitable by suggesting that societal progress will reduce conflict for harmony. The use of these classical theories is not an attempt to reduce the broad body of modern literature on Hamas and armed groups into arbitrary categories. Rather, the idea is that by better understanding how these old theories apply to bygone conflicts, we can better understand the undulations of modern conflict and armed groups like Hamas.

Pericles, the leader of Athens and central character of Thucydides's (trans. Crawley 2009) work (and Shakespeare's play *Prince of Tyre*), uttered a famous axiom that provides a clear understanding of Realism in conflict, particularly when pursued by states, 'fishes live in the sea, as men do on land; the great ones eat up the little ones'. Another statement by Pericles (trans. Crawley 2009: 2,6) demonstrated realism on a more human level, 'and surely, to a man of spirit, the degradation of cowardice must be immeasurable more grievous than the unfelt death which strikes him in the midst of his strength and patriotism'. Hobbes (1642: 12) furthered the notion of realism by claiming that the state of nature was not 'benign' and that violence was a 'by-product of anarchy'. Hobbes's idea of the highest order of things is 'war of all against all', resulting in a 'life

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<sup>8</sup> Note: the Sharvit (2013) paper is unclear on the total  $n$  used to demonstrate a relationship between Israeli Targeted Killings and Palestinian Faction led violence against Israel, but it can be concluded that the  $n$  was small.

experience that is nasty and short' (Hobbes 1651: chp 13). Conflict through the prism of realism is not relegated to those scholars from centuries ago. More recently, Thomas Shelling (1975: 4) argued that the strategy of conflict was a 'conscious calculation of advantages'. Even more recent, Kalyvas (2006: 13-14), though very much an instrumentalist, produced work on the understanding of civil war that claims violence is a product of intimate retribution, which is very much a realist notion. According to Joseph Nye (2005: 12), realists' central concern is 'war and the use of force'. Michael Kerr (2011: 4-7) offers an expanded understanding of realism in existing conflicts by suggesting that British national interests were advanced when Prime Minister Heath considered shifting from 'direct rule' to 'power sharing' in Northern Ireland to bring 'the security crisis under control'. The greatest challenge to the theoretical idea of realism, as it pertains to Hamas, is that the thinking is most often fatalistic or deterministic. Hamas very much lives by realist principles in that their goal of reclamation of lost lands in 1948 destines them to armed conflict with the occupiers of that land.

If realists argue that conflict between Palestinians and Israel is inevitable, then Palestinians and Israelis would be generally willing to support violence against the opposition and the enhancement of military force for eventuality of the conflict. This idea motivates the following corollary:

*Corollary #1b: Palestinians will generally be willing to support violence against Israel and the advancement of military weapons for use in conflict against Israel.*

In contrast, liberalism, in theory, leans toward a more peaceful set of propositions. John Locke (2011), often considered the father of liberalism, claims that people could make the threat of anarchy less by 'joining in society together...for mutual preservation of lives, liberties, and estates'. Kant (trans. Hastie 2012: 4-24) argues that republics will favour peace and that the windfall of the republic would be the addition of other republics that would lead to a 'pacifist union' that would make war obsolete. Unfortunately, Kant's hypothesis is rebuffed by the reality that republics have engaged in preemptive war and that young democracies/republics have a greater tendency to war (Mansfield & Snyder 1997; Collier 2009; Weinstein 2007). More recently, Bertrand Russell (1960: chp 1) claimed that the capacity to judge a state's foreign policy lies with

the individual. Ernest Gellner (1998: 22) claimed that industrial society's contribution to the stability of things was the expectation of 'perpetual growth' and 'continuous improvement'. Liberalism, particularly with Russell's and Gellner's intervention, would suggest that as economic conditions in Palestine and Israel improve and when the advancements in a republic form of government are made, conflict would decline. This idea motivated, in part, Hypothesis #2 above.

For Hamas, the boundaries of realism and liberalism are evident. Consider one example of the dynamic nature of the conflict, the disruption to the implementation of the Oslo Accords by both the Israeli Settlers and Hamas. The Peace Process established by Oslo was very much a liberal approach to the improvement of humanity through a specific trust building process. Yet, the process was disrupted by armed attacks of Settlers on Palestinians through the Cave of the Patriarchs Massacre and the assassination of one of their own, Prime Minister Rabin. Further, Hamas engaged in suicide bombing activity at the precise time (during the run-up to the Israeli elections in the spring of 1996) to shake loose the Israeli population's interest in Oslo. The violent acts by both groups demonstrate that even liberal notions of peace building through trust and harmony by many can become victim of the ravaging of conflict led by those realists who believe conflict between the parties to be inevitable. Like bookends, the idea of realism and liberalism parallels Tolstoy's classic title 'War and Peace' as a notion of the continual state of things in the question between Palestinians and Israelis with Hamas a principal actor. Though quite a simplistic understanding of the nature of conflict and peace, these two theoretical premises account for the major tectonic movements of scholarly work on conflict, but are insufficient explanations for the dynamic behaviours of Hamas and its use of violence.

### **2.2.2 Hamas, Palestinians and Ethno-Nationalism**

The ethnic difference between Palestinians and Israelis require a review of ethno-nationalism studies to see if they offer theoretical insights as to the actions of Hamas and Palestinians in their quest for statehood through the use of violence. Though nationalism studies are typically thought of as a 20<sup>th</sup> century invention (or 19<sup>th</sup> if you consider Renan's speech on the issue), Thucydides (trans. Crawley: 2009:1,2) described the conflict between Sparta and Athens as a contrast of national identities, 'men

remonstrate with friends who are in error, accusations they reserve for enemies who have wronged them. Besides, we consider that we have as good a right as anyone to point out a neighbor's faults, particularly when we contemplate the great contrast between the two national characters'. In 1882, Renan (1996) argued that nations were natural based upon common race, geography, language, religion and collective memory. Joseph Nye (2005: 3) argues that world politics had three forms before the modern state: '1) Imperialism (e.g. Rome, Mongols); 2) the feudal system (Europe after the fall of Rome); and 3) the anarchic system of states (e.g. city states – Ancient Greece and 15<sup>th</sup> Century Italy'. Generally the literature about Nationalism attempts to explain the origins of the modern state and attempts to understand conflict through the prism of statehood, race and national identity.

Nationalism, as a scholarly discipline, looks at the origins of conflict typically through two different lenses, primordial and instrumental. For primordialists, conflict typically originates from cultures and ethnicities with deep and long memories (Smith 2005:19) where 'hatred builds upon ancient hatreds' (Petersen 2002:1). Though this may be the case for some ethnic conflict, it does not universally apply. Laitin's (2007: preface) work demonstrates that ethnic difference is a necessary, but insufficient condition for ethnic conflict, 'understanding communal relations...people belonging to different ethnic groups cooperate nearly all the time'. Conner (2002: 302-306) argues that primordial behaviours fade away as modernisation progresses and self-determination as a national and individual idea advances. The primordial concept was often used in colonialization by the European powers, particularly during the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Great Britain employed the 'divide and conquer' policy. The approach sought to minimise the influence and cohesion of ethnic groups by drawing national boundaries in such a way as to split groups amongst two, three or more states (e.g. Iraq, Sudan, etc.). Palestine and Israel are 20<sup>th</sup> century examples of boundary drawing for ethnic division.

The primordial is contrasted by the instrumental approach to nationalism studies. Ernest Gellner (2006: 1-2) argues that modernity is the primary driver of nationalism, 'nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not occur across political ones, and...that ethnic boundaries within a given state...should not separate the power-holders from the rest'. Generally, instrumentalists look at the progress of humanity as the cohesion that brings individuals to the nation.

Benedict Anderson (2006) reasons that communities and nations are ‘imagined’ by people; suggesting that the formation of a nation is a function of individuals and groups searching for and constructing identity. Instrumentalists argue further that the cohesion of a people to a nation is a result of the expectancy of improved conditions (Gellner 2006: 7), interactions with other groups (Horowitz 1989), noxious stimuli (Gurr 2010: 23), anti-colonialism (Breuilly 1993: 284) or something more sinister like the quest for power (Orwell 1945), the subjugation of a weaker people (Gurr 1998: 34), or the ideological exhortation maintained by police powers (Geertz 1963: 110). Hobsbawm (2000: chp 1) argued that states produce nationalism, not the opposite.<sup>9</sup> Yet, there are many nationalisms with no state. Other scholars demonstrate how elites enhance nationalism through constructed identities (Toft 2009: 228-52), political institutions (Horowitz 1989: 75), leader charisma (Toft 2009) and political doctrine (Breuilly 1993: 12).

The relationship between nationalism and conflict is strong, but nationalism studies are better at explaining the structural origins of conflict in theory than the actual empirics of a particular conflict and its dynamics – the escalation or reduction of it. Instrumentalists and Primordialists fail to explain the use of violence for ethnic or nationalism purposes for several reasons, specificity being primary. Gellner (2006: 7), the stalwart of instrumentalist scholarship argued, ‘two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognise each other as belonging to the same nation’. In contrast, this research demonstrates that it is the agreement that two men share the same enemy (e.g. Hamas is forged as a resistance movement against an Israel and Palestinian secularism) that creates the bonds and cohesion to a group in a greater degree than the supposed belonging to a nation or to Smith’s notion of ethnicity, or even religion (as in the case of secular Fatah). Consider bin Laden’s admonishment to al-Qaeda affiliates about the use of Palestine as a central issue in lieu of local grievances, which suggests that the tie that binds is the enemy Israel and her supporters (Ignatius 2012). The idea of nationalism due to the social contract of improved lives through growth and modernity does not address the social contract between an armed group and its host population, for such a relationship is more complex than the improvement of living standards. Rather, ideas about group identity, its rights and connection with territory engender this contract.

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<sup>9</sup> Note: A counter-factual to Hobsbawm’s argument is the Jewish Nation, which was forged prior to the state through ethnic/religious identity (Mosse 1993:121).

Further, this contract is not based solely on the notion that a society has cohesion because of a shared expectancy of improved conditions (e.g. Palestinian acceptance of hardships as a function of devotion to a cause) as Gellner argues (2006), rather it is more complex with dynamic attitudes and behaviours, requiring further examination.

The primordialists' failure to explain intractable conflict can be demonstrated by challenging Smith's central argument. Smith argues (2005) that pre-existing ethnic ties and sentiments, particularly when viewed through periodisation of ethnicity form nations. This framework is problematic when applied to ancient conflicts where debate about the rightful 'possessor' of a specific geographic locale is central to the conflict. How far back in history must one go to determine the rightful ethnic group belonging to the fields of Kosovo, Ossetia, Chechnya, the forests of Latin America, or Palestine? Conflict dynamics are important, but are not found in theories of nationalism. Consider James Fearon's argument (2007: 7), 'those that would seek to establish a new state have an incentive to appeal for recognition and external support in precisely these terms, to say, "we merit a state because we are a true nation, just like the rest of you"'. His argument demonstrates that nations and states do not just appear because there is historical ethnic enmity and desire for self-determination. That is not to say that Smith and other Primordialists argue such, rather it illustrates the fact that in conflict, there are undercurrents that make possible or impossible the pathway to statehood.

Ethno-nationalism as a theoretical framework for Palestinians would suggest that grievances between political groups like Fatah and Hamas would subside and make way for cooperation to produce a Palestinian State for Palestinian Arabs. This notion motivates the next corollary:

*Corollary #2a: Ethno-nationalism interests of Palestinian Arabs would give rise to cooperation between Hamas and Fatah for the development of a unified Palestinian State.*

### **2.2.3 Conflict Dynamics: Hamas Violence - Civil War, Insurgency or Terrorism?**

*For as long as there have been states there have been those that engaged in sedition and rebellion...from Socrates to martyrs to utopians to revolutionaries to Marxists  
- Janet Coleman (1990: Introduction)*



A recent development in political violence and conflict research has been to better understand the dynamics involved, including violence (Kalyvas 2006: 22), changing causal mechanisms over time (Hughes 2007: 173) and the process of individual and group radicalisation (Sageman, Atran, Ginges and Davis 2009; Sageman 2008: vii) in attempt to identify new and novel methods for conflict reduction. In contrast to the disciplines that study of the origins of conflict, which often attempts to reduce the causes to simple agents or mechanisms, the study of conflict dynamics looks at the ‘plurality of causes’ (Hughes 2007) and the changing interactions of armed participants over time. Therefore, this section combines scholarly work on civil war, insurgency and terrorism to provide a broader understanding of the dynamics that shape violent conduct by armed groups and support of related populations.

In his work on Chechnya, Jim Hughes (2007: 173) makes the argument about the need to understand conflict dynamics, ‘rather than look for explanations in “ethnic belligerence” or think in terms of cause of the conflict, we must examine the plurality of causes and sub-conflicts and how they change over time’. Hughes’s work demonstrates the evolution of the conflict in Chechnya from one rooted in historical enmity to one that morphed into an ideological struggle pitting secular Russia against Islamic forces of the Caucasus. The evolution in the conflict demonstrated path dependency, escalation of violence due to the dynamics of radicalisation on both sides and the influence of the larger global narrative of great powers being at war with Islam.

Marc Sageman (2008: vii) states the importance of dynamics in another way, ‘the key to successful eradication of this threat [terrorism], which is real but unlikely to endanger the existence of the nation, is to understand the dynamics of this process, which has serious implications for how Western governments should proceed to contain this menace’. In his work on civil war, Kalyvas (2006: 22) expressed the value of understanding conflict dynamics, ‘approaching violence as a dynamic process allows an investigation of the sequence of decisions and events that intersect to produce violence, as well as the study of otherwise invisible actors who partake in this process and shape it in fundamental ways’. Further, the process of joining an insurgency or armed group and the interactions of these groups with out-groups and host populations are firmly rooted in the network dynamics (Petersen 2002; Sageman 2008; Sageman et al., 2009).

Given that the thesis is, at its core, the examination of an armed group engagement with its host population, it is important to draw out the importance of this element on the dynamics in conflict. Armed groups are generally born from a population of a particular geographic area (exceptions are the Mujahidin, Al-Qaeda, etc.). As such, the group must draw upon the population for support in terms of people and resources. This relationship is dynamic and requires constant adaptations by each. Because the host population must endure the impact of conflict: violence, destruction, personal loss, etc., the population and their corresponding engagement with the armed group cannot be understood without looking more broadly at the conflict itself, including the environment, violence, political conditions, armed group adaptations and domestic and foreign influence.

Weinstein (2007) claims that resource endowment, particularly the lack thereof, will engender a greater level of indiscriminate violence by armed groups against their host population, while Kalyavas (2006) argues that selective violence by groups against their host populations is a result of a series of transactions between political actors and individuals. The latter, he argues, is often the result of informants used by the armed groups looking to recruit talent or to weed out those with hostile intent. Collier's (2009: 21) generalisation that democratic states are more prone to violence when per capita income is below \$2,700 (2009 dollars) and the opposite for autocratic governments is hard to use when looking at specific conflicts. Palestine, for example, had a per annum income of \$2,000 in 2005 below the Collier threshold (Wasserstein 2008: 58), but how would one describe their government? Democratic elections were held in 2006, but internal and external violent conflict erupted in 2006, 2009 and 2012. And now, the government is in a form of status quo suspension where the recent reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah (PA) and potential subsequent national elections may overcome the lack of legal standing for its current institutions. Unfortunately, Collier's approach does not explain how armed groups emerge to become defenders of a people. Surely it is not because the groups claim to be able to improve personal incomes, is it?

Weinstein (2007: 7) also makes resource related claims to the perpetuation of violence from armed groups. His central finding is that 'rebel groups that emerge in environments rich in natural resources or with the external support of an outside patron tend to commit high levels of indiscriminate violence... governments that arise in

resource-poor contexts perpetrate far fewer abuses and employ violence selectively and strategically'. Though a valuable contribution to help understand causation in conflict, resource endowment as a single factor simply does not capture the complexity of interactions between the armed groups and host populations, particularly when those armed groups seek popular support. Hamas comes from a resource-poor environment, but has outside patrons (e.g. Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, etc.), and, for the most part, has refrained from committing violent acts against their number one domestic antagonist, Fatah.<sup>10</sup> Further, the idea of abuses is often too subjective (e.g. mentally, physically, economically, emotionally, etc.) to provide specific meaning. Unless we consider Israel the target of indiscriminate Hamas violence, Weinstein's generalisation does not seem to fit the violent actions of Hamas.

Complexities aside, many argue that economic considerations do seem to matter for those that join rebellion or are engaged in actions that may lead to violent conflict (Kalyvas 2006; Chehab 2007; Collier 2009; Weinstein 2007). Saddam Hussein, amongst others, contributed handsomely to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers in an attempt to incentivise others to join the Palestinian fight against Israel (Levitt 2006).

The resource endowment argument would suggest, if we use Collier's numbers, that Palestinians would engage in violence against democratically elected state institutions when income is below \$2,700 (2009 dollars). Given that Palestinian GDP per capita has been significantly below this number (Chp 7.4) since 1994, it suggests that violence against democratic institutions would result. Yet what exactly do we have in terms of democratic institutions in Palestine?

Beyond the economic and income arguments, there is a distinct ethnic and or religious element in many intractable conflicts, like Chechnya (Hughes 2007), Palestine (Segev 1999), Northern Ireland (Kissane 2004; English 2003; and Hughes 2012) and the Guatemalan Petan (Medin et al., 2003), amongst others. Laitin (2007: 4) takes a unique approach to the ethnic and religious peculiarities in conflict. Particularly, he looks for

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<sup>10</sup> Note: the primary exception was the civil war between Hamas and Fatah in Gaza. The enmity between the two political factions remains high, but Hamas has maintained, mostly, a commitment to not violently attack their Palestinian counterparts.

the nuances that explain conflict, arguing that circumstances create unique attributes that lead to or away from conflict. To some extent, this approach discounts the group's role in fomenting an environment of conflict. That said, Laitin's use of irredentism (Italian word meaning to reclaim) as a goal of armed groups is representative in most conflicts as armed groups generally seek restoration of rights, autonomy or self-rule for lands that are perceived to be lost. Environmental conditions that contribute to insurgency, rebellion and civil war include a 'sharp contrast between ethnic or religious diversity' (Fearon & Laitin 2003: 75-82), economic destitution (Collier 2009) and the presence of sanctuaries for violent actors (Kalyvas 2006; and Fearon & Laitin 2003). Though the environmental conditions in conflict tend to be bleak and are important in the psyche of the individual (Merari 2010; and Kruglanski 2009), they are often influenced by other factors than just economy and politics.

Violence in conflict is the ultimate weapon of armed groups. It represents a powerful agent in human interactions and one that consumes combatant and non-combatant victims with grief, anger, rage and fear. Violence in armed conflict is typically understood through notions of selective (Kalyvas 2006), intimate (Kalyvas), indiscriminate (Lyal 2009) and just (Dugard 1977; and Hughes 2007) violence. Acts of terrorism are often associated with each form of violence. Though scholars do not agree upon the definition of terrorism, the term 'political violence' represents terrorism and other acts of violence and can more easily be used to describe the types of violence that emanate in intractable conflict. Scholarly work on political violence range from studies of isolated 'lone-wolf' attacks (Spaaij 2010; and Phillips 2010), organised regional (Sageman et al. 2009; Sageman 2008) and global acts (Hoffman 2006), insurgencies (Fearon & Laitin 2003) and civil wars (Kalyvas 2006; and Fearon & Laitin).

Scott Atran's interdisciplinary fieldwork demonstrates the dynamic of the individual and small group on the larger context of conflict. His work exposes the influence of friendship and kinship on the use of violence as a tool, exposing that sacred values of individuals and group trump material considerations and that material considerations by states often increases the use of violent tactics by individuals which make up the armed groups (Atran, et. al., 2007). Like Atran, Marc Sageman has a 'bottom-up' view of political violence. His fieldwork has produced a theory about the dynamics of political violence, called 'The Blob Theory'. The theory, based upon politically violent acts

outside of Chechnya, Iraq and Palestine since 2003, demonstrates that the social network dynamics of politically violent actors is influenced most by friends and is very much path dependent. In contrast, Kalyvas (2006) looks at violence in the context of civil war and demonstrates that its perpetrators commonly act out of retribution and that violence is more about personal vendetta than other factors.

Other terrorism scholars offer competing theoretical perspectives. According to Bruce Hoffman (2006: 173), ‘terrorism is theatre’, a notion that began with scholarship about the anarchists of Russia. Notwithstanding the fact that successful violent acts demonstrate effectiveness of the armed group, the argument suggests that groups do not commit actions randomly as each wants to maximise the publicity of their acts to concentrate their intimidation. Hoffman essentially argues that terrorism is a top down enterprise where the masterminds of the organisation direct group actions at a wider, but intended audience. He claims that it is this strategic engagement that creates an environment that attracts others to its cause. Although there may be truth in his argument, it would be hard to quantify. How would one go about getting unbiased information on the number of supporters that have come to be active or sympathetic with the group through the publicity of violent acts? His argument is essentially a business case that armed groups brand themselves for new consumers through spectacular attacks.

Given that the Palestinian violence dataset includes a subset of the ten most prolific attacks against Israel, it is possible to see what happened to *Hamas Support*. Hoffman’s theoretical argument suggests that *Hamas Support* base would increase after these attacks. This motivates the next corollary:

*Corollary #1c: Hamas gained support from Palestinians by launching its ten most prolific attacks against Israel.*

Countering Hoffman’s arguments, Sageman (2008: vii) sees terrorism as a bottom up enterprise, ‘(t)he present threat has evolved from a structured group of al-Qaeda masterminds, controlling vast resources and issuing commands, to a multitude of informal local groups trying to emulate their predecessors by conceiving and executing operations from the bottom up’. Through a large collection of data on perpetrators of

terror acts, he distinguishes (Sageman, pers.comm., 2013) claims that those violent actors after 2003 as the ‘third wave’ made up mostly of peddlers and thugs compared to doctors and engineers in the ‘second wave’. The strength of Sageman’s work is that it is quantifiable and largely made up of understanding the dynamic social networking process of the perpetrators of the violence. Because his approach does not examine violence within Palestine and Israel, it is unclear whether his conclusions can be extrapolated to that conflict – though there is no reason to think otherwise. On this point, Atran conducted similar field research in the Palestinian Territories and came to a similar conclusion with Sageman (Sageman et.al., 2009); terrorism is a bottom up enterprise where friends are the primary radicalisers on the pathway to political violence.

The ideas related to this thesis are different than understanding the notion of ‘a quest for significance’ (Pape 2003; Merari 2005; Atran 2006; and Kruglanski 2009), cognitive dissonance (Merari 2010) or the recruitment mechanism of armed groups. Rather, this thesis is about how the group itself becomes known as the defender of the nation. How does the group evolve from seven supporters to a million, where young men and families would find the group as a worthy vehicle for violent expression? Horgan’s (2005: 51) perspective is that ‘terrorism like other forms of deviant behaviour can have its roots in mundane, non-deviant behaviours’. Merari (2005: 70) argues that terror tactics like suicide bombings ‘instill the impression that people who are willing to sacrifice themselves cannot be stopped and their cause is *bound to win*’. Though Horgan and Merari have investigated violence in intractable conflicts, their work has only ‘scratched the surface’ on the dynamics of popular support, violent acts and armed group behaviour.

Somewhat surprisingly, counter-insurgency doctrine relates to armed group adaptation insomuch that the new US Army doctrine requires the army to adapt to lessons learnt from insurgent strategy and tactics (Nagl 2002). Although counter-insurgency doctrine is focused on adaptations of the army to issues experienced in the field of battle, the similarities between the learning environment between small armed groups and a large army is striking. The US Army doctrine calls for a learning and adaptive environment in order to more effectively combat insurgencies. Paradoxically, the COIN (Counter Insurgency) Theory suggests that armies adapt to be more like insurgents to the

detriment of the ‘heavy army’, which is needed to wage war. Unlike the larger state armies, armed groups, including Hamas, have to be learning organisations (Sayigh, 2011) that adapt quickly or they will not survive.

In the *Origin of Species*, Darwin’s explanation for Natural Selection was in essence an understanding that organisms adapt to their habitat(s). Those more capable of adapting would survive and reproduce. The parallels between the evolution of an organism and a group are evident. This naturally extends to an armed group who survives based upon the tacit or direct support that it receives from the host population. Other scholarly work, particularly that on drug trafficking by armed groups, has demonstrated group adaptability based upon environmental conditions. Some of the thinking can apply to this thesis.

Armed groups must adapt to their environmental conditions to expand from a small to large support base; often they adapt through characteristics described as ‘metis’.<sup>11</sup> It is the cunning behaviour of these groups that leads Michael Kenney (2007: ix) to argue, ‘terrorists and counter-terrorists not only learn, they learn from each other, through complex interactions in shared social systems; “co-evolutionary” dynamic factors the traffickers and terrorist is significant, if not inevitably superior’. Kenney’s research also argues that these groups espouse competitive adaptation, often superior to governments, due in part to the notion of ‘metis’. Other scholars have looked at the nature of drug trafficking groups through the lens of adaptation. Historian Alan Block (1994: 86) wrote that progressive-era (1920s) New York criminal entrepreneurs, when they were able, would coalesce, breakup and re-coalesce as opportunity arose. Even US counter narcotics leaders refer to the ‘balloon effect’ in countering the narcotics industry. Assistant Secretary of State, Robert Charles (pers.comm., 2004) often referred to this problem when describing the problems associated with countering the Colombia drug trade indicating that when one operation was closed, cartel leaders would adapt to keep the illicit product flowing. John Nagl (2002: 3-58) also describes the learning nature of

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<sup>11</sup> Note: in Greek Mythology, Metis was the goddess that espoused ingenuity, skill, cunning, elusiveness and deceit. So powerful is the concept, that in Modern Greek it has become an adjective to describe a clever individual or group. Detienne and Vernant wrote, ‘[metis] implies a complex but very coherent body of mental attitudes and intellectual behaviour which combine flair, wisdom, forethought, subtlety of mind, deception, resourcefulness, vigilance, opportunism, various skills, and experience acquired over the years. It is applied to situations which are transient, shifting, disconcerting and ambiguous, situations which do not lend themselves to precise measurement, exact calculation or rigorous logic’.

insurgencies. The Director of the CIA, George Tenet (2004), admitted that even al-Qaeda was a 'learning organisation' that adapts to its environment in order to survive. Decision maker consensus is that armed groups adapt to survive. But decision makers and scholars are not sure how this happens, particularly when the adaptations change the role and use of violence by the group. Related, this thesis is intended to further understanding of the methods of adaptation that occur within an armed group as a result of domestic and foreign influence.

During the course of my research it became evident that changing values in the Palestinian population and in Hamas were influencers on each other. But, what role do the values really play in the relationship between an armed group and the population? There is not much in literature on this point. Sacred values (values resistant to material trade offs) research on the nuclear pursuit in Iran provides the only example of how a population can have shifting values even to the point of making normative values sacred. In that work, a small portion of the Iranian population was found to hold the sacred value, 'Iran has the right to pursue nuclear enrichment for peaceful purposes' (Dehghani et al. 2010). Though the nuclear issue has become the battleground for this portion of the Iranian population, the issue likely became sacralised because it threatened notions of Iranian national pride and interests in self-determination. Ten years ago, the Iranian population had little to no knowledge of an Iranian nuclear pursuit. The fact that the issue could become sacralised in such short time is evidence that even a small portion of the population can adapt its values based upon changing environmental conditions on issues of grave importance to the world.

The idea that values across a population can become sacred also suggest that maybe the values that are sacred to a population can have different priority order under different environmental conditions over time. Would Iranians consider nuclear enrichment a 'sacred' right had the world encouraged it or has it become sacred to this population as a result of the international condemnation and sanctions? Has nuclear enrichment surpassed the common human passion for having a better life? Maybe for some, but the likelihood is that values change order of priority for people based upon environmental conditions. The idea of prioritisation of values motivates the next corollary:

*Corollary #3a: Hamas reprioritises values based on environmental conditions.*



#### **2.2.4 Is Hamas Explained by Social Movement Theory?**

A good argument can be made that the growth/decline in *Hamas Support* can be explained through social movement theory. The argument suggests that social mobilisation of the Palestinian people is based upon some moral affinity or mandate offered by Hamas that is unmet by other groups or the government, which engenders attraction to the group. Further, the theory suggests that Hamas will adapt its engagement with the Palestinian people in order to capture more direct or tacit support or to not lose the support.

One clear example of this adaptation was demonstrated when Hamas changed its position on the utilisation of women as armed combatants. Prior to this change, Hamas had articulated a position against women involved in combat operations on moral grounds. Meanwhile, Fatah had used women combatants on multiple occasions resulting in an overwhelming response from Palestinians and greater attention to the Palestinian cause throughout the world. Palestinians demonstrated a high level of sympathy for the women and outwardly expressed support for their actions, which resulted in greater support for Fatah. Within hours of the seventh female suicide bomber and the first from Hamas, the Hamas founder, Sheikh Yassin, issued a fatwa stating that women as combatants was permissible in Islam and that the previous positions by Hamas had always elevated women to the level of heroines for their actions in support of Palestinian resistance (Regular 2004). Such examples of group adaptations to popular support are ubiquitous, but they do not necessarily mean that the group can be understood through social movement theory alone. How, for example, does the group balance calls from its most ardent supporters for increased violence against Israel, while trying to increase popular support from a population that may not support, to the same extent, the violent acts? And, to what extent, do violent acts, or the lack thereof, relate to popular support?

Levitt (2006), and others, argue that a majority of Hamas's resources are dedicated to the *dawa* programme in order to meet the unmet welfare needs of Palestinians and to create a mechanism for recruitment. The existence of the programme establishes a quid pro quo relationship with the people thereby undermining the idea that the allure of the

group is solely its moral mandate. The parallel track of Hamas to offer a moral framework for religious based violent resistance and welfare programmes designed to increase Islamisation of the population demonstrates that Hamas's strategy is based upon its ability to provide services for Palestinians. If those services were stopped, would the population still support Hamas? We can test this question.

Since 2007, the *dawa* programme in the West Bank has systematically been shut down or assumed by the Palestinian Authority. The consequence is that we can test the relationship between an active and inactive *dawa* programme and *Hamas Support* in Gaza and the West Bank, respectively. The next corollary:

*Corollary #2b: Popular Support for Hamas declined when the dawa programme was shut down in the West Bank.*

Related understanding on armed groups and terrorism comes from work on social network analysis. In a study on the Theoretical Pathways to Political Violence (Sageman et al. 2009), social network theory was used to explain the development of the groups that perpetrated the Dutch terrorism (Hofstad network in the Netherlands), the Madrid train bombings and the Hebron (Hamas) launched suicide bombings. The theoretical insights offered were that friends and kin become self-radicalised on their way to committing violent acts. The story referenced in the Prologue of this thesis was about two young men that came from one soccer team in the University neighborhood of Hebron, in the West Bank. There were twelve young men on that team that motivated each other to become suicide bombers or attackers between 2003 and 2008. Once radicalised, Hamas determined when, where and how to use the young men to advance their interests with the Israelis and the host population. So how is it that Hamas makes the decision on when to use violent acts? Social movement theory would suggest that Hamas would engage in violent acts when *Palestinian Support for Violence* was increasing and would reduce attacks when *Support for Violence* was decreasing. The next corollary:

*Corollary #1d: Palestinian Support for Violence predicts Hamas led violence against Israel.*

Hamas had its origins in religious social service activities, but quickly found that it was the religious framing of violent resistance, making Islamic resistance to Israel a moral foundation and attractor for the group, is the thing that provided sharp contrast to the secular and nationalistic Palestinian group Fatah. Thus, Hamas evoked the moral cause of religious fairness and violent activity in the face of secular Fatah and Jewish Israel (Chehab 2007). Consequently, social movement theory would predict that as Hamas advanced its credo of Islamisation of Palestinians and religious based violent resistance to Israeli occupation, that *Support for Violence* against Israel would increase. This notion motivates the next corollary:

*Corollary #1e: Palestinian religiosity predicts support for Islamisation of Palestine and/or violence against Israel.*

Another indication that something is different about armed group behaviour can be seen in the group psychology work on ‘prosocial’ behaviour. In contrast to anti-social behaviour, groups will undertake ‘costly commitments’ for the benefit of the larger host population (Sosi & Ruffle 2003: 715). Norenzayan & Shariff (2008: 58-60) further developed the work when they explained the result of ‘selective pressure’ on groups. Their work indicates that groups face certain ‘select’ pressures by the host populations, which result in changes or adaptations by the groups based upon various environmental conditions, like ecology (Beardsley & McQuinn, 2009), to reinforce their relationship with the larger host population, the prosocial behaviour.

Hamas undertakes ‘costly commitments’, prosocial behaviour, like suicide bombings, for the benefit of the larger group, which underscores the need for these groups to adapt activities to keep up with the changing opinions of the host populations. Generally, armed groups are sensitive to the opinions of their host populations, which demonstrate that these groups also experience selective pressure, like shifting popular support for varying issues. According to Turchin (2006: 2), groups with strong internal unity and cooperation, *asibaya*, are more adaptable in shifting political environs. The result is that these groups adapt their prosocial behaviour in order to gain wider acceptance and sympathy from the larger populations to further accomplish violent and non-violent objectives.

The continuous requirement to adapt to the demands of the larger host population even has an effect on the values of the group. In statements by Hamas leaders, for example, it is possible to see changing positions on various issues, including values central to the group. Clearly demonstrated in the founding documents and public statements over 25 years, one objective of Hamas is territorial reclamation of all lands lost in 1948. Yet, at times, Hamas is pressured to adapt its position by overwhelming popular support for a Palestinian State within 1967 borders. Prior to entering national politics, Hamas would articulate that a Palestinian State 'in' the 1967 borders was never going to happen. But, the selective pressure, resulted in a policy shift to the willingness to accept a State 'on' 1967 borders. The distinction is large with just a slight shift in language. By shifting from 'in' to 'on' 1967 borders, the group was able to adapt its position without giving up its core value of full land reclamation. The term 'in' suggested that the borders would be fixed, while the term 'on' suggests that Hamas would accept a smaller State without having to give up land claims and future efforts for land reclamation.

Some would argue that Hamas makes no compromise to its values if they interpret language in such a manner. Essentially Hamas determined that compromising on the borders of a State would be acceptable, for now. The 'for now' part is significant, because there are no assurances that the group would be able to maintain momentum for further land capture. The momentary pause is not without risk to the group in its overall ambition and values. Consequently, it can be argued that this articulation represents a value shift, which is significant and meaningful, because for a large majority of Palestinians, a State 'in' 1967 borders is acceptable, thereby making selective pressure on the group even greater to conform to the will of the host population. This type of value-oriented adaptation is common and suggests that Hamas engages in prosocial behaviour based upon selective pressure.

### **2.2.5 Is Hamas a Rational or Devoted Actor?**

In academia and government, Rational Choice Theory dominates the field of international security. It relies primarily on an economic cost-benefit model to understand interactions between foreign entities and protagonists in conflict. It assumes that all actors will behave rationally, though we know that this is not always true and often a matter of perspective. According to political science scholars, states rely on

rational choice theory (Allison & Zelikow 1999; Parfit 1983; Dowding & King 1995) when developing foreign policy actions. The theory applied to international security was developed in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but nations have been using the concept of rational choice for several millennia (e.g. Athens and Sparta). Even today, the United States national security apparatus is based upon the Rational Choice construct. The National Security Act of 1947 and the later top secret initiative led by President Eisenhower entitled 'Project Solarium' established the containment policy used by the United States against the Soviet Union. These policies established the dominant elements of power now used by the US, like the Pentagon, the National Security Council and other related powers.

*The Essence of Decision* by Allison and Zelikow (1969) put forth the idea of the Rational Actor Model (RAM), a derivative of Rational Choice Theory, to explain the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The model provides a framework for understanding the relations between the two superpowers and can further be extended to state interactions. Theories such as Mutually Assured Destruction and deterrence are often linked to the work. The RAM theory is thought of so highly that it is currently taught in security courses around the world, including war colleges for senior military personnel (Naval War College 2012). But, the emergence of powerful sub-state groups and individuals on the international stage has greatly stressed the RAM to provide insight into the decision making process of these groups. The model, for example, has difficulty explaining the actions of al-Qaeda, the Tamil Tigers, Hamas or other similar sub-state groups. This limitation has grown evident by the failures of engagements by states with these groups. For example, the cessation of violence in Sri Lanka was not a result of masterful statecraft and diplomacy between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers as a result of game theory or rational choice decision-making. Rather, it was the brutal tactics by the Sri Lankan military that forced the Tamils to surrender. According to the UN, the military action claimed over 40,000 civilian lives that were being used as human shields by the Tamils (Lynch 2011).

The rational choice paradigm has been used quite often in Middle East Peace negotiations. The Oslo Accord, for example, used a systematic process of trust building steps that would lead to further sacrifice on the part of Palestinians and Israelis. The structure was based on the notion that the participants of the conflict would see that the

benefits of peace outweighed the consequences of violence and conflict and that this perception would continue progressing through the negotiation. Unfortunately, the negotiations were disrupted by extreme actions on both sides undermining confidence in the process by the host populations.

If we were to consider the application of rational choice in the relational dynamics between the Hamas and the Palestinian people, the theory would predict that the population would leave the group when the cost of being part of the group outweighed the benefits. This notion motivates the next corollary:

*Corollary #2c: Palestinians will leave Hamas when the costs of maintaining support for the group outweigh the benefits of being part.*

Scholars, like James Hughes (pers.comm., 2012), argue that states ‘may not act rationally in a conflict’ especially if it stems from historical enmity or internal insurgency. The difficulty in determining rationality is one of perspective and is often times a function of one’s values. The notion of preemptive action is an exemplar of how cost/benefit calculus is seen through different value systems. Some leaders articulate greater benefit through pre-emptive military strikes, while others articulate that such actions lead to greater cost. Thomas Schelling (1975: 4) argued that strategy by states is reliant on understanding rational behaviour, which constrain real understanding mainly because, ‘behaviour motivated by the conscious calculation of advantages’ requires a ‘consistent value system’. Though modern use of rational choice approach stems from strategic studies, states regularly intertwine cost/benefit calculus and value systems when engaged in foreign policy, including diplomatic and military action (e.g. we don’t negotiate with terrorists).<sup>12</sup>

Rationality is a matter of perspective. It may be that a state and an armed group act rationally from their own perspective. Some armed groups use suicide bombers against civilians of a state and claim it rational, while the state perceives the action as irrational. Conversely, the state may conduct security operations whereby it imposes a siege on an area to reduce violence with that very action being perceived to be irrational by the

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<sup>12</sup> Note: though a learning curve exists for states and armed groups vis-à-vis their interactions with each other, the lack of shared values greatly complicates the interactions between them and often leads participants to policy choices through cost/benefit calculations that often do not have the desired effect.

area's populace. The difference in perspective stems from a difference in values between states and groups.

When considering the conflict between Hamas and Israel, Hamas leaders claim all action, including suicide bombings against Israeli civilians resulting in the death of non-combatants, including women and children, are rational as they 'resist the occupying power'. The international community, including other Arab States, has denounced such action as terror and irrational. The crux of the different perspectives lies at the motivating values of each group. For Israel, the self-described motivation is the moral and economic development of the state that has peace and harmony with its neighbours. For Hamas, it is the reclamation of all lands lost in 1948 through the establishment of the State of Israel. To fulfill a primary objective, Hamas deems all violent action against Israel, which may lead to the reclamation of land, as a rational act. For those who do not hold the same values, the actions are deemed irrational and harmful to the Palestinian people. According to Schelling (1975: 4):

If we confine our study to the theory of strategy [of conflict], we seriously restrict ourselves by the assumption of rational behaviour – not just of intelligent behaviour, but of behaviour motivated by a conscious calculation of advantages, a calculation that in turn is based on an explicit and internally consistent value system. We thus limit the applicability of results we reach.

Foreign policy institutions, which were designed to handle state interactions, are now required to lead the way with non-state actors. Yet, for various reasons, most are unable to engage these groups with anything but traditional instruments of power, and for legal reasons often do not use diplomacy as one of those instruments. An example of the structural deficit can be seen in a prominent policy committee at The White House. The Counter-Terrorism Policy Coordinating Committee includes primarily White House Policy Directors and decision-makers from law enforcement, intelligence and military agencies. Typically absent within these meetings are decision makers in agriculture, education, health, labour and social services. This structural limitation, codified by Presidential authority, often prohibits natural collaboration from relevant experts on ways to reduce the attractiveness of armed groups, which often use agriculture, education, health, labour and other welfare services to establish a support base amongst the population for their militant operations. The United States is not the only country

with this limitation. These structural deficiencies are with us today because the rational choice paradigm worked so well during the Cold War between states after World War II. Since the end of the Cold War, states have not been able to easily adapt the instruments of power to reflect more nuanced ways to engage with sub-state actors.

Value differences between antagonists in conflict can have meaningful consequences. Consider the Quartet's (United States, Russia, the EU and the UN) original preconditions of the Palestinians for peace talks, directed primarily at Hamas. The three conditions were, (1) recognise the State of Israel; (2) abide by previous agreements; and (3) renounce violence. These conditions align with rational values prescribed by states, and the author, with most scholars, finds these requests reasonable. But, consider condition one, the recognition of a state. It seems obvious that states would call on sub-state groups to recognise the legitimacy of a state. This is a function of state identity and how those that represent states think about order and structure. But in a conflict where contested land is at the heart of the impasse, such a precondition is outside the value structure of a non-state antagonist. When interviewing Moussa Abu Marzouk (pers.comm., February 2007), he stated that recognition of Israel as a state is something that could potentially be done at the end of a process, but not at the start. He claimed, that Hamas 'could not hold the street' by making such a profession. Marzouk's words demonstrate a value structure that is different, placing the priority on the power of recognition, the strength of land claims and the cohesion of the group. The Quartet's preconditions resulted in a split Palestine over the recognition question, ultimately winning the support from the Palestinian Authority and Fatah only after Hamas defeated Fatah in national elections in 2006 and militarily in Gaza in 2007.

The international community has also used the rational choice paradigm to dictate its current engagement strategy with the Palestinians. The United States and Europe have been financially backing the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank in order to provide economic growth and a higher standard of living for its residents. From 1994 to 2013, the EU has given over 5.6 billion Euro to the PA (ECA 2013), while the US has provided in excess of \$5 billion (Zanotti 2013). The international community, other than financial assistance from Iran and Qatar, has refused to support development in Gaza in the same way. The thinking is based on the idea that the economic improvements in the West Bank would improve the quality of life for Palestinians there



and that the residents of Gaza would see the difference in benefits between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. Consequently, Gazans would reject the leadership of Hamas in Gaza for the material benefits that would come from the leadership of the Palestinian Authority. This notion motivates the next corollary:

*Corollary #2d: International aid in the West Bank, resulting in material improvements, has lessened the level of Hamas Support in the West Bank and Gaza.*

### *Devoted Actors*

Seldom in the history of state interactions has the existence of ‘crazed’ or ‘irrational’ leaders, or ‘rogue states’, stressed the rational choice theorists to the point where new novel theories needed to be developed to account for interstate engagement. However, since the rise of sub-state groups (arguably post 9/11), rational choice theory has been greatly stressed. As discussed, it provides little help in understanding the impact of different value structures of sub-state groups expressed through the devotion by an armed group to a cause for which many are willing to die.

The literature on devoted actors is in the nascent stages (Atran, Axelrod and Davis 2007; Atran & Axelrod 2008, Atran 2010 and Sheikh et al. 2013). The concept originated with Scott Atran when he and the author were debating the failings of governmental responses to violent sub-state groups in summer of 2006. The argument suggested that rational choice paradigm structured the governmental approaches to international security after World War II and the arrival of individuals like Osama bin Laden and groups like Hizballah and Lashkar-e-Taiba on the international scene stressed the structure to the point of failure. As the author was describing why policy interventions were often wrong footed because of the structure, Atran replied, ‘it’s because these groups are devoted actors instead of rational actors’. Since that utterance, Atran and others, including the author, have been working to define what it means to be a devoted actor.

In sacred values research, led by Atran, we can see glimpses of what it means to be a devoted actor. Consider the following logic expressed in a survey of the members of the Palestinian Hamas. A young man will give up the Hajj (trip to Mecca - one of the five pillars of Islam) in order to perpetrate a suicide-bombing mission. The same man would

forgo the suicide-bombing mission to assist his ill father. But, the young man will not forgo the suicide mission if the consequence of it is retaliation on his family resulting in their death, including the death of his father (Atran & Axelrod 2008). Also consider Bobby Sands the volunteer member of the Provisional IRA and Member of Parliament who died as a result of a hunger strike in the HM Prison Maze and the use of suicide bombers by the Tamil Tigers, Al-Qsa Martyrs' Brigades and others. These acts do not compute in the normal 'rational' calculus and it is insufficient to label these acts as 'irrational' as each represents a unique tool used by groups to achieve specific goals.

The sacred values research suggests that all persons have sacred values, which are those values that cannot be compromised through material incentives. It also demonstrates that groups in intractable conflict have different values systems than that of states in the same conflict (Atran 2010). When an adversary is threatening an individual's or group's sacred values through force, the potential for violence increases. Further, when the adversary attempts to marginalise the sacred value through material incentives, the approach backfires (Atran et. al. 2007). Those individuals and groups that are devoted to a cause insomuch that economic cost-benefit equations are not applicable are devoted actors. This line of argumentation suggests that states are 'rational' and non-state actors are 'devoted', but this may not always be the case. Simply, sub-state groups engaged in intractable conflict may show devotion to a cause or group that surpasses the predictive nature of the Rational Choice Model.

Devoted actors will suffer great hardship if their values are threatened (Atran 2012), which are often considered non-rational to onlookers (e.g. hunger strikes). The consequence is that when a population perceives heightened tension and conflict, their values will shift toward the 'sacred'. This shift is also demonstrated by a willingness to use violence, such as suicide action and other dramatic forms of violence against non-combatants even when the reprisal by the adversary is described through a public assassination policy. Such a finding demonstrates the 'devotion' by these groups and their leaders and is representative of a different value structure. The implication of such a finding is that a theory that more clearly demonstrates the difference between rational and devoted actors would be illuminating for conflict studies.

Though a formalised devoted actor theory remains in the future, the conceptual framework does suggest that in times of heightened violence, the Palestinian people's values shift toward the sacred, potentially aligning their interests with Hamas. This idea motivates the next corollary:

*Corollary #1f: During times of heightened violence by Israel, Popular Support for Hamas increases.*

### *Conclusion*

This chapter provided a review of Hamas literature, Max Weber's theory of tension between values and responsibilities for political actors, and multidisciplinary literature on conflict and armed groups. The sum total of the review shows a significant gap in literature pertaining to the dynamic relationship an armed group has with popular support of its host population and the use of violence. The three main hypotheses tease out salient research questions to help us understand how Hamas uses violence in relation to popular support. Eleven supporting corollaries allow for the testing of other scholars' assumptions or theories within the conflict environment of the Middle East, an eminently intriguing prospect.

As stated earlier in this chapter, most scholarly work on Hamas suggests that the group has been able to grow and maintain its support because of its social services programme, *dawa*. There may be truth in this perspective, but should not it actually be tested? Further, broad notions that suggest the *dawa* provide unending and unwavering support fail to capture the ups and downs that Hamas has in utilising this core mission. Generally, the theoretical perspective fails to provide understanding as to how the group manages the tension between its values and its social and economic provision for Palestinians. It also does not explain why increased Hamas violence against Israel accompanies higher and lower *Popular Support for Hamas* at different times. The Weber Spectrum provides a pivotal theoretical framework for which this thesis largely relates. The idea to modify Weber's framework may be met with controversy, but the hypotheses derived by doing so can advance understanding on how armed groups, engaged in political leadership, balance violence and responsibilities under different environmental conditions. The exploration and invention of an adapted theoretical model will prove useful or it will not. Either way, it is a worthy scientific exploration.

The discussion of value differences between rational and devoted actor literature opens the question even further about the role of utilitarian concepts that often accompanies foreign intervention into the Middle East conflict. The idea that this thesis can test the role and impact of the *dawa* on *Hamas Support* and the role of hardening or softening of values as a function of environmental conditions may tell us something about the type of foreign assistance that works or does not. Further, the testing of Hamas values and the reprioritisation of those values can tell us how the group internally views external influence and threat. This too may provide better understanding of the group, particularly as it pertains to managing its violent resistance campaign.

Hamas resistance is truly an interdisciplinary subject. The strength of the related literature provides a strong backdrop that has motivated a set of hypotheses and corollaries for testing. The collective analyses provide a wide and deep picture of Hamas resistance over time and allow this thesis to add to the literature on power-seeking insurgent groups and Hamas.

# Chapter Three

## The Origins, Structure and Relationships of Hamas

*As for 'peaceful resistance', which people are trying to preach us - it is suitable for the struggle for civil rights, but not for the liberation of a homeland. When it comes to military occupation, armed with conventional and non-conventional weapons - it can be confronted only by armed resistance.*

– Khalid Mishal (25 June 2009)

In Chapter 2 it was discussed that other scholars view Hamas as essentially a social and political organisation, a terror group or a non-violent community builder. Instead of making claims such claims, this research sought to understand what Hamas, particularly the leadership, thought of itself. Whatever else it may be to others, for the Hamas leadership, the group is most certainly an armed resistance organisation willing and able to use violence against what it deems as Israeli occupation of lands taken in 1948.

According to the Open Source Violent Attack Dataset, since the beginning of 1989, Palestinian factions have conducted over 600 high profile armed ground attacks against Israelis; Hamas conducted over 250 of those. Together, Palestinian factions conducted over 190 suicide attacks against Israelis. Hamas accounted for 79 of those (Merari 2010: 38). In total, 1,586 Israelis were killed and 8,120 injured by the Palestinian attacks not including Gaza Wars I and II. These casualties are evidence of the prolific violent capabilities of the Palestinian militant groups, including Hamas. But how did Hamas develop these capacities? This chapter provides a short background of Hamas, establishing how the group developed the capacity to conduct violent operations against Israel.

### 3.1 The Foundations of Hamas

*The Muslim Brotherhood*

Though the area known today as Israel and the Palestinian Territories (the Holy Land) has been at the crossroads of conflict for several thousand years, the background on Hamas will begin in the 1920s with the founding of the Muslim Brotherhood. Because there is a large literature on historical dimensions of Hamas, this thesis provides only a short history for the reader. This history is intended to provide context for understanding the background, people and values that brought the group onto the scene in 1987 and to set the stage for understanding Hamas as a resistance organisation.

Hassan al-Banna, born to Sheikh Ahmad ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Banna Al-Sa’ati in 1906 in Mahmoudiyah, Egypt, moved to Cairo in 1924 with his parents and worked as a teacher (Mitchell 1993: 1). As a young man, al-Banna showed a penchant for being involved in anti-establishment activities as he participated in demonstrations in the 1919 revolution against British rule and later became a full member of the Sufi order (Midlarsky 2011: 153). By his early twenties, Al-Banna sought to build an organisation that would improve understanding of Islam and compete with non-Islamic forces, like secularism, socialism, communism, British Rule and Zionism. In 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood was established.

With grand success, the Brotherhood became a political organisation in Egypt (a model that Hamas would later follow) that would boast a membership of 500,000 (Mitchell 1993: 328) just ten years after it began. Al-Banna further showed himself a capable leader by publishing ideological concepts that still drive the organisation today. To spread the Brotherhood message, he sent missionaries across the region to preach Islam, establish social services and religious works. In 1942 and 1945, al-Banna visited Palestine (Chehab 2007: 18) and established several branches of the Brotherhood in different cities. In 1948, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt attempted a coup against the Egyptian Government (Yousef 2010: 10-11), which resulted in the assassination of al-Banna in early 1949.

The influence of the Muslim Brotherhood on the thinking of Hamas leaders is unmistakable. Nearly all the organisation’s senior personalities were leaders of different branches of the Brotherhood before the launch of Hamas. Even the Hamas Charter pays homage to the Brotherhood. Known as the Spiritual Leader of Hamas, Sheikh Yassin was the foremost of these Hamas disciples of the Brotherhood.

*Early Leaders of the Palestinian Islamic Movement 1976 to 1987*

Ahmed Ismail Hassan Yassin was born in al-Jura, a small village near the city of Ashkelon sometime between 1929 and 1937.<sup>13</sup> His family fled to the al-Shati camp (Al Jazeera 2004), in Gaza, after the Israeli Defense Force captured his native village in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. While in a wrestling match with his friend, Yassin suffered a catastrophic neck injury (Chehab 2007: 16), which left him a quadriplegic at the age of 12. Due to his academic penchant, Yassin received a scholarship to attend al-Azhar University in Cairo. Although he did not remain in Cairo long, for health reasons, he did get involved with the local Muslim Brotherhood chapter. This early exposure with the Brotherhood stuck with him, when later he joined a local chapter in Gaza.

As Yassin grew older, he was invited to preach at the local Mosque and was soon known as Sheikh Yassin. It was not long after he began preaching when large crowds came to listen to him. Within a few short years, Sheikh Yassin was one of the best-known individuals in Gaza with a great number of followers. By 1976, Yassin had established the Islamic Society to promote Islam and provide charitable services. By 1978, after the signing of the Camp David Accords (peace agreement between Egypt and Israel), the sheikh had launched a new organisation entitled the Islamic Compound. This time, Sheikh Yassin sought to register the organisation as a charity with the Israeli authorities. After initial approval, the Israelis declined to authorise the permit. In response, Sheikh Yassin cleverly engaged the Israeli head of Islamic Courts, Sheikh al-Kazandar, a leading proponent of the Egypt-Israel Peace Accord, to argue for reinstatement (Chehab 2007: 19-22). In order to keep Sheikh al Kazandar firmly behind the Camp David Accords, the Israelis issued a license for the Islamic Compound to operate in Gaza for the purpose of operating sports leagues. Yassin used the license to establish religious instruction, build mosques, schools and clinics. Even after the Israelis recognised the activities of the Compound and placed restrictions on its behaviour, it was to become the largest foundation in Gaza.

By 1983, the Islamic Compound had begun to search for weapons to arm their newly formed military wing, the Mujahideen Falastine. The Israeli Shabak (Shin Beit) was aware of the Compound's operations and established a sting operation to provide the

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<sup>13</sup> Note: Sheikh Yassin's date of birth is in question. His Palestinian passport listed his DOB as 1 January 1929, but he claimed to be born in 1938. Other reports indicate that he was born in 1936.

weapons. Subsequently, Sheikh Yassin and several others were arrested by the Israelis for illegal weapons possession. Years later, in an interview with the Journalist Zaki Chehab (2007: 19-22), Sheikh Yassin indicted that the movement had four objectives: (1) build charities and social committees which would welcome anyone who could play a role in resisting Israel; (2) strengthen the credibility of the organisation across the West Bank and Gaza; (3) develop a capable armed wing which ‘would give Israelis sleepless nights’; and (4) establish strong relations with Arab and Islamic friends outside of Palestine. The seeds of Islamic armed resistance in the Territories were sown by these charities. Along with the work of other Palestinians who also came from the Brotherhood, Sheikh Yassin had done a great deal to lay the groundwork for a Palestinian Islamist movement based upon principles of welfare support similar to those established in Egypt by Al-Banna.

Khalid Mishal, the current leader of Hamas, was born in 1958 in the village of Silwad, north of Ramallah in the West Bank. In 1967, Mishal’s father temporarily moved the family to Amman, Jordan before they final settled in Kuwait City (McGeough 2009: 31). As a teen, Mishal attended Kuwait University to study engineering, where he soon became the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood sponsored ‘Islamic Justice’ group. As the organisation grew under Mishal’s direction, he sought to compete with Fatah for the leadership of the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS) at the university.<sup>14</sup> When the GUPS elections were cancelled, Mishal launched the Palestinian Islamic movement, a new chapter of the Muslim Brotherhood in Kuwait.

During the early 80s, Mishal had demonstrated great fundraising ability and began to send funds to support the work of the Islamic Compound and Sheikh Yassin. By the time Hamas was formally established in December 1987, Mishal had become a quiet but effective leader of the movement in Kuwait and declared the Palestinian Islamic movement a chapter of Hamas. He used his talents to gain access to wealthy Kuwaitis who were sympathetic to the movement in order to raise money for the cause. Given his penchant for fundraising, he became well known inside the Hamas movement even though he did not become a public figure for several more years. In an interview with

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<sup>14</sup> Note: Many Palestinian Refugees lived in Kuwait City at the time. The Kuwait University became the recruiting ground for the hearts and minds of these youth by Fatah and other groups. As the Islamist cause grew, the traditional warm relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and the secular Fatah became strained.



the academic Jessica Stern (2003), he boasted of his group's participation in the building of the Islamic University in Gaza in 1978.

Mousa Abu Marzouk, the former leader of Hamas and currently Deputy Chairman of the Political Bureau (second in command of Hamas) was born in 1951 in the Rafah refugee camp in Gaza. Marzouk, a protégé of Sheikh Yassin in Gaza, went off to study engineering at the Helwan College of Engineering and Technology in Cairo, where he graduated in 1976. In 1978, Marzouk became the founder of the Islamic University in Gaza. According to the journalist Paul McGeough (2009: 115-117), Yassin selected a young woman from the ranks of the Gaza Chapter of the Muslim Brotherhood as a wife for Marzouk.

In the early 80s, Marzouk moved to the United States to pursue graduate studies at Colorado State University (coincidentally just a few years after Israeli leader Benny Begin completed his PhD at CSU). During his time in the United States, he established the Islamic Association for Palestine and started a number of charities and businesses that would fund operations of the Islamic movement in Gaza. After the deportation of many of Hamas leaders to southern Lebanon in 1992, he is credited with establishing the first organisational structure that prevented Hamas from being destroyed by the Israelis through his grassroots design (McGeough, 2009: 115-117). The new design was essentially a distributed decision making processes and resilience structure established via an oral protocol for how positions are filled in the event of incapacitation through death, imprisonment or some other factor.<sup>15</sup> In the early days of Hamas, Yassin appointed Marzouk as the Politburo Director, where he directed operations of the organisation from his homes in Virginia and Amman, Jordan. Marzouk's Muslim Brotherhood credentials, his prolific fundraising and his relationship with Sheikh Yassin established his bona fides for leading Hamas in the early years.

Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, appointed a spokesman for Hamas during the Israeli deportation of Palestinians to Southern Lebanon in 1992, was considered the deputy to Sheikh Yassin in Gaza after the launch of the organisation (BBC 2004). Rantisi was born in 1947 in the village of Yibna, outside Jaffa. A year later his family fled for the Gaza Strip. He later studied medicine and genetics at Egypt's Alexandria University where,

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<sup>15</sup> Note: this collective understanding came through author interviews with many Hamas leaders and technocrats.

according to field interviews, he finished at the top of his class. While in Cairo, Rantisi became deeply involved in the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1976, he returned to Gaza to teach at the new Islamic University. After the assassination of Yassin in 2004, Rantisi took the helm of Hamas in Gaza, and was considered by many as the most senior Hamas official. Rantisi was assassinated just four months after Sheikh Yassin.

There were many others from the Palestinian Territories that were engaged in the local chapters of the Muslim Brotherhood that went on to support the creation of Hamas in 1987. The four leaders described in this section were highlighted because of their early influence on the movement and their clear ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. From the mid-70s through the mid-80s, various Islamic charitable organisations were established. The funds raised by these organisations were used by Sheikh Yassin to build the infrastructure of social services, religious training and an armed movement. The emergence of militant activities of the Islamic Society, the Islamic Compound and later Hamas were borne out of the infrastructure originally created by al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood decades earlier. In 2004, author Matthew Levitt wrote in the *National Review*:

As Khaled Mishal recounts: “In 1983, we carried out our first military experience under the leadership of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin; the 1983 organisation that sought to gather weapons to prepare groups for military training and launch the jihad project.” Mishal concedes that even back then Iran was funding Yassin’s activities, noting that “it is no secret that the 1983 arms deal was funded from abroad [Iran]; Hamas was still forming”. Palestinian author Khaled Hroub also notes that various attacks against Israeli interests from 1985 to 1987 were conducted by Yassin’s group; the several “military cells organised by the Muslim Brotherhood” included the Yahya al-Ghuoul’s Mujahideen of Mifraqa Group, Salah Shehadah’s Group Number 44, and Muhammad Sharathah’s Group Number 101.

The momentum gained by the collection of talented individuals and the funding coming from various internal and external sources was evident in the growing support for the Islamic movement in the Palestinian Territories. The momentum led to a growing movement that was in need of an organisation more capable than the Islamic Compound and more Palestinian than the Muslim Brotherhood. A series of events in early December 1987 presented the perfect opportunity for Sheikh Yassin to launch a new

organisation that would capture the heart of the Islamic Palestinian resistance against Israel.

*The Launch of Hamas in 1987 and the Uprising (First Intifada)*

On 6 December 1987 an Israeli businessman, Shlomo Sakal, was stabbed to death in Gaza. Two days later, four Palestinians were killed and others wounded when an Israeli driver ran into a vehicle carrying Palestinian workers home to Gaza. Rumour quickly spread through the Strip that the Israeli driver had acted in revenge of the stabbing death two days earlier, which incensed Gazans and led to wide spread outrage (Yousef 2010: 21-22). By this time, Yassin and Rantisi were in a position to use the Islamic Compound network of supporting mosques to launch a public demonstration.

During the resulting protests in Gaza and the West Bank, Sheikh Yassin called together six other senior individuals within the Islamic movement to discuss the idea of formally launching a resistance group. According to Rantisi (one of those in attendance), the meeting took place at Sheikh Yassin's house on 9 December 1987 (Chehab 2007: 25). This meeting is widely credited with being the beginning of Hamas, but different accounts of it indicate some confusion about who was actually in attendance. Mosab Yousef (2010: 5) declares that his father, Sheikh Hassan Yousef was one of the original seven founders. But, in an interview with the Journalist Zaki Chehab (2007: 23), Sheikh Yassin indicated that those in attendance included, Sheikh Shehada, Issa Nasshaar, Dr. Ibrahim al-Yazuri, Dr. Abdul al-Rantisi, Abdul Dokhan and Mohammed Shamhaa. The participation of Sheikh Yousef in this meeting was unlikely because of the account given by Sheikh Yassin and the fact that the meeting took place in Gaza, not in the West Bank where Sheikh Yousef lived. The current leader of Hamas, Khalid Mishal, discounts the significance of the meeting in early December 1987, indicating that the movement was well on its way of being established and that many people, including himself, were the founders of it. According to the Ezzedeen al-Qassam Brigades (al-Qassam n.d.) website (the official Hamas Military Wing website), Hamas was officially established on 14 December 1987, presumably because the name 'Hamas' was selected on that date.

The name of the resistance movement took a few days to formulate. The Arabic name, *Harakat al-Mokawama al-Islamiya*, meaning Islamic resistance movement, was originally abbreviated as HMS. Someone within the organisation suggested that the group be entitled Hamas, meaning 'zeal' in Arabic, since it was so close to the acronym

of HMS. Abdul Dohan, one of those in attendance at the December meeting, later clarified the reason for the selection of the name Hamas. He said, ‘we wanted something [a name] which wouldn’t create the impression we were a militant organisation to the Israelis’ (Chehab 2007: 23). As a result, the leaders who selected the name ‘Hamas’ did so in part because they believed Israel would not associate the name with militancy. Though, the violent events led by Hamas in the First Intifada made certain that the Israelis understood Hamas to be a militant group.

Between 11 and 15 December 1987, Hamas distributed its first pamphlet in Gaza and the West Bank calling for the ‘defeat of the occupier’ (Roy 2011: 26). Some accounts indicate the beginning of the *intifada* was in late November 1987, but most suggest that the uprising began on December 8 (the date used by Hamas to celebrate its anniversary), as a response to the death of the four Palestinians by the Israeli motorist. Regardless of the actual date, the fact that Hamas was launched at nearly the precise time of the beginning of the uprising indicates that the leaders of the movement seized upon and contributed to the chaotic environment to formally launch the resistance movement. This is evidence that the group, even at its inception, adapted to the environment to capture support of the Palestinian population, which indicates that adaptation and the interest in popular support is part of the group’s DNA.

#### *The Covenant/Charter - 1988*

On 18 August 1988, the Official Hamas Covenant was published. Several unconfirmed reports indicate that the Covenant had one author, an Imam from Gaza who was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood [some speculate this was Sheikh Yassin, others disagree]. The Covenant has thirty-six articles that are broken down into five different sections, (1) Definition of the Movement; (2) Objectives; (3) Strategies and Methods; (4) Attitudes Toward Others; and (5) The Testimony of History. The Covenant, generally, describes the movement as an Islamic Resistance Movement designed to reclaim Palestine, which is a universal cause for all Muslims from all walks of life and from the four corners of the earth. Further, the Covenant identifies two enemies of the Palestinian cause, Zionism and secularism. The document derides Zionism and secularism, referring to the former as a conspiracy for local, regional and global domination, while to the later as a movement that has weakened Muslims and lost Palestine. It is careful not to be overly critical of the Palestinian Liberation

Organisation, a secular organisation, of which Fatah is the dominant player, which Hamas sees as brothers in arms in the resistance, but misguided because of its secular nature.

Over the years, Hamas leaders through subsequent policy statements have continually interpreted or adapted the original language of the charter to changing conditions. At the time of writing of this thesis, the Hamas Leader Public Statement Database had nearly 900 policy statements made by Sheikh Yassin, Khalid Mishal, Dr. Rantisi, Osama Hamdan and Mousa Abu Marzook since the publication of the Covenant in 1988. Of these statements, a substantial portion were clarifications of policies that had originated in the Hamas Covenant. The leaders of Hamas continually reframe the charter through terms relevant to the needs of the organisation at the time. In an interview with Robert Pastor of the Carter Center (Adas 2010), Khalid Mishal stated that the Charter, ‘is a piece of history and no longer relevant, but cannot be changed for internal reasons’. As recent as January 2011, Dr. Ahmed Yousef, the former Senior Political Advisor to Ismail Haniyeh, Palestinian Prime Minister (also a senior leader in Hamas), wrote:

It [the Charter] reflected the views of one of the movement’s elder leaders; and it was ratified during the unique circumstances of the Uprising in 1988 as a necessary framework for dealing with a relentless occupation. There was little opportunity, at that time, to pore over the minutia of either its religious and political terminology or the broader perspective of international law. An internal committee reviewed the possibility of amending the charter during the nineties and ratifying it as a binding manifesto; yet the primary concern, that of being seen as following the Fatah route of offering up concessions on a silver platter, led the group’s leadership to shelve such measures.

Even though the current leadership calls the Covenant a non-relevant piece of history, the organisation has been unable or unwilling to make formal changes or to recant any portion of it. In an interview with Mousa Abu Marzook (pers.comm., 2007), he explained that the charter could not be changed because the ‘street’ would view the change as a compromise and that could potentially fracture the unity of Hamas. He also explained that Fatah had not revised their charter and that it called for the destruction of Israel. This, of course, changed in 2009, when Fatah drew up a new charter, which eliminated the language about the destruction of Israel.

The existence of so many policy restatements and the move by the Hamas leadership away from the Covenant, without renouncing it, demonstrates that Hamas has two

audiences for which it must navigate. First, the internal Hamas dynamics require that Hamas not ridicule the original Covenant, while external domestic and international relations demands require some moderation of tone. Hamas seems to have found the stable ground, for the time being, in that they, in 2006, published principles of the Hamas Electoral Programme. Portions of these principles read as an exact copy of the original covenant. Yet, Hamas publically stated at the same time that they would abide by the popular vote of the Palestinians on matters of Palestinian life, including a two state solution, in the event the Palestinian Authority agreed to a peace settlement with Israel. The conflict between the Presidential Guard of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas over Gaza muddied the waters to some extent. But, Hamas maintains its position in supporting a Palestinian popular vote. Given that Hamas has been able to disrupt previous peace initiatives through the selective use of violence, this may not be a concession or an adaptation of policy; rather it is likely an adaptation of political language.

### **3.2 Structure and Operations**

The structure of Hamas can be thought of in two dimensions. First, there are four recognised groups within Hamas: Gaza, West Bank, Prisoners and the exiled leaders. Second, the decision making process is based upon the hierarchy of existing Shura Councils. Operations for Hamas are conducted through three separate but connected wings: political, military and social.

To begin, we will examine the significance of the four recognised groups within Hamas. Given that Hamas originated in Gaza, the Gaza leadership has historically maintained a strong position within the group. Sheikh Yassin's commitment to Gaza is still present within the psyche of the group and three of the de facto leaders of Hamas have come from Gaza, including Yassin, Abu-Marzouk and Rantisi. In all polls, Hamas enjoys greater support of Palestinians in Gaza than in the West Bank. Since the takeover of Gaza by Hamas, there has been a migration away from Gaza being in a privileged position only because it was the home of the founders. It now is privileged because it is a territory under control by Hamas. As such, the institution building exercise of Hamas in Gaza has focused attention and resources on the Strip in a way that is new for the

group. The thinking was described in one interview as ‘you’re either in Gaza or your outside’. The implication is that Gaza is the centre of the universe for Hamas and everyone else is in the hinterlands.

The West Bank leaders of Hamas include persons like Hassan Yousef, who is well respected amongst Palestinians. Many of the technocrats appointed by Hamas to the government in 2006 were based in the West Bank. Even the exiled leader of Hamas, Khalid Mishal, comes from a small village north of Ramallah. Hamas has a few strongholds within the West Bank including Nablus and Tulkrum in the North and Hebron in the South. These strongholds represent a popular support base for Hamas even though welfare programmes of the group in the West Bank have been shuttered in the past few years. On 8 December 2012 (25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hamas), the author was in East Jerusalem and witnessed at least 75 young men marching behind a picture of the recently killed head of the al-Qassam Martyrs’ Brigade and chanting his name, ‘al-Jabari’. Such an outward display is considered illegal and punishable with prison time. According to Hamas officials, no young men were arrested for such actions in East Jerusalem for activities from that day. When the acts of the young men were mentioned to the Hamas Parliamentarians the following day, the Minister of Finance (pers.comm., 9 December 2012) responded by saying, ‘the youth are so courageous’.

Given the high number of detentions of Hamas activists, the group maintains a leadership structure amongst the prisoners. There are two different prison authorities that hold Hamas prisoners, the Palestinian Authority and Israeli Security Services. According to Hamas Parliamentarians, affiliation with Hamas in the West Bank can get you jailed. Several of the Parliamentarians interviewed had been incarcerated in Israeli and Palestinian Authority jails on multiple occasions. The number of Hamas operatives in these jails is high, and so too is the inflow and outflow of Hamas persons coming to and from the prisons. As a result, Hamas has structured a Shura council for the prisons. Its members are known to very few.

Finally, the exiled leaders include those from the Politburo. Sheikh Yassin thought that it would be important for the political leaders of Hamas to be based outside the Palestinian Territories so that freedom of movement and actions would not be under the

same constraints by Israel as those within the Territories. Consequently, the elected leadership of the Politburo started and has remained outside the West Bank and Gaza.

For the first few years, Sheikh Yassin was the active leader of the Hamas. By 1994, Yassin had turned the operations over to his young protégé, Mousa Abu Marzouk. Marzouk's office was technically in Amman, Jordan even though he ran operations from homes based inside the United States. When Marzouk was imprisoned in New York in the late 1990s, Khalid Mishal was elected to be the new Chairman by the Shura Council. Upon the release of Marzouk two years later, Mishal was firmly in charge of the Politburo and Marzouk returned to be the Deputy Chairman. The diplomatic challenges caused by the Marzouk incarceration by US authorities and his subsequent deportation resulted in a challenge for Jordan to remain as the home of the Politburo, so the Hamas leadership was formally asked to leave the country. Eventually, Mishal and Marzouk found sanctuary in Damascus under the protection of President Assad. For over 10 years, the Hamas leadership was able to direct the operations of the group from Damascus. This dynamic changed when President Assad began the siege of Muslim Brotherhood strongholds in Syria in 2011. By the spring of 2012, Hamas needed to depart from Damascus (details of this event are described in Chapter 6). In 2012, Mishal set up operations in Qatar, while Marzouk was invited by the new leadership in Egypt to set up an office and reside in New Cairo. In the months since the deposing of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, there has been conjecture that the Hamas office in Cairo will be closed and Marzouk kicked out of Cairo. As of June 2014, Marzouk had been able to continue operations in Cairo even after the deposition of President Morsi and his impending charge that he colluded with the Hamas by giving Egyptian State secrets to the group. This situation remains fluid and may result in another change in the future.

Prior to understanding the operations of Hamas, it is necessary to explain how decisions are made. Though the Politburo members have a degree of autonomy, most of the decision-making process for the group is derived by the local, regional and national Shura Councils. There is much about the councils that remain unknown to the academic community because of the secretive nature of the group. But, more is known about the structure and membership than ever before.



Even before the launch of Hamas, the Islamic Compound operated in three distinct areas: social services, religious training and militant operations. In the early days, Hamas continued with this structure and was managed primarily by Sheikh Yassin and a council of elders that he established. As the organisation grew and the pressure from Israel increased, the group needed to adapt its operations, particularly by establishing a broad base of leadership. Soon thereafter, the Shura Council was established as an elected body within Hamas that would strategically guide the young group through the various issues for which it had to adjust. At some point along the way, the Shura Council's name changed to 'General Consultative Council' and was based outside of the Palestinian Territories. This change stemmed from two specific problems faced by the group. First, Israel continued to arrest active members of Hamas, which caused disruptions to its leadership. Second, and unconfirmed with the leadership, the name change was likely the result of a public image objective of distancing Hamas from the organisational structure of Iran's Supreme Council. In more recent years, Hamas again adapted to have the General Consultative Council select the members of the Politburo, which is now the highest decision-making body in Hamas. Local Consultative Councils represent specific regions and nominate individuals for the General Consultative Council, which, in turn, elects the leaders of the 15 member Politburo. For fear of Israeli assassination, Hamas maintains strict secrecy about the exact organisational structure and the process, timing and results of internal elections (Ma'an News Agency 2009).

According to several different interviews with senior Palestinian sources, the Politburo is derived from a vote of the General Consultative Council. This council is derived from four Shura Councils: Gaza, the West Bank, Prisoners and the Diaspora. These Shura Councils are derived from the local Consultative Councils that make up, for example, districts in the West Bank. Each of the councils has special committees to address the work of the group in each jurisdiction. Elections for the Politburo take place once every four years. Given the highly secretive nature of these councils, confirmation of this structure was not sought from Hamas officials primarily because such an approach had the potential to increase the risk to the remainder of the study.

The leaders of Hamas and scholars writing about Hamas identify the existence of three different wings that make up the group: political, military and social. There is a serious

debate about the relationship or lack thereof between the different wings. On one side, the Hamas leadership indicates that the wings are independent with no interaction between them, particularly between the Political and Military Wings. On the other side, scholars like Matthew Levitt (2006), have written about the ‘myth of the separate wings’. There is compelling evidence for both arguments.

Israel maintains an active *Targeted Killing* and Apprehension Programme to punish Palestinians engaged in directing or committing acts of violence against Israeli targets. According to records from the Israeli High Court of Justice (2005), to conduct a targeted operation there must be evidence, not just that someone has ‘blood on their hands’, but that the target is planning ‘future attacks’. The legal ruling justifies *Targeted Killings* in self-defence as opposed to a death penalty for past actions. Though the programme will be explored further in Chapter 6, the reason to discuss it here is that the existence of the programme incentivises the Israel Defense Force and Security Services to gain as much intelligence as possible utilising their massive technological superiority to monitor phone and web based communications. Further, the Israeli Security Services have been able to establish a strong informant programme within the Palestinian Territories, which complicate Hamas operations. The existence of these programmes creates significant obstacles for the social and political wings of Hamas to communicate directly to the military wing. This is not to say that it does not happen, it just outlines the reasons why Hamas political leaders make such a distinction between themselves and their military counterparts. On 17 November 1997, Abdel Rantisi, then spokesman for Hamas in Gaza, made a public statement (Lerner 1997) that describes most communication on the subject by Hamas’s political leadership:

From the beginning it was difficult for both wings to act together or for the military wing to get its instructions from the political wing because of the security conflict here. So we prefer that the military wing be free with its leaders. Just its leaders can direct the action and we choose complete separation between both wings.

The fact that Hamas political leaders know that the *Targeted Killing* programme exists and any direct evidence linking them to violent acts against Israel results in an Israeli strike suggests that if they do direct the actions of the military that it is done in a covert manner either through public statements that provide directives to military leaders or

that communication happens through the use of advanced physical or web-based message carriers. Speculation on this front is rampant.

Matthew Levitt (2006: 2-5) argues that the separation of these wings is a myth. He bases this argument on various sources of intelligence, which suggests that the leadership of Hamas engage in political, social and military functions for the group.<sup>16</sup> He qualifies the claim by explaining that a political leader from Tulkrum and Nablus was the mastermind of the 27 March 2002 Passover suicide bombing at the Park Hotel which claimed 30 lives and 140 injured. Levitt claims that Abbas al-Sayyid was both a political and military leader responsible for recruiting suicide bombers during the Second *Intifada*. Levitt attempts to further the claim by stating that the evidence is best seen through the operations of the *dawa*, which is used by Hamas leadership to recruit and deploy fighters. The claims are strong, but there is little open-source evidence of such actions. This does not mean that the direct relationships do not exist; rather, it means that if they do exist, they are hard to prove using open-source data.

The assassination of Sheikh Yassin was sanctioned not because of evidence of previous acts of violence, but because of a fatwa he issued in January 2004, where he stated, ‘women could conduct military operations in fulfillment of the resistance’ (Regular 2004). The military legal council of the IDF determined that this statement demonstrated evidence of planning future attacks against Israel (Eldar 2012). The Israelis killed Abdel Rantisi four months later based upon claims that they had evidence of his involvement in planning attacks against Israel.

Sheikh Yassin’s words are often provided to make claims that no separation between the wings exists. According to Levitt (2006: 34), Yassin was quoted in a Reuters article in May 1998 saying, ‘we cannot separate the wing from the body. If we do so, the body will not be able to fly’. Whether this was a philosophical statement by Yassin or something more concrete is an open question. The use of symbolism by the Hamas leadership demonstrates that the group uses communication strategically to speak to

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<sup>16</sup> Note: Given Levitt’s position within the US Government, he had access to intelligence reports that helped shape his opinion. Therefore, it is difficult to cross-examine conclusions he reaches on the lack of separation between the different wings in Hamas. If his conclusions were accurate, it would mean that either Israel does not have accurate intelligence on the militant actions of its leaders or it means that they know about these actions and do not act on them for various reasons.

different audiences without implicating themselves in direct involvement in future violent attacks.

The assassination policy by Israel created one of the most significant adaptations by Hamas. As the Hamas leadership faced increasing threat of *Targeted Killing* by the Israelis, they claimed that the Politburo and the Military Wings were completely separate and never communicated with each other. Hamas leaders attest that this is still true today. Either way, the fact that senior Hamas leaders, after the assassination of Rantisi in 2004, are still alive today indicates that the adaptation method was effective in the face of the Israeli *Targeted Killing* Policy. There are only three possibilities to describe the adaptation, (1) the Political Wing and Military Wing do not communicate; (2) the Political Wing and Military Wing do communicate clandestinely; or (3) no direct communication happens between the wings, but the philosophy (attack or not) is set by the Political Wing and executed at the time and choice of the Military Wing. Regardless of which of the three methods is used, Hamas adapted in a manner that has kept their political leaders alive. Further, it can be argued that since the *Targeted Killing* of Sheikh Yassin and Rantisi in 2004, the IDF lawyers have tacitly accepted the distinction of 'separate wings' due to a lack of evidence to the contrary.

The final point to make on the subject before describing the activities of each wing is to say that Israel has demonstrated a willingness to target leaders that have direct involvement in planning future attacks. The fact that both political leaders of Hamas since 1994 are still alive provides some evidence that a separation does exist or that Israel choose to not use evidence it has implicating Hamas leaders for various reasons. The later seems unlikely given Israelis history using the *Targeted Killing* program. Would Israel shy away from using *Targeted Killings* if there was evidence that Khalid Mishal and/or Mousa Abu Marzouk were involved in planning attacks? Perhaps for political purposes Israel has refrained, but given the attempt at Mishal's life directed by Prime Minister Netanyahu in 1997 and the many other killings of Hamas military leaders since suggests that Israel does not shy from such action. As will be described in the Social Wing section below, it is entirely possible that the system of fundraising for Hamas has created a unique structure whereby monies coming to Hamas charities are able to be directed to political, charitable and military actions all the while providing political leaders with plausible deniability for armed actions against Israel.

### *Political Wing of Hamas - The Politburo*

Sheikh Yassin was the first leader of Hamas. Sometime in the early days of Hamas, he realised that having an external (outside Palestine) leader of Hamas was critical to the survival of the group. As such, he and the Shura Council appointed Mousa Abu Marzouk as the Chairman of the Political Bureau. Abu Marzouk lost this position to Khalid Mishal during his two-year incarceration in New York. Upon Abu Marzouk's release, he stood for the Chairman against Mishal and lost. Since that time, Mishal has been the Chairman of the Politburo while Abu Marzouk assumed the elected role of Deputy Chairman. An interesting fact about both of these men, and one that is explained in this research, is that they have demonstrated themselves to be the most prolific fundraisers of all of Hamas members. This is unlikely a coincidence and more likely to be an insight in the formation and evolution of armed groups, in that the groups elevate those that bring resources.

In 25 years, Hamas has only had two leaders of the Politburo. Although, today, Mishal is considered the senior Hamas official, that was not always the case for the Chairman of the Politburo. Until the assassination of Sheikh Yassin in 2004, Yassin was considered the de facto leader of Hamas. After the assassination, some believed that Rantisi was the leader, while others looked to Mishal. Upon Rantisi's assassination just months after the death of Yassin, Mishal became the universally recognised leader of Hamas. During these years, it was likely that the different groups of Hamas (e.g. Gaza, West Bank, prisoners and the exiled leaders) led by coalition, not by individual decree, particularly on issues common to all four groups. Although unconfirmed, the elevation of the Politburo as the senior most decision-making body was likely an adaptation resulting from the confusion in leadership between Gaza and the exiled leaders.

Given that Abu Marzouk was in the United States while he was Chairman of the Politburo, the location of this wing could be said to have been located there. Upon Abu Marzouk's return from the US to the region, the Politburo was reestablished in Amman, which is where it remained until 1999, when King Hussein expelled Hamas for various political reasons. Within two years, Hamas moved the Politburo to Damascus, which is where it remained until 2012 with support from the Assad Regime. The unravelling of

the relationship between Hamas and the Assad Regime offers us important lessons about the limitations of the Political Wing.

It is no secret that Palestinians have supported the Arab Spring and later the rebels in Syria. In the early days of the Syrian conflict, members of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood were participants in the opposition to Assad. Consequently, the harsh military crackdown by the Assad Regime targeted members of the Brotherhood. Subsequent operations targeted certain Palestinian refugee camps in Syria. This complicated the relational dynamics with Hamas, because the group was forced to choose between its loyalty to the Brotherhood (*Ikhwan*) movement and the sanctuary provided by Assad. The untenable position, described in greater depth later in this chapter and in Chapter 6, caused Hamas to vacate Syria. The consequence has been significant, including the loss of financial support from Iran and a split Politburo. Mishal now has based his operations in Qatar while Abu Marzouk operates from Cairo (see Chp 3.5.8).

#### *Social Wing of Hamas (dawa)*

The Social Wing of Hamas is a replica of Al-Banna's Muslim Brotherhood charitable work. In 2005 (Levitt 2006: 264), social service spending by Hamas consumed most of its \$70 to \$90million (approximate) annual budget. The inability of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and the Palestinian Authority to create jobs and to provide broad social services has created a vacuum that Hamas has filled through its *dawa* programme. *Dawa* is the social service campaign of Hamas to provide food, water, housing support, medical service, counselling, religious training, education and a variety of other essential daily services for needy families. The funds for the *dawa* activities come from every corner of the globe through a network of charities and non-profits that Hamas has established to move monies into the Territories under its control. In a Palestinian environment where government welfare and important social services are nearly non-existent, the Hamas social service campaign has increased support for and cohesion to the group. It is often cited that Hamas's suicide bombers are identified through its Social Wing during religious training sessions at the mosques. To be certain, the charitable work lays a foundation across the Palestinian population for support and sympathy to the Hamas cause.

Evidence of Hamas adaptation within the Social Wing is evident. In 1993, a group of Hamas leaders met in a Marriott in Philadelphia to discuss the manner in which funds could be sent to Hamas. Though the meetings were recorded by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI 2007), the group designed a concept for raising money to support Hamas's *dawa* and military agenda even with international efforts to stop the funding flows to Hamas. The Philadelphia group determined that Hamas should establish charitable foundations in many countries and in the Territories, which would raise money for humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people. The local charities in the Territories were to be run by Hamas supporters that would fund the *dawa* and support the military operations. Given that monies are fungible, Hamas leaders, according to the plan, would be able to shift money between charitable and armed activities to meet the group's objectives. Even with the increased international pressure on money transfers to Hamas after 9/11, which claimed several charitable organisations, Hamas still continues to bring money into the territories through the same method.

The Social Wing does provide significant services for the Palestinian people. Education, counseling and monetary support are some of the primary methods of engagement by the Social Wing. Books have been written about the many humanitarian programmes run by the Hamas as part of their *dawa* programme. Yuval Diskin (pers.comm., 2012), claimed that the Shin Bet could kill 10 members of the al-Qassam Brigades, but that would not be as harmful to Hamas as destroying Gaza University, the base of many of the Hamas's *dawa* programmes. According to Diskin, there has been on several occasions' senior policy discussions in Israel about attacking the university, but each time political leaders have derailed the effort claiming poor perception and the inability to limit non-combatant casualties.

The Palestinian Authority with support from the international community and Israel began to shut down *dawa* programmes in the West Bank after the defeat of the PA Presidential Guard in Gaza in June 2007. The consequence is that Hamas *dawa* programmes are now exclusively run in Gaza. But, even these programmes are now challenged because Hamas has the responsibility of building state institutions responsible for all Gazan public works. And, as will be described in Chapter 6, money is tight in Gaza after the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

### *Military Wing of Hamas - Ezzedeen al-Qassam Brigades*

The forerunners to the Hamas Military Wing were the Mujahideen Falastine, Group 44 and Cell 101 (Chehab 2007: 31), which all represented Islamic resistance and were affiliated with Sheikh Yassin's Islamic Compound's military wing. After the launch of Hamas, the al-Jihad Wa Da'wa (MAJD) was established as an umbrella organisation for all of the military cells. Weapons were hard to secure and created significant risk for those who tried to purchase them from arms dealers or steal them from Israeli security forces. The first few attacks perpetrated by the new military wing of Hamas were kidnappings of Israeli soldiers. This approach allowed the Hamas abductors to capture arms and munitions for the group.

In November 1992, Hamas successfully used a car bomb to attack Israeli interests deep inside the country. Although no one was injured, the group demonstrated advancing sophistication with the attack. Formally, the MAJD became the al-Qassam Brigades under the direction of Yahya Ayyash in 1992. The brigades were named after Ezzedeen al-Qassam who was an Arab revolutionary in the British Mandate of Palestine, who started the Black Hand, an anti-Zionist and anti-British armed group in 1930 (Segev 1999: 360-362). Under the leadership of Ayyash, the al-Qassam Brigades of Hamas was capable of striking deep into Israel with new sophistication. It was Ayyash who established the use of improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers. The Israelis assassinated Ayyash in January 1996 by planting a bomb in his cell phone (Chehab 2007: 61). By this time, Ayyash had developed an organisation that was capable of complex and deadly attacks against the Israeli military and civilians. And, those capabilities have become more sophisticated since Ayyash's death. In November 2012, Hamas used advanced missile systems acquired from Iran to attack targets as far away as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. The missiles were launched from inside Gaza and were able to reach further than any previous missile attack. The advancement in weaponry and training has been dramatic. Most of those advancements were made possible by the support of Iran, Syria and Hizballah. Implications of the Syrian conflict in 2012 and 2013 have resulted in changes to the support received, which are discussed in Chapter 6.

During the First *Intifada*, the Israeli Cabinet determined that it would target for killing or arrest Hamas leaders who could be directly tied to the commission of attacks on Israel (Ben Israel, pers.comm., 2012). Given Israel's use of phone taps and informants, the



leadership of Hamas and members of the al-Qassam Brigades had to adapt their methods. This forced new communications techniques between leaders, recruiters and cells. According to Mosab Yousef (2010: 147-183) who participated in some of the communication drops as a spy for the Shin Beit, sophisticated communication drop methods were used so that individuals in the lower echelons of Hamas had no idea where the messages originated or of names of those who were couriers of the messages. The fact that al-Qassam continues to launch attacks, to this day, even though the Israelis have taken the lives of many military operatives through assassinations and arrest, is testimony that Hamas has developed a dynamic system for its Military Wing that for the first 25 years has been sustainable in the face of violent opposition.

Finally, the Military Wing hosts the official website of Hamas and is named after their Martyr's Brigade, al-Qassam. The website gives a short history, its mission and other information, including 70 pages dedicated to the Martyrs of Hamas; the people that have died either through assassination, suicide bombings, armed attacks or through tunnel accidents. Over 150 'martyrs' are listed on the al-Qassam (n.d.: martyrs) website.

### **3.3 Identity & Ideology: Defining Hamas as a Resistance Group**

Since inception in 1987, Hamas has launched thousands of attacks (ground and rocket attacks) against Israeli targets inside Israel. Over 250 of those attacks were high-profile ground operations, which included a suicide bomber or some other close-in ground attack. Over 7,800 rocket attacks have been directed or sanctioned (discussed thoroughly in Chapter 6) by the group from Gaza since July 2007. The sum total of these attacks demonstrates that Hamas has the armaments necessary to conduct violent operations against Israel. And, according to the Hamas Deputy Chairman, the advancement and collection of armaments have made the Palestinian people safer from their enemy, Israel.

Mousa Abu Marzouk (Deputy Chairman) and Usama Hamdan (unofficial Foreign Minister) in 2007 in Damascus (pers.comm., 28 February 2007), responded to two questions about 'resistance'. The first question was, 'does resistance for Hamas mean violent or non-violent resistance(?)'. Marzouk responded that, 'resistance meant the right and ability to conduct violent resistance to Israeli occupation'. The second

question asked was, ‘could Hamas renounce un-provoked violent resistance(?)’. Both Marzouk and Hamdan responded, by saying ‘no’. Hamdan went further by saying, ‘we are like the continental army fighting the British imperial force. Would you have asked Washington to lay down his arms to negotiate the British out of America?’

As the interview progressed, Marzouk went on to say, ‘Let Israel withdraw from our homeland to the 1967 borders, and let there be a Palestinian state, because there already is an Israeli state. And then there will be no resistance’. Hamdan quickly added, ‘Yes, it will not be called resistance, because between two states, it is called war’.

In September 2012, Marzouk was interviewed again, this time in Cairo, and asked a follow up question about what ‘resistance’ meant to Hamas (pers.comm., 23 September 2012). Marzouk responded by saying, ‘in the First *Intifada* we lost 3,500 people in 3 years. In the Second *Intifada* we were armed and we lost 1,700 people. In the war with Israel in December 2008 to January 2009, we lost 1,400. So, now, we resist by all means’. The point of Marzouk’s comments were that in the early days, Hamas did not have weapons to wage war and to violently resist and more deaths occurred. Since that time, Hamas has become stronger in its ability [technically] to violently resist and has lost fewer people when engaged with Israel than before.

Though current leaders of Hamas have articulated in various ways that the Hamas Charter (1988) is a historical document that does not necessarily define the modern group, it does offer a relevant framework for how to understand the way current leaders view ‘resistance’. Resistance is mentioned twelve times in the document and in all but one case, it is mentioned in the context of ‘Islamic Resistance Movement’. Islam is mentioned 98 times and underscores how important the faith is to the group’s most ardent supporters. ‘Jihad’ is mentioned 36 times and most often contextualises what it means to be an ‘Islamic Resistance Movement’. The definition of ‘Jihad’ means ‘inner struggle’ but is used in the founding document to show how current and future ‘jihad fighters’ will meet the souls of previous ‘jihad fighters’ who had ‘sacrificed their lives in the land of Palestine since it was conquered by the Companion of the Prophet’.

Article Nine of the Charter (1988) states the objective of Hamas to be: ‘discarding the evil, crushing it and defeating it, so that truth may prevail, homelands revert [to their

owners], calls for prayer be heard from their mosques, announcing the reinstatement of the Muslim state. Thus, people and things will revert to their true place’.

In total, the Charter outlines ‘resistance’ as a responsibility for the Islamic group as it fights to remove the ‘enemy’ (mentioned 24 times) from the ‘land of the Muslims’. Though it only infers violent action through ‘jihad’ it makes no direct mention of ‘violent resistance’. To better understand the direct communication on this point, it is necessary to draw from public statements of Hamas leaders. The following statements are just a sample of the many that have been uttered by the group’s leadership over the 25 years.

*18 May 1989*

Two months before the start of the *Intifada* in December 1987, I met with Sheikh Salah al-Shehada to whom I was first introduced in al-Majdel prison. I had decided to establish a movement in Gaza to work against the Israeli settlement policy, resist the occupation and to encourage Palestinians to take part in the resistance effort against Israel. During our meeting we agreed to set up a military wing and a security wing of this new Islamic movement. The military wing was to fight against the Israeli army and its occupation. Salah al-Shehada built up this wing.

– Sheikh Yassin (Chehab 2007: 23)

*28 December 1997*

We will continue our struggle and resistance until we uproot the occupation from our land.

- Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi (AP 1997)

*25 February 2001*

The USA only wants to stand by the enemy, the murderous criminal. This is why we respond to the USA and its allies with rejection. Resistance, we declare, will continue in all possible ways, until the last drop of Palestinian blood. The Palestinian people will never surrender with a white flag.

– Sheikh Yassin (Israel MFA 2001)

*30 April 2003*

Our resistance is continuing and it will continue and no one will stop it. We should not drop our weapons before we get our rights.

– Sheikh Yassin (Al Jazeera 2003)

*8 September 2003*

We gave the Israeli enemy a *hudna* [temporary truce] for 50 days, but the Israelis did not commit to it. They continued with their aggression, killings and crimes and erected this separation wall that they continue to build. Their settlements are still stealing our land. There are house demolitions and destruction all over the West Bank and Gaza. Just yesterday in Gaza they demolished three towers under the pretext that they were built close to a settlement. Tell me, where are the families living in those towers to go? So it is not a question of what Hamas thinks or what Fatah thinks. It is a question of the Palestinian national interest: does this lie in resistance or in the declaration of a *hudna*?

– Sheikh Yassin (Tamimi 2011: 167)

*15 January 2004*

For the first time, Hamas used a female fighter and not a male fighter. It is a new development in resistance against the enemy...Resistance will escalate against the enemy until they leave our land and homeland...We have said before that women are a tactical advantage.

– Sheikh Yassin (Chehab 2007: 89)

*25 March 2004*

Since the enemy has targeted our leadership...and a big symbol like Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, it is the right of the resistance to respond against the big Zionist heads...including Sharon, but this is up to the military leadership in the field and its capabilities. I hope they are successful.

– Khalid Mishal (The Daily Star 2004)

*1 December 2004*

We do know that, as you have said, many sympathizers [with the Palestinians] around the world do not understand the issue of the martyrdom operations, which may prompt them to reconsider their sympathy. However, we ask, “What is the alternative?” There is no alternative. Had the Palestinian people found the alternative they would have done without the resistance and without the martyrdom operations. They have been forced to resort to them.

– Khalid Mishal (Tamimi 2011: 156)

*1 February 2006*

However, the basic law says, as long as the enemy is targeting the heads of the resistance, and elders of our nation, it would be our ultimate right to seek out any available Zionist target, whether it was a military, political, or security leadership, whether it is a settler, a soldier, or any other occupying enemy. We have the ability and all the available support.

– Khalid Mishal (Israel MFA 2006)

*16 December 2007*

Today is the day of Jihad, resistance and uprising...The message from you today is that Hamas and these masses will not yield before sanctions. Your presence today, brothers and sisters, asserts the choice of resistance...against America and the Zionist occupation.

– Ismail Haniyeh (Halevi 2007)

*17 September 2009*

Military force is an option that our people resort to because nothing else works. Israel's conduct and the collusion of the international community, whether through silence or indifference or actual embroilment, vindicate armed resistance.

– Khalid Mishal (Livingstone 2009)

*23 May 2010*

So a resistance is based on all of this and everyone knows this. Mainly the resistance is part of the military actions. That doesn't mean that there is no political resistance, but it is supposed to be based on a kind of power, which the history tells us is this, the militant resistance.

– Osama Hamdan (Al Jazeera 2010)

*4 May 2011*

It will be an armed confrontation, as well as all other forms of struggle, including civil *Intifada* against the occupation, against the wall, and against the Judaization of

Jerusalem. There is no doubt, however, that the armed confrontation will continue to be the main effort and the backbone of the resistance, until the liberation of Palestine.

– Osama Hamdan (MEMRI 2011)

*27 September 2011*

The people have been getting killed for more than 60 years in the cause of liberation...we say liberation should come first and then the state, because states are not created through UN resolutions or political maneuvers and compromises, but through steadfastness and resistance.

– Ismail Haniyeh (ME Monitor 2011)

These fourteen statements over the years demonstrate that at no time in the group's history has the image of itself as a violent resistance movement changed based upon environmental conditions. For example, it would be easy to mistake that the group's engagement in the political process in 2005-6 changed the group from being a violent resistance group to a political group. Hamas does not view itself that way. Rather, it considers itself an armed Islamic resistance movement that has consolidated political power, which strengthens its ability to violently resist Israeli occupation.

Based upon the statements from the various Hamas leaders, there can be no doubt that resistance to these men is a form of 'violent resistance'. If we consider that the name of Hamas means 'Islamic Resistance Movement' and the Charter's discussion of what it means to be an 'Islamic Resistance Movement' and the articulation from the group's leadership defining resistance as 'armed resistance', then there can be no mistake that the group is in fact a violent resistance organisation that also engages in social services, politics and international relations. This is not to say that the group does not have other interests or pursuits like building an Islamic society. Rather, it is to say that the idea of violent resistance is so much part of the group that it must maintain the reputation amongst the Palestinian population in order to maintain its core base of support. This is most evident when considering the rocket attacks from Gaza.

Hamas works hard to protect its leading position as a violent resistance organisation amongst all Palestinian groups (discussed in depth in Chp 6). In September 2012, Mousa Abu Marouk (pers.comm., 23 September) said that Hamas wanted no armed confrontation with Israel so that the group could continue to consolidate power and build the institutions of government in Gaza. Yet, two months later, the group was engaged in Gaza War II with Israel. The Israelis claim that the war was prompted by a significant

increase in rocket attacks being fired into Israel. It is true that more rockets were being fired in the weeks leading to the war. How was this possible if the second in command of Hamas was stating that Hamas did not want the armed engagement? The answer is surprisingly simple.

Other armed groups, like PIJ and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) operate in Gaza. These groups do not have the same interests in institution building of Hamas. So, they continue with their resistance operations, which include firing rockets on Israel. Further, some fighters in the Hamas Military Wing, the al-Qassam Brigades, believe that the group is becoming too political and forsaking the resistance cause. If Hamas were to crackdown on these groups/people to prevent all rocket attacks, then the group would look as if they are forsaking armed resistance for political power. This would undermine their support with the base. So, Hamas must tolerate other actions outside its tactical interests in order to not lose the reputation of being the leading Palestinian armed resistance movement, which is a strategic interest. The author confirmed this approach by Hamas with both Palestinian and Israeli leaders.

The accommodation policy by Hamas of allowing other groups to fire rockets further enforces the notion that Hamas is a violent resistance group that has engaged in politics to further its cause of reclamation of lands lost in 1948. This notion aligns with comments made in field interviews of Palestinians and Israeli Shin Bet leaders, where they uniformly claimed that Hamas must maintain its position as the leading violent resistance organisation or lose fighters to other, more radical groups. Removing the banner as the leading Palestinian armed resistance group would hasten the demise of Hamas by ensuring that hard core supporters of the group leave for other groups that are primarily focused on violent resistance.

### **3.4 Hamas Relations (in-groups and out-groups)**

The purpose of detailing the many relationships discussed in this section and the next is to provide the reader with a backdrop of the external influences on Hamas's internal decisions. These influences can help us better understand the environmental conditions that shape Hamas actions. The very nature of the Hamas cause – the restoration of

Palestine for Islam and the Palestinian People – requires the existence of ‘in-groups’ and ‘out-groups’, which either support or oppose the cause. To begin, let us examine what groups are considered ‘in-groups’ by Hamas. An ‘in-group’ is a group that would be construed as an ally or potential partner to achieve group aims.

Hamas considers all Palestinian groups that strive for resistance against Israel as ‘in-groups’. Generally, Hamas views the PLFP, Fatah, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and PIJ as domestic Palestinian partners for the resistance against Israel. That said, groups like Fatah are also bitter rivals and can be considered ‘out-groups’ at various times for various political and religious reasons. Hamas only views PIJ as a partner for the transformation of society toward Islamic values – though PIJ lends little help in related religious training and operations. The other groups, including Fatah, represent secular forces on Palestinian society, while Hamas works diligently to increase Islamisation of the people.

International actors like the Muslim Brotherhood, certain members of the Arab League, Iran, and even Hizballah, have been viewed as ‘in-groups’ by Hamas. It is obvious why Hamas would have loyalty to the Brotherhood since it is essentially a Brotherhood formed organisation. Specific countries within the Arab League (Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE) are viewed favourably since significant funds for Hamas’s *dawa* programme are received from them (Levitt 2006: 143). Iran has sent millions of dollars and a continuous supply of military advisors to Hamas over the years. The author learnt from several Palestinian and Israeli leaders that Iran sent \$50million in cash in suitcases with a Hamas leader traveling back from Tehran at some point after Hamas took control of Gaza. After acknowledging that he brought \$20m in a suitcase to Gaza in 2006, Mahmoud Zahar, a senior leader in Gaza, stated, ‘we are going to continue to bring money in through Rafah crossing. This is a legal process. We are not going to allow anyone to prevent us’ (AP 2006b).

As for Iraq, there was an ‘on’ again ‘off’ again relationship with Hamas. Saddam Hussein had been a long-time supporter of the PLO and there was a view in Palestine that Hussein and Arafat could be liberators of Palestine (Ayalon 1995: 264-265). But, Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990 caused Hamas to question its support of Hussein, primarily because Kuwait had a sizable Palestinian population and an active Muslim

Brotherhood, led by Khalid Mishal that was a benefactor of Hamas. Within weeks of the invasion by Iraq, the PLO and Hamas had taken different positions with Arafat's longstanding relationship with Hussein as the justification for the PLO to support Saddam, while Hamas looked after its supporters in Kuwait (Ayalon 1995). By the time the Second Intifada had arrived, Hussein had been supplying money to the families of Palestinians who died in attacks on Israel. ABC News reported in January 2003 that Hussein had, 'given Palestinian families more than \$10million, all according to a well-known scale. Families of suicide bombers get \$25,000 each and families of those killed in confrontations with Israel get \$10,000. Those whose houses are destroyed by the Israeli military get \$5,000 and those wounded by Israelis get \$1,000' (Yang 2003).

The battle directed by Hamas at Israel is one particularly of land. As much as there is religious (anti-Semitic) rhetoric coming out of members of Hamas, the battle for the Palestinian land is a nationalistic endeavour in that it desires to take control of the land away from Israel, not necessarily to convert Israel to Islam. Conversely, the battle directed by Hamas at Fatah is one particularly for the control of Palestinian politics. Hamas desires that Islam govern Palestine while Fatah desires secular governance. In the 2006 election, Hamas used the notions of moral absolutism, a function of religious purity, to defeat Fatah. The Hamas election motto was 'reform and change', which was a direct attack on Fatah's corrupt practices.

Prior to the 2006 elections, Hamas was considered trustworthy by most, while the Palestinian Authority, led by Fatah, was considered corrupt by over 90% of the population (PSR 2006). The battle for representation of the Palestinian people is particularly a religious battle. But, a higher level of religiosity within the population does not predict higher levels of *Hamas Support* (See Chapter 4.5). Although the nature of the battles against Israel and Fatah are nationalistic and religious, respectively, there is overlap. Consider the battle for Gaza. The fight between Hamas and Fatah was a fight for both land and representation, which was both a nationalistic and religious fight. That said, Hamas now controls Gaza, but *Hamas Support* and the Islamisation of Palestine has fluctuated since the Hamas takeover.

Until 2006, Hamas was able to operate without the burden of governance. The existence of two distinct 'out-groups', Israel and Fatah, allowed Hamas to wage a battle for the



internal support of Palestinians while demonising both groups. Further, it allowed the Hamas leadership to adapt to the emotive themes of the day to wage a rhetorical campaign against Israel or Fatah or both. For example, when the PLO leader Yasser Arafat died, Hamas did not demean Fatah. However, when Fatah participated in the Palestinian Authority's Annapolis Peace talks, Hamas publically berated both the Israelis and Fatah. Over the years this has been a very effective strategy to gain international recognition (leaders in and out of the Arab world, including Russia, have met with leaders of Hamas for the better part of the past decade), state support (e.g. Iran, Turkey) and to build internal Palestinian support at the expense of Fatah.

The international community outside of the Middle East is often referred to by Hamas as impartial participants in the affairs of Palestine. Most notably the European Union, the United States, the United Nations are continuously labelled as 'biased' actors by Hamas. As a result, the group maintains a high level of distrust in the actions of these players.

To understand the actions of Hamas, one must understand the influences that shape Hamas actions. The 'in-groups' and 'out-groups' are important factors in this regard. The adaptations and changes by the group's leadership are often a reaction to these influences. Ideally, the reader should be able to fall back on the understanding and nuance offered in this section to gain a better understanding of how and why the group acts in certain ways at different times with the Palestinian people and other groups.

### **3.5 The Influence of Other Muslim Brotherhood Groups and Iran**

The founding leaders of Hamas encouraged the development of the Politburo outside the borders of the West Bank and Gaza. This structural reality encourages the establishment of relationships by the Politburo members with leaders in other countries, particularly in the Middle East, but not limited to the region alone. The reality of these relationships suggests that influence outside the Palestinian territories will help shape Hamas decisions within the territories.

Hamas has ideological and logistical support coming from across the Middle East. The prevalence of the Muslim Brotherhood chapters in various Middle Eastern countries provides an ideological and logistical partner for Hamas in the region. Further, states like Iran and Syria have been providing logistical support for Hamas through financial

and military aid. Many of these relationships were developed, in large part, by the founders of Hamas, specifically the current Chairman and Deputy Chairman. Mishal and Marzouk have deep connections with leaders in Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria and Qatar in addition to relations with Iran. In various ways, these relationships inject influence into the decision making process of Hamas, which makes the relational dynamics important to understand. In later chapters, each of these countries and their respective roles with Hamas will be discussed more thoroughly. The intent of this section is to provide a historic backdrop of the relationships and to tease out the geographic and environmental conditions that help shape Hamas actions both internally and externally.

Before articulating the relationships between Hamas and the states within the region, it is important to understand more about the way Hamas views itself vis-à-vis the Muslim Brotherhood. Earlier in the chapter, the formation of Hamas was discussed as a group that was formed from Palestinian members of the Muslim Brotherhood chapters in Gaza and the West Bank/Jordan. This is true, but does not explain the entire story. In the early days of formation, many younger members of the Palestinian chapters of the MB left the Brotherhood to join Hamas. Some elder members of the Brotherhood made claims that the MB was a ‘peaceful movement in the region’ and declined to join Hamas because of the ‘violent resistance’ agenda. At the time, the Hamas leaders (Sheikh Yassin) did not ask the International MB to be part of the movement even though the Hamas Charter and they themselves claimed it was part. Since that time, many of those older members of the Brotherhood have become members of Hamas. Also during the intervening period, the international organisation of Muslim Brothers supported the group in an advisory capacity while providing money and training. Though unable to pinpoint exactly when, sometime after the takeover of Gaza in 2007, Hamas asked the international organisation of the Muslim Brotherhood to be officially recognised as the Palestinian Branch. They were accepted. Since that time, Hamas has sent representatives to the Brotherhood’s international meetings (Senior Palestinian Leader, pers.comm., 17 October 2012).

The idea of membership in Hamas further elucidates the symbiotic relationship between Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. There are supporters of Hamas and members. The supporters can best be identified through popular support measures. *Popular*

*Support for Hamas* ranged from 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 people (22% to 32%) in 2012-3. One senior Gaza leader put it this way, ‘1/3 of the people completely support Hamas, 1/3 are against Hamas regardless, and 1/3 are independent and hold all accountable for the conditions in Gaza’. Members represent a much smaller group, approximately 100,000. Another member of Hamas said, ‘you can tell who is not a member by those who smoke. Hamas members don’t smoke’.

Hamas is a closed group meaning that the group’s operations are kept secret to those outside the membership, to the extent possible. Each member has a secret name. In times of difficulty, like when Hamas is outlawed in the West Bank, the members are organised into houses. Several members may be known to other members of a house, but those members do not know the other houses or members of those houses. Several houses would report to a captain. The compartmentalisation is one method the organisation has created in order to protect the identity and functionality of its members. Further to the point of a symbiotic relationship, when a person is sworn into membership of Hamas, they take the oath by placing their hand on the Qur’an and swearing allegiance to the *‘Ikhwan al-Muslimun’* (Muslim Brotherhood). This has been the oath since the beginning of Hamas. Here is an English translation of the full oath (Senior Palestinian Leader, pers.comm., 20 October 2013):

I pledge allegiance before Almighty Allah to place my best of effort, money, and time for the sake of my God's word, and to satisfy him and raise the word of my religion, and to declare my loyalty to the Muslim Brotherhood, and pledge unwavering loyalty and obedience to its leadership in good and bad. Allah is witness to what I say.

The implication that such an oath is taken reveals an important nuance of the group in relationship to the Brotherhood. The founders of Hamas determined that the existing Muslim Brotherhood of Gaza apparatus was not the best vehicle at the time to establish a violent resistance organisation and therefore felt the need to establish Hamas as a related but separate organisation. In many interviews with Hamas leaders they described Hamas as if it was a pioneer with a privileged place in the Brotherhood movement because it was physically fighting for the most sacred thing of all, Palestine. No other MB chapter or affiliate had such a responsibility. The perspective seemed to be that Hamas represented a necessarily independent but related group to the Brotherhood.

After the takeover of Gaza, and perhaps as a result of the success of the Muslim Brothers in the region as part of the Arab Spring movement, Hamas formalised their role as the Muslim Brotherhood Chapter in Palestine with the International Organisation of Muslim Brothers by formally asking to be part. On one hand, asking to be a recognised chapter of the international organisation formally subjugates the group's independence to the larger body. On the other, it is a reflection of the historical identity of the group. The oath of membership serves to deepen this identity with the new members of Hamas and places the movement into the larger context of the Brotherhood still with a privileged place because of its role as a violent resistance organisation to Israel for the purpose of recapturing the lost lands of 1948.

### **3.5.1 Arab Spring – Change Across the Region**

The power of the Arab Spring resulted in the replacement of governments in Tunisia, Egypt (temporarily), Libya and threatens others across the region. The resulting change of government order creates a vacuum of institutional support at many levels including social services and welfare to needy families. It is this vacuum in the welfare programmes that creates the most significant opening for Muslim Brotherhood Chapters to use their *dawa* infrastructure to engender support and gain new followers from the population. Across the region, the *dawa* is the social service campaign of Brotherhood Chapters to provide food, water, housing support, medical service, counselling, education and a variety of other essential daily services for needy families. The funds for the *dawa* activities come from every corner of the world through a network of charities and non-profits that move monies into the hands of Islamists to provide these services.

In an environment where government welfare and important social services are disrupted, or non-existent, the *dawa* programme attempts to fill this vacuum to build and strengthen its existing social service campaign to draw support and create cohesion to the Islamist cause. Given the unemployment and poverty that go along with revolution, social service institutions that provide essentials for daily living are ideal tools used by Islamists to recruit new members. This reality is met with opposition of secular forces

in the region. It may take years to see how the Arab Spring fully manifests between these newly organised Islamist forces with the secular oppositions.

### **3.5.2 Iran – financial and military support**

Numerous sources, including author interviews with Hamas and the Shin Bet, confirm that Iran has supported Hamas for years by providing cash, weapons and military advisors. This relationship began prior with Hamas's predecessors in Gaza in 1983 and continues through today. Yaakov Peri, Director of Shin Bet ('87-94) said (pers.comm., 3 December 2012), 'in 1983 we interdicted a ship sent from Iran through the Indian Ocean which was full of Kalisnikov rifles, missiles, and anti-tank weapons bound for Gaza'. According to Ibrahim Goshi, Hamas Spokesman in Jordan, he and Abu Marzouk (Chairman of the Politburo at the time) received invitations from Tehran in 1992. The subsequent meetings in Tehran (Chehab 2007: 141-142) were conducted with the Iranian leadership and the discussion centered on 'financial methods to support the Palestinian cause'. At the meeting, 'all agreed to unite against the peace initiatives being forged by the PLO and Israel'.

Since the 1992 meetings in Tehran, Iran has supported nearly all resistance groups in Palestine at different times, with Hamas and PIJ receiving the greatest level of support. According to Chehab (2007: 142), 'Osama Hamdan, the Hamas representative in Iran in 1994, admitted that the flourishing relations between Tehran and Hamas were at the expense of the previous marriage between Tehran and the PLO'. Though the relations may have thawed between the PLO and Iran after the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, Iran continued to assert influence into all Palestinian resistance groups.

Hamas has received as much as \$150million per year in aid from Iran with PIJ receiving nearly that amount (Senior Palestinian & Israeli leaders, pers.comm., 2011-13) – PIJ uses these resources to support its organisational expenses, militant operations and weapons development. Even Fatah militant activists received money from Iran through Hizballah during the Second *Intifada*. These Fatah activists became ripe for the Hizballah influence as they began to grow isolated from the Fatah leadership after the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (Senior Palestinian Leader, pers.comm., 17 October 2012) because, according to them, 'Fatah leaders were receiving VIP treatment

from the Israelis'. Though Hizballah began supporting Fatah leaders like Muni Maqdash in Lebanon, they quickly shifted the support to activists in the field. One al-Aqsa leader stated to the same Senior Palestinian Leader that his Hizballah Liaison Officer said, 'as long as you carry out attacks we support you. Once you stop, we stop'. That al-Aqsa leader received \$7000 a month for leading 6 militants in Nablus. In addition to sending large amounts of money to al-Aqsa operatives, Hizballah advised the operatives on targets and methods of attacks against Israelis.

Another Palestinian Senior Leader (pers.comm., 14 October 2013) told me that during the Second *Intifada*, PIJ was both receiving money from Iran through Hizballah and carrying out orders from the Lebanese group. Khalil Shikaki (pers.comm., 16 October 2013) provided another perspective on the relationship between Iran, Hizballah and Palestinian factions:

There were efforts by Arafat in 2001-02 to open an Iranian channel for supply of arms to Gaza during the second *intifada* [for Fatah]. This channel culminated in the failed 2002 Karine A affair.<sup>17</sup> Arafat kept his role a secret and denied any link to the ship, but it is highly unlikely that this could have happened without his consent. That affair essentially ended this Fatah-Iran clandestine channel. Furthermore, as the PA (and Fatah) became weaker and weaker, especially in the aftermath of the Israeli reoccupation of the West Bank and after the arrest of Marwan Barghouti, fragmentation and warlordism came to characterize most of Fatah ranks. Hizballah, along with many other groups including Islamic Jihad and other extreme Islamists, took advantage of the situation and began to establish direct links with various Fatah affiliated cells offering money and arms in return for information and attacks on Israelis. It is estimated that few dozen Fatah activists, driven mostly by money shortages, were involved, but it is highly unlikely that they managed to carry out a significant number of attacks.

Since the end of the Second *Intifada*, the Iranian support consolidated behind Hamas and PIJ and that support has come in the form of cash, weapons and military advisors from Iran and Hizballah. According to another senior Hamas official (pers.comm., 2012), the weapons have come to Gaza via tunnels from Iranian shipments through the Sudan and weapons caches sent by the Muslim Brotherhood and sympathetic groups from Libya. Since the takeover of Gaza by Hamas in 2007, Iran has provided the Hamas leadership in Gaza with sizable amounts of cash to build the resistance capabilities. As

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<sup>17</sup> Note: the Karine A affair was the attempted smuggling of armaments from Iran to Gaza organised by leaders in Fatah. On 3Jan02, the Israelis seized the ship and arms in the Red Sea.

previously discussed, Hamas leaders have received money from Tehran through ‘suitcase’ transactions after the election victory and takeover of Gaza. Other cash receipts from Saudi Arabia and Qatar have occurred similarly (see Chp 6.3).

After the 2007 takeover, Hizballah and Iranian military advisors entered Gaza through the tunnels in order to set up an Iranian manufactured rocket system. In the most recent Gaza War (November 2012), the rockets used by the Hamas and PIJ were of Iranian origin. The Fajr-3 (range 30 miles) and the Fajr-5 (range 50 miles) allowed Hamas and PIJ to target locations as far away as Tel Aviv and Jerusalem (Yuval Diskin, pers.comm., 3 December 2012). These missiles represented a new capability to project force deeper into Israel without having to smuggle improvised explosive devices through Israeli checkpoints. According to Ziad al-Nakhla (Erdbrink 2012), deputy leader of the Islamic Jihad, ‘the arms of resistance, including those of Hamas, are Iranian, from the bullet to the missile...if it wasn’t for these arms, the Israeli Army’s weapons would have run over the bodies of our children...great sacrifices Iran had made by shipping these weapons to Gaza’.

The media spokesman for PIJ, Daoud Shihab said in May 2013 (Al Ghoul 2013), ‘All of the weapons in Gaza are provided by Iran, be they weapons intended for the Hamas movement or for PIJ. Perhaps Hamas even has more Iranian weapons than us; and everyone knows that Iran is financing us’.

### **3.5.3 Kuwait – Mishal at University and Fundraising**

After the Six-Day War, Mishal’s father relocated the family from Silwad, a village in the West Bank, to Kuwait. By the age of 15, Mishal joined the Kuwaiti Chapter of the Muslim Brotherhood. While attending Kuwait University he became the leader for the Islamic League for Palestinian Students, which allowed him to participate with others in the formation of a Palestinian Islamic resistance movement. During the years he spent in Kuwait, he developed a penchant for raising money for Palestinian causes. He became recognised within the Hamas movement as someone capable of bringing resources to the group and was therefore considered a good person for the Politburo. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, he departed for Jordan. To this day, Mishal has developed many Hamas benefactors from his time in Kuwait.

#### **3.5.4 Jordan – The Salience of Geographic and Ideological Proximity**

There is a long history between what is now Jordan and the West Bank, which includes Jordanian occupation of the West Bank from 1948 to 1967. During the Jordanian occupation, the Muslim Brotherhood from Egypt established chapters in Amman, Jerusalem and later in Ramallah. These various chapters and the kinship and friendship connections between the Brotherhood groups allowed for a good deal of migration of its members between the West Bank and Jordan. Given that Khalid Mishal and others like Hassan Yousef ( Hamas Spiritual leader in the West Bank) were able to travel between the two while they were young gave Jordan an affinity in the hearts of Hamas leaders from the West Bank that does not exist for other countries.

In 1991, when Iraq invaded Kuwait, Khalid Mishal departed Kuwait for Jordan where he helped to establish the role and function of the Hamas Politburo. When then Chairman Mousa Abu Marzouk was incarcerated in the United States in 1995 after the US officially placed Hamas on the ‘Foreign Terrorist Organisation List’, Mishal took over the duties of running the Politburo, being officially elected Chairman in 1996. The legal battle over Marzouk caused difficulty for Jordan, mostly because of its relationship with the United States and the US insistence that the King expel Hamas. Politically, the action for the King was difficult in that the idea of Palestinian resistance against Israel was quite popular at the time, which meant that expelling Hamas could cause deep political consequences and therefore was not done.

By late 1997, the pressure on King Hussein to expel Hamas changed; presumably at a time in which he was working to build the political momentum to evict the Palestinian group. On 25 September Israeli intelligence officers attempted to assassinate Khalid Mishal on the streets of Amman. The failed assassination and the subsequent incarceration of the Mossad agents created international crises for Jordan and Israel by threatening to undermine the peace accord signed in 1994 (McGeough 2009). The event even threatened to topple the King because the anti-Israeli sentiment made the ‘street’ unstable. Without decisive action from the King, the calls for a Jordanian revolution would have grown louder. As a result, King Hussein had no choice but to allow the



Hamas Politburo to remain in Jordan to avoid a general uprising by the people of Jordan stoked by an outpouring of support for Mishal.

On 9 November 1998, after his recovery from the assassination attempt, Khalid Mishal said in response to rumors about the Hamas Politburo possibly being asked to leave Amman (Tamimi 2011: 122), 'I am Jordanian. I do not ever think of leaving the homeland'. In 1999, King Abdullah of Jordan outlawed Hamas after accusing it of breaking a deal to restrict its activity to politics. The leaders of the Politburo were arrested at Amman airport upon their return from meeting senior Iranians in Tehran. They were later released and by 2001 had set up operations in Damascus.

The relationship between Hamas and Jordan extends beyond the Politburo. According to Diskin, 'Hamas is connected historically with the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan and the ideology between the two groups is similar'. He continued by saying, 'militant activists between Jordan and the West Bank were nearly indistinguishable, which is why there is an active effort to keep the border secure.' The implication of the relationships, particularly when the border between the West Bank and Jordan was porous, was that the WB Hamas was in collaboration with Muslim Brotherhood activists in Jordan and their movements across the border caused difficulty for the Israeli Security forces and led to a number of West Bank launched attacks inside Israel.

Another significant point of connection is best understood through a series of events that transpired in 2011. The Jordanian version of the Arab Spring led to demonstrations in the street where thousands demanded political change. The Muslim Brotherhood of Jordan led much of the organisation for these demonstrations. By mid-2011, the Muslim Brotherhood leadership in Egypt asked the Jordanian Brothers to quite the demonstrations. According to Sawfat Hegazi (pers.comm., 25 September 2012), he, Mohamed Badia and Saad al Shatter told the leaders of the Jordanian MB to 'wait to create political change in Jordan so that the Egyptian Brotherhood could consolidate control in Egypt and then they [the Egyptian Brothers] would help in Jordan when the time was right'. The Jordanian demonstrations receded as a result. The implications of these events in Jordan demonstrate the interconnectivity of the Brotherhood movements, including Hamas. In summary, the historical relationship between Palestinian groups and Jordanians have a deep history that boosted Hamas's ability, in the early days, to

launch operations from the West Bank while allowing militant operatives to retreat across the border into Jordan ultimately strengthening resistance efforts.

### **3.5.5 Qatar – Mishal, Haniyeh and the Sheik**

Upon the departure of the Hamas Politburo in Damascus in 2011, Khalid Mishal relocated to Doha, Qatar. In October 2012, the Emir of Qatar, Sheik Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, became the first Head of State to visit Gaza since the takeover by Hamas in 2007. While in Gaza, he pledged \$400m in aid to Hamas. Presumably, Mishal used his fund raising capabilities to encourage the Emir to make a sizable contribution to Hamas for the development of Gaza.

### **3.5.6 Syria – Bashir Assad and the Hamas Politburo**

After King Abdullah of Jordan forced Hamas from Amman, Mishal and Marzouk were able to find support and sanctuary from Bashir Assad in Syria. By 2001, the Hamas Politburo set up shop in the suburbs of Damascus. For years the Assad regime provided logistical and financial support for Hamas and allowed Iran to provide money and weapons through shipments that crossed Syria. At times, these shipments crossed Syria bound for Hizballah in Lebanon with the intended destination of Hamas and PIJ militant activists in the West Bank and Gaza (see 3.5.2).

In 2011, the Arab Spring arrived in Syria in the form of demonstrations. These demonstrations were met by force by the Assad regime, which descended the state into civil war. The Syrian violence created a strain between the regime and Hamas. Many of the demonstrators were members of the Syrian Chapter of the Muslim Brotherhood. So, when the Syrian military began to kill Brotherhood members, the base of support for Hamas turned against Assad. This put Mishal and Marzouk in an untenable situation, which therefore meant they needed to sever ties with Assad and Syria and depart the country. In January 2012, Marzouk relocated to Cairo and in February, Mishal left Damascus for Doha. The severing of ties with Assad and Syria strained Hamas's relations with Iran and Hizballah (described in depth in Chapter 6) and caused the Politburo to be split in geographic location for the first time since the early days of Hamas. In September 2012, Marzouk said (pers.comm., 23 September 2012):

The Qassam Brigades were named after Sheikh Izz ad-Din al-Qassam, who established the Palestinian liberation movement and led the revolution of 1936. Sheikh Qassam was a Syrian man. Syria and Palestine are one people. Whatever the result in Syria, it will stand behind Palestine.

By the summer of 2013, it became clear that some Qassam fighters had gone to Syria to support the development of militias to defend against aggression from the Assad regime and other militant groups in Syria. Several Gaza members of Qassam were killed in fighting in Syria, leading Hamas leaders to claim that the young men were not fighting on behalf of Hamas (Davidovich 2013), saying ‘they resigned their membership in Hamas to fight jihad in Syria’.

### **3.5.7 Lebanon – Connectivity with Hizballah**

In response to Israeli security forces being killed in 1992, Israel rounded up over 400 militant activists, most from Hamas, and deported them to Southern Lebanon (B’Tselem 2011). For various reasons, international aid organisations were unable to provide food and health support for the deportees. The one group that came to the aid of the Hamas members in exile was Hizballah. Collaboration between the two groups began at this time and manifest in various ways over time and represented most significant relational dynamics between Hamas and Lebanon. The relationship between with Hizballah went beyond the influence of Iran. For years, Osama Hamdan, the unofficial Foreign Minister of Hamas ran the organisation’s Lebanese offices in al-Dahyeh in Beirut, a Hizballah neighborhood. Hamdan would, with permission of Hizballah, bring Hamas leaders and foreign groups wanting to speak to Hamas through the Lebanese offices.

The camaraderie between Hamas and Hizballah was largely built on the idea that the groups were fighting the same enemy, Israel. With each group identifying allies of the other as new enemies, the relationship between the groups has eroded. The row began when the Hamas leaders departed Damascus over the conflict between Assad and members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria. The sectarian nature of the conflict positioned Hizballah and Hamas on opposite sides of the conflict. Though seemingly amicable publically, presumably due to the encouragement from Iran that both remain enemies of Israel, the likely fallout from the opposing positions will only be known in the future. As of 25 February 2014 (Senior Palestinian Leader, pers.comm., 25

February), Hizballah was not allowing Lebanese Visas to be issued to members of Hamas. Meanwhile they were continuing to allow Osama Hamdan to remain in residence in the Hizballah stronghold of Beirut.

### **3.5.8 Egypt – Muslim Brotherhood Elected, Shilat and Marzouk**

Of all countries, Hamas may have the deepest ties within the state of Egypt. After all, al-Banna launched the Brotherhood movement in Egypt and it is clear in talking to the Egyptian Brotherhood leaders that they feel that they are the vanguards of the movement. Nearly all of the early leaders of the Gaza chapter of the Muslim Brotherhood either did their university studies in Egypt or trained with Brotherhood leaders in Cairo or Alexandria. Those same individuals are the ones that launched Hamas in 1987 in Gaza. So when the Muslim Brotherhood rose to power in Egypt, the relationships between Hamas leaders, particularly those from Gaza, and the Egyptian Brotherhood had history. The importance of the following discussion is that it demonstrates the depth and penetration of the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt, of which, several common attributes are shared with Hamas and the Palestinian people. Further, the proximity of Gaza and Egypt opened significant new opportunities and threats for Hamas. Though these issues will be discussed in subsequent chapters, a brief description is provided here in order to understand the existence of influence that was emanating from Cairo on Hamas.

By January 2011, the Arab Spring descended on Cairo and massive protests began. As the world watched international news feeds, we saw the crowds gather in Tahir Square in central Cairo. By all accounts the beginning of the Egyptian revolution began on 25 January 2011. In the first few days of the protests the Egyptian Brotherhood refused to participate. As the protests grew and international attention focused on the events, the Brotherhood leaders decided to join the nascent revolution. Today, if you were to ask Brotherhood leaders when the revolution began, they will tell you 28 January 2011, the day they decided to join. To be fair, their involvement swelled the ranks of the revolution and helped topple the Mubarak regime.

Once Mubarak was deposed, the Egyptian Supreme Council of the Armed Forces declared that public elections would be held as soon as possible. Because Mubarak had

crushed all opposing political parties, there existed a large vacuum of organised political movements, save one. Under Mubarak, the Brotherhood was outlawed and its leaders regularly imprisoned, but the religious and social service related programming of the movement was organised through the Mosques. So, despite Mubarak's efforts to dismantle the Brotherhood, it was able to survive because the regime decided to not purge the organisation from the Mosques for fear of perception that the regime was against Islam. Consequently, when the military council declared elections, the most forceful and organised political movement emanated from those mosques. The resulting election of the Freedom and Justice Party, the political party established by the Muslim Brotherhood, in early 2012 came as no surprise.

After the fall of Mubarak in February 2011, Hamas leveraged the friendlier environment in Egypt to pursue a prisoner exchange for Gilad Shilat. One Hamas official told me that it was the Israelis who suggested the willingness to exchange over 1,000 Hamas prisoners for Shilat that led to the willingness of Hamas to release Shilat. Israeli leaders, on the other hand, claimed that Hamas finally accepted the provision that the most violent prisoners would be deported to other countries. Regardless of the breakthrough, the Shilat deal was negotiated in Egypt by al-Jabari, the leader of al-Qassam brigades, and several international negotiators, including Egyptian Intelligence Officers.

Meanwhile, the escalation of violence in Syria increased the pressure on the Hamas Politburo to relocate from Damascus. As can be seen in the relocation of the Politburo from Amman in 1999 to Damascus in 2001, establishing a new headquarters for Hamas is a timely and difficult endeavour. The opening in Cairo represented a real opportunity for Mishal and Marzouk to relocate. However, the newly elected Brotherhood was caught in tension between its interest in supporting and hosting Hamas and the Egyptian need to keep the nearly \$2billion in aid from the US Government, which maintains its stance that Hamas is a terrorist organisation. Further, the Egyptian Intelligence Service was articulating for the military and newly elected President Morsi, that Gaza represented the most significant strategic risk to Egypt. These pressures led the Egyptian government to tell Hamas that only one of the two senior leaders of Hamas could reside in Egypt. It is unclear whether President Morsi dictated that Marzouk was the one who could stay in Egypt or whether that decision was reached by the Hamas leadership. One potential influence was the time that Marzouk spent in Cairo as an

engineering student at Ein Shams University where he was engaged with young leaders of the Egyptian Brotherhood. In any event, by late winter 2012, Marzouk (Hamam Deputy) relocated to a home in New Cairo, the same neighborhood where President Mubarak had resided and where President Morsi lived. Marzouk resided in a large four-storey home that also housed the Hamam Politburo office. Within the office, there was a large room used for meeting visitors. The room was adorned with couches, pictures and a chair specifically for the Deputy Chairman, adjacent to the standing green flag of Hamam. Described in detail later in the thesis, the events around the relocation of Marzouk to Cairo created an interesting and important dynamic into the internal election of the Hamam Politburo.

While interviewing Marzouk (23 September 2012) at his office in Cairo about the opportunities presented to Hamam as a result of the Brotherhood leadership in Egypt, he said, ‘the first priority is to handle the security and the human need. The facts on the ground need treatment before anything else...priority to own problems before anything else’. He went on to say that freedom of action by the government is difficult and that, ‘the relationship with the United States is complicated and deep. Egypt should think outside box. The US should not pressure the Presidency. The people [who elected the Brotherhood] have influence. America should not forget that Morsi’s first visit was to China’.

In response to a question about the relationship between Islam and democracy as witnessed in the 2006 Palestinian elections and the 2011 elections in Egypt, Marzouk responded, ‘(r)eligion is human life and democracy is a tool of ruling. In its basics, it is not against Islam, there are other tools [other than democracy]. Islam accepts ways of governance. People are the source of power and are the basis of Islam and democracy’.

Another more tactical issue between the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt and Hamam of Gaza presented itself with a seemingly common and perhaps coordinated policy response. A similar question was asked of Marzouk and Sheikh Safwat Hegazi. By way of background, Sheikh Hegazi was the Secretary General of the Tahir Square Revolutionary Council, the Secretary General of the Organisation of Sunni Scholars and proclaimed direct descendent of the Prophet Mohammed. He had a leadership position with the Muslim Brotherhood, was a presidential candidate along with Morsi, and with

Badia and Shatter determined that Morsi should be President of Egypt. The similar refrain from Hegazi and Marzouk was on the question of the possibility of opening the Rafa border between Gaza and Egypt. Marzouk said, '(a)ny group in power, as in Egypt, can't change policy overnight. There are requirements for leading. A man of the state is not a man for votes. The Philadelphia agreement between the Palestinian Authority and Israel governs Rafa, so the PA can't open the border on its own'. Hegazi responded by saying, '(t)he agreement was negotiated because of America and that we will open Philadelphia in 2012'. Both men articulating the diplomatically negotiated agreement that governs the Rafa border suggests that both Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood realised the same constraints and that ways to address those constraints were in the forefront of the mind for both. This is not to suggest that collusion on the topic was a matter of fact, rather to infer that the both had similar priorities.

The closeness of the relationship between Hamas and the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo cannot be overstated. There is a symbiotic relationship between them, which injects influence into the actions of the Hamas. Even during the Mubarak years where the Brotherhood was outlawed, there existed a close relationship between the Brotherhood in Egypt and Hamas in Gaza, with occasional visits between senior leaders (Salam 2009). Later in the thesis, the dynamics related to international recognition of the Gaza/Egypt border, the election of Mishaal, the transfer of weapons, the transfer of goods and supplies from Egypt to Gaza through the tunnels and the implications of the fall of the Brotherhood in Egypt in 2013, will be discussed in detail.

# **Chapter Four**

## **Popular Support and Causal Mechanisms of Violence**

This chapter has two primary purposes. First, the chapter defines seven distinct time periods that characterise Hamas resistance from its inception. Second, the chapter includes most of the thesis's data and statistical analyses measures of the relationships between various popular support factors from PSR polling, Hamas violence and values of Palestinians. These measures are both defined and displayed in graphic form with related discussion. Generally, the statistical analyses measured the full time span of the collected and normalized data, September 1993 to December 2013, but changes in Hamas violence and attitudes of Palestinians are best done through analysing the data between the different time periods discussed below. Last, the data and statistical measures establish the contextualised basis to: 1) test the hypotheses, 2) expound upon Max Weber's theoretical model, 3) establish a model of Hamas Resistance, 4) establish a predictive model of Hamas violence and 5) strengthen the qualitative analyses in subsequent chapters.

### **4.1 The Distinct Eras of Hamas Resistance**

There are seven distinct time periods, eras as they are called from this point forward, that help us better understand how Hamas used violence during different periods. These eras come naturally from the Hamas violence data in that the group changed violent behaviour at particular times based upon environmental conditions. The first two eras represent the before and after the decision to enter elective national politics. They are referred to as the Pre-Political and Political Eras. It is important to note that Hamas, since inception, has always been a political actor on the Palestinian stage. The public engagement of the group to transform Palestinian society into an Islamic society, by itself, necessitates a level of public engagement that is political in nature. This should

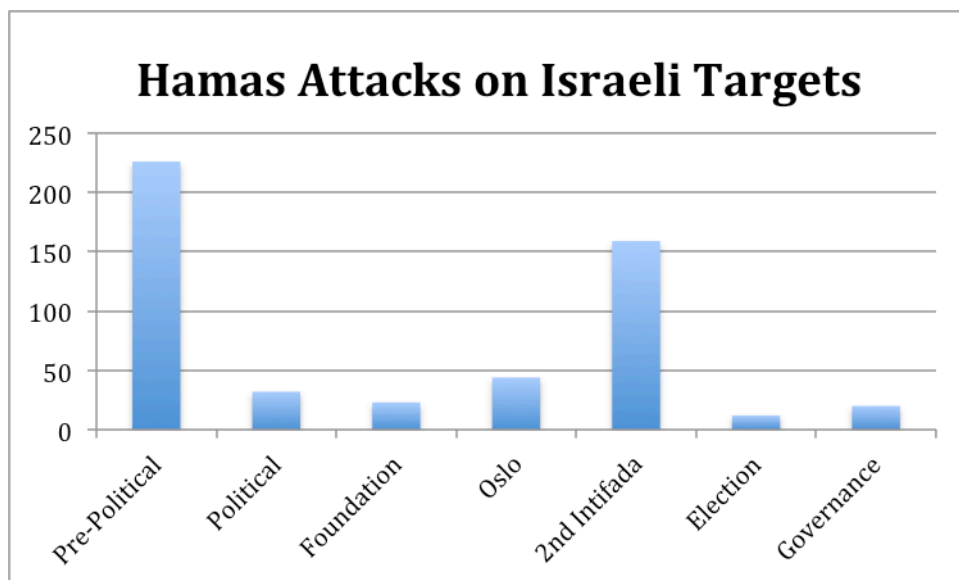


not be confused with the idea of elective politics. After all, it was Mousa abu Marzouk (23 September 2012), who said that, ‘a man of the state is not a man for votes’. The demarcation line between the two eras is when Hamas made the decision to pursue elective office at the national level.

The other five eras are smaller time segments known as the Foundation, Oslo, Second *Intifada*, Campaign and Governing Eras. Each of these eras corresponds with specific behaviours of Hamas led violence, which will be discussed thoroughly in Chapters 5 and 6. It is important to note that though these eras have defined beginnings and endings, which is required to demonstrate data and for statistical analysis. The reality is that there is some overlap between the eras because each new era, like the takeover of Gaza by Hamas, takes some adjustment by the leadership to understand the ramifications and to shift the behaviour of the group.

Figure 2 depicts the number of Hamas led attacks for each era. Not included in this graph is the number of rocket/mortar attacks not leading to Israeli casualties since Hamas took over Gaza, which numbers over 8,000. The violence in each era had different environmental conditions that made each era unique from the other (described in Chapters 5 and 6). After the end of the Second *Intifada* and the Hamas decision to enter elective national politics, the group initiated only one suicide attack and that was in February 2008 and was described in the Prologue.

Figure 2. Hamas Attacks on Israeli Targets by Era



### *Pre-Political Era*

This era begins in December 1987 and concludes in December 2004. The beginning of the era coincides with the formation of Hamas and the conclusion with the death of Yasser Arafat. The beginning is straight forward, but the end of the era is not. Though Arafat died on 11 November 2004, Hamas violent behaviour did not noticeably change until after the following month. Further, in November and December of 2004, there were a number of issues weighing on the Hamas leadership, including the death of Arafat, three years of loss of militant activists, at least 500 according to General Ben Israel (pers.comm., 6 December 2012), as a result of the Israeli *Targeted Killing* and apprehension campaign, the building of the security barrier making it more difficult to launch successful attacks and a realisation that the corruption in Fatah left it politically vulnerable. These issues weighed heavy on the leadership of Hamas and eventually led them to move away from the type and *Violence Frequency* that defined the Second *Intifada*.

### *Political Era*

The decision to enter into elective national politics was marked by a significant lessening of violent behaviour by Hamas. This era begins in January 2005 and ends in August 2013, which is an arbitrary end of the era, but was done for the purpose of analysis for this thesis. Further, the statistical data analysing the environmental conditions and violent behaviour was necessarily stopped in December 2012 leaving only qualitative analysis for the final months of the study.

The beginning of the Political Era was marked by the Hamas decision to enter elective national politics. None of the senior leaders could or would tell me when this decision was made. In response to questions about the decision to enter elective politics, Hamas leaders gave many different answers – sometimes the same person responded with different answers. As such, one could conclude that the decision was likely a process that did not happen overnight and therefore is not marked in the memory of the Hamas leaders as an event. Within the era, there was a national election campaign in which nearly all organised violence by Hamas ceased. Also within the era was the takeover of Gaza in June of 2007. Coinciding with the Hamas ascendancy in Gaza was the

advancement of weaponry that came from Iran for Hamas and PIJ. These new weapons, particularly the rocket/mortar capabilities ushered in a new era of violent attacks by Palestinian factions. Since the takeover, Hamas has either attacked or allowed the attacks to take place from Gaza by other militant groups. The nearly 8,000 rocket and mortar attacks are counted as attack incidents, not the total number of rockets/mortars launched, which numbers significantly more than 8,000. The method and source used to calculate the number of attack incidents for rockets/mortars was the Israeli Security Agency's public archive (Israel Security Agency). The political era statistically ends just after the Gaza War 2. The qualitative analysis extends another 18 months beyond that to June 2014 in order to examine the second reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas for a unified Palestinian Authority.

### *Foundation Era*

The Foundation Era begins at the launch of Hamas on 8 December 1987 and ends at the signing of the Oslo Declaration of Principles on 13 September 1993. This period is generally known as the First *Intifada*. Hamas was trying to find its way during this period and scaled into their violent resistance. In early 1988, the militant activists had only a few weapons in which to use against Israel (Chehab 2007: 12-20). Consequently, their strategy was to acquire more weapons by, in the first instance, stealing them from kidnapped Israeli soldiers to later efforts to smuggle them from Iran and North Africa and to receive advanced weaponry training from anyone who could help. For this era, only raw violence data is available. It is not until the Oslo Era that we have popular support data that can be used to measure relationships with violence.

The First *Intifada* coincided with the day Hamas was launched. In fact, Chehab (2007: 20-28) describes how Sheikh Yassin and others used the events leading to the beginning of the uprising to springboard the launch of Hamas. In other words, the founders of Hamas used the events surrounding the uprising to coalesce the formation of the group, which further added fire to the emerging *intifada*. During this time, Hamas was a minority actor to other violent factions engaged in the Palestinian Territories. According to the Verified Open-Source Violent Attack Dataset, the total of Hamas led high-profile attacks during the period was 23.

### *Oslo Era*

The era begins with the signing of the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the PLO, which included mutual recognition, and ends with the beginning of the Second *Intifada* in late September 2000. Hamas led nearly all of the Palestinian violence during this period. For the most part, the capacity to perform larger violent acts deeper within Israel advanced significantly during this period because of the skills of a few Hamas operatives, including ‘The Engineer’, Yahya Ayyash. The death of Rabin, subsequent election of the Likud party and the emergence of Hamas as a negotiation foe put an end to the idea of establishing a two state solution through the Oslo Accords. It becomes clear during this period that there is a significant relationship between the Hamas acts of violence and the Palestinian *Popular Support for Violence*, discussed later in this chapter. When discussed with Dr. Khalil Shikaki from PSR, he explained that Ami Ayalon, former Director of the Shin Bet during the latter part of the Oslo Era, suggested the same thing to him just weeks before.

#### *Second Intifada Era*

The era begins with the start of the ‘uprising’ in September 2000 and ends December 2004, the month after the death of Yasser Arafat. Though the official ending of the end of the Second *Intifada* is 8 February 2005, the total number of Hamas attacks in early 2005 was significantly less than December 2004 and nearly came to a complete stop before the Palestinian Elections in January 2006. The implication is that Hamas had determined to end or temporarily suspend their violence campaign while engaged in political campaigning. The era consisted of 159 verified high-profile Hamas led attacks. Seven of Hamas’s ten most prolific attacks by casualties occurred during this period.

The era also included the organised Israeli *Targeted Killing* and apprehension campaign of Hamas operatives. Israeli military leaders suggest that the success of the programme led to the end of the ‘uprising’, while Hamas leaders claim that it was not a motive in the decision to end the violence and move toward elective national politics. In the first half of 2004, Israeli missiles killed Sheik Yassin the co-founder and spiritual leader of Hamas and Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, the Hamas leader in Gaza. The killing and apprehension campaign certainly did thin the ranks of Hamas field commanders for the *Intifada*. However, the data available for measurement during this time period does not allow us to test whether attrition from this programme was the causal factor or one of the causes that led to the end of the era.

### *Campaign Era*

The era begins in January 2005 and concludes in July 2007, after the honeymoon and consolidation efforts related to the election victory and the civil war in Gaza between Hamas and Fatah. Though there was twelve verified high-profile violent Hamas led attacks against Israeli targets, only one was a suicide bombing and that occurred in January 2005. The occurrence of the other attacks are indicative of two realities: 1) not all Hamas militants were in agreement that resistance operations should take a backseat to politics and 2) the diffuse structure of Hamas can accommodate violent actions outside the control of the senior political leaders. Regardless of these counter movements within Hamas, the organisation reduced violent activity significantly during this period.

Another factor that defines this period is the importance the role of Fatah plays for Hamas. During the period, most of the Hamas public statements were not geared toward the defeat of Israel, rather they were about cleansing Palestinian society of the secular corruption that defines Fatah. This era quite clearly demonstrates that at times, Fatah is the greater enemy to Hamas than that of Israel. This, however, is a nuance that is hard to substantiate other than recognising that the purpose of Hamas is twofold, Islamisation of Palestine and resistance to Israeli occupation, the former requiring the decline of the secular aspirations of Fatah.

This era intentionally extends beyond the election victory in January 2006 for another 17 months because Hamas was busy working to implement its political ideas through the legislative government and then after dissolution of that government, through public efforts to undermine the Palestinian Authority. In a sense, Hamas was not governing during this time so much as running a campaign to establish the political legitimacy of the electoral victory. Those political and campaigning efforts coincided with little violent activity from Hamas toward Israel. The era ends when international and domestic interests collide in Gaza in June 2007. The resounding defeat of Fatah at the hands of Hamas ushered forth a new yoke of responsibility, one that it had pursued since December 2004, governance.

### *Governance Era*

The beginning of the era is June 2007, when Hamas defeated Fatah to become the leading political faction in Gaza. Until we see the impact of the most recent reconciliation between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, we are still in the Governance Era. For the purpose of this thesis, the analysis of the era ends statistically in December 2012 and qualitatively in June 2014. The era is marked with two Gaza wars with Israel, the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood across the region, including its fall in Egypt, the significant development of a few Qassam fighters engaged in sectarian fighting in Syria and the implications of the ‘reconciliation’ and ‘unity’ throughout the spring of 2014. Further, the era demonstrates clearly the evolution of Hamas weaponry coming from Iran and Libya. The new rocket systems from Iran also mark an evolution in tactical methodology of Hamas. Whereas, prior to the rocket capability, Hamas had to demonstrate their resistance credentials through ground attacks. Now, such credentials can be displayed through rocket/mortar fire at Israel, despite whether the airborne attacks hit an intended Israeli target or not.

The split between the West Bank and Gaza also marks the era. The Palestinian Authority shut down all Hamas organisations in the West Bank, while Hamas assumed the leadership of Gaza and began to focus on institution building. The control of Gaza provided another significant development in Hamas, notably that Gaza became the centre of the Hamas world and maintaining control of the territory and strengthening its grip has, in a sense, competed with the notion of resistance. This balancing act by the Hamas leadership underscores the approach this thesis takes to modify Max Weber’s theoretical model and then to measure the balance between values and responsibilities.

#### **4.2 Pilot Study: Preliminary Approach & Findings**

This section describes the pilot study that was first conducted and the preliminary findings that came from it. The pilot study was the vehicle to transform criticisms of literature and hunches about the dynamics of violence and popular support into a methodological approach that could further direct the full-scale empirical investigation. The research question driving the pilot was, ‘does a significant relationship exist between the Palestinian popular support and violence?’

To begin, the pilot evaluated popular support measures for Hamas, Fatah, and *Support for Violence* against Israel, Hamas led violence and quotes from Hamas leaders. The data was collected using archives for popular support measures, public statements of a few Hamas leaders and the *Verified Open-Source Violent Attack Dataset*. The final component of the pilot was to interview a few senior Palestinians on related questions.

The preliminary findings from the pilot suggested that Hamas adapted much of its violent rhetoric and behaviour based upon the attitudes of the populace. Though drawing such conclusions is well understood in electoral politics, it is not normally equated with the behaviour of armed groups, like Hamas. The pilot produced several preliminary findings described in this section. Generally, those findings can be organised into four overarching themes:

- A. Violence and non-violence is a causal mechanism for the popular support of Hamas;
- B. Hamas is responsive to its environment, it moderates language and positions as a function of environmental conditions;
- C. Hamas gains and loses popular support through dynamics with out-groups (i.e. competing for ‘market share’); and
- D. Examining the dynamics of conflict provides greater clarity into the escalation and reduction of tensions and violence.

*Violence, or the lack thereof, is a causal mechanism for the Popular Support of Hamas.* The pilot data in Figure 2 suggests that there is a dynamic relationship between the behaviour of Hamas, including violent acts, and popular support measures. The left chart in Figure 3 shows, between 1995 and 2000, a general trend upward of Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israeli targets and Hamas popular support, but a relatively flat trend line for the number of Hamas violent acts. Several interviews were conducted with Hamas experts and Hamas leaders to try to understand this, whereby it was suggested that Hamas was able to induce reprisals from the Israelis, which ratcheted up the *Support for Violence* against Israel and *Hamas Support*.

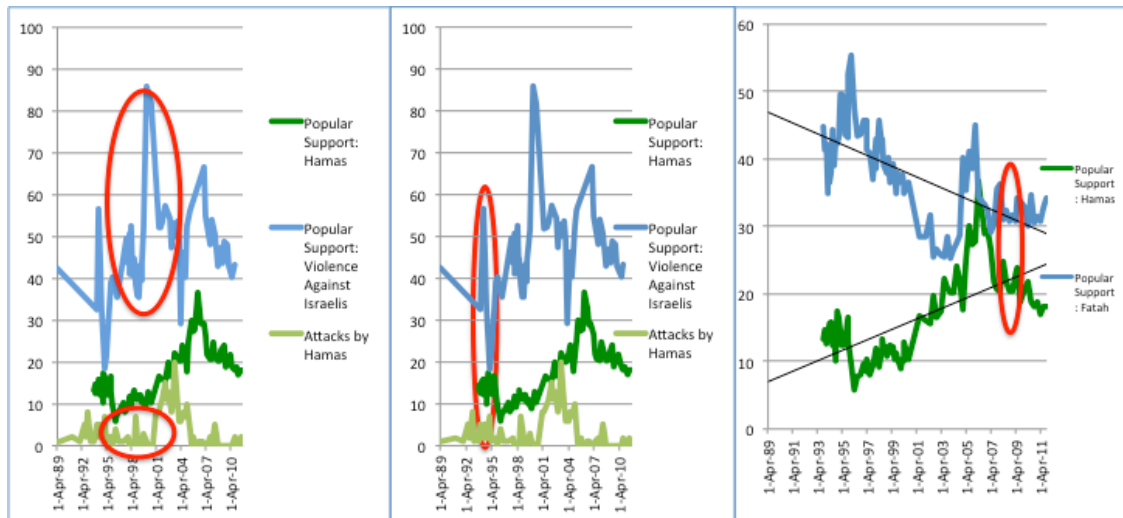
*Pilot Finding #1 – Hamas induced violent reprisals from Israel with suicide attacks inside the Green Line in order to gain Popular Support for Violence against Israel*

and greater Hamas Support. Described later in this chapter, the full empirical investigation shows this finding to be false.

This finding suggests that Hamas violence would predict *Hamas Support* and *Support for Violence*. As will be discussed later in this chapter, such predictions are not found in the data.

Carlos Marighella's writing on the Urban Guerrilla (1969) argues that the approach of guerrillas should be to engage in armed activity to force the police and military toward intensifying 'repressive' activities which will in turn push the population's support against the state and toward the guerrillas. This is generally believed to be common wisdom for armed group and guerrilla activities, but as will be seen by this work, Hamas does not directly benefit with greater popular support in such a manner from its armed engagement (see Chp 7.3).

**Figure 3. Pilot Data: Hamas Violence and Support for Hamas, Violence and Fatah**



The centre chart in Figure 3 suggests that environmental conditions can dramatically change the *Support for Violence* against Israel and how Hamas uses violence toward Israel. The variation in *Support for Violence* represented by the blue line in the red circle shows the dynamics around the Oslo Accords signing and the Hebron Massacre. For the former, it shows that progress toward a Palestinian state lessens the *Support for Violence*, while the latter suggests that violence against Palestinians potentially plays a spoiler role and can ratchet up *Support for Violence* and possibly violence. The data from the pilot was particularly unclear on this point because popular support measures



were not taken immediately after the Hebron Massacre; they were taken months later after Hamas launched attacks of retribution.

On 13 September 1993, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and Israel signed the Oslo Accords. Between the signing of the accords and mid February 1994, Hamas led nine attacks against Israelis, killing 12 people. Then on 25 February 1994 Baruch Goldstein, an Israeli settler near Hebron, killed 29 and wounded 125 Palestinian worshipers at a mosque in Hebron (also known as the Cave of the Patriarchs Massacre). On 6 and 13 April Hamas launched two of their deadliest (to date) suicide bus bombings in the heart of Israel killing 14 and injuring 85. Hamas claims these bombings were in retaliation for the massacre (Martin 2009: 358).

The combination of these factors led to two more preliminary findings:

*Pilot Finding 2 – Palestinian Support for Violence is a function of environmental conditions. Described later in this chapter, the full empirical investigation shows this finding to be true.*

*Pilot Finding 3 – Palestinian Support for Violence increases based upon Israeli violence in the West Bank and Gaza. Described in Chapter 6.2.5 discussion of Gaza Wars, the full empirical investigation shows this finding to be not always true.*

To test Pilot finding #3 in the larger study over the duration of 20 years, it was necessary to collect a dataset of all Israeli operations in the Palestinian territories, whether individuals, the Israeli Defense Forces or the Shin Bet, led them.

Unfortunately, such a database of Israeli action was unable to be assembled and therefore made the relationship between Palestinian *Support for Violence* and Israeli violent acts empirically untestable. That said, testing of the Gaza population before and after the two Gaza wars is possible and is described in Chapter 6.

#### *Hamas Moderates Language and Positions as a Function of Environmental Conditions*

The use of language by Hamas is a strategic and tactical tool used to gain or not to lose popular support. In the early days, the language from the group was hostile toward Israel, presumably to gain support of Palestinian militant activists. Pilot study data suggested that over time, Hamas language moderated, presumably to gain wider support

from the Palestinian people. This should not be confused with the understanding that some percentage of the population supports violence. Increasing or decreasing *Support for Violence* does not necessarily predict how Hamas articulates its position. This should be considered an independent factor. Figure 4, shows three occasions where environmental conditions encouraged the leadership of Hamas to use more moderate language.

Figure 4. Pilot Data: Hamas Language Moderation and Policy Adaptations

<b>Example of Language Moderation and Policy Adaptations</b>	
<p>1. In Article 34, the Charter states, "...Thus it was that the Crusaders came with their armies, bringing with them their creed and carrying their Cross. They were able to defeat the Moslems for a while, but the Moslems were able to retrieve the land only when they stood under the wing of their religious banner, united their word, hallowed the name of Allah and surged out fighting under the leadership of Salah ed-Din al-Ayyubi. They fought for almost twenty years and at the end the Crusaders were defeated and Palestine was liberated...This is the only way to liberate Palestine. There is no doubt about the testimony of history. It is one of the laws of the universe and one of the rules of existence. Nothing can overcome iron except iron."</p>	<p>In May 2002, Sheikh Yassin stated, "And my own best vision for Palestine is of a land for Christians, Jews, Muslims -- a state where everyone has equal rights...That question should be left for the democratic process. Let the people select the kind of state they want, in the same way that the United States is a state for all its people and they solve their differences democratically as equals."</p>
<p>2. In March 2002, Sheikh Yassin stated, "Hamas was far from enthusiastic about the inclusion of women in warfare, for reasons of Modesty."</p>	<p>In January 2004, Sheik Yassin state, "Significant evolution in our fight. The male fighters face many obstacles...women are like the reserve army, when there is a necessity, we use them."</p>
<p>3. In April 2004, Sheikh Yassin stated, "the primary purpose of the intifada today is to expel the occupation from the 1967 borders. The future will decide the fate of what remains of the soil of Palestine."</p>	<p>In December 2011, Khalid Mishal stated, "Fatah and we have political differences, but the common ground is agreement on a state within the 1967 borders."</p>

The seemingly moderated language used in number one in Figure 4, occurred during the height of violence in the Second *Intifada*. For Sheikh Yassin, it was a perfect environment to test language that cast a broader vision of inclusivity under a democratic process for a one state solution. Though the Israelis and other international actors would argue that the content of the statement was aggressive in that it described a scenario whereby Israel vanished, it did provide a more moderate tone than the previous related statement.

Number 2 in Figure 4 shows Sheikh Yassin providing a defense for his blessing for al-Rayashi, the first female Hamas suicide bomber. Previously the Hamas position was that women were not to be involved in combat operations. Likely, the moderation in position was a result of Fatah receiving accolades for using women in combat

operations. Number 3 shows the evolution of language around the 1967 borders, where the former suggests that a Palestinian State within 1967 is not part of the thinking. The latter suggests the opposite. Of the hundreds of Hamas public statements gathered for the pilot study, over half could be considered policy changes and language moderation as a result of internal or external influences faced by the group. This conclusion led to the next finding:

*Pilot Finding 4 – Hamas moderated language and positions since inception to gain popular support. Described in Chapter 7.4, the full empirical investigation shows this finding to be false.*

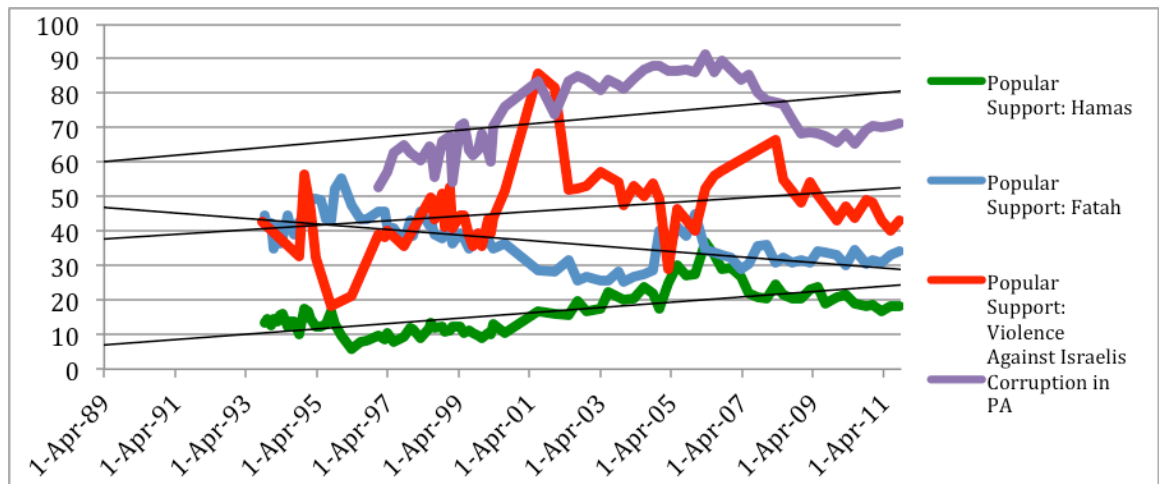
*Hamas gains and loses popular support through dynamics with out-groups*

Figure 5 demonstrates several trends in the relationship of Hamas with Fatah and the Palestinian people. First, it shows the general trends of popular support declining and increasing for Fatah and Hamas, respectively. The negative correlation between the two factors was significant:  $r(93)=-.518$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. Second, the rise of *Popular Support for Violence* against Israel correlates to the rise in *Hamas Support* for different eras: Pre-Political  $r(27)=.505$ ;  $p<.01$ ; and Governing  $r(23)=.671$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. Third and strongest, the belief in corruption in the Palestinian Authority (led by Fatah) correlates to the increase of *Popular Support for Hamas*  $r(67)=.752$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced], which led the their national election victory in 2006. These factors led to the next finding:

*Pilot Finding 5 – Hamas gains or loses support at the expense or benefit of Fatah. Described later in this chapter, the full empirical investigation shows this to be generally false.*

Though this pilot data suggests that there is power in understanding the popular support measures, it is not deterministic on the factors of causation. To better understand possible causation factors, time series statistical measurement with accompanying qualitative assessments based upon field interviews was part of the full empirical study.

Figure 5. Pilot Study: Popular Support Data on Hamas, Fatah, Violence & Corruption



As can be seen in the left chart in Figure 3, the number of Hamas attacks against Israel declined significantly during the group’s national elective campaign in 2005-6. Low levels of violence and increasing *Popular Support for Hamas* suggest the next pilot study finding:

*Pilot Finding 6 – Hamas gains popular support by increasing or decreasing violence against Israel. Described in Chapter 7.2, the full empirical investigation shows this finding to be false.*

Ghazi Hamad, a senior member of the Hamas Shura Council said in response to a question about Fatah building up arms and the Presidential Guard in Gaza in May and June 2007 (pers.comm., 24 March 2009), ‘we knew they [Fatah] wanted to have us [Hamas] for dinner, so we decided to have them for lunch’. Nothing from the pilot study better demonstrates the adversarial nature between Hamas and Fatah, than this statement. When combining this understanding with the data on violence and non-violence from the pilot investigation, the sum total of this preliminary evidence suggested that Fatah, at times, was more important to Hamas than the resistance to Israeli occupation and that violence by Hamas could be turned on and off like a tap. Such a conclusion led to the idea that there must be demonstrable differences in the exercise of violent resistance as a function of environmental conditions. This led to the seventh of nine findings from the pilot study:

*Pilot Finding 7 – Violence data and various measures of popular support could be used to develop a model of Hamas resistance. Described in Chapter 7.5, the full empirical investigation shows this finding to be true. For the reader’s benefit, the*

*model has been turned into a time series movie and can be seen at [www.hamasinsights.org](http://www.hamasinsights.org).*

Examining the dynamics of conflict provides greater clarity into the escalation and reduction of tensions and violence. Since the statement of the Oslo Principles between the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and Israel, Hamas had sought to undermine the peace negotiations through violent attacks in Israel. Particularly striking was how they helped induce the change in Israeli party leadership after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, the Labour Party leader and Prime Minister that sought an end to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The response to the assassination by the Labour Party was to put forth Simon Peres, a candidate who sought the continuation of the Rabin policies and the resumption of the Oslo Accords. In contrast, the Likud Party put forward Benjamin Netanyahu as a challenger to both Peres as a candidate and the platform of peace through Oslo. While the Labour Party wanted to see the Oslo Accords continue, the Likud was intent on bringing ‘peace through security’ before Oslo. Subsequently, Peres ran on the platform of ‘there needs to be a new mandate for peace [through Oslo]’, while Netanyahu ran on the platform of ‘a secure peace’. Elections were called in early February 1996 to be held on 28 May. In early 1996, Hamas desired to stop the Oslo Accords and determined it could do so by launching violent attacks. The result led Hamas to conduct some of the most prolific attacks, to date, against Israel (e.g. Ashkelon Bus Bombing, Second Jerusalem Bus 18 bombing and the Dizengoff Center Bombing...all claiming 58 lives with 217 injured), evoking a migration of the Israeli population from peace seeking, to a security first mantra. This shift helped Netanyahu ascend to the leadership of Israel, while removing Labour from the agenda of Oslo peace implementation. Netanyahu systematically ramped up military engagement with the Palestinian people, as a result of the Hamas attacks, which further pushed the Palestinians toward the resistance model offered by Hamas. The interactions of each of these participants to the conflict demonstrate the fine line between a continuation of peace or the new paradigm of ‘a secure peace’, which led to an increase of violence and an escalation in conflict.

The series of events surrounding the election of the Likud Party over Labour suggested the penultimate finding:

*Pilot Finding 8 – Hamas attempted to kill the Oslo process by influencing the outcome of Israeli elections. Described in Chapter 5.2.6, the full empirical investigation shows the data on this issue to be inconclusive.*

When contemplating the impact of the assassination of Rabin by an Israeli settler, the Hebron Massacre and the violent acts of Hamas that killed the Oslo Accords, it suggests that violent individuals and groups play an outsized spoiler role in peace negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis. This conclusion motivates the final finding of the pilot study:

*Pilot Finding 9 – Violent individuals and groups have privileged place as spoilers in peace negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis. Described throughout Chapters 5 and 6, the full empirical investigation shows this finding to be true.*

#### *Pilot Study Conclusion*

The pilot study was conducted to help motivate the hypotheses to test in the full investigation. Without the pilot, the hypotheses development would have been more guesswork than science. That said, the data supporting the pilot study was informative, opening a number of pathways to be tested in the larger investigation, but was not necessarily exhaustive or deterministic. Probably the most important aspect of the pilot was that it allowed mistakes to be made early and to inform which popular support measures and datasets would provide the most compelling evidence to define what Hamas resistance looks like over time. These measures are fully fleshed out in the remainder of this chapter. Finally, though the study motivated many of the hypotheses in the full investigation, it did not motivate all because the author determined that the existing literature on Hamas and armed groups merited the testing of other hypotheses. The combination of the two will, hopefully, generate a stronger contribution to literature on conflict and Hamas.

### **4.3 Critical Issues About Statistical Measures**

The following sections of this chapter provide a thorough analysis of a number of popular support and violence measures. The obvious resulting question is why were these measures included and not others? For the most part, the answer is, not all data collected for this study made it into this chapter. Only the measures that materially impact our understanding of Hamas and the dynamics of violence and popular support

were included. It should also be said that there is likely the existence of other data not available for this study or known to the author, which could improve understanding beyond the measures defined heretofore.

The final statistical dataset that was the test bed for nearly all the findings in this chapter included 65 different variables for 59 specific time periods spanning over 20 years (approximately 3,835 data points). The volume of data makes the organisation and evaluation of that data critical. In an effort to make sense of the volume of data, it was necessary to pull together a suite of statistical tools to understand relationships and predictive power, including tests for causation. The statistical tests used differenced and undifferenced data for correlations, regressions, linear regressions, t-tests, time series, multiple regressions and multiple regression time series.

Unfortunately, the sum of the statistical tests does not provide conclusive evidence of causality between variables. Even Clive Granger (1980: 320), the Nobel Prize winning economist for developing the Granger-causation methodology, argues that mathematical and statistical testing for causation should be considered through Bayesian principles, meaning probability of causation, rather than definitive evidence of causation.

The statistical analysis process used to examine causation between variables followed the Granger-causation methodology to determine which variable, if any, could be said to have causal power for other variables. Particularly, the multiple regression time series analysis provided the strongest evidence for which variables had causal power over other variables. The process identified which variables were less important. Those variables were subsequently dropped in successive tests until one variable could be said to predict the outcome of another variable better than the rest. Only one variable pair formed a relationship, which from this point forward will carry the Granger-causation label.

It can be said that the Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israeli targets is a Granger-causation of Hamas led violence against Israel. This is not conclusive evidence that the former causes the latter. Rather it can only be said that the one Granger-causes the other. This distinction means that it is more powerful than a correlation and prediction and less powerful than actual causation. Other statistical relationships will be

reflected in terms of predictive power. For example, the Hamas Violence Predictive Model in Chapter 7 uses the Granger-causation variables, but is labelled with the term predictive, which is less conclusive than saying it is the cause and more appropriate for a wider non-technical audience.

To reiterate from the methodology section in Chapter 1, the following popular support measures originated from the archives of the PSR in Ramallah. The archives included 114 surveys over 20 years, in excess of 8,000 questions. The violence data comes from a dataset developed for this thesis and was derived by confirming each high-profile violent act through two independent and verifiable sources. Again, the dataset is known as the *Verified Open-Source Violent Attack Dataset*. Testing the relationship between the data points was a unique contribution of this thesis.

This chapter also uses differenced and undifferenced time series data. A brief explanation about this is required. First, differenced data can help remove noise coming from linear trends in the data that may not be related. For example, home prices in California may be increasing at the same time Hamas violence is increasing, but these two variables are unrelated. One way to eliminate this noise is to test the relationship using differenced numbers in the time series (e.g.  $t_1=2$ ,  $t_2=5$ ,  $t_3=7$  results in differenced numbers would be  $5-2=3$  and  $7-5=2$ ). This can remove linear trends that may not be related. Unfortunately, the process can also remove trends that may be related (e.g. number of fishing boats and number of caught fish). For the most part, the data points collected for this thesis all have some relationship to each other by the fact that the study focuses on Hamas and popular support for things related to the work of Hamas. Even still, the use of differenced data is a statistically conservative methodology and should be considered more valuable than undifferenced data. That said, the chapter uses undifferenced data because it is a common method in science to understand the existence of relationships. It is just that differenced data should be considered a stronger finding than those findings using undifferenced data. Statistical representations of correlations and predictive capacity will label whether those relationships are based on differenced or undifferenced data.

Finally, in an effort for brevity and to keep parts of the remainder of the chapter from repeating, each description of measures will be from the perspective of the dependent



variable. For example, if *Popular Support for Violence* predicts *Hamas Support*, then this relationship will be referred to only in the section on the ‘*Popular Support for Hamas*’. This will keep the relationship from being mentioned twice. Correlation measures will also be referenced only once for a pair, instead of mentioning the relationship in both locations. On occasion, an exception is made to expound upon relationships to provide greater context of environmental conditions.

#### **4.4 Popular Support for Hamas**

##### *Definition, Critique and Summary of Measure*

The popular support measure for Hamas comes directly from a question in PSR polling that asks Palestinians, ‘(w)hich political party do you support?’ The same question was asked through all questionnaires, spanning from October 1993 to December 2012. For the most part, this PSR measure is used by scientists and policy makers the world over to determine how policy interventions interact with popular support in the Palestinian Territories.

The most significant critique of the measure came after the Hamas national election victory in 2006. The month before the elections, PSR data showed a narrowing of popular support between Fatah and Hamas with Fatah firmly leading 45% to 27.7%. Several Hamas scholars claim that PSR polls were flawed because they did not accurately predict the election results. Khalil Shikaki, Director at PSR, rebuffs the criticism by indicating that the election results were within the margin of error of the polls and that it was the fact that multiple Fatah candidates in different districts campaigned against lone Hamas candidates which split the Fatah vote and resulted in enough surprising victories for Hamas that it won the election. None of the Hamas scholars dispute Dr. Shikaki’s response.

Another critique of the measure is that PSR’s polling does not account for the Hamas directives to its supporters to not answer truthfully political affiliation questions from pollsters. Khalil Shikaki said that this has been the directive within Hamas for years and that the PSR results are weighted to capture those few that do not answer truthfully. He further asserts that the polling numbers for political party support are accurate and that local elections prove this.

Khalil Shikaki served as a translator on the author's first visit to see Mousa Abu Marzouk in Damascus. At the meeting, Marzouk said to Shikaki, 'your polls don't accurately reflect the attitudes of Palestinians'. Shikaki and Marzouk debated this point for nearly 30 minutes, until Marzouk said, 'okay, Khalil, you're right, they are good polls'.

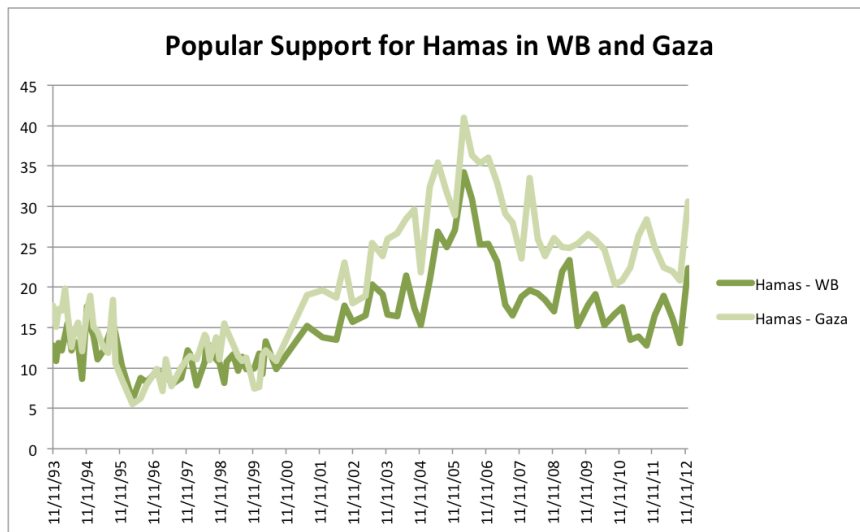
Despite the criticism of the PSR measure, it is a reliable political affiliation measure and is carefully monitored in Ramallah, Gaza City, the Knesset, the White House, 10 Downing Street, the Kremlin and at the United Nations.

The measure provides absolute clarity about the level of *Hamas Support* over time and by geographic location. For this investigation, the geographic distribution was only narrowed to the West Bank and Gaza, but it could be much more granular. The benefit of having time series of this measure is that it can be tested to understand its relationship with a host of other measures, including Hamas led violence, *Support for Violence*, wars with Fatah and Israel and religiosity to name a few.

#### *Popular Support Over Time*

The general trend for *Hamas Support* has increased during the past 20 years, but declined after the national election victory in early 2006. Through casual observation, one can see that, at times, the data swings significantly up and down. This suggests that environmental influences are changing the Palestinian attitude regarding Hamas. For example, *Hamas Support* increased 47.1% in Gaza after Gaza War 2.

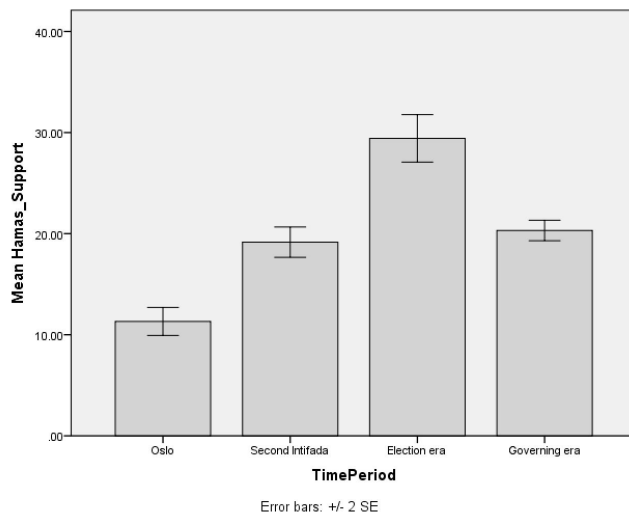
Figure 6. Hamas Support Over Time



In Figure 6, we can see that *Hamas Support* in Gaza is slightly higher than in the West Bank. A meaningful split between the two support levels by geography began in 2000, at the beginning of the Second *Intifada*. Factors like the density of population, clans and violence measures may be related but were not formally tested with the available data.

The largest differential in support between the West Bank and Gaza occurred after the takeover of Gaza by Hamas. For example, in September 2011, there was a 15.6 point differential in *Hamas Support* between Gaza and the West Bank (West Bank 12.8% vs. Gaza 28.4%). There are many possible explanations for the difference in support, but it does happen to coincide with the Hamas *dawa* (social services) programme being shut in the West Bank, which according to Hamas Parliamentarians (pers.comm., 9 December 2012) made it difficult to conduct business as usual in the West Bank. Further, as senior Palestinian leaders have said (pers.comm., passim), ‘Gaza is the center for Hamas and everywhere else is the hinterlands’. The attitude seems to be carrying across the population. Though the second war in Gaza showed a significant increase in *Popular Support for Hamas* immediately after the cessation of violence, the differential between Gaza and the West Bank remained.

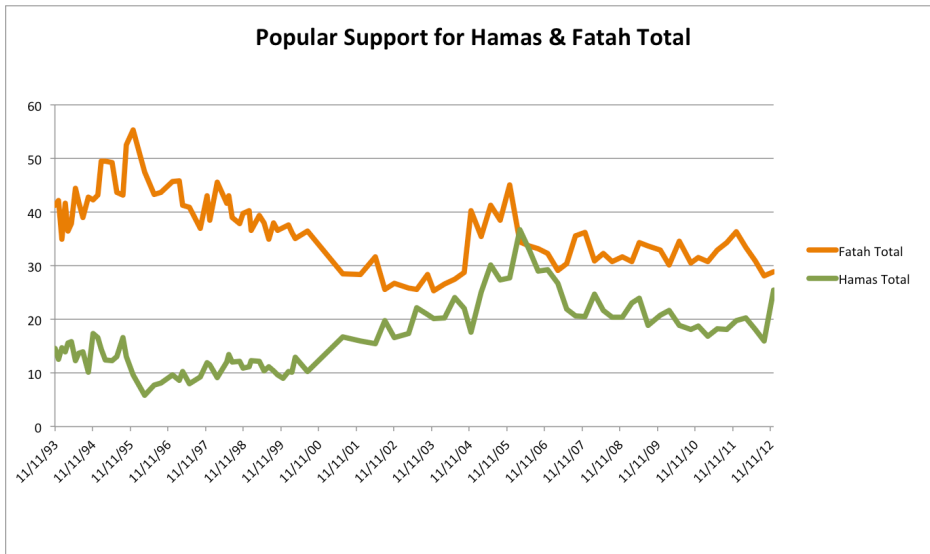
**Figure 7. Mean of Hamas Support by Era**



According to Figure 7, the mean of *Hamas Support* was highest during Campaign Era. It is interesting to note that Hamas grew to its highest level of popular support when it intentionally stopped its violence campaign at the beginning of 2005. Upon reconstituting that campaign after the Gaza takeover, its support fell.

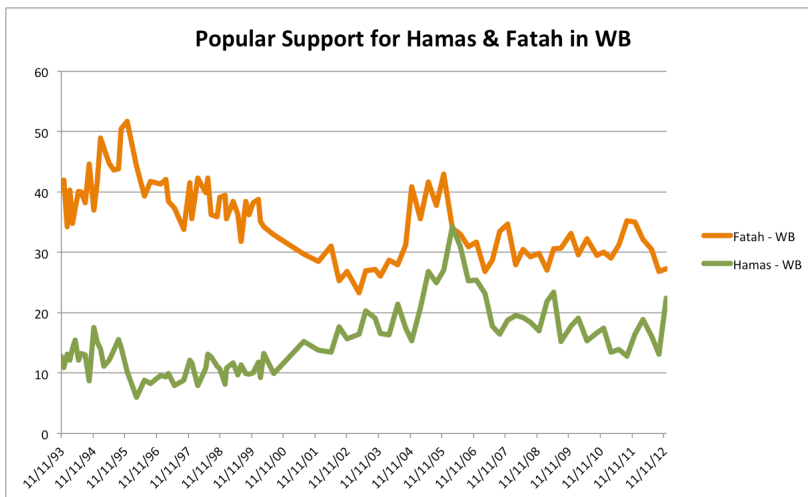
Figure 8 shows the relationship between popular support for Fatah and Hamas. The two variables are negatively correlated:  $r(93)=-.518$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. This suggests that Hamas increased popular support at times when Fatah lost it, and vice-versa. Further investigation reveals that *Hamas Support* has no meaningful relationship with other political parties. The data is inconclusive on whether increases or decreases in *Hamas Support* come directly from Fatah supporters. The differenced data does not show significance, which likely means that the growth and decline in support is not directly from/to Fatah, but more likely to be coming from ‘undecideds’. In an interview with Dr. Shikaki (pers.comm., 30 September 2012), he said that there were a few who made the switch from Fatah to Hamas, but most of the change has come from those who respond ‘None’ on political affiliation.

**Figure 8. Popular Support for Hamas & Fatah**



One of the most often questions asked about the support for Fatah and Hamas is, ‘what is the difference between the West Bank and Gaza?’ Figures 9 and 10 show the relationship between these two variables. As seen in the charts, Fatah maintains a sizable lead in the West Bank and a modest lead in Gaza.

**Figure 9. Popular Support for Hamas & Fatah in the WB**



**Figure 10. Popular Support for Hamas & Fatah in Gaza**

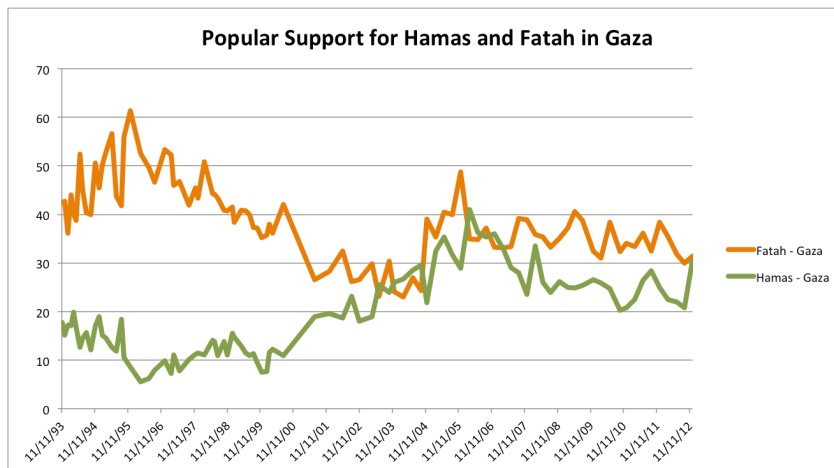
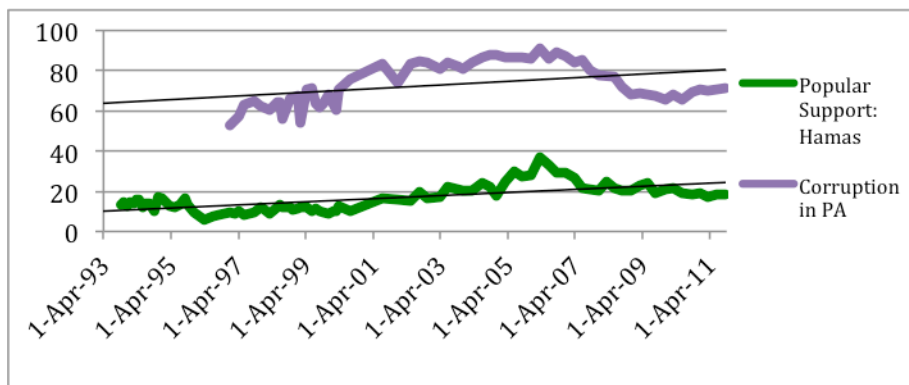


Figure 11 shows the relationship between the perceived corruption in the Palestinian Authority (led by Fatah) and the *Popular Support for Hamas*. The two variables are highly correlated:  $r(67)=.752$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferentenced]. Hamas used this credibility problem against Fatah during national campaigning when the Hamas coined the slogan, ‘reform and change’. The campaign rhetoric was that Palestine must reform the practice of corruption in governance. The approach led Hamas to victory.

**Figure 11. Popular Support for Hamas & PA Corruption**

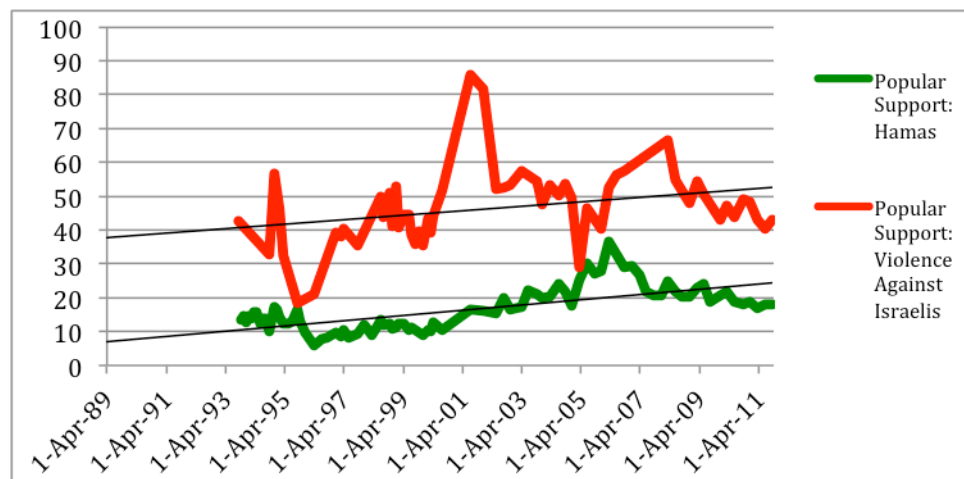


Since the takeover of Gaza in 2007, Hamas has been in control of the Gazan government, so PSR began running a question about perceived corruption of Hamas in Gaza. This measure also negatively correlates with *Popular Support for Hamas*:  $r(9)=-.684$ ;  $p<.05$  [undifferentenced].

### *Meaningful Relationships & Non-Relationships*

When *Hamas Support* is increasing, *Support for Violence* against Israel is also increasing  $r(59)=.450$ ;  $p<.01$  [differenced] (Figure 12). The relationship is not surprising in that Hamas's identity as a resistance organisation suggests that as support for it increases, so would the *Support for Violence* against Israel. That said, there is an interesting difference between the West Bank and Gaza for this correlation: 1) WB  $r(59)=.337$ ;  $p<.05$  [differenced] and 2) Gaza  $r(59)=.469$ ;  $P<.01$  [differenced].

**Figure 12. Popular Support for Hamas & Violence Against Israelis**

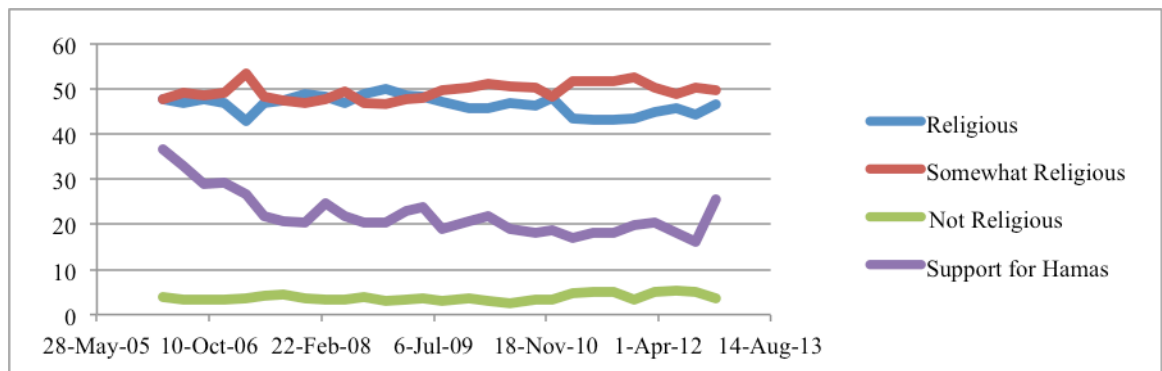


Though both numbers are significant, the Gaza population more closely mirrors the two issues of *Hamas Support* and *Support for Violence* against Israel and suggests that the population would more readily support violent operations than the West Bank population. Recent history shows this. With the exception of the Dimona bombing in February 2008, all Hamas significant attacks and violent engagement with Israel since the end of the Second *Intifada* have been launched from Gaza.

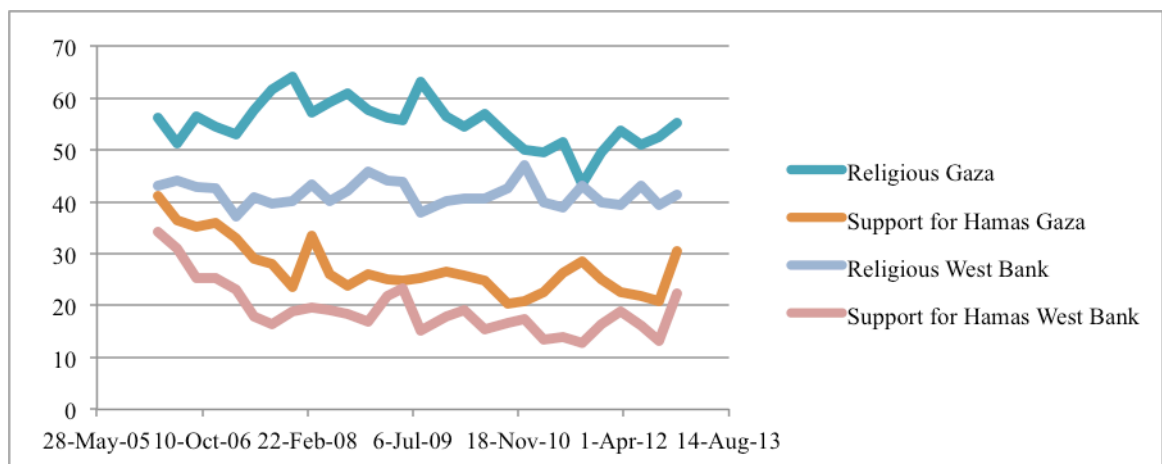
No other differenced variables significantly correlate to *Hamas Support*. Undifferenced *Hamas Support* negatively correlates with Palestinian *Optimism*  $r(59)=-.718$ ;  $p<.01$  and Perceptions of *Safety of Family*  $r(33)=-.790$ ;  $p<.01$ . Undifferenced *Hamas Support* also significantly correlates with the *Violence Frequency Before National Politics*:  $r(27)=.682$ ;  $P<.01$ . It is unclear if this linear trend has a directional causation. None could be found with the available datasets.

The most significant non-relationship is between *Hamas Support* and religiosity in both the West Bank and Gaza. Figure 13 shows the dynamic between *Hamas Support* and levels of religiosity. There are no statistically significant relationships in this data for the timeframe the data is available. Figure 14 takes this analysis a step further by looking at the levels of religiosity and *Hamas Support* in the West Bank and Gaza. No meaningful statistical relationships are present in this data either. The reasons for this non-relationship could be: 1) no relationship actually exists, 2) no relationship exists during this time period, 3) the definition of religiosity is understood differently across the residents of the Palestinian Territories and the broad PSR question does not allow for the actual relationship between religiosity and *Hamas Support* to be identified and 4) Islamisation and religiosity are understood differently by supporters of Hamas than the rest of the population. Further examination of PSR data could better reveal how those who claim to support Hamas refer to religiosity, but this would be a significant task that goes beyond the scope of the thesis.

**Figure 13. Popular Support for Hamas & Religiosity**



**Figure 14. Popular Support for Hamas & Religiosity by Geography**

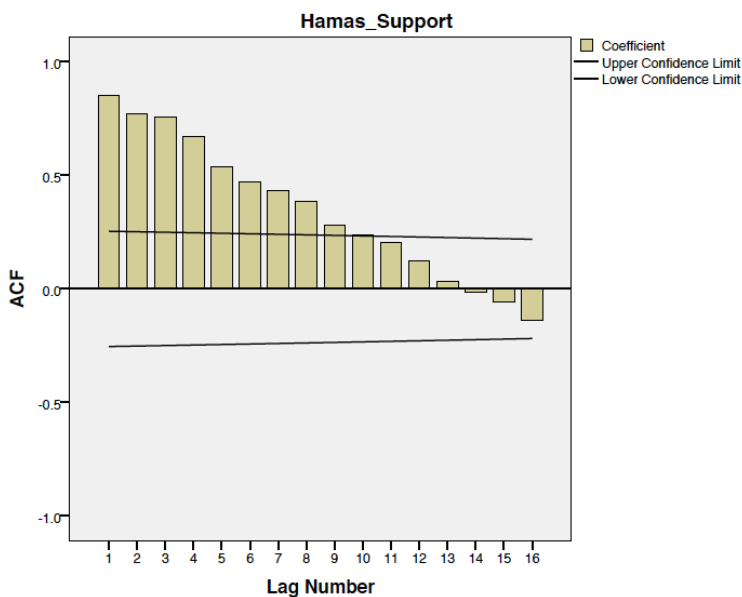




*Time Series Results ( Hamas Support as the Dependent Variable)*

Differenced linear regression of *Hamas Support* variable shows a high level of predictive value in future *Hamas Support*. This means that the level of *Popular Support for Hamas* at Time 0 predicts the level of *Hamas Support* at Time +1 (Figure 14: Lag 1 = .850). This generally means that *Hamas Support* tends to go up and down over longer periods of time without sharp moves up or down, which is suggestive that short term environmental conditions do not sway the number all that much. The exceptions are the significant reversals resulting in increasing *Hamas Support* (e.g. March '08 and December '12). Those reversals have coincided with conflict with Israel. Simply put, when there is violence with Israel, *Hamas Support* increases. When there is no violence, *Hamas Support* tends to decline with the exception of the Campaign Era. The Campaign Era demonstrates an exception, meaning that while Hamas focused on campaigning against Fatah, it was able to grow its support base without the environmental condition of violence being present.

**Figure 15. Popular Support for Hamas Linear Regression**



*Optimism* at Time 0 predicts *Hamas Support* at Time +1:  $r(59) = -.721$ ;  $p < .01$  [undifferenced]. This measure suggests that as Palestinian *Optimism* for the future declines, *Hamas Support* increases. In the *Optimism* measure section of this chapter, two types of optimism will be discussed. The *Optimism* here is the one related to the future including the development of a *Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*.

The *Safety of Family* measure has only been collected during the Political Era with one survey being conducted in the Pre-Political Era. *Safety of Family* at Time 0 predicted *Hamas Support* at Time +1:  $r(33)=-.679$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. The measure suggests that when one perceives their family's safety is decreasing, *Hamas Support* increases. This coincides with the finding above that suggests that when there is violence with Israel, *Hamas Support* increases, while one's perception of family safety declines.

*Conclusion: So What?*

Hamas went from a starting group of eight persons in 1987 to a support base in January 2006 that included well over one million Palestinians. Though it is hard to understand grand trends over a short time period of 20 years and even more complex in a dynamic environment like the Palestinian Territories, we can draw a few conclusions from this analysis. First, there is a meaningful difference between *Hamas Support* in Gaza and the West Bank. This support first diverged in 2000 and since the Gaza takeover in 2007, the spread has widened with the Gaza populace being more supportive than the West Bank populace. Two significant issues should be monitored going forward. In Gaza, the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has resulted in the Egyptian military closing many of the smuggling tunnels that were between Gaza and the Sinai. Since a sizable portion of the Hamas government budget was derived from taxes on goods sold in those tunnels, the group has lost a meaningful source of financial support. Couple this with the decline of support from Iran due to the fallout from the war in Syria; the ability of Hamas to deliver basic government services has been greatly diminished. The events are so recent, that the impact of these events will not be known for some months. The other issue is the shutting down of the *dawa* programme in the West Bank. Chapter 7.3 discusses whether the closing of the *dawa* programmes cost *Hamas Support* in the West Bank.

Second, in times of conflict or perceived threat to the family, *Hamas Support* increases. The data is quite clear that there is no predictive value of Hamas violence leading to an increase in *Hamas Support*, but *Hamas Support* does go up when the trend for violence between Palestinian factions and Israel is increasing. Such a reality creates a moral hazard and has the possibility of encouraging Hamas to desire a more hostile environment in times when it is having difficulty maintaining popular support. Further, the absence of a significant predictive relationship between *Support for Violence* and

*Hamas Support*  suggests that one variable does not drive the other. Yet, the strength of the correlation between the variables provides some evidence that similar environmental conditions drive both  *Support for Violence*  and  *Hamas Support* .

Third, Hamas and Fatah are bitter rivals and compete directly for the support of unaffiliated voters. With the exception of the battle for Gaza between Hamas and Fatah, which, as you will see in Chapter 6 was, in part, initiated by the Fatah Presidential Guard, Hamas leaders have long encouraged the militant activists of Hamas to not engage in violent action or target Fatah leaders or operatives (Chehab 2007: 107-115). Even the Hamas Charter acknowledges the existence of groups that have fought a good fight with the Israelis for years. Though, generally, the on-going battle between Fatah and Hamas may not, for now, be a hot conflict, they both fiercely fight for the popular support of the Palestinians.

Fourth, Hamas, like other political parties, must combat the ills associated with the perception and reality of corruption. Perception of corruption can be difficult to manage for young governments. The reason is quite simple, when Hamas took over Gaza it took on the responsibility of providing basic government services for the people. But, who can it trust to actually get those services done? Most likely, the leaders made decisions to provide contracts for providing the services to friends or family members for which there was a great deal of trust. Regardless of the fact that the decision may have been made for good reasons, it produces the optics that cronyism and nepotism are part of the government, which will be perceived and judged by non-supporters as corruption. This reality for Hamas makes the group common in this way to political parties the world over.

Fifth, the common bias in literature and among experts that suggests that Hamas's support is tied to the Islamisation of the Palestinian Territories is not borne out by the data. This does not mean that it is not true. It does mean that there is no relationship to the level of  *Hamas Support*  and the periodic gyrations in the level of religiosity claimed by Palestinians in the PSR polls. It is clear that the members (not supporters) of Hamas take their oath to and faith in Islam quite seriously. It seems that support for Hamas goes beyond the member commitments of faith.

Final, as Palestinian *Optimism* declines and *Safety of Family* declines, *Hamas Support* increases. Though there is predictive value in this finding, it was only borne out by the undifferenced data, which means that the environmental conditions may be such that linear trends in *Optimism*, perceptions of safety and *Hamas Support* are all related. This does not mean there is no causation. It does mean the finding is stronger than simple correlation, but less valuable than differenced data showing predictive value. In other words, in a deteriorating environment when people's hopes for a Palestinian state fade and concern for the well-being of family rises, Hamas looks like a safe harbour option for the population on the one hand, and on the other, the group looks like a way to violently resist the presence and occupation by Israel. Such is the basis of the moral hazard for Hamas leaders.

#### **4.5 Islamisation and Religiosity of the Palestinians**

##### *Definition, Critique and Summary of Measure*

Within this section, popular support data for Islamists and religiosity will be provided. The Islamist data has to do with self-identified political affiliation, while religiosity is a self-identified personal measure. The term Islamist refers to the devout Muslim that desires society and government to be governed by Islamic law. The term religiosity typically means the devoutness of faith and spirituality of an individual. The two terms are not the same in that there is a significant meaning difference between the two, which is likely to create differences in those that self-identify for each. For example, it is possible that society and government in Gaza may be governed by Islamic law without the support of a sizable number of religious people desiring such.

Definitions by others may be different than those mentioned above, so for this analysis the popular support measure collected by PSR will be used. As defined in the surveys, Islamist refers to a political affiliation with one of the Palestinian Islamist groups, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Independent Islamists. The popular support measures for these three groups collectively make up the data for Islamists. On religiosity, PSR began collecting data in March 2006. The question on the survey is, '(g)enerally, do you see yourself as religious, somewhat religious, or not religious?' The self-identification of what it means to be religious leaves a great deal of room for interpretation and difference between religious and somewhat religious. The deficit of a

clear definitional boundary between what it means to be religious and somewhat religious is a weakness of the measure.

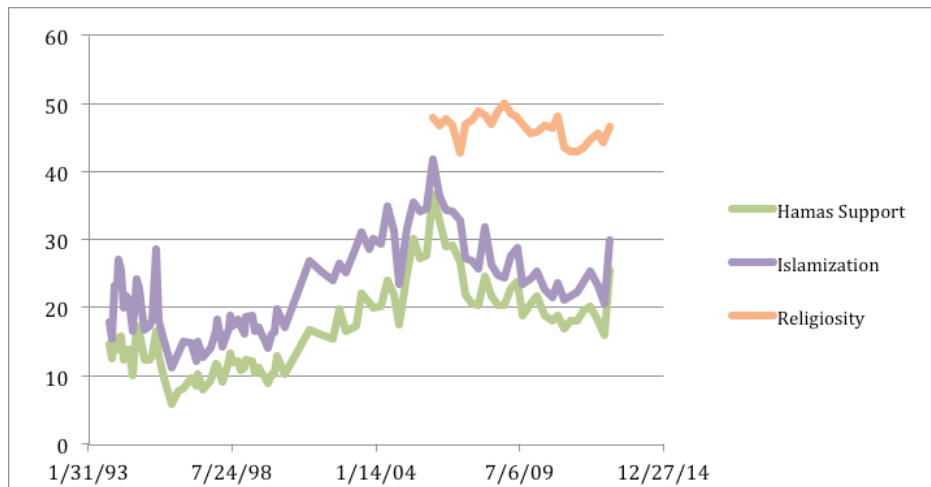
It is highly unlikely that someone who claims to be an Islamist would claim anything other than 'religious' on the PSR survey. The inverse relationship may not be the case. It may be possible that those that claim to be religious are not Islamists. This could be because they are not Muslims, they do not care to have society governed by Islamic law or they perceive a difference between the ideas of Islamist and religious that is not mentioned here. Other negative critiques for the use of the Islamist data are mainly that Islamisation as a concept extends beyond political affiliation, but the data only references the political affiliation. An additional negative critique for the religiosity data used here it has not been cross-tabulated with individual responses and other popular support measures across the 29 different surveys. Such an analysis would provide more clarity about the people who make different claims about religiosity, but the undertaking would be large and is outside the scope of this thesis.

Though these weaknesses are present in the data, the measure is still useful in understanding the relationship with other measures like Hamas violence, *Support for Violence* and *Hamas Support*.

#### *Popular Support Over Time*

While religiosity has remained range bound between 43-50%, popular support for Islamist groups and Hamas have trended together (Figure 16). The latter is largely a function of Hamas representing the strong majority of support for all Islamist groups. The short duration of the data available on the religiosity measure does not allow us to understand how religiosity and the growth of Hamas related in the early days. For the data that we do have, we know that the decline in support for Islamist groups after 2006 is not reflected in similar declines in the level of religiosity. This suggests that people who claim to be religious exceeds those that support the Islamist groups in growing numbers since the Hamas national election in 2006.

**Figure 16. Popular Support for Hamas and Islamisation & Religiosity**



Popular support for Islamist groups is negatively correlated with support for Fatah (Figure 16):  $r(93)=-.484$ ;  $p<.01$  [differenced]. Given that *Hamas Support* is the bulk of the Islamist support, this relationship was reflected in greater detail in the previous section.

**Figure 17. Popular Support for Islamists & Fatah**

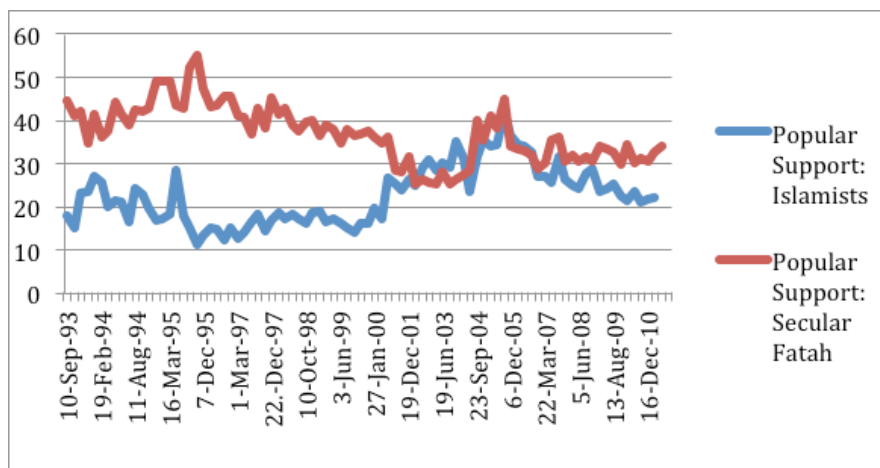
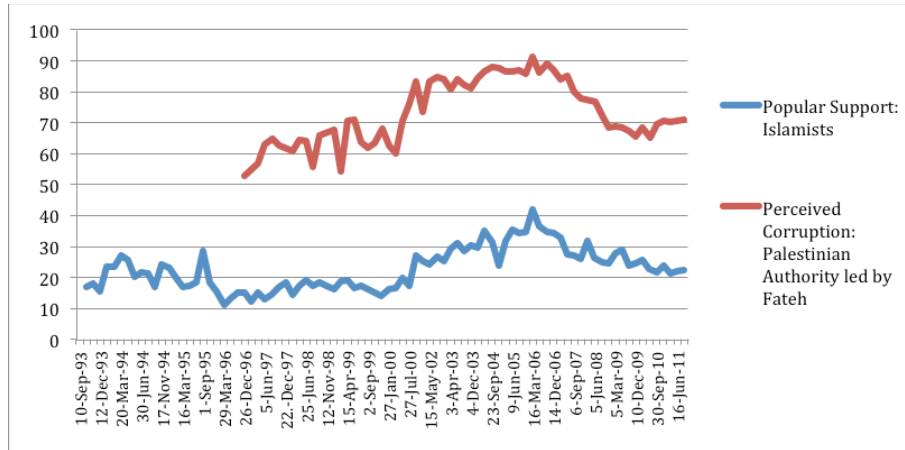


Figure 18 takes this relationship even further. The popular support for Islamists strongly correlates with the perceived corruption in the PA led by Fatah:  $r(25)=.782$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. The leadership of Gaza by Hamas creates its own perceptions of corruption. In the past three years, perceived corruption of the Palestinian Authority in Gaza, led by Hamas, has ranged from 53-63%. Though this number is high, it is still lower than perceptions of corruption in Fatah. Going forward, the data available on

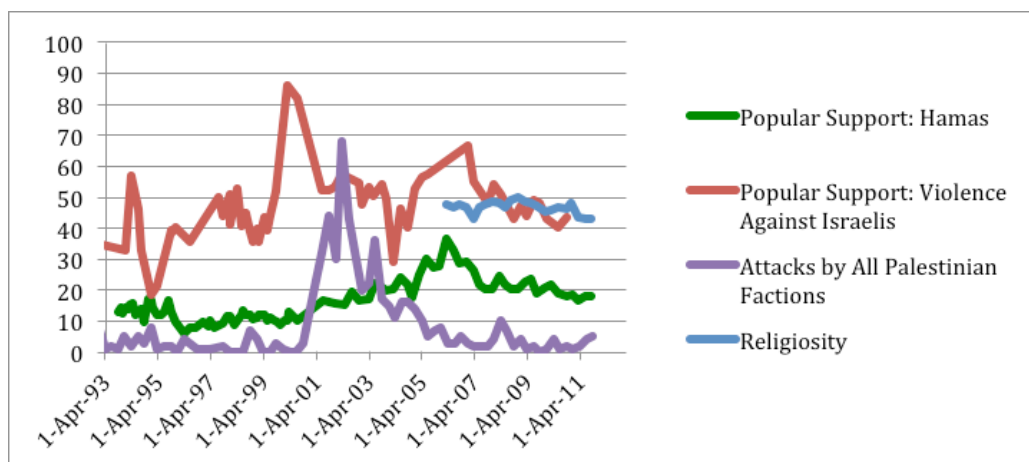
these two measures should create an interesting and potentially informing dynamic as to where the future of Hamas, as a political party, is headed.

**Figure 18. Popular Support for Islamists & Corruption in Fatah**



When looking in comparison to other critical measures in graphic form, it is difficult to see any relationship between religiosity and measures of support or violence data. Statistical measures also proved inconclusive, meaning that there were no significant relationships between religiosity and other support or violence measures. Again, this may be a function that no such relationship exists or that the relationship cannot be understood with the limited availability of religiosity data.

**Figure 19. Religiosity, Support for Hamas & Violence, Violent Acts**



*Meaningful Relationships & Non-Relationships*

There is no relationship between religiosity and Islamisation in the Palestinian Territories or in the West Bank and Gaza specifically. This finding counters broad conceptions that as religiosity increases in Palestine so does *Hamas Support* and violence against Israel. If this finding is not skewed by the relatively short time horizon provided by the religiosity data, it suggests the population as a whole is not led to violent behaviour as a result of the increase in religiosity or Islamisation, alone.

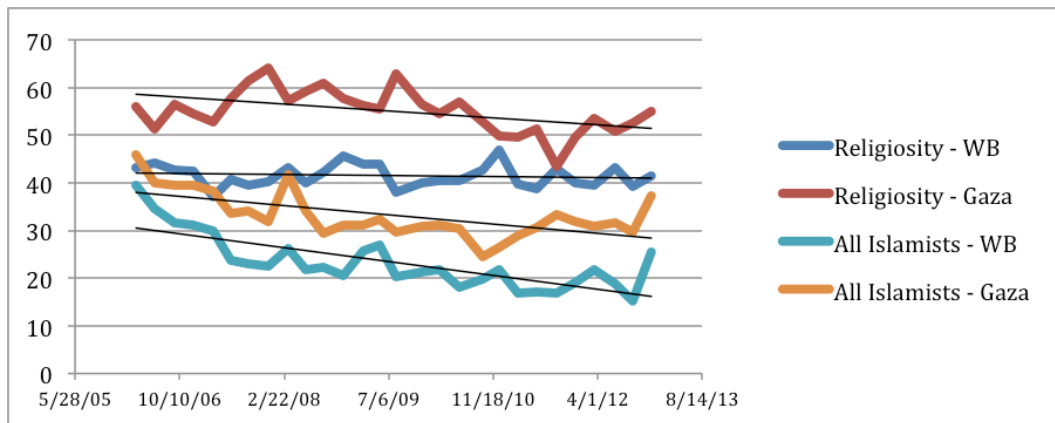
Religiosity also does not correlate between the West Bank and Gaza. This is a surprising finding in that religiosity is decoupled from the ups and downs of the political dynamics between Hamas and Fatah. This measure also suggests that dynamics in Gaza and the West Bank are different enough that levels of religiosity would be uncorrelated between the two. The simplest answer to this is that the environmental conditions differ enough in the West Bank and Gaza that people are not uniform in their outward pronouncements of faith.

Opposite to religiosity, the support for Islamists correlates strongly between the West Bank and Gaza:  $r(27)=.818$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced] and  $r(27)=.557$ ;  $p<.01$  [differenced] (Figure 20). For Hamas, this means that popular support in both Gaza and the West Bank tends to respond uniformly over time. That said, the margin of support for Islamists groups grew to its largest differential between the West Bank and Gaza after 2010. Time will tell if this is a broad trend caused by the reality of different governments and stimuli or if the trend will revert back to more normal historical relationship, which still has Gaza supporting Islamists in greater numbers than the West Bank.

Finally, *Popular Support for Violence* against Israelis does strongly correlate to religiosity and Islamisation. For religiosity the relationship is:  $r(27)=.517$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. For Islamisation the relationship is  $r(27)=.673$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced] and  $r(27)=.574$ ;  $p<.01$  [differenced]. More discussion on this point can be seen in the time series data below and the next section of *Popular Support for Violence*.



**Figure 20. Popular Support for Islamists and Religiosity**



*Time Series Results (Religiosity as the Dependent Variable)*

Religiosity does not predict Islamist support, nor does Islamist support predict religiosity. But, *Popular Support for Violence* at Time 0 does predict religiosity and Islamisation at Time +1. For religiosity this relationship is:  $r(27)=.514$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced] and for Islamists it is:  $r(27).557$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. This is the only predictive relationship with religiosity and Islamisation. The implications of these findings are that religiosity and support for Islamists (including Hamas) increases when *Support for Violence* is increasing and decreases when *Support for Violence* is declining. As an independent variable, *Support for Violence* is a predictor of several popular support measures and of violence itself. The fact that *Support for Violence* relates both to religiosity and support for Islamists to a greater degree than those relate to each other underscores the point that in an environment where the threat of violence is increasing, there is a shift toward religiosity and Islamist groups.

*Conclusion: So What?*

Since 1993, as popular support for Islamists increased, support for secular government declined. This was most acute when perception of corruption grew in the secular government in 2004 and 2005. Now, the Hamas leadership in Gaza confounds this historical relationship because, as the government leaders, they must also concern themselves with the perceptions of corruption, which was at 53% in December 2012. The significance of this will be seen in time. But since the measure for perceived corruption began to be captured, the support for Islamists has declined.

The shuttering of the Hamas *dawa* programme in the West Bank has coincided with the erosion of Hamas and Islamist support by Palestinians in the West Bank, while levels of religiosity remained relatively unchanged. If the *dawa* programme has the strategic importance of transforming society toward Islam, then there may be a related decline in West Bank of religiosity and support for Islamists. Corollary 2b in Chapter 7.3 evaluates this concept.

Further complicating matters for Hamas is the issue of Hamas running the government in Gaza. The *dawa* programme had success in Gaza because it provided for unmet Palestinian Authority (led by Fatah) government services. Now that Hamas runs the government and is responsible for public services, the role of the *dawa* may decline in importance as the budgets for the public service and the *dawa* merge. This too, could have an impact (positive or negative) on religiosity and support for Islamists. But, since 2006, *Hamas Support*, religiosity and Islamisation have trended lower. However, the existence of Hamas as the government may counter the potential loss of a relationship between the *dawa* and religiosity and Islamisation by the fact that their very existence exerts influence on Gazans through their interests and demands for religiosity and the transformation to Islam.

#### **4.6 Palestinian Support for Violence Against Israel**

##### *Definition, Critique and Summary of Measure*

The Palestinian *Popular Support for Violence* against Israelis is the most prolific measure in the datasets for predicting the change in other variables, but only perceptions about *Safety of Family* predict the *Support for Violence*. Though this chapter is written in such a way that each section deals with the measure as a dependent variable, it is necessary for broader understanding to explain the predictive power wrapped in the Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israelis. A host of meaningful relationships with other popular support measures and violence will also be discussed in this section.

To understand this measure it is important to know what *Support for Violence* against Israelis means. The polling firm PSR measured the population's *Support for Violence* in sixty-six different surveys from September 1993 to December 2012 through two different questions. The difference in these two questions is significant and worthy of

discussion. Until the outbreak of the Second *Intifada*, the question posed to Palestinians was, ‘concerning armed attacks against Israeli targets, I...?’ (PCPSR). The key attribute of this question is the term ‘target’. The question was agnostic to the kind of Israeli target, meaning that it did not distinguish Palestinian support for armed attacks on Israeli military, settlers or civilians inside Israel. Beginning in May 2002, the question changed to, ‘concerning armed attacks against Israeli civilians inside Israel, I...?’ (PCPSR). The change in responses by Palestinians to the two questions is meaningful. On the last survey before the change, *Support for Violence* against Israeli targets was 81.8% (PCPSR December 2001). The very next survey the *Support for Violence* against Israeli civilians was 52.0% (PCPSR May 2002). But, on that survey and a few others after it, PSR also asked the question, ‘concerning armed attacks against Israeli soldiers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, I...?’. On the May 2002 survey (PCPSR), the level of support for armed attacks against settlers and soldiers were 89.3% and 91.6%, respectively. More importantly, the fact that PSR ran the questions about attacks against civilians and soldiers provided the understanding that the decline represented from 81.8% to 52% (Dec ’01 to May ’02) was a result in the change from ‘target’ to ‘civilian’. Having seen from the pilot study that *Support for Violence* as a measure looked important to investigate, methods were searched on how to normalize the data given this change.

From May 2002, the data used for this measure was the support level for armed attacks against civilians. This meant the large drop from 2001 to 2002, as a result of the question change, needed to be addressed so as to not let the change skew the data analysis. The method followed statistical best practices by removing two data points from the data string and to run the statistical analyses using missing data. Those data points were the ones that spiked from 51.6% to 85.9% to 81.8% back down to 52% when the question changed. The spike to 85% and then to 81.8% happened at the beginning of the Second *Intifada*. Another approach would have been to average the questions about attacks on civilians, military and settlers, but these questions were not consistently used by PSR in their surveys since 2002. After consultation with social science statistics experts, it was determined that the ‘best-practice’ would be to use differenced data and to eliminate the two data points and reflect those as missing. Though the removal of these two data points may not capture the full extent of the increase in *Support for Violence* against Israelis, the approach is conservative. If the

data were weighted to account for the difference between *Support for Violence* against soldiers and civilians, the result would likely be stronger statistical relationships than the ones used in this thesis. Since the data represented is Pearson Two-Tailed Significant, no other statistical analysis tools were applied to the change.

To further ensure that the measure was analysed using best scientific practices, the original data was differenced, meaning that the new data string used the differences between time periods. This was the method used for all data points and was done to remove linear trend bias that could be present but not necessarily related. However, because of the longstanding argument within statistics that using undifferenced data for variable strings in a closely related topic is also a valid approach, the *Popular Support for Violence* measure as well as all other measures were also tested using undifferenced data. As mentioned earlier, all statistical relationships are demonstrated as differenced or undifferenced, the former being considered the stronger of the two.

Arguments can be made that the change in the question asked materially changes the results and should therefore be discounted or dismissed. This argument has been overcome by the measure showing significance in different eras where the change did not take place (e.g. Pre-Political, Political, Foundation, Oslo, Campaign and Governance). Four eras fall outside of the question change and the measure still maintains statistical significance with many other variables, many of which will be described later in this section.

Because the *Support for Violence* measure has salience with so many other variables, but only one relationship as a dependent variable, it can be argued that the datasets in this thesis provide little in the way of understanding of what drives the *Support for Violence* within the Palestinian population. This critique is fair. As will be seen later in this section, only one variable captured for this thesis provides any predictive value for the *Support for Violence* measure, and that is the perception of *Safety of Family*. And, no other variable in all the datasets predicts the perception of safety. Most certainly, the causal relationship exists in the environmental context of violence or the threat of violence, but pinpointing this causation is unfortunately beyond the data captured for this thesis.

The strength of this measure provides the basis for the most important finding of this study, which is, Hamas follows Palestinian *Support for Violence* and does not lead it. Components of this finding will be discussed in the *Violence Frequency* section of this chapter and more specifically in Chapter 7.

### *Popular Support Over Time*

Figure 21 shows the raw data for the *Popular Support for Violence*. The spike in 2001 and 2002 represents the increase in *Support for Violence* at the beginning of the Second *Intifada*. The rapid decline is due to the change in question from ‘Israeli targets’ to ‘Israeli civilians’. Previously discussed, this change was normalized for the statistical analyses.

**Figure 21. Popular Support for Violence - Raw Data**

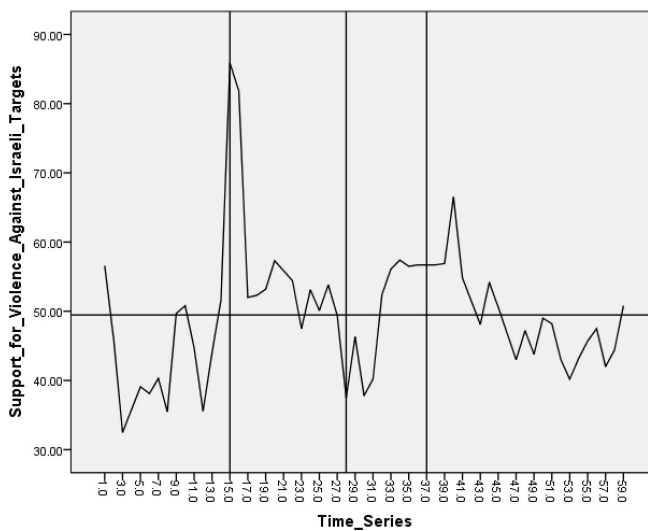
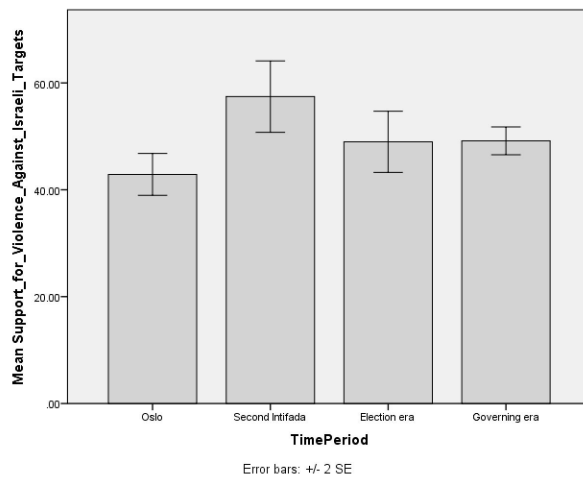


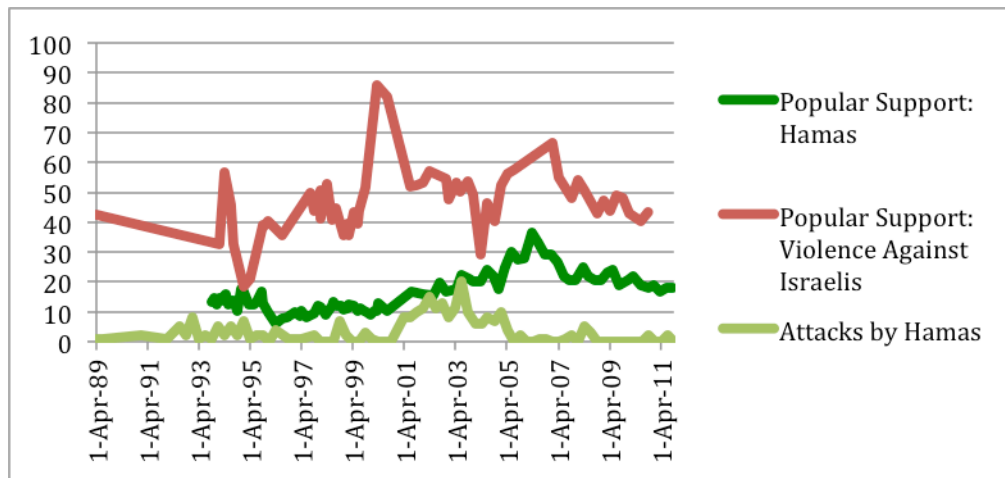
Figure 22, represents the mean popular support by era using the normalized data. As can be seen, the range is small between the eras and remains near 50% at the end of 2012. That said, the change in the measure not only correlates with a number of other measures, but it predicts several of those measures.

Figure 22. Mean Popular Support for Violence by Era - Normalized Data



Although not apparent at first glance in Figure 23, there is a strong correlation between attacks led by Hamas and Palestinian *Support for Violence* during the Pre-Political Era:  $r(27)=.471$ ;  $p<.05$  [undifferenced] and the Oslo Era:  $r(14)=.726$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. In addition, a significant correlation exists between *Support for Violence* and Hamas led attacks, including rocket attacks, during the Governance Era:  $r(23)=.477$ ;  $p<.05$  [differenced]. Even further, *Support for Violence* and the ten most prolific attacks by Hamas during the Pre-Political Era has a meaningful relationship:  $r(27)=.459$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. The correlation data does not demonstrate causation, but it does suggest that causation between the two variables should be investigated. The time series analyses and subsequent Granger-causation methodology was used to investigate this relationship, which is discussed in the *Violence Frequency* section of this chapter. Also, the Hamas Violence Prediction Model in Chapter 7 provides a good summary of the findings on causation.

**Figure 23. Popular Support for Hamas, Violence Against Israelis & Hamas Attacks**



The density of Hamas violence also significantly correlates with the *Support for Violence*. *Violence Density* means the number of Israeli casualties for each occurrence of Hamas led attacks. The significant relationships existed during the entire period:  $r(59)=.360; p<.01$  [undifferenced] and were particularly high during the Governance Era:  $r(23)=.701; p<.01$  [undifferenced]. Differenced data shows a similar strength in the relationship for the Governance Era:  $r(23)=.677; p<.01$  and the Political Era:  $r(32)=.443; p<.02$ .

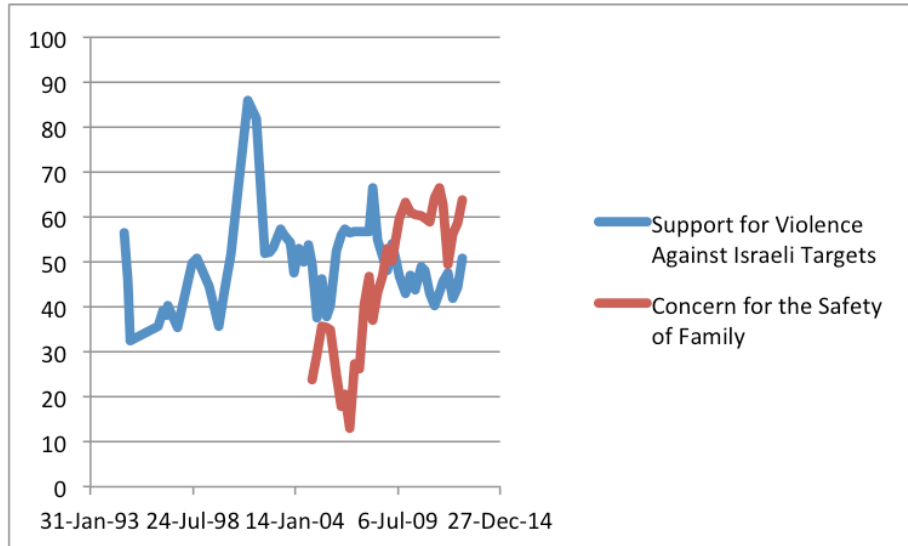
*Support for Violence* also has a meaningful relationship with the *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*. Because this measure is not explained until later in this chapter, the related discussion will be better suited for that section.

*Support for Violence* negatively correlates most strongly with *Palestinian Optimism*. The use of *Optimism* here refers to Palestinian attitude that a state is achievable in the next few years. Later in this chapter the definition of *Optimism* and the relationship with *Support for Violence* will be more thoroughly explained. For now, the statistical representation of the relationship will be provided for the entire time period:  $r(59)=-.457; p<.01$  [undifferenced] and  $r(59)=-.509; p<.01$  [differenced].

*Support for Violence* is higher when the perception of the *Safety of Family* is lower (Figure 24). The *Safety of Family* measure is also discussed later in this chapter. For now, it can be defined as concern that one has in the safety of their family. The *Support*

*for Violence* negatively correlates with perceptions of safety for the Political Era:  $r(32)=-.460;p<.01$  [undifferenced] and  $r(32)=-.498;p<.01$  [differenced]. The following segment on time series shows the predictive nature of this variable on Palestinian *Support for Violence*.

**Figure 24. Support for Violence & Concern for the Safety of Family**



*Time Series Results (Popular Support for Violence as a Dependent Variable)*

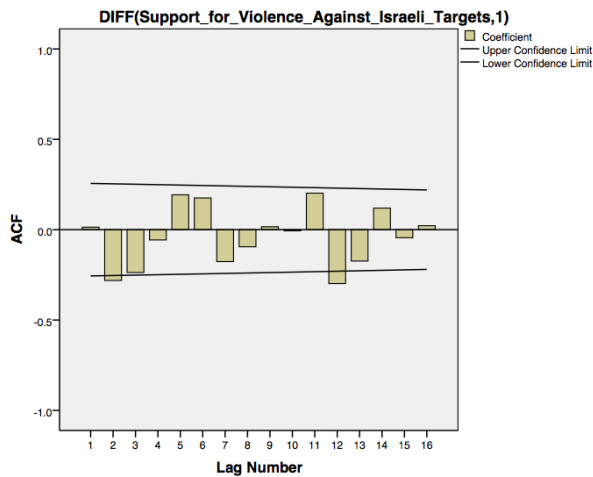
Figures 25 and 26 show the differenced and undifferenced linear auto-correlation for the *Support for Violence* measure. Though the charts look like they are representing differences, they are really telling the same story. The differenced number suggests *Support for Violence* in Time 0 predicts a negative correlation at Time +2 and +3. This means that when *Support for Violence* goes up or down at Time 0 it will reverse course in time +2 or +3. The undifferenced data in Figure 26, shows that Time 0 predicts strongly the relationship with Time +1 and +2. Notice, however, that the predictive capacity goes down from Time +1 to +2 and +2 to +3, meaning that the variable less accurately predicts *Support for Violence* over time and that the underlying number does not show a repeating pattern.

These two figures tell a similar story, which is that *Support for Violence* cycles through short term positive correlations to medium term negative correlations, but over various durations of time. Review back to Figure 21 and you will see that the measure is represented in a series of peaks and valleys, which may vary in their durations from one

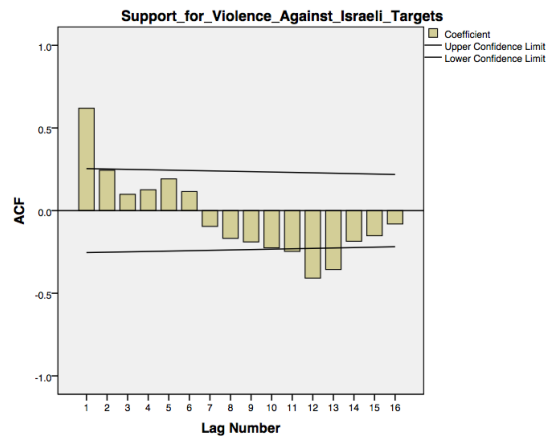


to four time periods, not more. Though the trends may be up or down over a larger time period, the short-term nature of the peaks and valleys does suggest that some set of environmental conditions or influences change the attitude of the Palestinians fairly regularly.

**Figure 25. Popular Support for Violence Linear Correlation - Differenced**



**Figure 26. Popular Support for Violence Linear Correlation - Undifferenced**



Though this chapter is set up in such a way that this section should analyse *Support for Violence* as a dependent variable, it is important to understand that as an independent variable, *Support for Violence* demonstrates real strength in predicting many other measures. *Violence Frequency*, *Violence Density*, *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*, *Hamas Support*, *Optimism* and *safety* are all predicted by undifferenced data. The differenced data only predicts *Violence Frequency* and *density*. All of the data are represented in their respective sections.

Further, the Granger-causation method was followed for the predictive power of *Support for Violence* and it can be said that Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israelis Granger-causes the frequency of Hamas attacks. This will be more thoroughly discussed in the section on Hamas Violence later in this chapter and in the Predictive Model of Hamas Violence in Chapter 7.

Palestinian perception about the *Safety of Family* (Figure 24) is the only variable that has predictive power with *Support for Violence*. Using differenced data, perceptions about the *Safety of Family* at Time 0 accurately predicts *Support for Violence* at Time +1 during the Governance Era:  $r(23) = .509; p < .02$ .

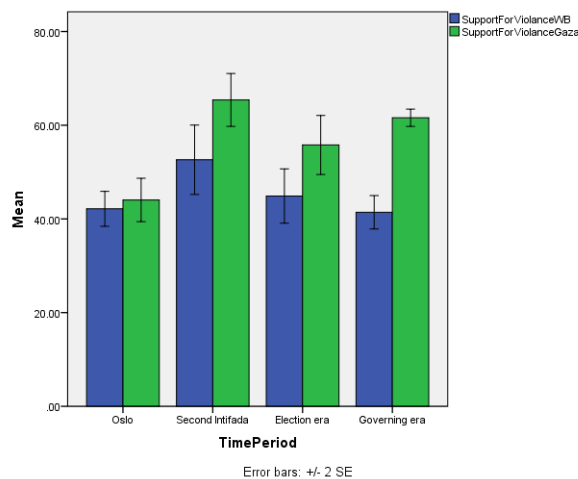
#### *Meaningful Relationships and Non-relationships*

It is significant that very little evidence was found to predict the Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israelis. This suggests that data collected for this thesis is not telling us what is driving the increase in *Support for Violence*. Given that *Support for Violence* is a Granger-causation factor for Hamas led violent acts, it is important to investigate the influences on *Support for Violence*. As part of this thesis, many possible predictors of *Support for Violence* were investigated through interviews and the popular support measures. Interviews with Palestinians suggested that the increase in *Support for Violence* was entirely caused by the Israelis. Without robust Israeli intervention data, this claim cannot be quantitatively measured. In discussions with Khalil Shikaki, he did tell me about survey work that PSR performed on the role of Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank on willingness to support violence. Khalil indicated that the methodology for the study was flawed, so he invalidated the results. Only a small subset of Israeli *Targeted Killings* and Israeli interventions during Gaza War I and II were investigated and can be seen later in this chapter and in Chapter 6. The former showed no relationship with *Support for Violence* (see Chp 4.11), while the latter did show a measurable effect on several Palestinian popular support measures (see Chp 6.2.5). No other information was available for testing this relationship.

There is a meaningful difference between the *Support for Violence* against Israeli Targets during: 1) the four different time periods shown in Figure 27; and 2) between the WB and Gaza. The mean *Support for Violence* was lowest during the Oslo period

averaging about 40%; the difference between the WB and Gaza was approximately 2%. During the Second *Intifada* there was a significant difference in *Support for Violence* between the WB and Gaza. The mean support in the WB was approximately 53%, while in Gaza it was nearly 66%. Though *Support for Violence* declined during the Campaign Era, the spread between the WB and Gaza was similar as the period before, 45% to 56%, respectively. The largest spread between the WB and Gaza is during the Governing Era, where 62% of Gazans and 42% of West Bankers support violence against Israel. The most significant differences in the Governing Era are that Hamas rules Gaza and three wars have been fought on Gaza soil, one between Hamas and Fatah and two between Hamas and Israel.

**Figure 27. Support for Violence in the West Bank and Gaza for Different Eras**



Preliminary Finding #1 in the pilot study suggested that Hamas initiated violence with Israel in order to increase Palestinian *Support for Violence*. The idea is that Hamas would use violence against Israel to prompt an Israeli reprisal that would cause Palestinian *Support for Violence* to increase. This preliminary finding is not supported by the data in that Hamas violence at Time 0 does not predict *Support for Violence* at Time +1, 2, 3, etc.. The significance of this empirical result is that Hamas led violence cannot be characterised as being a causal factor for the Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israel. The data also suggests that reprisals from Israel are also not a causal factor for the increase in *Support for Violence*. This could be because a direct relationship does not exist or it could be that Israeli violent response to Hamas violence is delayed to the point where testing its relationship to *Support for Violence* as a function of Hamas violence is ineffective. This is unlikely since the time series data tested Time

+1 to Time +8 with no significant relationship. It could also be that the general ratcheting up of security measures by the Israelis might, as argued by Marighella (1969), push the population toward a greater dissatisfaction of Israel, but this does not mean that it manifests in popular support for the group. This suggests that the *Support for Violence* measure must have other more significant relationships that could more definitively be considered causal factors (e.g. changes in the political environment between Israel and Palestine, internal Palestinian causes, Israeli building of settlements, road blocks, check points, etc.).

#### *Conclusion, So What?*

During the years of 1997-2001, the Shin Bet compiled data demonstrating a strong correlation between the Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israelis and the amount of money spent on successful and unsuccessful attacks by Hamas (e.g. operational costs for launching violent operations). The Head of the Shin Bet, Ami Ayalon (pers.comm., 2 October 2012), said that because he saw this correlation, he advised the Israeli Prime Minister to take action to reduce Palestinian *Popular Support for Violence* against Israel as a method to reduce Hamas attacks. Ayalon's comments suggest that both Hamas and the Israeli government paid attention to this measure, through PSR polls, and that, at least, some within the Israeli government believed that it was (and is) a primary causal factor in violence led by Hamas.

One of the most important findings of this thesis is tied to the *Popular Support for Violence*. The finding suggests that Hamas follows popular support and does not lead it. The violence data certainly suggests this. But, so too does the interview data. Yuval Diskin (Director of the Shin Bet 2005-2011) said (6 December 2012) that when Hamas leadership realised that it was out of step with popular opinion then it would convene a meeting immediately to figure out how to respond. The conclusion to be made from this data is that Hamas violence generally is being driven by rather than driving popular opinion.

## **4.7 Frequency and Density of Violence**

### *Definition, Critique and Summary of Measure*

The frequency and density of violence measures the number and lethality of Hamas led attacks. According to the *Verified Open-Source Violent Attack Dataset*, Palestinian factions conducted over 800 high-profile violent acts against Israelis between December 1987 and December 2012. Hamas conducted over 250 of those violent acts. The *Violence Frequency* measures the number of high-profile violent acts that happened during a specific period. The periods were selected to correspond with other popular support variables so that the relationship between violent acts and popular support could be measured over time. For the most part, time periods are roughly three months apart, with the exception of a few periods where the time elapsed was a few months longer. In one case, the time period was one year because the popular support measures were not available during that time. Taking the number of violent acts during a period and dividing it by the number of days in that period derived the frequency number. For example, if there were 3 violent acts during period x, where period x lasted 100 days, the frequency number would be derived in this manner:  $3/100=.03$ . In this example, *Violence Frequency* would be .03. By generating the number in this manner, the *Violence Frequency* in one time period can be compared to another using the constant metric of time.

A similar formula was used to derive the data making up *Violence Density*. Specifically, this measure captures the number of Israeli casualties during a time period. For example, if 100 people were killed or injured during a time period that last 93 days, the formula would be:  $100/93=1.075$ . Again, this methodology allows for *Violence Density* to be tested over time using the constant metric of time.

To understand the use of *Violence Frequency* and Density over time it is important to distinguish between ground and air attacks. Nearly all attacks prior to June 2007 were ground attacks (e.g. knife attacks, suicide bombers, car bombs, shootings, etc.). After 2007, the use of rockets in Gaza became more commonplace. The introduction of Iranian made rockets and mortars into Gaza caused substantial change in the use and methodology of attacks led by Hamas. Though a handful of rocket/mortar attacks occurred prior to the takeover of Gaza by Hamas, most of these occurrences were captured using the methodology described for violent incidents against Israelis by Palestinian factions. After the takeover, Hamas and other factions, like PIJ, began launching rockets/mortars with greater frequency. The only source for this data comes

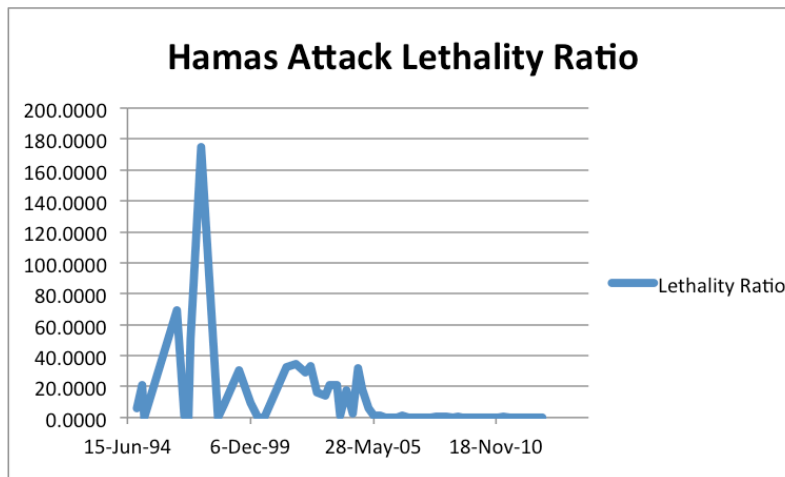
from monthly Israeli Security Services reports. The data is not listed by day; rather it was amalgamated into monthly frequencies. These rocket/mortar launches are attributed to Hamas because it has control over security services within Gaza and for reasons previously mentioned (see Chp 1.2.1). The frequency being tallied by month, in general, does not generate data analyses problems except for the months in which a poll was released. With the availability of the data in monthly frequencies, it is impossible to know if the attacks occurred before or after the time series date used for the analysis. Therefore, the total number of rocket launches was amortised by the number of days in a month. So if there were 30 launches in a month that had 30 days and the poll was published on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the total launches counted would be 15. This does cause the data after Gaza to be slightly less accurate than before. The ground attack data is the data that demonstrates the strongest relationship with Palestinian attitudes. This section will explain more about the strength of these relationships.

The most important idea for consideration about the use of rockets/mortars by Hamas is that the lethality<sup>18</sup> of the Hamas attacks significantly declines after the entry to national elective politics (Figure 28). This suggests two possibilities. The accuracy of the rockets is poor and/or Hamas chooses to launch the rockets into non-populated areas. The former is the analysis by the IDF Generals interviewed for this thesis. Regardless, Hamas gets the benefit of firing rockets from a distance, which means that their operatives have less risk than if they needed to clandestinely go deep into Israel to perform a violent act. Figure 28 does not include the violence from Gaza wars I & II.

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<sup>18</sup> Note: lethality is determined by dividing the Hamas Density Ratio by the Frequency Ratio. The result is the number of casualties per violent incident as a function of the time period.

Figure 28. Hamas Attack Lethality Ratio



There are several critiques to consider for using this methodology. First, does the dataset capture all Hamas led violence? Roughly, twenty percent of all Palestinian led violence had no militant group claim responsibility. So, does this create material impact on the data results? No. Even if we attribute all unattributed attacks to Hamas, the statistical relationships between measures in this thesis do not materially change. The correlation between Hamas *Violence Frequency* and *Support for Violence* using attributable data is  $r(59)=.348;p<.05$  [undifferentiated]. If we assign all unattributable high-profile violent acts to Hamas the relationship increases to:  $r(59)=.418;p<.01$  [undifferentiated]. Further, there is no meaningful difference in predicative values of *Violence Frequency* or *Density* with any other measure. All relationships remain fairly constant when manipulating the unattributable violent acts.

The methodology used to collect this violence data meant that only reports of violence that could not be confirmed by a second independent source were excluded. It may be possible that such a method excluded acts of Hamas led violence, but it too is unlikely that these omissions would be material due to the vastness of open source data on the violence perpetrated on Israelis.

Another critique of the measure is that the variance in the number of days in the time period skews the data and does not allow it to be nimble enough to measure dynamics between violence and popular support measures. There is some validity in this argument, but the methodology provides the best possible design to test these dynamics over time. The time periods align exactly with the publishing of the polls, which means

that the attitudes represented have no bias caused by a time delay (e.g. lengthy data collection process). Therefore, the only drag on the dynamic relationship would be that sentiment caused by violent acts early in a time period might not reflect in the support measure at the end of a time period. This is possible, but is mitigated by the fact that there are a large number of time periods (59) during the 19 years of polling data, meaning that on average surveys were conducted more frequently than one every four months. As such, it should be understood that the volume and *Violence Frequency* data and polling measures in this case study may be the most prolific available to scholars of conflict and insurgent groups.

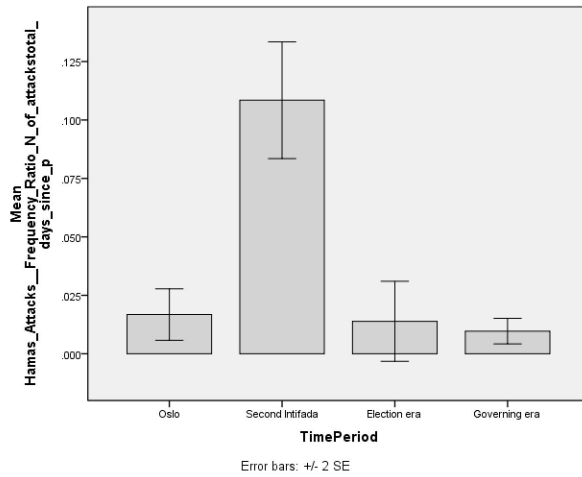
Critical to the understanding of conflict and conflict reduction is the clarity about what drives violent acts. Within this section, such clarity is provided. There is evidence that Palestinian *Support for Violence* is a Granger-causation of Hamas led violence. Further, other support measures demonstrate the environmental conditions that surround the use or non-use of violence. The predicative model of Hamas Violence and the Hamas Resistance Model, both described in Chapter 7, demonstrate how *Violence Frequency* and Density are influenced by the combination of other measures and how the collective measures interact over time.

#### *Trends Over Time*

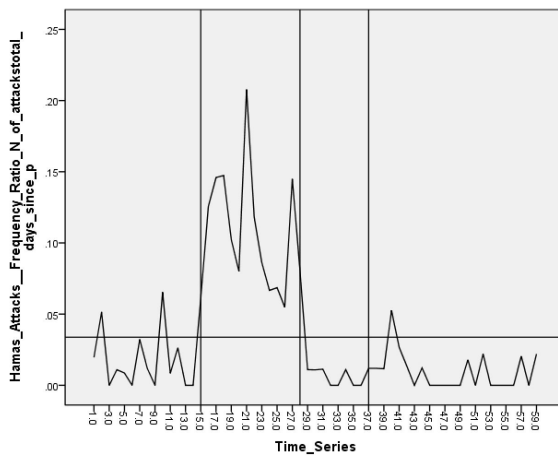
Figures 29 & 30 show two different views of *Attack Frequency*, one by era, the other by time period. For these charts, the Gaza War I and II data were removed so as to show the rest of the data in a format that could be seen and understood in the charts. Again, the data represents the total number of attacks/total number of days in the period.



**Figure 29. Hamas Attack Frequency by Era**



**Figure 30. Hamas Attack Frequency by Time Period**

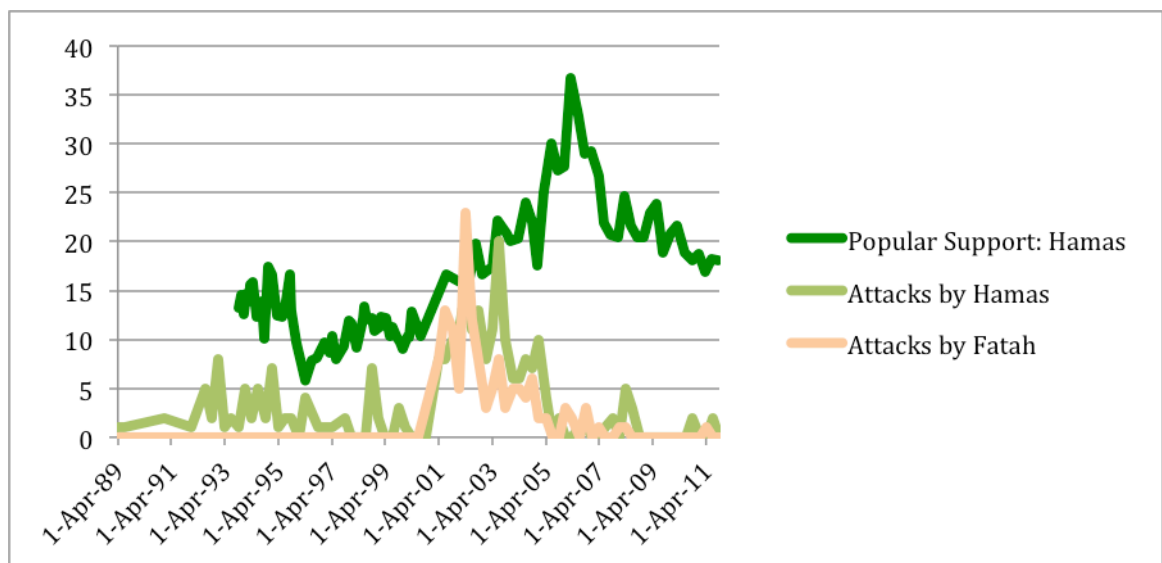


*Violence Frequency* and *Density* correlate with each other and a number of other measures. First, as would be suspected, the two variables correlate strongly with each other for ground attacks:  $r(59)=.871;p<.01$  [undifferenced] and  $r(59)=.735;p<.01$  [differenced]. When including rocket/mortar data, the correlation remains strong in the Governance Era:  $r(23)=.570;p<.01$  [undifferenced]. In the Pre-Political Era, undifferenced *Violence Frequency* strongly correlated with: 1) *Support for Palestinian State along 1967 Borders*  $r(27)=.663;p<.01$ , 2) *Hamas Support*  $r=.682$  and 3) *Optimism*  $r=-.765$ . In the Governance Era it negatively correlated with perceptions on the *Safety of Family*  $r(23)=-.588;p<.01$  [undifferenced]. Together these correlations provide supporting evidence of how the measures respond in an increasing conflict environment. More will be discussed on this point in Chapter 7 with the introduction of the Hamas Resistance Model. That said, the odd relationship here is that *Support for a Palestinian State along 1967 Borders* was positively correlated with *Violence Frequency*. This

relationship is not seen using differenced data. It is more likely that the Palestinian attitude toward sovereignty was increasing at the same time Hamas *Violence Frequency* was increasing. Given the lack of connectivity between these measures and the strangeness about it, it is likely that both measures were independently increasing, which suggests that the correlation is a linear trend error. That said, if the opposite were the case, it would suggest that as violence increased, *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* would increase. But, neither variable in Time 0 predicts the other at Time +1, which further suggests that the correlation is a linear trend error.

Figure 31 demonstrates the relationship between *Popular Support for Hamas* and violent ground attacks against Israel by Hamas and Fatah. *Popular Support for Hamas* neither predicts, nor is predicted by *Violence Frequency* or *Density*. The relationship between Fatah and Hamas is more connected. The *Violence Frequency* between Hamas and Fatah are correlated:  $r(59)=.570;p<.01$  [undifferenced]. More interestingly, Hamas violence at Time 0 predicts the Fatah violence at Time +1:  $r(59)=.304;p<.02$  [undifferenced]. This suggests that Fatah violence followed the lead of Hamas starting in the Second *Intifada* extending to the beginning of the Governance Era when most of Fatah’s violence against Israel ended. This relationship may also indicate that Fatah, like Hamas, followed popular support of Palestinians. The end of violence by Fatah corresponds with the recognition by the Palestinian Authority, led by Fatah, of the State of Israel.

**Figure 31. Attacks by Hamas & Fatah, and Popular Support for Hamas**



*Time Series Results (Attack Frequency as a Dependent Variable)*

Figures 32 to 34 show linear correlation data for *Attack Frequency*. The undifferenced data in Figures 32-33 indicates that Time 0 predicts Time +1 at a significant level for both ground attacks and ground plus air attacks. Differenced data depicted in Figure 34 indicates that Time 0 negatively predicts Time +1 for only ground attacks. This is telling us that the *Attack Frequency* generally reverses course at Time +1 compared to Time 0, but that it remains part of a longer up or down trend. For example, during the Second *Intifada*, the frequency of Hamas violence went up (2 periods), down (3 periods), up (2 periods), down (2 periods), up (2 periods), down (1 period) and up (1 period). These fluctuations happened while the number of Hamas attacks for the period was significantly higher than any other period. The best way to think about the volatility in this number is that it does not increase/decrease in a straight line. There are small peaks and valleys along the way.

**Figure 32. Hamas Ground Attack Frequency Linear Correlation Undifferenced (Lag 1=.718)**

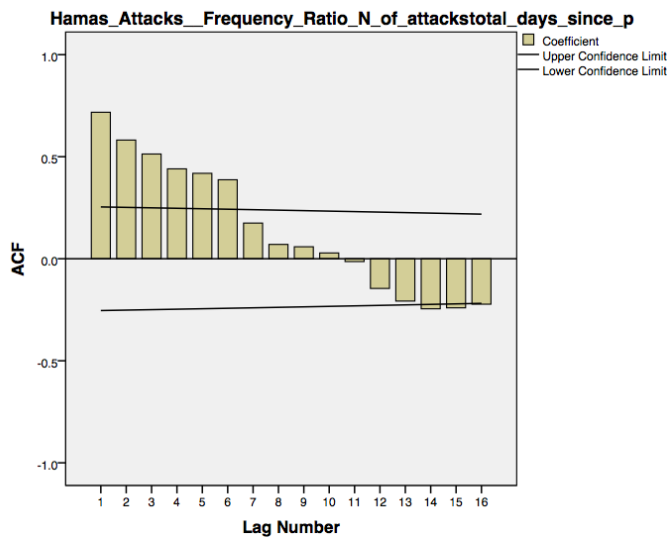


Figure 33. Hamas Attack Frequency w/ Rockets Linear Correlation Undifferenced (Lag=.378)

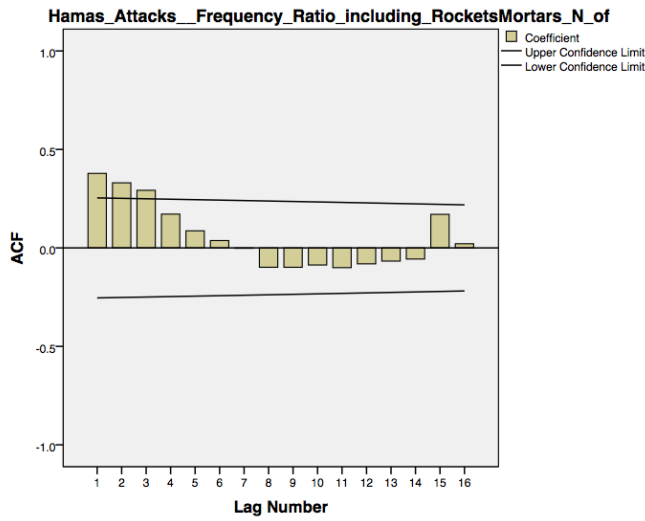
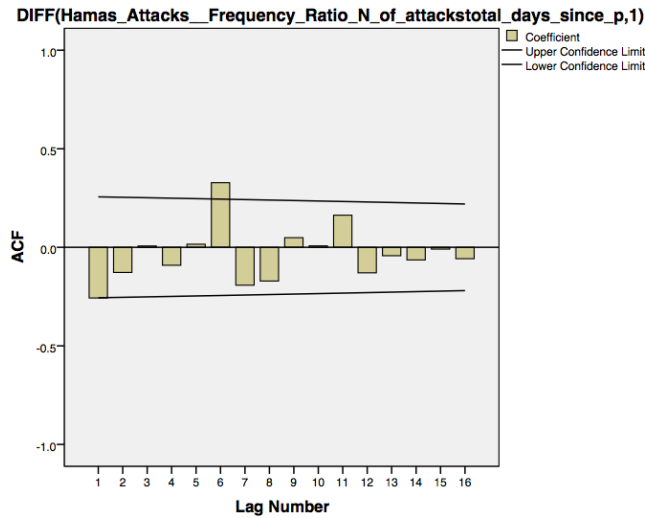


Figure 34. Hamas Ground Attack Frequency Linear Correlation Differenced (Lag 1=-.257)

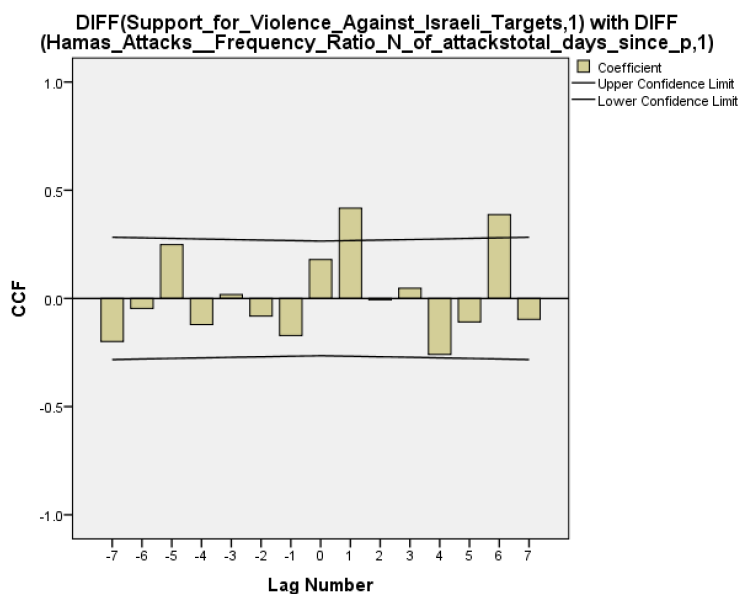


We know that the *Support for Violence* Granger-causes *Violence Frequency* (Figure 35). As an independent variable, *Support for Violence* at Time 0 predicts Hamas Violence (ground attacks) at Time +1:  $r(59)=.415;p<.01$  [differenced]. Generally, it shows that when *Support for Violence* is going up or down, Hamas will increase or decrease ground attacks in the following period, respectively. Though the time series chart shown in Figure 35 indicates that at time lag +4 and +6 there are meaningful correlations, this is probably not meaningful since the time lag could represent between 12-30 months and no other quantitative or qualitative measure could account for such a relationship.

So what does Granger-causation mean? Clive Granger established a procedure to determine to the extent possible by available data, what independent variables

potentially cause other dependent variables. The procedure includes multiple regressions and t-tests to eliminate independent variables that are less important in their predictive power on a dependent variable. A series of tests can potentially leave an independent variable with greater predictive power than the rest. According to Granger, this independent variable should be thought of in terms of Bayesian analysis, in that it has some probability of causation on the dependent variable. Following this procedure, it can be said that Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israelis Granger-causes Hamas *Violence Frequency*. This is the only variable pair that has this level of relationship. Granger-causation is a stronger relationship than correlation or predictive values, but not as strong as actual causation, which in this case is impossible to establish.

**Figure 35. Hamas Violence Frequency Predicted by Support for Violence**



During the Oslo Era, the predictive power can be most acutely seen in the analysis of the time surrounding the publishing of PSR polls. Figures 36 & 37 demonstrated that during the Oslo Era, Hamas paid close attention to the changes in the Palestinian *Support for Violence*, a question on nearly all PSR polls. Figure 36 depicts the linear regression between Palestinian *Support for Violence* and the Frequency of Hamas Violence 30 days before the publishing of a PSR poll. There is little relationship between the two variables  $r^2(n=14)=.004$ . Figure 37 shows a different story. Thirty days after the PSR poll was published, the *Violence Frequency* increased significantly when *Support for Violence* increased  $r^2(n=14)=.539$ ;  $p<.01$ . The change in *Violence Frequency* indicates

that Hamas paid attention to the attitudes of Palestinians and responded to them by increasing violent attacks when the population *Support for Violence* increased.

Figure 36. Support for Violence and Past Attacks – Oslo Era

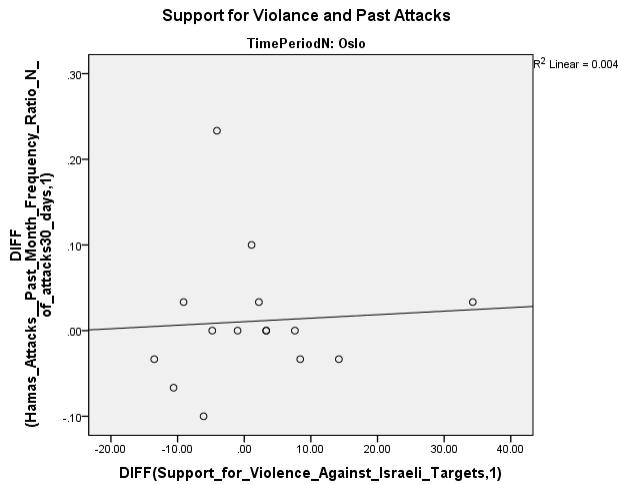
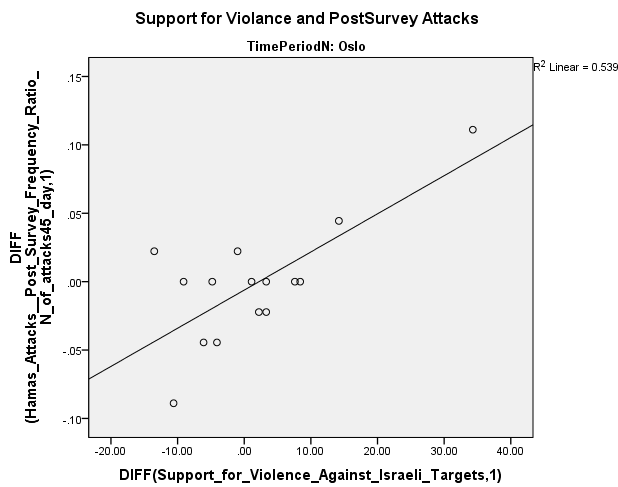


Figure 37. Support for Violence and Post Survey Attacks - Oslo Era

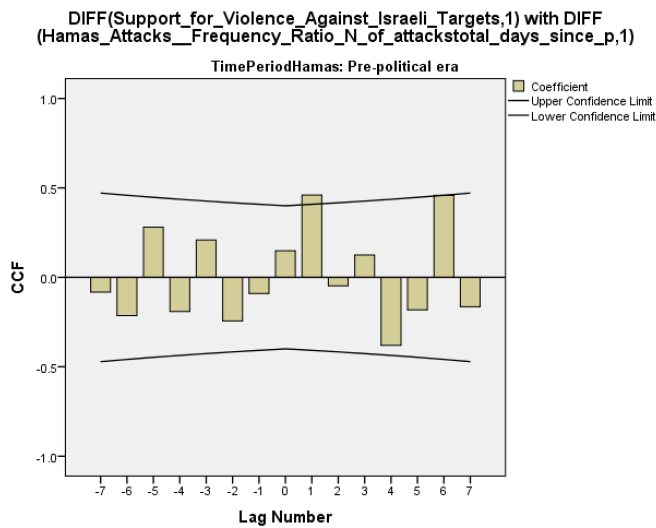


Figures 36 and 37 do not provide conclusive evidence that Hamas leaders were watching PSR polls and making their decisions on when to use violence based upon the variance in Support for Violence against Israel from them. However, the demonstration that Hamas violence was materially higher after the publishing of polls than prior indicates that Hamas was indeed tuned into the attitudes of Palestinians. Perhaps this awareness was from their reading of the polls. Or, it could have been that Hamas was tuned into the attitudes of Palestinians by the fact that they are themselves Palestinians and because of their work within the mosques and communities supported by the *dawa*. In any

event, the data demonstrates that Hamas was acutely aware of these attitudes and most likely responded to them through violent acts (or the lack of violent acts) on Israel. It is important to note that the relationship between the before and after the publishing of the polls, represented in Figure 36 and 37, does not extend beyond the Oslo Era.

During the Pre-Political Era, the *Support for Violence* also predicted *Violence Frequency*. The predictive relationship described in Figure 38 is:  $r(27)=.470; p<.01$  [differenced].

**Figure 38. Support for Violence & Attack Frequency - Pre-Political Era**

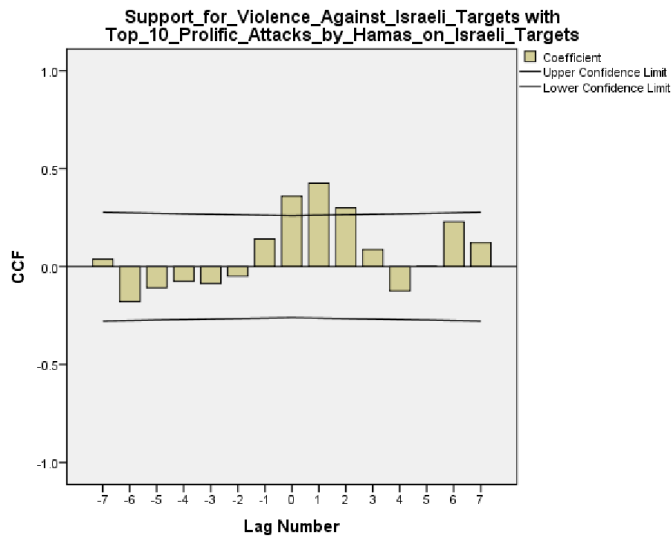


Even when we consider the most prolific attacks against the Israelis during the Pre-Political Era, the relationship holds. Palestinian *Support for Violence* at Time 0 against Israelis predicted the top ten prolific attacks (determined by total number of casualties) by Hamas on Israelis at Time +1:  $r(59)^{19}=.445; p<.01$  [undifferenced] (Figure 39). The prolific attacks on Israelis did not increase *Support for Violence*, *Hamas Support*, 1967 Borders or *Optimism* amongst the Palestinians in the near term. At first glance, this seems to counter to Bruce Hoffman’s argument that high profile attacks are the way organisations increase recruitment and support for the group. But, it is unclear whether these attacks induced other individuals to enlist in Hamas as militants willing to use violence against Israel and the data cannot be extrapolated to this subset. It may be that Hoffman’s arguments hold true for a militant subset of the population (untestable), but

<sup>19</sup> Note: for each of the 10 prolific attacks a 1 was inserted into the dataset. For all 49 other periods a zero was inserted.

the idea that popular support for the group is increased through the high profile attacks is not the case for Hamas and the Palestinian people. Further discussion on this point can be seen in the evaluation of Corollary #1c in Chapter 7.2. The evidence suggests that Hamas follows the population and does not lead it.

**Figure 39. Top Ten Prolific Attacks on Israelis by Hamas Undifferenced**



There are no other data points that show predictive power on *Violence Frequency* as a dependent variable.

*Meaningful Relationships and Non-Relationships*

After Hamas decided to enter national politics, the relationship between *Support for Violence* and *Violence Frequency* did not relate in the same way. No predictive power could be seen for the Election and Governance Eras. This was likely the result of the efforts by Hamas to consolidate political power while maintaining resistance credentials and the Gaza wars between Hamas and Israel.

Once Hamas entered national politics and subsequently took over Gaza, they had to balance their pursuit for political support with their desire to maintain the status of leading resistance organisation. This balancing act fundamentally changed the way the group used violence. As Hamas increased its stockpiles of Qassam rockets, which they made, and the Iranian made rockets and mortars, the group began to launch or allowed others to launch rockets against Israel in a manner that was different than the historic use of ground attacks. As other groups critique Hamas political forays as a



departure from resistance to politics, the group used the rocket launches as a demonstration of their resistance credentials. It looks as if the group uses rockets as a means to demonstrate for Palestinians that it is still the leading resistance organization. This has fundamentally changed the direct link between *Support for Violence* and *Attack Frequency*. After 2007, the historical relationship between *Support for Violence* and *Violence Frequency Including Rockets* changes from Pearson significant to insignificant. Again, this is most likely caused by the tension created because of the group's new political responsibilities and desire to maintain the resistance persona.

Further, the two Gaza wars demonstrated a new level of *Attack Frequency* and Density. *Attack Frequency* during these wars was now encompassed in an air war, whereby thousands of rockets would be launched. During the height of the Second *Intifada*, there were never more than three high-profile attacks in a day on Israeli targets. The Density also changed in that nearly all the rocket attacks fall into open fields and do not create casualties. As such, the historical lethality of the Hamas attack also declined. Combined, the new reality of Gaza fundamentally changes the the relationship between *Support for Violence* and Hamas Attack Frequency including rockets.

#### *Conclusion, So What?*

Data suggests that Hamas follows the population and does not lead it. In the early days the evidence suggests that Hamas observed Palestinian attitudes on Support for Violence, potentially through PSR polls, and when that support increased, they would launch attacks. This poll-watching finding did not extend into any other eras, which made it unique to the Oslo Era. At the start of the Second *Intifada* the reality on the ground changed. Hamas likely continued to watch the polls and observe Palestinian attitudes, but the Israeli defensive posture became so heavy that Hamas violent operations were forced to find methods to overcome the defences of the Israelis, which likely delayed the operations (Uzi Dayon, pers.comm., 5 December 2012). Even though the before and after polling results relationship changed from the Oslo Era, it did not break the predictive power that *Support for Violence* had on Hamas led violence for other eras.

Further, the violent acts of Hamas do not at any time predict Palestinian *Support for Violence* or any other popular support measure for any era. But, *Support for Violence*

predicts Hamas led ground attacks on Israelis for all eras. The likely conclusion to this finding by some Hamas experts would be that the group uses the *dawa* and work through the mosques to radicalise the population to increase *Support for Violence* against Israel, which therefore means that Hamas does, in fact, increase the *Support for Violence* through these programmes. Data on religiosity and Islamisation does not predict an increase in the *Support for Violence* against Israel or *Hamas Support*, so the data offers competing empirical evidence to such claims.

Other arguments suggest that *Support for Violence* is caused by Israeli intervention. This may well be a causal factor, but the data available for this study does not allow us to make the claim quantitatively. The lack of verifiable Israeli intervention data makes it impossible to statistically analyse. Another attempt to better understand the variables that predict Palestinian *Support for Violence* was a review of survey data on Palestinian data on checkpoints and humiliation. During the height of the Second *Intifada*, a PSR study was performed on ‘anger and humiliation’ generated by standing at an Israeli checkpoint for a long time on attitudes regarding violence. But, the findings were never published. Upon inquiry with Khalil Shikaki (pers.comm., 15 November 2013) regarding the results of the study he wrote:

We did indeed do a survey during the height of the *intifada*, but we decided not to use the data due to serious methodological problems. The survey aimed to find out the role of "anger and humiliation" generated by standing at a checkpoint for a long time on attitudes regarding violence. It found that support for suicide attacks was considerably higher among those standing at a checkpoint compared to those sitting in their living rooms. Unfortunately we did not have the resources at that time to repeat the experiment after our initial failure to do it right.

Mentioned earlier, Ami Ayalon said that in 1997 he recommended to Prime Minister Netanyahu that if the Israelis could reduce the Palestinian *Support for Violence* then it would reduce the violent acts perpetrated by Palestinian factions against Israel.<sup>20</sup> The evidence from this thesis independently supports the claims of Ayalon. Yet, the mechanisms that drive Palestinian Support for Violence are driven by variables not captured for this study. It is unfortunate that this research has not been able to

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<sup>20</sup> Note: Ami Ayalon claimed that while he was the Shin Bet Director, he searched all available data for relationships with violence. He said that the PSR polls on *Support for Violence* strongly correlated with money spent by Hamas on violent operations against Israel, which is what motivated him to argue for targeting this attitude within the Palestinian population.

empirically validate causations for Palestinian *Support for Violence*, but it is clear that identifying such variables is critical in understanding how *Support for Violence* and therefore *Violence Frequency* can be reduced. Future research might start with experimental testing through focus groups leading to broad surveys about the causal factors of *Support for Violence*. Such experiments would probably be most valuable if conducted in collaboration with PSR. Experimental results could provide new leads for researchers to pursue.

The takeover of Gaza by Hamas creates a different tension for Hamas in that it must balance its political responsibilities with its interest in violent resistance. The critique by rival resistance groups in Gaza that Hamas has forsaken resistance for politics creates a new dynamic in the use of violence by Hamas. During the Governance Era, Hamas engaged in violent behaviour for more reasons than to only reflect the Palestinian attitudes on violence. The group, due to this criticism, has been forced to protect its reputation as a resistance organisation or risk the loss of ardent supporters to rival resistance groups. As such, Hamas must balance the use of violence against Israel with their interest in maintaining political control and power in Gaza. Use too many rockets/mortars against Israel and risk Israeli invasion of Gaza, something Hamas leaders claim they do not want (Marzouk pers.comm., 23 September 2013). Use too few rockets and risk losing Qassam fighters to other resistance groups. The balance Hamas must strike in Gaza provides a very nice picture of Max Weber's political engagement theory when he argued that a political group must maintain its values while maintaining its responsibilities. For Hamas, the violence against Israel demonstrates how it attempts to achieve its values, while responsibilities by the group reflects its governance of Gaza. Success or failure in meeting its responsibilities can be represented by the *Popular Support for Hamas* in Gaza by Gazans. Though there is no statistical relationship between *Hamas Support* and violent acts that can help us define statistically the Weber theory in this conflict, it can be argued that the tension that currently exists in Gaza is a clear demonstration of what Weber articulated in 1917.

#### **4.8 Palestinian Optimism**

*Definition, Critique and Summary of Measure*

There are two kinds of Palestinian *Optimism* that can be seen in the PSR survey data. For the purposes of this analysis they will be called '*Peace Optimism*' and '*One-State Optimism*'. *Peace Optimism* characterises those Palestinians that express *Optimism* about negotiations with Israel leading to the creation of a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders. *One-State Optimism* characterises those Palestinians that become more optimistic when Palestinian violence is perceived to have improved the cause to have a Palestinian State from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, also known as the one-state solution (annihilation of the State of Israel).

The PSR data lends itself much better for the capture of *Peace Optimism* than to *One-State Optimism*. During the 19 years of surveys, *Peace Optimism* was captured in three similar questions: 1) 'given the political and economic circumstances here, and the Palestinian Israeli negotiations, are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future' (PCPSR March 1995), 2) 'after [current event] what do you expect to happen now' (PCPSR March 2000) and 3) 'what do you expect to happen between Palestinians and Israelis now that [current event] has happened?' (PCPSR March 2011). Those that expressed *Optimism* by indicating that 'negotiations will continue and armed confrontations will stop' are identified as peace optimists. According to Khalil Shikaki, the change in the question wording was designed to better capture the expression of *Optimism* for a more peaceful future from the population based upon the changes in the environmental conditions. Given the fact that the questions were similar and that respondents were provided with a common answer mitigates potential biases that can happen when questions are fundamentally different. In this case, respondents use the resumption of negotiation and reduced violence as an expression of a more optimistic future. The methodological approach of using differenced data also reduces the possibility of response errors in the data.

*One-State Optimism* exists in a few of the surveys but is not an easy metric to capture based upon PSR's question formulation. For example, it is not sufficient to say that those that express pessimism in the questions outlined above are one-state optimists, because it could be that they are pessimistic about the resumption of negotiations. Other questions relate to one-state optimists but they are not consistently asked in surveys across time. To provide a sense of where one might find the *One-State Optimism*, we can look to surveys before and after Gaza War II. In these surveys, respondents were

asked a question about vital Palestinian national goals. Prior to second Gaza War, 29.9% of the Palestinians answered the question by indicating that the national goal should be to ‘obtain the right of return to refugees to their 1948 towns and villages’. After the war, the response rate rose to 33.1% (PSR December 2012). The increase in the one-state goal corresponds with the Palestinian belief that Hamas won the war against Israel. Though the incremental difference may represent a small portion of the population, it does provide insight that there are Palestinians that become more optimistic about the future when violence is perceived to have improved the proposition for a Hamas led solution. Though we cannot say that all of these responses are one-state optimists, it does represent an *Optimism* that is tied to the perceived success in Palestinian led violence against Israel.

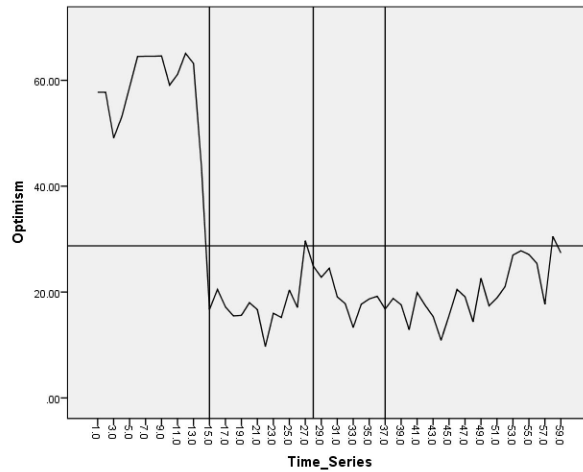
For the purpose of this study, *Peace Optimism* will be the variable that defines *Palestinian Optimism* and is used in the statistical analyses.

Beyond the critique of the question change, the primary critique of the use of *Optimism* as a data point is that it has so many different meanings. For example, a person may be optimistic about the future of negotiations and of the establishment of a Palestinian State while pessimistic about his or her future on other issues. Such disparity in the meaning of *Optimism* has the potential to lessen the understanding gained from the use of the variable. To overcome this critique, *Optimism* has been narrowly defined as *Peace Optimism*, which is defined as those people that believe negotiations with Israel will resume and that violence will soon end.

#### *Trends Over Time*

As can be seen in Figure 40, Palestinian *Optimism* was at its highest during the Oslo Era. It has crossed over 30% twice since early 2000. The first time it crossed this threshold was during the ‘Roadmap to Peace’ offered by the Quartet (e.g. United Nations, European Union, Russia and the United States) and the second was just after the end of Gaza War 2.

**Figure 40. Palestinian Optimism Over Time**



**Figure 41. Palestinian Optimism During Eras**

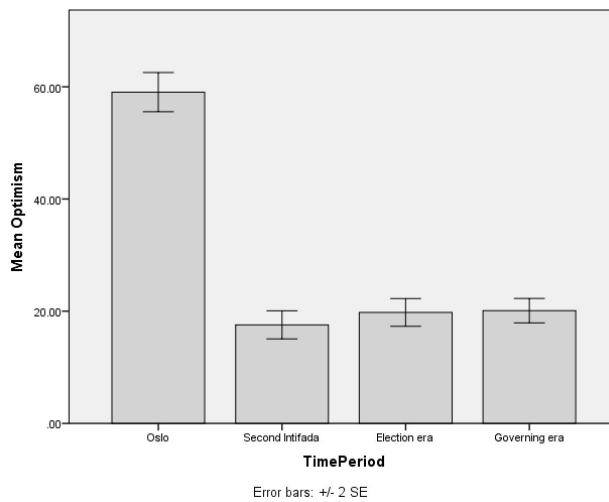
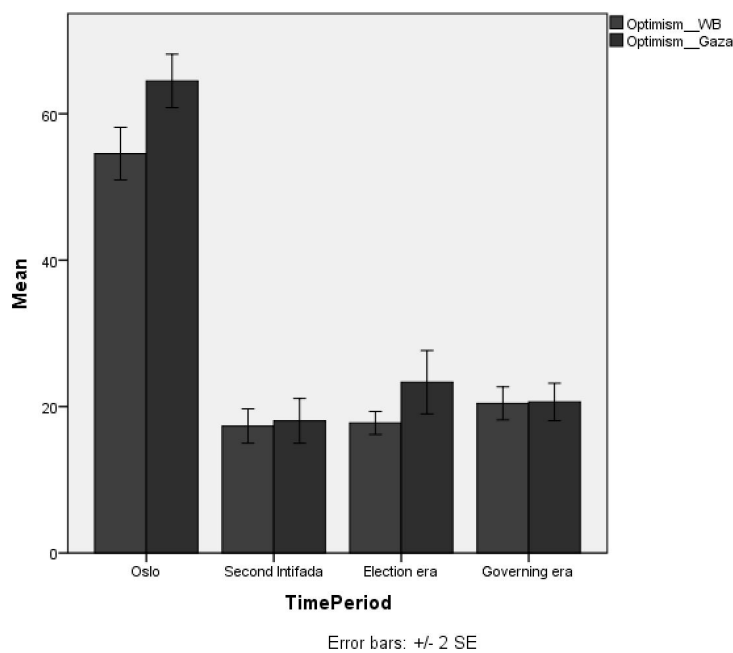


Figure 41 shows that since the failure of the Oslo Accords, the mean of *Palestinian Optimism* has hovered around 20%. Figure 42 depicts the difference in *Optimism* between the people of the West Bank and Gaza. *Optimism* was higher in Gaza than in the West Bank in 39 of the 59 time periods. This suggests that the environmental conditions in Gaza are such that *Optimism* is higher there than in the West Bank over a longer period of time. There are four significant environmental differences between the West Bank and Gaza that could account for this disparity, 1) Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in August 2005, 2) Israeli Occupation of the West Bank, 3) Hamas takeover of Gaza in June 2007 and 4) the wars fought in Gaza.

After the withdrawal of Israel from Gaza, Gazans have been more optimistic than Palestinians in the West Bank in 14 of 29 time periods. The difference during this

period is negligible. But, since the takeover of Gaza by Hamas in July 2007, Palestinians in Gaza have been more optimistic than their counterparts in the West Bank in 9 out of the 23 time periods. The primary differences between the territories during this period were the control of Gaza by Hamas, three wars fought in Gaza, *Targeted Killings* in Gaza by Israel and the absence of Israeli occupation. With the available data, it is impossible to know, which, if any, of these influences had material impact on the difference in *Optimism* between the West Bank and Gaza, but it is clear that the environmental differences are meaningful.

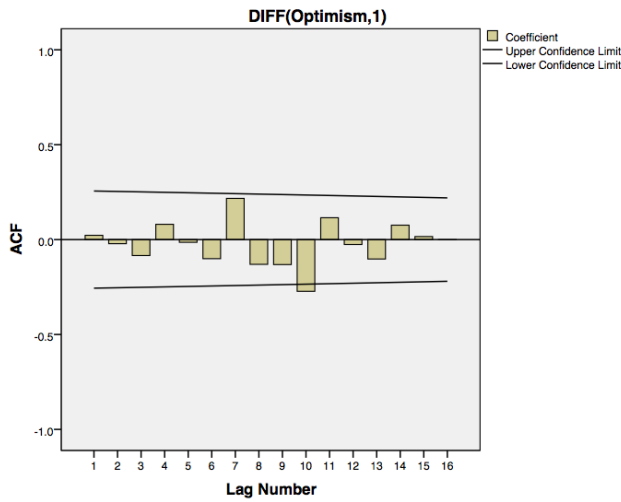
Figure 42. Palestinian Optimism West Bank and Gaza During Eras



*Time Series Results (Palestinian Optimism as a Dependent Variable)*

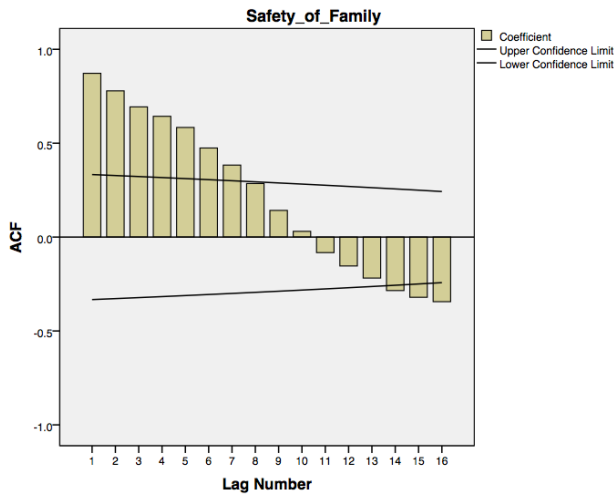
Differentiated *Palestinian Optimism* does not predict future *Optimism* in linear regression analysis (Figure 43).

Figure 43. Optimism Linear Regression - Differenced



However, undifferentiated *Palestinian Optimism* at Time 0 does predict future *Optimism* at Time +1 to Time +8 (Figure 44). This is likely the result of *Palestinian Optimism* moving linearly up and down over long periods of time.

Figure 44. Optimism Linear Regression - Undifferenced (Lag 1 = .915)



During the Second *Intifada*, an increase in *Hamas Attack Frequency* predicts a decrease in *Palestinian Optimism* in the near term (Figure 45):  $r(13)=-.608;p<.05$  [differenced]. No meaningful difference exists between responses from the West Bank and Gaza. With the few time periods in this Era, it is difficult to draw too many conclusions from this finding. It is likely that the environmental conditions experienced by Palestinians were such that *Optimism* was sure to decline during this period. That said, the



underlying *Violence Frequency* did increase and decrease during different periods within the era, which suggests that *Attack Frequency* did have some level of causation in the level of *Peace Optimism* within the population.

Figure 45. Hamas Attack Frequency and Optimism in Second *Intifada* Era - Differenced

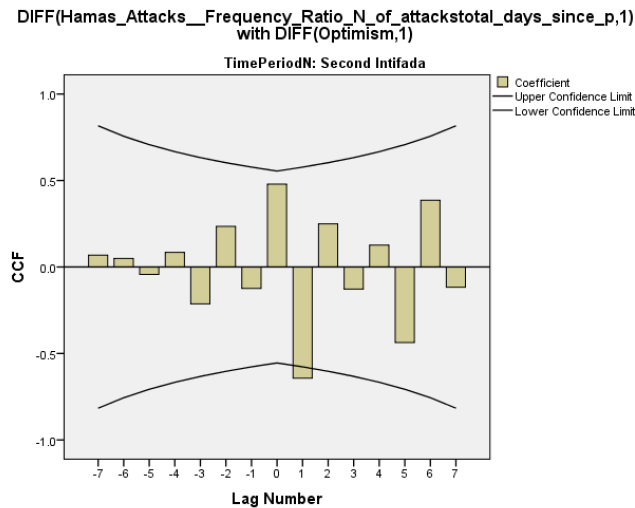
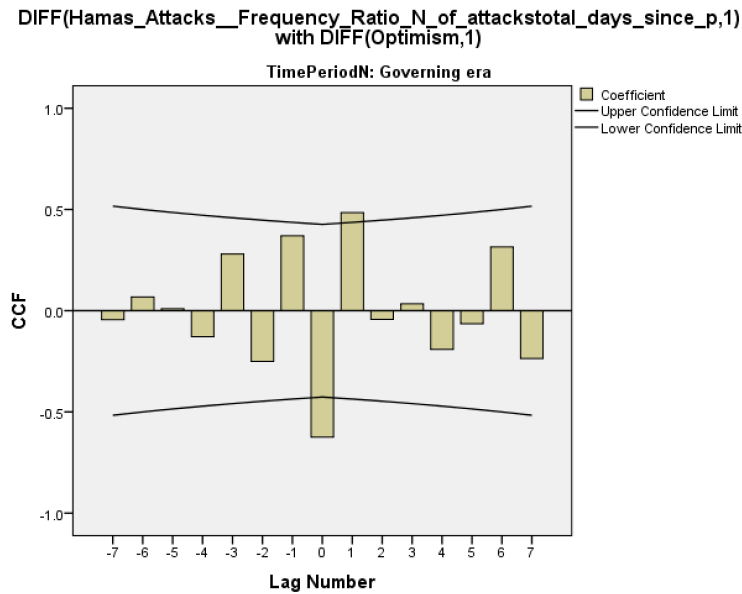


Figure 46 depicts an interesting reversal in the relationship between *Ground Attack Frequency* and *Optimism* during the Governing Era. At Time 0 there is a strong negative correlation between *Ground Attack Frequency* and *Optimism*:  $r(23) = -.613; p < .01$  [differenced]. This indicates that when Hamas led violence increases or decreases, *Palestinian Optimism* does the opposite. However, *Ground Attack Frequency* at Time 0 predicts *Palestinian Optimism* at Time +1:  $r(23) = .506; p < .02$  [differenced]. The reversal suggests that an increase of violence at Time 0 will lead to an increase in *Peace Optimism* at Time 1. It also suggests the opposite; when violence decreases so does *Optimism*.

To better understand how *Optimism* is negatively correlated with Hamas ground attacks during Time 0 while positively predicting *Palestinian Optimism* at Time +1, we should start by looking at the difference in *Optimism* between the WB and Gaza. At Time 0, the differenced correlation between *Ground Attack Frequency* and *Palestinian Optimism* is: 1) West Bank  $r(23) = -.634; p < .01$  and 2) Gaza  $r(23) = -.275$ . The difference between the correlations at Time 0 indicates that the Gazans are more tolerant of increased violence (perhaps a function of the *Violence Frequency* with Fatah and Israel in Gaza), while West Bankers are more sensitive to violence.

**Figure 46. Attack Frequency Predicts Optimism - Differenced**



Hamas *Ground Attack Frequency at Time 0* predicts *Palestinian Optimism at Time +1*:  
1) WB  $r(23)=.594$ ;  $p<.01$  and 2) Gaza  $r(23)=.117$  [differenced]. So it can be said that when Hamas *Violence Frequency* increases:

1. Gazans do not become more or less optimistic; and
2. West Bankers become more pessimistic in time period 0 and more optimistic in time period +1. In other words, since July 2007 the increase of violence by Hamas predicts greater near term *Optimism* in West Bankers only.

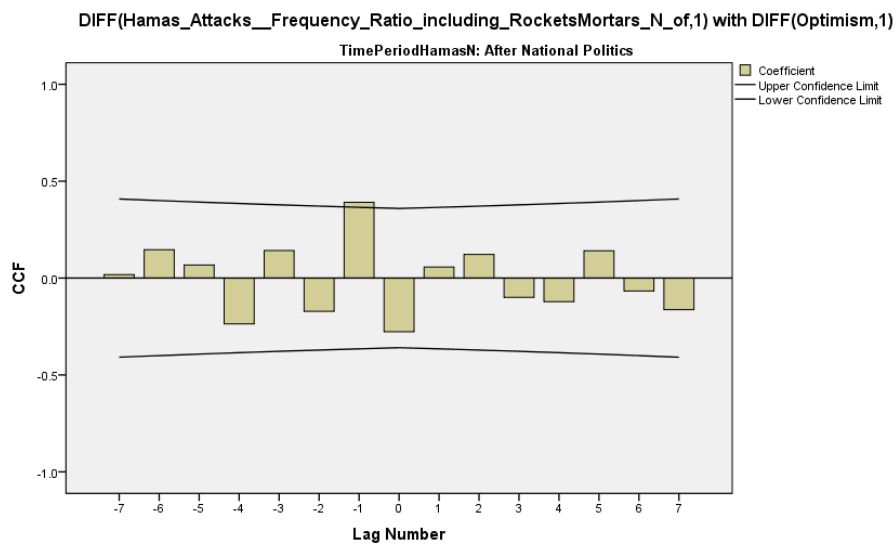
One possibility as to why there is such a difference between the West Bank and Gaza during the Governance Era is because nearly all violence from Hamas has been conducted from Gaza, not to mention that two wars with Israel were conducted on Gaza soil. Therefore, it can be said that increased violence from Gaza increases near term future *Optimism* in the West Bank.

Another explanation for the high correlation and predictive nature of violence with Palestinians in the West Bank is that while Hamas conducts violent ground attacks against Israelis, the environmental conditions for Palestinians may be materially different than when violence is not occurring. In other words, while violence is

increasing from Hamas against Israel, Israel and the Palestinian Authority response in the West Bank and Gaza may influence the environmental conditions to the point where attitudes between the West Bank and Gaza diverge. Yet, the predictive relationship between the variables, particularly those in the West Bank, suggests that as violence goes up in Time 0, so does *Optimism* at Time +1. One potential explanation for such a difference could be that the acts of violence by Hamas increase the expectation by those in the West Bank that a negotiated settlement is more possible than in the absence of previous violence. This is equivalent to believing that, 'because I beat you yesterday, I should be able to get more from you today'. The finding further suggests that *Peace Optimism* and *Attack Frequency* should be further examined in context of the levels of support for different formulations for the acceptance of a Palestinian state along 1967 Borders for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Such an examination would require drilling down into survey responses to see how select participants responded in relationship to the different variables.

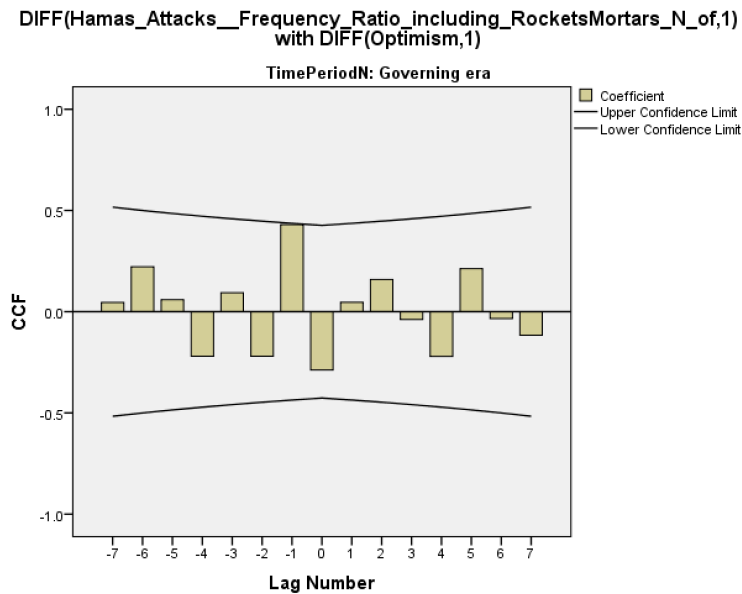
The relationship between *Palestinian Optimism* and *Violence Frequency* when factoring for Hamas sanctioned rockets/mortars changes (Figure 47). Total attacks including ground and rocket attacks do not predict *Optimism*, rather *Optimism* predicts more rocket/mortar attacks. In the Political Era (Jan '05-Dec '12) and Governing Era, increased *Optimism* by Palestinians in the WB and Gaza increases the *Attack Frequency* by Hamas in the near term: 1) Political Era  $r(32)=.423$ ;  $p<.05$  [differenced] and 2) Governing Era  $r(23)=.493$ ;  $p<.05$  [differenced].

**Figure 47. Hamas Attack Frequency w/ Rockets, and Optimism in Political Era - Differenced**



One potential explanation for why *Optimism* might predict Hamas sanctioned violence, including rocket attacks, may be that Hamas attempts to undermine Peace *Optimism* through the violent acts. The body of evidence, at least during the Governing Era, suggests that this may not be an intentionally direct relationship, but rather, it may be attributable to Hamas’s continuous need to demonstrate that it is a resistance organisation and that it does so in a rhythm which has them sanction rocket attacks followed by a period of no attacks, repeating this cycle over and over again. This would also explain both the predictive relationships discussed thus far. Figure 48 depicts a similar predicative power of *Optimism* in the Governing Era.

Figure 48. Hamas Attack Frequency w/ Rockets, and Optimism in Governing Era - Differenced



In the Governing Era, increased *Ground Attack Frequency* predicts an increase in *Palestinian Optimism*, particularly in the West Bank, and an increase in *Palestinian Optimism* in the Political Era predicts more mortar/rockets attacks against Israeli targets.

*Meaningful Relationships and Non-Relationships*

*Palestinian Optimism* is positively correlated with a *Palestinian State along 1967 Borders* during the Political Era and is negatively correlated with *Support for Violence* and *Hamas Support* for all eras. The relationships:

- *Palestinian State along 1967 Borders*:  $r(32)=.424;p<.02$  [differenced]
- *Support for Violence*:  $r(59)=-.507;p<.01$  [differenced]
- *Hamas Support*:  $r(59)=-.294;p<.05$  [differenced]

The higher *Palestinian Optimism*, the greater support for the establishment of a Palestinian State along 1967 Borders. Yet, *Support for Violence* and *Hamas Support* is lower when *Optimism* increases. These relationships may not have predictive value, but they clearly represent some of the environmental conditions that contribute to Palestinians sense of *Optimism*. In fact, these four variables are part of the dynamic model introduced in Chapter 7, entitled the Hamas Resistance Model. That model dynamically shows a number of environmental conditions interacting with violence data that graphically demonstrates what Hamas Resistance looks like over time.

Curiously absent in the correlation data is a relationship between *Optimism* and Safety of Family. There is no meaningful statistical relationship between these variables, which is somewhat surprising. Intuitively, one would think that as *Optimism* increased concern for one's family would decrease. Yet, this is not demonstrated by the data.

#### *Conclusion, So What?*

*Palestinian Optimism* is a reflection of Palestinian attitudes on the prospects for continued negotiation and a reduction of violence. Given that the negotiation interests are related to the willingness to accept a *State Along 1967 Borders*, it suggests that Hamas would want to reduce this level of support given that they have declared an interest in a Palestinian State from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. But, the statistical findings suggest that Hamas does not seem able to directly control the decline of *Peace Optimism* through their use of violence against Israel. The data indicates that the opposite is true; when Hamas increases violence in Time 0, *Peace Optimism* increased in Time +1. The data also suggest that if Hamas reduced violence, *Peace Optimism* would decline.

One might assume that declining *Optimism* would lead to increased Hamas *Violence Frequency*. No predictive relationship exists between these variables, which suggests that *Optimism* or the lack thereof is not a significant causal mechanism for Hamas attacks over time.

The difference in *Optimism* between the West Bank and Gaza is meaningful. The strength of *Optimism* expressed in the West Bank is suggestive of a physical and psychological difference in perception toward the use of violence and its role in strengthening the Palestinian position in peace negotiations. The idea that 'we beat you yesterday, so we should get more from you today' seems to have a meaningful role in the perspective of Palestinians in the West Bank. This may have to do with the psychological distance from the violence emanating from Gaza and a psychological nearness for the physical presence of the Israeli forces in the West Bank. Testing this perspective amongst both West Bank and Gaza populations would most certainly provide additional insights as to how violence interacts with *Optimism* for a negotiated settlement for this conflict and potentially others.

More generally, the correlation and time series data suggests that there is a dynamic relationship happening between the *Palestinian Optimism, Attack Frequency* and a host of other measures. The complexity of these relationships suggests that further study is required at the individual survey level to understand how exactly these two variables affect attitudes on *Hamas Support*, violence, sovereignty, religiosity and other values.

#### **4.9 Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders**

##### *Definition, Critique and Summary of Measure*

*Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* is a measure of Palestinian interest in the establishment of a state through a negotiated settlement with Israel. The measure is dynamic (Figure 49) in that it consistently fluctuates up and down. As will be seen in this section, the environmental conditions matter a great deal for Palestinians whether or not to accept a negotiated state along this border.

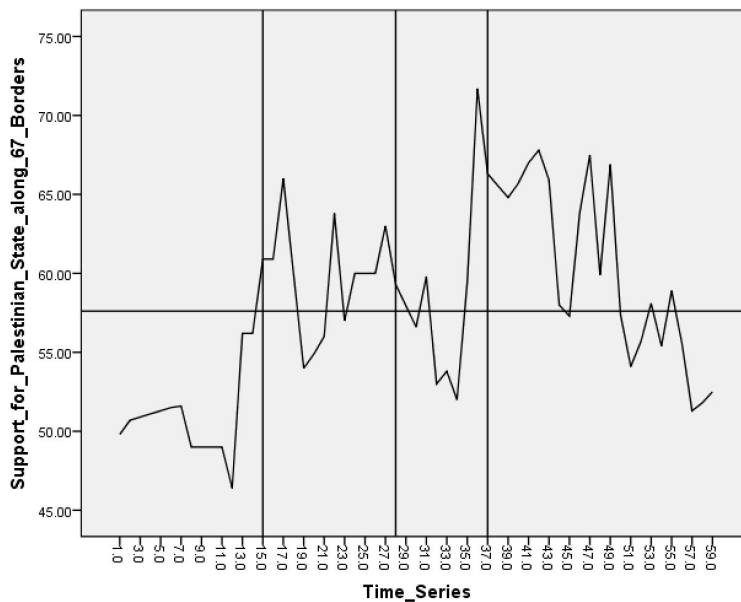
Hamas leaders have articulated two different responses to the notion of a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders. The two arguments are: 1) we cannot accept a state ‘in’ 1967 borders and 2) we could accept a state ‘along’ or ‘on’ 1967 borders. The differences in the statements are critically important. Accommodation to the idea of a Palestinian State forged in negotiations with the state of Israel is an anathema to the Hamas leadership. Yet, on several occasions the leadership has indicated that if the Palestinian Authority were to reach a settlement with Israel, then Hamas would abide by the results of a Palestinian Referendum. This stance provided several options for Hamas. It allowed them to not stand in the way of an established Palestinian State next to an Israeli State. Hamas carefully chose its words that it would accept such a referendum, because it does not limit Palestinian state to be ‘in’ the 1967 borders. Rather, the state would be ‘along’ the borders, suggesting that the borders could move at a later time. Further, the stance allows Hamas to meet the demands of a public referendum without compromising to its base by saying that ‘we now have a state and we will go get the rest of Palestine at a later date when we are stronger’. The idea espoused by these leaders is that the group could accept a Palestinian State ‘along’ 1967 Borders so long as they were not forced to give up their ‘right’ to establish a Palestinian State from the river to the sea at a later time.

The weakness of using this measure is that PSR changed the framing of the questions on a few occasions. At times it refers to the Saudi Plan, while at other times, it refers to the Clinton Plan or some other plan. Such changes in the question constrain its usefulness. That said, in all question formulations, the common denominator was a ‘Palestinian State along 1967 borders with some minor modifications’ (PCPSR). This fact allows the measure to be of some value when used alongside the other popular support measures. Further, the measure itself is tied significantly to the level of Palestinian led violence and therefore can be used to better understand how violence changes the environmental conditions and frames the perspectives of Palestinians related the establishment of a Palestinian State next to an Israeli State.

*Trends Over Time*

The highest level of *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* happened after the conclusion of the Second *Intifada*. The high-water mark is early in 2007, just before Hamas took control of Gaza. Since then, the related level of *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* has fallen from 71% to around 52%.

**Figure 49. Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders**



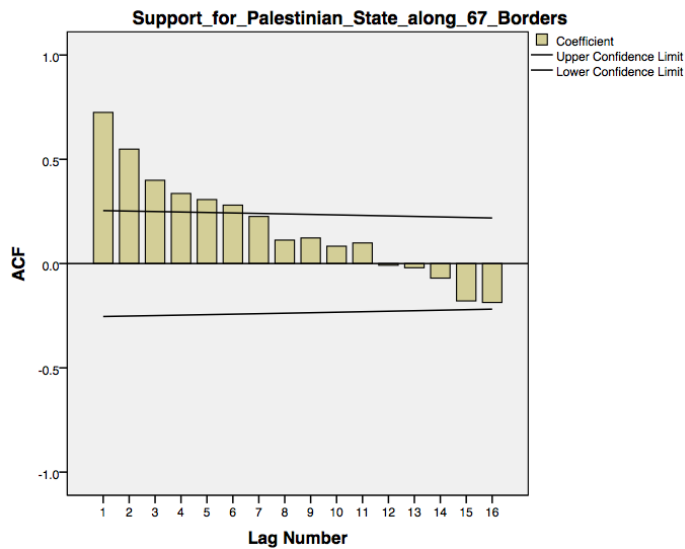
*Time Series Results*

The undifferenced Linear Regression is .725 at Lag 1 (Figure 50), which indicates that previous attitudes about a Palestinian State ‘along’ 1967 Borders predict future attitudes of the measure. This is indicative that the measure moves linear trend up or down over



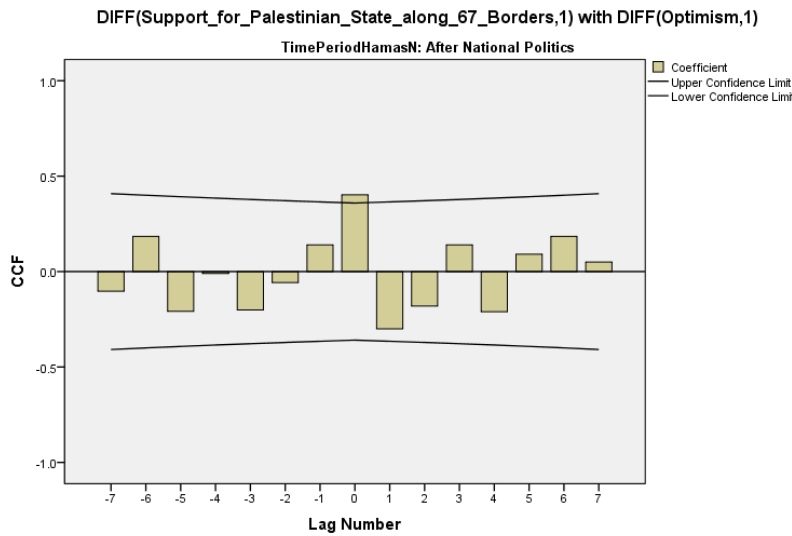
longer periods even though it may have shorter term up and down dynamics. Differenced data shows no predictability (Lag +1 = -.192). This likely indicates that the linear trends of support for the measure coincide with other linear trends, which is the case and can be seen in the correlation material below.

**Figure 50. Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders - Linear Regression**



Palestinian *Optimism* and *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* highly correlate after Hamas enters national politics (Figures 51 & 52): After National Politics  $r(32)=.424$ ;  $p<.05$  [differenced]; and Governing Era  $r(23)=.600$ ;  $p<.01$  [differenced]. The strength of the correlation suggests that the two variables are related to each other in that they both likely reflect environmental conditions. When *Optimism* increases so does the willingness to accept a Palestinian State along 1967 Borders. This makes sense given that the *Optimism* data used is defined as Peace *Optimism* – those that are more optimistic about the establishment of a negotiated Palestinian State.

**Figure 51. Support for a Palestinian State and Optimism – Political Era [differenced]**



**Figure 52. Support for a Palestinian State and Optimism - Governing Era [differenced]**

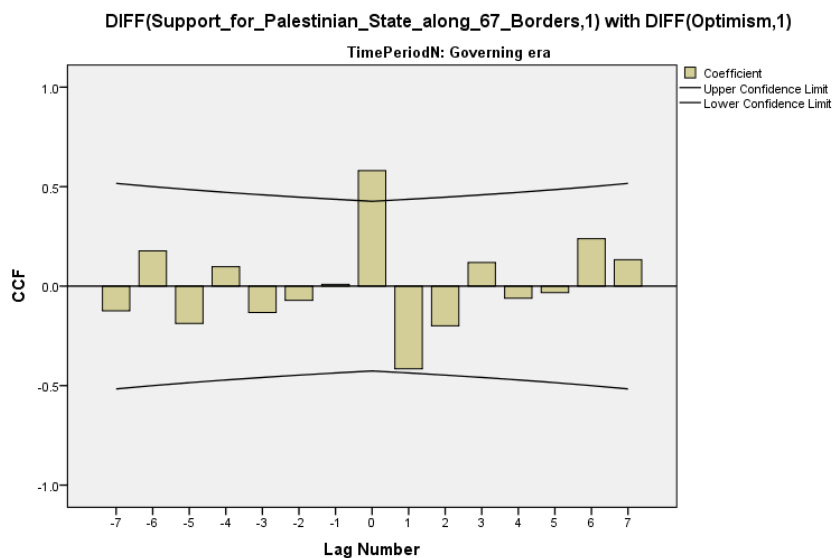


Figure 52 also suggests that *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* at Time 0 negatively predicts the level of *Optimism* in Time +1. This relationship does little more than to suggest that the environment is dynamic and that environmental conditions in a particular time period may not last long. It is more akin to the idiom about weather that people in London like to say, ‘if you don’t like the weather now, just wait five minutes’. The implications of such dynamic change are that if the underlying mechanisms are not understood, then it may be impossible to anticipate future opportunities to lessen violence or promote peace.

*Support for Violence* at Time 0 predicts *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* at Time +1:  $r(59)=.486$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. Differenced data does not show a significant relationship. Though it is possible that this result may be a function of linear trend bias, it may be telling us something more menacing, chiefly that in an environment of higher levels of violence support for a negotiated settlement increases. If there is actually the existence of a cause and effect relationship between higher levels of violence and increased willingness to compromise, then it has significant implications on the material use of violence by states to achieve more favourable outcome with non-state out-groups. In this case, the finding is either biased (linear trend) or it is telling us something meaningful about the Palestinian people's perspective on the willingness to accept a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders when there is an environment of increased violence.

During the time period Before National Politics, the *Violence Frequency* led by Hamas at Time 0 Predicted the *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* at Time +1:  $r(27)=.592$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. Again, it is possible that this relationship is caused by linear trend bias. If not, the immediate preceding argument is applicable to this finding. The fact that the relationship between *Violence Frequency* and Support for a *Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* did not extend after National Politics Era may be a function of the changing use of violence by Hamas (e.g. use of rockets instead of ground attacks).

Given that the international community of scholars' and policymakers' work on promoting Middle East Peace and the obvious relevance to this popular measure, the research was set on a course to identify any set of variables collected for this thesis could predict Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders. The approach required that all popular support measures and *Violence Frequency* be combined into one dataset so that multiple regression time series analysis could be performed. Collectively, the measures predict the level of *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*:  $r(59)=.786$ ;  $r^2=.619$  [undifferenced]. After a process of elimination, Support for Violence demonstrated a stronger relationship to Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders than any other measure using undifferenced data. Given that the data was undifferenced, no Granger-causation designation was given to this relationship. Significant relationships did not exist with differenced data.

*Meaningful Relationships and Non-Relationships*

In this section it is necessary to discuss the opposite findings coming from differenced and undifferenced data. The relationship between *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* and *Optimism* is significant for various reasons. Let us start with showing you the correlations between differenced and undifferenced data for the different time periods:

**Figure 53. Support for Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders and Optimism - Contradiction**

Time Periods	Diff. '67 Borders & Optimism – All	Diff. '67 Borders & Optimism – WB	Diff. '67 Borders & Optimism – Gaza	Un-diff. '67 Borders & Optimism - All	Un-diff. '67 Borders & Optimism - WB	Un-diff. '67 Borders & Optimism - Gaza
Before Nat. Politics (n=26)	r=-.277	r=-.008	r=-.207	r=-.829; p<.01	r=-.799; p<.01	r=-.826; p<.01
Governance Era (n=21)	r=.600; p<.01	r=.442; p<.05	r=.622; p<.01	r=-.407	r=-.343	r=-.454; p<.05
After Nat. Politics (n=31)	r=.424; p<.05	r=.231	r=.405; p<.05	r=-.275	r=-.171	r=-.197
All (n=59)	r=.041	r=.098	r=.073	r=.040	r=.089	r=.081

First, differentiated correlations show the exact opposite relationship than undifferentiated correlations. The former shows **positive** correlations, while the latter **negative**. One might consider this having to do with different time periods, but as you can see the relationship is the opposite during the Governance Era. Though the research relied mostly on differentiated correlation data to reduce linear trend bias, the noteworthy difference between the two different correlations deserves some discussion.

The undifferenced number indicates that as *Optimism* increases, *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* decreases. The implication is that as Palestinians begin to feel better about the future they are less willing to accept a peace agreement whereby a Palestinian State is established along 1967 Borders. The opposite would also be true; when Palestinian *Optimism* was low, *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* increased. Triangulating with other data this would suggest that when violence between Israel and Palestine is highest, Palestinians would be most willing to accept a State along 1967 Borders. This would be a stunning realisation and one that would not be pleasing to those seeking to reduce violence.

When the time period is narrowed to the after National Politics Era, the differentiated correlation is significant  $r(32)=.424$ ;  $p<.05$ . It could therefore be said that the use of undifferentiated and differentiated data provide contradictory results. In a sense, it is easier to feel good about a positive relationship between *Optimism* and the willingness to negotiate over a Palestinian State. The opposite relationship existing in undifferentiated data is so concerning that more investigation needs to be conducted. The implications represented by the negative undifferentiated correlation are so critical that the author could not, in good conscience, rely on correlation data alone to make such claims. The existence of this negative correlation could either be a Type One statistical error<sup>21</sup> or a critically important finding about human psychology in the midst of violent conflict.

It should also be understood, that this is the only measure in the entire thesis that had significant contradictory results between differenced and undifferenced data.

#### *Conclusion, So What?*

The undifferenced data relationships in this section suggest that as environmental conditions worsen, *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* increases. If this is not a Type One statistical error, the implications of this finding suggest as violence ratchets up in the Palestinian Territories, the support for a negotiated settlement with Israel increases. Such a finding incentivises less violence for those that do not want a negotiated solution and incentivises violence for those that do want a negotiated settlement. Given the implications of such a finding, one must conclude that the data provided in this section is insufficient to make such claims, but it does suggest that further investigation is necessary if we are to better understand the causal relationships between these variables.

### **4.10 Safety of Family**

#### *Definition, Critique and Summary of Measure*

The popular support measure related to the perceptions of safety about one's family began in December of 2004, right at the end of the Second *Intifada*. The same question

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<sup>21</sup> Note: a Type One statistical error is the incorrect rejection of the null hypothesis, which in this case would be that Palestinian *Optimism* would correlate with *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*.

has been posed in all PSR surveys since then. That question is, ‘would you say that these days your security and safety, and that of your family, is assured or not assured’. In this section, the measure will be referred to as *Safety of Family*, which is to be understood as the perception that one has that their family safety is assured.

As detailed in the *Violence Frequency* and the *Support for Violence* sections of this chapter, we learnt that concern about *Safety of Family* is the only predictive measure of Palestinian Support for Violence in all datasets collected for this thesis. Yet, we have not yet learnt if anything predicts the perceptions of *Safety of Family*. Even the outbreak of violence is not consistent in the impact on the measure. For example, *Safety of Family* declined during Gaza War I, but increased during Gaza II. This is likely a result of the differences in the nature and style of the violence that happened in these two wars, but the point is that increased violence does not necessarily predict Palestinian perceptions about the *Safety of Family*. Later in this section we will see which factors, if any, predict near term perceptions about safety.

There are two reasonable critiques against utilising this measure in this study. First, the data is only available during slightly over half of the 59 time periods. Though this obviously limits our ability to test the measure during the Pre-Political Era, it does not limit in the Political Era. This fact allows the measure to be robust in the analysis for the past nine years. Second, the notion of ‘safety’ means different things to different people. For some, safety may mean physical security, for others it may mean psychological or financial safety. This critique is accurate, but irrelevant for the measure here. Fluctuating environmental conditions, with or without greater violence, will obviously impact a person’s perception of safety toward one’s family and therefore provide us insights as to how safety as a concept interacts with violence and other support measures.

As will be seen in this section, there exists a material difference in perception of safety between the West Bank and Gaza. In 29 of 33 surveys, Gazans felt safer than their counterparts in the West Bank.

### *Trends Over Time*

Figure 54 shows the mean for the *Safety of Family*. The bar line for the *Second Intifada* represents only one time period, December 2004. Since the election in 2006 of Hamas, Palestinians perceive greater safety for their families. This is despite occupation in the West Bank and three wars in Gaza.

**Figure 54. Safety of Family by Era**

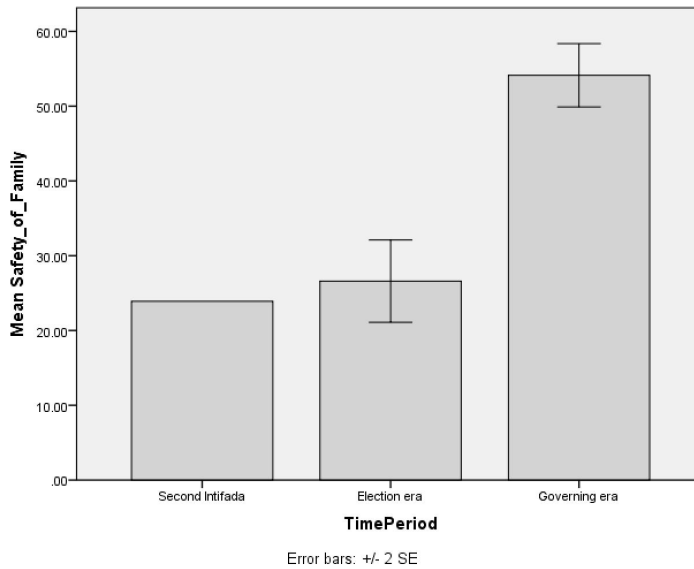
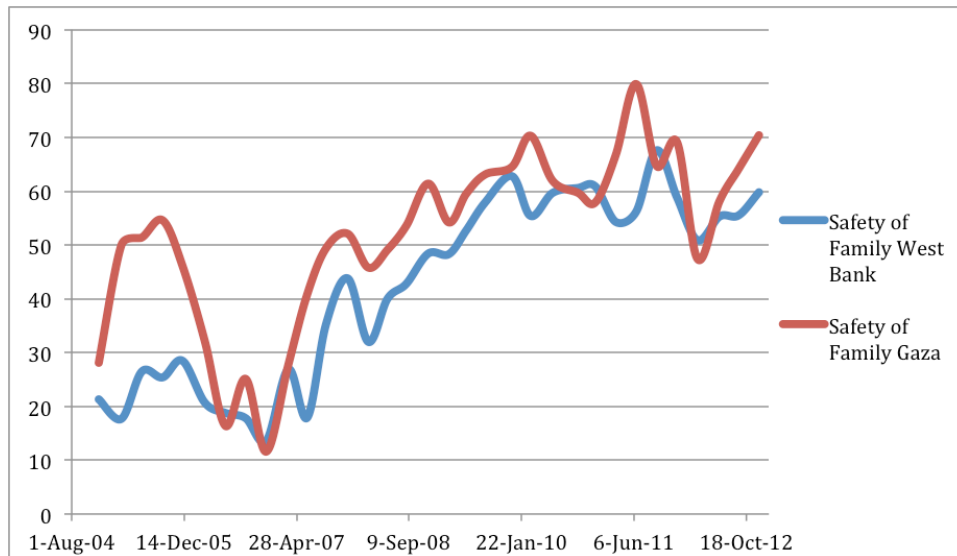


Figure 55 demonstrates perceptions of safety for both Gaza and the West Bank. Generally, the trend is that the perception of safety for one's family is strengthening. Within this Figure, the difference in perceptions of safety between the West Bank and Gaza can be seen. Since Hamas began governing in June of 2007, the mean perception for the *Safety of Family* has increased from 27% to 55%. This increase happened in the midst of one civil war and two wars with Israel. On average, Gazans perceive their family to be 9.3% safer than their counterparts in the West Bank even though Gaza was the host of three wars. This suggests a few possibilities: 1) Hamas created an environment in Gaza where people feel safer, 2) nearness to conflict lessens fear for family, 3) the psychological distance from war in Gaza invokes greater concern for the *Safety of Family* by West Bankers and 4) Israeli occupation and crime in the West Bank creates an environment where West Bankers feel different about *Safety of Family*.

In an attempt to understand this perception difference, several Palestinian leaders were interviewed to tease out whether the difference was related to psychological distance (i.e. the farther removed from actual conflict makes people in the WB feel more vulnerable when their brethren are in the midst of increased violence) felt by those in the

West Bank or some other factor. The most common refrain from those interviewed were that West Bankers are more concerned for the safety of their family because: 1) Gaza had no Israeli occupation, settlers, checkpoints or area “C” since August 2005 and 2) the Hamas government was faster than its counterpart government in the West Bank in enforcing law and order after June 2007.

**Figure 55. Safety of Family for the West Bank and Gaza**



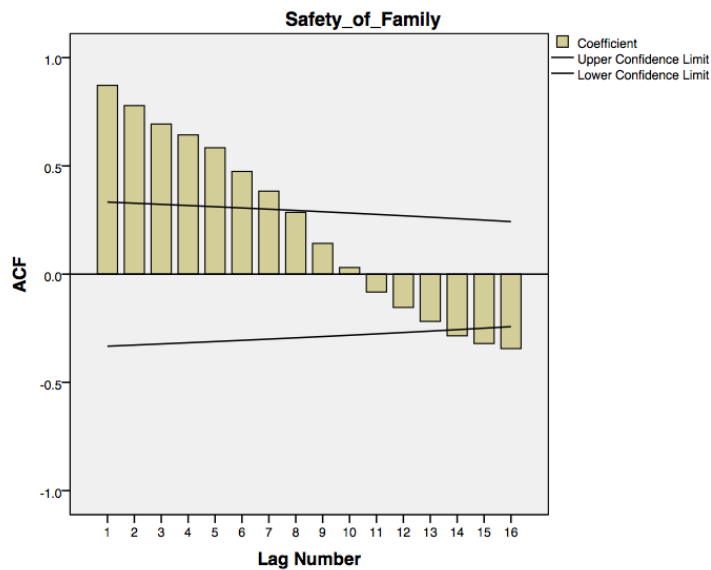
*Time Series Results (Safety of Family as a Dependent Variable)*

As a refresher, this section is designed to show those variables in time series analysis that predict the near-term future of *Safety of Family*. No differenced independent variable predicts the near-term future for *Safety of Family*. There are, however, two undifferenced variables that do provide predictive power: 1) *Safety of Family*; and, surprisingly, 2) *Hamas Support*.

Figure 56 shows how perceptions about the *Safety of Family* from Time 0 predicts perceptions in Time +1: Lag 1 = .872; WB = .875 and Gaza = .750 [undifferenced]. The finding suggests that perceptions of *Safety of Family* move up and down generally over time and that understanding the change between two variables helps understand the likely direction of subsequent change.



Figure 56. Safety of Family Linear Regression - Undifferenced



The most surprising independent predictor of how Palestinians view the *Safety of Family* is the level of *Hamas Support*. *Hamas Support* at Time 0 negatively predicts the perceptions of *Safety of Family* at Time +1:  $r(32) = -.877$ ;  $p < .01$  [undifferenced]. It is important to note that this relationship only exists in undifferenced data. If this is a reflection of a real causal relationship then the chain of causation would be increased *Hamas Support* decreases the *Safety of Family*, which increases *Support for Violence*, which leads to increased frequency of Hamas led violence against Israel. However, this relationship is questionable because the limited number of data points for *Safety of Family* coincides with two specific linear trends in *Hamas Support*. From December 2004 to March 2006, *Hamas Support* went up. Since the high-watermark just after national elections, *Hamas Support* has steadily declined with some minor increases in support, which coincide with an environment of heightened conflict. The implications of this is that *Safety of Family* has steadily increased during the time that Hamas has taken over Gaza which, according to interviews with Palestinian leaders, coincides with improved law enforcement activities in Gaza. As such, the highly predictive nature of *Hamas Support* on *Safety of Family* may be a Type One statistical error, meaning that the relationship has little cause and effect. However, an argument can be made that *Hamas Support* increases during times of heightened violence, which in theory would make one more concerned about the *Safety of Family*. But in this case, it would be the heightened violence that would predict *Safety of Family*, not *Hamas Support*.

### *Meaningful Relationships and Non-Relationships*

There is a strong correlation between *Safety of Family* and *Support for Violence*:  $r(33)=-.498; p<.01$  [differenced]. Referenced in the *Support for Violence* section was the predictive power of *Safety of Family* at Time 0 on *Support for Violence* at Time +1 during the Governance Era:  $r(23)=.509; p<.02$ . The relationship between these two variables establishes a very important outcome for this study, namely that as environmental conditions worsen as a function of violence, *Support for Violence* seems to lag one's perception about *Safety of Family*.

There is also a meaningful difference between the correlations between *Support for Violence* and the *Safety of Family* between the WB and Gaza: WB  $r(33)=-.370; p<.05$  and Gaza  $r(33)=-.498; p<.01$  [differenced]. The implications of this difference is that as Gazans feel that the *Safety of Family* is higher/lower they will inversely increase/decrease their *Support for Violence* to a higher degree than their counterparts in the West Bank.

### *Conclusion, So What?*

In this section, we have learnt that nothing in the data, other than a weak relationship to *Hamas Support*, predicts perceptions for the *Safety of Family*. We also know that the only measure that can be shown to predict *Support for Violence* is *Safety of Family*. So, what can be made of these results? Perceptions about the *Safety of Family* are likely a function of environmental conditions and of perceived threat. But is the variable actually a driver of *Support for Violence*?

During times of progress on Oslo, popular *Support for Violence* was at a low, which is suggestive that in an environment where Palestinians see advancements toward a Palestinian State through peaceful means, *Support for Violence* remains low. Yet, even in those times, the spoiler roles of individuals and groups perpetuating violence lessens progress toward a Palestinian state and either the general conditions, the security response from Israelis, or the general ratcheting up of violence between the antagonists generates the atmosphere where it is likely that perceived threats to the family increase along with *Support for Violence*. Therefore, the idea that concern over the *Safety of Family* causes *Support for Violence* to increase seems to place too much value on the

*Safety of Family*. Additional work on the *Safety of Family* could be quite useful in understanding what drives the perception of Palestinians, which in turn could help us better understand the causal factors for *Support for Violence* and the methods that could be used to reduce such support.

#### **4.11 Israeli Targeted Killings**

##### *Definition, Critique and Summary of Measure*

In this section, *Israeli Targeted Killings* during the Second Intifada are analysed with Palestinian violence and popular support measures. *Israeli Targeted Killings* are discussed as both an independent and dependent variable in this section. The data used for *Israeli Targeted Killings* comes directly from a dataset provided in Sharvit (2013) and Zussman (2006). The data specifies the name and date of 37 Palestinian leaders killed (21 from Hamas), presumably, due to their active role in planning violent actions against Israel. Those 37 acts were consolidated into the 13 time periods that comprise the Second Intifada for this thesis. This consolidation makes it possible to perform correlations and time series analysis. The reliability of these 37 data points is strong, but the results from this analysis are mitigated by the fact that, according to various reports and inconsistent interview data, there were approximately 120 to 200 *Targeted Killings* by the Israelis during the Second *Intifada*. As a result, this dataset only represents between one-fifth and one-third of those acts.

The weakness of using this data is that it may not include all *Targeted Killings* during the Second Intifada. Ben Israel (2006) argues that Israel targeted and completed the killing or arrest 500 Palestinian operatives from 2002 to 2004. Yet, because the data behind the Ben Israeli publication is classified there is no way of knowing whether 37 killings was the actual total. Another weakness is that the Israeli operations are limited to only 4 years, yet we know Palestinian popular support and violence data for 20 years. This provides only a small window for which to analyse the relationships, which highlights a significant weakness of the data, analysis and potential conclusions from the data. That said, Sharvit (2013) was published in a peer-reviewed journal using the same data.

##### *Trends Over Time*

Ben Israel (pers.comm., 6 December 2012) said that it took some months to determine who was behind the Second Intifada and even more time to identify the 500 operatives that Israel was going to target for killing or arrest, over 50% of the *Israel Targeted Killings* in this dataset occurred within the first 12 months of the uprising. Sharvit's data indicates that 21 of the 37 killings were Hamas leaders, notably ending with the deaths of leaders Sheikh Yassin and Abdel Rantisi.

*Time Series Results (Targeted Killings as an Independent and Dependent Variable)*

*Israeli Targeted Killings* provide no predictive power on Hamas violence or any other Palestinian popular support measure. However, as a dependent variable, *Israeli Targeted Killings* at Time +1 is predicted by *Palestinian Popular Support for Violence* at Time 0:  $r(13)=.819$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. The measure relies on undifferenced data, which is less significant because of its potential for linear trend bias. No meaningful predictions could be made from differenced data. Consequently, it is most likely that this finding is an error as a result of a linear trend bias resulting from a general ratcheting up of violence between Israel and Palestinian factions. The alternative would be that the Israelis were launching *Targeted Killings* based upon the Palestinian popular *Support for Violence* against Israelis. If this were true, it would most likely show up in differenced data, but it does not. And, generally, that argument would not make much sense.

*Meaningful Relationships and Non-Relationships*

There is a strong correlation between *Palestinian Support for Violence* and *Israeli Targeted Killings*:  $r(13)=.742$ ;  $p<.01$  [differenced]. Like above, the most likely explanation for this relationship is the general ratcheting up of violence between Israel and armed Palestinian factions. The fact that there are no meaningful relationships (e.g. correlations or predictive power) between the *Targeted Killings* and *Hamas Attack Frequency* suggests that there are no quantitative conclusions that can be drawn from this variable set. Further, *Targeted Killings* provide no predictive capacity on *Palestinian Support for Violence*. This further supports the evidence on *Support for Violence* when we learnt that only *Safety of Family* provides weak predictive capacity.

As will be discussed in Chapter 5, the lack of a relationship between *Targeted Killings* and *Attack Frequency* or *Support for Violence*, does not necessarily mean that there is

not some sort of relationship. We know that the data does not offer predictive power between these variables, but the *Targeted Killings* must contribute to the general ratcheting up of violence between Palestinian factions and Israelis. Though Sharvit (2013) suggests that the Palestinian factions who lose high-level leaders through *Targeted Killing* respond to Israel with an attack within two weeks, the conclusion is based on less than 8 incidents and is less than convincing.

#### *Conclusion, So What?*

The *Israeli Targeted Killing Data* is the only quantifiable Israeli data to test on Hamas *Attack Frequency* and Palestinian support measures. The fact that there are no significant differenced predictive relationships related to *Targeted Killings* means that we cannot base any conclusions in this paper on a quantitative relationship between Israeli projected influence in the Palestinian Territories and Hamas *Attack Frequency* or Palestinian popular support measures. This means such insights will be relegated to qualitative analysis only and can be found in Chapters 5-7.

#### **4.12 Summary of Statistical Findings**

This chapter provides a detailed statistical look at the relationships between various popular support measures and violence led by Hamas. These empirical data points provide evidence that the environmental conditions in the Palestinian Territories are both dynamic and complex with forces that shift behaviour and attitudes. These forces are akin to influences that shape the way Palestinians as well as Hamas attempt to navigate their interests and future. These multidirectional influences, in a sense, articulate the environment that Hamas must navigate to keep a violent resistance agenda both viable and supported by the Palestinian people over time.

Prior to articulating the main findings from this chapter, it is helpful to review the significant statistical relationships that have been expressed throughout the chapter. Figure 57 shows all of the differenced and undifferenced statistically significant findings of the time series analyses.

**Figure 57. Summary Chart of Statistical Findings**

Independent Variable	Action	Dependent Variable	Era	Significance	Confidence
Support for Violence	Granger Causes	Attack Frequency - Ground	All	r(59)=.415;p<.01	Differenced
Support for Violence	Predicts	Israeli Targeted Killings	2nd Intifada	r(13)=.819;p<.01	*Undifferenced
Optimism	Predicts	Attack Frequency - Ground & Rockets	Political	r(32)=.423;p<.05	Differenced
Support for Violence	Predicts	Attacks - Top Ten Violent	All	r(59)=.445;p<.01	Undifferenced
Ground Attack Frequency	Predicts	Optimism	2nd Intifada	r(13)=-.608;p<.05	Differenced
Ground Attack Frequency	Predicts	Optimism	Governing	r(23)=-.613;p<.01	Differenced
Support for Violence	Predicts	Religiosity	Most of Political	r(27)=.514;p<.01	Undifferenced
Support for Hamas	Predicts	Safety of Family	Political	r(32)=-.877;p<.01	Undifferenced
Support for Violence	Predicts	State on 1967 Borders	All	r(59)=.486;p<.01	Undifferenced
Ground Attack Frequency	Predicts	State on 1967 Borders	Pre-Political	r(27)=.592;p<.01	Undifferenced
Optimism	Predicts	Support for Hamas	All	r(59)=-.721;p<.01	Undifferenced
Safety of Family	Predicts	Support for Hamas	Political	r(32)=-.679;p<.01	Undifferenced
Safety of Family	Predicts	Support for Violence	Governing	r(23)=.509;p<.02	Undifferenced

\* likely a linear trend bias error

There are five main findings from this chapter:

1. Popular support and violence measures provide a rich contextualised picture of the environmental conditions that exist in the Palestinian Territories over 20+ years;
2. Popular *Support for Violence* has a privileged role in motivating Hamas violent acts;
3. Generally, Hamas follows the popular support of the people and does not lead it;
4. The relationship between *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* and *Optimism* has the potential of being significant in peace negotiations and should be investigated further; and
5. Available *Israeli Targeted Killings* data does not predict Hamas Attack Frequency or any Palestinian popular support measures captured in this study.

### *1. Contextualised Picture*

The dynamics between the various measures demonstrate the highly complex environment with which Hamas attempts to maintain popular support, a violent resistance agenda supported by the people and the idea that Palestine extends from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. There may be a relationship or a set of relationships that provide greater insights into the violent behaviours of Hamas for which this data does not allow us to test. That is a limitation of this work. It is also possible that particular relationships articulated in this chapter may provide important understandings beyond those mentioned. Further, there are no illusions that the complex dynamics detailed provide answers on how to reduce violence. What the contextualised picture does produce is a greater understanding of the drivers of Hamas violent behaviour and Palestinian attitudes. With this information, it may be informative in violence reduction efforts.

### *2. Support for Violence has a Privileged Role*

Palestinian *Popular Support for Violence* Granger-causes Hamas violence against Israelis. The implications of this finding, which was validated both by the statistical data and by the conclusions reached by Ami Ayalon, the former Shin Bet Director, are that Hamas is a reactive group that generally follows the attitudes of the people on violence and does not lead it. In the early days, Hamas violence against Israel suggests that the group was in sync with the polling results on Palestinian *Support for Violence* and used that information to time their attacks. After the start of the Second *Intifada*, the group continued to use *Support for Violence* to motivate their attacks, but the degree to which the timing of the attacks corresponded to the publishing of polling data was not the same as in the Oslo Era.

### 3. *Hamas Follows*

A large body of academic literature and a sizable policy perspective is that Hamas is the violent vanguard of the Palestinian people leading them into violent conflict to fulfill their specific aims. Other perspectives suggest that Hamas is stoking the Palestinians to violence against Israel through Islamisation and religious teachings. The data in this thesis posits an alternative view. The data suggests that Hamas follows the popular support of the Palestinians when conducting their violent acts against Israel. This is not to say that all acts are a function of popular support. Rather, it suggests that generally the violent behaviour of Hamas is a result of increased *Support for Violence* by the population. It may be that Hamas is able to manipulate the environmental conditions to lead the people toward this position through Islamisation of the population or through the *dawa*, like many scholars assert, but the evidence from this study suggests that greater religiosity does not predict greater violence. If the *dawa* accounts for radicalisation of the population to a more violent point of view it is not reflected in the measures of religiosity or Islamisation of Palestinians or in the support measures for Hamas in the West Bank after the closing of the *dawa* programmes in 2007 (see Chp 7.2). Consequently, the takeaway from the work is that Hamas is not the violent vanguard of the Palestinian people; rather, Hamas's violent acts are generally a reflection of Palestinian attitudes toward violence against Israel.

### 4. *1967 Borders and Optimism*

The contradictory findings from this study shows that *Optimism* negatively and positively predicts *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*. Ordinarily, the

relationship between variables that show conflicting results would be discarded and never discussed. But, if true, the significance of having declining *Optimism* as a function of higher levels of violence predict higher levels of support for a compromised state with Israel suggests that the cognitive disposition of those in a violent environment are more likely to compromise. It further suggests that an environment where violence is high increases the willingness for a compromised outcome for contested lands. The implications of both of these issues are so great that the relationship between *Optimism* and support for a negotiated state should be further examined.

#### 5. Israeli Targeted Killing Data

There is no evidence collected for this thesis that quantitatively demonstrates a predictive power of Israeli actions on Hamas Attack Frequency or Palestinian popular support measures. As such, the thesis will rely on qualitative analysis to discuss these relationships.

The drawback of Chapter 4 is that it is highly quantitative and does not provide the rich and storied context of the human and group interactions in the Palestinian Territories, which both define Hamas resistance and demonstrate the context for how Palestinian attitudes and Hamas violent behaviours changed over time. As such, Chapters 5 and 6 are written as a brief historical account of salient issues that define the different periods of Hamas resistance. Much of the content is derived from the field research and interviews with Palestinian, Hamas and Israeli leaders. The way to think about the content from this chapter while reading about the historical accounts is to imagine how the event may have shaped the attitudes of Palestinians with regard to *Hamas Support*, *Violence Frequency*, *Optimism*, *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* and *Safety of Family*. Where possible, the historical accounts will reference the statistics published in this chapter.



## **Chapter Five**

### **Pre-Political Era (December 1987 – December 2004)**

The preceding chapter provided a thorough analysis of the quantitative relationships between the many variables collected for this thesis. Chapters 5 and 6 build upon that work by demonstrating the environmental conditions experienced by Hamas, which in turn led the group to adapt its use of violence against Israel. These two chapters provide a qualitative analysis about these environmental conditions and, where possible, link those conditions to data points from Chapter 4. Chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate, through historical illustrations, the environmental conditions that shaped how and why Hamas adapted its violence as it tried to follow the ‘will’ of Palestinians and its core militant members. The blend of qualitative and quantitative analysis on the nature of Hamas resistance is a unique contribution of the thesis and offers a different perspective than existing literature on Hamas, which is, in almost all cases, a qualitative analysis.

Hamas, like other Muslim Brotherhood groups across the region, was established, in part, to transform society by linking together the role of Islam in the personal life with the role of Islam at the state level. Each aspect of this objective (society, politics and religion) requires the group work to benefit the lives of Palestinians in order to contend for legitimacy with the Palestinian people. In addition to these objectives, Sheikh Yassin and his colleagues added one feature to Hamas that went past the other Brotherhood groups, the reclamation of lands lost in 1948 through violent means. The dual goals of transforming society and the reclamation of land required Hamas to engage in some form of political activity since its inception. This political engagement was not about seeking votes at the ballot box, but it was about creating supporters for Hamas’s

vision, which was to essentially compete for the hearts and minds with other established political parties, including Fatah led by Yasser Arafat.

The strength of Fatah was such that segments of the Israeli leadership initially sought to support Hamas as a competitor to Fatah for the Palestinian people. The decision to provide licensing for the Islamic Compound (the Islamic educational and sports organisation established by Sheikh Yassin) was arguably approved by the Israelis, in order to support this competing vision in Palestine, the design of which was to reduce the strength of the militant activities of Arafat (Yakov Peri, pers.comm., 3 December 2012; and Higgins 2009).

By 1986, the Islamic Compound also included a militant wing entitled 'Palestinian Jihad Fighters' that was established by Salah Shehadeh (Chehab 2007: 23). This militant wing eventually led to the creation of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, which was led by Yahya Ayyash in 1992. To ensure security for its members, the nature of the militant wing has always been one of secrecy and distributed decision-making (e.g. also understood as cell structure). This approach provided several advantages to Hamas and al-Qassam. First, if Israeli security officials caught members of the militant wing, the entire organisation would not be at risk of exposure by captured operatives. Second, the al-Qassam leadership was provided operational freedom from the political leadership of Hamas, thereby providing plausible deniability in the chain of command for violent acts. The actual level of autonomous action of the Qassam Brigades is in question by scholars and government analysts. There is a good deal of literature on Hamas that make competing claims about the existence or non-existence of a separation between the Political and Military Wings. The legal parameters around the Israeli Targeted Killing Programme provide more clarity to the existence of collaboration in violent acts between these wings. Presumably, given that the Israelis are legally allowed to target for killing or arrest Palestinians in the West Bank or Gaza that are actively plotting to attack Israelis, then knowledge of leaders being involved in such planning would likely result in Targeted Killing efforts, as was the case with Sheikh Yassin (described later in this chapter).

In a sense, the shroud of secrecy that embodies the al-Qassam Martyr's Brigades can be somewhat understood through the historical acts of the militant wing of Hamas.

Chapters 5 and 6 provide historical accounts of significant events in the militant operations of Hamas and al-Qassam. The discussion of these events allow for the reader to get a deeper sense of the nature of Hamas resistance in different eras. Where possible, the historical accounts of the events that shape the violence campaign of Hamas will also include analysis of popular support measures both before and after the event, but this mainly happens in Chapter 6. Though, the linkage to popular support measures provides little evidence of cause and effect, particularly because those measures only show two data points over a short time span, the sum total of the popular support measures when compared to the historical actions of Hamas begin to show a picture of violent action and inaction that is a product of popular support. The idea is that by providing such historical analysis while linking it to the statistical findings, the reader will begin to better understand how the leadership of Hamas thinks and acts in relation to the opinions of the people of Palestine over time. Further, the reader is intended to see that over the past 25 years, a number of different eras have created unique environmental conditions for Hamas and its resistance activities. To some degree the historical accounts will provide evidence of how the group shifted to follow and reflect the attitudes of the population. In an attempt to better understand the key activities of Hamas led violence, there is also discussion of Israeli security and military activities that projected influence on Hamas and the Palestinian people. Sometimes the events that shape are as much about the personalities involved as they are about the actions. Arguably, the events around the visit to the Temple Mount by Ariel Sharon was as much about the personality of Sharon and his history as it was about the act of visiting the most holy of Islamic sites by a Jewish Israeli leader. Further, this chapter takes the reader on a more descriptive exposé of some of the actions that collectively show the changing face of Hamas resistance. The failed suicide bombing of Yahya Ayyash in 1992 and Ayyash's death in 1996 are such exposés.

This chapter provides historical depth of decisions and changes to Hamas resistance prior to their entry into national elective politics and attempts to provide more contextual understanding to the relationships described in Chapter 4. Most important is that Chapters 5 and 6 provide historical accounts of what the group has done to become a formidable violent resistance organisation. The lessons within demonstrate both the strategic and sometimes strange events, which have brought the group to be the leader of Gaza and a significant number of Palestinians. Most of the historical accounts herein

were compiled from new fieldwork performed for this thesis. The empirical evidence and observations from literature have been woven into these accounts to provide a more descriptive picture of the environmental conditions that played an influential part in the use of Hamas violent resistance.

## **5.1 Formation Era (December 1987 – October 1994)**

The Formation Era, described at the beginning of Chapter 4, is about the formation and consolidation of Hamas in its early days. In addition to describing the role Hamas had in competing with Nationalist Fatah, there is discussion on a few key events that forged the way Hamas used its militant wing. Unfortunately, the activities during this period predate the popular support data collection efforts of PSR as they did not begin their survey collection work until 1993, some six years after the establishment of Hamas.

### **5.1.1 Hamas as Competitor to Nationalist Fatah**

By the mid-1980s, the emergence of organisations like the Islamic Compound began to demonstrate a competing vision for Palestine to the ideas espoused by secular Fatah. Such was the success of the emerging movement that leaders within Israel and beyond began to consider the possibilities of lessening the influence of Fatah by allowing the development of Islamic groups as a form of counter weight. After all, Yasser Arafat and his brand of Palestinian nationalists were in exile in Tunisia. For Israel, it seemed a perfect time for other Palestinian groups to emerge if they could lessen the attraction to Arafat's vision for Palestine.

In several interviews with leading Israelis scholars, particularly Matti Steinberg (pers. comm., 5 December 2012), it was evident that there was something to the idea that Israel supported the development of the Islamic Compound and other Islamic groups as a form of counterweight to Fatah. Interviews with several former leaders of the Shin Bet shed light on the matter. Generally, the response from these leaders was that there were factions in Israel that pushed for the establishment of a complicit Israeli policy approach to the development of Islamic groups in Gaza, but all indicated that it was the IDF that provided the licence for the Islamic Compound to operate in Gaza

(pers. communication; and Chehab 2007). Yaakov Peri, Shin Bet Director from 1988 to 1994, said in response to my inquiry (3 December 2012):

Late in the 1980s the State of Israel blamed factions in Israel that it is in the interest of Israel to build Hamas. The whole security arena, mainly the right-wingers, said that you are building a strong Hamas. Their argument was that Fatah was more dangerous and that Israel was building a counter force to Fatah. Yassin built a social organisation around the mosque. I don't know of a policy that was used to support Hamas. Yassin got the license from the Israeli Defense Forces Civil Administration to run the Islamic Compound.

As they say, success has many fathers, but failure has none. It begs the question that if the development of a competitor to Fatah had been a non-violent peaceful companion to the Israeli government, would there be many standing in line to take credit? But, for the purposes of this research, the notions about complicity are somewhat irrelevant.

The critical understanding to be gained when thinking about the emergence of Hamas is that a clear and competing vision for the future of Palestine was provided at a time in which many within Palestine had grown weary of Fatah because of perceived corruption and failure to achieve statehood for Palestinians. It was this vision of Hamas combined with a social movement that supported local health, education and family finances that created the competing organisation to Fatah. As evidenced by the rapid ascendancy of Hamas in the local media and as a spokesman for the Palestinians, it was clear that the group was embraced by a sizable number of Palestinians during this era.

### **5.1.2 Laying the Foundation with Palestinians**

Hamas worked to legitimise the existence of the resistance movement through written argumentation detailed in the Hamas Charter. These arguments dominated the public refrain of the Hamas leadership as they worked to cast the vision in public settings across the Palestinian Territories.<sup>22</sup> The vision also drew in Arabs and Muslims across the world and established the platform by which Hamas sought to gain financial support to establish its *dawa* and military related programmes. The following excerpt from the

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<sup>22</sup> Note: this was determined by careful review of Hamas leaders public statements captured for this research. For the better part of the first five years of the organisations existence, it was common for Sheikh Yassin and others to interpret the meaning of parts of the Hamas Charter.

Hamas Charter (1988: 16) shows the arguments used to establish legitimacy with Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims for its vision of Palestine and Hamas, more generally:

As to the goals [of the Islamic Resistance Movement], they are: a war to the death against falsehood, conquering it and stamping it out so that truth may prevail, homelands may be returned [to their rightful owners] and the call of the muezzin may be heard from the turrets of the mosques, announcing the [re]institution of an Islamic state, so that Muslims might return and everything return to its rightful place, with the help of Allah...the Islamic Resistance Movement believes that the land of Palestine is a religious Islamic endowment [waqf] for all Muslims until Resurrection Day. It is forbidden to relinquish it or any part of it or give it up or any part of it. It does not belong to any Arab country, or to all the Arab countries, or to any king or president, or to any organisation or organisations, whether they are Palestinian or Arab, because Palestine is sacred Islamic endowment land and belongs to Muslims until Resurrection Day. Its legal status is in accordance with Islamic law. It is subject to the same law to which are subject all the territories conquered by Muslims by force, for at the time of the conquest [the Muslim conquerors] consecrated it [i.e., Palestine] as a Muslim religious endowment for all Muslim generations until Resurrection Day.

At a time in which the PLO was in exile in Tunisia and Palestinians largely believed that corruption existed within the Palestinian leadership, the message of Hamas was a popular one, particularly because it was accompanied with social services that supported basic human needs. Combining the social services with men who were perceived to have honesty and humility with moral conviction allowed the movement to build local credibility and gain supporters. Further, the Charter (1988: 14) and refrain of the leadership was to articulate to Palestinians that, 'in the absence of Islam a conflict develops that injustice, corruption grows, more conflicts are created, and [eventually] war breaks out'. Such statements were a condemnation for the dominant political actor, the nationalist group, Fatah. Yet, Hamas had to tread lightly in regard to Yasser Arafat's Fatah, because Arafat was considered a hero by Palestinians for leading military campaigns against Israel. So, Hamas went a considerable distance to articulate respect for the historical deeds of Fatah and other resistance movements. Article 25 of the Hamas Charter (1988: 29) states, in part:

The National (*wataniyya*) Movements in the Palestinian Arena [Hamas] reciprocated its respect to them, appreciates their condition and the factors surrounding them and influencing them, and supports them firmly as long as they do not owe their loyalty to the Communist East or to the Crusader West.

Hamas further sought to strengthen its credibility and legitimacy by addressing the issue of religious tolerance. The charter outlined that the movement was ‘humane’ and a respecter of ‘human rights’. The claim was that Hamas was not hostile to followers of other religions, only that history shows that ‘Islam, Christianity and Judaism can live side by side [only] under the aegis of Islam in security and safety’ (Hamas Charter 1988: 33). The implication of this position was that the Hamas fight was not against Judaism and the Christian West per se; rather it was against the state of Israel.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to the attempts to legitimise the vision and moral position of the group with the Palestinians, Hamas needed to establish various aspects of its organisational capacity. Remember, though the foundations of Hamas extend back to Muslim Brotherhood groups across the Territories and region, there were only seven people in the room that determined to establish Hamas. So, it became necessary for these seven to establish an organisational structure that allowed it to operate publically, establish a *dawa* infrastructure that had the financial and logistical infrastructure to provide social services and the secrecy to establish a military and security arm that would work external and internal of the Territories.

A letter sent by Sheikh Yassin to the Shura Council on 3 October 1993 (Chehab 2007: 112), while he was in Kfar Yuna prison, exemplified the type of organisational capacity work that was undertaken by the Hamas leadership in the Foundation Era:

Dear Brothers, these ideas I am sending to you should be studied and analysed in the Shura Council of the movement in order that we can make collective decisions which stand up to the challenges faced by our victorious movement. God willing. There must be cohesiveness in both internal and external decisions because the continuation of our work needs support from the outside in. The inside [Gaza and the West Bank] will be responsible for confrontation and sacrifices, and as such is more in a position to evaluate and to provide knowledge about what is needed to spread the message, and make best use of our efforts. I repeat, it is not permissible for any one person or a group to take a decision which would affect the future and decide the fate of our movement. Any decision taken by the majority, should be obeyed whatever it may be.

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<sup>23</sup> Note: in part, the insistence from the West and Israel to place preconditions to negotiations on Palestinians for recognition that the ‘Jewish State of Israel has the right to exist’ was born out of opposition to this Hamas position.

According to Chehab, during the year long trial of Yassin in 1989, Yassin explained how some of the operational capacity was established and conducted between Gaza and the West Bank. Chehab writes (2007: 28), ‘communications between Yassin and other members of the movement [in the West Bank] were either channeled through Jamil [Hammami] or through contacts in the Mosques’. In the trial, Yassin explained how funds used to be given to the West Bank leaders:

I used to tell Jamil who would contact activists in Jordan, or an activist in London called Mounir al-Aachi, would call Jordan and tell them about our needs. I used to give each of our senior activists a code, which was usually a number rather than referring to them by name so that no one could disclose any details about other members of the group in case of arrest.

According to Yassin, when the Israelis were interrogating him (Chehab 2007: 28), ‘(t)hey were eager to know who would lead the movement after me. I said to them this was a grass roots organisation; you remove the tip and a new tip will grow out of the base’. Such a statement demonstrates the work that went in to designing the organisational structure that included such dynamic components that individuals could be removed from the organisation without the organisation becoming paralysed due to the overreliance on specific personalities. Such was the case that Yassin and the other founders built an organisational structure that was nimble in the face of significant external opposition.

As one considers the Foundational Era, it is important to consider the volume of communication and capacity building that went into developing: 1) a base of operations that included a dynamic leadership structure that made decisions based upon Sheikh Yassin and the consensus of the Shura Council, 2) a resource gathering component that funded public operations as well as the *dawa* infrastructure and militant operations and 3) the establishment of a military and security service that could both resist Israel and manage internal security issues. Such capacity building was the essence of laying the foundation and the corner stones of the organisation with the Palestinian people. But how is it that they were able to develop a robust military wing to fight the Israelis in the early days when financial resources and weapons were scarce?



### 5.1.3 Kidnapping and Capturing Weapons

The military and security wings of Hamas began a few months before the group was formally organised. According to material obtained by Zaki Chehab (2007: 23), Sheikh Yassin made the following statement in his confession to Israeli interrogators in 1989:

Two months before the start of the *Intifada* in December 1987, I met with Sheikh Salah al-Shehada to whom I was first introduced in al-Majdel prison. I had decided to establish a movement in Gaza to work against the Israeli settlement policy, resist the occupation and to encourage Palestinians to take part in the resistance effort against Israel. During our meeting we agreed to set up a military wing and a security wing of this new Islamic movement. The military wing was to fight against the Israeli army and its occupation. Salah al-Shehada built up this wing [presumably through recruitment and organisational management]. The aim was to amass weapons to use in the struggle. The security wing was to monitor and arrest Palestinian informants as well as drug dealers, prostitutes and the sale and consumption of alcohol in the Palestinian Territories.

In the early days, the military wing, later to become al-Qassam, was without many armaments. So, according to Yassin, Salah al-Shehada was to amass weapons to use in the struggle. There were two options available to Shehada, capture weapons from Israeli police and collaborators in Gaza or to capture weapons from Israelis inside Israel. Operations against Israel soldiers were conducted as early as February and May 1989 in an attempt to kidnap soldiers for exchange of Hamas operatives and to capture weapons. Avi Sasportas, an IDF soldier hitch-hiking in southern Israel, was kidnapped and killed on 16 February 1989 and Ilan Saadon was kidnapped on 3 May 1989 by Hamas operatives dressed as ultra-Orthodox Jews (IMFA 1996). It is unclear from the public materials related to these actions whether or not Hamas was able to capture weapons from the operations.

According to Chehab (2007: 43), a confidential Hamas informant told him that as al-Qassam began their attacks in 1991, they had at their disposal no more than 20 machine guns, which remained the case until around 2000 (the total number and type of weapons are debated). According to the violence dataset, most of the attacks during the Foundation Era were crude attacks, like deceptive kidnappings, knife attacks and the occasional small arms or rifle fire – though all met the criteria to be a verified high-profile attack. What is clear about the Foundation Era is that Hamas did not have advanced weapons or tactics. Consequently, the group was forced to use makeshift tactics in order to build their armaments for their violent resistance agenda. According

to Yassin, the idea behind the military wing was to use any weapon available from stones to Molotov Cocktails to guns to grenades and other explosives (Chehab 2007: 22), ‘anything which would give the Israelis sleepless nights’.

#### **5.1.4 The Significance of the Mehola Junction Bombing in April 1993**

The Mehola Junction Car Bombing on 16 April 1993 represented a significant turning point for the tactics and strategy of Hamas resistance. The bombing occurred in a parking lot of a restaurant that was on the Jordan Valley Highway in the West Bank. The vehicle was detonated between two buses carrying Israeli soldiers, but most of the soldiers were inside the restaurant, so none were killed (Merari 2010: 34). This was the first successful car bombing against Israeli targets by al-Qassam, but the Israelis did not understand the significance of the event for some time (Yuval Diskin, pers.comm., 6 December 2012).

An attack several months prior helped to decipher the chaos at Mehola Junction. On 20 November 1992, an al-Qassam bombing plot was foiled by the Israelis on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. The attack was averted in Ramat Ef'al, East of Tel Aviv, after the assailants fled the scene of a somewhat routine traffic stop by the Civil Guard Patrol for faulty taillights. Samuel Katz's (1999: 3-9) book, *The Hunt of the Engineer*, provides us a detailed description of the scene. After a chase, the occupants of the ‘Fiat van...turned onto the dead end street, Rimon’. The assailants fled the vehicle on foot, but all three were arrested within an hour. Meanwhile, it was discovered that the vehicle had ‘five twelve-kilogram gasoline tanks, filled to capacity...wired to a crude timer. Acetone and store-bought detergents served as the explosive nerve center’. As the bomb disposal unit attempted to destroy the fuse of the device by remote control, the bomb detonated shattering windows throughout the neighborhood and causing damage to nearby vehicles and homes.

Sometime later, Ya'akov Perry (then head of the Shin Bet) briefed Prime Minister Rabin on the results of the interrogation of the three assailants. Perry is said to have told Rabin that the assailants were on their way to be suicide bombers (Katz 1999: 8). According to Katz, the ‘pressure’ applied by Israeli Security Services on the assailants revealed that the Dizengoff Shopping Centre was the intended target for the bombing and that they

were members of al-Qassam sent on a martyrdom mission. The investigation led to the understanding that the Commander of the al-Qassam unit was also the bomb-maker. The Shin Bet referred to this man as 'The Engineer' (see Chp 5.2.3).

Prior to this event, Hamas militants had conducted attacks using guns, knives and even axes against Israelis. The car bomb represented a new tactic used by Hamas operatives and greatly concerned the Israeli Security Services. Between November 1992 and April 1993 there had been no other successful car bombings, so when the Mehola Junction Bombing occurred, it was natural for the Israelis to suspect the same tactics and bomb maker that attempted the previous vehicle borne IED. Even though there was knowledge that the Ramat Ef'al assailants were sent on a suicide-bombing mission, the Israeli Security Services did not know or confirm for some time that a suicide bomber perpetrated the bombing at Mehola Junction (Diskin, pers.comm., 6 December 2012).

According to Yuval Diskin (Director of Shin Bet 2005-11), who served as chief of the Arab Affairs Branch in 1993, 'it took some time for us to realize that the attack at Mehola was a suicide bombing. The bomber killed only himself and injured a few others' (pers.comm., 6 December 2012). The inference made by Diskin was that the Israeli Security Services believed that Hamas had conducted a successful car bombing and that the person killed was a bystander.

Glen Robinson (1994: 125) suggested that the use of suicide tactics at Mehola was a result of Palestinian deportees being with Hizballah militants in Southern Lebanon in 1992. Further, Merari (2010: 28-34) argues that the Hizballah had successful suicide operations against the Americans, Syrians and enemies within the state of Lebanon prior to their time of fellowship with Hamas deportees and that the tactic was most likely discussed between the groups.

The shift in tactics by Hamas marked a turning point in their use of violent resistance against Israelis for several reasons. First, the detonation of the vehicle borne explosive device demonstrated that Hamas weaponry had evolved and that there existed talent within the group to make very destructive bombs with standard household chemicals. Second, the acceleration of tactics to include suicide bombers demonstrated an asymmetric clash between Israeli forces and Hamas. According to Diskin (6 December

2012), ‘suicide attacks were used to shape public opinion’, meaning that Hamas had launched the suicide campaign as an extreme measure to strike fear in Israelis as well as promote the resistance agenda amongst Palestinians. Diskin referred to an old Arabic saying that ‘blood cannot become water’, which meant that the blood spilt by ‘martyrdom’ bombers would live in the minds of Palestinians greater than other violent tactics. Finally, though not quantifiable at this early stage, the public response to the Mehola Junction Bombing likely demonstrated to the Hamas leadership that a strong relationship existed between Hamas led violent acts against Israelis and public opinion in the Palestinian Territories.

The Mehola Junction bombing and to a lesser extent the failed bombing in Ramat Ef'al demonstrated to both Hamas and to the Israeli Security Services that the lethality of violence between the antagonists had entered a new deadly age. Eighteen months later, Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi (1994), one of the Hamas founders and spokesman in Gaza said in response to questions about suicide bombings, ‘When we use martyrdom bombers we make a kind of balance in suffering, which we believe at the end will push them to stop their aggression against our people. All of them were soldiers at one time. The majority of them shared in killing our people’.

## **5.2 Oslo Era (November 1994 – August 2000)**

The Oslo Declaration of Principles was signed between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation on 13 September 1993, some fifteen months before the start date set for the Oslo Era in this study. After a lengthy review of the polling data, which began by PSR in September 1993, days before the Principles were signed, it was determined that the relationships between popular support measures and violence could only be quantified after November 1994, which is why that became the start date for the era. The consequence is that we are able to review the evolution of Hamas resistance with both quantitative and qualitative analysis during the Oslo Era, but only after November 1994. This should not in any way diminish the events that transpired prior to the beginning of the era, like the Mehola Junction Bombing. Other significant events like the Cave of Patriarchs Massacre perpetrated by the Israeli radical, Baruch Goldstein, on Palestinian worshipers in Hebron and the Afula, Hadera and Dizengoff suicide bombings occurred before this date. These were meaningful in the ramping up

of violent activities, but the overarching understanding of how violent acts interact with popular support comes some months after these events because that is when popular support data became available. That said, the popular support measures starting in November 1994 do account for Palestinian attitudes, albeit some months after the aforementioned events transpired.

### **5.2.1 Hamas Launches Attacks Reflecting Palestinian Polling Results**

During the course of the seven years that represent the Oslo Era, PSR conducted a total of 35 surveys of a representative sample of the Palestinian people. Only fourteen, roughly two per year, of those surveys could be used to analyse the dynamic relationship between the popular support measures identified in Chapter 4 and Hamas *Violence Frequency*. The total number of Hamas violent acts that qualified for analysis was 28. In Chapter 4.7, the relationship between Hamas led violence and the publishing of PSR polling data on *Support for Violence* showed a significant relationship. The regression analysis showed that 30 days prior to the publishing of the poll there was no relationship between the poll and violence:  $r^2(n=14)=.004$ . However, 30 days after the poll results were published the relationship had become significant:  $r^2(n=14)=.539$ ;  $p<.01$ . This demonstrates that Hamas launched their attacks after the publishing of PSR polls, so that when *Popular Support for Violence* increased, Hamas would launch new attacks. Whether this was intentional or a coincidence, it does demonstrate that the general attitude of Palestinians on violence incited Hamas to perpetuate violence. That said, it is possible that some other factor drove both the increase in *Support for Violence* and Hamas violent acts. But, if this were the case, it would likely have extended into other eras. Given that the relationship breaks after the start of the Second *Intifada*, the most likely explanation would be that Hamas did use polling data on *Support for Violence* to calibrate the timing of attacks during the Oslo Era. This also corresponds to the arguments made to me by Ami Ayalon, who was the Director of the Shin Bet during the era, when he said that *Popular Support for Violence* corresponded with the money Hamas spent on armed attacks against Israel.

A plausible explanation for why the relationship ends at the outbreak of the Second *Intifada* could be that violence became more widespread across the Palestinian population and other armed groups. The volume of violence and general increasing

*Support for Violence* likely changed operational decision-making on when violence would occur primarily because the Israeli military presence in the West Bank and Gaza made operational planning more difficult and decentralised. Coming out of the Second *Intifada*, the number of Hamas attacks declined significantly as it stood for national elective politics and needed to focus much of the attention to winning an electoral campaign. Such changes and the experience of its current leaders through two *intifadas* likely gave Hamas more experience on the political use of timing of attacks than existed in the early days of its militant operations.

### **5.2.2 Does Violence Serve One Hamas Faction Over Another?**

Chapter 3 discussed the existence of four main factions in Hamas: the West Bank, Gaza, Prisoners and the diaspora, which includes the Politburo. Then there were the political, social and military divisions with the group, albeit there may be overlap in these divisions. It would be too much to say that the violence being launched from either the West Bank or Gaza benefited any particular group during the entire history of Hamas. According to Carmi Gillon (pers.comm., 5 December 2012), Shin Bet Director in 1995-96:

When it came to influence within Hamas, there was a divide between Hamas and Qassam until Mishal. Shehade [leader of Qassam from 1996-2002] didn't want Yassin to know about attacks because if he [Shehade] was arrested, he couldn't put a finger on Yassin for giving direction to commit violence. It was Mishal who gave political attitude to the use of violence.

There are two ways to look at the possible costs or benefits to internal factions of Hamas extending from violent acts. First, if Hamas had a distributed power (cell) structure, particularly when considering the planning and execution of violent acts perpetrated against Israel, then the commanders of the al-Qassam Brigades would have a greater influence over the nature of Hamas resistance than other factions. On the other hand, this level of influence would be muted if, for example, other factions within Hamas are signaling or directing the al-Qassam commanders. If Hamas employs a consolidated power structure that somehow is able to clandestinely direct violent acts without informants, wire-taps and other intelligence gathering methods used by the Israelis discovering so, then the leaders of the Politburo and the Shura Council are likely to be the beneficiaries of the violent act vis-à-vis other factions within Hamas.

There are reports of both structures, distributed and consolidated decision making, at different times in Hamas's relatively young history. Since this is the case, the question of whether different groups within Hamas benefit more from the violent acts is more likely dependent upon the era and dynamic events surrounding the acts. That said, commanders that have come from al-Qassam, like Yahya Ayyash and others after him have put their stamp on Hamas violent resistance and have become leaders in their own right within the movement. In his historical account of Hamas, Chehab (2007: 57) demonstrates the level of influence attained by commanders in the al-Qassam Martyr's Brigades: 'Some Israeli intellectuals selected the Engineer as their Man of the Year in 1995 because of the influence he had over the Israeli people at that time, swaying their choice of governments'.

### **5.2.3 Impact of 'The Engineer' Yahya Ayyash**

Yahya Ayyash was the Hamas mastermind of many Israeli deaths. He so plagued the Israelis that he was the number one Palestinian sought by the Israeli Security Services for over three years (Yaakov Peri, pers.comm., 3 December 2012). After receiving his B.S. degree in electrical engineering from Bir Zeit University in 1991, Ayyash became a founder and leader of the al-Qassam Brigades in the West Bank. He used his position and knowledge of engineering to become the master bomb maker in Hamas and at times built bombs for PIJ.

The improvised explosive devices built by Ayyash were used in the most deadly attacks on Israelis at that time, including the Mehola Junction Bombing, the Afula Bus Massacre, the Tel Aviv Bus 5 Bombing and several others up to his death in January 1996. He was the bomb maker for all or nearly all of the Hamas suicide bombers prior to his death. His ability to adapt and develop improvised explosive devices for tactically many different types of attacks demonstrated his innate ability and skill for making instruments of death. He also had the ability to evade Israeli authorities for years. Shimon Romah, a former Shin Bet Commander, commented in early 1995 on a popular Israeli television programme (Chehab 2007: 57), 'I'm sorry to tell you that I am forced to show some admiration for this man who has displayed abilities and experience beyond all bounds'.

For young people in Palestine, Ayyash became a cult figure and hero. He was idolised while alive and since his death has been immortalised by al-Qassam and remains highly thought of by Palestinians. His funeral had over 100,000 Gazans, which was significantly more than the turnout for the funerals of Yassin and Rantisi in 2004. The implications of his vast popular support meant that he likely in life and death helped Hamas consolidate support of Palestinians. His persona became so important to the organisation that he singlehandedly elevated the use of Hamas violent tactics beyond his engineering skill. Most Palestinians understand his violent innovation and the laboratories of Hamas still strive to replicate modern day innovation, which he inspired. As the founder of the militant wing of Hamas that built the apparatus capable of killing so many Israelis deep inside Israel, he set the bar for future members of al-Qassam very high.

#### **5.2.4 Informal Israeli ‘Fingertip Policy’**

There existed a de-facto or de-jure Israeli policy during the Oslo Era, which was known as the Fingertip policy. The policy intended to limit the public actions of Israeli Security Services against Palestinian interests. Former Shin Bet Director, Carmi Gillon, when discussing the 1996 death of Yahya Ayyash, mentioned the existence of the policy. Gillon said (pers.comm., 5 December 2012), ‘Ehud Barak was the first Prime Minister to bomb [using aircraft] in Gaza in September 2000. This changed the Fingertip Policy’. In further explanation, Gillon mentioned that the policy was designed to have Israel leave very little evidence of security operations in the Palestinian Territories. The idea was to leave open the question of responsibility for violent acts against members of Qassam and other violent Palestinian factions in order to create distrust and suspicion within the groups.

After a thorough search of the Israeli High Court archival documents and Israeli literature in the winter of 2012, no written evidence could be found about the existence of a formal Fingertip Policy. Given that there is no publically available written record of the policy suggests that it was either a de facto policy or a classified one. Regardless, the policy was deemed operationally valuable for the Israeli Security Services in their quest to leave open questions related to Palestinian informants and to increase the level



of suspicion within and between the violent factions. The events surrounding the Targeted Killing of Yahya Ayyash provide greater understanding of how such a policy was used.

Since the Ramat Af'al car bomb incident in November 1992, the Israeli Security Services had hunted for Yahya Ayyash, the man they called, 'The Engineer'. After the Rabin assassination on 4 November 1995, the Israeli Security Services were in a bad place. Having the responsibility of security for Senior Israeli Officials, the service took a blow when an Israeli extremist killed Rabin. The Director at the time was Gillon, who, after the death of Rabin, ramped up the efforts of the Shabok to ameliorate existing threats to Israeli security and Ayyash was considered threat number one. But, catching up to Ayyash was no small task as he had demonstrated unique abilities to disguise and evade for the better part of three years. According to Ayyash's wife (Chehab 2007: 57), Asrar, he was a 'shy man of few words' who did not 'spend more than a few hours in each place and never says where he is going or when'.

The following story on the death of Ayyash was assembled by weaving together the events described by numerous sources, including field interviews (Gillion pers.comm., 5 December 2012; Katz 1999; Caridi 2012; Milton Edwards & Farrell 2010; and other interviews with Palestinian and Israeli leaders). In the latter half of 1995, Ayyash felt that his security in the West Bank was becoming increasingly difficult and so he made his way to Gaza. In Gaza, Ayyash stayed on the move, but would regularly return to a safe house in Beit Lahiya in the North, which was the home of Osama Hammad, a Bir Zeit University classmate of Ayyash. The home was actually owned by Kamil Hammad, the uncle of Osama. Kamil had for years worked as an informant to the Shin Bet, so Gillon and the operations group in Shin Bet devised a plan to get to Ayyash on one of his visits to Osama. On a fairly regular basis, Kamil would bring new cell phones to Osama, because Osama worked for Kamil, to stay in contact. Changing cell phones was a regular tactic of members of the Hamas militant cells and for Kamil's work. After buying a new phone, Kamil took it to his Shin Bet contacts who said that they would be putting a listening device in it. Abu Nabil, the Shin Bet handler, is reported saying (Katz 1999: 255):

Listen, we know he sometimes spends time in your house and we know that he communicates with other Hamas big-shots from your property. All we want to do is for you to help us eavesdrop on Ayyash. That's it. This way we can intercept the bombers before they kill lots of women and children.

Upon receiving the phone back from Shin Bet, it looked and felt the same. There was no visible evidence that it had been tampered with. Sometime in late December 1995 or early January 1996, Kamil had provided the phone to Osama for Ayyash. On the morning of 5 January 1996, Ayyash had returned early in the morning to the safe house in Beit Lahiya after staying out late working. Having previously received the new cell phone for use, Ayyash was expected to receive a call on it from his Father in the West Bank. At 8:40am, the phone rang and it was indeed Ayyash's father. A few minutes later an explosion came from the room where Ayyash was using the phone. Upon entry, Osama who recalled the event to Chehab (2007: 59) said, 'Ayyash must have died instantly and that he heard the sound of an aircraft leaving the scene'.

For the moment, let us say that there is no difference to the success or failure of Israeli security strategy between overt and covert killings of militant Palestinians. Consider only the operational ease of an attempted killing of Ayyash with something like a cell phone bomb that needed to be directly next to Ayyash's head or a missile fired from a local aircraft. It is debatable which one would be operationally easier to accomplish. Given that the Israeli Security Services had an aircraft in the vicinity of the safe house in order to detonate the cell phone bomb also meant that they could have fired missiles at their intended target. The choice to use the improvised explosive device therefore may not have been done with operational risk as the primary driver of the tactics used, particularly with such a small amount of explosives being used. It therefore is suggestive that the strategic approach by the Israeli Security Services was to kill Ayyash in a manner that left open the question of responsibility. On this point, the author asked several Shin Bet Directors how long it took Hamas to suspect and know that Israel was responsible. They uniformly responded that people within the Israeli government had gone on radio and TV the very day Ayyash was killed, prior to Palestinian leaders learning of the incident. So, it became clear that the operation was led by Israel, but that the tactics used opened the question of who within Hamas helped the Israelis. Such questions led to 'internal difficulty' within Hamas as they grappled with the knowledge that informants had been used. Though Osama Hammad provided the chain event

details upon his arrest in the afternoon of 5 January. It took weeks for Hamas to understand all the events that led to Ayyash's death. According to Katz (1999: 263), even American investigators were asked by the Palestinian Authority to help make sense of the bombing by visiting the crime scene. It is precisely this sort of confusion, conflict and internal suspicion within Palestine and Hamas that Gillon mentioned when he spoke of the Fingertip Policy.

### **5.2.5 Hamas Makes Netanyahu and Netanyahu Makes Mishal**

Since the signing of the Oslo Declaration of Principles between the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and Israel, Hamas sought to undermine the peace negotiations through violent attacks in Israel. Particularly striking was how they helped induce the change in Israeli party leadership after the assassination of Yitzak Rabin, the Labour Party leader and Prime Minister that sought an end to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Late in the afternoon on the day of the Rabin assassination, Simon Peres was elevated to the role of Prime Minister. Israel had a new leader.

Immediately after the assassination of Rabin by Yigal Amir, a right-wing radical Jewish Israeli who was studying law at Bar-Ilan University, Hamas conducted no violent operations against Israelis as they waited to see how the storm clouds in Israel would settle. The calculus from Hamas demonstrated stratagem. Had they launched attacks against Israel in the aftermath of Rabin's death, it would have certainly consolidated international sympathy toward the cause of Israeli peace and a further commitment by the international community toward a two-state solution, something Hamas did not consider a desirable outcome. By staying quiet, Hamas was able to bide time and not further provoke Israel while it was essentially a wounded and cornered animal. At the same time, Hamas leadership knew that the Israeli Security Services would be cracking down on all Israeli threats, including Hamas operatives, no doubt to deflect attention to internal problems.

After the Shin Bet operation that killed Yahya Ayyash, Hamas perspective changed and they vowed revenge on Israel, saying at the funeral (Katz 1999: 268), 'listen Peres, don't be so happy. We are coming'. Meanwhile, in early February 1996, Prime Minister Peres called for early elections to be held on 28 May. The actions of Hamas during the winter

and spring of 2006 suggest that Hamas employed new tactics, conduct violent operations against Israeli target inside Israel as revenge for Ayyash's death, disrupt the Israeli elections and destroy the Oslo process.

The Israeli Labour Party put forth Peres a candidate for Prime Minister to seek the continuation of the Rabin policies and the resumption of the Oslo Accords. In contrast, the Likud Party put forward Benjamin Netanyahu as a challenger to both Peres as a candidate and the platform of peace through Oslo. While the Labour Party wanted to see the Oslo Accords continue, the Likud was intent on bringing 'peace through security' before Oslo. Subsequently, Peres ran on the platform of 'there needs to be a new mandate for peace [through Oslo]', while Netanyahu ran on the platform of 'a secure peace'.

On 26 February, Mohammed Deif the Senior al-Qassam operative launched the Ashkelon Bus Suicide Bombing, which killed 26 and wounded 80, its most deadly attack to date. On 3 March, just five days later, the Second Jerusalem Bus 18 Suicide Bombing claimed another 19 dead and 7 wounded. On 4 March the Dizengoff Centre Suicide Bombing killed 13, injuring 130. In the span of six days, Hamas had struck the heart of Israelis killing 57 and injuring 217, evoking a migration of the Israeli population from peace seeking, to a security first mantra. Publically, Hamas claimed that these bombings were in retaliation for Ayyash's death, not to manipulate the Israelis away from Oslo. Regardless, this Israeli sentiment shift helped Netanyahu ascend to the leadership of Israel on 28 May, while removing Labour from the agenda of Oslo peace implementation. After the election, Netanyahu systematically ramped up military and security operations in the Territories as a result of the Hamas attacks, which arguably further pushed the Palestinians toward the resistance model offered by Hamas. The dynamics of these events demonstrate the fine line between a continuation of peace or the new paradigm of 'a secure peace', which led to an increase in both the support for violence and number of Hamas led attacks.

In September 1995, just before the Rabin Assassination, Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israelis was 18.3%. By December 1996, after the Ayyash Targeted Killing, the subsequent bombings from Hamas and the security campaign led by Netanyahu, Palestinian *Support for Violence* had climbed to 39.1%. Remember,

Chapter 4 shows us that *Palestinian Support for Violence* Granger-causes Hamas led violent acts. Consequently, the series of events described in this section show how the actions of Hamas contributed to the election of Netanyahu and how the actions of Netanyahu led to the strengthening of support for the Hamas violent resistance agenda.

In interviews with several leaders of Hamas, questions were asked about whether they intentionally sought to kill off the Oslo process by trying to push the Israeli population toward the Likud and Netanyahu. The response by Mousa Abu Marzouk (23 September 2012) was, '(t)here is no difference between the political parties in Israel. They all push the Zionist project'. Other leaders made similar comments. When questioned about the use of suicide bombers killing Israeli civilians in the February and March bombings, Sheikh Yassin said (Tamimi 2011: 165), 'Hamas does not endorse the killing of civilians, but that is sometimes the only option it has if it is to respond to the murdering of Palestinian civilians and the cold-blooded assassination of Palestinian activists'.

Once Netanyahu assumed office, Sheikh Yassin was in an Israeli Prison and Mousa Abu Marzouk, then Chairman of the Hamas Politburo, was in jail in New York. But, Netanyahu wanted to continue to eliminate the leadership of Hamas while it was continuing to conduct violent operations against Israel. So, the next candidate in line was the Jordanian Branch Chief and Deputy Chairman of the Politburo, Khalid Mishal. In what has been described by many as a seriously flawed idea and execution leading to an international firestorm for Israel, Netanyahu and the Director of the Mossad, Danny Yatom, designed a plan to assassinate Mishal on the streets of Amman, Jordan, while Mishal was exiting his vehicle on the way to work. The assassination attempt by the Mossad agents seemingly failed to give Mishal a fatal dose of poison. The alertness of Mishal's bodyguard led to him chasing the agents and eventually trapping them at the Israeli Embassy in Amman with the help of Jordanian Police. Fearing a reprisal within his own country, King Hussein of Jordan demanded that Netanyahu provide the antidote for Mishal as he lay in a coma at the King Hussein hospital in Amman or he was personally going to see to it that the Mossad agents were tried in Jordan. After much consternation, Netanyahu not only sent the antidote, but after consultation with senior advisors in Israel, including his hostage negotiators, he determined that in exchange for the Mossad agents he would release Sheikh Yassin from prison. Up to this point, Mishal had been an important external leader for Hamas, but the attempt on his life

increased his stature both within the movement and across the Palestinian Territories. Because of Mousa Abu Marzouk's imprisonment in New York, Mishal had filled in as the acting Chairman of the Politburo, but after the assassination attempt the position was to be Mishal's even after Marzouk was released from prison, returning to Jordan. Since then, Mishal has won all internal elections for Chairman and Marzouk has finished second, serving as Deputy Chairman.

### **5.2.6 Hamas Contributes to the Destruction of Oslo**

The Oslo Accords had set into motion the real possibility of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. Yet, the entire idea was an anathema to the core of Hamas. After the election of Netanyahu, Hamas continue to conduct suicide operations against Israelis inside Israel. Israel's response was to increase the number of checkpoints, reduce the number of visas to enter Israel, reduce transportation access from Gaza to the West Bank, all of which hampered the mobility and daily life of Palestinians. The systematic ramping up of violence by Hamas and the forward military posture of Israel began to deteriorate the progress of trust that had been made in the early years of Oslo. Further, Hamas operations continued to weaken the hand of Arafat on being able to deliver and implement a peace agreement. This, however, did not stop peace activists and leaders from continuing to try to save the Oslo process. In July of 2000, President Clinton attempted a last ditch effort to save the progress that had been made through Oslo, when he hosted Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat at Camp David, the Presidential retreat in Maryland. Though there are books written on the failures of Camp David, the actions of Hamas contributed to the atmosphere and potentially constrained the ability of both men to compromise; a resounding victory for Hamas. Consider, in September 1995, Palestinian *Support for Violence* Against Israelis was 18.3%, but going into Camp David it was 51.6%. A majority of Palestinians supported violence against Israelis. The escalation of security operations by Israel and the targeting of Israelis by Hamas likely contributed to the increase in support for violence. Keep in mind that the quantitative evidence in Chapter 4 does not show a cause and effect relationship between Hamas actions, Israeli reprisals and increased support for violence. Yet, somehow the combination of operations by Israelis and Hamas create an environment whereby Palestinians support in greater numbers violence against Israelis (no causal chain but a systematic ramping up of the conflict environment).

Sheikh Yassin summarised the Hamas position on Oslo in 1999 (al-Ahram 1999; Tamimi 2011: 197-197):

I stated publicly that the Oslo Accords to which the Palestinian Authority has committed itself, and all other agreements that followed, were unfair and have proved to be a failure because the enemy does not believe in peace. The enemy wants to steal everything. It has the power to do so and we don't have the power to resist. The Palestinian people have lost all their options in fighting the enemy. Nowhere in the world do resistance movements surrender their arms until they have gained their rights, and by retaining their arms they maintain their freedom of action. But we gave up our arms at the beginning of the road and then sat waiting for handouts and rewards from the enemy. This means that we have lost the first round. Therefore, I have asked our brothers in the Palestinian Authority to get rid of Oslo and all that is related to it because it is the reason for all the suffering we are facing right now.

### **5.3 Second *Intifada* (September 2000 – December 2004)**

Major General Isaac Ben Israel (2006: 22) argues that the 'Suicide *Intifada*' began in part because of an underestimation on the part of Yasser Arafat and Hamas leaders that Israel would not be willing to 'sacrifice her sons' to support the national cause. For some time prior to the *intifada*, the Israeli press debated Israeli normalization meaning that the press was articulating an opinion that Israelis were less willing to sacrifice in defence of the nation. The argument was that normalization came after peace agreements with Egypt, Jordan and the reduction of Israeli financial allocation to defence. According to General Ben Israel, the Israeli political and military leadership may have been perceived as weaker particularly early in the *intifada*. The consequence of the normalization debate most likely meant that Arafat, Hamas and other factions thought that Israel was in a weakened position and that a campaign of violence would strengthen the hand of the Palestinians in subsequent negotiations. The voracity of the frequency of violence launched by Fatah and Hamas was likely an outcome of such dispositions by Palestinian militant leaders.

The Second *Intifada* is largely considered to have started in September 2000, ending in February 2005. For purposes of this thesis, the end date of the *intifada* is defined as December 2004, the month after Arafat's death and the month that various issues came to a head for Hamas leading them toward the end of the *intifada* and to the beginning of

national elective politics. This was the most deadly era between Israelis and Palestinians in the modern age. Hamas conducted well over half of its ground operations against Israelis in the era. The level of violence initiated by Hamas in the first couple of years, demonstrated advancement in capabilities and tactics of Hamas's violent resistance programmes. After the Israeli Targeted Killing & Apprehension Programme took its toll, the capacity to wage violent resistance declined significantly. Coupled with the new security barrier, which made it more difficult to penetrate the Green Line, Arafat's death and the increasing levels of perceived corruption within the Palestinian Authority, Hamas interest in continuing to wage the *intifada* was replaced with an interest in ascending to political leadership for all Palestinians. This section of the chapter will demonstrate those events that materially impacted the Hamas violent resistance agenda as well as provide additional material, which helps explain the dynamics of the conflict.

### **5.3.1 Temple Mount Visit**

For Hamas and Palestinians, the visit by Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount was a provocative act. Though there is debate about whether the Sharon visit incited the beginning of the Second *Intifada* or not, it is certain that Palestinians' anger became more acute because the visit was made by Ariel Sharon, the architect of the right-wing Israel approach to the settlement activity. The background of Sharon sheds more light on the events surrounding the Temple Mount visit.

Ariel Sharon was voted eighth greatest Israeli of all time by Israelis in 2005 (Ynet 2011). His military and political career spanned six decades and was marked with many brilliant and controversial moments. As a military man, he showed ambition and initiative as a field commander of elite Israeli units that were on the frontier of fighting in the Israeli War of Independence in 1948. Throughout the course of successive military campaigns he had a penchant for the frontlines leading Special Forces units like Unit 101 (Morris 1993: 251-253), responsible for reprisal operations to Palestinian Fedayeen attacks. Later in the Suez War (Varble 2003: 32), Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War (Weizman 2012: 76), Sharon demonstrated attacking military tactics that led to many victorious battles, which got him promoted quickly. In addition to military skill, Sharon had a keen ability to speak his mind, often in disagreement with political



and military superiors. Such behaviour landed Sharon in disfavour on occasion (Weizman 2012: *passim*). At the outset of the Yom Kippur War, Sharon was out of the military leadership in civilian life when he was called to active duty to serve as the leader of the reserve armored division. His operational leadership in the Sinai, coupled with his battlefield strategy are largely believed to have contributed to the turning of the war in Sinai in Israel's favour (Rabinovich 2004: 339-366).

The military career of Sharon serves as a backdrop for how the man thought about his political career. He had a penchant for offensive manoeuvres on the military and political battlefields and was a skillful self-promoter. In 1977, Sharon became the Minister of Agriculture in the Begin government. While in that position, he increased the number of settlements and purportedly laid out a strategy, which marked Sharon's entire political career and has become a mantra of right-wing Israelis. Sharon is largely believed to have made the following quote to Agence France Presse in the early 80s, 'everybody has to move, run and grab as many hilltops [Judean] as they can to enlarge the settlements because everything we take now will stay ours'. Independent efforts to find the original French article have been unsuccessful. Regardless, the Palestinians largely believe that Sharon was responsible for this right-wing approach to settlements (Multiple Palestinian Leaders, *pers.comm.*, 2011-2013).

Later in the Begin government, Sharon was to become the Minister of Defence and oversaw the 1982 Lebanon War. During the war, the Israeli army had surrounded the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian Refugee Camps, when Lebanese Maronite Christian militias known as the Phalange entered the camps killing hundreds of refugees. Subsequent investigation led by the Kahan Commission (IMFA 1983) found the Israeli Defense Forces indirectly responsible for the attacks. Defence Minister Sharon eventually resigned due to the political stigma he endured from the Lebanese massacre. He continued to serve in successive governments as Minister without portfolio, Minister of National Infrastructure and Foreign Minister until he became the head of the Likud party in 1999 after the defeat of Netanyahu to Ehud Barak's Labour Party. Barak's tenure as Prime Minister was wrought with challenges to his governing coalition and once the failure of Camp David occurred in July 2000, it seemed to many that it was just a matter of time until the government coalition would be unsustainable and new

elections would be called. Sharon, being the leader of the Likud Party, began early to put his claims on the future election.

On 28 September 2000, Sharon made arguably his most controversial political move to date when he visited the Temple Mount with over 1,000 Israeli police at his side. The Temple Mount is the holiest place in Judaism and the third holiest site in Islam for the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque. The visit was considered provocative by most Palestinians and was met with throngs of Palestinians and Israel Arab protestors. On 29 September, the Palestinian and Arab crowds gathered, throwing stones at Israeli Police. The police responded with ‘rubber coated metal bullets and some ammunition’ (Mitchell 2001). In all, four Palestinians were killed and approximately 200 were injured. Fourteen Israeli Police were wounded.

The series of events sparked what has become known as the beginning of the *Al-Aqsa Intifada*. The Israelis make claims that PLO and Hamas leaders had been planning for a new uprising since the failure at Camp David. Hamas leaders interviewed for this research claimed (Hamas Parliamentarians, pers.comm., 9 December 2012), ‘it was a spontaneous action of Palestinians to the murderous policies of the Israeli government’.

As a result of the 17 October 2000 emergency summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, the US Senator George Mitchell was tasked to investigate the causes of the resumed violence. The Mitchell Report said that when PA and US officials heard of Sharon’s plans to visit the Temple Mount, they tried to convince Prime Minister Ehud Barak to prohibit the visit. The report (Mitchell 2001) claims that Barak told the US officials that he believed the visit was an ‘internal political act’ directed against him (i.e. a provocation) by Sharon and declined to prohibit it. The Mitchell Report (2001) made the following conclusions about the causes of the *Al-Aqsa Intifada*:

...we have no basis on which to conclude that there was a deliberate plan by the PA to initiate a campaign of violence at the first opportunity; or to conclude that there was a deliberate plan by the GOI [Government of Israel] to respond with lethal force. However, there is also no evidence on which to conclude that the PA made a consistent effort to contain the demonstrations and control the violence once it began; or that the GOI made a consistent effort to use non-lethal means to control demonstrations of unarmed Palestinians. Amid rising anger, fear, and mistrust, each side assumed the worst about the other and acted accordingly. The Sharon visit did not cause

the "Al-Aqsa *Intifada*". But it was poorly timed and the provocative effect should have been foreseen; indeed it was foreseen by those who urged that the visit be prohibited. More significant were the events that followed: the decision of the Israeli police on September 29 to use lethal means against the Palestinian demonstrators; and the subsequent failure, as noted above, of either party to exercise restraint.

Regardless of culpability, the Second *Intifada* had a violent beginning. The military capabilities and advanced attacking strategies employed by Sharon on the battlefield carried into his career as the leader in Israel made him a provocative leader in the eyes of Palestinians. His forceful demeanour was now set against Hamas and other Palestinian factions that were intent on bringing death and destruction to the streets of Israel. The events surrounding the visit to the Temple Mount and the subsequent ensuing violence stoked the Palestinian population to increase their *Support for Violence* against Israelis. Prior to the Temple Mount visit, Palestinian's *Support for Violence* and Hamas was 51.6% and 10.3%, respectively. By July of 2001, after the visit and nearly one year's worth of conflict between Israelis and Palestinian factions, it had risen to 85.9% and 16.7%.<sup>24</sup>

### **5.3.2 Hamas Violence and Resilience**

During the Second *Intifada*, Hamas resistance was defined by an increased number of violent acts against Israelis and a greater level of lethality. Suicide bombings became a central strategy for fighting against Israel to achieve political objectives, namely a stronger position at the bargaining table after the collapse of Camp David. Nearly all activity by Hamas and its operatives went into recruiting, maintaining and protecting its attack infrastructure. So successful were the Hamas operations in previous years that Chairman Arafat established Tanzim formed within Fatah, amongst other violent groups, to compete with Hamas for the violent resistance moniker from late 2000. According to the *Verified Open-Source Violent Attack* dataset, all totalled there were approximately 575 violent acts against Israelis, during this period, with Hamas accounting for nearly half. During the *Intifada*, approximately 1,118 Israelis were killed, while 5,656 were wounded by the Palestinian led violence. It was the single most deadly era since the beginning of Hamas. This section will not detail the voluminous

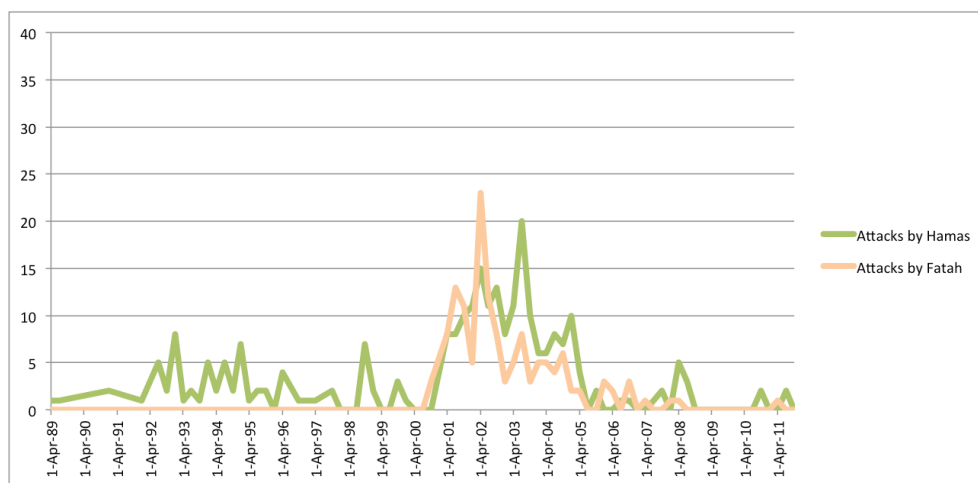
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<sup>24</sup> Note: the first PSR survey conducted after the Temple Mount visit was in July 2001.

acts of violence; rather it is designed to characterise the use of violence and to articulate the operational constraints in the performance of that violent resistance.

According to Disken (6 December 2012), at the outset of the Al-Aqsa *Intifada*, the Israelis did not know whether Arafat or Hamas was leading the violence. It took the Security Services some months to develop the understanding of whom and how the violence operations were being planned. Though Hamas had developed the infrastructure to send suicide bombers, Fatah forces soon began to employ similar tactics. Almost as if Fatah was competing with Hamas for political and military market share, they assembled a resistance capacity that rivaled Hamas forces. According to one Palestinian leader, Hamas and Fatah were most often competing with each other, but ‘on occasion they would cooperate’. As Figure 58 demonstrates, Fatah conducted more operations during the first part of 2001 and 2002 than did Hamas. Once the Targeted Killing and Apprehension Programme of the Israelis began, the number of attacks from all factions began to decline (discussed in the next section).

**Figure 58. Hamas & Fatah Violence**



The number one operational problem during the *Intifada* for the Hamas militancy was that the forward position of the Israeli Defense Forces and the activities of the Israeli Security Services required the militants from al-Qassam to go underground having very little communication with each other. According to Diskin (6 December 2012), ‘the military cells had problems connecting with each other. Head Quarters could not control them. Hamas leadership and operatives were afraid of the phone, Internet, and therefore had to rely on human messengers’.

According to a report obtained from a Senior Palestinian source, the decentralised nature of the military cells for the Hamas, Fatah and PIJ forces provided opportunities for Hizballah advisors to financially and technically support cells. The reports indicate that field commanders of Hamas were in receipt of money and had Hizballah trainers providing technical assistance and weapons. Often the monetary incentive to keep the operations going was directly from the Hizballah complements of Iran. For additional information about the Hizballah and Iran links during the Second *Intifada*, please refer back to Chapter 3.

Though General Uzi Dayan, former Commander of Israel's Central Command ('96-'98), managed IDF forces in the West Bank prior to the Second *Intifada*, his explanations of Hamas actions provide a wide perspective of the nature of its resistance operations for all eras, particularly this era. He spoke of meetings that he had with captured Hamas cell leaders (pers.comm., 5 December 2012):

They viewed Israel as an enemy. They understand that Israel has the upper hand, but they are patient. They'd say, "this is our destiny. It may take 50 or 100 years". The people I met were not terrorists by profession. They'd tell me, "we are ordinary people. We have work to do. We do something when we have free time". They didn't always get clear commands. Sometimes activists were issued explosives with little clarity. Other times, handlers took them to within 100 yards of the site. Operationally, Hamas is different than other groups because of religion, beliefs and ideology. They [bombers] were well trained. Not all suicide bombers knew they would be suicide bombers. In a few cases handlers deceived bombers into bombing.

Reflecting the increased militant operations launched from the territories, the Israeli Security Services and Defence Forces increased pressure on the militant operations of the violent Palestinian factions in the West Bank and Gaza. As a result, the Israelis increased the number of checkpoints, roadblocks and a higher number of IDF personnel were deployed in the West Bank and Gaza (see Chp 5.3.5). Such a presence made conducting militant operations by Hamas challenging, which is why Diskin said that that there was fear in the group to communicate through all means other than personal messenger. According to General Dayan (5 December 2012):

There are two umbrella rules that define Hamas and al-Qassam leaders throughout all eras, but had special import during the Second *Intifada*. First, spiritual and political leaders make statements. People hear what they want, some think they hear it is time to act. Second, the group won't go against opinion in the local neighborhood. Support of their neighborhood is critical. If the neighborhood says that something is a waste, they [Hamas] won't do it.

For the Second *Intifada*, there were thirteen time periods whereby we had data for all popular support measures and violent acts. Generally, the high number of militant operations coupled with a relatively low number of time periods makes the quantitative data analysis difficult. Further complicating the analysis is that, often, Hamas militant cells would go dark for several months in the planning and preparation stage before they were operationally capable of striking inside Israel (Diskin, pers.comm., 6 December 2012). This was a result of forward operations and disruptive activities by the Israelis. Consequently, the low number of time periods (13) with nearly 600 violent acts make it difficult to define quantitative authority in relationships and in predictive values between factors. That said, *Support for Violence* against Israeli targets going into the Camp David Accords was 44%, but after the clashes around the Temple Mount visit and the first year of the Al-Aqsa *Intifada* violence, the measure increased to 85.9%. The qualitative and quantitative demonstrate the interdependence of *Support for Violence* and *Violence Frequency* and show that Hamas increased acts of violence when *Support for Violence* was increasing and lessened when the support was declining. Illustrating the strategic use of violence by Hamas, this coincides with both General Dayan and Director Diskin's arguments that the group would not go against the attitudes of the Palestinian neighbourhood.

In total, the violent operations of Hamas during this period demonstrated to Palestinians that the group had the capacity to sustain lengthy militant operations against Israel. Organisationally, it was able to sustain great pressure from Israeli operations through a distributed and adaptive power structure that would have immediate replacements for killed or arrested operatives. Such a structure demonstrated to themselves, Palestinians and others that the cohesion of the organisation and its resilience to adapt allowed it to survive and maintain their violent resistance credentials. It further led to many within the population to believe that Hamas was willing to protect or advance the interests of Palestinians and through elective politics they would soon be considered by many the protectors and representatives of Palestinian rights. But, if the objective of Hamas for

conducting such violent operations was to strengthen the Palestinian hand at the negotiating table, it did not accomplish this because no subsequent negotiated settlements have resulted. If the objective was to drive Israel out of the region, this too was not achieved through the violence of the Second *Intifada*. If, however, the idea was to compete for the hearts and minds of Palestinians and to overcome the political clout of Fatah, by some objective measures, it could be said that this goal was accomplished through the election victory in January 2006. So, how did Hamas get to the point to where it would stop violence against Israelis to end the Second *Intifada* and move toward elective politics?

### **5.3.3 Israeli Targeted Killing and Apprehension Programme**

Before getting to the *Targeted Killing* and Apprehension Programme of the Israelis during the Second *Intifada*, it is helpful to understand how the Israelis operationalise their targeted programmes. There are two different legal standards, which define the Israeli operations to kill Palestinians engaged in militant activities against Israel. First, there are those operations, which fall into the *Targeted Killing* and Apprehension Programme. In a series of decisions in 2005 and 2006, the Israeli High Court of Justice put forth a set of legal decisions that outline the legality of performing *Targeted Killings*. Though voluminous, the decisions have three fundamental parts (IHCJ 2005):

1. A person who can be arrested is not an appropriate target for *Targeted Killing*;
2. A *Targeted Killing* cannot be a death sentence for previous acts. There must be evidence that the enemy combatant is part of the planning or execution of a future violent attack against the state; and
3. There must be sufficient care taken to minimise the risk to civilians to not be harmed in the process of the *Targeted Killing*.

IDF Commanders use terms like this person is part of the ‘ticking infrastructure’ (Blau 2008) when making a case for who meets the threshold for planning future attacks against the state.

The second legal standard is part of a programme entitled, ‘Canopy of Fire’. This programme allows a special unit led by a major with an intelligence officer to determine if a target in Gaza can be eliminated. According to Amir Bukhbut (2012), ‘in 2009-2010 ten attacks of “Canopy of Fire” were carried out in the Gaza Strip’. The difference between the *Targeted Killing* Programme and the Canopy of Fire lies mainly in the level

of the Palestinian operative. High-level operatives fall into the *Targeted Killing* protocol while the lower level operatives can be killed through the Canopy of Fire apparatus. No further definitions for what constitutes ‘high’ or ‘low’ level could be found.

The difference between the *Targeted Killing* programme and ‘Canopy of Fire’ predated the Israeli High Court decisions on the programmes. As will be described in the next section, some 500 Palestinian operatives, senior and junior, were targeted for killing or apprehension from 2001 to 2004. Both the *Targeted Killing* Programme and the Canopy of Fire as described were formally established through court and military procedure well after the end of the Second *Intifada*, but the *Targeted Killing* Programme has been part of the Israeli Defense and Security capacity for decades. But, for this section of the thesis, the idea is to show how the *Targeted Killing* and Arrest Programme known by the Israelis as the Targeted Prevention Programme worked to destabilise and disrupt Hamas militant operations during the Second *Intifada*.

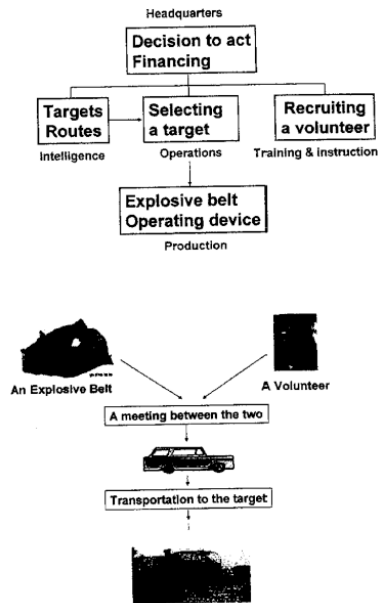
A great deal of effort was spent trying to access Targeted Killing data from Israeli leaders, particularly looking for a way to understand the date and casualties of each act. On multiple occasions from different sources, Israeli Security officials indicated that the data was classified. With good fortune, two sources amenable to analysis were identified and used for this analysis. First, an article written by Major General (ret.) Isaac Ben Israel for a book entitled *A Ticking Bomb: Contending with Suicide Attacks* by Ma’arkhot Press was used. General Ben Israel was given permission to publish material that conglomerated classified Israeli data on *Targeted Killings* and arrests. It is this material that provides much deeper Israeli understanding on the impact the arrests and killings had on the resistance operations of Hamas in the Second *Intifada*. Second, the data provided from Sharvit (2013) and Zussman (2006) provides 37 *Targeted Killings* during the Second *Intifada* (see also Chapter 4.11). Though this data does not provide quantitative predictive capacity, it is illustrative and will be discussed after the material from Ben Israel.

In the article written on the Targeted Prevention Programme during the Second *Intifada*, General (ret.) Ben Israel (2006) argues that defeating Palestinian terrorism is about destroying the network that is part of the production line leading to attacks. Figure 59



demonstrates what he calls a ‘Terrorism Production Line’. Ben Israel argues (2006: 26) that the further up the production line the Israelis disrupt, ‘the more effective its neutralization’. He further argues, ‘neutralizing, whether through arrest or *Targeted Killing*, 20%-30% of the participants of the production line, brings about a clear slowing of the production line and in the wake of this a clear decrease in the amount of attacks’.

**Figure 59. Suicide Bombing Production Line (Ben Israel 2006)**



Ben Israel (2006: 26-32) also argues that the fence around Gaza had an ‘indisputable’ role in preventing attacks coming from Gaza, even though he admits that much of the planning for the attacks on Israel were executed from the West Bank. Subsequently, he writes that according to captured militants, the existence of the new barriers in the West Bank forced Hamas operations to find ways around the barriers resulting in added warning time resulting in the increase in the percentage of preventions.

According to an interview with General Ben Israel (pers.comm., 6 December 2012), by mid-to-late 2001, the Israelis had established a list of 500 Palestinian ‘operatives’ that were part of the ‘Suicide Bombing Production Line’. As quickly as possible, the IDF and Security Services were either arresting or killing those responsible for planning and executing the attacks against Israelis. According to Ben Israel, most of the targeted arrests and killings occurred in the West Bank and Gaza, respectively. Figure 60 articulates by quarter, the number of suicide attacks attempted, carried out and those that

were prevented. The zenith of the number of attacks, initiated by Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade, PIJ and Hamas's al-Qassam Martyr's Brigade, occurred in the second quarter of 2003. The number of attempted and successful attacks declined from this point. General Ben Israel argues that this is because the production line was severely disrupted and that replacements in the production line caused young and inexperienced persons to be put into positions for which they were not prepared. The result, he says, was reduced effectiveness from the production line. Accordingly, Ben Israel wrote (2006: 35-36):

It is true that new militants were appointed in the place of the ones who were neutralized, but these were usually much younger and lacking in experience compared to their predecessors. In addition, as the percentage of activists that were hit (or arrested) rose, and as the thwarting/prevention approached the top of the pyramid (whose peak was the assassination of Hamas leaders Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and Abbed al-Azziz Rantisi who was appointed in his place), the organisation began allocating more and more resources towards self-preservation, and less towards suicide attacks. This process, which actually began with the assassination of the head of the military arm of Hamas, Salah Shehada (in July 2002), eventually brought to drastic drop in the curve of attacks as it is reflected in the graphs [Figures 60 & 61].

Figure 60. Suicide Bombings in the Second Intifada (Ben Israel 2006)

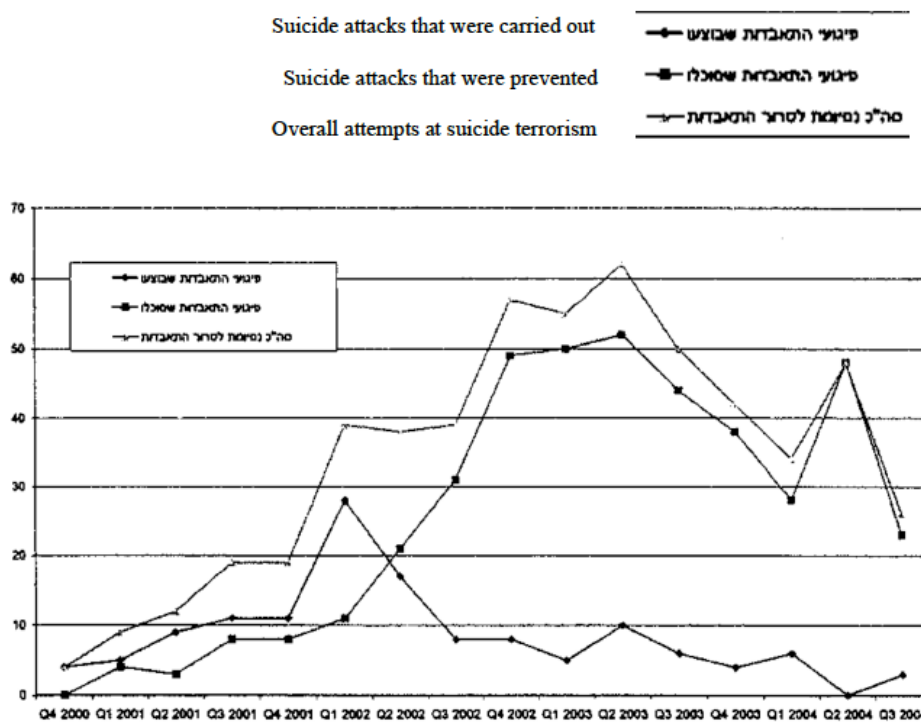


Figure 61. Prevented Suicide Attacks (Ben Israel 2006)

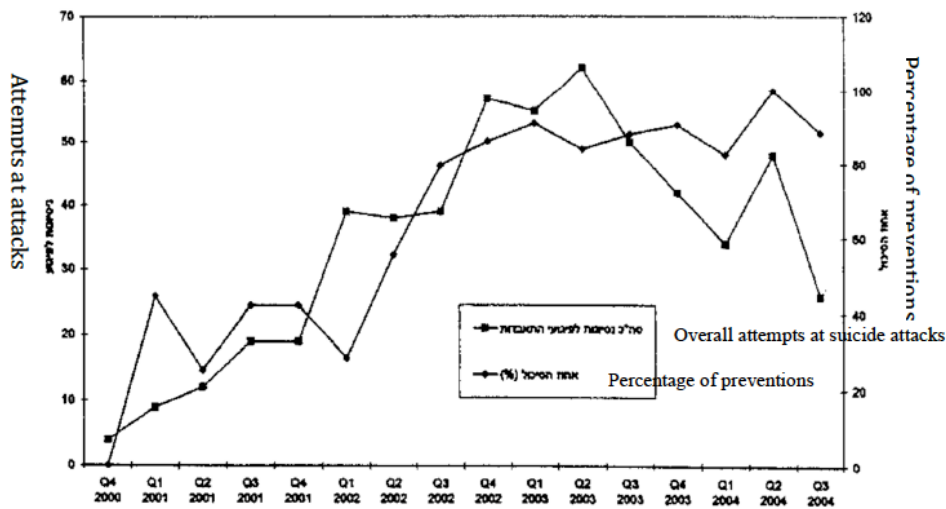
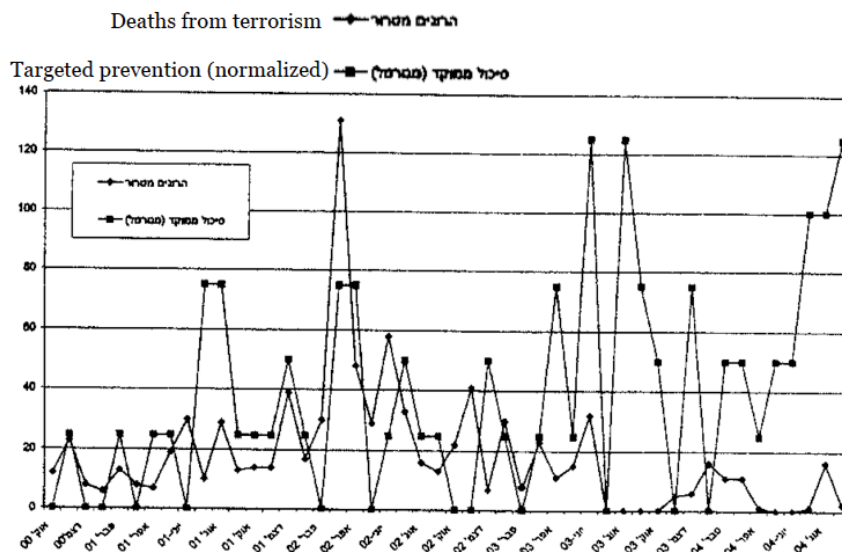


Figure 62 shows the targeted prevention activities by the Israelis and the total number of Israeli deaths by suicide bombings. The prevention activities combine the total number of killings and arrests into a single data point for each month of the *intifada*. The high-water mark for the number of Israeli deaths came in early 2002. Subsequently, the data shows that the frequency and lethality of the suicide bombings diminishes. It is not possible with this data to determine how many killings verses arrests were part of the programme. According to the Human rights organisation B'Tselem (Blau 2008), 'the IDF assassinated 232 Palestinians between the start of the *intifada* and the end of October 2008'. This number is obviously much higher than the Sharvit data (37) that will be analysed later in this section.

Figure 62. Targeted Prevention by Israelis (Ben Israel 2006)



On 26 January 2004, a few months before his assassination by an Israeli aircraft, Abdel-Aziz al-Rantisi told Reuters (Tostevin 2004) that Hamas wanted a *hudna* (temporary truce) that could last, ‘not more than 10 years’. It was clear some ten months before the death of Yasser Arafat that Hamas wanted to end the *intifada* with the Israelis, but desired a mechanism to do so without losing support from the group’s militant wing. It is unclear whether the Targeted Prevention Programme of the Israelis led to this conclusion for Hamas or if other factors were involved, but Rantisi made it clear that Hamas wanted a *hudna*. On this point Ben Israel (2006: 37) wrote:

...We can conclude that the suicide terrorism *intifada* was defeated through a strategy that included first and foremost identifying the key players in the terrorism production line and neutralizing them: either through arrest (and this was only possible in Judea and Samaria), or through assassination (“targeted thwarting/prevention”) in the case that their arrest was not possible (usually in the Gaza strip)...The attacks on people who planned, organised, recruited volunteers to commit suicide and coordinated the “production” of suicide terrorism is what brought about a dramatic drop in the number of attempts at suicide terrorism, and this was around a year and a half before Arafat’s death.

So, what are we to think about data on the effectiveness of the *Targeted Killing* programme written by a former Israeli General? In an attempt to verify the conclusions reached by General Ben Israel, the author conducted a review of the Hamas violence data and spoke directly to Hamas and Palestinian leaders about the programme. As evidenced in the violent dataset, the fact is that the number of Hamas attacks against

Israel lessened in the latter part of 2003, coinciding with the *Targeted Killing* and apprehension data described by Ben Israel. Though this could have been by choice of Hamas leaders, the data does show a significant decline in the lethality of attacks after August 2003. This reveals that the potency of the dozens of attacks that occurred between August 2003 and December 2004 were less harmful, which does suggest that lesser skilled operatives were planning and/or executing the attacks. In other words, the data demonstrates that the lethality of Hamas attacks predated the fall off in Hamas attacks, further suggesting that Hamas capability to launch attacks with lethality rates seen in late 2002 and early 2003 may have been impaired through the Israeli programme. It, therefore is conceivable, that Hamas may have had reduced militant capabilities, due to fewer operatives and lesser skilled persons, as a result of the Israeli Targeted Prevention Programme. According to Ariel Merari (pers.comm., 3 December 2012) the Israeli programme became a deterrent for the remaining Hamas leadership, particularly after two of its senior leaders (Yassin and Rantisi) were killed in early 2004.

In Cairo, Mousa Abu Marzouk (pers.comm., 23 September 2012) responded to questions about the impact of *Targeted Killings* on Hamas decision making, including the idea that the killings influenced the group to move from the *Intifada* toward elective national politics. He said, ‘Hamas did not change its policy based upon this. The Israelis were killing our leaders, this we came to accept as part of our cause. We saw no difference in the programme from the Israelis. From 2007, the Israelis have not killed leaders from Hamas and Fatah’. We know that the *Targeted Killings* continued just after this interview with Marzouk, when an Israeli helicopter gunship killed Al-Jabri, head of the al-Qassam Brigades in early November 2012; this event contributed to the escalation toward Gaza War II. Even though the Israelis specifically targeted the Suicide Bombing Production Line, Marzouk suggested that it made no difference to the future policy of Hamas in regards to its resistance operations.

After discussions with many Palestinians and Israelis on this question, there was general agreement that Hamas did shift, in part, away from the *intifada* because of the Israeli programme. This, however, is not something that any Palestinian would say on the record. Further, it makes no sense for Hamas to admit that such actions were influential in internal decision-making. In an interview after the cessation of the *intifada*, Osama Hamdan said on BBC Arabic (2005) ‘Hamas has halted the suicide attacks for the

benefit of the Palestinian people'. In a different off the record exchange, one Palestinian leader said that Hamas stopped the suicide bombings because, 'our people were exhausted'.

At one point during the Second *Intifada*, Hamas put out the following statement on their website in relation to the number of assassinations the group had absorbed (Ben Israel 2006: 36):

*The Zionist enemy succeeded in killing many of the fighter brothers, and this is at a time when we are in dire need of every pure fighter. There is no doubt that enemy's frivolousness is one of the central factors to the enemy's success, that indeed its electronic spying helicopters do not leave Gaza's skies, the numerous eyes appointed to the mission do not know sleep and the Apache helicopters are prepared and ready with their missiles and waiting for the opportunity.*

*Here you are under constant surveillance twenty-four hours a day. Here you are a target for assassination every day, and even every hour.*

*All the fighters must consider themselves to be a target for assassination. No one should delude himself that he is not a target.*

*None of the brothers should arrange the times for their travels or their placement using phones, since all the telephone frequencies are captured. You are wanted and being followed.*

*The brothers should not use cars in order to move from place to place, since you do not know who has been appointed to follow you, and this could be a convenience store owner, your friend whose house looks onto your house, a merchant or a car that watches over your house twenty-four hours a day. If the brothers do use a car, none of the brothers should drive with more militants so that there won't be more than one brother in the car.*

*All the brothers should displace themselves only in emergency situations, and it is better if the movement is in narrow streets.*

*All of the brothers should conceal themselves during their displacement in order to obscure things, whether by wearing specific clothes, whether by changing the direction of travel, etc.*

In Chapter 4.11 we learnt that there is little that we can say quantitatively about the predictive or causal relationships between the *Targeted Killings* and *Hamis Attack Frequency* or other Palestinian popular support measures. As described in the analysis above and through the words posted on the al-Qassam website, we can see that the

programme had tactical efficacy in reducing the frequency and lethality of Hamas attacks against Israel. Sharvit (2013) asserted that the *Targeted Killings* of Senior Palestinian leaders led to reprisals by Palestinian Factions, typically within two weeks. But, the number of incidents used to make such claims was low, eight or less. Further, it is entirely conceivable that the Palestinian factions launched reprisals for all *Targeted Killings*, but it would not be seen in the data because of the length of time it took to conduct the operation. It could also be that the reprisals Sharvit discusses were merely a function of Palestinian Factions saying that a previously planned bombing was revenge for a particular killing.

Qualitatively, we can see that the death of individuals like Ayyash and Jabri, have resulted in a form of cult-hero status within the population. In interviews with families of suicide bombers in Hebron, the iconic value of the Palestinian leaders killed by Israelis was evident. Families described how their children wanted to follow in the footsteps of those ‘martyrs’ before them, at times describing even lower level persons as heroes. Hamas clearly uses the *Targeted Killing* of their leaders and militants as a recruitment tool for future generations of fighters. Yet, analysis of the quantitative measures does not demonstrate a cause and effect or predictive capacity between *Targeted Killings* and any violence or popular support data.

#### **5.3.4 Security Fence – ‘the Wall’**

After the start of the Second *Intifada* in 2000, an Israeli movement called ‘Fence of Life’ gained influence. The movement was designed to build a security fence between the Palestinian West Bank and Israel for the purpose of keeping Palestinian bombers from freely entering Israel. The momentum grew for the cause and eventually the Israeli Cabinet, led by Ariel Sharon, adopted the concept. By 2002, the construction of the barrier had commenced in earnest most near the launching points of suicide bombing activity. Locations and transit points for launching points from Jenin, Tulkarm and Hebron were priorities.

By December 2004, the Israelis had completed most of the building of the Northern Security Barrier that made it more difficult for suicide bombers to be launched from Nablus, Tulkarm and Jenin. It had also partially completed the barrier West and

Northwest of Hebron in the Southern part of the West Bank. According to captured Hamas operatives (Ben Israel 2006: 34), the barriers required the operatives to adjust their entry points into Israel, which both delayed and put at risk Hamas violent operations. The construction of the barrier and the ramping up of the *Targeted Killing* and Apprehension Programme coincided, so it is difficult to measure the impact of each in isolation. The best way to characterise the concurrent utilisation of these programmes by Israel is that they caused Hamas and other armed factions to adapt violent tactics.

Although the frequency and lethality of Palestinian and Hamas attacks declined as the barrier was constructed, the sophistication of the attacks increased. For example, Hamas tactics evolved from bomber evasion of Israeli security forces at the Green Line (demarcation line between Palestine and Israel) to identity and uniform theft so that bombers would look like they were Israelis. Other advancements and adaptations included the use of women as attackers because they received less scrutiny at checkpoints than did their male counterparts and the use of missiles that could be fired over the new security barriers in the Gaza Strip.

The construction of the fence/wall clearly had operational significance for al-Qassam. In interviews with several Hamas leaders, the security barrier was discussed. The common refrain was, 'it didn't cause problems because our guys can still go over or around the wall'. Notwithstanding the tactical jockeying by the Israelis and Palestinians, the evidence is that the separation barrier makes conducting violent operations inside Israel more difficult for al-Qassam and other armed factions. Tactical advancements by Hamas, including the use of tunnels, identity theft and the acquisition of rockets, in part, demonstrate how the group adapted to the security measures of the Israelis.

### **5.3.5 Israeli Checkpoints and Roadblocks in the Palestinian Territories**

The Israeli use of checkpoints and roadblocks during the Second *Intifada* increased both the complexity and difficulty of Hamas militant operations, while also increasing the anger of Palestinians toward Israel. First, during the Second *Intifada* (Moore 2004), the Israelis erected hundreds of checkpoints and roadblocks. The Israelis did not use all of these points at the same time. They varied which checkpoint or roadblock would be



used as if it was a tactical military decision on when and where to place forces. The operational objective by the Israelis was to disrupt travel throughout the territories, making it difficult to plan and execute operations for the militant factions.

Second, the checkpoints and roadblocks significantly increased the amount of time Palestinians had to wait to travel across the West Bank or Gaza. Sometimes traveling a short distance could take hours or may not even be possible. The study performed by Khalil Shikaki on 'anger and humiliation' in 2003 found that support for violence against Israel did increase as a result of the long waiting lines at the checkpoints. It is important to note that Dr. Shikaki invalidated the results of the study for poor methodology. In discussing the problem with Scott Atran, he told me that while he was performing fieldwork in the West Bank, he had to stand in lines for hours, even after receiving permission to pass from Senior IDF Command and that he too became frustrated over the checkpoints. In his latest book, Atran (2011: 358) explains that he discussed the level of Palestinian anger and humiliation resulting from the checkpoints with a senior Israeli political advisor and that the advisor told him some weeks later, 'I raised the issue of behaviour at the checkpoints and Sharon [Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister] said, "don't you understand? I want them to feel humiliated, and we'll keep doing that until they stop trying to kill us"'.

Throughout the Second *Intifada*, the Israeli leadership's position on the checkpoints remained consistent. The checkpoints were to decrease the ease of militant operations, which in turn was to increase the security of the Israeli people. Given the difficulty and randomness of the Israeli forces locations, travel of Hamas operatives trying to execute attacks in Israel would have become more challenging, ultimately complicating militant operational capabilities.

### **5.3.6 Change in Hamas Leadership: Death of Yassin and Rantisi**

On the morning of 22 March 2004, Sheikh Yassin was killed by an Israeli helicopter gunship in Gaza City. According to Shlomi Eldar (2012: 70-85), there was great difficulty in getting the legal authorisation to assassinate Sheikh Yassin because the policy was that a *Targeted Killing* could only be performed when there was knowledge that the intended target was involved in planning violent attacks against Israelis. For a

number of years, no such argument could be made to legally ‘stick’. That changed on 14 January 2004, when Sheikh Yassin issued a *fatwa* that said that women could be involved in combat operations against Israel (Regular 2004). The *fatwa* superseded previous instructions issued by Yassin indicating that women should not be engaged in combat operations. The change in policy came the same day that Hamas female suicide bomber, Reem Raiyshi, successfully completed a suicide bombing that killed four Israelis and injured ten. Until this bombing, Sheikh Yassin had been publically saying that women were not to be engaged in militant operations. For nearly two years, Hamas had been fighting against public support gained by Fatah for using women in combat operations. The Palestinian people had rallied in support of female suicide bombers used by the Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade. This is one clear example when Fatah militants were ahead of Hamas when it came to popular opinion of resistance activities.

Two days later after the Yassin assassination, Rantisi made a public statement saying (Zaanoun 2004), ‘During its last meeting, the consultative council confirmed Sheikh Yassin as leader and elected me as deputy and therefore, according to the statutes, the deputy replaces the leader if he is eliminated’. Consequently, Rantisi assumed the leadership of Hamas. Just shy of four weeks later, on 17 April 2004, Rantisi was killed by Israeli missiles while in his car (Diskin pers.comm., 6 December 2012).

In less than one month, the spiritual leader of Hamas and two of its founders had been killed in the Israeli *Targeted Killing* Programme. Though, Hamas had made organisational plans for the shake-up of its leadership. Never again would Hamas have its elected leader reside in the Palestinian Territories. By 1994, Sheikh Yassin had placed Mousa Abu Marzouk as the Chairman of the Hamas Politburo. But, it was not until the death of Rantisi that the Chairman of the Politburo became the consolidated leader of Hamas. This does not mean that others in Gaza, for example, do not represent the leadership of Hamas and Gaza. Personalities like Zahar and Prime Minister Haniyeh have, in their own right, the ability to speak on behalf of Hamas. The difference is that that Shura Council determined that the Politburo would be voted on by the Shura Council and would represent the Political leadership of the group. Since that time, Khalid Mishal has been the only Chairman that Hamas has known.

### **5.3.7 The Death of Yasser Arafat and the Perceived Corruption in the PA**

By the time the Second Intifada arrived, Yasser Arafat was an iconic father figure for Palestinians. In 1969, he was voted the head of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), which was recognised by over 100 countries as the one legal representative body of the Palestinian people. Arafat had become the face of the Palestinians to the world and generally, Palestinians had great respect for him and the militant resistance operations he directed both before and after the Six-Day War in 1967.

For over three decades the Arafat persona grew as a symbolic leader of the people and it was rare when a political figure would even consider challenging him for leadership of the PLO. Even the Hamas Charter stated that members were to respect the work of resistance organisations that fought valiantly before.

On 11 November 2004, Arafat's death left a major vacuum in the leadership of the Palestinian Authority and the PLO. There was no clear heir apparent that could carry his stature as both President and Chairman of the National Legislative Council, particularly because Palestinians perceived most other leaders within Fatah as corrupt. The political opening represented an opportunity to engage in a meaningful way in elective national politics that had not been known since the founding of Hamas. It is true that persons like Ismail Haniyeh had been pressing for the group to run in national elections for years to be turned down by its leadership each time. But, after Arafat's death and the high levels of perceived corruption in the PA and Fatah, the Hamas leadership had an unprecedented opening in election national politics. The Palestinian election for President would be held in January 2005, but the legislative elections would be held in early 2006, more than adequate time to use the *dawa* network to help establish a grass roots political campaign. For Hamas, Arafat's death happened after four years of grueling battle with Israel and coincided with the previous month's decision to call a *hudna* (Scham 2009; and Ben Israel 2006: 25). After fighting so hard against the Israelis and losing so many young men to suicide bombings, the group had attained a greater degree of support across the Territories, which positioned it to fill some of the vacuum left by Arafat's passing. The possibility of leading Palestinians through elective office was a new opportunity and it seemingly came at a good time.

By December 2004, 87.8% of Palestinians (PCPSR) believed that Fatah was corrupt. With the leader of the PLO being the leader of Fatah for over 30 years, the positions of authority established by members of Fatah left them in firm control of the political economy of the Territories. This control left ample opportunity for corruption by Fatah's technocrats and Palestinians had become increasingly frustrated that many of these leaders abused their positions. Meanwhile, Hamas had worked to establish moral authority through the *dawa* at the level of the family. The vacuum left by Arafat and the belief that corruption dominated Fatah further contributed to the idea that a real opening existed for Hamas to compete with Fatah for the leadership of the Palestinian people.

### **5.3.8 Unilateral Israeli Withdrawal From Gaza**

In second half of 2004, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had begun to float an idea that Israel would unilaterally withdraw from Gaza. On 9 December 2004, that policy idea became a reality when it became clear that the Israeli government was going to back Sharon's plan for leaving the Strip. Though controversial both to Israelis and to Palestinians, the idea of Gaza, the stronghold of Hamas, having no Israeli settlements or military would have been met with great skepticism by Hamas. However, if it were true, Hamas would have wanted to position themselves to be as strong as possible in Gaza. Arguably, the best way to do this would be to consolidate political support in the wake of Arafat's death.

Though the withdrawal from Gaza was agreed to by the political leadership of Israel, the Palestinians and Hamas were far from certain that it would actually happen. The fact that Israel did not indicate that the PA had helped negotiate the withdrawal allowed Hamas to make a strong argument that four years of their fighting resulted in Israel pulling out of Gaza. Certainly, these ideas occurred to the Hamas leaders in December 2004.

### **5.3.7 Confluence of Events Conspire for Change in Hamas**

Toward the end of the Second *Intifada*, Hamas had experienced a number of transforming events, which provided something of a window of opportunity to leave behind the *intifada*. The preceding four years provided Hamas an opportunity to strive for one of its two primary goals, which was the reclamation of lost lands through violent

resistance with Israel. Now, after the culmination of four years of violence, Hamas stood at the precipice of seeing an opportunity to accomplish the other primary goal, the nationalisation of Hamas and an Islamic government. The culmination of events in late 2004 presented Hamas leaders with a choice to leave the *intifada* for the battleground of elective politics.

By December 2004, there were seven separate but related issues that influenced the way Hamas leadership viewed their options: 1) the weakened state of its militant capacity after nearly three years of assassinations and arrests of operatives, 2) new security barriers between the West Bank and Israel, which made attack operations significantly more challenging, 3) the emergence of a new generation of leadership at the helm of Hamas due to the deaths of Sheikh Yassin and Rantisi, 4) the death of Yasser Arafat, 5) the overwhelming number of Palestinians (87.8%) that believed the Palestinian Authority was corrupt, 6) the slowly declining Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israelis (49.4%) and 7) the confirmation by the Israeli Government on 9 December 2004 that Israel would be withdrawing troops and settlements from Gaza. Independently, these events may or may not have prompted changes within the thinking of Hamas about its future. Collectively, they presented an opportunity.

After dozens of interviews with Hamas leaders, the number one justification the leaders provide for moving into elective politics was that the people wanted it. There has never been a single external influence mentioned for this shift. Further, it is likely that the transition was a process that took months and was not a single decision made by the group.

For three years, the Israelis carried out a campaign of arrests and assassinations of leadership and militant operatives. This would fatigue any group. The fact that the Hamas leadership never mentions the Israeli Targeted Prevention Programme does not mean that the group did not want the arrests and assassinations to stop. As such, even if it was not a primary motivator, it must have given the Hamas leadership some satisfaction to know that if it stopped its violent campaign with Israel, even if it was just a temporary respite from the attack position, the arrests and assassinations would stop.

After the death of Sheikh Yassin and Rantisi, Khalid Mishal and the Politburo became firmly in control of the Shura Council. The interest expressed by the group months earlier to put in place a *hudna* with Israel had been met with resistance by Israel. So, in October 2004, Hamas issued a unilateral ceasefire with Israel (Scham 2009; and Ben Israel 2006: 25). The exercise of leadership by Mishal and the Shura Council represented the changing of the guard for the group.

Toward the end of 2003, the Palestinian *Support for Violence* had dropped below 50% for the first time in over three years. By the end of 2004, the support level remained below 50%. Though still high, Hamas had demonstrated a clear penchant for following the population. The population was demonstrating signs of fatigue for conflict with Israel and so was al-Qassam, evidenced by their declining number and lethality of attacks. Several off the record interviews suggested that the Palestinian people and Hamas leadership had grown weary of the stresses that went along with combating Israel.

Together, these separate but related issues created a confluence of events that ultimately shaped the outlook of Hamas leaders. Subsequently, in the months after Arafat's death, the number of Hamas led attacks against Israelis declined through the beginning of 2005. The *intifada* is thought by some as formally ending with the 8 February 2005 agreement at Sharm el-Sheikh when President Abbas of the PA and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon declared their intent to work toward an end of the *intifada*. This end date is debated because groups like PIJ and on occasion Hamas continued to launch attacks through 2006, though the total number were considerably less than the previous four years.

Armed groups moving into elective politics is not a new concept. But the idea that such a decision by Hamas would ultimately lead to elective politics, which would lead to moderation was a relic of lessons learnt by scholars of other groups. In December 2004, the idea that Hamas's electoral interests would result in moderation of violent interests seemed incomprehensible to those intimately involved in the conflict. So, in the following chapter, we will look into the issues that shaped Hamas resistance from 2005 to 2013 and then we can begin debating as to whether the group's move into elective politics was a move that moderated the group.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Political Era (January 2005 – June 2014)**

Once Hamas decided to enter elective national politics, they had to shift the focus of the organisation from projected violence inside Israel to campaigning inside the West Bank and Gaza. The ‘about face’, shifting from violence to campaigning, did not happen overnight as can be seen by infrequent Hamas attacks throughout the winter and spring of 2005. The shift in priorities for the group had two important components: 1) all within the organisation had to be on board with the plan, including the al-Qassam fighters or the campaigning would have been undermined and 2) the group had to elevate Fatah as its primary antagonist, even only if it were a political rival for the time being. This shift should be understood as a seismic shift within the organisation; one that required the Politburo and the Shura Council to meet with all members of the organisation to ensure that each could put their anger at Israel aside to take on the all-important task of defeating Fatah in national elections.

For the time being, let us distinguish between three groups inside Hamas, those that support Hamas in its quest for political Islam in Palestine, those that support violence resistance with Israel and those that support both causes. Shifting the group that supports Hamas engaging in the political process to transform society into political Islam is relatively straightforward. Asking those that believe Hamas should drive the enemy out through violence is more difficult. Within the ranks of the al-Qassam fighters there was ample skepticism toward the Hamas leadership laying down arms with Israel to fight for political leadership with Fatah (Hamas leaders, pers.comm., 2007-2013). After all, they had been engaged in mortal combat with a hated enemy. These skeptics had to be encouraged to go along with the new strategy for Hamas, for the political efforts to work. It is really not too hard to imagine how these conversations

may have gone. In any event, the Hamas leadership worked to establish a period of calm by reducing attacks against Israel for the purpose of setting the ‘cross-hairs’ at Fatah. Israel reciprocated by not killing Hamas senior leaders. So, the fight between Hamas and Fatah was on.

In campaigning, the Democrats are the sworn enemy to the Republicans as the Tories are to Labour. Similar to the politics in the United States and the United Kingdom, Hamas and Fatah waged battle through ideas for the hearts and minds of Palestinians. This battle waged for nearly one year and in a surprise outcome, Hamas defeated Fatah. The election outcome set forth a series of changes within the organisation that would include fighting a brief civil war against Fatah for control of Gaza. It further strengthened Hamas’s claim to be the democratic representatives of Palestinians. It also ushered forth an age in which the weaponry of Hamas would advance at a faster pace than before because of sponsors like Hizballah and Iran.

Within the Political Era there are two distinct sub-eras, heretofore entitled the Campaign Era and the Governance Era. Descriptions for each era can be found in the respective sections within the chapter. The Political Era begins in January 2005 because the data suggests that Hamas had begun to transition away from the *intifada* toward elective national politics about that time. The era ends arbitrarily in the June of 2014 (after the 2<sup>nd</sup> reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah) only because there needed to be an endpoint for the qualitative analysis of the thesis. Like Chapter 5, this chapter will articulate those issues that shifted the manifestations of Hamas resistance, either radically or ever so slightly. It will also refer back to lessons learnt in Chapter 4.

### **6.1 Campaign Era (January 2005 – May 2007)**

The campaign era began when Hamas determined to stand for elective national politics. The end of the era occurred when Hamas and Fatah engaged in a civil war for the leadership of Gaza. The era is marked with Hamas running on a platform of moral legitimacy as an extension of Allah through ‘Change & Reform’ while casting Fatah as a morally corrupt group of criminals. To leave the *intifada* behind, Hamas needed to articulate a message for Palestinians that would highlight their resistance credentials, but subtly transform themselves into a group capable of political leadership. The following



statement made by Mousa Abu Marzouk, shows how they articulated such a message (Perry 2010: 130):

We will continue the struggle to provide national unity, to stop Israeli aggression. We will participate in Palestinian elections, we will establish the framework for rebuilding the Palestine Liberation Organisation to represent all Palestinians, we will offer a truce with Israel, and we will continue our work to make certain that Israel abandons the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem. We do not endorse murder, but we support resistance.

Beginning the public campaign to transform from a group focused on militancy required more than a simple articulation on what the political aims would be in relationship to Israel, it also required the group to address the legitimacy of the previous four years of fighting. The group had to legitimise the number of suicide bombers who lost their lives in resistance operations. To characterise the sacrifice these bombers made and to legitimise the fighting as a platform to carry on a political effort, the spokesman of Hamas, Osama Hamdan said (MEMRI 2008):

As for the claim that the martyrdom operations took place in the wrong political circumstances - I think the opposite is true. In many cases, [Palestinian] concessions were due as a result of the Palestinian political helplessness, and the martyrdom operations came to rescue this political helplessness. True, the negotiations would have stopped, but this would have canceled many Palestinian commitments, which in itself was an accomplishment. Some people try to deny this, but an accomplishment it is, whether they like it or not.

Finally, Hamas had to convince Palestinian voters that Hamas was a better option than Fatah. To succeed, Hamas needed to walk the tight rope between self-aggrandising and casting too negative a picture of their fellow resistance group, Fatah. The latter, they felt, could be done in local politicking and by the press. An exchange between a Jewish reporter for the Haartz and the Hamas leader in the West Bank, Sheikh Hassan Yousef, on 14 April 2005 shows how Hamas walked this political tight rope (Rubinstein 2005):

**Reporter's Question:** It is commonly thought that the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza supports Hamas not necessarily because of its political views, but because the Palestinians are fed up with the government corruption in the Fatah movement. Do you agree?

**Sheikh Ahmed Yousef's Answer:** The claims against the government and Fatah are not only about corruption. When there is talk about the Hamas movement, people have faith in us. They see in our institutions places that

operate on the basis of fairness and honesty, institutions that provide real help to residents. These institutions are known. These are social, welfare and educational institutions with dedicated workers who serve the public.

### **6.1.1 Change & Reform: The Bumpy Transition to Elective National Politics**

The decision to enter into a post-*intifada* phase was by all accounts determined within Hamas by the end of 2004. The death of Yasser Arafat had opened the door for elective national politics. Although it became evident early that Mahmoud Abbas would likely replace Arafat as President of the Palestinian Authority, it did not matter much to Hamas. Hamas did not care for the PA because, to them, it was the relic of the illegitimate Oslo Accords. Though the Presidential election was not something Hamas would pursue, they showed a great deal of interest in the local elections scheduled to begin in Jericho and 25 villages in the West Bank in late December 2004. These local elections for districts across the West Bank and Gaza were to extend into the spring of 2005, to be followed by national elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council. These elections interested Hamas enough for them to overcome their objections to the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority. The decision to establish the affiliated political party 'Change & Reform' and to strive for elective national politics was some months and several favourable outcomes away.

In early December 2004, *Support for Hamas* and *Support for Violence* against Israel was 17.6% and 49.4% respectively. In October, November and December, Hamas militants had attacked Israeli targets on several occasions, indicating that the transition from violence to politics had not yet been directed across the organisation. On 23 December 2004, local elections for Municipal Councils were held in Jericho and 25 villages in the West Bank. Fatah won 17 of the 26 councils. But, Hamas won 9 and collected 75 of the 210 (35.7%) contested seats. A month later (BBC 2005), on 27 January 2005, Municipal Council elections were held in 10 districts in Gaza with Hamas winning 7 of the 10 municipal councils garnering 78 of the 118 (66%) of the available seats. The victory by Hamas surprised not only Hamas, it sent a loud and clear signal to the Palestinian people that Hamas was politically viable. This turn of events surprised Mahmoud Abbas and the leaders of Fatah and created dissension in the ranks. In an effort to establish his leadership, Abbas, after being elected President on 9 January 2005,

called for national unity and ultimately established, with the help of President Mubarak from Egypt, the ‘Cairo Talks’.

Prior to the beginning of the Cairo Talks in mid-March 2005, *Popular Support for Hamas* had risen to 25.1%, while the *Support for Violence* fell to 37.5%. Hamas had also refrained from launching attacks on Israel since mid-January. The Cairo summit brought together 16 different Palestinian factions to discuss common principles upon which the different factions could agree. All 16 factions, including the Palestinian Authority, Fatah and Hamas signed the Cairo Agreement articulating six principles, which included (al-Zaytouna 2005): 1) right to resistance, 2) right of return for refugees, 3) a period of calm providing Israel halts aggression against land and people and release of Palestinian detainees, 4) total reform through a democratic process, 5) reform of the PLO, which allowed PIJ and Hamas to join and 6) national unity through dialogue between factions. The agreement opened the way for Hamas to believe that they would be able to participate in national level elections particularly seeing the vehicle for a revamped PLO available. For Hamas, the Cairo Agreement meant for the first time that it would embark upon a campaign for national elective leadership.

The Gaza local election defeat of Fatah exposed great fault lines within Fatah and demonstrated a need for President Abbas to address the public perception of corruption with the PA and the party. At this point, 87% of Palestinians believed that there was corruption in the PA institutions led by Fatah. According to Hamas Parliamentarian, Dr. Ayman Daraghmeh (pers.comm., 29 September 2012), it was a press conference by the PA Attorney General that reflected the sense that Hamas and the population were in harmony. Daraghmeh said, ‘in the spring of 2005, the Attorney General held a press conference saying that he was prosecuting 150 cases of corruption within the PA and that hundreds of millions of Shekels were lost. It was then that we saw Hamas come into harmony with the people’. For years, Fatah had been in control of the government with little to show in the way of development. Now, after fifteen years of providing welfare services to Palestinians and five years of intense conflict with Israel, spilling more blood than their political opponents, the electorate had the opportunity to consider Hamas as political alternative to the corrupt Fatah.

After the late January election victory in Gaza and the building momentum, Fatah leaders were pushing Abbas to delay or cancel the third and final round of municipal elections scheduled for 76 villages in the West Bank and 8 in Gaza. To comply with the recently signed Cairo Agreement, Abbas had no choice but to allow the elections to proceed despite internal protests. On 5 May 2005, Hamas dealt another political blow to Fatah by winning the municipal councils in Rafah, Beit Laia and al-Buraij. Though Fatah won 50 of the municipal councils to Hamas's 28, the fact that Hamas defeated Fatah in the urban centres was a problem for the Fatah leadership. After initial announcements and agreements that new elections in the urban centres would be called, the election results stood. A month later *Popular Support for Hamas* had risen to 30.1%. Palestinian *Support for Violence* increased from 37.5% in March to 46.3% on 9 June 2005. Less than one week later Hamas operatives fired a Qassam Rocket killing one Israeli.

In June 2005, the Palestinian Legislative Council, led by Fatah, increased the number of seats from 88 to 132 and instituted a proportional and majority electoral system. Each voter was to be given two ballots, a proportional and district ballot. On the proportional ballot, the voter could choose the party (e.g. Fatah, Hamas, PFLP, etc.) that they wanted to represent them. Half of the 132 PLC seats would be elected through this vote. If Fatah, for example, won 50% of the vote, they would be awarded with 33 of the PLC seats. On the district ballot, the voter would be allowed to cast an equal number of votes, as were seats open in the district. If two seats were available, the person could cast two votes. The votes could be cast for one person or could be split amongst the multiple candidates. The candidate/party that received the most votes in the district voting would be the victor for the district in the majority system. For example, if a Fatah candidate received more votes than candidates from the other parties, Fatah would win the PLC district seats. All totalled the majority system in the districts accounted for the second half of the 132 PLC seats. This electoral structure would become critical to the election outcome.

In August 2005, on the heels of the Hamas local election success, the Israelis began their unilateral withdrawal from Gaza. The order from the Government of Israel was that those Israeli citizens that voluntarily accepted the government compensation packages needed to be vacated from their Gaza home by 15 August 2005. The Israel Defense

Force would evict all other residents choosing not to evacuate on 12 September 2005. Meanwhile on 20 August, Mahmoud Abbas and Hamas agreed on the date of national elections for the Palestinian National Council. Those elections were to be held on 25 January 2006. Prior to the final evacuation of Settlers in Gaza, there were campaign posters from Fatah and Hamas adorning an intersection in Gaza City (Bennet 2005). The Hamas poster read, '(f)our years of sacrifice beat 10 years of negotiations'. Fatah banner's had a less emphatic message, 'Withdrawal from Gaza means a reawakening of the Palestinian Economy'. A few days later, Hamas operatives kidnapped and killed an Israeli man in Jerusalem in what was the final attack against Israelis for months to come. With the benefit of hindsight, the events in Gaza, driven mainly by Israel, looked to favour Hamas more than the Palestinian Authority because the Israelis claimed that the withdrawal was not done through negotiation with the Palestinian Authority. Consequently, Hamas was able to claim that the Gaza withdrawal by Israel was the result of the Al-Aqsa *Intifada*. The Palestinian Authority was not in a position to articulate a stronger alternative explanation to the Palestinian people.

As the different factions were ramping up their campaigns, Hamas had three simple campaign messages: 1) we're honest, 2) we drove Israel from Gaza – Hamas resistance works and 3) we've been providing social services in the absence of Palestinian Authority services – we can do better with the government than they can. When Hamas registered the political party for the impending elections, they registered under the name, 'Reform and Change'. Even the party name was a swipe at their political rivals. By early December 2005, *Hamas Support* seemingly remained stagnant at 28%, while Fatah's support rose from 38% in September to 45%. Also increasing during the time period was the *Support for Violence* against Israelis, which rose from multiyear lows of 37% in September to 40% in December. Hamas responded with three attacks within two weeks of the poll being published, killing 7 and injuring 11 Israelis.

As the January election neared, there was a good deal of international attention paid to the possible outcomes. Given PSR's leading position as the preeminent polling institution in the Palestinian Territories, many international envoys and delegations paid a visit to Dr. Shikaki asking him his thoughts on the election outcome. Most wondered whether Hamas had a chance to win the elections. During the months of December 2005 and January 2006, Dr. Shikaki briefed international delegations, including a group

from the Council on Foreign Relations led by Henry Sigmund and senior diplomatic envoys from the US and elsewhere, on the possibility of a Hamas victory. Shikaki (pers.comm., 13 February 2014) argued that Hamas stood a reasonably good chance of winning, despite trailing in the polls because Hamas was working very hard to win the district level and the electoral format did not necessarily award victory to group with the highest popular support. Further, Shikaki argued, Hamas was fielding one candidate in many of the districts while Fatah was fielding multiple candidates, likely splitting their vote. After briefing a senior US Envoy, Shikaki met with senior leaders within Fatah, including Marwan Barghouti's wife, Mohammed Dhalan and others. At the meeting Shikaki explained what he had been telling the delegations and envoys. According to Shikaki, the Fatah leaders were stunned by what they were hearing and began to realise that they did not understand the electoral system that they designed earlier in the year. The fact that the electoral logic escaped Fatah and not Hamas is a testament to the organisation and execution of the campaigns. It also demonstrates that Hamas was working with a sense of unity, while Fatah was in disharmony.

On 21 December 2005, the Government of Israel indicated that they would prevent voting in East Jerusalem out of security precautions (AP 2005). Israel's objection stemmed from the inclusion of militant Hamas in the election. Because Israel and the Palestinian Authority were concerned about a Hamas election victory, they debated the idea of cancelling or postponing the election indefinitely. It is likely that the East Jerusalem issue was a pretext to accomplish this. The author is aware from various sources and his own work that President George W. Bush was consulted by both PA and Israeli leadership on whether to allow the elections to go forward in January 2006. After being briefed about Khalil Shikaki's arguments on the possibility of a Hamas victory, President Bush told his Middle East counterparts that the election should go forward as scheduled (Indyk 2009: 382-383). On 10 January 2006, President Abbas said (BBC 2006), 'US President George W Bush [the day prior] had given him a personal assurance that Palestinian residents [in Jerusalem] would be able to vote'. Later in the day the Israeli Cabinet issued the following statement (BBC 2006), 'Israel will follow the same policy as in the 1996 elections, which means it will allow people to vote in five post offices in East Jerusalem'.

The stage was set. Hamas had campaigned hard and used the perception of corruption in the PA and Fatah to its advantage. Hamas had further cemented the corruption charges into the psyche of the population. The poll immediately following the election showed that 91.3% of the population thought the PA led by Fatah was corrupt, the highest mark to date. Further, the split election process resulting in 66 seats being awarded for popular support and 66 seats being awarded based upon district level voting meant that the political party that put only one candidate in the district elections would likely fair better than a political party that campaigned with multiple candidates. This meant that Hamas's efforts to put only one candidate in the district elections would be a deciding factor in the election outcome.

As the election results began to roll in, it was clear to Hamas and Fatah leaders before the day's end that Hamas would be the election victor. The electoral system designed by Fatah some seven months earlier became their demise. The proportional voting had Hamas capture 44% of the vote to Fatah's 42%. It is important to say that if proportional voting would have been the voting method used, Fatah would have been the victor because it would have been impossible for Hamas to build a ruling coalition that would have given them a greater than 50% coalition. Hamas was willing to accept a proportional system, but Fatah had set the design to be only half proportional. As the voting results were counted, it was clear that Hamas decimated Fatah in the district election, winning 68.2% of the seats to Fatah's 25.8%, primarily due to the single Hamas candidates competing with multiple candidates of Fatah. Combining the election results together, Hamas won 56% of the PLC seats, while Fatah won only 33%. Figure 63 shows the final election results (PCEC 2006).

**Figure 63. 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council Election Results**

	Political Affiliation	No. of seats in the lists [proportional]	No. of seats in the districts [Majority]	Total No. of seats
1	Change and Reform	29	45	74
2	Fatah Movement	28	17	45
3	Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa	3	0	3
4	The Third Way	2	0	2
5	The Alternative	2	0	2
6	Independent Palestine	2	0	2
7	Independents	0	4	4
	Total	66	66	132

The takeaway from the election is that Fatah had no idea how popular or not they were and did not understand the logic of the electoral system that they designed. Hamas executed a very disciplined campaign and demonstrated their ability to be an organised strategic body that could set aside the resistance campaign to win in elective politics. The question for the world was whether the responsibility of governance would moderate their violent resistance agenda. In an interview with Tzipi Livni (pers.comm., 24 March 2009), the Israeli Foreign Minister under Ariel Sharon, she offered her views on the election victory of Hamas:

Political parties in a democracy must show respect for democracy. It would be helpful if there were a universal code for elections that prevented radicals from being involved. I spoke to the US Government about this and they gave two excuses for not requiring Palestinian election participants to renounce violence ahead of the elections: 1) Hamas won't win and 2) responsibility moderates.

Livni also conceded that the withdrawal from Gaza might have gone better for Israel had Israel indicated that it had determined to do so through negotiation with the Palestinian Authority. The White House Senior Policy Director for the Middle East, Elliot Abrams, also said (pers.comm., 10 May 2008), 'Ariel Sharon was dealing with internal politics on the Gaza withdrawal and did not want to indicate to hardliners in Israel that the decision was reached in a compromise to the Palestinians. The concern was that the religious Settlers would have created more problems than they did as a unilateral withdrawal'. In response to prompting with the notion that the Settlers could have been called Zionist heroes for once again sacrificing for Israel, Abrams responded, 'Sharon told me something similar a few months after the withdrawal'.



2005 shaped up to be a very good year for Hamas. A series of steps by their antagonists positioned them to win the election and they executed their campaign to perfection. Reflecting after the election on 26 April 2006, Issat al-Rishiq, a Hamas Politburo member and the head of its Election Committee, gave the following explanation of Hamas entry into national elective politics (Tamimi 2011: 210):

The decision by the Islamic Resistance Movement [Hamas] to participate in the legislative elections was reached after extensive deliberations and thorough consultations. All of the movement's leading institutions and organs inside and outside Palestine were consulted, including the movement's captives inside the prisons of the Zionist occupation. It was agreed that our participation should in no way prejudice our commitment to safeguard our people's legitimate rights and to protect the programme of resistance as a strategic option until the occupation comes to an end. The decision was in some respects a response to the popular sentiment and in fulfillment of our people's desire to see all Palestinian factions participate in the political process. It also took into account the outcome of the movement's assessment of the radical changes, which have taken place inside Palestine thanks to the resistance, the *intifada* and the sacrifices our people have made over the past years.

Tzipi Livni spoke of the argument that 'responsibility moderates'. This is the same notion that Max Weber articulated when he said that political groups are in tension between responsibilities and values. Though to this point, Hamas had been politically active in the Territories, they had not yet adorned the yoke of government. The remainder of the chapter will look at how Hamas balanced their new role as elected governors with their values as a violent resistance movement and looks further into Livni's statement that 'responsibility moderates'.

### **6.1.2 The Road From Election Victory to Failure in Reconciliation with Fatah**

The morning after the elections, the world woke to scores of articles claiming a Hamas electoral victory. The New York Times wrote (Erlanger 2006), 'Hamas claims victory and upends Mideast politics'. The Haaretz read (Rosner 2006), 'Bush urges Abbas to remain in office despite Hamas victory'. The Associated Press read (Leicester 2006), 'Foreign Leaders Shocked at Hamas Win'. The Islamic world was both delighted and concerned. Those countries, like Jordan and Saudi Arabia saw the Hamas victory as a threat to their regimes from more militant groups. Other Islamic leaders (AP 2006a) called for the international community to respect the results and give 'Hamas a chance'.

The shock was most acute for Fatah. For forty years Fatah had been ruling Palestinian politics and now they were soundly defeated by a group of religious devotees and fighters that wanted an Islamic state in lieu of the secular state. Western democratic countries were also in shock, because generally the common notion was that democracy was to be won by groups that played by international norms and laws. Hamas did not represent that. Over the course of the weeks and months to come, Hamas would find out the difference between winning an election and being able to govern.

Because Hamas won a majority of the PLC seats, it did not need to form a coalition government. Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah remained as the President of the PA, while Hamas now had the Prime Minister, Ismail Haniyeh and the PLC. The international community, including Europe and the United States, the largest funders of the PA, stopped sending money to the PA, because they did not want the funds to go to Hamas. Further, the taxes collected in the Territories, in the first instance, go to the Israeli Government and are then dispersed to the PA. The Israelis, too, withheld funding from the PA as a result of the Hamas election victory, perhaps signaling that they did not actually think that ‘responsibility moderates’. By March 2006, Hamas had begun to realise that a ‘unity government’ or consociation (Kerr 2005: 26-40) formed between Hamas and the PA, led by Abbas and Fatah would be the only chance it had in rescuing financial support for the divided Palestinian government.

Some eleven months earlier, in February 2005, the Israelis and the Palestinian Authority signed an agreement ending the Al-Aqsa *Intifada*. Though Hamas had not signed the agreement, it abided by the ceasefire provision. By the spring of 2006, Hamas leaders in Gaza and Damascus sent a messenger to Yuval Diskin (pers.comm., 6 December 2012), then Director of the Shin Bet, suggesting that the Hamas would be willing to sign a ceasefire with Israel on particular conditions. Hamas agreed to refrain from attacking Israel and would prevent other Palestinian factions from doing so in exchange for ‘guarantees that the Israeli army [and security services] won’t attack militants [members of Hamas] in the West Bank and Gaza’ (AP 2006a).

An altercation between Hamas and Israeli on 9 June 2006 threatened to end the ceasefire. Israeli officials claim that Hamas fired a Qassam rocket into Israel. The IDF responded by targeting the vehicle the militants were driving when fleeing the site of the

rocket launch, killing three. Later in the day, multiple reports claimed (CNN 2006) (Harel 2006) that the Israeli Navy fired shells at what was suspected to be a munitions compound in Beit Lahya, nearby where the rocket was launched. The reports indicated that the navy gunboat shells errantly struck a beach with sunbathers, killing as many as eight and injuring near 20. Mahmoud Abbas condemned the attack as a, 'bloody massacre' (CNN 2006). Hamas responded by calling off the ceasefire that it maintained since February 2005, launching a dozen rockets into Israel in response.

Despite the incident which caused such Palestinian and international uproar, on 15 June 2006, Hamas spokesman Ghazi Hamad said, 'Hamas wanted quiet and were interested in a ceasefire everywhere'. The following exchange on NPR explains the Hamas offer and the Israeli response to the incidents in Gaza on 9 June 2006 (Gradstein 2006):

Mr. RAZI HAMAD (Spokesman, Hamas): (Through Translator) I spoke today to Prime Minister and he said we definitely want quiet. We are interested in a ceasefire everywhere.

GRADSTEIN: Hamas and other key Palestinian factions agreed to halt attacks on Israel 16 months ago. But Hamas announced it was abandoning the truce last week after an explosion on a Gaza beach that killed eight Palestinian civilians. Palestinian officials blamed Israel for the deaths. After investigating the incident, Israeli officials said their forces were not involved, but an expert from the group, Human Rights Watch, said it appeared the deaths were the result of Israeli artillery fire. In the wake of the beach killings, Hamas militants fired dozens of rockets into Southern Israel prompting a warning from Israel's intelligence chief, who said Israeli forces would begin targeting Hamas leaders unless the rocket fire stopped. The Hamas spokesman said renewal of the ceasefire is contingent on a halt to Israeli air and artillery attacks in Gaza. That brought this response from Israeli Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mark Regev.

Mr. MARK REGEV (Spokesman, Israeli Foreign Ministry): Our operations in Gaza are purely defensive. They are responsive to the continuous volleys of missiles that are fired from Gaza into Israeli communities, Israeli cities, Israeli farms in the Western Negev area. If they cease their attacks, there's no reason for Israel to act.

GRADSTEIN: Israeli officials say rocket attacks by Hamas have largely subsided already, but militants from the hard-line Islamic Jihad faction are not holding back. Today they fired five rockets at Southern Israel. One crashed into an industrial zone in the town of Sderot. One Israeli was slightly wounded.

PSR polling in March 2006 indicated that 52.4% of Palestinians supported violence against Israel, up from 40.2% in December 2005. This is the one clear example in which Hamas maintained restraint against using violent resistance when there was such a marked increase in *Support for Violence* against Israel. Such restraint demonstrates that Hamas's priority during this era was in consolidating its election gains and not the continuation of violence against Israel. The March 2006 poll indicated that 36.7% of Palestinians supported Hamas, while Fatah had 34.4% of the support. A few days after the Gaza beach incident, PSR conducted a poll in which Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israel had increased to 56.1% with *Hamas Support* falling to 32.9%. A week later, Hamas, once again, responded with an attack inside Israel, killing three and injuring four. The attack conducted by al-Qassam was led by Ahmed Jabri, its senior commander, and became infamous because the attack also resulted in the kidnapping of Israeli Army Corporal, Gilad Shalit.

The abduction of Corporal Gilad Shalit occurred just days after Prime Minister Haniyeh and Ghazi Hamad were calling for 'quiet'. The militant operation was conducted through tunnels near the Kerem Shalom crossing in Southern Gaza. Later the same day, in an apparent coordinated effort by Hamas militants, Eliyahu Asheri, an Israeli high school student from the settlement of Itamar, was kidnapped and found killed days later. The events exposed a tactical fault-line between Hamas political and military leaders at the time. The political leaders in Hamas had been sending overtures to the Israelis for several months prior calling for a ceasefire, even calling for 'quiet', just ten days prior. Yet, al-Qassam operatives kidnapped Shalit and Asheri in what was a very provocative act for the group that desired a temporary suspension of violence. The kidnappings demonstrated that either the Hamas political leadership were negotiating in bad faith or that the al-Qassam Leader Mohammed Deif or other Qassam operatives were not fully behind the political interests of Hamas in the ceasefire discussion. It could have been possible that the Hamas was attempting to use the act to strengthen the case for a ceasefire, but that counters the 'quiet' objective stressed by Hamas's Gaza leaders.

According to Diskin (pers.comm., 6 December 2012), the political leadership had no hand in the kidnappings and that the Shalit kidnapping was an action led by Ahmed Jabari, then Deputy of al-Qassam. Diskin further explained that during the entire duration of Shalit's incarceration by Hamas, 'only Jabari and a few of his lieutenants

knew where Shalit was being kept'. Diskin also explained, 'Mishal didn't understand what took place in Gaza and that he was disconnected [from the Shalit operation] and that Zahar [ Hamas leader in Gaza] tried to influence the outcome of Shalit'. The implications of Diskin's arguments are that the al-Qassam conducted the operation against Israel at the same time the political leaders were trying to establish a ceasefire. It is possible that the two were part of the grand strategy of the group, but the evidence suggests that the political and military leaders had different agendas and tactics.

While Hamas was working to consolidate its hold on PA institutions, the Israelis became incensed by the Shalit abduction of 25 June. Four days later, the IDF launched a massive operation to arrest the newly elected Hamas Ministers and Parliamentarians. Hamas spokesman, Mushir al-Masri said of the arrests (Waked 2006), 'a grave precedent, an international crime and an open declaration of war against the Palestinian people'. A senior Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade (Fatah) commented on the arrests (Waked 2006), 'In response that the wave of arrests will lead all Palestinian organisation to resume their policy of terror attacks against Israel'. The Israeli leaders interviewed for this research claimed that the arrests were part of reducing the group's capacity to wage violence against Israel, particularly the capacity to kidnap Israeli soldiers. Without doubt, the ramped up Israeli operations were in response to the kidnapping.

Months earlier, Palestinian prisoners from various factions, including Hamas and Fatah, drafted the 'Prisoners National Reconciliation Document'. The document called for the creation of a Palestinian State in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, an Israeli withdrawal to pre-1967 borders and the right of return of Palestinian refugees (Hardy 2006). In an effort to force Hamas to compromise, President Abbas called on Hamas to create a unity government with Fatah or to accept a national referendum on the 'Prisoners National Reconciliation Document' on 26 July 2006. In mid-June 2006, a PSR survey showed that 77% of Palestinians supported the 'Prisoners Document', but only 47% would vote for it in a referendum (PCPSR 2006: 20). Hamas reconciled with Fatah on 27 June 2006 to form a national unity government (BG 2006).

On 29 June 2006, in a large operation, the IDF entered the West Bank and East Jerusalem to arrest some 60 members of Hamas, including several Ministers, Parliamentarians and operatives. During the operation, the IDF found the body of

kidnapped Eliyahu Asheri (BG 2006). Hamas Parliamentarian, Dr. Ayman Daraghmeh, provided a description of his various incarcerations by Israel after he was elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council. According to Daraghmeh (pers.comm., 9 December 2012):

Since June 2006, 47 PLC members of Hamas in the West Bank have spent 90% of time in jail. The charges are unclear because the court is secret but the main charge is being part of the Reform & Change Party. I've spent time in the Israeli jails in Ofra, Negev and Hadarim. The worst thing is that you are in jail. At the time we ran Israel did not object. It is very bad that you are far away from your family. The last time I was arrested, they came at 2am. I had two minutes with my family before they put me in a car between soldiers. They put a scarf on my eyes and drive around 10 hours. I asked for a toilet and they said, 'no place, you have to wait'. Then I arrived to jail. I sat with interrogators for 2-3 hours with them asking questions. I knew nothing, just that I was arrested...Each morning we'd have to come out at 6am for the Israelis to count us. Then we'd have one hour to exercise in a small yard. Afterwards, ten people would be put in a small room until 6pm. We had a television that we could watch that had six channels, including BBC, Palestine, MPC, and 3 Israeli stations. We were allowed out once per day for 30 minutes. Amongst the prisoners there is governance and common rules like when there could be no TV or rules about eating dinner. Each room elected one man. Each section had between 90-100 prisoners. The representatives would represent the rooms with the jail administrators. Everyone worried about life dream and about release. Sometimes, every 6 months [we'd] go to court not knowing [what would happen]. Since 1967 there is a mutual respect [between prisoners and guards]. Many administrative guards have been beaten and killed. They've come to the conclusion that they should not speak badly to the prisoners. All times, both sides try to make it easy.

Two weeks after the arrest and detention of many of the Hamas PLC Members and the day before the beginning of the Israel/Lebanon War of 2006, the Israeli Security Services and the IDF launched an attack on al-Qassam leadership in Gaza. According to Diskin, 'we had intel that many Hamas military guys were meeting with political guys. We sent two bombs. One didn't explode; the other went to the wrong side of the house. Deif escaped. Bombs were sent later than they should have been because it took time to get approval'. After explaining the incident, Diskin wryly remarked, 'God was with them'. The 11 July 2006 attack did not kill the al-Qassam Commander Deif, but it did severely injure him. A few days later, Ahmed Jabari replaced Deif as the commander of the Military Wing.

The day after the bombing in Gaza by the Israelis, Hizballah attacked IDF forces in the North. The quick escalation to war between the Lebanese armed group and Israel removed Hamas from the forefront of the IDF operations. The Hamas political leadership was still clamoring for a 'quiet' period, which would allow it to consolidate its political victory. To do so, it still needed to come to terms with President Abbas of the PA by coming to some power sharing accommodation that might encourage the international community to continue financial support of the PA. On 11 September 2006 (Erlanger & Myre), Abbas announced that he had reached agreement with Hamas on the formation of a unity government. The agreement marked the first time Hamas had been in position to take the functional leadership of some of the Palestinian governance infrastructure. Yet, without release of the taxes held by the Israelis or the foreign aid of the international community, the Hamas led government would be reliant upon Arab and regional donors to fund greatly reduced government operations. This certainly was not part of the hopes of Hamas on the heels of the election triumph.

One of the quietest periods of the Hamas resistance ensued after reaching agreement with Abbas. From July 2006 to June 2007, there were very few violent acts of Hamas against Israel. Roughly 10 unclaimed attacks that did occur during this period were mostly a result of militants in Gaza firing Qassam Rockets into Israel. Though we have discussed previously why these rocket attacks should be considered attacks or complicit attacks from Hamas, the low volume of violence further demonstrates the interest that Hamas had in consolidating political gains. The problem was that from March 2006 to June 2007, *Hamas Support* had fallen from 36.7% to 21.9%. *Support for Violence* remained slightly above 50% during this period. With Hamas attempts to lead the Palestinian Authority being checked by President Abbas, Israel and the international community, something had to give. That something was the building of tensions between Hamas and Fatah.

In March 2006, Hamas formed the government without the inclusion of Fatah. In April 2006, the United States and the European Union ceased sending aid to the Palestinian Authority. The US declared that it would only continue its humanitarian assistance through USAID organisations in the Palestinian Territories (Morro 2007). The Government of Israel also withheld the \$50million in monthly tax revenue from the Palestinian Territories. Together, the Western foreign aid and the tax money distributed

from Israel accounted for nearly 70% of the total revenue of the PA (Morro). The Hamas led government was able to bring in roughly \$50million from Middle East donors (Urquhart 2007), mostly Iran, to help the government, which was not enough to keep a divided government functioning. Meanwhile Abbas was attempting to use political leverage to bring Hamas and Fatah back into a unity government. In September 2006, Abbas announced that Hamas and Fatah had reached an agreement and that a unity government would be formed. While in negotiations of which Ministries would go to which group, the fiscal crisis in the Palestinian Territories grew. Employees of the PA would go unpaid for weeks or months at a time. The reconciliation was further undermined when violent clashes between armed factions of Hamas and Fatah claimed nearly 100 deaths before the end of 2006 (Morro 2006: 2). On 15 December 2006, fighting broke out between militant factions after Fatah forces injured 20 Hamas supporters at a rally. Fatah and Hamas exchanged criticism over the incident with Hamas claiming that Fatah had attempted to assassinate Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh (Al Jazeera 2006).

On 7 January 2007, President Abbas outlawed the 'Paramilitary Executive Force' set up by the Hamas Interior Ministry as a police force. Hamas responded with claims that it would double in size and resist any attempt to coopt it into Fatah's Presidential Guard (Boudreaux 2007). Tensions were eased when Fatah and Hamas agreed to a ceasefire on 31 January 2007 (Barzak). Tensions were eased further when King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia helped the factions come together under the Mecca Accord, which was signed into effect on 8 February 2007. The Accord was signed between Fatah and Hamas to form a national unity government, ideally that would end both the violence and the international aid blockade. The Accord established a new government with Fatah in control of nine Ministries and Hamas six. The two most important appointments for the international community were who was going to be in control of the Finance and Interior Ministries. The Finance Ministry had the responsibility for receipt of all funds. The obvious concern from the West was that these funds would be in some way direct to the violence agenda of Hamas. Salam Fayyad, an economist and the head of the Third Way Party, was appointed as Finance Minister. After the takeover of Gaza by Hamas, Abbas disbanded the government with Hamas and established the Palestinian National Authority, appointing Fayyad as Prime Minister. Hamas did not recognise the legitimacy of the PNA and maintained its own government with Haniyeh



as its Prime Minister. In the appointment of Fayyad, Abbas essentially had a manager of the day-to-day actions of the government and treasury of the Palestinian Authority, which Hamas was not part.

The PA and Fatah insisted that the Interior Minister, responsible for security operations in the Territories, be a member of Fatah. Dr. Hani Talab al-Qawasmi was appointed as Interior Minister. He previously served in the PA Ministry of Interior as Director of Administrative Affairs. According to Nasser Yousef (pers.comm., 25 February 2007), a senior member of Fatah and former head of the Palestinian National Security Forces, ‘the Israelis have about \$500million in collected taxes that it has not distributed to the PA since the Hamas election victory’. Yousef also explained how discussions related to peace with Israel were thought about in the deliberations over the unity government. Yousef said, ‘Hamas says that Fatah has made no progress for 10 years. Hamas is calculating its future, but when pressed about Fatah’s strategic choice to pursue peace with Israel, Hamas does not disagree with us. They say, “go ahead”’.

From the signing of the Mecca Accords to the end of May 2007 (Palestinian leaders pers.comm., passim), there were dozens of clashes between Fatah and Hamas militants that resulted in dozens of deaths and even more injured. By early June 2007, the fighting intensified in Gaza and the environment was set for a civil war between Hamas and Fatah.

## **6.2 Governance Era (June 2007 – June 2014)**

The Governance Era begins at the takeover of Gaza by Hamas in mid-June 2007. The era ends in June 2014. The era begins with the civil war between Hamas and Fatah for the future of Gaza. It transitions through significant changes to the tactics of resistance moving away from the intimacy of suicide bombings to the more distant rocket and mortar attacks. The era includes two wars between Hamas and Israel in Gaza, includes the implications of the rise and fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the sectarian conflict in Syria and ends with the implications of the second reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah. All totalled, there were significant changes to the Hamas resistance during this period, many of which may not be fully understood for some years to come.

### **6.2.1 No to Dinner. How About Lunch?**

By June 2007, the die was cast for the showdown to control Gaza. Many of the clashes that occurred throughout the spring between Fatah and Hamas forces in the Strip were a precursor to the impending fight. On 15 May 2007, five hundred members of Fatah's Presidential Guard crossed from Egypt into Gaza at the Rafah crossing. The Fatah forces were trained by Egyptian and US advisors in the Sinai to strengthen Abbas's hand when dealing with Hamas. While testifying before Congress on 23 May 2007, Lt. General Keith Dayton, President George W. Bush's Military Envoy to the Middle East, said about the training programme (Murphy 2007):

As a soldier, I believe there's a point when inaction, a wait-and-see attitude, is no longer an option. The situation has gotten to be quite dire in Gaza, we have a situation of lawlessness and outright chaos. This chaotic situation is why the [US] is focused on [helping] the legal, legitimate security forces in our effort to reestablish law and order.

The programme approved by the Bush Administration put \$40million into the training of 4,000 Presidential Guard troops that would be loyal to President Abbas (Wilson 2007). According to one Senior Palestinian (pers.comm., 2012), 'many of the persons being recruited to join the new PA force were not employed, some were homeless. They [PA] were not recruiting the best people for the training'. The Presidential Guard Troops entered Gaza with the permission of Israel.

Despite the increase in firepower for Fatah, the Hamas forces were prepared to fight. By 10 June 2007, Hamas launched an offensive against the Fatah forces and routed them in each and every engagement. There are numerous reports of vicious attacks by Hamas including the execution style shooting, dragging Fatah forces through the streets by their hair and the throwing of one Fatah fighter from the top of a building. Hamas deny these claims. Regardless, in the Palestinian vs. Palestinian fighting the Fatah forces were no match for Hamas. Late on 14 June 2007, Hamas had captured all Fatah security compounds and prepared to capture Abbas's Presidential Residence in Gaza the following day. On the night of 14 June, Abbas declared a State of Emergency and dismissed the Government of Hamas and the Prime Minister, Haniyeh. The next day after Hamas took the Presidential compound without a fight, Haniyeh made the

following comment (Urquart et al., 2007a), ‘I demand that all our people show calm and self-restraint and not take any action against those houses [Fatah] and compounds that contradicts the morals of our people’. In another news conference he said (Urquart et al., 2007b), ‘Mr. Abbas and his advisers had not considered the consequences [of the decision] and its effects on the situation on the ground’. Islam Shahawan, a spokesperson for Hamas, said on the Hamas radio station (Urquart 2007b), ‘the era of justice and Islamic rule have arrived’. When interviewing Ghazi Hamad (pers.comm., 24 March 2009), a senior Hamas leader in Gaza, about the events in Gaza on the week of 10 June 2007, he replied, ‘we knew they wanted to have us for dinner, so we had them for lunch’. Even though Abbas dismissed the Hamas led government, Hamas declared that it would continue to rule in Gaza to support the will of the people. The era of the Palestinian Authority run by Fatah in the West Bank and the Palestinian Authority run by Hamas in Gaza had arrived. So too, did the responsibility of governance for Hamas.

After the Fatah defeat in Gaza, Al-Aqsa fighters ransacked the Hamas Legislative Offices in the West Bank along with other forms of aggression toward Hamas. One of the most influential leaders of Hamas from Gaza is Mahmoud al-Zahar. In response to the Fatah attacks against Hamas interests in the West Bank, Zahar said (Erlanger 2007), ‘(i)f they continue to dismantle the local elections in the West Bank and punish Hamas there, the United States and Israel will face another surprise there’. Mr. Zahar was asked ‘how’ by Steven Erlanger of the New York Times. Zahar replied, ‘(t)he way we defend ourselves against Israel and this occupation’. Erlanger asked Zahar if that meant suicide attacks. Zahar replied, ‘(y)ou said that. We are ending the reign of the spies and collaborators in Fatah’.

Throughout the spring of 2007 while in the midst of factional fighting, Hamas had begun to use Qassam Rockets in greater numbers against southern Israeli towns. In one three-day stretch in May, Palestinians fired over 80 rockets at Israel (Wilson 2007). The shift in the use of force against Israel moved into a new era, one that was supported by military advisors and weapons shipments from Iran, Syria and Hizballah. For the most part, al-Qassam had added a new form of violent resistance to their repertoire, an air campaign of rockets and mortars. Yaakov Peri added (3 December 2012), ‘Now Hamas are in control of Gaza, which means they are in position to have control over smaller

factions, like PIJ and Al-Qaeda. This fact created disagreement between Damascus and Gaza’.

Controlling Gaza created a new reality for Hamas. For the first time, it had the full responsibility of providing all services to the population. It, too, gave Hamas another source of credibility and substantially changed the dynamic within Hamas to where all of the action for the group was considered to be inside Gaza, not out. Yet, its battle with Fatah was not over. After ‘licking their wounds’, the Palestinian Authority began to move in on the Hamas *dawa* network of the West Bank. By 2009, the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank had completely shuttered or taken control of all the Hamas welfare organisations throughout the West Bank. The shutting of these institutions forced Hamas to retreat to the historic confines of working through the Zakat of the mosque. The implications of this shuttering of programmes are not yet known. As discussed previously, it is unclear if the popular support of Hamas has been negatively impacted by the actions of the President Abbas. In an interview with several Palestinian legislators (pers.comm., 9 December 2012), they expressed dismay over the closing of these programmes, claiming that the PA had once again acted against the interest of Palestinians.

### **6.2.2 Gaza Tax, Tunnels, Egypt Border & Perceptions of Corruption<sup>25</sup>**

After the dust settled on the civil war between Hamas and Fatah in Gaza, Hamas had to get busy establishing its operational control of the PA’s agencies in Gaza. The problem is that Hamas had little money to put into the economic system of Gaza and did not have the financial assets assume payments to the existing civil servants. The situation was further complicated when the international community began to resume payments to the PA and Abbas in the West Bank. After the dissolution of the Unity Government in June 2006, Abbas appointed an internationally recognised Palestinian economist named Salaam Fayyed. The international community and the Israelis began to resume funding of the PA. In turn, the PA led by Abbas determined with its funders to continue paying PA employees in Gaza for staying home and not going to the office, which was now politically controlled by Hamas. To some extent the salaries of the roughly 70,000 PA

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<sup>25</sup> Note: much of the material for this section was obtained in interviews with various members of Hamas and other Palestinian leaders. Because most chose to remain ‘off the record’, I do not cite the person, date or location of the interview data.

employees helped keep the economy somewhat flowing after most employees had to go without pay for months during the standoff between Fatah and Hamas and the international embargo of funds. Eventually, the PNA Prime Minister, Salaam Fayyad and President Abbas determined that continuing to pay health and education workers in Gaza would not undermine the international community's approach of keeping Hamas from receiving funds that it could use for militant purposes.

The challenge presented by Abbas's decision to gut the ministries of employees hampered Hamas's ability to get its government up and running. Further, it forced Hamas to seek funds from other sources. Between 2007 and 2010, Hamas sought to fund the government through two primary means, international donors and tax revenue. Wealthy donors in the Gulf helped support the Hamas led government with hundreds of millions of dollars. The single greatest donor was Iran, which was providing nearly \$50million per year in cash and much more than that in military advice and material. The second avenue of funding extended from tax revenue on domestic products and imports from the tunnels with Egypt. From 2007 to 2013 there have been two separate expansions and contractions in the number of tunnels carrying goods between Egypt and Gaza. Prior to Mubarak being deposed, Hamas and tunnel operators were fighting against an Egyptian and Israeli effort to reduce the number of tunnels for fear of security problems. Once the Muslim Brotherhood won the elections in Egypt, the tunnels had a rapid increase in numbers and value to Hamas. Upon the deposing of Morsi and the Egyptian Government, the Egyptians have sought to close all tunnels, which crippled the tax revenue apparatus established through the tunnels. There is a strong relationship between the Hamas resistance programme and the financing of the government of Hamas. The dynamics between these two elements will be explored more thoroughly in this section.

Hamas government related expense and revenue data from Gaza is hard to come by. There are no ministries that publish any sort of data, so the numbers available to analysts come from insiders within Hamas or economists and journalists that are watching the events on the ground and attend the press conferences by different Hamas agencies. By 2011, Hamas had grown its government to be 27,000 employees. In contrast, the PA in the West Bank continued to bankroll tens of thousands of Gazans to not show up for work – except for those in the health and education sectors, which the PA continued to

pay. According to Hamas Deputy Prime Minister Ziad al-ZaZa, in December 2012 (Balousha 2013), Hamas had 42,000 employees and 5,000 temporary workers being paid by the government, costing \$41.3million for the month. Other sources claim that Hamas was able to account for nearly \$750million in revenue for 2012. So where did all this money come from?

According to Juan Zarate (2013), the international banking system is openly hostile to banks that hold funds for recognised terrorist organisations. One approach for Hamas to get around this problem is to engage in money laundering operations of some kind. Further, engaging in money laundering only exposes Hamas monies to potential of seizure by governments that do not take kindly to the organisation. To overcome this problem, Hamas carried financial contributions from the Gulf and Iran back into Gaza in suitcases. But, where does Hamas put this money? If it uses banks in Gaza that are part of the international financial system, the funds could be frozen by a foreign power. So, Hamas needed to establish its own banking system to hold its cash and to process payments for its employees. It is this type of banking system that Hamas uses to hold tax revenues and foreign aid and to process payments. Such a system was a far cry from the financial system it had set up to manage and run its *dawa* operations.

The crisis in Syria also cost Hamas millions in revenue from Iran. Hamas, for tactical and strategic reasons (described in Chp 3.5.6 and Chp 6.2.4) had to speak out against the violence of the Assad regime against the Muslim Brothers in Syria. Iran punished Hamas for taking the position, in part, by reducing the cash payments that it was providing to Hamas. A senior Palestinian source said that after the row between Iran and Hamas over Syria, that Iran reduced its \$150million annual aid by 60% or \$90million. The same source indicated that in an effort to make up this shortfall, Hamas began to tax cigarettes and was able to make up nearly \$50million. Seeing this, Iran invited a different Hamas leader, Mahmoud Zahar, to Tehran. After some deliberation, Iran resumed increased financial support to Hamas so as to not lose the influence over the group. It is unclear whether this support has returned to pre-Syrian crises levels.

Before Mubarak was deposed, the Egyptian government would coordinate activities with the Israelis to reduce the security threats posed by the tunnels in southern Gaza. In 2008 the Egyptians poured sand and concrete into many of the tunnels it discovered. In

other security operations, the first Gaza War between Israel and Hamas began as a result of Israel attempting to put an end to the barrage of rockets coming from Gaza. Many of those rockets were thought to have entered Gaza through the tunnel network. The Israeli Air Force launched a massive air campaign against the tunnel network in late December 2008. Operation Cast Lead was the name of the invasion of Gaza by the IDF known throughout this thesis as Gaza War I. The operation was intended to destroy the tunnels and stockpiles of weapons amassed by Hamas through those tunnels (Diskin pers.comm., December 2012; Greenberg 2008).

After the election of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas began to look at its southern border as a strategic asset. In addition to promoting the development of tunnels through which it could tax goods, it also began looking at the establishment of a de-facto state through internationally recognised free trade zone with Egypt. Though the free trade zone never materialised, under supervision of Hamas over 700 tunnels with 1,200 tunnel heads in Gaza were operational. According to Shikaki (29 September 2012), these tunnels were ‘a wonderful business for Hamas’. The tunnels brought all kinds of goods into Gaza, including flour, sugar, rice, fish, steel and cement. Other goods like cigarettes, gasoline and luxury automobiles were brought through the tunnels. The tunnels are also used by Hamas to smuggle in weapons to arm al-Qassam. The tunnels were the mostly likely transit routes for many of the Iranian rocket systems that are currently in use in Gaza.

Though the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt was a ‘brother’ organisation to Hamas, it did not necessarily have freedom of operations at the border with Gaza. The Egyptian Military and Intelligence leaders still viewed Hamas as the number one strategic threat to Egypt. The tunnels were considered a transit point for extremists of all kinds that posed threats to Egypt. As a result, the Egyptian military would occasionally, while the MB was in charge, close tunnels and erect steel barriers below ground at the border in Rafah to prevent the tunnels. Gazans would simply cut holes in these large steel plates. Hamas could do great damage to the MB if Hamas claimed that the MB was doing Israel’s work by blockading Gaza. So, under the administration of Morsi, Egypt needed to keep some tunnels open to satisfy Hamas, but could not do so openly because that would have angered the Americans and threatened the eradication or reduction of US aid

to the Egyptian military.<sup>26</sup> The MB did not want to alienate the military so they kept quiet about the issue and followed the lead of the military commander when needed.

Tunnel operations were not without risk. In addition to the hostile position of the Israeli Defense Forces and the Egyptian Military, which would sometimes destroy tunnels with missile or local ordinances, the tunnels would occasionally collapse due to the massive weight above. Some tunnels were as deep as one hundred feet below ground. The people of Gaza began to become sympathetic to the life of a tunnel operator. After all, these operators were risking life to bring goods into Gaza, only needing to do so because of the siege on Gaza by their enemy, Israel. The sympathy of the Gazans increased to the point that martyrdom is now the phrase used for those tunnel operators that die while performing their duties in the tunnels. One tunnel operator quipped by saying (Verini 2012), ‘we call it *tariq al shahada ao tariq al mawt*, a way to paradise or a way to death’. The al-Qassam Brigades began to claim the tunnels as ‘resistance tunnels’. The distinction provides another moral outlet for young people to engage in resistance through tunnel related work. As a result, those who die working in the tunnels are pronounced by the al-Qassam Brigades as ‘martyrs’ for their dedication to the resistance (OP 2013).

It was the Bedouins in the Sinai that were the master smugglers. Several sources indicated that so many goods were going through the tunnels that the tunnel operators were becoming millionaires. In an example of the high finance that was occurring as a result of the tunnels, there were numerous reports that luxury vehicles were being smuggled through some of the large, more sophisticated tunnels. The largest source of revenue coming through the tunnels was gasoline coming from Egypt. The Egyptian government subsidises gasoline, requiring Egyptians to pay about 20% of the real cost of fuel. Egyptian and Bedouin smugglers were bringing gasoline by the truckload to the tunnels and pumping into waiting trucks in Gaza. Hamas was leveling over \$200million in taxes just on the fuel through a 25% fuel surcharge. Gazans did not mind because they were able to buy significantly discounted fuel compared to the Israeli fuel they normally had to purchase. Cement was also taxed. At one point, over 3,000 tons of

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<sup>26</sup> Note: Senior leaders of the US Senate and House Armed Services Committee spoke openly about the potential of eliminating or reducing military aide to Egypt because of the policies of the Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood.



cement per day was coming through the tunnels. Hamas was levelling slightly more than a \$5 tariff per ton (Reuters 2013).

Hamas also used their military capacity to game the tunnel operations in their favour. As Israel imposed a siege on Gaza after the 2007 takeover by Hamas, it had to abide by international commitments to send 450 trucks per day into Gaza full of supplies to keep the Gazans stocked with provisions that it was unable to procure on its own due to the closure of its borders. The number of Israeli trucks would vary quite regularly, but by mid-2012, the Israelis were sending in approximately 200 trucks per day through the Kerem Shalom border crossing at the southeastern part of Gaza. Al-Qassam would launch rockets at the crossing causing Israeli authorities to close the border crossing and stop the shipment of goods. This played into the hands of Hamas because each truck below 450 per day that did not enter Gaza would provide equal demand for goods coming through the tunnels. Hamas was able to tax the goods coming into Gaza through the tunnels, but the Israelis impounded the taxes on the goods coming through Kerem Shalom to be distributed to the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. Another source told me that prior to the Turkish Convoy incident with the Israelis, the Gaza tunnels were providing 40-50% of the goods in Gaza. After the incident, the tunnels contributed nearly 60%.

Hamas also worked to prevent certain taxes from going to the Palestinian Authority. Since 2007, the Israelis collected customs money. A vehicle that cost \$10,000 would have a 70% duty added to it, which totalled \$7,000. The Israelis, with 97% to be transferred to the Palestinian Authority, would collect these duties. To prevent the PA from receiving the duties, the Hamas would collect and keep the duty papers not transferring them to the Israelis, therefore keeping the reporting mechanism from being complete. The action kept the duty payments from being transferred from the Israelis to the PA. Other methods of gaining tax revenue were also considered. In a similar move to the Fatah led PA years earlier, Hamas levied a business licence fee on all businesses running in the Strip. All reports indicate that this has not worked well for Hamas. In a tit-for-tat exercise, Hamas seized assets of Fatah charities in Gaza in the tune of \$400k. This was in response to the PA in the West Bank seizing assets of Hamas charities. But, the action in Gaza caused a one-day banking strike (McCarthy 2010). During the Morsi government in Egypt, the Egyptian security forces were upset with the tunnels due to the

security problems that they were creating. So, Hamas and the Egyptian government established a joint government-to-government committee to cooperate military security between the Hamas and Egypt.

When the Egyptian Army deposed the MB led government in Cairo in July 2013, favourable policies toward the Gaza tunnels were eliminated. As such, Hamas began to have revenue shortfalls because of the tunnel closures that were happening on the Egyptian side of the border. Ala al-Rafati, the Hamas Minister of Economy said (Reuters 2013), ‘up to 90 percent of the tunnels had now been destroyed by the Egyptian Army and those still open were not operating fully’. Between June and September 2013, Rafati claimed that the Gaza economy had lost \$460million and that the Gazan annual budget was more than \$700million.

In 2013, Qatar and Saudi Arabia committed to multibillion-dollar investments into roads and housing units in Gaza (Reuters). This foreign assistance was offered at a time in which the Muslim Brotherhood looked on the ascendancy across the region, so it is unclear whether the construction projects will actually be funded and completed by Qatar and Saudi Arabia as their strategic positions changed when the MB fell in Egypt, which was after their commitment in Gaza. Reports coming from Qatar and Gaza in May 2014 suggest that those investments are beginning to take place. Hamas claims that wealth donors from across the Gulf continue to help Gazans.

In contrast to the embargo of funds to the Hamas government and its employees in Gaza, the PA, according to one Hamas Parliamentarian in Ramallah, continued to fund the salaries and office expense of the Hamas PLC members in the West Bank.

As will be demonstrated in the sections on the Gaza Wars, the tunnels were a critical component in Hamas’s efforts to stockpile arms. According to one Senior Hamas Official who chose to remain anonymous, guns, ammunitions, mortars, ordinances and the rocket systems were coming through the tunnels via the Sudan and Libya.

At the beginning of the Hamas takeover of Gaza its popular support had fallen to 21.9%. From June 2007 until January 2011, the years it operated the tunnels with a hostile

Egyptian government,  *Hamas Support* reached a low of 18.1% and a high of 24.7%. Once the Muslim Brotherhood gained control of Egypt and the tunnels became more lucrative for Hamas, the support numbers did not vary much. They reached a low of 16.9% and a high of 20.3%. The cause of the general decline in support for Hamas at this point could have been contributed to by several factors: familiarity, perceptions of corruption, poor performance as a government, little to show for the development of a Palestinian state or a host of other reasons. In the coming sections, we will learn more about the decline and increases in *Support for Hamas*. But, it can be said that the increase in revenue and spending by Hamas did not necessarily result in greater levels of *Hamas Support*. However, when Hamas and Israel engaged in conflict in Gaza War I and II, *Hamas Support* increased 13% and 59%, respectively. Further, during the Governance Era, *Support for Violence* declined from 56.7% to a low of 42% in June 2012. After Gaza War II, the *Support for Violence* increased to 50.8%. These numbers show a consistency in the relationships described in Chapter 4.

### **6.2.3 Gaza War I – Cast Lead**

In 2007, Hamas began to shift in earnest from ground assaults on Israel to air assaults, particularly through mortar and rocket fire. Other Palestinian factions also joined in this move as the tunnels and the Hamas military labs began to increase the steady flow of Qassam Rockets. In the first part of 2007, there were a few rockets/mortars being fired from Gaza toward Israel. As the internal conflict between Hamas and Fatah became more volatile, Hamas looked to unite the Palestinian populace against Israel seemingly trying to take the attention from the internal strife. The Israeli Security Agency (ISA n.d.) indicates that in May of 2007, Hamas and aligned factions lobbed over three hundred rockets/mortars at Israel. After the takeover of Gaza by Hamas, the rocket/mortar fire continued, but at a slightly slower pace. The international embargo and the blockade of Gaza by Israel systematically shut down supplies and resources into the Gaza held territory. Hamas was determined to even the score and to bring attention to the dire situation in Gaza by launching the rockets and mortars. Throughout the autumn of 2007 and the spring of 2008, the Israelis responded to the aerial barrage with IDF *Targeted Killing* operations of militants involved in planning or executing attacks.

During the winter and spring of 2008, only one suicide attack was conducted and that was described in the Prelude of the thesis. Hamas had substantively moved to an aerial campaign of resistance. Hamas rocket and mortar fire had increased to hundreds of firings per month until the Egyptians were able to broker a 'lull' in the fighting between the Hamas and Israel. On 19 June 2008, Hamas and Israel agreed to this 'lull' in violence for 6 months. Hamas agreed to stop the aerial attacks on Israel in exchange for Israel's reduction of aggression and opening of the siege on Gaza. As a part of the ceasefire, Hamas and Israel were to also attempt in good faith to resolve the standoff over the kidnapping of Gilad Shalit. The latter half of 2008 did not go according to plan. Hamas did not fully stop the rockets and the Israelis did not fully remove the siege. The Israelis claim that the rocket fire was not stopped and they could not reduce the attacks against them until they were able to reduce the arms shipments into the Strip. Hamas claimed that Israel was in violation of the ceasefire. Hamas also had internal challenges to reducing all rocket and mortar fire.

Roughly ten days after the beginning of the ceasefire, Al-Aqsa (Fatah) forces claimed responsibility for firing two rockets from Gaza at Israel. It was assumed by many that Fatah's Al-Aqsa Brigades did this to embarrass Hamas and to cause them difficulty with the Israelis. Prime Minister Haniyeh responded by saying, '(t)he factions and the people accepted the lull in order to secure two interests – an end to aggression and the lifting of the siege. Therefore, we hope that everyone honors this national agreement'. Taher al-Nunu, a Hamas spokesman in Gaza, referred (Nahmias 2008) to the incident by Fatah as 'unpatriotic'. Mahmoud Zahar, presumably concerned about being outflanked by more radical groups said (Xinhua 2008), 'we agreed with the Islamic Jihad that anyone violates the ceasefire would be arrested and disarmed even if he is from Hamas'. Zahar went on to state that firing rockets during the ceasefire is 'an act sabotaging the programme of resistance'. When pressed by a reporter from the Xinhua News Agency, Zahar denied that Hamas would police the border with Israel to prevent other groups from firing rockets.

The statements by Hamas leaders indicate the delicate balance they attempted to maintain with other Palestinian factions in Gaza. First, they demonstrated an interest in leading and coordinating the resistance. On the other hand, they articulated that they would not police the border, which is an indication that if militants engaged Israel in this

area there will be no enforcement mechanism in place to stop the attacks, except that Hamas and PIJ would arrest the fighters. With little or no transparency as to what happens to those who are arrested, it is unclear if any fighter launching attacks against Israel would, in fact, need to serve jail time. It is likely that the fighters would soon be released, as Hamas would not want to be criticised by fighters of the 'resistance' for having gone soft in their turn to politics. The balancing act attempted by Hamas is a function of the need that the group has to maintain some level of political, policing and military control of the resistance. Though they desire calm, they are not in a position to stop all violence directed at Israel, without losing credibility for their 'resistance' programme (Diskin, pers.comm., 6 December 2012). After all, they, in word and deed, have demonstrated an interest in maintaining their leading position in Palestinian resistance. The consequence of policing too hard the violators of the resistance, even during periods of calm, would cause militants to question or abandon Hamas for other groups committed to violent resistance.

On 5 November 2008, the IDF entered Gaza searching for a tunnel that was intended for use in capturing Israeli soldiers. In the operation, the IDF killed six Hamas operatives. Hamas and other factions responded with a myriad of rocket and mortar attacks on Israel. By the end of 5 November, both the Israelis and Hamas were indicating that they wanted to return to the ceasefire (McCarthy 2008). Throughout November, the aerial barrage from Gaza intensified. Hamas sanctioned or conducted a total of 233 launchings (more than one mortar or rocket may be fired in a launching). Though the rockets may not have caused much damage, they did claim the lives of several Israelis and severely disrupt life in Israel in areas close to Gaza, which obviously has significant consequences on politics in Israel. On 13 December 2008, Israeli Defense Minister, Amos Gilad, declared from Cairo that Israel was in favour of extending the ceasefire with Hamas (Sofer 2008), so long as 'Hamas adheres to all terms'. The day after, Hamas presented its terms to interlocutors in Cairo, indicating that it too wanted an extension of the 'lull' so long as Israel would abide by the conditions of ending the blockade. Yuval Diskin told the Israel Cabinet on 21 December that Hamas wanted to improve the terms of the ceasefire. He said (BBC 2008), Hamas 'wants us to lift the siege, stop attacks, and extend the truce to include the West Bank'. Neither party agreed on the terms and on 20 December, so Hamas declared the end of the ceasefire.

Amongst the backdrop of the failed ceasefire, Hamas had improved its capacity to conduct violent operations against Israel. During the course of 2008, Hamas was able to smuggle rockets and mortars into Gaza that had a range of 25 miles (BBC 2008). Nearly half of the 2008 aerial campaign against Israel came from mortars that had a range of only six miles. After several years of laboratory work, Hamas had improved the range of its Qassam rockets to 11 miles. Improvements to the rockets were a function of the military training that Hamas received from Hizballah and Iran. The longer-range rockets were Russian made Katyusha and Grad rockets with a range of 15 and 30 miles, respectively (Ben Israel and Diskin pers.comm., December 2013). Prior to the launch of Israeli Operation Cast Lead, Hamas had 360 launchings of various rockets and mortars in December 2008 (ISA 2008). In response, the Israeli Defense Forces prepared an operation that would greatly reduce the number of armaments and destroy the tunnels used to smuggle the weapons into Gaza. On 26 December 2008, Israel launched Operation Cast Lead. For seven days the Israeli Air Force targeted the tunnels in southern Gaza and pounded weapons stashes throughout the Strip. Israel launched its ground invasion on 3 January 2009.

The war lasted 23 days and claimed the lives of approximately 1,200 Palestinians and 13 Israelis. On 18 January 2009, the Israelis called a unilateral ceasefire and departed Gaza. In the midst of the war, responding to the questions about the intention of the Israeli campaign to eliminate Hamas militants, Hamas Prime Minister Haniyeh stated (CSM 2008), ‘Hamas is a popular movement that doesn’t center on this or that leader...almost every member of Hamas is fit to become a leader’. Late in 2009, the United Nations issued a report claiming that both Hamas and Israel had engaged in war crimes and crimes against humanity. Netanyahu rejected the claims and put the diplomatic effort together to see that the UN Security Council did not refer the matter to the International Criminal Court. Similarly dismissive of the report, Prime Minister Haniyeh said (McCarthy 2009), ‘the Palestinian resistance were in a position of self-defence and not of attack. One cannot compare the simple capabilities of the resistance with the great strength of the occupation’. Hamas made claims that Israel was indiscriminately bombing civilians. Israel denied these claims, but did admit that civilians were killed in operations to destroy militant strongholds and weapons caches.

The goal of Israel’s invasion of Gaza was to reduce the violence emanating from Gaza mainly through aerial attacks on southern Israeli towns. According to the Israeli Security Agency, the sharp reduction in mortars and rockets from 2008 to 2009 was a result of Operation Cast Lead. In the Agency’s 2009 Annual Report they stated (ISA), ‘throughout 2009, 566 rockets and 287 mortar shells were launched towards Israel, as opposed to 2,048 rocket and 1,668 mortar shells launched in 2008. It is a sharp decline in the number of high-trajectory launchings in recent years, all as a result of the Gaza Operation’.

Figure 64, shows popular support measures before and after Gaza War I; generally, they show a hardening of the Palestinian population. *Support for Violence* increases 12.1%, while measures of *Optimism* and perceptions of safety fell by 27% and 12%, respectively. While Gaza War I is clearly a demonstration of violence by Hamas, the normal relationships between *Support for Violence* and *Violence Frequency* do not hold. The predictive nature of these variables do not account for sharp increase in violence that occurred during both Gaza Wars with Israel. Further, the shift from ground to aerial attacks lessened the predictive nature of the *Support for Violence* variable on *Violence Frequency*, but the relationship is still significant. The proliferation of rockets and mortars means that these weapons are available to other resistance organisations in Gaza. The limitations Hamas had in clamping down on all groups are likely cause for most of the lessening of strength between variables.

Figure 64. Measure Before & After Gaza War I

Measure Before & After Gaza War I	Pre Gaza 1 (3Dec08)	Post Gaza 1 (5Mar09) except state Nov09	% Change
Recognition of Israel	48.8	47.1	-3.5%
Theoretical Right of Return	-	-	-
State Along '67 Borders	56.5	49	-13.3%
Violence Against Israel	59.7	66.9	12.1%
Safety of Family	61.4	54.2	-11.7%
Optimism	14.7	10.8	-26.5%
Religiosity	57.7	56.3	-2.4%
Support for Hamas	26.1	25.0	-4.2%

#### **6.2.4 Mishal in Damascus at the Beginning of the Syrian Crisis**

During 2009 and 2010, Hamas violent resistance to Israel decreased dramatically. There were no suicide bombings and the aerial barrage slowed to an average of 10 per month after the end of Gaza War I. Though the Israelis continued to pursue threats emanating from Hamas through arrests and *Targeted Killings*, there was a relative calm between the sides. For Hamas, it had finally established a government in Gaza that could provide basic security. But, Hamas desired to consolidate gains in Gaza even further. The leadership was intent on showing Palestinians, and the embargoing world, that it was capable of providing for Palestinians through its newly established government entities (PLC Members, pers.comm., 2011-2012).

Little did Hamas know at the time, but the Muslim Brotherhood was at the doorstep of ascendancy across North Africa and the Middle East. The events of 2010 and 2011 in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria and elsewhere across the region presented both opportunity and trial for Hamas. As the Muslim Brotherhood gained success through the Arab Spring, challenges to existing monarchies were on the rise, including in Syria where Hamas had its headquarters. President Assad had for over a decade provided safe haven for the leaders of Hamas, but was now being challenged by ‘Brothers’ from Hama and pro-democracy protests elsewhere, including Yarmouk and Homs. Palestinians from a refugee camp in central Homs joined in the pro-democracy protests as early as March 2011. By July 2011, both ‘Brothers’ from Homs and Palestinians from Yarmouk and elsewhere had experienced violent crackdowns from Assad forces, including a riot sparked from outraged mourners at a funeral in which Khalid Mishal attended (Macleod & Flammad 2011; Ynet 2011). The MB and Palestinians both sought to support the protests against Assad as the Arab Spring had begun in Damascus. By July 2011, the Palestinian refugees in Syria began to protest any Palestinian leader being seen to be supportive of Assad. They claimed that Assad was harming Palestinians in Syrian camps at the same time he was claiming to be a leading proponent of Palestinian causes against Israel. According to a senior Palestinian source, Mishal understood the sentiment, and when he was invited to a picture opportunity in late 2011, he departed Syria for Qatar and has not returned.

In the first weeks of the struggle between the pro-democracy and Assad Forces, Hamas was able to stay relatively quiet about the situation saying that they did not interfere with



matters in Arab countries (Bronner 2011). Within a few weeks, the clashes grew in intensity and the Assad crackdown on MB and Palestinian neighbourhoods in Syria caused a backlash across the Palestinian Territories. As with decades before, the Palestinians began to see the actions of Bashar Assad follow in similar steps of his father Hafez Assad when tens of thousands of Syrians, including Palestinians and Muslim Brothers, were killed in a violent crackdown. The result was demonstrations in the Palestinian streets for their brethren in Syria.

According to a Carnegie Endowment Report (2012), in October 2011 the Brotherhood participated in the establishment of the Syrian National Council (SNC) in Istanbul. Over the course of several months, the Syrian MB were able to elevate to leading positions in the SNC's aid division and military bureau. By April 2012, the MB had a leading role in the Free Syrian Army and was engaged in violent opposition against Assad forces (Oweis 2012). The combination of Palestinian outrage over the treatment of Syrian Palestinians and the battle being waged by the Syrian MB against Assad made it untenable for Hamas to show any support for Assad or Syria, regardless of its history.

The Assad regimes for decades had used the Palestinian issue as leverage for being able to crackdown on dissidents at home. When Bashar Assad began to see the Palestinian sentiment turn against him, he sought to wave the Palestinian flag in an effort to strengthen his position. According to a senior Palestinian source:

Mishal was invited in the summer of 2011 to meet with Nasrallah, the Secretary General of Hizballah, and President Assad. Mishal declined. In a second attempt, President Assad invited Mishal in December 2011 in three days' time to meet with Assad. This was designed by Assad to show Hamas support of the Assad regime. Assad was fighting the MB of Syria. Mishal left Damascus without apology bound for Doha. Since then Mishal has been in Doha where he has been isolated from others. Marzouk in Cairo has conducted many of the lead functions of hosting meetings and doing the business of Hamas because Mishal is by himself in Doha.

Since 1999 the leadership of Hamas was able to run operations of Hamas under the protective hand of President Assad. The tumult in Syria changed the equation and required Hamas to relocate to Egypt and Qatar. This was discussed previously in the thesis. Yet, the political abandonment was not the only significant event for Hamas vis-à-vis Syria. According to the senior Palestinian source, al-Qassam has sent advisors

into the Palestinian camps in Syria to train and build militias to fight Assad. Hamas leaders in Gaza claim (Davidovich 2013) that the actions are by individuals who resign from the Qassam Brigades to fight in Syria.

The two primary ramifications for Hamas over the split with Syria was the loss of a home base for the Politburo and a loss of financial support by Iran.

### **6.2.5 Gaza War II and the Surprising Difference with Gaza I**

In May 2011, an internal rift became publically clear between the leadership provided by Mishal and the senior leaders in Gaza, namely Mahmoud al-Zahar. According to a senior Palestinian source, ‘Zahar is a grandfather figure. He now gives instructions then leaves the room. He is a religious man who writes novels about the resistance. He is no longer decision maker, but does sit on the Shura Council’. On 4 May 2011, Mishal signed the Cairo Agreement, a vehicle for reconciliation between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority to pursue a Palestinian state with full sovereignty. At the press conference afterwards (Bronner 2011b), Mishal indicated that Hamas would give the PA another chance at negotiating with the Israelis. In a harsh response, Zahar stated (Al Awsat 2011):

We didn’t know and were not consulted about the position of Khalid Mishal, and this is not the correct position. We haven’t given any chance for negotiations on behalf of us or the Palestinian people. Our programme is against negotiations in this way, because they are a waste of time.

Zahar furthered his critique of Mishal by stating (Al Awsat), ‘the leadership [of Hamas] is here [in Gaza], and the part that is abroad is just a part of that’. Multiple senior Palestinian sources indicated that Zahar had taken two trips to Tehran in the aftermath of Mishal’s departure from Damascus. The sources suggested that Zahar’s trips happened after Iran reduced financial assistance to Hamas only to learn that Hamas had replaced a large portion of that revenue from taxes on cigarettes. The assumption by Iran was that the locus of power had shifted to Gaza and that Iran was going to deal with the leadership there.

The removal of Mubarak in Egypt and the emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood as the leading political power opened up a new opportunity in the negotiations for Gilad Shalit.

Previously, the Israelis were offering around 450 prisoners, few or none with ‘blood on their hands’. Hamas rejected the offer, countering with various lists of over a thousand prisoners, many with a history of being involved in violent acts having led to the death of Israelis. The Israelis balked, not wanting to have hardcore militants returned to the West Bank or Gaza. In late 2011, Hamas changed a long time policy of not allowing prisoner exchanges to result in the deportation of those prisoners away from their homes in the West Bank or outside the Territories. Hamas was led in negotiations by Ahmed Jabari, the mastermind of the Shalit abduction and the head of al-Qassam. He was in Cairo negotiating through interlocutors with Israel. On 11 October 2011, Jabari and Netanyahu were successful in negotiating the release of 1,027 Hamas and Palestinian prisoners for the safe return of Shalit. Hamas agreed to allow 40 prisoners to be deported to other countries across the Middle East (Al Jazeera 2011). Palestinians viewed the prisoner exchange as a great victory for Hamas resulting in a modest increase in support for the group from 18.1% to 19.7%. More importantly, the prisoner exchange had another important impact on Hamas internal politics. Many thought that Mishal was the mastermind behind the negotiations and that Jabari was his man to negotiate. A different version of the story began to emerge later suggesting that Jabari alone and at his own direction dictated the terms of the deal with the Israelis since he was the mastermind of the abduction and that for five years he was the senior most Hamas official to know the whereabouts of Shalit (Diskin, pers.comm., 6 December 2012).

By early 2012, Khalid Mishal and Mousa Abu Marzouk had reestablished Hamas headquarters in Doha and Cairo. Meanwhile, the Hamas government in Gaza had established an internal policing capability and developed a capacity to earn tax revenue through internal taxes and imports of goods through the tunnels. In total, Hamas was running a payroll of over 45,000 employees. Though Hamas had suffered the loss of fighters, armaments and tunnels in Gaza War I, the organisation continued to replenish their supply of weapons. The turmoil in Libya and the Sudan provided smugglers access to new arms, which were brought through the tunnels. Further, the icy relationship with Tehran did not prevent the transfer of longer-range missiles from Persia to the Strip. By November of 2012, Hamas had deployed the Iranian made Fajr-3 and Fajr-5 missiles capable of traveling 30 and 50 miles, respectively, putting Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in

range. Efforts to confirm the total number of these fired during Gaza War 2 were unsuccessful.

Because Gaza represented a territorial claim by Hamas, most of the focus of the group's leadership was based on needs and activities there. It was as if all other interests of Hamas became secondary or less. Due to the shared border and the preexisting relationships between many of the original Hamas members and leaders of the Egyptian Brotherhood, Hamas turned its focus to its relationship with its southern neighbour when it became clear in the spring of 2012 that the MB was likely to win national elections. Given that the Egyptian Brotherhood wanted only one representative of Hamas, Marzouk, the odd person out was Khalid Mishal. Enormously talented, Mishal was now in relative isolation in Doha. Yet, he was the elected head of Hamas and continued to conduct the business of the group, though far removed from all others. Mishal had indicated that he would not run for reelection as Chairman of Hamas, but by all indication this was a political feint.

In early 2012, the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, urged Mishal to go a step further than the Cairo Agreement and to unite with the Palestinian Authority to form a Unity Government so that the PA could negotiate for all Palestinians. At the request of his host, Mishal and President Abbas of the PA signed the Doha Agreement on 8 February 2012 (MEM). A senior Palestinian source (September 2012) claimed that the Gaza leadership was 'incensed' by this agreement and they told Mishal, 'the agreement would not be honored'. Zahar once again criticised Mishal (Issacharoff 2012), saying that the Doha Agreement is 'a wrong and unacceptable move on a strategic level'. In public opinion polls led by PSR (PCPSR 2012), 84% of Palestinians supported the agreement, but only 46% believe it would succeed. The Gaza faction had its way and the unity government was not established.

Throughout the course of 2012, there was a tension within Hamas about its upcoming election for Chairman. The events of Syria, splitting the leadership between Doha and Cairo, coupled with the emerging strength of Hamas in Gaza, put a new wrinkle into the elections for Chairman. Marzouk, the first Chairman of the Politburo, had lost two previous elections to Mishal, but was now in a leading position to ascend to the top of Hamas once again. Marzouk was Sheikh Yassin's protégé and was an insider in Gaza.

With Mishal crossing swords with the leaders in Gaza so often, it was expected that the Gaza representatives on the Shura Council would put their weight behind Marzouk. The West Bank representatives were expected to go with Mishal due to his deep roots, having grown up there. The elections were believed to be in the hands of the Shura Council representatives in the Diaspora. Insiders with some knowledge of the elections said that the voting process had to be redone because there were claims that Mishal had used ‘inappropriate influence’ with a few members of the Shura Council to sway the vote. In late September 2012, Deputy Chairman Marzouk responded to questions about the internal election with a wry smile. Historically, Hamas has made a practice of keeping as much information about the structure of decision-making and internal elections unknown to the public or its enemies. In any event, 2012 saw perhaps for the first time a highly divided Hamas with an internal election, for which the outcome was far from certain. Al-Qassam had also increased the number of rocket firings into Israel, launching as many as 173 and 195 in March and June, respectively (ISA 2012).

On 23 September 2012, Marzouk explained that Hamas wanted ‘quiet’ in Gaza in order to further its institutional building efforts. This ‘quiet’ did not last long. In October 2012, Hamas launched 116 rockets at Israel. On 14 November 2012, the IDF and the Shin Bet conducted a *Targeted Killing* of Ahmed Jabari while he was traveling in a car in Gaza City. Jabari was the head of al-Qassam and the mastermind behind the Shalit kidnapping and the prisoner exchange deal. Presumably due to the legal structure previously described about the Israeli *Targeted Killing* programme, the targeting of Jabari was because the Israelis had knowledge of his participation in planning attacks against Israel. One IDF General told me, ‘we [Israel] had an open account with him [Jabari] and he was obstructing our ability to get to know lower level Hamas responsible for cooperation on shared resources like electricity and water’. As news of Jabari’s death spread in Gaza, Hamas and other militant factions took to the streets to launch over 100 rockets before the day would end (ISA 2012). The Israelis responded with a large aerial response, mobilising ground troops, sending them to the border of Gaza and the calling up of thousands of reservists. Gaza War II had begun.

The war lasted eight days and claimed the lives 158 Palestinians and six Israelis (UN – OCHA). Those injured were 1,269 and 224, respectively. The Israeli operation was known as ‘Pillar of Defense’ and featured exclusively an air campaign. Unlike Gaza

War I, the Israelis did not send ground forces into Gaza. On the other side, Hamas used some of the most sophisticated weapons it had ever deployed. In addition to firing the Iranian provided Fajr-3 and Fajr-5 missiles reaching the outskirts of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, the group also launched primitive cyber-attacks on the IDF and took control of an Israeli TV station by jamming the signal and setting up its own feeds (Levi 2012). These new developments demonstrated how far the war capabilities of the resistance had come in three years of the Israeli embargo. The advancements of technical ability and hardware demonstrated the value of the training the group had received from others and produced within its own labs. It is likely that the technical assistance originated from Iran, but confirmation of that fact remained elusive.

The Hamas Information Office of Gaza made the following declaration related to its media capacity during Gaza War II (Levi 2012; Osen 2012), ‘the importance of the media war in the struggle that takes place in Palestine does not go unnoticed by anyone. Our goal is to support the resistance, boost the morale of the resistance fighters who watch these media materials, and to wage a psychological war against the Zionists’. They added to the comments by stating, ‘today, the camera is used as a weapon, along with the Kalashnikov, the rocket and the missile’. Figures 65 to 69 were provided to me by an Israeli military advisor who made the presentation at the University of Tel Aviv less than two weeks after the conclusion of the war. The figures show that an Israeli station broadcasting BBC across Israel and the Palestinian Territories was jammed and then taken over with spoofed media feeds. The development of this capacity demonstrated a new more sophisticated approach by Hamas and al-Qassam to resistance operations. In Gaza War I, Hamas posted messages to fighters online, but in reality did not have operational control over its own website as the Israelis had the capacity to take the website down when it desired to do so. The efforts to jam and spoof an Israeli TV station was a strategic move by Hamas to attain some operational control of messages to its fighters, but also to the Palestinian people in Gaza.

Figure 65. Hamas Satellite Jamming 1 (Levi 2012)



Figure 66. Hamas Satellite Jamming 2 (Levi 2012)

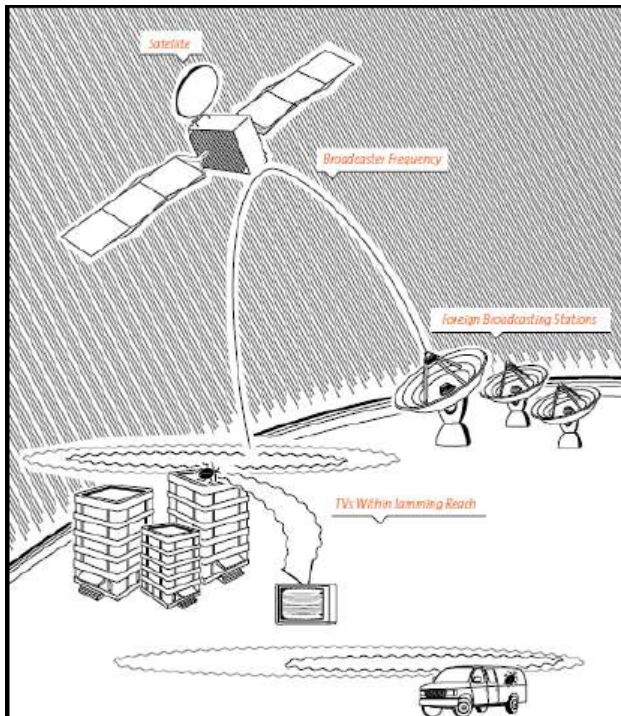


Figure 67. Hamas Satellite Jamming 3 (Levi 2012)

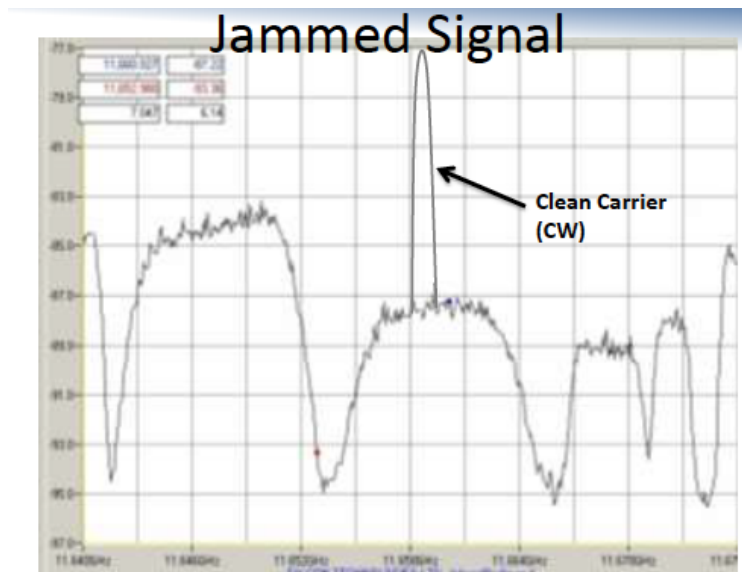
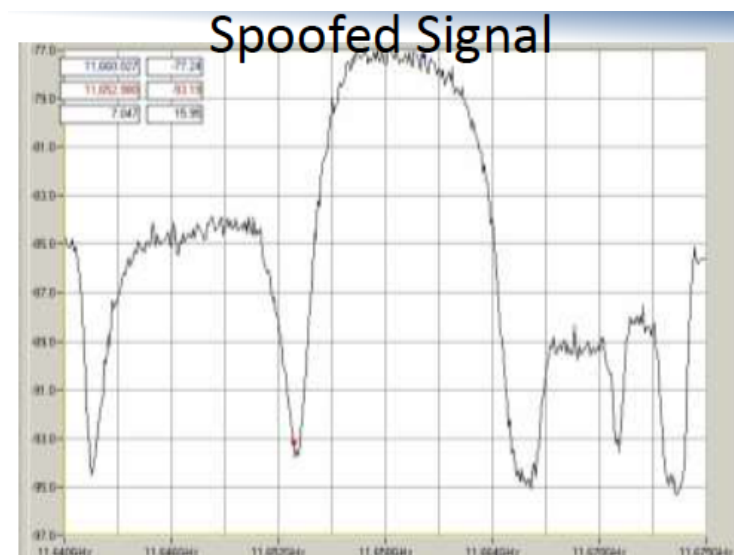


Figure 68. Hamas Satellite Spoofing 1 (Levi 2012)



Figures 67 and 68 provide the jamming and spoofing frequencies used by Hamas during Gaza War 2.



Figure 69. Hamas Satellite Spoofing 2 (Levi 2012)



Figures 65 and 69 show statements put on Israeli and Palestinian TVs. Figure 65 was Hamas's attempt to show that normal satellite feeds had been interrupted. When translated, Figure 69 provides the following messages to Israeli (and Palestinian) TVs, 'we miss and [look] forward to the operations'. The message was intended as a threat to Israelis by reminding them of the suicide operations that inflicted pain and suffering. It was suggestive that the group would conduct such future operations. Without question, the use of satellite jamming and spoofing had become a propaganda tool not only to bolster Palestinian and al-Qassam fighters *Support for Violence* against Israel, but it was now used to influence the Israeli population itself.

Another Israeli military source informed me that Hamas had launched several primitive cyber-attacks against the Israeli government during Gaza War II. Since the first Gaza war, Hamas had deployed three new weapons of war, longer-range missiles, media jamming and spoofing capabilities and cyber-attacks. These advancements indicated that during the Israeli blockade of Gaza, Hamas was able to use clandestine transport routes to improve its weapons and technical equipment. Presumably, external technical advisors also made their way to Gaza to help teach the al-Qassam Brigades how to use the advanced weaponry. It is also likely that some al-Qassam members were trained outside of Gaza.

A close look at the polling data of PSR before and after both Gaza War I & II show a significant difference in perception of Palestinians in Gaza on the outcome of each war.

The highlighted cells in Figure 70 show the popular support differences before and after each war. The most surprising data is that Gazans were more optimistic and believed the *Safety of Family* was more assured than before the war. Moreover, there was a 47% increase in *Hamis Support* after Gaza II, but a 4% decline after Gaza I. It is important to remember that the *Optimism* metric represents the belief that negotiations toward a Palestinian state will commence and that violence will subside. Finally, *Support for Violence* against Israel increased 12% during Gaza I and 6% during Gaza II. The differences in popular opinion before and after the wars deserve further exploration.

**Figure 70. Measures Before and After Gaza Wars I & II (PCPSR 2012)**

Measures before and after to 2 Wars in Gaza	Gaza Population Data Only					
	Pre Gaza 1 (3Dec08)	Post Gaza 1 (5Mar09) except state Nov09	% Change	Pre Gaza 2 (13Sep12) except State 11Dec11)	Post Gaza 2 (13Dec12)	% Change
Recognition of Israel	48.8	47.1	-3.5%	42.1	42.6	1.2%
Theoretical Right of Return	-	-	-	37.6	35.9	-4.5%
State Along '67 Borders	56.5	49	-13.3%	75.9	67.5	-11.1%
Violence Against Israel	59.7	66.9	12.1%	62.6	66.3	5.9%
Safety of Family	61.4	54.2	-11.7%	64.1	70.4	9.8%
Optimism	14.7	10.8	-26.5%	30	32.3	7.7%
Religiosity	57.7	56.3	-2.4%	52.6	55.1	4.8%
Support for Hamas	26.1	25.0	-4.2%	20.8	30.6	47.1%

Though limited in scope, the data available for this thesis provide a few variables that can be used to analyse the differences between the wars. The analysis reviewed differences in: 1) Palestinian casualty rates and type, 2) force projection of Israelis (ground/air vs. air) and 3) Israeli aerial campaign methods. First, the casualties in Gaza War I were approximately 1,200 Gazans and 13 Israelis killed. In Gaza II, there were 158 Gazans and six Israelis killed.

Second, in Gaza War I, the Israelis engaged in aerial and ground assaults, while in Gaza War II only an aerial campaign was conducted. The ground operations represent the most significant difference in Israeli force projection between the wars. The result was less street level fighting in Gaza II than in Gaza I. It is difficult to quantify the impact in psychology on Gazans, but it surely did have an effect. Further, the fact that the Israeli Army mobilised all the way to the Gaza border without entering the territory provided an opportunity for Hamas's propaganda machine to claim that Israel was fearful of the al-Qassam forces.

Just prior to Operation Cast Lead (Gaza I), Hamas's popular support was 26.1%. Afterwards, it declined to 25.0%. The reasons for the increased *Support for Violence* and the decrease for the group are debatable, but according to Hamas and Israeli leaders there are some common explanations. Though the Israelis claim that they destroyed a great deal of the Hamas fighting apparatus, Hamas claimed victory in the conflict and demonstrated that they alone, amongst the Palestinian factions, were capable of serious military engagement with Israel, further strengthening their 'armed resistance' bona fides amongst the Palestinians. Further, Israeli officials claim that mistakes were made with regard to the accidental killing of Palestinian civilians, which resulted in an international outcry and accusation of Israeli war crimes. One tactical difference in Israeli operations stands out as particularly influential.

In the first Gaza War (December 2008-January 2009), the IDF operation, 'Cast Lead' was a ground and air offensive aimed at destroying the capacity of the al-Qassam Brigades to wage battle. During the operation, the IDF dropped leaflets on the Gaza population blaming Hamas for the violence, warning citizens to stay away from Hamas facilities, warning citizens to stay at least 300 metres from the Israeli border and telling whole neighbourhoods to evacuate due to impending IDF military action (Khazan 2012). Based upon interviews with military leaders in Israel, the Gaza War I leaflet campaign had mistakes. In December 2012 Major General (ret.) Isaac Ben Israel told me that in the Operation Cast Lead, 'Israel made mistakes when dropping leaflets'. He went on to describe the following incident (pers.comm., 6 December 2012).

On one particular day, the IDF prepared an operation to destroy several buildings determined to be housing Hamas armaments. The bombing was to take place late that night. To minimise the risk of civilian casualties, the IDF dropped leaflets on several neighbourhoods telling the residents to leave because weapons caches in the neighbourhood were to be bombed that night. During the evacuation, some of the fleeing civilians wandered into another neighbourhood and decided to take shelter in a vacant building. The building happened to be identified by the IDF as having a weapons cache stored in the basement. During that night the building was bombed and the civilians, including women and children, were killed. The mistake, according to Ben

Israel, was that the leaflets were not specific in the evacuation instructions and therefore resulted in civilians wandering into other neighbourhoods targeted by the IDF.

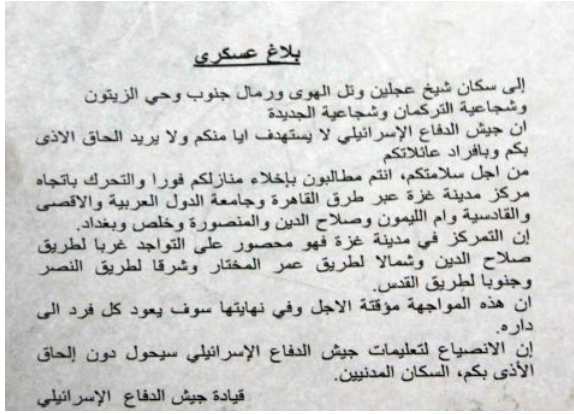
This incident, along with others, provided Hamas with the opportunity to claim moral superiority over the Israeli forces by claiming that Israel was targeting women and children. The international out-cry over some of the military tactics used by Israel emboldened Hamas publically to argue that their cause was legitimate and that the opposition force were war criminals even labeling the military action in Gaza as a ‘massacre’ (Ma’an 2009). Khalid Mishal went further by claiming that the Palestinian people won the war, attempting to cement the notion that the battle between the IDF and Hamas was a victory for all of Palestine thus memorialising the heroic actions of Hamas for the national cause. Mishal’s comments (MEMRI 2009):

This is the first war that our people have won on its land, the first real large-scale war. Therefore, the Gaza War is a turning point in the struggle with the Zionist enemy. With its significance, its accomplishments, its timing, and its greatness, it serves as a cornerstone for an effective and serious strategy for liberation, which begins in Palestine, and will continue everywhere, with the support of the nation.

During Gaza War II, General Ben Israel indicated that the IDF had learnt from its mistakes and wrote more precise descriptions of the areas being targeted and offered Gaza residents more specific locations to move toward to avoid getting caught in IDF military operations.

The two leaflets below provided by Gazan residents to the author were dropped by the Israeli Air force in Northern Gaza during the Gaza War II campaign (November 2012).

Figure 71. Gaza War 2 - Israeli Leaflet 1



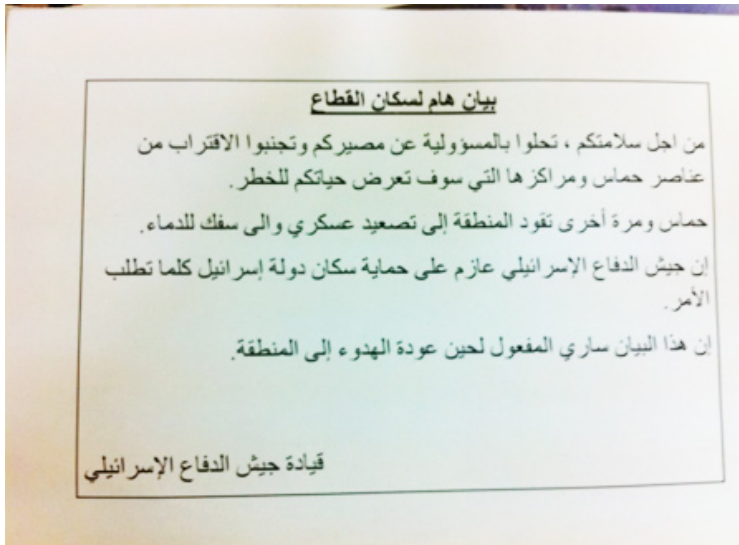
Military Notification

*To the inhabitants of Sheikh Sheikh Ijlin, Tel al-Hawa, South Rimal, the district of Zaytoun, Shuja'iyya al-Turukman, and new Shuja'iyya:*

*The IDF does not target any of you, and does not want to hurt you or your family. For your safety you are asked to leave your houses immediately, and to move into the direction of the centre of the city of Gaza through the roads of Cairo, the Arab League, al-Aqsa, al-Qadisiyya, al-Laymoun, Salah ad-Din, al-Mansoura, Khalas, and Baghdad. The deployment in the city of Gaza is limited to the West of Salah ad-Din Road, the North of 'Omar al-Mukhtar Road, the East of Nasr Road, and the South of al-Quds Road. This confrontation is temporary, and eventually all individuals will return to their homes. Obedience to the instructions of the IDF will prevent the infliction of harm on you, the civilian population.*

*- The leaders of the IDF*

Figure 72. Gaza War 2 - Israeli Leaflet 2



*Important Statement to the Population of the Strip*

*For your safety, take responsibility for your fate and avoid approaching members of Hamas, and of its centres, which will put your life at risk. Hamas again leads the region to military escalation, and to bloodshed. The IDF is determined to protect the population of the state of Israel wherever necessary. This statement is valid until the return of calm to the region.*

*- The leaders of the IDF*

Generally, in war, leaflet campaigns are an attempt to influence and demoralise the population and warfighter (Gabrys 2004), destabilise the enemy's war fighting ability, weaken support of war facilitators, persuade population and/or warfighters, establish a foundation of doubt. For the IDF, the intent of the leaflets was to attack the cohesion between the residents of Gaza and their *Hamas Support*.

As we look back to review the differences in Palestinian popular support measures between Gaza I and II, we know that the primary differences in Gaza War II were lower Palestinian casualties, the lack of Israeli ground forces, advanced weaponry used by Hamas and lower Palestinian civilian casualties as a result of clearer and more specific IDF leaflet campaigns. These differences were enough for Palestinians to feel that their families were safer and for Hamas to see an increase in popular support from 20.8% to 30.6%, a 47% increase. The increase in *Optimism*, which is related to a peaceful resumption of negotiations for a Palestinian State along 1967 Borders coupled with lower *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*, indicates that the Gaza population believed that the victory was resounding by Hamas and could produce negotiations that gave Palestinians a better deal than the formulations of a Palestinian state under the Saudi or Clinton plans. Looking historically at these numbers, it can be seen that Gaza War II created outliers outside the normal relationships between these variables. With a few months, the popular support measures moved back to more normal levels. The variances suggest that the predictive variables outlined in Chapter 4 have limited applicability in times of war.

The resolution of Gaza War II provided one additional difference between the two wars. Egyptian Intelligence Services brokered the ceasefire negotiated between Israel and Hamas. In the agreement, Prime Minister Netanyahu agreed to allow Khalid Mishal to

enter Gaza, which was to be the first time the Chairman of Hamas would enter Gaza. Mishal therefore arranged to visit Gaza on 8 December 2012, the 25-year anniversary of Hamas. At the ceremony, Mishal spoke to a massive crowd in Gaza City and used the platform to deliver a hard line message about the resistance and its intention of reclamation of all lost lands of Palestine. The speech was part resistance rhetoric and part campaign speech. In fact, it can be argued that the outcome of Gaza War II and the symbolism of Mishal entering Gaza, as a concession of Israel, allowed Mishal to overcome the internal opposition to his candidacy for a 3<sup>rd</sup> term as Chairman of the Hamas Politburo. A few weeks later Mishal was declared the victor of the Hamas elections. It could be argued that Prime Minister Netanyahu helped Mishal, once again, rise to the leadership of Hamas.

Yuval Diskin discussed the advancements of weapons within Hamas that did not show themselves during Gaza War II. He indicated that within the Hamas laboratories, the group was developing advanced reconnaissance and attacking capabilities through drones – an effort to increase attack precision. According to Diskin (pers.comm., 6 December 2012), the group was receiving the materials and training from Hizballah advisors in Gaza. At the time of writing there was no public evidence that Hamas had attempted to fly such a drone into Israel, but there was one media report in October 2013 that indicated the Palestinian Authority uncovered a drone plot in the West Bank city of Hebron. The same report indicated that the IDF confirmed that during Gaza War II (Issacharoff 2013), ‘the IAF struck several depots storing unmanned aircraft’.

### **6.2.6 The Strategic Implications of the Conflicts in Egypt and Syria**

After the fall of the Mubarak regime, Egyptian Intelligence officials were warning the interim government of the strategic nightmare that Gaza is to Egypt. According to senior Palestinians who interacted with the Egyptian Intelligence, a Hamas led Gaza was troublesome to Egypt because Hamas could not control the tunnels and the organisation attracted all sorts of violent types, like al-Qaeda. After the election victories of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Egyptian Intel maintained their cautious rhetoric about Gaza, but their fervent opposition made way for greater pragmatism since Hamas and the newly elected Muslim Brotherhood had deep ties.

As time progressed, it became obvious that the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and President Morsi had difficulty with regard to Gaza and Hamas. In interviews directly with the leadership of the Brotherhood, it was clear that the Egyptian leaders wanted to find ways to support Hamas, but the stability of Egypt was critical to maintaining control. Mentioned in Chapter 3, Marzouk made statements about the Egyptian Brotherhood from his office in Cairo (pers.comm., 23 September 2012), ‘the first priority for Morsi was to handle security...and their own problems first’. All the while, the arguments of the Egyptian Intelligence proved correct for Morsi and company because the level of violence against Egyptian Military and Police in the Sinai was directly related to individuals coming out of Gaza (Safwat Hegazy, pers.comm., 25 September 2012).

Meanwhile, the Hamas and Muslim Brotherhood leaders in Egypt were working toward the creation of a ‘free-trade zone’ on the border between Gaza and Egypt. For Hamas, the idea would have provided de-facto recognition by another state to its border. Several sources within Palestine indicate that Hamas was looking to parley this recognition of the border into other Arab states recognising it, therefore creating an internationally recognised statelet in Gaza.

For Egypt, this was a complicated manner. Creating an open and recognised border with Gaza would mean that Gazan residents would be able to more freely flow into Egypt at a time at which the financial situation for Egyptians and the government was precarious. The possibility of hundreds of thousands of Gazans burdening the economic situation in Egypt coupled with the obvious security concerns meant that Morsi needed to move slowly in relationship to the border issues.

In the negotiations between Hamas and Israel for the resolution of Gaza War II, Hamas upped the ante with another idea, which could be used to create a statelet that could be internationally recognised. One of Hamas’s demands of Israel was that Israel accept Gaza’s right to fishing grounds up to six miles off the coast of Gaza. Hamas concluded that such a concession by Israel would allow the group to ask other Arab countries to recognise its territorial fishing rights, which extended into international waters. The Hamas demand was an effort to create, once again, an opening which would result in de



facto recognition of the Gaza statelet. The Israelis did not consent to this demand, but they did consent to allowing Mithal to enter Gaza just days after the end of the war.

By the end of second Gaza war, the relationship between Gaza and Egypt was improving. Egypt began treating Gaza and Hamas as the recognised elected government. In late November 2012, Morsi sent the Egyptian Prime Minister, Hesham Kandil, to Gaza, while allowing seriously injured Gazans to pass through the Rafah border in seek of medical attention in Egypt (Hendawi 2012). Throughout the first part of 2013, Hamas leaders in Gaza continued to seek ways through which they might be able to control violence emanating from Gaza in the Sinai, while attempting to find ways for Egyptian leaders to create a free trade zone at the Rafah border. But, Hamas was dealt a serious blow when the Morsi government fell. The subsequent Egyptian charges of sedition against Morsi for conspiring and colluding with Hamas undermined further activity between Gazan leaders and their southern neighbour. Further, General Sisi of Egypt, the interim leader, sent Egyptian military forces to destroy the tunnels connecting Gaza to Egypt and the outside world. Hamas resistance was struck a blow because the tunnels had been the life-line of military aid for years. Further, the economic deterioration of Hamas finances as a function of lost tax revenues from the destroyed tunnels had a material impact on Hamas ability to govern in that it could not pay all of its employees.

The Syrian conflict has created further difficulties for the Hamas resistance. Historically, Syria had been a supporter of Hamas by providing refuge for Politburo leaders and by providing Iranian made arms to Hamas through Hizballah in Lebanon. The emergence of the sectarian fighting in Syria and the hardline taken by the Assad regime against the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood as well as Palestinian opposition groups forced Hamas to publically declare opposition to the Assad regime. The consequence of this public position resulted in the icing of relations with Iran and Hizballah. Further, some members of al-Qassam Brigades left the Palestinian Territories to join their fellow Palestinians and Muslim Brothers in the fight against Assad. As previously discussed in the thesis, these fighters have set up militias in Syrian Palestinian Refugee Camps and have participated in clashes against Assad Forces. It is unclear whether these clashes have resulted in members of the al-Qassam Brigades directly fighting forces of Hizballah fighting for Assad.

In 2013, the diplomatic relationship between Hizballah and Hamas had also become stormy. Hizballah stopped Hamas delegations from receiving Visas to visit Lebanon even though they allowed Osama Hamdan (unofficial Hamas Foreign Minister) to remain in the Hizballah controlled section of Beirut. At the time of writing, the dynamic nature of the shifting allegiances and emergence of groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Syria and Iraq, make it impossible to predict the impact of the war on the ability of Hamas to conduct violent resistance operations against Israel. Undoubtedly, the inflow of international arms into Syria and the munitions captured by ISIL in Iraq will likely increase Hamas's ability to get their hands on more weapons at some point in the future. The fallout for Hamas is most acutely felt on their ability to continue their governance of Gaza. With limited ability to fund government operations in Gaza, the group will be under increasing pressure by the population to meet its public responsibilities of education, health, sanitation and security. Though, the new 'reconciliation' government formed in the spring of 2014 creates a new dynamic in the relationship between Hamas and Fatah and the Palestinian Authority.

### **6.3. Pathway to National Reconciliation Deux**

The events in Cairo on 3 July 2013 were to have profound effect on Hamas's rule in Gaza. Prior, Hamas had reached its zenith in tax revenue in Gaza in large part due to taxes collected from goods coming through the tunnels. Hamas used this tax revenue to increase the number of Palestinian Authority employees from around 16,000 to approximately 41,000.<sup>27</sup> When General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, the head of the Egyptian Military arrested the leaders from the Muslim Brotherhood and its political party, Freedom and Justice, including President Morsi, reality changed for Hamas. One of the first acts of the Egyptian provisional government, led by Sisi, was to systematically destroy tunnels linking Gaza and Egypt. The change of government in Egypt and the subsequent closure of Gaza's tunnels created four strategic problems for Hamas: 1) significant loss of tax revenue, 2) higher priced goods for residents, 3) sharp reduction in foreign aid making its way into Gaza and 4) loss of weapons imports.

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<sup>27</sup> Note: at the time Hamas took over Gaza the PA had 70,000 employees. 16,000 of those stayed on with Hamas in health and education jobs. Hamas added 25,000 jobs to that number and had been paying for 41,000 employees plus up to 10,000 contractors.

The tunnel closures meant that the ‘good business’ of taxing smuggled goods could not continue for Hamas. According to previously discussed evidence and confirmation from sources close to Hamas, the group was able to generate over 50% of its tax revenue by taxing the goods coming through these tunnels. So, when Egypt began to search for and destroy tunnels used to bring goods through the Sinai to Gaza, tax revenues decreased significantly. With 41,000 employees and over 10,000 contractors, Hamas was put into the untenable situation of having governing costs significantly exceed revenues.

According to senior Palestinian sources near Hamas, the Hamas government was paying an average salary of about \$600 per month for its employees prior to the overthrow of the Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo. By August 2013, Hamas had begun to reduce salaries for all government employees to about half their normal levels (Bar’el 2013), which continued for ten months. Other sources close to Hamas say, ‘Hamas employees were receiving \$300 every 40 to 50 days for the past 10 months’. The revenue challenge did not subside for Hamas. Throughout the second half of 2013 and the first several months of 2014, the group was generating between 30-40% of the monthly revenues of the previous year through taxing internal goods and transactions in Gaza. The reduced salary levels had deleterious effects on the local economy and additional hardships to Gaza’s families.

The closing of the tunnels had another significant ramification on the economy. Prices of goods increased dramatically. One of the major imports coming through the tunnels was Egyptian subsidised fuel (fuel in Egypt is subsidised by the government to reduce cost burdens for Egyptians). But, Egyptian smugglers would acquire the fuel and sell to Gaza’s tunnel operators. Gazans were able to purchase the subsidised fuel for one-third to one-half of the price of Israeli fuel (Eldar 2013). According to several senior Palestinian sources, Hamas generated several hundred million dollars in taxes on the fuel annually. However, since the Egyptian Army had targeted the fuel tunnels, prices of fuel increased dramatically. According to a UN situation report published in November 2013 (OCHA), it was estimated that ‘less than 20,000 liters of fuel per week entered Gaza via the tunnels, compared to 1 million liters per day until June 2013’. The fuel shortage prompted many Gaza residents to walk long distances in lieu of buses or cars since prices of fuel had more than doubled (Harel 2013).

The fuel shortage impacted Gazans in a second and meaningful way. Nearly half of Gaza's electricity comes from the Gaza Power Plant, which operates by burning fuel. By November 2013, the Gaza Power Plant ran through its fuel reserves and was forced to shut down for up to 18 hours per day (OCHA 2013), twice the normal shut-down time. Alternative supplies of electricity from the Israeli power grid provided sporadic support to other Gazan consumers (Haaretz 2013). By mid-December the economic situation in Gaza continued to deteriorate to the point where Israel allowed 450,000 litres to enter Gaza through the Karem Shalom crossing; the Palestinian Authority and Qatar purchased the fuel from Israel. Gazans were forced to use fuel-burning generators to help businesses and homes have more than six hours of electricity per day. This put additional demand on fuel, driving prices for all goods and frustration higher. Though, Hamas could and did allow Israeli fuel to be brought into Gaza, the price included taxes collected by the Israelis, which was to be given to the Palestinian Authority, leaving Hamas with the choice of adding to the cost by charging additional taxes or allowing it to be lower priced to help the struggling economy. The bottom line is that the Egyptian approach to the tunnels resulted in Hamas and the Gazan residents being more dependent on fuel coming from Israel.

In addition to systematically closing the tunnels, the Egyptian government prevented the travel of Gazans through the Rafah border crossing. Since Hamas's own bank, the Islamic Bank of Gaza, was not set up to send and receive international bank transfers, an effort to prevent Western governments from seizing the financial assets of the group, Hamas relied on foreign aid coming in the form of cash. This cash had historically been brought into Gaza through the Rafah Border crossing with Egypt. According to sources close to Hamas, the organisation raises significant funds through donors in the Gulf. For example, Hamas is able to raise \$10million per month from individual giving in Saudi Arabia. During Gaza War II, that amount was double. The Qataris also give to Hamas and Gazans through different methods. First, they committed to build \$400million in roads, housing and infrastructure and set up the organisation called the Qatari Technical Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza to manage the many projects and the funding. This organisation funds building projects by contracting the construction firms directly from offices established in Gaza. The idea is that none of this money is to go to the Hamas government. Second, the Qatari Government contributes regularly to Hamas by hosting Chairman Mishal in Doha and meetings of Hamas in Doha and through

contributions to the movement through funding of the Yusuf al-Qaradawi Centre in Qatar.<sup>28</sup> According to a source close to Hamas, the Centre transfers cash to Hamas through the Rafah Boarder crossing. Altogether, Hamas is able to raise tens of millions of dollars each month through its fundraising efforts in the Gulf. Because of the closing of the Rafah border by Egypt, no foreign aid could be brought into Gaza. Though Hamas has a significant amount of foreign assistance it was not sufficient to cover the expenses of the Gazan government even if it were able to get the money into the Strip.

The closure of the Rafah border also significantly reduced the passage of Gazan residents to and from Egypt and the outside world. In September 2013, the Egyptians allowed the border to be open only four hours per day and were processing the passing of only 350 people per days (coming and going), compared to the 1,300 in the past (Harel 2013). Egypt also prevented Hamas cabinet ministers from leaving Gaza. The closures also greatly restricted the movement of students and business leaders from entering or exiting Gaza. Egypt argues that the closure of the tunnels and restrictions at the border is about reducing the free flow of militants that were emanating from Gaza, attacking the Egyptian Army and state interests in the Sinai.

The new strategy by Egyptian Government was aimed at reducing the level of violence being perpetrated at Egyptians in the Sinai. According to Harel (2013), 'Egyptian security officials discovered weapon caches in the Sinai bearing markings that indicated that they came from Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Gaza...30% of the 130 Islamic activists killed by Egyptian security forces [through September 2013] have come from Gaza'. Reuters (2013) reported that Egypt 'warned of a military response if Hamas or other Palestinian groups try to violate Egyptian security, increasing tension over what Cairo says is support from Gaza for Islamist militants operating in the Sinai Peninsula'. Egypt responded to the threat emanating from Gaza by razing buildings up to one kilometre from the Gazan Border (Reuters 2013b). According to the Egyptian Army, on 16 September 2013 (Khoury 2013) 152 tunnels were destroyed since the end of July. According to the statements the army seized weapons including anti-aircraft missiles and motorised paragliders. Ownership of these weapons was not identified.

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<sup>28</sup> Note: Yusuf al-Qaradawi is the intellectual and spiritual leader of the International Association of the Muslim Brotherhood. He is an Egyptian that has turned down the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt on several occasions.

The final strategic consequence faced by Hamas was the sharp reduction in weapons imports as a result of the change in government in Egypt. Discussed in Chapter 3, the traditional routes of weapons imports bound for Gaza came through Libya and the Sudan via the Sinai and the smuggling tunnels. The closure of most of the tunnels and the active Egyptian concern of militant attacks emanating from Gaza prevented smugglers from successfully increasing the quantity or quality of Hamas and PIJ weapons. This meant that Hamas was limited to internal manufacturing and technology development of its own weapons. According to Israeli security officials (Fishman 2013), Hamas has been able to improve the quality of its Qassam Rockets during the closure of the tunnels by Egypt, particularly because some smugglers were still able to smuggle explosives into Gaza through tunnels not yet closed by Egypt. Those officials indicated that Iranian rockets were not be smuggled into Gaza during this period.

The first half of 2013 saw Hamas's governance capacity at its highest level. But the change of government in Egypt in early July 2013 caused major shockwaves for the group as a function of the closure of tunnels and restrictions at the Rafah Border. The group however did not sit idle while General Sisi of Egypt ratcheted up the pressure on the Gaza Statelet. Hamas pursued two primary courses of action to get General Sisi to reconsider the Egyptian approach to the Southern border. First, Hamas sought to reduce tensions with Egypt through a general rapprochement with the Egyptian Army. Second, Hamas launched rockets on Israel with the idea that Egyptian interlocutors would respond by loosening the military's grip on the southern border.

The rapprochement with the Egyptian Army began in early September 2013 when Deputy Chairman Marzouk issued a letter (Bar'el 2013) to Mishal and Haniyeh calling for Hamas to refrain from public statements supporting the Egyptian Brotherhood and the Morsi Regime. The letter also called for Hamas to refrain from critiquing the Egyptian Army for leading a military coup or for military operations in the Sinai or along the border. As one would expect from ideological 'brothers', there was a public showing of support for President Morsi by Hamas leaders just after his incarceration in early July 2013. Marzouk also went on Egyptian television to explain that Hamas respected the Egyptian military and those Hamas actions and voices that contradicted

this show of respect were ‘mistaken’ (al-Mughrabi 2013). Al-Monitor published the following description of the Marzouk apology on Egyptian television:

Mousa Abu Marzouk, the deputy chairman of Hamas’ political bureau, publicly apologized to the Egyptian army in an unprecedented interview on the Egyptian Dream channel at the beginning of September. During the interview, he apologized for any affront, which he considered a “red line.” He also rejected any criticism of Gen. Abdel Fatah al-Sisi by some Hamas figures, whom he stressed must be held accountable. In addition, Al-Monitor has learned that a fierce debate ensued in Hamas following Marzouk’s apology to the Egyptians. Some saw it as an unacceptable concession, though many sympathized with the man’s sensitive geographical predicament since he still resides in Cairo and was appearing on a television channel that openly expresses its animosity toward the Muslim Brotherhood. Others considered Marzouk to be the mediator of a truce between the two sides (Abu Amer 2013).

The Hamas government went further in its effort to reduce tensions with Egypt. On 11 September 2013, Hamas Religious Affairs Minister in Gaza, Ismail Rudwan, ordered imams and clerics to refrain from critiquing the Egyptian government. In an interview with Reuters (al-Mughrabi 2013), he said, ‘preachers should avoid speaking of the internal affairs of Egypt and focus on our Palestinian national issues and our struggle for the liberation of our land and the freedom of our prisoners’. The rapprochement by Hamas toward the new Egyptian government that began in September 2013 continued through the beginning of 2014. Yet, Egypt did not relax its policies toward the destruction of the tunnels or the restrictions placed on the border crossing. So, Hamas attempted a different more violent tactic.

Senior Palestinian sources close to Hamas told the author on condition of anonymity that the group sought to engage in limited conflict with Israel for the purpose of having Egypt step in and negotiate a calming of tensions between Gaza and Israel with the idea that it might lead Egypt toward the easing of its southern border. According to the Israeli Security Agency (2013/14), eight launchings of rockets/mortars from Gaza occurred in December 2013. There were thirteen launchings in January 2014, seven in February, 23 in March and 14 in April.<sup>29</sup> The increase in January through March was, according the sources, designed to create limited conflict with Israel, ideally drawing Egypt in to negotiate, similar to their role in negotiating the end of Gaza War II.

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<sup>29</sup> Note: launching could represent more than one rocket/mortar. It could be that multiple rockets/mortars are launched by Gazan forces and they be counted as only one launching.

In late January 2014, Hamas issued an order to have its 900 forces stationed along the Israeli-Gaza border to withdraw. The forces had been deployed along the border to prevent rocket fire into Israel and to ‘safeguard public order’ (Ho 2014). The withdrawal of these forces was deemed to signal to other armed groups in the Strip that they were welcome to fire rockets/mortars at Israel. In response to the Hamas rocket prevention force withdrawal and the increased rocket launching activity, Israeli Intelligence Minister Yuval Steinitz said, ‘if the drip of rockets from Gaza continues, we will have no choice but to go inside [Gaza] in order to eliminate Hamas, and allow the Palestinian Authority to regain control of the Gaza Strip’ (Ho 2014).

By late January 2014, it became clear that the Palestinian Islamic Jihad was firing most of the rockets from Gaza; they were claiming responsibility (Balousha 2014). After Israel responded with attacks on militant and munitions supplies, Hamas withdrew its rocket prevention forces. Yet, all the while the PIJ leadership claimed that its military operation, dubbed ‘Breaking the Silence’ was being conducted in coordination with Hamas. PIJ Secretary-General Ramadan Abdullah Shalah stated on Al Mayadeen TV, ‘communication and coordination with Palestinian factions, particularly Hamas, in relation to the situation and to find the best way to manage the battle, in light of the plight of our people, and the situation in the besieged Gaza Strip’ (Balousha 2014).

Once again, Hamas used its relationship as the leading resistance organisation to collaborate with PIJ, presumably in an attempt to create a new opening with Egypt. The plan, however, did not work out the way Hamas had hoped. Since the takeover of the Egyptian government by General Sisi, Hamas had lost its communication with the Egyptian Intelligence and with the political leadership. Hamas’s objective in early 2014 was to force Egypt to negotiate directly with it, whereby Hamas could be able to negotiate a different arrangement along its southern border. Yet, to its frustration, the Egyptians did open communication channels, but with the leadership of PIJ.<sup>30</sup> One Hamas senior official told Al Mayadeen, ‘Egypt did not communicate with us about a return to clam, and limited its contacts to Islamic Jihad. The Egyptians did not inform us of any agreements, despite the fact that they should coordinate with Hamas

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<sup>30</sup> Note: efforts to retrieve reports about the PIJ and Egyptian Intelligence communications were unsuccessful.



[regarding such matters] (Balousha 2014)'. Al-Monitor reported that an inside source at Hamas told the paper that Hamas 'had approved the firing of rockets from Gaza, on the condition that the campaign be measured and that it only target surrounding towns and not central Israeli cities' (Balousha 2014). The existence of a joint General Committee of Hamas and PIJ that meets once every three months further adds to the idea that collaboration existed between Hamas and PIJ on the timing of rockets/mortar attacks against Israel. According to Zahar, a Hamas senior official, 'the relationship between the two sides is exceptional, and we both desire to develop it in service to the Islamic Project' (Balousha 2014).

Frustratingly for Hamas, its goal of negotiating directly with Egypt over the conflagration with Israel did not manifest. By the end of March 2014, Hamas was continuing to pay less than half salaries of Gaza public sector employees with no prospects on the horizon to improve the financial situation in Gaza. Further, public opinion of Hamas continued to erode and angst in the street over the economic conditions continued to grow. According to PSR, prior to the new government in Egypt, support for Hamas in Gaza was 29.7%. By September 2013 it had fallen to 26.9%. By December 2013 it had slid further to 25.5%. After the ramping up of violence between factions in Gaza and Israel in the first part of 2014, support for Hamas had risen to 28.5%. *Palestinian Support for Violence* against Israel fell in every survey since June 2013 (June 2013 – 46.8%; September 2013 – 43.4%; December 2013 – 42.9%; March 2014 – 39.6%). Interestingly, even though Hamas was complicit with the PIJ rocket launchings in the first part of 2014, they refrained from attacking Israel at a time when popular *Support for Violence* was declining.

The culmination of these factors forced Hamas to consider new options. One of those options was moving toward reconciliation with Fatah and the Fatah led PLO. According to a source close to Hamas, the decision to move toward reconciliation was designed to have the Palestinian Authority take responsibility for most of the public sector in Gaza, security being the one exception. Just weeks after the end of the conflagration with Israel, Hamas pursued the idea of reconciling with Abbas and Fatah. It just so happened that the peace talks between the PA and Israel had just hit the skids over Israeli refusal to release Palestinian prisoners. Consequently, Abbas and Hamas had different good reasons to consider reconciliation at the same time.

According to al-Watan, a Saudi newspaper, reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas had been discussed between Khalid Mishal and the head of the Qatari Intelligence (Zvi Bar'el 2014). The paper reported that the Qatari leader told Mishal that Hamas must speed up the reconciliation process because of the diplomatic rupture between Qatar and Saudi Arabia and Qatar and other Arab countries, like Egypt, demanded it. The strained relations felt by Qatar were a direct result in the funding of Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. The report suggested that Egypt felt that Qatar was acting directly against it. Bar'el (2014) had this explanation of events:

The head of Qatari intelligence noted that his country's support for Hamas is perceived in Cairo as an act that is directed against it. He explained to Meshal that in light of that and of the crisis between Qatar and Egypt, Qatar is liable to reconsider its policy toward Hamas, which explains that organisation's urgent efforts to win Arab legitimacy through reconciliation with the PA....Following his conversation with the Qatari, Meshal explained these developments to other leaders in his movement, and shortly afterward the reconciliation agreement between the PA and Hamas was signed.

On 23 April 2014, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, led by Abbas, and Hamas agreed to a 'Unity Pact', which states that a unity government should be formed within five-weeks (by May 28). The timing of the 'Unity Pact' was opportune for both Hamas and Fatah. For Hamas, the hemorrhaging of resources in Gaza and its inability to pay employees at a time when costs were rising was creating an undercurrent of distrust in the Hamas government. For Fatah, the seeming failing negotiations with Israel and Israel's breaking of its commitment for prisoner release put Abbas and the Palestinian Authority into a difficult situation. The idea of unity between the two groups strengthened them both with the Palestinian street and created a new dynamic for which to engage the international community, domestic politics and its conflict with Israel.

With one week remaining in the five-week requirement to establish a unity government, General Sisi sweetened the pot for Hamas. In an interview on Egyptian television, Sisi stated in relationship to the reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah, 'I call on Hamas to rehabilitate its relations with Egypt before it loses the affection of the Egyptian people once and for all' (Bar'el 2014). The general belief in Gaza and Egypt was that this was a softening of General Sisi toward the group – the rapprochement that Hamas had been

seeking. Ahmed Abu Ras, Director of the Qatari Technical Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza, also said that he expected Egypt to, ‘open the Rafah border crossing...to allow the transportation of building materials donated by Qatar’ (Bar’el 2014). The opening for Egypt to make such a statement resulted in the fact that the Unity Government would require that the both the PA and Hamas be responsible for security arrangements at the border; an idea that seemed to increase Egypt’s confidence in security at the Rafah border. The move by Egypt was seen as tacitly recognising Hamas’s role in a new Palestinian Unity Government. Hamas’s Zahar responded to Sisi’s comments with, ‘(t)hese words accord with the traditional Hamas policy, which is based on good relations with all the Arab countries, and with Egypt in particular’ (Bar’el 2014).

On 27 May 2014, one day before the ‘Unity Pact’ was to expire, Hamas and Fatah agreed to a formulation for the National Unity Government. Both factions agreed that all government Ministers needed to be people unaffiliated with any political group. Yet, in the final formulation of the new Cabinet, several of the ministers were the ones that had previously been working in a similar role in the Palestinian Authority. The central challenge not yet solved by the newly formulated government was how the finance and security portfolios would be managed in the new government.<sup>31</sup>

## **6.4 Negotiation Dynamics for the Unity Government**

On two previous occasions, the Chairman of Hamas, Khalid Mishal, had attempted to achieve reconciliation with Abbas and the Palestinian Authority and Fatah only to be rebuffed by the Hamas leadership in Gaza (see 6.1.2 and 6.2.5). This time was different. Gaza’s leadership supported rapprochement by Mishal with Hamas’s political rivals, Fatah and the PA. The cumulative effects of declining revenues, the pressure from

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<sup>31</sup> Note: formulation of the new government: PM/Interior Minister – Rami Al-Hamdallah, Deputy PM for Political Affairs/Culture Minister – Ziad Abu Amr, Finance Minister – Shukri Bihara, Local Governance Minister – Nayaf Abu Khalal, Tourism Minister – Rula Maaya, Work and Society Minister – Hifa al-Ara, Labor Minister – Mamoun Abu Shahla, Public Works and Housing Minister – Mufeed Hasayneh, Religion and Waqfs Minister – Yusef Idees, Foreign Minister – Riad al-Malki, Justice Minister – Salim al-Saqqa, Education Minister - Khawla al-Shakhsheer, Communications Minister – Allam Moussa, Agriculture Minister – Shawqu al-aiysa, Health Minister – Jawad Awwad, Jerusalem Affairs Minister – Adnan al-Husseini, Trnasportation Minister – Wael Dweikat, Prisoners Ministry – TBD.

Qatari benefactors and the shifting attitudes of Gazans about the ability of Hamas government to pay public sector employees had finally taken its toll. The leadership in Gaza was prepared for reconciliation with Abbas. There were a few reasons why Hamas was more accommodating than in the past with Abbas and Fatah during unity government talks: 1) Hamas had experience with forming a unity government, 2) Hamas wanted to shift the financial burdens of maintaining the public sector in Gaza to the PA and 3) Hamas wanted the Rafah border opened by Egypt. The bottom line is that reconciliation worked this time because Hamas leaders in Gaza wanted it at a time in which Abbas saw it as an important step for Palestinians.

As discussions commenced with members of the PLO on the make-up of the Unity Government, reports emerged that Fatah and Hamas were dominating the discussions without consideration of other factions. Secretary General, Nayef Hawateme, of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLO member) expressed frustration saying that the two groups were ‘divvying up the portfolios between themselves’ (Ravid and Khoury 2014). Careful consideration to the makeup of the new cabinet was paramount to Hamas and Fatah because of its experience from 2007. In 2007, the international community condemned the Unity Government and stopped all financial transfers to it, primarily because Hamas was part of that government. This time, Abbas and the Hamas leadership knew that the international community would only consider funding the PA if there were clear assurances that the structure did not provide Hamas access to international funds directed to the PA. Abbas and the PA have been very clear on this point. In a speech aired on official Palestinian TV after the swearing-in ceremony of the new government (Abukhater and Sobelman 2014), Abbas said the ministers are non-partisan, meaning that they do not belong to any political party. He further explained that they would not be responsible for political negotiations but only for preparing for national elections within six months and running daily life in the Palestinian areas.

According to multiple senior Palestinian sources, during the unity talks, the Hamas leadership recognised that the international community would not provide financial assistance to the Unity Government if there were a structure that allowed Hamas access to government resources. At the time of writing, the situation remains fluid as the PA and the PLO work toward a system that could be acceptable to foreign donors. Such a

realisation by Hamas further suggests that the group is eager to relieve itself of the financial responsibilities of Gaza's public sector employees.

The issue of funding the public employees in Gaza became a contentious issue within the unity discussions. On one side, Hamas wanted the PA to assume payment for the 41,000 public sector employees in Gaza. On the other, the PA and Abbas argued that the PA would vet each employee to determine suitability. The issue was not resolved prior to the formation of the new government, which led to increased tensions between the Gaza Public Employees Union and the new PA government (Webb-Pullman 2014). The PA has stated that it would vet all Gaza employees before paying out salaries, a process that could take months. Mohammed Seyam, Chairman of the Gazan Employee Union, said that the approach by the PA was an attempt to pay employees based upon political affiliation. It is also important to remember that in 2007, just before Hamas replaced the PA leadership in Gaza, the PA employed only 16,000 persons. One open question is whether the PA has the resources to pay for the 41,000 employees at a time in which the international community is scrutinising the flow of funds, attempting to reduce money accessibility by Hamas and its surrogates.

The international response to the formation of the Unity Government was mixed. The US, EU, China and the UN, amongst others, declared that it would work with the government sworn in by Abbas. The EU released the following statement (Reuters 2014), '(w)e welcome...the declaration by President Abbas that this new government is committed to the principle of the two state solution based on the 1967 borders, to the recognition of Israel's legitimate right to exist'. A bipartisan group of 88 US Senators sent a letter to President Obama stating that the new government 'represents a serious setback to efforts to achieve peace' (Haartz 2014). The Israeli government went much further to criticise the reconciliation. Netanyahu stated that the unity government was 'a Palestinian step against peace and in favor of terrorism' (Reuters 2014).

Some ten days after the announcement of the Unity Government, the Government of Israel instructed its ambassadors 'to call upon all countries where they are posted to present Abbas with a series of security demands to prove the seriousness of his intentions' (Ravid 2014). The three requests made by the ambassadors to their foreign counterparts were:

(1) Dismantling Hamas' military arm – Iz al-Din al-Qassam – and having the Palestinian Authority assume oversight of its people and arms. (2) A complete halt to the manufacturing and smuggling of arms into Gaza, and missile fire at Israel. (3) Renewed deployment of the PA security apparatuses throughout the Gaza Strip, at the border crossings with Israel and the Rafah border crossing with Egypt.

In response to questions of Hamas about their interests in maintaining al-Qassam forces in Gaza given the Unity Government, a source in Hamas told Ravid and Khoury (2014), '(i)f anyone expects Hamas to hand over its missile system to the PA he is mistaken... Hamas wants to shed ministerial responsibility for civilian issues but to maintain its power as a popular resistance organisation'. Another source close to Hamas told the author that the group wants to adopt the model of Hizballah in Lebanon, where there is a political role with a separate autonomous military force.

A poll conducted in early June 2014, just after formation of the National Unity Government and before the kidnapping of the Israeli teenagers (see Chp 6.5) showed *Hamas Support* at 20.6% (29.2% in Gaza), slightly higher than in March. *Support for Violence* also edged higher to 40.5%. One issue not addressed to this point is how al-Qassam would respond to the political decision of reconciliation and the Unity Government.

## **6.5 Kidnappings: The Beginning of a New Era**

The most challenging thing about writing a historical narrative of a modern group is that there are those watershed moments, whereby seminal events are transpiring in real-time, making it difficult to provide depth of analysis. The current environment is just such a time for Hamas. On 23 April 2014, Hamas reconciled with Fatah and the PLO and agreed to establish a new unity government within five-weeks. On 27 May, Hamas and Fatah establish a new government under the PA, whereby unaffiliated technocrats are appointed to run the government. On 12 June, three Israeli teenagers were abducted – and killed – while hitchhiking from school in near Hebron in the West Bank. At the time of writing, the full story behind the kidnapping and killing was unknown. According to Prime Minister Netanyahu, two Hamas members [he named them] from Hebron were responsible for the kidnapping and deaths of the teenagers. Hamas

Chairman Mishal praised the attack, but did not claim responsibility. In an interview with Al-Jazeera on 23 June, Mishal said that the three hitchhikers were, ‘settlers and soldiers in the Israeli army’. He went on to make the following statement about the kidnapping (Miller 2014):

No one claimed responsibility so far. I can neither confirm [Hamás’s responsibility] nor deny it...blessed be the hands that captured them. This is a Palestinian duty, the responsibility of the Palestinian people. Our prisoners must be freed; not Hamás’s prisoners – the prisoners of the Palestinian people.

The kidnapping [and killing] of the teens resulted in the cooling of Unity Government and threatened to end it. On 20 June, Riad al-Maliki, PA Foreign Minister said in response to questions about the implications of the kidnapping (Reuters 2014b), ‘(i)f Hamás is behind it, and nobody knows up until now, then it will be a blow to the reconciliation process...if we reach that conclusion, then the president [Abbas] will take drastic decisions’.

There remains a lack of clear information about the kidnapping and killing of the Israeli teenagers. It is certain that the actions of militants in the West Bank threaten to undermine the reconciliation as well as result in an escalation of tensions with no certainty that such tensions can be contained. Given the dearth of information about the assailants, further discussion in relation to this research will need to be conducted at a later time.

The most important lesson resulting from the past several months is that Hamás has determined that it no longer wants to be responsible for the public sector in Gaza, but that it does want to maintain a Hizballah type political and military capacity in Gaza. The move by Hamás’s leadership demonstrates that they are likely entering a new era. If indeed this is the case, we should look for the possibility of a return of Hamás violence and Palestinian *Support for Violence* to Pre-Political Era relationships that demonstrated strong predictive ability [before control of land became the objective].

## Chapter Seven

### Conclusion: The Characteristics of Hamas Resistance

This thesis has used empirical evidence to argue that Hamas conducts its affairs by gauging the attitudes of Palestinians on a variety of issues, particularly violence, and adapts accordingly. With the exception of Merari's work explained in Chapter 2, the existing literature on Hamas offers very little in the way of evidence of this dynamic. Merari wrote that the empirical evidence on popular support (2010:168), 'leaves little doubt that the community's attitude to suicide attacks has a strong influence on the volume of suicide attacks generated by community members'. Caridi (2012) claimed that Hamas reduced its violence against Israel in 2005 because the population 'grew tired' of it. There are other vague references about popular support in other Hamas literature, but there is nothing else in the way of systematic empirical investigation looking at its influence on Hamas's violent behaviour. The unique contribution of this work is that it goes beyond Merari's in that it quantitatively analyses the relationships between various popular support measures and violence for predictive ability and causation. This is a unique contribution of this thesis.

Conventional wisdom suggests that Hamas is the vanguard of violent resistance for Palestinians (Chehab 2007; Roy 2011; Schanzer 2008; Levitt 2006; Milton-Edwards & Farrell 2010; and Yousef 2011) by leading Palestinians to violence through the mosque and the *dawa*. This thesis stands in contrast to this wisdom by offering empirical evidence that Hamas follows the populace, particularly on violence against Israel, though this relationship did change once Hamas had control of Gaza. Further, the thesis shows no causal relationship between religiosity (devoutness of the population) and *Hamas Support* or *Support for Violence*. This is not to say that religiosity plays no role, it just indicates that such a role may not be as important as scholars have argued. The



evidence offered is not a ‘smoking gun’ removing all doubt of a vanguard role for Hamas. Yet, the empirical evidence herein should make us reconsider the conventional wisdom offered in the literature that makes such claims without analysis of popular support measures and Hamas behaviours.

This research has also demonstrated that simple definitions of Hamas resistance are insufficient to understand the dynamic machinations of the group’s use of violence. This chapter provides analyses of the hypotheses and corollaries that have driven the thesis. Though this chapter will provide results of the testing on the hypotheses and corollaries, it will not repeat the discussion provided in Chapter 4. The chapter will then offer a predictive model of Hamas resistance built with the Granger-causation data. A dynamic model of Hamas resistance vis-à-vis popular support over time will be discussed as well as a model that outlines how Hamas addresses the tension between values and responsibilities articulated by philosopher Max Weber.

## 7.1 Evaluation of Hypothesis One and Related Corollaries

### ***Hypothesis #1 Palestinian popular support measures predict or are predicted by Hamas led violence against Israel (Weber Spectrum).***

True. Popular support measures do predict Hamas led violence.

- *Support for Violence* predicts and Granger-causes Hamas led violence:  $r(59)=.415;p<.01$  [differenced].
- During the Oslo Era, Hamas violence against Israel increased after the publishing of PSR polling data indicating that *Support for Violence* had increased: pre-poll =  $r^2(n=14)=.004$ , and post-poll =  $r^2(n=14)=.539$ ;  $p<.01$  [differenced].
- During the Pre-Political Era, *Support for Violence* also predicts *Violence Frequency*:  $r(27)=.470;p<.01$  [differenced].

False. Hamas led violence does not predict any Palestinian popular support measure collected for this thesis.

Together, this is a stunning finding. It suggests that Hamas follows the population and does not lead it. It has been argued by scholars (Chehab 2007; Roy 2011; Schanzer 2008; Levitt 2006; Milton-Edwards & Farrell 2010; and Yousef 2011) that Hamas uses its *dawa* network and work through the mosques to radicalise the population to increase

*Support for Violence* or violent acts. However, religiosity and Islamisation do not predict an increase in support for Violence or Hamas. Further, the similarity in *Popular Support for Hamas* in the West Bank since June 2007 suggests that the lack of a Hamas *dawa* programme has not had a deleterious effect on their base of support compared to Gaza. As such, data from this thesis offers competing empirical evidence to the qualitative arguments made by the scholars who claim that *Hamas Support* is tied directly to the *dawa* and religiosity activities. That is not to say that the *dawa* does not engender sympathy or support from the population for Hamas, it just means that it has not been the singular influence to create popular support over time as argued by some scholars. The data suggests that perceived threat to the family is the most significant driver for the group's popular support.

***Corollary #1a: Hamas use of violence against Israel predicts popular support for the group.***

False. Hamas led violence does not predict *Hamas Support*.

Though Hamas led violence does not predict popular support for the group, there is a strong correlation between the two variables:  $r(59) = .459; p < .01$  [differenced]. This finding is consistent with the idea that Hamas is recognised as a resistance organisation. When *Support for Violence* increases so does *Hamas Support*. The important point is that a correlation does not mean that there is a causal effect between the variables, but it is consistent with an increasing conflict environment.

***Corollary #1b: Palestinians will generally be willing to support violence against Israel and the advancement of military weapons by Hamas for use in conflict against Israel.***

True. A majority of Palestinians supported violence against Israelis in 28 of 59 time periods.

Corollary #1b was motivated by realist claims that people will expect to be in conflict and will prepare for that conflict. Palestinians support the use of military weapons and tactics by Hamas, and other armed Palestinian factions, against Israel. In November 1994, 51% of Palestinians supported armed operations against Israel including 'a suicide bombing' and in March 2008, 66% of Palestinians supported the use of 'rockets' against

Israel. These support measures indicate the population's willingness to support the development of arms by Hamas, or other armed groups, against Israel.

***Corollary #1c: Hamas gained support from Palestinians by launching its ten most prolific attacks against Israel.***

False. *Popular Support for Hamas* did not increase after the ten most spectacular attacks. In fact, the ten most prolific acts nearly reached two-tailed Pearson Correlation significance threshold to say that they predicted a decline in Hamas popular support.

This corollary was tested in a variety of different ways:

- Test 1 (all time periods from #1 to #10 attack) – Prolific attacks at Time 0 do not predict popular support at Time +1:  $r(25)=-.252$  [differenced];
- Test 2 (time periods before and after each of the ten attacks) – Prolific attacks at Time 0 do not predict popular support at Time +1:  $r(18)=-.095$  [differenced]; and
- Test 3 (time periods after each of the ten attacks) – Prolific attacks at Time 0 predict a decline in the *Popular Support for Hamas* at Time +1:  $r(14)=-.495$ ;  $p<.10$  [differenced]. Note: Two-tailed Pearson Significance at  $p<.05 = -.497$ .

Corollary #1c was motivated by Bruce Hoffman's argument that terror groups use high profile attacks to increase their recruitment and level of support. The analysis generally tells us that *Popular Support for Hamas* did not increase with these attacks. The result however does not provide clarity on the number of militants that may have joined al-Qassam. Rather, the data only provides clarity that the population as a whole is not moved toward greater support of Hamas from the ten most prolific attacks (by casualties). There could be a number of reasons why support was not impacted by these attacks. It could be, for example, that the Palestinian population had seen so many violent acts that these specific prolific acts did not register in the larger psychology of the population. It might also be that Hoffman specifically meant that the groups use the attacks to recruit new militant activists. The data available is not amenable to such testing.

***Corollary #1d: Palestinian Support for Violence predicts Hamas led violence against Israel.***

True. *Palestinian Support for Violence* against Israel Granger-causes the frequency of Hamas violence against Israelis:  $r(59)=.415$ ;  $p<.01$  [differenced].

- Granger-causation is stronger than correlations or predictive values, but not as strong as actual causation;
- During the Oslo Era, Hamas violence against Israel increased after the publishing of PSR polling data indicating that *Support for Violence* had increased: pre-poll =  $r^2$  (n=14)=.004, and post-poll =  $r^2$ (n=14)=.539;  $p<.01$  [differenced];
- During the Pre-Political Era, *Support for Violence* also predicted *Violence Frequency*:  $r(27)=.470$ ;  $p<.01$  [differenced]; and
- Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israelis predicted the top ten prolific attacks (determined by total number of casualties) by Hamas on Israelis at Time +1:  $r(59)=.445$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced].

This may be the most significant finding of the thesis. The finding also confirms the idea espoused by former Shin Bet Director, Ami Ayalon, that if Israel wants to reduce Hamas attacks then it needs to figure out how to reduce the Palestinian *Support for Violence*.

***Corollary #1e: Palestinian religiosity predicts support for Islamisation of Palestine and/or violence against Israel.***

False. Religiosity does not predict Islamist support, nor does Islamist support predict religiosity. Further, religiosity does not predict *Support for Violence*, but *Support for Violence* at Time 0 does predict religiosity at Time +1:  $r(27)=.514$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced].

Similar to Hypothesis One, Hamas scholars who claim that the work of Hamas in the mosques and the *dawa* programme increases the radicalisation of the population and support for Hamas's violent resistance motivated corollary #1e. Further motivation for the corollary comes from social movement theory that suggests that as Hamas advances its credo of Islamisation of Palestinians with the theme of religious based violent resistance, *Support for Violence* against Israel would increase. This finding suggests that the generalised arguments coming from Hamas and social movement scholars do not provide the specificity required to have their assumptions stand up to the quantitative scrutiny of this thesis.

*Support for Violence* is a predictor of religiosity and Islamisation. Data for the latter is:  $r(27)=.557$ ;  $p<.01$  [undifferenced]. This suggests that when the perceptions of threat

(function of the perception of the safety of one's family) are increasing for Palestinians, levels of religiosity increase as does *Hamas Support* and other Islamist groups.

***Corollary #1f: During times of heightened violence with Israel, Popular Support for Hamas increases.***

Not always true. During the three most significant periods of violence with Israel, *Hamas Support* increased during two.

- During the Second *Intifada*, *Hamas Support* increased from 10.3% in July 2000 to 25.1% in March 2005.
- During Gaza War I, *Hamas Support* decreased from 26.1% in December 2008 to 25.0% in March 2009.
- During Gaza War II, *Hamas Support* increased from 20.8% in September 2012 to 30.6% in December 2012.

If *Safety of Family* is considered a surrogate value for perceived threat, then there is a nuance to understand about the corollary. *Hamas Support* at Time 0 negatively predicts the perceptions of *Safety of Family* at Time +1:  $r(33)=-.877; p<.01$  [undifferenced]. This finding suggests that as *Hamas Support* increases it is generally followed by a decrease in the perceptions of safety. Since *Safety of Family* increased 40% to 70% for Gazans since Hamas has been in control of Gaza, it is unlikely that *Hamas Support* causes fear about the *Safety of Family*. Further, we know that *Safety of Family* at Time 0 predicts support for Violence at Time +1 during the Governance Era:  $r(23)=.509; p<.02$  [differenced]. These findings are likely telling us that the *Safety of Family* predicts greater support for Violence, but only after threat conditions have eroded to the point where *Hamas Support* becomes a means of protecting the family.

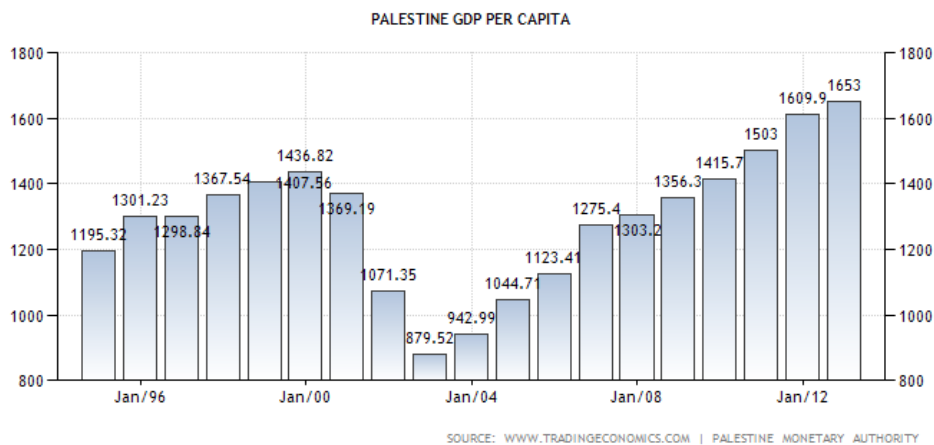
The decline in support during Gaza War I may have been caused by the actions of the Israeli Defense Forces. Chapter 6.2.5 discusses the difference in behaviour by the IDF compared to Gaza War II. If the difference in *Hamas Support* before and after Gaza War I was indeed attributable to the less specific Israeli leaflet campaign and invasion of Gaza with ground forces, then there is a moral dilemma for the Israelis in that the erosion of *Hamas Support* can be attributed to harsher military tactics and more indiscriminate Palestinian deaths; actions which are condemned the world over and may result in eroding support for Israel. Yet, the small decline in *Hamas Support* during

Gaza I was within the margin of error in polling and relatively insignificant. As such, the data from this thesis does not definitively answer the corollary.

## 7.2 Evaluation of Hypothesis Two and Related Corollaries

Evaluation of the Hypothesis and corollaries requires the introduction of Palestinian per Capita GDP. Figure 73 demonstrates the data from 1994 to 2013.

**Figure 73. Palestine GDP Per Capita (Trading Economics 2013)**



***Hypothesis #2: As Palestinian governance and economic conditions improve, violence against Israel declines.***

False. Economic conditions were increasing at the outset of violence for the Second *Intifada*, Gaza I and Gaza II, but did not prevent the outbreak of violence against Israel. Further, without a Palestinian Unity Government, income levels of Palestinians have been increasing.

- Palestinian GDP per capita increases during times of low violence and declines during times of increased violence. Income levels lag the levels of violence, suggesting that the economic output in Palestine improves during times when violence is declining.
- Hamas led violence does not follow economic data, but did lead it into decline at the start of the Second *Intifada*.
- After the signing of the Oslo Declaration of Principles, economic conditions improved until the start of the Second *Intifada*.
- After national elections in 2006, the Palestinian GDP per capita grew at its fastest rate in the past nineteen years at 13.5%.
- Without a unity government since 2007, the GDP per capita grew nearly 40%.

Without specific data on income levels of Gazans versus West Bankers, it is difficult to know the implications of the split governance. The available data does suggest that violence is a distinct and separate function to the economic output of Palestinians. This relationship may change as the output of Palestinians increases. Though, the commitment of values by supporters of Hamas has been demonstrated to trump the material incentives. Therefore, it is unlikely that economic data will materially change the level of violence being conducted by Hamas.

***Corollary #2a: Ethno-nationalism interests of Palestinian Arabs would give rise to governance cooperation between Hamas and Fatah for the development of a unified Palestinian State.***

False. Hamas and Fatah created a unity government that lasted for approximately 8 months in 2006 and 2007. During this time, Hamas agreed to accept the outcome of a Palestinian referendum on the establishment of a Palestinian State agreed to by Abbas and Israel. The unity government disintegrated due to the factional violence between Hamas and Fatah. From early indications, the second unity government established by Hamas and Fatah was as a result of self-interest by both parties, not necessarily from a shared sense of what constitutes a Palestinian state.

This corollary was motivated by the literature on ethno-nationalism. The literature suggests that ethnic interests in a state may come together for the establishment of a state. Yet, this has not happened in the Palestinian Territories. The possibility remains that Hamas and Fatah could form a unity government and retie the leadership of the West Bank and Gaza for the purpose of establishing a state that would be internationally recognised. Such an agreement would open the door for Abbas to broker a peace agreement with Israel that could conceivably be accepted in a Palestinian referendum. Yet, Hamas and Fatah have not come together with this declared intention.

***Corollary #2b: Popular Support for Hamas declined when the dawa programme was shut down in the West Bank.***

False. Since the shuttering (beginning in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2007) of the Hamas *dawa* programmes in the West Bank, *Hamas Support* in the West Bank has outperformed support levels in Gaza.

**Figure 74. Impact of *Dawa* Shuttering on Hamas Support**

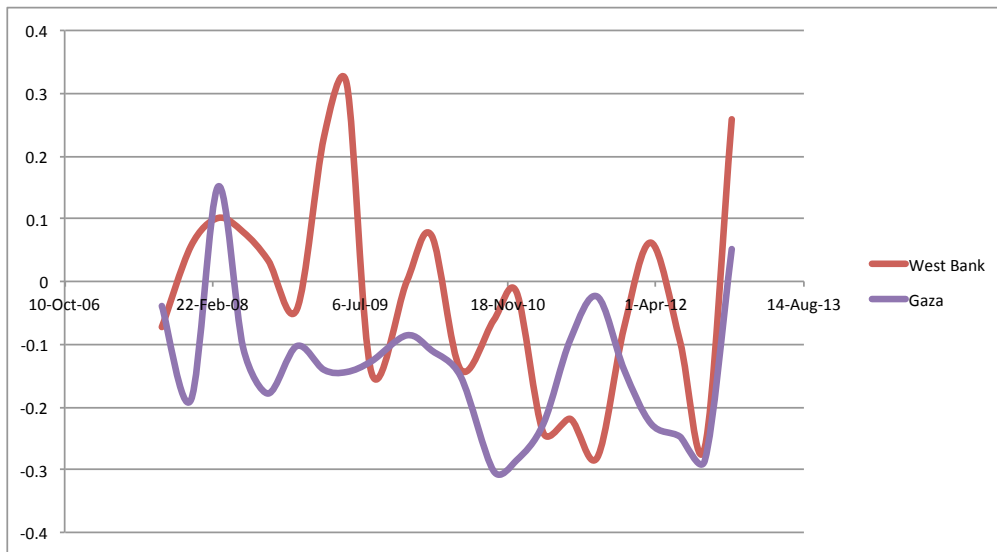


Figure 74 shows the percentage change in popular support for Hamas since June 2007. After the takeover of Gaza by Hamas, the Palestinian Authority along with Israel began to shut down *dawa* related programmes and charities in the West Bank. According to Hamas legislators none of them have been able to remain in operation in the West Bank. The difference in popular support measures in the West Bank and Gaza show that Hamas has not lost ground in terms of support as a result of the *dawa* programmes being shut. The implication of this finding suggests that that since 2007, the *dawa* programmes have had a negligible effect on Hamas level of popular support. That said, it could be argued that because Hamas took over the role of government, that the *dawa* programme in Gaza was essentially converted into the responsibility of governance, therefore resulting in the equivalent of shutting the programme altogether. There is some validity in this argument, but it discounts the freedom of action in providing humanitarian support in Gaza compared to the West Bank. Further, the charities in Gaza have not been shut down financially to the same degree as their West Bank counterparts, which mean that some *dawa* operations are being maintained in Gaza.

Further, those countries that have been contributing money only to the West Bank in order to show the difference between the governance ability of Fatah and Hamas are not likely to be happy with this *Hamas Support* data in the West Bank. The bottom line is that there are faithful supporters of Hamas in the West Bank that have not been swayed to leave the organisation as a result of the shuttering of the local *dawa* operations.



***Corollary #2c: Palestinians will leave Hamas when the cost of maintaining support for the group outweighs the benefit of being part.***

False.<sup>32</sup> Material costs to Hamas like the destruction of a home have not demonstrated the power to lower *Popular Support for Hamas*.

During times of violence, when Israel uses its demolition policy to destroy the homes and assets of Palestinians engaged in violence against Israel, *Hamas Support* increases. This is well demonstrated by the increasing *Hamas Support* during the Second Intifada, for example. The question then shifts to whether there is a lag effect in *Hamas Support* by those that have had to pay high material costs for maintaining support to Hamas. As demonstrated in the Prologue, Israel has taken companies, destroyed homes and lowered the income levels for the families with children involved in violent operations against Israel. Yet, in the cases discussed, the families demonstrated their loyalty to Hamas years after the material destruction. Further, there is no evidence from this research that such actions by Israelis create alternative results.

Those who maintain values similar to Hamas are willing to endure loss of possessions, prison and even death to maintain their loyalty to Hamas and the cause of the group. They genuinely are fused to the group. There have been many examples of this throughout the thesis.

***Corollary #2d: International aid in the West Bank, resulting in material improvements, has lessened the level of Hamas Support in the West Bank and Gaza.***

Indeterminable. *Hamas Support* has declined in both locales since the international community began the campaign to increase aid to the West Bank in the latter half of 2007.

It is possible that the lower *Hamas Support* levels are caused by a slow erosion of the Hamas base due to the international aid pouring into the West Bank. But, there are reasons to believe that the aid is not having such an effect. *Hamas Support* in the West Bank is lower than in Gaza, but it has numerically outperformed support in Gaza over the same period (Figure 74). The resilience in *Popular Support for Hamas* in the West

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<sup>32</sup> Note: 'cost' and 'benefit' are interpreted as 'material costs & benefits'.

Bank even though the group has no *dawa* programming, indicates that there is a base of support in cities like Nablus and Hebron that is not eroding despite the international aid. Further, the fact that Palestinians in Gaza feel that their families are safer than their counterparts in the West Bank, suggests that Hamas security operations are providing something in Gaza that Palestinians are not getting in the West Bank. This is most likely understood by people in the West Bank and provides headwinds to wholesale adoption of the PA as a function of western aid coming into the West Bank.

The bottom line is that it is impossible at this stage to know if the international community's efforts to show the value of the Palestinian Authority and the lack of value with Hamas are having a measurable effect.

### **7.3 Evaluation of Hypothesis Three and Related Corollary**

***Hypothesis #3: Hamas values expand or narrow based upon environmental conditions.***

True. Hamas leadership expands definitions of values in peaceful times and narrows definitions in times of higher threat to the group.

In February 2007 Mousa Abu Marzouk (pers.comm, 28 February) said that the Right of Return of Palestinians was a right, which would not be relinquished, but may not be acted upon. In September 2012 (pers.comm, 23 September), he said that the Right of Return is not a theoretical right and that 4 million Palestinians would return to their homes within weeks. The definition of the Right of Return narrowed between the two interviews.

In the dataset of nearly 900 public statements of five Hamas leaders since 1987, nearly half of the statements are clarifications for policy positions of Hamas. The definitions expand and narrow based upon environmental conditions. One example, Sheikh Yassin issued a fatwa stating that women could be used in combat operations after stating for over a decade that they needed to help the resistance by taking care of the family and supporting the fighters. This expansion of policy was the result of building public opinion by Palestinians supporting women in combat operations. Another example can be seen in Mishal's declaration that Hamas would abide by a referendum that established a state 'on' or 'along' and not 'in' the 1967 borders.

The most often-used counter argument on this point is that Hamas will say one thing to you and another to the Palestinian people. To some extent, this may be true. But, the volume of public restatements of Hamas positions is not directed at the foreign observer of Hamas. Hamas is waging a public relations war for their ardent supporters, future supporters and to cast their vision across the globe. They make no qualms about being a violent resistance organisation, so the expanding or narrowing of definitions has less to do with foreign observers than it does in their competition with Fatah for the hearts and minds of Palestinians.

***Corollary #3a: Hamas reprioritises values based on environmental conditions.***

True. Hamas reprioritised values to run for national elections and then to have Hamas recognised internationally as the legitimate government of the Palestinian people. When the international community shunned the Hamas government, it focused its attention on internal Palestinian matters.

The clearest example of Hamas reprioritising its values is seen in its move away from violence operations in the Second *Intifada* toward a national campaign for elective politics. The shift was a stark contrast from violence to nonviolence as a means to achieve their new priority, elective representation. In all interviews, Hamas leaders espoused relatively few priorities. Mainly, the values espoused were resistance, the right of return and the possible formulation for the acceptance of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. The Hamas leaders spoke of the right to resist the occupation and about the possible variations of the Clinton Plan and the Saudi Plan to establish a Palestinian state. After the Muslim Brotherhood came into power across North Africa, the priority of language in the interviews changed. No longer was the issue about the right to resist the occupation or the formulation of the state. Rather, it was about the right of return of millions of Palestinians to their homes in Jaffa and other historic Arab cities, now within the state of Israel. Prior, such discussions revolved around the theoretical right of return. The shift from resistance and a state to the right of return was a clear value shift by the Hamas leaders. The question is whether this shift was the result of perceived threat or strength. Observations of the data suggest that the reprioritisation of values is one of opportunism. Hamas is engaged in a battle for the popular support of Palestinians. Therefore, it will need to narrow or expand its values as well as reprioritise those values based upon environmental conditions.

## 7.4 Hamas Resistance Model

The Weber Spectrum articulates the idea that political groups, like Hamas, remain in tension between the values that define the group and the responsibilities that it has to supporters or those it governs. The reader can find an argument in Chapter 2 that explains why it would be difficult to test the level of tension in a group like Hamas without replacing the esoteric terms of values and responsibilities. So, an adapted Weber Spectrum was introduced, where ‘values’ was replaced with ‘Hamas violence’ and ‘responsibilities’ was replaced with ‘*Popular Support for Hamas*’. We know the level of violence for Hamas and popular support, but the question is how exactly do we test the tension with these variables?

A great deal of time was spent trying to define this tension in a quantifiable way. The author unsuccessfully built mathematical models and statistical formulas, but in the end, showing only violence and the level of *Hamas Support* did not provide a real life picture of the dynamic relationship between Hamas, its use of violence, popular support for the group and the environmental conditions that were driving each side of the Weber Spectrum. The more work that went in to establish models that would demonstrate the dynamism in these variables, the more clear it became that such variables actually represented a picture of what ‘Hamas resistance’ looked like over time.

All datasets of the thesis were scoured to see what variables were parts of Hamas violence and what other variables were parts of popular support for the group. Once the analyses for Chapter Four were complete, it could be seen that *Support for Violence* impacted *Violence Frequency*. Further, a relationship between attack and lethality demonstrated a changing use of violence by the group. So, after much consideration, the ‘violence’ side of the adapted Weber Spectrum would be captured with three variables: 1) *Support for Violence*, 2) attack (e.g. violence) frequency and 3) attack density (e.g. lethality). The ‘popular support’ side of the spectrum would be defined by: 1) *Hamas Support*, 2) *Palestinian Optimism* and 3) *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*.

The idea to include ‘*Optimism*’ and ‘*Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*’ is meaningful for several reasons. First, Palestinian *Optimism* provides us with an idea of whether the conflict environment is improving or declining. Within the model, you will see that *Hamas Support* and *Optimism* go in opposite directions most frequently. This underscores the point that *Hamas Support* increases, while *Optimism* declines, in a higher threat environment. Second, ‘*Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*’ is used to demonstrate how near the population believes it is to achieving statehood. The measure tells us something beyond ‘*Optimism*’ about environmental conditions by giving us a sense of Palestinian perceptions of achieving statehood during different time periods. In a small way, the measure tells us about perceptions of Israel and the international community’s efforts to support Palestinians and broker peace.

As such, the Hamas Resistance Model articulates the dynamic relationship between the six aforementioned variables. The sum total of the model creates the variables that show us how Hamas uses violence to balance tension between values and responsibilities over 59 different time periods from November 1994 to December 2012. To show the model in a visually understandable manner, it was necessary to develop a scale that demonstrated the relationship between variables in a simpler form, without changing the underlying statistical relationships. For example, instead of demonstrating the variables, *Attack Frequency* as .024 and *Hamas Support* as 34.4, the model now demonstrates the relationship on a scale of ‘zero’ to ‘five’. ‘Zero’ is only assigned to *Attack Frequency* and *Attack Density* when no attacks took place during a time-period. ‘One’ represents the lowest range for an underlying number, while ‘five’ represents the highest. So, in the example mentioned, *Attack Frequency* of .024 and *Hamas Support* of 34.4 would be represented with a ‘one’ and ‘five’ respectively. When the *Attack Frequency* increases, the ‘one’ may increase to as high a ‘five’. Likewise, if *Hamas Support* declines, the number may fall below a ‘five’.

Each of the six variables has numerical representation for all 59-time periods. To derive a score from ‘one’ to ‘five’, the lowest score was subtracted from the highest to provide a maximum difference for each variable. The maximum difference was divided by five in order to derive the average difference between a score of 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. For example, if the highest score was 35 and the lowest score was 5 the difference was 30. The number 30 was then divided by 5 to derive the difference between a ‘one’ and ‘two’, for

example. The scoring system would then be represented in this manner: 5 to 10 = 1; 11 to 16 = 2; 17 to 22 = 3; 23 to 28 = 4; and 29 to 35 = 5. The scoring system:

- 0 = No Violent Attacks took place during a period
- 1 = Lowest
- 2 = Low
- 3 = Moderate
- 4 = High
- 5 = Highest

The new variable representation had statistically the same relationships between variables as the underlying data. In other words, there was no significant statistical difference between the variables in the new model compared to the underlying data. Therefore, the model represented a less complicated way of representing the dynamic relationship between variables over time.

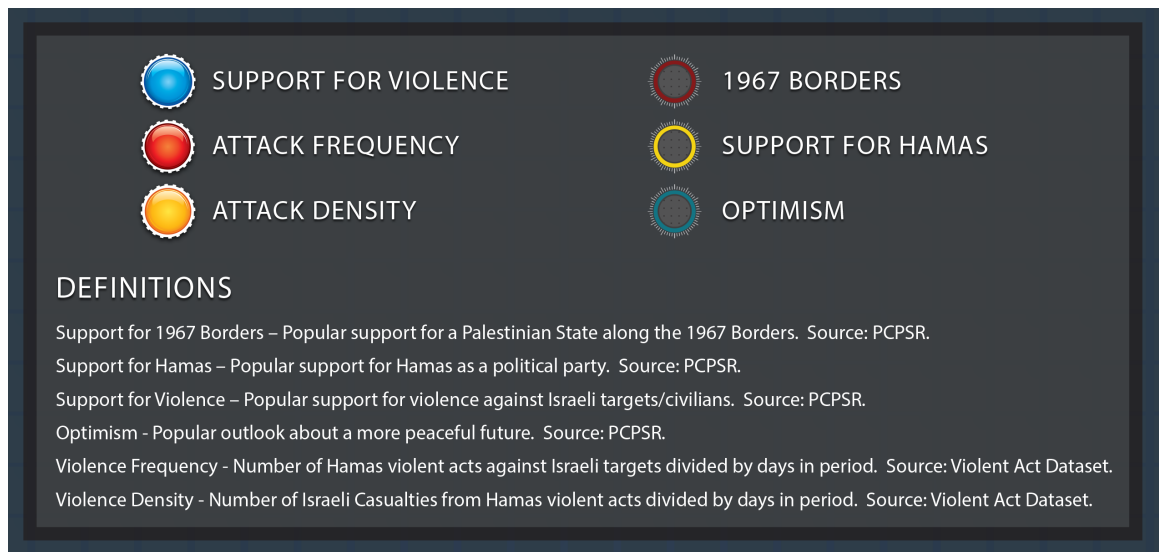
All totaled, there are 65 different graphic representations in the Hamas Resistance Model.<sup>33</sup> But, the model can be understood by demonstrating seven slides, six from the different eras. The first slide (Figure 75) is the legend for the model and provides a sense of what you will see in the following slides. The remaining six slides represent the six different eras described in this thesis: 1) Pre-Political Era, 2) Political Era, 3) Oslo Era, 4) Second *Intifada*, 5) Campaign Era and 6) Governance Era. The ‘Era’ slides show the mean of each variable for the era. This was the only way to demonstrate the variable for an entire era.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Note: Due to the sheer size of the model, it is not possible to show all 65 slides within this thesis. Further, it is best to view the model in a motion picture format, so that it is possible to see the changes between variables over time. For the reader of the thesis, this movie can be viewed at [www.hamasinsights.org](http://www.hamasinsights.org) [password: hamasresistanceLSE2014]. Ideally, the movie will motivate scholars to test the underlying results, while helping others to better understand how and when Hamas engages in violence. There is little doubt that the model itself can be improved, but it has valuable lessons, nonetheless.

<sup>34</sup> Note: This is different than the time series of 59 variables shown in the movie. They actually show real numbers and not the mean.

Figure 75. Hamas Resistance Model: Legend



Figures 76 and 77 show the models for the ‘Pre-Political Era’ and ‘Political Era’, respectively. Each variable with the model represents the mean of that variable for the total number of time periods in the era. The Political Era model does not include the number of violent acts that Hamas conducted during Gaza Wars I or II. As discussed earlier in the thesis, the violence data for these wars was not part of the Verified Open-Source High Profile Violent Attack dataset. There are several important differences between the eras. First, though *Support for Violence* remained similar, the *Attack Frequency* and *Density* declined in the Political Era. This accurately demonstrates that Hamas reduced the *Violence Frequency* against Israel after the end of the Second *Intifada* and also transitioned to less lethal aerial attacks. Second, *Optimism* declined significantly between eras. This is as much a function of the role that the Oslo Peace Process had on the mean *Optimism* number in the Pre-Political Era. Third, the idea of a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders has become more engrained in the minds of Palestinians over time. Undoubtedly, Hamas’s adaptation of language from ‘in’ the borders to ‘on’ or ‘along’ the borders and their willingness to abide by a referendum using the term ‘Along 1967 borders’ contributes to this increase between eras. Fourth, *Hamas Support* increased between the two eras. The increase is largely a function of Hamas intentional campaigning for popular support.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Note: As can be seen in the movie of the Hamas Resistance Model, there are wide swings within each variable and a clear set of relationships between the variables over time.

Figure 76. Hamas Resistance Model: Pre-Political Era

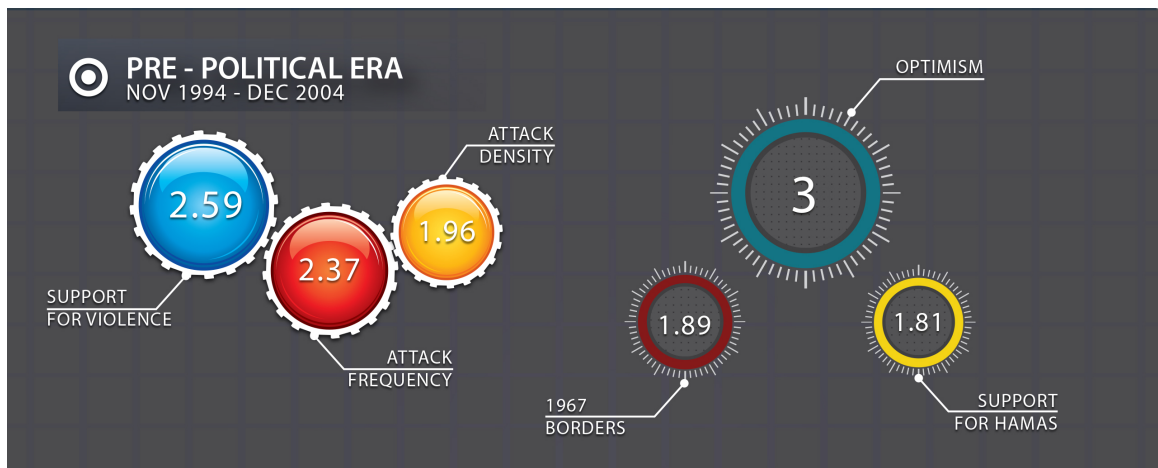
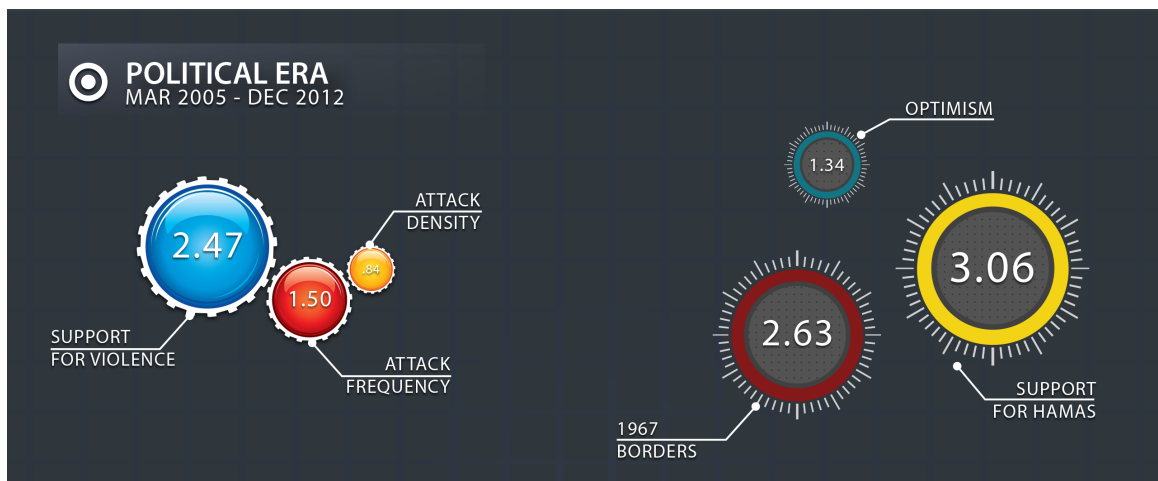


Figure 77. Hamas Resistance Model: Political Era

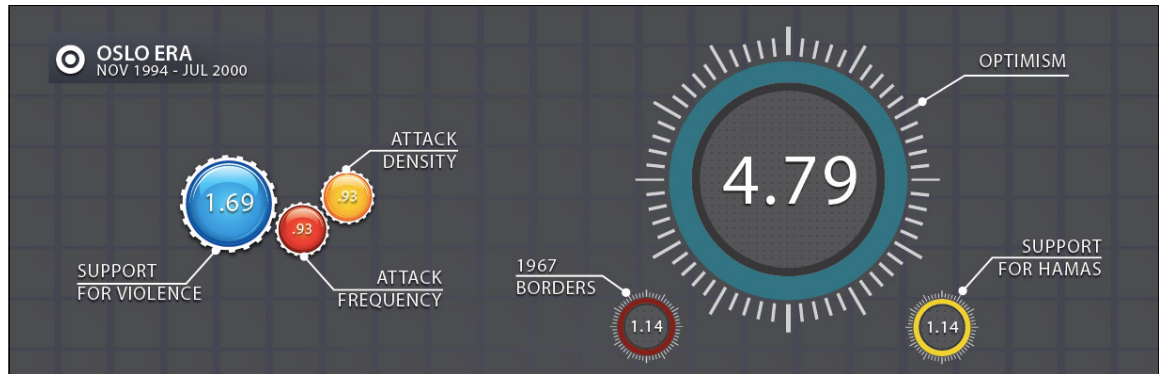


Figures 78 to 81 provide the mean for each variable for the remaining eras. In the Oslo Era, the use of violence by Hamas and the *Support for Violence* was low relative to the other eras. Also, the level of *Optimism* of the Palestinians was at an all-time high during this period. This corresponded to the hope that the Oslo Accords provided Palestinians. In the subsequent eras, there has never been *Optimism* that reached a level beyond that of a ‘one’, the lowest possible. *Support for Violence* reached a zenith during the Second *Intifada*, but has remained relatively high, bouncing between 40% and 60%, since the end of 2004. *Hamas Support* increased to its highest level in the Campaign Era, but has remained range bound between 20% and 30%, since. Surprisingly, the *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* increased after the Oslo Era. One would expect that the support for a state along these borders would have been highest when levels of *Optimism* were high during Oslo. But, this was not the case, suggesting that



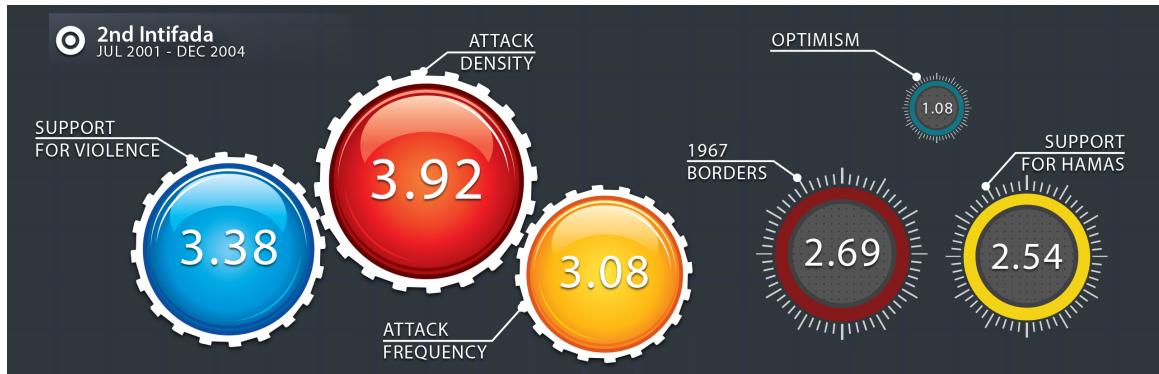
Palestinians increasingly supported the idea of ‘along 1967 Borders’ due to factors other than *Optimism* for a peace settlement with Israel.

**Figure 78. Hamas Resistance Model: Oslo Era**



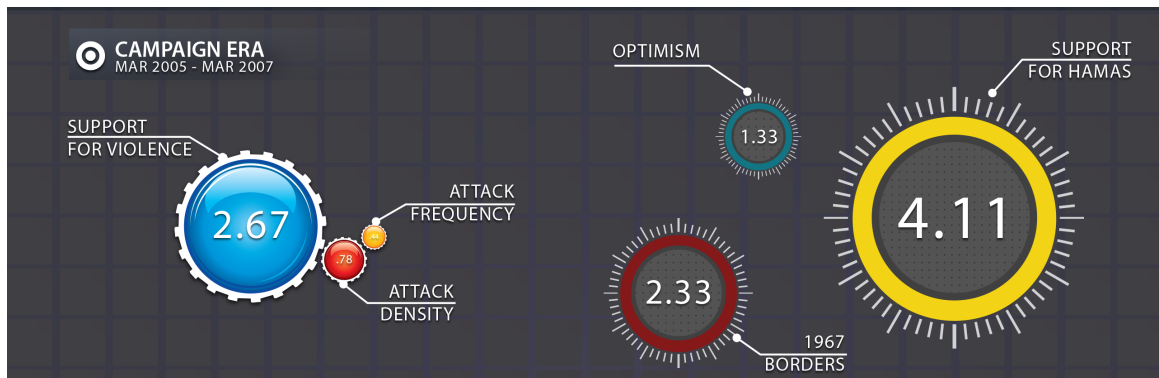
The static Figures of the Resistance Model make it difficult to understand the rapid changes and relationships between the variables. As such, there was a motion picture made of the 59 time periods that allows one to make observations of the dynamic changes (see footnote 31). First, *Attack Frequency* almost always trails *Support for Violence*. This is support of the Granger-causation conclusion reached earlier in the thesis. Interestingly, the *Attack Frequency* almost always surpasses the level of *Support for Violence*. This suggests that when Hamas decides to use violence, it does so in bunches. It is more akin to turning on the water tap at higher levels. Second, *Attack Density* is a variable representing the lethality of Hamas led violent acts. Notwithstanding the numerical volume of attacks in Gaza War I and II, there is generally a decline in the lethality of attacks after June 2003. This is partly why General (ret.) Isaac Ben Israel articulated the success of the Israeli *Targeted Killing* and Arrest Programme (See Chp 5.3.3). He demonstrated the difference in quantity and quality of attacks by Hamas. Subsequent to 2007, nearly all of the attacks against Israel were conducted using rockets or mortars. Though these munitions represent advancements in Hamas violence projecting capability, they also coincide with a decrease in lethality, which is what the *Attack Density* variable shows us in the movie.

Figure 79. Hamas Resistance Model: Second *Intifada*



Third, the *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders* reached its highest point during times of internal conflict between Hamas and Fatah or during fighting between Hamas and Israel. This is perhaps one of the most frightening findings of the thesis. It suggests that when violence is the highest, willingness to compromise on issues of land increases. The implications of such for the state are meaningful and it underscores the fact that states have a moral dilemma in violent territorial disputes with antagonist populations.

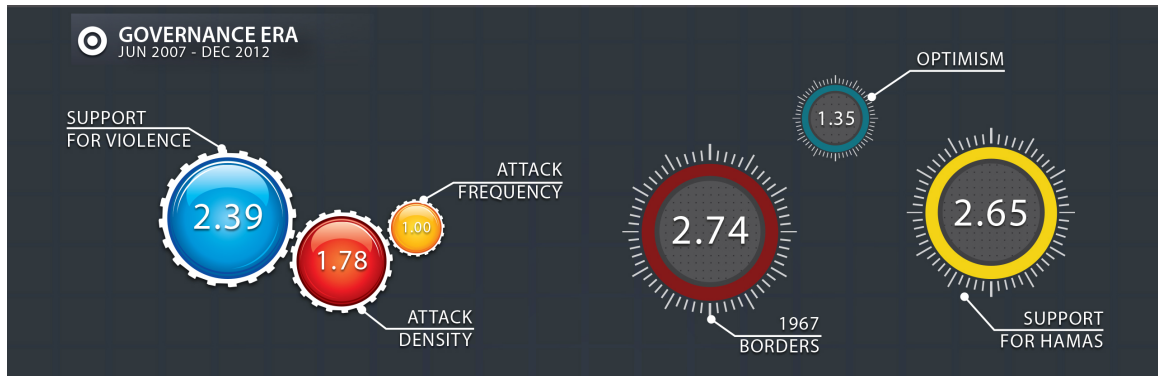
Figure 80. Hamas Resistance Model: Campaign Era



Fourth, *Hamas Support* has two fundamental drivers, conflict with Israel and political engagement with Palestinians. Palestinians tend to support Hamas in greater numbers during times of conflict. But, that support seems to be limited. The greatest level of support by Palestinians for Hamas was seen during the Campaign Era, where Hamas campaigned on 'Reform & Change' through a moral mandate that they were the honest leaders in Palestinian society. Also, *Hamas Support* is mostly independent of the *Attack Frequency* by Hamas. Hamas use of violence does not provide additional support for the group. More often than not, increased violence by Hamas against Israel leads to lower levels of *Hamas Support*.

Fifth, *Optimism* runs opposite to *Hamas Support*. When *Hamas Support* increases, *Optimism* declines and vice versa. After the Oslo Era, *Optimism* declines significantly. Furthermore, *Optimism* tends to run counter from all other variables save *Support for a Palestinian State Along 1967 Borders*.

**Figure 81. Hamas Resistance Model: Governance Era**

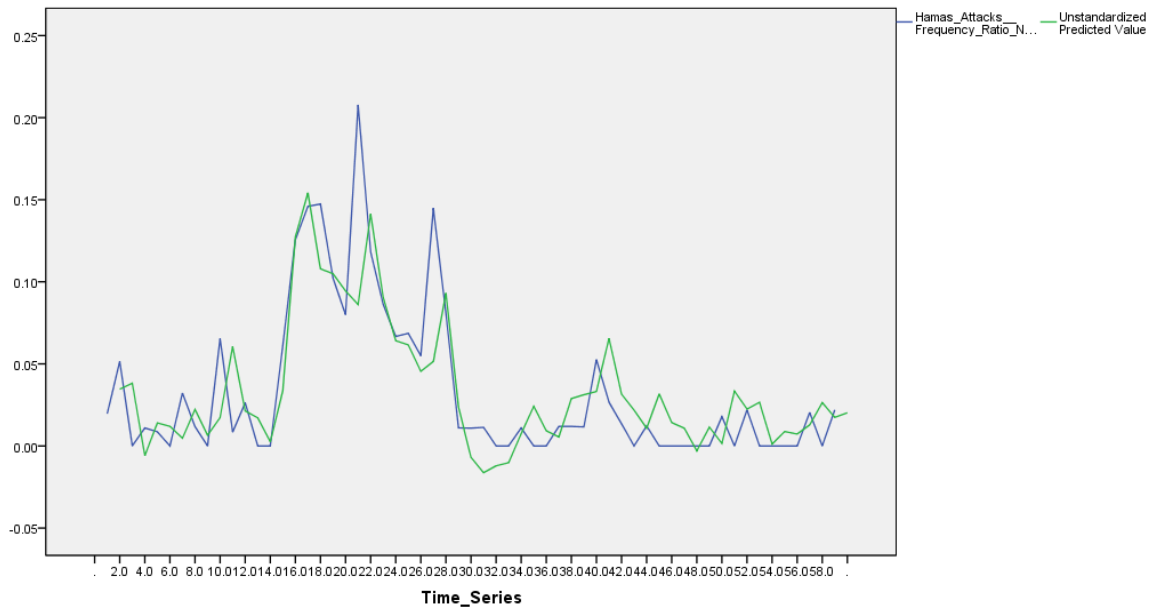


The Hamas Resistance Model articulates numerically the dynamic relationship between variables that help us understand the tension between violence and popular support in the adapted Weber Spectrum Model. It is likely not the best and final model that defines the tension between values and responsibilities of an armed group with political ambition. But, it does serve as a beginning point for the academic and policy community to scrutinise and refine over time. With the availability of data from other armed groups in intractable conflicts, the model can become more robust.

### 7.5 Predictive Model of Hamas Violence

Figure 82 is a predictive model of Hamas violence for ground attacks. The blue line represents the actual frequency of Hamas violence, while the green line is the predictive model generated by using variables from the Hamas Resistance Model. The significant predictors in the model were: 1) *Support for Violence*  $p=.003$ , 2) *Attack Frequency*  $p=.001$ , 3) *Hamas Support*  $p=.005$ , 4) *Optimism*  $p=.015$  and 5) Time Series (used to reduce the linear trends in the data since undifferenced data was used). The values of these independent variables at Time 0 predicted Hamas Violence at Time +1. The y-axis of the chart demonstrates the frequency of Hamas attacks. The x-axis demonstrates the 59 time periods used in the thesis.

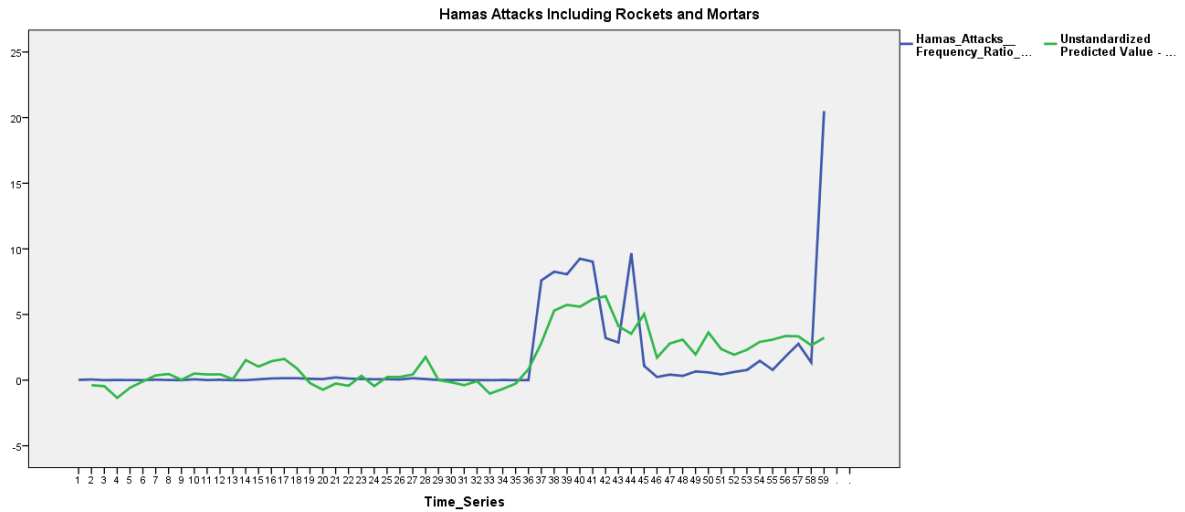
**Figure 82. Predictive Model of Hamas Violence – Ground Attacks**



To summarise, Figure 82 shows that if we know five predictors in the model, we can predict whether ground attacks increase or decrease in the following time period. The model has an Adjusted R Square of .648, which means that 65% of data in Time 0 will account for the data in Time +1. That is why there looks to be such a strong relationship between the two lines in the graph.

However, Figure 83 shows the relationship between the predicted Hamas attacks and actual attacks, including rockets and mortars. The relationships that hold in Figure 82 do not hold in Figure 83; the model has an Adjusted R Square of .321. The inclusion of rocket and mortar data makes the predictive model using popular support measures less significant than the ground attack data. This is consistent with the findings articulated in Chapter 4. The fact that the inclusion of rockets and mortars shows that the predictive model does not hold further supports the conclusion that Hamas violence has materially changed as a function of rockets and governance of Gaza. The reality for Hamas leaders is that now that they control Gaza, they must tolerate launches of some rockets by militants of Hamas and other groups in order to maintain their status as the leading violent resistance movement. Without this accommodation, Hamas would lose the status of leading resistance group to another more radical group. These rocket launches may or may not be indiscriminate, but they do not carry the same relationship with *Support for Violence* that ground attacks did.

**Figure 83. Predictive Model of Hamas Violence, Ground and Rocket/Mortar Attacks**



The difference between the two models suggests that the first, a predictive model of ground attacks, may have more to tell us than if both reflected similar quantitative relationships. The ground attack model suggests that when Hamas is not constrained with the responsibility of controlling land, it is more susceptible to popular opinion gyrations than when not in control of land. The qualitative story that Hamas has to compromise and tolerate rocket launches from other groups, or its own militants, in Gaza is consistent with the quantitative findings that demonstrates a clear difference in the predicative ability of ground and ground and rocket attacks.

### **7.6 What Do We Know About Hamas That We Did not Know Before?**

This thesis has attempted to answer a basic question for the author, ‘how do armed groups, like Hamas, grow from a small group to be defenders of a nation with million(s) of supporters?’ The question has implications beyond Hamas or similar groups. It has the potential of helping scholars and policy makers better understand the dynamics of sub-state actors engaged in intractable conflicts, a problem that confounds the role of states and state foreign policy. Specifically, the exploration of Hamas’s use of violence in relationship to the Palestinian people shows us a number of things that help to answer the question. Most important is that it shows that environmental conditions are the primary driver for attitudes of Palestinians and behaviours of Hamas. It also shows that the generalisations by scholars (Chehab 2007; Roy 2011; Schanzer 2008; Levitt 2006;

Milton-Edwards & Farrell 2010; and Yousef 2011) who claim that the *dawa* is responsible for the growth of Hamas and its violent resistance operations have not accurately provided understanding of how the group has grown and maintained the leading role in violent resistance. As this thesis has demonstrated, Hamas has maintained this leading resistance role by being ‘in tune’ with the population more often than not and by successfully navigating intergroup relations with other Palestinian militant factions, while keeping the militant activists of Hamas committed to the organisation.

The research adds to existing understanding of Hamas in five specific areas. First, the understanding of Hamas resistance is enhanced through popular support measures over time. The Dynamic Hamas Resistance Model characterises *Hamas Support*, *Hamas Attack Frequency* and environmental conditions (e.g. optimism and support for a state along 1967 borders) surrounding both. Second, *Palestinian Support for Violence* has a causal relationship to Hamas led violence, particularly ground attacks. This suggests, in contrast to commonly held understanding, that Hamas follows the population and is not the vanguard of it. Third, Hamas has not moderated their values or interest in violent resistance after deciding to enter elective national politics. This conclusion counters current understanding on armed group moderation through elective politics. Fourth, the modus operandi of Hamas violent resistance materially changed after the takeover of Gaza. This suggests that Hamas’s interest in maintaining control of geography has altered their use of violence. Fifth, the Israeli *Targeted Killing* programme materially altered Hamas violent attacks in the near and intermediate term and showed no predictive relationship to increased *Support for Violence* or *Hamas Support*. The programme likely has a deleterious effect on the long-term relationship between Israelis and Palestinians; the evidence for this is based only on observation, not empirical evidence.

### **7.6.1 Role of Popular Support Measures in Understanding Hamas Resistance**

Hamas resistance is better understood through analysing popular support measures and *Hamas Attack Frequency* and attack methods. The results from this study clearly demonstrate the value of understanding the future of Palestinian attitudes on a host of variables, including Hamas violence. Further, the Dynamic Hamas Resistance Model

provides a starting point for scholars to critique and further elaborate the relationship between values and responsibilities described by Max Weber (1917) and tested in this thesis.

Perhaps the most important factor in the dynamic of popular support and armed group violence is the cohesion expressed from the population toward the group, values of the group and violent acts of the group. This cohesion seems to ebb and flow based upon environmental conditions. Sometimes the cohesion for the group is stronger because of violence (Gaza War II) and sometimes it is because of non-violence (Campaign Era). To understand how this cohesion shifts based upon environmental conditions requires that one understand various popular support mechanisms in relationship to the group and actions of the group.

The Dynamic Hamas Resistance Model clearly shows the changes in environmental conditions that predict or are predicted by changes to *Support for Violence*, *Hamas Support* and *Hamas Attack Frequency*. For example, ground *Attack Frequency* by Hamas negatively predicts *Optimism*, which negatively predicts *Hamas Support*. This suggests that Hamas ground attacks at Time 0 negatively predict *Hamas Support* at Time +1. Though this research did not explore why this happens or which supporters of Hamas are leaving the group, it does demonstrate a level of understanding not available without popular support measures and further shows how researchers may use the measures in the future.

### **7.6.2 Hamas Follows Palestinian Support for Violence (it does not lead it)**

One of the most significant findings of this thesis is that Palestinian *Support for Violence* Granger-causes Hamas violence. The implications of this finding are that the use of violence by Hamas follows Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israel and does not lead it. As such, Hamas is not the vanguard of the Palestinian people leading them into Support for Violence against Israel. The drivers of *Support for Violence* would therefore be instrumental in the systematic reduction of the Palestinian population's *Support for Violence* and the subsequent reduction of Hamas violence. Such an argument obviously requires that the historical relationships continue to hold into the future and this is far from certain.

Prior to this thesis, the general understanding on Hamas is that they have worked to radicalise the Palestinian population through the *dawa* and recruitment to al-Qassam. The body of this work shows that the *dawa* is not the primary mechanism for increasing Palestinians' interest in *Support for Violence* against Israel. And, the discussion of the Israeli *Targeted Killing* programme underscores that the total number of militants in al-Qassam is not enough to sway the popular support measure. Therefore, the data suggests that Hamas does not lead the Population into greater *Support for Violence* against Israel, but that the group follows the population to this end. Some scholars have suggested that this is a revelation in armed group behaviour. Yet, Ami Ayalon, Shin Bet Director in 1996 and 1997, understood the general idea and articulated such to Prime Minister Netanyahu those many years ago.

The important lesson seems to be that scholars and policy makers who articulate that Hamas is the violent vanguard of the Palestinian people have overstated their understanding of Hamas violence. By understanding the drivers of *Support for Violence* against Israel, we may better understand how to lessen it, and therefore lessen the use of violence by the group.

There is one empirical caveat to the idea that Hamas follows Palestinian *Support for Violence*. Since 2007, the relationship between *Support for Violence* and Hamas use of rocket and mortar attacks has lessened. This tells us mainly that Hamas's interest in controlling Gaza and maintaining their resistance credentials is more important to them than reflecting popular attitudes toward violence. This idea is discussed in greater detail below (see 7.7.4).

### **7.6.3 No Signs of Moderation in Hamas due to Elective Politics**

One a priori assumption coming from research on 'political moderation' of armed groups engaging in electoral politics (e.g. IRA and Sinn Fein) was that it was possible that Hamas was moderating as a function of the move toward elective national politics (Matthew Whitting 2013). But, the quantitative and qualitative evidence of Hamas violence and Hamas leaders' articulation of values suggests that this a priori assumption is wrong.



Notwithstanding the recent reconciliation, Hamas's unwillingness to cooperate with the Palestinian Authority on the role of al-Qassam in security operations suggests that they are not interested in subordinating their interests to the secular ideals represented by Fatah and the PA. This further suggests that ethno-nationalism arguments are not correct at this time. It may be that Hamas sees a possible negative outcome in terms of popular support or with its ardent militants if it were to compromise on its security arrangements with Fatah and the PA, but that does not explain the group's drive to improve the capacity and capability of instruments of war (e.g. drones, rockets, cyber-warfare tools, etc.), nor does it explain their continued use of violence against Israel (i.e. 15 March 2014 – Hamas launched 90 rockets against Israel). Further, in interviews with Hamas, significant differences in language were used by the group to articulate their positions on certain values, including sovereignty, 'right of return' and reconciliation with Fatah.

After the national election in 2006, Hamas leaders' willingness to discuss issues of compromise was greater than at any other time. Hamas leaders tried to finesse words for reconciliation with Fatah and for the possibility of engagement in political discourse over the future of the Palestinian people vis-à-vis permanent status with Israel. More specifically, numerous Hamas leaders spoke about the theoretical 'Right of Return', suggesting that Hamas may be willing to compromise on this point, accepting a physical return of a predetermined number of Palestinians to their forefathers' homes in Israel. Even if this was only moderated language for the purpose of a short-term gain, it represented a different articulation than the leadership provided in 2012, whereby all leaders in Hamas were unwilling to discuss the 'Right of Return' in any other terms than the actual return of all Palestinians to their forefathers' homes. Marzouk (pers.comm., 23 September 2012) said, 'over four million Palestinians would return to their homes in just a couple weeks'.

The use of violence, the political discourse and the unwillingness to compromise with the Fatah led PA for ethno-nationalism interests combine to tell a story about the lack of moderation in Hamas. Proponents of 'political moderation' may suggest that the evidence in this thesis covers only years and that it takes decades for the moderating effect of elective politics to take hold on a group. This may be the case, but it seems that

the indoctrination of Muslim Brotherhood groups, in general, suggest that politics is only a tool for transformation of life and the state in fulfillment of an Islamic Caliphate with Jerusalem as its capital. Further, work performed by Artis in North Africa shows that Islamists demonstrate a willingness to forgo elections in order to further Islamic control of the state.

#### **7.6.4 Interest in Control of Land Materially Changed Hamas Violence**

After Israel withdrew its settlements and military from Gaza and after Hamas defeated Fatah for the territorial control of the Strip, Hamas use of violence drifted away from the traditional relationship with popular *Support for Violence* toward a new paradigm. This new paradigm has Hamas leading violence from Gaza for the primary purpose of maintaining territorial control and their position as leading violent resistance group in the Palestinian Territories. That is not to say that Hamas no longer pays attention to popular *Support for Violence*, but it does mean that this is not the only dominant interest. The recent interest in Hamas moving away from the responsibility for Gaza's public sector may once again impose a new relationship on these variables. Time will tell.

Hamas is now working to maintain their military leadership in Gaza at a time in which they have attempted to handover fiscal responsibility of Gaza's public sector to the PA. Gaza, in the mindset of Hamas, has become 'Hamastan', a statelet of which it is in military control. But, the opportunity has liabilities, such as the public sector expenses, for which it now wants to shed for a new model in Gaza, most similar to Hizballah and Lebanon. Hamas must continually demonstrate its resistance credentials or it will face critique from other violent resistance groups. This critique threatens to undermine the group's standing as the leading resistance organisation. Should it be perceived that it loses this role, it is likely that many of the militant activists will leave al-Qassam for other more radical groups. This leaves Hamas in a difficult position with regard to its violent attacks against Israel.

Should the group launch too many attacks against Israel, Israel will respond with *Targeted Killings* and possibly enter Gaza with the intention of landing a severe military blow to Hamas and other radical groups. In the one previous entry by Israel into Gaza (2008-9), *Hamas Support* fell. Such a conflict with Israel could cause more damage to

the group than existing leaders are willing to risk. However, if Hamas were to discontinue all acts of violence by al-Qassam, then it would only be a matter of time until it lost its militant support base that places a stronger emphasis on violent resistance to Israel than elective politics or reconciliation with Fatah and the PA. As such, Hamas is left to walk this veritable tightrope to continue on as a resistance organisation while it works to transform its role in Gaza into a political military group without financial responsibility for the non-security public sector and its broader interests for Palestine. This tension on Hamas results in the group shifting its use of violence to rocket attacks that is at times out of sync with the attitudes of Palestinians on violence against Israel. Consequently, these rocket attacks from Gaza have less of a relationship with Palestinian *Support for Violence* against Israel than does the group's use of ground attacks. In summary, Hamas's interest in territorial control of Gaza is the main cause for the shift in violence tactics by the group. Yet, the recent shift away from fiscal responsibility for the non-security public sector may change this relationship.

#### **7.6.5 Israeli Operations and Palestinian Support for Violence**

No meaningful statistical relationship existed between 37 Israeli *Targeted Killings* of Hamas operatives and *Hamas Support*, Palestinian popular *Support for Violence* or Hamas Attack Frequency. Further, no significant statistical relationships between projected influences of Israelis on Palestinians and Palestinian popular support measures and Hamas violence could be developed for the thesis because data for roadblocks, checkpoints, home demolitions and all incidents of *Targeted Killings* and arrests were unavailable in an independently verifiable dataset. This reality places limitations on the conclusions about causal relationships, but does not limit qualitative observations that can be made from the data.

With the exception of Israeli *Targeted Killing* data, most of the analyses in this thesis interrogated Hamas and popular support data. From this data we know that Palestinian *Support for Violence* Granger-causes *Hamas Attack Frequency* and that only *Optimism* and *Safety of Family* negatively predict *Hamas Support*. We also know that only *Safety of Family* weakly predicts *Support for Violence*. The sum total of the analyses does not leave us much in the way of understanding what drives *Support for Violence*. But, we shall try to test it with data that we have.

Since we know that *Safety of Family* and *Support for Violence* have a statistical relationship we can start by analysing the significance of the occurrence. Generally, *Safety of Family* is a product of an increasing threat environment. We know, for example, that perceptions of safety in Gaza are higher than in the West Bank, even though there have been three wars in Gaza since 2007. This is largely because of the PA and IDF operations in the West Bank (Shikaki, pers.comm., 2013). Increased concern for the *Safety of Family* also predicts increased Hamas Support. So, it is unlikely that Palestinians would increase their support for Hamas if it were Hamas that was directly increasing the threat on the family. As such, the increasing threat resulting from greater concern for the *Safety of Family* and *Support for Violence* is coming from perceived threats not emanating directly from Hamas.

The ratcheting up of violence has two sides, Palestinian and Israeli led violence. Since we could find no tit for tat relationship in the data, we cannot declare a causal chain of events for *Support for Violence* or *Safety of Family*. Therefore, we must turn our attention to a few discrete events of known Israeli influence in Palestine that gives us an indication as to the role of Israeli operations in the Palestinians' *Support for Violence*.

Discussed earlier in the thesis, the survey conducted by PSR on the 'anger and humiliation' for Israeli checkpoints was determined to be unusable by Khalil Shikaki due to poor data collection methodology. Shikaki did say that the survey showed that anger and humiliation led to greater support for violence against Israel by those who had to wait at the checkpoints. Regardless of the validity of this study, it is likely that any action by Israel that materially increased the anger of Palestinians would contribute to an increase in Palestinian *Support for Violence*. Yet, counter-insurgency doctrine would require Israel to engage in policies that would decrease the mobility of insurgents, through tactics like checkpoints.

In March and April 2004, the Israelis killed Hamas leaders Yassin and Rantisi. Prior to the *Targeted Killings*, Hamas Support was 20.3%, while *Support for Violence* was 53.1%. The poll taken after their deaths showed that Hamas Support had risen to 24%, while *Support for Violence* fell to 50.1%. This data does not show any conclusive results related to the Israeli Targeting of Hamas leaders.

During Gaza Wars I and II, Gaza residents' *Support for Violence* increased from 59.7% to 66.9% and 62.6% to 66.3%, respectively. While in the first war,  *Hamas Support* fell 4.2%, it increased 47.1% in the second. Though there were modest increases in *Support for Violence* during these two wars, the increases do not show a 'smoking gun'. Unfortunately, *Support for Violence* measures were not captured during the Gaza conflict between Hamas and Fatah. This may have better helped us understand perspectives in Gaza related to all conflicts.

Though the cause of Gaza beach blasts of 9 June 2006 are disputed by Israelis and Palestinians, the latter believed that Israel was responsible. So, we use the incident here to help us understand how the incident impacted popular support measures. Hamas support decreased from 36.7% to 32.9%, while *Support for Violence* increased from 52.4% to 56.1%. Again, this data does not provide convincing empirical evidence implicating perceived Israeli actions as a causal mechanism in *Support for Violence*.

None of these incidents outside of Prime Minister Sharon indicating that he wanted Palestinians 'to feel humiliated...until they stop trying to kill us', implicates Israeli use of violence in Gaza Wars I and II and the *Targeted Killing* programme writ large in the causal chain toward Palestinian *Support for Violence*. Drilling deeper into the actions of Israel in the Palestinian Territories may show a stronger relationship with Palestinian popular support measures. Perhaps Israeli activity on settlements, checkpoints, targeted arrests or incursions of the IDF into the Territories have a causal feature about them. Subsequent investigations by scholars should explore these possibilities. Further still, there are likely a number of causal relationships with *Support for Violence* that remain within the dynamics of Palestinian daily life. These possibilities should also be explored.

### **7.7 What Do the Findings Suggest About Other Armed Movements?**

The availability of popular support measures and conflict data is large in the Palestinian and Israeli conflict. As such, the conflict serves as a strong test bed for how popular support measures interact with violence of antagonists in the conflict. The findings from

this study are likely just the beginning of a push by researchers and policy makers to further understand the interplay between armed groups and their host populations.

The economic considerations presented by Collier and Weinstein on armed group engagement provide us only a partial economic view of the way groups engage with local populations. To an extent, this thesis adds to the understanding of the political economy of armed groups by showing how Hamas uses political and economic tools to advance their interests. For example, Hamas uses the resources coming from Iran, Saudi Arabia and Qatar to gird their resistance capacity only to the point that it does not undermine the group's ability to follow the lead of Palestinians to turn against Iranian agents (or others) like President Assad of Syria. The implications are that economic arguments about the use of violence by armed groups are subordinate to the adherence to values and the perceptions of adherence to those values by the dominant host population.

Armed groups that desire the reclamation of lost lands are likely to behave differently than those groups which have territorial control of some of the lands claimed by the group. The takeover of Gaza by Hamas provides us a clear picture of how a group may change violent tactics when it achieves, even modestly, one of its primary territorial objectives. Such a pivot point for armed groups seemingly makes them vulnerable to other more radical groups that have not achieved territorial control.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of this work for the study of other insurgent groups would be the theoretical framework provided by Max Weber in the understanding of tension between values and responsibilities. The model itself provides an interesting approach by which individual or collective action can be assessed. A strength and weakness of the way the model was used in this thesis was that it applied to measurable variables of popular support and high-profile acts of violence. This may not be the best way to test the tension in other groups (or even this group). Further, the lack of longitudinal testing in other conflicts makes it difficult for researchers to replicate the methodology described in this thesis. It should be considered paramount by researchers to have funding agencies related to everything from public health to defence consider the types of funding it takes to conduct longitudinal studies of populations which capture better the understanding of armed groups. This is not a small undertaking because it

requires that local researchers build an infrastructure to create scientifically credible polling of populations, sometimes in violent environments. The staff at the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) and the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre (JMCC) should be considered the model for performing such work. Researchers interested in establishing longitudinal polling in conflict environments would benefit from contacting both PSR and JMCC.

Further, this work goes beyond the examination of polling and violence data; it includes a great deal of fieldwork, which gave the data meaning. Without performing interviews of actors and leaders engaged in conflict how could one understand the dynamics and the environmental conditions that contribute to the mentality of each side? Fieldwork is not a panacea, but it does help provide context to data.

There are many conflicts across the globe that would benefit from using the model discussed in this thesis, including but not limited to Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand, The Philippines, The Sudan and Turkey. Ideally, in locations of interest, researchers would be able to establish a longitudinal study of the relationship between values and responsibilities and the use of violence by armed groups. The depth of data provided by longitudinal studies in each of these locations would be helpful to both researchers and policy makers, particularly in their quest to identify peculiarities and generalities that exist with armed groups in order to reduce violence and conflict.

To conclude, the most important finding from this thesis for application to other armed groups is that the systematic collection of data on popular support and violence can yield a great deal of understanding about the use of violence by the group. We may not agree on the meaning of the empirical evidence, but at least we will have generated the debate. Though popular support polling of values and support for violence may not be the answer to all the questions of armed group violent behaviour, it can help us better understand the real life dynamics of moderation and radicalisation by armed groups and host populations.

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# Appendix A

## Field Interviews Used for Thesis

Most of the interviews conducted for this thesis were ‘on the record’. There were, however, a number of interviews or parts of interviews that were ‘off the record’. In some cases the interviewee stated explicitly that the material was ‘off the record’. In other cases, I asked sensitive questions after indicating that responses would not be attributed to anyone. Some interviews with Palestinians and Israelis were conducted knowing that I could not or would not use the name of the individuals providing responses to my many questions. Those individuals are not listed below.

Fifteen Israeli and 34 Palestinian ‘on the record’ interviews were conducted. The Palestinian interviews included approximately 70 people. The list below provides the names and dates of persons interviewed. Some interviews were conducted with family members of suicide bombers, which had many family members present. Those family members are not listed here. Some persons were interviewed on multiple occasions and are noted by multiple dates. Other interviews were conducted with multiple Fatah and Hamas representatives at the same time. Those are indicated as such. Colleagues conducted three interviews at a time in which I was unable to travel. Those colleagues provided transcripts for use in this thesis. Each of those is identified below. A good deal of material provided by the interviewees did not make it into the thesis. Much of that material provided research leads or background for the thesis.

<u>Interviewee</u>		<u>Date</u>
Abdel-Razeq, Omar	Palestinian	December 2012
Abu Marzouk, Moussa	Palestinian	February 2007 September 2012
Al Beitwa, Hamid	Palestinian	February 2009
Amidror, Yaakov	Israeli	October 2012
Atoun, Ahmed	Palestinian	December 2012
Ayalon, Ami	Israeli	February 2009 October 2012
Ben Israel, Isaac	Israeli	2007-2013
Daraghmeah, Ayman	Palestinian	October 2012 December 2012
Dayon, Uzi	Israeli	December 2012
Diskin, Yuval	Israeli	December 2012
Gillon, Carmi	Israeli	December 2012

Halevy, Efraim	Israeli	February 2009
Hamad, Gazi	Palestinian	February 2011
Hamdan, Osama	Palestinian	February 2007
Haniyeh, Ismail (Atran)	Palestinian	September 2008
Hegazi, Sawfat	Egyptian	September 2012
Levi, Ram	Israeli	December 2012
Livni, Tzipi	Israeli	March 2009
Merari, Ariel	Israeli	December 2012
Mishal, Khalid (Atran & Axelrod)	Palestinian	March 2010
Netanyahu, Benjamin	Israeli	February 2007
Pavel, Tal	Israeli	December 2012
Saleh, Fadil	Palestinian	December 2012
Shallah, Ramadann (Atran & Axelrod)	Palestinian	March 2010
Sharif, Nasser	Palestinian	February 2011
Shikaki, Khalil	Palestinian	2007-2013
Steinberg, Matti	Israeli	December 2012
Strenger, Carlo	Israeli	2007-2013
Yaakov, Peri	Israeli	December 2012
Yousef, Ahmed	Palestinian	February 2011
Yousef, Hassan (Atran & Axelrod)	Palestinian	March 2010
Yousef, Nasser	Palestinian	February 2009
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Hamas Parliamentarians	Palestinian	February 2008
		February 2011
		December 2012
Fatah Leaders	Palestinian	February 2008
		February 2009
		February 2011
Suicide Bomber Families	Palestinian	February 2008