

## History: Was Hamas A Creation of Mossad?

By [Hassane Zerouky](#)

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*Let us not forget that it was Israel, which in fact created Hamas. According to Zeev Sternell, historian at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "Israel thought that it was a smart ploy to push the Islamists against the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO)".*

**Ahmed Yassin**, the spiritual leader of the Islamist movement in Palestine, returning from Cairo in the seventies, established an Islamic charity association.

**Prime Minister Golda Meir, saw this as a an opportunity to counterbalance the rise of Arafat's Fatah movement.** .According to the Israeli weekly Koteret Rashit (October 1987), "The Islamic associations as well as the university had been supported and encouraged by the Israeli military authority" in charge of the (civilian) administration of the West Bank and Gaza. "They [the Islamic associations and the university] were authorized to receive money payments from abroad."

The Islamists set up orphanages and health clinics, as well as a network of schools, workshops which created employment for women as well as system of financial aid to the poor.

And in 1978, they created an "Islamic University" in Gaza. "The military authority was convinced that these activities would weaken both the PLO and the leftist organizations in Gaza." At the end of 1992, there were six hundred mosques in Gaza. Thanks to Israel's intelligence agency Mossad (Israel's Institute for Intelligence and Special Tasks) , the Islamists were allowed to reinforce their presence in the occupied territories. Meanwhile, the members of Fatah (Movement for the National Liberation of Palestine) and the Palestinian Left were subjected to the most brutal form of repression.

In 1984, Ahmed Yassin was arrested and condemned to twelve years in prison, after the discovery of a hidden arms cache. But one year later, he was set free and resumed his activities.

And when the Intifada ('uprising') began, in October 1987, which took the Islamists by

surprise, Sheik Yassin responded by creating the Hamas (The Islamic Resistance Movement): “God is our beginning, the prophet our model, the Koran our constitution”, proclaims article 7 of the charter of the organization.

Ahmed Yassin was in prison when, the Oslo accords (Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government) were signed in September 1993. The Hamas had rejected Oslo outright. But at that time, 70% of Palestinians had condemned the attacks on Israeli civilians. Yassin did everything in his power to undermine the Oslo accords. Even prior to Prime Minister Rabin’s death, he had the support of the Israeli government. The latter was very reluctant to implement the peace agreement.

The Hamas then launched a carefully timed campaign of attacks against civilians, one day before the meeting between Palestinian and Israeli negotiators, regarding the formal recognition of Israel by the National Palestinian Council. These events were largely instrumental in the formation of a Right wing Israeli government following the May 1996 elections.

Quite unexpectedly, Prime Minister Netanyahu ordered Sheik Ahmed Yassin to be released from prison (“on humanitarian grounds”) where he was serving a life sentence. Meanwhile, Netanyahu, together with President Bill Clinton, was putting pressure on Arafat to control the Hamas. In fact, Netanyahu knew that he could rely, once more, on the Islamists to sabotage the Oslo accords. Worse still: after having expelled Yassin to Jordan, Prime Minister Netanyahu allowed him to return to Gaza, where he was welcomed triumphantly as a hero in October 1997.

Arafat was helpless in the face of these events. Moreover, because he had supported Saddam Hussein during the 1991 Gulf war, (while the Hamas had cautiously abstained from taking sides), the Gulf states decided to cut off their financing of the Palestinian Authority. Meanwhile, between February and April 1998, Sheik Ahmad Yassin was able to raise several hundred million dollars, from those same countries. The budget of The Hamas was said to be greater than that of the Palestinian Authority. These new sources of funding enabled the Islamists to effectively pursue their various charitable activities. It is estimated that one Palestinian out of three is the recipient of financial aid from the Hamas. And in this regard, Israel has done nothing to curb the inflow of money into the occupied territories.

The Hamas had built its strength through its various acts of sabotage of the peace process, in a way which was compatible with the interests of the Israeli government.

In turn, the latter sought in a number of ways, to prevent the application of the Oslo accords. In other words, Hamas was fulfilling the functions for which it was originally created: to prevent the creation of a Palestinian State. And in this regard, Hamas and Ariel Sharon, see eye to eye; they are exactly on the same wave length.

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Articles by: **Hassane  
Zerouky**

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