



# CLASHING PERSPECTIVES FOR THE EXISTENCE OF HAMAS IN THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT: INDEPENDENCE SUPPORTING GROUPS OR TERRORIST GROUPS RESULTING FROM WESTERN RHETORIC

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims to describe and compare the two perspectives in viewing the Hamas group from the perspective of Palestinian society and Western countries . The view of Hamas as a pro-Palestinian independence group or a terrorist group due to Western rhetoric is a fairly common opinion where the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the judgment against Hamas are strongly influenced by political perspectives and geopolitical interests. This research uses qualitative methods which aim to describe how International perspective on Hamas and the influence of the emergence of two perspectives and points of view on Hamas. The results of this research show that the pattern of military resistance carried out by Hamas against Israel causes very contradictory perspectives in describing Hamas. The conclusion of this research is that the point of view towards Hamas is also greatly influenced by the political background, history and national interests of a country so that The debate about whether Hamas is a group that protects Palestinian independence or a terrorist group is still ongoing and has not yet reached a universal international context.

Keywords: Hamas, Israel, Palestine, Terrorism, Independence





#### INTRODUCTION

Differences in views regarding the existence and role of a group involved in a conflict often occur. This research aims to examine differences in views towards the Hamas group in the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Dichotomy of views on Hamas, whether as a pro-independence group or Hamas as a terrorist group. The conflict between the two countries is the longest political conflict in history. Lasting for more than half a century, various research agendas and conflict resolution efforts have repeatedly failed in the process of achieving them. Jewish rule in Palestine began with the establishment of the independent state of Israel, along with the founding of the World Zionist Organization *in* 1897 AD.

In 1980 Palestinian Muslims integrated with the main aim of escaping Israel's grip. This movement was called Inthifadah I which lasted for thirteen years until 1993. This Muslim liberation movement gradually faded after the arrival of the Oslo agreement, this agreement demanded peace and allowed the Israeli people to live freely in Palestine. Even after the Oslo agreement, Israel continued to persecute Muslims in Palestine (Gelvin, 2021). Israel intensively carried out attacks against Palestine at the end of 2008 to the beginning of 2009 by launching attacks in the form of bombs which had fatal consequences, destroying places of worship, school buildings, public facilities and most of the homes of civilians.

Israel carried out various attacks under the pretext of fighting Hamas, which has controlled Gaza since March 2006. Israel included Hamas on the list of terrorist groups that must be fought, and lobbied Western countries not to get involved in any form. assistance to the group. Hamas. Hamas is a militant movement and one of the two main political parties in the Palestinian territories. The group rules more than two million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, but is best known for its armed resistance to Israel. Dozens of countries have designated Hamas a terrorist organization, although some countries apply this label only to its military wing. Iran provided him with material and financial support, and Turkey reportedly hosted some of its top leaders (Waxman, 2019). The rival Fatah party, which dominates the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and controls the West Bank, has renounced violence. Divisions in the Palestinian leadership and Hamas' hostility towards Israel have reduced prospects for stability in Gaza.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

To help add information to this paper, the author took from several previous research sources related to this paper. In the journal " **Independence and Sovereignty of the People from the Point of View of Mohammad Hatta and Islam** " Andi Andri explains the meaning of independence and sovereignty from the perspective of Mohammad Hatta and Islam. The meaning of independence and popular sovereignty in Mohammad Hatta's view is in line with the Islamic view, namely that they both state that independence is a national spirit, independence is not just freedom from colonialism by other countries but must also be free from colonialism by other countries. the grip of other parties who want to take advantage of what is in the country. In Mohammad Hatta's view, independence means eliminating all forms of colonialism against a nation (Andi, 2017).

According to Mohammad Hatta, popular sovereignty is a situation where the highest power is in the hands of the people so that the people's position is equal to the king. This condition can be realized by providing education to the people so that they are aware of the importance of sovereignty so that they will never want to give up their own sovereignty, together with the people. those who are educated will not be able to surrender the sovereignty of the people. Meanwhile, from an Islamic perspective, independence means freedom from mistakes, ignorance and injustice from those in power. In an Islamic perspective, people's sovereignty is positioned as belonging only to God Almighty, but sovereignty is also owned by the people as a gift from God Almighty, prosperity for their own lives.

In essence, the concepts of independence and sovereignty of Mohammad Hatta and Islam are in harmony, namely the creation of conditions that are free from colonialism in the form of ignorance, error and injustice from those in power. Meanwhile, the concept of popular sovereignty is only different from the way of looking at the nature of the owner of power because according to Islam, power in a country actually belongs only to Allah SWT, but the sovereignty given to the people is a reflection of Allah. the power of SWT.

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Furthermore, in the journal "Understanding Jihad from an Islamic Perspective (Efforts to Counter Accusations of Terrorism in Islam" written by Amri Rahman explains how the Islamic view of jihad is always perceived as similar to terrorist movements.

Amri in his writing explains that acts of terrorism in the name of Islam by carrying out various acts of terror such as suicide bombings are certainly very disturbing to the public. Not a few parties criticized this action, blaming Islam as the mastermind behind this action because the perpetrator carried out his action on the basis of defending religion or commonly known as "jihad". Terror cases that have occurred, such as the Bali bombing tragedy in Indonesia and the September 11 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center (WTC) and the Pentagon in the United States in the name of Islam, have given rise to the opinion that jihad and terrorism are parallel and related to each other. Jihad and terrorism are still a long-standing debate.

How closely is jihad related to crime and why is the term jihad so frightening in the ears of the public and even Muslims themselves. Therefore, Amri emphasized that the explanation to answer various kinds of speculation is to use the views of the Koran and hadith regarding the meaning of jihad itself. The concept of jihad in Islam is considered a negative term due to the actions of irresponsible parties which tarnish the beauty of Islamic teachings themselves. The often distorted facts about jihad which are synonymous with negative connotations cannot be avoided anymore. On the other hand, Islam teaches how important it is to maintain peace. Jihad is an Arabic term which means "fighting", ironically the meaning of jihad that is developing in today's society is "suicide bombing".

Confusion about the meaning of jihad itself is the impact of the many acts of terrorism that occur. Amri said that the understanding of jihad needs to be understood with in-depth study to avoid misperceptions and know what the actual definition of jihad is according to Islam. Amri explained in detail the terminology of jihad in the Koran, the classification of jihad in Islam and the explanation of jihad which is in sharp contrast to acts of terrorism (Amri, 2018). Jihad in the Koran means being serious about work, teachers strive for jihad by educating and teaching wholeheartedly, employees strive for jihad by working professionally, leaders strive for responsibility and justice, entrepreneurs strive for honesty with consumers, and scientists strive for honesty. make the best use of his knowledge. Amri closed his research by emphasizing that terrorism is unknown in Islam and is completely contrary to the teachings because Islam is a religion of grace that always radiates light and provides a sense of security through protection for everyone, both followers of the Islamic religion itself and its adherents. other religions (rahmatan lil alamin), so jihad cannot be linked to Islam.

The next article entitled "Terrorist Group Movements from a Western and Islamic Perspective" by Hamzah Junaid explains that according to *TP Thornton*, terrorism is defined as a symbolic act that is prepared to influence political policies and activities through various extra strict methods, especially very strict methods. using threats of violence. According to *EV Walter*, the terror process has three main elements, namely, threats or acts of violence, emotional reactions in the form of excessive fear from potential victims, and social impacts in the form of acts of violence, threats and fear that emerge later (Junaidi, 2013).

James Adams further formulated the definition of terrorism, according to which terrorism is the use of threats through physical violence carried out by individuals or groups to achieve certain goals such as political goals, both for the interests of the authorities and to fight against enemies. The authorities, if the action is carried out with the aim of shocking, paralyzing and intimidating a group, then the target will be greater than the victims who are directly affected.

Terrorism consists of groups that aim to overthrow the ruling regime because they are deemed unfit to occupy power due to feelings of disappointment which provide space for acts of terror, or meddling in the international political order. According to *Paul Wilkinson*, terrorism is a series of terrorist acts carried out systematically, neatly and carried out by certain organizations or groups. According to him, acts of political terrorism have six specific





characteristics, namely acts of coercive intimidation, using destructive methods, and murder carried out in a structured manner as a means to achieve certain goals, the loss of victims is not the main thing, the main goal is instead the goal of creating a war of nerves to "kill". one person to frighten a thousand people", and the message of the action is quite clear even though the perpetrator does not always declare himself personally, the perpetrator who acts is usually based on quite strong ideals, for example "fighting for humanity and defending religion." (Muhammad, 2003).

#### **METHODOLOGY**

This research uses qualitative methods which aim to describe how International perspective on Hamas and the influence of the emergence of two perspectives and points of view on Hamas. Especially in describing the indicators that cause the emergence of differences in views towards the Hamas group, so that valid data can be obtained regarding these different points of view, especially those that lead to the pattern of the Hamas resistance movement which is said to be very militaristic and frontal, which has a different pattern from the Pro-Independence group. Another Palestinian, namely Fatah, chose a pattern of diplomatic resistance and avoided violence.

The data collection technique that the author uses is library research, namely collecting data by reviewing a number of literature in the form of books, journals, documents, newspapers, papers and articles related to the problem.

#### DISCUSSION

#### Chronology of the Israel - Palestine and Hamas Conflict

The occurrence of tensions ranging from physical clashes to violence between Israel and militants in the Gaza Strip has brought world attention to this long-standing problem. The roots of this conflict and distrust are deep and complex, starting before the founding of the state of Israel in 1948. In the last seven decades we have all witnessed wars, uprisings, and sometimes a glimmer of hope for resolving conflicts by peaceful means. meaningful until it becomes meaningless.

Starting in 1948, Israel declared its independence. Regional conflict grew amidst the end of the British mandate over Palestine and Israel's declaration of independence in May 1948. A coalition of Arab states, allied with Palestinian factions with the aim of fighting Israeli forces. In the end, Israel controlled most of the territory which resulted in approximately hundreds of thousands of Palestinians being displaced and expelled from their own land. In July 1956 there was a crisis in the Suez Canal area, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, the Suez Canal is a vital trade route connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. Israel expanded its invasion of Egypt accompanied by troops from England and France. A peace agreement supported by the United States and the Soviet Union succeeded in ending the fighting. However, the canal was blocked by a sunken ship and reopened in 1957 (Gelvin, 2021).

In June 1967, an event called the "Six Day War" or in English "Six Day War" occurred, this war began with Israeli warplanes attacking Egyptian airfields and Israeli ground troops succeeded in entering the Sinai Peninsula. The war comes amid a long-running conflict, including an ongoing blockade of Egyptian shipping to the Gulf of Aqaba. Jordan joined the war with Egypt, but at that time the Israeli troops were superior because they could almost destroy Egypt's air power.

Israel controls the Gaza Strip, Sinai, West Bank, Golan Heights and East Jerusalem which were previously dominated by Arabs. This attack has again caused suffering because hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who were directly affected by the attack inevitably had to flee and look for a safe place. residence. temporary protection. In October 1973, the Arab Coalition collectively launched an attack on Israel. This attack was carried out by a coalition of Arab countries which at that time was led by Egypt and Syria. The action taken was to launch a surprise attack against Israel.





Arab troops initially succeeded in seizing territory, but soon after, the Arab troops were repulsed through Israeli counterattacks assisted by supplies from allies, including the United States. Until 1978, a peace agreement was reached between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, known as the Camp David Agreement. This peace agreement was brokered on September 17 1978 by President Jimmy Carter. Potential peace proposals for Palestine were also discussed, but to date there is no clarity and has never been implemented (Khalidi, 2020).

The atmosphere became volatile again in December 1987 due to the first Intifada. This tension was caused by the Palestinian uprising or intifada which succeeded in giving rise to clashes and protests in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel. The unrest continued for years, resulting in many people being killed or injured on both sides. At the end of the 90s, to be precise in 1993, an agreement was reached which was the first of two pacts known as the Oslo agreements signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) which contained the establishment of a peace process (Sufian, 2008). Based on previous UN resolutions (follow-up agreement signed in 1995). The agreement allows the Palestinian Authority to oversee most administrative affairs in the West Bank and Gaza. The PLO was recognized by Israel and the United States as a negotiating partner. Still unresolved, however, are key issues such as Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the status of Jerusalem, which Palestinians view as the capital of any future state.

#### Hamas Perspective in the Israeli – Palestinian Conflict

Hamas is considered a resistance group or national liberation movement that fights for Palestinian independence from Israeli occupation. They view Hamas as a group that fights for the rights of the Palestinian people, including the restoration of the occupied territories and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. In their view, the military efforts and tactics used by Hamas are considered a form of resistance to the occupation, these opinions are not a single view held by all of Western society. There are variations in opinions and viewpoints within Western society, depending on individual understanding, information and viewpoints. Apart from that, there are also views from outside the West that can provide a different perspective on Hamas and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a whole.

The 2000s, which began with the second Intifada movement, or what is known as the Palestinian uprising, which began after riots broke out following the visit of Israeli right-wing political figure Ariel Sharon (who later became prime minister) to a compound in Jerusalem that is highly respected in teachings of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Clashes and other violence continued until 2005, causing hundreds of lives to be lost on both sides. 2006 was the beginning of the progress of one of the Palestinian militant groups, namely Hamas, which succeeded in winning the elections in Gaza, thereby creating political tension between Hamas and the Fatah party, which was more moderate in its control of the West Bank. Tensions continued again in December 2008, Israel again carried out attacks on the Gaza Strip, Israel began a three-week attack on Gaza following a rocket attack on Israel carried out by a Palestinian militant group, it was discovered that Egypt supplied rockets through the tunnel which resulted in more than 1,110 residents being killed. Palestinians and at least 13 Israelis were killed.

In November 2012 Israel killed a Hamas military commander, an Israeli attack succeeded in killing Hamas military commander Ahmed Jabari, triggered by rocket fire from Gaza and Israeli air strikes carried out for more than a week, this attack killed at least 150 Palestinians. and six Israelis were killed. In the summer of 2014 Hamas then took retaliatory action by killing three Israeli teenagers who were kidnapped near a Jewish settlement in the West Bank, triggering an Israeli military response, Hamas immediately responded to this response by launching rocket attacks from Gaza. The seven-week conflict left more than 2,200 Palestinians dead in Gaza while 67 soldiers and 6 civilians were killed in Israel.

The United States recognizes Jerusalem as its capital. In December 2017, Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and announced that they planned to move the US Embassy from Tel Aviv, sparking huge Palestinian anger. Protests in Gaza Echoing again in 2018, protests occurred in Gaza along the fence with Israel, including demonstrators





throwing stones and Molotov cocktails who managed to cross the barrier. Israeli forces killed more than 170 protesters during the final months of 2018 (NBC, 2018).

In November, Israel launched a covert attack on Gaza, resulting in the deaths of seven suspected Palestinian militants and a senior Israeli military officer. Gaza continues to carry out hundreds of rocket attacks fired into Israeli territory. In 2021, after weeks of prolonged tensions in Jerusalem led to Israeli police raiding the al-Aqsa Mosque, one of Islam's holiest sites, Hamas fired rockets at the city for the first time in years, prompting Israel to counterattack with attacks. air (Karmon, 2022).

The fighting was the fiercest since 2014, with thousands of rockets fired from Gaza and hundreds of airstrikes on the Palestinian territory an oasis, resulting in more than 200 deaths in Gaza and at least 10 deaths in Israel. The spring of 2022 was marked by a series of violence against Israelis by Palestinians marking the deadliest series of "terrorist" attacks in Israel in recent years with at least 14 Israelis killed in individual Palestinian attacks between March 22 and April 8. In response, Israel suppressed militants and activists by launching the "Break the Wave" military operation in the West Bank. This operation also makes 2022 a very deadly year.

Israeli forces managed to kill a total of 146 Palestinians in the West Bank in 2022, a death toll higher than in any other year since the UN began keeping records in 2005. Israel's Foreign Ministry said Palestinians killed 29 Israelis that year. Benjamin Netanyahu was re-installed as Israel's prime minister in December 2022, after winning elections that gave him a sixth term in office and transformed a bloc of right-wing politicians into a powerful seat in the Israeli government. He formed the most right-wing government in Israel's history, which critics say has begun to reduce the prospects for a peaceful solution between the two countries. Israel carried out an attack on Jenin on January 26 2023, Israeli troops succeeded in raiding Jenin in one of the deadliest operations in almost two decades, both sides exchanged fire and killed nine people, at least one of whom was a civilian (Bordas, 2024).

In one incident a Palestinian gunman killed seven people, including children, while praying in an East Jerusalem synagogue. This conflict continued until May 9, when Israel again launched surprise air strikes across the Gaza Strip, targeting leaders of the Islamic Jihad militant organization that receives support from Iran. The attack killed three top militants and 10 other members, the Palestinian health official said, adding that four women and four children were among the victims.

Israel launched the attack a week after reaching a ceasefire with Palestinian armed factions. The Israel Defense Forces said three slain senior Islamic Jihad members were responsible for attacks on Israel. This attack triggered a series of attacks from both opposing sides. The Hamas group fired more than 160 rockets into Israeli territory, some of which reached Tel Aviv (Turak, 2023). There have been no reports of deaths or injuries from Hamas rocket attacks, most of which were destroyed in the air by Israel's powerful air defense system. Two days after Israel attacked new targets in Gaza, Israel attacked the top floor of an apartment building and succeeded in killing three Islamic Jihad members. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, Israeli attacks have killed dozens of Palestinians. So far, Hamas remains the dominant militant group in Gaza and is not involved in the latest escalation (Al Jazeera, 2023).

Views regarding Hamas are currently divided into two countries that support Palestinian independence. Hamas is considered part of the Palestinian Freedom Fighters, although it does not always have the same frequency of struggle as the Palestinian government, Hamas is often at the forefront of resistance, especially militarily, against Israel. and a group of fighters who consistently take a firm stance in responding to Israeli military attacks against Palestine.

Meanwhile, from the other side, Hamas is also considered a terrorist, especially by countries that support Israel. This very judgmental perspective can occur because pro-Israel countries feel very threatened by the presence of Hamas which is very aggressive against Israel. Then the weak influence of the UN on the peace process of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict also broadened the terrorists' view of Hamas, the resolutions issued by the UN were not responded to by Israel by continuing to attack Palestine, but what appeared to be the opposite was true (CNBC, 2023) . It was not Israel that attacked, but when Hamas responded to the Israeli attack, this was then reported very intensively by Western media, making it seem as if Hamas had violated and disobeyed the UN resolution that had been issued.





The role of the mass media is very influential in building the perspective and opinion of the international community so that there must always be a balance in reporting the Israeli and Palestinian conflict. Western media which tends to support Israel's actions must be balanced with mainstream media which presents proportional and objective information and reporting regarding the actual conditions and circumstances of this conflict.

### **CONCLUSION**

The history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and assessments of Hamas are strongly influenced by political perspectives and geopolitical interests. Hamas is a political and military group operating in the Palestinian territories. The view on whether Hamas is a group supporting Palestinian independence or a terrorist group is seen from the interests of the countries involved in the conflict. And to this day, more governments and countries classify Hamas as a terrorist group. This view is based on a series of attacks and violent tactics carried out by Hamas against Israeli civilians. Several countries, such as the United States, the European Union, and Israel, classify Hamas as a terrorist organization and view their actions as a threat to national security. Western countries, including the United States and several countries in the European Union, tend to label Hamas as a terrorist group. This view is based on the attacks and violent tactics carried out by Hamas, especially against Israeli civilians. Western governments and media often highlight these attacks and portray Hamas as an organization that uses acts of terrorism to achieve its political goals. Although on the other hand, there are also voices in the West who view Hamas as a resistance group or national liberation movement fighting for Palestinian independence. They emphasized the context of the Israeli occupation of Palestine, human rights violations committed by Israel, and the Palestinian people's resistance to the occupation. In their view, Hamas is one of the groups involved in this struggle. Viewpoints and assessments of Hamas are also greatly influenced by political background, history and personal views. The debate over whether Hamas is a group supporting Palestinian independence or a terrorist group is still ongoing and has not yet reached a universal international consensus

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