On 7 October 2023, the Palestinian Islamist terrorist organization Hamas massacred over 1,300 people in southern Israel and abducted more than 200 hostages to Gaza. Women, men, elderly people, children and even babies were murdered, raped, mutilated, beheaded and set on fire in the cruellest of ways. Only days later, Hamas official Ghazi Hamad announced: “This was only the first time, there will be a second, a third and a fourth time.” Hamas has written the destruction of the state of Israel and the annihilation of the Jews in its charter. It is mainly financed by Iran and enjoys great support among the Palestinians. Since the massacre on October 7, the Swiss Federal Council has also wanted to have Hamas banned by law. Most Western countries have classified Hamas as a terrorist organization and banned it for years.



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Hamas and Israel

Founded in 1987, Hamas is a radical Islamic terrorist organization that pursues an anti-democratic, anti-human and deeply anti-Semitic ideology. Its goal: the destruction of Israel through “holy Islamic war”, or jihad. In its charter, Hamas calls

for the death of all Jews and propagates the lie of the Jewish world conspiracy.

Hamas describes itself as a liberation organization, but subordinates everything to its destructive goal, including the lives of its own people. It uses them in Gaza as human shields. Hamas has a paramilitary arm, the Qassam Brigades, and has been rigorously enforcing its ideology in Gaza since it took power in 2007.

There is no diversity in Gaza. 99 percent are Muslim. There are no Jews among the remaining 1 percent. Women are on a lower legal and social level than men and are subject to a code of modesty. There are no rights for homosexuals.

Internally, Hamas is trying to establish a counterweight to Fatah and the Palestine Liberation Front, the PLO, which governs the West Bank.

Hamas is not exclusively regional, but part of the global jihad, i.e. the “holy war” against the infidels. It is largely financed from external sources, above all from Iran.

Hamas and Switzerland

Hamas has been classified as a terrorist organization by most Western countries for years and is therefore banned, but not in Switzerland. As a result of the pogrom on October 7, 2023, the Swiss Federal Council decided to ban Hamas by federal law on November 22, 2023.

Previously, corresponding initiatives had been repeatedly debated in the Federal Parliament, just as they were repeatedly rejected. The last parliamentary initiative came from Lukas Reimann, SVP, in June 2022. Marianne Binder-Keller, Member of the Council of States, Die Mitte, also advocated a ban on Hamas in her interpellation in June 2021. The SVP was primarily in favor of the demands. The Federal Council and the majority of all other parliamentary groups were against.

Courted by Switzerland for years

The FDFA relied on contact with Hamas, particularly during the era of Foreign Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey. Former Green Party National Councillor Geri Müller and SP diplomat Jean-Daniel Ruch made the headlines:

- In 2012, Geri Müller leads Hamas officials through the Federal

Parliament. Unsurprisingly, he also opposes a ban on Hamas today. Israel is an apartheid state, he says, and relativizes the terror of 7 October. The "Switzerland-Palestine" association, which he chairs, naturally also relativizes the pogrom.

• In 2012, Switzerland's then ambassador to Israel, Jean-Daniel Ruch, met the then Hamas leader Khalid Mashal in Cairo. In the Weltwoche of 12.10.2023, National Councillor Alfred Heer describes Jean-Daniel Ruch as a "useful idiot for Hamas" and writes: " The FDFA played a key role in making Hamas socially acceptable. What can the FDFA achieve today with its excellent contacts with Hamas? Absolutely nothing."

• A Swiss special envoy for the peace process meets with Jahia Sinwar in 2017. The Hamas leader is considered the mastermind behind the massacre on October 7.

Worth reading: NZZ from 14.10.2023, "Talking to Hamas: Micheline Calmy-Rey's vision is dead". The NZZ concludes: "He [Jean-Daniel Ruch] repeatedly tried to keep the so-called Geneva Initiative alive. This was a vision of a peaceful two-state solution promoted by Calmy-Rey – but which was never capable of winning a majority in either Israel or Palestine.

Switzerland has supported the idea with CHF 18 million over the past 20 years. It will withdraw completely from the Geneva Initiative at the end of 2023. After recent events, the outcome is more than sobering. At the end of her term of office, Calmy-Rey called on Hamas to participate constructively in a peace solution and to "think the unthinkable". The terrorists have indeed done so – but far away from the negotiating table and in an unimaginably brutal manner."

Hamas and the Palestinians

A considerable proportion of Palestinians have a positive view of Hamas. And: for them, there is only one Palestine, and that is “From the river to the sea”.

One month before the massacre on October 7, the Ramallah-based Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR) published the results of a survey conducted from September 6 to 9, 2023. According to the study, 44 percent in Gaza and 25 percent in the West Bank support Hamas. This shows that although Hamas does not represent the entire Palestinian population, a large proportion does support Hamas.

A study conducted by the PCPSR around a month and a half after the Hamas massacre of around 1,300 Israeli and foreign civilians , surveyed from November 22 to December 2, 2023, revealed the following picture:

- When asked about a two-state solution, 77% (West Bank) and 70.4% (Gaza) responded that for them there was only one Palestine “from the river to the sea”.
- 72 percent of Palestinians surveyed consider Hamas’ actions to be “correct”.
- 22 percent said the opposite.
- Likewise, 72 percent said they supported Hamas, 52 percent in the Gaza Strip and 85 percent in the West Bank.
- While support for Hamas in Gaza has increased slightly – although it was already at a high level before October 7 – it has more than tripled in the West Bank.

Hamas Charter

Goals of Hamas

“The Islamic Resistance Movement (…) strives to unfurl the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine.” (Article 6)

Destruction of Israel

“Israel exists and will continue to exist until Islam has wiped it out, just as it has wiped out other countries before it.” (Preamble)

The Muslim origins of the area

“Palestine is an Islamic land … Therefore, the liberation of Palestine is the highest personal duty of every Muslim wherever he is.” (Article 13)

Call to jihad

“Jihad is the personal duty of every Muslim.” (Article 15)

Rejection of peace initiatives

“Peace initiatives and so-called peace ideas or international conferences contradict the principle of the Islamic Resistance Movement. The conferences are nothing but a means of appointing infidels as arbiters in Islamic countries … There is no solution to the Palestinian problem other than jihad. Peace initiatives are a waste of time, a futile endeavor.” (Article 13)

Disapproval of the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty

“Egypt was detached from the common struggle (against Zionism) by the treacherous Camp David agreement. The Zionists are trying to drag the other Arab states into similar agreements … To abandon the common struggle against Zionism is high treason; cursed is he who commits such an act.” (Article 32)

Anti-Semitic agitation

“The Last Judgement will not come until Muslims fight the Jews and kill them. But then the Jews will hide behind stones and trees, and the stones and trees will cry out, ‘O Muslim, a Jew is hiding behind me, come and kill him’.” (Article 7)

“The enemies have been scheming for a long time … and have accumulated huge, significant, material wealth. With their wealth they have taken control of the media

worldwide, … with their money they have directed revolutions in various parts of the world … They were behind the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution and most other revolutions … With their money they formed secret organizations, e.g. the Freemasons, the Rotary Clubs and the Lions Clubs, which are spread all over the world to destroy social systems and to safeguard Zionist interests … They were behind World War I and formed the League of Nations, with which they ruled the world. They were behind World War I and formed the League of Nations with which they ruled the world. They were behind World War II, through which they made huge financial profits … They are the masterminds of every war waged anywhere in the world." (Article 22)

"The Zionist intrigues will never end… Their program is laid down in the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion"." (Article 2)

"Hamas sees itself as the spearhead and vanguard of the common struggle against world Zionism … Islamic groups throughout the Arab world should do the same, as they are best equipped for their future task, the struggle against the warmongering Jews." (Article 32)

Excerpts of the Founder's Charter of 1988

The second charter from 2017

The founding charter of 1988 led to criticism due to its open call for the annihilation of Israel and the killing of Jews. In order to be more moderate, Hamas published the 2017 charter, although its meaning compared to the first charter remains unclear. Is the version intended to supplement or replace the 1988 charter? In any case, Hamas has not distanced itself from the content of the founding charter.

Armin Pfahl-Traughber 's analysis for the Federal Agency for Civic Education clearly shows that the 2017 Charter rejects the existence of Israel.

"The Zionist project is a racist, aggressive and separatist project … And the Israeli state is the tool of this project and its foundation" (Article 14), Armin Pfahl-Traughber quotes the 2017 Charter and explains: "The statement refers to Israel, regardless of the question of the 1967 borders or the settlement projects. It is about a fundamental delegitimization of the state. Accordingly, the founding of "Israel" is considered illegal, which the deliberately placed quotation marks are also intended to illustrate to readers (cf. Article 18).

And you can read: “Hamas rejects any alternative to a complete and total liberation of Palestine, from the river to the sea” (Article 20). This is a clear statement that is directed against the existence of the Israeli state. It should no longer exist in favor of a sovereign Palestine, which is difficult to imagine without a war of annihilation. “From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free” (or the short form: “From the River to the Sea”) is also a frequently shouted and displayed slogan at demonstrations in Europe.

He continues: “There are also statements on the “Palestinian political system”, which is to be based on “pluralism, democracy, national partnership, acceptance of others and a willingness to engage in dialog” (Article 28). The aim is for Palestinian institutions to be based on “democratic principles”, in particular “free and fair elections” (Article 20). However, this raises the question of why Hamas has not held elections for years. The question also arises as to why Hamas rule in Gaza does not allow pluralism. It is clear from the orientation of the new charter that it is about political recognition and public impact. The formal moderation in the text therefore had a clear objective: it was not about an ideological change, but about strategic deception. The Hamas massacres in October 2023 at the latest illustrated this to the whole world.”

Financing

Since Hamas has ruled Gaza alone since 2007, money has bypassed the population. The salaries of the administrative apparatus are paid by the Emirate of Qatar, while the hospitals are financed by international aid organizations such as the Red Crescent. Schools and some clinics are paid for by UNRWA. In schools, children are inculcated with hatred of Israel and Jews from an early age. ((LINK UNRWA internal))

Iran alone is said to have given Hamas billions of dollars. Hamas used the money to build and expand its tunnel system and weapons arsenal.

According to estimates, the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip had an arsenal of over 10,000 rockets before 2023. While most of these rockets are considered short-range rockets with a range of up to 20 kilometers, Hamas also has hundreds to thousands of medium-range rockets aimed at the center of Israel. In addition to the rocket arsenal, it also has access to a wide range of other weapons such as assault rifles, small arms, explosive devices, bazookas, grenades, mines, drones, anti-tank missiles and more. Observation and attack drones are also part of the

arsenal.

History

Hamas' ideology is rooted in that of the Muslim Brotherhood, founded in Egypt in 1928 , which shares the Nazis' hatred of Jews and fantasies of extermination.

In 1987, after the outbreak of the first intifada, Hamas is founded in Gaza City. In 2006 – one year after Israel's complete withdrawal from Gaza – it wins the parliamentary elections in the Palestinian territories. Tensions arise with the Palestinian Authority.

In 2007, Hamas seizes control of Gaza by force. There is a break with the Palestinian Authority. 600 Palestinians are killed in the clashes.