

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

THE 2017 PALESTINIAN UNITY
ACCORD UNDER HAMAS'S
NEW LEADERSHIP AND
REVISED CHARTER: A
CRITICAL INTERPRETIVE
ANALYSIS

A thesis presented for the completion of the degree of

Master of Arts

In politics

College of humanities and social sciences

Massey University: Manawatu, Palmerston North

NICHOLAS ROBERT BROUGH
2018

Abstract

Since its success in the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections, Hamas has struggled to be an effective governing agent and service provider within the Gaza Strip. The refusal of Israel to recognise Hamas's administrative status after the free and fair elections resulted in a severe blockade and an international boycott from the international organisation known as the Quartet. The negative outcome of these harsh sanctions combined with past and present measures from the PA based in Ramallah, the West Bank, has been widespread for Palestinian nationalist goals and well-being in the Gaza Strip, which is now on the verge of total economic collapse. 2017 marks a highly active time for Hamas for its political development. Through its internal bylaws a major reorganisation of its leadership occurred along with the release of a long-awaited revision to its founding 1988 charter. With the signing of a unity deal in October with their rival's, Fatah, Hamas's new leadership is attempting to relinquish political control over the Gaza Strip. This has renewed hope from Palestinians that the harmful division may be finally ending along with imposed sanctions. This thesis presents a critical interpretive analysis of how this misunderstood Islamic resistance movement is willing to make concessions for the betterment of Palestinian nationalism. Combined with criteria from a shared transformational and transactional leadership framework, this approach challenges popular misrepresentation of Hamas by revealing the pragmatism of its new leadership in this unity accord.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to my supervisor Dr Nigel Parsons for your high level of expertise in guiding this research and introducing me to this subject. Thank you to Massey University for the support throughout the many years of study. Also, thank you to my mother for providing me with the motivation to complete this research project.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
TABLE OF CONTENTS	III
ABBREVIATIONS	V
GLOSSARY of Arabic Terms	VI
FIGURES	IX
TABLES	IX
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 Theoretical Framework	10
2.1 Theorizing traditional leadership	11
2.2 The development of a shared leadership model	13
2.3 Shared leadership framework of transformational-transactional leadership	18
2.4 Conclusion	20
3 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	21
3.1 Hamas as an Islamic resistance and political movement: 1987-2017	22
3.2 Conclusion	29
4 METHODOLOGY	30
4.1 Primary and secondary sources	30
4.2 Ontology and epistemology	31
4.3 Quantitative and qualitative research	33
4.4 Method of analysis: critical interpretive analysis	34
5 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CONTEXT OF HAMAS’S RULE IN THE GAZA STRIP.....	39
5.1 Political and military leadership of Hamas	39

5.2 political and economic situation in the Gaza Strip	47
5.3 Conclusion	54
6 The Palestinian unity deal: October 12 2017	55
6.1 How is Hamas’s new leadership reconciling with the PA through its new charter in the creation of a unity government?	56
6.2 What position do these leaders now have regarding regional and international actors throughout the unity accord?.....	74
7 Key findings	91
7.1 Conclusion.....	96
Bibliography	98
Appendix 1	122
Appendix 2	125

Abbreviations

ANSA	Armed Non-State Actors
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
EU	European Union
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
ISIS	Islamic State
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
NGOs	Non-State Organisations
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCC	Palestine Central Council
PFLP	Popular Front for the liberation of Palestine
PLC	Palestinian Liberation Council
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
PNC	Palestinian National Council
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
US	United States

Glossary of Arabic terms

Ahl al-Kitab

People of the book

Al-dawla al-islamiyya fi al-'Iraq wa al-Sham

Islamic State

Al-Masjid an-Nabawi

The Mosque of the prophet

Al-Maktab al-Siyasi

Political bureau

Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimum

Muslim Brotherhood

Al-Quds

Jerusalem

Asabiyya

Group solidarity

Harakat

Movement

Hizb

Party

Hudna

Ceasefire, truce

Intifada

Uprising

Ikhwan

Brethren

Izz al-Din al- Qassam Brigades

Hamas's military wing

Jihad

Striving for Allah, holy war

Majlis ash- Shura

Consultative Council

Masjid al-Haram

The Sacred Mosque

Muqawama

Resistance

Nakba

Catastrophe/Palestinian exodus of 1948

Sabr

Self-restraint

Sharia law

Islamic law

Sheik

Leader

Urf

Customary law

Waqf

Sacred Islamic endowment, land

Wasta

Mediation

Wataniyya

Nationalism

Zakat

Charitable donation

Figures

Figure 1: Model of shared leadership from Pearce and Conger (2003)	15
Figure 2: Political and military organizational structure of Hamas's leadership	42
Figure 3: Hamas's grassroots activities from Jensen (2009)	42
Figure 4: Map of Israel, West Bank, and the Gaza Strip from Macintyre (2016)	125
Figure 5: Map of the Gaza Strip from Macintyre (2016)	126

Tables

Table 1: Hamas over 30 years	122
------------------------------------	-----

1 Introduction

Founded in 1987 at the beginning of first *intifada* (uprising), Hamas has transformed through more than three decades of operation within the Palestinian political arena (Hroub, 2010). From its beginnings as a grassroots Islamic alternative to the secular Fatah, into the governing authority in the Gaza Strip since 2006, Hamas leaders have continuously revealed strategic adaptability to changing political realities regardless of its designation as a “terrorist” group by Israel and some of the international community, especially in the West. This perspective on Hamas, in part derived from an over reliance on its founding 1988 charter, seeks to demonize, and thereby isolate its leaders from peace negotiations (Gunning, 2007). However, these leaders have never held much regard for this document and have often presented numerous opportunities for peace talks (Milton-Edward, 2017).

The following section will reveal how Hamas’s leadership have acted as a pragmatic force for Palestinian resistance against Israel’s occupation deemed illegal by international law. It is argued that Hamas as an Islamic resistance *harakat* (movement) provides a valued force of *muqawama* (resistance) for Palestinians by channelling their frustrations into an Islamic sense of unity and purpose. An overview of Hamas’s 2006 success in the Palestinian legislative elections and the subsequent Palestinian division will also be covered. This is followed by a discussion into how Hamas has recently clarified its ideological position through a revision of its charter to clarify how its ethos of resistance is currently understood. Certain obstacles to reconciling with Fatah are covered along with a discussion of Hamas’s political and military structure. The change of leadership that has recently occurred and how this has helped open the door for another reconciliation attempt will be discussed along with how this will be explored through two research questions.

Harakat-al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah, the Islamic Resistance Movement or Hamas was established in December 1987 by seven prominent leaders of the Palestinian branch of the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* (Muslim Brotherhood, MB) as a reaction to the first *intifada* (uprising) (Chehab, 2007). The name Hamas, which is Arabic for 'Zeal', embodies the group's origins in the MB through its motto: 'Rights! Force! Freedom!' and was formulated as an Islamic alternative to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and its main faction, the internationally recognized Fatah movement (*harakat Fatah*). Early on, the founding members of Hamas, such as Ahmed Yassin and Abdel Aziz Rantisi, competed with Fatah through grassroots activities including welfare provision such as *zakat* (charitable donation), and educational and sports programmes (Jensen, 2008). It was through these enterprises that Hamas's local popularity increased during a time when the PLO was losing domestic support and regional patronage owing to corruption, bad strategic decisions, and concessions towards Israel. These included: recognising Israel in 1988, and participating in the 1993 Oslo Accords, thereby forfeiting the right of return of Palestinian refugees since the 1948 *Nakba* (catastrophe) (Tamimi, 2009).

Along with its grassroots activities, Hamas is associated with its Islamic commitment towards *muqawama* resistance and *jihad* (striving for Allah) against the 'Zionist' occupation (Dunning, 2016). Through this Islamic based opposition towards the occupation of Palestinian territories, Hamas has provided Palestinians with the comfort associated with resistance through a divine belief system (Dunning, 2015). This Islamic informed doctrine is considered by Western powers such as the U.S. to be in opposition to the core values of democracy. However, there is considerable misunderstanding regarding how perceptions of Islam have evolved throughout Hamas's existence. Since the beginning of the 1990s, Hamas has developed an Islamic style that often espouses democratic rhetoric and accountability; revealing that its leaders can adjust to changing social and strategic circumstances (Hroub, 2010). This is an important factor regarding another aspect of Hamas's ideology. Hamas has

become an embodiment for Palestinian *wataniyya* (nationalism) and the ability of its leaders to combine this with Islam (Knudsen, 2005).

The pragmatism indicative of Hamas's leadership reached a high point when its leaders decided to participate in the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections (Chehab, 2007). It had already achieved victory in the 2005 local elections winning 75 out of 118 seats (Knudsen, 2005). As an expanding movement that was increasing in popularity, this was a practical decision for its political development. This was to the dismay and disbelief of Israel and the Middle East Quartet (the UN, EU, U.S., and Russia) which designate Hamas as a "terrorist" organisation (Turner, 2006). Hamas won by a landslide gaining 74 of 132 seats of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) (Milton-Edwards, 2008). It achieved this victory fairly and in line with the regular democratic criteria of the PA (Goemans, 2008). Hamas then attempted to establish its first Palestinian government in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with its leaders willing to include Fatah in a subordinate role. However, rather than acknowledge the new Hamas government, the head of the PA, President Mahmoud Abbas, introduced harsh measures to weaken it. These included ordering Fatah civil servants to go on strike, and withholding control over the PA's finances (Berti, 2015).

While Hamas's electoral success was eventually followed by efforts to create a unity government between Hamas and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation's largest *hizb* (faction) Fatah, these broke down through a political stalemate caused by administrative issues between leaders of the two movements (Brenner, 2016). This continued between the two groups throughout 2006 and by June 2007 forced Hamas to drive the PA out of Gaza through an irregular form of political removal in the form of a coup (Goemans, 2008). Violence erupted between the two parties with President Abbas and Fatah national security advisor Mohammed Dahlan mobilizing forces loyal to Fatah to try and subdue Hamas militants in the streets. However, Hamas's militant force was too organised and committed. The result was the routing of Fatah security forces, with Abbas and Dahlan being driven into exile. Since this time the PA has been

divided into two governing organisations with the Fatah led PA leading in Ramallah in the larger Palestinian territory of the West Bank and with Hamas governing in the tiny Gaza Strip (McGeough, 2009).

Because Hamas leaders were forced to seal their regular political victory with the irregular use of force, additional problems have been present for their political rule since forming a government in 2007 (Goemans, 2008). International pressure impacts the cost, benefits, and profitability of leaders who replace past leaders. To be recognised as a legitimate government by the Quartet under pressure from Israel, and thereby receive international financial aid, its three conditions were presented to Hamas leaders. Hamas must recognize Israel's right to exist; it must renounce violence by disarming; and finally, its leaders must adhere to past written agreements, such as the hated Madrid process and the ensuing 1993 Oslo Accords that established the PA, but also involved intolerable concessions towards Israel (Parsons, 2005). However, these conditions, as time has told are a façade, as Fatah has accepted these and it still has not halted the growth of illegal Israeli settlements throughout the West Bank (Hroub, 2017). With Hamas's refusal to yield to these demands, Israel introduced a harsh blockade in 2007 restricting access to resources into Gaza along with military actions under the pretence that these were needed to prevent Hamas from bringing weapons into the Gaza Strip. The Quartet joined this strategy by imposing a financial and political boycott on the small territory. This was also done to punish Gazans who voted for Hamas, and to pressure them into blaming Hamas for their suffering. The goal of this is well articulated by the then senior advisor to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, Dov Weisglass who stated:

“It's like a meeting with a dietitian. We need to make the Palestinians lose weight, but not to starve to death” (Qarmout & Beland, 2012, pp. 36-37).

Hamas's current strategic situation is highly active for several main reasons. In May 2017 a new document was released as a revision of Hamas's controversial 1988

founding charter (Khoury, 2017a). This long overdue revision is a tangible expression of Hamas's pragmatism as an Islamic resistance movement when confronted with new strategic realities (Thrall, 2017). Within this edited version, anti-Semitic language inspired by conspiratorial beliefs about Jews and Judaism which characterised the original charter are replaced by resistance towards an aggressive Zionist colonial project (Hroub, 2017). The emphasis is now on working with all Palestinians for the sake of Palestinian nationalism. Rather than seeking Israel's complete destruction, Hamas is now willing to consider a Palestinian state based on lines just after the 1967 Arab/Israeli war (Mee Staff, 2017). While the revised charter states that there is a place called Israel, this does not mean that Hamas has changed in its willingness to recognise Israel's right to exist (*Al Jazeera*, 2017). The reality is, and has always been, that Hamas's leadership has never really believed in the practicality of wiping out Israel for all the rhetoric that has been emphasised by sources aiming to demonize Hamas (Dunning, 2016). To recognise Israel, however, is to reject the history of dispossession experienced by Palestinians since the *Nakba*. As the deceased Hamas leader and co-founder, Ismail Abu Shanab stated in 2003:

“Forget about the rhetoric, we cannot destroy Israel.... The reality is that Palestinians can create a state that would live by Israel. We will respect any American effort that will stop Israeli settlements and settlers and bring Israelis to withdraw up to 1967 borders” (Dunning, 2016, p.179).

In June 2017, Hamas's recently replaced political bureau chief, Khaled Meshaal, articulated how the revised charter differs from the 1988 original:

“The language of the first charter reflects the first moments of Hamas and the environment of the intifada. The harshness of the occupation, and as you remember, the Israeli bone breaking approaches. So, the expressions in the original charter were emotional responses, and didn't contain much political jargon, but it reflected the feelings of the Palestinian nation and its natural emotions while facing the occupation. This new document has the same spirit,

but is expressed in a more balanced, calm, and straightforward way. But truthfully, the question about the war against the occupiers, our philosophy hasn't changed since the beginning. We're not fighting Israelis because of their religion. We fight those who occupy our lands" (Meshaal, 2017).

Over the years, Hamas's leadership has presented opportunities for peace talks with Israel through the offering of *hudna* (ceasefire) (Milton-Edwards, 2017). However, Hamas is still ignored as a viable partner in the peace process. This is due to the fixation on viewing Hamas in purely destructive terms for the benefit of serving those who support Israeli expansion in the Palestinian territories (Dunning, 2016). It also results from removed international pressure on the occupation to negotiate with Hamas (Milton-Edward, 2004). The belief that Hamas is motivated purely by a rigid Islamic doctrine intent on the destruction of Israel is absurd and simplifies the complex political evolution of an Islamic movement attuned to the sufferings of fellow Palestinians (Dunning, 2016).

Hamas is led by a political wing consisting of two branches, the *Majlis ash-Shura-Shura* Council, and the *al-Maktab al-Siyasi*- political bureau (Jefferis, 2016). The Shura Council was headed by Ahmed Yassin before his assassination in 2004 (Knudsen, 2005). Its political bureau had been led by Khaled Mishaal for nearly 20 years until recently. Hamas's political structure is responsible for the administration of its many social enterprises, such as fundraising, business, and providing social provisions and services to Palestinians. Its top leadership has been based in Palestine and in exile over the years in places such as Jordan, Syria, and Qatar (Chehab, 2007). Hamas also possesses an important militant wing- the Izz al-din al-Qassam brigades, which are a defender of Hamas and the Palestinian cause of resistance. In 2007, it was the al-Qassam brigades that was the major factor in Hamas successfully driving Fatah from the Gaza Strip (Brenner, 2016). It has also fought three wars against Israel since 2008, providing Gazans with a much-appreciated source of defence against the occupation (Blumenthal, 2015).

The current attempt at reconciliation, through Egyptian *wasta* (mediation), is based on the 2011 Cairo Agreement (*Al Jazeera, 2017*). The major goal of this agreement was to create an interim government as a central Palestinian authority which would organise free-elections. Since 2007, Hamas was forced to replace around 50,000 civil servants loyal to Fatah that President Abbas ordered to stay home (Khoury, 2017a). The creation of a single Palestinian government would mean having to resolve the fate of around 100,000 employees in the Gaza Strip resulting from this. The establishment of a unified Palestinian government that will politically bridge the West Bank with the Gaza Strip would also have to include a single legal apparatus and security force. This means Hamas would have to dismantle its 25,000 member al-Qassam brigades as these are viewed as incompatible within a PA that accepts the three conditions of the Quartet. Hamas, however, is a resistance movement against Israel's occupation; therefore, an armed branch of resistance is a necessary means of representing the Palestinian struggle for emancipation (Rasgon, 2017a).

As of 2017, Hamas's organisational structure has experienced a notable reorganization (Thrall, 2017). Hamas has recently made major changes to the top strata of its leadership (Khoury, 2017a). This began in February with the appointment of Yahya Sinwar as head of Hamas in the Gaza Strip. This was followed at the beginning May by the replacement of Khaled Mishaal by Ismail Haniyeh as Hamas's political bureau chief. A third important leadership change occurred in October with the election of Saleh al-Aroui as the new deputy of the political bureau and Hamas's representative in exile (Edlar, 2017a). Exploring how this restructured leadership is forming a unity government with Fatah from October 2017 until February 2018 through a critical interpretive analysis supports the marginalized argument that Hamas is a misunderstood Islamic movement concerned with serving Palestinian resistance towards Zionist aggression (Baym, 2012). This critical analysis combined with certain criteria of shared transformational and transactional leadership based on Bass (1993) and Bass and Avolio (1997) reveals how these leaders approach domestic

and regional challenges during this time (Pearce, 2004). The following critical interpretive analysis seeks to answer two questions:

1. *How is Hamas's new leadership reconciling with the PA in the creation of a unity government?*
2. *What position does Hamas have regarding regional and international actors during this time of reconciliation?*

Exploring the behaviour of leaders through a critical interpretive analysis provides an important means of understanding the beliefs that guide them and the organizations they lead (Warwick & Board, 2013). Current literature regarding the leadership of Islamic groups such as Hamas suffers from certain theoretical and methodological limitations (Gunning 2007). Such scholarship has often been located within the field of terrorism studies relying too heavily on inadequate secondary sources to confirm a spoiler representation of Hamas. To quote Brenner (2016), most western scholarship on Islamist movements is distorted by a lens of 'threat assessment'. Through this perspective, Hamas is defined narrowly and problematically as a force motivated solely by destructive ends. There has also been an excessive focus on the Islamic character of Hamas through a narrow stereotypical perspective that describes Islamic groups as possessing unitary features (Thomson-Johnson, 2017). Another issue throughout the research and one that this critical interpretive analysis seeks to address is the absence of contextual factors influencing Hamas's leadership within its enterprises (Gunning, 2007).

This critical exploration begins with an overview of the theoretical framework that will serve as a lens for this research. Hamas's new leadership and how it is establishing a Palestinian unity government can be investigated through the criteria provided by Bass (1993) and Bass and Avolio's (1997) transformational and transactional leadership combined with Pearce's (2004) shared leadership model. These reliable and highly esteemed leadership models provide an appropriate and broad lens suited to an exploration concerned with leadership behaviours. This is followed by a discussion of how Hamas leaders are represented in the literature throughout the 30 years of serving Palestinian resistance. The application of a simplistic spoiler lens within this scholarship has often limited a more realistic understanding of the motives behind this resistance movement. The methodology applied in this research is then explored. It is argued that a critical interpretive media analysis offers the best means of challenging stereotypical assumptions located throughout current scholarship. One of these is an absence of contextual factors which help the reader appreciate why Hamas leaders make certain decisions. This will be covered with an overview of Hamas's political and military organisation structure as well as the current political and economic position within the Gaza Strip. The two research questions are then explored through being guided by the theoretical framework followed by a discussing of major findings.

2 Theoretical framework

Hamas consists of a widely dispersed leadership structure containing many electrifying figures who possess important leadership qualities. While these personal characteristics are essential for the magnetism and character required of its top leaders, Hamas is an organization that values collective consensus in its decision-making process. To explore how its leaders must function cohesively, including during the recent reconciliation with Fatah, a framework of leadership will be used that can express individual concerns in a shared manner reflecting the contemporary political goals of Hamas. This will be achieved through combining an individual leadership theory with a collective model of leadership. The first of these, transformation and transactional leadership, looks at personal traits applied in a top-down manner. The second leadership framework used is a collaborative model of shared leadership.

The following section explores the evolution of leadership theory since the early 20th century. Founding theories into leadership focused solely on traits of individual leaders and suffered with limitations such as unreliability. By the late 1970s, leadership scholarship made a breakthrough through its focus on transformational and transactional aspects of leadership, which has since developed into a reliable framework of leadership behaviour. The discussion then turns to the development of an alternative model for improving leadership effectiveness known as shared leadership. This model moves away from focusing on the vertical style associated with traditional leadership theories towards effectively sharing leadership tasks. The discussion concludes with an overview of the shared transformative and transactional leadership criteria used in this critical interpretive analysis into the establishment of a unity government through Hamas's new leadership.

2.1 Theorizing traditional leadership:

Individual theories of leadership

Traditionally, leadership has been perceived as the domain of an individual designated to lead at the top of an organisational hierarchy (Koccolowski, 2010). Since the 1930s, theories into leadership have developed focusing on the attributes of individual leaders (Bolden, 2011). These approaches viewed leadership as depending on the actions of a central leader, applying a top-down style of leadership towards followers in a structured hierarchy. The earliest leadership theories were conducted by historians, focusing narrowly on features possessed by “great men,” such as perseverance in the face of adversity (Landy & Conte, 2010). Soon after, industrial/organizational psychologists investigated innate traits that separated leaders from followers, such as ambition, self-esteem and intelligence. These earlier models of leadership were found to be unreliable containing criteria which was too broad found within both leaders and followers. They also ignored contextual factors relating to leadership emergence such as the organizational environment. By 1967, contingency theory was introduced and incorporated situational factors into the study of leadership, such as how situational features influence who becomes a leader within an organisation (Landy & Conte, 2010).

By the late 1970s a greater understanding began to emerge into scholarship regarding leadership. New models of leadership were developed that reflected the transformational aspects of leaders (Cross & Carbery, 2016). Transformational-transactional leadership was introduced by Burns in 1978 to investigate the actions of charismatic political leaders. Transformational leadership leaders inspire followers to strive towards higher ideals such as peace and justice. These leaders empower followers with their vision of a better life and demonstrate how to achieve this through their actions. Individual pursuits and rewards are discouraged by the

transformational leader, who works in unison with followers for the sake of collective goals (Landy & Conte, 2010).

Transformational leaders trigger strong emotions in followers (Cross & Carbery, 2016). This transformational feature relates to charismatic leadership. Theories into charismatic leadership have developed in many forms, perhaps most notably Weber (1968) where a leader possesses magnetism and relevant features that inspire followers (Houghton, 2010). Followers wish to emulate the charismatic leader who they view as the sole representative of the group's cause. The charismatic leader inspires feelings of awe from followers who believe the leader is suitable for leading their collective cause (Khurana, 2002). For much of his career PA president Yasser Arafat was the embodiment of the charismatic figure throughout the Palestinian national cause. It was his actions that resulted in organised Palestinian resistance during a time when institutions and law were absent (Jarawa & Pearlman, 2007). It was his strength of personality and his skill at moving around domestic and regional issues that compelled the Palestinians to associate themselves with him, and to regard him as the foundation of the Palestinian political arena.

While transformative and charismatic leadership possess similarities, they also differ (Landy & Conte, 2010). A transformative leader may inspire followers to identify with him, while a charismatic leader may rely more on followers remaining weak and dependent. Transformational leadership is also more defined by the attainment of a goal such as Hamas's newly elected leadership aiming to build a unity government, while charismatic leadership emphasis individual traits, such as Ismail Haniyeh's ability as a public speaker. Hamas's leadership structure is highly interdependent, relying on the consensus of major leaders regarding the vision of strategic goals (Alsoos, 2017a). The transformational leader motivates others psychologically towards the goals of the organization. They set high moral and practical standards aiming to elevate others to

their level. There is therefore also a strong concern for others in the eyes of the transformational leader (Bass, 1999).

While the transformational-transactional leadership model is the most explored leadership framework, the transactional behaviours in this model has received considerably less attention throughout scholarship than the transformational ones (Willis, Clarke, & O’Conner, 2017). Like transformational leadership, transactional leadership was introduced by Burns (1978). Transactional leadership is present when leaders interact with followers to exchange rewards. These can be both tangible (e.g., money) and non-tangible (e.g., political authority). While both actors have mutual reasons for doing something, the relationship is only about valued benefits. While Burns formulated this theory, Bass (1985) developed transactional leadership further, arguing that transactional leadership revolves around the exchanges between leaders and followers and what rewards each receives for these (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2015). Transactional leaders tend to appeal to the self-interest of followers (Bass, 1999).

2.2 The development of a shared leadership model

While vertical models of leadership were developing throughout the twentieth century, certain practitioners within fields such as education endorsed the idea that leadership is more productive when performed collaboratively (Goksoy, 2016). Certain scholars placed greater emphasis on what is referred to as team-based knowledge work, or in other words, work that requires the enormous intellectual efforts of many professionals (Bligh, Pearce, & Kohles, 2006). Shared leadership can be defined as “a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both” (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p.1). Within a shared leadership framework an organisation is not led by a single leader, but through the

skills and knowledge of several leaders leading interdependently in a bottom up, as well as top down leadership style. Shared leadership is a dynamic, interactive process between many individuals who lead each other towards the goals of the organization. While there is still a designated leader within an organization, by sharing leadership roles, authority and decisions are delegated to team members who are responsible for themselves and the shared outcomes of the group (Koccolowski, 2010).

What is known today as shared leadership showed some development between the 1930s and 1960s (Pearce & Conger, 2003). The conceptual foundations of modern SL theory developed from fields such as human relations and social exchange theory. By the 1970s more concepts were added to this growing leadership paradigm. By the turn of the century scholars interested in collective leadership possessed adequate theoretical foundations to establish SL as its own leadership framework. During this time, scholarship into education and healthcare explored the value and limitations of SL as a theoretical leadership framework (Koccolowski, 2010). Within education, for example, Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, and Hopkins (2007) argue that if schools are to change for the better, vertical leadership must be replaced by horizontal leadership that combines the leadership efforts of many actors. The view that the principle serves as the sole administrator is beginning to be replaced by greater collaboration between other staff such as teachers. This is because vertical models of leadership fail to fully exploit the abilities of other professionals while over expending the time of the single vertical leader (Lambert, 2002).

The importance of a shared vision of leadership is perhaps best articulated by its major advocate, Craig L. Pearce. He argues that within the modern working environment it is more productive to combine the abilities of several leaders working simultaneously through mutual influence and empowerment (Pearce, 2004). A study regarding how three newly elected leaders of Hamas re building a unity government and their ties with international and regional actors is suited to an SL framework. As

Hamas's top leadership structure is highly interdependent requiring consensus within decision making, vertical leadership, while still useful, is insufficient. Hamas's senior figures must combine their qualities creatively to resolve the complex disputes that have diminished efforts at reconciliation in the past (Brenner, 2016). There is a blurring of boundaries within a shared leadership organization as leaders are required to manage outside rivals and acquire important resources. Hamas is now in the throes of mending broken ties with regional actors, such as Egypt and Iran, and with the eyes of the international community on them, it is essential that its leaders show themselves, like past leaders have, that they are capable of innovation within a new security environment (Eldar, 2017a).

While the development of a shared leadership model has proven to be elusive, Pearce and Conger (2003) offer four useful shared leadership concepts which combine vertical and shared leadership action:

Figure 1: Pearce's (2004) shared leadership framework



Shared transformational leadership regards a collective vision carried out through shared intellectual contributions and joint responsibility towards goals, such as creating something new and gaining the upper hand over the organization's rivals (Pearce, 2004). Shared transactional leadership throughout occurs through the distribution of rewards between team members, such as praise and resources. Through shared directive leadership, team leaders direct each other in resolving opposing points of view. Empowering shared leadership regards the encouragement of self-influence and empowering subordinates to set goals and develop in an autonomous way. The first of these two concepts are best suited to an exploration into Hamas's new leadership within a time of transformation for Hamas. Regarding individual leadership they are two of the most researched and developed models available and complement one another well. This has resulted in a broad range of transformational and transactional leadership perspectives since Burns' original model (Landy & Conte, 2010). Hamas's reconciliation with the PA and the strengthening of ties with regional allies requires that the three primary leaders apply transformative features, and to a lesser extent are mindful of transactional characteristics.

Shared leadership, while growing in popularity, has not been applied often to studies regarding Palestinian politics. One model of collective/shared leadership is distributed leadership (Gronn, 2002). According to Goksoy (2016), a shared leadership model and a distributed model of leadership possess certain similarities and can be applied interchangeably. It may be better to place both models under the title of collective leadership to simplify matters. However, while these leadership concepts are quite similar, they can be defined as separate theories of leadership. In a recent study into the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, Barnes (2014) uses a distributed leadership framework to assess how the grassroots, transnational makeup

of the BDS movement altered Palestinian resistance in the contemporary era. Within this research, four distributed leadership concepts are used: heterarchical leadership; informal and formal leadership; concertive action; conjoint agency. These largely distributive criteria differ from the concepts applied within this exploration into Hamas's reconciliation with Fatah and its engagement with regional and international actors during this time.

The combining of four transformational-transactional leadership criteria with shared leadership is applicable to this research into Hamas's new leadership reconciliation with Fatah and how they engage with regional and international actors.

Transformational-transactional leadership is well suited to this exploration through assessing relevant leadership actions at the personal level, such as the charisma. As Hamas's leadership values collective consensus before personal motives it is useful to apply transformational-transactional leadership through a shared leadership framework with this critical interpretive analysis. The first three leadership criteria used draws from transformational leadership. The reason for such a reliance on a transformative theoretical framework is that it is a highly researched and respected model of leadership which makes it a valid and developed categorization of leadership. Drawing from Bass and Avolio (1993) and Bass (1997) four strategies of transformative leadership model the three transformative concepts are: idealized influence; inspirational motivation; and intellectual stimulation. These will be applied both vertically and in a shared manner.

A complementary model of transformational leadership is transactional leadership. While transformational leaders aim to transform the organization for shared benefits, transactional leadership is more self-centred (Landy & Conte, 2010). Transactional features focus on the personal benefits throughout contractual relationships. Everyone has their own personal motivations for working and self-interest is emphasised. As Hamas's leadership values collective consensus ahead of personal motives, transactional leadership is ill suited to this interpretive analysis. However,

there is one transactional character very applicable to this research; passive management by exception (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Through its focus on delaying decision making it is highly relevant regarding controversial issues that Hamas must confront when ceding authority to the PA. These include factors such as the fate of its militant wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades. Pearce's (2004) shared leadership framework will be used as a lens for this transactional structure.

2.3 Shared leadership framework of transformational and transactional leadership

Shared transformational leadership concepts

Idealized influence

This charismatic leadership concept regards how leaders display conviction; promote trust; take stands on difficult issues; present their most important values; and emphasize the importance of purpose, commitment, and the ethical consequences of their decisions. These leaders are viewed as role models and create pride, loyalty, confidence, and unity in a shared purpose (Bass, 1997). Leaders share a feeling of family and purpose (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Inspirational motivation

Leaders will display a clear and desirable vision of the future; will apply high standards for that future, and will use rhetoric that is enthusiastic and optimistic, and are encouraging and meaningful in completing tasks required towards a goal (Bass, 1997). Leaders have shared interests and direction (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Intellectual stimulation

Leaders will question past assumptions, beliefs, and traditions; and encourage new perspectives and ways of doing things through ideas and reasons. It deals with how leaders must innovate to help move the organization forward (Bass, 1997). When promoting cultural changes, leaders must respect the past and turn to it for inspiration, principles, and strategies that must be maintained. Older values can be maintained despite making necessary changes. Changes should develop by providing reinforcement for innovative efforts that are successful, which fit with the new mission or vision for the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Shared transactional leadership concept

Passive management by exception

Features of passive management by exception include when leaders are primarily negotiators who fail to make changes until problems become serious, or don't make changes. They only take action when mistakes are brought to their attention (Bass, 1997). A leader may accept no deviation from standard operating procedures or past strategies (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

This combination of transformational and transactional elements provided by Bass and Avolio (1993) placed through Pearce (2004) transformational-transactional leadership is well suited to the following analysis of Hamas's leadership. These criteria capture a broad range of leadership behaviour. For example, as Hamas's newly elected leadership is trying to rebuild its relationship with certain regional Muslim actors, intellectual stimulation can assess how past alliances are being rebuilt while new ones are developing.

2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, early theories into vertical leadership, such as “Big man” and trait theories lacked reliability. By 1978, Burns’ paved the way for exploring leadership through focusing on transformational and transactional features located within leaders. Later scholars such as Bass and Avolio have developed this theory, providing a reliable lens for exploring leaders such as the three newly elected Hamas leaders behave. These four leadership criteria are: idealized influence; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and passive management by exception. Because Hamas’s decision making is highly interdependent these leadership behaviours will be applied through Pearce’s (2004) model of shared leadership to challenge misrepresentations of the Islamic resistance movement. To appreciate how past theoretical limitations have resulted in Hamas being portrayed as a spoiler, an exploration into the history of western scholarship will now be provided.

3 Literature Review

To understand how certain beliefs about Hamas have become popular, it is necessary to provide a critical overview of the scholarship that aims to represent its leadership. The purpose of this literature review will be to look at the factors that have influenced portrayals of Hamas throughout the three decades of its existence. It is important to have an appreciation of the strengths and limitations presented within this scholarship to understand the context that informed this work. These relate to early theoretical and methodological issues, and how these contributed to representations of Hamas as a spoiler. Hamas's 2006 electoral success led to a shift in scholarship towards exploring how its leaders adjusted to its new governing role. However, a far greater understanding into the pragmatism of Hamas's leadership regarding its ideology towards resistance is still needed to challenge its status as a solely destructive agent.

To begin with, the little scholarship after Hamas's rise as a grassroots actor throughout the 1990s and its ideological foundations will be explored. Through an absence of theoretical frameworks, this was largely informed by terrorism studies and Islamism studies (Gunning, 2007). With the onset of 9/11 at the turn of the century, Hamas was identified within the broader framework of the global "War on Terror" enhancing its status as a spoiler. This would be reflected throughout the literature as Hamas's leadership was defined purely as being preoccupied with attacks against Israel. With Hamas's increased popularity resulting in its decision to participate in the 2005 municipal elections followed by its victory in the Palestinian legislative elections in 2006, scholarship turned towards how its leaders were adapting to the role as administrators of the Gaza Strip. This has shed light on Hamas's identity as a movement with a fluid ideological position depending more on political and strategic context rather than its founding religious document.

3.1 Hamas as an Islamic resistance and political movement: 1987-2017

Scholarship into Hamas since its establishment is plagued by various limitations, hindering its value as a reliable source. Early scholarship was restricted by a lack of theory into the motivations of its leadership (Gunning, 2009). Much existing theory has borrowed from a spoiler model of armed non-state actors developed by Western scholars in areas such as Islamism studies, which is how social and political organisations promote the establishment of an Islamic state; and terrorism studies derived upon a positivist/realism/liberalism framework (Podder, 2013). This spoiler lens has resulted in stereotypes of armed non-state actors (ANSA) viewing them as ‘terrorists’ possessing unitary features, such as a leadership structure that monopolises power and is solely focused on the uncompromising destruction of its enemies. It serves the purpose of defining resistance organizations as the ‘other’, separating them from “normal” Western democracies (Brenner, 2016). It is based on a categorical perspective that places social and political realities as fixed binary opposites, thereby allowing no room for critical analysis (Mishal, 2003). Inadequate theoretical leanings also resulted in bypassing the complexity of Hamas’s leadership through its excessive use of secondary data. Later research to some extent has explored Hamas’s leadership in its own words through fieldwork and the collection of interviews. What is still required more in the literature is a critical perspective where the researcher is actively self-reflexive about narrow methodological assumptions of cultural and political entities based on the researchers own cultural lens (Gunning, 2009).

Scholarship regarding Hamas’s political motives and early grassroots activities is scarce. This contributed to the major theoretical weakness early on when analysing the motives behind its leadership apparatus. Hamas emerged during the political and social turmoil of the first intifada (Hroub, 2010). Its association with the Muslim

Brotherhood (MB), founding 1988 charter, and some regard for grassroots activism is reflected within the little early scholarship available. While these writings exhibit some impartiality in representing Hamas by avoiding the 'terrorist' label, sophistication is absent. Abu-Amr (1993) and Litvak (1998) briefly cover Hamas's historical and ideological development from the MB and the *Ikhwan* (brethren). Some focus is also placed on the Islamization of Palestinian politics as a means of forging successful resistance and the goal of an Islamic State in Palestine, which was then regarded by Hamas as a sacred Islamic *waqf* (endowment).

By 2000, a little more was known regarding Hamas's political development. Mishal and Sela (2000) describe Hamas as capable of political and religious development through its grassroots activities that was based on its concern with the plight of the Palestinians and resistance towards occupation. These activities included: building networks, such as Mosques, assisting widows and orphans, providing education, and delivering financial aid. Such Ideological flexibility, for example, occurred through Hamas's interpretation of Islam in both violent and non-violent terms. Violent resistance developed in a controlled, pragmatic cost-benefits approach where the founding charter was irrelevant. Jihad is defined alongside strategic realities and embraces the religious concept of *sabr* (self-restraint) (Mishal & Sela, 2000).

With the events of September 11, 2001, more scholarship became inspired by Hamas's designation as a terrorist organization by the U.S. State Department through President George Bush's global "War on Terror" (Mishal, 2003). Through binary rhetoric devises, such as "you are either with us, or for the terrorists", less consideration was given towards exploring the differences between armed non-state actors. Because 9/11 occurred within the context of the turmoil of the second intifada, Israel's Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, had license to enhance his aggressive

assassination policy towards Hamas's leadership (Dunning, 2016). This representation occurred even though certain Hamas leaders, sensitive to Palestinian outrage over the attacks in the U.S., wanted to show *sabr* towards Israel (Brenner, 2016).

Through Hamas's increased spoiler status, scholarship between 2001 and 2006 scapegoated its leaders as the main cause of failed peace initiatives. One such work is Alexander's (2002) *Palestinian Religious Terrorism: Hamas and Islamic Jihad*. Hamas's actions are described as deriving from religious fanaticism and a commitment to violent ideology. For example, it is suggested that the Oslo Accords threatened Hamas's militant aspirations as the PLO agreed to combat groups that did not recognise Israel. Hamas's decision to conduct its first attack against Israel after the accords is cited as the major threat to the peace process. This however simplifies a far more complex scenario regarding why the Oslo Accords failed. For example, Palestinians were frustrated by their isolation from the agreement that would reduce what was left of their land. Hamas's increased popularity reveal that they were symbols of the Palestinian struggle. The Oslo Accords have been regarded by some commentators as an extended truce for greater land confiscation by Israel. The advancement of Israeli colonisation hindered the economic and political growth of Palestinians so seriously that it would be the major factor leading to the second intifada beginning in 2000 (Parsons, 2005). Through its access to non-Western types of funding, such as *zakat*, and patronage from Islamic supporters, such as Saudi Arabia, Hamas was able to remain separated from the Arafat led PLO. As Dunning (2016, p. 100) suggests:

“Hamas, a party of religious principle and conviction benefitted from this ideational void during the Oslo years because it offered clear vision for the future based on traditional Palestinian notions buttressed in Islamic thought”

Another piece of literature portraying Hamas's leadership through a spoiler lens is Levitt's, (2006) *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*. In describing Hamas's political leadership, the author associates the behaviour of key figures as inextricably connected to terrorist activities, such as creating policies for its military wing, and supporting attacks against Israel. Such portrayals present a highly sparse perspective into Hamas's leadership by making violence its sole motivator. It also ignores the fact that while Hamas's political and military branches are tied together, they are also separated at times as militant leaders can go rogue from its political leadership. For instance, its top leaders often desire greater pragmatism. The importance of cultural and Islamic codes, such as *asabiyya* (solidarity), and the inclusion of many members within policy discussion is relevant in Hamas's political and military direction. The strategic situation that Hamas is confronted with also impacts the attitudes of its leadership. Writers such as Alexander and Levitt place little emphasis on the value of Hamas's political development as adaptable towards changing political circumstances (Hroub, 2010).

Some scholarship in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 offered a glimpse of recognition of Hamas's ability to act as a potential partner for peace within a restricted spoiler framework. Gunning's (2004) representation of Hamas as a "limited spoiler" falls into this category. Certain researchers did well to analyse why Hamas's leadership is unfairly isolated from the peace process. Hroub (2004) provides a broader perspective into the development of Hamas's political development before and after this period. From the end of 2002 until January 2003, the *hudna* or peace talks held in Egypt revealed how the US worked with Israel to prevent Hamas from participating in the peace process through promoting its spoiler image.

With Hamas gaining in political strength in 2005 by participating in municipal politics, its leadership decided to enter the Palestinian legislative elections the following year (Hroub, 2006). Objections from Israeli politicians aside, the poll was deemed to be both free and fair by international observers. Former U.S. President, who was present in Gaza at the time remarked on this (*The Carter Centre, 2006*). By visiting 25 polling sites in Ramallah, Jericho, Hebron, and East Jerusalem he noted that the election was unfolding in an orderly fashion with voters even in strong Fatah communities often preferring Hamas. With its overwhelming legislative victory an increase of scholarship focused more critically on the newly Hamas instated government in Gaza (Berti, 2015). Scholarship in the past 11 years pays greater attention to the pragmatism of Hamas's leadership. This includes how it restructured Gaza's social, economic, religious, and legal institutions while confronted with the international boycott, and regional sanctions introduced to undermine its credibility as a legitimate governing actor (Brown, 2012).

With Hamas's entry into parliamentary politics, ideological changes were observed regarding its new political documents. Jihad was restructured to be more consistent with Hamas's new political role (Hroub, 2010). Hroub (2006) explores three of Hamas's major documents during and after its electoral success. These are: the electoral platform of 2005; the draft National Unity Program; and Hamas's government platform. What is observed is a move away from religious discourse towards greater pragmatism. For example, in Hamas's government platform there was a strong emphasis towards state building projects, indicating how Hamas took their new political role seriously. In another convincing piece by the same author, it is argued that while Hamas's founding charter certainly contains anti-Semitic language, the major concern is and has always been opposition towards the Zionist occupation (Hroub, 2010). The founding charter was composed in haste by one member of the MB at the beginning of the first intifada when the group's political and ideological direction was not well defined. Islamic teaching prohibits harm against *Ahl al-Kitab* (People of the Book) based on religion alone. Research conducted by Klein (2007) supports Hamas's ability for pragmatism when the strategic environment requires it.

He argues that Hamas gradually went from possessing a fundamentalist position towards resistance, to what is better defined as radicalism. An important point is that a fluid rather than static view of Hamas's Islamic ideology must be taken within the context of its political motives.

The history and individual charisma of Hamas leaders is generally ignored throughout scholarship. This is highly problematic as explorations into the lives and experiences of these leaders can offer an enlightening and contextual based insight into why these leaders are admired. McGeough's (2010) *Kill Khaled: The Failed Assassination of Khalid Mishal and the Rise of Hamas* offers a detailed account of the failed assassination attempt by Mossad agents on then political bureau chief Khaled Mishaal in 1997. This gives a detailed portrayal of how this leader achieved notoriety through this botched effort by Mossad agents through the fallout that ensued. Other scholarship with its collection of primary data, such as Hovenak (2009) who interviewed 25 Hamas leaders, found that the post-2006 international boycott only empowered Hamas's armed wing while weakening its more pragmatic leaders, thereby wasting an opportunity to encourage negotiations with Hamas. In October 2017, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair admitted that the UK and other Quartet actors were wrong to yield to Israeli pressure to boycott Hamas after its victory in the 2006 election (*Haaretz*, 2017). He has stated that it would have been useful to encourage dialogue; however, Israel was highly opposed to this (Macintyre, 2017).

As Hamas was faced with governing the Gaza Strip a few scholars explored the concessions that its top leaders made. Two researchers are Sayigh (2011) and Berti (2015), who found that the newly instated Haniyeh government showed economic and administrative innovation by concentrating its limited resources into fewer areas, the major one being the security sector. Brenner (2016) explored how Hamas changed the social reconciliation process by replacing *urf* (customary law), which

Gazans relied on before and immediately after the lawlessness of 2007, with features of Sharia law. However, regardless of its efforts, Hamas's leadership was unable to establish an economy along formal lines owing to its isolation.

Another sparse area within scholarship is how Hamas's leadership is willing to make concessions to reduce the likelihood of conflict and minimize its impact when it occurs. Milton-Edwards and Crooke (2005) and Milton-Edwards (2017) challenges the absolutist perspective of Hamas as a destructive agent by revealing how this ignores the temporary truces and ceasefires consistently offered by its leaders since the 1990s. It is through a lack of international pressure on Israel that these fail as Hamas leaders are forced to abandon these. For instance, in November 2006, Hamas introduced a 10-year hudna to Israel. However, in the same month Israel entered the Gaza Strip through Operation Autumn Clouds (Milton-Edwards, 2017).

Throughout the literature, why Hamas leaders are viewed as representatives of the Palestinian struggle has been bypassed. One scholar with first-hand experience of the devastation caused by Israeli interference is Blumenthal (2015). Through extensive fieldwork during and after Operation Protective Edge he reveals the true perceptions of Gazans struggling with human rights violations while still maintaining their humanity and dignity. Blumenthal also provides a useful background into the development of the al-Qassam brigades and the pragmatism of its leaders. For example, during this 51-day conflict these militant leaders made the decision to target Israeli soldiers rather than civilians, while the IDFs carelessly conducted operations resulting in the deaths of 2200 Palestinians, around 500 of which were children. Through ethnography conducted over three years, Brenner (2016) describes how Gazans felt about Hamas and certain changes its leaders made throughout Gaza. Another useful work that makes use of interviews is Dunning (2016). This scholarship effectively captures the feelings of Gazans regarding Hamas and life in the Gaza Strip. Through its use of a critical terrorist framework, such research is highly valuable in describing the appeal of Hamas for so many residents throughout Gaza and why

Gazans identify with its Islamic political style. There is however, a greater need for more research based on a critical lens, which makes a critical interpretive analysis into the shared transformational-transactional behaviours of its leaders a worthwhile exploration.

3.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, early scholarship on Hamas was limited through an absence of theory. This encouraged scholars to lean on terrorist studies and security studies, which were based on a narrow spoiler framework. With the events of September 11, 2001, Hamas's status as a spoiler found a greater position within the framework of the global war on terror. With Hamas's victories in the 2005 municipal elections, followed by the Palestinian free-elections a year later, a shift occurred throughout scholarship to explore how Hamas's leadership governs throughout the Gaza Strip. While this scholarship has helped challenge the spoiler perspective of Hamas by revealing important factors into its motivations as a resistance movement, certain limitations are still present throughout the literature that require a greater shift towards more critical analysis of its leadership. These limitations include greater coverage of contextual factors, such as strategical and ideological shifts in its existence as a force for Palestinian liberation, and how its leaders view its struggle in their own terms. The next section will lay-out how Hamas as a resistance movement and marginalized by this western scholarship is best represented through a critical lens with attention placed on context.

4 Methodology

4.1 Primary and secondary sources

When conducting research, social scientists rely on various techniques for the collection of information distinguished as either primary or secondary data (Hex & Beige, 2005). Primary data is new data added to existing social knowledge which is drawn directly from individuals (Ithaca College Library, 2017). Examples of primary data regarding Hamas's leadership include its founding, and revised charter, and interviews conducted with its leaders, such as those of Hovenak (2008). The strategies of primary data collection can be classified as quantitative, such as experimental observation, and qualitative, such as interviewing and ethnography (O'Leary, 2005). Certain strengths exist through primary data collection, the strongest being that the researcher can operationalize the theoretical constructs, research design, and data collection to suit the research question. However, producing one's own data set also has drawbacks, most notably the expense and time-consuming nature of such research. Primary methods require the recruitment of participants which can be costly and difficult to manage. Because it is impractical to conduct research on the ground within Gaza owing to the expense and potential risks of such an endeavour, this thesis will rely on a secondary analysis including the use of primary data in a secondary manner. Secondary data is the reuse and further analysis of primary data which is analysed for additional purposes sometimes other than those of the original researcher (David & Sutton, 2011). These sources include, newspapers, magazines, and books.

Like primary data, secondary data carries both advantages and disadvantages (Hox & Boeije, 2005). The reuse of primary data means that new research questions can be answered in a more economical and time saving manner. Methods of secondary data collection are often less obtrusive than primary strategies and allow for greater flexibility throughout the research (O'Leary, 2005). There is also a greater accessibility

to secondary data, particularly when considering access to global websites containing potentially endless sources of information. However, owing to this broad access issues are present relating to research validity, which regards the accuracy of the data used and whether it answers the question (Denscombe, 2010). As qualitative studies like this one into Hamas's leadership are concerned with analysing data for its meaning this could be an issue. Secondary data, such as media articles from websites, which will be a major source of material for this thesis, regarding an emotive subject (e.g., Palestinian/Israeli conflict) will often present personal feelings of those who compile them reflected throughout certain terminology used and a desire to sensationalize events (Marzen, 2017). From this researcher's perspective, an inherent bias may also be an issue. It is easy, for example, to take written sources out of context. One way to decrease the likelihood of data and researcher bias is through triangulation (O' Leary, 2005). This occurs through comparing the consistency of the data from various sources. In this study into Hamas's leadership and reconciliation with the PA, the information within media articles will be compared with primary data to establish consistencies between different views. Archived data sets from past research will also be assessed in this way.

4.2 Ontology and epistemology

The concepts of ontology and epistemology guide the social research process and what can be determined from its findings (Marsh & Furlong, 2010). It is through the philosophical lens of ontology and epistemology that research questions and methods are formulated. Ontological questions are concerned with the nature of 'being', that is, they ask what constitutes 'reality' and the world in which people exist, and how much can be known about them. Its focus is on what exists and in what form (Huff, 2009). Broadly speaking, there are two major ontological positions. The first of these, objectivism/realism, argues that an independent, 'real world' that can be understood through observation exists. Laws can be detracted from this. The second position, constructivism/relativism, suggests that the world is socially constructed and ever

changing through the meanings that individuals place on it throughout their social interactions. What is perceived as reality varies across time and space. While individuals create and reflect on their social world, they are also influenced by social, cultural, and political structures in their local environment (Marsh & Furlong, 2010). It is therefore this constructivist ontological position through its consideration of contextual developments that is best suited to the current study into Hamas's new leadership.

Epistemology, which is mutually related to ontology, is the branch of philosophy concerned with the study of knowledge and its form (Powell, 2012). It is concerned with investigating the means of dividing what is measured to be accurate knowledge from what is false or misconception. Epistemology seeks to understand the structure of knowledge, what is required for its existence, its limitations, and the justification of beliefs and evidence. Traditionally, debates regarding epistemology revolve around three positions. The first, which is empiricism, views knowledge as the result of sensory perception mainly observation. The second epistemological position is rationalism, where knowledge results from rational thought and ideas based on cognitive structures. However, a third, more recent epistemological position and the one applied within this study into Hamas's new leadership is that of constructivism (Davidson & Tolich, 2003). A constructivist perspective assumes that knowledge is constructed by individuals who are the subjects of knowledge. Claims of an objective reality and natural physical structures are considered too narrow by constructivists. This is because the social world only exists through the meanings that people place on the social world. What is perceived as social reality, therefore differs between individuals and groups based on political, cultural, and social arrangements (Marsh and Stoker, 2010).

4.3 Quantitative and qualitative research methods

Quantitative and qualitative research methods embrace differing ontologies and epistemologies (Barbour, 2014). Quantitative research draws from positivism through its application of statistical methods, such as experiments, drawn from the positivist paradigm to establish empirical laws based on cause and effect relationships between variables (David & Sutton, 2011). An objective/realist ontological and epistemological position is applied as the social world is subject to the same static laws of the natural world. Quantitative studies routinely claim that they are objective and free from emotional influence (although critical theorists and constructivists would dispute this). The social scientist deduces from theory to construct research questions or hypotheses which are then tested through statistical means. Factors considered extraneous to the relationship between isolated independent and dependent variable/s are controlled throughout the research. As the name suggests, quantification is the major process of the research as statistics and numbers are considered the most reliable source of reference (O' Leary, 2017). The current exploration into Hamas's changed leadership is not well suited to this quantitative approach as its methods aim to assess causation separated from contextual structures. It is this context that forms a vital part of the behaviour of Hamas's leadership which does not exist in isolation from various contextual elements such as its revised charter and position as administrators in the Gaza Strip.

Unlike quantitative methods, qualitative research methods focus on contextual elements existing throughout society and are connected to political structures (Barbour, 2014). Its ontological and epistemological stance leans towards constructivism/relativism as it is more subjective in its strategies and regards how knowledge is fluid and influenced by cultural, political, and local dynamics. The major source of data within qualitative research is language, which is collected through various methods, such as interviewing and ethnography. This collected language is then analysed to extract meaning in relation to the two research questions. It is

through exploring subjective insights of individuals that the social scientist constructs systematic models of how individuals perceive their world (Guthrie, 2010). There is often greater and more meaningful interaction between researchers and participants within qualitative studies. However, this investigation into Hamas's leadership will be applying an unobtrusive interpretive analysis largely based on available scholarly and other online sources. It is the meaning that quantitative researchers aim to isolate that qualitative researchers like this one value (Davidson & Tolich, 2003).

A common aim of qualitative research is to promote social and political change through the construction of representations of marginalized groups (Barbour, 2014). A study into Hamas's changed leadership in-light of its altered ideological position is therefore better suited to a qualitative approach. Hamas's leadership is often demonized by outside players who view it as a terrorist organisation with a fixed ideological position. While qualitative research is highly labour intensive, it is unfortunately easy to become lethargic owing to the flexibility allowed through its design and application (Guthrie, 2010). The likelihood of this can be reduced however through ensuring that the research design is highly methodical, with well organised sections that are clearly written and interpreted.

4.4 Method of analysis: Critical interpretive analysis

An exploration into how Hamas's new leadership is reconciling with Fatah is well suited to a hermeneutics or critical media interpretive analysis (Kawulich, 2004). A critical media interpretive analysis captures meaning throughout different types of media content. These include mainly written texts, but also pictures and symbols to achieve a holistic understanding of the social, cultural, and political issues convened within articles (Baym, 2012). The content of media articles is explored both on the surface and beneath to locate interconnected networks of significance. A critical

interpretive analysis requires a broad theoretical framework to allow a wide understanding of the issues throughout the media text. The selected theoretical framework based on Bass and Avolio's (1993) transformational/transactional leadership models combined with Pearce's (2004) SL satisfies this through the range of leadership behaviours these contain. The interpretivist analyst consistently interprets the texts to grasp the meanings and values portrayed by key actors within them (Bernard, 2000). The researcher through an interpretive analysis also records the contextual factors associated with important actions and events (Baym, 2012).

Through the choosing analysis it is possible to gain insight into the very important shift in the Palestinian political environment. A critical interpretive analysis draws from a theoretical framework guided by critical theory (Powell, 2012). At the centre of critical theory is the idea that research should serve the aim of progressive social enlightenment. The knowledge that is produced through a critical interpretive analysis is therefore used to inform social change through challenging stereotypes directed against marginalized groups. In a post-9/11 era, what Dunning (2016, p. 22) refers to as "Orientalist meta-discourse" has found an increasing presence within liberal and conservative academic circles regarding the Muslim world. Within this dominant discourse, Islam is described as possessing certain innate features that are static in nature derived from medieval thought, such as barbarianism. Hamas has been placed within this narrow Western devised Islamic framework along with other Islamic movements regardless of how they differ in many important aspects. Hamas is a nationalistic movement which displays pragmatism, such as restructuring its ideological views to suit political realities. However, ISIS, which is another Islamic group in the region display no compromise regarding the interpretation of the Quran and *Jihad* to create a Caliphate based on strict Sharia law (Berman, 2014).

As this research relied on online material that was usually of a secondary nature, there were no real ethical issues. However, as this is a critical interpretive analysis

that seeks to represent a marginalized group it was important to be mindful of this. Put another way, an ethics of care approach was applied with the goal of representing Hamas's leadership through its own views (Wiles, 2010). The following critical interpretive analysis began in September 2017 and concluded in February 2018. Grounded in scholarly literature, it nevertheless relied extensively on news reports and website articles released throughout this period; this is particularly true for the period from Oct. 12 when the two delegations representing Hamas and Fatah established the unity accord in Cairo. The news reports collected are from reputable online news sources, such as *Al Jazeera*, *The Times of Israel*, and *Haaretz*. The websites, which include *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*, *Human Rights Watch*, and *Hamas's official website* are appropriate sources of data for a critical analysis seeking to shed light on a current phenomenon in the Middle East.

For this study to provide a valid exploration into Hamas's newly elected leadership and Palestinian reconciliation it was necessary to have a sound understanding of the theory regarding Hamas's leadership. This is because social theory provides a lens for the researcher to interpret the social world (May, 1997). This was very important as the goal of this research was to construct argument representative of Hamas's new leadership. Therefore, the research findings reflect within this critical interpretive analysis are consistent with the work of the little critical scholarship available by challenging spoiler claims made by existing literature. However, it was important not to make unfounded claims or over-reach when making an argument. The findings are also placed within context, that is, they are connected to the historical, political, ideological, and economic situation facing the Gaza Strip in which its leaders are currently relinquishing administrative power.

The first stage of the critical interpretive analysis involves a wide reading of the texts (Baym, 2012). Once an intimate familiarity was achieved, the regularities throughout the text were identified. These included broader topics and text structure. After this, a template was created for content logs. For question 1, six content logs were

created, each represented a major theme. These were: reconciliation meetings; the three major border crossings; Gaza's civil service; PA sanctions; the Izz ad-din al-Qassam brigades; and the impact of President Trump's Jerusalem decision on reconciliation. For question 2, five content logs were developed. These focused on: a new prisoner deal; Hamas's relationship with Iran; Hamas's relationship with other Muslim actors (e.g., Iran, ISIL); Hamas's reaction to the actions of Israel and the U.S.; and Hamas's and regional response to President Trump's Jerusalem declaration. These content logs contained both the more obvious, and more mundane features of the topics. It was essential to develop aspects of these contents logs within the leadership theoretical framework, which acted as a guide for the interpretive analysis (Baym, 2012).

While analysing the text, a semiotic perspective was applied to capture how features of the articles (e.g., text, headings, pictures) worked together to convey meaning (Baym, 2012). Because this research aims to critically examine how Hamas's new leaders are reconciling with Fatah from their own perspective, selectivity was required regarding the language used when describing Hamas. Media texts reflect journalist bias both overtly and covertly. Labels used in media reports often reflect the subtle biases and value judgements of journalists (Kuypers, 2014). Words carry connotations that imply certain "realities", and this is even more apparent when exploring ANSA's. Online news reports often label such organizations using derogatory terms such as "terrorists." Social theory, such as applied critical theory, must reveal the relationship between how people make sense of the world they live in and the language they use (May, 1997). While recording Hamas's perspective it was important to be mindful that such connotations exist in both an overt and covert manner. Hamas is represented throughout as a resistance *harakat* opposed to Israeli occupation and its hardships.

Using a critical perspective, stereotypes that contribute towards a narrow spoiler perspective seeking to demonise Hamas's leadership are challenged. An interpretivist

with leanings in a constructivist world view would argue that negative representations of groups are socially constructed through shared connotations (Baym, 2012). An interpretive analysis challenges wider patterns of discourse. This draws from the perspective that language is based upon sociocultural structures that reflect power and what group possesses it (Foucault, 1972). As the current research focuses on the meanings regarding the decisions of Hamas's three new leaders, it was essential to focus on the opinions of these actors. Linkages were then made with context (Baym, 2012). This meant that the reconciliation was located within broader economic, political, and historical structures. This interpretive analysis contributes towards or challenges wider patterns of discourse. Once the content logs were completed the interpretive analysis entered its final stage involving shaping the meaning through repeated reading of the text (Altheide, 1996).

The next section examines Hamas's contextual background. It looks at Hamas's leadership structure and Gaza's political and economic situation which is partly the reason motivating Hamas's newly elected leaders to reconcile with Fatah.

5 Organisational structure of Hamas's leadership

An important advantage of a critical interpretive analysis is its ability to place political events such as the current unity accord in context. When exploring the decisions of Hamas's new leadership, it is essential to be mindful of its political and military structure and how its leadership functions. Without an overview of Hamas's political history and organisational structure interpreting the actions of its new leadership during a unity accord would be limited. The following provides a discussion into Hamas's leadership organisation based on its geographical location, internal dynamics and political and military aspects. Important domestic, regional, and international factors that have influenced the development of this leadership organisation and the election of the three key figures within this apparatus are also covered. It is then necessary to explain why this new leadership is attempting to build a unity accord with Fatah now. A brief history of the economic restrictions placed on the Gaza Strip since 2006 to punish Gazans for electing Hamas and recent regional and international developments is also explored. The section concludes by revealing how Hamas's revised charter may assist its leadership within the new strategic climate.

5.1 Political and military leadership of Hamas

The structure of Hamas's leadership can be placed within two dimensions: that of political and religious management, and military resistance (Jefferis, 2016). Its political wing consists of two major branches. The first of these is the Shura Council, which is a religious/legislative body responsible for religious matters, public policy, and electing Hamas's leadership (Gunning, 2009). This entity consists of members based within and outside of the Palestinian territories. While its leadership is highly secretive, the Shura Council most likely contains around 60 members responsible for the strategic planning of the movement. It also contains a local branch made up of specialised committees, or local Shura Councils that manage the quires of Palestinians throughout the Gaza Strip (Hroub, 2010). While the Shura Council is Hamas's most

powerful authority, its status has declined since the 2004 assassinations of two of its founders, Ahmed Yasin and Abel al Rantisi. Its authority experienced another reduction in 2012 with the assassination of Ahmed Jabaari (Eldar, 2017a).

Hamas's second political branch is the political bureau (Jefferis, 2016). This political body contains 10-20 leaders elected by the Shura Council and is responsible for administration, charity, social enterprises, and international relations (Lieber, 2017a). Beginning in February Yahya Sinwar was named as Haniyeh's replacement as the top leader in the Gaza Strip. In May, Haniyeh was elected as the new chief of Hamas's political bureau replacing Khaled Mishaal who held this position for nearly 20 years. The third and final major change for Hamas's leadership in 2017 occurred in early October with the naming of Saleh al-Arouri as Haniyeh's deputy and top leaders in exile (Al-Mughrabi, 2017a).

The organizational structure of Hamas is managed by a flexible, multifaceted leadership existing inside the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and outside of Palestine (Hroub, 2010). Its leaders can also be incarcerated within Israel's prisons. The diverse geographical layout is largely the result of Hamas's commitment towards developing its resistance strategy with resilience in countering Israel's assassination policy towards its leaders (Hroub, 2004). The outside leadership has largely lived in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and recently Qatar. Hamas's exiled leadership enjoyed protection in Jordan under King Hussein throughout much of the 1990s (Chehad, 2007). However, upon his death in 1999 his son and successor Abdullah the Second banished Hamas from Amman. Its external leadership then spent two years in Qatar then relocated in Syria. With their refusal to support the regime of Bashar al-Assad upon the arrival of the Arab Spring in 2012 its leaders were expelled from Damascus and returned to Qatar (Fahmy & al-Mughrabi, 2012). Due to pressure from regional actors such as Saudi Arabia who are now sanctioning nations who support armed groups like Hamas, Qatar was forced to banish Hamas's leadership in 2017. These externally placed leaders are now located in Turkey, Lebanon, and Malaysia (Khoury, 2017b).

Hamas's political bureau was established in the early 1990s mainly through the efforts of U.S. based Mousa Abu Marzouk (Jefferis, 2016). However, with Marzouk's arrest in 1995, and subsequent extradition to Israel, Khaled Mishaal would later be elected as its new chief. Until recently, he maintained this position while performing tasks internationally such as fundraising and promoting Hamas's resistance cause. Back in 1997, he was the target of a failed assassination attempt which cemented his status as Hamas's top leader (McGeough, 2009). This attempt on his life on foreign soil by Mossad agents resulted in Jordan's ruler, King Hussein, demanding that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu provide an antidote in exchange for the captured Mossad agents. As well as this, Israel was forced to release over a thousand Hamas affiliates from its jails, including one of its key founder Ahmed Yasin. This was regarded as a great achievement by Mishaal and cemented his legitimacy as head of the political bureau (Hroub, 2010).

Figure 2: Hamas's political and military organisation

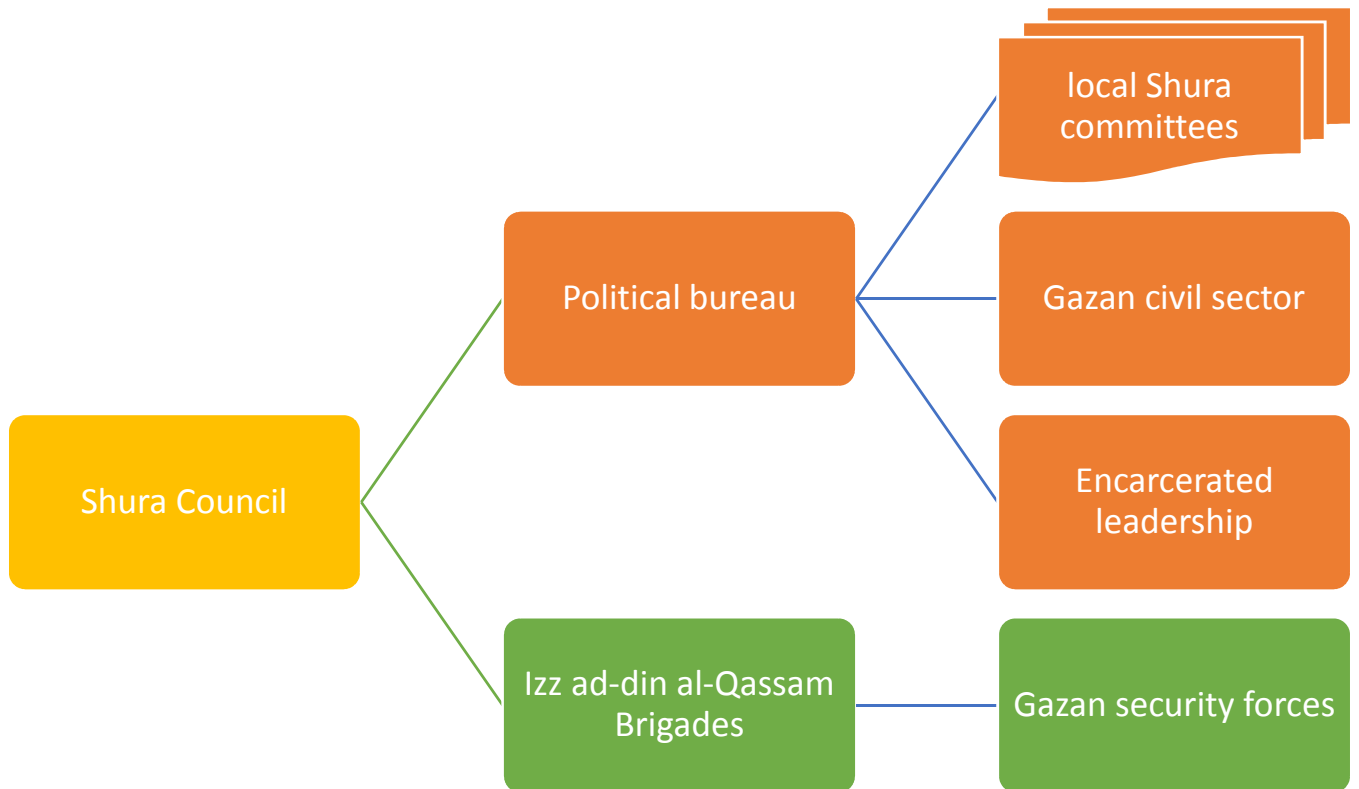


Figure 3: Hamas's grassroots activities

- Building social and religious networks; (e.g., building mosques, meeting at university)
- Provision of social welfare through zakat; (e.g., assisting orphans, widows)
- Creating social activities; (e.g., education, medicine sports activities)

While it is debatable whether the inside or outside leadership has greater authority, Hamas's inside leadership situated in Gaza has often held more authority than its foreign based leadership (Hroub, 2004). However, the extent of insider, outsider authority can depend on strategic developments. With Israel's more aggressive assassination strategy in the post 9/11 climate a shift occurred regarding the strength of its foreign based leadership. In 2004, the assassinations of the magnetic Yasin, shortly followed by that of Abdel al-Rantisi led to condemnation from European political leaders (Knudsen, 2005). To protect its leadership, Hamas introduced a rule of 'undeclared' leadership, which increased the power for the external leadership with at least one major leader having to reside in exile. It was at this time that Mishaal's power increased, and he became the most powerful leader in Hamas. The appointment of Arouri as Haniyeh's deputy in October conforms to this rule of having at least one major leader based in exile. However, with both Haniyeh and Sinwar being based in the Gaza Strip Hamas's internal leadership is now the more powerful (Eldar, 2017a).

As of 2017, Mishaal was unable to run for another term as the head of the externally based political bureau owing to internal Hamas bylaws (Thrall, 2017). Regardless, his status as head of Hamas's political bureau had declined in recent years (Eldar, 2016). While he was an essential actor in the build-up to the 2006 Gazan legislative elections, his ability as a decision maker was often controversial owing to poor decisions. While he had initially raised financial support for Hamas in recent years he lived in comfort in Qatar, separating him from the harsh realities faced by Palestinians. The negative feelings towards his leadership reached a high point when he fell out with Iran by refusing to support Syria's Bashir Assad regime, thereby losing Hamas's major sponsor. With Haniyeh now leading the political bureau a new era of governing is anticipated for Hamas. He brings with him a strong sense of pragmatism and what can be referred to as a charismatic leadership style (Bass & Avolio, 1997). This is because he possesses a powerful ability as a public speaker and is well attuned

to the realities of life within Gaza through his strong attachment to the enclave (Eldar, 2017b).

Hamas's leadership contains opposing views that must be reconciled for the group to function cohesively (Hroub, 2010). Its leaders can be considered both moderate and hardliners regarding their views. However, these diverse perspectives assist in maintaining unity as too much leaning in one direction may create an imbalance. More importantly, its strong religious values and organisational background derived from the MB promote collective decision making. Hamas leaders are aware they are elected by and representatives of their political institutions (Alsoos, 2017a). Every four years these leaders are elected as part of its internal democratic process. They often possess certain similarities. For example, it is common for its leaders to be highly educated and modest in their lifestyle (Jefferis, 2016).

As the newly elected Haniyeh and Sinwar are based in the Gaza Strip, they will display more charismatic leadership qualities as they can identify with their fellow Palestinians there (Issacharoff, 2017a). Born into a Gazan refugee camp, Haniyeh has made it his primary goal to remove the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip since 2007. With his newly instated position as the head of Hamas's political bureau, leaders of Fatah are optimistic for reconciliation. Unlike Mishaal, who live aboard and was not well known to Fatah leaders, Haniyeh is familiar with other central factional figures and wants to reconcile with President Abbas to resolve historical issues between Hamas and the PA (Eldar, 2017b).

Along with its political dimension Hamas possesses a strong military wing known as the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam brigades (Gunning, 2009). Named after the anti-colonial militant Islamic preacher who died in a stand-off with British forces in 1935 and

drawing its ideological framework from the Arab revolt of 1936-39; the al-Qassam brigades have developed into a useful irregular force when confronting the IDF (Blumenthal, 2015). The emergence of the al-Qassam brigades began in 1992 during the Oslo Accords when violent resistance was becoming more valued by Palestinians (Dunning, 2016).

Hamas's military leadership is even more secretive than that of its political branch (Knudsen, 2005). Through their commitment to violent resistance, Hamas's military leadership has been the target of Israel's assassination policy more than its political leaders (Blumenthal, 2015). An extensive list of al-Qassam operatives have been killed by the IDF. These include: Imad Aqel; Yahya Ayyash ("the engineer"); Salah Shehadeh; and Ahmed Jaabari. It would be Jaabari along with Mohammed al-Deif who would develop the al-Qassam brigades into a professional irregular force. Deif would become the top leader of the al-Qassam brigades after Jaabari's assassination in 2012 and it was him who was credited with its decent performance during Operation Protective Edge (Abu Amer, 2015).

The situation today for the al-Qassam brigades has been shaped by the recent leadership change. Sinwar was elected as the new top military leader in Gaza in February 2017 (Eldar, 2017c). He is an original founder of Hamas's military arm and along with Arouri was released from an Israeli jail as part of the exchange for Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit in 2011. Sinwar is considered a communicator between Hamas's political and military wings and his election is expected to bridge the gap between the political and military branches. Due to his constant survival of assassination attempts, Deif is still held with high esteem by Palestinians and Hamas leaders. He will now serve as a silent chief of the al-Qassam brigades. However, as he has been made invalid through his injuries over the years, Sinwar will be the more active leader. Both Sinwar and Arouri are considered 'hardliners' as they have a strong military background. They were not present during the Palestinian political break up in June

2007. This makes them new figures within the new unity accord and are less likely to cause offence to Fatah members still weary of the violence from the division (Alsoos, 2017a). Their ascendancy to the top of Hamas's leadership ranks through its internal elections marks an interesting shift in the rise of military leaders in the movement. Hamas's recently departed leadership headed by Mishaal desired great consensus on all leadership positions to make leaders highly committed to these positions even when they were hardliners. Hamas has always been concerned with a united political doctrine. It is the only Palestinian faction that has maintained strong internal unity (Hroub, 2017).

Hamas's military branch has developed into a formidable fighting force capable of creating problems for Israel since 2007 (White, 2014). A good example occurred with its resistance within Operation Protective Edge in 2014. The al-Qassam brigades revealed a broad range of offensive and defensive manoeuvres, making this conflict the worst regarding Israeli casualties since 2007. Throughout the 51-day war Hamas revealed an emphasis towards innovation and showed that it is a learning organisation with a developing doctrine. While around half of 2200 Palestinian casualties from this war were from the al-Qassam brigades, at the end of the war they displayed high moral and an image of victory to other Palestinians (Blumenthal, 2015). Combining an increased number of rockets with surveillance of military structures, a complex tunnel system, and united combat forces, allowed the al-Qassam brigades to make effective strikes into Israel. The most intense confrontation from this war occurred with the Shajaiya battles. By the IDF's own admission this was the toughest challenge they had ever faced from any armed non-state force, with al-Qassam fighters at times surrounding Israeli forces during the latter's raids. The Shajaiya battles are regarded as a turning point in the history of the al-Qassam's brigades as the IDF is now more aware of the price of a future war with Hamas (Abu Amer, 2015).

In conclusion, Hamas possesses a highly complex organizational structure made up of two political branches, the Shura Council and the political bureau, and a military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades. Hamas's political leadership has been situated mainly within the Gaza Strip where Hamas has ruled since 2007, but also in exile. With the introduction of Israel's assassination programme in a post-9/11 world, leaders within both these branches have been pursued, often relentlessly. Regardless, its determination to function as both a resistance movement that opposes occupation and as a political movement within the Gaza Strip since 2007 has made its leadership structure adaptable and innovative. While Hamas's past chief executive Khaled Mishaal experienced key failures recently, the recent election of Ismail Haniyeh as his successor marks a pragmatic turn for Hamas's top position. Along with this change, the appointment of Yahya Sinwar as the head of Hamas's political and armed wing in Gaza marks the beginning of a new era in the leadership of the Islamic resistance movement.

5.2 Political and economic position within the Gaza Strip

Throughout its 11 years of political leadership in the Gaza Strip, Hamas's responsibilities for the nearly 2 million Palestinians living there were blighted by sanctions introduced by the PA (Palestinian territories: recent history, 2017). The Fatah dominated PA has consistently introduced punitive measures to weaken the legitimacy of Hamas's leadership. For example, when the PA was ousted from Gaza it reduced Hamas's finances by introducing Decree No.18 which exempted Palestinians in the Southern provinces of taxes and fees (Decree No.18, 2007).

There is now a desire between the two parties to end the division with certain grievances having received attention signalling a move forward (Khoury, 2017). The ex-head of Fatah in Gaza, Mohammed Dahlan has established strong ties with regional actors such as Egypt. A rival of President Abbas and still popular in Gaza, he has been working with Cairo to resolve the internal division between Fatah and Hamas. In May 2017, Hamas's new top leader in Gaza Yahya Sinwar met with Dahlan to discuss the prospect of a unity accord and mending Hamas's relations with Egypt, which would act as a mediator within the reconciliation process. In September, hundreds of senior Hamas officials met with Dahlan and some of the bereaved families of the 356 mainly Fatah affiliates who were killed when Hamas assumed full control of Gaza in 2007. This event established financial compensation to the victim's relatives based on Sharia law and tribal customs. This is an important issue drawing back to earlier national reconciliation attempts and had to be achieved for reconciliation to begin as it relates to clan identity and social ties (Khoury, 2017a).

In October of this year, PA officials under Fatah Prime Minister Rami Habdalah met in Gaza for the first time in three years to assess Hamas's position on reconciliation (Cook, 2017). The current unity deal is not new in design; rather, it represents a new attempt at national reconciliation based on the criteria of past agreements, mainly the 2011 blueprint (Dunne & Walles, 2017). Certain difficult issues exist for the creation of a unity government. These include, Hamas's desire to maintain its al-Qassam brigades and the fate of the thousands of Hamas employees within Gaza's public sector that replaced PA employees after the 2007 Gaza war (*Daily Sabah, 2017*). The establishment of a unity government will improve Hamas's influence in the PLO, while helping create future elections for the PLC. Public opinion polls conducted by the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research suggest that if elections occurred now, Hamas would win as Fatah's popularity is declining through factors such as coordination with Israel's security forces (Young 2017).

Past attempts at reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah have consistently broken down (Abu Amer, 2016). These include: The Mecca agreement in 2007; the Cairo agreement in 2011; the Doha agreement in 2012; and the last attempt in 2014, the Beach Refugee Camp agreement (*Al Akhbar English, 2015*). While these past talks have failed, the economic situation in Gaza which has reached new levels of desperation, along with Hamas's desire to improve its fragile strategic position through strengthening ties with Arab/Muslim regional allies adds greater motivation for success in this 2017-2018 unity accord. The current negotiations beginning in Cairo on Oct. 12 is moving in gradual steps. It begins with Hamas's political branch ceding power to the PA through actions such as transferring control over its three major border crossings, followed later by addressing more complex issues, such as arranging National elections and creating a unified Palestinian security apparatus in the Gaza Strip (Cook, 2017).

While the PA made Hamas's administrative duties more difficult since 2006, recent measures have exacerbated the situation (Tahhan, 2017). In March 2017, Hamas established a formal parallel administrative committee to operate local ministries throughout the Gaza Strip. This was viewed by the PA as a move to undermine its authority (Thrall, 2017a). The ensuing response from Abbas in April was to reduce payments of thousands of public servants working in Gaza by up to 50 percent (Melhem, 2017). This was followed in May with sanctions on important resources, such as electricity, fuel, tax exemption for schools, and medicine. While the decision by Hamas in September to dissolve the committee was viewed as a positive step, Abbas did not lift the sanctions (Abou Jalal, 2017).

A major contentious issue regarding Israeli-Palestinian relations is security coordination between the PA and Israel. Since the 1993 Oslo Accords, security has

been central to all Israeli-Palestinian agreements and is viewed by the international community as the foundation of state building (Bouris & Reigeluth, 2012). For example, the EU argues that to build its political organisation a nation must successfully establish law and order. After the 1995 Oslo II Agreement, Palestinian territories were split into three areas, A, B, and C. However, it was only in Area A that the PA gained full security control. In Area B, it only received civil control, while in Area C, which contains 61 percent of the West Bank, Israel was given full control over all matters. This arrangement has increased Palestinian suffering. From 2000-2009, over 6000 Palestinians died at the hands of the IDF, with many reports of torture and other human rights abuses (Batniji, Rabaia, Gillham, Giacaman, Sarraji, Punamaki, Saab, & Boyce, 2009).

Gaza is facing its worst humanitarian crisis since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war (Amari, 2017). Even before 2007 the Gaza Strip was an extremely poor territory with two thirds of inhabitants existing below the poverty line (Knudsen, 2005). After Hamas's successful take over in June 2007, Israel imposed a severe blockade and military actions (Qarmout & Beland, 2012). All goods into Gaza have restricted access through Israel's Erez and Karem Shalom border crossings (Whitson, 2008). Inhabitants have relied on humanitarian aid from Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and aid policies. However, an irrationality exists as it is given to the PA in the context of the conflict and reduces international pressure (Batniji et al. 2009). It therefore permits Israel to maintain its illegal occupation and control over important resources such as fuel and those relating to sanitation without having to provide Gazans with much of these basic living necessities. The outcome of Israel's blockade rather than reducing support for Hamas has driven Gaza's economy to ruin. Residents experience shortages of important resources and are unable to export or import items. As Israel refuses to end the blockade, and the Quartet refuses to pressure them to do so, Gazans, with the help of Hamas have had to resort to smuggling in goods, such as food and medicine, and larger resources such as building materials, through Hamas's tunnel system. The result has been a shadow economy, rather than one that exists along formal lines (Qarmout & Beland, 2012).

While Israel's blockade and dominant control over Palestinian infrastructure restricted electricity and fuel into Gaza, Abbas' recent sanctions means that electricity is only accessible for up to four hours a day in certain places (OCHA, 2017, April). The lack of electricity, along with fuel has had far reaching effects on wellbeing in the Gaza Strip. Gaza's medical institutions are stretched beyond capacity and have deteriorated to the point of closure in some cases. Cancer patients are forbidden to leave Gaza to seek treatment in Israel (Melhem, 2017). There has been a massive increase in mortality rates due to underpowered hospitals (Eldar, 2018). Due to the shortage of electricity, sanitation services such as Gaza's water supply have also been neglected with many Gazans relying on the polluted Mediterranean-sea (Thrall, 2017a). Infrastructure has deteriorated in the tiny enclave through the 11 years of blockade and the three wars with Israel (Palestinian territories: recent history, 2017). Mass unemployment from Gaza's almost non-existent economy means 42 percent of Gazans exist beneath the poverty line, and 58 percent of Gaza's youth are unemployed (NRT, 2017).

Hamas's current relationship with its Arab and Muslim neighbours reveal an improving strategic position (NTR, 2017). Coinciding with Israel's blockade, Cairo greatly restricted access through the Rafah border crossing (Sharp, 2008). In 2013, Egypt's new leader, President Abdel Fattah closed the Rafah border even more with Sinai believing Hamas supported *al-dawla al-islamiyya fi al-'Iraq wa al-Sham* (Islamic State, ISIS), and were assisting the MB in overthrowing his rule. However, through Cairo acting as a mediator throughout current reconciliation talks, relations between the two actors are now improving (Cook, 2017). Both actors have the mutual interest of managing ISIS. Hamas can reduce ISIS's influence within the region through preventing its supporters in Gaza from connecting with those in the Sinai Peninsula (Alsoos, 2017a). Egypt for its part is expected to re-open the Rafah border crossing more frequently. Egypt has also approved of Hamas's new leadership strengthening

its ties to other important regional actors that it relies on for improving its strategic position. The refusal of Hamas's leaders to support the Bashir al-Assad regime in Syria during the Arab Spring resulted in Mishaal's explosion from Damascus in 2013 alienating Hamas from Assad's ally Iran, its past strongest sponsor. In August, a Hamas delegation was sent to Tehran to meet with senior Iranian members, signalling a new beginning for the strategic partnership (Cook, 2017).

Regarding Palestine's status within the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) this is a very active time (Palestinian territories: recent history, 2017). In December 2016, the UNSC backed resolution 2334, condemning the continuous expansion of Zionist settlements on Palestinian land, passed with U.S. President Barack Obama withholding the veto power of the U.S. The resolution states that:

“The establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-state solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.”

and:

“Reiterates its demand that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and that it fully respect all of its legal obligations in this regard.”

In March 2017, the UN's Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) released a report titled, *Israeli Practices towards the Palestinian people and the question of Apartheid*, which declared Israel to be an apartheid state (Palestinian territories: recent history, 2017). In September, the unpopular head of the PA, President Abbas, appeared at the yearly speeches held by the general assembly. It was here that he noted the shift in the prospect for a two-state solution with just over

50 percent now supporting a one-state option through an awareness of expanding Israeli land settlements. President Abbas remarked that the two-state resolution is no longer practical owing to continuous Zionist land confiscation. The Palestinian goal should now be integration within Israel with a focus on struggling towards equal rights (Palestinian territories: recent history, 2017).

The election of Donald Trump as the new U.S. President has signalled a shift in that nation's stance towards the Palestinian/Israeli conflict (Palestinian territories: recent history, 2017). He publicly opposed the UNSC's 2334 resolution and the withholding of America's veto allowing it to pass. Since taking office in January 2017 he has appointed figures sympathetic towards Israel to his administration and there are talks of a "deal of the century" regarding the region (Alsoos, 2017a). This involves his stated intention to move the U.S embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem (Beaumont, 2016).

On May. 1 Hamas released a document to supplement its founding 1988 charter (Palestinian territories: recent history, 2017). This new updated version was Mishaal's legacy as he crafted this new important document (Hroub, 2017). Within the revised format there is an absence of anti-Semitic language frequent in the original. The focus is now against a militant Zionism that aims to wipe Palestinian nationalism off the radar. The revised charter is therefore framed in more nationalistic terms with the goal of creating a future Palestine based on 1948 borders, while not dismissing 1967 lines (Thrall, 2017a). In article 2 of the 1988 charter Hamas binds itself with the MB (Maqdsi, 1993). The MB is one of the largest Islamic global movements and was founded in Egypt. It claims to promote a wide understanding and lens of Islamic concepts throughout everyday life such as politics. Hamas has now dissociated itself from the MB within this new document; a move that is expected to assist in strengthening its ties with Egypt. This is because Egyptian President el-Sisi views the MB with suspicion and as wanting to overthrow him to establish an Islamic State in Egypt (Abu Amer, 2017a).

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the current bleak political and social climate within the Gaza Strip is the result of sanctions imposed by the international community, such as Israel and Egypt and internal forces including the actions of the PA in Ramallah under its President Abbas. Since the 2007 coup, Hamas's leadership has struggled to reconcile with its main rival Fatah through the failure to establish a unity government preventing further elections in Palestine. While it is hoped that this may finally be on the cards through recent talks held by Hamas and Fatah leaders, political commentators are not optimistic for a successful outcome. With a recent change in its top leadership, there are signs of stronger ties emerging between Hamas and other regional actors, such as Iran and Egypt. With this contextual background now provided, the research now turns towards exploring the two questions: How is Hamas's new leadership reconciliation with the PA through its new charter in the creation of a unity government? and; what position does Hamas's new leadership have regarding regional and international actor throughout the unity accord? These will be explored through a critical interpretive analysis based on a shared transformational-transactional leadership framework.

6. The Palestinian unity deal: October 12 2017

On Oct. 12 Hamas's newly elected deputy, Saleh al-Arouri headed a delegation, which included Yahya Sinwar, in Cairo where he signed a reconciliation deal with a Fatah delegation headed by Azzam Ahmed (Fahmy, 2017). This initial agreement which is a continuation of past reconciliation attempts as far back as 2005 stipulated the gradual establishment of a Palestinian unity government involving Hamas relinquishing full political control over the Gaza Strip to the PA by Dec. 1. Its initial focus is on issues relating to improving life in the Gaza Strip with PA President Abbas expected to lift sanctions he imposed on there by resuming the funding of important resources, such as electricity and fuel (Dunne & Walles, 2017).

While important dates for issues relating to smaller local matters were covered on Oct. 12, more complex issues remained unclear (Dunne & Walles, 2017). These related to political areas, such as how Hamas will be integrated within the PLO, the restructuring of the PLC, and holding future Palestinian elections. Security issues were covered to some extent. It is expected that the 8,000 police that worked in Gaza before 2007 will be reinstated (AFP, 2017a). However, the fate of Hamas's al-Qassam brigades is expected to be the most difficult issue to resolve. A single government must have only one security apparatus. Also, the 100,000 government officials in Gaza who are paid by either Hamas or the PA is another difficult issue regarding reconciliation. These include: the 40,000 PA officials who were told in 2006 by President Abbas to stay at home; the 40-50 thousand Hamas officials that replaced them; and the 30,000 employees of Hamas's security services (Issacharoff, 2017a).

6.1 How is Hamas's new leadership reconciling with the PA through its new charter in the creation of a unity government?

Through the lens of shared transformational-transactional leadership criteria, the following explores how three newly elected Hamas leaders worked towards establishing a unity government with the Fatah led PA from its signing in Oct.12 until early February. The first transformational behaviour, idealized influence, explores how the three leaders display charismatic qualities in representing the struggles of the Palestinian cause. The inspirational motivational features of Hamas's new leadership such as how they work towards certain goals is then covered. This is followed by exploring the intellectual stimulation dimension presented by the new leaders when negotiating with Fatah. Through the lens of its revised charter these leaders were confronted with having to reconsider the most controversial issue of the reconciliation; that is, the fate of its weapons arsenal. Finally, the sole transactional leadership behaviour of passive management by exception explores how the leaders were faced with having to put off certain key issues important to creating a unity government.

Shared transformational leadership

Idealized influence:

The situation for Palestinians under Israeli occupation has been one of continuous oppression and human rights violations (Dunning, 2016). To be representatives within the shared purpose of Palestinian resistance it is important that Hamas's new leadership display integrity and conviction by being attuned to the suffering of Palestinians (Milton-Edwards & Farrell, 2010). This increases their loyalty towards Hamas as it encourages them to identify with its leadership and promotes greater adherence to its value of resistance. Hamas's three new leaders are aware of the

humanitarian crisis within the Gaza Strip. This has inspired them to take a difficult ethical stand by relinquishing administrative authority within Gaza through the decision to reconcile with Fatah (Ahronheim, 2017). Both Haniyeh and Sinwar are based in the Gaza Strip (*BBC News, 2017*). This means they witness first-hand the harsh realities of life there and share the hardships of fellow Palestinians. Haniyeh was born and raised in the Shati refugee camp which has profoundly affected his thinking. He has made it his life's work to improve the lives of Palestinians. This is opposed to past Hamas leaders such as Mishaal who lived in luxury in Qatar and Damascus and who gradually earned the reputation from Gazans as being out of touch with reality (Abu Amer, 2017a).

The idealized influence of Sinwar was important for promoting trust in the shared purpose of reconciliation (Smolar, 2017). This leadership behaviour requires that leaders are role models for their organization. It is he, perhaps more than the other two newly elected leaders that really embodies the meaning of the charismatic leader. Sinwar was released from prison in 2011 as part of the Shalit prisoner exchange deal after serving 22 years in Israeli jails (Ragson, 2017b). Arouri also spent over two decades in Israeli jails. Regardless of this, both still possess great resolve and an unbroken spirit (Williams, 2017). This type of commitment has helped Hamas emerge as a pillar of resistance in the eyes of Palestinians. It reveals a genuine belief in the value of resistance and promotes trust as they are willing to sacrifice their freedom for it. Sinwar is highly trusted by not only other Hamas members but leaders from other Palestinian factions (Abu Amer, 2017b). Through his commitment to resistance and the well-being of fellow Palestinians Hamas's member of national relations bureau, Mahmoud Mardawi, argues that Sinwar and Hamas are the same thing. This is an essential component of idealized influence as it implies that Sinwar is really the embodiment of Hamas' values and purpose of Palestinian liberation (Bass & Avolio, 1997).

It is important that other Hamas leaders do not become alienated by the decision-making process (Alsoos, 2017a). As the newly elected top leader of Hamas in Gaza, Sinwar has remained true to the traditional internal value within Hamas's leadership organization of collective decision making, while at times appealing to a new generation of Palestinians through his own personal initiative (Abu Amer, 2017b). While he took a difficult stand by meeting with Fatah leaders without going through traditional Hamas's leadership structure, this was done for the ethical reason of speeding up Palestinian unity and was well received by Gazans weary of years of externally placed sanctions and hardships (Abu Amer, 2017b). After the signing of the unity accord, Sinwar worked hard to increase to act as a role model to Palestinians by keeping them informed throughout meetings. For example, he once met with around 250 youths who look up to him as a pillar of resistance. Within this meeting he promoted the collective purpose of resistance and kept them informed on other important issues relating to the unity accord (Mazan, 2017).

While Sinwar's presence is important for Hamas and fellow Gazans, he is also viewed as the most valuable unifying figure for Palestinians from other factions (Abu Amer, 2017b). Zulfigar Sairjo, from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) suggests that Sinwar's decisions have a distinctively Palestinian flavour to them as they represent what Palestinians want. This is yet another reference to his quality as a charismatic leader and how he is an ideal representation of the shared purpose towards Palestinian unity. His experience of prison also helped him establish friendly relations with leaders from other factions incarcerated with him (Abu Amer, 2017b). A strong feeling of family developed through these prison ties as Sinwar was credited with looking out for others and suppling them with what they needed. This helped build his reputation as a unifying figure for Palestinians. All three leaders made it clear that the decision to reconcile now with Fatah was made in collaboration with Hamas leaders inside and outside of Palestine who reached a shared consensus (Halevi, 2017). Their appointment throughout 2017 like other decisions that are made internally was determined by Hamas bylaws with Mishaal noting how this testified to the value of the democratic process and other values relating to unity within the

organization (Abu Amer, 2017c). This is outlined at the beginning of Hamas's revised charter:

“The new document is the product of deep deliberation that led us to a strong consensus. As a movement, we agree about both the theory and the practice of the vision that is outlined in the pages that follow. It is a vision that stands on solid grounds and on well-established principles. This document unveils the goals, the milestones and the way in which national unity can be enforced. It also establishes our common understanding of the Palestinian cause, the working principles which we use to further it, and limits of flexibility used to interpret it” (Document of general principles and policies, 2017).

As Sinwar and Arouri are both founders of the al-Qassam brigades and are committed to resistance, Palestinians view them as possessing authenticity regarding their struggle for liberation. This makes them what is termed “hardliners” (Alsoos, 2017). However, this should not be misleading as they are also pragmatic and have both stated their intention to make concessions throughout the unity accord. For example, after the unity accord was signed, Arouri stated that the leadership is willing to make even more painful concessions (*The Islamic Resistance Movement, 2017*). Sinwar is a leader with considerable political experience and knows how to combine the two wings for a collective Palestinian cause:

“Our weapons are the property of the Palestinian people, and are meant for the liberation effort, and not for internal conflict” (Toi Staff, 2017).

Arouri is a top military commander in his native West Bank and was elected partly to improve Hamas's weak strategic position there (*Revolvy, 2017*). Even Israeli

intelligence acknowledges that he is a capable, astute and well connected throughout the Middle East. Throughout negotiations Arouri also revealed his shared commitment to the representation of the Palestinian struggle:

“Israel’s conditions for the Palestinian reconciliation have not been discussed in the talks and the Palestinian people will not accept such conditions; the reconciliation is solely an internal Palestinian affair” (*The Islamic Resistance movement, 217*).

The election of Haniyeh as the new chief of Hamas’s political bureau brings an invaluable pragmatic figure to the forefront of Palestinian politics. Haniyeh has shown himself as a role model for Palestinian resistance through various commitments. He has spent time in jail for resistance activities, such as leading in the first intifada (*TRTWorld, 2017*). He survived an assassination attempt in 2003 when he played the valuable role of assisting the Hamas’s past *Sheik* (leader) Ahmed Yassin (McGeough, 2009). Haniyeh has become an increasingly popular leading political figure for Hamas. A survey conducted by the Palestinian Centre Policy and Survey Research in March revealed that in the event of new presidential elections Haniyeh would receive 47% of votes, the same amount as current PA president Mahmoud Abbas (*Quds Press Service, 2017*). This is due to Palestinian frustration at new land settlement projects and Abbas’ refusal to stop security coordination with Israel. Other Palestinian factions were also pleased with Haniyeh’s appointment viewing it as a mark of increasing the likelihood of successfully reconciling and creating future elections. For example, leaders in the PFLP commended the values espoused by Hamas’s democratic election style, while the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) called his election a point of pride with all Palestinians (Abu Amer, 2017e). With the charismatic features of idealized influence covered, it is now required to assess what goals Hamas’s new leadership is working towards through this unity accord by exploring the inspirational motivation feature of transformational leadership.

Inspirational motivation:

Both Sinwar and Arouri displayed joint vision regarding Hamas's future goals as a resistance movement after the unity accord was signed. It was clear to them that Hamas had been unable to act as a governing agent in Gaza since 2007. Sinwar admitted that Palestinian division had done nothing but harm to the Palestinian struggle (Eldar, 2017d). This can be measured in part by the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip that Hamas's new leaders wish to reduce. One of the complicated issues behind reconciliation is the creation of a single security system for all Palestinians. President Abbas demands that Hamas disarm its 25,000 member al-Qassam brigades (Abu Amer, 2017c). PA president Abbas has made it clear that a new unity government would not be based on a "Hezbollah model" where one faction governs while the other still holds its militant force (Issacharoff, 2017a). A unity government must contain "one authority, one law, one gun" (*The Meir Intelligence and Terrorism Information Centre, 2017*). Both Sinwar and Arouri remarked that Abbas' demand was through the PA's coordination with Israel regarding the Palestinian security network. This relationship between the PA and Israel resulting from the Oslo accords is highly unpopular with Palestinians and is made possible in part by Israel controlling most of the West Bank's territory (Rasgon, 2017d).

While Hamas introduced a revised charter with alterations made to past terminology, its basic vision for resistance until Palestine is liberated remains the same (Mee Staff, 2017). Through their adherence towards Palestinian resistance to liberate Palestine, the new leadership denounced demands from the PA to disarm in front of media and Palestinian groups (Lieber, 2017b). For example, on Oct. 19 in front of around 250 Palestinian youth, Sinwar declared that Hamas could not be forced by the PA to accept conditions that were against Palestinian interests. The weapons of the al-Qassam brigades are weapons of resistance and are essential for protecting Palestinians and their liberational aims. Such sentiment echo's a strong commitment to the goal of ending Israeli occupation with armed resistance. This is reflected

throughout powerful rhetoric by Hamas leaders such as, “our weapons are our honour” (*Middle East Monitor*, 2017). Also, Sinwar powerfully declared:

“Anyone who thinks we will disarm is delusional, disarming us is like Satan dreaming of heaven. No one can take away our weapons, we will continue to protect our people” (Lieber, 2017b).

Hamas’s leadership was clear that part of the reason for reconciliation is for the goal of reducing the suffering within the Gaza Strip (Abu Amer, 2017b). The humanitarian crisis there is partly the result of the closure of the three main border crossings into the enclave—the Erez and Karem Shalom crossings bordering with Israel, and Egypt’s Rafah crossing. These are the main channels for the movement of goods and people in and out of Gaza (Sones, 2017). On Nov. 1 Hamas leaders made the first concession in conceding authority to the PA by transferring security control over the border crossings (Latina, 2017). PA Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah confirmed that the PA had successfully assumed control of the three crossings in a key move towards gaining administrative control over Gaza and establishing security there (Khoury, 2017c). Haniyeh reflected the optimism felt at this point of the unity accord:

“We have handed over the crossings with honesty and responsibility without bargaining and unconditionally” (Beaumont, 2017a).

However, members of the PA have stated their desire to reintroduce the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA) to regulate the crossings (Abu Amer, 2017f). As the AMA was devised with the help of external forces such as the European Commission, Hamas discarded it after taking full control of Gaza in June 2007. While the PA has argued that the AMA is required to help with security at the crossings, Hamas is concerned that it may invite Israeli and European interference within Palestinian politics. This is a major area of sensitivity for Hamas owing to its high

standard that Palestinian unity should not allow cooperation with the Zionist occupation. Throughout the reconciliation deal these leaders would continue to argue that the greatest threat towards a future united Palestinian government was the PA's coordination with Israel (Benari, 2017a).

Although Hamas referred the crossings to the PA, President Abbas maintained his harsh economic sanctions in Gaza (Abu Amer, 2017f). The crisis in the Gaza Strip has now been made worse due to further economic incentives introduced by Abbas. Since gaining control over the border crossings Gaza's Ministry of Finance has now lost its monthly tax revenues of around 50 million shekels to the PA (15 million dollars). A greater ripple effect for Gaza's economy is now observable with all areas of industry suffering. As the nearly two million Palestinians have very little purchasing power there has been a massive decline in the amount of trucks entering Gaza through the Kerem Shalom crossing since the signing of the accord. Abbas also abolished Decree. 18, by reintroducing tax exemptions that were introduced to weaken Hamas in 2007 (Al-Amoudi, 2018). By the start of 2018, Gaza's economy was heading towards a complete collapse (Abu Amer, 2018).

With the increasing economic pressure placed on the already impoverished territory, the possibility of another war with Israel will unfortunately increase (Issacharoff, 2018a). Other factions in the Gaza Strip such as Islamic Jihad have resorted to firing rockets into Israel who, like other Gazans perceive Israel as the major cause of their suffering through its 11-year blockade. However, as Hamas maintains its vision of the future of building a unified Palestinian government and developing its resistance strategy, attacking Israel has been placed on hold for now. By Nov. 17, Egypt reopened its Rafah border crossing, however, this was only open for five days by the close of 2017 (Khoury, 2017c). On Feb. 10, Haniyeh renewed optimism regarding the Palestinian vision of unity and hopes of economic relief in Gaza by announcing that he would visit Cairo shortly after it re-opened the Rafah border for another three days in early February (AP, 2018). These talks will aim to continue the Palestinian vision of

reconciling with the PA and uniting Gaza with the West Bank. However, the inconsistent opening of the Rafah crossing will also be addressed (AP, 2018).

During this is a time of massive internal alteration for Hamas the critical interpretive analysis will now consider how its new leadership is applying intellectual stimulation through the new unity accord. It will assess how by questioning past assumptions, beliefs, and traditions how these new leaders are moving Hamas forward in a new strategic era.

Intellectual stimulation:

Hamas's new leadership often applied intellectual stimulation throughout the unity accord. This related to certain revisions regarding fundamental issues presented in its updated charter. Within a contemporary era, it is essential that Hamas's new leadership innovate to be adaptable to changing strategic realities and for it to move forward (Alsoos, 2017a). This required them to release this new document in 2017. Issues that have been rethought include: Hamas's stance towards resistance; its ideology; and Palestinian nationalism and how this should be established. Regarding Hamas's view of armed resistance, this is stipulated in the revised charter under the category "Resistance and Liberation" (Mee Staff, 2017). The framework of these two past interconnected elements is now slightly questioned as while the 1988 charter viewed them solely in Islamic terms of *jihad*, they are now broadened to include notions of international law:

"Resisting the occupation with all the means and methods is a legitimate right guaranteed by divine law and international norms and laws. At the heart of these lies armed resistance, which is regarded as the strategic choice for

protecting the principles and the rights of the Palestinian people.” (Document of general principles and policies, 2017).

This commitment to resistance was seen in an important meeting headed by Sinwar on Oct. 24 (JNS, 2017). Before Palestinian groups, such as trade union representatives, he showed respect for Hamas’s resistance tradition by arguing that Hamas was still fighting to liberate Palestine and could not disarm now. However, consistent with the revised charter’s focus towards moving forward for the sake of Palestinian unity, he also stated that Hamas wants to establish a single Palestinian resistance force consisting of all Palestinian factions within a restructured PLO. Within this framework, Hamas is willing to innovate by placing its al-Qassam brigades under the PLO’s authority:

“As a nation, we are still in the throes of our national liberation efforts, and we cannot surrender our weapons. Our weapons must be under the umbrella of the PLO and must not be used for internal conflict” (Toi, 2017).

This indicates that Hamas’s new leadership shows a little flexibility by questioning past beliefs about resistance as they are willing to make this concession. However, this still must honour Hamas’s tradition of resisting the occupation. Hamas cannot forfeit their weapons as they serve their fellow Palestinians (*Hamas Islamic Resistance*, 2018). Echoing Abbas’ demand that Hamas relinquish its weapons, PA head of police, Hazem Atallah, stated that it would be completely impractical to allow Hamas to maintain its armed wing when creating a new security structure in the Gaza Strip (AFP, 2017a). This is because the preservation of the al-Qassam brigades does not fit into a security model based on Abbas’ notion of a “one gun”, “one law” security system. Hamas response was that it is the PA’s desire to adhere to outdated agreements such as the Oslo Accords that make this a requirement, which can be seen through their influence over the West Bank (Rasgon, 2017c). This cooperation is

not just despised by Hamas leaders, but by most Palestinians. Hamas views the PA's coordination with Israeli security forces as interfering in Palestinian business (Birnbaum, 2017).

By signing a unity accord, Hamas's new leadership has questioned its ability to govern in the Gaza Strip, which can also be framed through the revised charter. This document signals a move forward in Hamas's political development as there is now an emphasis on nationalist terminology which have replaced the Islamic overtones of the 1988 version (Hroub, 2017). Cultural change is taking place as the view of Palestine as an "Islamic *waqf*" has been replaced with "Palestine is the land of the Arab Palestinian people" (Mee Staff, 2017). Under the heading "The Palestinian Political System," emphasis is now on moving towards a future Palestine through uniting Palestinians under a single political banner. This is done by encouraging the move toward unity based on the similarities between Palestinians and benefits of national collaboration rather than focusing on past differences and divisions (Hroub, 2017):

"Hamas believes in, and adheres to, managing its Palestinian relations on the basis of pluralism, and the adoption of dialogue. The aim is to bolster the unity of ranks and joint action for the purpose of accomplishing national goals and fulfilling the aspirations of the Palestinian people" (Document of general principles and policies, 2017).

Through conceding administrative control over Gaza, Hamas is now rethinking its political strategy with its leaders hoping to increase their power within future reorganised Palestinian political institutions (Houry, 2018a). During reconciliation talks from Nov. 21-22, complex issues, such as payment of its appointed officials, remained unclear. However, the shared Palestinian goal of holding future democratic elections showed positive momentum (Al-Mughrabi & Awadalla, 2017). A joint

statement was made by both parties for elections at the end of 2018 with Abbas set to make a specific date. Hamas praised the strategy to make the PLO the single representative body of all Palestinian factions that would include them within future Palestinian elections based on adherence to the 2005 Palestinian Cairo agreement (Issacharoff, 2017b).

Later in November, important areas requiring agreement, such as the reform of the PLO, were still unresolved (Abdel Hadi, 2017). Hamas's leadership demanded that Fatah resolve all political and organizational disputes in the Palestinian orbit so that the PLO can be reformed along democratic lines under a broad Palestinian based political paradigm. Within this current strategic environment, the PLO must be nationally endorsed to assist with a unified political system which will aim to be a powerful body capable of serving all Palestinians and engagement with international actors. However, Hamas's new leaders have remarked how it has become too influenced and pressured by Israel, resulting in the continuation of land confiscation in the West Bank and the Judaization of villages. There have also been recent intrusions on Islam's third holiest site; the Esplanade containing the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa (Zalzburg, 2017). This is in violation of a 2014 agreement that limited Israel's interference there and upheld an access arrangement, indicating how Israel has the power to bend or break agreements for its own advantage, while the PA through its subordinate role in agreements is less able to do so. Owing to such violations, Hamas has called for the PLO to stop recognising Israel (Ians, 2018a).

Hamas leaders strongly believe that enormous innovation is required for restructuring the Palestinian political scene and rebuilding its institutions, such as the PLO (Document of General Principles and policies, 2017). A revised PLO should include the political dimensions and perspectives of all Palestinian factions, not just those of Fatah. All Palestinian factions are entitled to serve under the umbrella of the PLO as presented in its charter (Palestinian National Charter: Resolutions of the Palestinian National Council, 1968). This endorses as a key principle the unity of Palestinians for

the sake of Palestinian liberation. Hamas's revised charter supports this by defining Palestinians as "Arabs who live in Palestine, irrespective of whether they were expelled from it, or stayed in it; and every person that was to an Arab Palestinian father after that date, whether inside or outside Palestine, is a Palestinian" (Document of general principles and policies, 2017). For Hamas, it is also essential that the past layout of the PLO is replaced by a democratic format that opposes prior Israeli-Palestinian agreements such as the Oslo Accords to help create a future Palestinian nation (Mee Staff, 2017).

Another reason why Hamas's leadership questioned its political control over the Gaza Strip is that since 2007 it has had to make intolerable concessions towards Israel that undermine its past commitment towards resistance (Ahronheim, 2017). This relates to how the militant dimension of its resistance doctrine, and thereby nationalist goals have suffered since it gained full control of the Gaza Strip. While Hamas is willing to rethink its past political strategy to help their fellow Palestinians, this must not compromise the integrity of the principle of resistance. This could be seen throughout the unity accord when Salafist groups based in Gaza began to fire rockets into Israel after President Trump's Jerusalem declaration (Harel, 2017). As Hamas is still viewed by Israel as being responsible for the administration of the Gaza Strip they were held accountable. While Hamas has arrested these groups in the past for its own reasons, because its leaders are trying to avoid a war right now, it's leaders had to have these groups arrested at the behest of Israel to prevent further escalation (Moore, 2017). There are several reasons for this. Hamas's militant wing has not yet recovered from its last war with Israel. It must rebuild its weapon arsenal, which it is aiming to do now by building stronger ties to its past ally Iran. However, Hamas's new leaders also had to make the concession to Abbas that they would not attack Israel now as a condition when signing the unity accord on Oct.12 (Eldar, 2017e).

With the three transformational leadership dimensions now explored through this critical interpretive analysis regarding the research's first question, the single

transactional leadership criteria will now be applied. This passive management by exception will reveal how Hamas's new leaders delayed certain decisions required for a successful outcome to the unity accord.

Shared transactional leadership

Passive management by exception:

Passive management by exception was displayed by Hamas leaders throughout reconciliation through their passive response towards major issues. These were: the fate of Hamas's employees in Gaza; control over the al-Qassam brigades; the management of security in Gaza; and disputes over land (AFP, 2017b). While Hamas was to hand administration of the Gaza Strip over to the PA on Dec. 1 these important issues were largely avoided by its leaders throughout unity talks in Cairo and the Gaza Strip. Regarding the first delayed issue, at the end of November Abbas stated that all Fatah public service employees must return to work by February 2018. Hamas's 50,000 employees would still be paid by the PA until this time. However, Hamas views this as violating past agreements between the two sides and wants to still have some employees maintaining their positions after this cut-off date. The outline of the 2011 Cairo agreement which this unity accord draws from explicitly states they are entitled to this (*Middle East Monitor, 2017a*). By January, the long-term fate of the Hamas's 50,000 employees had failed to progress. This had also been a major issue within the 2014 unity accord (Akram, 2016). Due to the 30 percent salary deduction introduced by Abbas in April the Gazan market had lost 160 million dollars by January 2018 (Al-Mughrabi, 2018).

While some ministries were handed over to the PA by the end of November, others were still held by Hamas right before the December deadline. Abbas claimed that Hamas refused access to the PA of three ministries (Al-Mughrabi, 2017b). By the end of November negotiations, both parties requested that Cairo postpone the Gaza take-over to Dec. 10 to allow more time to complete arrangements for the transfer. Certain Fatah leaders were often unclear regarding how much of Gaza they controlled as they gave conflicting figures. Fatah's Central Committee argued that the PA controlled only 5 percent of the Gaza Strip by the beginning of December. However, the head of Fatah's reconciliation effort, Azzam Al-Ahmad, stated it was more like 50 percent when taking account of the border crossings (*Middle East Monitor, 2017b*).

It is fair to state that the most controversial issue to be resolved was the management of Hamas's 25,000 member al-Qassam brigades (Eldar, 2017e). President Abbas stated that Hamas did not cede control of Gaza because of its refusal to disarm. However, some Fatah officials argued that this was not a requirement stated within Cairo talks and that the handover of Gaza occurred in full and Abbas should remove sanctions (*Middle East Monitor, 2017c*). This is likely as throughout unity talks the issue of the al-Qassam brigades was described as the "Elephant in the room" because delegates on both sides were aware of it but it was ignored throughout discussions. This is supported by Al-Ahmad said it was unnecessary to be concerned with more complex issues such as Hamas's military wing early in the accord (Lieber, 2017c).

Establishing a single Palestinian security force in Gaza is a major issue ignored during the unity accord (Al-Mughrabi, 2018). At the initial signing on Oct.12, both parties had agreed to implement a 3000-member security force by Nov.1, however, this failed to materialize. By early February, Sinwar announced a plan to establish a security system in Gaza with Fatah that will eventually lead to the integration of Hamas policemen in the establishment of a single security system that is meant to be created by the unity government (Khoury, 2017e). However, it is unclear when and how this will occur. While the PA gained administrative control by the Dec. 10 deadline in theory, the

security and economic situation was still the same in Gaza as Hamas still controlled the enclave in practice (AFP, 2017b). While Hamas's security and police force still managed the Gaza Strip its leaders argued that it had handed over full control over its ministries with the full transfer of power to the PA (AFP, 2017c). While both sides stated that they were still committed to full reconciliation, Sinwar admitted it was problematic as the fate of the al-Qassam brigades along with the two separate civil administrations was unresolved (Lieber & Toi Staff, 2017). He argued that the term of the al-Qassam brigades was contaminated by U.S. and Israeli influence through the pressure they were applying to the PA by trying to enforce its own rules upon it through the Oslo Accords (Lieber, 2017d). In late December he declared honestly that:

“whoever doesn't see that reconciliation is collapsing is blind” (Lieber & Toi Staff, 2017).

Within Hamas's revised charter under the heading “The position towards Occupation and Political Solutions” a political response is given to the Oslo Accords (Document of general principle and policies, 2017). Unlike the 1988 version, which views them as a challenge to the Islamic *Waqf*, these are now framed politically in violation of international law and the rights of Palestinians. It is highly scathing of security coordination with the occupation:

“ Hamas affirms that the Oslo Accords and their agenda contravene the governing rules of international law in that they generate commitments that violate the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Therefore, the Movement rejects these agreements and all that flows from them, such as the obligations that are detrimental to the interests of our people, especially security coordination” (Document of general principles and policies, 2017).

After U.S. President Trump's declaration, major Palestinian actors including Hamas leaders argued for a new mediator for the peace process in the region. On Jan. 14 over 80 members of the Palestinian Central Council (PCC) headed by President Abbas conducted its annual meetings in Ramallah (Kuttab, 2018b). While Abbas criticised Hamas, his most scathing attacks were towards the U.S. (Halbfinger, 2018). Hamas leaders praised this but had decided to boycott the meetings stating that they were disappointed at the Arab/Muslim response towards President Trump's announcement after Dec. 6. They also accused the Palestinian National Council (PNC) of failing the national project and anticipates that it won't do enough to limit U.S. diplomacy in the region. Hamas leaders believe that these meetings which argued for an alternative peace process will still adhere to the Israeli control security system (*The Islamic Resistance Movement, 2018*). Throughout the meetings, Abbas criticised the Oslo Accords, even going as far to suggest disbanding the PA. However, this is impractical owing to how much Israel controls Palestinian security through the Oslo Accords (Kuttab, 2018b). To make such a move may create a security vacuum resulting in lawlessness. There is, therefore no real sign of an end to the security coordination that Hamas's leadership believes is obstructing reconciliation (Harel, 2018a).

Another issue that was delayed throughout unity talks was the dispute over tens of thousands of dunams of Palestinian land in the Gaza Strip (Khoury, 2017e). This also includes land that past Israeli settlements had been placed on in the enclave but was reinstated to the Palestinians in 2005 (Baker, 2015). Much of this land has been distributed by Hamas to its affiliates, a third of which were members of the al-Qassam brigades. However, it has also allocated plots to some of its civil servants as payment for their work, which reveals how the group has struggled financially (Akram, 2016). This is a complex issue to resolve. Fatah delegates view the reluctance of Hamas leaders to confront this as a sign that they are not fully committed to ceding meaningful control over Gaza. However, Hamas leaders argue that Fatah delegates failed to elaborate on important strategic issues relating to strategic cooperation

between the two factions. These include how Fatah plan to integrate all Palestinian factions into a revised PLO and the lifting sanctions (Khoury, 2017e).

With question one now covered through the shared transformational-transactional criteria, the critical interpretive analysis will now shift to exploring Hamas's ties to regional and international actors while reconciling with Fatah.

6.2 What position does Hamas's new leadership have regarding regional and international actors throughout the unity accord?

Hamas's shared transformational-transactional behaviours with regional and international actors during Palestinian reconciliation was critically analysed during the current unity accord. Beginning with idealized influence, Hamas's reaction to President Trump's contentious Dec. 6 Jerusalem declaration is covered. This involved Haniyeh displaying charisma by exploiting his ability as a powerful public speaker to mobilize Palestinians towards a third *intifada*. During the reconciliation, Sinwar and Arouri revealed inspirational motivation by declaring Hamas's vision and why it could not relinquish its weapons while working towards the goal of Palestinian unity. The final transformational behaviour of intellectual stimulation was a powerful guiding feature in the current strategic setting through Hamas's leaders challenging old views to rebuild regional ties to create strategic depth. The transactional leadership behaviour of passive management by exception was very important for Hamas during this time of reconciliation as the new leadership had to delay attacking Israel through showing *sabr* in the face of IDF attacks aimed at disrupting Palestinian unity.

Shared transformational leadership

Idealized influence:

By early December the unity deal was showing signs of slowing down owing to the transfer of political power to the PA being delayed by 10 days (*Middle East Monitor*, 2018). An international move was delivered by the Trump Administration that further complicated the unity accord and force Hamas leaders to make a difficult stand. On Dec. 6, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that he would be moving the U.S. embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to *Al-Quds* (Jerusalem) making it the future capital of

Israel (Jaraba, 2017). This created global outrage from the Muslim community as East *Al-Quds* is viewed as the future capital of Palestine under a two-state solution and holds sacred value for Muslims throughout the world. The fate of *Al-Quds* holds extremely important religious value for Muslims. It is home to the sacred *Al-Aqsa* mosque, which is one of Islam's three holiest sites. The other two are the *Masjid al-Haram* (The sacred Mosque) in Mecca and the *Al-Masjid an-Nabawi* (the Mosque of the prophet) in Medina (Huda, 2017). Palestinians fear that President Trump's decision could limit access to the *Al-Aqsa* Mosque (Huda, 2017).

Standing up to the U.S. decision regarding *Al-Quds*, Hamas's new political chief, Ismail Haniyeh, displayed his charisma by channelling the anger of Palestinians (*TRTWorld*, 2017). This occurred during shows of Palestinian solidarity including a huge rally held at al-Katiba Square on Dec. 16 to commemorate Hamas's 30th anniversary. During this display of Palestinian loyalty and pride consisting of around a hundred thousand Palestinians all dressed in Hamas colours of green and black, Haniyeh held firm on a new position that every Friday should be a "day of rage" (Burns, 2017). He stated that this should occur within Jerusalem and throughout other Muslim cities in the world (*Sputnik*, 2017). Haniyeh's commitment towards the Palestinian and Muslim cause reached a high point with his promotion of a new shared purpose in the form of a "third intifada" (Alsoos, 2017b). Consistent with the values of forming a single Palestinian government at this time, Haniyeh took a firm stance in promoting Hamas's nationalist goals by declaring that all of Jerusalem is the capital of the state of Palestine:

"Jerusalem is one, is united, no East, or West, Jerusalem, is Palestinian, Arabic, and Muslim, and it is the capital of the state of Palestine. Palestine is united and together from the sea to the river. It does not accept any splitting up, or two states, or any other state. Palestine is for us, and Jerusalem is all for us. We do not accept the legitimacy of the occupation in Palestine" (Haniyeh, 2017).

President Trump's announcement regarding the future status of *Al-Quds* carries with it other ethical connotations regarding the shared purpose of building a future Palestine (Gilenson, 2017). Through his ethical commitment, Haniyeh argued that the Trump administration is planning other moves associated with this decision that seek to undermine Palestinian nationalist goals. One of these is to identify Israel as a Jewish state in complete disregard for Palestinian claims such as the right of return for Palestinian refugees. This is an important shared purpose of both Hamas and the Palestinians they represent. Israel may therefore be given greater license to increase its illegal expansionist policy into remaining Palestinian territory. This is because more radical elements within the Israeli government are now under the impression from the Trump Administration that they may further discard international law (Kuttab, 2018a).

It is worth noting that within the revised charter under the heading "The Position toward Occupation and Political Solutions" Hamas leaders also consider a more feasible political attitude towards the outline of a future a Palestinian state (Mee Staff, 2017). Hamas is now more sensitive to a broader range of Palestinian views for the creation of a national consensus. While such a view has been present in theory since the 1990s, its inclusion within the updated Hamas charter is noteworthy. Its allowance for a future Palestinian state along June 4th, 1967 lines with Jerusalem as its future capital now allows for flexibility when interpreting Hamas's major ideological document and its future goals. The original 1988 charter only forwarded the uncompromised liberation of all of Palestine "from the River Jordan in the east to the Mediterranean in the west" (Hroub, 2017).

As the response from Palestinians and the Arab/Muslim world was quite moderate towards President Trump's Jerusalem decision, Sinwar tried to motivate greater commitment by declaring that all Fridays should be a "red blood day" for all Palestinians (Lieber & Toi Staff, 2017). This added momentum to the Palestinian cause

as it occurred the day after it was overwhelmingly decided by the UN to reject Trump's declaration (Beaumont, 2017b). This decision saw 128 nations vote overwhelmingly for this resolution while only nine voted against it, despite threats from U.S. ambassador, Nikki Haley that the U.S. would not forget those who opposed it. As Sinwar is a role model through symbolizing resistance for young Palestinians he provided them with specific instructions on how to respond towards Israel's occupation. These included, resisting IDF soldiers, greater participation in protests, and holding rallies after Friday morning prayers. He also completely denounced any potential for President Trump's "deal of the century" to be used as a peace plan in the region (Lieber & Toi Staff, 2017).

Hamas's new political bureau chief continued to take a stand on this difficult issue while being mindful of the Palestinian reconciliation accord. On Jan. 23, 2018, Haniyeh broadcasted a speech in Gaza urging the Palestinian national conference to devise a new strategy to respond to U.S. and Israeli efforts to undermine Palestinian nationalism (*Xinhua*, 2018). This occurred at the end of U.S. Vice President Mike Pence's visit to Israel, which Haniyeh called unwelcomed. Pence had given a speech before the Knesset a day earlier which Haniyeh argued revealed the Trump Administration's unity with the Zionist entity. During Pence's speech, Israel's Joint Arab List law makers held up signs stating, "East Jerusalem" in English and Arabic protesting what they referred to as Pence's racism (Toi Staff, 2018a) According to Haniyeh, this is because the U.S. is not a neutral peace mediator as it's leaders ignore the Palestinian perspective by preferring its strategic alliance with Israel (Agencies and Toi Staff, 2018). Recently, the U.S. has also cut funds to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, UNRWA, which is the UN body that assists Palestinian refugees. Haniyeh stated that while Hamas is willing to visit any capital to devise a new Palestinian strategy, Cairo would be preferred through its support of the current Palestinian unity deal (Ians, 2018b).

The critical interpretive exploration now turns to the vision and goals that these leaders have for Hamas's future regarding regional and international actors occurring at this time of the unity accord.

Inspirational motivation:

Regarding Hamas's goals with regional and international actors at this time, Arouri stated that Hamas's vision is to remain focused towards Palestinian unity without being affected by present conflicts or agendas in the region (*The Islamic Resistance Movement, 2017*). This meant that the new leadership would not be concerned with how Israel and the U.S. was trying to derail its goal of establishing a single, reformed Palestinian political system. Immediately after Oct. 12 U.S. Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. envoy to Israel Jason Greenblatt stated that Hamas must accept the conditions of the Quartet for Israel and the U.S. to accept them as part of a new Palestinian government (Dunne & Wallies, 2017). However, in line with its vision of increasing the strategic depth of its resistance doctrine its leaders have refused to disarm and will continue developing its weapons arsenal. Sinwar promoted this high standard with excessive zeal throughout press conferences and meetings:

“There's not one minute of the day or night that when we aren't building up our military might”, and “gone is the time of recognising Israel, the issue is now when to wipe it out” (Khoury, 2017d). “we can strike Israel for a period of 51 minutes at the same level we attack Tel Aviv for 51 days. The conditions of the occupation are intolerable” (Halevi, 2017).

While he exaggerates, Sinwar is aware of the threat the IDF poses towards Gazans and wishes to give the impression that the new leadership is ready to protect them. His use of the number “51” is a reference to the length of Hamas's last war with Israel in 2014 when over 2000 Palestinians died (Blumenthal, 2015). When combining Hamas's last two wars with Israel just under 4000 Palestinians have been killed (*The*

Islamic Resistance Movement, 2015). There are also thousands more who have been wounded, as well as the psychological impact caused by Israeli aggression. It also must be considered that while threats are made towards Israel within speeches, issues relating to Palestinian well-being harkening back to Hamas's grassroots days are not explored well by Journalists (Marzen, 2017). The use of confrontational language against Israel often makes up little of what is said at meetings and serves the goal of benefitting the occupation through being taken out of context. This is because such rhetoric places the occupation as the victimized entity. As early as June of 2017 Hamas's leadership announced that it did want another war with Israel, as this would disrupt its future-plans of building a unity government and improving ties with Iran and Egypt (Toi, 2017). Its new leadership argues that Hamas has never initiated war with Israel as these are defensive in nature. Hamas's last war with Israel was only three years ago and exacerbated difficulties within the enclave. The infrastructure within Gaza is still yet to be rebuilt and another war would only make the highly disparate situation there worse (Kubovich, 2017).

It is not realistic for Hamas to adhere to the principles set by Israel and the Quartet. Since the 1993 Oslo peace accords, U.S. and Israeli sanctions and the PA's coordination with Israel have made the peace process practically impossible (Hroub, 2017). The PLO and the PA have committed to all of Israel's and the Quartet's conditions in the past such as recognising Israel, honouring agreements, and abandoning armed resistance. It is irrelevant that Hamas accept any of these requirements as Israel profits by pursuing an aggressive policy of illegal land confiscation and refusing the right of return to Palestinian refugees (Hroub, 2017). Recently, there has been human rights violations in the occupied territories and Zionist expansion in the form of building settlements into the West Bank and East Jerusalem (*Human Rights Watch, 2017*). From the start of 2017 until June, the outline for nearly 5,000 housing units in the settlements has been endorsed. This is nearly twice as many for the whole of the previous year, and in half the time (*PeaceNow, 2017*). These areas which are controlled by the PA are now easily exploited by Israel through the PA's acceptance of peace deals (*The Islamic Resistance Movement, 2015*).

Regardless of Hamas's new leadership rejecting the three Quartet terms, Sinwar has continued to express determination and optimism in completing a successful unity agreement (Benari, 2017b). He announced that it was a strategic goal for Hamas to relinquish its authority over the Gaza Strip of which there can be no return. As a silver lining to President Trump's Jerusalem announcement, Hamas's new leadership stated that it is now more determined in their goal of unifying Palestinians under a single PLO and in working towards a Palestinian state with *Al-Quds* as its future capital (Kuttab, 2017). Sinwar states:

“We are concerned about the possibility that reconciliation will fail and will continue for years. The continuation of the current situation will have disastrous consequences, and therefore Hamas will not be a part of the destruction. This declaration (Trump's Jerusalem decision) is a real opportunity to overcome the obstacles in the way to reconciliation” (Benari, 2017b).

This was supported at the end of January during a speech by Haniyeh in the Gaza Strip:

“We are still onto our positions on reconciliation, ending the division and restoring unity. We have not departed from the positions, and I don't believe Hamas will depart from these positions” (Rasgon, 2018).

Another future goal in the works for Hamas during the unity accord worthy of note involved Sinwar working towards the difficult arrangement of another prisoner exchange deal with Israel (Eldar, 2017g). These are challenging to produce owing to the large numbers that Hamas require from these. In the last prisoner exchange in 2011, over a thousand Hamas associates were traded for one Israeli Soldier. Sinwar, who was one of these Palestinians has spearheaded the collective vision of another

prisoner swap. This time round, Hamas want to exchange two bodies from Operation Protective Edge and two captured civilians. While reconciliation talks were held in Cairo on Oct. 29, an Egyptian devised plan for such an exchange was accepted by Sinwar, but later refused by Israel (Benari, 2017c). By Dec. 1, the issue was breached again in Cairo. A prisoner deal can bring honour to Sinwar through the high benchmark it sets. It would be in the shared interest of Hamas's leadership at this time as many of its leaders are incarcerated (Toi, 2017). This includes 39 that were recaptured after being freed in the 2011 deal, such as Hassan Salameh, Abbas al-Sayid, Marwan Berghont, and Ahmed Saadat (*Meir Intelligence and Terrorism Information Centre, 2017*). The recapturing of prisoners once they have been released serves to undermine prisoner exchanges between the two parties. Hamas perceives this as a violation of the exchange system and as a lack of commitment by Israel (*The Islamic Resistance Movement, 2015*).

With the discussion of Hamas's inspirational motivation throughout the unity accord and how it's leaders view regional and international actors now concluded, the intellectual stimulation leadership aspects presented by these leaders will now be explored.

Intellectual stimulation:

Owing to the weakened state of the al-Qassam brigades and the war in Syria subsiding, Hamas's new leaders have decided to rebuild its fragile ties with Iran (Eldar, 2018b). Israel and the Quartet demand that Hamas break all ties with Iran to be accepted as a part of a unified Palestinian government. Fatah leaders, such as al-Ahmed have also cited Hamas's improving relationship with Iran as the greatest obstacle to Palestinian unity through Iran's patronage of the al-Qassam brigades (Lieber, 2017d). However, both Sinwar and Arouri announced that their current meetings in Tehran during the early stages of the accord was a practical refusal of this demand (Benari, 2017d). After an initial visit by Hamas leaders in Summer, Haniyeh

stated that Hamas's relationship with Iran was now improving due to the war in Syria receding (*Jerusalem Post, 2017*). On Oct. 20, Arouri continued this work by leading another high-ranking delegation to Tehran to increase Iran's improved support (Benari, 2017e). Its conclusion was marked as a strong success for Hamas with Arouri stating:

“We and our brothers share solid ground, on the basis of which we can always build and develop our relationship. The Islamic Republic adapted a Palestinian cause and it supports the rights of Palestinians, and I hope that it will continue until the resistance is able to defeat the occupation” (Julian, 2017a).

Hamas's new leadership is rebuilding its military alliances and strategy by questioning its past relationship towards other regional actors during the unity accord. This includes developing a closer relationship to Hezbollah (*The Tower, 2017*). On Nov.1 Arouri headed a delegation to Beirut to conduct rare talks with Hezbollah's top leader, Hassan Nasrallah (Latina, 2017). The two leaders agreed that Israel was attempting to foil Palestinian unity through the destruction of its tunnels and the killing of Hamas associates, with Nasrallah offering his condolences to the families of the martyrs. On Nov. 6, Arouri once again visited Iran for the funeral of Qassaim Suleimani, the commander of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard's elite force (Lieber, 2017e). This was also used as an opportunity to cement improving ties between Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran. While in Tehran Arouri commented that Hamas could not question its past assumptions regarding its resistance strategy while Palestine is occupied:

“We do not recognise Israel's legitimacy, and do not accept their existence on this land. We cannot give up our principles relating to our people's right's, our duty is to our people and in confronting the Israeli occupation” (Rasgon,2017a).

Throughout the reconciliation process, Sinwar also shared this view by arguing that Hamas needed to build greater strategic depth (Khoury, 2017d). After the visits to Tehran, Sinwar and Arouri announced that Hamas's relationship with its major past ally was now rebuilt with the issues that had strained it now resolved (JTA, 2017). Arouri stated that regardless of the recent alterations to Hamas's charter, there is no change in Hamas's strategy regarding the rights of Palestinians and the illegitimacy of the occupation (Rasgon, 2017a). The revised charter considers a move away from the complete destruction of Israel towards a Palestinian state based along June 4, 1967 borders (A document of general principles and policies, 2017). However, throughout reconciliation this was never described as important as the total liberation of Palestine "from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea" (*Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, 2017*). This allows flexibility in the interpretation of this new document as it can be seen along both 1948 and 1967 lines. For example, in a statement regarding the revised charter, Arouri remains true to 1948 criteria:

"there will be nothing new in terms of our belief in the right of the Palestinian people to all of Palestine, the illegitimacy of the occupation, and our right to use all forms of resistance to confront the occupation" (Rasgon, 2017a).

Haniyeh for his part questioned this ridged principle by stating before just before the signing of the unity accord that Hamas is willing to consider a Palestinian state consistent with the 1967 borders with *Al-Quds* as its capital (Zboum, 2017). However, it will not recognise Israel or tolerate more illegal land settlements, and a Palestinian state along 1967 lines must be a "national consensus" which is also cited as a condition in the revised charter. Sinwar, Haniyeh, and Arouri also view reconciliation as a purely Palestinian enterprise and none of Israel's or the America's business (Abramson, 2017). Sinwar has stated:

“If Israel is thinking of foiling reconciliation, it will be taught a lesson not to intervene in our affairs” (Halevi, 2017).

While the rethinking of ties between Hamas and Iran was assisted by regional changes, Sinwar’s ability to question past assumptions is also relevant (Jeremy Bob, 2018). As the major leader of the al-Qassam brigades, he realises that Iran is the most reliable source for weapons and training. By January Arouri developed Hamas’s ties with Hezbollah further by discussing a new future strategy between the two organizations. While in the past Hamas maintained a presence in Beirut through sharing smuggling routes and training, its senior leaders such as Mishaal did not establish an operation base there (Eldar, 2018b). Hamas had only maintained a small presence in Lebanon owing to its severed ties with Syria (Hashem, 2017). By January, Hamas and Hezbollah were closer than ever revealing a new strategy based on common interests (Harel, 2018a). Arouri and Nasrallah discussed a new alliance between Hamas and Hezbollah under an Iranian umbrella. This desire to build a unified Islamic front against Israel gained greater momentum after Trump’s Jerusalem declaration (O’Conner, 2017). A new alliance between Muslim actors may also include the Iranian Revolutionary Guard as its leader Qassem Soleimani also pledged his support to Sinwar (Benari, 2017f).

Hamas’s new leadership is not only rethinking its alliance to Hezbollah but may also be reconsidering its geopolitical strategy regarding military operations (Harel, 2018a). However, this would have to be viewed with scepticism (El-Komi, 2018). This is because Hamas has made it clear within its policy that it will confine operations within Palestine. The leadership of Hamas states that it wishes to maintain the civil peace in Lebanon (Baraka, 2018). It does not wish to be dragged into another conflict with Israel, especially one outside of Palestine. As Arouri has spent time improving its ties with Hezbollah, Israeli propaganda has suggested that he is establishing an operation’s base in Beirut close to the Israeli border (Eldar, 2018b). By January 2018, as Hamas had rethought its ties to Hezbollah, Israel accused Arouri of building a base

in Southern Lebanon. However, it is possible that such claims are devised to justify military action against Hamas, as Israel is fully aware that Hamas's leadership has revealed great self-restraint during this time of national reconciliation (El-Komi, 2018).

As Hamas's new leadership is improving ties with Egypt, it has built on its past approach towards ISIS in the Gaza Strip. While Hamas's past leadership despised ISIS, its new leaders are now involved in stronger coordination with Egyptian officials in the Sinai (Rahman, 2018). As a response, ISIS has accused these leaders of opposing the resistance through its efforts to create a unity government through Egyptian mediation. The Dec.6 Jerusalem declaration complicated this further as shortly after ISIS release a video which berated Hamas for suppressing Salafist groups in Gaza for firing rockets into Israel and accused Hamas leaders of failing to prevent Trump's announcement (Morris, 2018). Its leaders also argued that Hamas's new leaders lacked the religious zeal required to lead Palestinians through its current questioning of past Islamic values such as a total commitment to sharia law. Hamas leaders may increase its war against ISIS if they begin to fire rockets into Israel as Hamas are held to account (Moore, 2018).

On Jan. 14 an important meeting took place for the Palestinian Central Council (PCC) involving over 80 members headed by Abbas (Kuttab, 2018b). While the PA President accused Hamas of failing to honour rules of the unity deal, his most scathing attacks were towards President Trump (Halbfinger, 2018). Hamas leaders boycotted accusing the Palestinian National Committee (PNC) of failing the Palestinian national unity project and feared it would act insufficiently towards current U.S. diplomacy. They believe that the meetings aimed for an alternative means of rebuilding the peace process, which will ultimately serve the occupation (*The Islamic Resistance Movement, 2018*). Abbas also criticised the Oslo Accords and even resolved to disband the PA (Kuttab, 2018c). However, it is unlikely that this will be implemented as Israel control too much security through the terms of these accords. Therefore, to do this would create a massive security vacuum and would result in lawlessness.

There is no real sign of ending the security coordination between Israel and the Palestinian institutions that Abbas controls and that are so unpopular with Palestinians (Harel, 2018a).

The critical interpretive analysis will now conclude by exploring the shared passive management by exception behaviour displayed by Hamas leaders when aiming to end Palestinian division from October to February.

Shared Transactional leadership

Passive management by exception:

Throughout the unity accord Hamas's leadership expressed passive management by exception in its relationship with Israel. This was in the form of showing a high level of *sabr* towards the IDF to prevent another war right now. Since the beginning of the unit accord, there has been some indication that the IDF is trying to foil Palestinian reconciliation by provoking Hamas in the hope that it will retaliate and reveal an inability to be pragmatic now (El-Komi, 2018). As a response, Hamas's leadership has had to ignore the decision to attack Israel while they conducted attacks against Hamas associates. Shortly after the unity accord signing an assassination attempt occurred on the head of Hamas's security in Gaza, General Tawfik Abu Naim (Rasgon, 2017c). Palestinian leaders, including Haniyeh, surrounded Abu Naim in hospital in a show of unity. Haniyeh directed blame towards Israel, stating:

“Those who think that that this crime can limit our determination to achieve national reconciliation are wrong” (Benari, 2017g).

An important part of Hamas's military strategy is the building of tunnels throughout Gaza which at times narrowly enter Egypt and Israel. However, these tunnels also serve important economic ends (Taha, 2017). Israel's relentless blockade has meant finding ways of smuggling important resources into Gaza. Four of Hamas's border tunnels were attacked in the early stages of the unity deal helped by Israeli innovations in tunnel elimination (Harel, 2018b). Soon after the signing of the unity accord in Cairo, Hamas's leadership was forced to show passive management as the IDF detonated a tunnel located near the border fence with the Gaza Strip killing seven Palestinians, two of which belonged to Hamas (Levy, Tzuri, & Zitun, 2017). Haniyeh believed that this was another attempt by the IDF to sabotage reconciliation efforts by trying to force Hamas to retaliate by firing rockets into Israel (Lieber & Ari Gross, 2017). While Islamic Jihad and Salafist groups were actively promoting a unified militant response towards this attack by firing rockets into Israel, Hamas urged restraint with consensus from Egypt. Its Foreign Ministry referred to those who died as now martyred while agreeing that it was an attempt to undermine the legitimacy of Palestinian nationalism. Haniyeh addressed the families at the funeral of those killed and restated Hamas's determination to form a unity government through ignoring violent retaliation:

“This enemy deludes itself if it believes that by means of this massacre it will impose its rules of the game upon us. Our determination is stronger than the enemy, we will continue our efforts to achieve Palestinian unity-this is one of the ways of responding to this massacre” (Birnbaum, 2017).

At the funeral of those killed the following day, Hamas leaders addressed why they were ignoring retaliation towards Israel during this time (AFP, 2017d). They stated how they understand how the conflict should be managed Israel and know how to strike at the time and place that harms Israel. This is regarded under the resistance section of Hamas's revised charter as resistance now includes managing resistance:

“ Hamas rejects any attempt to undermine the resistance and its aims. It also affirms the right of our people to develop the means and mechanisms of our people. Managing resistance in terms of escalation and de-escalation, or in terms of diversifying the means and methods is an integral part of the process of managing conflict and should not be at the expense of the resistance” (Document of general principles and policies, 2017).

At the funeral, Haniyeh again remarked on the counterproductive nature of the PA’s continue security coordination with Israel especially while Hamas and other groups are being attacked (Birnbaum, 2017). Reactions from Gulf States was one of high condemnation against Israel. A spokesperson from Iran’s Foreign Ministry, Bahram Qassemi, referred to Israel as “bloodthirsty” and trying to sway the oppressed Palestinians in their occupied territories away from unity (Halon, 2017). Leaders from Qatar condemned the attack as a violation of international law with its Foreign Minister referring to the dead as martyrs. He stated that the attack was another attempt to undermine the legitimacy of the Palestinian nationalism (Toi, 2017). Hezbollah leader, Nasrallah also condemned the attacks referring to the dead as “martyrs” (Lieber, 2017f).

On Jan. 14, 2018, the IDF destroyed another crossing stretching underneath the Kerem Shalom, which was a major source of strength for Gaza’s crippled economy (Ahronheim, 2018). It had allowed Hamas to bring 15 million tons of food, construction materials, and clothing into the suffering territory (Heller, 2018). This was the fourth tunnel destroyed since October. These are also tunnels useful for launching attacks. As Hamas wishes to avoid war, Sinwar continued to promote self-restraint however by delaying offensive measures and utilising remaining tunnels in a more defensive manner (Issacharoff, 2018b). The destruction of this tunnel is embarrassing for Hamas as it entered Egyptian territory and may increase Egypt’s suspicion of Hamas during a time when its leaders are rebuilding ties through reconciliation. Regardless of taunts from Israel’s Coordinator of Government Activities

in the Territories, Major General Yoav Mordechai, Hamas's "time was up", its leaders still maintained *sabr* throughout January for the sake of Palestinian nationalism (Harel, 2018b).

While Hamas's new leadership presented anti-Israeli rhetoric during this time, it is committed to delaying war (Julian, 2017b). Israel on the other hand would prefer a military confrontation with Hamas in favour of the current peaceful mass protests Hamas leaders are encouraging, if these lead to a third intifada this would be costly for Israel (Alsoos, 2017b). On Feb. 3, 2018, the IDF launched another attack with its fighter jets bombing two of Hamas's military positions in the Southern Gaza Strip in retaliation for a rocket fired into Israel (Toi Staff, 2018b). While Hamas probably wasn't behind the rocket attack, Israel still considers them in control of Gaza. The following day Sinwar announced that there is a 95 percent probability that another war with Israel may occur in a matter of days (Khoury, 2018b). He suspected that Israel may use a training exercise on the Southern front as a disguise to begin another war with Hamas. As a result, Sinwar warned Gazans to be on high alert. While wanting to delay war, Hamas leaders still prepared for an attack with its headquarters abandoned, checkpoints established, and the al-Qassam brigades mobilized (Winer, 2018). It is possible that Sinwar's recent announcement of an imminent war with Israel is to generate greater attention to the humanitarian crisis and the lack of momentum regarding Palestinian reconciliation (Khoury, 2018b).

With reconciliation still stalling by the end of February, Hamas leaders including Sinwar agreed to meet Fatah leaders in Gaza by the end of the month (Khoury, 2018b). Hamas argues that the PA has been given administrative control over Gaza, however, Abbas still shows no sign of lifting sanctions. With the current humanitarian crisis in Gaza combined with the stalemate in reconciliation the mood in the small enclave is one of great sadness. While Hamas leader displayed strong self-restraint at this stage of the accord, life has become intolerable for Gazans who blame the situation on Israel's continued blockade (Eldar, 2018a). Israeli politicians such as

Prime Minister Netanyahu showed little interest in estimating the long-term impact of the blockade since 2007. This regardless of the findings of its state comptroller which reveal a strong correlation between poverty and war in Gaza. This is because Israel's security cabinet decided to view the blockade as the best means of weakening Hamas's political credibility. However, it has made living conditions so intolerable in the Gaza Strip that Palestinian factions have been more likely to respond violently out of sheer desperation (Eldar, 2017f).

7 Key findings

The preceding critical interpretive analysis explored two interrelated questions regarding the position of Hamas's strategic direction under its newly appointed leadership: How is Hamas's newly elected leaders reconciling with Fatah to form a unity government; and what position does Hamas's new leadership have regarding regional and international actors during this unity accord. The major obstacle for reconciliation on the surface appeared to be the uncompromising unwillingness of Hamas's new leadership to dismantle the infrastructure of its militant wing due to a desire to destroy Israel. However, this would be a highly superficial and narrow interpretation of events conforming to the spoiler representation that has restricted a more critical understanding behind the motives of this resistance movement.

Idealized Influence

During Hamas's reconciliation with Fatah, the idealized influence of its new leaders was active in certain aspects. Sinwar tended to embody the charismatic leadership feature of this criteria more than Haniyeh and Arouri as he was viewed more as an embodiment of the Palestinian cause. While he remained true to the democratic process valued by Hamas's leadership organisation, he also showed decisiveness in initiating a unity deal. The democratic instatement of Sinwar and Haniyeh was highly praised by other factions for its democratic style and was viewed as a positive step towards establishing a unity accord. This value of democratic consensus when its leaders make decisions can be viewed at the beginning of Hamas's revised charter. Both Sinwar and Arouri share important features that increase their idealized influence which inspires adherence from fellow Palestinians. Both are 'hardliners' meaning they have extensive experience in Hamas's armed wing. However, they are willing to make concessions for the sake of the shared purpose of uniting Palestinians. Both leaders have spent over two decades in Israeli jails revealing their commitment and sacrifice for the Palestinian struggle.

Idealized influence was a notable leadership trait for Haniyeh and Sinwar after U.S. President Trump's Dec. 6 Jerusalem declaration. With the regional and International response being one of outrage Haniyeh used his charisma to channel feelings of violation in defence of the Muslim value placed on *Al-Quds* as Islam's third holiest site and the capital of a future Palestinian state. This was done during Hamas's 30th anniversary celebration and throughout speeches. His main vision for his fellow Palestinians, while failing to achieve momentum, was for the beginning of a third intifada. Haniyeh revealed strong ethical leanings through his concern that Trump's decision might set a precedence for other actions that undermine Palestinian nationalism. This is a major feature articulated within Hamas's new charter and aims for a future Palestine preferably on 1948 borders, but also considers 1967 lines. Sinwar built on Haniyeh's "day of rage" rhetoric by connecting with with Palestinian youth in meetings and declaring that Fridays should be a "day of blood" meaning Palestinians should resist Israel police and protest.

Inspirational motivation

The inspirational motivation aspects of Hamas's new leadership were presented throughout reconciliation. While Hamas's newly elected leaders possess a powerful vision to end the Palestinian division that has limited its nationalistic goals, it will not dismantle its al-Qassam brigades. This is articulated within its revised charter as Hamas's extremely difficult goal of Palestinian liberation and a Palestinian state require armed resistance to end Israel's occupation. Shortly after the signing of the unity accord in Cairo, Hamas transferred control over its three border crossings to the PA. However, hopes that these would be opened in a more frequent manner have not materialized. PA President Abbas' refusal to ease sanctions combined with other economic developments since Dec. 10 such as the transfer of tax revenues from Gaza's Ministry of Finance to the PA has contributed to the non-existent economy in the tiny enclave. Another criticism directed towards the PA from Hamas's leadership throughout negotiations is the PA's continuation to coordinate with Israel's security forces. This is the result of the despised Oslo Accords. Hamas leaders believe there is

no place for Israeli interference in Palestinian unity and that Israel wishes to develop its land settlements which are considered illegal by international law.

Throughout the reconciliation, both Sinwar and Arouri applied powerful rhetoric to oppose the three demands of Israel and the Quartet as conditions of a unity government. Sinwar argued that rather than recognise Israel, Hamas is preparing to “wipe it out”. However, this is not realistic owing to Hamas being exceedingly weaker than Israel militarily. Hamas’s new leadership does not desire war with Israel now through its focus on reconciliation and improving its regional ties with actors such as Egypt, Iran, and Hezbollah. It is the type of rhetoric used to reinforce Hamas’s commitment to striving against the occupation. Also, Hamas like other Palestinians are aware of Israeli military aggression through the three wars it has fought with it in the Gaza Strip since 2008. It is not practical to adhere to the three demands of the Quartet as Fatah has done so yet it failed to stop Zionist land theft. Hamas is also interested in another prisoner swap with Israel lead by Sinwar.

Intellectual stimulation

Intellectual stimulation was a major leadership trait for Hamas’s new leaders throughout the unity accord. Hamas’s revised charter reflected this as it now has a new perspective focusing on nationalistic goals rather than Islamic ones revealing the questioning of past assumptions, beliefs, and traditions. The new goal of Hamas’s leadership is Palestinian unity through the inclusive rebuilding of its political institutions and creating a Palestinian state. However, while Palestine is still under occupation the strategy of resistance is still the primary means of achieving this. Throughout reconciliation Hamas leaders viewed its weapons as a red line not to be crossed. However, they are willing to make the concession of allowing its weapons to serve under a united and restructured PLO that serves all Palestinians.

Intellectual stimulation also occurred for Hamas's new leadership through innovating new ties with other regional actors, such as Iran, Hezbollah, and Egypt which acts as a mediator for Palestinian reconciliation. Arouri led two delegations to Tehran during this time to restore past relations. This is a very important strategic development for Hamas as it is improving its regional and strategic power. Hamas's resistance strategy is now improving by building its relationship with Iran and the Lebanese resistance group, Hezbollah. With Trump's Jerusalem declaration, there were talks between Arouri and Hezbollah's top leader Nasrallah signalling the possibility of a strategic alliance existing between Hamas and Hezbollah under Iran.

Passive management by exception

Throughout the early stages of the unity accord, Hamas's new leaders displayed passive management by exception by putting off the important issues. These included: the fate of around 100,000 civil servants; controversial land distributed to Hamas associates; and most challenging the management of the al-Qassam brigades, which are viewed by the PA as a serious obstacle for unity. During reconciliation talks, this last issue was viewed as the elephant in the room. By the deadline of Dec.1 the transfer of political authority to the PA was increased to Dec. 10 as other issues relating to security were unresolved. When this new date arrived, very little had changed regarding security in Gaza as Hamas still governed in practice.

Because Hamas's new leadership is determined to reconcile with Fatah and does not desire war with Israel right now, passive management by exception in the form of self-restraint was also highly practiced. This occurred with Haniyeh promoting greater Palestinian unity while delaying violent retaliation against Israel even though the IDF conducted destructive actions such as destroying four strategically important border tunnels from October to January. This ability of Hamas's new leadership to display this *sabr* is consistent with its pragmatic approach as these leaders are aware that resistance is about more than violent retaliation. Hamas revised charter indicates that resistance must be managed including escalation and de-escalation measures.

However, it must also be considered that Hamas's military wing is yet to recover from its last war with Israel in 2014.

7.1 Conclusion

2017 marked a highly innovative year for the Islamic resistance movement- Hamas. Its leadership structure experienced a large reshuffling signalling a new domestic, regional, and international strategic era. This began in February with the naming of the charismatic hardliner, Yahya Sinwar, replacing Ismail Haniyeh as Hamas's new top leaders in the Gaza Strip. Due to internal bylaws, Ismail Haniyeh would replace Khaled Mishaal as the new chief of the political bureau in May after Mishaal had held this position for nearly 20 years. Just before the unity signing in October, this leadership reorganization was completed through the naming of Saleh al-Arouri as Haniyeh's deputy and top leader in exile. Throughout the current unity agreement with the PA beginning in Cairo on Oct. 12 the shared transformational and transactional leadership criteria provided as the theoretical framework for this research has provided a broad framework for describing the actions and motive of these new leaders.

Another key shift for Hamas during this time of internal restructuring was the revision of its 1988 charter. Within this updated version, anti-Semitic language is replaced with opposition towards an aggressive Zionist colonization program that builds new settlements deemed illegal by international law. Rather than emphasising Hamas's Islamic character, such as defining Palestine as an Islamic *waqf*, the new document describes Palestine and Palestinians in nationalist terms. However, despite of this alteration to its founding charter it is essential to remember that the motives of Hamas leaders since the 1990s have always reflected such goals. While much western scholarship has portrayed Hamas through a spoiler lens, some scholarship considers these pragmatic elements. It could therefore be argued that while the revised charter represents a desire by its new leadership to adapt to contemporary political realities, little has change in the goals of the movement overall.

The beginning of the unity accord in October 2017 was met with enthusiasm for what was perceived by Palestinians to be a possible end to the division and the lifting of PA sanctions. However, there was also scepticism that reconciliation would break down as it had done so many times in the past. While greater incentive existed for a successful reconciliation this time around owing to the growing humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, along with Hamas's new leadership and charter, with the conclusion of this research talks had reached a stalemate. The unity accord showed some early promise with Hamas successfully transferring control over its three main border crossings. However, as reconciliation talks unfolded certain key issues have proven up until February to be complicating the establishment of a united Palestinian government. The announcement on Dec. 6 by U.S President Donald Trump that the U.S. embassy will move from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, while complicating matter also added a new incentive for Palestinian unity. While reconciliation talks were at a dead-end by the conclusion of this critical interpretive analysis in February, Hamas's leadership has stated that they are still committed to ending the division with future talks scheduled for Cairo.

By signing a unity accord with the PA, Hamas's new leadership showed its willingness to make concessions by relinquishing its political control over the Gaza Strip. These leaders are now aiming to move away from this difficult administrative position in the small territory as this weakened Hamas's ability to act as a resistance movement and was impossible to establish an economy along regular lines owing to external sanctions, such as Israel's blockade. Hamas's new leadership now possess the shared vision of strengthening its strategic depth through its improved relations with important regional supporters, such as Egypt, Iran, and Hezbollah. However, as they are symbolic of the Palestinian struggle they also wanted to reduce the suffering of Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip.

Bibliography

Books

- Alexander, Y. (2002). *Palestinian religious terrorism: Hamas and Islamic jihad*. New York: Transnational Publishers.
- Alteide, D. (1996). *Qualitative media analysis*. Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications.
- Barbour, R. (2014). *Introducing qualitative research: a student's guide*. London: Sage Publications.
- Baym, G. (2012). "Critical interpretive methods: social meanings and media texts." In *Media research methods: understanding metric and interpretive approaches*, Edited by James Anderson. 323-350. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Bernard, H. (2000). *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Blumenthal, M. (2015). *The 51-day war: ruin and resistance in Gaza*. London: Verso.
- Brenner, B. (2016). *Gaza under Hamas: From Islamic democracy to Islamic governance*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Chehab, Z. (2007). *Inside Hamas: the untold story of militants, martyrs, and spies*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Cross, C., & Carbery, R. (2016). *Organisational behaviour: an introduction*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- David, M. & Sutton, C. (2011). *Social research: an introduction*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Davidson, C., & Tolich, M. (2003). *Social science research in New Zealand: many paths to understanding*. (2nd Ed.). Auckland: Pearson.
- Denscombe, M. (2010). *Ground rules for social research: guidelines for good practice*. (2nd Ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Dunning, T. (2016). *Hamas, jihad and popular legitimacy: reinterpreting resistance in Palestine*. London: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Gunning, J. (2009). *Hamas in politics: democracy, religion, violence*. London: Hurst.
- Guthrie, G. (2010). *Basic research methods: an entry to social research*. California: Sage Publications.
- Hroub, K. (2010). *Hamas: a beginner's guide*. London: Pluto Press.
- Huff, A. (2009). *Designing Research for Publication*. Los Angeles: Sage Publication.
- Jefferis, J. (2016). *Hamas: terrorism, governance, and its future in Middle East politics*. California: Praeger.
- Jensen, M. (2009). *The political ideology of Hamas: a grassroots perspective*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Kuyper, J. (2014). *Partisan journalism: a history of media bias in the United States*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Landy, F., & Conte, J. (2010). *Work in the 21st century: an introduction to industrial and organizational psychology*. New Jersey: Wiley.
- Levitt, M. (2006). *Hamas: politics, charity, and terrorism in the service of jihad*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Macintyre, D. (2017). *Gaza: preparing for dawn*. London: One World Publications.
- Marsh, D., & Furlong, P. (2010). "A Skin Not a Sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science." In *Theories and methods in political science*, edited by David Marsh and Gerry Stoker. 17-31. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- May, T. (1997). *Social research issues, methods and process*. Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- McGeough, P. (2009). *Kill Khaled: the failed Mossad assassination of Khaled Mishal and the rise of Hamas*. New York: New Press.

Milton-Edwards, B. & Farrell, S. (2010). *Hamas: the Islamic resistance movement*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Mishal, S., & Sela, A. (2000). *The Palestinian Hamas: vision, violence, and coexistence*. New York: Columbia University Press.

O'Leary, Z. (2005). *Researching real-world problems: A guide to methods and inquiry*. Oxford: Sage Publications.

Palestinian territories: recent history. (2017). *The Middle East and North Africa*. London: Routledge.

Parsons, N. (2005). *The politics of the Palestinian authority: from Oslo to al-Aqsa*. London: Routledge.

Pearce, C., & Pearce, J. (2003). *Shared leadership: reframing the hows and whys of leadership*. California: Sage Publications.

Powell, J. (2012). *Foundations of social inquiry: a brief excursion*. New York: Nova Science Publisher's.

Tamimi, A. (2009). *Hamas: unwritten chapters*. London: Hurst & Co.

Warwick, R., & Board, D. (2013). *The social development of leadership and knowledge: a reflexive inquiry into research and practice*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wiles, R. (2013). *What are qualitative research ethics*. Bloomsbury: London.

Academic Journals

Abu Amr, Z. (1993). Hamas: a historical and political background. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 22(4), pp. 5-19.

Bass, B. & Avolio, B. (1993). Transformational leadership and organisational culture. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 17(1), pp. 112-121.

- Bass, B. (1997). Does the transactional-transformational leadership paradigm transcend organizational and national boundaries? *American Psychologist*, 52(2), pp. 130-139.
- Bass, B. (1999). Two decades of research and development in transformational leadership. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 8(1), pp. 9-32.
- Batniji, R., Rabaia, Y., Gillham, V., Giacaman, P., Sarraj, E., Punamaki, R., Saab, H., Boyce, W. (2009). Health as human security in the occupied Palestinian territory. *The Lancet*, 373(9669), pp. 1133-1143.
- Berti, B (2015). Non-state actors as providers of governance: the Hamas government in Gaza between effective sovereignty, centralized authority, and resistance. *The Middle East Journal*, 69(1), pp. 9-31
- Bligh, M., Pearce, C., & Kohles, J. (2006). The importance of self and shared leadership in team-based knowledge work: a meso-level model of leadership dynamics. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 21(4), pp. 296-318.
- Bolden, R. (2011). Distributed leadership in organizations: a review of theory and research. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(3), pp. 251-269.
- Bouris, D., & Reigeluth, S. (2012). Introducing the rule of law in security sector reform: European Union policies in the Palestinian territories. *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*, 4(1), pp. 176-193.
- Dunning, T. (2015). Islam and resistance: Hamas, ideology and Islamic values in Palestine. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 8(2), pp. 284-305.
- Goemans, H. (2008). Which way out? The manner and consequences of losing office. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 52(6), pp. 771-794.
- Goksoy, S. (2016). Analysis of the relationship between shared leadership and distributed leadership. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 65, pp. 295-312.
- Gronn, P. (2002). Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis. *The leadership Quarterly*, 13(4), pp. 423-451.

- Gunning, J. (2004). Peace with Hamas? the transforming potential of political participation. *International Affairs*, 80(2), pp. 233-255.
- Gunning, J. (2007). A case for critical terrorism studies? *Government and Opposition*, 42(3), pp. 363-393.
- Harris, A., Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., & Hopkins, D. (2007). Distributed leadership and organizational change: reviewing the evidence. *Journal of Educational Change*, 8(4), pp. 337-247.
- Houghton, J. (2010). Does Max Weber's notion of authority still hold in the twenty-first century? *Journal of Management History*, 16(4), pp. 449-453.
- Hovdenak, A. (2009). Hamas in transition: the failure of sanctions. *Democratization*, 16(1), pp. 59-80.
- Hox, J. & Boeije, H. (2005). Data collection, primary vs. secondary. *Encyclopedia of Social Movement*, 1, pp. 593-599.
- Hroub, K. (2004). Hamas after Shaykh Yasin and Rantisi. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 33(4), pp. 21-38.
- Hroub, K. (2006). A "new Hamas" through its new documents. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 35(4), pp. 6-27.
- Hroub, K. (2017). A newer Hamas? the revised charter. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 46(4), pp. 100-111.
- Jarbawi, A., & Pearlman, W. (2007). Struggle in a post-transition: rethinking Palestinian politics after Arafat. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 36(4), pp. 6-21.
- Khurana, R. (2002). The curse of the superstar CEO. *Harvard Business Review*, 80(9), pp. 60-66.
- Klein, M. (2007). Hamas in power. *Middle East Journal*, 61(3), pp.442-459.
- Klein, M. (2009). Against the consensus: oppositionist voices in Hamas. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 45(6), pp. 881-892.

- Knudsen, A. (2005). Crescent and sword: the Hamas enigma. *Third World Quarterly*, 26(8), pp. 1373-1388.
- Kocolowski, M. (2010). Share leadership: Is it time for a change? *Emerging Leadership Journals*, 3(1), pp. 22-32.
- Lambert, L. (2002). A framework for shared leadership. *Educational leadership*, 59(8), pp. 37-40.
- Litvak, M. (1998). The Islamization of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict: The case of Hamas. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 34(1), pp. 148-163.
- Maqdsi, M. (1993). Charter of the Islamic resistance movement (Hamas) of Palestine. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 22(4), pp-122-134.
- Milton-Edwards, B. & Crooke, A. (2004). Elusive ingredient: Hamas and the peace process. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 33(4), pp. 39-52.
- Milton-Edwards, B. (2008). The ascendance of political Islam: Hamas and consolidation in the Gaza Strip. *Third World Quarterly*, 29(8), pp. 1585-1599.
- Milton-Edwards, B. (2017). 'The warriors break': Hamas and the limits of ceasefire beyond tactical pause. *International Peacekeeping*, 24(2), pp. 212-235.
- Mishal, S. (2003). The pragmatic dimension of the Palestinian Hamas: A network perspective. *Armed Forces and Society*, 29(4), pp. 569-589.
- Pearce, C. (2004). The future of leadership: combining vertical and shared leadership to transform knowledge work. *The Academy of Management Executive (1992-2005)*, 18(1), pp. 47-59.
- Podder, S. (2013). Non-state armed groups and stability: reconsidering legitimacy and inclusion. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 34(1), pp. 16-39.
- Qarmout, T., & Beland, D. (2012). The politics of international aid to the Gaza Strip. *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, 41(4), pp. 32-47.
- Turner, M. (2006). Building democracy in Palestine: liberal peace theory and the election of Hamas. *Democratization*, 13(5), pp.739-755.

Willis, S., Clarke, S., & O'Conner, E. (2017). Contextualizing leadership: transformational leadership and management-by-exception-active in safety-critical contexts. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 90(3), pp. 281-305.

Yahaya, R., & Ebrahim, F. (2015). Leadership styles and organizational commitment: literature review. *Journal of Management Development*, 35(2), pp. 190-216.

Research institute articles

Alsoos, I. (2017b, December 12). Popular anger a boon for Hamas. *Carnegie: Endowment for International Peace*. Retrieved from: carnegieendowment.org/sada/74991.

Brown, N. (2012, June 11). Gaza five years on: Hamas settle in. *Carnegie: Endowment for International peace*. Retrieved from: carnegieendowment.org/2012/06/11/gaza-five-years-on-hamas-settlesin-pub-48470.

Decree No. (18) for the year 2007 on the exemption of citizens in the southern provinces of taxes and fees. (2007). *The Institute of Law at Birzeit University*. Retrieved from: muqtafi.birzeit.edu/pg/getleg.asp?id.

Dunne, M. & Walles, J. (2017, October 14). Have Hamas and Fatah finally reconciled? *Carnegie: Endowment for International peace*. Retrieved from: carnegieendowment.org/2017/10/14/have-hamas-and-fatah-finally-reconciled-pub-73428.

Jaraba, M. (2017, December 12). Repercussions on the peace process. *Carnegie: Endowment for International Peace*. Retrieved from: carnegieendowment.org/sada/74989.

Kawulich, B. (2004, August). *Data Analysis Techniques in Qualitative Research*. Retrieved from: https://www.eeraonline.org/journal/files/2004/JRE_2004_08_Kawulich.pdf.

Primary and secondary sources. (2017). *The Ithaca College Library*. Retrieved from: <https://library.ithaca.edu/sp/subjects/primary>.

Sayigh, Y. (2010). Hamas rule in Gaza: three years on. *Middle East Brief*, 41. Retrieved from: <https://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/meb41.html>.

Sharp, J. (2008, February 1). The Egypt-Gaza border and its effect on Israeli-Egyptian relations. *Congressional Research Service*. Retrieved from: Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave SE, Washington, DC, 20540-7500.

White, J. (2014, September). The combat performance of Hamas in the Gaza war of 2014. *CTC Sentinel*, 7(9). Retrieved from: Washingtoninstitute.org.

Young, M. (2017, September 28). Will the Fatah-Hamas reconciliation work this time. *Carnegie: Endowment for International Peace*. Retrieved from: <https://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/73218?mkttok=eyJpIjoWIRV eUmpNelZsT1dGailsInQiOilzWUNLMI ZvTUQ3kF va FZ4YXRVeJFodFhndm.JRO>.

Thesis article

Barnes, P. (2014). The changing face of Palestinian leadership: the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement. A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Politics. Massey University, Turitea: New Zealand. Retrieved from: mro.massey.ac.nz.

Website articles

Abdel Hadi, I. (2017, December 10). Will Palestinian authority revamp PLO? *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/12/palestine-liberation-organization-reform-israel-peace.html>.

Abu Amer, A. (2015, August 13). Hamas recalls fierce Shajaiya battles during Gaza war. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/...gaza-war-shajaiyya-battles-israel-testimonies-hamas.html>.

Abu Amer, A. (2017a, July 18). New Hamas chief's first speech reflects strategic shift. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.almonitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/07/hamas-politburo-chief-haniyeh-speech-fatah-iran-egypt.html>.

Abu Amer, A. (2017b, November 3). Hamas chief is still talk of the town in Gaza 9 months after election. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/11/paleestine-hamas-siwar-reconciliation-egypt-israel.html>.

Abu Amer, A. (2017c, February 19). Has the military wing tightened its grip over Hamas? *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/02/yayha-sinwar-elected-head-hamas-political-bureau-in-gaza.html>.

Abu Amer, A. (2017d, October 13). How will Hamas' new deputy head influence events? *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/10/hamas-internal-elections-saleh-al-arouri-west-bank.html>.

Abu Amer, A. (2017e, May 8). What to expect from Hamas' newly elected leader. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/05/hamas-elections-ismail-haniyeh-challenges-fatah.html>.

Abu Amer, A. (2017f, November 10). Hamas rejects return to Israeli involvement in borders crossing. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/11/palestine-agreement-movement-access-factions-reference-israel.html>.

Abu Amer, A. (2018, January 7). Impoverished Gaza's economy on verge of total collapse. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/gaza-economy-collapse-business-investment.html>.

A document of general principles and policies. (2017, May 1). *Hamas Islamic Resistance*. Retrieved from: <https://hamas.ps/en/>.

Al-Amoudi, M. (2018, January 16). Abbas lifts Gaza tax exemption, threatening further economic woes. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al->

[monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/palestine-gaza-abbas-decree-abolish-tax-exemption-economy.html](http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/palestine-gaza-abbas-decree-abolish-tax-exemption-economy.html).

Al-Aroui, S. (2017, October 23). Saleh al-Aroui. *Revolvy*. Retrieved from: <https://www.revolvy.com/man/inex.php?s=Saleh%20al-Aroui>.

Al-Aroui: Hamas won't back down from reconciliation and is ready for more rounds of talks. (2017, December 31). *The Islamic Resistance Movement: Hamas*. Retrieved from: <https://hamas.ps/en/post/1140>.

Baroud, R. (2015, July 18). Why Palestinians fight back: the logic of life and death in Gaza. *The Islamic Resistance Movement: Hamas*. Retrieved from: <https://hamas.ps/en/post/102>.

Caspi, B. (2017, December 11). How Israel is bringing an end to Hamas' tunnels. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/original/2017/12/israel-gaza-strip-hamas-tunnels-idf-terror-technology.html>.

Eldar, S. (2016, June 15). Hamas elections will mark end of Meshaal era. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/06/khaled-meshaal-haniyeh-election-political-bureau-gaza.html>.

Eldar, S. (2017a, October 10). With the appointment of new deputy chief, Hamas leadership more militant than ever. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/10/israel-hamas-saleh-al-arouri-yahya-sinwar-ismail-haniyeh.html>.

Eldar, S. (2017b, May 8). Could Hamas' pragmatic new leader finally reconcile with Fatah. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/.../israel-hamas-meshaal-haniyeh-election-political-bureau-gaza.html>.

Eldar, S. (2017c, February 14). How Hamas' new leader came to power. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/02/gaza-palestinians-hamas-israel-mohammed-al-deif-yahya-sinwar.html>.

Eldar, S. (2017d, December 22). Why Hamas is offering Abbas Gaza on a silver platter. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/12/israel-palestinians-mahmoud-abbas-yayha-sinwar-hamas-fatah.html>.

Eldar, S. (2017e, October 16). Hamas, Fatah ignore elephant in the room, for now. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/10/israel-fatah-hamas-egypt-mahmoud-abbas-palestinian-unity.html>.

Eldar, S. (2017f, March 1). Has Israel recognized link between Gaza blockade, security threat? *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/03/israel-gaza-war-2014-state-comptroller-report-blockade.html>.

Eldar, S. (2017g, December 6). Can Hamas agree to prisoner swap with Israel? *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/12/israel-egypt-hamas-yahya-sinwar-avigdor-liberman-prisoners.html>.

Eldar, S. (2018a, January 22). Israel's Hamas dilemma. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/israel-palestinians-reuven-rivlin-gaza-strip-hamas-closure.html>.

Eldar, S. (2018b, January 9). Abbas' electricity deal an olive branch to Gaza. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/israel-palestinian-mahmoud-abbas-fatah-hamas-gaza-strip.html>.

Eldar, S. (2018c, January 24). What's Hamas up to in Lebanon? *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/israel-gaza-strip-lebanon-hamas-hezbollah-saleh-al-arouri.html>.

El-Komi, A. (2018, January 31). Is Hamas setting up military force in Golan Heights? *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/israel-accuse-hamas-military-force-syria-golan-iran.html>.

Expansion of illegal settlements, deterioration in Gaza, escalation in repression by Palestinian forces warrant council's attention. (2017, September 25). *Human Rights Watch*. Retrieved

from: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/09/25/expansion-illegal-settlements-deterioration-gaza-escalation-repression-palestinian>.

Hamas clarifies that it will not change its fundamental positions. (2017, October 25). *The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information*. Retrieved from: <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/hamas-clarifies-will-not-change-fundamental-positions>.

Hamas politbureau vice president: we're willing to make more concessions. (2017, October 27). Retrieved from: <https://hamas.ps/en/post/1027>.

Hashem, A. (2017, December 22). Hezbollah, Iran, Hamas seek new strategy for resistance. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/12/resistance-axis-hezbollah-iran-hamas-syria-war-israel.html>.

Issacharoff, A. (2017, October 1). Sick of running Gaza, Hamas may be aiming to switch to a Hezbollah style role. *Australian/Israel. & Jewish Affairs Council*. Retrieved from: www.ajiac.org.au/news/article/hamas-fatah-reconciliation-talks-a-hezbollah-mod#Top.

Khoury, J. (2017, October 9). Palestinian factions negotiate unity in Egypt but leave hard questions at the door. *Australian/Israel. & Jewish Affairs Council*. Retrieved from: www.ajiac.org.au/news/article/hamas-fatah-reconciliation-talks-a-hezbollah-mod#Top.

Kuttab, D. (2017, December 29). Palestinians ready for major shift in strategy. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/12/palestine-meeting-shift-strategy-us-jerusalem-move.html>.

Kuttab, D. (2018a, January 4). Trump Jerusalem decision opens Israeli expansionism floodgates. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/israel-likud-annex-west-bank-settlements-palestine.html>.

Kuttab, D. (2018b, January 11). Palestinian leadership faces monumental decisions. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/palestine-pcc-meeting-choices-recognition-israel.html>.

Kuttab, D. (2018c, January 18). Abbas' security coordination challenge. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/palestine-suspend-security-coordination-israel.html>.

Melhem, A. (2017, July 17). New batch of PA employees in Gaza forced to retire. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/07/palestine-employees-civil-early-retirement-pressure-hamas-pa.html>.

Myths and facts. (2018, January 9). *Hamas Islamic Resistance*. Retrieved from: <https://hamas.ps/en/page/5>.

Nearly double the housing units in half the time-advancement of settlement plans 2017 in comparison to 2016. (2017, May 8). *Peace Now*. Retrieved from: <https://www.peacenow.org.il/en/nearly-double-housing-units-half-time-advancement-settlement-plans-2017-comparason-2016-2>.

Palestinian elections: trip report by former U.S. president Jimmy Carter. (2006, January 29). *The Carter Center*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cartercenter.org/news /documents/doc2287.html>.

Palestinian reconciliation: A history of documents. (2015, March 6). *Al Akhbar*. Retrived from: <https://english.al-akhbar.com/node/19580>.

Press release on boycotting the NPC meetings. (2018, January 14). *The Islamic Resistance Movement: Hamas*. Retrieved from: <https://hamas.ps/en/post/1157>.

Rahman, O. (2018, January 23). Egypt and Hamas draw closer in the fight against the Islamic state. *World Politics Review*. Retrieved from: <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/trend-lines/24043/egypt-and-hamas-draw-closer-in-the-fight-against-the-islamic-state>.

The Palestinian national charter: resolutions of the Palestine national council. (1968, July 1-17). *The Avalon Project: The Palestinian National Charter*. Retrieved from: <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20thcentury/plocov.asp>.

Thrall, N. (2017, May 19). As Trump alights in Israel, Palestinians are descending into darkness. *International Crisis Group*. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north->

[africa/eastern-mediterranean/israelpalestine/trump-aligns-israel-palestinians-are-descending-into-darkness](https://www.ochaopt.org/reports/humanitarian-bulletin).

Occupied Palestinian territory. (2017, May 10). *United Nations Office for the coordination of Humanitarian Affairs*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ochaopt.org/reports/humanitarian-bulletin>.

Zalzburg, O. (2017, July 19). Palestinian activism reawakens in Jerusalem after holy Esplanade attack. *International Crisis Group*. Retrieved from: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/israelpalestine-activism-reawakens-jerusalem-after-holy-esplanade-attack>.

Online news articles

Abramson, J. (2017, October 24). Hamas leader: "Our weapons are the Palestinian people's property." *JOL*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jerusalemonline.com/news/middle-east/israel-palestinian-relations/hamas-leader-says-no-to-disarming>.

AFP. (2017a, November 8). PA police chief: Hamas must disarm. *Arutz Sheva* 7. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx>.

AFP. (2017b, November 29). Fatah and Hamas spar as reconciliation deadline nears. *i24 News Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/middle-east/161444171128-fatah-and-hamas-spar-as-reconciliation-deadline-nears>.

AFP. (2017c, December 12). Hamas and Fatah miss Gaza handover deadline. *i24 News Middle East*. Retrieved from: <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/middle-east/162432-171211-hamas-and-fatah-miss-gaza-handover-deadline>.

AFP. (2017d, October 31). Tensions rise after Israel blows up tunnel from Gaza. *Dawn*. Retrieved from: <https://www.dawn.com/news>.

Agencies & Toi Staff. (2018, January 23). Hamas chief accuses US of preferring 'Zionist entity' over Arabs. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-chief-accuses-us-of-prefering-zionist-entity-over-arabs>.

Ahronheim, A. (2017, September 27). Hamas's new leader radically shifts military strategy. *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Hamass-new-leader-radically-shifts-military-strategic-506110>.

Ahronheim, A. (2018, January 15). With another tunnel destroyed, will Hamas finally respond? *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/With-another-tunnel-destroyed-will-Hamas-finally-respond-536818>.

Akram, F. (2016, July 30). In financial plight, Hamas hands out former settlement lands. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timsofisrael.com/in-financial-straits-hamas-hands-out-former-settlement-lands>.

Al-Mughrabi, N., & Awadalla, N. (2017, November 23). Palestinian factions agree to hold general elections by end-2018. *Reuters*. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-palestinians-talks/palestinian-factions-agree-to-hold-general-election-by-end-2018>.

Al-Mughrabi, N. (2017a, October 6). Hamas picks new deputy leader chief whom Israel blames for helping spark Gaza war. *Reuters*. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-palestinians-israel-hamas/hamas-picks-new-deputy-chief-whom-israel-blames-for-helping-spark-gaza-war>.

Al-Mughrabi, N. (2017b, November 30). Palestinian rivals delay full Gaza handover by 10 days. *Reuters*. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-palestinians-reconciliation/palestinians-rivals-delay-full-gaza-handover-by-10-days>.

Alsaafin, L. & Tahhan, Z. (2017, September 21). Why Hamas and Fatah won't reconcile. *Al-Jazeera*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/09/fatah-hamas-wont-reconcile-170919133016581.html>.

Alsoos, Imad. (2017a, November 4). Hamas gives up control of Rafah crossing. *The Real News.com*. Retrieved from: <https://therealnews.com/t2/storg:20372:Hamass-Gives-up-Control-of-Rafah-Boder-Crossing>.

AP. (2018). Leader of militant Hamas leaves Gaza for talks in Egypt. *U.S. News*. Retrieved from: <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2018-02-09/leader-of-militant-hamas-leaves-gaza-for-talks-in-egypt>.

Baker, L. (2015, August 11). Shadow of Israel's pullout from Gaza hangs heavy 10 year on. *Reuters*. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-gaza-disengagement-insight/shadow-of-israels-pullout-from-gaza-hangs-heavy-10-years-on>.

Baraka, A. (2018, January 16). More denial of Hamdan's assassination attempt by Mossad: Hamas keen on Lebanon's security and our battle in Palestine will remain. *Al-Binaa Newspaper*. Retrieved from: www.al-binaa.com/archives/article/181952.

'Battle with Zionists not just about Al-Aqsa mosque, but the whole sanctuary'. *Memo: Middle East Monitor*. Retrieved from: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180106-battle-with-zionists-not-just-about-al-aqsa-mosque-but-the-whole-sanctuary>.

Beaumont, E. (2016, November 9). Trump has 'every intention' of recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/09/israel-donald-trump-netanyahu-jerusalem>.

Beaumont, P. (2017a, November 1). Hamas hands control of Gazan crossings to Palestinian authority. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/01/hamas-over-control-of-crossing-to-palestinian-authority>.

Beaumont, P. (2017b, December 21). UN votes resoundingly to reject Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as capital. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/21/united-nations-un-vote-donald-trump-jerusalem-irael>.

Benari, E. (2017a, November 10). Hamas blasts security coordination with 'Zionist enemy'. *Arutz Sheva 7*. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx>.

Benari, E. (2017b, December 21). Hamas leader: we will no longer rule in Gaza. *Arutz Sheva 7*. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx>.

Benari, E. (2017c, September 29). We approved prisoner exchange deal. *Arutz Sheva 7*. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx>.

Benari, E. (2017d, October 10). Hamas ignores Israel, sends delegation to Iran. *Arutz Sheva* 7. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx>.

Benari, E. (2017e, October 22). Deputy Hamas leader: we will never cut ties with Iran. *Arutz Sheva* 7. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/aspX>.

Benari, E. (2017f, December 12). Hamas leader: revolutionary guards will stand by us. *Arutz Sheva* 7. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News/aspX>.

Benari, E. (2017g, October 27). Haniyeh blames Israel for attempt on Hamas official's life. *Arutz Sheva* 7. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx>.

Berman, (2014, August 27). Is Hamas really ISIS. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/is-hamas-really-isis>.

Birnbaum, C. (2017, October 31). Ismail Haniyeh on tunnel demolition: "Our determination is stronger than the enemy." *JOL*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jerasalemonline.com/news/middle-east/israel-palestinian-relations//hamas-shameful-that-coordination-with-israel-continues>.

Cook, J. (2017, October 2). Is Hamas, Fatah rapprochement a win-win deal? *Al-Jazeera*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/09/hamas-fatah-rapprochement-win-win-deal-170930101113068.html>.

Deputy Hamas leader: Iran is our "main and primary benefactor." *The Tower*. Retrieved from: www.thetower.org/5557-deputy-hamas-leader-iran-is-our-main-and-primary-benefactor.

Dunne, M. & Walles, J. (2017, October 14). Have Hamas and Fatah finally reconciled? *Al-Jazeera*. Retrieved from: <https://aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/hamas-fatah-finally-reconciliation-deal>.

Fatah, Hamas reach agreement on unity gov't rule in Palestine's Gaza in Cairo talks. *Daily Sabah Mideast*. Retrieved from: <https://www.dailysabah.com/mideast/2017/10/12/fatah-hamas-reach-agreement-on-unity-govt-rule-in-palestines-gaza-in-cairo-talks>.

Fourteen things to know about Hamas' new leader, Ismail Haniya. (2017, May 6). *TRT World*. Retrieved from: <https://www.trtworld.com/mea/14-things-to-know-about-hamas-new-leader-ismail-haniya-6826>.

Future of Jerusalem: Hamas leader Ismail Haniya addresses Jerusalem. (2017, December 7). *TRT World*. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHPrD2dyVE>.

Halbfinger, (2018, January 14). Abbas calls Oslo accords dead and blasts U.S.- 'Damn your money'. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/14/world/middleeast/abbas-palestinians-trump.html>.

Haaretz. (2017, October 15). Tony Blair: world leaders were wrong to boycott Hamas after 2006 Palestinian elections. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/tony-blair-he-other-leaders-were-wrong-to-boycott-hamas>.

Halevi, D. (2017, October 25). Hamas threatens to bomb Tel Aviv. *Arutz Sheva* 7. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx>.

Halon, E. (2017, October 31). Iran slams 'Bloodthirsty' Israel following Gaza terror tunnel destruction. *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Iran-slams-bloodthirsty-Israel-following-Gaza-terror-tunnel-destruction>.

Hamas calls for "new Palestinian strategy" following Trump's Jerusalem move. *Xinhua*. Retrieved from: www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-01/24/c_136919044.htm.

Hamas chooses Ismail Haniya as new leader (2017, May 6). *BBC News*. Retrieved from: www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east.

Hamas leader touts terror group's military capability, reiterates refusal to disarm. (2017, October 25). *JNS.org. Allgemeiner*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jns.org/news-brief/2017/10/25/hamas-leader-lauds-terror-groups-military-capability-reiterates-refusal-to-disarm>.

Hamas marks 30-year anniversary with Gaza rally. (2017, December 14). *Al-Jazeera*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/hamas-charts-30th-anniversary-171214100002588.html>.

Hamas: PA call for its workers to return to their posts' 'violation' of Cairo deal. (2017, November 29). *Memo: Middle East Monitor*. Retrieved from: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20171129-hamas-pa-call-for-its-workers-to-return-to-their-posts-violation-of-cairo-deal/>.

Hamas will not disarm and calls on Fatah not to succumb to external pressure. *Memo: Middle East Monitor*. (2017, November 28). Retrieved from: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20171128-hamas-will-not-disarm-and-calls-on-fatah-not-to-succumb-to-external-pressure/>.

Harel, A. (2018a, January 21). Israel frets over Hamas' new front- and it's not in Gaza or the West Bank. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/premium-israel-frets-over-hamas-new-front-southern-lebanon>.

Harel, A. (2018b, January 15). Hamas approaches endgame in Gaza as Israel sharpens its tunnel elimination prowess. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/>.

Heller, A. (2018, January 14). Israel says it destroys Hamas tunnel under key Gaza crossing. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/israel-says-it-destroys-hamas-tunnel-under-key-gaza-crossing/2018/01/14/>.

Huda, (2017, October 9). The importance of the city of Jerusalem in Islam. *ThoughtCo*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-city-of-jerusalem-in-islam>.

Ians, (2018a, January 6). PLO should de-recognise Israel. *The Hindu*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/plo-should-de-recognise-israel-hamas/article>.

Ians, (2018b, January 24). Hamas calls for new Palestinian strategy following Trump's Jerusalem move. *The Quint*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thequint.com/news/hot-news/hamas-calls-for-new-palestinian-strategy-following-trump-jerusalem-move>.

Internal differences within Fatah over reconciliation with Hamas. (2017a, November 27). *Memo: Middle East Monitor*. Retrieved from: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20171127-internal-differences-within-fatah-over-reconciliation-with-hamas/>.

Issacharoff, A. (2017b, November 25). As unity process goes nowhere fast, Hamas leader's tactic will be to blame PA. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thetimesofisrael.com/as-unity-process-goes-nowwhere-fast-hamas-leader-tactic-will-be-to-blame-pa>.

Issacharoff, A. (2018a, January 4). As economy crumbles and with 'nothing to lose,' war in Gaza grows likely. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/as-economy-crumbles-and-with-nothing-to-lose-war-in-gaza-grows-likely/>.

Issacharoff, A. (2018b, January 14). Latest tunnel strike puts Hamas leaders in a tough spot with Cairo. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/latest-tunnel-strike-puts-hamas-leaders-in-a-tough-spot-with-cairo/>.

Jeremy Bob, Y. (2018, January 11). Iran-Hamas reconciliation in the works. *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved from: www.jpost.com/Arab-Israel-Conflict/Iran-Hamas-reconciliation-in-works-Amit-Center-says.

Johnson, A. (2017, November 24). Hamas in power: Gaza's Islamist-secularist—democratic-authoritarians? *Middle East Eye*. Retrieved from: <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/hamas-gaza-decade-power>.

JTA. (2017, October 23). Hamas leader's visit to Iran defies Israeli condition on Palestinian unity. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-leaders-visit-to-iran-defines-israel-condition-on-Palestinian-unity>.

Julian, H. (2017a, October 30). Hamas politburo no.2 al-Arouri praises Iran as top terror patron. *Jewish Press.com*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jewishpress.com/news/middle-east/syria/hamas-intl-politburo-no-2-al-arouri-praise-iran-as-top-terror-patron/2017/10/30>.

Julian, H. (2017b, December 13). Hamas doesn't want war despite abduction. *The Jewish Press.com*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jewishpress.com/news/hamas-doesnt-want-war-despite-abduction-plot/2017/12/13/>.

Khoury, J. (2017a, September 14). In boost to Gaza reconciliation efforts, Palestinian factions meet to compensate bereave families of Hamas-Fatah clashes. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinian/premium-palestinian-factions-meet-to-compensate-victims-of-hamas-fatah-clashes>.

Khoury, J. (2017b, June 5). Palestinians confirm: top Hamas officials have left Qatar at country's request. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/palestinians-confirm-hamas-officials-left-qatar-at-country-s-request>.

Khoury, J. (2017c, November 19). After a decade of Hamas control, Gaza's border crossing with Egypt opened under PA. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians>.

Khoury, J. (2017d, October 20). Hamas leader in Gaza: We will neither disarm nor recognise Israel. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinian>.

Khoury, J. (2017e, November 22). Palestinian reconciliation hangs in the balance as Hamas. Fatah meet in Egypt. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinian/premium-hamas-fatah-meet-in-egypt-to-discuss-reconciliation-deal>.

Khoury, J. (2017f, December 11). Nasrallah: Hezbollah to focus on Jerusalem, best response to Trump would be third intifada. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news>.

Khoury, J. (2018a, January 3). Fatah, Hamas are at an impasse. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinian/premium-fatah-hamas-are-at-an-impasse>.

Khoury, J. (2018b, February 4). Hamas 'prepares for imminent war' with Israel in Gaza. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/report-hamas-prepares-for-imminent-war-israel-in-gaza>.

Latina, P. (2017, November 8). Hamas cedes Gaza border crossings to Palestinian Authority control. *Prensa Latina: Agencia Informativa Latinoamericana*. Retrieved from: <https://www.plenglish.com/index.php?ozm&id=20430&sEO=hamas=cedes-gaza-border-crossing-to-palestinian-authority-control>.

Lieber, D. (2017a, May 5). Hamas to begin selection of new leader to replace Khaled Mashaal. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-to-begin-selection-of-new-leader-to-replace-khaled-mashaal>.

Lieber, D. (2017b, October 19). Hamas chief: we won't discuss recognising Israel, only wiping it out. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-chief-we-wont-discuss-recognising-israel-only-wiping-it-out>.

Lieber, D. (2017c, October 11). Ignoring elephant in the room, Hamas-Fatah talks advance with Egyptian help. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/ignoring-elephant-in-the-room-hamas-fatah-talks-advance-with-egyptian-help>.

Lieber, D. (2017d, October 30). Hamas, Fatah accuse Israel of trying to foil unity deal by hitting terror tunnel. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-fatah-accuse-israel-of-trying-to-foil-unity-deal-with-tunnel-explosion>.

Lieber, D. (2017e, December 21). Palestinian reconciliation 'collapsing' over weapons disputes, Hamas leader says. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/palestinian-reconciliation-collapsing-over-weapons-dispute-hamas-leader-says/>.

Lieber, D. (2017f, November 1). Hamas leader talks 'resistance' with Hezbollah chief in Beirut. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-leader-talks-resistance-with-hezbollah-chief-in-beirut>.

Lieber, D. & Toi Staff. (2017, December 22). Following UN vote, Hamas calls for 'red bloody day' in West Bank. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/following-un-vote-hamas-calls-for-red-bloody-day-in-West-Bank/>.

Marzan, R. (2017, September 17). What Hamas' leader in Gaza really said about war with Israel. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/>.

Mee Staff. (2017, May 1). Hamas in 2017: the document in full. *Middle East Eye*. Retrieved from: <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/hamas-charter>.

Moore, J. (2017, December 19). Hamas is arresting and torturing jihadis to prevent war with Israel. *Newsweek*. Retrieved from: www.newsweek.com/hamas-arresting-and-torturing-jihadis-prevent-war-israel.

Moore, J. (2018, January 4). Gaza's next war: ISIS vows to overthrow radical rival Hamas for failing to stop Trump. *Newsweek*. Retrieved from: <https://www.newsweek.com/gazas-next-war-looms-isis-vows-defeat-hamas-failing-stop-trump>.

Morris, L. (2018, January 4). Islamic State declares war on rival Hamas with video execution. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/01/04/islamic-state-throws-down-gauntlet-to-rival-hamas-with-video-execution>.

O’Conner, T. (2017, December 27). Iran allies Hezbollah and Hamas may unite against Israel and Trump’s Jerusalem decision. *Newsweek*. Retrieved from: <https://www.newsweek.com/iran-allies-hezbollah-hamas-unite-against-israel-trump-decision>.

Poll: 64% of Palestinians want Abbas to resign. (2017, March 15). *Ramallah (Palestine)-Quds Press Service*. Retrieved from: <https://www.gudspress.com/index.php?>

Rasgon, A. (2017a, October 24). Deputy Hamas chief: Iran to continue support for ‘resistance.’ *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Deputy-Hams-Chief-Iran-to-continue-support-for-resistance>.

Rasgon, A. (2017b, February 13). Report: Hamas taps prisoner freed in Shalit deal as new Gaza leader. *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Report-Hamas-taps-prisoner-freed-in-Shalit-deal-as-new-Gaza-leader>.

Rasgon, A. (2017c, October 27). Hamas security chief in Gaza wounded in explosion. *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Hamas-official-wounded-in-Gaza-vehicular-explosion>.

Rasgon, A. (2017d, November 8). PA police chief confirms security cooperation with Israel back on track. *The Jerusalem Times*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/PA-police-chief-confirms-seurity-ccoperation-with-israel-back-ontrack>.

Rasgon, A. (2018, January 24). Hamas leader: group still seeking reconciliation with Fatah. *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Hamas-leader-Group-still-seeking-reconciliation-with-Fatah>.

Smolar, P. (2017, November 8). Yahya Sinwar, A charismatic new Hamas leader ready to talk. *WorldCrunch*. Retrieved from: <https://www.worldcrunch.com/world-affairs/yahya-sinwar-charismatic-new-hamas-leader-ready-to-talk>.

Sones, M. (2017, November 1). From today PA controls Gaza crossing. *Arutz Sheva 7*. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx>.

Taha, M. (2017, June 16). Crossing the line: Khaled Meshaal. *TRTWorld*. Retrieved from: <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/khaled-meshaal-on-hamas-new-charter-and-palestinian-resistance-7979>.

Toi Staff. (2017, October 25). Hamas chief says armed wing must be under PLO control. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/in-pivot-hamas-chief-says-armed-wing-must-be-under-plo-control>.

Toi Staff, (2018a, January 22). Hamas praises Arab Israeli MK's for 'Jerusalem is Palestine' anti-Pence protest. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-praises-arab-israeli-mks-for-jerusalem-is-palestine-pence-protest>.

Toi Staff, (2018a, February 3). Israeli jets strike Hamas targets in Gaza after rocket launch. *The Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.israelofisrael.com/israel.com/israeli-jets-strike-hamas-targets-in-gaza-after-rocket-launch>.

Zboum, K. (2017, November 2). Haniyeh: we support establishment of Palestinian state on basis of 1967 borders. *Asharq Al-Awasat*. Retrieved from: <https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1071221/haniyeh-we-support-establishment-Palestinian-state-basis-11967-borders>.

Appendix 1

Hamas over 30 years

Year	Month	Event/s
1987	December	Hamas is established by 11 members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine at the beginning of the first intifada
1988	August	Hamas releases founding ideological document
1992	June-July	Establishment of Hamas's armed wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam brigades
1993	September	Signing of first Oslo Accord between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO head Yasir Arafat
1994	April	First attack against Israel conducted by al-Qassam brigades
1996	February	The PA begins to arrest Hamas affiliates through security coordination with Israel
1997	September	Mossad fail assassination attempt on political bureau chief Khaled Mishaal in Amman
2000	September	Beginning of second intifada
2001	September	Al-Qaeda attacks in New York and Washington. U.S. State Department designate Hamas as a terrorist organization in new "global war on terror"
	March	Sheikh Ahmed Yassin assassinated by Israeli airstrike receives international condemnation

2004	April	Assassination of Yassin's successor, Dr. Abdel Aziz Rantisi by Israeli airstrike also condemned internationally
2005	February	End of second intifada
	March	Cairo Accord signed by 13 Palestinian factions
	December	Hamas participates in local elections
2006	January	Hamas achieves victory in fair and free Palestinian legislative elections
	March	Ismail Haniyeh sworn in as Palestinian Prime Minister
	June	Al-Qassam brigades capture Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit during raid into Israel
	July	Operation Summer Rains conducted as rescue attempt of Shalit
	November	Hamas announces 10-year truce. Israel launches Operation Autumn Clouds
2007	February	Mecca Agreement; Abbas requests to create unity government with Haniyeh and that Hamas recognise Israel
	March	Unity talks begin
		Due to political stalemate, violence ensues in Gaza's streets between al-Qassam Brigades and Fatah forces. Fatah

	June	leaders are ousted from the Gaza Strip and form government in the West Bank. Israel begins blockade
2008	February	Yemen initiative calls for greater deduction to Cairo Accords and Mecca Agreement
2009	April	Reconciliation talks break down in Cairo
2011	May	Cairo Agreement begins
2012	February	Doha declaration introduced to resolve stalemate in 2011 Cairo deal
	November	Operation Pillar of Defense begins
2014	April	Hamas and Fatah sign Gaza Agreement
	July	Israel begins Operation Protective Edge
	September	Cairo Agreement concludes with Hamas conceding control over Gaza Strip
2015	December	Unity Accord fails through Abbas changing ministerial layout of newly formed consensus government. Refuses to add 40,000 Hamas civil servants added in 2007
2017	October	Hamas and Fatah sign new unity accord in Cairo

Appendix 2



Figure 4: Map of Israel, West Bank, and Gaza Strip (Macintyre, 2017)

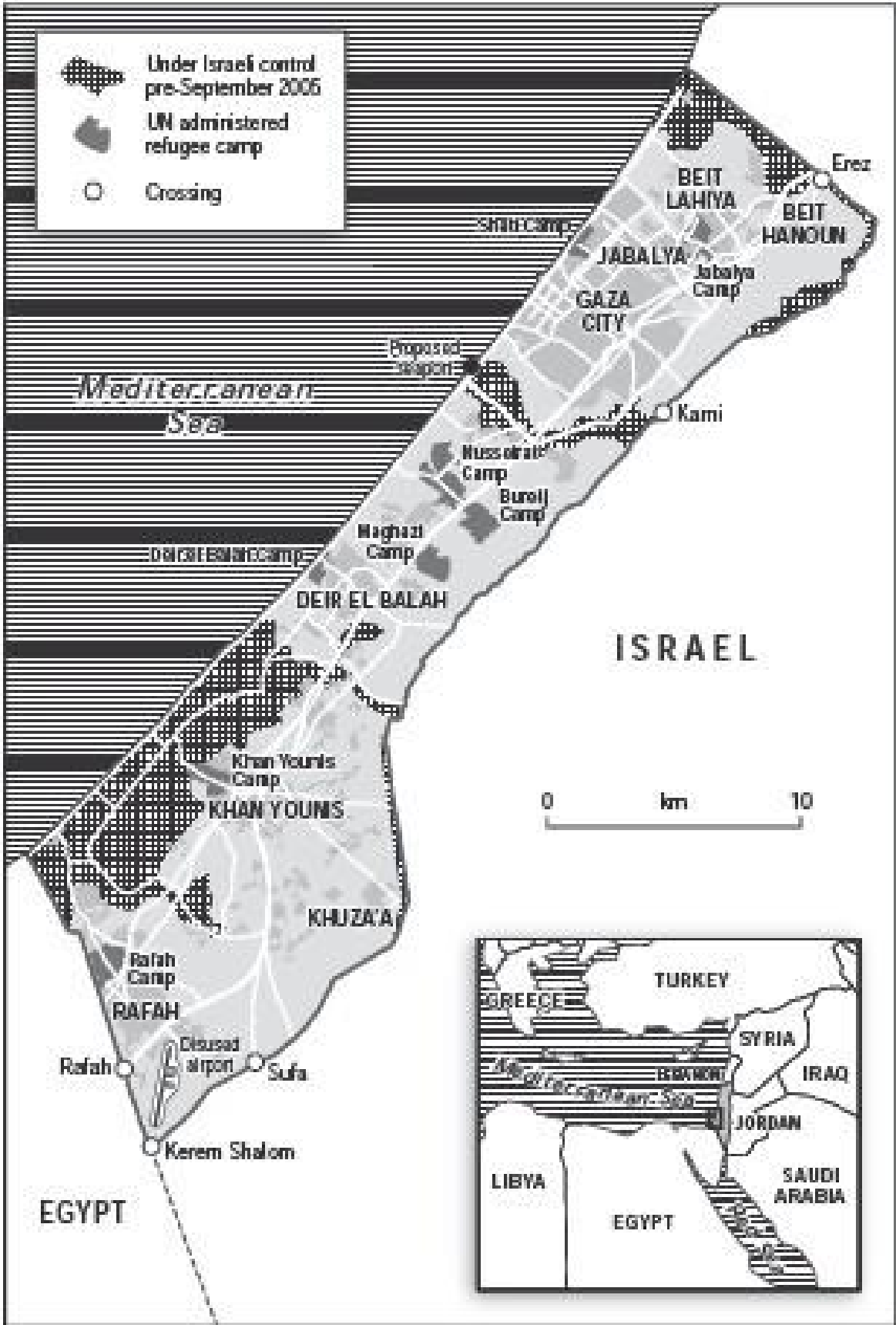


Figure 5: The Gaza Strip (Macintyre, 2017).