

“ Hamas is ISIS”? Monitoring Global Jihadi Organizations Since October 7

The barbarity of the October 7 massacre, as well as the ISIS flags and pamphlets found on the Hamas Nukhba terrorists who invaded Israel, triggered natural comparisons between Hamas and ISIS, the Islamic State terrorist organization. Global jihadi organizations, such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda and their affiliates have used Hamas's attack to promote their worldwide jihadist agenda, glorifying their attack as a 'victory of the Ummah,' thereby justifying their ongoing propaganda against Jews and Christians.

October

Calls for terrorist attacks against Jews

ISIS

Since Hamas's horrific attack on 7 October, the organization has been compared to ISIS and has even claimed to be the Palestinian equivalent of the radical Salafist group. Nonetheless, despite the comparison, ISIS views Hamas as traitors and infidels.

As a Salafist group, ISIS views every entity that doesn't follow the Sunni-Salafist system as apostates. Therefore, Hamas, as a Sunni group which acts as a regional proxy of Shi'ite Iran, is considered as infidel.

Thus, initially, ISIS didn't react to the 7 October attacks. About two weeks later, ISIS supporters expressed outrage at the Israeli attacks on Gaza, and sought to exploit the Israel-Gaza war to recruit new sympathisers and incite attacks.

In an editorial article, followed by an infographic, in ISIS's '*Al-Naba*' weekly, under the title "Practical steps to fight the Jews", the organization called for targeting Jews and their allies around the world. The article stated that the focus on fighting the Jews in the Palestinian territories is not sufficient to meet the goal of Jewish genocide. ISIS called to target Jews all over the world, especially in Jewish neighbourhoods in the US and Europe. In addition, ISIS called to attack Jewish and Christian embassies, and called on the countries bordering Israel to attack Israel's front defense lines and fences.

ISIS also referred to the possibility of a ground offensive in the Gaza Strip and called for religious-moral preparation, which includes adherence to Islamic law and military preparation, with an emphasis on appropriate equipment, such as explosive belts "that disappeared from the scene of the confrontation with the Jews".



وإنما على هذه المقدمات والمعطيات الشرعية والتاريخية والواقعية؛ يتضح لنا بجلال أن السبيل العملي لمواجهة دولة اليهود تمهيدا للقضاء عليها؛ لا يتحقق إلا بضرب جميع هذه المكونات والتحالفات وجميع المنخرطين فيها،

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خطوات عملية لقتال اليهود

ما إن تتعرض دولة اليهود إلى هجوم أو خطر محتمل؛ حتى يسارع حلفاء اليهود إلى تقديم دعمهم الشامل واللامحدود، وهذا ليس جديداً ولا مستغرباً وإن جاء هذه المرة أكثر حدة، كما ظهر جلياً في خطابات القادة الأمريكيين التي طفحت

Analogous to al-Qaeda, ISIS supported the Palestinians, and used the war between Israel and Hamas to emphasize its messages regarding the importance of the Jihad war, recruit new supporters and incite attacks against “infidels”.

However, ISIS appears reluctant to praise or mention Hamas in reference to the October 7 attack. ISIS does not want Hamas to gain more attention among worldwide Jihad supporters, thereby threatening its role (as ISIS itself did to Al-Qaeda - it split as a separate organization and established supremacy among the global Jihad organizations), as the dominant radical Palestinian organization.

Even though Hamas is an Islamist organization, ISIS views it as an organization that fights under a nationalist banner and not under the banner of Islam alone - hence its reluctance to call for terrorist attacks on behalf of Hamas. However, ISIS leverages the actions of Hamas to incite attacks under the banner of Islam.

Hamas, a proxy of Shi'ite Iran is a substantial rival of ISIS, which fights and carries out attacks in Iranian controlled territories.

From ISIS's perspective, to lose their dominance to an "apostate" organization that is close to the Shiite enemy would be double failure.

Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda called for the harming of Jews and US bases in Muslim countries.

Al-Qaeda hailed Hamas's attack, expressing its enthusiasm by backing the perpetrators and describing the attackers as “heroes”. In addition, the jihadist group claimed that the attack had

revealed Israel and the West's weakness and represented a historic moment for "global jihad". Al-Qaeda made multiple statements announcing that the Hamas attack was a calling for Muslims to mobilize for "jihad" in support of Gaza, warning that those who refuse will be regarded as "infidels".

The organization's leadership issued a statement calling on Muslims around the world to participate in the fighting in Gaza financially and through moral support. The announcement also stated that this is a historic moment and that "the Israeli enemy is a paper tiger and is collapsing from every angle: intelligence, military, security and economic."

Al Qaeda has declared "open war" against everything that is Crusader (the Christian West), Zionist and Israeli. In the announcement, a call was also made to the Muslims in the countries bordering Israel to pierce the borders, and to the tribes living in the Sinai Peninsula to break the siege on Gaza. A call was made to target Israelis in UAE, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, and to attack US military bases, airports and embassies in Muslim countries. Al Qaeda also called for the boycott of Jewish-owned products and companies.

Jaish Al-Malachim Al-Elektroni, the media branch of Al Qaeda, published a poster quoting the words of Seif Al-Adel, the leader of Al Qaeda (who lives in Iran). Al-Adel called on Al Qaeda members and supporters to establish sleeper cells to help "jihad fighters" in "Palestine".

In a pamphlet on behalf of the organization's propaganda arm, Al Qaeda calls for money to be sent to mujahideen to carry out suicide attacks against Jews and Christians. It suggests a breakdown of how the Jews should be attacked around the world: burning houses, cars, Jewish shops, Jewish facilities, etc¹.



In this context, and in contrast to ISIS, Al Qaeda warns in the pamphlet not to harm children².

¹ "Attack on governmental Jewish facilities and interests in Arab and European countries, such as embassies and consulates"; "exhausting the money of Jews by burning their houses, cars and shops around the world"; and "focusing on government crusading facilities in America and Europe."

² "Be as careful as you can not to harm their (Jewish) children. Our enemy is clear, and children are not on our list of enemies."

Moreover, Al Qaeda calls to continue inciting Muslims around the world to support "Palestine" in social media and in opposition to 'infidel' Muslims (probably the Gulf countries that maintain normalized relations with Israel and diplomatic and military relations with international coalition forces).

The pamphlet contains a section of the eliminated Al Qaeda leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, who called for jihad against Israel and its allies³.

Al Qaeda in the Maghreb and Jama'at Nasr Al-Islam wa Al-Muslimin

Al Qaeda's affiliate in the Maghreb and Jama'at Nasr Al-Islam wa Al-Muslimin (Maghreb and West Africa), Al Qaeda's affiliate in the Sahel region, issued a joint statement stating that Al Qaeda is trying to gain the ability to reach and liberate Jerusalem. In the announcement there is also a call to the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria to act against the Jews.

Al-Shabaab

The Somali Al-Shabaab organization, which is also affiliated with Al Qaeda, held a support rally for Gaza on October 14th, in the southern Somalian Juba region. At the rally, calls were made for the liberation of Al-Aqsa and Jerusalem and it was noted that the war against Gaza is a war against Islam.

³ An entire page was devoted to the shooting attack that occurred on October 8th at an archaeological site in Alexandria, Egypt, in which two Israeli tourists were killed and one tourist was injured. The attack is called "the blessed Alexandria operation" and the comment was added: "This was the beginning. Who will complete the mission?"



On October 22nd, Al Qaeda's propaganda arm issued a statement in which they claimed responsibility for a major "electronic warfare" attack against European and Jewish targets. The attack included wreaking panic and chaos through false reports aimed at airports, tourist sites and educational institutions with an emphasis on Jewish institutions in Europe.

The statement claimed that the attack was carried out by the Mujahideen group, which is managed by the magazine "Wolves of Manhattan" and supported by the propaganda arm of the Al Qaeda organization.

According to the statement, the attackers collected the communication details of more than 50 airports in European cities, mainly in France, in addition to accessing the "websites and accounts" of seven major airlines, and the "websites and names" of a large number of airlines. In addition, details of Jewish institutions in Europe, including personal information for students. They also collected phone numbers of police and fire departments and emergency forces in Europe.

It is also claimed that the attackers managed to "close" a number of tourist sites, in addition to four Jewish institutions, including a Jewish school in Rome, which was evacuated following false reports about the presence of a bomb there. In addition, the attackers made more than one hundred false reports to the fire departments in Paris, Rome, Berlin and Madrid.

Al-Qaeda views the Hamas attack as a "historic" turning point. It uses the attack by Hamas to highlight the weakness of the "Crusader and Jewish enemies", those "colonialist" actors that have

oppressed Muslims - and now they have the opportunity to strike at them. Thus, Al-Qaeda is utilizing the situation: calling for Jihad and to fight side by side with Hamas.

From Al-Qaeda's perspective, this attack also constitutes an achievement in that it succeeded in disrupting the normalization of relations between Israel ("the little devil", a bastion of the remains of colonialism in the Middle East, an extension of the United States, "the great devil") and its hated Saudi Arabia, a moderate Sunni- Arab country and the leader of the Sunni world.

Al-Qaeda views the historic opportunity created by the attack, as a "resurgence" of jihad and therefore incites to carry out as many attacks as possible against Christians and Jews.

Attacks by elements of global jihad

ISIS

Brussels – two killed in a stadium shooting attack

On October 16, an armed man opened fire near the stadium in Brussels, about half an hour before the soccer match between the teams of Belgium and Sweden was supposed to take place. During the shooting, he shouted "Allahu Akbar" and declared that he was an ISIS member and fled. Two fans, wearing Sweden football shirts, were killed. After a chase, the terrorist was shot and killed. He was identified as Abd al-Slam Aljilani from Fatah Al-Soud.

ISIS published a statement in which it accepted responsibility for carrying out the attack in Brussels . According to the announcement, the perpetrator of the attack, known as Abu Al-Salam Almahajr, shot at a number of "infidel Christians", killing two of them and wounding several others.

ISIS praised the terrorist as a "hero" and claimed that the attack would provoke the wrath of "the infidel Al Qaeda" and the supporters of Iran's "minions" - referring to Hamas.

In two additional posters, ISIS even called on Muslims to shed the blood of the infidels⁴.

This choice of the attack outside of the Sweden/Belgium match, came against the backdrop of the burning of the Quran in Sweden several months ago and Brussels being the capital of Belgium and the countries of the international coalition against ISIS.

However, ISIS also calls to support the Palestinians without specifically naming the Hamas organization and the "Al-Aqsa Flood" operation.

Planning an ISIS attack in Germany

Special forces in Germany broke into a residential building in the center of the city of Duisburg, in northwestern Germany, and arrested a 29-year-old man, known as "The German Ussama" and identified only by his first name, Tarek, on suspicion of attempting to carry out an attack during a rally in support of Israel held in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, in northern Germany. The suspect, an ISIS supporter, intended to drive a truck quickly into the rally and run over as many people as possible.

⁴ "To slaughter them like sheep and kill them like beetles and flies", "to cut off heads, oppress souls and do more".

November

In November, global jihadist organizations kept attempting to leverage the Hamas massacre and translate it into support for their own groups.

Al Qaeda:

The "Al-Sahab Foundation", the official media branch of Al Qaeda's Central Command, released a new issue of its Al-Nafir periodic bulletin, where it disparages Arab countries' rulers, accusing them of supporting Israel and calling to kill "Zionists," slaughter Israeli Jews, and force them to flee to Europe and America".

The bulletin called for the expulsion by the followers of Islam against the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, the Palestinian Authority, and Turkey. Specifically, the bulletin calls the army and people of Pakistan to attack the American ambassador.



Al Qaeda accuses Israel for being responsible for the strike on the Al-Ahli Hospital (which was a failed rocket launch by The Palestinian Islamic Jihad)⁵.

⁵ "Every one of us must undertake to kill every Zionist he encountered in his path, "our duty today is to kill them, and those of them who remain we will exile back to where they came from – to Europe and America."

The Al Qaeda media branch, Jaysh Al-Malahem Al-Electroni, published a statement praising three recent attacks that targeted two synagogues in Montreal, Canada, using rifles and Molotov cocktails.

The statement also incited to implement a violent attack, similar to the 2015 attacks on the office of the Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris following that magazine's publication of cartoons of Prophet Muhammad. In a threat it says that although many years has passed, the "Crusaders" did not realize that their silence was "in preparation" (for an attack). This is an important message to the western misconception of Islamic organizations (such as the misconception of Hamas and Hamas massacre): **the silence isn't a real silence- it's a preparation for an attack.**

Also, it calls Muslims to carry out commando style and suicide operations in the heart of the 'Crusaders' lands.

Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS):

Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) released the latest issue of its magazine 'Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind', where it discusses the implications of the October 7 Hamas attack in Israel. In addition to its articles, it urges every Muslim to launch jihadi attacks in every part of the world⁶.

In this call, AQIS is describing multiple ways to implement jihad: either with physical violence, with an addition we haven't seen in prior calls since the beginning of Israel- Hamas war - a biological weapon. Moreover, AQIS calls for every Muslim who has the capability of implementing a "lone wolf" attack to do so.

ISIS

In an editorial article in ISIS's 'Al-Naba' weekly, the organization addressed the ongoing events in Gaza following the October 7 Hamas attack against Israel, arguing that the "Jews and Christians" have conducted a religious war against Muslims.

To support its argument, the editorial accused Israeli officials of citing a Jewish narrative derived from the Bible ordering the Jews to kill all their enemies.

⁶ "No Israeli, American, European, non-European Zionist is safe, there is no protection for the embassies of these unbelievers and no protection for their civilians".

Additionally, the editorial emphasized that the IDF actions in Gaza are grounded in anti-Islamic ideology.

Conclusion

The war between Israel and Hamas highlights the competition between ISIS and Al-Qaeda and begs the question - who will lead the Islamic narrative regarding the correct way to carry out Jihad.

This situation creates a battle over the core foundations of the Salafist organizations - which might affect their affiliated groups around the world. Al-Qaeda advocates massive support for Hamas, praising the Palestinian organization as heralding a "historic turning point". On the other hand, ISIS despises Hamas, rejects the attention it receives and calls it an "infidel". Both organizations call for a Jihad war against the infidels - one calls for it because of Hamas, and the other in spite of Hamas.

The lack of agreement regarding the correct manner of implementing jihad may even lead to further fragmentation and the creation of a new jihadi-salafist organization, with a new narrative that combines the views and messages of Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Such an organization could create a new leader who would attract many jihadists around the world.

In addition, a situation of increasing jihad operations around the world on the one hand, and a lack of clarity as to the righteousness of the path on the other - may even intensify the activities of jihadists operating individually, those "lone wolves" who carry out attacks due to their support for the idea of jihad and how they interpret it.