



# TIME TO PROSCRIBE HAMAS IN FULL

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# INTRODUCTION

There exists a loophole that allows the Islamist terrorist group Hamas to operate in the UK. Following the recent record-breaking surge in antisemitism in Britain during the conflict between Hamas and Israel, the time has undoubtedly come to close the loophole: it is time to proscribe it in its entirety.

Hamas' ideology and activities are Islamist, nationalist, antisemitic, misogynistic and homophobic. Many also consider its militant teachings to be a corruption of Islam.

Currently, the UK only proscribes the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades — the so-called 'military wing' of the terrorist group — relying on the European Union's proscription of the entirety of Hamas as a *de facto* ban in the UK. Following the UK's exit from the European Union, however, this reliance is no longer tenable, and the UK must now act to proscribe the entirety of Hamas.

As this report shows, there is no material distinction between the supposed 'wings' of Hamas, which share the same personnel and where political leaders launch military operations. However, because of this loophole, Hamas flags can be flown, its ideology can be promoted, funds can be raised, material can be disseminated, and its representatives can operate in the UK.

Campaign Against Antisemitism is a volunteer-led, apolitical charity dedicated to exposing and countering antisemitism through education and zero-tolerance enforcement of the law.

Over the years — and particularly in the last couple of months — our monitoring teams have found evidence of support for Hamas on British streets, as documented in this report, and this

is undoubtedly tied to the recent surge in domestic antisemitism.

The proscription of the Islamist terrorist group Hizballah in its entirety in 2019 can serve as a case study for a similar ban of Hamas.

Just as the proscription of Hizballah sent a powerful message to the Jewish community — and Islamists — that antisemitism and terrorism will not be tolerated in the UK, so would the proscription of Hamas, particularly at a time of a record-breaking surge in antisemitism in Britain.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Following the recent record-breaking surge in antisemitism on British streets inspired by the conflict between Hamas and Israel, the time has undoubtedly come to close the loophole that allows the Islamist terrorist group to operate in the UK and to proscribe Hamas in its entirety.**
- Hamas is a genocidal antisemitic terrorist organisation which seeks the murder of all Jews worldwide. Founded in 1987 as the “paramilitary wing” of the local Muslim Brotherhood, the group is committed to violence.
- **Hamas’ ideology and activities are Islamist, nationalist, antisemitic, misogynistic and homophobic. Many also consider its militant teachings to be a corruption of Islam. The group is guilty of the double war crime of indiscriminately targeting civilian populations from within population centres.**
- Hamas’ murderous ideology has resulted in countless civilian deaths and injuries, both of Jews and Arabs. There have also been British victims, including the gap year student and aspiring doctor, Yoni Jesner, and the professional Bible translator, Mary Jean Gardner.
- **Prominent politicians have appeared to show solidarity with Hamas, including Jeremy Corbyn, who has described Hamas as his “friends;”, and George Galloway, who was awarded a passport by the Hamas Prime Minister.**
- Support from Hamas has also extended to ordinary members of the public. During the most recent conflict between Hamas and Israel, support specifically for Hamas was evident on British streets — in signs, scarves and headbands.
- **There is no material distinction between Hamas’ so-called military wing, known as the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, and its supposed political wing. They share the same personnel and ‘political’ leaders command the ‘military’ infrastructure. The faux distinction between the ‘military’ and ‘political’ wings also provides cover for Hamas’ terrorist activities.**
- British allies, including the United States, Canada, the European Union, Japan and Israel designate the entirety of Hamas as a terrorist organisation. In June 2021, Germany banned the Hamas flag after a rise in antisemitic incidents.
- **Currently, the United Kingdom only designates the Izz al-Din al-Qassem Brigades (Hamas’ ‘military wing’) as a proscribed terrorist organisation under the Terrorism Act 2000. The rest of Hamas is not yet designated as a terrorist organisation, which means that its flags can be flown, its ideology can be promoted, funds can be raised, material can be disseminated, and its representatives can operate in the UK.**
- Polling from Campaign Against Antisemitism’s Antisemitism Barometer in 2020 found that 91% of British Jews believe that the British Government should proscribe Hamas in full as a terrorist organisation.
- Britain’s proscription of the terrorist group Hizballah in its entirety in 2019 can serve as a case study for a full ban of Hamas in the UK.

# WHAT IS HAMAS?

Hamas is a genocidal antisemitic terrorist organisation which seeks the murder of all Jews worldwide.

The group was founded in December 1987 by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, a Gaza-based cleric who became an activist in local branches of the Muslim Brotherhood. He established Hamas as the Brotherhood's local political arm in the late 1980s following a major outbreak of violence. He described the new organisation as the “paramilitary wing” of the local Muslim Brotherhood, and he became its spiritual leader.

The name “Hamas” is an acronym for *Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya*, which means “Islamic Resistance Movement” in Arabic. In Hebrew, the acronym is a biblical word meaning “violence”.

The Hamas Covenant, issued in 1988, remains the group's governing document. Article 7 states that: “The Day of Judgment will not come about until Muslims fight Jews and kill them. Then, the Jews will hide behind rocks and trees, and the rocks and trees will cry out: ‘O Muslim, there is a Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him.’”

Moreover, its charter explains that “our struggle against the Jews is very extensive and very grave”. Observing the supposed “Nazism of the Jews” and complaining of “Nazi Zionist practices” — in contravention of the International (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism — the charter warns that Hamas’ struggle must continue until the “obliteration” of Israel, which “by virtue of its being Jewish and of having a Jewish population, defies Islam and the Muslims.”



Hamas has claimed responsibility for countless terrorist attacks and attempted attacks specifically targeting Jews, including suicide bombings (since 1993), firing rockets into population centres, the construction of “terror tunnels” for offensive use against Jewish civilians (including incursions for the purpose of kidnapping), incendiary balloons, stabbings, car rammings and more. The organisation is committed to the use of violence.



Effect of Hamas suicide bomb in Tel Aviv in 1994



In 2006, the year after Israel withdrew its entire civilian and military presence from Gaza, Hamas won the legislative elections in the Gaza Strip. A year later, it reinforced its authority by coercively ousting its rival, Fatah, from the territory, including by murdering hundreds of Fatah members in what is known as the Battle of Gaza, described locally at the time as a “civil war”. Since then, Hamas has ruled the Gaza Strip as a dictatorship. The territory has been blockaded by Egypt and Israel — its two bordering nations — since Hamas forcibly took complete power in 2007.



Hamas mob drags body by motorcycle through streets of Gaza

In addition to its terrorist activities emanating from both Gaza and the West Bank in the decades prior its complete takeover of Gaza, in the period since then it was engaged in full scale wars with Israel in 2008-9, 2012, 2014 and 2021, resulting in significant civilian and combatant casualties. Hamas is well known both for indiscriminately targeting Israeli civilian populations and also for deliberately doing so from within civilian populations in Gaza, both of which are war crimes.



Hamas been firing Fajr-5 rockets since 2012

Hamas also provides social services to its constituents, a practice common among other powerful terrorist groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood, ISIS and Hizballah. It has been noted that Hamas uses these services as patronage to buttress its power, prioritising support for its backers and paying dividends to the families of terrorists incarcerated by Israel in a policy widely known as “pay to slay”.

Hamas’ ideology and activities are Islamist, nationalist, antisemitic, misogynistic and homophobic. Many also consider its militant teachings to be a corruption of Islam.



Hamas rally

# BRITISH VICTIMS OF HAMAS

Hamas' murderous ideology has resulted in countless civilian deaths and injuries, both of Israelis and Arabs. There have also been British victims, two examples of which are remembered below.

## JONATHAN (YONI) JESNER

On 19th September 2002, Jonathan (Yoni) Jesner, 19, of Glasgow was killed when a suicide terrorist detonated a bomb on a bus on Allenby Street, opposite the Great Synagogue in Tel Aviv. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack. The bomber apparently boarded the bus at a stop opposite the synagogue and then detonated the device, killing six and wounding about 70. The blast scorched the bus and blew out its windows.

Yoni was in Israel for his gap year, studying at a *yeshiva* (Jewish religious academy), intending to return to the UK to study medicine at UCL. His family donated his organs to Yasmin Abu Ramila, a seven-year-old Arab girl from East Jerusalem born with kidney failure. One commentator described Yoni's legacy thus: "Yoni Jesner will not live to become a doctor, but just as surely, he will be remembered as a healer."



## MARY JEAN GARDNER

On 23rd March 2011, Mary Jean Gardner, a 55-year-old British national studying at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, was murdered when a bomb was detonated by the Jerusalem Convention Center, near the Central Bus Station. The explosion was caused by a bomb placed at a telephone booth near the bus stop.

It was later reported: "Israeli security forces have arrested two people who are suspected of being Hamas militants and accused in a Jerusalem bombing that killed a British woman and wounded dozens of civilians this year."

Mary Jean, a devout Christian originally from Orkney, worked for Wycliffe Bible Translators, where she had been working on a translation of the Bible into the *Lfè* language of Togo since 1989. The New Testament was completed in 2009, and she had moved to Israel in January of that year to study Hebrew for six months before planning to return to Togo to work on the translation of the Old Testament.



Her parents, of Aberdeenshire, said: "Mary was a very special person and we thought the world of her. She was devoted to her work and was well liked wherever she went. Her loss in this way has been deeply upsetting for us all. We are proud of her and all that she has achieved in her life and feel truly blessed to have had her in our lives."

# BRITISH SUPPORT FOR HAMAS

Regrettably, not only have there been British victims of Hamas terrorism, but the group also counts Britons among its supporters.

## POLITICIANS

Prominent politicians have in the past appeared to legitimise Hamas, including the former leader of the Labour Party, **Jeremy Corbyn**, who remains suspended from the Parliamentary Labour Party after repeatedly playing down the Party's antisemitism, and his own, during his tenure.

Mr Corbyn has previously referred to Hamas as his friends. For example, in a speech to a Stop the War Coalition event in 2009, Mr Corbyn described Hamas (and the terrorist group Hizballah) as his "friends", saying it would be his "honour and pleasure" to host their operatives in Parliament. In 2016, under pressure over antisemitism in his Party, Mr Corbyn said that he regretted his words.



Jeremy Corbyn MP and Andy Slaughter MP pose with Hamas officials in Ramallah

Hamas has reciprocated Mr Corbyn's support. In May 2019, Hamas issued a statement in which it said that it "salutes" Mr Corbyn for supporting an antisemitic march through London. It said that it had "great respect and appreciation [sic] the solidarity message sent by the British Labor [sic] Party Leader, Jeremy Corbyn."



Another far-left politician to appear to have legitimised Hamas is **George Galloway**, the on-again, off-again MP, formerly of the Labour and Respect Parties. Mr Galloway recently stirred controversy yet again in the Batley and Spen by-election just a few weeks ago, where his campaign was widely viewed as fomenting communal division. Rumours of the promotion of antisemitic views during the by-election campaign abounded, and at least one volunteer from Mr Galloway's campaign was removed after antisemitic social media posts were uncovered.

In 2009, Mr Galloway was reportedly described by one Hamas official as a "hero" and was awarded a passport by the Hamas Prime Minister, Ismail Haniyeh, in "deep appreciation" of his support.



George Galloway receives a passport from Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh



Canada previously barred Mr Galloway from entry following his claim that he provided financial assistance to Hamas. He disputed the claim and said that he would appeal the ban. Mr Galloway again insisted on Twitter in 2018, when confronted with this photograph, that he does not support Hamas.

## ACTIVIST GROUPS

Numerous activist groups have also legitimised Hamas. The former Chair of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Hugh Lanning, for example, has been seen pictured with Hamas figures in Gaza, including the Hamas Prime Minister.

In 2017, an investigation by Campaign Against Antisemitism found that the Palestine Solidarity Campaign was riddled with bigotry. The group's Twitter account has in the past posted tweets expressing support for Hamas, although the group claimed that its account had been hacked and that the tweets did not reflect its views.



## GENERAL PUBLIC

This support has also extended to ordinary members of the public. During the most recent conflict between Hamas and Israel, support

specifically for Hamas was evident on British streets.

These displays of support for the terrorist group were particularly concerning in the climate of surging antisemitism on streets, campuses, online and even in schools and hospitals during the same period.

For example, at a rally on 15th May 2021 on Kensington High Street in London, Campaign Against Antisemitism's Demonstration and Event Monitoring Unit photographed a protester wearing a Hamas scarf with the terrorist group's logo.



At a rally on 16th May 2021 outside Downing Street in London, Campaign Against Antisemitism's Demonstration and Event Monitoring Unit also photographed protesters wearing green Hamas-style headbands.





At a march on 22nd May 2021 in Westminster in London, Campaign Against Antisemitism's Demonstration and Event Monitoring Unit photographed a protester with a placard declaring that " Hamas are gallant fighters for the Palestinian cause" and that "they show huge bravery against the might of the Israeli military."



## MILITARY AND POLITICAL WINGS?

There is no material distinction between Hamas' so-called military wing, known as the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, and its supposed political wing.

Hamas' so-called political wing is directly concerned with violent terrorism, and both 'wings' share the same personnel. Indeed Hamas' own founder and spiritual leader described the whole organisation as the "paramilitary wing" of the local Muslim Brotherhood.



By way of more recent example, consider that, in March 2021, Yahya Ibrahim Hassan Sinwar, a former commander and founding member of Hamas' armed apparatus, was re-elected as the leader of Hamas in the Gaza Strip for a second four-year term, a role that oversees the group's political activities as well.



Yahya Ibrahim Hassan Sinwar

Gaza political analyst Adnan Abu Amer summarised the occasion thus: "Sinwar's victory shows the man maintains a strong grip on things inside the movement, especially within its vital components such as the military wing."

Michael Milstein, head of the Palestinian Studies Forum at the Moshe Dayan Center of Tel Aviv University, told *The Wall Street Journal* on 4th June 2021 that Mr Sinwar is seeking to gain leverage by promoting ongoing resistance against Israel. "Since 2017, many people predicted that he would be a less militant leader and more political," Mr Milstein said. "But he was both."

Mr Sinwar helped form the forerunner to Hamas' military apparatus. He spent more than twenty years in an Israeli jail for abducting and killing two Israeli soldiers and was sentenced to four life sentences. In 2011, he was released in a prisoner swap and built up his power within Hamas' military.

The United States listed Mr Sinwar as a specially designated global terrorist in 2015.

Yaron Blum, a former senior official in the Israeli domestic intelligence agency, Shin Bet, told *The Guardian* that Mr Sinwar "will do all he can to carry out terror attacks."

It has been widely reported that Mr Sinwar was responsible for starting the most recent conflict with Israel. After Hamas' rival, Fatah, cancelled planned elections in the West Bank, it was Mr Sinwar who ordered the military offensive against Israel, in order to position Hamas as the real leader of the West Bank and Gaza peoples. That Mr Sinwar, who is ostensibly the leader of Hamas' 'political wing', orchestrated the group's military conflict, is further evidence



that there is no meaningful distinction between the 'wings'.

On 16th May 2021, the Israeli Air Force struck the residences of Mr Sinwar and his brother, Muhammad, the Head of Logistics and Manpower for Hamas. According to the Israeli Air Force, "both residences served as military infrastructure for Hamas."

A senior Israeli security official, who focuses on Hamas foreign funding, was quoted in *The Spectator* saying: "The distinction between the military and civilian arms is — to be very polite — artificial, and has no place in the fight against modern terrorism. We saw in this latest conflict that the political arm dictates the use of force. The so-called civilian arm takes care of providing significant funding to the military arm, and members of Hamas' military arm play a significant role in other arms.'

Furthermore, Dr Matthew Levitt, a world-renowned expert on Hamas and author of the 2006 book, *Hamas: Politics, Charity and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*, described the role of Hamas' political leaders in a paper for the Washington Institute for Near East Policy on 6th January 2004: "Hamas leaders readily acknowledge the central role that the organisation's 'political wing' plays in operational decision-making. For example, in May 2002, Hamas military commander Salah Shehada stated publicly that "the political apparatus is sovereign over the military apparatus, and a decision of the political [echelon] takes precedence over the decision of the military [echelon], without intervening in military operations."

The faux distinction between the 'military' and 'political' wings also provides cover for Hamas' terrorist activities. In July 2001, Hamas' then-leader, Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, told *Reuters*, "The [Hamas] political leadership has freed the

hand of the [Izz al-Din al-Qassam] brigades to do whatever they want against the brothers of monkey and pigs", referring to Jews.



Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi

British allies, including the United States, Canada, the European Union, Japan and Israel designate the entirety of Hamas as a terrorist organisation.

In June 2021, Germany banned the Hamas flag after a rise in antisemitic incidents. The ban, agreed upon by all parties in Germany's grand coalition government, is believed to have been spearheaded by Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

Thorsten Frei, the Deputy Parliamentary Spokesperson for the CDU, said: "We do not want the flags of terrorist organisations to be waved on German soil."



Hamas' first female suicide bomber, Reem Raiyshi

# FULL PROSCRIPTION IN THE UK

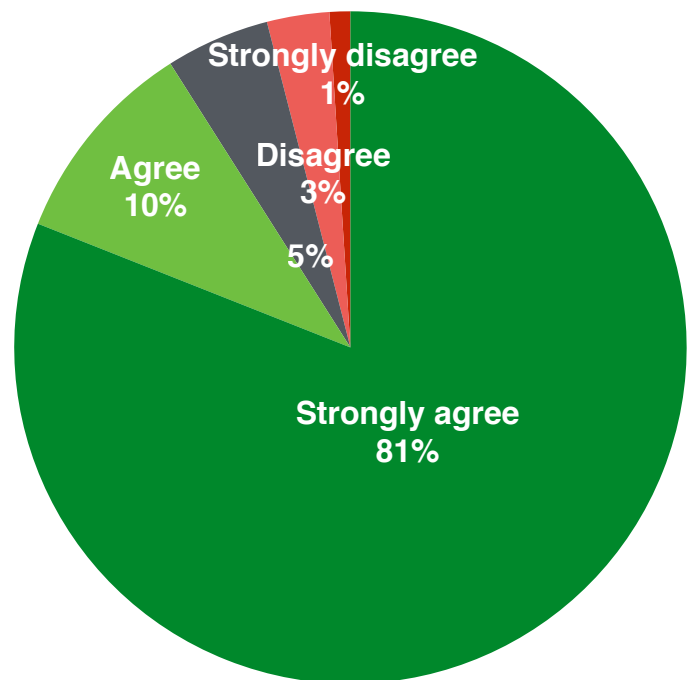
Currently, the United Kingdom only designates the Izz al-Din al-Qassem Brigades ( Hamas' 'military wing') as a proscribed terrorist organisation under the Terrorism Act 2000. The rest of Hamas is not yet designated as a terrorist organisation, which means that its flags can be flown, its ideology can be promoted, funds can be raised, material can be disseminated, and its representatives can operate in the UK.

In a debate in Parliament on 19th May 2021 on "Israel and Gaza: Ceasefire", Theresa Villiers, the MP for Chipping Norton, asked the Rt Hon James Cleverly, the Minister of State (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) about the full proscription of Hamas. He responded: "I thank my right hon. Friend for the points that she has made. She will know that the military wing of Hamas is recognised internationally as a terrorist organisation, and the entirety of Hamas has no contact — we have a no-contact policy — from the UK Government. We enjoy good working relationships with the leadership of the Palestinian Authority. Solutions need to be achieved — they must be — through negotiated political means, rather than through military means. She will also understand that we do not speculate on future proscriptions."

According to one expert, British officials have in the past privately justified not proscribing the entirety of Hamas on the basis that this was effectively accomplished through the European Union's proscription of the entirety of Hamas. Following the UK's exit from the European Union, this rationale, such as it is, no longer applies.

Polling from Campaign Against Antisemitism's Antisemitism Barometer in 2020 found that 91% of British Jews believe that the British Government should proscribe Hamas in full as a terrorist organisation.

**Question: "The British Government should proscribe Hamas in full as a terrorist organisation"**



- Neither agree nor disagree

Results from Campaign Against Antisemitism's polling of the Jewish community in 2020, extracted from our Antisemitism Barometer

# CASE STUDY: PROSCRIPTION OF HIZBALLAH

By way of case study, it may be instructive to consider the proscription of Hizballah, another antisemitic genocidal terrorist organisation based in the Middle East.

In February 2019, at the request of Campaign Against Antisemitism and others in the Jewish community, Hizballah was completely proscribed by the Home Secretary, the Rt Hon. Sajid Javid MP, with the support of the Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon. Jeremy Hunt MP.

Until then, the British Government had distinguished between Hizballah's "military wing" and "political wing", even though Hizballah mocked the Government and said that no such distinction exists. The loophole enabled brazen shows of support for Hizballah, including at previous "Al Quds Day" parades where pro-Hizballah supporters marched through central London waving Hizballah flags and placards with the caption: "We Are All Hizballah".



Hizballah rally

While in previous years the march has been a pro-Hizballah festival, with marchers festooned in Hizballah flags, no support for Hizballah was visible at the 2019 parade following the proscription. The law was also changed to allow police officers to seize flags or clothing bearing the insignia of terrorist organisations,

and also arrest anybody who publishes photographs of them. Significantly, it also meant that Hizballah assets in the UK could be frozen, which HM Treasury did in 2020.



Hizballah flag displayed on the streets of London, a practice that is now outlawed

The full proscription of Hizballah is a useful precedent for the full proscription of Hamas. After all, both are antisemitic Islamist terrorist organisations that in practice or effect govern territory in the Middle East, both enjoy support from the Iranian Government and both have wider political ambitions.

Just as the proscription of Hizballah sent a powerful message to the Jewish community – and Islamists – that antisemitism and terrorism will not be tolerated in the UK, so would the proscription of Hamas, particularly at a time of a record-breaking surge in antisemitism in Britain.



Hamas rally



**ZERO  
TOLERANCE  
— FOR —  
ANTISEMITES**

**ZERO  
TOLERANCE  
— FOR —  
ANTISEMITES**

**צדק צדק תרדף**

**JUSTICE, JUSTICE, YOU SHALL PURSUE**

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