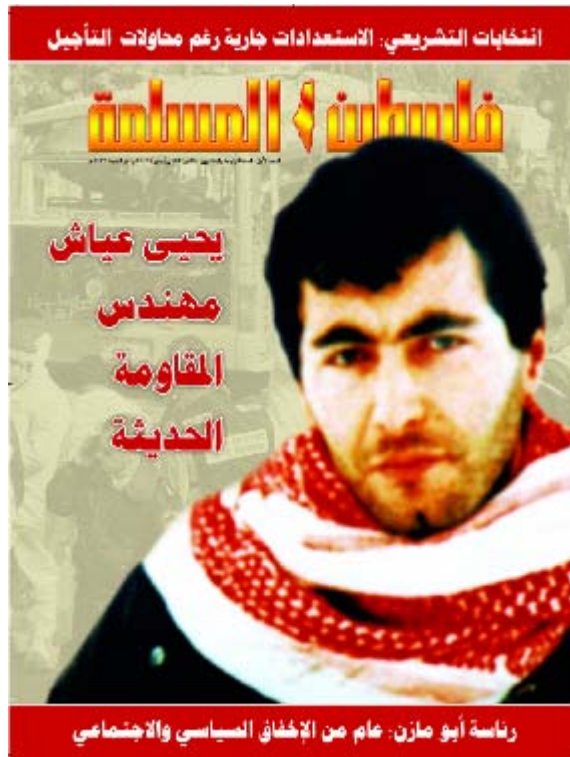




February 26, 2006

**Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center
at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S)**

Filastin al-Muslimah, a Hamas monthly distributed from the UK, continues to incite to terrorism, mainly suicide bombing terrorism. At the same time, it disseminates messages denying Israel's existence and expressing sympathy for global jihad elements.



A photograph of **Yahya Ayyash** (with an Israeli bus hit in a suicide bombing attack in the background) as appears on the cover of Hamas' **Filastin al-Muslimah**, published on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his death (January 2006). On the left is the following caption: "**Yahya Ayyash, the engineer of modern resistance**". The Hamas movement turned Yahya Ayyash, a terrorist mastermind whose attacks claimed the lives of 55 Israelis and injured some 430 more, into a **myth and a role model** in Palestinian society and in the Arab and Muslim world.

Overview

✿ The Hamas movement conducts an **extensive communications infrastructure serving it in the battle for hearts and minds of the Palestinians and of Arab and Muslim audiences**. That infrastructure includes newspapers, a radio station, a television channel (whose test broadcasts recently began), and websites. The Hamas movement uses its media to disseminate its messages in the Palestinian Authority administered territories and across the Arab and Muslim world. **They preach hatred against Israel and the West, granting religious legitimacy to suicide bombing terrorism, and turning its perpetrators into role models.**

✿ One of Hamas' most important periodicals is **Filastin al-Muslimah**, an elegant monthly that serves as Hamas' **primary mouthpiece** since the movement first came into being. The publication, in our assessment, is **directed from Damascus, printed (or published) in Beirut, and continues to be distributed from the UK¹** to the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Arab world, and even Muslim communities in Europe, the US, Canada, and Australia.² It is available both in hard copies and in an internet edition, also directed from Beirut.³

✿ The Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies has been monitoring Filastin al-Muslimah as part of its monitoring of

¹ In the past, a London address for readers' comments appeared on the first page of the publication. The London address has been **removed** from the periodical. This was done, in our assessment, **in order to hide the fact that it is distributed from the UK and in order to make the periodical's source of distribution difficult to locate by the British authorities.**

² The issues feature the publication's price in the UK and other European countries, the US, Canada, Australia, and Arab world countries.

³ The Filastin al-Muslimah website's contact in Beirut (according to the Haganah website) is **Nizar Hassan Suleiman Hussein**. Nizar Hussein is the director of the leading group of Hamas websites in Beirut. He answers, in our assessment, to the Hamas Political Bureau in Damascus and operates from Lebanon from the office of Hamas representative in Lebanon, Osama Hamdan.

the battle for hearts and minds waged by Hamas.⁴ Reviewed this time are the **January and February 2006 issues of the periodical, as published on its website.** Those two issues, published on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the death of Yahya Ayyash and Hamas' victory in the elections, provide a wide coverage of Hamas' radical Islamic worldview. It is reflected both in relation to the confrontation with Israel and the identification with global jihad, with a particular emphasis placed on nurturing **suicide bombing terrorism and turning its perpetrators into myths and role models.**

⁴ See previous publication by the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center on Filastin al-Muslimah: ["The Hamas organ Filisteen Almuslima \(Muslim Palestine\) is directed from Damascus, printed in Beirut and distributed worldwide from London, England. Its September issue pays tribute to the suicide attack against Israel carried out on a Jerusalem bus in which 23 civilians were killed, a third of them children. The organ's ultimate aims are to make a role model of the suicide bomber and thus to promote further similar attacks"](#)

The distribution of Filastin al-Muslimah according to the inner cover page

A yearly subscription in the UK costs £25; £35 in the US, Canada, and Australia; £30 elsewhere in the world. The monthly is distributed from the UK, hence the subscription prices are listed in pounds sterling.



The periodical's distribution in the Arab world. The margin of the inner cover page lists the issue's price in Sudan, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Qatar, Bahrain, Tunis, Mauritania, Morocco, and Oman.

The January 2006 issue of *Filastin al-Muslimah* is notable for its use of the tenth anniversary of Yahya Ayyash's death to nurture suicide bombing terrorism and turn him into a myth

● On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Israel's killing of Yahya Ayyash, the cover story of the January issue focuses on **that terrorist's life and work**. Yahya Ayyash, **considered to be the very symbol** of suicide bombing terrorism, was turned by Hamas into a myth **both in Palestinian society and in the Arab world**.

● Yahya Ayyash headed Hamas' terrorist-operative wing in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. **He specialized in manufacturing explosive charges and dispatching suicide bombers in the years 1994-1996, his purpose being to derail the Oslo Accords, signed in 1993**. He was called "**the Engineer**" since he completed a degree in electric engineering in the Bir Zeit University and used the knowledge he acquired for manufacturing explosive charges used by the suicide bombers. **Yahya Ayyash was responsible for the deaths of some 55 Israeli civilians and the injuries of some 430 more in a series of particularly deadly suicide bombing attacks that struck Israel's cities**. His activities led to his death in a targeted killing carried out by Israeli security forces on January 5, 1996.

● The title of the main article reads: "**[Yahya] Ayyash—Hamas' military engineer**". The subheading reads: "Yahya Ayyash [had] much experience and [was] the person who developed a [new] method of action in the [Palestinian] war of liberation. Yahya Ayyash devised a [new] method of action in the methods of "the resistance" [*al-muqawama*⁵]. He was highly knowledgeable of [explosive charges'] detonation, concealment, and camouflage techniques, and of recruiting the men [to perpetrate suicide bombing attacks] and dispatching the suicide bombers [*istishhadiyin*]. **The political and security results arising from Yahya Ayyash's activity extended beyond their military significance**. The reverberations of [the effect of] his explosives shook the capitals of the world. Yahya Ayyash moved the resistance from one phase to the next, **and he even brought about an escalation on**

⁵ *Al-muqawama* (the resistance), a central term in Hamas' terminology, describing terrorism and violence as well as all-out opposition to Israel in all spheres of activity, not only by military actions.

the strategic [level] of military activity. Yahya Ayyash is the renovator of the resistance activity in Palestine and the inventor of new military knowledge...”

✿ The article goes on to list a number of terrorist attacks under the title of **“The most important actions by Engineer Yahya Ayyash”**, describing the terrorist attacks he was responsible for. In the list, the suicide bombers are depicted as jihad warriors (i.e., holy warriors fighting for the sake of Allah), perpetrators of acts of sacrifice for Allah (*istishhadiyin*), warriors killed in battle for Allah (*shuhadaa*), and heroes (*abtal*). Thus, for example, **Raed Abdallah Zakarne**, the perpetrator of the suicide bombing attack by a car bomb in Afula in April 1994, is described in the article as a “heroic jihad warrior” and the suicide bombing attack he perpetrated is called **“an attack of sacrifice for Allah” and “a heroic act of explosion”**.

✿ The article includes an interview with **Zuheir Labadah (Abu Rashid)**, in whose house Yahya Ayyash lived when he was wanted by Israel in the years 1993-1994. Abu Rashid lavishes praise on Yahya Ayyash, referring to him as an example and a role model: “Our engineer was a spiritual man, modest to the extreme, wary of arrogance. After the Israeli Prime Minister, [Yitzhak] Rabin, spoke about him following the action on Dizengoff [Street in Tel-Aviv], **in which 25 Zionists were killed**, [Ayyash’s] eyes filled with tears and he began asking for Allah’s forgiveness, praying He would [willingly] welcome his act.” At the end of the interview, Abu Rashid said: “Ayyash is a symbol of this [Islamic] nation, a symbol for resistance fighters everywhere [on Earth]. He was devoted to Allah and absolutely refused to stand out...”

The support of the Sunni-Muslim Hamas movement for Shiite-Muslim Iran as part of the joint campaign against the enemies of Islam

✿ The monthly issue features an article on a Hamas delegation that came to Tehran. Within this context, Khaled Mash’al, head of the Hamas Political Bureau, was quoted as saying: “If Israel attacks Iran, we will broaden the scope of the campaign. We are part of a unified front against the enemies of Islam, all of whose constituents defend themselves with unique means of their own.” The article further

states that Mash'al approved Hamas' support of Iran regarding the "defense of its [self-]evident nuclear right."

Hamas' refusal to continue the lull in the fighting

✿ An article titled "**Mash'al: Hamas will not resume the lull**" states that according to Khaled Mash'al, the Hamas movement will not resume the lull at the end of 2005. Mash'al is then quoted as saying: "Our Palestinian rifle will remain targeted at the Zionist enemy alone, **and peace will not be made but by the rifle [alone].**"

✿ One of the articles in the issue presents Hamas' viewpoints as taken from its platform, published for the Palestinian Legislative Council elections. These include the **continuation of the so-called resistance** to Israel, focusing on violent resistance, and referring to the **entire land of Palestine as a Muslim land**, thus denying Israel's right to exist.

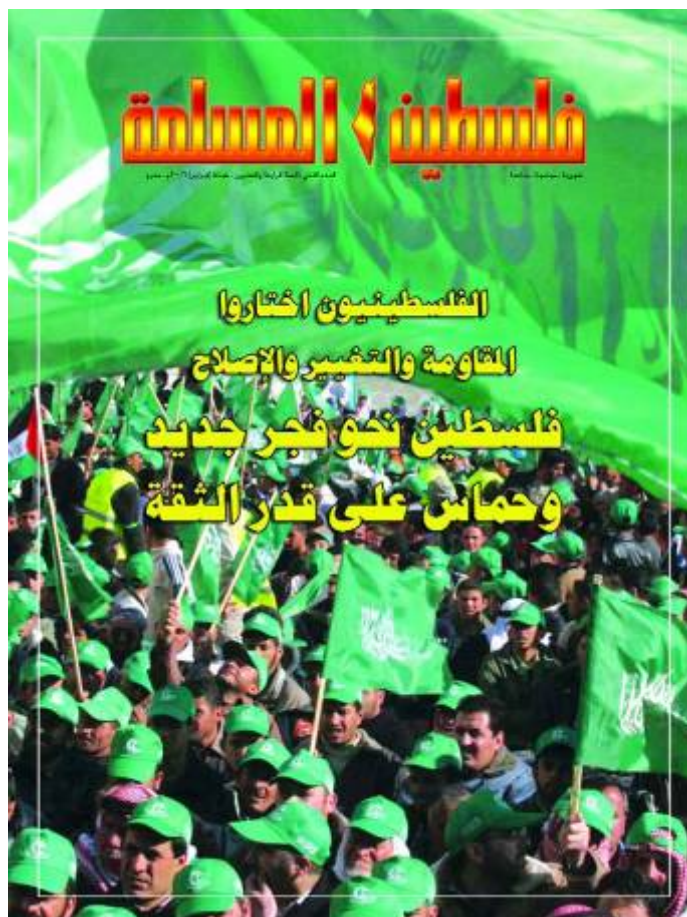
Praise for a suicide bombing attack in Netanya (December 5, 2005)

✿ The periodical provides a favorable coverage of the suicide bombing attack at the Hasharon mall in Netanya on December 5, 2005, perpetrated by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (5 killed and some 40 injured). At the end of the article, the writer boasts that "[Nevertheless,] **the most important and biggest act to be carried out in Netanya remains the one behind which stood the Islamic resistance movement, Hamas, in March 2002, at the Zionist Park hotel in the city.**" That act, states the article, perpetrated by **Abd al-Basset Oudeh, led to the deaths of more than 30 Zionists and injured a hundred.**" The article, therefore, reflects a "competition" between Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad over which of the terrorist organizations perpetrated more terrorist attacks and what terrorist attack resulted in more fatalities and received more coverage on the media.

Expressions of sympathy for anti-US terrorist attacks in Iraq

✿ The issue features an interview held in Damascus with **Sheikh Hareth al-Dari**, depicted as an Iraqi personality “of a developed national and Islamic viewpoint,” supporting the resistance to the American occupation in Iraq. The interviewed Sheikh **justifies the use of violence against the Americans** and those who assist them, portraying it as being legitimate by virtue of the divine laws and the laws set by man.

The February 2006 issue of Filastin al-Muslimah focuses on Hamas’ victory in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections, while stressing Hamas’ adherence to the continuation of terrorism and non-recognition of Israel’s right to exist



The portrayal of Hamas’ victory in the elections as reflecting the Palestinian people’s support for continuing violence and terrorism against Israel and opposing its right to exist. One of the captions in the center reads: “The Palestinians have chosen resistance [i.e., terrorism and violence], change and reform [the name of Hamas’ election list]...” The title therefore makes it clear that in Hamas’ view, there is no separation between the reforms and the continuation of terrorism.

✿ The introduction at the beginning of the issue concludes with the following: “...We extend our best wishes to the entire Palestinian people. May the elections be a turning point towards national unity and **support of the resistance** [i.e., anti-Israeli violence and terrorism].” The editorial states: “These [election] results are testimony that the vast majority of the Palestinian people on the inside [i.e., in the Palestinian Authority administered territories] have voted for the **plan of resistance**, for change, and for reforms. **Therefore, those who demand Hamas to stop resisting the occupation are putting themselves against the opinion of the majority of the voters.**”

✿ The main story in the issue deals with Hamas’ victory in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections. The article quotes parts of Hamas’ election platform, **according to which the “resistance” [i.e., violence and terrorism] against Israel must be continued and there is a religious Islamic ban on recognizing it.** The following is an excerpt of the platform: **“Palestine is part of the Arab and Muslim land whose validity** does not expire over time, and no so-called military or legal moves will change that.”

✿ **The article stresses that through their votes in the elections, the Palestinian people expressed their adherence to “the path of resistance” [i.e., violence and terrorism] and their adherence to historical Palestine, from the river to the sea [i.e., the elimination of the State of Israel].** It goes on to say: **“The people have expressed their opinion [by voting in the elections], [that is] they object to the Oslo Accords and the Roadmap and all the agreements and understandings [of the Palestinians] signed with the [Israeli] occupation.”**

✿ The issue features an article stating that **Khaled Mash’al**, head of the Hamas Political Bureau (and the movement’s de facto leader), stressed once again that **the movement stands by its weapons and resistance (*muqawama*) as a strategic option** “until the liberation of every inch of Palestinian land and the return of every refugee to his land and homeland.”

Coverage of the terrorist attack at the Tel-Aviv central bus station (January 2006)

✿ As part of Filastin al-Muslimah’s effort to nurture suicide bombing terrorism, this issue also features an article covering “an act of suicide”. **It is the suicide bombing attack that occurred at the Tel-Aviv central bus station on January 19, 2006**, in which some 30 people were wounded. The suicide bombing attack, also perpetrated by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, is described as a “heroic act of sacrifice for the sake of Allah”, and the responsible suicide bomber is called *istishhadi*, that is, one who perpetrated an act of heroism for Allah.

Sympathy for anti-US terrorist attacks in Iraq

✿ This issue also features an article encouraging terrorist attacks against the US forces in Iraq out of Islamic religious rationales. The article includes an interview with **Tareq al-Hashemi**, Secretary General of the Islamic Party in Iraq, in which he states that **the liberation (of Iraq from the Americans) will only occur through every kind of holy war (jihad), mainly armed jihad.**

✿ The article reflects, in fact, **Hamas’ affinity with global jihad and its association with elements of global jihad and their activities worldwide.**⁶ In the interview, Al-Hashemi repeatedly states that “ours is a legitimate, serious position, taking the side of the resistance [*al-muqawama*] and [even] approving of it. The liberation [of Iraq] will not take place but by all kinds of holy war [jihad], mainly armed holy war [*al-jihad al-musallah*].

The nurturing of “suicide martyrdom culture”

✿ The issue features an article titled “**Paying full respect to martyrdom**”, which **includes praise for martyrdom for the sake of Allah (*shahadah*)**. The article states: “It is possible that a man’s martyrdom (*shahadah*) or an act of heroic self-sacrifice for the sake of Allah (*istishhad*)⁷ are [seemingly] **the cessation of [the perpetrator’s]**

⁶ It should be noted that Hamas relates to jihadist activities not only in Iraq but also in other hot spots of global jihad, such as Chechnya and Afghanistan.

⁷ Using this Islamic terminology, the writer refers to suicide bombing terrorism and its perpetrators.

breath and movement on Earth. However, it [martyrdom] is not the end of life and the cessation of influence on it.”⁸

✿ The writer quotes Yahya Ayyash: “The Jews can uproot my body from Palestine, but I want to sow among the [Palestinian] people something they cannot uproot...” The author adds: **“And sown he has. Martyrdom for the sake of Allah is not only the peak of jihad, it is also the peak of life in any shape or form.”** The writer of the article praises **“leader shahids”** and makes an example of prominent shahids, including Hamas leaders (Ahmed Yassin, Abd al-Aziz al-Rantisi, Yahya Ayyash), Muslim Brotherhood leaders in Egypt (Hassan al-Bana⁹ and Sayyid Qutb¹⁰), and **Abdallah Azzam, a Palestinian from northern Samaria who was Osama Bin Laden’s ideologist.**¹¹

✿ The issue features an article covering an event organized by the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, commemorating the life and work of Yahya Ayyash. The event placed an emphasis on nurturing the myth of suicide bombers, among other things, through singing songs of praise and reading excerpts from Yahya Ayyash’s biography. According to the report, a local band called the Al-Aqsa Hawks performed at the event and “sang a wonderful song, with a model of a wrecked, smoking bus behind it” (a symbol of suicide bombing attacks perpetrated on Israeli buses¹²).

⁸ According to the radical Islamic worldview supporting suicide bombing terrorism, the suicide bomber does not die but goes on to live in the presence of Allah in paradise.

⁹ Founded the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt in 1928; killed by Egyptian security forces in 1949.

¹⁰ A radical Islamic ideologist who influenced many radical Islamic movements in Egypt and elsewhere. Executed by the Egyptian government in 1966.

¹¹ Abdallah Azzam was killed in a mysterious explosion in Afghanistan in 1989 and became a shahid revered by the Hamas movement (in like manner to the other prominent shahids mentioned in the article).

¹² Hamas (and the other terrorist organizations) make extensive use of various artistic means (books, movies, poems, plays, and art exhibits) to nurture the myth of suicide bombing terrorism.

Nurturing the myth of Yahya Ayyash and suicide bombing terrorism



The performance of the Al-Aqsa Hawks, with a miniature model of a burned down bus and a photograph of Yahya Ayyash in the background