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

Hamas's new satellite television channel: a step forward in Hamas's battle for hearts and minds

- ✂ A Hamas-operated satellite broadcasting station named “**The Light of Al-Aqsa**” (Saraj al-Aqsa¹) started broadcasting on October 15 in the afternoon. For the time being, the station airs archive footage of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and songs of religious character. The station will broadcast from **Dubai** (where the station manager, **Ziyad al-Hasanat**, is based) and the content will originate from **Gaza** (Dunya al-Watan, October 10).²



The logo of the new satellite television channel, as published on Palestinian websites (October 11)

- ✂ The station makes use of two satellites:
 - ✓ **Arabsat**, an Arab-owned **communications satellite**, with most of its shares held by **Saudi Arabia**.
 - ✓ **The Pas 5 communications satellite**, formerly owned by an American company (**Pan Am Sat**). It was purchased by the Arab

¹ A *saraj* is an oil lamp or lantern, usually associated with sanctity or mysticism.

² Another source claims that the channel's technical and administrative team will reside in Damascus, while the broadcast centers will be located in Egypt and in another country (Maan News Agency, October 16, 2006).

Satellite Communications Organization, renamed “Badr”, and is now **owned by Arabsat.**

Note: According to Maan News Agency (October 16), the new channel signed a \$300,000-a-year operation contract with Arabsat.

- ✂ It should be noted that Hamas originally intended to operate the satellite television station from the Gaza Strip. Ultimately, owing to security concerns, it was decided to choose **Dubai**, where there is a free media zone.
- ✂ While the Hamas government is bankrupt, **the Hamas movement invests funds and efforts to boost its capabilities in the battle for hearts and minds.** The new channel will provide Hamas with a means to **enhance its abilities in the sphere of television broadcasting. It should be noted that until now, Hamas had a terrestrial television station in the Gaza Strip with limited broadcasting coverage.**
- ✂ The satellite broadcasts will allow Hamas to disseminate its radical messages not only among target audiences in the Palestinian Authority administered territories, but also throughout the entire Arab world and even among Arab/Muslim communities in South European countries, which fall within the broadcasting range (Hamas’s model being, in our assessment, Hezbollah’s Al-Manar television channel).



Pictures from the channel's test broadcast (October 15)