

Foreword:
Dr. Marouf al-Bakhit
Commentary:
Taher al-Masri

Mohammad Abu Rumman
November 2009

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«جہاس»

JORDANIAN POLICY AND THE HAMAS CHALLENGE:

Exploring Grey Areas and Bridging the Gap
in Mutual Interests

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Islamic Politics in Jordan - Volume IV

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Exploring Grey Areas
and Bridging the Gap in Mutual Interests**

**Mohammad Abu Rumman
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«تحريري حياس»

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Preface

Jordan has, without doubt, played an important role in Middle Eastern politics in the last decades, being situated at the very heart of the Arab world and very close to the centre of the Middle East conflict. The country has tried to act as a mediating force and has walked a delicate tightrope in order to balance the centrifugal forces of the region. Events and developments have affected Jordan's politicians as much as the country's public. Citizens and decision makers have reacted in a plethora of ways in order to deal with military confrontations, civil unrest and political stalemates in Jordan's immediate neighbourhood.

For years, one central aspect of regional politics has been what could be called the Hamas triangle: the complex relationship between Jordan and the Hamas movement, with Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood as the third leg of this triangle. This triangular relationship has historically undergone several phases; different actors on all three sides have acted in different ways at different times.

Mohammed Abu Rumman sheds light, in this fourth volume of the series "Islamic Politics in Jordan", published by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, on this multi-faceted web of policies. As in the earlier publications of this series, it is the aim of the author to look beyond the limelight, do explore the deeper layers of these interwoven relationships. In order to achieve this aim, he describes the historical stages, analyses the dynamics and forces on all sides and develops future perspectives.

As it will be recalled, the first volume had analyzed the *Muslim Brotherhood in the Jordanian Parliamentary Elections 2007*. The second volume had described the very heterogeneous landscape of positions that Islamic movements hold on *Women & Politics*. The

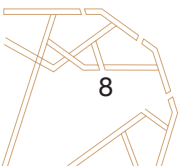
third volume of the series had dealt with the *Jihadi Salafist Movement in Jordan after Zarqawi*.

We offer this fourth volume with the hope that it will again provide interesting reading. It is equally hoped that scholars and politicians, media and civil society will obtain a much needed background analysis to better understand regional political considerations and to possibly develop strategies that might eventually lead this troubled region to a more positive future.

Achim Vogt

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

Amman, November 2009





Foreword

Dr. Marouf al-Bakhit*

Doctor and friend Mohammad Abu Rumman was kind enough to send me a copy of the manuscript of his new book, “Jordanian Policy and the Hamas Challenge: Exploring Grey Areas and Bridging the Gap in Mutual Interests”. I began to read this study with extreme interest, finding myself rushing to arrive at the end result of this courageous attempt to delve into such a sensitive subject.

Afterwards, the researcher called to ask if it would be possible for me to write an introduction for the book. I welcomed this opportunity, with admiration and appreciation for the subject matter and the approach with which it was treated, and with great appreciation for its scholarly objectivity. And, apart from my desire not to comment on the subject of this study and on the course of the relationship between Jordan and Hamas, its summaries and conclusions, despite the fact that I was a witness to it by virtue of my position and my responsibilities during certain stages in this relationship, because I believe that this would not be of benefit at this point – nevertheless I see that Dr. Mohammad Abu Rumman has succeeded with distinction and with merit in this challenge that he has taken upon himself.

Taking on the subject of the relationship between Jordan and Hamas is in itself beset with great difficulties. For, on the one hand, the handling of this portfolio was and still is a security matter for Jordan. As this relationship is still continuing, negatively or positively, this makes accessing official documents virtually impossible. On the other hand, Jordanian officials, in general, are often reluctant to talk about the details of events that took place while they were in

* Former Prime Minister of Jordan

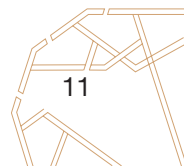
positions of responsibility, particularly when the subject is still active and ongoing. Indeed, it has become a custom amongst us in Jordan not to delve into details about important issues once we have left an official position. In addition to the latter, there is an absence of conviction amongst many who were once in positions of responsibility to write about important issues or even to write their memoirs.

These realities have reflected in some way or another on Dr. Abu Rumman's book. The research in some parts appears to be descriptive or historical when it comes to the relationship between Jordan and Hamas, due to the scholar's reliance on secondary sources for the lack of first sources, such as official documents and otherwise. However, in the last section of the book, and particularly the fourth part, the scholar relies on his creative abilities in intellect and in viewing the overall scene from within a general context that establishes and proves conclusively that he has conceptualization ability.

The real value of this book lies in the fact that it fills the serious gap in critical political research we have in Jordan. Indeed, it is necessary to recognize that, in general, we suffer from a weakness in executing strategic political studies and research, which is of high caliber. And, despite the numerous research and study centers that have expanded lately, these centers have not been able to present solid political research of the kind that can generate policy options and recommendations, which can facilitate and produce the kind of groundwork that the decision-maker can proceed from in formulating decisions.

I would like to emphasize that this research arrives at options and recommendations that can be of great benefit to Jordanian decision-makers when it comes to formulating policy with regard to Jordan's relationship with Hamas. The researcher has clearly identified the factors and considerations that influence and affect the relationship between Jordan and Hamas; and, then provides a fluid analysis of the latter, using exceptional, articulate language that arrives at and examines policy options.

Finally, helping the researcher execute this valuable research are his erudition, knowledge and experience in Islamic organizations from all sides of the spectrum. In Dr. Mohammad Abu Rumman, we have not only gained a most capable journalist, but an excellent researcher of the first order.





Commentary

Taher al-Masri**

In his book, writer, journalist and political analyst, Mohammad Abu Rumman, addresses a subject that is not only important and sensitive but also constantly shifting. He addresses this subject with complete objectivity and impartiality. Indeed, this concern and his forte in all that he writes. I am confident the reader will take pleasure in reading this informative, factual and analytical book, as I am confident the reader will feel these qualities in both the book and in the writer.

One must look at the relationship between the government of Jordan and the Islamic resistance movement, Hamas, from a scholarly, realistic perspective and without exaggerating matters. Fundamentally, Hamas is a Palestinian resistance movement that is also a part of the Global Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood. And, what is of essential importance for Jordan stems from the fact that Hamas is a Palestinian Jihadist Islamic movement, which has proven itself on the field of the Palestinian struggle and on the Palestinian social front and, that it is seeking to establish a sustainable presence in the political arena there. There are valid and real concerns that, while it strives to achieve this objective, it has worked to bridge itself with the Islamic movement in Jordan, which has a large popular base, particularly in Palestinian communities.

Hamas is a popular resistance movement that was first formed in Gaza then spread to other parts of Palestine. Its rise was assisted by several factors, the most important of which was the growing frustration with and declining popularity of the other Palestinian

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factions, first and foremost amongst them, Fatah. The latter is in addition to the tide of Islamism sweeping over the area, a rich nation prepared to generously fund it, the complete standstill in the peace process, and Israel's and the West's procrastination with regard to all the Arab initiatives made towards reaching an acceptable settlement. All of the aforementioned lent Hamas special importance for Jordan and in the way Jordan would deal with it. That Hamas was part of the Muslim Brotherhood was of secondary importance for us in Jordan.

As mentioned in this book, the importance of the Brotherhood aspect of Hamas originated from the fact that it was a Palestinian resistance movement that had extensions inside the so-called 'Palestinian street' in Jordan. This was particularly the case after the first Intifada broke out in 1988, with growing fears that the repercussions of this Intifada would cause a ripple effect in Jordan via Islamic and/or Palestinian channels inside the Jordanian street. This, in my opinion, was one of the factors that accelerated the process that led to Jordan's administrative disengagement with the West Bank, which took place in July of 1988. It was due to these factors, and not because Hamas was an Islamic movement, that Hamas was lent such significance when it came to the Jordanian domestic arena.

This was how Hamas grew to become the Jihadist face of the Muslim Brotherhood. I want to stress on this latter point so that we may better appreciate the extent to which the Jordanian government was concerned about this reality and how it would reflect upon Jordan; namely, Jordan's apprehension about Hamas – the Palestinian Brotherhood – becoming a principle player in the domestic equation. These concerns were further reinforced by Hezbollah's ascent in Lebanon, where the ability of a national and religious resistance movement to liberate South Lebanon was proven, followed by the emergence and steady rise of the Iraqi resistance, which was tied to nationalist parties and tendencies in Iraq.

All three resistance movements (Hamas, Hezbollah and the Iraqi Resistance) were able to weaken, if not destroy altogether, the new American project in the region. What is worse still is that the Hamas and Hezbollah resistance movements were both supported and financed in a very clear and robust manner, and quite frankly, by Iran, which we had assumed had ceased its call for exporting the revolution only to find it doing just that through new tactics and instruments.

The former/new Iranian factor entering into the equation exacerbated the fears of the so-called “moderate” states, first and foremost amongst them, the Gulf States. The increased national security concerns of states in the region paralleled the growing threat of Iran’s nuclear program against United States oil interests, in particular, and that of the West, in general; interests which are considered to be amongst these nations’ highest strategic and security interests. It was now becoming a necessity to reign in all these instruments, sometimes with gauntlets of silk, sometimes with outward rejection or disregard and, other times, with a more cautious handling of matters with the ultimate objective of containment.

Furthermore, there were speculations amongst numerous political circles that the Islamic movement’s objective in Jordan’s last municipal and parliamentary elections was derived of their aspirations to first dominate municipal councils in major cities (where the overwhelming majority of residents were of Palestinian origin), to prove their power amongst a high percentage of the population; and, that these elections were seen as being a first step towards achieving an electoral victory on the parliamentary level, following their victory at the municipal level, with the Islamists closing the circle during the parliamentary elections. Indeed, it was from this point and prior to the elections, that the Islamist Member of Parliament, Azzam al-Huneidi, made a declaration in which he claimed that the Islamic movement was now ready to take power. These speculations continued with the claim that the Jordanian state was ready to thwart this scheme even if it had to resort to violating the principles of electoral transparency and, even if it had to place democratic progress and practices on the back burner for the time being.

Prior to these developments, the Jordanian government had already experienced a period of political contradiction with the Hamas Movement, which finally came to the surface after Hamas’ participation in the legislative elections in Palestine, in 2006, and after its victory over Fatah in these free and transparent elections that the world, and even the West, witnessed. Unfortunately for Hamas and for political players in both Palestine and Jordan, this important victory took place in the era of George Bush’s ideologically, religiously and politically hard-line administration, which adhered

to the neo-conservative school in the United States. At the time of its victory, Hamas did not understand the significances behind this reality. Once again, Hamas failed to comprehend the reasons behind political transformations, and the depth of these transformations in the United States' domestic arena with the election of Barack Obama, and their effect on developing a political platform, which would help a president of good intentions but, perhaps, of limited ability in reaching his objectives in this region.

Hamas achieved its legislative victory due to several reasons. The most important of these was that the Palestinian electorate's vote was more in the form of a protest against the Palestinian Authority and (the corruption of) Fatah. In addition, the waning possibilities of any peaceful solution tipped the advantage towards the idea of resistance. Hamas' accomplishments in the domain of social and volunteer work also attracted the support of the working classes in both Gaza and the West Bank. Finally, Hamas went into the legislative elections with a clear political platform, which depended in principle on resisting the occupation; indeed, it was a Jihadist movement that had succeeded with distinction.

But, once again, Hamas fell into a strategic contradiction that it still suffers from, and that is, the Palestinian situation as a whole, which is embodied by the fact that Hamas insists on its political program, whose success is based on the fact that it is a movement that resists the occupation, while, at the same time, it seeks to gain access to power, only to become an authority that must govern under the occupation.

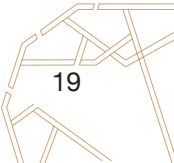
This clear contradiction has confounded Hamas, has confounded the Palestinian National Authority, and has confounded the peace process. I made this clear to the Hamas leadership, telling them directly that the Movement should not accept being part of the government, but rather, remain in the legislative assembly with its majority; that it should leave authority and governance in the hands of the National Authority; and, that the Movement should take the position of being a security valve within the legislative authority. Then, if the Hamas leadership did not see any change in circumstances – to the better or to the worse –, it could deal with matters in whatever

manner it deemed appropriate through the legislative assembly, where it had the upper hand over the executive authority. This was a great opportunity for Hamas, where it could evolve from being a large Palestinian faction to one that had ownership over of a national plan for Palestine.

Hamas was granted a golden opportunity in which it could prove to the world, to the Arab leaders and to the Arab peoples across the Arab world that political Islam was capable of governing, and of conducting the affairs of the state and of its servants; and, that it was capable of preserving the balance and of understanding change and of building strategies. But, now, it stands before a long and arduous road. And, I do not know where this road will take Hamas or take Palestine.

Today, we are seeing the alternatives to a peaceful solution closing before the Palestinians and the Arabs, one after the other. Will the choice to resist return to the fore? Will this option win over that of the peace process? Is a division of roles possible? Is the combination of this or that possible? And, finally, do we put forth the option of a single, democratic, bi-national state?

Introduction



The relationship between Jordan and the Palestinian Hamas Movement represents one of the most important strategic portfolios concerning both parties, as well as the Muslim Brotherhood, the third party actively engaged in this relationship. The significance of this subject is of a common concern that far exceeds the question of mere foreign policy for these parties. Indeed, it touches upon the very core of a sensitive nerve in the internal composition of the nature of Jordan's domestic affairs.

Despite this fact, few studies dealing with this subject have been offered within a research framework or objective scientific analysis that examine the dimensions and dynamics of this relationship, or the internal and external factors that influence it. There are no studies available that deconstruct the evolution of and transformations in this relationship, or the events and the influences simmering behind this scene, which do not necessarily appear on the surface.

This study is an attempt to go beyond the limited scope of the literature and the documents currently available on the subject. It seeks to develop a framework that does justice to the subject by placing the interests, stakes and politics involved within an objective context. It also attempts to shed light on this ambiguous and meandering relationship by exploring grey areas and defining past, current and expected practices.

Needless to say, the scarcity and lack of resources on the subject – save for a few books that take on the approach of ‘documenting’ events according to the point of view of one of the sides –, represented the greatest challenge faced by this study.¹ To overcome this challenge, the study uses a methodology that traces the history of this relationship divided into stages. It observes the transformations it experienced, on the one hand, and uses discussions and interviews with a number of relevant actors, active at different times during these various stages, on the other. Finally, an overall analysis of documents, statements and declarations available is presented to the reader and for the researcher to benefit from for the purposes of scholarly research in the future.

Also contributing to the difficulties faced by this research were individuals, who played an important role in certain periods and had access to certain evidence and information, who refrained from providing certain information in their testimonies despite the fact that some of them have been outside the political scene for years. Indeed, this information, at this point, is merely historical and does not contain state secrets. Perhaps, what prompted this reaction was that a great part of the relationship between Jordan and Hamas was actually crafted behind the scenes due particularly to security concerns.

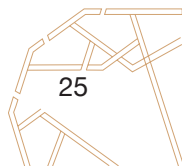
In order to meet its desired objective, the study will dissect the factors and variables that affected and governed the relationship between Jordan and Hamas, in an attempt to present a reading of what was at stake for both parties, as well as their mutual and conflicting interests. To this end, the study begins with a historical survey of the periods in which the relationship began to develop and undergo certain transformations. The aim of this survey is to construct a ‘historical context’ for both the researcher and reader to benefit from as they try to build a framework, which helps clarify these factors and variables that impacted the way the relationship evolved, according to the respective points of view of both parties.

The paper then aims to discuss the relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, as this relationship represents a key determinant influencing the relationship between the state and Hamas. Finally, the study will attempt to identify 'grey areas' present for both sides (the Jordanian government and Hamas), and will try to understand the 'gap' that developed without the parties (or either one of the parties) realizing the extent of the mutual interests shared between them.

What remains to be said is that the study avoids presenting details of events that took place as well as the differing points of view held about such events. Nor does it engage in a comparative analysis between conflicting viewpoints, as much as the researcher attempts to refer to other sources, mostly because other books have covered these types of details and have offered a full range of views, such as the books by Ibrahim Ghosheh, "The Red Minaret", and Paul McGeough's "Kill Khalil", in particular.

The paper will thus focus on building a perspective based on three dimensions: Firstly, an information-based and historical dimension, which surveys the various stages in the evolution of the political relationship between the two parties. Secondly, the analytical dimension, which will cover the determining factors and dynamics influencing the relationship between the two parties. And, thirdly, a future outlook, which explores the various stakes, interests and options available to both parties in charting the future course of this reciprocal relationship.

**News Clipping:
Mishal's Father's
Funeral Wake Sums Up
the Political Situation!**



At the end of August 2009, the Jordanian Monarch, King Abdullah II, permitted the leader of the Hamas Movement, Khalid Mishal, into Jordan for a limited period of hours in order to participate in his father's funeral procession and wake. The news of this visit broadcast by the Jordanian media included a statement by an official source that said, "The visit is based on purely humanitarian considerations and carries no political implications whatsoever."²

Despite the very short period of time he spent in Amman, Mishal managed to present a political speech that carried an amicable message towards Jordan. From the location of his father's wake, Mishal addressed the public and the country's political leadership in the speech, and he outlined Hamas' view on what could be the desired framework for the relationship between both sides.

On the other hand, Jordanian officials remained silent, offering nothing in the way of a political reply save for Amman's mayor offering condolences to Mishal on behalf of the King prior to Mishal's return to the Syrian capital, Damascus, which has provided a safe haven for him (and his colleagues from Hamas' political bureau) these past few years.

Commenting on the event, the Jordanian media and certain Jordanian writers tried to play upon the 'humanitarian' nature of Mishal's visit, questioning its political implications and dimensions in opening new channels in the deadlocked relationship between Jordan and Hamas during the past few years.

Writers recalled the assassination attempt against Mishal that took place in Amman in 1997 in which the King saved his life by insisting that Israel provide an antidote. The writers also recalled the years of warmer relations between Jordan and Hamas, when Amman had embraced and hosted the movement for a period of almost eight years and had allowed Hamas' political bureau to have a legal presence. The latter was notwithstanding the fact that the launch of the Movement's political and media presence would take place from Amman, specifically from the headquarters of the Muslim Brotherhood – prior to the Jordanian government's official ban on the activities of the movement's political office in Amman and the incarceration of its leaders, followed by their deportation to Doha (Qatar) in 1999.³

Much “water passed under this bridge” in the past few years. According to certain powers-at-be in Jordan's political leadership, as of 2006, Hamas had begun to change and had begun to show visible signs of posing a “a threat to Jordan's national security” in light of the regional polarization that placed the Movement in an alliance with Iran, Syria and Hezbollah (otherwise known as the Opposition or ‘Dissenter's’ Camp). In the meantime, Jordan had allied with the other regional camp, otherwise known as the Moderate Arab States (later called the Arab Solidarity Alliance, which included Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Palestinian National Authority).

During Mishal's father's funeral, the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood made an obvious effort to politically ‘cast’ the occasion in their favour, with Brotherhood members taking on the task of managing and organizing the funeral wake. The occasion provided spokesmen for the Brotherhood a golden media opportunity in which they commended Hamas and its political stances, as well as implicitly criticizing the official Jordanian position. Indeed, the outcome produced an atmosphere of resent on the part of leading state policy-makers. Had it not been for the intervention of Mishal's speech, which praised the Jordanian King for his “hospitality” and for his position with regard to the Palestinian cause, the occasion had the potential of turning into a “political crisis”.⁴

In the meantime, the Muslim Brotherhood (to which Mishal originally belonged, prior to Hamas' official split from the Brotherhood and their establishment of an independent organization as the 'Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood'), was not of "one heart", with sharp differences storming within the organization. The crisis between the Jordanian Brotherhood's two principal wings –the hawks, or those close to Hamas, and the centrists and doves – has hung heavily over the organization's internal dynamics. Leaks from both sides have become part of a "media war" that, in recent months, has turned into an open war waged between the two wings, creating with it rich material for the press.

Hamas has not been an objective party to the internal crisis in the Jordanian Brotherhood. Jordanian state institutions also have not stood idly by. The relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas has been a fundamental determinant in shaping the framework that has affected and governed the relationship between all three sides: the state, the Brotherhood and Hamas.

For the Muslim Brotherhood, the relationship with the Hamas Movement and the Movement's influence inside their organization have become principal factors in the struggle to define the "Brotherhood's political identity". The relationship in itself has come to represent a very sensitive nerve in the internal divisions and disagreements between the organization's two major wings.

For the state, these two questions also pose a fundamental concern, which helps explaining the transformation in the relationship between Hamas and the Brotherhood and their respective political courses, which have conflicted at times and merged at others.

Thus, the scene of Mishal's "humanitarian" visit and presence at his father's funeral carried with it broad political implications against a backdrop of nearly two decades of altercations, transformations and events, all of which testify to the way the course of the relationship developed between the Movement and the Jordanian

state. It has been a ‘complexly constructed’ relationship, with the Muslim Brotherhood representing a third column in this formation. Indeed, the Brotherhood represents an important and dynamic entry point for any research or political analysis, which tries to deeply penetrate into the relationship between Hamas and Jordan and the political frameworks governing it, as well as in finding the means to better explain this relationship and in predicting potential horizons, determinants and scenarios for it.

The following pages will attempt to do just that by answering the following questions:

- What is the current framework and context in which the relationship between Hamas and Jordan operates?
- What were the major transformations and stages that this relationship went through?
- Where does the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan ‘stand’ when it comes to the other two parties?
- What are the determinants and considerations that govern the visions of the three parties (the state, the Brotherhood and Hamas) in terms of their relationship with each other and their conflicting and converging interests?
- Finally, how can one draw a vision for the next phase in light of local, regional and international variables and changes?

To answer these questions and to construct an analysis on the dimensions and scope of this relationship and its phases and its determinants, the next pages will work on and present the following principal themes:

1. A Historical Prelude: “The Meandering Course” between Hamas and Jordan
2. Behind the Scenes: The Role of Internal and External Factors in Shaping the Transformations in the Relationship

3. The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas: From a “Legitimate Birth” to the Question of Identity and Influence
4. Jordan, Hamas and the Brotherhood: Grey Areas and the Question of Mutual Interests



Part 1

A Historical Prelude: The Meandering Course between Hamas and Jordan

The relationship of successive Jordanian governments with the Hamas Movement did not follow a clear upward or downward path. Rather, the relationship went through periods of ebbs and flows, warmth and animosity. Nevertheless, it is possible to examine the major trends and characteristics of certain historical periods, which affected the course of the development of the relationship between the two sides up to this day.

What is unique about the relationship between the two sides is the fact that a great part of the Movement's political and media activities and much of its strategic policy decisions were actually born out of Jordan. Furthermore, leading figures in the Movement's political bureau were of Jordanian nationality (carried Jordanian passports), as were a great proportion of the Movement's members and its grassroots supporters in Jordan, half of whom were of Palestinian origin.

During the late 1980s, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan contributed to the birth of the political, media and Jihadist (the new Jihadism) activities of its Brotherhood branch in Palestine, which was named Hamas in juxtaposition with the launch of the First Intifada in 1987.

With the invasion of Kuwait, in 1990, by the late leader of Iraq, Saddam Hussein and the launch of the Second Gulf War the following year, many of Hamas' political leaders, who had previously been active in the Arab Gulf states, returned to Jordan. There, they returned to their political and media-related activities under the umbrella of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In 1993, the Jordanian government and the Hamas Movement together attempted to define the framework within which the Movement would exist on the domestic arena, based on a "gentlemen's agreement" between the two sides. But, the agreement would not last long due to the continued strain on the relationship, which finally culminated in 1999. That year, the Jordanian government decided to ban the activities of the Movement in Jordan. Its leaders left to Qatar, then on to Damascus. And, a period of rift and intermittent crisis was born between the two sides.

The occupation of Iraq by American forces (in April 2003) subsequently created new regional conditions, the repercussions of which would become apparent in the year 2006. The beginning of that year also witnessed the unfolding of Palestinian legislative elections in which Hamas participated and won an outright majority. And, in parallel with these developments came the emergence of the regional role of Iran, with all the governments in the region moving towards a policy of polarized alliances and axes, which reinforced and pushed the crisis between Jordan and Hamas to a more advanced stage.

In 2008, with Hamas taking over and maintaining its hold on the Gaza Strip, a new attitude towards the Movement began to emerge internationally. The Director of Jordanian General Intelligence, at that time, Lieutenant General Mohammad Dahabi, tried to engineer a new direction for the relationship between Jordan and Hamas, and once again, opened the doors to political dialogue with the Movement through secure channels. The effort did not last, especially with Dahabi's service coming to an end in late 2008.

The Jordanian government froze all communications with the Hamas Movement and contact with the Movement was restricted to the most limited of scope. The relationship between the two parties returned to “square one” in terms of its insecurity and in its pattern of alternating crises. There was to be no agreement between the two sides on the definition of the strategic interests that governed the relationship between them; nor was there a definition of the criteria through which it would be possible to present an interpretative framework, which could help guarantee a logical response to the transformations that the relationship was experiencing.

In the next section, a survey of the historical development of the relationship between the two sides, in its evolution and in its digressions, and in the meandering path that it would pursue, will be discussed according to the following themes:

1. The Muslim Brotherhood in the Levant: The Birth of Hamas from the Womb of the Palestine Branch
2. The ‘Gentlemen’s Agreement’: Defining a Framework for the Movement’s Presence in Jordan
3. The “Rift”: Seeking an Alternative Incubator Strategy
4. Eruption of the Political Crisis: The Politics of Regional Alliances
5. A Temporary Respite Followed by a Period of Ambiguity

The Muslim Brotherhood in the Levant: The Birth of Hamas from the Womb of the Palestine Branch

In 1986, the Global Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood decided to establish what was to be called the Palestine Branch. The Palestine Branch was created to assist in transforming Islamist activities in Palestine to a more ideal level in terms of their charitable, educational and missionary work, or as deemed required by the “Jihadist Project”⁵. By the end of the next year (1987), this is exactly what took place with the launch of the popular Palestinian Intifada and the declaration made announcing the birth of the Islamic resistance movement, Hamas (or the Jihadist front of the Muslim Brotherhood).⁶

The Muslim Brotherhood was never far from what was taking place in Palestine. Indeed, it was a primary catalyst as the general supervisor of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood was also, officially, the leader of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood (or Hamas). The two organizations together formed the ‘Muslim Brotherhood Organization of Greater Syria’^a, which was established in 1978.

a- The term Greater Syria is also known as the Levant: Present-day Syria constitutes only a small portion of the ancient geographical Syria. Until the twentieth century, when Western powers began to carve out the rough contours of this part of the region, the whole of the settled region at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea was called Syria, the name given by the ancient Greeks to the land bridge that links three continents. For this reason, historians and political scientists usually use the term Greater Syria to denote the area in the pre-state period... On a more political level, today the term ‘Greater Syria’ refers to pan-nationalist desire among many Levantine Arabs--Christian and Muslim alike--to achieve some kind of unity in fulfillment of their aspirations for the region. Second is a desire for economic and social prosperity. Third is a universal dislike of Israel, which many Arabs feel was forcibly imposed by the West and which they view as a threat to Arab unity. The fourth issue is the dominant political role of the military in such unity. Reference: <http://countrystudies.us/syria/2.htm>; Source: U.S. Library of Congress.

And, it was from the headquarters of the Muslim Brotherhood that the Hamas political bureau and its Shura Council^b (established later) contributed to forming and presenting the political and communication visions and objectives of the umbrella organization; thus, giving Hamas a fundamental role in the organization's policy-making and political discourse, equal in importance to its new 'Jihadist mission'.

Despite all this, Hamas Movement's Political Bureau Chief, Khalid Mishal, claims that the true body of the Movement's leadership was not born of the Jordanian Brotherhood, but rather a group of expatriates, particularly from Kuwait, who campaigned for the idea of turning the volunteer and charity work of the Brotherhood in Palestine into Jihadist activism – which eventually led to the initiation of the Hamas Movement in the form of a Palestinian Jihadist movement.⁷

It was nearly impossible to differentiate between the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas during that period. The 'Muslim Brotherhood Organization of Greater Syria' existed as the primary umbrella before the political office (of Hamas) assumed a more independent and distinctive role from the Jordanian Brotherhood.

The presence of Hamas in the Jordanian domestic arena experienced an abrupt jolt with the onset of the Second Gulf War in 1991 (after the occupation of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein). The leadership of the movement's political bureau returned to Jordan from Kuwait and continued their work through the Muslim

b- Shura Council: (Arabic: "consultation"): represents, in early Islamic history, the board of electors that was constituted by the second caliph (head of the Muslim community), Omar I (634–644), to elect his successor. Thereafter, in Muslim states, shūrā variously designated a council of state, or advisers to the sovereign, a parliament (in modern times), and - in certain Arab states - a court of law with jurisdiction over claims made by citizens and public officials against the government. The word shūrā provides the title of the 42nd chapter of the Qur'an, in which believers are exhorted to conduct their affairs "by mutual consultation." Reference: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/542358/shura>.

Brotherhood's organization in Jordan. Indeed, Khalid Mishal's office was located inside the Muslim Brotherhood's headquarters and Ibrahim Ghosheh's office was located inside the Islamic Action Front's (IAF) party offices, designated for the IAF's members of parliament.⁸

The conflict between the Jordanian government and the activities of Hamas took place in 1991. The government arrested several members of the Muslim Brotherhood on charges that they had been conspiring with the Hamas Movement, and that they had been stockpiling weapons and preparing to carry out military operations.

One of the leaders of the Hamas Movement, Ibrahim Ghosheh, links these events with the nature of the political atmosphere prevailing in Jordan at that time. The Americans and the West had begun preparations for the First Gulf War against the Iraqi regime under the leadership of Saddam Hussein; and, Jordan feared the repercussions this climate would have on its domestic front.

According to Ghosheh, there were very strong concerns growing inside the Jordanian domestic scene about the possibility of Israeli retaliation. As a result, political leaders began to discuss establishing a "national resistance committee" with the regime, and tried to amass weapons to arm this "committee" in preparation for the defense. Ghosheh maintains that the statement made by Jordanian Prime Minister Mudar Badran (at that time) in which Badran declared "the Jordanian people have the right to arm themselves in any way they may deem necessary" as representing an "implicit license" that allowed for these attempts to stockpile weapons. And, prior to the dismantling of this "committee" and the arrest of its members, several members of the Islamist leadership, including Ibrahim Ghosheh, went on a visit to Teheran – with the prior knowledge of Jordanian authorities – in an attempt to garner Iranian support in the form of arms for the purpose of enabling this form of popular resistance.

There is no official Jordanian version that corresponds with Ghosheh's account, or that confirms it. Indeed, the fact that these individuals were referred to the courts implies an absence of any clear, official understanding between the two parties. It would rather appear as though it was an attempt by some members of the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas to re-articulate the official Jordanian position and certain statements and decisions, which were susceptible to being open to interpretation.

Eleven individuals were arrested and the mediation process for negotiating their release was launched by members of the Brotherhood and other politicians. Ghosheh tells the story of a meeting between members of the Movement and the Director of General Intelligence, at that time, Mustafa al-Qaisi. In this meeting, a discussion ensued between the two sides about the purpose of Hamas' presence on the Jordanian domestic scene being aimed at stockpiling weapons. Ghosheh insisted that Hamas was not targeting Jordan's national security and that the weapons seized were meant to be transferred to the Palestinian resistance. The Director of General Intelligence questioned this rationale, and a debate ensued about the nature of the relationship between the Brotherhood and the Jordanian authorities, and who had served the other more.

The crisis did not last long. Those arrested were released by a pardon from the King, despite the fact that 160 Kalashnikovs were discovered in their possession, along with almost a million rounds of ammunition.⁹

At the end of 1991, Hamas' Shura Council met and a new leader was chosen for the Movement. Ibrahim Ghosheh was appointed as the official spokesman for the Movement and Dr. Musa Abu Marzouk was appointed as political bureau chief. The role of the "external leadership" of Hamas began to take hold, and began to take on a greater role in the media and in the politics of the Movement, turning Amman into a vital center for Hamas and its political activities.¹⁰

The ‘Gentlemen’s Agreement’: Defining the Framework for the Movement’s Presence in Jordan

The relationship between the Jordanian government and the Hamas Movement witnessed a marked transformation in 1993 when several members of the Movement’s political bureau met with then Jordanian Prime Minister Zeid Bin Shaker. Both Musa Abu Marzouk and Imad al-Alami were granted residency in Jordan and it was agreed that the Movement’s political bureau would be based out of Amman.

This preliminary agreement with Prime Minister Bin Shaker was confirmed in a gentlemen’s agreement that followed between two leaders in the Movement (Ibrahim Ghosheh, Mohammad Nazzal) and then Director of the General Intelligence Department, Mustafa al-Qaisi. The agreement included only “general headings” (according to Ghosheh), which covered the following items¹¹:

1. Permission for the Movement to conduct its political and media activities on Jordanian soil;
2. That the Movement would not interfere in Jordanian affairs;
3. And, that the Movement would not conduct any military activities or launch military operations from Jordanian territory.

This agreement was never signed, with both sides satisfied with a verbal commitment to adhering to its terms. And, thus, the Movement proceeded to take the steps to establish and open its own offices in Amman, in the neighborhood of Khildeh.

However, certain events and developments and their subsequent ramifications would appear to have been greater than the commitment to the terms of the agreement. On February 2, 1994, the Ibrahimi Mosque (*al-Haram al-Ibrahimi*) Massacre took place

(in Hebron in the West Bank) where a Jewish individual opened fire upon people while they were performing dawn prayers, killing 29 people and wounding close to 200.

This incident greatly provoked public opinion in the Arab and Islamic worlds, and the Brotherhood in Jordan mobilized thousands in a demonstration to condemn the massacre. Soon thereafter, the military wing of the Hamas Movement sought revenge and retaliated with unprecedented armed operations against Israel.

These military operations generated international pressure on Jordan, especially as these activities took place after the signing of the Oslo Agreement between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel. Ghosheh says that then Jordanian Minister of the Interior, Salameh Hammad, called him, objecting to statements that he and several members of the Hamas political bureau had made.

Thereafter, the crisis between the two sides escalated when the official spokesman for the Movement, Ibrahim Ghosheh, was summoned to the Ministry of the Interior. Ghosheh refused to surrender his passport leading to his arrest by security forces. Member of Parliament Bassam al-Amoush, who had left the Islamic Action Front offices with Ghosheh, tried to intervene and both were intercepted by security forces in the street. A compromise was made and it was agreed that al-Amoush would accompany Ghosheh to report to the Metropolitan Chief of Police. An altercation between the two sides took place and the crisis ended with a call from the Prime Minister, who was outside the country at the time.¹²

Hamas continued its military operations inside Palestinian and Israeli territories, and pressure on Jordan continued to mount as a consequence of the Movement's continued political and media activities on its soils. Then, the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement was signed on October, 26, 1994, representing a marked turning point in the relationship between Jordan and Hamas.

Despite assurances by the Director of General Intelligence, Mustafa al-Qaisi, to the Hamas leadership that the agreement (with Israel) and its security arrangements did not necessarily mean an end to the gentlemen's agreement with the Movement, reality on the ground bore indicators that pointed to an entirely different direction. The Jordanians began to increase pressure on the Movement's political bureau to put a halt to issuing statements in support of the resistance in Palestine.

In May of 1995, Minister of Interior Salameh Hammad informed the members of the Movement's political bureau that Jordan would no longer host both Musa Abu Marzouk and Imad al-Alami in Amman, and both would have to leave the country by the end of the month of May. Thereafter, several military operations carried out by Hamas in the Occupied Palestinian Territories led to increased external pressure on Jordan to stop Hamas from conducting its political activities on Jordanian soil.

When Hamas' Shura Council convened at the end of 1995, Khalid Mishal was elected to succeed Musa Abu Marzouk as head of the Movement's political bureau after Abu Marzouk left Jordan. Ibrahim Ghosheh was elected as the head of the Movement's Shura Council.

In the same year, several leaders of the Hamas Movement were arrested in Jordan, the most prominent of which were Izzat al-Risheq and Sami Khater. And, according to Ghosheh's version of events, hundreds of thousands of Jordanian Dinars and other equipment were seized. The editor-in-chief of the "al-Sabeel" weekly newspaper, Hilmi al-Asmar, was also arrested. All those arrested were later released.¹³

The pressure on the Hamas Movement mounted as the pace of its military operations accelerated. The Movement entered into a confrontation with the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The military operations led to the convening of an international summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, under the patronage of the Americans, with over thirty countries participating. The summit

was entitled the “Summit of Peacemakers”; and the resolutions against terrorism that emanated from the summit clearly reflected upon Hamas’ activities in Jordan.¹⁴

All of the above was taking place in juxtaposition with changes in Jordan’s top posts in the prime ministry (Abdel Karim al-Kabariti) and in the administration of the General Intelligence Department. There were numerous indicators, particularly later, that pointed to a change taking place in the Jordanian attitude and position towards the Hamas Movement and its presence on Jordanian territory, particularly by the new Director of General Intelligence, Samih al-Batikhi. Incidents where the level of tension amplified between the two sides increased as did the number of arrests of members and supporters of the Hamas Movement in Jordan, until the number of detainees reached 60 individuals.

In May of 1997, Musa Abu Marzouk was released from custody through the personal intervention of King Hussein, according to the version of these events as relayed by Bassam al-Amoush, who became the link between the Royal Court and Abu Marzouk. The latter returned to Amman by way of a special military airplane and was received at the Royal Court by King Hussein and his family. After these events, Abu Marzouk was permitted to remain in Amman.¹⁵

Paul McGeough documents the opinions of various Jordanian authority figures and personalities from the Hamas Movement in his book, “Kill Khalid”, who claimed that the “Kitchen Cabinet”^c

c- “Kitchen Cabinet” was a title derisively applied by President Andrew Jackson’s political enemies to an informal group of advisers who were credited with exercising more influence on the president than his regular cabinet. From 1829 until 1831, when the cabinet was reorganized, the Kitchen Cabinet, or “lower cabinet,” as it was often called, was especially influential. Thereafter, Jackson relied less on his informal advisers and more on regular members of the Kitchen Cabinet. Today, the term is used to define a small unofficial group of people who give advice to a political leader. *References: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3401802258.html> and <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/define.asp?key=43830&dict=CALD>*

in Amman aimed through Abu Marzouk's release to return him to the leadership of the Hamas Movement, instead of Khalid Mishal. For, Khalid Mishal's "extreme positions" were not to the liking of Jordan's policy-makers, nor were his schemes to use Hamas as a trump card in the peace settlement process and in the relationship with Arafat.¹⁶

This did not change the course of deteriorating relations between the two sides. In May of the same year, Ghosheh made a statement to the media urging armed resistance in Palestine by the Qassam Brigades^d, in violation of the government's decision that banned the Movement from issuing statements in support of the armed resistance from Amman. As a result of this statement, Ghosheh was arrested and held at the General Intelligence Department Prison for 15 days.¹⁷

On September 25, 1997, an assassination attempt on Khalid Mishal by two Israeli Mossad agents took place. Mishal's bodyguard and several others present at the scene caught the agents and turned them over to Jordanian security forces.¹⁸

Mishal remained in the grasps of death until King Hussein personally intervened and sent warnings to the American administration. Eventually the intervention led to a deal that included Israel sending the antidote to the poison Mishal was administered with and trading the two Mossad agents in return for the release of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of the Hamas Movement, who had been imprisoned in Israel. Sheikh Yassin was transported by means of a private jet to Jordan, where he was visited by King Hussein and President Arafat at the King Hussein (Army) Medical Center in Amman, where Yassin was being treated for certain ailments.¹⁹

f- Otherwise known as the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades: The military wing of the Hamas Movement in Palestine, named after the Syrian-Palestinian Islamist Imam, Sheikh Izz ad-Din al-Qassam; http://www.mideastweb.org/Middle-East-Encyclopedia/izz_ad-din_al-qassam_brigades.htm

The year 1998 ended with increased levels of tension between Hamas and the Jordanian government as well as an ongoing disagreement about Hamas' lack of commitment in refraining from issuing statements and delivering speeches from their platform in Amman, which were related to the resistance in Palestine.

The “Rift”: Seeking an Alternative Incubator Strategy

At the beginning of February 1999, King Hussein passed away. One can say that, with his death, the delicate balance and formula that governed the relationship between the Hamas Movement and the Jordanian regime was “shaken”, which is the way Ibrahim Ghosheh describes the phase that followed the death of King Hussein.²⁰

It is likely that many who monitored this relationship would also agree with Ghosheh. The death of King Hussein was a historical milestone and turning point in Hamas' relationship with the Jordanian political regime, for reasons that are presented later in this study. Indeed, only a few months later, at the end of August of that same year, and while certain leading figures from Hamas were on a visit to Teheran, the Jordanian authorities arrested 16 members of the Hamas Movement. Amongst those arrested was Sami Khater, a member of the Movement's political bureau. Also during that time, Mohammad Nazzal and Izzat al-Risheq went into hiding.

In juxtaposition to these developments, Hamas' offices in Amman along with any media-related institutions connected to the Movement, such as the “Muslim Palestine Magazine”, were shut down. Equipment was confiscated; and, what was more important at that time was the implicit message being sent that “the Movement's activities in Jordan were now considered as posing a threat (to national security)”, which was accompanied by arrest warrants issued for the leaders of the Movement's political bureau.

According to the official Jordanian version of events, the declared and direct justification for these arrest warrants was the discovery of a cache of weapons in the Movement's possession. Also, according to the official story, the Movement was organizing and conducting illegal activities and events that jeopardized Jordan's national security. However, it became clear that the authorities waited for the Hamas leadership to leave the country before issuing the arrest warrants because the real intention was to actually prevent them from returning to Jordan; thus, pushing Hamas' leadership to search for another location from which to conduct their activities.

In his account of this period, Ghosheh inevitably denies the official Jordanian version, and insists that the Movement had honoured its commitments to the terms of the prior agreement with the Jordanian government; and – albeit in an indirect manner –, he links the regional situation and mounting international pressure on Jordan with the decision to ban the Movement and its activities in Jordan.

The leaders of Hamas did not pay any heed to calls made by the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood to hold off and not return to Amman. Although Ghosheh is sceptical about the fact that the Brotherhood's Shura Council actually met and asked them not to return, the General Supervisor of the Brotherhood then, Abdul Majid Thuneibat, confirms that this meeting did actually take place. And, at this meeting, a decision was made to ask the leadership of Hamas to refrain from returning at that time.

Mishal, Ghosheh and their bodyguards were arrested at the airport upon their arrival to Amman. They were transported to the Jweideh Prison in the outskirts of Amman, where they remained for 61 days and were joined by Mohammad Nazzal and Izzat al-Risheq (a member of the Movement's political bureau), who were arrested later. Abu Marzouk was not amongst them because in September of that same year the Jordanian authorities had already forced him to leave via the airport to Damascus.

During the period of their detention, local and external interventions and mediation efforts by the Muslim Brotherhood and other Jordanian politicians intensified. In response and in conjunction to these efforts, Jordanian authorities insisted that the detainees declare that they would refrain from conducting any political or media activities related to the Hamas Movement. The rationale was that as long as they were Jordanian citizens, they were banned from belonging to an organization that was not Jordanian. However, the Hamas leadership refused to do so and insisted on maintaining their positions.

Finally, as an outcome of mediation efforts made by the Qatari Minister of the Exterior, at the end of November of 1999, the leaders of the Movement's political bureau left Jordan for Qatar on a Qatari airplane, taking off from the Marqa Military Airport in Amman.

Hamas' version of these events maintains that what took place was indeed a deportation; that they had made it clear that they refused to go to Qatar, even while they were on board the airplane while it was still docked on the airport runway. Meanwhile, the official Jordanian version insists that it was not a deportation, but rather a decision made with the consent of the Hamas leadership after they, themselves, asked for the Qatari mediation.

On the other hand, then Prime Minister Abdul al-Raouf al-Rawabdeh denies the presence of external pressure on Jordan to take the deportation decision or that the decision was the result of a change in political leadership. He maintains the reason came out of necessity. And, it had been deemed necessary to resolve the ongoing Hamas portfolio after the Movement had gone too far in its militant activities and in its recruitment of members of the Brotherhood into Hamas. Furthermore, Hamas had explicitly violated its agreement with the Jordanian government and had infringed upon "Jordanian sovereignty", notwithstanding the fact that it was not perceived as normal for a Jordanian citizen to be the leader of a Palestinian organization.²¹

Also according to Al-Rawabdeh's version of these events, which Dr. Bassam al-Amoush documents in his book "Landmarks in the History of the Muslim Brotherhood", the government's search of Hamas' offices and its confiscation of 420 computer disks, thousands of documents and light weapons, led to the government's conviction that this was, indeed, the presence of a "non-Jordanian organization on Jordanian territories". Corroborating this conviction were documents seized from the executive offices of the Muslim Brotherhood, which contained information on the criteria used to classify Brotherhood members in Hamas, as well as other documents seized that listed the names of officers in the Jordanian security apparatus, had information on the organizational structure of the offices of the Royal Court, and alternative action plans for Hamas as well as schemes for mobilizing the Palestinian community in Jordan.²²

As for Khalid Mishal, he maintains that the Movement's leadership had no knowledge whatsoever of the terms of the mediation efforts agreed to by the Jordanian and Qatari governments. He claims that the agreement with the Qataris was that the Hamas leadership would spend a short period in Qatar and then return to Jordan after the political crisis ended. But, this did not take place. And, the Qataris were put in an awkward position, which in itself led to a crisis in Jordanian-Qatari relations.²³

In the end, these series of events concluded with the leaders of the Hamas political bureau leaving Jordan for Qatar, with correspondence and mediation efforts continuing for their return. However, the Jordanian decision, it appears, became final with the termination of the agreement signed with Hamas in 1993, and with the Jordanian decision to discard the Hamas trump card from its regional and local calculations.

Despite the official hospitality bestowed upon the Hamas leadership and the outwardly warm relationship between the Hamas and Qatari leadership in Qatar, their ability to manoeuvre politically, to communicate with the rest of the world, to conduct

their political and media activities and to network with Palestinians inside the Palestinian territories and in the Diaspora were restricted and constrained for many reasons. Consequently, the eyes of the Hamas leadership became fixed on another place; and, if it was not to be in Amman... then Damascus.

Indeed, during recent years, the relationship between the Hamas leadership and the Syrian regime had begun to solidify. It began in the year 2000, when the Movement's leaders began to travel back and forth to Damascus more frequently, a fact that paralleled with the increased presence and ongoing political activities of several other Palestinian opposition factions there.

In 2000, the Hamas Movement's new Shura Council convened, five years after the last session in which Mishal was appointed head of the Movement's political bureau. Mishal was re-elected for a second term, and Ghosheh was re-elected as head of the Shura Council for another term.²⁴

It is likely that, together, the subsequent election of President Ahmadinejad in Iran in 2004 and the emergence of a new regional axis, comprised of Damascus, Teheran, Hezbollah and Palestinian opposition factions, gave the Movement a decisive push in the direction of Damascus as the new strategic incubator for the Hamas Movement's political bureau.

In the meanwhile, in June of 2001, Ibrahim Ghosheh attempted "to test the waters with Jordan's 'Kitchen Cabinet'" when he tried to return to Amman on board a Qatari airliner, using a one-way ticket. He was arrested and detained in a room at the airport and the Qatari airliner was grounded for several days, which led to another political crisis between Qatar and Jordan that contributed to further contaminating relations between the two countries.

Ghosheh remained at the airport for 14 days. He was allowed entry into Jordan, after Arab and local mediation efforts, but only after signing a document agreed to by the Hamas leadership and

Jordanian General Intelligence, where he pledged to refrain from participating or conducting any political or media activities in the name of the Hamas Movement while in Jordan. Subsequently, in the year 2004, Ghosheh was not re-elected as head of the Hamas Shura Council due to this agreement signed with the Jordanian authorities.²⁵

The Hamas leadership moved to Damascus. As a result, their relationship with the Jordanian government was marked by a political rift that further entrenched the gap between the two sides, with the exception of very limited and clandestine channels that remained open. These ‘channels’ took form in secret visits by the leading figure Mohammad Nazzal to Amman, who met intermittently with officers from the General Intelligence Department.

But, despite all the above, Mishal maintains that throughout those years he tried to keep the channels of communication open with certain Jordanian authority figures and politicians from diverse positions, past and present. But, these efforts were to no avail when it came to the “Kitchen Cabinet” in Amman, who did not respond to any of these gestures.

The relationship between Jordan and Hamas remained marked by deadlock, until larger variables began to effect change in the international and regional arena during the period that elapsed from 1999 to 2006. Peace talks between the Palestinian Authority and Israel collapsed in the year 2000, giving rise to the Second Intifada, which boosted the popularity of Hamas amongst the general Palestinian and Arab populations, and particularly amongst Jordanians of Palestinian origin in Jordan. The events of September 11 unfolded. And, the chapters of the so-called “War on Terror” were opened. The political stakes for Jordan began to diverge further from the choices made by the Hamas Movement, and its political thinking and posturing.

The “War on Iraq” broke out in 2003, turning the regional arena upside down. The Iraqi resistance (afterwards), the complete breakdown of the security situation there and the eruption of the internal struggle in Iraq led to weakening the impact of the new American regional project. This period would witness developments that would indeed overwhelm the entire region.

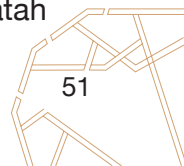
In the year 2004, Israel succeeded in assassinating the spiritual leader of the Hamas Movement, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and, shortly thereafter, Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, one of the most prominent leaders in the Movement, as well as others. In 2005, the late Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafiq Hariri, was assassinated in Beirut in juxtaposition to a deadlocked peace process. In the same year, Israel withdrew from Gaza within the framework of Ariel Sharon’s unilateral disengagement plan with the Palestinians.

In summary, these variables and developments generated an entirely new international, regional, local, Palestinian and Jordanian environment, the implications of which would become more pronounced the following year in the context and formula governing the relationship between Jordan and Hamas.

Eruption of the Political Crisis: The Politics of Regional Alliances

The year 2006 proved to be a historic turning point in the international and regional political environment. In the beginning of that year, Palestinian legislative elections were held in which Hamas decided to participate (after boycotting the legislative and the Palestinian Authority presidential elections in 1996).

Regardless of what Hamas’ motives were or what conditions led to its decision to participate, and regardless of whether or not it expected such an outcome, the fact is that the Movement won a landslide victory in the legislative elections and, as a result, formed a Palestinian government – all of which was followed by the emergence of a power struggle between Hamas and the Fatah



Movement. This immense transformation created a new Palestinian reality on the ground. And, Hamas entered into this reality as an organization that was borne of the position that armed resistance was the sole option, and suddenly found itself transported into a completely new place of political authority. In this new reality, the Movement was faced with a new set of criteria against which its achievements would be measured. This was especially the case when one considers the nature of its entanglement with the international community, on the one hand, and the nature of its regional relations, on the other.

In that same year, an obvious transformation took shape in American policy perceptions with regard to the Iraqi and regional reality. The United States began to focus its attention on the growing influence of Iran in Iraq and in the area. This became particularly the case with the rise of President Ahmadinejad's government and the weakened role of the reform movement in Iran; the outcome of the parliamentary elections had clearly proven the domination of the conservatives in the Iranian political arena.²⁶

Inevitably, the above reflected on the regional scene and led to the reformulation of the stakes of the players in the area – both governments and movements. The polarization of the region into two axes was further reinforced: The first called the 'Opposition' camp (comprised of Syria, Palestinian opposition factions and a minority in Lebanon supported by Iran) and the second, the 'Moderate' camp, which included pivotal Arab states (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates) who were closer in alignment with American policy.

These regional changes and transformations, in addition to the victory of Hamas in Palestine, produced an obvious ideological and political collision course for the Jordanian track and its corresponding stakes and the position taken by Hamas.

The official Jordanian position remained embedded in wagering on the peace process and on its relationship with the United States of America, which placed Jordan in support of and in the same trench as the Palestinian Authority under the presidency of Mahmoud Abbas.

As for Hamas, it was wagering on breaking the “international veto” against it and in reinforcing its military capabilities and political alliances with the Damascus-Teheran axis.

These conflicting visions with regard to regional political interests coincided with the growing apprehension in the Jordanian “Kitchen Cabinet” about Hamas’ influence inside the Jordanian domestic political arena. And, these concerns were particularly focused on the context of the Movement’s relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood, which was also the major power in the political opposition in the country and enjoyed broad political influence amongst the Jordanian public (of Palestinian origin).

It was at this moment, precisely, that an influential trend in the official and semi-official Jordanian political scene returned to reiterating warnings about the negative repercussions that the political rise of Hamas would have on the “domestic (political) equation”. Political and security concerns were reinforced about this whetting “the Brotherhood’s appetite for political power” and changing the rules of the (political) game. The latter worries coincided with declarations issued by the Jordanian Brotherhood’s leadership that were “officially” read as pointing to intentions that were not very comforting on the part of the Islamist movement.²⁷

Official Jordanian fears came to the surface and clearly materialized in the form practical measures that were taken in the municipal and parliamentary elections that took place the following year. A past official of high standing confesses that bringing down the Islamists and scaling down their political representation became a major objective of the “Kitchen Cabinet”.

The relationship between Jordan and President Abbas was strengthened by the prevailing environment and context of the new transformations taking place in the region. The pace of political and security coordination between the two parties intensified; Jordanian policy was seen as being openly hostile to Hamas. This came to be seen as particularly the case when the Jordanian government participated in the training of the Palestinian police force in a program that was led by United States General Dayton. Jordan's role in the training program was read by the leadership of Hamas as directly targeting the Movement on both its internal and external fronts.

In the meantime, the Hamas Movement began to get more deeply entrenched in the dynamics of the regional confrontation. The Movement's confidence in itself was bolstered by the symbolic victory Hezbollah achieved in its war with Israel in 2006, and with the Movement's success in carrying out an extraordinary operation, "The Vanishing Illusion", in which it captured Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit.

This atmosphere transported the relationship between Jordan and Hamas from the general theatre of the "rift" stage to an all-out political crisis. Regionally, this crisis was embodied in the Jordanian government's position against the Iranian axis and Iran's support to Hamas in its adversity to President Abbas, and domestically, in the escalation of the crisis between the state and the Muslim Brotherhood, and the linkages that the Jordanian "Kitchen Cabinet" made between this crisis and the Hamas Movement, and what the "Kitchen Cabinet" deemed as its growing influence on the Jordanian Brotherhood.

While these dynamics worked at the lower depths of the relationship between the two sides, its symptoms and warning signs began to float to the surface in terms of the Jordanian government's position and attitude towards Hamas, even after it became part of the Palestinian government.

Perhaps the above is best represented in a remarkable incident where the Jordanian authorities announced they had uncovered a cell connected to Hamas that was amassing weapons in Jordan. The authorities accused this cell of planning to carry out an operation on Jordanian soils on the same evening that a visit to Amman had been planned for Mahmoud Zahar – a Hamas authority figure, who was also Minister of the Exterior in the Palestinian Authority, at that time. The visit was subsequently cancelled.²⁸

The crisis did not end there. The Jordanian government went on to accuse other individuals, also connected with Hamas, with forming cells and planning operations that jeopardized Jordan's national security.

At the same time, sources close to the Hamas Movement accused Jordan of conspiring with the Palestinian Authority in targeting Hamas both on a political and security level. A Jordanian Salafist Sheikh, Ali Halabi, who was seen as allied to the Jordanian state, was accused by Hamas of presenting a *fatwa* (religious edict) to certain persons, who then attempted to assassinate the prime minister of the discharged Hamas government, Ismail Haniyeh.²⁹

Perhaps the most substantive proof of what the prevailing official position in Jordan really was, at that time, was in its redefinition of what it considered “sources of threats to Jordan's security”. Internally, the Islamist movement, in general, was considered an integral part of these threats, as was the Syrian-Iranian axis externally. Hamas was seen as a partner to both – internally in its relationship with the Brotherhood, and externally in its relationship with Iran and with Syria.

An Interim Respite Followed by a Period of Ambiguity

In July of 2008, in an unexpected move, Jordanian authorities reactivated the channels of communication with the Hamas Movement by means of secure contacts made between authority figures in the General Intelligence Department – under the direct supervision of the past Director Lieutenant General Mohammad Dahabi – and leading figures from Hamas’ political bureau – specifically, Mohammad Nazzal and Mohammad Nasr.

The meetings were initiated upon Hamas’ request. But, the surprise came in the Jordanian reaction to the initiative. The Jordanians wanted to go beyond partial, routine discussions of everyday issues at the negotiation table and set an in-depth political dialogue process in motion.

Despite the fact that these meetings were limited in nature, they found political resonance in the local and international media. They also created questions concerning the relationship between Jordan and its Palestinian ally (the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah) and its regional allies.

The dialogue proceeded to focus on major issues, the most prominent of which was Hamas’ position with regard to the issues of “re-settlement” (of refugees) and the “surrogate” homeland (in Jordan). Another major issue under discussion was Hamas’ role in the Jordanian domestic equation, whether in terms of the accusations made by Jordanian General Intelligence that Hamas was trying to undermine national security or in terms of matters related to the Movement’s relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood.³⁰

Engineering this “dialogue” project was past Director of General Intelligence, Mohammad Dahabi. But, his role in opening these unexpected channels with the Hamas Movement was attributed to his dismissal from his post at the end of 2008. In addition,

recent changes in the direction of Jordan's overall policy were characterized by an animosity towards the Hamas movement and by accusations that the Movement was seen as an extension of the Iranian-Syrian axis. Furthermore, Hamas was seen as standing on the opposite end of the spectrum in terms of Jordan's national interests, which were seen as being inextricably linked to the success of a peace process that Hamas utterly rejected.

Mohammad Nasr, a Hamas leader who, along with Mohammad Nazzal, participated in this dialogue process, confirms that "the dialogue did not lead to a final or written set of agreements". He also indicates that he personally felt the concern of leading figures in Amman when it came to two particular issues: The first being resettlement and the right to return; and, the second was that Jordan was the only country left that still had blocked all channels with Hamas, while other countries were dealing with the Movement.

Later on in this study, we will return to an interpretation of the environment and conditions surrounding this dialogue and its ramifications, within an analytical framework that tries to reconstruct the context that affected and governed Jordan's relationship with Hamas. What is important to note at this point is that this period was limited in nature, and did not extend to any practical manifestations other than piecemeal measures. Also important to note is that the limited developments with Hamas during this period paralleled discussions that were taking place between the Jordanian state and representatives from the Muslim Brotherhood.

The practical outcomes of this dialogue process surfaced in decisions that turned the tide in the opposite direction from the previous stage. The first of these was in granting a license for the "al-Sabeel" weekly newspaper, which was considered pro-Brotherhood and close to the Hamas Movement. Permission was also granted to numerous speakers from the Brotherhood to conduct sermons during Friday prayers in various mosques, on condition that these sermons were consistent with the rules

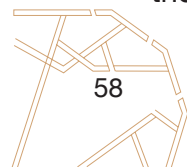
and regulations of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. And, finally, passports for leading figures in Hamas' political bureau were renewed, with Khalid Mishal and Mohammad Nazzal at the fore.

After Dahabi's departure from the political arena, semi-official sources confirmed that the "Kitchen Cabinet" in Amman considered re-opening the channels of communication and dialogue with Hamas and the Brotherhood damaged Jordan's relationship with its allies. The initiative was considered an "uncalculated and unwarranted risk". Subsequently, Jordanian authority figures decided to "freeze all political interaction" and closed all communication channels with Hamas, while keeping them open with the leadership of the Brotherhood.

From yet another angle, these developments coincided with a restructuring of political roles in Jordan's institutional equations. The General Intelligence Department was asked to return to its traditional role of security and asked not to interfere in politics. The Royal Court was asked to confine itself to its administrative role, and remove itself from the pervasive role it had been playing in domestic and external state policy.

All in all, this "restructuring" was seen as an attempt to erase all traces of the fissures, intense political struggles and press wars taking place in the domestic political and media scene between two groups: The first group was close to the past Chief of the Royal Court, Bassem Awadallah and the other group was allied to the past Director of the General Intelligence Department, Mohammad Dahabi.

However, the relationship between the Jordanian regime and both Hamas and the Brotherhood would not revert back to the level of crisis witnessed in the previous period, where tensions were so obvious. Perhaps, it would be more accurate to characterize the following period as the "grey" or "static" phase of ambiguous visions. Indeed, this ambiguity may have actually strengthened the influence of certain currents within the formal state institutional



structure, as well as amongst the political elite and leading influential figures in the media – all of whom were opposed to opening up to the Hamas Movement and the Brotherhood, and all of whom demanded that the policy of political confrontation be maintained.



Part 2

Behind the Scenes: The Role of Internal and External Factors in Shaping the Transformations in the Relationship

In the previous pages, a historical background and framework was presented with regard to the evolution and transformations that took place in the relationship between Jordan and Hamas. This background and context examined the factors and influential considerations that defined Jordan's official policy towards the Hamas Movement, on the one hand, and the Movement's corresponding perception of this relationship and subsequent consequences emanating from this perception, on the other.

The objective of the above exercise was to go beyond the political surface of the changes that took place in the relationship between Jordan and Hamas, and delve further into identifying what visions the parties held with regard to the converging and conflicting interests between them, which affected and governed the evolution of successive stages in the relationship in the past, and which had the potential to influence the future course between them, according to the following themes:

- The Dialectics of Internal and External Factors
- Jordanian Politicians and Hamas... "Conflicting Visions"
- Hamas' Strategic Vision of Jordan: An Arena to Influence or to Arrive at a Political Consensus?

Internal and External Factors that Determined and Influenced Conflicting and Converging Interests

By returning to the stages of the evolution in the relationship between the two parties, one can analyze the internal and external factors that influenced both sides. These factors changed both in terms of their influence and in terms of their ramifications from one stage to another, depending on the political variables surrounding and affecting that time period.

In the first stage, an active political bureau was established by the Hamas Movement in Jordan, influenced by its relationship with the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood and by their convergence in the Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood of Greater Syria (the Brotherhood in Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza). Subsequently, the political activities of the Movement's political bureau were perceived as similar – in the earlier days – with those of the Muslim Brotherhood, which also represented an institutional and political cover for Hamas' leadership in Amman. The symbiotic relationship with the Brotherhood in the earlier stages assisted in bolstering the role of Hamas' political bureau and its activities in Jordan, and enabled "Hamas outside (the Occupied Territories)" to have more influence and capabilities in terms of its political manoeuvring and leeway in the media than "Hamas inside", which was suffering from incarcerations and assassinations of great numbers of its members at the hands of the Israeli army.

The Second Gulf War played a major role in the return of the leadership of the Hamas political bureau to Jordan, as the majority held Jordanian citizenship. Furthermore, the Movement was still considered in its nascence, with little in the way of friendly relations with other countries that may have provided cover for its activities the way that Jordan did. Thirdly, Jordan was closest in proximity to Palestine and had the greatest gathering of Palestinians outside the Occupied Territories.

The aforementioned is notwithstanding the fact that the peace process was also officially in its earliest stages, with neither Jordan nor the Palestine Liberation Organization having signed any peace settlements with Israel. Therefore, there was nothing to officially prevent political support or support in the media for political activities, which reinforced and bolstered the Palestinian resistance “inside” (the Occupied Territories).

Despite the above, Jordanian institutions did not overlook the activities of groups orbiting Hamas, which tried to support the resistance logistically by way of providing arms and military training. Neither did they overlook any activities perceived as threatening security in the Jordanian domestic arena, which explains the arrest of several members of the Brotherhood in 1991 on charges of working in collusion with Hamas in a way that violated Jordanian law.

“Internal considerations” in themselves led to the (unsigned) “gentlemen’s agreement” between the two sides prior to the signing of the Oslo and Wadi Araba Agreements. It is clearly evident in the terms of this gentlemen’s agreement that Jordan was careful to obtain a commitment from the Movement not to engage in security and military activities on Jordanian soil and not to interfere in domestic affairs, in any way whatsoever. In return, (Jordanian) “decision-makers” would not mind the Movement conducting communications and political activities that did not pose a security threat to the country.

From its perspective, Hamas achieved some major objectives in this agreement. It guaranteed the Movement a legitimate presence in the Jordanian arena and allowed it the capacity to officially speak in the name of the new Islamic resistance in Palestine, and allowed it to build a media and political institutional structure, with official Jordanian agreement – giving the Movement a strategic advantage in establishing and launching itself in its first phase.

That was on the internal front. As for the regional context, analysts see that Hamas was an influential card, strengthening the Jordanian hand in the strained relationship between Jordan and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and particularly between the late King Hussein and the late President Arafat.

During that historic stage, Jordan was extremely wary of any deals, understandings or agreements that Arafat may make with the Israelis, which did not take Jordanian objections or interests into consideration in its final form, such as the issue of Palestinian refugees (resettlement), the status of Jerusalem and potential demarcation of borders. These concerns made Hamas an acceptable choice and an influential card that Jordan could use when dealing with President Arafat.

The position of the Palestinian Authority, and the position towards it, indeed forms a major parameter in the reading of the evolution of the relationship between Jordan and Hamas, and the transformations that emerged in the relationship during subsequent years. This became especially the case as the Palestinian Authority increasingly distanced itself from operations carried out by Hamas in the Occupied Territories, which threatened the peace agreement with Israel. From another angle, the prevailing context pointed to the rising presence of another Palestinian player with strong influence (on the ground) other than the Fatah Movement (tied to the Palestinian Authority), who could, one day, actually represent an alternative to the latter (Fatah).

In addition to the above, the Jordanian “Kitchen Cabinet” perceived and considered Hamas as an Islamic movement on the rise, whose impact and spheres of influence, power, strength and momentum were all increasing, as was its potential of turning into a “difficult number” in the Palestinian equation. Also of concern was Hamas’ organic relationship with the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood (which, even in the worst case scenarios, had always been able to maintain friendly relations with the regime). These factors combined contributed to the thinking that containing the Movement while maintaining influence over it could be a strategic card in Jordan’s advantage.

Confirming this analysis is the way the head of the Hamas political bureau presents his own reading of the reasons why King Hussein embraced the Movement:

Firstly, the signing of the agreement came after the discovery of the weapons cache in 1991. And, the late King did not want “to leave domestic security exposed to the risk of the Movement’s interpretations. Therefore, the agreement was concluded with Hamas in order to contain its presence in the Jordanian arena. This way it would remain under the watchful eye of the official authorities, and that way it would not attempt to carry out operations that could cause Jordan undue embarrassment with the Israelis and the Americans.”

Secondly, King Hussein did not want to let go of a potential Palestinian trump card completely, especially after Arafat had taken over the political representation of the Palestinians in a historic game of tug of war with Jordan over the role of representing the Palestinians of the West Bank. The King found Hamas different from Fatah, both politically and ideologically, and found that the Movement could serve as an important card in confronting Arafat, especially in the case that Arafat tried to manipulate the Palestinian card in Jordan. Furthermore, Hamas had demonstrated that it understood the complex, compounded and constructed relationship between Jordan and Palestine, and had showed that it was ready to discuss and negotiate a future context for this relationship. Finally, nowhere in its history did Hamas threaten Jordanian national security the way other Palestinian organizations and movements had.

Thirdly, the late King saw Hamas as a rising power in Islamic politics that could be wagered on later in the context of Jordan’s political manoeuvring and leverage in the region.

The foundations of these political equations and calculations that led to the agreement, in the first place, began to destabilize and change when Jordan finally signed the Wadi Araba Agreement

with Israel that came into force in 1995. At that point, Israeli and American (and Western) pressure on Jordan began to mount to restrain the Movement's political and media activities.

These observations are supported by Khalid Mishal, who sees the golden era in the relationship between Jordan and Hamas as having taken place during that same period – between the signing of the gentlemen's agreement in 1993 and the year 1995, when the Wadi Araba Agreement came into force. This timeline also coincided with Hamas' refusal (stated during the Cairo Negotiations with Fatah) to participate in the Palestinian legislative elections that were going to be held the following year.³¹

The external pressure mounting on Jordan reflected the tense situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the growing strength of the military wing of the Hamas Movement. Indeed, the Movement's military operations against both Israel and the Palestinian Authority had begun to increase in impact and gain in influence. Jordan was increasingly being put in an awkward position by the declarations being made by official Hamas spokespersons in Jordan that praised and supported these operations. Also increasingly embarrassing for Jordan were the Movement's political activities and the public events it was holding inside Jordan, especially after Jordan signed the peace agreement with Israel that included security and political terms that contradicted with Hamas' agenda and military activities in the Occupied Territories.

Of course, this new reality led the "Kitchen Cabinet" in Amman to revisit the relationship with the Hamas Movement. This new posture resulted in new policies that in themselves carried a message to the outside, such as deporting certain members of the Movement's political bureau from Jordan who did not carry Jordanian passports (specifically Musa Abu Marzouk and Imad al-Alami). Meanwhile, the fact that other Hamas political leaders in Amman carried Jordanian passports gave the regime some space to manoeuvre with regard to external pressure. The citizenship

of Hamas leaders was often used as a pretext for the regime not being able to legally deport Jordanian citizens as long as they were not conducting military or other activities on Jordanian soil that were detrimental to national security.

In the meantime, tensions and transformations in the relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jordanian regime were in themselves taking place and augmenting with the Brotherhood's opposition to the peace agreement and their refusal to accept the policy of normalization (establishing friendly relations with Israel). Indeed, the Brotherhood was mobilizing public opinion to that end in their political discourse and speeches, which contradicted what the regime perceived as what was best for Jordan's national interests.

In return, the Jordanian authorities began to take larger measures to reduce the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood and to limit their rising political strength. These measures began with drafting a new election law and ended with "curtailment initiatives" that affected their influence in mosques, universities and state institutions. It was a policy context that was presented as being closer to "restructuring" the role of the Brotherhood and its political influence.

Thus, the Wadi Araba Agreement led to a change in the balance of internal and external powers and the factors that governed the framework in which the relationship between the state and Hamas existed. External pressure became an element that was now being highly factored into Jordan's perception of its strategic interests in this regard, notwithstanding internal considerations that were changing, especially with the discovery of certain unauthorized Hamas activities being conducted under the cover of the Muslim Brotherhood. According to both a Jordanian authority figure as well as a leading figure in the Brotherhood, these activities were in breach of the Movement's commitment not to interfere in domestic affairs.

The leading figure from the Brotherhood saw Hamas' presence in the Jordanian domestic arena as provoking serious concerns for the Jordanian "Kitchen Cabinet". He cites the popularity of Hamas' military wing's operations in the Occupied Territories and in Israel, and the fact that all this was moving in a completely opposite direction from official Jordanian policy, which was itself moving towards a peaceful settlement with Israel. Indeed, the "Kitchen Cabinet" was concerned that these activities were strengthening and reinforcing the influence of Islamists in the internal domestic equation – and that this influence in itself was becoming extraordinary and singular in popular, grassroots areas where the popularity and influence of nationalist and leftist parties had seriously deteriorated.

New internal and external variables were all pushing towards putting an end to the presence of the Movement on the Jordanian scene, and to be rid of a political burden and liability that increased with the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (by an Israeli extremist), and with America's growing concern over final status negotiations. As a consequence, the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit was convened in 1996, in which one of its most important resolutions called for refusing shelter, financial and political support for Islamist movements that wanted to thwart the peace process.

Despite all the aforementioned, the late King wanted to maintain a last thread, or "one of Mu'awiya's hairs"^e, with the Hamas Movement, and also circumvented international pressure to carry out certain measures by Jordan against the Movement by ensuring the Movement's leadership did not conduct public political and

e- This is a popular Arab proverb attributed to Muawiyah Ibn Abî Sufyân; (602 – 680), who was the first Caliph in the Ummayyad Dynasty. He is known for his famous saying, «I do not apply my sword where my lash suffices, nor my lash where my tongue is enough. And even if there be **one hair binding me to my fellow men, I do not let it break**. When they pull, I loosen, and if they loosen, I pull." Reference: *Dar al-Taqwa*; Reference: <http://bewley.virtualave.net/muawiya.html>

communication activities, and arrested some members to prevent action that was detrimental to security inside Jordan. At the same time, Jordan could then keep Hamas as a “trump card” in confronting the late Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

It may be that, in some way, personal factors played a role in the considerations that defined the relationship between the two sides. For, the late King wanted to maintain a role for Jordan in the West Bank. He had insisted on Jordan’s participation in any talks linked to the status of Jerusalem and on maintaining his religious mandate over it. Furthermore, he never reached a “complete fracture” point with the Muslim Brotherhood at any time whatsoever. Indeed, he had a historical legacy with them and personal ties with certain leaders in the Brotherhood, ties that always helped to “absorb tensions” and curb potentially explosive crises.

It seems that personal factors also played a role with the directors of the General Intelligence Department. Despite the lack of solid and definitive information available that may help clarify Director of General Intelligence Mustafa al-Qaisi’s (who was responsible for concluding the gentleman’s agreement with Hamas) view of the relationship with the Hamas Movement, testimonies from certain figures from the Movement and other observers allude to the fact that he did not carry any open, personal enmity towards them. According to Ibrahim Ghosheh and other observers, it seems that the situation was clearly different with the new Director of General Intelligence, Samih al-Batikhi, who took over the post in 1996. According to these testimonies, al-Batikhi changed the nature of the political tone used with the leadership of Hamas and showed unfriendly intent with regard to their activities in the Jordanian domestic arena.

Meanwhile, a current Jordanian official refused the notion of taking personal factors into consideration when constructing a reading of Jordan’s relationship with the Hamas Movement. He saw that the relationship was subject to the calculations and readings of Jordan’s state institutions and had nothing to do with

who was administering the state's intelligence services and that particular person's 'personal' attitude. But, according to Mishal', al-Batikhi played a key role in rupturing the relationship between the Movement and Jordan, because he had a negative opinion of Mishal; and, that al-Batikhi tried to seek out and manipulate conflicts that existed between Mishal and Abu Marzouk, and between Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood by using the sensitive issue of Hamas' influence within the Brotherhood.

At the same time that Mishal refers to al-Batikhi's personal attitude as a negative factor, the image painted of Mishal himself is one that shows him as representing the hard-line in the Hamas Movement, that he was stubborn, and that he participated in planning armed operations that the al-Qassam military wing carried out – all of which Mishal denies. Mishal insists that the military wing in the Movement is fully independent; that the political leadership defines general policy for the Movement and leaves details and operations for the military field office on the "inside" (in Palestine).

Mishal points to the fact that he only officially met with al-Batikhi one time, by way of the mediation efforts of Member of Parliament Abdullah al-Akayleh, who insisted that al-Batikhi meet with Mishal. Mishal says that he "felt al-Batikhi was not friendly with him or with any of the Hamas Movement's leadership in Amman".

In summarizing that political period, then, one could say – if one allowed oneself a degree of boldness in drawing conclusions – that the late King Hussein took on a policy of "holding the stick from the middle" in order to create a balance between competing internal and external considerations and conflicting interests when it came to the Hamas Movement. He allowed for the presence of the Movement's leadership on the one hand, but deported some of them (those who did not carry Jordanian passports) and forbade the leadership that remained from conducting media and political activities; and, finally, the security services went on to arrest other members of the Movement.

In the next period, the period of “rift”, which coincided with the earliest days of the new reign of King Abdullah II, the formula that governed the “Kitchen Cabinet’s” outlook on the relationship with Hamas changed in a significant way and on fundamental levels.

On the one side and considering the nature of the new regime, an entire caseload of key, important domestic portfolios was transferred to the General Intelligence Services. Indeed, in previous years, the General Intelligence Department had expanded its activities and extended its influence throughout public life. As a consequence of the former decision, the Hamas ‘portfolio’ was transferred from being a political case file (handled by the late King himself) to a security portfolio (handled by the General Intelligence Department).

At that time, the majority of indicators and communications alluded to the fact that the Director of the General Intelligence Department, Samih al-Batikhi, was not in support of the relationship with Hamas. He had already arrested several Hamas individuals and members of the Movement’s leadership. With the passing of the late King Hussein and with the absence of his historical and personal legacy with the Brotherhood and Hamas, the door was opened for al-Batikhi to change the direction of the relationship; and, he was basically released from the “policy of restraint” or “holding the stick in the middle” when it came to Hamas.

On another angle, when King Abdullah II took over the reigns of governance, he adopted a position that clearly differed from the legacy of the strained relationship between the late King Hussein and the late Palestinian President Yasser Arafat. The new King formed a new strategic outlook based on the principle that the establishment of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders constituted a strategic interest for Jordan. Accordingly, he worked to put an end to the tensions in the relationship with the Palestinian Authority by emphasizing a new policy that made it clear that Jordan no longer wanted to play a political or security role there (in Palestine).

Perhaps, the “ban on the activities of the Hamas Movement” (and expelling its leadership from Jordan), was in itself a clear, political message about the King’s intentions with regard to the West Bank and the Palestinian Authority, as well as an answer to the enormous external pressures on the state that resulted from the Hamas Movement’s communication and political activities in Jordan.

Thus, the Jordanian “Kitchen Cabinet” no longer considered Hamas as a political trump card in the regional game. The relationship between Jordan and the Palestinian Authority was reinforced at the expense of Hamas, which, as a result, lost the regional incubator it had enjoyed in the past.

Internally, from the perspective of the General Intelligence Department, increased concerns about the presence of Hamas on Jordanian soil emerged based on the growing problematic institutional overlap between the Movement and the Brotherhood. Calls (even from inside the Brotherhood) to recruit members of the Brotherhood into Hamas were taking place, as well as other activities such as amassing weapons and military training.

These considerations coincided and paralleled with a deterioration of the relationship between the state and the Muslim Brotherhood after the Brotherhood boycotted parliamentary elections in 1997. At this point, the new reign also transferred the Brotherhood portfolio from a political case file to one of security. The levels of tension in the ensuing crisis between the state and the Brotherhood escalated with an increase in the level of official discourse concerned with the growing influence of Hamas on the Jordanian Brotherhood, and the expanding influence of both organizations on the Jordanian street.

At that point, the “relationship” between the two sides (the state and Hamas) simultaneously moved from “rift” to “crisis”. By the beginning of 2006, these developments were reflected in concerted efforts and joint considerations on the international, regional and internal level. This period also represented a pivotal

turning point in American policy on the Middle East (especially after September 11); and, at the fore of this changing context were two major issues:

The first was a transformation in the American definition of what it considered the sources of threat in the region, and refocused its top priority on Iran's regional influence on al-Qaeda. This new definition, in turn, created a fertile breeding ground for the regional policy of realignment and imposed a state of acute polarization between the so-called 'Moderate' and 'Opposition' camps in the region.

The second was that pressure from the United States on its Arab allies to introduce democratic reforms had led to the rise of Islamic movements and had led to these movements making great gains in the Egyptian parliamentary elections in 2005, in Palestinian legislative elections in 2006, and in several legislative and municipal elections in numerous Gulf States. All of the latter paralleled with the emergence of the increased influence of Iran and the simultaneous regression of the "American project" in Iraq.³²

These changing variables prompted a return to the approach of the Realist School in American foreign policy, which was founded in prioritizing American strategic interests over the dissemination of democratic values (democracy and human rights) elsewhere. The discourse of this school of thought entailed a return to the logic of "historic pacts" (that dominated the Cold War period) and renewing alliances with Arab regimes in confronting the rise of "political Islam movements" in the region.³³

This new line in American policy (that re-emerged in 2006), then, carried with it two principle implications that, together, contributed to the growing gap between Jordan and Hamas. The first of these was represented in the focus on building regional alliances to counter Iran and its allies and, the second lay in renewing the alliance with Arab regimes in an attempt to confront the rise of the Islamic movements.

American policy reflected in a direct way on the regional situation. Iran and Syria and, with them Hamas, Hezbollah and other Islamic movements, formed the regional axis of the “Opposition”; whereas, America and the “Moderate Arab” states formed the other (later called the “Arab Solidarity Alliance”), whose most prominent members included Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority.

In the meantime, a reassessment of the sources of regional security threats was taking place (in Jordan, this reassessment would take place circuitously and on a ‘practical’ level rather than in any ‘official’ direct manner). The idea of Iran’s influence threatening the region was encouraged and endorsed, as was the idea of containing this threat, culturally, politically and on the level of security.

The disparity in the positions between Jordan and Hamas was further reinforced during the Lebanon War in the summer of 2006 that took place between Hezbollah (with Iran and Syria backing it) and Israel. This was then exacerbated by Hamas’ take over in Gaza, in early 2007, when it took over the institutions of the Palestinian Authority and imposed the full control of the Movement over security in the Gaza Strip.

The Jordanians had been wagering that, from the time of Hamas’ victory in legislative elections and later, after its take-over in Gaza, it would be weakened before a strengthened Palestinian Authority under the leadership of President Abbas (who was considered an ally). Meanwhile, and according to certain Jordanian authorities, Hamas was now considered as having loyalties and interests that converged with Iran. Indeed, one past authority figure took this view to the extent that he described the Hamas political bureau as “the group of followers of *al-Hawza* (a term used to describe the supreme seat of Shiite higher learning) residing in Damascus”.

Behind this wager on the weakening of Hamas was the immense gap in the positions of both Jordan and Hamas with regard to a peaceful settlement. The Jordanian “Kitchen Cabinet” perceived the establishment of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders as a vital Jordanian interest. This view meant that the “Kitchen Cabinet” was in a position at the opposite end of the spectrum from the Hamas Movement, which refused the prevailing trajectory the peace process was taking and which specifically rejected any declared agreement to international resolutions in this regard.

The differences between the two sides reflected firstly, on the nature of their subsequent regional and international alliances and, secondly, on the relationship between them and the perceptions each had of one another. For, Jordan saw Hamas as a threat to its national security and as a part of the Iranian axis; and, Hamas saw Jordan as a strategic ally to its Palestinian foe (President Abbas) and as part of what it considered “the American camp in the area”.

Meanwhile, the Jordanian political scene in its own right was subject to the dynamics of the regional crises and its ramifications, on the one hand, and subject to domestic considerations, on the other. As a result, a consensus kept growing within official Jordanian political circles on the fact that regional considerations were converging with Jordan’s internal considerations. This perspective began to link the Hamas Movement’s victory in Palestinian legislative elections with the whetting of the Muslim Brotherhood’s appetite for changing the rules of the domestic political game in Jordan. The latter was seen in the context of firstly, concerns that an attempt would be made to replicate this experience and possibly even taking over power and, secondly, in the close relationship between the Hamas Movement and the Muslim Brotherhood, who together made for a staunch force that would become difficult to reckon with in the framework of Jordan’s domestic affairs.

Over and above these considerations, the Hamas-Brotherhood line was deemed to be a compound challenge that fed official fears of the rising power of Islamic movements and what these movements represented in terms of being major players on the domestic scene. These fears also took into account that the Hamas-Brotherhood representation extended across the shores of both the East and West Banks for Palestinians and for Jordanians of Palestinian origin. And, this was exactly the kind of situation the “Kitchen Cabinet” in Amman did not want to end up having to deal with.

This continuous escalation in the crisis between the two sides took a sharp turn in the opposite direction when the channels of dialogue were opened between the past Director of the General Intelligence Department, Lieutenant General Mohammad Dahabi, and the leaderships of both Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.

The re-opening of this political line had juxtaposed the failure to come to a peaceful settlement at the Arab-Israeli summit in Annapolis, upon which Jordanian political leaders (and with them the Moderate Arab states) had attached hopes of reviving the peace process or, in other words, of reaching convincing outcomes. This failure, in turn, hardened and reinforced the “Opposition” camp which was already seriously calling into question the prevailing track of peace negotiations.

The reasons behind the initiative of re-opening up to Hamas and the Brotherhood were based on the following rationale:³⁴

First: The prevailing track of the peace process was not going to lead to a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders that was fully sovereign, which put Jordan before the following two realities:

1. Establishing a Palestinian state lacking in sovereignty and in the essential elements required for a real political existence, with no hope for the return for the majority of Palestinian refugees. This would put the principle burden on Jordan on

two major fronts: first, on the level of the relationship with the West Bank and second, on the domestic formula in terms of the political and legal status of Jordanians of Palestinian origin and also of Palestinians residing in Jordan, who did not have either Jordanian passports or national identity numbers.

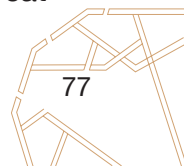
2. Not establishing a Palestinian state – a reality that would reinforce the “Jordanian option” (for resolving the Palestinian issue) in the future and that would put pressure on Jordanian decision-makers in Amman to come up with historic solutions, which would surely be at Jordan’s expense.

According to this reading, then, Jordan’s commitment to its alliance with the United States of America and the current strategic track would limit, to a great extent, Jordan’s ability to resist political pressure as well as its latitude in political manoeuvrability.

Therefore, certain Jordanian powers-at-be viewed opening up to the Hamas Movement and to the Muslim Brotherhood, and amending relations with Syria and Iran, in the context of widening Jordan’s margin of “diplomatic manoeuvring” in facing external pressure on Jordan in the future. Jordan was trying to regain some of its trump cards for its hand in regional politics for the sake of reinforcing Jordan’s political standing in the region.

Second: In a reading of this perspective and this track in Jordanian political thinking, the emergence of a right-wing government in Israel, at this particular historic juncture, in juxtaposition with Israeli society’s move to the right and the regression of the peace camp in Tel Aviv, reflected at the same time a transformation in Israel’s strategic convictions towards Jordan and a redefinition in Israeli strategic thinking with regard to what constituted sources of threats to it in the region.

For Israel, Jordan had been considered a regional security valve and a buffer state against surrounding Arab countries, which had, in the past few decades, formed a strategic security threat



to Israel. But, today, in Israel's strategic thinking, Jordan was no longer seen in the same light after the sources of threat (to Israel's security) became externalized in Iran and in Islamic movements and internalized in terms of the "Palestinian demographic bomb".

What does that mean exactly? ... It means that Jordan's role as a "buffer" for Israel no longer had the same value, so much so that the Israeli right no longer sought for Jordan to be part of any historic solution to the Palestinian issue.

Third: All of the above raised a fundamental question about what the position of the Palestinian powers-at-be would be when it came to the issue of the "surrogate state" or the "Jordanian option". The question posed itself on whether or not these Palestinians powers-at-be would be willing to let such a solution pass in order to achieve certain Palestinian political gains in Jordan, in conjunction with achieving part of these gains in the Occupied Territories. The latter would make Jordan part of the "Palestinian promise" not only for Palestinians inside the Occupied Territories but outside as well.

When faced with this question, certain members of the Palestinian establishment expressed their concern about the inability of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah –, which, along with Jordan, had limited political options – to confront or deal with American and Israeli pressure, in the event that the latter wanted to allow such a scenario to pass. These Palestinian individuals also had their doubts about how solid and strong the Fatah Movement and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas really were.

Thus, opening up to Hamas could be viewed in the context of an attempt to test the position of this rising power in Palestinian society against Jordanian concerns, and as a chance to test the extent to which such a potential partnership could confront such a scenario. Indeed, the few meetings that did take place between the leadership of Hamas and Jordanian General Intelligence focused on the position Hamas held with regard to the "surrogate state"

project, about the issue of resettlement and of the “Jordanian option”. Finally, the meetings discussed the possibilities of renewing the ‘unwritten agreement’ with Hamas, which entailed that the Movement refrained from jeopardizing Jordanian national security and from interfering in domestic affairs.

According to official Jordanian sources, this initiative would guarantee friendlier relations, a clear agreement on Jordan’s strategic interests and a common ground with another Palestinian party, which could insure Jordan against sudden or unexpected moves by the Fatah Movement. This was also seen in the light of insuring Jordan against the consequences of the weakening of or, in the worse case scenario, the collapse of Fatah.

Fourth: What was the justification for Jordan to insist on keeping channels closed with the Hamas Movement? And, for the relationship between them to remain tense when there were several Arab states that had opened up to them, particularly Egypt and Saudi Arabia –who were also part of the Moderate Arab camp–, notwithstanding the fact that back channels of communications had been opened between Hamas and the Europeans?

Finally, in view of a realistic reading of the situation, which offered proof that Israel was also failing to eradicate the existence of the Movement both politically and militarily, was it any longer logical for Jordan to wager on the weakening of the Hamas Movement or even its eventual failure and collapse?!

According to the Jordanian sources previously mentioned, Hamas had become a “difficult number” in the Palestinian and regional equation that could not be broken or cancelled out. Rather than continuing to ignore it and trying to overlook the Movement, Jordan’s strategic interests now called for opening up channels of dialogue with it. Indeed, it could even present an opportunity to restore Jordan’s role as mediator between the various Palestinian political powers and rebuild Jordan’s political influence in the Occupied Territories, which could help Jordan achieve certain strategic interests and help it protect its national security.

Fifth: This ‘realistic’ reading inevitably reflected on the domestic equation. For, if the “Kitchen Cabinet” in Amman wanted to construct an “alternative vision” (or plan B) in case the peace process did fail or, if the peace process took on a trajectory that could harm Jordan’s national security and strategic interests (i.e. the scenario of a “Jordanian” solution to the Palestinian issue), it meant that the internal front and the nation’s immunity had to be consolidated, strengthened and reinforced. This possibility also required a “redefinition of the relationship” with the Muslim Brotherhood and reaching an understanding, founded upon a new set of rules that would better govern the internal political role of the Brotherhood and its relationship with the state’s formal institutions.

On this basis, those “responsible for initiating the dialogue process with the Hamas Movement”, so to speak, saw that this step could help contain the Brotherhood and restore the historical role of the Movement in protecting the regime and internal political stability, by: Investing in Hamas’ influence on the Brotherhood and investing in the potential of the strong links that already existed between the two movements in order to create a partner that extended across both the East and West Banks, which could represent both Palestinians and Jordanians of Palestinian origin. This kind of “partner” could help create a common ground that both sides could stand on – a common ground that was founded on shared interests, positions, and visions for both the Jordanians and the Palestinians.

However, what is clear is that the proponents of the political vision that led to taking the steps needed to open up to Hamas, and to re-opening channels of dialogue with them, conflicted to a great extent with the vision that governed the previous era of crisis between the two sides. This new perspective and the new considerations created by the changing regional context would prevail (for a time) over previous fears and concerns about the Movement and its place in the region’s alliances, and about political Islam, in general.

Despite this abrupt change, official Jordanian political discourse and the official media made sure to emphasize that this sudden opening up to the Movement did not reflect a transformation in Jordan's strategic stakes, or a change in the historic formulation that governed Jordan's relationship with the West, Israel and friendly Arab states as much as it was a "tactical manoeuvre" within the historic, traditional and declared "strategic matrix" of Jordanian diplomacy. The opening up to Hamas and the messages of goodwill and intent delivered to both Iran and Syria should be considered as a "diversification of the basket of diplomatic options before Jordan" and nothing more. None of these initiatives were meant to be considered as either alternatives or an alteration to Jordan's relationship and strategic partnership with the Fatah Movement and the Palestinian Authority, and the United States and the West.

From the point of view of Mohammad Nasr (who participated in this dialogue initiative), Dahabi's aim in the dialogue with Hamas was to turn a 'new page' with the Movement, while waiting for regional and international changes to unfold and, particularly, waiting for the outcome of the American presidential elections that were to take place soon after – as a Democratic victory in these elections meant that great changes would inevitably take place in the American approach to the region.

According to Nasr's analysis, Dahabi's initiative was viewed by the leadership of Hamas within the context of a pre-emptive Jordanian reading of impending international and regional challenges and variables, but without fully discounting Jordan's strategic options and stakes.

However, this moment was not to last long, with its potential ramifications evaporating with the end of the service of the General Intelligence Director Mohammad Dahabi. Without going into great details on the reasons for his dismissal, especially those linked to the power struggles and the balance of power inside the state's political system, there are numerous indicators that point to a

connection between his dismissal and the initiative launched with the Hamas Movement. Indeed, all channels of communication with Hamas and with the Muslim Brotherhood were immediately closed upon Dahabi's dismissal. And, the "window of opportunity" flashed by – closing as quickly and abruptly as it had been opened (according to an expression used by Jordanian political analyst, Fahd al-Khaytan). Indeed, the flood of political and media analyses, readings and interpretations of the initiative perhaps outweighed the few weeks in which it existed.

Here, one cannot exclude external considerations from the decision made to shut down the dialogue initiative, especially as the Palestinian Authority was made anxious by it, and there were indications that Washington was also uncomfortable with it, and Israel unhappy.

Mishal sees that to unlock the secret to that "open and shut" moment, one had to see the four principle sides to the equation that prevailed at that time: The first being that the General Intelligence Director, during that period, Mohammad Dahabi understood the importance of opening up to the Movement but, at the same time, wanted to keep the door slightly ajar to any other possibilities and variables. The second was that there were certain powers-at-be within the Jordanian political system that did not support the initiative and actually worked against it. Thirdly, external powers (America, Israel, other Arab states and the Palestinian Authority) were not at all comfortable with this initiative. And finally, the fourth was the Hamas Movement, itself, which was prepared to make the steps required to reach a larger agreement with Jordan that could have been guaranteed by the Movement's past track record of not undermining Jordan's domestic security.

The period that followed the closure of the initiative was unclear and, to this day, remains marked by ambiguity. The "Kitchen Cabinet's" perception of the dimensions and implications of this relationship were unclear, in themselves. Whatever the case was, what was clear was that once again, the political proponents in opposition to opening up to Hamas re-emerged. And, that

historical, political moment was condemned as being an adventure that undermined Jordan's national interests and whose outcomes were not calculated properly. A demand was made to return to the approach that considered Iran as the major source of threat to the region, that placed Hamas within the same regional alliance as Iran, and that refused the possibility that the Movement become a strategic partner by any definition of Jordan's vital interests, domestic or external.

Jordanian Politicians and Hamas: Conflicting Visions

From the previous analysis of the role of internal and external factors and the other variables and considerations mentioned that dictated the nature of the policies and the positions taken by the "Kitchen Cabinet" in Amman with regard to Hamas, one can summarize the views of the Jordanian political elite today when it comes to Hamas by using three principle approaches. These approaches are also shared in the political debate and the debate in the media, and each approach reflects a certain perspective in terms of how strategic interests are viewed in this regard.

The First Approach can be considered the "cautious approach" towards Hamas and opening up channels with it, and in terms of maintaining the alliance with the Palestinian National Authority³⁵: The proponents of this approach, today, are represented by an influential political elite that is close to the regime and inside the state's institutional framework. This approach is based on a vision of Jordan's strategic interest that is grounded on the following pillars:

1. The traditional and logical ally of Jordanian nationalism is Palestinian nationalism. And, thus, Jordan's interests are embodied in the presence of a national Palestinian authority, which would accept the two-state solution and would establish a Palestinian state, west of the Jordan River, and which would guarantee that it, as an authority, would not accept a solution at Jordan's expense.

2. Hamas' opposition to a peaceful settlement and its alliance with Iran and the "Opposition Camp" means Hamas is positioned at the completely opposite side of the spectrum of Jordan's national interests. Indeed, the Movement's position was seen as complementing the position of the Israeli right in its evasion from the implementation of international resolutions and in its insistence that a Palestinian partner (to negotiate with) did not exist – all of which helped Israel circumvent international pressure to implement a withdrawal (from the Occupied Territories), to stop building settlements and to accept painful concessions on final status issues.
3. Jordan is an independent, sovereign state that deals directly and reciprocally with the Palestinian Authority and not with political factions. Accordingly, opening up channels of dialogue with the Hamas Movement was seen, in this context, as futile; notwithstanding that such initiatives aroused the suspicions of the Palestinian Authority, destabilized relations between the Palestinian Authority and Jordan, and invoked doubts about Jordan's desire not to interfere in the affairs of the West Bank.
4. Even in the case that the dialogue with Hamas could be employed by Jordan in Palestinian national reconciliation efforts, that kind of initiative would be seen as sending "unfriendly" signals to Egypt; it would only irritate Egyptian sensitivities about interfering in that field (of mediation between the Palestinian factions), where Egypt was seen as having the greatest influence as a regional power, and would place Jordan in "competition" with the Egyptians.
5. There was a large question mark on the extent to which it was possible to stand on a "common ground" with the Hamas Movement in confronting any attempts at resettlement (of Palestinian refugees), or on abandoning the right to return and confronting any resolution of the Palestinian issue at Jordan's expense. Finally, contrary to public declarations by

the Hamas leadership, there was evidence and there were numerous indicators that the Movement was interfering in Jordanian domestic affairs by way of “the Brotherhood’s interface” and that the Movement had a long arm extending into that organization; and that Hamas and its supporters aimed to turn the Brotherhood into the “representative” of Jordanians of Palestinian origin. That was all notwithstanding the political discourse and discourse in the media of a group close to Hamas (within the Muslim Brotherhood) that still spoke of the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship in the context of Muslim unity and brotherhood – and these were the kinds of statements, which, in the future, could be projected in “code name” to a formal unity between Jordan and the Palestinians, a concept that lies at the core of the “Jordanian option”.

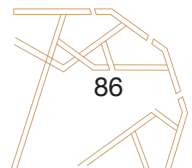
6. Despite all of the above, some advocates of this approach did not mind the presence of a “back channel” of communication or dialogue with Hamas in order to resolve pending issues, and to reach an agreement that protected and preserved certain Jordanian national interests. But this was acceptable within the undeclared, limited scope of security interests only, so that it would not instigate any complications or confusion in terms of Jordan’s strategic, political position with and towards the Palestinian National Authority.

The Second Approach called for a “strategic shift” in both Jordan’s international and regional alliance strategy, and called for shifting the historic international-regional matrix more towards the “Opposition” camp and against America and Israel. The advocates of this tendency represent a combination of Islamist forces, leftists and nationalists; and, this tendency’s approach is founded in the following premises:

1. That the American “project” in the region was in regression and wagering on this “project” would weaken Jordan’s position, regionally and domestically, especially in light of the deep-set alliance between the United States and Israel. Therefore,

giving in to the peace process, in its prevailing form, was nothing more than a waste of time and discounted a more trustworthy ally – the Syrian-Iranian axis –, which was seen as being more intrinsically concerned with and protective of national and Islamic interests.

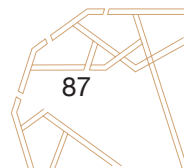
2. Even if one were to assume that the peace process was to succeed, it would not lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state that was fully sovereign on all the territories occupied since 1967, but rather produce a “frail Palestinian entity”, which would not possess even the most rudimentary elements required for the strength to survive. Indeed, sooner or later, the latter would inevitably pave the way to reverting back to the “Jordanian option”, and to Jordan carrying the burden of the outcomes of such a historic settlement of the Palestinian problem.
3. The Fatah Movement, which in itself forms the backbone of the Palestinian Authority, was no longer a national resistance movement that confronted the occupation. Rather, it has been transformed into a bunch of rival groups vying for economic and personal gain, which can no longer be trusted to be seriously prepared for the difficulties that will inevitably be posed by final status negotiations.
4. On the other hand, Jordan’s past experience with the various factions in the Palestinian Liberation Organization did not encourage any approach that relied on their trustworthiness or on a strategic alliance with them. Meanwhile, Jordan’s track record with both the Muslim Brotherhood and the Hamas Movement was not subject to any historic struggles or any attempts to take control in Jordan. On the contrary, during the difficult periods that the country passed through, these movements actually stood on the side of the regime and supported its political stability.



5. In addition to all the aforementioned, Hamas did win in the Palestinian legislative elections, by democratic means. And, it had a majority in the Palestinian legislative assembly and had become part of the political system. So, why should the Movement be overlooked and ignored while contact with the Fatah Movement continued, despite the fact that it (Fatah) lost the elections and its government no longer had legislative legitimacy (a parliamentary majority).

The Third Approach advocated “diversifying the basket of political options” for Jordan and safeguarding a number of alternatives for the country.³⁶ This political current was actually a by-product of the past few years and found practical manifestation (amongst official Jordanian political circles) before it was abandoned and all communication channels were frozen (with Hamas). The third approach was founded on the following premise:

1. That Jordan should strike a balance between the restrictions set forth by the historical-strategic alliance it had with the Moderate Arab states and the West, on the one hand, and maintain certain regional “trump” cards, alternatives and other exit strategies for the country, in case the tides in the regional situation turned against Jordan’s national interests and domestic security.
2. Opportunities were receding for establishing a fully sovereign Palestinian state in light of the emergence of the Israeli right and the shift in Israeli society towards right-wing thinking. In addition to the latter, hopes were waning about the effectiveness and seriousness of American pressure on the Israelis – all of which meant the Jordanian “Kitchen Cabinet” would have to start thinking about a “Plan B” to be able to deal with worse case scenarios without deviating from the Jordanian strategic matrix.



3. Even if Jordanian vital interests today lay with the Palestinian National Authority, focusing on diplomatic efforts to ensure the peace process succeeds, and that a Palestinian state is established, this did not necessarily mean that channels of communication and dialogue with the Hamas Movement should stop altogether, especially when one considered that it was a Palestinian faction with strength and influence, and a player that could not be overlooked. That was seen as a “key” to protecting Jordanian security interests in the West Bank, as well as an agreement with the Hamas Movement in that regard. Finally, this approach would serve both Jordan and the Palestinian Authority at the same time.
4. It was Jordan’s right, just like any other Arab or Western state, to take any measures and open any channels that protected its national security interests and met its strategic interests. This was especially the case as other moderate (Arab) states had opened communication channels with Hamas and as certain Western states also had back channels open with the Movement. Therefore, why was it that Jordan alone was “banned” from engaging in dialogue with Hamas?
5. Opening up to Hamas and engaging in dialogue with the Movement had domestic implications that sprung from Jordan’s unique internal social composition, which called for reaching an agreement with Hamas on issues such as its relationship with the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood in addition to any activities it carried out in the Jordanian domestic arena.

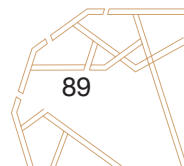
What is evident is that there is considerable diversity in the various positions held by the Jordanian political elite and in their assessments of the situation with Hamas. Of course and as made apparent in the previous paragraphs, it is also obvious that each approach’s assessment was subject to a different reading (in terms of the others’ perceptions) of the main criteria that should be used to define the context that framed the relationship. The most important criteria that were being factored into defining this

context were obviously: The relationship with the United States of America, the West, regional polarities, the efficacy of the peace process and finally, the domestic equation in Jordan.

At the moment, the approach that is closest to the position of the “Kitchen Cabinet” is the first approach, with major indications that the communication with Hamas has been halted and that negative signals towards it continue. Meanwhile, the second approach reflects the position of the political opposition (in general), which, in the current context (domestically and externally), has no real chance to convince the “Kitchen Cabinet” otherwise. Finally, the third approach reflects the opinion of a certain group of political elite, which is not very far from that of the “Kitchen Cabinet’s”, but lacks the right proponents that can carry this approach further and defend it from within the state’s institutional framework. The latter is especially the case in the wake of all the diplomatic efforts being rallied behind and pushing for a successful peaceful settlement, and in the fact that much reliance is still being made on the role of the Americans and in transformations in the international community’s position, as well as in attempts to isolate the right-wing Israeli government, which has reduced the parameters of the peace process to an economic and administrative solution and not a political solution of any significance.

Hamas’ Strategic Vision of Jordan: An Arena to Influence or to Arrive at a Political Consensus?

Unlike the debate existing on the Jordanian side, there is little “debate” within the Hamas Movement that could help one test for the presence of differing or conflicting trends within the Movement itself with regard to the relationship and context of the relationship with Jordan. And, although some have spoken of differences in visions and perceptions between Hamas in Gaza and the Movement’s political bureau (outside) – and even within the political bureau itself –, no one was found to corroborate this matter for the purposes of this study.

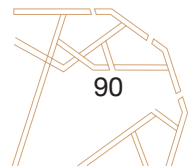


However, to this effect, in his book, “Kill Khalid”, Paul McGeough offers the story of the struggle between Mishal and Dr. Musa Abu Marzouk, as well as with Sheikh Ahmed Yassin previously. McGeough describes Abu Marzouk as more pragmatic and closer in vision to decision-makers in Amman, and particularly the late King Hussein Bin Talal. McGeough refers to private discussions with Abu Marzouk and several individuals in Hamas about the conflicts between Mishal and Abu Marzouk, but without reaching the point of being able to present a clear view of Hamas’ strategic vision with regard to Jordan.³⁷

The question posed with regard to Hamas’ strategic perspective towards Jordan lies in the extent to which this perspective matches, differs or perhaps even contradicts what Hamas declares publicly in terms of its position towards Jordan and how it actually behaves on the ground and in reality.

Perhaps the last statements that Mishal made in Amman, in particular, present the clearest view of Hamas’ discourse when it comes to Jordan (and its relationship with Jordan). The most important points made by Mishal were the following:³⁸

- Reaffirming Hamas’ refusal of any Israeli plans for resolving the Palestinian issue at Jordan’s expense: “Palestine is Palestine and Jordan is Jordan.”
- Differentiating between “brotherly sentiments” and the “extraordinary Palestinian-Jordanian relationship”, and not allowing this relationship to be exploited by the Israelis, which means rejecting the “surrogate state” option and resettlement (of refugees): “We will never accept resettlement at Jordan’s expense, or that of any other Arab state for that matter. I beg to make that very clear and I ask that you, the people of Jordan, are reassured by the fact that we are with you. And, that we will be the hand that protects Jordan.”



- Hamas' refusal to interfere in the domestic affairs or scene in Jordan in any direct way or through the Muslim Brotherhood: "Hamas will not ever allow itself to be an internal problem in Jordan. It will not be part of the Jordanian domestic equation, not through the Islamic movement nor on any other level that may be."

While Mishal's speech was welcomed by Jordanian politicians and the Jordanian media, because it presented clear points with regard to the relationship between the two sides, doubts remained inside the Brotherhood and outside it (on the part of a certain political elite and members of the media) about the credibility of this speech when it came to the reality on the ground. There were contradictions that, according to official sources, indicated otherwise, such as the discovery of certain cells linked to the Hamas Movement that were caught caching weapons in Jordan and conducting military training not only in the Occupied Territories but also on Jordanian soil.

Official Jordanian sources have indicated that their past experience with the Hamas Movement made it difficult to trust the said speech by Mishal. For, there were numerous cases of persons arrested with a link to the Hamas Movement, weapons without permits and documents containing sensitive 'internal' information being confiscated, which provoked fears and concerns about the causes and reasons for these being in the Movement's possession. These official accusations emerged after the arrest of leading figures in Hamas, and after their offices were searched, in 1999; and once before, in 1991, when a group was arrested under the suspicion of having links to Hamas and to caching weapons on Jordanian soil.

Furthermore, in the year 2006, a cell was accused of conducting training in Syria and of purchasing weapons from Iraq in order to conduct operations inside Jordanian territory.³⁹ Recently, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood was arrested in the city of al-Zarqa and accused of working with Hamas' military wing before he was released.

The more important questions regarding the influence of the Hamas Movement were particularly connected to the Muslim Brotherhood – whose membership was made up predominantly by Jordanians of Palestinian origin, who belonged to the very womb of the Muslim Brotherhood, itself, and the Muslim Brotherhood Organization of Greater Syria (previously) that united Jordanian and Palestinian ‘Brothers’ under one organizational umbrella. Several declarations and postures pointed to the Movement as seeing Jordan as a “sphere of influence” for it, especially in terms of the Jordanian-Palestinian community – a community which Hamas could not do without in its current struggle with Fatah and the Palestinian Liberation Organization over the representation of the Palestinians.

In his book, “The Red Minaret”, Ibrahim Ghosheh points to discussions that took place between him and other Hamas leading figures in Tehran, before their return to Amman (after which they were arrested in 1999), in which he says to them “... We must return to Jordan. The Jordanian arena is one of the most important ones for us and we cannot let go of it.”⁴⁰

Ibrahim Ghosheh himself gave a statement to the “al-Sabeel” weekly newspaper in which he said, “that Hamas represents Jordanians of Palestinian origin.”⁴¹ This statement was made during the time he and other Hamas leaders were detained (during negotiations). In both these statements there was an implicit indication to two fundamental points in Hamas’ strategic vision with regard to Jordan:

- That Jordan was a principle arena, or sphere of influence, for the Movement and its organizational and political activities, because it encompassed the largest gathering of Palestinian refugees outside the Occupied Territories. Furthermore, Jordan was going to be a future candidate in serving “some sort of formula” dealing with the Palestinians. Thus, Hamas was going to take great care in maintaining a certain active presence for itself in Jordan, notwithstanding that this presence served the purposes of its struggle with the other Palestinian factions.

- Through “the Brotherhood’s front”, Hamas and its influence on the Brotherhood’s leadership implicitly meant that they were an indirect party to be factored into the Jordanian domestic equation, by virtue of their “representation of Jordanians of Palestinian origin” and of Palestinians residing in Jordan. This was especially the case when one considered the context of the growing question of the impact and the ramifications of the role that this broad segment of Jordanian society might play inside Jordan’s political system in the near future.

Therefore, we stand before two differing outlooks on Hamas’ vision with regard to Jordan:

1. The official and declared position of the Movement, which is non-interference in Jordanian domestic affairs, including through the Muslim Brotherhood, and which rejects the options of resettlement and the “surrogate state” or any other resolution to the Palestinian problem at the expense of Jordan.
2. The position of the rivals of the Movement, who see that Hamas considers Jordan as an arena or sphere in which they can use their influence and in which they can conduct their political (and military) activism; and, who think that Hamas uses the Brotherhood as a “front” to reinforce the Movement’s presence within Jordanian society (and specifically the community of Jordanians of Palestinian origin).

Prior to any attempt at initiating an in-depth discussion that aims at extricating each side’s perception of the other (Jordan and Hamas), as well as prior to any attempt to exit the “areas of ambiguity” when trying to build a perspective for the following period, and trying to present all the potential scenarios and options before each side, one must first pause at the question of the relationship between the Brotherhood and the Hamas Movement. Indeed, the dynamics of this relationship represent a major factor in putting forward a paradigm that explains the context of the relationship and the determinants of the relationship between the two movements, on the one hand, and of the two movements with the Jordanian regime, on the other.



Part 3

The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas: From a “Legitimate Birth” to the Question of Identity and Influence

Today, the struggle inside the Muslim Brotherhood between its two major wings (the centrists and the doves, – later known as the ‘reform tendency’, and the hawks and the ‘fourth movement’, – those close to the Hamas Movement) is a complex matter with one dimension affecting the Brotherhood, internally, and another dimension affecting the ‘external’ relationship between the Brotherhood and the Hamas Movement.

Indeed, the decision to establish the Muslim Brotherhood Organization of Greater Syria (that included Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza) in 1978 was an important historical milestone in the evolution of the relationship between the Brotherhood in Jordan and the Brotherhood in Palestine. Declaring the launch of the Hamas Movement was yet another major turn of events. Finally, Hamas’ decision in 2006 to disengage from the Jordanian Brotherhood, and the Brotherhood’s organizational elections in 2009 were also major landmarks in the course of the relationship. All these milestones posed questions about the political identity of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan and in the way their relationship with the Hamas Movement would be defined, as well as the subsequent consequences of this relationship on the level of the Brotherhood’s internal structure and statutes, its priorities and its relationship with the Jordanian regime.

Deconstructing the relationship between Hamas and the Brotherhood, and defining its various dimensions, the current axes of conflict and future probabilities require a review of the historical stages the relationship experienced up until today. After the point where the official decision and declaration announcing the launch of the Hamas Movement was made, it is possible to divide the major stages that the relationship between Hamas and the Brotherhood underwent into three principle periods:

1. The Shadow Organization within the Brotherhood [1991-1999]
2. The Birth of the Hamas Movement and Gaining International Stature [1999-2006]
3. The Disengagement and Establishing an Organizational Structure and Statutes

The Period of Active Engagement in Jordan: A Shadow Organization Develops within the Brotherhood

The return of the Hamas Movement's political bureau from Kuwait in the wake of the Second Gulf War and the launch of their political and organizational activities in Jordan marked the beginning of a new stage in the relationship between the Movement and the Muslim Brotherhood.

In the beginning, the Hamas Movement's political and communications activities were initiated through the organizational structure in Palestine. In that period, the General Supervisor of the Muslim Brotherhood would attend Hamas' Shura Council meetings, investing in their "Palestinian front". Meanwhile, members of Hamas became active and moved within the circles of the Brotherhood's institutions.

When the Hamas Movement reached its unsigned agreement with the Jordanian government, in 1993, it began to take the steps required to establish its own independent offices. These offices were not confined to the activities of the political bureau, but also included establishing communications and media bodies, research centers and even commercial enterprises. In parallel, members from within the Muslim Brotherhood were recruited into the Hamas Movement, with the Brotherhood's consent, in order to serve the goals of the Movement and its diverse range of activities. At the same time, the Muslim Brotherhood established media bodies and outlets such as the "al-Sabeel" weekly newspaper, research centers and the "Muslim Palestine" magazine, whose offices were later shut down by the Jordanian government.

The previous General Supervisor of the Muslim Brotherhood, Abdel Majid Thuneibat, offers this testimony about that phase in the relationship between Hamas and the Brotherhood:

"New legislation on the press and publications (at that time) required that newspapers had certain financial liquidity and accounts. The Brotherhood did not have enough to provide for the publication of its 'al-Rabat' weekly newspaper, which was the Brotherhood's official news agency at that time; never mind, that the Brotherhood was already strapped for the resources required to maintain the publication of a weekly newspaper. So, the Hamas Movement offered the Brotherhood to replace the 'al-Rabat' with another, new publication, with independent financing and management that would be tied to both the Brotherhood and Hamas. And that is actually what took place and the 'al-Sabeel' weekly newspaper was born to light."

Thuneibat also insists that the agreement with Hamas with regard to identifying and recruiting certain members of the Brotherhood into the Movement was conditional upon Hamas notifying the Brotherhood's leadership and of Hamas providing a list of names in this regard. The agreement also stipulated that none of the persons recruited to the Movement would be from positions of

leadership within the Brotherhood. But, every once and a while, the Brotherhood's leadership were surprised to find that certain members had been recruited without its prior notification; and these activities often led to problems between the two organizations.

The organizational overlap and the continued differences between Hamas and the centrists in the Brotherhood, whose influence inside the organization had been expanding noticeably since the mid-1990s until it peaked in 1997, planted the seeds for a new kind of polarization within the Brotherhood – between that trend, the centrists, which represented mostly third and fourth generation Brotherhood members, and between the Hamas Movement and its supporters within the Brotherhood.

The main issue of contention revolved around the issue of Hamas' influence on the Brotherhood and around the Brotherhood's priorities. For, the centrists were pushing for prioritizing local and Jordanian affairs, and issues related to development and political reform (later this trend was called the Jordanian wing), whereas Hamas and its supporters wanted to focus on treating Jordan as a dynamic stage and vital ground from which to support the work of the resistance in Palestine.

During those same years, the presence of the Muslim Brotherhood amongst the Eastern Jordanian community began to decline, while its popularity began to increase inside the Jordanian-Palestinian community. This transformation inevitably reflected the rising popularity of Hamas in Palestine and the increasing impact its armed operations were having – all of which was taking place at the same time that the peace process was losing ground.

The declaration by the Jordanian government calling on a ban on Hamas and its political and media activities in Jordan, and expelling the Movement's political bureau from Amman in 1999, constituted a major turning point in the state of polarization within the Brotherhood. The proverbial spark was lit when negative allusions and statements were made by Hamas' leadership,

during that crisis and in its wake, about the position that the Brotherhood's leadership and the centrist wing took at that time, and the way they dealt with the issue of the arrests (of the members of Hamas). This particular situation later led to the emergence of a new current inside the Brotherhood, where members employed by the Movement, recruited by it or sympathetic to it, became the other pole within the Brotherhood.⁴²

Commenting on that period, Ibrahim Ghosheh is critical of the approach of the Brotherhood's leadership (of which a majority came from the centrist wing in the organization) during the crisis, and the way they dealt with this crisis – that they behaved more like mediators between the Hamas Movement and the government, and not a party on the side of Hamas. Ghosheh attributes this growing conflict with the Brotherhood's leadership to the period before, and particularly the year 1998. He says, "During that time, discrepancies in the policies between the leadership of the Brotherhood and that of the Hamas Movement began to surface. There was, in the Muslim Brotherhood, a line that called for prioritizing domestic, local affairs. Or, in other words, the Jordanian dimension was what should concern the Brotherhood; and that it was imperative for the Brotherhood not to become immersed with the Palestinian dimension, or any other dimension, for that matter. They wanted to focus on issues that were more educational, social, charitable and environmental. Unfortunately, when the Movement was exposed to that harsh blow in 1999, that particular current, or line of thinking (in the Brotherhood) worked against the Movement by inciting matters and taking sides. What is more important is that the differences between the leaderships of the Brotherhood and Hamas grew. One of the outcomes of these differences included barring Khalid Mishal from using one of the rooms in the (Brotherhood's) headquarters, which was once his to use... It was taken away from him."⁴³

These words of Ghosheh reveal, with a great degree of clarity and honesty what extent the level of conflict had reached between Hamas and the Brotherhood's centrists. Ghosheh blatantly

accuses this current of actually “taking sides and inciting” against the Movement. Furthermore, he raises suspicions about the position the General Supervisor of the Brotherhood at that time, Abdel Majid Thuneibat, took against Hamas.

Ibrahim Gharaibeh (one of the more prominent figures in the centrist current at that time) disagrees with Ghosheh’s version of events and the position Ghosheh takes with regard to the Brotherhood’s centrists. Gharaibeh attributes the conflict between the centrist current and the leadership of Hamas to Hamas’ establishment of a “shadow organization” within the Muslim Brotherhood, from the period between 1991 and 1999 – or, in other words, the period in which Hamas’ political bureau actually had a legal presence in Jordan.

Indeed, the return of the Hamas political bureau to Amman took place at the same time that the doves took power of the Brotherhood’s executive office. The Brotherhood’s executive office had actually opened the door wide for Hamas’ work and activities, but on the condition that they would not recruit anyone from the Brotherhood without prior notification to the executive office, on the one hand, and that no one employed or recruited by Hamas from the Brotherhood would be given senior positions, on the other. This condition was made in order to avoid putting the Brotherhood in the predicament of duplicity in leadership and in organization, and to avoid putting them in an awkward position before the regime and before public opinion.

However, according to Gharaibeh, Hamas did not keep its promises and, instead, was building another organization within the Brotherhood. Hamas was expanding its recruitment of Brotherhood members into Hamas, without notifying the leadership of the Brotherhood, who would later discover that this had taken place from confessions taken from these persons’ after their arrest by Jordanian General Intelligence.

At the same time, the Hamas Movement's political bureau was keen for those who were recruited to the side of Hamas to reach positions of leadership and senior administration in the Brotherhood, which created a breach of trust and produced an internal crisis that began to take root and expand with time.

Hamas Becomes a Regional Player: Restructuring “Polarities” inside the Muslim Brotherhood

The internal composition inside the Brotherhood witnessed a structural change after Hamas' leadership left Jordan. The angry statements made by Hamas against the Brotherhood's leaders (or the centrist current) planted the seeds of this change. A group of active young men close to Hamas, who had once been aligned with the centrist current, publicly emerged to the surface with stinging criticisms directed against the leadership of the Brotherhood. Internal leaks to the press escalated, particularly against the Vice General Supervisor, Imad Abu Diyyeh, who was the most important and number one figure in the centrist movement.

This all took place in juxtaposition with the eruption of the Second Palestinian Intifada in the year 2000. The Second Intifada would cast its shadow on the relationship between the Brotherhood and the state, especially in that period, where demonstrations and protests were dealt with by the state quite severely.

Despite all that had passed, the majority of slogans and banners held by the Brotherhood during these demonstrations called for the “return of Hamas' leaders to Jordan.” According to a leading figure from the doves in the Brotherhood, a group seen as being close to Hamas took advantage of the outpouring of impassioned sentiment at that time, and capitalized on reaping the benefits of this rise in the popularity of Hamas by promoting themselves within the ranks of the Brotherhood as the group closest to Hamas and to the Movement's leadership outside.

In the meantime, Hamas was beginning to acquire international stature and began to take on the character of the regional alliance with Damascus and Teheran; and, it began to actively engage with other Arab countries. It got to the point that its status of being organizationally situated under the wing and control of the “umbrella in Palestine” no longer seemed appropriate for its new size.

The self-declared birth of the “fourth movement” (a current considered close to Hamas) and its vigorous efforts to reinforce its presence and influence within the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood led to a restructuring of alignments inside the organization, according to the new formulations in which Hamas played a hand as an indirect party. After the “fourth” current distinguished itself by allying with the Hawks, the center re-established its alignment with the doves; and, internal regulatory elections took place in the Muslim Brotherhood in 2002 on this basis.

As a consequence of the weight of the conflicts with the Hamas Movement, and leaks to the press and internal efforts to mobilize against the center, the fourth current, which was allied with the hawks, won a majority in the Brotherhood’s Shura Council and executive office. The center wing and the doves were cornered and left outside the leadership of the Brotherhood, with only Abdel Majid Thuneibat (the General Supervisor of the Muslim Brotherhood) remaining. Even Thuneibat’s presence was a mere shadow of the Brotherhood’s (once) tradition that the General Supervisor be an (Eastern) Jordanian. However and in the meantime, the center wing and the doves were able to maintain their seats in the executive office of the Islamic Action Front (IAF).⁴⁴

The surprise came with the return of parliamentary elections in 2003 (after parliament had been dissolved and had remained idle for over two years). The Brotherhood took the decision to participate in these elections by way of a group of young men, who were not from the executive offices of either the Brotherhood or the Islamic Action Front. The majority of these young men

were of Palestinian origin. The situation made the centrists and doves question whether or not this represented some sort of a pact between the regime, the (Brotherhood's) hawks and those close to Hamas. The implications of such a pact was that it could herald in new arrangements in the future when one considered the context of the regional environment, with the occupation of Iraq and growing American pressure on Arab governments to introduce political reform, which was clearly reflected in the Middle East Reform Initiative declared by the Secretary of State, at the time, Colin Powell.

What is worth noting, at this point, is that the Brotherhood gained seventeen seats during the 2003 elections, fourteen of which were held by young men of Palestinian origin.

In 2005, the Islamic Action Front launched its new political reform platform at the same time as the Muslim Brotherhoods in both Egypt and Syria did. These reform platforms included accepting the tenets of democracy and plurality; and, went beyond the historical conflict between the hawks and the doves about these contentious issues. The initiative put the internal debate within the Brotherhood on a completely different track, which began to center around questions of the Brotherhood's identity and its priorities.⁴⁵

In 2005, the Hamas Movement withstood some harsh military and security blows that culminated in the assassination of the Movement's spiritual leader, Ahmad Yassin, and one of the Movement's most prominent leading figures, Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi. At the same time, the noose was being tightened around the neck of the Hamas Movement's military wing. Consequently, by the beginning of 2006, the signs and precursors of change began to emerge with regard to Hamas' position towards participating in the political processes in the Occupied Territories, leading to the decision to participate in upcoming legislative elections in which Hamas won an overwhelming majority in the legislative assembly.

The real surprise came with the internal regulatory elections inside the Brotherhood that took place only a few weeks prior to the Palestinian legislative elections. The center wing and doves won a majority in the Shura Council and stripped the leadership, once again, from the hands of the fourth current and the hawks.

However, and according to the Brotherhood's statutes and regulations, the previous Shura Council had already appointed the Secretary General of the Islamic Action Front (Zaki Bin Arshid, who the doves and center wing considered part of the " Hamas group"). This awkward situation carried the internal crisis to an even more advanced stage. Zaki Bin Arshid now governed over an executive office where the Doves, the center wing and independents held a majority and the new leadership in the Brotherhood came from the same current.

To the "misfortune" of the doves and the center wing, the appointment of Zaki Bin Arshid came with their return to the leadership of the Brotherhood and coincided with Hamas' landslide victory in the Palestinian legislative elections. Furthermore, it paralleled with an even more increased level of concern from within the state about Hamas' influence on the Brotherhood and about the Brotherhood's growing political ambitions.⁴⁶

This historic moment "plunged" the Brotherhood's leadership into a series of crises with the regime and state. The crisis began with a fierce assault by the Jordanian authorities on the appointment of Bin Arshid, which was subsequently met by statements made by the latter that further provoked the state. It then continued with the arrest and trial of four members of parliament who visited the home of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (after his death), and ended with the Brotherhood's leadership signing a declaration that affirmed their commitment to the "center" and to the "pillars of the state".⁴⁷

The crisis took further root with the upcoming municipal and parliamentary elections, where the state (with the admission of politicians and other authorities) targeted the Brotherhood and

then pushed for a restructuring of the role of the “Brotherhood” in the domestic political equation. One of the first manifestations of the state’s policy was in the expropriation of the Muslim Brotherhood’s Islamic Center Association.⁴⁸

During that period, the doves and center wing did not conceal their political agenda, which was made clear in statements made by the (past) General Supervisor, Salem al-Fallahat. Fallahat made it clear that the Brotherhood intended to make national and local affairs a priority; that, from now on, it wanted to focus on the issues of political reform and the concerns of the Jordanian citizen in its discourse and its activities. These declarations also represented an implicit, coded message, so to speak, to the other current in the organization, which rejected that kind of prioritization and insisted on the centrality of the Palestinian issue in the Brotherhood’s discourse and in defining its political position.⁴⁹

All of the above took place in juxtaposition with the region entering into a state of acute “polarization” between the Opposition and Moderate camps, which in turn, further reinforced the internal dispute inside the Brotherhood with regard to its political agenda and position.

Meanwhile, the doves and the center wing were making an effort to move towards reconciliation with the state. They affirmed their independence from Hamas, organizationally and politically (while maintaining their support for the Movement) and made it clear that they believed in the need to preserve and protect the “domestic equation” from the upheaval and stormy conditions engulfing the region. But, the real predicament that befell the dove’s and center wing’s agenda was that it got caught between that of the state and that of the other current in the organization, both of which were conditioned upon regional calculations!

In the meantime, the “Kitchen Cabinet” in Amman was becoming very concerned about the growing influence of the Hamas Movement in the Occupied Territories and about its friendly relations

with the (regional) Opposition camp. Furthermore, the “Kitchen Cabinet” linked the Brotherhood into this context, and refused to acknowledge the sincerity of the doves’ and center wing’s agenda. From the point of view of the “Kitchen Cabinet”, their agenda did not really touch upon the core of the Brotherhood’s approach, nor did it deny the profound transformations that were taking place in the way in which the Brotherhood was evolving, or in its deviations from the traditional equation that had historically governed the relationship between the Brotherhood and the regime.

The “Jordanian” objective of the “Kitchen Cabinet’s” policy of weakening the Brotherhood was, indeed, two-fold: It targeted the Brotherhood and worked to contain its political influence and power, on the one hand; and protected the domestic front from Hamas’ influence and power, which emanated from the (regional) Opposition camp, on the other.

On the other hand, leading figures from the hawks and the fourth current, who were not part of the elected leadership of the Brotherhood, continued to raise the ceiling in terms of their political discourse and pushed the crisis with the regime to an even higher level – which put the center-aligned leadership between a rock and a hard place. At the same time, the hawks began to mobilize the ranks in the Brotherhood against the “weak posture” that the organization’s leadership was taking in confronting the harsh policies of the regime against the Brotherhood.

The 2007 parliamentary elections represented a defining moment in the internal formulation in the Muslim Brotherhood and subsequently generated an extensive debate within the organization. The doves and the center wing were ardent about presenting a list of candidates that was free of any contentious names and that could be considered ‘moderate’. They also wanted the list to be represented by a majority of (Eastern) Jordanian candidates. The doves and center wing took this stand in order to send a clear political message that targeted multiple dimensions: In its first dimension, the message was internal; it was meant

to allow for the Brotherhood's parliamentary representation to embody the line taken by the doves and the center wing – thereby organizationally weakening the other current in the Brotherhood. In its second political dimension, a message was being sent to the regime to prove that the intentions of the “centrist leadership” were to preserve and to protect the relationship with the state and their communication channels with it. In the end, the Brotherhood limited their list of nominees to only thirty candidates, confirming the Brotherhood's unwillingness to change the rules of the internal (political) game.

At the same time, the (previous) centrist executive office worked to change the composition of the Brotherhood's Shura Council by reducing the share of the Brotherhood's administrative offices in the Gulf States (which was closer in approach to Hamas) in the Council. This decision reduced the (Brotherhood's) Gulf States' seats from ten to only four. The other eight seats were redistributed amongst Brotherhood branches in Jordan, which guaranteed the presence and position of the center wing's power inside the realm of the leadership, despite the numerical majority of Jordanians in the Brotherhood of Palestinian origin, which was closer to the pro-Hamas current in the organization.

The brutal shock and decisive blow came with the parliamentary elections. The state worked to bring down the Islamist list and, combined with the efforts made against the list by the hawks and fourth movement, the Brotherhood incurred heavy losses in the elections – a loss never experienced before in the previous decades. They would only win six seats of a possible 110 seats.⁵⁰

Commenting on this period, one of the leading figures from the doves and center wing says, “The set of policies that the past executive office took were aimed at redirecting the Brotherhood's compass towards national concerns and at putting a limit to Hamas' influence. That is why the district representation in the Shura Council was changed; and, that is why a moderate list was chosen. Had that list won, it would have reinforced the internal

power of the center and of the doves to a great extent. But the (gift) from the state to the other current (in the Brotherhood) was quite precious. For they brought down the leadership and put it in a real predicament!”⁵¹

The outcome of the parliamentary elections reflected in an overwhelming and direct way on the internal struggle in the Brotherhood. It granted the other current a strong boost of morale in their confrontation with the doves and center wing. The crisis also pushed forward elections for the Brotherhood’s Shura Council in which the fourth current and hawks were able to gain a majority over the council. The executive office was reshuffled and split almost in half between the hawks and the doves (four seats to five respectively), and for the first and unprecedented time in their history, the Brotherhood was represented by a General Supervisor, Dr. Hashem Sa’id, who was not only aligned with the hawks but was also of Palestinian origin.

In the Shura Council, the hawks and the fourth current were able to gain 26 seats in comparison to 25 provisional seats for their opponents.

The crisis in the Brotherhood did not recede after the elections. The conflict remained in effect between the two opposing wings in the Brotherhood despite all the understandings and deals that took place between them.

The repercussions of the Brotherhood’s crisis led to the dissolution of the executive office of the Islamic Action Front and to the resignation (or dismissal) of its Secretary General, Zaki Bin Arshid, who was considered to be aligned to those close to Hamas. A new executive office was elected outside the framework of the inter-organizational competition and polarization, with Dr. Ishak al-Farhan as its head. Al-Farhan was considered one of the leading figures amongst the doves, although he had managed to keep his distance from the conflict inside the organization during the previous years.

After the Decision to Disengage from the Brotherhood: The Question of Political Identity and Influence

One of the most important historical twists that the Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood experienced was the decision by the Hamas Movement to disengage, or break ties, with the Brotherhood. This official disengagement was the outcome of the establishment of an officially independent organizational structure for Hamas that combined the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in the West Bank and Gaza with the Palestinians of the Diaspora. A practical consequence of this decision meant the end of the Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood of Greater Syria established in 1978 (Gaza had been added to the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan and in the West Bank, after which the Palestinian branch was established to oversee the launch of the Intifada).

This secession of Hamas reinforced the state of inter-organizational polarization within the Brotherhood and elevated this polarity to a more serious level for two major reasons:

The first reason was related to issues linked with the administrative offices in the Arab Gulf States (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar). These offices once formed a principle cornerstone of the Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood in Greater Syria. Their representation had reached 12 seats in the Brotherhood's Shura Council before the previous (centrist) executive office reduced these to four, after Hamas announced it was breaking official ties with the (Brotherhood).

The disagreement regarding the administrative offices in the Gulf States was an issue that had a two-pronged point of origin: the first point originated as a result of the dynamics in the relationship between the Brotherhood and Hamas; and, the second originated from within the Brotherhood's organization itself.

The offices in the Gulf States included a mix of Jordanians and Palestinians (some of which had Jordanian national identity numbers^f while others did not). The question of the representations of these offices emerged after Hamas seceded from the Brotherhood, and after Hamas had called for their “dual representation” in both the Shura Councils of the Brotherhood and of the Hamas Movement.

The doves and center wing in the Brotherhood rejected this notion of dual representation, which created an institutional overlap between the organizations which, according to the doves, violated the internal organizational statutes of the Brotherhood, notwithstanding the fact that it created a problematic overlap between the Jordanian and the Palestinian fields of operation. The latter was seen as creating a major legal and political crisis for the Brotherhood, which was further compounded by the profound, fundamental differences in the natures of the Palestinian and Jordanian political arenas.

The matter was referred to the (global) Guidance Office of the Brotherhood and Hamas’ request to secede was approved (despite the opposition to this decision by a majority of the Jordanian Brotherhood’s Shura Council). In the meantime, it was decided that the representative seats of the Gulf States administrative offices in both Hamas and in the Brotherhood would remain vacant until an agreement was reached between the two sides.⁵²

Soon after, elections in the Hamas Shura Council were held and Khalid Mishal was re-elected (for a fourth consecutive term). In the meantime, the Gulf States administrative offices’ seats remained vacant as discussions continued inside the Brotherhood and between the Brotherhood and Hamas about the fate of this representation.

While this was taking place, the doves and center wing adopted the attitude of “watch, wait and see” (leaving all options open). This approach included forming a committee that visited the Gulf

^fh- To be a carrier of a Jordanian national identity number means that an individual has full Jordanian citizenship or a five-year renewable passport.

States administrative offices. During these visits, discussions were held with the Brothers there, who carried Jordanian national identity numbers, about the political and legal ramifications and consequences that came with choosing either the Brotherhood or Hamas. Members were then asked to choose between the two organizations in order to guarantee that the organizational independence of both sides would be comprehensively ensured.

According to this approach, those who chose to remain inside the Muslim Brotherhood would not be represented in the Brotherhood's Shura Council. Finally, members of the administrative offices would no longer be dealt with in their previous capacity, but rather as "expatriate Jordanian Brothers."⁵³

Behind the hard line approach that the doves and the center wing took towards the representation of the Gulf State administrative offices was confronting the great obsession with the idea of reserving 12 seats in the Shura Council for these offices. The rationale was that, in the majority, these offices had their loyalties tied to Hamas and worked with the Movement. Twelve seats for them in the Shura Council would, thus, significantly tip the balance in the internal composition of the Brotherhood to the advantage of those close to Hamas, and would turn the Brotherhood into a behind-the-scenes "sphere of influence" for Hamas.

Conversely, Khalid Mishal has rejected the notion of trying to attribute any conflict that took place inside the Brotherhood to the Hamas Movement. He maintains that the Movement remained equidistant from both wings in the Brotherhood, and that it had nothing to do with "those who used it (Hamas) for or against the Brotherhood". He saw what was taking place as purely internal conflicts. He further emphasized that Hamas had advised the Brotherhood to put an end to what was going on inside the organization; and, that Hamas would accept any agreement that resolved the conflict pertaining to the administrative offices (in the Gulf States).

As for the story about the "shadow organization" inside the

Jordanian Brotherhood, Mishal's view is that these claims can be attributed to attempts by the previous Director of General Intelligence Department, Samih al-Batikhi, to create a rift between the Brotherhood and Hamas and to instigate an internal crisis in the Brotherhood. He maintains that Hamas had no influence or "shadow" organization within the Muslim Brotherhood and that the decision had been taken within the institutions of the Movement not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Brotherhood.

Mishal also refused the claims that Hamas paid money to the hard line wing in the Brotherhood and maintains that such financial support, from the outside, had always been remitted to the Brotherhood on a continuous basis, but not by way of Hamas.⁵⁴

The second dimension was linked to the question of the Brotherhood's political identity. For, after Hamas officially broke ties with the Brotherhood and set up its own independent organizational constitution and statutes, there was a need for both the doves and center wing to revisit the path before the Brotherhood in Jordan and its institutional statutes, priorities and the framework it wanted within which its relations with the Hamas Movement would operate.

It is in this context that the problem of the "shadow organization" emerged, whose front today is represented by the hawks and those close to Hamas. For, as soon as the center wing proposed the need to enforce and implement the complete organizational separation from the Hamas Movement, and presented the need to reformulate the political and reform agenda for the Brotherhood, according to national, Jordanian considerations, the other wing pushed towards deepening ties with Hamas. The latter has consistently held a vague position with regard to the disengagement between the West Bank and Jordan (that the late King Hussein announced in 1988), which also implicitly meant that, according to this wing's overall outlook, an overlap did exist between the Palestinian and Jordanian arenas.⁵⁵

The conflict inevitably reflected upon the relationship and

interaction of the Brotherhood with Jordan's national and international political environment. It had to define itself either as a Jordanian Islamic movement or an extension of the Hamas Movement in Jordan; and, in both cases the benefits and the liabilities would be different.

One of the repercussions of this crisis, at this stage, was the resignation of members of the Brotherhood's executive office, who were considered members of the doves and center wing. These resignations were attributed to a series of direct and indirect causes that pushed towards this end. One of these reasons was the relationship with the Hamas Movement and the contentious issues related to the administrative offices in the Gulf States.

Meanwhile, the position that the state took with regard to the crisis inside the Brotherhood was that of an "observer". It appears that this transformation in the state's outlook was represented in its indirect support for the doves and center wing, after it had previously refused to acknowledge this wing and considered it as fragile and weak. Indeed, today, the state is counting on the role of this wing in curtailing the influence of the Hamas Movement inside the Brotherhood. However, if this was the official position of the state, the state did not take any clear or strong steps in that regard, but, rather alluded to this position through certain intimations and partial leaks from the sidelines, here and there.

With that, and in general, it does not appear that the "Kitchen Cabinet" in Amman was willing to let go of its "strategic hand" in weakening the Brotherhood. Indeed, it perceived the internal crisis taking place today within the Brotherhood as a "precious gift" to the state – it appeared as though the Brotherhood's leadership was busy undermining its own political strength and its popularity through the principle of "by my own hands and not by any other."

In a press release issued by Ahmad al-Kafaween (who spoke in the name of the independents in the executive office) the birth of the "reform movement" in the Brotherhood, as an offspring of the doves and centrists current, was circuitously announced. In

itself, the declaration pointed to the nature of the debate taking place within the Brotherhood that, today, became subject to new premises and evaluations, which were quite different from that of previous years.⁵⁶

For, the political debate in the Brotherhood was no longer just a matter of a conflict between the hawks (who refused the concept of democracy, found the regime guilty of apostasy, and belonged to the school of Sayyid Qutb⁹) and the doves (representing the moderate, pragmatic current when it came to their position with regard to the state and the regime). Indeed, this “recipe” had ceased to exist years before.

As a matter of fact, the conflict today runs between two principle currents:

The first renamed itself as the “reform movement”. It adopted an agenda that focused on internal political reform, the role the Brotherhood could play in national development in Jordanian society, with independent institutional frameworks for the Brotherhood and the Islamic Action Party, on the one hand, and for dealing with the state and its institutions, on the other.

This current maintained that the Brotherhood’s political identity

g- The writings of Sayyid Qutb, particularly the volume series entitled “In the Shadow of the Quran” and the booklet “Milestones” (written during the Egyptian Nasserite era), are considered principle building blocks in the primary infrastructure and framework of the Brotherhood’s ideas. Qutb’s ideas center around the principle concepts of “al-Hakimiya” (Divine Governance and Sovereignty), “al-Jahiliya” (the Age of Ignorance) and the rejection and excommunication of the modern political nation-state and the system of democracy (al-Mufasala). His ideas are founded in ‘disavowing as blasphemous’ (“takfir”) the prevailing Arab regimes, and on advocating and the “calling” (da’wa) upon the sons of Muslim communities and countries to be governed by and obey nothing other than Islamic law (the Sharia). Resource: “*The Jihadi Salafist Movement in Jordan after Zarqawi: Identity, Leadership Crisis and Obscured Vision*”; Mohammad Abu Rumman and Hassan Abu Haniyeh; Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Amman Office, 2009; page 85

was as a “national Jordanian Islamic movement” that sympathized with and supported Hamas, but was entirely independent of it. This current also rejected the idea of a dual-organization and pushed for establishing new institutional statutes for the Brotherhood that affirmed its belief in and commitment to the tenets of Jordanian statehood.⁵⁷

The second current never clearly declared or named itself (although certain sources in the media close to this current have used the term “unity current” to describe it).⁵⁸ It moved within the institutional framework of the Brotherhood in a more organized and structured manner. This current’s agenda was centered on the ‘unity of position’ with Hamas and on giving regional considerations (the link with the Palestinian cause) priority over national interests when defining the coordinates that positioned the Brotherhood. Some members of this current have even been inclined to indirectly defining the Brotherhood as an “Islamic movement that represents Jordanians of Palestinian origin.”

Indeed, the second current’s position would lead to an overlap between the Jordanian and Palestinian arenas, and would keep the relationship with Hamas irrefutably ambiguous.



Part 4

Extrapolating the Next Phase: The Triumph of Apprehension, Ambiguity and the “Gap in Mutual Interests”

After an examination of the historical stages that Jordan’s relationship with the Hamas Movement experienced and an analysis of the internal and external factors that influenced and affected this relationship, leading up to the situation that prevails today, it is clearly evident that we stand before an “ambiguity” on the Jordanian side, with regard to defining which interests converge and which interests conflict when it comes to the Movement. Simultaneously, there are “grey areas” that exist in the Movement’s political discourse and in its practice with regard to Jordan.

In the past few years, and particularly since the period of rift and the following period of intermittent crises, the channels of communication and dialogue between the two sides definitively weakened. Apprehensions and suspicions prevailed over the image each had of the other. This happened at the expense of working towards defining a “common ground” that both sides could stand upon, which could act as a platform for reaching understandings and agreements, and at the same time, did not necessarily negate the vast gap in their differing stakes – at least, for the time being. But, it would allow for “conflict management”, and for avoiding certain crises and arriving at a minimum common denominator of mutual interests with which to face the current conflict in visions.

In the last part of this study, we will address the following major themes:

1. The Absence of Strategic Dialogue and a “Mutual Breach of Trust”
2. Exploring Grey Areas: Political Ambiguity Versus Claims of the Existence of a “Shadow Organization”
3. Bridging the “Gap” in Mutual Interests: “Conflict Management” and “Positive Objectivity”

The Absence of Strategic Dialogue and a “Mutual Breach of Trust”

So, there is an official and political Jordanian current that still insists on rejecting any initiation of strategic dialogue with Hamas for all the reasons previously mentioned, and because of what this political current would call a “breach of trust”. This breach of trust, in their opinion, stems from Hamas’ disregard for its commitments to and agreements with Jordan, which in turn, makes trusting the outcomes of any dialogue with Hamas unrealistic and impractical.

Mishal’s reply to the above is that there are no understandings or standing agreements today between Jordan and the Movement for it to break or to commit to, especially when it comes to Jordan’s domestic security or when it comes to influencing the Muslim Brotherhood from within. With that, Mishal says one of the major tenets of the Hamas Movement has always been not to interfere or disrupt the national security of any Arab state, not just Jordan. So, it was not a policy of the Movement to disrupt the national security of any state.

Mishal adds that Hamas is even more careful and more insistent on not interfering in the domestic affairs of Jordan, in particular, because of the sensitivities that surround that relationship. The Palestinian-Jordanian relationship, according to Mishal, was

complicated in nature and in its overlapping social, political and geographic dimensions. But, this did not prevent the Movement from taking all measures and means to “support the resistance in Palestine. That can only be done from neighbouring countries”. In Mishal’s opinion, this was the Movement’s right.

Perhaps, what Mishal was not saying directly, was that what was being alluded to by the Jordanians about Hamas’ security activities was not tied to the domestic Jordanian arena but rather the Palestinian. There is a degree of risk in presenting the analysis or reading, so to speak, that “Jordan was considered a conduit rather than the base for Hamas’ military activities”.

In relation to this context, Mohammad Nasr argues that the subject of Hamas’ military activities was discussed in the meeting with certain authority figures in Jordan’s security apparatus. In that meeting, Hamas denied having anything to do with targeting Jordan’s national security and emphasized that the activity under discussion only concerned the Occupied Territories. Conversely, Mishal points to the fact that, indeed, the Movement was also subjected to security breaches by the Jordanians.

With that, Mishal maintains that the Movement was willing to reach an agreement with Jordan that included an understanding on every point of contention and on all important issues, in a way that suited both parties, and in a way that met Jordanian strategic interests and would help rebuild the trust between the two sides.⁵⁹

On the other hand, past attempts by Mishal to convince Jordanian authority figures and politicians, who were responsible for handling the Hamas Movement portfolio, had failed to gain a positive reception. These individuals assert that there are security-related activities that the Movement cannot justify, and in which individuals from the Muslim Brotherhood have been used (the authorities refused to reveal details due to security considerations). These activities were seen as significantly weakening Mishal’s credibility with regard to the Movement’s intentions towards Jordan.

A Jordanian authority figure added that what was even more dangerous was that Hamas' security-related activities (even if one were to presume they were targeted at the Occupied Territories) were dependant on Jordanians (even Jordanians of Palestinian origin that had full Jordanian citizenship) which in itself violated Jordanian law and the obligations required of citizens thereof, on the one hand, and violated Jordan's regional and international commitments, on the other.

According to this authority figure, these kinds of matters did not require agreements or understandings, as one of the fundamental tenets of international law and in the relationship between states, movements and organizations was to respect the sovereignty of states and not to interfere in their affairs. Furthermore, striking a deal with Hamas would make Jordan appear weak and incapable of protecting its own security without the consent of an external party; and, that was something which was absolutely unacceptable.⁶⁰

In addition to all of the aforementioned, this Jordanian authority points to statements made and postures taken by the (reform) wing, which contradict claims made by Hamas that it did not interfere in the affairs of the Jordanian Brotherhood, and that Hamas stood at equal distance from both wings in the Brotherhood. The position of the reform wing is notwithstanding the substantiated information official Jordanian institutions had about Hamas' widespread and broad infiltration into the organization of the Jordanian Brotherhood.

Therefore, the perceived breach of trust and lack of the Movement's credibility slipped further in the wake of the crisis between Jordan and Hamas – a crisis that, till this day, has the Jordanians rejecting the idea of initiating any form of strategic dialogue with the Hamas Movement.

Shedding Light on Grey Areas: Political Ambiguity versus the “Shadow Organization”

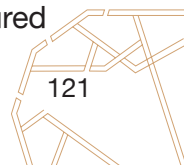
The relationship between Jordan and Hamas remains riddled by extensive ‘grey’ areas and broad ambiguities, which have not allowed for any form of in-depth, reasonable discussion that could lead to some sort of understanding.

On their part, Jordan’s formal institutions have not offered any specific, strategic definitions of what they want or expect from the Hamas Movement, or the grievances they have against it, for that matter. Indeed, the Jordanian attitude towards Hamas has been riddled by vacillating anxiety and concern, and the approach has been short-winded (from one day to the next). This reality has led to a profound breach of trust and made these policies and approach captive to regional and domestic variables, on the one hand, and to the moods and opinions of those in positions of decision-making on an official Jordanian level, on the other!

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the vast disparities in Jordanian policy with regard to both the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas are of the major reasons for the vast ambiguities and inconsistencies that plague the relationship between the two sides today.

By quickly revisiting the context in which the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas evolved, one will find that the Jordanian regime in itself played a decisive role in the current outcomes.

For, in the 1970s, successive Jordanian governments worked on replacing Palestinian factions in the Jordanian political arena by the Muslim Brotherhood. And, the Muslim Brotherhood included the Palestinian Brotherhood. A golden opportunity was placed before the Brotherhood to develop, thrive and expand until it became a difficult numerical factor that dwells in the community of Jordanians of Palestinian origin. The Brotherhood captured



the overwhelming majority of political influence and recognition amongst the population that once belonged to the Palestinian factions.⁶¹

On the other hand, the regime's policies, particularly in the 1990s, worked to empty the Muslim Brotherhood of (Eastern) Jordanians. The Brotherhood's presence became removed from Jordanian cities, villages and rural areas. Numerous political leaders (of Eastern Jordanian origin) left the womb of the Brotherhood at the same time parallel to the expansion of the influence of Hamas and the expansion of the Brotherhood in the cities and neighbourhoods with an overwhelming Palestinian population.

These policies eventually led to a disruption in the organizational composition of the Brotherhood and destabilized its previous internal equilibrium. The Brotherhood began to gravitate towards the Palestinian community in a significant way. Indeed, the parliamentary and municipality elections showed themselves to be important indicators that pointed to the overwhelming influence of the Brotherhood within the Palestinian community. And, conversely, the presence of (Eastern) Jordanians in the Brotherhood came to be limited, with that presence specifically centered in the leadership of the organization.

This "structural imbalance" paralleled the rise of Hamas inside the Palestinian territories on an extensive scale. It was only natural that Hamas would also find a presence and a place of influence in the community of Jordanians of Palestinian origin, due to complex political and social factors. Indeed, the Jordanian-Palestinian community was a natural social incubator for Hamas, as the case was (albeit with differences in geography, society and in the state) for the Taliban in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Pashtun communities.

Sensing this imbalance, the state adopted harsh and decisive measures against the Hamas Movement in an attempt to drain its influence within Jordanian society by way of policies that were

defensive in nature. However, these policies fell short and were ineffective in presenting a strategic recipe for restoring the balance and filling the holes in the relationship between the state and both the Muslim Brotherhood and the Hamas Movement.

In addition to the above, regional transformations and other external and internal factors pushed Jordan to take a negative, critical stand against the Hamas Movement and led to closing the doors completely on any attempts to building a reasonable, pragmatic dialogue between the two sides, which could ensure the preservation of Jordan's interests and achieving part of those of Hamas in Jordan.

On the other hand, and from Hamas' side, the position of the Movement with regard to sensitive issues related to their relationship with the Jordanian regime also remained ambiguous and unclear in nature.

In a recapitulation of the past, the gentlemen's agreement between the Hamas Movement and Jordan committed Hamas to non-interference in Jordan's political affairs, as did the agreement reached between the Movement's political bureau and the leadership of the Brotherhood in Jordan. However, according to claims made by both the state and the reform wing in the Muslim Brotherhood, the Movement did not fulfil these commitments. Instead, it expanded its operations by recruiting Brotherhood members into its ranks, and it violated the spirit of the agreements it had committed to. It built up media, cultural and commercial institutions affiliated to it. And, it tried to transform the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan into a part of its own sphere of influence within the Jordanian-Palestinian community, without paying heed to the lessons-learned from dangerous past experiences that other Palestinian organizations had undergone.

When thinking about the positions that prevailed, in a more precise manner, we will find ourselves confronted with four parties, not three, which are: the state, the Hamas Movement, the

“Jordanian reform wing” in the Brotherhood and the “Palestinian unity wing” in the Brotherhood; each with its own agenda, vision and outlook.

Perhaps, the predicament the Jordanian reform wing in the Brotherhood finds itself in is that it has been weakened in terms of organizational presence and in numbers within the Brotherhood today. However, its real value has been embodied in its political role and its presence on the domestic political scene, which has allowed it to transcend the Jordanian-Palestinian bilateral equation. And, despite its weakened state and the siege in which this wing found itself in, it is still alive and is still resisting being taken out of the equation – which would transport the relationship between the Brotherhood and the state into a Jordanian versus Palestinian context. The situation being reduced to a bilateral equation such as the latter would, indeed, threaten social stability and political security on the national level.

Therefore, on the domestic side of this equation, in which Hamas and the Brotherhood and the state are all involved, the solution is embodied in exiting from the “grey areas” in the positions taken by Hamas, and disposing of the ambiguities and suspicions embedded in official policy-making. This effort could be done by taking the following, successive steps:

- Reaching a clear agreement, with little room for interpretation, between Jordan, Hamas and the Brotherhood on prohibiting and criminalizing any interference in Jordan’s domestic affairs, on any level, including national security or by means of “shadow activities or organizations” that exploited the façade of the Brotherhood.
- It is not in the security or political interests of the state, nor does it serve Hamas, to weaken the Jordanian reform movement in the Brotherhood. This current’s presence serves the function of maintaining a delicate balance in the Brotherhood’s disposition and in the context within which it plays a political and national

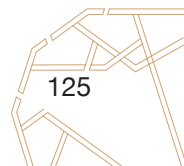
role on the domestic scene. And, instead of the government taking forceful security measures, there needs to be an effort to retrieve a balanced political role for the Brotherhood and granting the reform movement the conditions required in order to re-establish its presence in a clear manner, so that it can act as a stabilizing factor, politically and socially, in the domestic arena.

- In light of serving the interests of all sides involved, the Muslim Brotherhood should issue a statement or a political document confirming its endorsement of the decision (of the state) to officially break ties between the West Bank and Jordan, on the one hand, and affirming the organizational disengagement between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Hamas Movement, on the other.

Moving Towards Filling the “Gap in Mutual Interests”, “Conflict Management” and “Positive Objectivity”

Based on the analytical reading presented previously, there are numerous mutual interests, internal and external, that can be built upon in redefining the framework within which the relationship between Jordan and the Hamas Movement functions. However, the problem remains the “gap” or black hole in both sides’ outlooks and perceptions that swallows up these interests, prevents any convergence, and reinforces the logic of mutual apprehension and suspicion on both sides.

Of course, separating (Jordanian) domestic factors from the (Palestinian) regional factors in any understanding or agreement with the Hamas Movement is not realistic. In other words, any binding commitments made by Hamas with regard to the domestic arena should be met with a flexible Jordanian stand with regard to the regional arena.



Scepticism about initiating dialogue with the Hamas Movement points to four major issues, which can be dealt with:

Firstly that Jordan's strategic alliance is with President Abbas and the Fatah Movement. But, this fact does not have to negate engaging in dialogue with the Hamas Movement, which would, in turn, serve the Palestinian dialogue process and strengthen President Abbas' position, on the one hand, and would protect Jordanian national interests, on the other. This is particularly the case as Hamas is no longer just a Palestinian faction, but rather has become "the de facto government" in Gaza, notwithstanding the fact that it has an active presence in the West Bank.

Secondly, Hamas' strategic postures do not serve Jordan's national interest in establishing a Palestinian state. Engaging in dialogue with the Movement does not mean that there is an agreement with its (strategic) postures or implies that these postures are justified. Indeed, the process could help assist the Movement in changing its course, at best, or allow for "managing the conflict" with the Movement, at worse – indeed, either of both cases would serve the interests of all the parties involved.

Thirdly, the Hamas Movement's position with regard to Jordan's national interests is unclear and remains a "grey area", particularly in terms of the issue of the disengagement and the differentiation between the two arenas, Jordanian and Palestinian. In dealing with such issues, it should be seen as more beneficial to engage in dialogue with the Movement, in order to actually reach an understanding on these topics, and not to close down windows of communication and push the Movement further to the other axis (the Opposition camp). The latter will only reinforce "security concerns" in which the Movement will remain a factor in the tension rather than the stability of Jordan's domestic front.

Fourthly, apprehensions that the combined and mutual influence of Hamas and Jordan's Brotherhood, together, produce a formidable Islamic movement which is, in the long run, a serious problem for the political scene in Jordan. What is obvious is that these reservations induce enmity and animosity firstly, against Islamists, in general, and secondly, raise the levels of suspicions about the intentions of the Movement and the degree to which it would really commit to any agreement with Jordan. Nevertheless, using "security measures" as a weapon also is not the solution "most likely to succeed" in dealing with the Islamists. On the contrary, it paves the way for an even more rooted and extremist presence. Indeed, the best solution is rooted in political reform and in integrating these elements into the democratic game, and trying to draw them back to political postures, which are more consistent with realistic interests – as is the case in the Turkish model and in the experience with the (Islamic) Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP).

If the current crisis is managed and overcome, and both sides' reciprocal interests are extrapolated in a manner that allows for building a new, common ground for the future relationship between the parties, then the main question that remains would be: **What can Jordan expect from Hamas with regard to its national interests; and what should Hamas expect from Jordan?**

On the Jordanian side, reaching an understanding with the Hamas Movement and coming to an agreement on Jordan's strategic interests will allow for political and security guarantees, and will allow for the Movement to become a factor that aids internal political stability (through its relationship with Jordan's Brotherhood and by way of its grassroots popularity in the Jordanian-Palestinian community). This kind of reality would also protect Jordan's national security with regard to the Occupied Territories, as well as the other states in the region where Hamas' influence is extended amongst the presence of Palestinian refugees.

Maintaining channels of dialogue and communication and reaching an understanding with the Hamas Movement would contribute to granting the “Kitchen Cabinet” in Amman broader horizons and choices in case the peace process deteriorates, and the Jordanian stakes that have been wagered on that option fail, on the one hand and, in case external pressures are increased on Jordan to accept a solution at the expense of Jordan’s own national security and domestic stability. All of the aforementioned is notwithstanding the fact that a (healthier) relationship with Hamas gives Jordan certain trump cards in the international game of interests after Jordan has lost much in the way of its regional trump cards in recent years.

Engaging in dialogue with Hamas will not jeopardize Jordan’s strategic matrix or its regional and international relationships if the political discourse and the discourse used in the media are formulated in such a way that clearly and convincingly define the parameters of the dialogue process. However, an exclusive “veto” – Arab or International – on Jordan’s engagement in dialogue with the Hamas Movement must be rejected based on the obvious logic that this “veto” would contradict Jordan’s right to take sovereign decisions and its right to protect its strategic national and security interests. Dialogue between Jordan and the Hamas Movement would not contest Egypt’s historic influence in the Occupied Territories, and would not undermine the Egyptian role in Pan-Arab affairs. On the contrary, this kind of Jordanian intervention would be confined to ensuring national interests, within minor limits, unless a demand was made to expand this role to include discussions on Palestinian national interests.

The aforementioned requires (at first) one major condition, which is, that Jordan’s position towards all Palestinian parties must be seen as being “positively objective”; or, that it is not on unfriendly terms with any of them, nor is it a partner with one party against the other – with Jordan preserving the right to politically support Abbas’ efforts to deal with Israel and in trying to create the conditions conducive for a Palestinian partner to be present in the peace process.

Jordan opening up to Hamas, engaging in dialogue and maintaining political communication channels with the Movement will ensure Jordan's security interests are protected by a clear understanding, at minimum; at best, it would provide a new ceiling under which the Movement could find the latitude to change its current alliances and amend its position towards the peace process, if it so desired. It would also grant Jordan an alternative in case the wagers Jordan has placed on the peace process and on President Abbas collapse, as well as a backdoor into a "Plan B". The absence of a "Plan B", till this day, represents the area in which the shortcomings and flaws in Jordanian policy have become most apparent.

On the other hand, **what is Hamas' interest in engaging in strategic dialogue with Jordan?** There are numerous, dynamic and vital advantages to building a strategic dialogue with Jordan for the Hamas Movement, despite the differences and, at times, even clashes, that exist between their political stakes.

At the fore of the concerns that exist for Hamas would be to break the international embargo against the Movement, and to gain access to regional channels that would strengthen the Movement's confidence in its existence and allow it to exit from the live-or-die equation it is currently caught in.

Moreover Jordan, which is situated within different matrixes in regional calculations, can help reinforce the Movement's propensity and ability to manoeuvre politically. It would also allow the Movement more latitude in its independent, strategic decision-making process in case its relationship with its current regional allies changes – especially in view of the fact that the game of political interests is always an unstable and constantly changing one.

On another level, a great majority of Hamas' leadership and membership carry Jordanian citizenship and have families and extensive social bonds in Jordan. The presence of an understanding

and an outlet for them would grant them respite and a “safe haven” on both an individual and social level in view of the embargo and restrictions placed upon the Movement, both internationally and regionally.

In addition to all that, Jordan intervening into the Palestinian formula with greater balance and a more positive objectivity would help the Movement on many levels and in many dimensions. Firstly, in a national reconciliation, in the future, and secondly, on the level of humanitarian assistance that Jordan offers to the Palestinian people, especially in the Gaza Strip and, thirdly, in terms of the logistical role that Jordan has always played with residents of the West Bank.

On the internal Jordanian domestic front: If the Hamas Movement aims to reinforce its influence in places where Palestinian refugees dwell, such as Jordan, entering into the direct line of the crisis within the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood would not necessarily lead to Hamas actually achieving this objective. On the contrary, it may lead to the weakening and disintegration of the Brotherhood. It may also push the organization into an even deeper crisis with the Jordanian state and, in the end, lead to Hamas losing a strategic ally inside Jordan. Indeed, maintaining an alliance with the Brotherhood entails that the Brotherhood feel secure against any attempts by Hamas to transform it into a mere “political extension” of the Movement.

Mishal identifies what the Movement wants from Jordan in two fundamental ways:

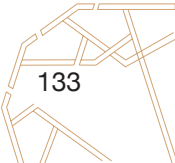
First: To have healthy, normal relations between the two parties, as is the case between other states and various organizations, and as is the case between Hamas and other Arab states, whose strategies and stakes also differ, but who have not put a “veto” on dealing with the Movement.

Second: In light of the fact that the nature and structure of the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is complicated and complex, Mishal calls for engaging in building a mutual strategic dialogue (Jordanian and Palestinian) to clearly define the framework for the relationship to operate under for both sides. This framework could delineate the political interests of the two peoples, the mechanisms and instruments that would be used in the conflict with Israel around final status negotiations and critical and vital issues of common interest to both parties, such as resettlement and the right to return, as well as in defining the parameters of the Palestinian state, which would be established on the 1967 borders; and, whether or not Jordan would accept an interim state lacking in sovereignty.

According to Mishal, there are major challenges and fundamental sources of threat common to both the Jordanians and the Palestinians. And, Jordan could construct a common vision with Hamas to confront such challenges and threats, despite the current disagreement over political stakes.

As for the Movement's position with regard to the decision to disengage or break ties with the Occupied Territories (as declared by the late King Hussein Bin Talal in 1988) and the successive consequences and outcomes of this decision on the sovereign, political and legal level in terms of Jordan's domestic formula and in its relationship with the Palestinians, Mishal responds that the Movement is fully aware of the compound nature and complicated dimensions that are embodied in the relationship between the Jordanians and the Palestinians. He says the Movement clearly differentiates between the social and political dimensions needed for achieving the requirements of the political interests of both the Jordanians and the Palestinians, and for circumventing Israel's plans. However, he sees that any decision that affects the destiny of both peoples, and that changes the structure and framework of the relationship between them must be the outcome of a core understanding and a consensus on all the various dimensions of such a decision between both sides.

**In Conclusion:
Open-ended Scenarios
and Multiple Factors**



When one considers the context in which all the factors that influenced the choices and stakes of both Jordan and Hamas are depicted, and when one takes into consideration the numerous and diverse variables that enter into the equations affecting this relationship, including the third party or the Muslim Brotherhood, then it becomes quite difficult to define possible scenarios and prospects for the future course of the relationship, except for a game of numerical probabilities, which neither presents a definitive outlook nor a functional indication of what the future holds for the next period.

The success or failure of the peace process is, indeed, a determining factor. Transformations inside Hamas and in the Palestinian political equation are yet another set of factors. The “Kitchen Cabinet” in Amman and the individuals who are active in it and the domestic formula in Jordan are in themselves dynamic and important factors. And, this entire context is still subject to regional and international variables and changes, which put the state of the relationship at their mercy!

With that, there are constructive opportunities available for engaging in a strategic dialogue that could put forth clear directions for the outlooks of both sides. This process could allow the relationship to overcome the current state of ambiguity, the grey areas, each parties’ wary projections of the other’s intentions, and each party’s inflated suspicions about the other’s strategic wagers and stakes, ambitions and alliances.

The path is paved and ready for working on arriving at the lowest common denominator required for meeting the minimum requirements of both parties' interests. This path is represented in the dialogue process, in communicating, in managing conflict and in using positive objectivity. On the other hand, there are many scenarios that help paving the way towards even further struggle, crises and conflicts, which place all three parties (Jordan, the Hamas Movement and the Muslim Brotherhood) in opposing and possibly, confrontational, trenches and axis.



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6. Ibrahim Ghosheh, "The Red Minaret", op. cit., pp.156-59

7. Private interview with Mishal at his office in Damascus, October 15, 2009

8. Paul McGeough, "Kill Khalid: The Failed Mossad Assassination of Khalid Mishal and the Rise of Hamas", op. cit., pp. 95-96

9. Ibrahim Ghosheh, "The Red Minaret", op. cit., pp.178-181

10. Ibid, pp. 181-182

11. Ibid, pp. 203-204; Ghosheh himself attended the meetings that led to the agreement. The researcher tried to meet with the (Jordanian) Director of General Intelligence at that time, Mustafa al-Qaisi to discuss this matter. However, al-Qaisi declined to comment or to give his account of what took place. Also refer to Paul McGeough, "Kill Khalid: The Failed Mossad Assassination of Khalid Mishal and the Rise of Hamas", op. cit., pp. 97-98

12. Refer to Ghosheh's account of these events in "The Red Minaret", op. cit., pp. 216-219; and compare this version to the slightly different details given in Bassam al-Amoush's version, particularly with reference to the attempted arrest of Ghosheh in al-Amoush's "Landmarks in the History of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan", op. cit, pp. 197-98

13. Ibrahim Ghosheh, "The Red Minaret", op, cit., pp. 221-224

14. Refer to the terms of the statement issued at the summit at: http://www.moqatel.com/openshare/Behoth/Siasia2/MazbahaKan/mol01.doc_cvt.htm, where the parties agreed to prevent support (of any kind) to "terrorist" groups that oppose the peace process. By definition, that included Hamas, which had political offices and media arms in Jordan

15. Refer to Bassam al-Amoush's account of these events in which al-Amoush acted as mediator between the King and Abu Marzook's family; refer to Basseem al-Amoush, "Landmarks in the History of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan", op. cit., pp. 184-195

16. Paul McGeough, "Kill Khalid: The Failed Mossad Assassination of Khalid Mishal and the Rise of Hamas", op. cit. pp. 305-309

17. Ibrahim Ghosheh, "The Red Minaret", op. cit., pp. 235-238

18. Paul McGeough documents and presents, in precise detail, the events surrounding the attack, its preparations and the subsequent and intense crisis between the Jordanian and the Israeli governments, as well as the mediation efforts made by the American Administration during that crisis; “Kill Khalid”, op. cit., 221-263

19. Refer to Bassam al-Amoush’s account in “Landmarks in the History of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan”, op. cit., pp. 195-196

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21. Private interview conducted by the researcher with al-Rawabdeh at his home in the Abu Nseir neighborhood, Amman, September 2009

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25. Ibid. pp. 267-307; where Ghosheh offers his own account of his return, and on details of the events that accompanied the signing of the agreement he made with the Jordanian government, which outlined the conditions of his return to Jordan.

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29. See Ali al-Halabi, "What Was Attributed to Me Regarding the Assassination Attempt against Ismail Haniyeh Are Lies and Fabrications", "Al-Ghad", Amman, February, 18, 2008

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34. Interview with an important (past) political figure

35. This tendency was deduced from a discussion that took place with certain politicians and from various newspaper articles researched, for example, Hamadeh Fara'neh, "The Secret Mechanic", "Al-Ghad", Amman, October 9, 2008; as well as Jamil al-Nimri, "Palestinian Nationalism: Jordan's Peer, Friend and National Ally", "Al-Ghad", Amman, August 9, 2009; and Saleh al-Qallab, "Their Opinion or the Opinion of Hamas", "Al-Rai", Amman, August, 27, 2009

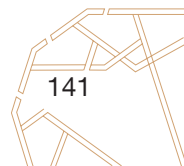
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38. Refer to the Associated French Press (AFP) news report on this speech taken from “Ad-Dustour” in which the head of the Hamas Movement’s political bureau, Khalid Mishal, confirms that the Movement stands by its commitment to the Palestinian right to return and rejects resettlement. These statements to the press were made by Khalid Mishal during his visit to Jordan for the purposes of participating in his father’s funeral and wake: The semi-governmental “Ad-Dustour” Arabic language daily newspaper (Amman) quoted the following statements made by Mishal, at sundown on the Saturday of his father’s wake, in the al-Kamiliya area in North Amman, that, “Hamas respects the fundamentals... and, (therefore) the Movement rejects the (options of the) “surrogate state” and resettlement (of refugees), or any other arrangements made – prior to the liberation of its lands – that allows for an easy solution for the Zionists at Jordan’s expense. Because politically, Palestine is Palestine and politically, Jordan is Jordan.” He added, “I want the Jordanian leadership and the Jordanian people to rest assured that Hamas will not take any position that is contrary to Jordan’s interests, as Hamas also understands the (prevailing) international and regional circumstances”. He continued, “We, in Hamas, understand matters well. And, we differentiate between unity in finding a solution and the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship. We understand the importance of the necessity of politically dealing with the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship with the utmost care in order to protect this relationship from interference and infiltration by any one.” In addition, Mishal pointed to the fact that “the Hamas Movement’s will not stand for any American-Israeli project that impairs the rights of Jordan, or any project that tries to damage it (Jordan). And, the Movement will not allow for anything to be passed at the expense of Jordan.” He then went on to say that “Hamas has no interest in the creation of any divisions within the Jordanian arena or of any interference in Jordan’s domestic affairs, whether on the level of the Islamic movement or any other level, thereof...” He added that the “Movement wants a nationally united Jordan.” And he clarified that “the Hamas Movement is careful in its decisions and has a vision and a political course that does not spring from differences and conflicts, or personal interests; it is committed to the land, to Jerusalem, to the right of return and to the resistance in liberating Palestine, in addition to the diplomatic and political approach, as well as other means.”

39. Refer to “Discrimination Supports the Conviction of Five Hamas Members”, on the “Khaberni.com” Jordanian news website, September, 9, 2009

40. Ibrahim Ghosheh, “The Red Minaret”, op. cit., p. 268



41. Bassam al-Amoush, "Landmarks in the History of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan", op. cit., p. 217
42. Ibrahim Ghosheh, "The Red Minaret", op. cit., p. 278
43. Ibid. p. 257
44. Refer to Mohammad Abu Rumman, "The Muslim Brotherhood in the Jordanian Parliamentary Elections 2007: A Passing 'Political Setback' or Declining Popularity", Published by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Amman Office, 2008
45. Refer to the text of initiative on the front page of the Islamic Action Front website; <http://www.jabha.net/index.asp>
46. The first message from the state was sent by way of the semi-governmental "Al-Rai" Arabic daily newspaper (Amman), in an article signed by the "Editor" under the headline, "Is it True that Hamas will Appoint the New Secretary General of the Islamic Action Front?" on the front page of the "Al-Rai" March 7, 2006 issue
47. Refer to:
<http://www.aljazeera.net/News/archive/archive?ArchiveId=330910>
48. Refer to Mohammad Abu Rumman, "The Brotherhood Renews its Credentials", "Al-Ghad", Amman, September 29, 2007; and also, "The Jordanian Brotherhood's Shura Council Investigate Resignations and al-Bakhit Meets with the Brotherhood's Leader", "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat", London, July 22, 2007, available on the following link: <http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&article=374388&issueno=10098>
49. Refer to discussions held with Ibrahim Gharaibeh and Salem Fallahat, (the past) General Supervisor of the Muslim Brotherhood, on the "Amman Times" website, on September 11, 2007
50. Refer to Mohammad Abu Rumman, "The Muslim Brotherhood in the Jordanian Parliamentary Elections 2007: A Passing 'Political Setback' or Declining Popularity", op. cit., 2008
51. Documented discussion with a leading figure from the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood

52. Refer to the letter that the doves wing directed to the head of the Muslim Brotherhood's Shura Council in appended to this study

53. Ibid.

54. Interview with Mishal, op. cit., October 15, 2009

55. Refer to statements made by Zaki Bin Arshid on the Al-Jazeera website in the report, "A Report to the Brotherhood Creates a Tornado", August 26, 2009, in which Bin Arshid is quoted as saying, "Today, there are those in the organization of the Brotherhood who are trying to flex their muscles in passing the project of the so-called Organization of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, which is congruent with that of the official position on the disengagement"; and, he continues to say, "those in the Brotherhood, who are involved in this scheme, are living the delusions of a dream in which they are offering the sacrifice of weakening the organization; and in the end, they will not receive any gifts from the other party, which continues its scheme to liquidate the Brotherhood and weaken them, whoever these members are and whatever color they represent inside the organization."

56. Refer to the text of the declaration appended to this study

57. Refer to Mohammad Abu Rumman, "The Launch of the Reform Movement in the Brotherhood... and the End of the Hawks and the Doves", "Al-Ghad", Amman, September 16, 2007

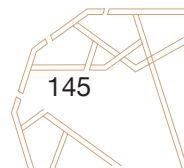
58. Refer to the report in the "Al-Majd" weekly newspaper, which is close to the hawks in the Brotherhood, under the headline, "Why Do You Want to Distance Yourself from Your Pride, Your Sword and Your Fluttering Banner", Issue No. 583, September 14, 2009

59. Exclusive interview with Mishal, op. cit., October 15, 2009

60. Exclusive interview with a Jordanian authority figure

61. Refer to Mohammad Abu Rumman, "The Muslim Brotherhood in the Jordanian Parliamentary Elections 2007: A Passing 'Political Setback' or Declining Popularity", op cit., pp. 16-32

Study Appendices



Appendix I

Text of the document presented by the doves and centrist wing of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood

(It appears likely that this text was received by Arabiyat's office in early July of 2009)

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

To the Brother and Head of the Shura Council (Confidential)

Peace and God's Mercy and Blessings be upon you

In your capacity as the head of the highest leadership body in the Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, and as you safeguard the responsibilities bestowed upon you by your brethren, by those entrusted with safeguarding the rights of the Brotherhood's members, institutions, and by those who have been mandated to implement the decisions taken by the Brotherhood's Shura Council, and according to the powers vested in you by the internal statutes of the Brotherhood:

We hereby address you, at this particularly sensitive time in the history of the Brotherhood in Jordan, and based on the recent decision taken by the distinguished Guidance Office to establish a distinct and independent organization of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine and abroad, and the subsequent ramifications of this decision relative to the situation of the Organization in Jordan and

the administrative offices abroad that once reported to it. As the Shura Council has decided to defer discussions on the subject of the administrative offices and the new arrangements required by the decision to establish a new organization, with respect to Jordan, we put forth to you the following document, with observations and remarks that summarize our point of view with regard to the above-said issue, in the pursuit of what is just, and in seeking to preserve carefully deliberated interests and finally, in upholding and in fulfilling the obligation of our responsibilities and our integrity:

A. A Historical Review

B. From a Legal and Institutional Perspective

A. A Historical Review:

Until the year 1967, the Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan included the West and East Banks (of the Jordan River). The branches of this Brotherhood extended across the two banks, with no differentiations made between the Brotherhood's branch in Hebron (in the West Bank), for example, and the Brotherhood's branch in Kerak (in the East Bank). Both belonged to one organization under one leadership, until the Zionist occupation separated the two banks in June of 1967.

With the occupation of the West Bank, the executive office formed a committee made up of five brethren to follow up on the affairs of the organization in the West Bank. The Organization of the Brotherhood in Jordan, therefore, basically became confined to Jordan alone until the year 1978, or for eleven years after the occupation began. Expatriated brethren in the Gulf States had their own distinct organizational structure and were not represented in the Shura Council then, as they are not represented in the Shura Council today. Some of the brethren who were around at this time were Mohammad Abu Faris, Mamdouh al-Muheisin and Haytham Abu al-Ragheb.

Our Palestinian brethren, who were the leaders of the Palestinian organization, at that time, resided outside (in the Gulf States). They approached the brethren in Jordan and suggested uniting the two organizations under one organizational umbrella, and in which they would have one-quarter of the representation in the Council, at that time. Thus, they were given eight representatives in the Shura Council, which was made up of 31 members. New statutes were established on August 28th, 1978, and the organization was entitled the Organization (of the Muslim Brotherhood) of Greater Syria, with the hopes that the brethren in Syria and Lebanon would also join. This newly established organization had new responsibilities that extended from Jordan to our brethren in the Gulf States to Palestine. The Palestine section (which later developed into a full-fledged organization in Palestine) reported to the executive office of the Organization of Greater Syria to follow up on matters that took place inside Palestine.

The brethren in the Organization of Greater Syria were aware of what was going on in Palestine and there was intensive follow up on the activities of the brethren there, whether these activities took place in the West Bank or in Gaza. A wide segment of the Brotherhood's leadership, at that time, was well informed and was kept updated on details that are too numerous to mention here in this document. This was a time worthy of praise. It reaffirmed the meaning of true unity and proved the Palestinian cause was not just for a people or an individual, but rather for the (Arab) nation in its entirety; and, at the fore of this nation was this blessed Brotherhood. The Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood alone had the capability of uniting not only these two peoples but the (Arab) nation altogether.

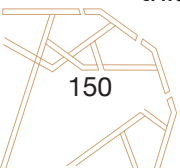
* The first time – perhaps – the Organization of the Brotherhood in Jordan was informed of the aspiration, on the part of certain brethren, to establish a distinct Palestinian organization for them took place during a meeting of the Palestine branch's advisory council, which convened in Amman in 1994. However, this proposition was not taken up at that time, although the subject

would continue to be brought up from time to time on the part of certain brethren. The subject was brought up again by one of the brethren before the same advisory council, in 1998; again, the request did not meet with approval.

* Meanwhile, on January 3rd, 2000, the Organization of Greater Syria's Shura Council was asked to vote on the motion that the Palestine section, from that point forth, would report to a new body entitled the 'high commission'. This commission was composed of three members from the executive council of the Organization of Greater Syria, three members from the (Global) Guidance Office and two members from the (Palestine) section. Subsequently, this commission was supposed to report to the (Global) Guidance Office. The executive office of the Organization of Greater Syria and its Shura Council, then, were no longer responsible for this (Palestine) section.

All of this took place after the leaders of Hamas were expelled from Jordan and after many difficulties were found in trying to monitor and follow up on the day to day details of operations (in Palestine); and, (these measures were taken) in order to protect the interests of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, so that the Brotherhood would not be targeted on the pretext of having sustained an institutional overlap between the Brotherhood and Hamas.

* In 2005, discussions increased about the necessity of forming an independent organization for the Brotherhood in Palestine; and, in May of 2006, and in the presence of several long-standing members of the Brotherhood from Gaza, several members from the (Hamas/ Palestine) political bureau and from the executive committee of the Organization of Greater Syria, as well as another group of brethren, the subject of forming an independent organization for Palestine, due to the new extenuating circumstances, was again initiated. The former general supervisor of the Brotherhood was asked not to oppose this initiative and instead, to assist in making this objective happen, as his eminence the general director of the



Brotherhood had agreed to it, according to the narrative presented by the brother who facilitated this meeting. However, Salem al-Fallahat opposed the approaches used in these discussions, stating that there was a delegated authority in the organization with jurisdiction over such matters; and, that this matter must proceed through the proper institutional channels and procedures if it was a truly well-considered and well-informed aspiration.

* On June 23rd, 2006, the former executive office was officially informed by way of the (Global) Guidance Office that the brethren from the (Palestine) political office wanted to meet with members of the (Organization of Greater Syria) executive office. The meeting was held in the presence of several members from the (Gulf States) administrative offices, the General Supervisor, and three members from the executive office of the Organization of Greater Syria. The subject was opened for discussions and the justifications in favor of forming a new organization were presented. The members of the executive office of the Organization of Greater Syria promised not to stand in the way of this declared aspiration, if, indeed, that was what the majority wanted and that was what was being recommended by the advisory council of the (Palestine) section. Those present agreed to another date in which to convene the next meeting, which would include representatives from the two major offices. The meeting would be chaired by Faisal al-Mawlawi, may God grant him rest, and would discuss and debate propositions presented by the participants on the mechanisms for dealing with the administrative offices (in the Gulf States) in the process of forming the (new) organization (in Palestine). The results of that meeting (on the new structure of the administrative offices) would then be presented to the Shura Council of the Organization of Greater Syria.

Thus, the executive office (of the Organization of Greater Syria) proceeded to devise a draft proposal for the restructuring of the administrative offices. Three members of this (executive) office, headed by Sheikh Faisal al-Mawlawi, took this proposal to Damascus and met with the brethren and representatives of the (Hammas/Palestine) political bureau there.

There was a suggested framework for organizing these institutional relationships according to new conditions and procedures agreed to in the bilateral meetings. These (draft procedures) were presented to the brethren from the (Hamas/Palestine) political bureau, as having been agreed to and as being ready for implementation. There was opposition to the fourth item in this proposal, which the (executive) office then decided to delete.

The framework suggested by the executive office on December 14, 2006, during the meeting between both parties in Damascus, was as follows:

1. That there would be no organizational overlap and duplication in the Jordanian arena
2. That no brother who had been disciplined or penalized inside his own organization would be allowed to transfer to the other organization
3. That any expatriate brother residing in the Gulf States, who carried a Jordanian national identity number or who had permanent residence in Jordan, would belong to the Jordanian organization; and, that any member who carried a Palestinian travel document and who did not reside permanently in Jordan would belong to the Palestinian organization.
4. That brethren involved in Palestinian activism, who carry a Jordanian national identity number, had the choice of joining the Palestinian organization on the condition that they severed all ties with the Jordanian organization, and that this choice should be made by the member only after that member was fully enlightened about the general situation; after which he would be granted a free choice to decide.
5. That any brother, who worked with the other organization without the prior knowledge of his organization, would not be allowed to remain as a member in either organization.

6. That an established standard operating procedure would be put in place for the transfer of members from one organization to the other in the future.

* The brother, Abu Walid, (meaning Khalid Mishal, the head of the Hamas Movement's political bureau), paused at the point of 'enlightening and free choice' (number 4), and said that this condition might scare certain brethren off from joining the Palestinian organization.

* The delegation returned (to the executive office of the Organization of Greater Syria) and relayed this (Mishal's) message of concern; and, thus, the former executive office decided to cancel the point concerned with 'enlightening' brethren. The brother, Jamil Abu Bakr, the deputy general supervisor of the executive council, then, travelled to the United Arab Emirates and met with the brethren (of the political bureau) there. They (the Palestinian brethren) presented this previously mentioned concern to Abu Bakr and he promised to relay this to the (executive) office, and promised that this (their request to cancel this point) would be agreed to. And, this is what really took place. For, the (executive) office had actually taken the decision to cancel this point (4) prior to Brother Jamil Abu Bakr's return from his visit to the United Arab Emirates. The former secretary general, himself, then travelled to Saudi Arabia and met with the brethren there. In Saudi Arabia, discussions ensued on the issue of how the two organizations would deal with the administrative offices (in the Gulf States) from that point forth.

* In Ramadan of 2006, the advisory council of the Palestine section convened a meeting in which it was decided, with what was close to a consensus, that the Palestine organization would indeed be established; and, that it would exclude Jordan.

* As for the subject under study, which was related to (the future status of) the administrative offices outside (in the Gulf States), a meeting was convened by the executive council (in Jordan) in

which the attendance of all the heads of the administrative offices (in the Gulf States) was requested. Two of them attended; and, the two who were absent from the meeting were later informed of what transpired. The heads of the administrative offices that attended the meeting were asked to present the subject for discussion with their brethren in the Gulf States; and the brethren absent from the meeting were asked to do the same.

* An advisory meeting was convened for these purposes for several members of the Shura on July 1st, 2007; and, another meeting was convened for the other members of the Shura on February 4th, 2007 to prepare for deliberations on this subject (of the administrative offices in the Gulf States) at the official Shura Council meeting.

* The Shura Council meeting was convened at the request of the (Global) Guidance Office, which presented a document, which was then read to the Shura. The document informed us (the Shura Council) of the aspiration of the brethren in Hamas to establish an independent Palestinian organization, which excluded Jordan and the administrative offices in the Gulf States. The work of the administrative offices was then debated and a paper that was sent by the brother, Abu Walid, was presented by the executive committee and read (to the Shura). After extensive discussions, the Shura Council voted on the subject, which received only 19 (affirmative) votes from the 43 members present, with the knowledge that a decision such as this would require two-thirds of the Shura votes to pass, because of an amendment to article 51 of the organization's by-laws and regulations.

* The decision denying the request to establish an independent Palestinian organization was sent forth to the (Global) Guidance Office along with the required explanations. Despite this denial, a decision by the Guidance Office was returned, which approved the establishment of the Palestinian organization. The decision by the Guidance Office also left the situation in Jordan as is, for the time being, and deferred dealing with the subject of the administrative offices in the Gulf States for a future time.

* The Shura Council gathered the heads of all the Gulf States administrative offices in Amman. They were told to allow the brethren (in the administrative offices) an unconditional and free choice, without any limitations or any interference, with regard to which organization they wanted to enlist in. The last of these meetings took place at the end of 2007, where it was made known that the brethren had until no later than February 2008 to make their choice, but without actually proceeding with implementation.

* Weeks passed after this decision was made, when suddenly we heard that the brethren in the administrative offices (in the Gulf States) did not want this new situation to take effect; and, that Hamas had informed them that Hamas could not accept them because it still did not have the proper cadres to organize them (new members) at that point in time.

* The former general supervisor (meaning Salem al-Fallahat) travelled to meet the brethren from the executive committee and the brethren from the administrative offices, who presented their points of view and remarks on the matter. It was relayed (to al-Fallahat) that (the pretext used by Hamas) of the (unavailable) cadres (was the same excuse always used); and, that these 'cadres' were of them and from them; and that there never was a cadre that came from Gaza or from Syria or any other place; and that this was a constantly used excuse. As for their lack of desire for the new restructuring, they declared that this was due to concerns about the security and safety of individuals (in the organization). It was made clear to these brethren that the security of individuals was always acknowledged and always a factor that was considered; however, the security of the Brotherhood was a priority above and beyond the security of individuals; and, that the (former) executive office would not, under any circumstance, accept that any of those working with the Palestine organization to be active on Jordanian territory. And, it would not accept that the Palestine organization be represented, even by observers, in the Shura Council of the Brotherhood in Jordan.

* Afterwards, the former general supervisor met with the Brotherhood's advisory council. Most of the representatives attended this meeting; and, they were listened to. It was made clear that the decision was issued by the office; and, a grace period was then granted, as per the request of the representatives, until February 15th, 2008, due to the necessity of carrying out Shura Council elections. (It was made clear that) the Shura Council elections could not be delayed and the date set for these elections could not be postponed, because it would cause undue embarrassment to the organization under the abnormal circumstances the Brotherhood was passing through at that time. They said (it was also made clear) that if the issue (at hand) was about (the administrative offices') representation in the Shura Council, then the matter was simple; (they would accept) if that meant they would not be represented at all during this term; and if they were allowed to meet with the Amman office and explain their justifications for not accepting the new divisions or the restructuring. The advisory council voted on this matter and delegated the administrative offices with sending representative brethren to Amman; however, this did not happen and no one came to Amman for these purposes. On the contrary and instead, a meeting was held in Qatar, which was attended by the administrative offices at the invitation of the brethren in Hamas, without the knowledge of the executive office or its prior permission. Indeed, the reference for these administrative offices, up until that time, (was the executive office); and they had sent a letter stating their refusal of the division. The executive committee discussed the matter with Hamas directly, without going through the executive office first, which was considered a clear transgression that their representative recently apologized for to the Guidance Office. We sent the administrative offices our warnings about this violation and of the necessity of complying with the decisions of the Brotherhood. And, we were nearing the date of the new Shura Council elections and the executive office was committed to taking a decision, with the knowledge that the Shura Council had dissolved itself and therefore, the office put forth the following possibilities:

* That, if the brethren outside (in the administrative offices in the Gulf States) chose to join the Palestinian organization, there would be no need for their representation in the Shura (Council in Jordan)

* Or, that, if the brethren outside chose the Jordanian organization, they would be considered only as expatriates; and therefore, they would not have representation in the Shura (Council in Jordan), as was the case in the past anyway.

* Or, some of the brethren would choose this (Jordanian) organization while others would choose the Palestine organization; and, in both of the latter cases, their representation would be withdrawn.

Based on this (these possibilities), then, the office saw that the representation of each country would be dependant on that country's choosing one delegate, and that delegate would be conditional upon the ability of that delegate to actually attend and be present at Shura meetings (in Jordan). This (arrangement) would continue until a meeting of the Council was convened in which new procedures would be put in place to amend regulations appropriate to the new situation for the Jordanian organization after the establishment of the Palestine organization. These amendments would (have to) be endorsed by the Guidance Office, after which the status of expatriate brethren would be reviewed, with the knowledge that they were not represented in the Shura Council prior to the year 1978, as they were considered expatriates. The executive office informed the Guidance Office of these measures. The Guidance Office responded that this was an internal matter for the executive office to decide upon (by itself); and that, in the end, this was something that the executive office was responsible for anyway (implementing and for dealing with its ramifications) after the decision was made.

The review of the status of the external (offices') representation, after the decision was made to establish the new (Palestinian) organization, reduced the number in the Shura Council by eight members. In the meantime, several of the longer-standing branches (in Jordan itself) did not have permanent representation in the Council because of the small numerical proportion of their membership – (these smaller branches had small memberships) because of special circumstances and because they were being targeted by the government, and because their members were being harassed and people were frightened (away) from the Brotherhood. In light of the constant complaints made by these (local Jordanian) branches, we did receive numerous letters from certain branches the gist of which was: 'If there was not to be full representation for us (the local Jordanian branches) in the Council, we thank you for our partial representation, but refuse that.' Therefore, the (executive) office decided to give each existing branch one representative in the Shura, and whatever (seats) remained would be re-allocated between the branches based on (numeric) proportional representation.

The Palestine organization's advisory council convened a meeting at the end of the blessed month of Ramadan, in 2008, which was attended by several members of the executive office (of the Jordanian organization), as well as his eminence the general supervisor Humam Sa'id. The latter also met with the (Hamas/Palestine) political bureau and the (Palestinian) executive committee. As a result (of this meeting), a new proposal was presented based on the following terms:

- The Brotherhood in Jordan would be represented in the new Palestinian organization's Shura Council.
- The (administrative) offices (in the Gulf States) would remain as per their current status, reporting organizationally to the Jordanian Brotherhood; and the Palestine organization would deal with these offices in the capacity that they existed in prior to the division.

- The administrative offices in the Gulf States would be represented by 12 members in the Outside (Palestinian) Regional Shura Council and these administrative offices would remain represented in the Shura Council in Jordan

The (Jordanian) Shura Council convened a meeting, in Jordan, on July 28th, 2008. The Council was presented with a paper by the reconciliation committee; and, this paper was ratified and endorsed. The paper included the following:

1. A committee would be formed of (Jordanian) Shura Council members in order to reevaluate the relationship between the (Jordanian) Brotherhood and the (Islamic Action Front) Party. In the event that the relationship between the members of the (Jordanian) executive office and the secretary general was unstable, the executive office would resign and new elections would be held.
2. This committee would submit recommendations on the matter of merging the locations of the executive offices of both the (Islamic Action Front) Party and that of the Brotherhood.
3. This committee would submit recommendations on the matter concerning the administrative offices (in the Gulf States).

Cases filed with the central court regarding certain brethren, who were tried and adjudicated in the district court, such as the case of brother Musa Huntash, were decided upon after the case was filed against the brother and secretary general of the Islamic Action Front Party – which has been delayed and its decision remains pending; and which the office has asked for an explanation thereof.

The members of the Global Shura Council asked for a meeting on October 25th, 2008; however, it lacked a quorum. In a special session convened for the Jordanian members of the Global Shura Council with members from the (Global) Guidance Office, a

meeting was agreed upon and set for November 2008. In addition to the (Global) Guidance Office, the head of the Jordanian Shura Council, brother and Dr. Abdel Latif Arabiyat would attend this meeting, whose attendees were commissioned with finishing discussions concerning the subject of Jordan. However, this meeting was postponed, once again, at the request of the general supervisor, to January 28th, 2009; however, this meeting has not been convened till this day.

At the request of the head of the Shura Council, his eminence the general supervisor attended a meeting held by the committee delegated by the Shura Council. In this meeting, it was announced that Hamas had asked for a decision on the (status of the) administrative offices (in the Gulf States) from us (the Jordanian Brotherhood). Certain information regarding representation in the Palestinian Central and Regional Shura Councils were also mentioned (at this meeting). The general supervisor and the (Jordanian) executive office dealt with this matter by asking the committee to finalize its recommendations with regard to the issue of the status of the administrative offices (in the Gulf States) by no later than January 15th, 2009.

The Shura Council convened a meeting on March 13th, 2009. In this meeting it was decided that discussions on the subject (of the administrative offices in the Gulf States) would be postponed on the basis that this issue would be decided upon some time in the following three months.

(In the end) The committee recited the following recommendations to the Council:

1. The Shura Council would nominate two members to the (Islamic Action Front) Party's Shura Council. And, one of these two nominees would be elected the secretary general of the Islamic Action Front.

2. Discussions on the issue of the administrative offices (in the Gulf States) would be postponed for a period of no more than three months.

The (first) decision recited (above) concerned the resignation of the (Islamic) Action Front's executive office in the event that it did not reach a consensus on holding new elections.

B. From a Legal and Institutional Perspective

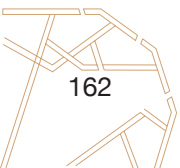
1. In accordance with the institutional by-laws regulating the Global Organization (of the Brotherhood), which define the regulations and procedures in which a new country organization is established, and which make each organization in it independent but tied to the Global Guidance Office and Shura Council, where each organization is represented by a certain number of members in the said Council, which monitors the political and security environments and situations in which the Brotherhood organizations operate.(:)

These regulations do not allow for any overlap between organizations, due to the negative implications this overlap may have on organizational security – as (all) the (Brotherhood) organization(s) is/are subjected to monitoring, surveillance, investigation and a quest for any pretext and excuses to ban it and to wage war against it. And, as the (Global) Guidance Office agreed to the establishment of an independent organization in Palestine, which is independent of the Jordanian organization, it is subject to the same regulations that any other Brotherhood organization is subjected to.

2. The decision by the (Global) Guidance Office to establish the Palestine organization, which excluded the brethren in Jordan, also postponed discussions on the status of the administrative offices (in the Gulf States). If the matter of the status of the administrative offices was postponed, how then could the internal statutes of the Palestinian organization act

upon the affairs of these administrative offices? And define the numbers of their representatives in the general assembly of the Palestine organization, and their representatives in the outside region, prior to any agreement reached on this subject between the Jordanian and Palestinian organizations and the brethren themselves, in a way that does not contravene the (Global Brotherhood's) general statutes and institutional procedures?

3. The real face of the unity between the organization in Palestine and the organization in Jordan, which took place in 1978, by way of the initiative of the brethren in the Palestine organization, at that time, are in themselves the administrative offices. They are the true components and the real representation of this integration. Therefore, this (the status of these offices) is the fundamental issue today and the core issue at the center of the new Palestinian organization.
4. If the framework that once governed the 1978 Organization of (the Muslim Brotherhood in) Greater Syria has come to an end, then it is obvious and logical that the situation should return to the status that prevailed prior to 1978, of course, allowing for certain adjustments if preserving the interests of all and the security of both organizations in Palestine and Jordan so requires.
5. What is most dangerous with regard to this issue is the official ratification of any arrangements that allow for interference and overlap between the two organizations on any level whatsoever.
6. For, the organization in Jordan is a public and declared, and it was given license for its operations, which is not the case for most of the Brotherhood organizations in other countries. And, although it acts in opposition to government policy, the Jordanian Brotherhood does not in any way antagonize the prevailing regime. It is a civic organization, whose objectives



are public and its instruments are known and transparent. It never did and does not use force to achieve its objectives, which is not the case for the Palestinian organization, which practices a legitimate armed resistance, due to the Zionist occupation of Palestine. Therefore, any overlap between the two organizations will whet the appetites of predatory brethren, here (in Jordan), to sow intrigue, to seek revenge and to present a gratuitous gift to our enemies and adversaries, who want to eliminate the declared and public presence of the Jordanian Brotherhood – whose status is partially unique in the Arab world – and for use by Arab governments to use as a trump card when the time is right.

7. The idea proposed by our brethren in Hamas and by certain brethren in Jordan with regard to keeping the administrative offices in the Gulf States linked to the Jordanian organization, and for these offices to be represented in the (Jordanian) Shura Council, while retaining their representation in the Central and Regional Palestinian Shura Council, does not take into account the new decision to establish a Palestinian organization and to end the Organization of Greater Syria. However, this proposed idea is actually a decision of jurisprudence, which conflicts with the legal statutes that form the legal basis in which all the Brotherhood organizations are founded. In fact, this proposed idea embodies the true meaning of (institutional) overlap and duplication, in a clear and unequivocal way.

Also, having representation for the Jordanian organization in the Palestine Shura, in any number whatsoever, offers gratuitous legal proof into the hands of all our enemies and adversaries, and will not achieve the objective that is so valued by certain worthy brethren. On the contrary, it will only lead to negative repercussions; and, it is dangerous, especially as we live in the shadow of regimes, whose political positions and stands change as the four seasons change, and sometimes even faster.

8. How can a brother from one organization be given the right to decide on the affairs of another organization in the Brotherhood, which has its own representation in the Global Shura Council and has its own independent leadership?

Meanwhile, offering counsel, advice, cooperation, support and assistance is not only the proper and legal obligation of every Muslim brother, but of every Muslim towards his brethren under occupation. This is another matter, which carries with it its own instruments and means, and requires coordination and serious efforts to accomplish this end, but which is far from institutional overlap and duplication.

At the same time, some brethren, here (in Jordan), claim that our executive leadership told his eminence the general supervisor that the administrative offices (in the Gulf States) should remain under the umbrella of the Jordanian organization, and should remain a part of it with these offices retaining their full rights in the organization. But, we believe that, if this situation were allowed to happen, it would be unparalleled in any other organization in the Brotherhood; and, it would not be congruent to the axioms of any sound organizational structure; on the contrary, it would exemplify a blatant legal violation.

9. Of the grounds presented to convince the brethren that the Organization of (the Muslim Brotherhood in) Greater Syria is not a suitable umbrella organization, when it comes to the brethren in Palestine and the events taking place there, is that the Organization of Greater Syria does not have the ability to follow up and does not have the knowledge in the intricate details to act as the reference for (the) Palestine (organization). That is why the decision in 2000 was made that Hamas' institutional reference would be outside the Organization of Greater Syria and instead would be, in the end, with the (Global) Guidance Office, and that a special commission would be established called the high commission (for these purposes).

10. This matter should be subject to adjudication, today; and, together with that, would it seem logical for a brother in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, who has never been to Jordan and does not have the knowledge of the intricacies and dynamics in which (the Jordanian Brotherhood) operates, to decide matters in Jordanian affairs, such as choosing the leadership and other decisions that could affect the fate of the organization? Or (would it not seem more logical) that the sons of the country are more aware of the circumstances and of taking the appropriate decisions (in that country)? Finally, the organization in Jordan is stable, and of the conditions of being in the leadership (of the Jordanian organization) is citizenship (and residency) (in Jordan), except for in special cases, where one has been forced into exile (and thus can be exempt from this condition) or for other special circumstances.

11. We think that the interest of all, in both organizations, and in light of the new situation where the framework of the Organization of Greater Syria has come to an actual end, and since the former status of the administrative offices (in the Gulf States) is no longer valid, is embodied in the following points:
 - a. Giving the brethren in the administrative offices in the Gulf States – as individuals in themselves – the choice of which organization they want to be members of, either the Palestinian organization or the Jordanian organization, according to that brother's circumstances, convictions and aspirations. The priority should be given to the Palestinian organization since it is in its nascent stage of establishing itself and is in need of the competencies of the brethren on many different levels and in many different capacities. The choice by any brother should be made without any obligations and without any coercion; and, no one can make this decision on behalf of any brother.

- b. Brethren who choose the Jordanian organization, because of their desire to do so, are considered “expatriate brethren” and will be dealt with as such in the Jordanian organization; (and, thus,) their representatives can attend sessions of the Shura Council in Jordan (only) as observers.
 - c. Brethren who have been delegated as observers may attend the Jordanian Shura Council and the Palestinian Regional and Central Shura Council on the condition that the Palestinian Shura Council has agreed to this, and wants this attendance to take place.
12. Considering these new conditions and circumstances, we, here, in the Jordanian organization, are in urgent need of reviewing our internal by-laws and statutes (unintelligible sentence) with what is congruent and befits these new circumstances. The regulations we have at hand were put in place for the purposes of the Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood in Greater Syria, which included Palestine and Jordan, and were, thus, harmonious with that particular situation. Today we are in need of a new formulation for this (new situation); and this new formulation needs ratification and endorsement by the (Global) Guidance Office, as this is what conforms to the (Global Brotherhood’s) standard organizational operating procedure; and, any delay in trying to achieve this mission would be unsound.
13. The responsibility of action on the Palestinian front is a mandatory obligation for every Muslim brother. We were breastfed with this (obligation) as children and raised our brethren, our children and our families (upon it). It is not (only) because of this, and it is an involuntary obligation that we plunge ourselves in this direction with equal means and seek to mobilize all Muslims to achieve this condition. (The obligation) rests upon the

brethren in Jordan more than any other organization; and working towards serving the Palestinian cause must have a place of prominence in the Brotherhood's plan (strategy). However, (this should be done while) taking great care to ensure that organizational procedures and measures are sound (properly followed and maintained), taking into consideration the reasons that have legally obliged us to be diligent about them; and to present observations; and to commit to organizational regulations and sound foundations. It is wrong that our brethren be deliberately negligent; or, that we would allow ourselves to be debilitated from doing all that we can in the service of our great and central cause; and, that we strive to ward off all threats to our families and our brethren in our Occupied Territories; and, that we are not detracted from the linkages that we are founded upon in the land of the great masses and binding ties (of Palestine) and the gateway to liberation, God willing... and, that which God grants is dear.

Your Excellency the Chairman:

In conclusion:

We hope that we have clarified our point of view on this sensitive and inspirational subject. Otherwise, we have before us a situation where both organizations have entered a dangerous turning point and a spiral of dispute we cannot accept. Therefore, our request before you is with the hope that Your Excellency will communicate the decision by the Council to postpone deliberation on the subject of the administrative offices in the Gulf States to our brethren in the (Global) Guidance Office and our brethren in Hamas.

We believe that the Shura Council decision made on March 13th, 2009, and which is linked to the resignation of the members of this executive office, should be carried out; otherwise, we ask that all the members of the executive office of the (Islamic Action)

Front submit their resignations forthwith, as is pursuant to that which was stipulated by the decision, and to continue with the preparations required to carry out new elections for this office. The latter is not tied with postponing the discussions related to the subject of the administrative offices for no later than the upcoming three months.

Peace and God's blessings be upon you.

cc: His Eminence the General Director

cc: The Guidance Office

cc: The Political Bureau

cc: His Eminence the General Supervisor

cc: His Eminence the Deputy General Supervisor

cc: His Eminence the Head of the Global Shura Council

cc: The Advisory Council

Appendix II

Text of the resignation letter submitted by members of the doves and centrist wing of the executive office in the (Jordanian) Muslim Brotherhood

**His Eminence Brother Head of the Shura Council, May God
Preserve Him**

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

His Eminence, Brother and Head of the Shura Council,
May God Preserve Him

His Eminence, Brother and General Supervisor,
May God Preserve Him

Brethren and Worthy Members of the Assembly

Date: Sunday, Ramadan 16, 1430 (Hijri)
corresponding to September 6, 2009

Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you

**Subject: Resignation of the Membership
of the (Jordanian) Brotherhood's Executive Office**

*Praise be unto the Lord of the two worlds, Keeper of the patient,
Patron of the mujahidin, and prayers and peace be upon His Most
Honored of Messengers, the Prophet Mohammad, His Family, His
Chaste Sahaba (Companions of the Prophet) and all those who
follow His guidance until Judgment Day*

Despite our certain and definitive knowledge of the unlawful way in which the Brotherhood's former Shura Council was dissolved, and despite the unlawful release of the former general supervisor from his position prior to the completion of his term as set forth by the internal statutes, and which occurred due to the procrastination and the muted testimonies of certain individuals, we did make an effort to respond to calls made for us to reach a consensus and to continue our participation in the Brotherhood's executive office, in order to overcome this critical moment, which has threatened to divide the Brotherhood and wreck its achievements. We have endured our wounds in the hopes that the Brotherhood would be re-united and its ranks realigned; and in the hopes that the Brotherhood would overcome the state of acute dispute it is currently experiencing, and which has reached an unprecedented level. We came to you as obedient servants, full of hope that this precious wish would be fulfilled.

But, after the elapse of almost one year and a half, we have been shocked by the general supervisor's autocratic manner of management, the suppressive approach used to slander others, and other practices, which have proven so difficult to keep in check and which have distorted the face of the Brotherhood, and which have led to a deepening of the conflict and a widening of the divisions between the two points of view (in the organization). These developments have proven to become too costly and unacceptable in that they have led to horns of sedition and lit the fires of dissension. These elements have indeed come to symbolize the Brotherhood and the instigators, who hide behind the Brotherhood's leadership, and who have given themselves the right to speak in the name of the Brotherhood and to set the general guidelines for it. Hence, we put forth to you our resignation from the Brotherhood's executive office, and put forth to you our notice that we will no longer attend sessions convened by the executive office, so that we may not bear false witness to the deterioration and descent of the Brotherhood into inevitable peril. And, finally, we have failed to convince our brethren, the decision-makers in the executive office, of the dangers of the current path that they have chosen to continue upon.

Forthwith are some of the most important issues that have driven us toward this resignation; and, these matters are only some of the many other issues, which would be too difficult to enumerate on paper:

1. Impeding the Brotherhood's reform projects; obstructing the Brotherhood's ability to delve into real and pragmatic programs that defend the nation from the threats of Zionism; neglecting the country's priorities; and being content with broad, emotional and empty slogans that neither fatten nor allay hunger; and obstructing the Brotherhood's ability to become an influential political party to the decisions taking place on the national front.

Indeed, it has become clear that an unacceptable reversal has been set in motion on the (Jordanian Brotherhood's) national reform initiative of a "constitutional monarchy", which took a period of over two years to prepare. And this reversal was set in motion despite the (executive) office's ratification of this document and the commissioning of certain brethren to implement the decisions taken, which were recorded in official minutes of meetings. This reversal is unacceptable neither in its application nor in its ethics, nor in the shameful manner in which the subject was manipulated and personalized; all of which has caused immeasurable damage to the Brotherhood's position and credibility with political authorities and other organizations that are active on a grassroots and popular level.

2. Insisting on transforming the organization into a mere support group for another organization; abstaining from taking serious steps to ensure the independence of the organization's leadership and base; failing to formulate a clear program and a clear and independent strategy; ignoring the matter of the independence of the Palestinian organization and its sovereignty over the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian field of operations, and the subsequent impact this has had on the organization's institutional procedures and internal statutes.

3. Undervaluing and taking for granted the importance of social issues and the lack of seriousness in adopting the causes and concerns of the people; not taking a strong and firm stand in defending the basic rights and public freedoms of citizens; and, deviating towards marginal issues of lower priority, which has immobilized the Brotherhood and paralyzed its initiatives and efficacy amongst the masses, and which has debilitated its true role in effecting change and weakening its political standing.
4. Allowing an autocratic logic to dominate the management (of the organization) and the policy of ‘throwing dust in the eyes of others’ while using superficial manifestations of formalities; and misleading the organization’s ranks and base through a policy of misinformation.
5. Following a policy of character assassination against those brethren whose points of views differ; conducting an inciting slander campaign against these brethren before the base and inside the ranks of the organization; fostering rumors and disunity amongst the ranks; and fueling regional prejudice.
6. Demonstrating a clear contradiction between the internal discourse, based on raising the ceiling and making claims of heroism, and the external discourse, based on taking sides, prostration, falsifying truths, evasive positioning and circumventing sound decisions; and, an addiction to a two-faced policy.
7. Moving forward with the arbitrary dissolution of the political department and the dismissal of its head, who is also a member of the executive office, with the knowledge that the department had been put in place for several months and had presented its action plan and budget; furthermore, the political department had presented several projects, which were cited in the Brotherhood’s comprehensive work plan, and which, up until now, have not been ratified, nor have

their budget, nor were these plans or the studies presented for these plans considered. The department was dissolved after a debate on its policy report, which was leaked to the press in a manner that indicates a conspiracy based on an immature, premeditated scenario staged for the purpose of this outcome. It should be noted that the office took a decision to form a committee to investigate the leakage of this report; and the committee has not yet completed this task. As for the policy report, it was prepared by competent parties and was presented to the executive office, who then presented it to the Shura Council in its name; and, the general supervisor adopted this report before the Shura Council. The report was then denigrated before the media and was attributed to a certain party, and one individual, in particular, in an irresponsible manner lacking in organizational sensitivity and lacking the logic of brotherly relations and in “the calling” (to Islam). Some individual appeared before the media declaring the responsibility was that of the political department, meanwhile an official declaration to the press on the truth and facts of the matter has yet to be released by the official press spokesman or the general supervisor.

8. The policy of leaking (matters) to the press, deliberately and in a deliberate attempt to influence the ranks in an flawed manner, and to blur and distort the facts, has led to the press becoming an instrument for discussing internal matters and for speaking to the organizational base. Evidence of the latter has been made clear in the example of the executive office meeting in which only five members attended and four others remained absent, and in which the decision to dissolve the political department was leaked to the press before the ink was even dry; and, there is no other party accused of this leak, at all.
9. Following a blatant policy of accusing brethren who differ in their point of view; and accusing them of being part of a governmental scheme and as an instrument of the

government, and that they are working to offer sacrifices; and, this was published in the press and in the newspapers by citing some of them, while others declared the same amongst the brigades (ranks) and the families; and, these persons come from the highest echelons of responsibility (in the organization).

10. Using the (executive) office as an instrument for issuing premeditated decisions, cooked up in the kitchens of lobbies; and busying the office with small, trivial matters while distancing it from the fundamental issues that concern the nation, to the point that the majority of the office's meetings take no less than an hour to complete. The office has become isolated and dysfunctional in fulfilling its role; and, it no longer fulfills its leadership role; and, it no longer has a presence.
11. Despite the support we have all shown to Hamas and to its Jihadist mission, there are those who now trade in the name of Hamas, and who employ Hamas stories to divide the rank and file into two sides: those who are with Hamas and those who are against it; for electoral purposes and for petty, factional gains at the expense of a united, coherent rank and file.
12. The insistence of the general supervisor in playing the role of the leader of one faction against the other; and this practice is evident in the voting on resolutions, in the submission and adoption of controversial proposals. He has not taken on the role of the leader of the Brotherhood in all its individuals and, instead, has become one of the reasons for the splitting, tearing apart and fragmentation of the rank and file instead of playing the role of unifier of the Brotherhood. He did nothing to reunite or bridge the gap in the conflict between (the two) sides.

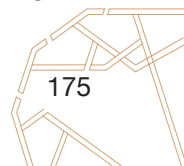
13. Circumventing the Brotherhood's statutes and regulations in order to cover up for those who have erred, by violating the resolutions passed by the Brotherhood, in broad daylight, and before the eyes of the public, in a deliberate and premeditated way; and working to extract and remove cases from adjudication; and, covering up former disputes on the pretext of fearing for 'the unity' of the rank and file. Meanwhile, in reality, this practice has led to a deepening of the conflict, notwithstanding the fact that it has worked to destroy the values and principles held by the Brotherhood.
14. Overstepping financial operating procedures and regulations set by the Brotherhood in the policy of (the) dismissal and employment of (brethren); and, monopolizing the allocation of funds to certain sides at the expense of others, and monopolizing anonymous spending on items that have not been allocated for, in the manner of "Mohammad inherits and Mohammad does not inherit".

Your Eminence the General Supervisor; Your Eminence the Head of the Shura Council; Respected Brethren and Members of the Shura Council:

We call upon all the leaders and all those of reason in the Brotherhood to protect and to defend the Brotherhood from deviating onto a dark path that will lead to the weakening and dissolution of the Brotherhood, God forbid.

And, we pledge, by God, to remain loyal and faithful to the Brotherhood and the soldiers in its ranks. We pledge to protect the Brotherhood's pure, chaste and kind approach; and, we offer our souls in order to protect the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan and across the globe until God grants victory and bestows empowerment upon the faithful... for He hears and sees all.

We ask God Almighty that He may forgive us and bless our prayers. And we ask the Almighty to guide us to the truth and onto the path of righteousness.



“Our Lord, judge between us and our nation in truth, For, You are the greatest of those who give judgment. True are the words of God Almighty”

Peace and God’s mercy and blessings be upon you all.

Signed,

Dr. Ruhayel Gharaibeh

Brother Ahmad al-Kafaween

Brother Mamdoud al-Muheisin

Appendix III

Press release in the name of the resigning party from the Muslim Brotherhood's Executive Office (in Jordan)

A meeting was organized and convened in which a lengthy discussion ensued between the individuals, who announced their resignation from the Muslim Brotherhood's executive office, and the general supervisor and the rest of the members of that office. The meeting, which continued for several hours, addressed the subject and content of the resignation and was characterized by the utmost honesty and clarity.

The key causes for the resignation were examined and, which were represented, firstly, by the issue of the general supervisor and his party abandoning the national reform initiative that had been formally ratified, according to institutional regulations and after lengthy debates and discussions. Dr. Ruhayel Gharaibeh had been commissioned with communicating the officially recorded resolutions amongst the relevant political parties and popular base for the purpose of implementing and carrying out this initiative. When the initiative was reversed in an embarrassing and disgraceful manner, the conviction was formed amongst the independents that the Brotherhood's leadership was not serious about the path of reform and was negligent in its concern for national affairs.

The second reason was represented in the arbitrary dissolution of the political department, which came about at the same time that the policy report was leaked to the press, in a manner that pointed to an intended reversal of positions on the report at the expense of the political department and its director; an action perceived as an attempt to please official agencies and state apparatuses. The political department's proverbial back was left exposed in an irresponsible manner; and, the same approach was used to denigrate this report in the media; and, this report had already been ratified and adopted before the Brotherhood's Shura Council.

During this meeting, the (resigning) independents also stressed on the subject of deliberate and intentional leaks to the media and press, which was most likely instigated by a certain party for the purposes of inciting the rank and file (of the Brotherhood) and public opinion - the least of which was evidenced by a leak to all of the press bodies in the country of a decision taken by the executive office with the presence of only five members and with the absence of the four independents, on the same day that the meeting had been convened, and before the ink on the paper recording this decision had time to dry.

Finally, the (resigning) independents denounced the approach the general supervisor has taken in managing the Brotherhood and claimed that this approach has led to a polarization of positions, a widening of the gaps in the conflict, a weakening of the role of the Brotherhood in reform and in effecting change, and reducing the efficacy of its political role, while debilitating the organization's ability to resolve the conflict and to unite the ranks in the Brotherhood. And, he did not help heal the rift and clear the air between the conflicting parties.

Therefore, we are moving forward with our resignation as long as the causes for these resignations remain standing.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to deny what was published in the media and in the press about the intentions of the reform movement to visit Damascus. This information is fabricated, baseless and without sound foundations, especially when one considers the perspective that we believe such an issue is an internal matter; and, as such, we have the capability of dealing with this issue with a sense of responsibility. And, contrary to what has taken place with other internal matters, we do not want to discuss this subject in the media and in the press. Finally, we are affirming our right to clarify our positions and points of view to all the members of the movement and to our broader public in a clear manner. Indeed, it is not permissible for one party to monopolize information and to obstruct the facts from reaching all the parties concerned.

Signed by the resigned,
Brother Ahmad al-Kafaween,
Member of the Executive Office
of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood

