

No, the Palestinians Did Not Vote for More Terrorism in the 2006 Elections

By [Mike Whitney](#)

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Is this statement true or false: Israel is justified in flattening Gaza because the Palestinians elected Hamas in 2006 which proves they support terrorism.

1. True
2. False

The answer is "2". The 2006 elections do not prove that the Palestinians support terrorism. Quite the contrary. What the polling data shows is that the majority of people voted on issues completely unrelated to terrorism. Here's what they voted for:

1. Safety and Security (37%)
2. Decreased Corruption (25%)

What a surprise, eh? So, the Palestinians want the same thing that people want everywhere; More security and less corruption.

No one—and I mean no one—voted for Hamas because they thought the group would instigate more bloody confrontations with Israel.

The fact that "safety and security" were the Number 1 issue, shows that there's no appetite for more conflict at all. Palestinians—at least the majority of Palestinians—want peace. That's what all the surveys tell us.

Unfortunately, the media has tried to convince people that the opposite is true, that the people of Gaza voted for Hamas because they still cling to the idea of "pushing the Jews into the sea." But that's just not true. See for yourself:

An exit poll conducted by Near East Consulting on 15 February 2006 on voters participating in the 2006 PA elections revealed the following responses to major concerns:

Support for a Peace Agreement with Israel:

79.5% in support

15.5% in opposition

Should Hamas change its policies regarding Israel:

Yes - 75.2%

No - 24.8%

Under Hamas corruption will decrease:

Yes - 78.1%

No - 21.9%

Under Hamas internal security will improve:

Yes - 67.8%

No - 32.2%

Hamas government priorities:

- 1) Combatting corruption
- 2) Ending security chaos
- 3) Solving poverty/unemployment

Now, I know that many people would like to scapegoat the Palestinians for the ghastly massacre that is going on today, but it just doesn't square with the facts. Palestinians voted for Hamas—not because they thought the group was a perfect match with their own values—but because they appeared to be less corrupt than the disreputable puppets in Fatah. Americans should be sympathetic to these feelings given the similarities between the 2006 Gaza balloting and the 2016 Presidential elections in the US. In the American election, many people voted for Trump—not because they couldn't see he was a deeply-flawed candidate with no political experience—but because his opponent was the most crooked and vindictive politician in American history. Trump was clearly the 'lesser of two evils', just as Hamas was the lesser of two evils.

But there's more to this story than most people realize. And, that is, that **Hamas had ordered the complete cessation of suicide bombings more than a year before the election.** Did you know that?

It's true; no more suicide missions, no more blown-up buses, retail shops and coffee houses. No more bereaved families, wailing mothers and endless funeral processions. It all stopped. And **it stopped because Hamas stopped it.**

Did the voters in Gaza know that?

Of course, they knew that, and it's doubtful that Hamas would have won the election if the group had continued with the bombings. Because that's not what the 'average guy' wants.

And, guess what happened after the bombings stopped?

Then **Hamas decided to enter the political arena.** Again, this was a significant

development that was downplayed in the media but sent tremors through the Israeli political establishment.

Why?

Because Israeli leaders put the two developments together and could see what was going on. **Hamas was shifting its approach from armed struggle to a political track.** That is a tectonic change in policy that represented a grave threat to Israel's broader Zionist strategy which involves the seizing of more land to form a Greater Israel.

But **how was Israel going to seize more land if the Hamas boogiemán had transformed himself into a dovish politician who no longer engaged in acts of terrorism?** That is the conundrum that Israel faced.

It's also worth mentioning, that as soon as **Hamas won the election, they declared a unilateral ceasefire with Israel.** (which put even more pressure on Israel.) In other words, Israel continued the attacks on Gaza, but Hamas refused to respond.

Additionally, **Israel imposed a suffocating blockade on Gaza that has persisted until today. And the reason they did this, was because the threat of 'peace breaking out' was too serious to ignore. If Hamas was going to pursue a peaceful political track, then Israel would have to increase the provocations, the incitements and the brutality.**

But, why?

Once again, it's because **Israel needs a boogiemán to justify its operational plan for territorial expansion. It's that simple.** They can't simply take the land by force without first concocting a pretext that will conceal their real motive. So, even though everyone knows that Israel is expelling the Palestinians in order to control all the land from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, they still need to justify the operation in terms of a (fictitious) national security threat that they need to confront. **Hamas, of course, is that fictitious threat that must be eradicated by turning all of Gaza into a smoldering pile of rubble.** See how it works? Check out this brief excerpt from an article at *Counterpunch* in 2007:

Hamas recently renounced violence by maintaining a unilateral ceasefire for well over a year. The same period saw a steady escalation of Israeli raids, arrests, killings, and settlements in the occupied territories. Everyone, including Israel's general staff, knows that Hamas would return to a ceasefire if it thought Israel were serious about reciprocating. Hamas leader-in-exile Khaled Meshaal's recent proposal for a 10-year ceasefire was summarily rebuffed. [Pushing the Wedge in Palestine](#), *Counterpunch*

Bottom line: The Palestinians voted for the wrong party, so the Palestinians had to be punished. That's not the way democracy is supposed to work.

And, what is particularly ironic about these developments, is that it was the United States that forced the elections to begin with. The Palestinians didn't care about elections. How were elections going to help them? No, it was the Bush Administration and their risible democracy-spreading agenda that forced the balloting. In fact, **Bush and Co pumped \$2.3 million into the Palestinian elections via USAID which was "allegedly designed to**

bolster the image of President Abbas and his Fatah party.”

Interesting, isn't it, that we actually know how much money was spent meddling in a foreign election. And, yet—even after all that meddling—the plan failed. Hamas won anyway.

And that is when Israel freaked out. They said the elections proved that the Palestinians supported terrorism which—as we've already shown—is not the case at all. **The Palestinians did not vote for terrorism, they voted for security and honest government. The whole Israel-media narrative is a fairytale.**

But the critics are correct in saying that Hamas steadfastly refused to acknowledge “Israel's right to exist”. That is true, but there's also an explanation. Here's more from James Brooks:

As for 'recognizing Israel's right to exist', we simply note that Israel has yet to recognize the state of Palestine's 'right to exist'. Israel currently forbids a Palestinian state and negates the Palestinians' national rights daily with its strangling military occupation. Under the circumstances, it hardly seems unreasonable for Hamas to withhold recognition of this 'right to exist' until it is reciprocated in word and deed.”
([Counterpunch](#))

He's right; why should Hamas make concessions to Israel that Israel won't make to Hamas? All Israel needs to do is accept UN Resolutions requiring it to stay within its 1967 internationally-accepted borders, and everything will be fine. Which brings us to the next point, which is; **Is Hamas willing to live side-by-side with Israel in peace?**

And, the answer is: **Yes, it is.** This is from an article by Elaine Hagopian:

After Hamas won the elections in 2006, its leadership accepted a two-state solution based on the pre-war June 4, 1967 borders, but this was unacceptable to Israel. Earlier, Israel destroyed secular Fatah leader and Palestinian Authority President Arafat for failing at Camp David in July 2000 to comply with its demands to accept permanent Israeli control over Palestinian life and land confined in enclaves. Hamas became the new challenge to Israel's vision. [Gaza: History Matters](#), *Counterpunch*

Let me get this straight: Hamas accepts a two-state solution?

Yep, it sure does, in fact, here it is from the horse's mouth himself. This is a short excerpt from a Washington Post interview with Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh in 2006. Haniyeh said that he wanted to see an end the “vicious cycle of violence” and vehemently denied the claim that “Hamas is committed to destroying Israel”. He said, **“We do not have any feelings of animosity toward Jews. We do not wish to throw them into the sea.** All we seek is to be given our land back, not to harm anybody....We are not war seekers nor are we war initiators. We are not lovers of blood. We are oppressed people with rights.”

Wa Post: “Would Hamas recognize Israel if it were to withdraw to the '67 borders?”

Haniyeh: “If Israel withdraws to the '67 borders, then we will establish peace in stages... We will establish a situation of stability and calm which will bring safety for our people.

Wa Post: “Do you recognize Israel's right to exist?”

Haniyeh: “The answer is to let Israel say it will recognize a Palestinian state along the 1967 borders, release the prisoners and recognize the rights of the refugees to return to Israel. Hamas will have a position if this occurs.”

Wa Post: “Will you recognize Israel?”

Haniyeh: “If Israel declares that it will give the Palestinian people a state and give them back all their rights, then we are ready to recognize them.”

Haniyeh’s answers are straightforward and rational. He asked for nothing that isn’t already required under existing United Nations resolutions; a return to the 1967 borders, basic human rights, and settlement of the final status issues. An agreement could be facilitated tomorrow if Israel was willing to conform to international law. Instead, Israel has chosen to invade Gaza. Here’s more from Haniyeh:

“We want what Americans enjoy — democratic rights, economic sovereignty and justice. We thought our pride in conducting the fairest elections in the Arab world might resonate with the United States and its citizens. Instead, our new government was met from the very beginning by acts of explicit, declared sabotage by the White House. Now this aggression continues against 3.9 million civilians living in the world’s largest prison camps. America’s complacency in the face of these war crimes is, as usual, embedded in the coded rhetorical green light: “Israel has a right to defend itself.” [The Gaza Bloodbath](#), *Counterpunch*

Here’s a bit more on the topic:

In 2009, former President Jimmy Carter visited the West Bank and Gaza where he met with Ismail Haniyah, who he thought would be a reliable partner in future negotiations. Carter also met with Hamas Chief Khaled Meshaal in Damascus who assured the ex-president that Hamas would accept any agreement reached between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, provided it was approved by the Palestinian people in a national referendum. **Carter’s interaction with Hamas leaders disproved western pro-Israel pundits who had claimed that Hamas would never commit to such an agreement. They were wrong. Hamas wants peace.** Here’s a short blurb from an article in the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* in 2015:

Former U.S. President **Jimmy Carter said Hamas leader Khaled Meshal is in favor of the peace process with Israel and that Hamas is not a terrorist organization.**

Carter also told Israel Channel 2 on Saturday that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is not in favor of a two-state solution with the Palestinians.

“I don’t see that deep commitment on the part of Netanyahu to make concessions which [former prime minister] Menachem Begin did to find peace with his potential enemies,” Carter said.

Of Meshal, the ex-U.S. leader said, “I don’t believe that he’s a terrorist. He’s strongly in favor of the peace process.” Carter added that he “deplored” terrorist acts by Hamas and would support moderate members of the group. [Jimmy Carter: Hamas leader favors peace, Netanyahu not committed to 2 states](#), *JTA*

So, let's summarize:

Jimmy Carter wants a two-state solution based on UN Resolutions requiring Israel to stay within its 1967 internationally-accepted borders.

Hamas leader Khaled Meshal wants a two-state solution based on UN Resolutions requiring Israel to stay within its 1967 internationally-accepted borders.

Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh wants a two-state solution based on UN Resolutions requiring Israel to stay within its 1967 internationally-accepted borders.

So, what's the problem? It looks like everyone agrees.

But, no, Mr. Netanyahu doesn't agree, in fact, he is adamantly opposed to any Palestinian state within the area from the Jordan to the Sea. And Netanyahu not only has a powerful military machine to back him up, but he also has influential friends in Washington that will provide him with as many bombs and weapons as he needs to drive defenseless civilians off their historic homeland and into Egypt.

So, the peace process cannot move forward which means the bloodletting will continue for the foreseeable future. It is the great tragedy of our time. Here's one last excerpt from an interview between Alexander Cockburn and Khaled Meshal that took place in 2008:

I know very well that the American people are very kind people. But our problem is with the foreign policies of successive American administrations. We accepted a state of... Palestine on the borders of 1967. The international community failed to pressure Israelis to do the same. So, **what is left for Palestinians to do, except resist? For our part, we prefer the peaceful path. But we find the peaceful path blocked. Hence, the Palestinians are left with no option but the resistance.** And this is what explains why the Palestinian people elected Hamas and why, amid famine and hunger and siege inflicted on the Palestinian people today, you find the same thing: the Palestinian people are supporting Hamas.... [Alexander Cockburn's 2008 Interview With Hamas' Khaled Meshal](#), *Counterpunch*

American president John F Kennedy reiterated these same sentiments in March 1962 at an address on the first Anniversary of the Alliance for Progress when he said:

Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.

Indeed.

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Michael Whitney is a renowned geopolitical and social analyst based in Washington State. He initiated his career as an independent citizen-journalist in 2002 with a commitment to honest journalism, social justice and World peace.

He is a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG).

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