

## Habib Clarifies MB Stance towards Hamas, the Palestinian Cause



Ikhwanweb Conducted this interview with the deputy chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood Dr. Mohamed Habib to elaborate the truth about the links between MB and Hamas, the stance toward the Palestinian cause, as well as how the movement views the international community's demonization of Hamas.

Ikhwanweb: Dr. Habib, how would you respond to western media portrayal of the relationship between Hamas and MB? Some even went so far as to suggest military links with Hamas, and that Hamas is an MB armed wing in Palestine.

Mohamed Habib: there are no organizational links whatsoever between the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas. The only link is an ideological one. We share the same ideology, an Islamist one which includes a strong belief in democracy, plurality, freedom, and most importantly the right of any nation to resist foreign occupation of its lands. Hamas has its own challenges to face, and the politicians of Hamas are the only ones who can decide how to handle their problems.

We emphasize that resisting occupation is a religious obligation acknowledged by international laws and conventions. To describe this legitimate right as an act of terrorism is a huge mistake exacerbated by Zionist propaganda and US media.

We always urge the Egyptian people to provide emotional and material support to the Palestinian people who suffer a blockade of hunger and death. We also expect Arab regimes, particularly Egypt to assume their responsibility in lifting the blockade and putting an end to suffering in the Gaza strip. This requires opening the Rafah crossing border and organizing entry and exit, which does not in any sense threaten Egypt's national security.

The Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas respect Egypt's sovereignty, and Hamas has no interests at all in Sinai because it is an Egyptian national territory, and we both respect that.

Ikhwanweb: How do you view the international community's stance towards the Palestinian cause and its designation of Hamas as a terrorist organization?

Mohamed Habib: the position of the US Administration and the international community has exposed their double standards. While they admitted that the legislative elections in Palestine were unprecedentedly transparent and democratic, they did not acknowledge their results. We have seen how the Palestinian people have been punished for their choice by a deadly siege. This is incompatible with US and EU claims of promoting democracy and honoring human rights.

It is clear that they have their agendas, and they try to preserve their interests. The most dangerous of these is that which has to do with the Zionist-American project to dismantle the region and redraw its map, while eliminating the cultural distinctiveness of its peoples.

This is a racial and imperialist project based on occupation and flagrant violations of human rights. The Palestinian people are besieged; the Israeli occupation forces commit daily horrific massacres against them; the apartheid wall that turned the Western Bank into isolated islands is still in place; settlements are expanding; Palestinian refugees are denied the right of return; there are attempts to dispel 1984 Palestinians from Israel with the pretext that it is a Hebrew land. Unfortunately, the USA and Israeli occupation do not conform to international laws and conventions.

Ikhwanweb: what is the MB's stance toward the Palestinian cause?

Mohamed Habib: we consider the Palestinian cause a central issue in the Arab and Muslim world. Supporting resistance as the only means to liberate occupied and holy lands is a matter of principle that unites Arab and Muslim public opinion. Negotiations have not offered a solution to the Palestinian people. Negotiations should coincide with a real political force on the ground that can have a say in political life.

The first step for the Palestinians to retain their sovereignty is unity and acknowledging the legitimacy of Mahmoud Abbas and the elected government. We promote dialogue and believe that it is the only way to achieve unity.

Ikhwanweb: is there something else you would like to add?

Mohamed Habib: Yes. We have seen US presidential hopefuls last week kowtowing to the Jewish lobby to secure their votes, promising unswerving commitment to Israel. I would like to send them one message across: you are only complicating matters and fostering anti American sentiments in the world, which are the cause of much of modern day terrorism.