

# A Major Pivot in Hamas Strategy

by [Devorah Margolin \(/experts/devorah-margolin\)](/experts/devorah-margolin)

Oct 16, 2023

*Also published in War on the Rocks*

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[Devorah Margolin \(/experts/devorah-margolin\)](/experts/devorah-margolin)

Devorah Margolin is the Blumenstein-Rosenbloom Fellow at The Washington Institute.



Articles & Testimony

---

**Given its willingness to dramatically change targets and tactics, the group likely aims to halt the recent advance of Arab-Israeli normalization and rouse other actors into joining the fight.**

**T**he Hamas-led attack on Israel constitutes a major deviation in strategy since the group took control of Gaza in 2007. For the past 16 years, Hamas has worked to present itself to the international community as a legitimate political entity. While it has **never stopped espousing violence (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/hamas-35>)** in pursuit of jihad, it has also garnered popular support through social services and governance in Gaza and implemented a well-laid strategic communications strategy highlighting its internal governance and foreign policy. Meanwhile, its attacks have generally targeted adults, whom the group sees as legitimate targets. Though it has also indiscriminately targeted civilians through rocket attacks or suicide bombings, the group viewed these civilian casualties as collateral damage. This time, however, was different, with the group's decision to explicitly target vulnerable groups like children and the elderly...

**[Read the full article at the War on the Rocks website.\(https://warontherocks.com/2023/10/a-major-pivot-in-hamas-strategy/\)](https://warontherocks.com/2023/10/a-major-pivot-in-hamas-strategy/)** ❖

---

## RECOMMENDED

---



#### ARTICLES & TESTIMONY

### Why 10/7 Was Worse for Israel Than 9/11 Was for America

Oct 15, 2023



Robert Satloff

(/policy-analysis/why-107-was-worse-israel-911-was-america)



#### BRIEF ANALYSIS

### Deterring Escalation and Expansion of the Gaza War by Iran's "Axis of Resistance"

Oct 13, 2023



Michael Eisenstadt,  
Michael Knights

(/policy-analysis/deterring-escalation-and-expansion-gaza-war-irans-axis-resistance)



#### BRIEF ANALYSIS

### Iran-Backed Militias Applaud Hamas, Threaten Americans

Oct 13, 2023



Amir al-Kaabi,  
Michael Knights

(/policy-analysis/iran-backed-militias-applaud-hamas-threaten-americans)

#### TOPICS

Arab-Israeli Relations (/policy-analysis/arab-israeli-relations)

Peace Process (/policy-analysis/peace-process)

Terrorism (/policy-analysis/terrorism)

## REGIONS & COUNTRIES

[Palestinians \(/policy-analysis/palestinians\)](#)