



Survey of Islamic and Islamist Responses to the Hamas Attack

A Washington Institute Compilation of Regional and Global Statements

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In the wake of the deadly October 7 Hamas assault against Israeli civilians and military personnel, numerous government-affiliated Islamic institutions and individuals have publicly responded to the incident, as have various Islamist-sympathetic bodies and figures. A survey of these statements shows some commentators condemning the violence against civilians, but many others justifying the attack. Some also obfuscated the reality of how bloody the attack was. Taken together, the statements indicate that even though Israel has formed more overt relations with Arab states in recent years, deeper societal-level engagement and understanding remain elusive.

The Saudi-based Muslim World League [warned](#) against “dangerous escalation between a number of Palestinian factions and the occupying Israeli forces” and called for both sides to stop violence and return to peaceful methods of solving the conflict.

Mansour Abbas, an Arab Israeli politician who heads the United Arab List, [called](#) on the leaders of Palestinian factions to take a “moral, humanitarian stance reflective of the values of Islam” and to free all of the hostages: “This is the time to prove a valuable human stance according to which it is forbidden to hurt the innocent and kidnap women, children, and the elderly. To free them would have a positive and human impact.”

Mamosta Salahadin Mohammed Bahadin, General Secretary of the Islamic Union of Kurdistan, wrote a [Facebook post](#) that starts by condemning “oppressors,” but then wishes that the Palestinians would not break international law or “violate the rights” of the captives. Yet he also criticized human rights organizations for not taking into account the past seventy years of Palestinian oppression, claiming that this led to the Hamas attack and declaring that “peace in the time of oppression” is impossible.

Turkish Minister of Religious Affairs Ali Erbas [stated](#) immediately after the attack that the solution to the whole conflict is for Israel to withdraw from Palestinian lands. Noting “it is our greatest wish that innocent people are not harmed,” he also affirmed solidarity with the Palestinian people and offered a generalized wish for peace. A few days after the attack, once Israel’s air campaign in Gaza had begun in earnest, Erbas [called](#) for Friday services to pray for “the souls of the innocents who were murdered in Palestine, the healing of the injured, the liberation of all the oppressed people of the world from the oppression of the oppressors, the peace and tranquility of all Islamic lands, especially

Jerusalem.”

The Egyptian institution al-Azhar [remarked](#) that Palestinians, not Hamas, were defending their homeland and Islamic nation: “al-Azhar salutes with all pride the efforts of the resistance of the noble people of Palestine.” Further, it called on the international community to blame the Israeli occupation for the attacks, then said recent events have revitalized hopes that the Palestine issue is not over.

Iraqi Shia Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani [called](#) on the world to stand up to the Zionists and keep them from attacking the Palestinians. He further condemned the shelling of Gaza and siege of the Strip, calling it an attempt to “take revenge on them and compensate for their devastating loss and great failures in the recent confrontations.” He also says that the end to the “tragedy of this honored people” will only come if they “attain their legitimate rights and end the occupation of their land”; without that, the resistance would continue.

Ahmed al-Khalili, the Grand Mufti of Oman, [tweeted](#) that the Palestinian victory in defense of its territory comes from God. He also [called](#) on all Muslims to stand behind the Palestinian resistance. Moreover, he [emphasized](#) that the resistance must adhere to the Islamic prohibition against mutilating corpses, calling on all Palestinian groups to heed to this rule. Finally, he asked God to protect the resistance and destroy their enemies, just as he destroyed Pharaoh, Ad, and Thumud.

Abd al-Ila Ibn Kiran, Secretary-General of the Moroccan Justice and Development Party (PJD), [stated](#) that the Hamas attack was a “natural and legitimate reaction to daily abuses carried out by the Zionist enemy and the racist and extremist Zionist government policies,” and that resistance to occupation is a “legitimate right guaranteed by divine sharia and international conventions.”

The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood [stated](#) their solidarity in the fight against “occupiers,” as they are currently fighting Iranian and Russian occupation. They also declared their intention to stand with the Palestinian resistance “during the good times and the bad.” “Your fight with the Zionist enemy is the fight of all Arabs and Muslims,” the group declared, calling on Palestinians to rally around the Hamas leadership and provide all methods of material and spiritual support to the Palestinian people.

The International Union of Muslim Scholars initially [issued a statement](#) declaring that “resistance to the occupiers by our people in Palestine—including the most recent Gazan resistance—is legitimate according to all divine sharia law and international laws, and it is rather an obligatory and legal obligation in Islam,” citing Quranic verse al-Nisaa 75 as proof. In a second [statement](#), the union explained why “Zionists” are not civilians, noting that (1) every member of Israeli society is drafted into the military, (2) warfare has expanded beyond infantry and tanks, so people who carry out technical roles still contribute to the war through flying unmanned drones, (3) “in an occupying country, anyone who lives on its land is an occupier,” and (4) the “philosophy of occupation” is present in every member of Israeli society. The statement then cited Quranic verse al-Baqarah 217 as proof.

Rabitat Ulama Ahl al-Sunna, a signatory group of twenty-nine Islamic bodies from Palestine, Yemen, Iraq, Algeria, Mauritania, Turkey, Senegal, Indonesia, Lebanon, and Iran as well as twenty-four religious scholars from Palestine, Yemen, Senegal, Iraq, Syria, Morocco, Bangladesh, and Iran, [argued](#) that “scholars clearly and unequivocally state that every Zionist soldier or settler is permissible for blood wherever he is in Muslim countries—in Palestine and outside of it in any Islamic country—and his entry into Islamic countries based on peace or normalization agreements with the Zionist enemy does not matter.” Furthermore, it stated that every Muslim must support the resistance through money or active fighting, citing Quranic verse al-Hijrat 15 as proof.

American Sunni imam Yasir Qadhi [posted](#) on YouTube that the condition of Palestinians is worse than apartheid, speaking solely about their suffering without mentioning the Hamas attacks specifically. He claimed that for everyone who supports apartheid, “God almighty will take care of them,” asking God to grant victory to those who have been oppressed for decades.

Syrian jihadist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham [praised](#) the “heroes of Gaza” for their determination to “reclaim their land from oppressive occupiers.” It also declared that the Palestinian “resistance” has served as inspiration for the Syrian people in their battle against the Assad regime.

Yemen-based jihadist affiliate al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) [congratulated](#) Hamas’s Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades for the “blessed victories” and “daring operation.” Addressing Muslims closest to Israel—particularly in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan—the group urged them to support militants in Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel proper “with whatever means possible. Give them whatever they need: men, money, food supplies, and moral support.” It also told Muslims not to be discouraged by “obstacles” imposed by their governments.

The Somali jihadist group al-Shabab [stated](#) that Palestinian Muslims have “comforted the hearts of the believers. Muslims, wherever they are, were pleased that your hand reached and revenged against the criminal Zionist.”