

West Bank

Joint Israeli-Palestinian Authority rule since 1994.

Jewish settlements not indicated.



Credit: CIA World Factbook

VII

A Comparative Analysis

The Palestinian National Charter and The Hamas Covenant

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Overview

Although the secular Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hamas are often considered bitter enemies, when examining their seminal doctrines we see the two have much in common. *The Palestinian National Charter (PNC)* of the Fatah-led PLO and *The Hamas Covenant (HC)* both call for the destruction of Israel and the liberation of Palestine through armed struggle. At the conclusion of the Wye Accords in late 1998, the PLO was obligated to amend all references to Israel's destruction from the *PNC*, in order to stay within the Oslo Accords framework for conflict resolution between Israel and the Palestinians. To date the Palestinians have not changed the verbiage in the *PNC*, despite letters of intent and declarations of promise by PLO officials and the late Yasir Arafat. *The Hamas Covenant*, considered "The Charter of Allah," will never change. It must remain in its original form—rock solid in its intent, an everlasting religious document. The two documents share a similar spirit and worldview when calling for Israel's destruction. When relating to Jews the PLO embodies a concealed antisemitism while the Hamas position is overtly manifest. Islam most definitely influenced the PLO, while secular Palestinian nationalism impacted Hamas actions and rhetoric. The major difference between the two documents is their scope of conflict. *The Hamas Covenant* advocates world Jihad and an almost universal destruction of the Jews, while neither world Jihad nor Jewish annihilation are declared objectives of *The Palestinian National Charter (PNC)*.

The Palestinian National Charter

Below is the full text of *The Palestinian National Charter (PNC)* with explanations and commentary.¹ The *Charter* is the foundational document of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). It expresses the organization's identity, objectives and strategy in its struggle against Israel. Below each section are comparisons between *The Hamas Covenant (HC)* and the specific *PNC* Articles indicated. Relevant commentaries from Professor Yehoshafat Harkabi's book, *Palestinians and Israel*² are cited for a fuller understanding of secular Palestinian nationalism in its original 1960s and 1970s context. The analysis and conclusions presented when comparing the two texts are fully my own.

THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL CHARTER

Resolutions of the Palestine National Council, July 1-17, 1968

PNC, Article 1: Palestine is the homeland of the Arab Palestinian people; it is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland, and the Palestinian people are an integral part of the Arab nation.

The *PNC* uses the term "Arab" to emphasize Arab nationalism as the secular and cultural definition. "Palestinian" indicates the specific region in the Middle East ranging from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea corresponding to the "Land of Israel" as defined by Jews and Judaism. Historically, the Jihadi Islamic conquests of the seventh century CE imposed the Arab cultural and linguistic heritage on the Middle East. Hence, even the term "Arab" insinuates a Muslim cultural acquiescence although non-Muslims are included, such as Christians living in the region. The *PNC* makes their Arab declaration for the Western audience, who view the term "Arab" as referring exclusively to language and culture while obscuring the Muslim aspects of the "Arab" identity.

¹ Kadi, Leila S. (ed.), "Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement," *Palestine Research Centre*, Beirut, December 1969, pp. 137-141.

² Harkabi, Yehoshafat, "*Palestinians and Israel*," Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem, 1974, pp. 49-69.

HC Comparison:

The Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood emphasizes its identity as first and foremost Islamic (*HC*, Article 2). Arab and Palestinian identities are secondary and there is no room for Christians or others. In the *HC*, secularism is the antithesis to religious ideology. Palestinian national movements are evaluated based on their attitude toward Islam. When the PLO adopts Islam as its identity and way of life, Hamas envisions unification between the two movements (*HC*, Article 27).

PNC, Article 2: Palestine, with the boundaries it had during the British Mandate, is an indivisible territorial unit.

Palestine is an indivisible territorial unit between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea including the Negev Desert. The *PNC* does not allow for a two-state solution option whereby Arab and Jewish States exist side by side in “peace and security” as is often stated by those advocating conflict resolution.

HC Comparison:

The *HC* addresses the issue of “Palestine” as important, even if artificial, in order to sound more palatable to the general Arab and specifically Palestinian Arab public. The overall battle for Palestine is overwhelmed by the demand for its full incorporation into the Islamic *waqf* or “endowed lands” belonging to Islam for eternity (*HC*, Article 11). Hamas envisions conquering all land worldwide. In the Islamist struggle, Hamas is only one unit in the global Jihad army whose responsibility lies on the narrow front called “Palestine.”

PNC, Article 3: The Palestinian Arab people possess the legal right to their homeland and have the right to determine their destiny after achieving the liberation of their country in accordance with their wishes and entirely of their own accord and will.

The *PNC* emphasizes the Palestinian Arab people’s legal and national right “to their homeland.” Palestinian rights and self-determination are understood to be absolute by definition. The *PNC* declared an inalienable “right” to their homeland, which requires implementation. Although secular

because the people determine their own “destiny,” one hears Islamic religious overtones as only Palestinian Arabs have a right to the land.

HC Comparison:

Palestine is *waqf* land belonging to Islam forever. Legal rights originate from *Sharia* law—the law of Allah (*HC*, Article 11). Islam *always* determines the people’s destiny.

PNC, Article 4: The Palestinian identity is a genuine, essential, and inherent characteristic; it is transmitted from parents to children. The Zionist occupation and the dispersal of the Palestinian Arab people, through the disasters which befell them, do not make them lose their Palestinian identity and their membership in the Palestinian community, nor do they negate them.

As pointed out by Harkabi, this *PNC* article is a Palestinian Law of Return, similar to the secular laws pertaining to Jews immigrating to the State of Israel. Once a Palestinian, always a Palestinian; a nationality passed on from one generation to the next. This is a secular definition.

HC Comparison:

Secular Palestinian identity is not the beginning. One’s identity as a Muslim is far more important (*HC*, Articles 1 and 2). Hamas does not emphasize issues concerning refugee status, as hinted at in the *PNC*, Article 4, since the conquest of Palestine is a pan-Islamic responsibility and not just for those directly affected by the conflict. It makes little difference if there was displacement or not. Islam must regain Muslim *waqf* lands. Such action is a universal Islamic responsibility (*HC*, Article 7, paragraph 1).

Neither the PLO nor Hamas admit any responsibility for the “disasters which befell” the Palestinians although conflict resolution was at hand in 1947-48 if the two-state solution Partition Plan (UN Res. 181 – Nov. 29, 1947) was accepted. The Arab and Muslim world, including Palestinians, reject all compromise.

PNC, Article 5: The Palestinians are those Arab nationals who, until 1947, normally resided in Palestine regardless of whether they were evicted from it or have stayed there. Anyone born, after that date, of a Palestinian father -

whether inside Palestine or outside it - is also a Palestinian.

As shown by Harkabi, *PNC* Article 5 is a continuation of Article 4. Only Arabs are Palestinians, Jews are excluded. The Palestinian identity is passed down through the father, a tradition originating in Islam. Despite the “secularism” of the *PNC*, no reference is made to the status of the mother.

Through UN resolutions and the establishment of the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA), Palestinian refugee status became eternal and is passed down to the next generation, whether through the mother or father, as opposed to the general refugee status of other people in similar circumstances. Other refugees worldwide have done their best to begin life anew. The Palestinians use their refugee status to their political and diplomatic advantage. Such a claim is possible because it is made against a non-people, the Jews, as we will see below in *PNC*, Article 20. Implementation of full Palestinian refugee return translates into the destruction of the Jewish State, nullifying the two-state solution.³ UN Resolution 194 (December 1948) allowed for “compensation” to replace the demand for refugee return.

HC Comparison:

Islam is the determining factor as to whom the land belongs, not whether an individual was a Palestinian or the descendant of a Palestinian. Reference to exile is made in *HC* Article 20.

In real time Hamas demands full Palestinian refugee return as the major condition for even a limited *hudna* of several years, this to ensure Israel’s demise. Such insistence solidifies support for Hamas among refugees and their descendents. Whenever the PLO considered options other than full

³ “Refugee,” *Wikipedia*, retrieved June 20, 2011, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refugee.
 “Palestinian Refugee,” *Wikipedia*, retrieved June 20, 2011,
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palestinian_refugee.

Pipes, Daniel, “[UNRWA] The Refugee Curse,” *Daniel Pipes Middle East Forum*, August 19, 2003, retrieved June 20, 2011, www.danielpipes.org/1206/unrwa-therefugee-curse.

Note on the Applicability of Article 1D of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees to Palestinian refugees, at unispal, retrieved December 31, 2015, <http://www.unhcr.org/4add88379.pdf>

If one follows Article 1D as mentioned above eventually everyone on the planet may be recognized as a Palestinian refugee.

return, such as compensation, Hamas insisted that such policies are a betrayal of the Palestinian Muslim cause.

PNC, Article 6: The Jews who had normally resided in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians.

Harkabi points out that the “Zionist invasion” or the implementation of Jewish national rebirth is considered to have begun with the Balfour Declaration in 1917 by the Palestinians. The above Article 6 states immigrating Jews cannot be considered “Palestinians” and presumably can be expelled. Jews who lived in Palestine before 1917 and their descendants will be considered citizens in the future Palestinian State. According to *PNC* Article 5, only Arabs are Palestinians. Hence, we see a contradiction in the *PNC*. How can these “acceptable” Jews ever achieve full and equal status in a Palestinian Arab State? This inconsistency appears intentional, denying Jews full equality in the Arab world. Questions arise as to how to trace the lineage of each and every Jew and who will determine which Jews can or cannot live in a Palestinian State. How will denial of citizenship and expulsion be implemented for those not meeting the PLO criteria?

HC Comparison:

The Hamas Covenant advocates eliminating the Jews, for they are the enemy. Zionism is seen as the secular state extension of overall Jewish perfidy. Technically, Jews can live under Jihadist–Islamist rule accepting the *dhimma* status. In reality, only the tiny rabidly anti-Israel ultra-orthodox Jewish Netura Karta sect and their allies would willingly accept the *dhimmi* status. The

Jewish date of arrival in Islamic Palestine would be of no importance, but rather the Jews’ willingness to prostrate themselves before their Muslim overlords (see Chapter VI “*The Hamas Covenant* Analysis,” Article 31). All other Jews would conceivably be annihilated.

PNC, Article 7: That there is a Palestinian community and that it has material, spiritual, and historical connections with Palestine are indisputable facts. It is a national duty to bring up individual Palestinians in an Arab revolutionary manner. All means of information and education must be adopted in order to acquaint the Palestinian with his country in the most profound manner,

both spiritual and material, that is possible. He must be prepared for the armed struggle and ready to sacrifice his wealth and his life in order to win back his homeland and bring about its liberation.

Insisting Palestinians are raised, educated, and informed in “an Arab revolutionary manner” while engaging in the “armed struggle” is a concept parallel to the Hamas understanding of Jihad. The *PNC* expects Palestinian individuals to make sacrifices. The *PNC* uses the term “Arab” as opposed to “Muslim” or “Islamic” (*HC* Article 15, paragraph 1 and Article 16). Palestinians are connected to the land in every manner, the same way Muslims are connected to the *waqf*lands (*HC*, Article 11). The PLO demands Palestinian Arabs must be informed and educated concerning the struggle and “ready to sacrifice his wealth and his life” to liberate the homeland. Here the *PNC* uses more nationally focused language since it does not speak of world Jihad or in secular terminology the “armed struggle” in a religious sense, as does *The Hamas Covenant*. Still, the *PNC* requires the same course of action involving ultimate material and personal sacrifice through overall commitment.

***HC* Comparison:**

The direct line between the *PNC* and *HC* originates with the concept of “defensive” Jihad (see Chapter II “Hamas Ideologues,” subsections—al Banna and Azzam). In the *HC* Articles 12, 15 and 16, similar sacrifices of wealth and life are demanded for the national cause. In *HC* Article 19 Islamic art makes its own specific contribution. Hamas condemns secular nationalism as lacking the full spiritual commitment Islam demands. The *HC* explains the Jihad imperative as far superior to all others—a hint that shows Hamas’ opinion that the secular PLO is not serious. Furthermore, the *HC* states the major role of the Muslim woman is to impart a Jihadi education to her children (*HC*, Articles 17 and 18). We do not find a role particular to women in the *PNC*.

***PNC, Article 8:* The phase in their history, through which the Palestinian people are now living, is that of national (*watani*) struggle for the liberation of Palestine. Thus the conflicts among the Palestinian national forces are secondary, and should be ended for the sake of the basic conflict that exists between the forces of Zionism and of imperialism on the one hand, and the Palestinian Arab**

people on the other. On this basis the Palestinian masses, regardless of whether they are residing in the national homeland or in diaspora (*mahajir*) constitute - both their organizations and the individuals - one national front working for the retrieval of Palestine and its liberation through armed struggle.

Article 8 of the *PNC* is a call for unity to fight Jewish nationalism (Zionism) and imperialism, or Western influence as described in the developing world's national and "liberationist" literature of the 1960s and 1970s. At the time, factionalism set in between the larger more mainstream Fatah, and the left wing Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) groups. All Palestinians are called upon to fight for the "liberation of Palestine through armed struggle," whether they live in the "homeland" or abroad.

HC Comparison:

PNC Article 8 is similar to the Hamas call for world Islamic unity (*HC*, Article 23). The difference is *The Hamas Covenant* expands into condemnations of both the East and West (*HC*, Articles 25 and 26), an implied criticism of the PLO. There is a fundamental difference in scope as the PLO is only addressing Palestinians in the Palestinian-Israeli (Jewish national) arena while Hamas sees the Palestinian Islamic struggle as one link in the chain of an overall battle to conquer the world. Jihad, at first defensive, transforms to offense and continues until universal victory.

PNC, Article 9: Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine. Thus it is the overall strategy, not merely a tactical phase. The Palestinian Arab people assert their absolute determination and firm resolution to continue their armed struggle and to work for an armed popular revolution for the liberation of their country and their return to it. They also assert their right to normal life in Palestine and to exercise their right to self-determination and sovereignty over it.

Although built into a secular nationalist setting this strategy of the "Armed struggle" is the same as the Hamas call to Jihad. There are no compromises. Calls for "self-determination," "sovereignty," and "the right to normal life in

Palestine” mean Arab domination and the full denial of any Jewish national rights. These words are euphemisms for Israel’s destruction. Such was the leftist rhetoric of the 1960s, focusing on the armed struggle by the “*fedayeen*” or resistance fighters (Harkabi). Their function is the same as the “*mujabideen*” guerilla groups, which at times were not necessarily religious or even Muslims, as condemned by Abdullah Azzam (see Chapter II “Ideologues”). The word *mujabideen* originates from the root “j-h-d” and defines such armed groups as Jihadists in the popular understanding. Calls for the armed struggle of the *fedayeen* are couched in secular terms but have roots in total victory as advocated by Jihadism.

HC Comparison:

These absolutist ideals began as Islamic and mutated into an all-encompassing secular Arab Palestinian nationalism, and then reappeared in *The Hamas Covenant*. HC Article 3 demands Jihad in the general cleansing sense while HC Article 8 defines Jihad as its “path,” “way,” or “methodology,” depending on which translation is used. Jihad is the strategy and not simply a tactic. Hamas calls all Muslims to Jihad (HC Articles 13, 15, 30, 32, and 33), while the PNC confines “their armed struggle” and “armed popular revolution” to Palestinian Arabs. These PNC concepts are similar to Hamas’ Jihad, but in a more focused context. The PLO plans to re-emerge in its pure state once again via the calls for the destruction of Israel, calls similar to those in *The Hamas Covenant*. The solution is the annihilation of the State of Israel (Harkabi) and its replacement by a Palestinian Arab State.

For Hamas, there is little difference between destruction of the Jewish State and the destruction of Jews. On the theological level, the Israeli State is to be replaced by an Islamic one. Hamas goes well beyond the PNC with vicious antisemitism. The concept of self-determination, sovereignty and “normal life in Palestine” are expressed in Islamic domination (HC, Articles 6 and 31), demanding second-class *dhimmi* status for Jews and Christians.

PNC, Article 10: Commando action constitutes the nucleus of the Palestinian popular liberation war. This requires its escalation, comprehensiveness, and the mobilization of all the Palestinian popular and educational efforts and their organization and involvement in the armed Palestinian revolution. It also requires the achieving of unity for the national (watani) struggle among the different groupings of the Palestinian people, and between the Palestinian people and the Arab masses,

so as to secure the continuation of the revolution, its escalation, and victory.

“Commando action” is a deceptive term because it includes terror attacks against all Israeli Jews, civilians as well, defined as the Zionist enemy. Engaging in commando action is a step prior to becoming a suicide-homicide bomber. Both types of attacks are often against civilians; however in commando action, the attacker plans to escape. In any case, all Palestinians and Arabs are expected to unify in participation to achieve victory.

HC Comparison:

In the *HC* a suicide-homicide bomber sees death as his or her escape. Bombers believe they fuse with Allah by implementing the “Divine” desire to kill the Jews (*HC*, Article 7, 8 and 28 last paragraph). Hamas upgrades from the *PNC*’s command to kill Zionists, to the killing of Jews in general. The *HC* echoes the *PNC*’s call for mobilization and national unity among all Palestinian Muslims. Hamas specifies and intensifies the demand for full Islamic unity in battling Israel and the Jews. *HC* Articles 17 and 18 define the role of women in the mass Jihadi struggle as opposed to no specific clause as such in the *PNC*. The above *PNC* Article 10 probably inspired *HC* Articles 15, 16 and 30 with their specific demands for total participation in the destruction of Jews and Zionism.

PNC, Article 11: The Palestinians will have three mottoes: national (wataniyya) unity, national (qawmiyya) mobilization, and liberation.

For the PLO “national unity” is a love of nation or a fusing of the national being into one—unity similar to other national movements. On the theoretical level, liberation is national and physical for the secular PLO, as the *PNC* speaks of “national mobilization, and liberation.” This is the secular version of unification with Allah—the ultimate goal for believing Muslims.

HC Comparison:

The Hamas motto is found in *HC*, Article 8.

**Allah is its goal,
the Prophet its model to be followed,
the Koran its constitution,**

**Jihad its way,
and death for the sake of Allah its loftiest desire.**

The Hamas objective to fuse with Allah by way of a Jihadist death is considered one's "loftiest desire." The Prophet Mohammed is their ultimate example. For Hamas, the Koran is the legal document or "constitution," which lays out the mobilization leading to the Holy War/Jihad or religious war of "liberation" in the name of Allah (see Chapter II "Ideologues" and Chapter VI "*The Hamas Covenant Analysis*.")

Hamas demands the physical liberation of all Palestine for Islam, while invoking spiritual and religious terminology and seeking the same land-oriented objectives of total conquest over Palestine: the destruction of the State of Israel.

The mottoes appear to have a different emphasis but they serve similar objectives in reference to land. The difference is in loyalty and "way of life." The PNC is loyal to the secular nation while Hamas is loyal to Allah and the Islamic nation. These are the ideological roots of the clash between the PLO and Hamas (*HC*, Article 27).

PNC, Article 12: The Palestinian people believe in Arab unity. In order to contribute their share toward the attainment of that objective, however, they must, at the present stage of their struggle, safeguard their Palestinian identity and develop their consciousness of that identity, and oppose any plan that may dissolve or impair it.

The Palestinians are one part of the puzzle of secular Arab unity or Pan-Arabism. Perpetuating the Palestinian identity within an overall Arab unity is vital to achieve that all-encompassing national goal. Due to their struggle, the special characteristics of Palestinian identity contribute to Pan-Arab unity. Palestinians insist they are part of a greater whole, but fear being fully assimilated into an overall Arab nation, a position they cannot outwardly admit, because to do so would expose their suspicions as to the ulterior motives of their Arab allies. There is both cooperation and tension between the specific Palestinian Arab identity and the inclusive Pan-Arabism. This is particularly acute as concerns Syria, which traditionally claimed Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan as part of what is called "Greater Syria."

HC Comparison:

In the *HC*, the identity issue is much simpler. Muslim identity and universal Islamic solidarity are expected, but Hamas emphasizes a specific Palestinian Arab identity because of the PLO/*PNC* influence. For Hamas, Palestinian uniqueness is superficial. The Palestinian Arab identity is secondary to the greater Islamic nation, as constantly expressed in *The Hamas Covenant* and Muslim Brotherhood understandings. Hamas rejects the specifics of a secular Palestinian Arab identity (*HC*, Article 25, 26 and most importantly 27). The *PNC* emphasizes Pan-Arabism (Harkabi) while Hamas demands Pan-Islamism.

PNC, Article 13: Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine are two complementary objectives, the attainment of either of which facilitates the attainment of the other. Thus, Arab unity leads to the liberation of Palestine, the liberation of Palestine leads to Arab unity; and work toward the realization of one objective proceeds side by side with work toward the realization of the other.

The PLO expects the Arab world to participate in the liberation of Palestine as a function of Arab unity. Article 13 became a challenge to the Arab world in the mid-twentieth century, in particular to Egypt's Nasser and the Syrian Baath leadership. If they could not liberate Palestine, then the struggle for Arab unity is questionable. Harkabi shows the liberation of Palestine to be a Pan-Arab unifying point. It would be the "Big Bang" leading to the singularity of identity and purpose in the Arab world. To fail on the Palestinian front is to fail in Arab unity.

HC Comparison:

The *HC* presentation of unity is exactly the same as the *PNC* when it comes to confronting the Muslim world and challenging it to step up for Palestinian Islamic liberty. The *HC* translates the conquest of Palestine as the continuing proof of cohesiveness and Islamic unity. Like Pan-Arab nationalism mentioned above, participation in universal Jihad for Palestine facilitates union and tests true loyalties (*HC*, Articles 14, 15, 28, 29, 30 and 32). For Hamas, the successful liberation of Palestine is only one more step in world Islamic conquest. Pan-Arabism claims a specific part of the globe—the Arab world. Hamas, as part of the Muslim Brotherhood, lays claim to the entire world—one front at a time after Muslim lands are recovered (see Chapter II "Ideologues" subsection on Abdullah Azzam).

***PNC, Article 14:* The destiny of the Arab nation, and indeed Arab existence itself, depend upon the destiny of the Palestine cause. From this interdependence springs the Arab nation's pursuit of, and striving for, the liberation of Palestine. The people of Palestine play the role of the vanguard in the realization of this sacred (*qawmi*) goal.**

Article 14 is a continuation of Article 13, and clarifies the “vanguard” role of Palestinian Arabs in the realization of not only their own destiny, but of the overall Arab cause and Arab unity itself. To fail is to threaten the continuation of the Arab existence (Harkabi). The Palestinians have appointed themselves the commandos of Arab unity through their own front-line struggle; a confrontation they believe belongs to the entire Arab world.

HC Comparison:

Substitute the word “Muslim” for the word “Arab,” and *PNC* Article 14 becomes the Hamas Islamist position in principle. Failure on the Palestinian front is equal to a worldwide Islamic setback. Palestinian Muslims may be the “vanguard,” but all others are obligated to aid in “defensive” Jihad as stated in *HC* Articles 14, 15, and by inference Article 3 (see Chapter II “Ideologues,” subsections on al Banna and Azzam).

The Hamas Covenant raises a question of concern for Arab national existence in the event of failure to “liberate” Palestine. The root of this question comes from the Jihadi diatribes expressed by Qutb against the Jews and their nation state plot—the State of Israel. For both Arab nationalists and Islamists, the Jewish State is situated in the center of their national and religious homeland. They see Israel as an occupying force trying to spread evil. Evil is defined as Jewish perfidy originating in the seventh century or a Jewish form of imperialism, as detractors define Zionism. Islamists determine both as Jewish evils. This is arguably what is known as a “zero sum game,” or defined as “winner takes all.” Israel’s existence contradicts Arab nationalism (Harkabi), just as Jewish continuity nullifies the Islamic essence for Hamas (*HC*, Article 28, last paragraph).

***PNC, Article 15:* The liberation of Palestine, from an Arab viewpoint, is a national (*qawmi*) duty and it attempts to repel the Zionist and imperialist aggression against the Arab homeland, and aims at the elimination of Zionism in**

Palestine. Absolute responsibility for this falls upon the Arab nation - peoples and governments - with the Arab people of Palestine in the vanguard. Accordingly, the Arab nation must mobilize all its military, human, moral, and spiritual capabilities to participate actively with the Palestinian people in the liberation of Palestine. It must, particularly in the phase of the armed Palestinian revolution, offer and furnish the Palestinian people with all possible help, and material and human support, and make available to them the means and opportunities that will enable them to continue to carry out their leading role in the armed revolution, until they liberate their homeland.

The *PNC* obligates the “Arab nation” throughout the world to aid the Palestinians in every way possible in their struggle to eliminate Zionism (the State of Israel).

HC Comparison:

Hamas makes parallel demands of Muslims to participate in the struggle against Israel and world Jewry. Palestine is a Pan-Arab confrontation line or, in the case of Hamas, a Pan-Islamic Jihadist front line (*HC*, Articles 28, 32 and 33).

Most significantly, the *HC* emphasizes the integration of the three circles: The Palestinian, the Arab, and the Islamic, with the latter having the greatest influence. *HC* Article 14 specifically insists on this point. It is through the Palestinian and Arab overlap that Hamas constructs the conduit whereby *PNC*/*PLO* understanding and loyalty can be channeled to the Islamists themselves. The *PNC* emphasizes the Arab/Palestinian identity, but as they call on the Arab world there is the latent Islamic understanding. This overlap of loyalties facilitates the shift of secular Palestinian nationalist supporters to Hamas.

PNC, Article 16: The liberation of Palestine, from a spiritual point of view, will provide the Holy Land with an atmosphere of safety and tranquility, which in turn will safeguard the country’s religious sanctuaries and guarantee freedom of worship and of visit to all, without discrimination of race, color, language, or religion.

Accordingly, the people of Palestine look to all spiritual forces in the world for support.

Only secular Palestinian Arab rule will end the conflict and bring about the perfect solution of equality, freedom of religion, “safety and tranquility.” Let us recall that Jews were forbidden from entering the secular Arab Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and therefore had no access to holy sites in the West Bank under Amman’s jurisdiction from 1949-1967. Never were Palestinian voices raised against such discrimination. Both the secular PLO and Hamas claim everyone will enjoy freedom of religion, but we must think of “freedom of religion” from an Islamic standpoint—not a Western one. Yet the PLO presents the future Palestinian State as an open liberal society and calls upon “all spiritual forces in the world for support” for a policy with no realistic basis for implementation. Under Israeli jurisdiction from June 1967 until the Second Intifada or Low Intensity Conflict in 2000 there were full visitation rights for everyone at holy sites, regardless of religious affiliation. From October 2000 and continuing to the present, the Palestinian Muslim religious authorities have as a general rule refused to let Jews, Christians or other non-Muslims enter the Al-Aksa Mosque or Dome of the Rock structures on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

HC Comparison:

The *HC* claims all religions will live in perfect harmony under Islamic rule. This means Sharia law and the second-class *dhimmi* status for Jews and Christians (Articles 6 and 31), and no promises of access to holy sites. Under Hamas rule we can expect everyone except Muslims to be barred from Islamic holy sites.

***PNC, Article 17:* The liberation of Palestine, from a human point of view, will restore to the Palestinian individual his dignity, pride, and freedom. Accordingly the Palestinian Arab people look forward to the support of all those who believe in the dignity of man and his freedom in the world.**

The Israeli (Jewish) victory was and continues to be a terrible humiliation for the Palestinians and Arab world as a whole. Victory, meaning the destruction of Israel, will return “dignity” to the Palestinians.

HC Comparison:

The *HC* understanding of the Palestinian humiliation is theological. Palestine is *waqf* land consecrated for Muslim ownership until Judgment Day (*HC*, Article 11). Muslim dignity, pride and sovereignty will be restored with the re-conquest of *waqf* land. The End of Days or Judgment Day is delayed from arrival due to the existence of the Jewish State and the survival of the Jewish People within a sovereign state entity. According to the *HC*, not only is dignity at stake with the existence of a Jewish State, but world redemption is delayed. Victory through Jihad will eliminate all obstacles (*HC*, Article 7, 8 and 9).

PNC, Article 18: The liberation of Palestine, from an international point of view, is a defensive action necessitated by the demands of self-defense. Accordingly, the Palestinian people, desirous as they are of the friendship of all people, look to freedom-loving, and peace-loving states for support in order to restore their legitimate rights in Palestine, to reestablish peace and security in the country, and to enable its people to exercise national sovereignty and freedom.

The PLO deems Israel an illegal entity (Harkabi); therefore any attack against her is legal. Israel embodies implied original sin, thereby relegating any defensive actions illegal. By definition anyone supporting the Palestinian cause of the destruction of the State of Israel desires peace and freedom. In the *PNC*, the expression “defensive action” is used instead of making clear PLO demands to initiate conflict. The PLO defines its supporters as “freedom-loving” and “peace-loving,” regardless of whatever their nature might be. States invited to support the Palestinian cause may be Muslim or non-Muslim.

HC Comparison:

Attacking Israel is viewed as “defensive” Jihad, since Palestine belonged to the Islamic world until the end of WWI. Allah gives Hamas’ its “legitimate rights,” yet as an organization and political movement they depend on the Islamic world and in particular the Muslim Brotherhood for friendship and support (*HC*, Articles 2, 28, 29, 30, 32 and in particular 33). The *HC* does not seek alliances with non-Muslims although in certain cases temporary cooperation can be considered.

***PNC, Article 19:* The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of the state of Israel are entirely illegal, regardless of the passage of time, because they were contrary to the will of the Palestinian people and to their natural right in their homeland, and inconsistent with the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the right to self-determination.**

Beginning with the problem of the “international point of view” mentioned in Article 18 and continuing through the supposed illegality of the Partition Plan (UN Resolution 181) and the establishment of the State of Israel, Article 19 is as deceitful as the previous one. The Palestinian birthright is one twin in the two-state resolution passed by the UN in November 1947. The international body recognized both Jewish and Palestinian Arab nationalism at the same time. The vote was more than the necessary two-thirds majority: 33 in favor, 13 against, 10 abstentions and one no-show. The abstentions and no-show are not included in the final tally as per UN voting rules. Apparently the member states did not see themselves as violating their own UN Charter.

HC Comparison:

The *HC* offers a simpler explanation. Islam is the only answer and Allah is the only adjudicator, therefore Palestine as an Islamic *waqf* is part of the Muslim world and no humans have the right to give it to others or split any part of it (*HC*, Articles 11 and 13). The illegality of Israel is a theological issue, not one given to discussion in human forums. People who accept the existence of the Jewish State thereby abandon the struggle against Zionism and incur Allah’s condemnation (*HC*, Articles 13 and 32).

***PNC, Article 20:* The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate for Palestine, and everything that has been based upon them, are deemed null and void. Claims of historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history and the true conception of what constitutes statehood. Judaism, being a religion, is not an independent nationality. Nor do Jews constitute a single nation with an identity of its own; they are citizens of the states to which they belong.**

PNC, Article 20 is a continuation of Article 19. The British issued the Balfour Declaration and then the League of Nations, the predecessor of the United Nations, incorporated it into the Palestine Mandate. The Palestine Mandate is an internationally drafted and recognized legal commitment. The British ruled Palestine and implemented the Jewish National Home policy through the Palestine Mandate authority granted them by the League of Nations. The *PNC* nullifies these documents.

The *PNC* outright denies Jewish religious, historical and national claims to Palestine (the Land of Israel). Secular Palestinians decided Jews are not a nation, but are only members of a faith, Judaism. Here too lies a contradiction, as Judaism does claim the same specific land as the Palestinian Arabs. All of Article 20 is a complete falsehood. If through the secular national eyes of the PLO, religious affiliation is not a criterion for claiming territory, then by extension, Islam cannot make claims to any land mass. They are only members of a faith, after all. If secular Arab nationalists recognize Islamic land-claims, then Jews would have just as strong a case for asserting their rights over the Land of Israel.

The secular Palestine Arab national movement not only strips the Jewish People of its national memory, but eradicates its geographic roots and religious foundations through the institutionalized nullification of the concept of the “People of Israel,” a term consistently used in the *Tanakh* (Hebrew Scriptures). Here in Article 20 we find “Erasure Theology” embodied in the secular *PNC* as a form of holy writ. The Palestine national movement is not demanding the physical elimination of the Jews, but determines the historic, cultural and religious death of the Jewish People as a “given.” If memory is deleted, then one is only a Jew in name, Judaism an empty shell, and the eradication of the Jewish People as a group is just a matter of time. Palestinian antisemitism hides behind supposed Enlightenment liberalism of individual rights rooted in equality for all. Yet, as made clear in previous *PNC* articles, one must be a Palestinian Arab to enjoy such rights. Jews are legally shorn of memory as well as national rights.

This is similar to the Soviet attitude toward their own Jews from the 1950s through the 1980s. Jews were a community but had little access to religious, cultural or national texts and were forbidden the study of Hebrew. Such is the policy of “forced assimilation” bringing about the dissolution of a people.

HC Comparison:

By basing its insights on the Koran, Hamas has a complete, even diametrically opposed, understanding of the Jewish connection to the Land of Israel. Since the Koran is its constitution (*HC* Article 8) it is clear they

believe everything written in the Koran is true. The Israelites/Jews did have a covenant with Allah, received a promised “blessed land” (Koran 7:137), had two Temples destroyed in the Farther Temple (Jerusalem), and therefore certainly did live in Palestine or the Land of Israel (Koran 17:1-17:8). Most importantly, by keeping the covenant, the Israelites/Jews guarantee their own redemption in the afterlife by returning to the Land (Koran 17:104) as discussed in Chapter IX “Islamic Abrogation.”

According to the Jihadists, the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, the Jews were expelled from the Land for violating the covenant with Allah and for doing evil. Their greatest evil was not accepting Mohammed as the Prophet, doing battle against him and not accepting his revelations. All of the above statements classify the Jews as a “people” —albeit disgraced and nefarious. For Hamas, the Jews are not just a religious community. The Koran clearly views Jews as more than a faith group, and there is no denial of Jewish nationhood in *The Hamas Covenant*. Paradoxically, Hamas can be accused of theological denial when confronted with the establishment of the State of Israel and the ingathering of the Jewish People into the Land of the Covenant. The abrogation clause (Koran 2:106) may be invoked, but rings false in light of reality (see Chapters II “Ideologues” and IX “Abrogation”). By declaring Judaism only a religion and denying Jewish nationhood the PLO is not caught in the contradiction, yet they are denying the Divine truth of the Koran.

We are familiar with the “Replacement Theology” of certain Christian theologians relegating Judaism to the trash heap of history and replacing it with Christianity. Later, Islam adopted the same concept toward both Judaism and Christianity. Hamas follows in these theological footsteps by declaring Islam the only true religion. Judaism and Christianity are replaced through Divine supersession. The *dhimma* status suffered by the “People of the Book” involved the eradication of national and religious memory. Islam reduces both Jews and Christians to an inferior community status.⁴ Despite all, the Koran and Hamas view the Jews as a people who had a homeland.

Certainly Hamas theology is physically more deadly, but *PNC* ideals are not far behind in the danger they present in their total denial of the collective

⁴ Bat Ye’or, *Islam and Dhimmitude Where Civilizations Collide*, translated from the French by Miriam Kochan and David Littman, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Teaneck NJ, USA, 2002, Chapter 10, “The Politics of Dhimmitude in Europe,” and Chapter 11 “Conclusion,” pp. 305-400.

Jewish being. *PNC* antisemitism is comparable to the Soviet brand (1917/1991) of cultural and religious denial, mentioned above.

***PNC, Article 21:* The Arab Palestinian people, expressing themselves by the armed Palestinian revolution, reject all solutions which are substitutes for the total liberation of Palestine and reject all proposals aiming at the liquidation of the Palestinian problem, or its internationalization.**

Here we have the complete rejection of a two-state solution from a secular perspective, and support for a military struggle similar to Jihad. The *PNC* rejection of compromise comes from the Palestinian Arab nation, while the Hamas rejection is founded on what are deemed Islamic principles and “the will of Allah.”

HC Comparison:

In the *HC*, rights to Palestine/Land of Israel are based on the *waqf* endowment and belligerency toward Jews as sanctified in the Koran’s Sura or Chapter 9. *PNC* Article 21 is written in the same non-compromising spirit as the *HC* Articles 11, 13 and 32.

***PNC, Article 22:* Zionism is a political movement organically associated with international imperialism and antagonistic to all action for liberation and to progressive movements in the world. It is racist and fanatic in its nature, aggressive, expansionist, and colonial in its aims, and fascist in its methods. Israel is the instrument of the Zionist movement, and geographical base for world imperialism placed strategically in the midst of the Arab homeland to combat the hopes of the Arab nation for liberation, unity, and progress. Israel is a constant source of threat vis-a-vis peace in the Middle East and the whole world. Since the liberation of Palestine will destroy the Zionist and imperialist presence and will contribute to the establishment of peace in the Middle East, the Palestinian people look for the support of all the progressive and peaceful forces and urge them all, irrespective of their affiliations and beliefs, to offer the Palestinian people all**

aid and support in their just struggle for the liberation of their homeland.

In the *PNC*'s Article 22, Jewish nationalism is elevated to a universal evil as a "racist," "fascist," "aggressive, expansionist and colonial" power. As Harkabi and others pointed out, this was the agenda of extremist elements emanating from the New Left in the 1960s. The *PNC* and *The Hamas Covenant* borrow from each other, most notably in singling out Israel as a world menace aligned with the most reactionary, repressive powers and as part of a universal conspiracy against the Palestinians. Although the *HC* was written later, its ideological underpinnings were understood by the 1950s. The Hamas and PLO reasons for hating Israel are identical. Israel is seen as the ultimate satanic nation state by both. The *PNC* does not condemn the Jews as its enemy, only their "illegitimate" nationalism—Zionism. The PLO/*PNC* views Israel or Jewish nationalism as an extension of international imperialism.

***HC* Comparison:**

The *HC* condemns the Jewish State as an appendage of a worldwide Jewish conspiratorial evil. In both the *HC* and *PNC*, Israel is a small part of a much larger insidious international plot. Hamas is more vicious than the PLO, as noted in Articles 20, 22 and 32, by blending Islamic, Czarist and Nazi antisemitism not only in the condemnation of Israel and the requirement for its liquidation, but in its demands for annihilating Jews worldwide (*HC*, Articles 7 and 32). For Hamas, there is an all-encompassing conflict of eradication against Israel, Judaism and the Jews (*HC*, Article 28, last verse).

The *PNC* stops short of the Hamas accusation identifying the Zionists/Jews as Nazis (*HC*, Articles 20, 31 and 32). The secular Palestinian condemnation of Zionism is a major stepping-stone in the direction of Hamas demands for Jewish destruction. If Jewish nationalism is "racist," "fascist," etc., then Jews have these same attributes.

***PNC, Article 23:* The demand of security and peace, as well as the demand of right and justice, require all states to consider Zionism an illegitimate movement, to outlaw its existence, and to ban its operations, in order that friendly relations among peoples may be preserved, and the loyalty of citizens to their respective homelands safeguarded.**

The PLO requests foreign states to consider Zionism or Jewish nationalism “an illegitimate movement,” outlawed internationally in the name of security, peace and justice. Article 23 is in contradiction to itself when discussing “security and peace” because it was the leaders of the Palestine national movement and Arab States who rejected the Partition Plan designed to ensure “friendly relations among peoples,” in particular Jews and Arabs. In 1947, had the Palestinians accepted the Partition Plan, it would have allowed for full implementation of individual human rights in both the Arab and Jewish States, replacing the British Mandate. Furthermore, these two conflicting nations were to be recognized as equally legitimate.

The matter of “loyalty of citizens to their perspective homelands” is aimed at Jews supporting the State of Israel while living in other countries instead of fully focusing their loyalty toward the country of their residency. As Harkabi points out, people living in democratic nation states have other loyalties as well, not just the “narrow, formal nationalistic approach.” Nullifying one’s rights to secondary loyalties of religion, culture and ethnic/national identity is the ultimate in dictatorial secular nationalism, the former Soviet Union being the case in point.

Continuing with this logic, Muslim Arabs outside of the Arab world—those living in Europe, North and South America—would have to forgo loyalty to their nation of ethnic origin. Forbidding outside loyalties would criminalize people if they contributed to any cause associated with their previous ethnic and/or religious homeland. To take this a step further, any Israeli Arabs who call themselves “Palestinian Arabs with Israeli citizenship,” as many do nowadays, would be disloyal and could be charged with treason. But obviously such a move against “disloyal” Israeli Arabs by the Israeli authorities would be deemed illegal because the Jewish State is an illegitimate entity according to the *PNC*.

HC Comparison:

The Introduction and Preamble of *The Hamas Covenant* makes clear Israel and the Jews are the foremost enemy and must be killed (*HC*, Article 7). They believe Zionism is an evil Jewish plot, by definition illegal (see Chapter II “Ideologues,” subsection on Qutb), and to be battled in every possible way (*HC*, Articles 7, 15, and 17). At the same time, they see Israel and Jews as having powerful, and mythical, allies in the capitalist West, the communist East, and in international institutions (*HC*, Articles 22, 25, and 28). Hamas allies are Arab/Islamic organizations (*HC*, Introduction-Preamble and Articles 29, 32 and 33).

***PNC, Article 24:* The Palestinian people believe in the principles of justice, freedom, sovereignty, self-determination, human dignity, and in the right of all peoples to exercise them.**

All people have rights, especially when it comes to sovereignty and self-determination, except for the Jews who are not a people (Article 20). Article 24 sounds harmless enough but when put in the context of the *PNC* reveals outright discrimination and antisemitism, Stalinist-Soviet style once again. The Jewish People are left bereft “of justice, freedom, sovereignty,” and “self-determination” once they are denied their heritage and bond to the ancient homeland (*PNC*, Articles 19, 20 and 21). The secular PLO goes so far as to ignore the Koran when they nullify Jewish peoplehood and nationality. Jews must find their “human dignity” as individuals within the rights of other peoples.

The *PNC* excludes Jews from the family of nations.

HC Comparison:

Using the Koran as its constitution (*HC*, Article 8), Hamas recognizes the Jews as a “people,” one destined for elimination. All other peoples and a few surviving Jews are designed to be subjects living under Islam.

***PNC, Article 25:* For the realization of the goals of this Charter and its principles, the Palestine Liberation Organization will perform its role in the liberation of Palestine in accordance with the Constitution of this Organization.**

The PLO’s Constitution and the *PNC* were written at the same time in July 1968. The Constitution echoes the *PNC* but is a technical document relating to the general principles, national assembly and the executive branch of the PLO. The PLO Constitution provides organizational structure to facilitate the implementation of PLO objectives. Overall, the PLO Constitution is another call for the destruction of the State of Israel, similar to that of Hamas.

The PLO Constitution is not the same document as the *Constitution of Palestine* drawn up by the Palestinian Authority (PA) in 2003, which does not specifically outline borders in the future Palestinian State. The PA Constitution of 2003 declares Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine

(Introduction and Article 3). It also invokes the Palestinian right of refugee return (Introduction). Borrowing from the PLO Constitution the PA is to develop executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. At the same time, the PLO retained its status as the “sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people,” a contradiction if one thinks in terms of elections and democracy. The PNC and the PLO Constitution of 1968 are secular documents, but the future Palestinian State, according to the 2003 PA Constitution, declares Islam as its official religion and Sharia law as the basis for judicial decisions (Constitution of Palestine, Article 4).⁵ The Palestinian Authority moved closer to the Hamas state ideal.

HC Comparison:

The Islamist influence, apparently by way of *The Hamas Covenant*, is overwhelming. In practice, the supposedly secular PLO and Palestinian Authority began fusing with Hamas when it came time to implement the principles and legislation necessary for building a concrete Palestinian State as illustrated by the 2003 Constitution. For sure Hamas applauds the inclusion of Islam and Sharia law as religious and judicial pillars in the future Palestinian State.

On the other hand, Hamas is at variance with this same Constitution for declaring the PLO as the only “legitimate representative of the Palestinian People” and for not outlining its borders as ranging from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.

PNC, Article 26: The Palestine Liberation Organization, representative of the Palestinian revolutionary forces, is responsible for the Palestinian Arab people’s movement in its struggle - to retrieve its homeland, liberate and return to it and exercise the right to self-determination in it - in all military, political, and financial fields and also for whatever may be required by the Palestine case on the inter-Arab and international levels.

In the 1960s, the PLO became the self-appointed liberation organization to represent the Palestinian People. In October 1974, the seventh Arab Summit Conference officially designated the PLO as the “sole, legitimate representative” of the Palestinians. They remained so until Hamas challenged

⁵ “Constitution of Palestine,” *Wikisource*, retrieved June 3, 2015, http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Palestine.

their authority in the late 1980s. The PLO and Fatah gained legitimate representative status in the 1996 parliamentary and presidential elections; Hamas did the same in the 2006 parliament.

The PLO takes full responsibility for “retrieving,” “liberating,” and “returning” any land held by Israel. “Liberation” and “self-determination” are euphemisms for the destruction of Israel. The PLO’s role is to destroy Israel in the “military, political, and financial fields” for the sake of the Palestinians, and responsible for inter-Arab relations on an international level.

HC Comparison:

In 1988 Hamas also took the self-appointed leadership role, making the same claim as the PLO but this time with “Allah’s blessings.” Hamas took a similar approach when representing Palestinian Muslims as part of a broader Islamic front working for world Islamic conquest (*HC*, Articles 7 and 8). The Hamas call for Israel’s destruction is identical to that of the *PNC*, but is based on the Islamic right to all *waqf* lands, and rule by Sharia law (*HC*, Article 11). Hamas sees itself as the only legitimate organization representing Palestinian Muslims.

PNC, Article 27: The Palestine Liberation Organization shall cooperate with all Arab States, each according to its potentialities; and will adopt a neutral policy among them in the light of the requirements of the war of liberation; and on this basis it shall not interfere in the internal affairs of any Arab State.

PLO policies toward the Arab world are a result of the support they receive from those Arab countries in the “war of liberation.” Understanding their own precarious position in building alliances and intending to focus on the destruction of Israel the *PNC* declares they will not intervene in other Arab countries’ affairs so as not to alienate any potential allies. Hence the PLO declares a neutral policy toward inter-Arab rivalries.

HC Comparison:

Hamas has a more radical view when it comes to judging Arab countries’ support of Jihad against Israel and the Jews. Islam trumps all other interests, especially secular nationalism. All Muslims are to battle Israel. Hamas does not accept neutrality in the long term (see Chapter II “Ideologues”). One either supports Jihad or is against it, becoming either a friend or an enemy.

***PNC, Article 28:* The Palestinian Arab people assert the genuineness and independence of their national (*wataniyya*) revolution and reject all forms of intervention, trusteeship, and subordination.**

Since 1993 the Palestinian Authority draws its legitimacy from agreeing to work with Israel to jointly implement the Oslo Accords. Yet, according to the above article, the PLO is independent and rejects all mediation or compromises leading to less-than-full national sovereignty. By agreeing to the Oslo Accords (1993), the PLO/Fatah crossed the line and contradicted their own *Charter* when they established the Palestinian Authority (PA) to negotiate with Israel. This may be a tactical stage (or not) in a multi-step approach to lull Israel into complacency and eventually destroy the Jewish State. In retrospect, one could ask whether PA Chairman Yasir Arafat had a subtle destruction plan in mind during the Palestinian Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) and terror offensive waged against Israel from 2000-04.

HC Comparison:

The *HC* advocates the same uncompromising policy stated in *PNC* Article 28 and denounces any attempt at compromise, specifically the 1978-79 Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt (*HC*, Articles 11, 13, 32). Hamas also consistently condemns the Oslo Accords of the 1990s.

***PNC, Article 29:* The Palestinian people possess the fundamental and genuine legal right to liberate and retrieve their homeland. The Palestinian people determine their attitude toward all states and forces on the basis of the stands they adopt vis-a-vis to the Palestinian revolution to fulfill the aims of the Palestinian people.**

Article 29 is a continuation of Article 27, clearly going beyond neutrality. The PLO reciprocates the foreign policies of other states toward the “Palestinian revolution.” Those supporting the revolution will have the Palestinians as an ally and those who undermine or do not support them will be treated as enemies. As Harkabi explained it, anyone showing friendship toward Israel becomes an enemy. More so, the PLO views itself as a government in exile, and therefore behaves as a state, at least on the declarative front.

HC Comparison:

As stated before, Hamas views everyone within the prism of Islam as interpreted by the Muslim Brotherhood, and determines its policies toward others in the same reciprocal manner as the PLO. Previous commentary on *PNC* Articles 27 and 28 clarify their stand. The Hamas expectation is for Muslims with secondary Palestinian and Arab identities to subjugate themselves to the Islamic demand for Jihad and the “liberation of Palestine” (*HC*, Article 14).

PNC, Article 30: Fighters and carriers of arms in the war of liberation are the nucleus of the popular army which will be the protective force for the gains of the Palestinian Arab people.

The *PNC* views people who fight and carry arms as the heart of the true “popular army,” meant to include not just Palestinians, but all Arabs. There is also no prohibition against any non-Arab willing to join the cause.

HC Comparison:

The mention of a “protective force” can be considered parallel to the “defensive” Jihad explained in the commentary on *PNC* Article 14, in tandem with Hamas (*HC*, Articles 3, 7, and 10). The issue of non-Muslims joining the Jihad against Israel and the Jews is not clearly stated in the *HC* (see Chapter II “Ideologues”).

PNC, Article 31: The Organization shall have a flag, an oath of allegiance, and an anthem. All this shall be decided upon in accordance with a special regulation.

The PLO is preparing for a Palestinian State with a flag and an oath. Hamas has a flag and an oath of allegiance, but as of now there appears to be no official Hamas anthem. Hamas could easily use the PLO anthem without facing contradiction. The PLO anthem lends a veneer of Palestinian nationalization to one’s overall Islamic identity. The PLO belongs to the Arab world, while Hamas is the Palestinian component of the Muslim Brotherhood. Below is the PLO National Anthem calling for sacrifice and war, the same actions advocated by Hamas.

Fida'i - Fedayeen Warrior

My country, my country (or “warrior, warrior”)
 My country, the land of my grandfathers
 My country, my country (or “warrior, warrior”)⁶
 My country, my nation, the nation of eternity
 With my determination, my fire and the volcano of my revenge
 The longing of my blood to my land and home
 I have climbed the mountains and fought the wars
 I have conquered the impossible, and crossed the frontiers
 My country, my country, the nation of eternity
 With the resolve of the winds and the fire of the guns
 And the determination of my nation in the land of struggle
 Palestine is my home, Palestine is my fire, Palestine is my
 revenge and the land of eternal
 My country, my country, the nation of eternity
 I swear under the shade of the flag
 To my land and nation, and the fire of pain
 I will live as a guerrilla, I will go on as guerrilla, I will expire as guerrilla
 until I will be back
 My country, my country, the nation of eternity⁷

PNC, Article 32: Regulations, which shall be known as the Constitution of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, shall be annexed to this Charter. It will lay down the manner in which the Organization, and its organs and institutions, shall be constituted; the respective

⁶ “Fida’i,” *Wikipedia*, retrieved June 3, 2015, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fida%27i>.

The words “warrior, warrior” appear as the translation of “*fida’i, fida’i*.” “Palestinian National Anthem - Fida’i,” *Lyrics Translate*, retrieved June 3, 2015, <http://lyricstranslate.com/en/site-search?query=Palestinian+National+Anthem&op=Search#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=Palestinian%20National%20Anthem&gsc.page=1>.

The word “*bilad*” or “land” appears in the first line while “*fida’i*” or “warrior” appears in the third.

⁷ “Palestine National Anthem,” *Middle East Facts*, retrieved June 3, 2015, <http://www.middleeastfacts.com/middle-east/palestinian-national-anthem.php>.

The overall translation is taken from this site where the word “*bilad*” meaning “land” or “country” is used. The Palestine Affairs Council also emphasizes the word “country.”

competence of each; and the requirements of its obligation under the Charter.

As mentioned in the commentary on *PNC* Article 25, the PLO Constitution is a technical document. PLO ideals were transferred to the Constitution of the quasi-governmental Palestinian Authority of 2003. It was their first step as an autonomous but not-fully-independent regime striving for statehood. To repeat, the PA Constitution guarantees democratic rights and freedoms while power is exercised through the executive, legislative and judicial branches. Arabic is the official language, Islam the official religion and the principles of Islamic Sharia law form “the main source of legislation.”⁸ The PLO administered the Palestinian Authority since 1994 and won the parliamentary elections in 1996. The 2006 legislative ballots, however, resulted in a national unity government for a year and a half.

Hamas overthrew the PA in Gaza in June 2007 and took full control. In response, Fatah established an emergency government in the West Bank. Both Hamas and Fatah administered their own rules in their respective territories. Neither regime was, or is democratic, nor were elections held. Ideologically the PLO Constitution echoes the *PNC*. The Constitution of the Palestinian Authority is meant to become the basis for all law under the PA and the independent Palestinian State in the future. It must be emphasized that PLO/Fatah leaders make it clear their first loyalty is to the PLO/Fatah. Their secondary commitment is to the quasi-state Palestinian Authority. This leaves open questions of loyalty to the future independent Palestinian State as opposed to allegiance to a political faction.

HC Comparison:

The Koran is the Constitution of Hamas (*HC*, Article 8). Like the PA, Hamas is loyal to itself first and to a state framework second. Proof of loyalty to its organizational ideology became clear after the Hamas coup against the PA in Gaza in 2007.

PNC, Article 33: This Charter shall not be amended save by [vote of] a majority of two-thirds of the total membership of the National Congress of the Palestine

⁸ “Constitution of Palestine,” *Wikisource*.

**Liberation Organization [taken] at a special session
convened for that purpose.**

A two-thirds majority can amend the *PNC*. Allowing amendment or correction is an anthropocentric ideal where humans rule, can make decisions and reverse them. War and peace are in the hands of “the people” and their representatives after elections.

It is within *PNC* Article 33 that we see the possibility of conflict resolution should a two-thirds majority decide to change the *Charter*. The PLO voted to amend the *PNC* by removing the offending anti-Israel passages already in 1996 by a vote of 504 to 54 and then again two years later after the Wye Plantation Accords when President Clinton came to Gaza to witness another vote in December 1998. The revised *Charter* was meant to pave the road for a two-state solution.⁹ Eighteen years later (2016) nothing has changed nor are there any concrete proposed draft changes. As stated above, *The Palestinian National Charter* remains in full effect despite declared intentions to the contrary. One can only conclude that “secular” Palestinians prefer to preserve the *PNC* as is, despite their declared obligation to change it.

HC Comparison:

From the Hamas viewpoint, the *Covenant* or “Charter of Allah” is unchangeable; its essence is diocentric, of Divine inspiration. Allah is everlasting, does not change His mind and accordingly does not suffer human intervention in His dictates. Allowing amendment is a major point where *The Hamas Covenant* and *The Palestinian National Charter* differ.

Conclusion

The Palestinian National Charter and *The Hamas Covenant* are similar in many ways. In calling for the destruction of the State of Israel, neither minces their words. The PLO speaks of a war of liberation on a secular nationalist level; Hamas insists on Holy War or Jihad. The PLO borrowed Jihadist concepts prior to the official establishment of Hamas and secularized them. Hamas retrieved the veiled Islamist lexicon from the PLO and returned it to its original Islamic context—Jihad.

The PLO demands a secular Arab State to replace Israel. Some Jews would be allowed to stay with supposed equal rights, but they would expel most of the Jews who would survive the Palestinian Arab victory. Hamas demands

⁹ Rubin, Barry and Rubin, Judith Colp, *Yasir Arafat, A Political Biography*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2005, pp. 167-168.

an Islamic State and would slaughter any Jews who refused to accept the *dhimmi* inferior status. For Hamas it is of no significance when Jews arrived (until 1917, after 1948, etc.), but rather it is their acceptance or non-acceptance of the *dhimma* strictures that would determine if they live or die (*HC*, Article 31).

On the declarative level, the PLO is battling the State of Israel and Zionists—meaning all supporters of Jewish nationalism. Hamas is battling Israel, Judaism and the Jewish People worldwide (*HC*, Article 28 last paragraph). Hamas calls for the overall annihilation of Jews (*HC*, Article 7), except for the few who would choose to accept full Muslim sovereignty and the humiliating *dhimmi* arrangement.

While both the *PNC* and *HC* are exterminationist toward the State of Israel, for Hamas the Jews are the ultimate conspirator, working to undermine the Islamic world on every level. The PLO finishes its combat mission with Israel's destruction. Hamas views the destruction of Israel as only one victory against universal Jewish conspiracies. Hamas is clear in its antisemitic policies while the PLO denies any enmity toward Jews. Still, the PLO denies the Jewish right to national memory and an independent national existence in the ancient homeland.

There are major concerns about the PLO and the secular Palestinian nationalist attitude toward Jews. To single out Jews as the only people whose nationalism is to be denied, is to separate them from the rest of humanity. Their approach is simple prejudice, specifically antisemitism. On the level of written intent, secular Palestinian nationalism is not annihilationist toward Jews worldwide. Still, we must keep in mind that Haj Amin el-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem held in such great esteem by both Hamas and the PLO was a staunch Nazi ally during World War II. He outwardly demanded the extermination of the Jews and sent Bosnian Muslim troops to help facilitate the Holocaust (see Chapter III "Jewish National Liberation," Chapter VI "*The Hamas Covenant Analysis*" Article 22 and specifically Chapter VIII "Czarist Nazi Integration").

This leaves us with the last dilemma of whether the "anti-Zionism" of secular Palestinian nationalism is a veneer for an overall universal antisemitism, or do the secularists say exactly what they mean? Behavior and comments by Palestinian Authority officials originating in the PLO from the mid-1990s to the present, lead many to believe that claims they make denying

antisemitism ring hollow.¹⁰ Article 4 of the PA's Constitution of Palestine sets Islam as the official religion of their territories and state-to-be in the future. Sharia law is the "main source of legislation." Islam and Sharia law lean on the Koran as its pillar of legitimacy. The Koran is extremely ambiguous toward the Jews, and is often exceedingly hostile. Sharia law does not advocate Jewish equality but rather the *dhimmi* status extrapolated from the Koranic verse 9:29 and implemented over the centuries. More so, there are numerous antisemitic quotes by PLO and PA leaders as noted previously in this work.

The PLO/*PNC* denial of Jewish peoplehood and nationalism goes a step beyond "Replacement Theology" reviewed earlier. Today's *PNC* is the political expression of "Palestinianism" as discussed by Bat Ye'or,¹¹ and not only a Palestine national document asserting the rights of the Arab population. As we have noted previously, "Replacement Theology" gives way to a secular "Erasure Theology" cloaked in the guise of liberal, secular, individual human rights, whereby Jews will find national expression in other cultural and state entities. Supposedly, only Zionism or Jewish nationalism is seen as illegitimate and detrimental to universal stability.

If the PLO were to finally change the *PNC* to acknowledge Israel's right to exist, as demanded by the Wye Accords, it would prove secular Palestinian nationalism to be neither antisemitic nor anti-Zionist. Until then, there is much in common between the PLO and Hamas foundational documents and their respective political movements in relation to Israel, Jewish nationalism and Jews even if the *PNC* does not explicitly call for Jewish destruction.

While *The Hamas Covenant* advocates world conquest through Jihad, *The Palestinian National Charter* does not make any such demand. The PLO/PA may be brought closer to such Jihadi thinking in the future due to the increasing Islamization of secular Palestinian nationalism and the 2003 Constitution declaring Islam the official religion.

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¹⁰ For a comprehensive review of Fatah, PLO and Palestinian Authority (PA) antisemitism, see "Palestine Media Watch," for foreign language translation, numerous articles and primary source research of Palestinian media, both written and electronic, <http://www.palwatch.org/pages/aboutus.aspx>.

¹¹ Bat Ye'or, pp. 366-371.