



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**WHY REBELS GOVERN: EXPLAINING ISLAMIST  
MILITANT GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC GOODS  
PROVISION**

by

Alexander J. Daley

September 2018

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Mohammed M. Hafez  
Thomas H. Johnson

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**WHY REBELS GOVERN: EXPLAINING ISLAMIST MILITANT  
GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC GOODS PROVISION**

Alexander J. Daley  
Lieutenant, United States Navy  
BA, University of Florida, 2013

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from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
September 2018**

Approved by: Mohammed M. Hafez  
Advisor

Thomas H. Johnson  
Second Reader

Mohammed M. Hafez  
Chair, Department of National Security Affairs

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## **ABSTRACT**

Rebel groups and insurgencies have been an important topic of study for several decades, particularly with the rise and success of groups like Hezbollah, al-Qaeda, Hamas, and the Islamic State. When rebel groups such as these are discussed in the media and in popular culture, they are generally portrayed purely as violent organizations bent on imposing strict religious doctrines on an unwilling population. Often missing in these discussions are the nuances of how rebel groups actually act and operate. There are numerous cases of rebel groups gaining territory and governing over their constituents effectively and efficiently—sometimes better than the official state government.

Using across-case and within-case analysis of Hezbollah, Hamas, and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), this thesis explains why Islamist militant groups choose to provide governance and public goods to a population instead of primarily using coercive violence to achieve their goals. Ultimately, this thesis finds that rebel legitimacy and territorial control along with overall group capability are the most important factors behind rebel governance.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AAS	Ansar al Sharia
AQAP	al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
AQIM	al Qaeda in the Maghreb
IDF	Israeli Defense Force
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IRGC	Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps
IS	Islamic State
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PA	Palestinian Authority
PDRY	People's Democratic Republic of Yemen
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
YAR	Yemen Arab Republic

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. PURPOSE

Rebel groups and insurgencies have been an important topic of study for several decades, particularly with the rise and success of groups like Hezbollah, al Qaeda, Hamas, and the Islamic State. When rebel groups such as these are discussed in the media and in popular culture, they are generally portrayed solely as violent and ruthless organizations bent on imposing strict religious doctrines on an unwilling population. Often missing in these discussions are the nuances of how rebel groups actually act and operate. Although 70 percent of rebel groups do not provide public goods or services,<sup>1</sup> there are numerous cases of rebel groups gaining territory and governing over their constituents effectively and efficiently—sometimes better than the official state government.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the Islamic State, al Qaeda and its affiliates have been the most concerning insurgent groups for the United States and its allies for two decades. Western countries and their Middle Eastern allies have experienced thousands of civilian and military casualties at the hands of al Qaeda, and the study of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) remains vital to the security of Western countries and their allies. The United States has also remained concerned with the strength and operations of Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah in Lebanon since the 1980s, in part due to the United States' close relationship with Israel. Interestingly, despite their designation as terrorist organizations, all three groups have displayed strong elements of rebel governance and have provided goods and services to their constituents.

This thesis will explain why Islamist militant groups have provided governance and public goods to the constituents within their territory. While many aspects of rebel-civilian

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<sup>1</sup> Megan Stewart, "Civil War as State Building: Strategic Governance in Civil War," *International Organization* 72, no. 1 (2017): 206.

<sup>2</sup> Notable examples of rebel groups that have provided extensive levels of governance and public goods include the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in the Palestinian Territories, Sendero Luminoso in the Upper Huallaga Valley in Peru, and the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) in Guinea-Bissau.

relationships have been studied in-depth, such as the use of violence and recruitment, rebel governance has been understudied to date.<sup>3</sup> By casting a light on rebel governance, scholars may gain greater understanding into rebel-civilian interactions, and how and why insurgents provide public goods. These studies may help scholars and policymakers to understand insurgent motives and provide better prediction of rebel behavior.<sup>4</sup> This research may also provide insight on the potential for states to fight the influence of extremist groups by way of public goods provisions.

## **B. DEFINITIONS**

### **1. Civil War**

According to Stathis Kalyvas, civil war is broadly defined as “armed combat within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign entity between parties subject to a common authority at the outset of the hostilities.”<sup>5</sup> By Kalyvas’s definition, most ethnic insurgencies, sustained peasant insurrections, revolutions, anti-colonial uprisings, and resistance against foreign occupation classify as civil wars. Violent protests, low-level banditry, and riots are typically excluded from the category of civil wars as they leave state sovereignty intact.<sup>6</sup>

### **2. Rebel Groups and Insurgents**

For the purposes of this thesis, the terms rebel groups, rebel organizations, and insurgents will be used interchangeably. In general terms, rebel organizations are “consciously coordinated groups whose members engage in protracted violence with the intention of gaining undisputed political control over all or a portion of a pre-existing

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<sup>3</sup> Zachariah Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 7–15; Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly, “Introduction,” in *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, ed. Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 3–4.

<sup>4</sup> Nelson Kasfir, “Rebel Governance—Constructing a Field of Inquiry: Definitions, Scope, Patterns, Order, Causes” in *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, ed. Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 44.

<sup>5</sup> Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 17.

<sup>6</sup> Kalyvas, 19.

state's territory.”<sup>7</sup> These groups may be conventional military forces defecting from the state or irregulars utilizing guerrilla tactics, and may target their efforts toward the state, opposing rebel groups, or both. This includes groups that seek to overthrow the state, secessionist groups that pursue their own territory, as well as other belligerents seeking significant changes or reforms from the government.<sup>8</sup>

Civilians are distinct from rebel groups inasmuch as they do not plan, lead, or participate in combat. Although groups vary in how informally civilians and insurgents can move from one to the other, civilians are not classified as rebels or insurgents just because they provide material or popular support to the rebel organization.<sup>9</sup>

### **3. Governance**

Rebel rule can vary greatly from group to group. Some may focus on strict regulation of local residents while others provide governance, services, and promote civilian participation.<sup>10</sup> A broad definition of rebel governance includes any group that does one of the following: establishes a governing administration or structure over civilians, encourages civilian participation in decision-making (as evidenced by the creation of legislatures, local councils, or civilian advisory boards), or establishes regulations or taxes on commercial goods or services.<sup>11</sup> These governing structures may evolve over the course of a conflict and are likely to change over prolonged periods of fighting.

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<sup>7</sup> Kasfir, “Rebel Governance—Constructing a Field of Inquiry: Definitions, Scope, Patterns, Order, Causes,” 24.

<sup>8</sup> Kasfir, 24; Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 17.

<sup>9</sup> Kasfir, “Rebel Governance—Constructing a Field of Inquiry: Definitions, Scope, Patterns, Order, Causes,” 24.

<sup>10</sup> Kasfir, 23.

<sup>11</sup> Kasfir, 32–34.

#### **4. Public Goods**

Public goods and services can be provided in a variety of ways. Groups may provide education or medical services to their constituents, or even establish programs for distributing food, collecting garbage, or establishing law and order.<sup>12</sup> Depending on the organization, these goods may be distributed to a targeted group of participants only (exclusive provision) or more widely to a large segment of the population regardless of participation (inclusive provision). Public goods and services may be used interchangeably with the terms social welfare and welfare provision.

#### **5. Violence**

Methods of violence employed by rebel groups can take on a variety of forms. Far more than just killings and death tolls, rebel violence includes a variety of human rights violations and atrocities aimed at combatants, non-combatants, or both. Forms of violence include killings, beatings of non-combatants, rape of women and children, abduction, pillaging, forced relocation and labor, acts of destruction and terrorism, or threats to commit any of the aforementioned acts.<sup>13</sup>

Similar to the provision of public goods, violence can be distinguished between selective violence and indiscriminate violence. While selective violence is targeted only against those participating against the rebel group, indiscriminate violence is used against its victims regardless of participation.<sup>14</sup>

### **C. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES**

Civilians represent both a challenge and an opportunity for rebel groups. While civilians are capable of betraying rebels and assisting the government or a rival group, they can also provide rebels with recruits, information, and food.<sup>15</sup> Assistance from civilians was a key goal of the two most prominent revolutionaries of the twentieth century, Mao

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<sup>12</sup> Stewart, "Civil War as State-Making: Strategic Governance in Civil War," 205–207

<sup>13</sup> Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*, 18, 199–201.

<sup>14</sup> Weinstein, 19.

<sup>15</sup> Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly, "Introduction," 3.

Tse-Tung and Che Guevara. Both Mao and Guevara emphasized the importance of civilian support and collaboration<sup>16</sup> and their writings have inspired rebel groups for decades. Similar to Kalyvas' argument that civilian support is based on "varying combinations of persuasion and coercion,"<sup>17</sup> Mao argued that establishing systems of governance and maintaining civilian support were essential for rebel survival.<sup>18</sup> Guevara, meanwhile, emphasized the role of addressing social welfare through public goods.<sup>19</sup> By providing governance, these revolutionaries both believed they could win over the local populace while dissuading them to support the government. According to Grynkeiwich, rebel governance and public good provision also have the effect of threatening the legitimacy of the state government as derived from the social contract.<sup>20</sup>

The existing scholarly literature on why rebel governance occurs can be divided into five primary arguments: *legitimacy and rebel territorial control, secessionism, state's territorial penetration, and rebel capacity*.

- Legitimacy and Rebel Territorial Control

Several scholars have examined the role that building legitimacy plays in rebel governance, with Mampilly emphasizing the need to provide public goods as a way for rebel groups to gain legitimacy and support from constituents.<sup>21</sup> He argues that the relationship between rebels and civilians is a form of social contract, and that in order to achieve cooperation rebel groups must maintain their end of the social contract through governance and public goods.<sup>22</sup> Stewart argues that secessionist insurgencies use inclusive

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<sup>16</sup> Ernesto Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); Mampilly, 11–14; Mao Tse-Tung, *Basic tactics* (New York: Praeger, 1966), 130–144; Mao Tse-Tung, *On Protracted War* (Honolulu, HI: University Press of the Pacific, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 101.

<sup>18</sup> Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, 12.

<sup>19</sup> Mampilly, 12.

<sup>20</sup> Alexis G. Grynkeiwich, "Welfare as Warfare: How Violent Non-State Groups Use Social Services to Attack the State," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31, no. 4 (2008): 350.

<sup>21</sup> Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, 52–53.

<sup>22</sup> Mampilly, 52–53, 55, 58.

goods in order to legitimize their territorial claims and that they strive to gain recognition of their statehood and legitimacy through domestic and international support.<sup>23</sup> By providing inclusive goods and services, rebel groups are able to mimic state functions and legitimize their claims of sovereignty.

Other scholars have emphasized the role that territorial control plays in rebel governance. Researches have shown that groups with territorial control are more likely to attempt to build a positive reputation within their constituency compared with groups without territorial control (once a low-level threshold of reputation has been crossed).<sup>24</sup> Other scholars have treated territorial control as an assumed characteristic of rebel groups who attempt to create systems governance,<sup>25</sup> while Kasfir has explicitly argues that territorial security is a precondition for rebel governance.<sup>26</sup> Kalyvas, however, maintains that rebel groups can provide low-levels governance without territorial security, but that rebels must have long-term security over their territory in order to provide high-level governance.<sup>27</sup> This is because the successful implementation of goods and services “requires a long-term rebel administration with a stable presence.”

Mampilly argues that there are multiple levels of territorial control, which will vary spatially and temporally. He claims that in contested areas, rebel groups are more likely to use strategies focused on winning the “hearts and minds” of civilians.<sup>28</sup> He clarifies this assertion to argue that rebel groups will generally need to have “a sufficient period of territorial control” in order to provide advanced levels of governance, to include a civilian

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<sup>23</sup> Stewart, “Civil War as State-Making: Strategic Governance in Civil War,” 205–226.

<sup>24</sup> Seden Akcinaroglu and Efe Tokdemir, “To Instill Fear or Love: Terrorist Groups and the Strategy of Building Reputation,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 2016, 16, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894216634292>.

<sup>25</sup> Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly, “Introduction,” 1.

<sup>26</sup> Kasfir, “Rebel Governance—Constructing a Field of Inquiry: Definitions, Scope, Patterns, Order, Causes,” 25.

<sup>27</sup> Stathis Kalyvas, “Performing the Nation-State: Rebel Governance and Symbolic Processes” in *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, ed. Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 152.

<sup>28</sup> Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, 59–60.

government apparatus and public welfare provision.<sup>29</sup> This is largely because groups without territorial control are more focused on defending their territory than on providing goods and services to constituents.<sup>30</sup>

The correlation between rebel legitimacy and territorial control with rebel governance provides the basis for the first hypothesis of this thesis:

***H<sub>1</sub>: Territorial security and legitimacy are significant factors behind insurgents' decision and ability to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

- Secessionism

Recent studies have also emphasized groups' goals as a major factor for rebel governance. Secessionist groups which strive to create an independent state are more likely to create new systems of governing civilians, while non-secessionist groups are focused on taking control of the state from within by overthrowing the central government and are able to choose to keep existing government structures, create new ones, or do nothing until after victory is achieved.<sup>31</sup> Mampilly also argues that secessionist groups are more likely to develop effective systems of government compared with non-secessionist groups (who strive to capture existing power structures).<sup>32</sup> Similarly, Stewart argues that secessionist groups are more likely to provide civilians with inclusive incentives and public goods while non-secessionist groups typically use exclusive incentives.<sup>33</sup>

The role that secession plays in a group's use on governance provides the basis for the second hypothesis:

***H<sub>2</sub>: Secessionist rebel groups are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than non-secessionist groups.***

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<sup>29</sup> Mampilly, 63.

<sup>30</sup> Mampilly, 63.

<sup>31</sup> Kasfir, "Rebel Governance—Constructing a Field of Inquiry: Definitions, Scope, Patterns, Order, Causes," 40; Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, 74.

<sup>32</sup> Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, 214–217.

<sup>33</sup> Stewart, "Civil War as State-Making: Strategic Governance in Civil War," 205–226.

- State's Territorial Penetration

An additional factor behind rebel governance is based on the previous level of societal penetration by the incumbent government. Mampilly argues that effective governance is less likely in places of low-level state-penetration, and that in places of strong state-penetration, rebel groups will co-opt the existing networks and institutions into its new governmental infrastructure.<sup>34</sup> Other scholars have argued the opposite, asserting that rebel governments are more likely to take root in areas where state presence is weak.<sup>35</sup> According to Wickham-Crowley's studies of Latin America, rebels are more likely to form counter-states that effectively serve in the traditional capacity of the governments when the incumbent government is weak.<sup>36</sup> These counter-states typically have high levels of rebel governance and are capable of providing police and judicial functions, material security and welfare, as well as physical security from outside attacks.<sup>37</sup>

Wickham-Crowley's argument that strong rebel governance emerges in weak states provides the basis of the third hypothesis:

***H<sub>3</sub>: Rebel groups that exist in weak states are likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

- Rebel capacity

The final major approach to rebel governance is based on the capacity of the rebel group itself. By examining rebel capabilities (military strength, leadership quality, foreign sponsorship, social capital, and resource financing among others), Wood argues that weak groups are incentivized to use violence against civilians because they are unable to provide

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<sup>34</sup> Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, 68–73, 210–214.

<sup>35</sup> Mampilly, 49–50.

<sup>36</sup> Timothy Wickham-Crowley, "Del Gobierno de Abajo al Gobierno de Arriba ... and Back: Transitions to and from Rebel Governance in Latin America, 1956–1990," in *Rebel Governance in Civil War*, ed. Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 50–51.

<sup>37</sup> Wickham-Crowley, 47.

sufficient incentives for civilian support.<sup>38</sup> Strong groups, meanwhile, have fewer incentives to use violence over time and are more likely to “purchase” civilian loyalty using incentives.<sup>39</sup> Wood’s analysis of rebel group strength is based on the ratio of rebel forces to government forces, popular mobilization capability, and level of foreign sponsorship.<sup>40</sup>

Wood’s argument on the role of rebel capability provides the basis of the fourth and final hypothesis:

***H4: Rebel groups with greater overall capability are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than groups with moderate to weak capability.***

#### **D. RESEARCH DESIGN AND FINDINGS**

The three case studies examined in this thesis are Hezbollah, Hamas, and AQAP. Across-case and within-case comparisons of these groups allow for an analysis of the causal factors behind a group’s decision to utilize governance over violence. Studying these groups presents useful comparisons in the ultimate goal of explaining Islamist militant governance.

Research for this thesis is based on a qualitative, multi-case study analysis. While quantitative data and statistics are used when appropriate, a qualitative approach provides a more nuanced and holistic approach. Due to the unique backgrounds and complex variables of the rebel groups in this thesis, a comparative and qualitative approach provides a better understanding to the multi-faceted and interconnected variables involved.

Research for this thesis relied heavily on academic books and journal articles for general information of the groups involved, interactions with civilians, the use of violence, and levels of governance and public good provision. This thesis also utilizes primary

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<sup>38</sup> Reed M. Wood, “Opportunities to Kill or Incentives for Restraint? Rebel Capabilities, the Origins of Support, and Civilian Victimization in Civil War,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 31, no. 5 (2013): 463–468, 472; Reed M. Wood, “Rebel Capability and Strategic Violence Against Civilians,” *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 5 (2010): 601–605, 610.

<sup>39</sup> Wood, “Opportunities to Kill or Incentives for Restraint?,” 463.

<sup>40</sup> Wood, 469.

sources from the rebel organizations and their leaders in addition to journalistic accounts that address these groups, their operations, and civilian interviews depicting personal experiences.

From examining the existing literature on rebel governance and the three case studies in this thesis, I ultimately argue that the most significant reasons in explaining rebel governance concern territorial security and legitimacy (Hypothesis 1) and the overall capability and funding of the rebel group (Hypothesis 4). While secessionist motivations (Hypothesis 2) and the presence of a weak state (Hypothesis 3) may play a role, their impact was noticeably less clear from qualitative analysis.

## II. HEZBOLLAH CASE STUDY

### A. INTRODUCTION

Hezbollah serves as an insightful organization to examine regarding rebel violence and public good provision. Since its creation in 1982, Hezbollah has actively engaged in social welfare programs to benefit the constituents within its territory. Interestingly, while it has engaged in reoccurring violent conflict with Israel, its use of violence within Lebanon as a whole has typically been minimal and its use of violence against its constituents almost non-existent.

This case study will discuss the development of Hezbollah and how it fits into the complicated and chaotic history of Lebanon, in addition to its use of violent and non-violent strategies. It will also examine how this case study fits into the hypotheses listed in the first chapter and how they compare with Hamas and AQAP.

### B. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Hezbollah began in 1982 and operated primarily in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.<sup>41</sup> By the time Hezbollah became fully operational in 1984, it had expanded into southern Lebanon. Hezbollah formally announced itself and its military wing, the Islamic Resistance brigades, in 1985 with the publication of "An Open Letter: The Hezbollah Program."<sup>42</sup> Before its evolution into a legitimate political actor, Hezbollah's early identity was as an armed militia group fighting against Israeli occupation and against other Lebanese militias during the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990).<sup>43</sup>

Several regional and national conditions factored in Hezbollah's creation and rise. By the 1980s, the Middle East had grown increasingly disenchanted with pan-Arabism.

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<sup>41</sup> Joshua L. Gleis and Benedetta Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 35; Krista E. Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots: Governance by Islamist Terrorist and Guerrilla Groups* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2016), 92–93.

<sup>42</sup> Lebanese Hezbollah, "Open Letter Addressed to the Oppressed in Lebanon and the World," News Release, February 16, 1985, [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC\\_0000361273.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000361273.pdf); Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 92.

<sup>43</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 92.

This secular notion, championed by Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser and other leaders throughout the 1950s and 1960s, began its decline after Israel's victory in the 1967 Six-Day War.<sup>44</sup> Combined with widespread political and military failures throughout the region, political Islam rose as a prominent alternative.<sup>45</sup>

The 1979 Iranian Revolution was perhaps more important, sparking notions of political Islam throughout the Muslim world—particularly among Shia Muslims. Shia felt empowered and emboldened by what they saw in Iran, and the Islamic Republic made it its goal to export the revolution to Muslim countries around the world.<sup>46</sup>

Domestically, Lebanese Shia, who make up 1.4 million of Lebanon's roughly 4 million citizens, were underrepresented politically and felt treated as second-class citizens by the country's Christian and Sunni population.<sup>47</sup> The Shia-dominated southern suburbs of Beirut, for example, constituted one-sixth of Lebanon's population in 1993 and, in some parts, had an average per capita income at 14 percent of the average Lebanese citizen.<sup>48</sup> The 1975 invasion by Syria and particularly the 1982 invasion by Israel furthered the belief among Lebanese Shia that they must take care of themselves and were a crucial factor behind the birth of Hezbollah.<sup>49</sup>

Hezbollah was formed as a new organization by a union of young leaders from several other parties, namely the existing Shia militia group Amal.<sup>50</sup> After the 1982 Israeli invasion, Iran provided much-needed money and weapons to the young group, even

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<sup>44</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 37.

<sup>45</sup> Gleis and Berti, 37.

<sup>46</sup> Gleis and Berti, 36.

<sup>47</sup> Shawn Teresa Flanigan and Mounah Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad: Nonprofits as Resistance Organizations," *Middle East Policy* 16, no. 2 (2009), 127; Augustus Richard Norton, "The Role of Hezbollah in Lebanese Domestic Politics," *The International Spectator* 42, no. 4 (2007), 475.

<sup>48</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 127.

<sup>49</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 38; Simon Haddad, "The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon's Hezbollah," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no. 1 (2006), 23; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 94.

<sup>50</sup> Shawn Teresa Flanigan, "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations: The Cases of Hizballah and the Tamil Tigers," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31, no. 6 (2008); Norton, "The Role of Hezbollah," 577; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 93.

sending fifteen-hundred Iranian Revolutionary Guards to provide training to Hezbollah fighters.<sup>51</sup>

In its early years, Hezbollah was adamantly opposed to participating in the Lebanese political system and even refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the government.<sup>52</sup> Like other armed groups involved in the civil war (the consolidated Christian group named the Lebanese Forces, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), and the Progressive Socialist Party), Hezbollah developed a social services program in order to provide public goods to those within its territory.<sup>53</sup> Hezbollah, however, suffered a decline in support by the end of the civil war due to the heavy losses Lebanon suffered from Israel and an unpopular system of imposing harsh Islamic law in Hezbollah strongholds.<sup>54</sup>

The Lebanese civil war ended in November 1989 (although some fighting continued into 1990) with the signing of the Taif Accord and Syria's promise to assist in establishing peace. For various reasons, Hezbollah was the only armed political group in Lebanon that did not disarm following the Taif Accord.<sup>55</sup> While Syria supported both Hezbollah and its primary adversary, Amal, until its departure in 2005, Syria's presence was overall beneficial to Hezbollah as it assured that Hezbollah could continue receiving supplies from Iran. Hezbollah's popularity steadily rose throughout the 1990s due to its successful military achievements against Israel and the vast social welfare network it provided to Shia populations.<sup>56</sup>

With both the ratification of the Taif Accord and the death of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989, Hezbollah shifted in favor of participation in Lebanese politics and

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<sup>51</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 39–40; Haddad, "The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon's Hezbollah," 24.

<sup>52</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 40–41.

<sup>53</sup> Anne Marie Baylouny, "Born Violent: Armed Political Parties and Non-State Governance in Lebanon's Civil War," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 25, no. 2 (2014): 335–340.

<sup>54</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 40–41.

<sup>55</sup> Gleis and Berti, 42–43.

<sup>56</sup> Gleis and Berti, 47.

elections.<sup>57</sup> Although done primarily for pragmatic reasons, this was nevertheless a watershed moment for Hezbollah and a major change from its past views. Hezbollah leaders believed that participation in the existing system would allow it to bring about greater change than could be achieved through attempts to overthrow the political system.<sup>58</sup> Hezbollah continued to soften its tone, embraced Lebanese patriotism and nationalism, began working with Christian parties and communities, and participated in parliamentary elections beginning in 1992 and municipal elections in 1998.<sup>59</sup> Although Hezbollah initially restricted its participation to parliamentary and municipal elections, Hezbollah joined the government's executive cabinet after Syria's 2005 withdrawal from Lebanon.<sup>60</sup>

Although Hezbollah largely abandoned domestic violence in favor of political participation, it is believed to have been responsible for the 2005 assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri<sup>61</sup> and seized control of large parts of the capital city of Beirut in a violent 2008 conflict between pro-government forces and Hezbollah-led opposition.<sup>62</sup>

While some scholars predicted the decline of Hezbollah after Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon, its representation in parliament increased steadily throughout the

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<sup>57</sup> Gleis and Berti, 44–47; Haddad, "The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon's Hezbollah," 24; A. Nizar Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Islamists and Local Politics: A New Reality," *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 5 (2000), 743.

<sup>58</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 109.

<sup>59</sup> Eitan Azani, "The Hybrid Terrorist Organization: Hezbollah as a Case Study," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 36, no. 11 (2013), 909–910; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 44–47; Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Islamists and Local Politics," 751; Norton, "The Role of Hezbollah," 481.

<sup>60</sup> Flanigan, "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations"; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 47–50.

<sup>61</sup> "Lebanon: UN Names Hezbollah Men in Rafik Hariri Case," BBC, July 29, 2011, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14345997>.

<sup>62</sup> Tom Perry, "Lebanon Political Conflict Turns Violent," *Reuters*, May 6, 2008, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-strike/lebanon-political-conflict-turns-violent-idUSL0761005520080507>.

1990s and 2000s.<sup>63</sup> Syria and Iran have continued their assistance to Hezbollah, further fueling the group's important role in Lebanese politics.<sup>64</sup>

### C. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To understand Hezbollah's primary goals and ideology, it is important to examine the themes and statements of its 1985 Open Letter and 2009 Manifesto. With clear anti-American and anti-Israeli sentiment throughout, the 1985 Open Letter listed four objectives: forcing Israel out of Lebanon along with their eventual destruction; forcing the United States, France, and their allies from Lebanon; justice against the Phalange for their cooperation with the United States and Israel; and the creation of a system of government chosen by the people, with Hezbollah's clear preference being an Islamist system.<sup>65</sup> The 2009 Manifesto meanwhile provides a more refined and mature view of the world, although several of its underlying views remain unchanged.<sup>66</sup> For example, rather than referring to the West as evil, Hezbollah criticizes U.S. hegemony and the negative impact that globalization has had on Muslims.<sup>67</sup> The 2009 Manifesto also emphasizes the importance of its regional allies, primarily Syria and Iran.

The 1985 Open Letter calls for the establishment of an Islamic state modelled after the Iranian system. This includes not just the incorporation of Islamic principles into the political system but the rule of Islamic jurist-theologian as well.<sup>68</sup> These ideas were abandoned in practice by the late-1980s however, and were officially dropped in the 2009

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<sup>63</sup> Flanigan, "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations," 500; Haddad, "The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon's Hezbollah," 22; Ilene R. Prusher, "Through Charity, Hezbollah Charms Lebanon," *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 19, 2000.

<sup>64</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 123; Krista E. Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 32, no. 8 (2009), 671.

<sup>65</sup> Lebanese Hezbollah, "Open Letter Addressed to the Oppressed in Lebanon and the World," CIA, February 16, 1985, [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC\\_0000361273.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000361273.pdf).

<sup>66</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 55–57.

<sup>67</sup> Gleis and Berti, 55–57.

<sup>68</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 94.

Manifesto.<sup>69</sup> Making no reference to any issues with political participation or an Islamic state, the 2009 Manifesto instead calls for a “political system that truly represents the will of the people.”<sup>70</sup> Now participating in the Lebanese political system, Hezbollah’s political platforms have emphasized economic rights, social justice, human rights, improved status and representation for Lebanese Shia, and the incorporation of Islamic-based reform into legislation.<sup>71</sup>

Historically, the fight against Israel and Zionism has been Hezbollah’s primary reason for existing. The fight fuels Hezbollah’s narrative and it thrives on any conflict with Israel.<sup>72</sup> Its efforts against Israel have widened its base and provided it legitimacy in Lebanon, even among non-Shia. While Hezbollah has toned down its rhetoric regarding the destruction of the Israeli state and instead focuses on the rights of Palestinians and changing Israel from within, Hezbollah today remains fully opposed to any negotiated agreement between Arabs and Israel.<sup>73</sup>

#### **D. STRENGTH OF STATE GOVERNMENT**

Due to the civil war, Lebanon was considered a failed and collapsed state throughout the 1980s and a weak state after Syrian intervention in 1990.<sup>74</sup> Municipal elections were not held in Lebanon for 35 years, which led to a decline in financial, technical, and human capacity, and decimated institutions for governance and public good provision. This was exacerbated by the neglect of Lebanon’s state government, both during and after its civil war.<sup>75</sup> Conditions were especially poor in Lebanon’s rural areas and the

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<sup>69</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 57–58; Graham Usher, “Hizballah, Syria, and the Lebanese Elections,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 26, no. 2 (1997), 63–64.

<sup>70</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 57–58; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 94.

<sup>71</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 101–110, 114.

<sup>72</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 53.

<sup>73</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 57; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 114.

<sup>74</sup> Robert I. Rotberg, “Failed States in a World of Terror,” *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 4 (2002), 134.

<sup>75</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, “Hezbollah’s Social Jihad,” 128.

southern suburb of Beirut as the state government focused its efforts in Beirut's urban areas.

It is in such weak states that groups like Hezbollah are able to exist. As Tamara Coffman Wittes argues, "only regimes with insufficient capacity to enforce their monopoly on violence and with weakened legitimacy for their governance and political institutions are compelled to allow such compromised groups to participate in politics with their weapons in hand."<sup>76</sup> In stronger states, like Egypt and Jordan, armed groups are typically suppressed by the central government.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, the citizens of weak states generally have little faith that their government can provide for their security and welfare, and often turn to community-based organizations like Hezbollah.<sup>78</sup>

Lebanon's status as a weak state is a primary reason why Hezbollah and its armed-wing are able to exist, despite the group's demonstrated ability to challenge Lebanon's monopoly of violence.<sup>79</sup> Lebanon has proven itself incapable of projecting itself in the areas where Hezbollah operates—a lack of sovereign control which points to its failed status.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, Lebanon's status as a weak state also explains the level of foreign intervention in the country, as both Israel and Syria maintained a recurring military presence in the country, and Syria maintained a heavy hand in Lebanese political decisions until 2005.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Tamara Coffman Wittes, *Freedoms Unsteady March: Americas Role in Building Arab Democracy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Inst. Press, 2008), 130.

<sup>77</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 89–90.

<sup>78</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*.

<sup>79</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad"; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 118.

<sup>80</sup> Nadav Morag, "A Tale of Two Failed Mideast States: The U.S. Should Act Forcefully and Not Allow Gaza and Lebanon to Remain Failed States," *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 7, 2006.

<sup>81</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 118–119.

## E. TERRITORIAL CONTROL

Hezbollah began operating out of the Bekaa Valley in the early 1980s before expanding to the heavily-Shia areas in southern Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs.<sup>82</sup> Hezbollah operates with three local councils, with one in each of these regions.<sup>83</sup> It acts as the de facto government in those areas where the state government has little access or capability.<sup>84</sup> While Hezbollah does not limit its services to non-Shia in its areas of operations, Hezbollah operates primarily in areas that are majority Shia (depicted in Figure 1) due to the extremely sectarian nature of Lebanon.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 124; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 35.

<sup>83</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 93.

<sup>84</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 91, 119.

<sup>85</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 127–128.

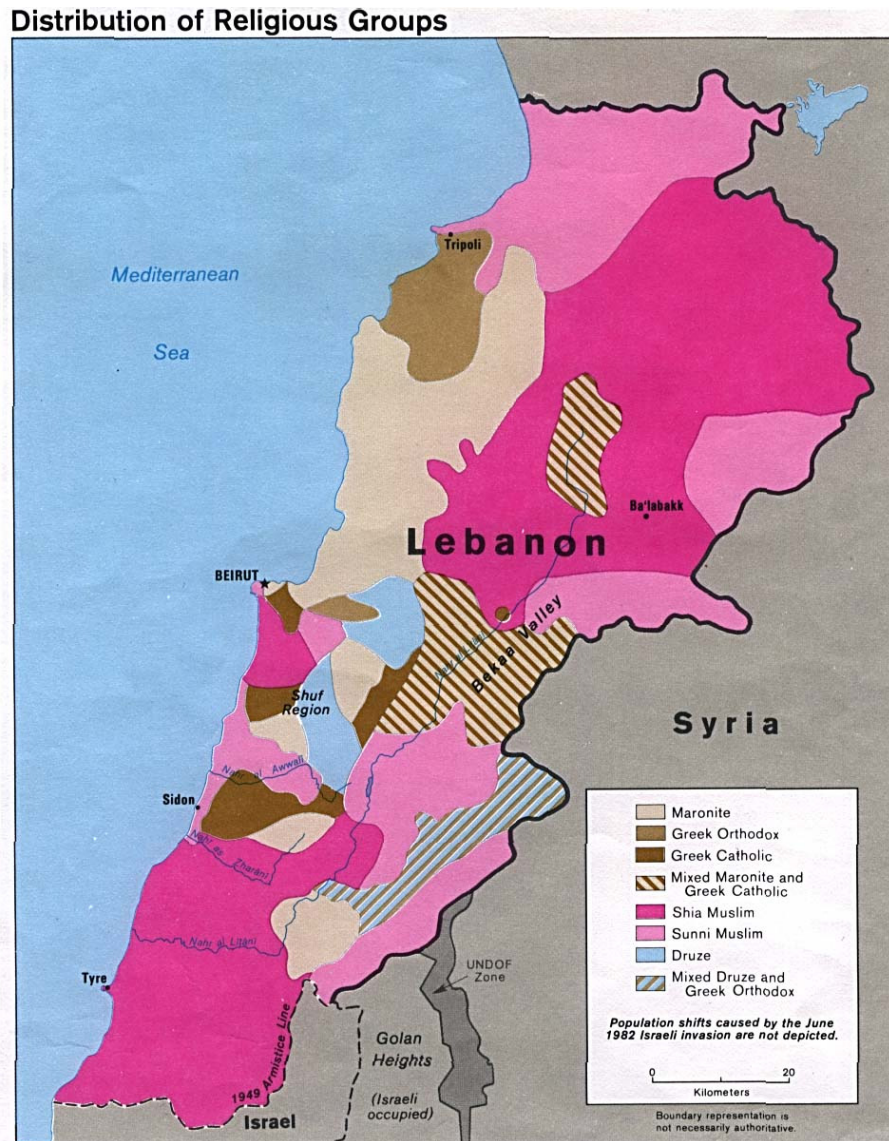


Figure 1. Religious composition of Lebanon.<sup>86</sup>

While Hezbollah has never indicated a desire to create a separate or autonomous state from the Lebanese government, Hezbollah nevertheless maintains such strong control in its territories that the Lebanese police is known to lack any authority in these areas.<sup>87</sup> Hezbollah flags can be spotted frequently throughout its territory, along with displays of Shia cleric

<sup>86</sup> Source: “Distribution of Religious Groups,” University of Texas at Austin, accessed February 15, 2018, [http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle\\_east\\_and\\_asia/lebanon\\_religions\\_83.jpg](http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/lebanon_religions_83.jpg).

<sup>87</sup> Flanigan, “Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations,” 508.

Muqtada al-Sadr and Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, and Hezbollah is the largest employer in Beirut's southern suburbs.<sup>88</sup> Many of those in Hezbollah's territory are distrustful of the central government, viewing themselves as separate from the north and center of country. Due to its social programs and resistance against Israel, Hezbollah has garnered deep loyalty and attachment from its constituents since the early 1980s.<sup>89</sup> Even if the Lebanese government and military were more capable, it would face a tough task trying to disqualify Hezbollah from politics due to its popularity and standing in Lebanese society.<sup>90</sup>

Due to Lebanon's inability to confront Hezbollah, the government has had little choice but to enter an unspoken "gentleman's agreement of sorts" to "stay out of Hezbollah's way in these areas"—so long as the group does not interfere with the government's economic considerations.<sup>91</sup> Although not an ideal situation, Hezbollah's social services program has also relieved heavy social pressures on the government.<sup>92</sup> However, by ceding sovereign control of these areas to Hezbollah, the government continues to demonstrate its status as a weak state unable to fully control its own territory.<sup>93</sup>

After Israel left southern Lebanon in May 2000, the Lebanese government did not send forces to the area and instead gave Hezbollah its blessing to take control of the territory and secure the Israeli border.<sup>94</sup> Although Hezbollah now respects the Lebanese government's legitimacy in many respects, Hezbollah and the Lebanese government issued a joint claim regarding Israeli's presence in the Shebaa Farms, which they stated was a violation of UN Resolution 425 and an occupation of Lebanese territory.<sup>95</sup> Although the issue is far from settled, the joint issuance of the claim indicates that the Lebanese

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<sup>88</sup> Prusher, "Through Charity, Hezbollah Charms Lebanon"; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 120.

<sup>89</sup> Sabrina Tavernise, "Charity Wins Deep Loyalty for Hezbollah," *New York Times*, August 6, 2006.

<sup>90</sup> Haddad, "The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon's Hezbollah," 22.

<sup>91</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 67; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 121.

<sup>92</sup> Gleis and Berti, 67.

<sup>93</sup> Morag, "A Tale of Two Failed Mideast States."

<sup>94</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 104.

<sup>95</sup> Norton, "The Role of Hezbollah," 479; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 105.

government respects Hezbollah's position of authority in these territories and on issues regarding Israel.

## F. FUNDING

Hezbollah's most significant source of revenue and funding is Iran, a fact that Hezbollah is open about. Motivated by its desire to export the Islamic Revolution and support the fight against Israel,<sup>96</sup> estimates for Iran's support to Hezbollah's projects and social services program range from \$200 million to over \$1 billion annually. This figure does not include Iran's military assistance to Hezbollah, which is believed to be even greater than its non-military assistance.<sup>97</sup> The majority of these funds come not through Iran's government or president, but through charitable organizations and foundations overseen by Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Additional funds are provided by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and intelligence services, which also fall under Khamenei's authority.<sup>98</sup> Iran's long-standing support was critical to the foundation and rise of Hezbollah. In 1982, for example, Iran provided funds, weapons, and fifteen hundred IRGC fighters to train and support Hezbollah.<sup>99</sup>

A second major source of funding is from *khums*, a one-fifth tax required by Shia jurisprudence which represents a form of *zakat*, or charity.<sup>100</sup> While statistics on these are unknown, Hezbollah's Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah claims that "the funds are big, important, and they are spent on jihad, educational, social, and cultural affairs."<sup>101</sup>

Hezbollah also receives donations from businesses, charities, and individuals in Lebanon and throughout the world.<sup>102</sup> Although donations to Hezbollah are illegal in the

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<sup>96</sup> Flanigan, "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations," 500; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 95.

<sup>97</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 69.

<sup>98</sup> Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 2006), 63.

<sup>99</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 39.

<sup>100</sup> Gleis and Berti, 69; Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah*, 63–64; Yaroslav Trofimov, "U.S. Finds It Hard to Tag Hezbollah as a Terrorist Group," *Wall Street Journal*, Europe, December 17, 2001.

<sup>101</sup> Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah*, 63–64.

<sup>102</sup> Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah*, 64.

United States, donations are legal throughout much of the world, as few states label Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.<sup>103</sup> Even states with strict anti-terrorism laws generally recognize the distinction between Hezbollah's armed wing and its social programs.

Hezbollah's last major source of revenue comes from its global investments and business operations. Some of these operations are legal and legitimate, such as a commercial network that includes supermarkets, construction companies, and department stores.<sup>104</sup> Others are highly illegal, including its involvement in Africa's diamond trade and its operations in a South American region known as the Tri-Border Area where Hezbollah is reportedly involved in drug smuggling, and gun running.<sup>105</sup> Hezbollah has even been linked to two cigarette smuggling rings in the United States where profits were sent to Lebanon in support of the group.<sup>106</sup>

## **G. USE OF VIOLENCE**

Hezbollah rose to global notoriety as a terrorist organization in the 1980s following its attacks on the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in April 1983, which killed 63 people, and the October 1983 bombings of the Multinational Force barracks in Beirut, which killed 241 Americans and 58 French paratroopers.<sup>107</sup> Although Hezbollah generally ended kidnappings and terrorist attacks on foreigners within Lebanon after its second civil war (1975-1990), it continued international attacks throughout the 1990s, primarily targeting Jewish and Israeli interests.<sup>108</sup>

In addition to terrorist attacks, Hezbollah has used violence and military means to achieve its goals in several instances since its creation: against other Lebanese militias during

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<sup>103</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 70; Trofimov, "U.S. Finds it Hard to Tag Hezbollah As a Terrorist Group."

<sup>104</sup> Gleis, *Hezbollah and Hamas*, 70–71; Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah*, 64.

<sup>105</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 70–71; Trofimov, "U.S. Finds it Hard to Tag Hezbollah As a Terrorist Group."

<sup>106</sup> Christian Leuprecht et al., "Hezbollah's Global Tentacles: A Relational Approach to Convergence with Transnational Organized Crime," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29, no. 5 (2015), 907–910.

<sup>107</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 84; Wiegand, *Reformation*, 672.

<sup>108</sup> Azani, "The Hybrid Terrorist Organization," 907; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 84–85.

the civil war, against Israeli forces and non-combatants during Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon, against Israel in the 2006 war, and lastly against its political opponents in Lebanon in 2008.<sup>109</sup> Hezbollah's targeted violence against Lebanese factions was limited to militia forces, although its attacks against foreign targets included both combatants and non-combatants. Hezbollah's use of violence against Israel prior to 2006 was done to continue its resistance efforts and its acts were specifically calculated to force Israel out of Lebanese territory. Since 2006, Hezbollah has not used force against Israel (in compliance with cease-fire agreements) but did use limited levels of violence within Lebanon in 2008.<sup>110</sup> In May 2008, after over a year of major political deadlock, violence erupted the streets of Beirut between the Hezbollah-led March 8 alliance and Prime Minister Fouad Siniora and his pro-government March 14 alliance.<sup>111</sup> Sparked by a government effort to shut down a Hezbollah-operated communications network, Hezbollah seized control of parts of the capital, blocking roads and engaging in shootouts that left several dead.<sup>112</sup> Separately, Hezbollah is also believed to be responsible for the 2005 assassination of Rafik Hariri (father of current Prime Minister Saad Hariri).<sup>113</sup>

Two reasons for Hezbollah's general lack of violence against Lebanese civilians have been a stated reluctance to kill fellow Muslims and a recognition that political, rather than violent, behavior strengthens Hezbollah's public perception and improves its political clout. Although Hezbollah has attacked Muslims in the past, it ended its terrorist attacks within Lebanon in the early 1990s and is primarily focused on countering the United States, Israel, and other Western states.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 103.

<sup>110</sup> Norton, "The Role of Hezbollah," 485–489; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 103.

<sup>111</sup> Robert F. Worth and Nada Bakri, "Hezbollah Seizes Swath of Beirut From U.S.-Backed Lebanon Government," *New York Times*, May 10, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/10/world/middleeast/10lebanon.html>.

<sup>112</sup> Alia Ibrahim and Robin Wright, "Violence Paralyzes Beirut for Second Day," *The Washington Post*, May 9, 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/05/08/AR2008050800518.html>.

<sup>113</sup> "Lebanon: U.N. Names Hezbollah Men in Rafik Hariri case," *BBC*.

<sup>114</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 54; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 103.

According to Joseph Nye, “the current struggle is not only about whose army wins, but also whose story wins.”<sup>115</sup> Hezbollah is well aware of the importance of public perception and regularly use the media to mobilize support, recruit, and influence the opponent’s perception of the conflict. For instance, Hezbollah is aware of Israeli sensitivity to casualties and often records videos and pictures of attacks on IDF soldiers to influence Israeli society.<sup>116</sup>

Although some assert that Hezbollah will eventually shift away from its violent tactics entirely, this is not necessarily certain, as terrorist groups who halt violence do not always do so permanently.<sup>117</sup> A core element of Hezbollah’s identity has been its armed protection of the Lebanese and Palestinian people, and it views its military activities as central to its organization—even in times of peace. Hezbollah maintains its military arm and right to force in part because eliminating those aspects would itself eliminate a core source of identity for Hezbollah.<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, studies have shown that while 67 percent of Lebanese Shia would oppose Hezbollah’s use of violence to achieve the its own objectives, 54 percent believe that Hezbollah should maintain “the right to use violence against the state.”<sup>119</sup> Additionally, 80 percent of Lebanese Shia support the military aspects of Hezbollah.

## **H. USE OF GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC GOODS**

While many see Hezbollah as strictly a terrorist organization, others see Hezbollah as a legitimate political party in Lebanon that provides a robust social services program. Other scholars emphasize Hezbollah’s role as a hybrid terrorist organization that maintains a robust paramilitary organization, social services program, and political organization.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study* 89.

<sup>116</sup> Gleis and Berti, 90.

<sup>117</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 102.

<sup>118</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*.

<sup>119</sup> Haddad, “The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon’s Hezbollah,” 29.

<sup>120</sup> Azani, “The Hybrid Terrorist Organization,” 900–902.

Although Hezbollah maintains its armed wing, despite calls to disarm, the group today is primarily focused on its active involvement in Lebanese politics.<sup>121</sup>

Due to the weak state of the Lebanese government during the civil war, it was unable to provide basic services across the country, ranging from water distribution and health services to electricity and garbage removal.<sup>122</sup> Additionally, many of the social services and welfare programs provided by the government and other actors are patronage-based, meaning that members' families and party supporters were prioritized.<sup>123</sup>

Hezbollah's work providing services and filling the role as the de facto government therefore began as early as 1983 and was buttressed by Iranian support beginning in 1984.<sup>124</sup> Hezbollah quickly become known among the people of Lebanon, and particularly among Shia, as a movement dedicated and committed to the poor.<sup>125</sup> Small-scale forms of assistance, such as food and cash, are frequently given out in its early years. Although Hezbollah provides services to non-Shia, Lebanese Shia make up the primary beneficiaries due to the fact that Hezbollah operates in Shia-dominated areas.<sup>126</sup>

Although many assumed the Lebanese government would resume providing services following the end of the civil war, Hezbollah has instead maintained responsibility in their territory. These services are widely considered by the NGO community to be highly efficient and superior to the services of the government and other organizations.<sup>127</sup> For example, in the months after Israel's 2006 attacks in southern Lebanon, Hezbollah had spent an estimated

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<sup>121</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 91.

<sup>122</sup> Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 119.

<sup>123</sup> Melani Cammett, "Sectarianism and the Ambiguities of Welfare in Lebanon," *Current Anthropology* 56, no. S11 (2015), 78.

<sup>124</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 66–67; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 119.

<sup>125</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 124.

<sup>126</sup> Melani Cammett, "Habitat for Hezbollah," *Foreign Policy*, August 17, 2006, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2006/08/17/habitat-for-hezbollah/>; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, 124.

<sup>127</sup> Cammett, "Habitat for Hezbollah"; Melani Cammett, "How Hezbollah Helps (And What It Gets Out of It)," *Washington Post*, October 2, 2014, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/10/02/how-hezbollah-helps-and-what-it-gets-out-of-it/>; Flanigan, "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations," 508; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 131; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 120.

\$281 million in compensation and rehabilitation, compared to just \$21 million spent by the Lebanese government.<sup>128</sup> Today, Hezbollah provides services to an estimated 200,000 to 350,000 Lebanese citizens, which is as high as 10 percent of the entire country.<sup>129</sup>

Headquartered in Beirut's southern suburbs, Hezbollah's social services program is divided into the Education Unit, Social Unit, and Islamic Health Unit (as depicted in Figure 2).<sup>130</sup> Many of Hezbollah's smaller service organizations are registered as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) with the Lebanese government and regularly work with other local and international organizations.<sup>131</sup>

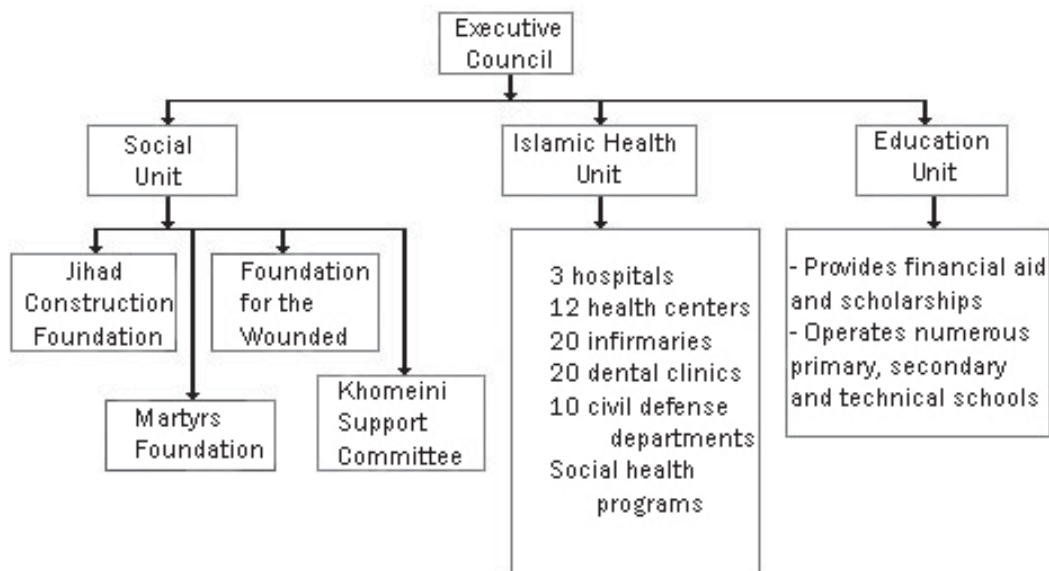


Figure 2. Hezbollah's social services breakdown<sup>132</sup>

Hezbollah's Education Unit is a vital organization for Lebanon's poor Shia population. Lebanon's public school system is considered very low quality and is a last

<sup>128</sup> Flanigan, "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations," 510.

<sup>129</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 130.

<sup>130</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 124; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 120.

<sup>131</sup> Melani Cammett, "Habitat for Hezbollah"; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 124.

<sup>132</sup> Source: Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 125.

resort for poor families who are unable to afford private schools.<sup>133</sup> Hezbollah operates schools for approximately 14,000 students for fees at a third of the cost for typical private schools.<sup>134</sup> Hezbollah also provides scholarships and books for its poorest students, operates libraries, and even has computers and modern technology often found in Western countries.<sup>135</sup>

The Social Unit consists of four organizations: Jihad Construction Foundation, the Foundation for the Wounded, the Khomeini Support Committee, and the Martyr's Foundation. The Jihad Construction Foundation is one of the most significant NGOs in Lebanon, which works to repair homes and buildings damaged from war with Israel, maintains roads, and ensures access to water and sanitation.<sup>136</sup> Following Israeli attacks in southern Lebanon in 1996, Hezbollah reported that it rebuilt 5,000 homes throughout 82 villages (which outside observers believe is accurate), in addition to other road and infrastructure repairs.<sup>137</sup> The Martyr's Foundation provides financial support to the families of Hezbollah fighters who die in combat, while the Foundation of the Wounded gives aid to civilians injured by conflict with Israel.<sup>138</sup> Following the 2006 war with Israel, Hezbollah provided displaced people with food, water, shelter, and compensation to those whose homes were destroyed.<sup>139</sup>

Hezbollah's Islamic Health Unit provides healthcare to poor Lebanese citizens for little to no cost. It operates three hospitals, 20 dental clinics, 20 infirmaries, and 12 health centers. According to interviews, the Islamic Health Unit was so effective that it took over the operation of several government hospitals in the Bekaa Valley and Southern

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<sup>133</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, 126.

<sup>134</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, 126; Prusher, "Through Charity, Hezbollah Charms Lebanon."

<sup>135</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, 126; Prusher, "Through Charity, Hezbollah Charms Lebanon."

<sup>136</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 67; Trofimov, "U.S. Finds it Hard to Tag Hezbollah As a Terrorist Group"; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 120.

<sup>137</sup> Usher, "Hizballah, Syria, and the Lebanese Elections," 64.

<sup>138</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 125; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 68; Wiegand, 120.

<sup>139</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 127.

Lebanon.<sup>140</sup> The Islamic Health Unit helps pay for medical care, both in Lebanon and abroad, and offers free health insurance and prescription-drugs through a local pharmacy network.<sup>141</sup> Interviews with those living in Hezbollah territory attest to their ability to deliver services ranging from providing Caesarean sections to paying for heart surgery.<sup>142</sup> Additionally, Hezbollah staff members have also stated that during times of war, they will go into dangerous areas to assist refugees and injured civilians even when other NGOs, such as the Red Cross, will not.<sup>143</sup>

Hezbollah has also run a robust communications program since the 1980s, complete with a newspaper, multiple radio stations, and a television station.<sup>144</sup> It has also assumed responsibility for many typical state government functions, including water delivery, garbage collection, waste management, and many other basic needs.<sup>145</sup>

Hezbollah has overtaken important clan-mediating roles previously filled by Lebanese state officials and clan political leaders.<sup>146</sup> It has operated these mediations using tribal traditions and Islamic law, including mediations regarding murder, and operates outside the Lebanese legal system. In instances where a legal suit has been filed with the Lebanese legal system, the suit is dropped once reconciliation has been completed. Although not a robust example of governance, it demonstrates Hezbollah's ability to perform functions typically reserved for central governments.

Hezbollah's work providing public goods, which it incorporates into its parliamentary platform, has gained the organization a great deal of support as a political

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<sup>140</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, 125.

<sup>141</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, 125; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 68; Wiegand, 120.

<sup>142</sup> Sabrina Tavernise, "Charity Wins Deep Loyalty for Hezbollah."

<sup>143</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 131.

<sup>144</sup> Azani, "The Hybrid Terrorist Organization," 905.

<sup>145</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 129; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 68.

<sup>146</sup> A. Nizar Hamzeh, "Clan conflicts, Hezbollah, and the Lebanese state," *The Journal of Social, Political, and Economic Studies*, Winter 1994, 439–443.

party.<sup>147</sup> In a survey regarding educational, social, and health services, 64 percent of Lebanese Shia participants stated that Hezbollah provided more services than any other entity in Lebanon, and 72 percent of poor participants stated that their political preference was Hezbollah.<sup>148</sup> Other studies have also shown high levels of support among very religious Shia.<sup>149</sup> Heartfelt or not, it is clear that constituents in Hezbollah-controlled areas regularly demonstrate their loyalty to Hezbollah in elections.<sup>150</sup>

Hezbollah's commitment to providing public goods and services has remained consistent over time. Against a background of competing groups that provided goods and services themselves, social welfare was a priority for Hezbollah early on.<sup>151</sup> As its social welfare program developed throughout the 1980s, it quickly reached robust levels in just a few years.<sup>152</sup> Its commitment to social welfare and public goods has remained steady since its foundation, in part due to reoccurring conflict with Israel and the resulting wartime damages in addition to its involvement in electoral politics and its subsequent need to court the support of Shia and non-Shia voters.

## I. EXPLANATIONS

The decision to provide public goods and governance rather than solely committing violence against a population is likely a complex relationship of multiple factors. This section, however, will analyze how the Hezbollah case study appears to fit within the hypotheses laid out in the introductory chapter. It will examine the correlations that do or do not support the hypotheses in addition to comparing the Hezbollah case study with AQAP and Hamas.

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<sup>147</sup> Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 129, 132.

<sup>148</sup> Judith Palmer Harik, "Between Islam and the System," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 1 (1996), 50–56.

<sup>149</sup> Haddad, "The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon's Hezbollah," 31.

<sup>150</sup> Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah*, 134.

<sup>151</sup> Cammett, "How Hezbollah Helps (And What It Gets Out of It)."

<sup>152</sup> Azani, "The Hybrid Terrorist Organization," 904–905.

***H<sub>1</sub>: Territorial security and legitimacy are significant factors behind insurgents' decision and ability to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

Historical observations of Lebanon indicate that is likely true for Hezbollah. While many non-state actors, including religious groups and secular NGOs, provide assistance and services within Lebanon, this is especially true among political actors. Notably, in Lebanon's civil war (1975-1990), the four major armed political groups (Hezbollah, the Lebanese Forces, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and the Progressive Socialist Party) involved all provided public goods to the constituents within their territories.<sup>153</sup> Although Hezbollah is now unique in its status as the only armed non-state group in Lebanon, its role as an armed group providing public goods within its territory remains consistent with other recent armed groups that controlled territory in Lebanon. Even in its current role as a participant in Lebanese politics, Hezbollah continues to provide public goods to constituents in their territory in exchange for support.

Hezbollah is therefore similar to Hamas in the Gaza Strip and AQAP in Yemen as all three maintained elements of territorial control.

***H<sub>2</sub>: Secessionist rebel groups are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than non-secessionist groups.***

Although Hezbollah controls territory at the expense of the central government and was vocally opposed the entire Lebanese political system in the past, it is clearly a non-secessionist group that also provides extensive public goods. Rather than seeking to maintain control of its territory and achieve a level of autonomy or independence from the central government, it instead works actively within Lebanon's political system to achieve its goals. The Hezbollah case study therefore does not provide support to this hypothesis.

Hezbollah is therefore similar to AQAP in this regard but different from Hamas, which seeks sovereignty and independence from Israel.

***H<sub>3</sub>: Rebel groups that exist in weak states are likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

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<sup>153</sup> Baylouny, "Born Violent," 335–340.

It is undeniable that Lebanon has been a historically weak state, particularly during the civil war. Hezbollah has thrived in these areas since its creation and the central government has been unable to counter the strength of Hezbollah in the group's territory. Hezbollah and the Lebanese state therefore appear to provide support for this hypothesis.

Compared to AQAP and Hamas, Hezbollah is unique in terms of the strength of its state opposition. AQAP exists in Yemen, a failed state, and Hamas is opposed to Israel, a strong state with a powerful military. Lebanon, meanwhile, was a failed state during the 1980s and 1990s and is now a recovering failed state—but a weak state nonetheless. This hypothesis therefore provides three unique positions on the spectrum of weak state to strong state.

***H4: Rebel groups with greater overall capability are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than groups with moderate to weak capability.***

Hezbollah has demonstrated an impressive level of funding for its military and social services programs. The quality of these programs is praised by NGOs throughout the region and the group still maintains a robust military capability capable of waging medium-intensity warfare.<sup>154</sup> Primarily supported by Iran among other sources, Hezbollah's funding is estimated to be as high as several billions of dollars annually, allowing them the flexibility to provide extensive public goods and services in addition to their military capabilities. The Hezbollah case study therefore provides support for this hypothesis.

Hezbollah clearly has greater funding than either Hamas or AQAP. Hamas has an annual budget as high as \$150 million annually, while AQAP's war chest is believed to have peaked at about \$100 million—far lower than Hamas.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 82–84; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 98.

<sup>155</sup> Associated Press, "Al-Qaeda Seizes Large Weapons Cache in Eastern Yemen," *Washington Post*, April 17, 2015, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/al-qaeda-seizes-large-weapons-cache-in-eastern-yemen/2015/04/17/9f1d9eb0-e53c-11e4-905f-cc896d379a32\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/al-qaeda-seizes-large-weapons-cache-in-eastern-yemen/2015/04/17/9f1d9eb0-e53c-11e4-905f-cc896d379a32_story.html); Khaled Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*.

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### III. HAMAS CASE STUDY

#### A. INTRODUCTION

Like Hezbollah and AQAP, Hamas is a complicated organization. It has been locked in an ongoing conflict with Israel since its creation in 1987 and has utilized terrorist tactics against the Israeli military and its citizens. Hamas also uses violence against its main political opponent and has curtailed the rights and liberties of its constituents. This use of violence, however, has generally been strategically used in pragmatic and rational ways.

Hamas has also long been committed to the security and welfare of Palestinians. It has funded hospitals, taken care of orphans, sponsored schools, and given meals to the needy. It engages in democratic elections and is supportive of liberal-democratic institutions and free enterprise.

This case study will discuss the history of Hamas and examine how these strategies play out and coexist with one another. It will also examine how this case study fits into the hypotheses listed in the first chapter and how they compare with Hezbollah and AQAP.

#### B. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Hamas emerged in December 1987 during the outbreak of the First Intifada (1987-1993) between Palestinians and Israel.<sup>156</sup> Hamas was created as a paramilitary wing under the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, which was itself rooted in the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Although it was formed as a purely militant group due to domestic pressure on the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood to engage Israel with force, Hamas was largely autonomous of its parent organization and quickly expanded into the political realm.<sup>157</sup> Before the end of the First Intifada, Hamas overtook the Muslim Brotherhood as the most influential Islamist political movement in the Palestinian territories and gradually coopted

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<sup>156</sup> Khaled Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2000), 36–41.

<sup>157</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 119; Krista E. Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 125–127.

much of its parent organization.<sup>158</sup> In line with its Muslim Brotherhood roots, Hamas is an Islamist and Palestinian nationalist group, which differentiates it from its primary domestic rivals, the PLO umbrella group and its strongest contingent, Fatah, which are purely secular.<sup>159</sup>

With the signing of the initial Oslo Accords in 1993, Yasser Arafat and the PLO successfully negotiated a set of peace agreements with Israel and ended the First Intifada.<sup>160</sup> The agreements created the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), also known as the Palestinian Authority (PA), which was an interim government with limited powers over parts of the Palestinian territories—in cooperation with the Israeli government.<sup>161</sup> Although verbally opposed to the PA and the Oslo Accords, Hamas refrained from attacking or undermining the PA in Gaza in the year following the agreement.<sup>162</sup> After the 1994 Hebron Massacre, however, in which an Israeli settler left 29 Palestinians dead and 125 injured, Hamas quickly ramped up its attacks against Israel and its citizens.<sup>163</sup> These attacks, which undermined the PA's agreement and authority, escalated throughout the 1990s and included kidnappings, rockets, ambushes, and most notably suicide bombings.<sup>164</sup> In response, Israel and the PA instituted a major crackdown on Hamas and Gaza which contributed to worsening on the ground conditions for Gazans.<sup>165</sup> Hamas also

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<sup>158</sup> Glenn Robinson, "Hamas as Social Movement," in *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* ed. Quintan Wiktorowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 123; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 125–127.

<sup>159</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 103–104.

<sup>160</sup> Shawn Teresa Flanigan and Cheryl O'Brien, "Service-Seeking Behavior, Perceptions of Armed Actors, and Preferences Regarding Governance: Evidence from the Palestinian Territories," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 38, no. 8 (May 2015): 623.

<sup>161</sup> Flanigan and O'Brien, "Service-Seeking Behavior," 623; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 99.

<sup>162</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 103.

<sup>163</sup> Tareq Baqoni, *Hamas Contained: The Rise and Pacification of Palestinian Resistance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018), 29–30, 32; Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 52–53.

<sup>164</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 158–161; Jennifer L. Jefferis, *Hamas: Terrorism, Governance, and Its Future in Middle East Politics* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2016), 44; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 122, 132.

<sup>165</sup> Sara M. Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza: Engaging the Islamist Social Sector* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 36.

led the Palestinian resistance against Israel during the Second Intifada (2000-2005), which resulted in increased Palestinian support for Hamas and coincided with the deteriorating image of Fatah and the PLO due to corruption, poor governance and service provision, and an inability to make progress in achieving a long-term peace settlement with Israel.<sup>166</sup>

As Hamas absorbed Muslim Brotherhood institutions during its initial years of operation, it became increasingly involved in social welfare and building grassroots support<sup>167</sup>—traits that echo the priorities of Hamas’s Muslim Brotherhood roots.<sup>168</sup> From healthcare and education to orphanages and an efficient justice system, Hamas has diligently provided services to Gaza’s 1.8 million residents since the 1990s. Providing these services was key to building Hamas’s support base and legitimacy and allowed Hamas to keep in touch with the needs and desires of the Palestinian people.<sup>169</sup> Although not initially involved in Palestinian-wide elections, Hamas created its Political Bureau in 1992 and began competing with and defeating Fatah candidates in municipal elections, university student unions, professional associations, and chamber of commerce boards. After growing internal pressure, Hamas launched its own official political party in March 1996.<sup>170</sup>

In addition to the decreasing popularity of Fatah and the death of Yasser Arafat in 2004, the end of the Second Intifada and Israel’s subsequent withdrawal from the Gaza Strip created a promising environment for Hamas’s political future.<sup>171</sup> Hamas took 77 of Gaza’s 118 seats in the 2005 municipal elections followed by 74 of 132 seats in the 2006

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<sup>166</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 106–109.

<sup>167</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 123–124; Robinson, “Hamas as Social Movement,” 123.

<sup>168</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 233–234; Matthew Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 17, 24.

<sup>169</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 234–235; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 156–157.

<sup>170</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 132–133.

<sup>171</sup> Flanigan and O’Brien, “Service-Seeking Behavior,” 623; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 124–126; International Crisis Group, “Dealing With Hamas,” International Crisis Group, September 26, 2004, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/israel-palestine/dealing-hamas>.

Palestinian-wide legislative elections—enough to beat out Fatah for the largest bloc.<sup>172</sup> International isolation, led by the United States and Israel, quickly followed Hamas's democratic victory.<sup>173</sup> When Fatah then refused to share control of the Palestinian government with Hamas, fighting broke out between the two organizations resulting in the brief 2007 Battle of Gaza. Hamas's victory led to its takeover of Gaza and Fatah's creation of a separate, parallel government in the West Bank in June 2007.<sup>174</sup> Despite numerous attempts at reconciliation (including an October 2017 agreement),<sup>175</sup> no reconciliation frameworks or agreements between Fatah and Hamas have resulted in meaningful change or unification.<sup>176</sup>

Notably, over the course of its history, Hamas has balanced its ideological roots and long-term vision with its commitment to Palestinian's well-being and political pragmatism.<sup>177</sup> It has engaged in numerous attacks (including 2008–2009, 2012, and 2014) and cease-fires with Israel, largely based on pragmatic cost-benefit analysis and an awareness of popular opinion.<sup>178</sup> At various times, Hamas has indicated that it would be willing to approve of an interim solution for peace with Israel and no longer directly states its unwillingness to officially recognize Israel.<sup>179</sup> Similarly, after violent clashes and

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<sup>172</sup> Björn Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas: From Islamic Democracy to Islamist Governance* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017), 30; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 125–127.

<sup>173</sup> Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 41–45.

<sup>174</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 133; Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 30–41; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 128–131; Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 44.

<sup>175</sup> Elinor Levy, "Abbas' Sanctions on Gaza Are Bad News for Both the Palestinians and Israel," Ynetnews, March 27, 2018, <https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-5197605,00.html>; Kifah Ziboun, "Fatah-Hamas Dispute Continues to Hinder Reconciliation," Asharq Al-Awsat, April 24, 2018, <https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1247576/fatah-hamas-dispute-continues-hinder-reconciliation>.

<sup>176</sup> Flanigan and O'Brien, "Service-Seeking Behavior," 623; Haaretz, "The Bloody Hamas-Fatah Power Struggle That Threatens to Return following Gaza Assassination Attempt," Haaretz, March 13, 2018, <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/the-bloody-hamas-fatah-power-struggle-that-threatens-to-reignite-1.5054803>.

<sup>177</sup> Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), xxiii.

<sup>178</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 140–141.

<sup>179</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 77–79; International Crisis Group, "Enter Hamas: The Challenges of Political Integration," International Crisis Group, January 18, 2006, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/israel-palestine/enter-hamas-challenges-political-integration>; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 136.

political standoffs, on-and-off cooperation with Fatah has been motivated by Palestinian public opinion and short-term political gain rather than a serious change of position.<sup>180</sup> Overall, Hamas has painted itself as a hard to define and hard to predict organization, constantly balancing its ideological commitment with pragmatic moderation and public opinion.<sup>181</sup>

Despite its engagement in governance and social services, Hamas's opposition to Israel and use of terrorist tactics have put it at odds with the international community. Hamas is designation as a foreign terrorist organization by the United States Department of State and has faced international pressure and sanctions since the 1990s.<sup>182</sup> Since its 2006 legislative election success and 2007 takeover of Gaza, Hamas has faced increased international isolation while its main rival, Fatah, has received cooperation and support from the United States and Israel.<sup>183</sup>

### **C. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Hamas's official and original goals can be traced back to the 1988 Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement.<sup>184</sup> The charter clearly states Hamas's goal of creating an Islamic state in all of historic Palestine and to restructure Palestinian society according to sharia.<sup>185</sup> It strongly associates itself with the Muslim Brotherhood and clearly identifies nationalism and Islamism as the pillars of its ideology.<sup>186</sup> It seeks the elimination of the state of Israel and declares that there is no solution for Palestine other than through

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<sup>180</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 54.

<sup>181</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 123.

<sup>182</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 2; United States, Department of State, BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM, *Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations*.

<sup>183</sup> Brenner, 2, 32; Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 72–73; Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 45.

<sup>184</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 35.

<sup>185</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 23.

<sup>186</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 136.

jihad.<sup>187</sup> As such, it has long been opposed to Fatah's cooperation with Israel and was an outspoken critic of the 1993 and 1995 Oslo Accords.<sup>188</sup>

Despite its clearly stated ideology and original list of goals, Hamas has strayed from the 1988 charter in practice. Early statements regarding the goal of creating an Islamic state never gained serious traction<sup>189</sup> and, most importantly, its negotiations and short-term agreements with Israel have indicated a de facto acceptance of an Israeli state.<sup>190</sup> Following Hamas's 2006 legislative election success, senior leader Mousa Abu Marzook stated that "we cannot recognize Israel" but that "relations with the Jewish State are inevitable as the existence of Israel is a fact" and that "Hamas may recognize Israel's legitimacy, under certain conditions" to include a return to the 1967 borders and the right of return for Palestinian refugees.<sup>191</sup> Far from an official position or a change to its charter, various Hamas leaders have repeatedly echoed these sentiments since the 1990s. Hamas has also often stated that it is willing to achieve its goals in stages, specifically in the form of an "interim solution" that establishes peace based on the 1967 borders rather than only its long-term goal, or "historic solution," that liberates all of historic Palestine and forms an Islamic state.<sup>192</sup> Acceptance of an "interim solution" became more official in early 2017 when Hamas issued a "Political Document" stating that it would accept peace based on the 1967 borders and the right of return.<sup>193</sup>

In addition to Hamas's long commitment to the social welfare of Palestinians, its government platform has emphasized democratic ideals, including separate judicial, legislative, and executive branches; checks and balances; and guaranteed rights and freedoms. This was reiterated in March 2006 by Prime Minister Ismail Haniya who stated

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<sup>187</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 23; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 128.

<sup>188</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 139.

<sup>189</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 20.

<sup>190</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 230; International Crisis Group, "Enter Hamas: The Challenges of Political Integration".

<sup>191</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 140–141.

<sup>192</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 30–31; Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 60–61, 77–80.

<sup>193</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 245.

that Hamas's political goals included the resistance against Israeli occupation, safety and security for Palestinians, relieving economic hardships, financial and administrative reform, pluralism, and the peaceful rotation of power.<sup>194</sup> Despite a poor track record promoting democratic institutions since taking over Gaza, these remain Hamas's official and broad political objectives.<sup>195</sup>

#### **D. STRENGTH OF STATE GOVERNMENT**

Due to Palestine's lack of statehood and the fact that Israel exerts considerable external and internal influence on Palestine, this section will specifically examine the strength of Israel in regard to Gaza and the West Bank. The following section, covering territorial control, will focus on Hamas's control within Gaza.

According to Krista Weigand, Palestine is best described as a pseudo-weak state since it is itself extremely weak but not officially a state.<sup>196</sup> Israel, however, is far from a weak state. As an outside power (or occupying force according to Palestinians and the United Nations), Israel held a military presence in Gaza until 2005 and currently maintains firm security control of over 80 percent of the West Bank.<sup>197</sup> It has long been involved in Palestinian politics, mainly through its cooperation and coordination with Fatah and the PA after the 1993 Oslo Accords, and has worked closely with the United States and international community to exert pressure and enforce sanctions on Palestine—and specifically on Gaza and Hamas.<sup>198</sup> In addition to leading international sanctions, Israel has enacted a crippling blockade and withheld tax revenues from being redistributed back

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<sup>194</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 146–148.

<sup>195</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 176; *The Economist*, “Hamas Marks Ten Years of Misruling Gaza,” *The Economist*, July 13, 2017, <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2017/07/13/hamas-marks-ten-years-of-misruling-gaza>.

<sup>196</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 154.

<sup>197</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 99; Ehab Zahriyeh, “Maps: The Occupation of the West Bank,” *Al Jazeera*, July 4, 2014, <http://america.aljazeera.com/multimedia/2014/7/west-bank-security.html>.

<sup>198</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 32; International Crisis Group, “Islamic Social Welfare Activism in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: A Legitimate Target?” International Crisis Group, April 2, 2003, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/israel-palestine/islamic-social-welfare-activism-occupied-palestinian-territories-legitimate-target>; Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 41–45; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 158.

into Gaza.<sup>199</sup> With the backing of Israel and the United States, Fatah and the PA have also joined in targeting Hamas, to include restricting critical goods and medical supplies from entering Gaza and withholding pay for Palestinian government officials who work in Gaza.<sup>200</sup>

The active role of Israel has gradually weakened Hamas and has considerably constrained its opportunities for growth and its ability to provide for Palestinians<sup>201</sup> (but has also created significant Palestinian animosity and greater support for Hamas and its resistance efforts).<sup>202</sup> Israel is also a far superior military power that has the backing of the United States, which further limits Hamas's ability to wage a long-term, successful resistance campaign through militant means. Despite their territorial control, Hamas has been powerless to stop these sanctions from crippling the Gazan economy and creating mass poverty and unemployment.<sup>203</sup>

## E. TERRITORIAL CONTROL

Although Hamas and Palestine have been engaged in a decades-long fight for sovereignty and are largely helpless to the strength of Israel and the international community, Hamas has maintained strong influence in Gaza since the mid-1990s and a

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<sup>199</sup> "More than 1,000 Palestinians in Gaza Died from Israeli Blockade," Al Jazeera, February 25, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/02/1000-palestinians-gaza-died-israeli-blockade-180225175751636.html>; Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 211; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas*, 131; Jefferis, *Hamas: Terrorism, Governance, and Its Future in Middle East*, 101; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Gaza Blockade," United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Occupied Palestinian Territory, accessed June 01, 2018, <https://www.ochaopt.org/theme/gaza-blockade>; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 135, 154.

<sup>200</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 115, 246; Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 240–242; Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 41–45; *The Economist*, "Hamas Marks Ten Years of Misruling Gaza."

<sup>201</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 212; Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 240–241; Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, viii; Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 85, 209–219.

<sup>202</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 150; International Crisis Group, "Dealing with Hamas"; Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 193.

<sup>203</sup> Al Jazeera, "More than 1,000 Palestinians in Gaza Died from Israeli Blockade"; *New York Times* Editorial Board, "An End to Gaza's Misery Is as Elusive as Peace," *New York Times*, February 13, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/13/opinion/gaza-palestinians-israel-blockade.html>.

total monopoly on the use of force after 2007.<sup>204</sup> After 2007, Hamas invested heavily in its al-Qassam Brigade “rebel forces” and in Gaza’s institutional security sector.<sup>205</sup> As of 2014, 15,000 of Hamas’s 40,000 employees were involved in the security sector. Hamas’s territorial control and monopoly of force are further evidenced by the significant reduction in crime after 2007 and by Hamas’s strict crackdown against Fatah leaders and members. Additionally, after 2007, the al-Qassam Brigade continued its gradual evolution into a skilled, quasi-army and has achieved unclear level of autonomy from Hamas leadership.<sup>206</sup>

## **F. FUNDING**

Specifics on Hamas’s funding are difficult to ascertain and estimates range widely, from \$70 million–\$150 million annually.<sup>207</sup> Despite this uncertainty, it is well established that Hamas has developed an integrated and complex financial system, combining funding from private donors, foreign states, charities, and internal taxation.<sup>208</sup> While Hamas goes to great lengths to make it appear that its military funding is separate from charitable donations, the reality is that the separation of these funds are entirely unclear.<sup>209</sup> That said, the vast majority of funding goes to social services while the military receives the smallest share.<sup>210</sup>

Since the early 1990s, Hamas has received the majority of its funding from outside sources, particularly foreign states.<sup>211</sup> Countries such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar have

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<sup>204</sup> Benedetta Berti and Beatriz Gutiérrez, “Rebel-to-Political and Back? Hamas as a Security Provider in Gaza Between Rebellion, Politics and Governance,” *Democratization* 23, no. 6 (2016):1066.

<sup>205</sup> Berti and Gutierrez, 1065.

<sup>206</sup> Berti and Gutierrez, 1064–1066; Jefferis, *Hamas: Terrorism, Governance, and Its Future in Middle East*, 110.

<sup>207</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 136; Ora Szekely, “Doing Well by Doing Good: Understanding Hamas’s Social Services as Political Advertising,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 38, no. 4 (2015): 284.

<sup>208</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 153; Gregory Rose, “Terrorism Financing in Foreign Conflict Zones,” *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 10, no. 2 (February 2018):12.

<sup>209</sup> Gleis and Berti, 153–155.

<sup>210</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 136.

<sup>211</sup> Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*, 53.

all been known to provide funding to the group.<sup>212</sup> As early as 1992, Iran had pledged \$30 million to Hamas annually in addition to providing Hamas with weapons and military training from the IRGC. This support was vital to the early rise of Hamas as an alternative to Fatah and the PLO.<sup>213</sup> In April 2006, Iran pledged \$50 million annually and increased its pledge to \$120 million in December 2006.

Hamas also raises money through *zakat*, or charity, (which is one of the five pillars of Islam) both locally and internationally.<sup>214</sup> Hamas utilizes foreign charities, such as Interpal and al-Aqsa International, for donations—many of which are direct fronts for Hamas.<sup>215</sup> These foreign organizations have faced increased pressure from the United States and the United Nations, which have strengthened its laws and enforcement mechanisms to prohibit donations from reaching designated terrorist organizations like Hamas.<sup>216</sup> Despite pressure on these groups, Hamas raises an estimated \$15 million–\$20 million through foreign charities annually.<sup>217</sup>

In addition to local charities that raise money through *zakat*, Hamas has self-funded locally by way of tax collection on companies in Gaza and on goods smuggled in through tunnels. It also collects customs duties on legally imported goods, institutes fines, and charges nominal fees for the services it provides.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 121, 155; *Terrorist Financing: Kidnapping, Antiquities Trafficking, and Private Donations*, 114th Cong. (2015) (testimony of David Andrew Weinberg), 31–34; Jonathan M. Winer, “Countering Terrorist Finance: A Work, Mostly in Progress,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 6, no. 18 (July 2008): 116–118.

<sup>213</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 121.

<sup>214</sup> Gleis and Berti, 152–153; International Crisis Group, “Islamic Social Welfare Activism in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: A Legitimate Target?”; Rose, 13; Winer, “Countering Terrorist Finance,” 115.

<sup>215</sup> Gleis and Berti, 155; Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*, 144–145.

<sup>216</sup> Glesi and Berti, 154–155; Daniel Nasaw, “Leaders of Muslim Charity in U.S. Found Guilty of Providing Funds to Hamas,” *The Guardian*, November 24, 2008, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/nov/24/holy-land-foundation-gaza-hamas>; Winer, 120–125.

<sup>217</sup> Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*, 144–145.

<sup>218</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 157.

## G. USE OF VIOLENCE

Historically, Hamas's use of violence has been primarily aimed at Israel and there has existed an undeniable degree of anti-Semitism within the organization.<sup>219</sup> Hamas was originally established as the militant wing of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood before becoming autonomous and overtaking it as the dominant Islamic organization in Palestine. Hamas was active throughout the First Intifada and formed its own military wing, the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, in 1991.<sup>220</sup> Prior to 1993, Hamas had a policy of controlled violence against Israel and did not target Israeli civilians.<sup>221</sup> Following the Oslo Accords and Hebron Massacre, however, Hamas began to actively use terrorist and guerilla tactics against both Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and civilian non-combatants.<sup>222</sup> Hamas's attacks included kidnappings, roadside bombs, shootings, knife attacks, and suicide bombings.<sup>223</sup> While suicide bombings were used heavily from 1994 to 1997 and especially during the Second Intifada, rocket attacks have been far more common since 2005.<sup>224</sup>

The use of violence against the average Palestinian citizen has been almost non-existent. While Hamas has instituted codes of conduct in Gaza, it has used a non-coercive strategy that enforced conduct with little more than reprimands or public condemnation for non-conformers.<sup>225</sup> In instances where violence has occurred, including the 2005 killing of a Palestinian woman by Hamas's "vice and virtue" police, Hamas distanced itself from those involved and stated that the perpetrators were acting on their own without orders

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<sup>219</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 22; Robinson, "Hamas as Social Movement," 131–132; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 123, 151.

<sup>220</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 131; Jefferis, *Hamas: Terrorism, Governance, and Its Future in Middle East*, 110.

<sup>221</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 246; Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 102.

<sup>222</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 52–53; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 129.

<sup>223</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 158–161;

<sup>224</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 34; Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Suicide and Other Bombing Attacks in Israel Since the Declaration of Principles (Sept 1993)*; Szekely, 280; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 129.

<sup>225</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 180; Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 237; Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 84.

from Hamas.<sup>226</sup> Hamas's leadership has stated that they do not believe an Islamic state can be brought about by force but only through the will of the majority of Palestinians.<sup>227</sup> This explains Hamas's emphasis on social services and governance to attract public support rather than relying on coercive means. It is important to note, however, that since taking over Gaza, Hamas has blended democratic and authoritarian governance.<sup>228</sup> Since 2006, Hamas has not strengthened democratic norms within Gaza as promised but rather has ruled with little concern for civil liberties and human rights outside of its public declarations.<sup>229</sup>

While Hamas has not utilized violence against the average Palestinian citizen, it has used force repeatedly against its political opposition, namely Fatah.<sup>230</sup> The use of force against Fatah was most notable during the 2007 Battle of Gaza, in which violent fighting led to Hamas's successful takeover of Gaza. Before and after that conflict, however, Hamas has been criticized for human rights violations in its actions against Fatah members and leaders, which include arbitrary detentions and unlawful killings.<sup>231</sup> It has also looted the office buildings, places of business, and homes of Fatah officials; been accused of torturing detained Fatah members; closed all Fatah run charities and organizations; and instituted widespread censorship against Fatah media outlets.<sup>232</sup>

Following Hamas's 2006 legislative election success, splinter Salafi-jihadi opposition groups gained prevalence in Gaza.<sup>233</sup> Overall, Hamas has utilized a carrot and stick approach to dealing with Salafi-jihadists, which has included the use of violent force

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<sup>226</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 135–136.

<sup>227</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 149.

<sup>228</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 138.

<sup>229</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 176–187.

<sup>230</sup> Berti and Gutierrez, "Rebel-to-Political and Back?," 1069; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 123.

<sup>231</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 138; Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 63; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 130.

<sup>232</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 44; Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 48; *The Economist*, "Hamas Marks Ten Years of Misruling Gaza"; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 156.

<sup>233</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 65–82; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 113.

in several instances, resulting in multiple deaths as well as damage to a mosque and several homes.<sup>234</sup> In recent years, however, Hamas has focused on containing Salafi-jihadist opposition rather than on eliminating it.<sup>235</sup> These efforts have included particular emphasis on mediation, de-radicalization programs, and counter-radicalization programs.

Overall, Hamas has not used violence as a means in and of itself but rather as a way to achieve specific goals.<sup>236</sup> Whether against Fatah or Israel, Hamas has been driven by a pragmatic cost-benefit analysis of violence and by an awareness of Palestinian public opinion.<sup>237</sup> Throughout its history, Hamas has utilized different methods of violence at different times, depending on the political conditions.<sup>238</sup> Furthermore, when Hamas has determined that violence was counter-productive to achieving its goals or to maintaining popular support it has agreed to multiple cease-fire agreements with Israel.<sup>239</sup>

## **H. USE OF GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC GOODS**

The Hamas organization is controlled by two main bodies: The Advisory (or Shura) Council and the Political Bureau.<sup>240</sup> The Advisory Council is senior, made up of about 60 leaders both inside and outside of Gaza, and is the main decision maker for significant political and strategic decisions.<sup>241</sup> The Political Bureau acts as the executive body by overseeing lower-level and day-to-day operations.<sup>242</sup> The Political Bureau is in charge of Hamas's security forces, finances, and social welfare programs.

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<sup>234</sup> Berti and Gutierrez, "Rebel-to-Political and Back?," 1066; Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 83–96.

<sup>235</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 139; Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 105–115, 179.

<sup>236</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 162.

<sup>237</sup> Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 205; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 138.

<sup>238</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 129.

<sup>239</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 139.

<sup>240</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 144–145.

<sup>241</sup> Jefferis, *Hamas: Terrorism, Governance, and Its Future in Middle East*, 48; Mishal and Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas*, 162–163.

<sup>242</sup> Jefferis, *Hamas: Terrorism, Governance, and Its Future in Middle East*, 48–49; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 144–145.

Hamas entered the political arena in 1992 after the Political Bureau was established, enabling it to participate in municipal elections, professional elections, and university student unions<sup>243</sup>—which attracted even more support than from mosques.<sup>244</sup> Hamas’s leaders claimed that participation in politics was another method for meeting the needs of Palestinians and for its struggle against Israel.<sup>245</sup>

As the Second Intifada came to an end, Hamas shifted from a military focus to a political focus in order to ensure long-term integration in Palestinian society. Capitalizing on the weakness of Fatah at the time, due both to Fatah’s low popularity and the death of Yasser Arafat, Hamas ran in the 2005 municipal elections and in the 2006 legislative elections.<sup>246</sup> In addition to its criticism of Fatah, Hamas ran on a platform promoting justice and equality, capitalism and free enterprise, helping the poor, curbing monopolies, and strong liberal democratic principles to include pluralism, checks and balances, and the peaceful rotation of power.<sup>247</sup> Hamas’s surprising victory in 2006 was also the result of years of building grassroots-level support, Fatah corruption, and the perceived failures of Fatah’s governance and peace efforts with Israel.<sup>248</sup>

Since taking over Gaza in 2007, however, Hamas’s mixed track record at governance falls short of its stated platform. In its first year in power, Gaza did successfully legislate, to include passing bills, approving budgets, and overhauling the judicial system to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.<sup>249</sup> It was also able to end to the chaotic security situation in Gaza, restore law and order, and even worked with the Fatah government in Ramallah on specific issues such as improving education and importing essential goods

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<sup>243</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 132.

<sup>244</sup> Robinson, “Hamas as Social Movement,” 128.

<sup>245</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 149.

<sup>246</sup> Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 199.

<sup>247</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 3; Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 69, 148.

<sup>248</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 66.

<sup>249</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 43–44, 142–161.

and health supplies.<sup>250</sup> Hamas, however, largely failed to promote the liberal-democratic ideals it campaigned on. It has operated as a “soft-authoritarian” government that has suppressed civil liberties, enacted strict censorship, and has been criticized for widespread human rights violations against its political opponents.<sup>251</sup>

Hamas’s involvement in providing public goods and services traces back to its Muslim Brotherhood roots, which was itself very concerned with social welfare.<sup>252</sup> Hamas’s 1988 Charter specifically addressed the importance of waging war against Israel with a “fortified society,” which requires religious education and a widespread commitment to Islam. Pressure from Israel and competition with the PLO pushed Hamas to expand its operations in social services and grassroots-level politics.<sup>253</sup> Social services have become one of Hamas’s primary sources of influence, are key to its popularity and recruiting, and have helped foster legitimacy for the group by demonstrating its capability as an administrative institution.<sup>254</sup> As early as 1994, Palestinians viewed Hamas as more trustworthy than the PLO and even non-Hamas supporters donated to the organization due to its reputation for trustworthiness.<sup>255</sup> Hamas’s role in Palestinian society is also seen through employment, as Hamas is the single largest employer in Gaza.<sup>256</sup>

The provision of goods and services was critical to the Palestinian population. As Palestine has faced sanctions and pressure from Israel and the international community, the ability for the PA to provide services to Palestinians has been affected. The inability of the government to provide goods and services meant that charities and Islamist organizations

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<sup>250</sup> Berti and Gutierrez, “Rebel-to-Political and Back?,” 1067; Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 47–49, 165.

<sup>251</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 239; Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 176–177.

<sup>252</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 233–234; Levitt, *Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad*, 17, 24.

<sup>253</sup> Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 79.

<sup>254</sup> Flanigan, “Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations,” 623–626; Gleis and Berti, 149–150; Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 234; Szekely, “Doing Well by Doing Good,” 285–287.

<sup>255</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 236.

<sup>256</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 153.

like Hamas had an increasingly important role in providing aid. In 2001, for example, 6 percent of services were provided by the PA, 34 percent by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), and 60 percent by charitable organizations.<sup>257</sup>

The type of social welfare and public goods provided by Hamas has ranged considerably, from small groups of volunteers distributing food to large specialized medical facilities.<sup>258</sup> Hamas funds and sponsors food banks, mosques, schools, orphanages, medical clinics and hospitals, and even summer camps and sports complexes.<sup>259</sup> Hamas specifically places great emphasis on caring for children and families, as it provides for orphans until the age of sixteen and gives monthly stipends to the families of those killed (martyred) or imprisoned by Israel.<sup>260</sup> Hamas provides low-cost education to Palestinian children through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and has coordinated with Fatah to ensure education programs are funded and meet standardized curriculum goals.<sup>261</sup> Hamas even runs an entire propaganda division complete with several radio stations, newspapers, websites, and multiple television stations.<sup>262</sup> Even prior to its 2007 Gaza takeover, Hamas had made significant improvements to education, healthcare, and banking in Gaza.

Since its 2007 takeover of Gaza and crackdown on Fatah organizations, Hamas has taken over all over Fatah's charities in Gaza and maintains dominance over all social services either through direct sponsorship or influential control.<sup>263</sup> These organizations are known for their efficiency and, contrary to outside claims, are generally far from Islamic

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<sup>257</sup> Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 203.

<sup>258</sup> Roy, 103.

<sup>259</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 141; Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 70; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 157.

<sup>260</sup> Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 80.

<sup>261</sup> Brenner, *Gaza under Hamas*, 48–49; Roy, 81.

<sup>262</sup> Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 165.

<sup>263</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 157.

in practice.<sup>264</sup> It has also regularly worked with the PLO and its international counterparts to transparently provide services to all Palestinians regardless of political affiliation.<sup>265</sup>

Despite its accomplishments, the quality and extent of Hamas's provision of social welfare has not always been consistent due to pressure from Israel, the United States, and Fatah.<sup>266</sup> Throughout the 1990s, for example, Israel and the PA shut down numerous charitable organizations and mosques in Gaza that were believed to be affiliated with Hamas.<sup>267</sup> This was also the case after Hamas's 2006 legislative election success, as Israel and the U.S. enacted strict sanctions (and the Israeli blockade) on Gaza which crippled Hamas's social welfare capabilities.<sup>268</sup> Fatah also withheld funding, trade, and much-needed provisions from the West Bank after 2006.<sup>269</sup> Even though Israeli occupation and the Gazan blockade weakened Hamas, Hamas has always provided services to some degree due to its ability to raise funds internally and through other foreign sources, thus allowing it to continue reaching hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and maintain popular support.<sup>270</sup>

## I. EXPLANATIONS

The decision to provide public goods and governance rather than solely committing violence against a population is likely a complex relationship of multiple factors. This section, however, will analyze how the Hamas case study appears to fit within the hypotheses laid out in the introductory chapter. It will examine the correlations that do or do not support the hypotheses in addition to comparing the Hamas case study with Hezbollah and AQAP.

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<sup>264</sup> Roy, *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*, 14–15, 91.

<sup>265</sup> Roy, 89–90.

<sup>266</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 72–73.

<sup>267</sup> Hroub, *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*, 240–241.

<sup>268</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 156.

<sup>269</sup> Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 156.

<sup>270</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 118; Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 72–73; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 156.

***H<sub>1</sub>: Territorial security and legitimacy are significant factors behind insurgents' decision and ability to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

Hamas has clearly held territorial control within Gaza since 2007, which has certainly been instrumental in allowing Hamas the opportunity to govern. However, Hamas began its extensive social welfare operation over a decade prior to taking over Gaza, has been active in local politics since the mid-1990s, and began running in Palestinian-wide elections prior to gaining territorial control. That said, it began its move from municipal-level to national-level elections as its influence in Gaza increased due to Israeli retrenchment and withdrawal from Gaza and as Fatah's popularity declined.

Hamas is therefore similar to AQAP in Yemen and Hezbollah in Lebanon (both are considered to have territorial control) since it has maintained strong influence in Gaza since the 1990s and has held complete control since its takeover in 2007.

***H<sub>2</sub>: Secessionist rebel groups are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than non-secessionist groups.***

Hamas is considered secessionist due to the fact that it is not a recognized state and remains under the thumb of Israel. Although Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005 and Hamas has been independent of Fatah and the PA since 2007, it is clearly not given the recognition or freedom of other states in the international community. Quite simply, the creation of a separate, independent Palestinian state is Hamas's core reason for existing.

While Hamas's 1988 Charter states that it wants to eliminate the state of Israel and form an Islamic state in all of historic Palestine, the rhetoric of its leaders has suggested that it would accept a long-term "interim solution" based on the pre-1967 borders, with Palestine operating fully and completely separate from Israel. Hamas's classification as a secessionist group is therefore a distinction between AQAP and Hezbollah, both of which are non-secessionist.

***H<sub>3</sub>: Rebel groups that exist in weak states are likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

The entirety of Palestine has been weak for decades. However, it is controlled and surrounded by Israel, which held a military occupation over the Gaza Strip until 2005 and still holds a military occupation over 80 percent of the West Bank. In stark contrast to Fatah and Hamas, Israel is an extremely strong state with a united government, robust economy, and operates the strongest military in the Middle East—and has the firm backing of the United States.

The Hamas case study is notably different from Hezbollah and AQAP regarding the strength of state government as Yemen is a failed state,<sup>271</sup> Lebanon a recovering failed state,<sup>272</sup> and Israel a strong state with a far more powerful military.

***H4: Rebel groups with greater overall capability are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than groups with moderate to weak capability.***

The capability and funding of Hamas can be described as weak to moderate. While Hamas has an annual budget as high as \$150 million, maintains firm control within Gaza, and has provided social welfare to Gazans even in the midst of international sanctions and the Israeli blockade, the fact remains that Gaza is one of the poorest places in the world. Sanctions and the Israel blockade have weakened Hamas<sup>273</sup> and resulted in severe water and electricity shortages and a 40 percent unemployment rate. If Hamas had a high level of capability (or greater outside funding) it would likely be able to better address the dire needs of its constituents.

Hamas's level of funding and capability appear to fall closer to AQAP than to Hezbollah. Hezbollah is entrenched into Lebanese politics and has received significant levels of funding and support from Iran since its creation—with an estimated budget range

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<sup>271</sup> International Crisis Group, "Yemen: A Humanitarian Catastrophe; A Failing State," International Crisis Group, March 01, 2017, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/yemen-humanitarian-catastrophe-failing-state>.

<sup>272</sup> Rotberg, "Failed States in a World of Terror," 134.

<sup>273</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 212.

of \$200 million to over \$1 billion annually.<sup>274</sup> AQAP, meanwhile, had a much lower level of funding. Although it received millions of dollars from hostage ransoms and \$100 million from the central bank in Mukalla, this level of funding was inconsistent and likely lower on an annual average.<sup>275</sup> Hamas's capability and funding may be somewhat higher than AQAP's, but it is also far lower than that of Hezbollah.

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<sup>274</sup> Flanigan, "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations," 500; Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas a Comparative Study*, 69; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 95.

<sup>275</sup> Associated Press, "Al-Qaeda Seizes Large Weapons Cache in Eastern Yemen."

## **IV. AL QAEDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA CASE STUDY**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Similar to Hezbollah and Hamas, AQAP is a complex organization. Emerging from al Qaeda Central and its Yemeni roots, AQAP has separated itself from its parent organization both organizationally and ideologically. In contrast with the global jihadi mindset of al Qaeda Central, AQAP has oriented its goals and operations towards the local level.

Since its founding in 2009, AQAP has utilized both violent and non-violent methods in order to establish territory and cement its rule. Particular emphasis has been placed on governing the constituents within its territory and on providing services and public goods, ranging from providing food and basic healthcare to trash collection and the establishment of a functional justice system.

This case study will discuss the development of AQAP and how it fits into the complicated and chaotic history of Yemen, in addition to its use of violent and non-violent strategies. It will also examine how this case study fits into the hypotheses listed in the first chapter and how they compare with Hezbollah and Hamas.

### **B. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Yemen has spent much of its contemporary history divided into two states. The Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) was founded in 1970 in northern Yemen while the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) was founded in 1967 after leftist revolutionaries in southern Yemen successfully forced the British from the Federation of South Arabia protectorate.<sup>276</sup> While the YAR was as a republican state backed by Egypt and Gamal Abdel Nasser, the PDRY to the south was a socialist state backed by the Soviet Union. Despite fighting between the two states and a civil war in the southern PDRY in 1986, the YAR and PDRY unified in 1990.

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<sup>276</sup> Peter Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State* (London: Chatham House, 2016), 7.

The hurried marriage between the two states came as both neared economic collapse and quickly saw YAR leader Ali Abdullah Saleh and his northern counterparts seize a greater share of political power in what was meant to be an equal partnership between north and south.<sup>277</sup> After a brief but brutal civil war in 1994, Yemen's northern elite solidified their dominant position in the government for years to come.<sup>278</sup> Through President Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) and Islah, Yemen's primary Sunni Islamist party, northern elites dominated the south for control of the country, going largely unchallenged until 2011.<sup>279</sup>

It is in post-unification Yemen that al Qaeda's presence in the country begins. Al Qaeda's foundation and role in Yemen is tied both to domestic politics and trends in global jihadism. As fighters returned from anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan in the early in 1990s, many Arab states turned against the jihadists.<sup>280</sup> Yemen, however, welcomed the fighters and encouraged them to settle in southern Yemen. These fighters were supported by Saleh and were employed against the southern Yemeni Socialist Party during Yemen's 1994 civil war.<sup>281</sup> Over the years, Saleh would maintain a fickle relationship with the extremist fighters but often supported them by releasing them from jail, misusing U.S. anti-terrorism funds, and maintaining jihadi fighters on his payroll in order to fight his domestic adversaries.<sup>282</sup>

In 1989, Osama bin Laden, motivated by a desire to spark a global movement of Muslims and to establish a caliphate, created al Qaeda.<sup>283</sup> Bin Laden hoped to use Yemen as al Qaeda's first test but saw little progress and later fled to Sudan. Al Qaeda gradually

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<sup>277</sup> Victoria Clark, *Yemen: Dancing on the Heads of Snakes* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 30–35.

<sup>278</sup> Clark, 142–145.

<sup>279</sup> Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*, 8.

<sup>280</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, *The Last Refuge: Yemen, Al-Qaeda, and America's War in Arabia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014), 22.

<sup>281</sup> Evan Hill and Laura Kasinof, "Playing a Double Game in the Fight Against AQAP," *Foreign Policy*, January 21, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/21/playing-a-double-game-in-the-fight-against-aqap-yemen-saleh-al-qaeda>.

<sup>282</sup> Hill and Kasinof, "Playing a Double Game in the Fight Against AQAP."

<sup>283</sup> Johnsen, *The Last Refuge*, 16–18, 25.

strengthened and gained notoriety through several high-profile events including a takeover of Aden in 1994, the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in Aden, and ultimately its infamous attack on the U.S. on September 11, 2001. Under extreme pressure, Saleh's government began cooperating with the U.S. in its fight against Yemeni-based al Qaeda fighters, largely defeating the group by 2003.<sup>284</sup>

By treating al Qaeda as completely defeated in Yemen, the group was generally ignored by the U.S. and Yemeni government and was gradually able to make its return. Aided by the 2006 prison escape of 23 suspected al Qaeda fighters, including Qasim al-Raymi and Nasir al-Wahayshi (Osama bin Laden's former secretary), al Qaeda slowly reorganized and rebuilt itself in Yemen<sup>285</sup> and in January 2009, al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) was officially formed with the merger of al Qaeda's Yemeni and Saudi branches.<sup>286</sup> By 2011, AQAP had become al Qaeda's most lethal branch and boasted several thousand fighters.<sup>287</sup> Since its 2009 creation, AQAP has been behind countless attacks and attempted attacks in Yemen and across the world. AQAP's most notable operations include the "Underwear Bomber" Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab's attempt to bomb a Northwest Airlines flight in 2009, an attempt to send explosive-laden packages aboard U.S. aircraft in 2010, and the 2015 attack on the Charlie Hebdo magazine's office in Paris.<sup>288</sup>

As the Arab Spring swept across the Middle East in 2011, protests demanding change and for the replacement of President Saleh broke out across Yemen. Despite offering

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<sup>284</sup> Clark, *Yemen: Dancing on the Heads of Snakes*, 202–206; International Crisis Group, 2017, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," International Crisis Group, February 2, 2017, 3; Johnsen, *The Last Refuge*, 92–97.

<sup>285</sup> Gregory Johnsen, "Waning Vigilance: Al-Qaeda's Resurgence in Yemen," The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, July 13, 2009, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/experts/view/gregory-johnsen>.

<sup>286</sup> Edmund James Hull, *High-Value Target: Countering Al Qaeda in Yemen* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2011), 208, 235.

<sup>287</sup> International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 4; Christopher Swift, "Arc of Convergence: AQAP, Ansar Al-Shari'a and the Struggle for Yemen," *CTC Sentinel*, January 19, 2018, <https://ctc.usma.edu/june-2012/>, 2.

<sup>288</sup> Hull, 258–259; "AL-QA'IDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA (AQAP)," National Counterterrorism Center, accessed April 15, 2018, <https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/aqap.html>.

concessions (following an initially brutal response to protests),<sup>289</sup> domestic and international pressures forced Saleh to transfer power to Vice President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi in 2012.<sup>290</sup> By 2014, however, Houthi militants in northern Yemen joined forces with Saleh and his supporters against the Hadi government. In September, Houthi militants took over the central government in Sanaa and forced President Hadi to flee to Aden and later to Saudi Arabia.<sup>291</sup> The country spiraled into civil war as the Houthi-Saleh alliance (with Iranian support) fought Hadi and his loyalist forces (with the support of Saudi Arabia and an international coalition).<sup>292</sup> Already one of the region's poorest countries prior to 2011, Yemen has collapsed into the world's most pressing humanitarian crisis.<sup>293</sup>

As feared by many in the international community, the state of chaos in 2011 and beyond (and the void left by the central government) allowed other groups in the country to gain strength.<sup>294</sup> The secessionist Southern movement, Hirak, stepped up its efforts for a referendum on independence, AQAP was able to seize large swaths of land across southern Yemen, and even the Islamic State (IS) established a foothold in the country after 2015.<sup>295</sup> Although UAE and U.S.-led attacks in 2016 and 2017 significantly reduced AQAP's

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<sup>289</sup> Saleem Haddad and Saleem Haddas, "Yemen: Divided Dissent," *The World Today* 67, no. 3 (March 2011): <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41962628>, 8–9; Hull, 270.

<sup>290</sup> Jeremy M. Sharp, *Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention*, CRS Report No. R43960 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2017), 2.

<sup>291</sup> Sharp, 2.

<sup>292</sup> *The Economist*, "What Is Going on in Yemen?" *The Economist*, March 29, 2015, <https://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2015/03/economist-explains-24>.

<sup>293</sup> Ashley Clements, "YEMEN: Lives At Risk," *The World Today* 66, no. 11 (November 2010): <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41962464>; Daniel Nikbakht and Sheena McKenzie, "Yemen War Is World's Worst Humanitarian Crisis, UN Says," CNN, April 03, 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/03/middleeast/yemen-worlds-worst-humanitarian-crisis-un-intl/index.html>.

<sup>294</sup> Michael Horton, "Fighting the Long War: The Evolution of Al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula," *CTC Sentinel* 10, no. 1 (January 2017): <https://ctc.usma.edu/fighting-the-long-war-the-evolution-of-al-qaida-in-the-arabian-peninsula/>, 17; Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*, 3.

<sup>295</sup> Daniel Green, "Al-Qaeda's Soft-Power Strategy in Yemen," The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, January 13, 2013, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/al-qaedas-soft-power-strategy-in-yemen>; Elias Groll, "Yemen on the Edge," *Foreign Policy*, March 20, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/20/twin-suicide-bombings-in-yemen-may-mark-islamic-state-foray-into-yemen/>; Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*, 9.

territory, the group remains a powerful force in southern Yemen.<sup>296</sup> As this chapter will examine further, AQAP enacted their own form of governance in their territories and provided public goods to their constituents at a level far exceeding that of the state government.<sup>297</sup>

In December 2017, Saleh was killed by Houthi rebels after the two brief allies turned on each other.<sup>298</sup> As of 2018, the civil war rages on, Saudi and coalition strikes continue, and the devastating humanitarian crisis has only worsened with time.<sup>299</sup>

### C. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's primary goals are to seize and hold territory, gradually implement sharia, and to eventually form an Islamic caliphate. It views its primary adversaries as the Yemeni and Saudi Arabian governments, along with the United States.<sup>300</sup>

Despite the ambitious nature of these goals, AQAP has proved adept at balancing its ideological goals with the realities of local insurgency.<sup>301</sup> AQAP therefore differs somewhat from al Qaeda Central regarding the scope of its target. While al Qaeda Central has long been focused on attacking the far enemy, the United States (which supports non-Islamic

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<sup>296</sup> "Al-Qaeda Is Losing Ground in Yemen. Yet Is Far from Defeated," *The Economist*, January 10, 2017, <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2017/06/10/al-qaeda-is-losing-ground-in-yemen.-yet-is-far-from-defeated>.

<sup>297</sup> Alessandria Masi, "Al Qaeda Winning Hearts and Minds Over ISIS in Yemen With Social Services," *International Business Times*, April 7, 2016, <http://www.ibtimes.com/al-qaeda-winning-hearts-minds-over-isis-yemen-social-services-2346835>.

<sup>298</sup> "Ali Abdullah Saleh, Yemen's Former Leader, Killed in Sanaa," BBC, December 4, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42225574>.

<sup>299</sup> International Crisis Group, "Yemen: A Humanitarian Catastrophe; A Failing State," International Crisis Group, March 01, 2017b, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/yemen-humanitarian-catastrophe-failing-state>; Reuters, "Yemen's Cholera Epidemic Likely to Intensify in Coming Months: WHO," Reuters, February 26, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-cholera/yemens-cholera-epidemic-likely-to-intensify-in-coming-months-who-idUSKCN1GA225>.

<sup>300</sup> Barak Barfi, "AQAP's Soft Power Strategy in Yemen," *CTC Sentinel* 3, no. 11 (November 2010): <https://ctc.usma.edu/aqaps-soft-power-strategy-in-yemen/>, 1; Glenn E. Robinson, "The Four Waves of Global Jihad, 1979–2017," *Middle East Policy* 24, no. 3 (Fall 2017): 72; Murad Batal Al-Shishani, "Bringing Shari'a Rule to Yemen and Saudi Arabia: Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's Post-Revolution Strategies," *Terrorism Monitor* 9, no. 37 (October 14, 2011): <https://jamestown.org/program/bringing-sharia-rule-to-yemen-and-saudi-arabia-al-qaeda-in-the-arabian-peninsulas-post-revolution-strategies/>.

<sup>301</sup> Swift, "Arc of Convergence," 2.

governments in the Middle East), AQAP has focused primarily on Yemen and Saudi Arabia with only a handful of attacks against the West.<sup>302</sup> Despite AQAP's vocal encouragement of "lone-wolf" attacks in the West, it is a much lower priority for the group.<sup>303</sup> In this sense, AQAP's religious and ideological goals have been made secondary to its immediate and pragmatic goal of building local support.<sup>304</sup> Once a strong local backing has been established, AQAP would likely seek to increase its foreign operations.<sup>305</sup> Ultimately, AQAP seeks to link its own Islamic emirate with others in Afghanistan, Somalia, Pakistan, and Iraq.<sup>306</sup>

#### D. STRENGTH OF STATE GOVERNMENT

Even before the 2011 Arab Uprisings spread to Yemen, the country had long been a hotbed for violence and political turmoil.<sup>307</sup> Once the Arab Spring protests began, however, political infighting between President Saleh and the Islah party escalated and split the government's security apparatus. As the country fell into civil war and the Houthis took over Sanaa, the ability of the Yemeni government and military to demonstrate control vanished.<sup>308</sup> Yemen's security forces were divided, degraded, lacked a central command, and had little incentive to continue fighting.<sup>309</sup> This created a power vacuum that AQAP,

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<sup>302</sup> Michael Horton, "Capitalizing on Chaos: AQAP Advances in Yemen," *Terrorism Monitor* 15, no. 4 (February 19, 2016): <https://jamestown.org/program/capitalizing-on-chaos-aqap-advances-in-yemen/>, 10–11; Robinson, "The Four Waves of Global Jihad," 77; al-Shishani, "Bringing Shari'a Rule to Yemen and Saudi Arabia," 6–7; Swift, "Arc of Convergence," 1.

<sup>303</sup> Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 17–21; International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 6; Katherine Zimmerman, "AQAP: A Resurgent Threat," *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 9 (September 2015): 22.

<sup>304</sup> Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 21.

<sup>305</sup> Barfi, "AQAP's Soft Power Strategy in Yemen," 2; International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 7.

<sup>306</sup> Sarah Phillips, "Al-Qaeda and the Struggle for Yemen," *Survival* 53, no. 1 (January 28, 2011): 106.

<sup>307</sup> Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*, 9.

<sup>308</sup> Ludovico Carlino, "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula Makes Inroads in Southern Yemen but Reveals Limits to Its Operational Capabilities," *Terrorism Monitor* 11, no. 13 (June 27, 2013): <https://jamestown.org/program/al-qaeda-in-the-arabian-peninsula-makes-inroads-in-southern-yemen-but-reveals-limits-to-its-operational-capabilities/>; Daniel Green, "Al-Qaeda's Shadow Government in Yemen," The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, December 12, 2013, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/al-qaedas-shadow-government-in-yemen>.

<sup>309</sup> April Longley Alley, "Assessing (In)security after the Arab Spring: The Case of Yemen," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 46, no. 04 (2013): 721–724; Zimmerman, "AQAP: A Resurgent Threat," 19.

Zaydi Houthis in the north, and the secessionist Southern Movement all took advantage of.<sup>310</sup> These factors all contributed to AQAP's ability to seize territory in 2011 and 2015 with minimal bloodshed and little resistance from the Yemeni security services.<sup>311</sup>

Yemen's status as a collapsed state not only resulted in an ineffective security apparatus and the rise of non-state actors like AQAP but it also magnified pre-existing humanitarian issues. The Yemeni government has been completely incapable of providing basic services, like water and electricity, to its population while disease and malnutrition have strangled the country.<sup>312</sup> As of February 2018, the United Nations had declared that 22 million of Yemen's 25 million citizens were in need of humanitarian assistance, with over half of those in acute need. Yemen's ability to provide goods, services, and security for its population is almost entirely non-existent and it is in this state of chaos that we find the rise of non-state actors such as AQAP.

#### **E. TERRITORIAL CONTROL**

Although AQAP maintained a strong presence in multiple governates across Yemen and has had brief control of small towns and villages,<sup>313</sup> its noteworthy periods of full territorial control can be viewed in two distinct phases: from May 2011 to May 2012 in the Abyan and Shabwa governates and from April 2015 to April 2016 in the Hadramawt governate, particularly the port city of al-Mukalla (depicted in Figure 3).

In May 2011, AQAP seized control of Abyan's capital, Zinjibar, and its surrounding areas with little resistance from government forces.<sup>314</sup> As it gradually took control of large

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<sup>310</sup> Ghaith Abdul-Ahad, "Al-Qaida's Wretched Utopia and the Battle for Hearts and Minds," *The Guardian*, April 30, 2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/30/alqaida-yemen-jihadis-sharia-law>; Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 17; Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*, 9.

<sup>311</sup> Al-Shishani, "Bringing Shari'a Rule to Yemen and Saudi Arabia"; Horton, "Capitalizing on Chaos"; International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 10; Brian Perkins, "AQAP Surges in Yemen as War Rages," *Terrorism Monitor* 13, no. 9 (May 1, 2015): <https://jamestown.org/program/aqap-surges-in-yemen-as-war-rages/>.

<sup>312</sup> Reuters, "Yemen's Cholera Epidemic"; Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*, 19.

<sup>313</sup> Al-Shishani, "Bringing Shari'a Rule to Yemen and Saudi Arabia"; Carlino, "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula Makes Inroads in Southern Yemen".

<sup>314</sup> Abdul-Ahad, "Al-Qaida's Wretched Utopia and the Battle for Hearts and Minds"; Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 17; International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 10.

parts of Abyan and its neighboring governate, Shabwa, AQAP achieved its first opportunity to govern territory.<sup>315</sup> Throughout its year of control, AQAP maintained full control of its territory, provided basic services to the population, and instituted a sharia-based justice system. In May 2012, the Yemeni Armed Forces, with support from tribal militias and the United States military, launched an offensive campaign which successfully stripped AQAP of its territorial gains.<sup>316</sup>

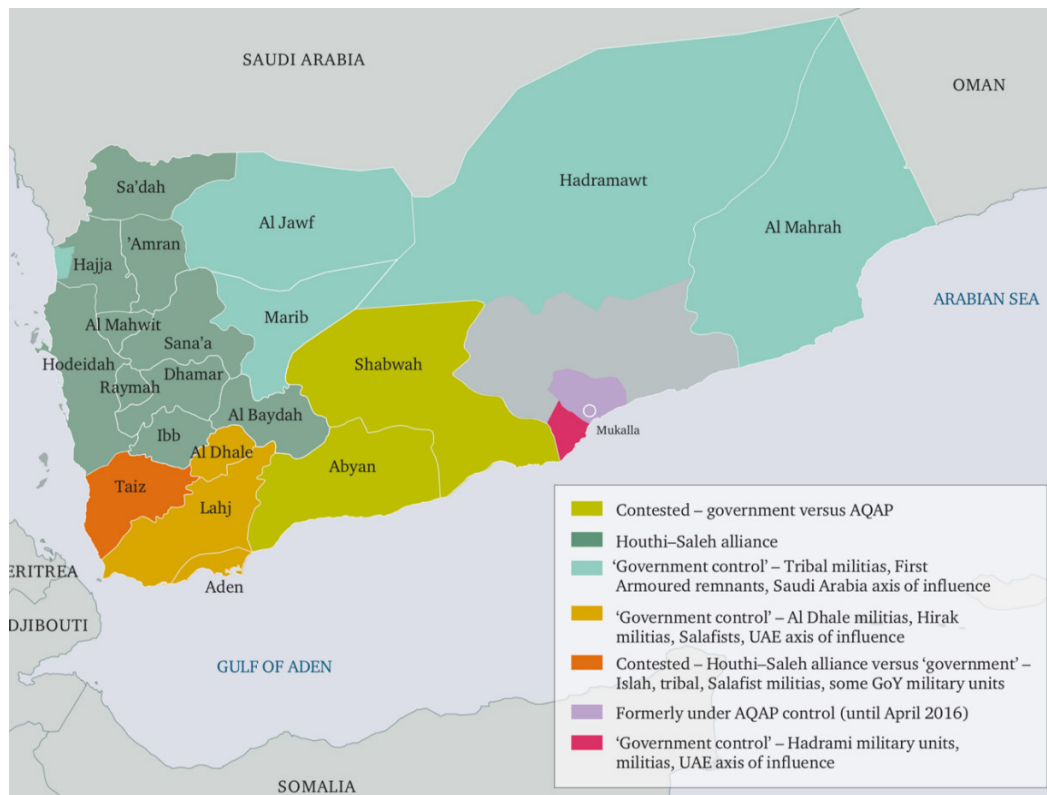


Figure 3. Map of the Republic of Yemen.<sup>317</sup>

<sup>315</sup> Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*, 13; Robin Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," Hudson Institute, December 27, 2012, <https://www.hudson.org/research/9779-ansar-al-sharia-and-governance-in-southern-yemen>, 58.

<sup>316</sup> Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 18–19.

<sup>317</sup> Source: Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*.

In April 2015, AQAP successfully seized al-Mukalla, with a population of over 300,000, and large swaths of territory across southern Hadramawt.<sup>318</sup> After months of preparation and coalition building with tribal leaders, AQAP rapidly seized the port city with almost no bloodshed.<sup>319</sup> AQAP held full control over this territory for one year while it worked with local leaders, implemented a social services program, and worked to gradually transform the society into an Islamic emirate under sharia. In April 2016, Saudi and Emirati-backed forces retook al-Mukalla. While coalition officials labeled it a defeat of AQAP, AQAP itself referred to it as a strategic retreat in order to save civilian lives.<sup>320</sup> As it was, AQAP gradualists had anticipated and planned their retreat in order to prevent massive losses to the organization and the destruction of goodwill it had worked so hard to build with the local population.

After being forced from al-Mukalla, AQAP relocated to neighboring governates and blended with the local population while continuing to expand its influence in the governates of Taiz, Ibb, and al-Bayda.<sup>321</sup> Despite not holding control of territory, AQAP has continued to exercise on and off control of territory within the Abyan and Shabwa governates.<sup>322</sup>

## **F. FUNDING**

Since its foundation, AQAP has relied on a variety of sources for funding including hostage ransoms, phony charities, bank robberies, and taxes on trade in the port city of al-Mukalla.<sup>323</sup> While AQAP relied heavily on hostage ransoms prior to 2015, the group

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<sup>318</sup> Horton, “Fighting the Long War,” 20; Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*, 30.

<sup>319</sup> Horton, “Fighting the Long War”; Perkins, “AQAP Surges in Yemen as War Rages”; International Crisis Group, “Yemen’s Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base,” 9.

<sup>320</sup> Horton, “Fighting the Long War,” 20; Salisbury, *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State*, 33.

<sup>321</sup> Carlino, “Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula Makes Inroads in Southern Yemen”; Horton, “Fighting the Long War,” 20; International Crisis Group, “Yemen’s Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base,” 9.

<sup>322</sup> International Crisis Group, “Yemen’s Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base,” 9.

<sup>323</sup> Zachary Laub, “Yemen in Crisis,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 19, 2016, <https://www.cfr.org/background/yemen-crisis>; *Terrorist Financing: Kidnapping, Antiquities Trafficking, and Private Donations*, 114th Cong. (2015) (testimony of David Andrew Weinberg).

amassed a sizable war chest from bank robberies and taxes as it controlled territory across the Hadramawt governate from April 2015 to April 2016.

In an August 2012 letter to al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM), AQAP leader Nasser al-Wuhayshi wrote that “kidnapping hostages is an easy spoil” and stated that almost half of AQAP’s funding at that time came from hostage ransoms.<sup>324</sup> As European and Middle Eastern governments (particularly France, Oman, and Qatar) paid out over a \$100 million in ransoms to various terrorist groups across the Middle East, AQAP received almost \$30 million from 2011 to 2013 alone.<sup>325</sup> This allowed AQAP to recover from US-led counterinsurgency operations, seize new territory, and position itself to take advantage of the turmoil across Yemen.<sup>326</sup>

After taking over the port city of al-Mukalla and much of the Hadramawt governate in April 2015, AQAP drastically improved its financial position. In addition to seizing weapons from an Yemeni Army depot, AQAP stole an estimated \$60 million from al-Mukalla’s central bank.<sup>327</sup> During its yearlong control of the port city, AQAP extorted private companies and earned \$2 million to \$5 million each day from taxes and customs

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Hearing before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

<sup>324</sup> Rukmini Callimachi, “Paying Ransoms, Europe Bankrolls Qaeda Terror,” *New York Times*, July 29, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/30/world/africa/ransoming-citizens-europe-becomes-al-qaedas-patron.html>.

<sup>325</sup> Callimachi, “Paying Ransoms, Europe Bankrolls Qaeda Terror”; Tom Keatinge, “Finances of Jihad: How Extremist Groups Raise Money,” BBC, December 12, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-30393832>; U.S. Department of the Treasury, “Remarks of Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David Cohen before the Center for a New American Security on “Confronting New Threats in Terrorist Financing,” Press release, March 4, 2014, <https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2308.aspx>.

<sup>326</sup> U.S. Department of Treasury, “Remarks of Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David Cohen”; David Weinberg, *Terrorist Financing: Kidnapping, Antiquities Trafficking, and Private Donations*.

<sup>327</sup> Yara Bayoumy, Noah Browning, and Mohammed Ghobari, “How Saudi Arabia’s War in Yemen Has Made Al Qaeda Stronger and Richer,” Reuters, April 08, 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/yemen-aqap/>; Associated Press, “Al-Qaeda Seizes Large Weapons Cache in Eastern Yemen.”

duties applied to fuel and goods coming into and out of the port.<sup>328</sup> These funds allowed AQAP to provide public goods and services to those within its territory as well as to pay its fighters, estimated at nearly 4,000 at its peak.<sup>329</sup> With an annual operation budget estimated at \$10 million, AQAP's peak war chest of an estimated \$100 million provided it considerable financial resources for long-term operations.<sup>330</sup>

## G. USE OF VIOLENCE

AQAP's use of violence from 2010 to 2017 represented a stark change compared to previous al Qaeda affiliates. Learning from al Qaeda's experience in Iraq, AQAP relied less on violence and instead focused on gradualism for ruling territory, particularly during its second opportunity to govern.<sup>331</sup>

In Abyan from 2011 to 2012, AQAP compromised, to a degree, on its harsh implementation of sharia in pursuance of a "hearts and minds" strategy.<sup>332</sup> Markets for qat, for example, were moved outside the main cities rather than being banned outright and AQAP worked to persuade locals to give up other vices such as cigarette smoking.<sup>333</sup> Despite a degree of compromise and gradualism, AQAP's eventually reverted to using violence as they consolidated power.<sup>334</sup> The group crucified an accused spy and publicly

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<sup>328</sup> Saeed Al Batati, "Yemen: The Truth Behind Al-Qaeda's Takeover of Mukalla," Al Jazeera, September 16, 2015, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/09/yemen-truth-al-qaeda-takeover-mukalla-150914101527567.html>; Faisal Edroos and Saleh Al Batati, "After Al-Qaeda: No Signs of Recovery in Yemen's Mukalla," Al Jazeera, January 11, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/al-qaeda-signs-recovery-yemen-mukalla-180111135554851.html>.

<sup>329</sup> Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 19–21; Elisabeth Kendall, "What's Next for Jihadists in Yemen?" *The Washington Post*, February 23, 2018, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/02/23/whats-next-for-jihadists-in-yemen>.

<sup>330</sup> Bayoumy et al., "How Saudi Arabia's War in Yemen"; Yaya J. Fanusie and Alex Entz, *Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula: Financial Assessment*, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, Center for Sanctions and Illicit Finance, July 2017, [http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/CSIF\\_TFBB\\_AQAP\\_web.pdf](http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/CSIF_TFBB_AQAP_web.pdf).

<sup>331</sup> Green, "al-Qaeda's shadow government"; International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 7; Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 61; Swift, "Arc of Convergence," 2.

<sup>332</sup> Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 61.

<sup>333</sup> Simcox, 62–63.

<sup>334</sup> Green, "al-Qaeda's soft power strategy"; Swift, "Arc of Convergence," 5.

executed several others. It flogged locals for drinking alcohol, banned Arab music, and assaulted those who did not attend mosque during required times.<sup>335</sup> While some local Yemenis praised this harsh rule for establishing long-absent security, many others were opposed to it and accused AQAP fighters for using violence indiscriminately and without cause. Despite bringing security to Abyan (one method in which AQAP hoped to win hearts and minds), many Yemenis were happy to see them go in May 2012 and even assisted in forcing them out.<sup>336</sup>

AQAP learned from these lessons in its 2015 to 2016 takeover of al-Mukalla and the Hadramawt governate and was even more committed to prioritizing gradualism over violence within its territory.<sup>337</sup> While banned activities, floggings, and executions occurred, the use of violence was used sparingly and intended to serve as an example to other locals.<sup>338</sup> In fact, when AQAP was forced out of al-Mukalla it coordinated its departure with coalition forces to ensure minimal losses to itself and to civilians.<sup>339</sup> In this case, AQAP believed that potential civilian casualties would significantly erode the goodwill it had spent the better part of two years developing.

What violence AQAP has resorted to, meanwhile, has been primarily focused on those not under its territorial control. AQAP has attacked Yemeni government and military officials and fought heavily against Houthi fighters (particularly after 2014).<sup>340</sup> In doing so, AQAP has relied on a number of asymmetric and guerrilla techniques including

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<sup>335</sup> Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 63.

<sup>336</sup> Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 64; al-Shishani, "Bringing Shari'a Rule to Yemen and Saudi Arabia".

<sup>337</sup> Horton, "Fighting the Long War."

<sup>338</sup> Zimmerman, "AQAP: A Resurgent Threat," 21.

<sup>339</sup> International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 12.

<sup>340</sup> Daniel Green, "al-Qaeda's Resiliency in Yemen," The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, August 7, 2013, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/al-qaedas-resiliency-in-yemen>; Horton, "Fighting the Long War"; Perkins, "AQAP Surges in Yemen as War Rages"; Zimmerman, "AQAP: A Resurgent Threat," 20.

ambushes, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and assassinations.<sup>341</sup> It sustained fighting across multiple governates and even established the coordinating capability to conduct simultaneous attacks across five governates.<sup>342</sup> In addition to government and military officials, AQAP has also carried out assassinations against local leaders in order to undercut resistance.<sup>343</sup>

## **H. USE OF GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC GOODS**

In a shift from al Qaeda's experience in Iraq, AQAP has emphasized a grassroots approach in which the group embeds itself into the tribal social fabric.<sup>344</sup> To accomplish this, AQAP created the subsidiary organization, Ansar al-Sharia (Supporters of Islamic Law), in 2011.<sup>345</sup> Ansar al-Sharia (AAS) serves as AQAP's domestic arm and allows AQAP to operate on the ground without some of the controversy of the al Qaeda brand.<sup>346</sup> In October 2012, the United States Department of State designated Ansar al-Sharia as an alias of AQAP (rather than as a separate organization) and stated that "AAS is simply AQAP's effort to rebrand itself, with the aim of manipulating people to join AQAP's terrorist cause."<sup>347</sup> Similarly, according to senior AQAP official Abu Zubayr Adel al-Abab: "the name Ansar al-Sharia is what we use to introduce ourselves in areas where we work."<sup>348</sup> While Ansar al-Sharia is an extension of AQAP, AAS works more closely with

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<sup>341</sup> Green, "al-Qaeda's Resiliency"; International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 7; Aaron Y. Zelin and Patrick Hoover, "What AQAP's Operations Reveal about Its Strategy in Yemen," War on the Rocks, August 23, 2015, <https://warontherocks.com/2015/04/what-aqaps-operations-reveal-about-its-strategy-in-yemen/>.

<sup>342</sup> Zelin and Hoover, "What AQAP's Operations Reveal about Its Strategy in Yemen".

<sup>343</sup> Horton, "Capitalizing on Chaos."

<sup>344</sup> Al-Shishani, "Bringing Shari'a Rule to Yemen and Saudi Arabia"; Phillips, "Al-Qaeda and the Struggle for Yemen," 105; Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 61.

<sup>345</sup> International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 6.

<sup>346</sup> International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 6; Swift, "Arc of Convergence," 2.

<sup>347</sup> U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism, "Terrorist Designations of Ansar Al-Sharia as an Alias for Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula," news release, October 4, 2012, <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/266604.htm>.

<sup>348</sup> Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 60; Swift, "Arc of Convergence," 2.

local communities and tribes, its members are composed primarily of local Yemenis, and its interests are more domestically focused. Despite layers and variance among AAS members' level of support and loyalty to AQAP, it is undeniable that the two organizations highly intertwined in membership, support, and overall agendas.<sup>349</sup>

In August 2012, Nasir al-Wuhayshi, the leader of AQAP until his death in June 2015, summarized AQAP's approach to governance in his letter to the leader AQIM by emphasizing a "hearts and minds" approach in which goodwill was earned by providing governance and public goods.<sup>350</sup> He stated that "providing these necessities will have a great effect on people, and will make them sympathize with us and feel that their fate is tied to ours" and encouraged AQIM to take a gradual approach in enforcing religious law.<sup>351</sup>

The long-standing inability of the Yemeni government to provide services or security to its population was essential for AQAP's ability to step in and replicate the duties of a functional government.<sup>352</sup> The goods and services provided by AQAP in its two periods of governance were robust, extensive, and superior to anything the Yemeni government had previously provided.<sup>353</sup> During its rule in Abyan, AQAP distributed food, gas, fresh water, and electricity to those under its control. AQAP even provided teachers, collected trash, installed sewage pipes, and provided basic healthcare.<sup>354</sup> In interviews with the local population, many stressed that these services were provided promptly, for

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<sup>349</sup> International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 27; Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 60.

<sup>350</sup> Masi, "Al Qaeda Winning Hearts and Minds Over ISIS in Yemen With Social Services"; Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 19.

<sup>351</sup> Green, "al-Qaeda's Shadow Government"; Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 19.

<sup>352</sup> Al-Shishani, "Bringing Shari'a Rule to Yemen and Saudi Arabia"; Green, "al-Qaeda's Soft Power Strategy"; Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 58.

<sup>353</sup> Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 17–18; Masi, "Al Qaeda Winning Hearts and Minds Over ISIS In Yemen With Social Service."

<sup>354</sup> Green, "al-Qaeda's Soft Power Strategy"; Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 61–62.

free, and in the case of electricity, for the first time in decades.<sup>355</sup> During AQAP's rule of the Hadramawt it provided many of the same goods and services to the local population as it had in 2011–2012, including infrastructure projects, paying the salaries for local civil servants, providing food and medical supplies, and even hosting community events.<sup>356</sup> During these periods of territorial control, AQAP magnified their actions through a robust propaganda campaign, which included using Twitter and its own media wing.<sup>357</sup>

Key to AQAP's method for governance was its ability to provide security and justice to the local population. In 2011–2012, AQAP ran the local police force and enacted an efficient sharia-based court system. Although its justice system became increasingly strict during its year of rule, it was an unsurprising form of justice in an area that had long been without and created a significant reduction in crime.<sup>358</sup> In 2015–2016 (and in the year prior to its takeover), AQAP softened its approach to governance and placed a greater emphasis on gradualism and working with tribal and local leaders than it had in 2011–2012.<sup>359</sup> While AQAP worked with local leaders during its 2011–2012 rule of Abyan and Shabwa, it placed greater emphasis on ruling through proxies during its 2015–2016 rule of al-Mukalla and Hadramawt, and even worked to exploit inter-tribal rivalries when possible.<sup>360</sup> AQAP also formed the Hadramawt National Council with local tribes, a local ruling council that oversaw day-to-day governance and a militia force that protected schools, banks, and local government buildings.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>355</sup> Abdul-Ahad, "Al-Qaida's Wretched Utopia and the Battle for Hearts and Minds"; Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 61–62.

<sup>356</sup> Al Batati, "Yemen: The Truth Behind Al-Qaeda's Takeover of Mukalla"; Edroos and Al Batati, "After Al-Qaeda: No Signs of Recovery in Yemen's Mukalla"; International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 11.

<sup>357</sup> Kendall, "What's Next for Jihadists in Yemen?"; Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 61, 68.

<sup>358</sup> Al-Shisani; Green, "al-Qaeda's Shadow Government"; Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 64; Swift, "Arc of Convergence," 4.

<sup>359</sup> Green, "al-Qaeda's Soft Power Strategy"; Horton, "Capitalizing on chaos"; International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 11; Zimmerman, "AQAP: A Resurgent Threat," 21.

<sup>360</sup> Horton, "Fighting the Long War," 19; Zimmerman, "AQAP: A Resurgent Threat," 21.

<sup>361</sup> Al Batati, "Yemen: The Truth Behind Al-Qaeda's Takeover of Mukalla"; Horton, "Fighting the long war," 19; International Crisis Group, "Yemen's Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base," 11.

Interviews with local Yemenis indicate mixed perceptions of AQAP and Ansar al-Sharia. While many locals praised the groups for their public goods provision, justice system, and the level of security they brought to the area, many others reported that they were glad to see the group and its brutal tactics leave (and even helped fight against them).<sup>362</sup> Both views appear based on indisputable facts: AQAP and AAS provided far higher levels of governance and public goods than the central government at the same time that it enforced a sharia-based system of justice (at varying degrees of harshness and severity). Of note, after AQAP was forced out of their strongholds in 2012 and 2016, living conditions for Yemenis in Abyan and the Hadramawt worsened as the civil war raged on and the central government remained completely incapable of providing security or services.<sup>363</sup>

## I. EXPLANATIONS

The decision to provide public goods and governance rather than solely committing violence against a population is likely a complex relationship of multiple factors. This section, however, will analyze how the AQAP case study appears to fit within the hypotheses laid out in the introductory chapter. It will examine the correlations that do or do not support the hypotheses in addition to comparing the AQAP case study with Hezbollah and Hamas.

***H<sub>1</sub>: Territorial security and legitimacy are significant factors behind insurgents' decision and ability to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

This hypothesis appears to hold true for AQAP in a manner different from Hezbollah and Hamas. Since AQAP's creation, it has twice held territory for roughly a year in each instance. It was during these periods, and only during these periods, that AQAP was able to provide public goods and services to Yemeni civilians. Although it is true that AQAP worked with local and tribal leaders prior to its 2015–2016 takeover of al-Mukalla

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<sup>362</sup> Abdul-Ahad, "Al-Qaida's Wretched Utopia"; Bayoumy et al, "Born Violent: Armed Political Parties and Non-State Governance in Lebanon's Civil War"; Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," 64–65.

<sup>363</sup> Edroos and Batati, "After Al-Qaeda: No Signs of Recovery in Yemen's Mukalla."

and the Hadramawt governate (when the Yemeni government held control), the building of relationships is far from the widespread distribution of goods and services that followed once they gained territorial control.

This hypothesis therefore holds true for all three case studies but receives the most interesting and robust support in the AQAP case study, as the group clearly was able to provide goods and services while they held territorial control and unable to when the Yemeni government held control.

***H<sub>2</sub>: Secessionist rebel groups are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than non-secessionist groups.***

Whereas Hamas can be classified as secessionist, Hezbollah and AQAP are both non-secessionist. AQAP's efforts in Yemen seek to control their own territory but are not actively involved in any attempts to seek independence from Yemen and create their own formal state. While the analysis of just three case studies in this thesis is not enough to prove this hypothesis as false, it is clear that two of the three case studies examined do not support it.

***H<sub>3</sub>: Rebel groups that exist in weak states are likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

This hypothesis is clearly supported by the AQAP and Yemeni case study. Yemen has collapsed into a failed state with multiple factions sparring in a complicated civil war. The Yemeni government has proven incapable of providing goods and services to its citizens and has demonstrated itself as unable to adequately maintain state security against AQAP without outside support.

AQAP in Yemen joins Hezbollah in Lebanon in providing support to this hypothesis, as AQAP operates in a failed state and Hezbollah operates in a previously failed, but now recovering, state. Hamas meanwhile operates in an area controlled and dominated by Israel, a strong state with a robust military capability.

***H4: Rebel groups with greater overall capability are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than groups with moderate to weak capability.***

AQAP appears to support this hypothesis in a manner different than Hezbollah and Hamas. AQAP provided goods and services over two separate one-year periods. In the first instance, AQAP had a smaller war chest than in 2015–2016 and was less committed to providing good governance and public goods. After initial efforts, AQAP gradually resorted to increased levels of violence against its constituents. After its 2015 takeover of al-Mukalla and the Hadramawt governate, however, there appears to be a correlation between its improved financial position and greater commitment to governance and public goods. By raiding the central bank in al-Mukalla and extracting taxes from shipments in and out of the port, AQAP clearly had more financial capability than it did over 2011–2012 and simultaneously demonstrated greater provision of goods and services.

This case study matches up with Hezbollah and Hamas, both of which had sizeable financial reserves and provided extensive governance and public goods.

## V. CONCLUSION

Research into rebel violence has been the main focus of scholars over the years. Less prominent has been research into rebel governance. This thesis has sought to study this underexplored topic and contribute to a relatively new field of inquiry. It seeks to explain how rebel governance and public goods unfolded in three important Islamist movements: Hezbollah, Hamas, and AQAP. This thesis also seeks to contribute to how states can counter the influence of such militant groups and their attempts to build legitimacy and consolidate power through the provision of public goods. Increased discussion on the topic could establish universally accepted definitions and (potentially) an agreed upon causal chain of what factors lead rebel groups to emphasize either violence or governance.

### A. HYPOTHESES

While 70 percent of rebel groups do not provide governance to their constituents,<sup>364</sup> this thesis has aimed to find causal factors for the 30 percent that do. From examining existing literature on rebel governance and the three case studies in this thesis, I argue that the most significant reasons in explaining rebel governance concern territorial security and legitimacy (Hypothesis 1) and the overall capability and funding of the rebel group (Hypothesis 4). While secessionist motivations (Hypothesis 2) and the presence of a weak state (Hypothesis 3) may play a role, their impact was noticeably less clear from qualitative analysis.

While the four hypotheses have been discussed in each case study chapter, this section will provide an analysis of my findings from the three case studies and an overall, qualitative assessment of the strength of each hypothesis:

***H<sub>1</sub>: Territorial security and legitimacy are significant factors behind insurgents' decision and ability to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

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<sup>364</sup> Stewart, "Civil War as State-Making: Strategic Governance in Civil War," 206.

The case of Hezbollah firmly supports this hypothesis as Hezbollah has maintained significant influence in the Shia regions of the country since the early 1980s. This influence has developed into solid territorial control of southern Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs at the expense of the central Lebanese government. The government has employed a "gentleman's agreement" where it does not contest Hezbollah's dominance in these areas. This has given Hezbollah the freedom to act without constraint and to provide governance and public goods to its constituents.

Hamas is similar to Hezbollah in that it has long held influence and control over territory. Hamas maintained strong influence in the Gaza Strip throughout the mid-1990s and early 2000s and has held a total monopoly on the use of force since 2007. Although Hamas certainly faces various pressure from outside forces such as the Palestinian Authority and Israel, its dominance in the Gaza Strip is unquestioned and uncontested.

The case study of AQAP is what provides the strongest overall support for this hypothesis as it was clearly able to provide governance and public goods while it maintained territorial control and unable to do so when it did not control territory. AQAP's ability to govern its constituents in the Abyan and Shabwa governates (May 2011 to May 2012) and in the Hadramawt governate (April 2015 to April 2016) provide clear support for this hypothesis. While AQAP has maintained a presence in multiple parts of the country and has worked to build partnerships with local leaders, it has been unable or unwilling to provide governance or public goods outside of the times and places that it held strict control of territory. In addition to the overall across-case comparison of this thesis, the AQAP case study provides strong within-case support for Hypothesis 1.

The findings for this hypothesis fit with the arguments of Mampilly, Kalyvas and Kasfir. Mampilly and Kalyvas similarly argued that rebel groups may try to use "hearts and minds" strategies in contested areas but that advanced levels of governance and welfare

provision would need to emerge after “a sufficient period of territorial control.”<sup>365</sup> Kasfir, meanwhile, asserted that territorial security was a precondition for rebel governance.<sup>366</sup>

***H<sub>2</sub>: Secessionist rebel groups are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than non-secessionist groups.***

This thesis does not find robust support for this hypothesis based on qualitative analyses of the three case studies. The basis for this hypothesis was rooted in the arguments of Mampilly and Stewart: Mampilly contended that governance was more likely to be found in secessionist groups than in non-secessionist groups,<sup>367</sup> while Stewart argued that secessionist groups are more likely to use inclusive incentives and public goods while non-secessionist groups typically rely on exclusive incentives.<sup>368</sup>

While Hamas is classified as secessionist as it is adamant in its desire for Palestinian statehood and sovereignty free of Israeli control, Hezbollah is satisfied with its territorial control and participation in electoral politics and AQAP seeks neither formal statehood or independence from the Yemeni central government. Since these three case studies provide a mix of secessionist and non-secessionist groups, variation should be expected based on Mampilly and Stewart’s arguments. Yet all three case studies demonstrated successful efforts to provide governance and inclusive public goods despite these differences.

These case studies alone are not enough to disconfirm this hypothesis outright (as will be addressed in the limitations section) but it clearly does not provide support for it either.

***H<sub>3</sub>: Rebel groups that exist in weak states are likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents.***

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<sup>365</sup> Kalyvas, “Performing the Nation-State: Rebel Governance and Symbolic Processes” in *Rebel governance in civil war*, 152; Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, 59–60, 63.

<sup>366</sup> Kasfir, “Rebel Governance—Constructing a Field of Inquiry: Definitions, Scope, Patterns, Order, Causes,” 25.

<sup>367</sup> Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, 214–217.

<sup>368</sup> Stewart, “Civil War as State-Making: Strategic Governance in Civil War,” 205–226.

Hezbollah and AQAP both exist in weak-to-failed states. Lebanon is a long way from the failed state that it was in the 1990s but remains a weak state by international relations standards. Yemen, meanwhile, has long been a weak state and has further devolved into civil war and a failed state status. Lebanon and Yemen's status as weak states has prevented the central government from firmly eradicating domestic threats to their sovereignty and legitimacy. This has allowed Hezbollah and AQAP the ability to operate and provide governance to their impoverished constituents. Yemen, for its part, has only been able to counter the threat of AQAP with the assistance of foreign allies.

Hamas, meanwhile, exists under the shadow of a strong state. Israel (with the support and combined efforts of the Palestinian Authority and the United States) held a military presence in the Gaza Strip until 2005 and has long been active in undermining Hamas. These efforts include leading international sanction efforts, military campaigns, and blockades that prevent critical goods and supplies from entering Gaza. While Hamas may maintain territorial control over Gaza, Israel has created a constrained environment that severely limits Hamas's freedom to operate and govern. Although Israel's efforts have at various times impacted the way in which Hamas has provided governance and services, Hamas's dedication to provided public goods has never stopped.<sup>369</sup>

While these case studies are unable to disconfirm this hypothesis outright (as in Hypothesis 2), these case studies also do not provide support for it. Rather than demonstrating variation among the governance and welfare provision between groups in weak states versus strong states, all three groups have provided public goods and governance regardless of these distinctions. Additionally, using qualitative analysis, there appear to be no major differences in the levels of governance and public goods provided by Hamas (compared to Hezbollah and AQAP) that would suggest the presence of weak states or strong states has had any significant impact.<sup>370</sup>

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<sup>369</sup> Baconi, *Hamas Contained*, 118; Hroub, *Hamas: A Beginners Guide*, 72–73; Weigand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 156.

<sup>370</sup> Cammett, "Habitat for Hezbollah"; Melani Cammett, "How Hezbollah helps"; Flanigan, "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations," 508; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad," 131; Wiegand, *Bombs and Ballots*, 120.

***H4: Rebel groups with greater overall capability are more likely to provide governance and public goods to their constituents than groups with moderate to weak capability.***

Based on qualitative analysis, levels of funding and overall capability appear to have a significant impact on rebel groups' ability to provide governance and public goods. Hezbollah's efforts toward public goods and welfare provision are the most robust of the three case studies. They have an elaborate organizational network and have provided extensive support to their constituents from education and medical services to communications and public works. Hezbollah rebuilt 5,000 homes in 1996 following Israeli attacks and spent an estimated \$281 million in compensation and rehabilitation after Israel's 2006 attacks in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah's welfare services are not only better than the central government but are widely praised by the NGO community as efficient and superior to other organizations.

Hamas's efforts at governance and public goods have been strong but are overshadowed by those of Hezbollah. Hamas has supported large medical facilities, orphanages, and low-cost education to Gazans, but this has come with restrictions and limitations due to external pressures from Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the United States.

AQAP's ability to provide governance and public goods was clearly the lowest of the three case studies. Although AQAP was able to extend electricity and trash collection efforts, in addition to providing food, water, basic healthcare, and teachers to its constituents (at levels exceeding the capabilities of the central Yemeni government), these efforts pale in comparison to the far more robust education and medical services of Hezbollah and Hamas.

The level of welfare provision correlates strongly with the funding and budgets of each group. Hezbollah, strongly backed by Iran, is able to provide the most robust welfare system of the three groups in part because its annual budget is estimated to range from \$200 million to over \$1 billion. Hamas's annual budget meanwhile is as high as \$150 million, which still allows it to provide extensive services to its constituents. AQAP's

capacity sits far lower than Hamas and Hezbollah, with an estimated annual budget of \$10 million and a peak war chest in 2015 estimated at only \$100 million.

An important within-case study observation regarding AQAP is the timing of its welfare system: when AQAP controlled territory in 2011–2012, the extent of its governance and public goods provision was far lower than in 2015–2016.<sup>371</sup> AQAP initially provided good governance and welfare to its constituents, but these efforts tapered off and were gradually replaced by increased levels of coercive violence in 2012. In 2015–2016, however, AQAP’s commitment to gradualism and welfare provision was far more robust and was sustained until the end of its rule. Notably, it is at this time that AQAP had seized the port city of al-Mukalla, thus allowing it to raise taxes from the port, raid the central bank of an estimated \$60 million, and amass its peak war chest of \$100 million.<sup>372</sup> This within-case study analysis therefore provides additional support for this hypothesis.

## **B. LIMITATIONS**

One strength of this thesis is that the qualitative approach to three case studies allows for an in-depth understanding of each group and its dynamics. For example, when comparing the ability of groups (across-case study and within-case study) it becomes clear that it is not so simple to grade welfare provision as a simple yes or no. There are variations among groups and within groups over time.

This approach is also a limitation for this thesis, however. The sample size for comparison is small and limits the ability to make wider claims. Further studies using a large-n sample group and quantitative data analysis would provide an important insight into these questions. While the variables and dynamics of groups would be lost, a wider sample size may provide greater clarity. It would also be helpful to examine additional groups that did not provide governance and public goods to their constituents (rather than

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<sup>371</sup> Green, “al-Qaeda’s soft power strategy”; Horton, “Capitalizing on chaos”; International Crisis Group, “Yemen’s Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base,” 11; Zimmerman, “AQAP: A Resurgent Threat,” 21.

<sup>372</sup> Bayoumy et al, “Born Violent: Armed Political Parties and Non-State Governance in Lebanon’s Civil War”.

only groups that did), groups from outside the Middle East, and control for additional variables.

### **C. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Understanding how and why rebel groups provide governance and public goods to their constituents has significant implications for policymakers. Rebel groups are fundamentally complex and dynamic, as are their support bases and how they gain legitimacy from their constituents. If U.S. policymakers target rebel groups outright, without careful considerations of how they provide for their constituents, they could cause a number of unknown consequences. Targeting a group that provides welfare services may create or worsen a humanitarian crisis. It may also hurt public opinion of the U.S. (both locally and around the world) if people fault the U.S. directly. This has the potential of strengthening the support base for rebel groups and undermining U.S. or allied efforts.

These concerns are similar to those of Grynkewich, who argued that rather than destroying social welfare services, states should instead seek to “displace” the role of those rebel groups by providing strong welfare programs.<sup>373</sup> By understanding how rebel groups provide governance and public goods, the U.S. and its allies can seek to undermine the support and legitimacy of these groups in a targeted and effective way that also limits collateral damage and human suffering.

Greater understanding on the nuances of rebel governance and the factors that contribute to it would also provide U.S. analysts and policymakers improved predictive assessments. By understanding how specific variables and pre-conditions contribute to rebel governance and public goods provision, U.S. policymakers may have a better understanding of how groups will operate long-term. Understanding these variables may also provide U.S. policymakers the ability to “displace” rebel welfare services earlier on.

The findings of this thesis specifically are relevant for policymakers as it suggests that considerations for secessionist and non-secessionist groups as well as states fighting weak or strong states are not necessary in their decision-making process. This thesis finds

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<sup>373</sup> Grynkewich, "Welfare as Warfare," 351.

that policymakers who seek to understand rebel groups and how they will operate should not focus on examining secessionist goals or state strength but should instead focus on the funding, influence, and territorial control a group has.

This thesis also suggests that the correlation between governance and public goods to levels of funding, influence, and territorial control should be further studied. If these findings are accurate, the academic community would benefit from a quantitative analysis examining how different levels of funding and territorial control correlate to varying levels of governance and provision.

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