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**MAC disregards Hamas' terrorist background and its ambition for a caliphate and presents it as an organization involved in social and relief work**

Original address: [http://www.macnet.ca/press-releases/2004/press\\_release\\_-\\_2004-03-22.php](http://www.macnet.ca/press-releases/2004/press_release_-_2004-03-22.php)

Date of the press release: March 3, 2004

Excerpts:

Although emphasis has been placed on the organization's military operations, Hamas has carried out significant social and relief work in the Occupied Territories since its inception.



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#### For Immediate Release

(Ottawa, Canada – 22/3/2004) – The Muslim Association of Canada condemned today the assassination of Shaikh Ahmad Yassin. Shaikh Ahmad Yassin was killed in a missile strike by the Israeli Defense Forces shortly after leaving a local mosque following dawn prayers. Yassin was partially blind, quadriplegic and relied on a wheel chair for mobility.

Shaikh Yassin founded Hamas in 1987. Although emphasis has been placed on the organization's military operations, Hamas has carried out significant social and relief work in the Occupied Territories since its inception.

The Muslim Association of Canada joins many international voices in condemning this illegal and horrific act. Mr Ahmad Qurie, the PM of the Palestinian Authority noted that Shaikh Yassin had a moderating influence within Hamas. British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said, "[Israel] is not entitled to go for this type of unlawful killing, and we therefore condemn it. It is unacceptable, it is unjustified, and it is very unlikely to achieve its objective."

The reaction throughout the Occupied Territories and around the Muslim world suggests that the assassination will precipitate more violence rather than limit it. The assassination is also likely to poison the environment in the Middle East for years to come.

The Muslim Association of Canada calls upon the Canadian government to condemn this illegal act. We point out that there is no excuse for this choice by the Israeli government to resort to extrajudicial killing rather than pursue whatever grievance it had in a civilized and legal manner. We appreciate that Canada's foreign minister Mr. Bill Graham joined the European Union and the UK in its condemnation of this murder and in reprimanding the Israeli government for yet again plunging the Middle East into violence. Canada has invested a lot to promote stability and progress in the Middle East. Equivocation and euphemisms would have completely discredited our country in the region for years to come.

Our heartfelt prayers and commiserations go out to the Palestinian people in their struggle to live in peace, dignity and freedom in their own homeland.

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