



In 'Ruthless' Sinwar, Iran Got Its Man To Lead Hamas

Yahya Sinwar, the alleged architect of the deadly October 7 attack on Israel and surprise appointment as the new leader of the U.S.- and EU-designated terror group Hamas, is known to have close ties to Iran.

By Kian Sharifi / Aug. 13, 2024

His appointment on August 6 as the head of the Palestinian group's political bureau followed the assassination of his predecessor, Ismail Haniyeh, in Tehran on July 31, an act that Iran and Hamas blame on Israel.

[...]

"None of us experts on Palestinian affairs -- especially here in Israel -- thought about Sinwar as the person who would replace Haniyeh," said **Yohanan Tzoreff, a senior researcher at the Tel Aviv-based Institute for National Security Studies** who specializes in Israeli-Palestinian relations.

"One [major] reason why Sinwar is the [new] leader is Iran," he added.

Sinwar was appointed after two days of deliberations in Qatar by the Shura Council -- a consultative body that elects the group's politburo and has members in Gaza, the West Bank, Israeli prisons, and the Palestinian diaspora.

Tzoreff said Meshaal's criticism during the 2011 Arab Spring of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad -- a close ally of Tehran -- made him a deeply unpopular figure among Iran's top brass.

Tzoreff argued that Mashaal's return to power could have jeopardized the Palestinian group's relations with the Islamic republic and "[the Iranians] may have stopped giving Hamas everything it needs [to fight Israeli forces]."

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