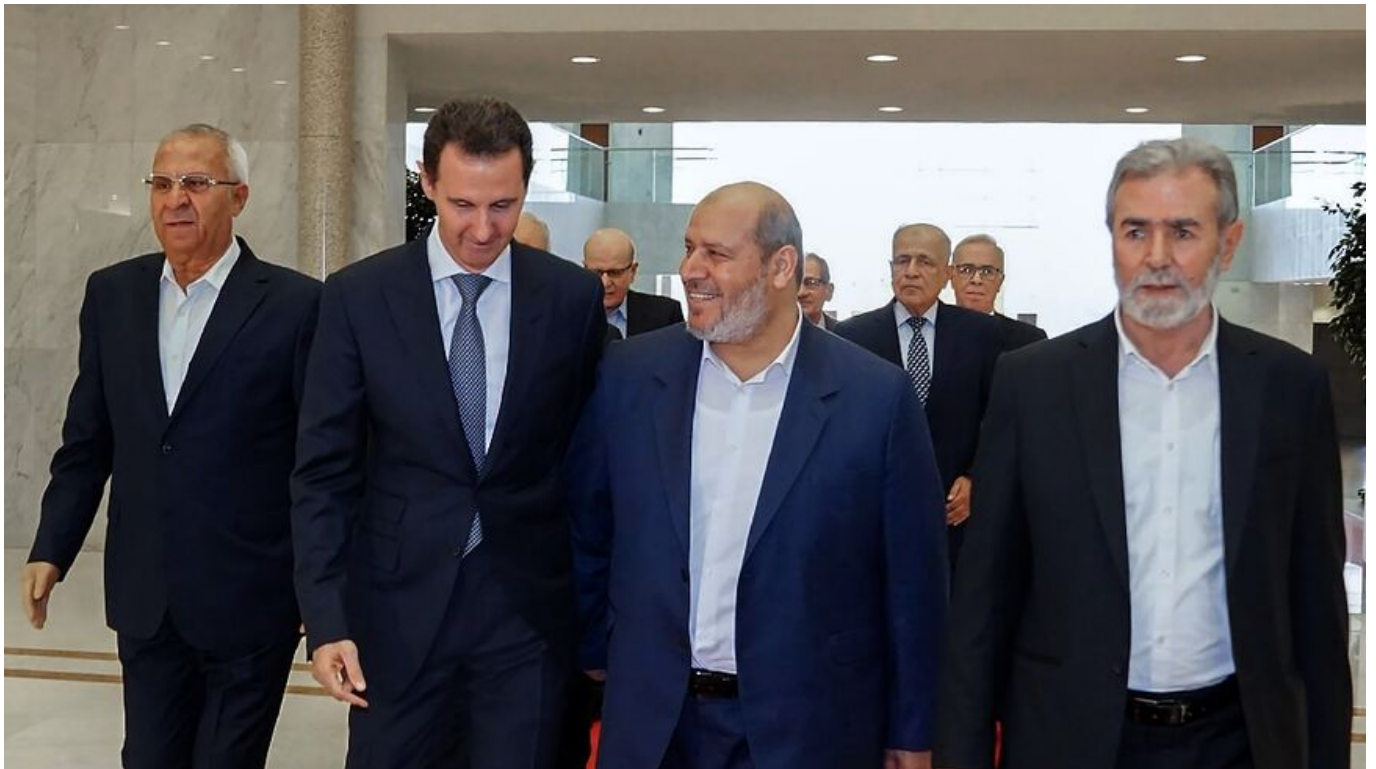


# Hamas Delegation Resumes Syria Ties After 10 Years

written by Maheen Tanveer | October 25, 2022



On 19th October 2022, the Palestinian movement Hamas restored its relations with Syria after the delegation visited President Bashar al-Asad in Damascus. This was followed by a historic meeting between the two entities. Hamas was once Syria's closest ally due to their common enmity against Israel. But in the year of 2012, this group left Syria after strongly condemning the Assad regime's brutal suppression.



Hamas chief of Arab relations Khalil al-Hayya told reporters in Damascus that “this is a glorious and important day, in which we come back to our dear Syria to resume joint work, Hamas and Assad have agreed to “move on from the past and look to the future”. Al-Hayya revealed that this move was backed by Hamas leadership and the Palestinian group’s foreign sponsors. “All the states we notified of our decision were welcoming and supportive of the move, including Qatar and Turkey, who encouraged us to take the step,” al-Hayya said.

A Hamas leader is reported to have said that the organization’s headquarters which was located in Syria before its departure, aims to restore its Damascus office. But the official also informed that it will be too early to give confirmation regarding this development.



Maha Yahya of the Carnegie Middle East Centre claimed that the meeting with Assad “is in line with the broader rapprochement between Hezbollah and Hamas evident in Lebanon over the past year or more”. The Syrian presidency said Assad met a delegation of Palestinian leaders without mentioning the resuming of ties with Hamas. But the presidency aired a video of Assad and Al-Hayya holding hands as they came along with other Palestinian officials.

The two-day Hamas visit to Syria comes after the organization signed a reconciliation deal with its Palestinian rival Fatah in Algiers, promising to conduct elections by next October in a bid to settle a 15-year intra-Palestinian rift.

The restoration of relationship between Hamas and Syria came amid significant changes in Middle East relationships. This comprises Hamas’s long-time ally Turkiye resuming a full diplomatic relationship with Israel in August 2022.

Charles Lister, Director of the Syria Programme at the Middle East Institute, said rapprochement is the “only logical move” Hamas could take. “Given the prevailing regional trend of Arab engagement with Israel, it’s not surprising to see Hamas’ leadership in Gaza seeking to re-enhance and amplify their role within the Axis of Resistance,” he said.

This restoration of ties with Syria paved the way for Hamas to secure its part within the “axis of resistance” in opposition to its arch-rival Israel.