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UNRWA in 2010

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The propensity for senior staff of UNRWA – which according to its mandate¹ is a purely humanitarian and service-driven organization – to make inappropriate, inciteful and highly politicized statements has been documented by the Center for Near East Policy Research for years.²

This report will track that trend during the course of 2010. Primary focus will be on the agency's statements concerning Gaza. Words of the three senior staff members who have the greatest visibility will be examined.

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John Ging

Director, UNRWA Operations in Gaza

● On January 4, 2010, a video filmed in Gaza was uploaded to YouTube;³ it includes a Sky1 News interview of John Ging, who heads UNRWA operations in Gaza.

They are standing, explains Ging in that video, in what used to be the industrial area of Gaza. Here, he says, the biscuit factory once stood, etc.

Elaborating, Ging says:

“The announcement [regarding Israeli intentions in Operation Cast Lead] was that this whole war was about demolishing the infrastructure of terrorism. But we look around and see that this was not the case.” The infrastructures of the economy and education were destroyed, he says. And the infrastructure of the government—ministries and the president's compound. “These are not the infrastructures of terror, these are the infrastructures of peace—the infrastructures of a state...the parliament building, the infrastructure of democracy.”

This protest by Ging is disingenuous, for it is inconceivable that he was unaware of the Hamas propensity for operating within civilian infrastructure⁴, impossible that he did not

realize that structures that had the appearance of being civilian may well have housed terrorists or weapons, or been employed as launching sites for rockets and missiles. And yet, he told his interviewer that standing in Gaza he was able to “see the truth.”

In alluding to the parliament building utilized by a terrorist Hamas, the governing entity of Gaza, as “infrastructure of democracy,” Ging willfully and seriously distorted reality.

● *In early April – ignoring the years of radicalization of the population of Gaza under the influence of UNRWA schools controlled by Hamas⁵ – Ging laid the blame for all problems with Gaza youngsters at the feet of Israel:*

“...if you have no reason to live, you will seek a glorious death. It’s worse now than it ever was before. A whole generation of Palestinians will have never got out of the besieged strip, never interacted with foreigners or even met Israelis except as enemy soldiers intent on killing and destruction. Their violent behavior and disrespect to their parents is symptomatic of the desperation they are growing up in.”⁶

● *On April 22, Ging gave a major press conference at the UN during which he depicted a situation in which the people of Gaza were “struggling to survive” because of the “political situation.”*

Speaking of the people, he said:

“That’s one of the features that strikes people when they come to the Gaza Strip. There is a distance between the mischaracterization of Gaza, as a so-called ‘hostile entity,’ and the scale of the civility of the people who populate the Gaza Strip in these very uncivilized circumstances. They are very civilized people who manifest very clearly interact with visitors.”⁷

“The mischaracterization of Gaza, as a... ‘hostile entity,’” is a highly politicized statement.

When rockets are fired from Gaza at Israeli civilians, and the governing party of Gaza, Hamas, is sworn to Israel’s destruction, it indeed does mark Gaza as a hostile entity. Ging would have it understood that the people inside of Gaza are devoid of associations with Hamas – which he never mentions – and totally innocent by-standers.

Additionally, Ging insisted that:

“all [UNRWA] teaching staff is closely vetted by the UN in order to provide a non-political education.”⁸ (Emphasis added)

This is perhaps Ging’s most startling and blatant misrepresentation of the facts during the course of this press conference.

*The reality is that Hamas, via its affiliate Islamic Bloc, has dominated the UNRWA teachers' union in Gaza for 15 years, and in 2006 gained full control of the executive council of the union: Hamas enormously influences the education in the classroom.*⁹

Promoting the Flotilla

● On May 3, 2010, in an interview in his Gaza office with the Norwegian paper *Aftenposten*, Ging suggested that the international community had a responsibility to act with regard to the situation in Gaza. The situation now, he suggested, is that “Israel refuses to act reasonably.”

“Therefore we ask the international community: Bring us the supplies we need to rebuild schools and run them, bring us the equipment we need to hospitals and health centers. Everybody knows how desperate the situation is in the Gaza Strip after almost three years of blockade. We need action now... (Emphasis added)

“And who would stop the ship with such things as teaching materials and materials to building schools? In that case we would get a new reality for the international community. Then the purpose of the blockade would be to destroy Gaza, not to protect Israel.”¹⁰

"We believe that Israel will not intercept these vessels because the sea is open, and human rights organizations have been successful in similar previous operations proving that breaking the siege of Gaza is possible."¹¹

“Where there is a political will,” he declared, “there is always a way.”

This made news internationally and was repeated in a variety of media sources. It is blatantly inciteful as it motivated and justified action against Israel. There is full reason to believe that the so-called “Freedom Flotilla” that was launched in May of 2010 was directly inspired by Ging’s words.

A May 6, 2010 Flotilla video¹² from the “Free Gaza Movement” – which begins by citing John Ging – provides *prima facie* documentation of this.

Part of Ging’s statement was also caught on a video that was put up on YouTube¹³ in November, in response to his reported denial that he had ever called for a Flotilla against Gaza.

Following the Flotilla incident, Ging sustained the same theme:

● On June 27, he declared, at a Gaza City press conference, that it is "shameful" that the international community has allowed the Gaza siege to enter its fourth year as “750,000 innocent children are paying the toll.”¹⁴

● On June 30, the children of Gaza, under the auspices of UNRWA, held a kite-flying competition in order to break the record in the number of self-made kites flown at one time. John Ging's comment on this event:

“We have to break the harsh siege by making the world record in flying the kites.”¹⁵

Even the flying of kites for him became a PR weapon against Israel.

● On July 7, a British Member of the European Parliament, Chris Davies, sent a letter to the British foreign secretary, in which he said that he had met with John Ging, who had “confirmed the view that... Israel's blockade of the territory [Gaza] is profoundly counterproductive.”

“Ging emphasized that although Israel is now allowing all foodstuffs through its checkpoints it is not allowing anything for construction, commerce and industry,” his letter said.¹⁶

Ignored in this statement by Ging was any acknowledgement of Israeli concern about letting into Gaza materials that would be helpful to Hamas in building bunkers and storage areas for rockets, or otherwise strengthening the Hamas infrastructure.

Also ignored was the announcement by Israel, on June 20, that there was going to be a loosening of restrictions and that there were plans to meet with international agencies to discuss advancing such projects as the construction of schools and hospitals.¹⁷

In point of fact, UN Secretary-General Ban, three months prior, in March 2010, had announced that Israel would be launching a housing project in the town of Khan Younis (in Gaza), which would involve the rebuilding of 150 housing units, a mill, an UNRWA school and sewage infrastructure.¹⁸ This alone puts the lie to the statement that nothing was being permitted in for construction.

● In mid-September, Ging explained that much of the water in Gaza is polluted and that 90% of the water is not drinkable.¹⁹

What Ging neglected to acknowledge is that Israel continues to send water into Gaza even though there is no requirement to do so according to international law: Every year Israel provides 5 million cubic liters of water to Gaza, transferred through 3 pipes – one pipe in the center of the Gaza Strip and two pipes in the southern part of the Strip.²⁰

In addition to this, Israel also transfers bottled mineral water via the Kerem Shalom crossing. (Unfortunately no information is available on the precise number of bottles as the orders for 'goods' are under the responsibility of the PA.)²¹

As to water sources within Gaza, they are administered exclusively by the Palestinian water board, with no Israeli interference. All of the water infrastructure (including water processing) that belonged to the Israeli communities in the Gaza Strip were left intact and ready for use when Israel disengaged from Gaza in 2005. ²²

At that time, Israeli and Palestinian officials together toured the Israeli water processing facilities to insure the proper transfer of the facilities. The Palestinians were given documentation to allow them to use the facilities Israel built to process sewage water for reuse in agriculture.²³ Whether the facilities have been used efficiently is another question: it was noted at the time the tour was held that chlorine that was being held by the Israelis for use in the water plant was not promptly claimed for use by the PA.²⁴

On May 18, 2010, an Olympic-sized swimming pool was opened in Gaza.²⁵ Whatever water resources are available in Gaza, there was sufficient for this pool.

As recently as summer 2010, there had also been the “Crazy Water Aqua Fun Park” in Gaza²⁶ – which was shut down by Hamas and subsequently burned down by “militant” vandals in September.

On September 13, 2010, Israel permitted into Gaza 250 tons of construction materials to upgrade a major sewage plant in Gaza City.²⁷

● On October 16, welcoming a group that calls itself “the Elders”²⁸ in their visit to Gaza, Ging said:

“I am delighted that the Elders come again to Gaza to witness and speak of simple and obvious truths that go untold. The truth that every one of the 800,000 children in Gaza knows is that we are in the fourth year of an illegal, inhumane and counterproductive blockade on 1.5 million innocent civilians.”²⁹

In point of fact, Israel is not contravening international law, and is actually exceeding its requirements with regard to the extent of humanitarian assistance permitted into Gaza.³⁰

While Ging uses the term “blockade” broadly, in actuality the only blockade is at sea: As hundreds of trucks carrying humanitarian and commercial goods are allowed into Gaza weekly via crossings from Israel, there is no land “blockade.”.

Further, in his statement to “the Elders,” Ging referred to the situation in Gaza as:

“...a crisis that is far larger than a “humanitarian crisis”³¹

He justified the actions of the Flotilla:

“But shamefully, it has taken the tragic deaths of activists on a flotilla to generate this new level of political clarity and resolve.”³²

- On November 11, Ging told BBC that Israel ignores demands from the international community to lift the “blockade”:

"There's been no material change for the people on the ground here in terms of their status, the aid dependency, the absence of any recovery or reconstruction, no economy... **The easing, as it was described, has been nothing more than a political easing of the pressure on Israel and Egypt.**"³³ (Emphasis added)

*Countered Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor: "The UN refuses to talk about the elephant in the room. Why are there any problems in exporting and sometimes importing goods into Gaza? Why is the border blockaded? Because the territory has been overtaken by a declared terror movement."*³⁴

In December, Ging contradicted his own statement, above, that:

“There’s been no material change for the people on the ground,”

when he said:

“since the new Israeli government decision [June 2010] on adjusting the blockade, every day is better than yesterday.”³⁵

- In a November 30 UN press briefing, Ging persisted in his demand for normalization of the Gaza economy:

While acknowledging that sufficient goods were coming in to stock the shelves of stores, he lamented the continued dependence of much of the population on welfare assistance and spoke of the need for “economic activity.”³⁶

Once again, missing from his statement was any recognition that Israel does not wish to foster economic normalization in Gaza because that would be to strengthen Hamas.

In fact, he referred neither to “Hamas” nor to “terrorist” groups more broadly when reporting the “good news” that “rocket fire has not been directed against the crossings” in the last six months.³⁷ Rocket fired is “directed,” but he fails to mention who directs it.

Ging’s description of the plight of the Gaza population as still “desperate” in spite of available consumer goods was repeated in a host of reports over a period of days.³⁸

- On December 8, Ging gave an interview to Ma’an News; his comments included the following:

"The denial of human rights, the injustice of decades of experience of Palestinians is then what is at the core of the creation of all the other problems. So the humanitarian problem

flows out of the denial of basic human rights to Palestine and Palestinians.

"The first issue for Palestinians is the issue of justice. That has to be the top priority: the restoration of Palestinians' fundamental human rights, all of them.

"... Our position has been crystal clear. The blockade is illegal. It's a contravention of international law. And on top of that it's inhumane and counterproductive."³⁹

See above – for October 16th – the refutation of Ging's claim that the situation Israel maintains is "a contravention of international law."

● One day later, Ging, sounding a lament with regard to lack of supplies coming into Gaza, said:

"Illustrating just how far behind Gaza is, the projects in limbo are ones that were suspended when Hamas took control of Gaza. They don't even begin to address new needs that have risen since then from population growth, infrastructure destruction from Israel's offensive in the Palestinian territory that ended in January 2009.

"The scale of the need, when measured against the capacity at the current crossing points, just tells you it's still going to be wholly and totally inadequate...We have exhausted all of the arrangements to try to cope."⁴⁰

● During the last week of December, Ging addressed a festival in Gaza that was promoting a reduction in gender violence. He told those gathered that, The blockade has devastated the economy and made daily life more difficult. Domestic violence has increased due to escalating levels of stress and unemployment."⁴¹

● On December 27, Ging gave a talk at the Limmud Conference⁴² in Great Britain. He spoke about how matters were not dire – for example there are hungry children, but "they're not emaciated." But we should not wait until they are emaciated, he said. The problem, he explained, is that the situation is deteriorating. While markers – e.g., for infant mortality – are those of the first world, there is now regression, what he called "de-development."

This is a markedly strange comment, lacking in consistency or logic, because less than two minutes further into his talk, he said:

"...we've now turned the corner...since the new Israeli government decision on adjusting the blockade, every day is better than yesterday." (Emphasis added)

In spite of this, he lamented, there is frustration because the situation is "not as better as it could be."⁴³

A slower rate of improvement than might be desired (realistically or not) is most decidedly not “regression” or “de-development.”⁴⁴ In point of fact, if every day has been better than the previous one since the Israelis loosened the parameters for what is permitted into Gaza, then we are looking at six months of incremental improvement.

Filippo Grandi Commissioner-General of UNRWA

● In January 2010, Filippo Grandi succeeded Karen Abu Zayd as commissioner-general of UNRWA. His inauguration statement to the UNRWA staff, which appeared on the UNRWA website,⁴⁵ promoted the theme of Israeli injustices against the Palestinians of Gaza. Included was the following:

“I need not tell you how difficult this period is for the Palestinian people. We are all painfully aware of the counterproductive policies collectively punishing the people of the Gaza Strip; conscious decisions that have caused untold suffering and a dramatic deterioration in the lives of the population, in contravention of international law.”

This is yet another statement that requires refutation: Israel was not contravening international law⁴⁶, and permitted passage into Gaza of humanitarian supplies on a regular basis.⁴⁷

● On February 2, Grandi visited Gaza, and declared the situation “catastrophic.”⁴⁸

He referred to Israeli’s “siege on Gaza” as “collective punishment,” saying that the refugees’ rights are violated every day. “The closure is a violation of human rights. Not allowing Gazans access to goods that sustain life and allow them to pursue normal life is therefore a clear violation.”⁴⁹

● By April 1, Grandi had announced that the problems faced by Gaza – as a result of the “blockade” – “are not just humanitarian,” but “encompass every aspect of society.”⁵⁰

● On May 31, Grandi issued in a joint statement with UN Robert Serry, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, in regard to the Flotilla incident. It said,

“We are shocked by reports of killings and injuries of people on board boats carrying supplies for Gaza, apparently in international waters. We condemn the violence and call for it to stop... We wish to make clear that such tragedies are entirely avoidable if Israel heeds the repeated calls of the international community to end its counterproductive and unacceptable blockade of Gaza.”⁵¹

- Referring yet again to the Flotilla incident on June 6, Grandi told the Swedish edition of the Finnish Broadcasting Company that:

"It is terrible to say this but I hope that the tragedy could be a turning point, a watershed in terms of the blockade. I hope that world leaders, those who make decisions, open their eyes to the suffering of the Palestinians."

This time, however, he included a veiled threat: "**If you have one and half million Palestinians affected 60 km from Tel Aviv, it is not a healthy situation for Israel's security.**"⁵² (Emphasis added)

He referred to Gaza, in the course of this statement, as the "largest open-air prison in the world."⁵³

- Later in June, speaking to reporters in Beirut, Grandi referred to the blockade of Gaza as "absurd, counterproductive and illegal."⁵⁴

- At the beginning of July, during a visit to Japan, Grandi again voiced his concerns about Gaza in terms of a veiled threat:

Frustration among refugees in Gaza has reached a bursting point with further unrest likely unless Israel lifts its blockade against them immediately. There is mounting disturbance among the refugees because they do not see their problems solved, Grandi said, adding that this commotion will pose a risk to the peace process.⁵⁵ (Emphasis added)

- In the fall of 2010, Grandi was still echoing the same themes: Calling for an end of Israel's siege of Gaza, he maintained that children enrolled in UNRWA schools would be attending in 186 shipping containers, since despite the easing of the closure Israel had not allowed the entry of one single truckload of construction materials requested by UNRWA.⁵⁶

This statement – that Israel has not allowed entry of a single truckload of construction materials requested by UNRWA – is soundly refuted by the report of CoGAT (Israeli Coordinator of Government Assistance in the Territories) for October⁵⁷:

Materials were transferred, via crossings from Israel into Gaza, in October for the follow UNRWA projects:

Riad school in Rafah, 32 truckloads

Eight classrooms being constructed in the Za'arah school, one truckload

Rehabilitation of a medical center in Nutzirat, 21 truckloads

*Five housing units in Um-Nazer, seven truckloads
Seven housing units in Han Younis, nine truckloads*

- In a press conference in Brussels in late October, Grandi charged that the cruelty of the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip was not in Israeli's security's interest, because it pushes the Palestinians toward frustration.⁵⁸

- On November 30, Grandi released a statement to the UNRWA Advisory Commission meeting that was being held in Jordan. That statement included the following:

“In the West Bank, there were signs of continuing economic growth. However, the context of **occupation, human rights violations** and a variety of related factors conspired to deny many Palestinians and Palestine refugees the material benefits of economic revival. These factors included **the construction of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land; the separation barrier; and the associated regime of movement restrictions**...unacceptable and growing restrictions are replicated throughout the West Bank, and **are incompatible with the objective of Palestinian statehood** as affirmed by the international community, and as embodied in the plan of the Palestinian Authority in that regard...”⁵⁹ (Emphasis added)

*Grandi's politicized statements regarding Palestinians who are not refugees and the objectives of Palestinian statehood as embodied in the PA plan are well beyond the purview of UNRWA.*⁶⁰

Christopher Guinness UNRWA Spokesman

- On June 17, 2010, in response to Israeli plans to ease restrictions on materials allowed into Gaza, Christopher Guinness said, “We must talk about lifting the siege and blockade, which is regarded as a violation of international law. You cannot have half a violation of international law.”⁶¹

"There have been many many false dawns," Guinness said, insisting that Israel had to be judged by deeds and not words. The "collective punishment of 1.5 million" people in Gaza, he said, was illegal⁶².

*In point of fact, neither the restrictions on material going into Gaza by land or the naval blockade are violations of international law.*⁶³

- Four days later, in a statement that was widely cited, Guinness said that nothing short of the full lifting of Israel's blockade would allow Gaza to be rebuilt:

"The Israeli strategy is to make the international community talk about a bag of cement here, a project there. We need full unfettered access through all the crossings...

"Israel's blockade became a blockade against the UN."⁶⁴

Here, in a statement masterful for its PR effect, there was a distortion of the reality: Guinness pits Israel against the UN, which wants school construction materials brought into Gaza, rather than against Hamas, which seeks to bring in weapons to destroy Israel and building materials for weapons bunkers. There is no acknowledgement on his part of Israel's legitimate need to block weaponry from being brought in to Gaza, or weapons bunkers from being built..

In referring to an Israeli strategy of making the international community talk about "a bag of cement here, a project there" – a phrase that caught on with the media – he is obscuring the fact that Israel had reasons for what was being done (which he surely knew) – he attempted, rather to convey the impression that Israel was being contrary and arbitrary.

Just one day before Guinness made this statement, Israel had announced a loosening of restrictions and had said that there were plans to meet with international agencies to discuss advancing such projects as the construction of schools and hospitals (see above). Guinness, however, expressed no satisfaction with this, which would affect UNRWA directly.

● On October 22, Guinness charged that Israel was preventing thousands of children in Gaza from getting an UNRWA education:

UNRWA recently submitted a request, as required, to the Israeli Defense Ministry for approval to build several new schools in the Tal al-Hawa neighborhood of southern Gaza City. The request was denied, however, because the Israelis discovered that UNRWA had plans to build on land that had been provided by Hamas and that was adjacent to a Hamas military installation.

Guinness's response was that the Hamas installation had been badly damaged during Operation Cast Lead⁶⁵ and he raised doubts as to whether it was still operational. The Israeli military says it is.

According to one senior Israeli official:

"Israel attaches a lot of importance to the UNRWA education system in Gaza and will continue to cooperate and assist as much as possible in helping UNRWA. But we will not help Hamas use schools and turn the people of Gaza into human shields."⁶⁶

Guinness's comment:

“There is an acute shortage of UNRWA schools in that area, and as a result of the shortage more children beyond the 39,000 who are already not receiving a UN education will continue to receive local education instead,” Guinness said. “It is a great pity that we can’t have children in Gaza receive a UN education based on universal values.”⁶⁷

This incident raises multiple issues:

According to this report, Guinness did not say that UNRWA was certain that the Hamas military installation was no longer operational, he merely raised doubts. And so, it must be asked, first, if this means he did not accede to the judgment of the Israeli military.

Or does this mean that for Guinness, and the UNRWA he represents, it doesn’t matter. That is, would UNRWA be prepared to build schools in this locale even if it understood that the Israeli defense officials were correct: Would UNRWA be willing to risk having their children used by Hamas as human shields?

Lastly, Guinness’s lament – “It is a great pity that we can’t have children in Gaza receive a UN education based on universal values” – must be examined.

His clear implication is that the Israeli decision deprives some of the children of Gaza from the benefit of a superior education (“based on universal values). A closer look, however, makes it clear that – that while the academic quality of an UNRWA education may be superior – any notion that it is based on universal values is purely illusory.

UNRWA does not produce its own texts, but uses PA-produced textbooks in Gaza. Hamas has not produced its own and uses the very same PA-texts. Teachers in the “local” schools would be Hamas-affiliated. However, Hamas has controlled the UNRWA schools for several years (see above) and many, if not most, of the teachers in UNRWA schools would also be Hamas-affiliated.

● On October 24, Guinness wrote a response to an article by Khaled Abu Toameh – “The Palestinian Refugees: Why is Everyone Lying to Them?” – that appeared on the Hudson-NY website. The last sentences of this letter read:

“What perpetuates the Palestinian refugee crisis is the failure of the parties to resolve the refugees’ plight within the context of a durable political resolution of the conflict. Until such resolution is reached, UNRWA remains committed to its mandate of bringing human development through education, health and social services, offering dignity, hope and stability to some of the most disadvantaged people in one of the world’s most troubled regions.”⁶⁸

Points of fact:

1) What perpetuates the Palestinian refugee crisis is the failure to adjust the mandate of UNRWA so that it more closely conforms to the mandate of UN High Commission for Refugees. UNHCR is charged with securing permanency for the refugees under its care

as speedily as possible even if this means settlement in the place to which the refugees had fled or a third country.

2) By no reasonable measure can the Palestinian refugees be considered among “the most disadvantaged people” within the Middle East. Even if at some minimal level, they receive education, housing, health care, and food allotments or welfare assistance. No other group in the Arab/Muslim Middle East can make this claim. John Ging, cited above from December 27, with regard to quality of life for the refugees of Gaza, said with regard to several markers, such as infant mortality, they are at a first world level.

● Guinness wrote an article, which was run by Ma’an News Agency on December 16, in which he commented on political issues beyond his purview as a representative of UNRWA and further promoted UNRWA involvement in political matters. His article included the following:

“The arrival of that day [when UNRWA can fold its operations], however, is contingent upon a real peace process that bears tangible results for Palestine refugees in line with United Nations resolutions and with international law and practice.

“...UNRWA recognizes that the API [Arab Peace Initiative] is an important element in the pursuit of peace.

“The responsibility to ensure a negotiated end to the conflict lies with states and other political actors. That said, UNRWA is a stakeholder in the outcomes of any peace process. The agency is obligated to advocate for the realization and protection of the human rights of Palestine refugees...**In keeping with UNRWA's mandate and its focus on promoting the well-being of refugees, the agency could serve as a facilitator and advisor to refugees, the United Nations and other entities engaged in formulating and implementing a future dispensation.**”⁶⁹ (Emphasis added)

¹ UN General Assembly Resolution of December 8, 1949:

“Establishes the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East:

“(a) To carry out in collaboration with local governments the direct relief and works programmes as recommended by the Economic Survey Mission;

“(b) To consult with the interested Near Eastern Governments concerning measures to be taken by them preparatory to the time when international assistance for relief and works projects is no longer available;”

On October 8, 2010, at an UNRWA conference -- “From Relief and Works to Human Development: UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees after 60 Years” -- UNRWA Commissioner-General Filippo Grandi, delivering the keynote address, expanded upon this:

“...UNRWA has a record of adapting to the demands of its context and responding to the changing needs of refugees. The evidence and results have been apparent over the decades: the transition from relief driven operations to education, health and community-based services;”

² See http://www.israelbehindthenews.com/library/pdfs/MY_UNRWA_Report_2009_US_.pdf and <http://www.israelbehindthenews.com/UNRWA.html>.

³ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsxxquaMDo0>

⁴ See a report, January 11, 2009, from the International Institute for Counterterrorism documenting Hamas use of heavily populated civilian areas, complete with a captured Hamas chart showing booby-traps set in civilian areas:

<http://www.ict.org.il/NewsCommentaries/Commentaries/tabid/69/Articlsid/604/currentpage/1/Default.aspx>.

Also an IDF report from March 15, 2010, indicating that Hamas had utilized almost 100 mosques in Gaza for storing and launching weapons during the war:

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Article.aspx?id=171012..>

⁵ “For over 15 years, Hamas (via its affiliate Islamic Bloc) has dominated the UNRWA’s teachers’ union in the Gaza Strip. In 2006, the Hamas victory was decisive: for the first time, its candidates won all 11 seats, meaning that Hamas representatives then controlled the executive council of this union sector.

The 2009 elections for the Gaza unions of UNRWA workers were held at UNRWA headquarters in Gaza. Once again, Hamas-affiliated candidates won all 11 seats in the teachers’ section, guaranteeing Hamas control of UNRWA schools in Gaza..

“...As the teachers’ sector of the UNRWA union in Gaza is controlled by Hamas, it is to be expected that Hamas would have entrée into the schools. And, indeed, this is the case now and has been the case.

“...The Hamas-affiliated Islamic Bloc (known in Arabic as *Al-Kutla Al-Islamiah*) maintains broad programs in UNRWA schools; these begin as early as junior high school, and promote incitement for jihad and opposition to Israel.”

UNRWA: Its Role in Gaza, Arlene Kushner, August 2009, pp.10-12.

http://www.israelbehindthenews.com/library/pdfs/MY_UNRWA_Report_2009_US_.pdf.

⁶ <http://journeytogaza.blogspot.com/2010/04/guns-n-teddy-bears.html>

⁷ http://e.gov.kw/News/KUNAMoreNews_Eng.aspx?NewsId=76672

⁸ <http://talkradionews.com/2010/04/security-no-barrier-to-lifting-gaza-blockade-says-un-official/>

⁹ See “UNRWA: Its Role in Gaza,” by Arlene Kushner at:

http://www.israelbehindthenews.com/library/pdfs/MY_UNRWA_Report_2009_US_.pdf

Citing Lt. Col. (res.) Yoni Dahoah Halevy, the report says:

“The Islamic Bloc (known in Arabic as *Al-Kutla Al-Islamiah*) maintains broad programs in these UNRWA schools, beginning as early as junior high school, which promote radical

incitement for jihad and opposition to Israel. Its goal is winning the hearts and minds of students so they can be recruited into the Hamas military wing during high school or after graduation.”

¹⁰ Cited by <http://shiptogaza.se/en/news/un-chief-urges-world-send-relief-gaza>.

¹¹ Al-Jazeera, May 5, 2010. Also www.ikhwanweb.net, the official English website of the Muslim Brotherhood, Paltelegraph.com, and other sources.

¹² <http://vodpod.com/watch/3566767-john-ging-gaza>

¹³ <http://www.wikio.com/video/john-ging-caught-lying-4588309>

¹⁴ Maan News (PLO) Agency), June 27, 2010.

¹⁵ Xinhua (China) News Agency, June 30, 2010.

¹⁶ http://twocircles.net/2010jul07/israel_continuing_deceitful_siege_gaza_says_uk_mep.html.

¹⁷ In accordance with an Israeli Security Cabinet decision on June 20, 2010, new regulations were advanced with regard to what would be permitted into Gaza. Dual-use construction materials would be permitted into Gaza for approved “PA-authorized projects (schools, health facilities, water, sanitation, etc.) that are under international supervision and for housing projects such as the UN housing development being completed at Khan Yunis. **Israel intends to accelerate the approval of such projects in accordance with accepted mechanisms and procedures.**” (Emphasis added)

Those dual-use materials were listed in an Appendix (B) to material released by Israel and included such items as steel cables, concrete, concrete blocks, beams, and asphalt.

Israel Ministry of Defense, COGAT, “The Civilian Policy Towards the Gaza Strip, The Implementation of the Cabinet Decision (June 2010)”

¹⁸ http://www.shalomlife.com/eng/8980/COGAT_Report_Contradicts_UN_Chief/Page1/

¹⁹ <http://www.thevoiceleuven.be/news/international/299-water-crisis-raises-at-the-midst-of-summer>. September 20, 2010.

²⁰ Major Guy Inbar, Spokesman, Coordinator for Government Activities in the Territories (CoGAT). E-mail communication, January 3, 2011.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Shlomo Dror, who was then Spokesman for CoGAT.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ma’an news, May 18, 2010.

Picture can be seen at: <http://israelmatzav.blogspot.com/2010/05/olympic-swimming-pool-opens-in-gaza.html>

²⁶ Picture from June 2010: <http://photocamel.com/forum/street-urban-photojournalism/109175-crazy-water-park-gaza.html>. It featured three swimming pools, a canal 100 meters long, and ponds.

²⁷ http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/HumanitarianAid/Palestinians/Upgrade_Gaza_sewage_treatment_13-Sep-2010.htm.

²⁸ An international group of leaders and former leaders, headed by Nelson Mandela and including Jimmy Carter, Desmond Tutu, Mary Robinson, and Kofi Annan, who “offer their collective influence and experience to support peace-building...”

²⁹ <http://www.theelders.org/middle-east/blogs/john-ging/gaza-simple-truths-go-untold>.

³⁰ See:

“The maritime blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip is motivated strictly by security considerations and is in total compliance with international law...” <http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Article.aspx?id=186160>.

“Article 23 of the Fourth Geneva Convention permits states like Israel to cut off fuel supplies and electricity to territories like Gaza. It only requires Israel to permit passage of food, clothing, and medicines intended for children under fifteen, expectant mothers, and maternity cases. Moreover, Israel would be under no obligation to provide anything itself, just not to interfere with such consignments sent by others.” <http://www.globallawforum.org/ViewPublication.aspx?ArticleId=60>.

³¹ <http://www.theelders.org/middle-east/blogs/john-ging/gaza-simple-truths-go-untold>,

³² Ibid.

³³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11731695>.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ <http://pktube.onepakistan.com/video/9maW2gjbRY/Limmud-2010-John-Ging-speaks-to-British-Jews.html>. See approximately minute 11.

See additional information on this below, in the paragraph explaining Ging’s talk on December 27.

³⁶ Video: <http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2010/11/daily-press-briefing-with-guest-john-ging-unrwa.html>.

³⁷ This is a reference to the propensity of terrorist groups in Gaza to directly attack the crossings from Israel into Gaza, thereby causing Israel to temporarily shut them down and slowing down the passage of assistance to the people of Gaza.

³⁸ E.g., NewsRoomAmerica.com, December 1; www.newspolitan.com, December 1; www.middleeastmonitor.org, December 1; BeforeIt'sNews.com, December 2; Gulf News, December 3; Middle East Monitor, December 3; Pravda, December 3; www.breitbart.com, December 4; malaysiandigest.com, December 5..

³⁹ <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=340247>.

⁴⁰ http://www.gamespot.com/pages/forums/show_msgs.php?topic_id=27523835.

⁴¹ http://www.unifemcanada.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=148:16-days-of-activism-gazans-rally-together-at-festival-to-combat-gender-violence-.

⁴² A broad-based Jewish community learning week, with lectures and workshops, that took place between December 24th and 30th, at the University of Warwick, Coventry.

⁴³ <http://pktube.onepakistan.com/video/9maW2gjebRY/Limmud-2010-John-Ging-speaks-to-British-Jews.html>. Op.cit.

Cited material begins at roughly 9 minutes into the video.

⁴⁴ <http://pktube.onepakistan.com/video/9maW2gjebRY/Limmud-2010-John-Ging-speaks-to-British-Jews.html>. Comments referred to begin at roughly 9 minutes into the video.

⁴⁵ <http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=548>

⁴⁶ See (op.cit.):

“The maritime blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip is motivated strictly by security considerations and is in total compliance with international law...” <http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Article.aspx?id=186160>.

“Article 23 of the Fourth Geneva Convention permits states like Israel to cut off fuel supplies and electricity to territories like Gaza. It only requires Israel to permit passage of food, clothing, and medicines intended for children under fifteen, expectant mothers, and maternity cases. Moreover, Israel would be under no obligation to provide anything itself, just not to interfere with such consignments sent by others.” <http://www.globallawforum.org/ViewPublication.aspx?ArticleId=60>.

⁴⁷ See the policy statement from (Israeli) Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories regarding material that was being permitted into Gaza:

<http://www.israelpolitik.org/2010/06/03/statement-from-cogat-policy-of-aid-into-gaza/>

⁴⁸ NAM News Network, February 3, 2010.

⁴⁹ *Huffington Post*, February 16, 2010.

⁵⁰ <http://streetroots.wordpress.com/2010/04/01/palestinian-people-held-captive/>

⁵¹ The BBC, as reported by the World Forum for Alternatives.

⁵² Ma'an News Agency, June 8, 2010.

⁵³ www.allvoices.com; *Islam Times*

⁵⁴ <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2010/06/201062411715429597.html>.

⁵⁵ <http://www.nowlebanon.com/NewsArchiveDetails.aspx?ID=182552>. Also AFP.

⁵⁶ Cited in a Palestine Center for Human Rights report of October 18, 2010.

⁵⁷

http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/HumanitarianAid/Palestinians/Gaza_Strip_humanitarian_aid_October_2010_monthly_report.htm

⁵⁸ <http://www.english.moqawama.org/fastnewsdetails.php?fstid=1258>.

⁵⁹ <http://unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=852>.

⁶⁰ <http://unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=852>.

⁶¹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/worldhaveyoursay/2010/06/is_easing_the_gaza_blockade_co.html

⁶² Ma'an News, June 18, 2010.

⁶³ See:

“The maritime blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip is motivated strictly by security considerations and is in total compliance with international law...” <http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Article.aspx?id=186160>.

“Article 23 of the Fourth Geneva Convention permits states like Israel to cut off fuel supplies and electricity to territories like Gaza. It only requires Israel to permit passage of food, clothing, and medicines intended for children under fifteen, expectant mothers, and maternity cases. Moreover, Israel would be under no obligation to provide anything itself, just not to interfere with such consignments sent by others.” <http://www.globallawforum.org/ViewPublication.aspx?ArticleId=60>.

⁶⁴ Reuters, June 26, 2010. Made press in a number of venues, e.g., *Haaretz*, *The Jerusalem Post*.

⁶⁵ The Israeli operation in Gaza from the very end of December 2008 through January 2009.

⁶⁶ Yaakov Katz, “Exclusive: 'No' to UNRWA school ‘near Hamas base,’” *The Jerusalem Post*, October 22, 2010.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸

<http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.nsf/47D4E277B48D9D3685256DDC00612265/FEFB3A0D24FF8324852577C7005A5749>

⁶⁹ <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=342611>.