

Policy Paper for Submission to the UN

UNRWA as a Convenient Surrogate for Terrorists Organizations

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Introduction

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was founded in 1950, with its' stated goals of providing “education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance¹” for over 5 million Palestinian refugees. These praiseworthy efforts have improved the lives of countless Palestinians, yet in recent years their efforts have been subverted by the terror organizations that have taken over UNRWA facilities and resources.

Most recently, ample evidence has accumulated during Operation “Protective Edge,” which started on July 8, 2014, linking Palestinian terrorist organizations to UNRWA.

Hamas’ de facto takeover of UNRWA institutions in the Gaza Strip

The UNRWA workers union has been controlled in practice by Hamas for many years. The “Professional List”, headed by senior Hamas activist Suheil Al-Hindi, won a landslide victory in the elections for the UNRWA workers union held in September 2012.

In the elections, in which nearly 11,500 employees of UNRWA voted, the “Professional List” won all 11 seats allocated to the teachers’ sector, 6 of 7 seats in the employees’ sector and 8 out of 9 seats in the service sector.

The "Al-Karama (Honor) List," affiliated with the Islamic Jihad organization, also participated in the elections, whereas the Fatah movement chose to boycott them, claiming that Hamas controls the UNRWA workers union and limits its activities.

The 2012 workers union elections were not the first ones to be won by Hamas. They also won the 2009 elections. The bloc affiliated with Hamas also won the previous election for the UNRWA workers union by an overwhelming majority. Lists affiliated with Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the PLO (uniting representatives of the PFLP, Fatah and the People's Party) and the independents took part in the 2009 elections. 17 representatives of Hamas (63%), four from the PFLP, four from Fatah, one from the People’s Party and one from the independents were elected to the union, which includes 27 members.²

The activities of the “Islamic Bloc” in UNRWA schools

"Al-Kutla Al-Islamiya" (the Islamic Bloc) is the official wing of Hamas, which operates in the educational institutions in the Gaza Strip (and in the West Bank), starting from elementary schools, junior high schools (including the management of UNRWA) as well as in high schools, colleges and universities.

¹ <http://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are>

² <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3703627,00.html>

The “Islamic Bloc’s” strategy in elementary and middle schools focuses on an attempt to attract the students to the various activities conducted by the organization and which are meant to strengthen ties with the students, their faith in Islam and gradually bring them closer to Hamas ideology until they become activists in the movement and in its' military wing.

In every school, including schools run by UNRWA, Hamas appoints a representative who heads the “Islamic Bloc’s” branch, and he serves as a liaison for the group and is responsible for enlisting the students to the “Islamic Bloc” and for organizing activities in the school and after school hours.³

The direct route from UNRWA schools to the Al-Qassam Brigades

The activities by the "Islamic Bloc" are an important means for Hamas to carry out indoctrination of the younger generation, both in state-run schools and in UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip, paving the way for the recruitment of the students to the ranks of Hamas and eventually to the Al-Qassam Brigades.

An examination of the resumes of the Al-Qassam Brigades activists who were killed reveals a pattern that repeats itself. Dozens of activists in the Al-Qassam Brigades started out as activists in the “Islamic Bloc” in UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip, joined Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood and later the military wing of Hamas, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades. All these groups were involved in terrorist activities against Israel or in fighting against the IDF.

Islamic Jihad activity in UNRWA schools

The Islamic Jihad through its representatives in the Staff Union and its students’ organization al-Rabita al-Islmaiya (a.k.a al-Rabita) is also active in schools run by UNRWA in the Gaza Strip.

For example, on November 12, 2013 senior members of al-Rabita visited Abasan Middle School in east Khan Yunis to have a discussion on student issues with the principle, Nabil Sarafandi. Mundhir Abu Drar, al-Rabita’s coordinator in east Khan Yunis office, Wisam abu Khater, coordinator of academic issues in the districts of east Khan Yunis and members of the public outreach wing of the Islamic Jihad were also in attendance. The principle, Nabil Sarafandi, said that al-Rabita activists regularly visited his school and held activities inside its premises in order to follow-up on students’ issues.⁴

³ <http://alrased.ps/index.php?action=showdetail&seid=238>

⁴ <http://alrabeta.ps/index.php?act=post&id=1030>

Examples of terrorists who were employed in senior positions and taught in UNRWA institutions

Suheil Al-Hindi - Al-Hindi, who in the past also headed the teachers' sector at UNRWA, does not hide his affinity for the Hamas organization and takes part in overt political activities as its representative. In his capacity and as a supervisor of student summer camps, al-Hindi has a tremendous impact on the UNRWA education system and the contents taught within.

UNRWA's management is well aware, at least since 2004, of the fact that Suheil al-Hindi, who headed the UNRWA teachers sector, is a senior Hamas activist who supports jihad against Israel and suicide bombings. UNRWA spokesman Chris Guinness implicitly acknowledged this in an article posted on Ynet on January 27, 2009⁵, in which he referred to an article exposing the activities of Hamas in UNRWA schools including the fact the al-Hindi was an UNRWA employee.

Guinness dismissed the author's accusations by describing them as recycled allegations, which had been raised by Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs few years earlier.⁶ Nevertheless, Suheil al-Hindi continues to be employed by UNRWA, which chooses to ignore the reports in the media about his being a senior Hamas activist.⁷



Issa Abd al-Hadi al-Batran - Al-Batran was born in the al-Bureij refugee camp in Gaza. He studied at UNRWA's elementary and middle schools, at the Khaled al-Hassan high school, the Gaza Training Center (UNRWA) and the al-Quds Open University.⁸ For years al-Batran was employed as a teacher in UNRWA's schools in the central district of the Gaza Strip even though UNRWA heads were aware of the fact that he serves in a senior role in the Al-Qassam Brigades

⁵ <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3662487,00.html> <http://www.unrwa.org/htemplate.php?id=165>

⁶ <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3657863,00.html>

⁷ <http://www.paltimes.net/olddetails/news/63126>
<http://islah.ps/new/index.php?page=viewThread&id=1793&cat=81> <http://tinyurl.com/qzbnxn5>

⁸ <http://www.alqassam.ps/arabic/sohdaa5.php?id=1727>

and ^{he} was eventually fired from UNRWA in 2009, after he was seriously wounded in a work accident as part of his activities in the Al-Qassam Brigades.⁹



Awad Al-Qiq - An Israeli airstrike on a workshop for the manufacturing of weapons in Rafah on April 30, 2008, killed Awad Al-Qiq, a teacher, educator and principal in UNRWA schools who at the same time served as head of the engineering and weapons manufacturing unit of the Jihad Islamic Gaza in the

Strip. Al-Qiq was one of the senior operatives in charge of manufacturing and developing rockets for the Islamic Jihad, preparing bombs and weapons and training generations of "engineers" on the basis of his knowledge. It is unclear why UNRWA failed to dismiss him from any role in teaching and education in its institutions after his terrorist activities were exposed.¹⁰



Said Siam - Siam, who was a close associate and confidant of the leader of Hamas, Khaled Mashaal and later was appointed interior minister in the Hamas government and was in charge of the military forces in the Gaza Strip, served for 23 years a teacher and educator in UNRWA schools. Until 2003 Siam was Hamas' representative in the Coordinating Committee of the National and

Islamic Forces, which coordinated activities within the framework of the Al-Aqsa Intifada. Despite being a well-known senior activist in Hamas, UNRWA did not take steps to remove him from its ranks.¹¹



Zuheir al-Qaisi - Al-Qaisi, who was a senior commander in the Popular Resistance Committees terrorist organization, served for years as a mathematics teacher in UNRWA schools while also being a member of a terrorist organization (the Rafik Salemi groups).¹²

⁹ <http://www.alaahd.com/arabic/?action=detail&id=2792>

¹⁰ <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3657863,00.html>

¹¹ <http://www.jcpa.org.il/Templates/showpage.asp?FID=557&DBID=1&LNGID=2&TMID=99&IID=21206>

¹² <http://www.maannnews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=466674>

Textbooks approved by UNRWA in refugee schools educate towards *jihad* against Israel

The comprehensive study by Dr. Arnon Groiss of the textbooks used in UNRWA schools found they include content that implements the adherence to the so-called "right of return" of Palestinian refugees and their descendants to the State of Israel at all cost and even encourages a 'right of return' through force of arms and *jihad*. Some of these contents include learning songs that emphasize the violent return of refugees and mention the term *jihad* in this context, by presenting their struggle as a means to liberate Palestine by glorifying martyrdom in this context as a noble death that one should strive for. Dr. Groiss holds a MA/PhD from Princeton University's Department of Near Eastern Studies and has over 40 years experience as an Arabic-language journalist, presently serving as deputy director at Israel Broadcasting Authority's Arabic Radio.

The UNRWA textbooks include expressions of hatred against Jews and Israel that are reflected through literary passages that include dehumanization and demonization, as well as claims that refute any Israeli and Jewish presence and claim to Israel. This is done by presenting Palestine and omitting Israel in their maps as one of the countries of the Levant, presenting Jewish holy places as Muslim holy sites that were stolen by the Jews and removing the Hebrew from a stamp used during the British Mandate.¹³

Operation Protective Edge

During the "Protective Edge" operation, which started on July 8, 2014, overwhelming evidence linking Palestinian terrorist organizations to UNRWA has surfaced. The following examples show how terror organizations hijacked UNRWA installations to use as a front in attacking Israel.

Opening fire and launching rockets in the vicinity of UNRWA facilities or from its' premises

- * August 2, 2014: 11 mortar shells were fired by terrorists from the vicinity of an UNRWA school in the Zeitoun neighborhood in Gaza and UNRWA facilities (clinic and distribution center) in Jebalya. (Appendix -1)¹⁴

¹³ <http://tinyurl.com/ofhrhkq> <http://tinyurl.com/lg3czs8>

¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/495912534222721024/photo/1>
<https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/497502246314061824/photo/1>

- August 1, 2014: IDF documented a rocket launcher pad in the vicinity of al-Mahtal Hotel in the al-Shati refugee camp. The UN sign is clearly seen on the buildings' roof. (Appendix -2)
- July 30, 2014: IDF forces uncovered an attack tunnel reportedly dug from inside an UNRWA health clinic in the area of al-Farahin in east Khan Younis. During IDF searches Hamas operatives detonated 12 explosive charges planted inside the building, killing 3 Israeli soldiers.¹⁵
- July 25, 2014: Palestinian terrorists fired mortar shells and anti tank rockets from the vicinity of an UNRWA school and from inside it¹⁶, causing the death of an Israeli soldier.¹⁷
- July 24, 2014: The IDF Spokesperson reported on that “in recent days” Hamas launched rockets from the area of Beit Hanoun where an UNRWA shelter is located.¹⁸
- FRENCH 24 reporter documented rockets launching in the vicinity of UNRWA school. (Appendix -3)¹⁹

Hamas' use of UNRWA facilities and equipment for terrorist purposes

- UNRWA reported on July 17 that approximately 20 rockets were discovered inside a vacant UNRWA school in Gaza. UNRWA's press release did not specify the name of the school, the type of the rockets and to which organization the rockets were transferred.²⁰
- UNRWA reported on July 22 that rockets were discovered in a vacant school in Gaza. UNRWA's press release did not specify the name of the school, the type and the number of the rockets and to which organization the rockets were transferred.²¹
- UNRWA reported on July 30 that rockets were discovered in a school in Gaza. According its press release (which for an unknown reason was not posted on the UNRWA website) UNRWA could not send a UN munitions expert to disarm and remove the weapons “because of fighting in the vicinity.” UNRWA did not specify the name of

¹⁵ <http://www.timesofisrael.com/3-idf-soldiers-killed-in-booby-trapped-unrwa-clinic/>

<http://www.alqassam.ps/arabic/#!/البيانات5057/>

¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/492734233962487809>

¹⁷ <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/492730745211727872>

¹⁸ <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/492346857952014337>

<http://www.idfblog.com/blog/2014/07/24/hamas/>

¹⁹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uE3feo_b8Cg

²⁰ <http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-strongly-condemns-placement-rockets-school>

²¹ <http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-condemns-placement-rockets-second-time-one-its-schools>

the school, the type and the number of the rockets and to which organization the rockets were eventually transferred.²²

- The IDF Spokesperson reported on July 26 that IDF forces discovered in an attack tunnel equipment belonging to UNRWA, including flour sacs bearing the UNRWA emblem, that were used by Hamas to conceal the removal of the sand during the digging operation. (Appendix 4)²³

Epilogue

UNRWA has become a convenient surrogate for terrorist organizations, led by Hamas, which was chosen in successive elections to lead the workers union and the UNRWA teachers union, as the key mentors who influence generations of Palestinian refugee descendants about engaging in 'right of return' through *jihad*, to Arab villages that existed before 1948.

The Hamas takeover of the UNRWA institutions and UNRWA staff should set off alarms regarding the possibility of funding given by donor countries (primarily the United States) finding its way to financing the salaries of Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists.

Beyond the issue of terrorism, UNRWA and the Palestinian leadership assist through their policies in perpetuating the problem and misery of the refugees. The Palestinian leadership has made it clear that the government will not settle the refugees in the settlement areas evacuated by Israel during the 2005 Disengagement, in order to maintain their right "to return."

Improving the conditions of the refugees does not reduce from the demand for return or compensation, as it is maintained for the Palestinian refugees currently living outside the camps (as well as for Jews who were expelled from Arab countries). It seems as though the interests of the Hamas government is to use UNRWA facilities and resources, to prevent the dismantling of the refugee camps, despite the severe distress that leads to extremism, with the plan of returning to Palestine. In a situation such as this, there is no justification for the continued status quo of UNRWA, if the organization sees its entire purpose in maintaining the misery of refugees in the camps, and certainly after the deep involvement of the terrorist organization in the last month has been exposed.

An immediate and independent investigation is required into the infiltration of Palestinian terrorist groups into UNRWA, the use of its facilities for the purpose of terrorist attacks and rocket storage as well as the transfer of UNRWA equipment to be used by Gaza terrorist organizations and last but not least, the indoctrination of the future generations to war and strife.

²² <http://www.timesofisrael.com/rockets-found-in-unrwa-school-for-third-time/>

²³ <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/491952391055355905/photo/1>
<http://www.algemeiner.com/2014/07/27/idf-commander-hamas-using-unrwa-gear-to-build-tunnels/>
<http://news.walla.co.il/?w=/2689/2769368>

Aid to UNRWA must be conditioned upon changing a curriculum that teaches hatred and serves to perpetuate the hatred, on the removal of terrorists from the institutions of the UN agency and on the organization's commitment to act to dismantle the refugee camps that are under Palestinian control and to rehabilitate the refugees in new and spacious communities. Donor nations to UNRWA that hope to assist and support the Palestinian people, need to know they are not in fact, supporting terrorist groups.

PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS IN GAZA FIRE MORTARS FROM THE VICINITY OF A UN SCHOOL

ZEITOUN DISTRICT OF GAZA CITY, AUGUST 2, 2014



JABALIA, GAZA STRIP

August 2, 2014 at 6:04 pm

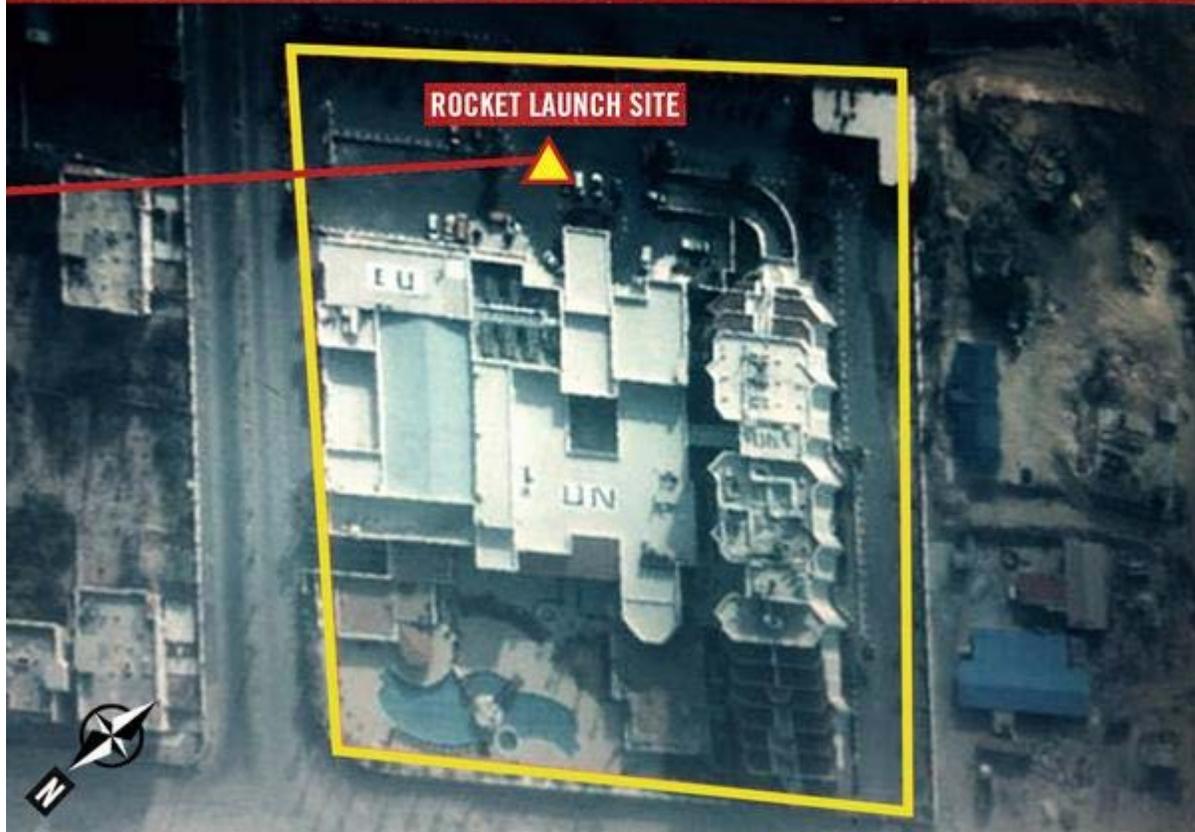


**HAMAS FIRES ROCKETS FROM
UN FACILITIES IN GAZA.**

 ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES

AL-MASHTAL HOTEL IN THE AL-SHATI REFUGEE CAMP

August 1, 2014



**HAMAS ROUTINELY FIRES AT ISRAEL
FROM CIVILIAN BUILDINGS IN GAZA.**

 ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES

Appendix -3



Appendix -4



IDF
@IDFSpokesperson



Following

Found this in Gaza house. UNRWA bags once had wheat. Hamas filled them with dirt to hide evidence of tunnel digging.

pic.twitter.com/Bq0glXVx4Q

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