

NGO MONITOR

# Annual Report

# 2008

NGO MONITOR

Making NGOs Accountable





**Making NGOs Accountable**

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# MISSION STATEMENT

The community of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has become extremely powerful and influential, particularly with respect to human rights related issues and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Their reports, protests and lobbying activities have a dominant impact, particularly in the United Nations, as well as on the policies adopted by many governments, in the media and in universities.

Until recently, however, these NGOs, which receive significant financial support from generous donors, philanthropic institutions, and government budgets, have not themselves been subject to independent and critical analysis. NGO Monitor, therefore, was founded to promote accountability, and advance a vigorous discussion on the reports and activities of humanitarian NGOs, both in the framework of the Arab-Israeli conflict and beyond.

NGOs vary widely, not only in nature and quality, but also in their apparent motivations. Their power to do good is matched by their power to distort and destroy the moral principles they claim to promote. Unlike democratically elected governments or publicly traded companies, no systematic framework exists for holding NGOs to rigorous standards of accountability for the statements and reports they produce. Established NGOs that claim to pursue universal humanitarian goals enjoy a halo effect that grants immunity from detailed scrutiny or criticism. The assumption that their motives are pure, and politically, as well as ideologically neutral, inhibits critical review.

The vast resources at the disposal of these self-proclaimed humanitarian NGOs allow for large staffs who produce an immense volume of reports, press releases and media interviews, turning them into primary sources for journalists, researchers, and government policy makers. The amplifying effect of these public pronouncements has often framed the terms of public discourse and strongly influences the crafting of policy. NGOs are in a dominant position to offer the supply to meet the demand for quick and focused information on what Prof. Irwin Cotler has called the new secular religion of human rights.

However, as NGO Monitor demonstrates, in many cases, major NGOs produce reports and launch campaigns that stand in sharp contradiction to their own noble mission statements. Selective morality, as evidenced in the obscuring or simply the removal of context, and accompanied by highly misleading reporting, often through incomplete images, have made widespread gross distortions of the humanitarian and legal dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The aim of NGO Monitor is to provide information and analysis, in order to challenge such interpretations and the perceptions that have been built up by fostering a comprehensive debate on these critical issues.

# LETTER FROM PROF. GERALD STEINBERG EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we complete a successful year of operation, we can point to some significant achievements in 2008. The media has extensively covered NGO Monitor's research and reports, in particular on key issues such as false NGO accusations of "collective punishment" in Gaza. In addition to citations in the *International Herald Tribune* and being featured on BBC Radio, NGO Monitor op-eds have reached the influential and diverse readership of the *Wall Street Journal* and other prestigious titles. Our important work has also influenced policy makers, and started to challenge the politically correct status of NGOs on university campuses.

Our preparations for the Durban Review Conference (April 20-24, 2009), including an improved webpage and numerous printed publications, were a central part of our work in 2008. NGO Monitor's material influenced decision makers in the US, Canada, and Israel, and briefings to European government officials are scheduled for the beginning of 2009.

NGO Monitor's influence and credibility have been reinforced through the launch of the NGO Monitor Monograph Series. This series is a platform for groundbreaking, in-depth analysis, beginning with a detailed research report into EU funding for politicized NGOs, and on the exploitation of universal jurisdiction laws by anti-Israel groups. We will continue and expand this valuable series in 2009 and beyond.

Tangible success has also been seen in the arena of funding for highly politicized NGOs. EU support for the fringe NGO Israel Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHAD) ended; similarly, the Ford Foundation grant for the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) was not renewed. Unfortunately, many other NGOs who pursue the "Durban Strategy" of demonizing Israel and manipulate international humanitarian law continue to receive funding from the EU, European and other governments, and wealthy foundations; our work is certainly not complete.

NGO Monitor remains the only framework in the world that systematically analyzes the activities of politicized NGOs. We are the definitive source for answers to questions and reliable information regarding NGOs, responding to and engaging with journalists – including reporters from the *New York Times*, *CNN*, *Sky News*, and the *Jerusalem Post* – researchers, government officials, and NGO donors. With the establishment of a Hebrew desk, we have expanded our capabilities in influencing the media and decision makers based in Israel. These Israel-based sources have a major influence on the ways in which allegations by NGOs are perceived and reported in the rest of the world.

NGO Monitor's success is also reflected by the angry responses to our research reports. We have been denounced by NIF leaders who fear exposure of their attempt to manipulate Israeli democracy. Mossawa, an Israeli-Arab group funded by the New Israel Fund, the EU, and the German government, filed a lawsuit against NGO Monitor in an attempt to silence us. This litigation is another form of "lawfare," the exploitation of courts to achieve political

goals – not justice. Their case lacks any substantive merit, and we expect it to be rejected. In another incident, HRW's deputy director of the Middle East Division, Joe Stork, told a reporter, "I haven't seen this report from Mr. Steinberg, and he seldom has anything useful or truthful to say - you can quote me on that."<sup>1</sup> Stork's comments reflect HRW's evasion of substantive criticism, and the formidable challenges that lay ahead for 2009.

The intensification of the Gaza conflict at the end of 2008 and the subsequent response of NGOs – hundreds of statements from dozens of groups, almost all exclusively condemning Israel – demonstrate the ongoing need for NGO Monitor's work.

We thank our donors for their generous support, which empowers us to continue to combat NGO campaigns and distortions. Without it, the politicized attacks against Israel, which threaten the universal foundations of human rights, would go unchallenged.

# 1. ENGAGING WITH NGO OFFICIALS AND DONORS

## 1a. PROF. STEINBERG DEBATES AMNESTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON THE BBC

In May 2008, NGO Monitor published a systematic analysis of Amnesty International's Middle East coverage in 2007,<sup>2</sup> applying a quantitative methodology. The results showed that in 2007 Amnesty singled out Israel for more condemnation than Syria, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Lebanon, and Algeria. More items were published condemning Israel than the Palestinian Authority, Hamas and Hezbollah combined. If detailed reports are used as an indicator, Amnesty ranked Israel and Iraq as equally the worst human rights abusers in the Middle East. Apparently, factors other than universal human rights – media attention, and Israel's democratic and open society – dictate Amnesty's disproportionately negative reporting in the region.

NGO Monitor also analyzed Amnesty's 2008 annual report (covering events in 2007),<sup>3</sup> yet another example of the NGO's highly biased approach. It presented a gross distortion of the conflict, selectively reported events to remove the context of terrorism and ignored human rights issues not related to its political agenda, while repeating un-sourced and anecdotal claims.

The publication and distribution of NGO Monitor's report led to a live debate between Prof. Gerald Steinberg and Irene Kahn, head of Amnesty International, on BBC World Service Radio (average weekly listeners: 188 million world-

wide). Prof. Steinberg challenged Amnesty's research, sources and reporting on Israel and discussed Amnesty's negative contribution to dialogue in the region, noting that "it becomes impossible when human rights are so distorted, to have a reasonable discussion. When every Israeli official who's involved in security, is hounded and harassed and terms used

like 'war crimes,' you really make a discussion impossible."

Ms. Khan expressed her familiarity with NGO Monitor's publications, and welcomed the opportunity to "have a [future] discussion with [Steinberg], public or private." Yet Amnesty evaded repeated attempts by NGO Monitor to arrange such a debate.

### snapshot



### Amnesty International

- Throughout 2008, Amnesty focused disproportionate resources on condemning Israel's Gaza policy, and led the NGO campaign accusing Israel of "collective punishment."<sup>4</sup> At the same time, Amnesty largely ignored Hamas' rocket attacks on Israeli civilians.
- Amnesty's reports lacked evidence and credibility, ignored the context of terrorism, exploited international legal terms, selectively used data, and myopically focused on Israel's role in the conflict.
- After a cameraman was killed in Gaza and the Israeli army concluded that the death was accidental, Amnesty issued a highly prejudicial press release accusing the IDF of conducting a "so-called investigation" which "lacked any semblance of impartiality" and promoting a "culture of impunity."<sup>5</sup> Amnesty's main "researcher" for Israeli-Arab issues, Donatella Rivera, condemned the Israeli army, even though she did not have access to the IDF's report of its detailed investigation.<sup>6</sup>

**1b. PRESSING CHRISTIAN AID ON DURBAN II AND POLITICIZED FUNDING**

In 2008, NGO Monitor pursued a correspondence with Christian Aid, a British charity with international scope that mobilizes the worldwide church community for its stated goals of relief, development and advocacy. As NGO Monitor’s extensive research has demonstrated,<sup>7</sup> Christian Aid assumes a highly biased and politicized approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Its publications systematically ignore Palestinian responsibility and minimize Israel’s right to self-defense. Many of its partner NGOs are among the most radical NGOs involved in the conflict, including Sabeel, Al-Haq, Ittijah, PCHR, ICAHD, and the Alternative Information Center (AIC).

On April 14, 2008, NGO Monitor sent a series of questions to Christian Aid’s director, Daleep Mukarji, regarding the organization’s participation in the 2001 World Conference against Racism in Durban and preparations for the Durban Review Conference in April 2009. Mr. Mukarji’s reply directly addressed a number of important points, including:

1. In 2001, Christian Aid “supported the participation of the Dalit Solidarity Network UK, to raise issues of caste discrimination [in India],” but was not involved in sessions focused on Israel, and did not “provide sponsorship for any of our Middle East partner organisations to attend.”

2. “Christian Aid does not intend to send a representative of our Middle East programme to the 2009 conference.” Partner organizations will make their own decisions about attendance.

In September, NGO Monitor wrote to Christian Aid to clarify its reasons for funding the Alternative Information Center (AIC), providing 10% of AIC’s total budget in 2006 and 8% in 2007. Though AIC claims that its mission is “to find a just solution” to the Arab-Israeli conflict, its officials and publications promote the Durban Strategy of demonization. It accuses Israel of “ethnic cleansing,”<sup>8</sup> and its articles have minimized the actions<sup>9</sup> of convicted murderer Samir Kuntar (freed in the 2008 exchange with Hezbollah) and the bulldozer terror attacks in Jerusalem (July 2008).<sup>10</sup> Its co-founder, Michael Warschawski, has stated that “one has to unequivocally reject the very idea (and existence) of a Jewish state, whatever will be its borders.”<sup>11</sup>

This time, Mr. Mukarji’s response did not provide any details, but consisted of a blanket claim that “[we] do not find your comments [about AIC] to be well founded.” Rather, according to Christian Aid, its partners, including AIC, “provid[e] for the needs of the most vulnerable and poorest people...

[and] they are also working for a just and sustainable peace for both Israelis and Palestinians.” NGO Monitor could not find evidence of AIC activities on behalf of the poor, or in promoting a just peace.

Christian Aid also responded to an NGO Monitor op-ed in the *European Voice*,<sup>12</sup> which exposed Christian Aid’s support for the anti-Israel boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign that was crystallized at the NGO Forum of the 2001 Durban Conference. The NGO claimed that it “has never taken a position on this campaign.” Yet, NGO Monitor research has established that Christian Aid provides financial, logistical, and institutional support, and legitimacy, to various NGOs and conferences that are centrally involved in the BDS campaign. For instance, Christian Aid was a “partner” for the Palestinian Civil Society Conference in Cyprus in October 2007, which called for “turning utmost attention to the boycott, divestment, and sanctions campaign against Israel and its institutions and pursuing the parastata Zionist organizations worldwide.”<sup>13</sup>



## 1c. CHALLENGING NIF FUNDING FOR RADICAL NGOs

NGO Monitor has increased its focus on NIF support for extremist NGOs in Israel, such as Adalah, Mossawa, Coalition of Women for Peace, and others. These critiques have led to angry responses from NIF officials, demonstrating the impact of NGO Monitor's research. In an August 1, 2008 opinion piece in the UK's *Jewish Chronicle*,<sup>14</sup> NGO Monitor challenged the New Israel Fund (NIF) to defend donations to the Israeli-Arab group Adalah. NGO Monitor argued that Adalah's "vision for Israel undermines some of the very foundations upon which the state was founded." In 2007, Adalah proposed a "Democratic Constitution," which calls for an end to Israel as a state with a specifically Jewish character: Jewish immigration to Israel would only be permitted for "humanitarian reasons" and Israel's Jewish cultural framework would be replaced by an amorphous "democratic, bilingual and multicultural" state.<sup>15</sup>

Additionally, Adalah actively participated at the virulent NGO Forum at the 2001<sup>16</sup> Durban Conference, promotes anti-Israel campaigns at the UN, and accuses Israel of "racism" and "apartheid."<sup>17</sup>

As argued in the *Jewish Chronicle* op-ed, "philanthropic organisations like NIF make funding decisions based

on their own priorities, beliefs and values." And while "[p]erhaps the mere mention of equality and civil rights by Adalah is enough for NIF to blindly reach for its cheque book, [] it is hard to imagine that NIF's donor base views the attempt to de-legitimise Jewish statehood as a sound investment."

Mark Goldberg, Chairman of NIF-UK, attempted to respond, claiming that Adalah works "successfully through public advocacy and the courts to counter that discrimination and achieve the rights of equality that are a cornerstone of Israel's Declaration of Independence." He then legitimized the so-called "Democratic Constitution" by labeling it "one of several visions of Israel's future."

Goldberg also defended NIF support for "free expression of the various views, concerns and voices of our grantees - **whether we agree with all their positions or not** - so long as they work within the framework of Israel's laws and democratic processes" (emphasis added). In other words, NIF writes a blank check to its grantees, providing funding for projects that do not correspond to its ideals.

This exchange between NGO Monitor and NIF sparked a serious debate within the UK Jewish community, which

filled the *Jewish Chronicle's* letter page for a month. The public discussion of these issues, which NIF has avoided, allowed for the expression of differing perspectives on "collective cultural identity" and the role of Jewish giving to Israeli-Arab groups.

NIF also responded to NGO Monitor criticism following Prof. Gerald Steinberg's speaking engagements in Toronto during the summer of 2008, and after NIF refused to hold a public debate on these issues. The Director General of NIF-Israel, Eliezer Ya'ari, told a Canadian journalist that "I believe that the work [Prof. Steinberg] sees as anti-Israel is very pro-Israel...We are supporting Arab groups because Arabs are citizens of Israel...We don't want to have two classes of citizens in Israel, one that has all the rights and one that only has part of the rights."<sup>19</sup>

NIF's attempts to prevent criticism consistently ignore the root of NGO Monitor's analysis: massive NIF funding empowers the most radical Arab groups, including Adalah, which pursue a rejectionist agenda, refer to Israel as "racist," use terms such as "apartheid," and actively campaign for the dismantling of Israel as a Jewish democratic state.



1d. “SHOOTING BACK” AT B’TSELEM

B’Tselem’s “Shooting Back” project was active in 2008, publicizing video footage that showed Israeli civilians and security personnel allegedly violating the rights of Palestinians. In particular, a video of an IDF soldier shooting at the feet of a bound Palestinian was widely distributed and watched, and led to severe condemnations of the Israeli army.

NGO Monitor challenged the uncritical reception of these videos by the media and decision makers, noting B’Tselem’s political agenda and the absence of footage of Palestinian violence against Israelis. Prof. Gerald Steinberg was quoted in Britain’s influential *New Statesman*:

“The public relations and media battle is a central arena in the

Arab-Israeli conflict, and the image of victimisation is a core part of the Palestinian strategy. B’Tselem’s video campaign has become an integral part of



this battle, and there is no parallel which highlights Palestinian violence or provocations that lead to Israeli responses shown in the videos. If such videos existed, this would reduce the strength of the victimisation myth. It is morally important to prevent Palestinian violence from undermining Israel’s moral standards.”<sup>20</sup>

And in the *Jerusalem Post*, Prof. Steinberg condemned B’Tselem for the inevitable misconceptions that emerge from its nar-

row project, and the contribution to the Durban Strategy of demonizing and delegitimizing Israel:

“Shooting Back reinforces the false image of Israel as the world’s major perpetrator of war crimes and a systematic violator of human rights... when the fact is that the vast majority of soldiers are the opposite, and we know that much of the army goes out of its way to avoid unnecessary civilian casualties, and does take human rights seriously.”<sup>21</sup>

B’Tselem was also criticized for needlessly endangering children and “violat[ing] youths rights to safety” by giving video cameras to minors and asking them to film violent confrontations.<sup>22</sup>

**Confronting NGOs on Gaza**

On March 6, 2008, a coalition of British and Irish NGOs – including Amnesty International, Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), CARE, Christian Aid, Medecins du Monde, Oxfam, Save the Children Alliance and Trocaire – issued a joint statement entitled, “The Gaza Strip: A Humanitarian Implosion.” The report repeated standard NGO condemnations of Israeli policy on Gaza (starting with B’Tselem’s summer 2007 booklet “The Gaza Strip - One Big Prison”) and distorted international law.



NGO Monitor’s analyses exposed numerous factual errors in the report, and were cited in reports by the AP, CNN, CBS, *USA Today*, *Jerusalem Post* and *Ha’aretz*.

*This week NGO Monitor, a Jerusalem-based watchdog, called on human rights groups to end what it called their political use of international law. It cited an Amnesty International press release that it said made unsubstantiated accusations that Israeli responses “are being carried out with reckless disregard for civilian life”.*

*“NGOs and human rights groups must end their irresponsible and immoral use of legal rhetoric.” said Gerald Steinberg, Executive Director of NGO Monitor. “False claims of disproportionate force and collective punishment by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch make a mockery of international law.”<sup>23</sup>*

**1e. HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH IN 2008: EXPOSING THE DOUBLE STANDARDS**

In 2008, Human Rights Watch (HRW) continued its biased, anti-Israel agenda, singling out Israel as a primary violator of international law, as demonstrated in NGO Monitor’s quantitative analysis of HRW’s 2008 publications regarding the Middle East.<sup>24</sup> Only Saudi Arabia received more attention, with chronic human rights abusers Iran, Syria, Jordan and Egypt receiving less.

Similarly, our study showed that Israel was condemned for violations of “human rights law,” “humanitarian law,” or “international humanitarian law” (IHL) 33 times, compared with 13 citations for the Palestinians, 6 for Hezbollah and 5 for Egypt. The term “war crimes” was only applied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Additionally, HRW accused Israel of “illegal” or “unlawful” activity, or “violating the law” 26 times in 2008, compared to 17 citations for the Palestinians, 6 for Yemen, and less than 4 citations for other Middle Eastern countries.

HRW’s selective use of international legal and human rights terminology reserves condemnation for Israel, and absolves Hamas and other terror groups of their responsibility for civilian deaths. In 2008, Israel was repeatedly urged to protect Palestinian civilians, whereas Hamas’ use of human shields was erased.

This omission of “human shields” from a human rights

analysis of any asymmetric combat adds to the overall distortion, and to HRW’s highly misleading characterization of



many aspects of the Gaza situation. Further misrepresentations of international law include the continued applica-

tion of the “collective punishment”<sup>25</sup> label to the situation in Gaza and the dubious claim that Gaza remains occupied after the 2005 Disengagement.<sup>26</sup>

NGO Monitor’s criticism of HRW’s credibility and double standards was reflected in news articles, forcing HRW to respond. When approached by journalists about NGO Monitor’s meticulous quantitative analysis of HRW in 2007,<sup>27</sup> published in April 2008, Joe Stork answered “... I haven’t seen this report from Mr. Steinberg, and he seldom has anything useful or truthful to say - you can quote me on that.”<sup>28</sup>

The addition of Nadia Barhoum, a pro-Palestinian campus activist,<sup>29</sup> to HRW’s Middle East and North Africa Division, also reflects the virulent anti-Israel agendas of this NGO superpower, and reinforces the culture of impunity surrounding its activities. Barhoum was an active member in Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) at the University of California, Berkeley.<sup>30</sup> SJP promotes the Durban agenda of demonization of Israel, using terms such

as “apartheid,” as well as accusations of “mass atrocities.”<sup>31</sup> In promoting divestment, Barhoum wrote: “Our university should not profit from bloodshed. Our university should not invest in apartheid.”<sup>32</sup>

## 2. IMPACTING GOVERNMENTS AND DECISION MAKERS

### 2a. NGO MONITOR'S CENTRAL IMPACT ON THE DURBAN REVIEW CONFERENCE

A major focus of NGO Monitor's activities in 2008 was preparations for the Durban Review Conference, scheduled for April 2009 in Geneva. Given the damage to universal human rights inflicted by the demonization of Israel in 2001, NGO Monitor actively campaigned to prevent a repetition of the virulent antisemitic NGO Forum.

NGO Monitor was instrumental in briefing government officials in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, and Israel on the Durban process. Prof. Steinberg met with ambassadors and other top diplomats in order to bring the importance of these issues to their attention.

In September 2008, Prof. Steinberg addressed the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs, at the request of ranking member Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida. Following his visit, a draft resolution of the House of Representatives was published regarding the Durban Review Conference. The resolution, formulated in consultation with a broad-based coalition of interest groups, reflected much of the information included in Prof. Steinberg's briefing, describing the disastrous impact of the UN Durban Conference on Racism held in 2001. In particular the NGO Forum is noted, including its promotion of hatred, antisemitism and demonization of Israel.

NGO Monitor updates on conference developments – in

particular regarding efforts by Palestinian NGOs to label Israel as an “apartheid” and



“colonial” state<sup>33</sup> – were also distributed to Israeli diplomats and decision makers. Following these strategy talks and meetings with government officials, including ministers and advisors to the prime minister, Israeli officials announced that it would not participate in the Durban Review Conference. Similarly, the Canadian government's decision to withdraw from the Review Conference, and to insure that NGOs could not use government funds to participate, reflects NGO Monitor's impact.

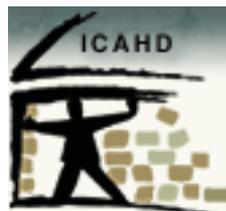
Prof. Steinberg also presented NGO Monitor's research findings and analysis at the United Jewish Community's General Assembly (GA) meeting in November 2008. In this framework, our preparations for the Durban Review Conference reached the leaders of American Jewry, and thousands of Jewish decision makers from around the world.

In response to these developments, the Ittijah NGO coalition wrote that “the international Zionist organizations

such as Simon Wiesenthal Center, NGO Monitor and others represent the interests and the say of the Israeli state rather than civil society's voice based on human rights values. The international Zionist organizations are oriented and guided by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs; their role is to defend the racist nature of the Israeli state” (sic).<sup>34</sup>

In the build-up to Durban II, NGO Monitor enhanced its working relationship with a number of organizations, including UN Watch, Bnai Brith, Community Security Trust (UK), and The Israel Project. Increased cooperation resulted in the publication of a policy paper in conjunction with the World Jewish Congress entitled “NGOs and the Durban Review Conference: History Repeating Itself.”<sup>35</sup>

## 2b. EU ENDS FUNDING FOR ICAHD



In 2008, following eight years of funding, the European Commission (EC) did not renew a grant for the Israel Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD). ICAHD had received EU support through the “Partnerships for Peace Program,” despite its extreme anti-Israel agenda that fuels the conflict and the Palestinian narrative. The reasons and processes for this change in EU policy remain hidden from the public, as do most other aspects related to the transfer of millions of euros annually to Israeli and Palestinian political NGOs.

Officials from the EC consistently argue that its grants are directed towards specific projects and are not intended as general funds for the organization. However, in an “urgent message” to members of ICAHD-USA, the organization’s director Jeff



Halper, announced, “We have just heard that our request for re-funding has been rejected... So we now face a real crisis.” In fact, the 2005 grant of €472,786 over 24 months represented the vast majority of ICAHD’s funding, belying the EC’s claims to support narrow projects.

EU funding for radical NGOs has been a main focus of NGO Monitor’s activities (see pg. 14), leading to intensive discussions with EC officials about their

decision making processes in this area, and the lack of transparency.

Our research and publications have served as the basis for a number of EU Parliamentary Questions regarding European Commission expenditures. While the responses from the EC, both in Israel and the EU, have been unsatisfactory, and sought to avoid the issues, some changes have begun. NGO Monitor’s pressure on the EU, demanding accountability and real oversight, will continue, and these developments with ICAHD are indicative of NGO Monitor’s influence.

ICAHD, as its name suggests, was ostensibly founded to “oppose and resist Israeli demolition of Palestinian houses.” However, most of the organization’s energies are geared towards the demonization of Israel and supporting boycotts. ICAHD officials, principally Halper, consistently employ “apartheid” rhetoric,<sup>36</sup> as well as allegations of “ethnic cleansing,”<sup>37</sup> “atrocities,” “bloody and sadistic actions,”<sup>38</sup> “state terrorism,” “land theft,” and “massacres.”<sup>39</sup> Halper also dismisses the “two-state solution,” rejecting the concept of a Jewish state.<sup>40</sup>

In 2008, ICAHD’s main activity was leading the “Free Gaza” boat trips,<sup>41</sup> along with the fringe International Solidarity

Movement (ISM). These radical activists promoted an anti-Israel campaign by referring to Israel as “Palestine,”<sup>42</sup> its creation as the “Nakba” (catastrophe),<sup>43</sup> and accusing Israel of “ethnic cleansing.”<sup>44</sup> The primary goal was to generate publicity. The stunt was supported by Hamas leaders, who seek open borders with no obligation to end terror attacks.

As NGO Monitor emphasized in numerous publications and correspondence meetings of EU officials, the European government funding for Halper and ICAHD was entirely inconsistent with claimed policy supporting peace based on compromise. The EU decisions to end this funding will greatly reduce ICAHD’s visibility and impact.

## 2c. FORD SUSPENDS SUPPORT OF PCHR

The Ford Foundation's stated mandate is to "reduce poverty and injustice, strengthen democratic values, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement." In 2008, Ford provided over \$25 million in grants to the Middle East and North Africa, including to NGOs involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Following the 2001 Durban Conference, in which Ford-funded groups led the demonization of Israel at the NGO Forum, the Ford Foundation committed itself not to fund NGOs that "promote or engage in violence, terrorism, bigotry or the destruction of any state."

However, as NGO Monitor reports have shown a number of Ford grantees continue to lead and promote the "Durban Strategy" of delegitimizing Israel internationally. One such NGO, the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR), received a \$370,000 Ford grant in 2005. PCHR supports boycotts against Israel and presses an anti-Israel agenda in the media and international forums. It repeatedly refers to terrorism as "resistance"<sup>45</sup> and pursues an on-going campaign of "lawfare,"<sup>46</sup> bringing criminal and civil suits against Israeli military officials for anti-terror measures. During the Gaza war, PCHR issued over 40 statements about the violence, referring to the "indiscriminate killing and continued systematic destruction of all the Palestinian institutions and civilian facilities in the Gaza Strip."<sup>47</sup>

NGO Monitor has noted this and similar discrepancies in Ford funding for NGOs. In correspondence with NGO Monitor, a Ford Foundation official revealed that the grant for PCHR ended in 2007; the funding has not been renewed. This follows extensive NGO Monitor reporting from 2003 to 2007 on Ford, exposing the problematic

and highly politicized nature of its support of PCHR and other NGOs.

PCHR continued to list the Ford Foundation as a donor, even after the grant expired, exploiting the prestige and legitimacy. Following correspondence involving NGO Monitor, PCHR removed Ford from the list.

### NGO Monitor in the Media

*Yet JTA has uncovered several grantees that engage in the twin "Israel is apartheid" and "boycott and divest" campaigns.*



*"That is the essence of the Durban strategy: demonize and delegitimize Israel to the degree that it gains no external support and eventually is unable to function," said Gerald Steinberg, the executive director of the Jerusalem-based NGO Monitor.*

*"I wouldn't say this is a strong, consistent pattern, but it's more than minor leakage. Ford should take a more proactive approach so its monies are not abused."*

*Beneficiaries of Ford funds include:*

- *Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights ; Muwatin: Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy; The Palestinian Center for Human Rights; and Miftah: The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy. All these groups signed onto boycott and divestment petitions against "Apartheid Israel..."*
- *Al Haq: Law in the Service of Man. In the "Goals and Objectives" section of its Web page cites "participation in civil society discourse and activities regarding divestment, boycott, and sanctions." Last July it urged the U.N. General Assembly to recall the "political, economic, military and cultural isolation of South Africa" as "such measures must be considered in relation to Israel."*
- *The Arab NGO Network for Development. An article titled "The Israeli Recipe for 2008: Genocide in Gaza" and a March news release of the Euro-Mediterranean NGO Platform – another Ford grantee – accusing Israel of "massacres," "war crimes" and "genocide."*

Michael J. Jordan, "Ford Foundation still funding anti-Israel groups," JTA, July 23, 2008

## 2d. NGO MONITOR'S SUBMISSION TO THE UN'S UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

In December 2008, the UN Human Rights Council reviewed Israel as part of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process.<sup>48</sup> With the creation of the UN Human Rights Council in 2006, UPR was instituted to review each of the 192 UN member states every four years. It is ostensibly based upon the “universality of human rights” and should “be conducted in an objective, transparent, non-selective, constructive, non confrontational and non politicized manner.”

NGO Monitor submitted a report to the UNHRC, which was included in the UN's compilation of NGO contributions, expressing concern that many of the NGOs participating in the UPR process – such as Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International, World Vision, Save the Children, Al Haq, Badil, Adalah, and Ittijah – produce reports and launch campaigns that stand in sharp contradiction to their stated

mandates of upholding universal human rights.



As shown by NGO Monitor, the majority of NGO UPR submissions

grossly distorted the humanitarian, human rights and international legal dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict, including:

- focusing almost exclusively on alleged violations of Palestinian human rights;
- falsely manipulating a political and territorial dispute in the midst of asymmetric warfare into one of racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination;
- omitting the context of terrorism as well as ignoring Israel's international legal

obligations to fight terrorism and its financing.

- failure to provide sources for claims; allegations based on questionable statistics and “eyewitnesses” that lack credibility; repetition of and citation to claims by non-credible NGOs such as Yesh Din and Physicians for Human Rights-Israel;
- ignoring areas where Israel is a leader in human rights – women's rights, sexual freedoms, right to unionize, a vigorous free press, freedom of association, academic freedom, rule of law, and succession of power;

The NGO Monitor contribution and its acceptance along with other NGO submissions marked an important step in the recognition of critical analysis of NGO claims in the UN Human Rights process.

## 3. NGO MONITOR MONOGRAPH SERIES

### 3a. MAKING WAVES IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: EUROPE'S HIDDEN HAND

The NGO Monitor Monograph Series was launched in April 2008, as a platform for the publication of in-depth studies on issues related to NGOs and accountability. The first publication, *Europe's Hidden Hand: EU Funding for Political NGOs in the Arab-Israeli Conflict*,<sup>49</sup> reveals that between 2005 and 2007, the EU provided tens of millions of euros from public money to NGOs whose activities directly contradict EU policy and do not promote regional coexistence. The 48-page report also uncovers and analyzes the lack of transparency and accountability in EU funding for Israel and Palestinian NGOs, with detailed tables and summaries. This report became the basis for meetings with officials, diplomats, journalists and academics.

For instance, under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) framework, the EC granted €300,000 in 2006-8 to Oxfam Novib in partnership with the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) for a project entitled "Awareness raising and lobbying against the Death Penalty in the occupied Palestinian Territory." NGO Monitor research demonstrated that PCHR used this funding to pursue politicized "lawfare" cases against Israeli officials in Spain and elsewhere, and organized conferences to publicize its efforts. Other EU-funded NGOs analyzed in the monograph include Adalah, ICAHD, ARIJ, and Christian Aid.

*Europe's Hidden Hand* also notes that the official EU guidelines by which NGOs are selected to receive public funds are very vague or non-transparent, allowing for a high degree of error and bias. Anonymous EU officials and outside experts decide on the allocation of millions of euros to highly political NGOs, yet are not subject to any external process of accountability. The absence of specific performance indicators to evaluate the impact of EU-funded NGO projects adds to the accountability deficit.

The monograph also provided detailed recommendations to the European Commission, including creating a comprehensive EU database on NGO funding; applying performance indicators to measure the success or failure of projects; evaluating the NGO's complete agenda, in particular campaigns that support the demonization of Israel, as opposed to technical and bureaucratic checks that reveal little about possible abuse of EU funds; establishing clear red-lines of acceptable NGO behavior and activities.

Due to NGO Monitor's efforts, this study has impacted the discourse surrounding NGOs in Europe amongst Members of the European Parliament (MEP), European Commission officials, and European and Israeli diplomats. MEPs have used NGO Monitor's research in posing Parliamentary Questions (PQs) to the European Commission.

Following the publication of *Europe's Hidden Hand*, the European Commission announced the launch of the Financial Transparency System (FTS). This database, which the EC claims to provide "clear information on the use of EU funds," provides limited information on the approximately 20% of the EU budget that was "managed by the Commission at a central level" in 2007; other years have not, as of yet, been included. By the EC's own admission, "[t]he vast majority of EU funds (almost 80%) are handled by the national administrations and the responsibility to publish the names of beneficiaries rests with them."

#### **NGO Monitor in the Media**

*"Both Canada and the U.S. practice full transparency by providing details for their NGO funding. They have strict guidelines designed to prevent grant recipients from using the money for hostile campaigning instead for humanitarian projects. The EU could do worse than follow this example."*

Prof Gerald Steinberg, 'Funding Israel's Detractors'  
*Wall St Journal* (Europe), 6 May 2008



## 3b. GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH: NGO “LAWFARE”

On October 7, 2008, NGO Monitor held a press conference to launch its second monograph, entitled *NGO “Lawfare”: The Exploitation of Courts in the Arab-Israeli Conflict*.<sup>50</sup> This publication is a detailed analysis of the role of NGOs in the abuse of European and US courts for political “lawfare” – the use of legal methods to achieve military goals. In parallel to their other political campaigns, these groups have initiated criminal and civil cases against Israeli officials using false claims of “war crimes.”

NGO Monitor’s 40-page monograph provides the first in-depth study of this important issue, and reveals the central role of NGOs in promoting the expansion (and subsequent abuse) of *universal jurisdiction* statutes worldwide; the creation of the “lawfare” strategy against Israel at the infamous 2001 Durban Conference; and the leading role NGOs have played in these cases. The report also documents how the main perpetrators of NGO “lawfare,” such as PCHR and Al Haq, are funded by the European Commission, European governments, the Ford Foundation and George Soros’ Open Society Institute.

Although Israel is not the only country that has been subject to “lawfare” (the US and England have also been subject to suits arising out of the Iraq war), Israel is a primary target. NGOs exploit universal jurisdiction statutes in Europe and North

America to bring these cases. These statutes allow courts to preside even though the parties and events at issue are entirely foreign. In some countries, such as Spain, NGOs can apply to a court directly for an arrest warrant or to launch a criminal investigation without the knowledge or approval of the government.

These cases are entirely frivolous, wastes of time and money: every single case has been dismissed at a preliminary stage. Nonetheless, NGOs pursue “lawfare” to promote a negative image of Israel in the media, harass Israeli officials, interfere with Israel’s diplomatic relations, and advance the Durban Strategy.

Panelists at the press conference included Professor Gerald

Steinberg, Executive Director of NGO Monitor; Maj. Gen. (Res) Doron Almog, former IDF head of Southern Command and the target of multiple “lawfare” cases; and Irit Kohn, former Director of the International Affairs Department at Israel’s Ministry of Justice and lead defense counsel for Ariel Sharon when he was prosecuted by NGOs in Belgium.

NGO Monitor’s monograph and ongoing updates on this subject continue to impact international discourse about the role of national courts in universal jurisdiction cases. The research was reviewed on the International Law Observer website<sup>51</sup> and circulated by Palestinian activists – including PCHR – to their mailing lists (as a threat to their campaigns).

### NGO Monitor in the Media

*“The ‘lawfare’ against Israel raises troubling questions... Why do these NGOs fail to seek ‘justice’ for Israeli terror victims? Why do the EU and European governments fund these NGOs under ironically named programs like the ‘Partnership for Peace’?”*



Anne Herzberg, ‘Lawfare Against Israel’  
Wall St Journal (Europe), 5 Nov 2008

## 4. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

NGO Monitor saw significant organizational growth in 2008, expanding its offices, staff, and internet presence.

In June 2008, NGO Monitor moved into a newly renovated space in the center of Jerusalem, across from the Prime Minister's residence. The office provides a comfortable and productive environment for the staff, with a conference room that accommodates presentations to journalists, diplomats, and decision makers.

The organization also developed professionally, with the addition of the positions of Chief Executive Officer and Managing Editor. Dov Yarden, NGO Monitor's first CEO, oversees the day-to-day management of the organization, and is responsible for long-term planning. The Managing Editor, Naftali Balanson, edits all reports and prepares them for publication on NGO Monitor's

website and in print. He also manages the research agenda, and coordinates the NGO Monitor Internship Programs.

NGO Monitor also inaugurated the Hebrew Desk, expanding the organization's research capabilities of Hebrew language materials, as well as Arabic sources. By the end of 2008, NGO Monitor had 10 full time employees – plus a number of part time staff and interns – compared with 5 in 2007.

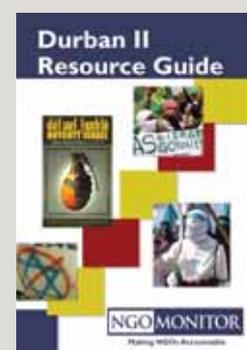
In 2008, NGO Monitor established an International Advisory Board, comprised of respected figures who add both prestige and expertise to the organization. International Advisory Board members include Elie Wiesel, Professor Alan Dershowitz, Sir Martin Gilbert, R. James Woolsey, Tom Gross, Michael Gove MP, Douglas Murray, Judea Pearl, Elliott Abrams, Harry Wechsler, and Nina Rosenwald.

Finally, NGO Monitor's website ([www.ngo-monitor.org](http://www.ngo-monitor.org)) continued to be the hub of the organization's research operation, providing an accessible and valuable tool for NGO related materials. A statistical analysis shows sustained growth in website traffic throughout 2008. Additionally, NGO Monitor launched a unique Durban Review Conference webpage in 2008. Designed to provide an overview of NGO involvement in the Durban process and updated information and analysis on preparations for the conference, NGO Monitor's page was one of the most comprehensive Durban II resources on the internet. The page consistently attained a top ranking with Google searches for "Durban Review Conference" and "Durban II," directing significant traffic to the NGO Monitor site.

### *Preparations for Durban II*

In 2008, NGO Monitor created an important online resource, the Durban Review Conference webpage. Topics on this webpage include an introduction to the role of NGOs at Durban and the "Durban Strategy," relevant UN documents, Durban-related activities by a wide range of NGOs, and government statements on participation and funding. The page consistently attained a top-3 ranking with Google searches for "Durban Review Conference" and "Durban II," directing significant traffic to the NGO Monitor site, and proving that NGO-Monitor was the go-to source for information on this subject.

NGO Monitor also published a print version of the Durban II resource guide. This publication will function as an important tool for journalists, diplomats and activists at the April 2009 conference.



## 5. NGO MONITOR'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On December 9-10, 2008, NGO Monitor hosted its annual conference marking the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the Genocide Convention. Co-sponsored with Bar Ilan University's Faculty of Law and Department of Political Studies, the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs' Global Law Forum and Legacy Heritage Fund, the conference brought together academics, ambassadors and experts in international relations, international law and human rights

to analyze the impact of the UDHR and the role of the human rights movement today.

The conference opened in Jerusalem, with an event hosted by Prof. Gerald Steinberg. The keynote address was given by Canada's former Justice Minister and Attorney General Prof. Irwin Cotler, entitled "The Danger of a Genocidal Iran: The Responsibility to Prevent." The event attracted a large and diverse audience, including Canadian Ambassador Jon Allen, journalists, and representa-

tives of the US and UK embassies in Israel.

In sessions at Bar Ilan University, academics and NGO officials examined the record of human rights implementation over the past 60 years, and the implications of this record. Jessica Montell of B'Tselem joined a lively debate on one of the panels alongside Daniel Taub of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where the role of B'Tselem and other NGOs was analyzed.

## 6. NGO MONITOR POLL

In advance of the conference, NGO Monitor and Bar Ilan University commissioned a poll on Israeli attitudes towards human rights and NGOs. Israelis overwhelmingly support human rights, but expressed skepticism about NGOs and their objectivity in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

89% said that human rights are important, but only 19% of respondents thought that NGOs claiming to promote these values are equally concerned with

Israelis and Palestinians, and 51% recognize NGO favoritism toward Palestinians. 64% concluded that, in light of the UN's World Conference Against Racism in Durban in 2001, NGOs are inherently biased against Israel. Over two-thirds of those questioned said that critical NGO reports hurt Israel's image internationally.

The vast majority of Israelis believe that Israel is better than other Middle Eastern countries at protecting human

rights, and 55% saw Israel as better than other Western democracies. Additionally, 66% of respondents demanded transparency regarding foreign government funding for NGOs in Israel.

The poll and its findings were covered in *Ha'aretz* newspaper,<sup>52</sup> IBA TV news, and Kol Yisrael Radio.

## 7. NGO MONITOR IN THE MEDIA - GOING MAINSTREAM

In 2008, NGO Monitor enjoyed increased media exposure, reaching both targeted specialist media and major international titles. NGO Monitor has been featured in renowned media outlets such as BBC, CNN, ABC, *International Herald Tribune*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

One important feature of NGO Monitor's media coverage was the increased publication of opinion pieces on NGO issues. These articles provide a forum for NGO Monitor to discuss complex issues and raise public debate in a manner which is often impossible in a news story. Op-eds by NGO Monitor staff members appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, *European Voice*, *Jewish Chronicle*, *Jerusalem Post*, and other titles.

NGO Monitor saw extensive coverage on TV, the radio, in newspapers, and on websites and blogs. The organization's profile in the Hebrew press

was also raised. Prof. Steinberg published in *Makor Rishon* newspaper<sup>53</sup> and was interviewed by Reshet Bet Radio regarding "lawfare" (see page 15). An NGO Monitor op-ed was featured in *NRG*,<sup>54</sup> *Ma'ariv* newspaper's online service.

For instance, drawing primarily on NGO Monitor's research and adding comments from NGO officials, the Jewish Telegraph Agency (JTA) published an in-depth, three-part series, entitled "Durban's Descendants," by Michael J. Jordan (July 23, 2008). These articles return to the theme of the 2003 JTA series, "Funding Hate," which revealed the Ford Foundation's support for NGOs that led the demonization of Israel at the UN Conference Against Racism in Durban in 2001 (see page 12). The series describes Ford's continued funding of politicized NGOs which employ the "Durban strategy," often channeled via the New Israel Fund (NIF – see page 7). Jor-

dan also highlighted the risk that such recipients pose to the UN Durban Review Conference in April 2009, turning it into a repeat of the 2001 debacle.

Additionally, in December 2008, NGO Monitor triggered impressive media coverage in Israel and the UK with its report on NGO manipulation of Christmas symbols for anti-Israel and antisemitic attacks. British groups War on Want and Amos Trust marketed Christmas cards conflating Jesus' suffering with the Palestinians. NGOs also supported an event entitled "Bethlehem Now: Nine Alternative Lessons and Carols for Palestine," involving the crude re-writing of Christmas carols in order to explicitly demonize Israel. NGO Monitor's research was picked up by the media in England (*The Spectator*),<sup>55</sup> Lebanon (*Al-Manar*),<sup>56</sup> Turkey (*Turkish Weekly*)<sup>57</sup> and Israel (*Jerusalem Post*,<sup>58</sup> *Ynetnews.com*)<sup>59</sup>.

### NGO Monitor in the Media

*"In their moral pronouncements and press releases, the human rights NGOs and the UN groups that are charged with implementing human rights norms consistently fail to properly address the use of human shields. This failure is also an indictment of the human rights community."*

Gerald M. Steinberg Op-ed, "US Image Problem; Watching Human Rights,"  
*International Herald Tribune*, March 9, 2008

*"These internships are an inappropriate element of any kind of university educational program," said Gerald M. Steinberg, executive director of NGO Monitor and chairman of the political-studies department at Bar-Ilan University. 'Such one-sided political campaigning by unaccountable NGO's is antithetical to academic norms and standards of conduct.' Mr. Steinberg called on the American universities to 'end such biased internships, and to appoint an independent committee to review this and similar activities.'"*

Matthew Kalman, "American Internships In Israel Promote Extremism, Report Says,"  
*Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 27, 2008

## 8. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008

	<u>2008</u>		
	<u>Funds that are not restricted</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Used for Activities</u>	<u>Used for Fixed Assets</u>	
<b>Opening balances</b>	\$18,365	7,524	24,938
<b><u>Receipts</u></b>			
Donations	433,500	-	433,500
Additional Income	4,063		4,063
<b><u>Cost of Activities</u></b>	(294,843)	-	(294,843)
Surplus from activities	142,720	-	142,720
Administrative and general expenses	(63,732)	-	(63,732)
<b>Surplus for the period</b>	78,988	-	78,988
<b>Other changes during the period:</b>			
Amounts transferred to cover depreciation expenses	5,699	(5,699)	-
Amounts transferred to cover purchases of fixed assets	(28,203)	28,203	-
<b>Total changes for the period</b>	56,484	22,504	74,925
<b>Net assets as at December 31, 2008</b>	<b>74,849</b>	<b>30,028</b>	<b>104,877</b>

## 9. LOOKING AHEAD: NGO MONITOR IN 2009

Since its inception in 2003, NGO Monitor has grown into a formidable research center with an international profile and access to decision makers. In 2009, the organization will undertake a number of significant projects to expand upon earlier successes.

### **Durban Review Conference:**

NGO Monitor was founded in the wake of the 2001 Durban Conference and its antisemitic NGO Forum. We are recognized internationally as experts on questions related to NGO participation in the April 2009 follow-up, and preparations made by these groups to repeat the anti-Israel agenda of the 2001 event.

In 2009, NGO Monitor will publish the "Durban II Resource Guide," an important tool for journalists, diplomats and activists. The guide will contain background on the NGO Forum in 2001 and the build-up to Durban II, analyses of the central role of NGOs in the Durban Review process, and information on NGOs likely to be vocal in April 2009.

NGO Monitor will also send a delegation to the UN headquarters in Geneva to monitor and witness NGO activity at the Durban Review Conference.

### **NGO Monitor Monograph Series:**

The detailed research provided in this series will continue in 2009. Two studies, one analyzing NGO activity during the Gaza fighting (Dec. 2008 – Jan. 2009) and one reviewing NGO superpower Human Rights Watch, have already been commissioned. Additional volumes in the series are forthcoming

### **Israeli NGOs:**

Foreign governments provide millions of shekels annually to Israeli "amutot" (non-profit organizations). Many of these groups – including B'Tselem, Ir Amim, Bimkom, and Adalah – oppose Israeli policies and promote rejectionist alternatives that are in-line with European visions for the region. This project will reveal the extent and pervasiveness of this phenomenon, and explore the local laws that govern the intersection of foreign governmental funding and the influencing of public policy.

### **Pressing the EU:**

In 2008 NGO Monitor initiated an official request of the European Commission (EC), under EU regulations on public access to documents, for the release of secret project evaluations and grades related to NGO funding in Israel and the Palestinian Authority. At first NGO Monitor was denied; upon appeal the EC agreed to provide some of the requested material, but there were repeated delays in receiving it. In 2009, NGO Monitor will continue to demand that the EC abide by its own transparency guidelines, and open up its decision-making processes to scrutiny and analysis. Further requests for documents, and appeals as necessary, will be made, maintaining pressure on the EU to increase its accountability to the public.

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