

**NGO Monitor's Submission to the International Development Committee Inquiry
on the "Humanitarian and Development situation in the Occupied Palestinian
Territories"**

International Development Committee
House of Commons
7 Millbank
London
SW1P 3JA
Email: indcom@parliament.uk

NGO Monitor
13 Tel Hai St
Jerusalem
92107, Israel
www.ngo-monitor.org

March 19, 2008

NGO Monitor was founded to promote critical debate and accountability of organizations that claim to encourage universal human rights and provide humanitarian assistance in the Arab-Israeli conflict zone. Our objective is to publish detailed analyses and reports on the activities of the NGO community, for the benefit of policy makers, journalists, philanthropic organizations and the general public. NGO Monitor has over 11,000 subscribers to its weekly reports and monthly digests, and averages over 700 daily unique visits on its website.

As a follow up to its [submission dated October 12, 2006](#), NGO Monitor (www.ngo-monitor.org) presents this updated report to the International Development Committee Inquiry on the "Humanitarian and Development situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories."¹

¹ http://www.ngo-monitor.org/data/images/File/ngomonitor_submission_parliamentary_ctteeOct122006.pdf

Summary of NGO Monitor's Submission:

International Development NGOs are playing an increasingly visible and large-scale interventionist role in complex conflicts with humanitarian implications, such as the one between Israel and the Palestinians. Some of these NGOs, while engaged in legitimate projects to enhance civil society, reduce poverty and strengthen institutions, use development aid to pursue political goals which exacerbate conflict. Such partisan activities undermine their stated goals and those of their funding agencies, including government departments.

This report examines how funds given to three DFID-funded organizations -- Christian Aid, War on Want and Oxfam-GB -- ostensibly for humanitarian or development aid, are used for political campaigns which contradict DFID goals. UK policies to promote peace, "[reduce how much \[a\] country relies on overseas aid](#)," and "[support better Palestinian public institutions](#)," are undermined by activities that seek to internationally isolate Israel by referring to it as an "apartheid state," by calls for boycotts, divestment and sanctions, and, repetition of a rejectionist Palestinian narrative which ignores key causes of conflict. This report also looks at the biased political campaigning of DFID-funded NGOs with regards to current events in Gaza. These NGOs include Oxfam-GB, CARE, Save the Children and CAFOD.

Based on this material, we discuss the urgent need for DFID to reconsider the extent to which recipient NGOs advance peace and development goals. Although NGOs are in a unique position to effectively respond to humanitarian concerns, DFID should ensure that its funds are not being used to pursue political goals that exacerbate conflict.

I. NGO MONITOR MISSION STATEMENT

1. The community of non-governmental organizations has become extremely powerful and influential, particularly with respect to human rights and development issues in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Their reports, campaigns and lobbying activities have a significant impact in shaping perceptions of the conflict, media accounts, and government policies

2. 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 in the framework of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

3. 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. In some situations, established NGOs that claim to pursue "universal humanitarian goals" enjoy immunity from detailed scrutiny or criticism. In other cases, the assumption that their motives are moral, and politically, as well as ideologically neutral, inhibits critical review.

4. The vast resources at the disposal of these self-proclaimed humanitarian NGOs allow for the production of an immense volume of reports, press releases and media interviews, turning them into primary sources for journalists, researchers, and government policy makers. NGO public pronouncement often frame the terms of public discourse and strongly influence policy formulation. In this regard, NGOs are in a dominant position in providing the supply to meet the demand for information on what Prof. Irwin Cotler has called "the new secular religion of human rights".

5. However, as NGO Monitor has documented, established humanitarian NGOs often produce reports and launch campaigns that stand in sharp contradiction to their own mission statements claiming to uphold universal human rights values. Especially in the Arab-Israeli conflict, they regularly obscure or remove the context of terrorism, provide incomplete statistics and images, misrepresent international law and campaign on political issues that diverge from the protection of human rights.

6. Following the September 2001 UN Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa, many humanitarian/human rights NGOs adopted a concerted strategy to undermine Israel's legitimacy. They adopted the "Durban Strategy", using the lexicon of human rights to equate Israel with apartheid South Africa, and incorporate inflammatory rhetoric into their reporting such as the terms "apartheid," "ethnic cleansing," "ghettos," "Bantustans," and "racist crimes." These NGOs have also initiated boycott, sanctions and divestment (BDS) campaigns against Israel in order to isolate it from the community of states.

7. The aim of NGO Monitor is to challenge these distortions and inflammatory rhetoric by providing information and analysis. The fundamental question we seek to answer is whether NGOs are positively contributing to the protection of human rights. By doing so, NGO Monitor seeks to foster a comprehensive and intellectually honest debate on the critical issues surrounding the Arab-Israeli conflict.

8. This report updates NGO Monitor's October 12, 2006 [submission](#) to the International Development Committee Inquiry on Development Assistance and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.² The earlier report described the role of NGOs that receive DFID funding in promoting conflict and undermining development goals. This submission provides recent analysis of how DFID funds have been used to advance political campaigns that do not contribute to DFID objectives.

9. We present below several representative examples of organizations that have received substantial funding from the UK, and whose activities undermine DFID goals of alleviating poverty and promoting civil society in the Palestinian Authority. These examples are by no means exclusive. We have organized this analysis around four sections:

1. An Overview of UK DFID Development Assistance to the PA Since 2006

2. Palestinian Development Assistance: Undermining the Policy Objectives of DFID

3. Case Studies

A. Christian Aid

B. War on Want

C. Oxfam (Great Britain)

D. DFID-funded NGOs and Gaza Campaigns

4. Conclusion

² http://www.ngo-monitor.org/data/images/File/ngomonitor_submission_parliamentary_ctteeOct122006.pdf and <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmintdev/114/114ii.pdf>

1. An Overview of UK DFID Development Assistance to the Palestinian Authority Since 2006

10. In 2007/2008, DFID provided £31.6m to the Palestinian Authority (PA).³ This will increase to £62m in 2009, according to Douglas Alexander, the UK Secretary of State for International Development.⁴

11. DFID funding supports a number of institutions and funding instruments within the PA including the Temporary Assistance Mechanism (TIM), support to the Quartet envoy, and private sector initiatives to support Palestinian businesses. Funds are also given to support actors within civil society, such as British NGOs, that either work in the Palestinian-Israeli theatre, or publish reports and engage in political activities dealing with conflict.

12. Major British NGOs and registered charities which currently receive funding through DFID's Partnership Programme Agreements (PPAs)⁵ include **Christian Aid** (CA) (a six year contract in 2005 for £5 million per annum for the first 3 years); **Oxfam** (a six year contract in 2005 for £8.3 million per annum for the first 3 years); **World Vision** (a five year contract in 2006 for £3.5 million); **Save the Children UK** (a six year contract in 2005 worth £6.4 million per annum for the first 3 years); **CARE** (a six year contract in 2005 worth £3.25 million per annum for the first 3 years); and **CAFOD** (a six year contract in 2005 worth £3.7 million per annum for the first 3 years). These PPAs last an average of 3-5 years and "funding is unrestricted, which means that [DFID] do not require partners to account for the expenditure in their accounts. Neither do [they] 'stipulate' how the funds are spent or allocated by the partners in support of their strategic programmes."⁶ **War on Want** also received over £250,000 from DFID in 2007, apparently not via a PPA. In this regard, although some NGOs were not directly funded to execute programs in the PA, their campaigning on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and participation in political activities are given legitimacy and indirect support by DFID (money is fungible so grants for other projects inevitably free up money for use elsewhere.)

13. The political campaigning of various DFID funded NGOs continues to work against DFID's goals of reducing poverty and advancing development. [DFID's policy](#), which seeks "to support better Palestinian public institutions", also continues to be eroded by CA, War on Want and their partners which rarely criticize Palestinian institutions and behavior and focus predominantly on Israel's responsibility.⁷

14. DFID's objective of "reduc[ing] how much [a] country relies on overseas aid,"⁸ also continues to be compromised by NGOs which consistently ignore Palestinian

³ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/asia/palestine2.asp>

⁴ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/news/files/Pressreleases/donor-support-palestinian.asp>

⁵ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/dfidwork/ppas/partnerprogagreements.asp>

⁶ <http://ngo-monitor.org/article.php?id=795> [This description was later removed from the DFID website]

⁷ www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/palestinian-prog-brochure.pdf

⁸ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid>

behavior and the role of Palestinian institutions' contribution to the conflict. As Don Habibi writes in the *Journal of Human Rights* (2007),

"The claim of holding Israel to a higher standard...insinuates that its adversaries are less developed politically and morally, as if this excuses their transgressions on human rights. It implies that Arabs and Muslims are not accountable to the same universal principles—that they are not equals. It suggests that they are either backwards, immature, or uncivilized—and thus not responsible for their actions."⁹

If international organizations continually deny the Palestinians agency and responsibility for change, there are grim prospects for weaning them off overseas aid. Furthermore, such double standards underline the highly partisan approach of many NGOs to this conflict zone, and reveal a failure to demand basic prerequisites for peace from the Palestinians, such as a rejection of violence.

2. Palestinian Development Assistance: Undermining the Policy Objectives of DFID

15. This section examines the activities of CA, War on Want and Oxfam (GB), since 2006. Attention is also given to the recent campaigning of DFID-funded NGOs regarding Israeli policy in Gaza. Funds ostensibly given to support development projects that strengthen Palestinian institutions and promote a two-state solution continue to be diverted towards political campaigning. Such projects directly contradict the funding guidelines of the UK and fail to address the fundamental objective for which they were granted: the reduction of poverty. These examples are representative and by no means exclusive.

3. Case Studies

A. Christian Aid (CA)

16. CA has received £18.6m from DFID since 2001 and in 2007 received over £5m.¹⁰ [The current PPA](#) between CA and DFID expires in 2011.¹¹ Although these funds were not specifically targeted for work in the Palestinian Authority, money is fungible, and DFID support for CA enhances its credibility.

17. Despite CA's substantive global development work, it continues to advance a partisan narrative of the Arab-Israeli conflict by making unsubstantiated claims against Israel, distorting international law and failing to criticize Palestinian institutions and violence for their contribution to the conflict.

⁹ Habibi, Don. "Human Rights and Politicized Human Rights: A Utilitarian Critique." *Journal of Human Rights* Vol. 6 (2007).

¹⁰ http://www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/69533%20-%20AN_rept0607_BWversion%20lores.pdf

¹¹ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/dfidwork/ppas/christianaid-ppa.asp>

18. Examples of CA's highly partisan campaigns are:

•19. CA continues to repeat claims by unreliable sources that promote boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaigns against Israel. In June 2007, CA published a report entitled [Israel & Palestine: a Question of Viability](#) and includes claims by the [Palestinian NGO Network](#) and the [Palestinian Center for Human Rights](#). Both of these organizations are major supporters of BDS including the [academic boycott of Israel and "the imposition of comprehensive arms, oil, economic and trade sanctions and embargoes](#) (with the exception of medical food and other humanitarian supplies), the downgrading or suspension of diplomatic relations", with Israel.¹² This report also includes claims made by [Al-Haq](#)—an active participant in the [2001 Durban Conference](#).

20. This report also continues CA's practice of exculpating Palestinian behavior. A section entitled "[The maths of occupation](#)," makes no mention of terror attacks, and is limited to giving a body count of Palestinian and Israelis killed since 2000. While both Israeli civilians and Israeli security personnel are listed, no distinction is made between Palestinian civilians and Palestinians terrorists.

•21. CA's 2007 campaign on Gaza repeats Palestinian arguments while making fallacious claims against Israel. In a section of its website entitled "[End Palestinian Isolation](#)", (accessed in January 2008), CA repeats biased claims that the humanitarian situation in Gaza is the result of the "siege-like conditions imposed by Israel", without any critical analysis of Palestinian accountability.¹³ The report even alleges that the collapse of the Palestinian unity government and the fighting between Hamas and Fatah is the "predictable result of prolonged Israeli blockade and political isolation by the international community."¹⁴ Hamas' radical ideology, internal Palestinian human rights abuses, corruption, and terror attacks against Israeli civilians are entirely missing. Similarly, in its [criticism of Israeli policy in Gaza](#), the [use of human shields](#) by terror elements is regularly ignored.

•22. CA continues to make false claims against Israel while minimizing Palestinian behavior. On March 6, 2008 CA joined with other UK NGOs to issue a [report](#) criticizing Israel's policy on Gaza.¹⁵ Evidence provided by the NGOs proved to be factually incorrect,¹⁶ contradicting the data and reports of organizations such as the

¹² [Report BDS Conference Ramallah 22-11-07 .pdf](#); and

¹³ "End Palestinian Isolation." [CA](#). Accessed 6 January 2008

http://www.christianaid.org.uk/stoppoverty/conflict/stories/End_isolation.aspx

¹⁴ "End Palestinian Isolation." [CA](#). Accessed 14 February 2008

http://www.christianaid.org.uk/stoppoverty/conflict/stories/End_isolation.aspx

¹⁵ <http://my.ynet.co.il/pic/news/5.3.08/embargoedGazalowreswithout.pdf>

¹⁶ See "NGOs Use False Claims on Humanitarian Conditions in Gaza," [NGO Monitor](#), March 06, 2008,

http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/ngo_monitor_ngos_use_false_claims_on_humanitarian_conditions_in_gaza

World Bank and the World Health Organization.¹⁷ This report also failed to report evidence that Hamas has deliberately exacerbated the humanitarian situation in order to create pressure on Israel,¹⁸ and had stolen humanitarian aid. The German news agency Deutsche Presse Agentur reported February 7, 2008, "[a]t least 10 trucks with humanitarian aid sent to the Gaza Strip by the Jordanian Red Crescent Society were confiscated by Hamas police shortly after the lorries entered the territory;"¹⁹ a further news report added that the aid was "unloaded in Hamas ministry warehouses", and that a similar seizure took place in January, 2008.²⁰ The report accuses Israel of "collective punishment" while maintaining that restrictions on imports to Gaza are "illegal." CA fails to acknowledge that "Article 23 of the Fourth Geneva Convention ... only requires Israel to permit passage of food, clothing, and medicines intended for children under fifteen, expectant mothers, and maternity cases." CA also fails to recognize that Israel continues to supply Gaza with critical humanitarian supplies.

•23. CA not only failed to condemn a suicide bombing which killed one woman and injured thirty eight civilians in the Israeli city of Dimona on February 4, 2008 but issued a press release the following day²¹, which ignored that attack and accused Israel of "collective punishment." Yet despite Gaza's dependence on foreign supplies of electricity and oil, Israel is under no legal obligation to provide for the entire Gazan population. Although many NGOs argue that Israel is still the occupying authority of Gaza based on its control of Gaza's airspace, as noted by international law professor Avi Bell, "There is no precedent that creates legal duties on the basis of a former military administration... Furthermore, control of airspace does not create a legal duty to supply goods either. For instance, UN Security Council-ordered no-fly zones in Iraq

¹⁷ The NGO report claims that "The Israeli government prevents the repair and maintenance of the electricity and water service infrastructure in Gaza by prohibiting the import of spare parts". In contrast, a December 17 World Bank report describes how Israel allowed parts through specifically for this purpose (page 23): "as a result of coordination with Israel ... work [on the lake].... is expected to be completed by March."

"According to the World Health Organization, the proportion of patients given permits to exit Gaza for medical care decreased from 89.3% in January 2007 to 64.3% in December 2007, an unprecedented low." This claim is inconsistent with a WHO report that permissions and referrals to Israeli specialty medical services, increased by 45% from 4,934 in 2006 to 7,176 in 2007, with approval rates of some 82% of all requests during 2007.

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/294264-1166525851073/ParisconferencepaperDec17.pdf>

¹⁸ "Timing a power blackout (they [Hamas] threw the switch themselves) to coincide with the evening news." Terror in Gaza: Eight months since the Hamas takeover, February 14, 2008, Ministry Foreign Affairs. See <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism-+Obstacle+to+Peace/Palestinian+terror+since+2000/Terror+in+Gaza-+Two+months+since+the+Hamas+takeover+16-Aug-2007.htm>

¹⁹ <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/MMAH-7BM8XT?OpenDocument>

²⁰ <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0.7340.L-3504227.00.html>

²¹ Original release found at http://www.christianaid.org.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/Gaza_blockade_set_to_worsen_after_court_ruling.aspx. This was later removed. Similar statement found at http://www.christian-aid.ie/ireland/stories/call_for_action.aspx

and Libya were not seen as the source of any legal duty to supply those countries with electricity, water, or other goods." ²²

24. Notwithstanding their global development work, the aim of CA's campaigns and publications regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is to reinforce the image of Israel as the aggressor and the Palestinians as victims, while minimizing the role of Palestinian terror, violence and corruption, and manipulating the language of international law to demonize Israel.

B. War on Want

25. War on Want (WoW) is a UK registered charity which received £300,006 from DFID in 2006 and £258,689 in 2007, according to War on Want's most recent financial statements.²³ Although these funds were not directly allocated for activities in the PA, War on Want is active in advancing political campaigns regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

26. According to its mission statement, WoW "fights poverty in developing countries in partnership and solidarity with people affected by globalization...campaign for workers' rights and against the root causes of global poverty, inequality and injustice."²⁴ Despite a number of complaints regarding biased political campaigning that is inconsistent with these goals, and subsequent investigations by the UK Charity Commission, War on Want makes no secret of its pursuit of partisan objectives, evident in the fallacious and demonizing claims it makes against Israel, such as the identification of Israel as the new Apartheid South Africa. War on Want was also a participant in the February 2008 "Israeli Apartheid Week", which included assemblies, seminars and other events promoting efforts at "isolat[ing] the Israeli apartheid regime."²⁵

27. Elsewhere in the world, War on Want implements numerous humanitarian aid programs, but its role in Palestinian issues appears to go primarily to political campaigning. The following examples demonstrate War on Want's highly biased approach, which distorts the conflict, denies Palestinian responsibility and undermines UK development goals:

²² [http://jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DRIT=1&DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=111&FID=443&PID=0&IID=2037&TTL=Is Israel Bound by International Law to Supply Utilities, Goods, and Services to Gaza?](http://jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DRIT=1&DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=111&FID=443&PID=0&IID=2037&TTL=Is%20Israel%20Bound%20by%20International%20Law%20to%20Supply%20Utilities,%20Goods,%20and%20Services%20to%20Gaza?)

²³ http://ngo-monitor.org/digest_info.php?id=1713; and www.waronwant.org/download.php?id=664

²⁴ <http://www.waronwant.org/About%20Us+10631.twl>

²⁵ http://ngo-monitor.org/article/ngos_promote_israeli_apartheid_week

•28. In 2006, War on Want initiated a major campaign entitled “Profiting from the Occupation: Corporate complicity in Israel's crimes against the Palestinian people”,²⁶ advocating boycotts and divestment from corporations which sell goods made in the West Bank and the Golan Heights or which have carried out business with the Israeli government in those areas. This is a clear expression of the Durban Strategy, intended to isolate and delegitimize Israel in the international community.

•29. In July/August 2006, War on Want joined with the Palestine Solidarity Campaign to promote a letter writing campaign to UK Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett.²⁷ The letter laments Israel's "assault" and "collective punishment" of the Palestinians, but ignores the reason for the IDF operation – the Palestinian cross-border attack that resulted in the death of 2 Israeli soldiers and the kidnapping of Gilad Shalit. It demands that the UK restore aid to the Palestinian Authority, but makes no mention of continued attacks on border crossings, or that aid has been withheld due to Hamas' refusal to renounce violence or recognize Israel. This is but one example of War on Want's exculpation of Palestinian behavior.²⁸

•30. War on Want's 2006 submission to the UK International Development Parliamentary Committee describes the Separation Barrier as a “land grab” intended to “make Palestinian lives more miserable.” Such rhetoric fails to acknowledge the reduction in terror attacks following the construction of the barrier.²⁹ War on Want claimed the disengagement from Gaza “left all decisions of national sovereignty in the hands of the Israeli Government,” and “gave [Israel] carte blanche to re-invade at will.”³⁰ These distortions ignore the free and fair elections in Gaza following disengagement, and that any state has the theoretical option to invade its neighbor in the case of a legitimate security threat. War on Want also blames Palestinian poverty solely on the “Occupation,” ignoring Palestinian terrorism, internal violence and corruption.³¹

•31. War on Want has a history of promoting traditional anti-Semitic libels (such as “poisoning the wells”) in repeating unsupported allegations that the IDF targets Palestinian water sources as a “punitive and discriminatory tool”.³² Most recently, its 2006 and 2007 Christmas card campaigns echo the anti-Semitic blood libel of deicide.³³ One of three cards sold on War on Want’s website portrays Joseph and a pregnant Mary being searched by Israeli soldiers against the Separation Barrier outside of Bethlehem.³⁴ In this image, War on Want is explicitly connecting the suffering of Palestinians with that of Jesus. The card further implies that Israel is intentionally

²⁶ <http://www.waronwant.org/publications/Profiting%20from%20the%20occupation.html>

²⁷ <http://www.waronwant.org/?lid=12721>

²⁸ http://ngo-monitor.org/article/war_on_want_wages_war_on_israel_update

²⁹ http://www.defenddemocracy.org/publications/publications_show.htm?doc_id=231602

³⁰ <http://www.waronwant.org/Development+Assistance+and+the+Occupied+Palestinian+Territories+2006+13123.twl>

³¹ <http://www.waronwant.org/Palestine+Campaign+10004.twl>

³² <http://www.waronwant.org/?lid=4207>

³³ <http://www.waronwant.org/Christmas+Cards+13367.twl>

³⁴ <http://www.waronwant.org/Christmas+Cards+-+Mary+and+Joseph+13386.twl>

persecuting Palestinian Christians, diverting attention from the ongoing oppression of Christians under the PA.³⁵

•32. War on Want's political activities have led to investigations from the UK's Charity Commission on grounds that their activities did not achieve their stated goals of poverty reduction. In August 2005, the [Charity Commission warned War on Want](#) that its political activities must demonstrate "a reasonable expectation" that they would further its "charitable purposes."³⁶ The [Charity Commission began another investigation](#) into War on Want's political activities in July 2006 responding specifically to [a complaint about the "Profiting from the Occupation" conference](#).³⁷ This [conference featured](#) Reverend Stephen Sizer, patron of UK friends of [Sabeel](#) a major advocate of divestment, Jeff Halper, the Director of the radical NGO [Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions](#), and Mustafa Barghouti, a Palestinian legislator and former presidential candidate.³⁸ [In response to an NGO Monitor inquiry](#) on the investigation's progress, the Commission stated that the "issues are now being considered at a senior level ... to determine what action, if any, it is appropriate for the Commission to take."³⁹

•33. British MP's have also condemned War on Want's campaigns on Israel and have called for investigations into the charity. In August 2007, members of both the Labour and Conservative parties [condemned War on Want's document](#) entitled "a guide for boycott, divestment and sanctions" which suggests that the boycott movement needs to "gain greater popular support" in order "to grow into a truly global movement".⁴⁰

C. Oxfam (GB)

34. In 2005, [Oxfam \(GB\)](#) received a six year contract from DFID for £8.3 million per annum for the first 3 years (funding for the last 3 years of the arrangement will be agreed in due course⁴¹). The [PPA signed between DFID and Oxfam](#) outlines three strategic areas of collaboration: "creating the conditions and opportunities for people living in poverty to achieve a sustainable livelihood; strengthening the voice of poor and marginalized people in decision-making; and supporting young people to become an informed and competent constituency for pro-poor change."⁴² Some of Oxfam's projects in the Palestinian Authority indeed address these strategic areas, including

³⁵ <http://www.jcpa.org/christian-persecution.htm>

³⁶ http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/_warning_to_charity

³⁷ http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/correspondence_between_an_anonymous_individual_and_the_u_k_charity_commission_regarding_war_on_want_from_june_to_july

³⁸ <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull&cid=1150885919939>

³⁹ http://ngo-monitor.org/article/war_on_want_wages_war_on_israel_update

⁴⁰ <http://www.thejc.com/home.aspx?ParentId=m11&SecId=11&AId=54873&ATypeId=1>

⁴¹ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/dfidwork/ppas/oxfam-ppa.asp>

⁴² <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/oxfam-ppa-2005.pdf>

[projects](#) in the sectors of water, sanitation, food security, public health and women's and children's empowerment.⁴³ [Oxfam believes](#) in a "two-state solution" and that "Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories over 40 years should be ended as one essential step towards peace and to alleviate the humanitarian crisis."⁴⁴

35. Despite Oxfam GB's substantive humanitarian projects, the NGO also proffers a highly partisan interpretation of the conflict, bizarrely inverting aggressor and defender in a [February 2008 article](#) that stated, "we must be clear that the plight of the people of Sderot, facing a daily barrage of rockets from Gaza will not end, unless Israel too stops its blockade and military attacks."⁴⁵ Oxfam also partners with NGOs that support BDS and places little emphasis on Palestinian behavior and responsibility.⁴⁶

36. The following are the most recent examples of Oxfam's political campaigning. They are a sample and are by no means comprehensive:

- 37. Oxfam's [President Barbara Stocking](#) distorts both facts and international law. In January 2008, she wrote that Israel was "considering cutting off all supplies to 1.5 million already impoverished people" claiming this would constitute collective punishment.⁴⁷ [Not only has Israel continued to supply Gaza](#)⁴⁸, but as mentioned before, Israel's soft blockade of Gaza [does not constitute collective punishment under international law](#).⁴⁹ Oxfam has also made [false claims](#) that Israel's policy in Gaza threatened the progress of infrastructure projects, despite reports from the World Bank which argue otherwise.⁵⁰
- 38. Oxfam consistently [fails to criticize](#) Palestinian group Islamic Jihad's use of human shields when carrying out attacks against Israel.⁵¹
- 39. Oxfam [partners](#) with the [Palestinian Center for Human Rights](#) (also a CA partner), an NGO that has [depicted terrorism as "resistance"](#) and has supported political, economic, and academic boycotts against Israel.⁵² PCHR has accused Israel of apartheid in its coverage of Israeli policy in Gaza and [referred to the](#)

⁴³ http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/countries/palterr_israel.html#civil_society

⁴⁴ http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/countries/palterr_israel.html#civil_society

⁴⁵ http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/countries/palterr_israel_state_shame.html

⁴⁶ http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/countries/palterr_israel_state_shame.html

⁴⁷ http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/countries/palterr_israel_state_shame.html

⁴⁸ <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/About+the+Ministry/MFA+Spokesman/2008/Supply+of+electricity+to+Gaza+continues+20-Jan-2008.htm>; and <http://www.imra.org.il/story.php3?id=38542>

⁴⁹ http://www.jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DRIT=1&DBID=1&LANGID=1&TMID=111&FID=443&PID=0&IID=2037&TTL=Is_Israel_Bound_by_International_Law_to_Supply_Uilities_Good_s_and_Services_to_Gaza?

⁵⁰ <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/2>

⁵¹ http://www.oxfam.org.uk/applications/blogs/pressoffice/2008/01/oxfam_calls_for_an_end_to_gaza.html

⁵² http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/report_palestinian_center_for_human_rights

[abduction of Gilad Shalit](#) and attack against an IDF outpost at Kerem Shalom as "resistance".⁵³

D. DFID-funded NGOs and Gaza Campaigns

40. Since [October 28, 2007](#), when Israel decided to respond to daily rocket attacks ([in 2008, the average is more than 200 per month](#)⁵⁴) by reducing supplies to Gaza, many UK-funded NGOs have [participated in a campaign](#) to undermine Israel's right to self defense.⁵⁵ On March 6, DFID-funded NGOs including Oxfam, CARE, Save the Children and CAFOD issued a [report](#) criticizing Israel's policy on Gaza.⁵⁶ Replete with factual inaccuracies, and unfounded accusations of violations of international law, this political statement minimizes Israeli security concerns and ignores Palestinian responsibility for the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

41. These DFID-funded NGOs distort international law by ignoring the complex legal arguments, and concluding that Israeli policy both "constitutes a collective punishment against ordinary men, women and children" and is "illegal under international humanitarian law". They also propagate the one-sided argument that Israel is still responsible for Gaza, and "bound by their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law to ensure the welfare of the Palestinian population." As mentioned earlier in this report, this allegation is highly disputed in international law.

42. The report also fails to criticize Hamas' use of human shields in Gaza and ignores the moral distinction between indiscriminate attacks against Israeli civilians and targeted strikes against military infrastructures which result in unintentional civilian casualties. Such failure contributes to an environment where the violent and illegal acts of non-state actors are considered morally equivalent to self-defensive measures taken in response. Given DFID's commitment to [protecting civilian populations](#) in other countries it operates in, this issue should be of great concern.⁵⁷

⁵³ <http://www.pchrgaza.org/files/PressR/English/2006/62-2006.htm>

⁵⁴ <http://washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=2728>

⁵⁵ <http://edition.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/meast/10/28/israel.gaza/index.html>;

<http://washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=2728>

http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/analyzing_the_ngo_campaign_on_gaza_beyond_the_rhetoric

⁵⁶ <http://my.ynet.co.il/pic/news/5.3.08/embargoedGazalowreswithout.pdf>

⁵⁷ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/africa/cotedivoire.asp>

4. Conclusion

43. Despite the substantive efforts that DFID-funded NGOs have made towards reducing poverty in the Palestinian Authority, a number of NGOs engage in explicitly political campaigns that undermine DFID's strategic objectives. DFID must insist on greater scrutiny, transparency and accountability to ensure that its funds are being used exclusively to advance its goals.

44. DFID's goals of "[reduc\[ing\] how much \[a\] country relies on overseas aid](#)," and "[support\[ing\] better Palestinian public institutions](#)" are undermined by the consistent reticence among DFID-funded NGOs to publicly criticize Palestinian behavior, including daily attacks against Israel ([224 rockets, February 27 - March 10, 2008](#))⁵⁸ and use of civilians as human shields. Supporting sustainable Palestinian institutions requires actors in civil society to critique and evaluate the behavior of its citizenry, something the aforementioned DFID-funded NGOs fail to do.

45. DFID-funded NGOs also undermine its commitment towards "[enhanc\[ing\] prospects for peace](#)". Campaigns supporting boycotts, divestments and sanctions, erode trust and are meant to isolate Israel from the community of nations. So too do statements referring to Israel as an "apartheid" state, which represents both a gross misunderstanding and demonization of Israel.

46. DFID-funded NGO's also apply international law in tendentious ways, with the goal of denying Israel the right to defend its sovereign territory from indiscriminate attacks against civilians. Referring to Israeli policy in Gaza as a form of "collective punishment" achieves none of DFID's objectives and [misrepresents](#) (and therefore erodes) the canon of international law.⁵⁹

47. Given this evidence, there is an urgent need for DFID to reconsider its relationship with its NGO recipients, in terms of stricter funding guidelines, accountability, performance indicators, mechanisms to counter the fungibility of funds, and more scrutiny in what type of organizations receive support. In the Middle East, NGOs have the potential to play a useful role responding to humanitarian needs, and promoting the development of the institutions and practices necessary for a Palestinian State. But these development goals cannot be achieved while NGOs continue to focus attacks and blame on outside factors. Until these conditions are created, the NGO community, including governments and other sources of funding, should acknowledge the limitations of their work, and the extent to which funding can be used to pursue highly partisan and political goals that are irrelevant and undermine the goals of the donor government.

⁵⁸ <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism-+Obstacle+to+Peace/Palestinian+terror+since+2000/Missile+fire+from+Gaza+on+Israeli+civilian+targets+Aug+2007.htm>

⁵⁹ http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/false_claims_of_collective_punishment_in_ngo_campaigns_on_gaza