

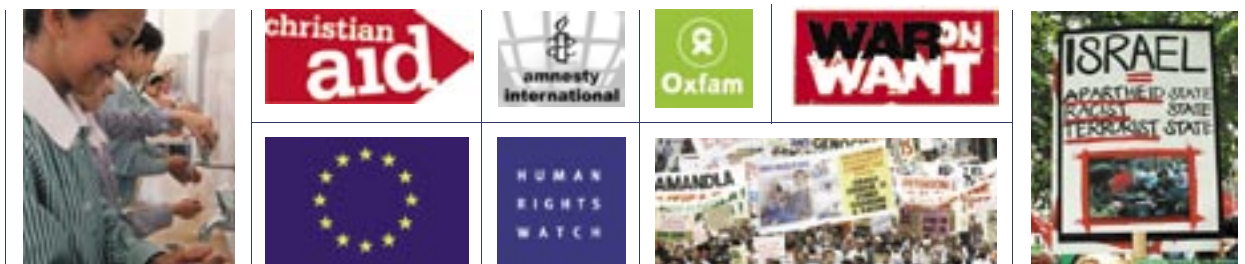
NGO MONITOR

Annual Report

2006

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Promoting Critical Debate and
Accountability of Human rights
NGOs in the Arab Israeli Conflict



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Palestinian children benefit from Oxfam UK's "Turning on the tap" project to bring clean drinking water to West Bank villages

Placard held at "Enough!" rally in London, 9 June 2007. This was attended by many NGOs including Israel Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD), Pax Christi and Christian Peacemaker Teams.



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MISSION STATEMENT

The community of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has become extremely powerful and influential, especially 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 media, academia, the United Nations, and on the policies adopted by many governments. The NGO Forum of the 2001 Durban conference, and the strategy adopted by the participants highlights this power.

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.

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 misrepresent and to fuel conflict. 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 a halo effect that grants immunity from detailed scrutiny or criticism. In other cases, 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 allows 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 policy. NGOs are central in meeting the demand for information on what Prof. Irwin Cotler has called the new secular religion of human rights.

However, as NGO Monitor has documented, in many cases, NGO reports and campaigns stand in sharp contradiction to their claims to uphold universal human rights values. Selective morality, in the form of obscuring or simply erasing context, as well as reporting using unverifiable sources, have contributed to gross distortions of the humanitarian dimension of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The aim of NGO Monitor is to provide information and analysis, and to foster a comprehensive debate on these critical issues.

LETTER FROM PROF. GERALD STEINBERG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NGO Monitor's publications and activities have had a major impact on increasing NGO accountability in 2006. Our research and analyses stimulated debate from government officials, diplomats and academia, to the written and recorded media and blogosphere. Through our monthly digests of NGO developments and weekly comprehensive analyses on new developments and the activities of the influential organizations, we have become the main source for anyone interested to learn more on NGO issues.

In 2006 we published research on Swedish, Finnish, Norwegian and EU government funding for politicized NGOs; and met with officials from these government representative offices to discuss transparency and accountability structures. We also submitted evidence to the UK parliamentary enquiry into British development aid to the Palestinians. NGO Monitor's report was discussed by the committee chairman and used to challenge the Christian Aid representative on his choice of local NGO partners.

We also met with members of the US State Department, to discuss our findings that its "Country report on Israel and the Occupied Territories" relies heavily on NGOs that display anti-Israel bias, publish claims that lack credibility, and ignore the complexities of human rights requirements in the context of conflicts involving terrorism and warfare. NGO Monitor continues to apply pressure on the State department to explain how NGO claims are assessed and included, as the 2007 report is written.

NGO Monitor drove (and continues to push) the critique on Amnesty and Human Rights Watch's extreme bias in the Second Lebanon War, and our research was quoted in the highly visible debate on the pages of the New York Sun, Jerusalem Post, Washington Post and Weekly Standard.

We also re-launched our website and held our [first annual conference in Jerusalem](#). Despite the refusal to participate by a number of NGOs, the program included senior journalists, academics, government officials and NGO representatives. Topics discussed included the Durban Strategy, the "halo effect," human rights and international law, and government funding; and Natan Sharansky gave a stirring keynote address which urged human rights groups to pursue moral clarity and apply a single standard to both dictatorships and democracies.

This annual report is a summary of the wide range of research and reporting that we accomplished in 2006. The first section highlights key developments within the major NGOs, while the second looks at themes and events which involved significant NGO activity during the year.

We would like you thank all our donors for their generous and ongoing support, which enables us to continue to challenge NGO campaigns and distortions of human rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

With an annual budget of [\\$40 million](#), New York City-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) [claims](#) to be “dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world.” However, [NGO Monitor has documented a pervasive bias and evidence of a continuing political agenda](#) in HRW activities relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In 2006, HRW publications on the June 9 Gaza Beach incident, the second Lebanon war, and other events reconfirmed the NGO’s inherent lack of balance.

On June 9, 2006, eight Palestinians were killed on a Gaza beach [in disputed circumstances](#). Though the IDF [concluded](#) on June 12 that Israel was not responsible for the incident, HRW [presented a report contradicting](#) the IDF’s findings, arguing that “the evidence overwhelmingly supports the allegations that the civilians were killed by artillery shells fired by the IDF.” HRW’s initial report was authored by Mark Garlasco, a former “battle damage expert” and author of the infamous 2004 “Razing Rafah” report. After [meeting with IDF Major General Meir Klifi](#) on June 19 to discuss the IDF’s findings, Garlasco stated that HRW could not contradict the findings of the Israeli inquiry. However, the cycle of inconsistency continued when HRW issued [a press release](#) on June 20, claiming that the IDF investigation was “incomplete” and called for an “independent inquiry.” (See page 19 for more on the Gaza beach Incident)

[As documented by NGO Monitor](#), HRW published 24 statements and op-eds during the summer 2006 Lebanon war, most of which focused on allegations against Israel. Due to the highly politicized stances it adopted in publications during and after the war, HRW received an unprecedented amount of criticism. HRW largely ignored Hezbollah’s intentional targeting of civilians, while HRW officials publicly condemned Israel for “disproportionate” and “excessive” force.

In August 2006, HRW published a lengthy report on the Lebanon war entitled “Fatal Strikes,” in which it [“found no cases in which Hezbollah deliberately used civilians as shields to protect them from retaliatory IDF attack.”](#) In response to claims made by HRW and others, the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S.) in Israel, headed by Dr. Reuven Ehrlich, [published a detailed report](#) which documented “Hezbollah’s consistent pattern of intentionally placing its fighters and weapons among civilians” and how Hezbollah was “well aware of the civilian casualties that would ensue” from such activities.

Furthermore, Ken Roth, HRW’s Executive Director, [condemned the US and Israel](#) in February 2007 for demanding more changes to the framework for the new UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), which replaced the discredited UN Commission on Human Rights. Contrary to Roth’s great expectations, UNHRC resolutions have thus far only condemned Israel and have declined to bring attention to human rights situations in Sudan, China, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

With a budget over £100 million, UK-based Amnesty International (AI) [claims to be](#) “independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion...[and] does not support or oppose any government or political system.” However, AI in 2006 continued its biased approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, overwhelmingly condemning Israeli actions in the second Lebanon war and promoting a highly political agenda in its advocacy.

Following the murder of two IDF soldiers and the kidnapping of a third (Gilad Shalit) by Palestinian terrorists on June 25, the IDF entered southern Gaza. While initially condemning the kidnapping in [a June 27 press statement](#), AI denounced Israel's “[targeting of civilian property and infrastructure](#),” and “[measures which disproportionately threaten the lives of the Palestinian civilian population](#)” while failing to call for an end to all Palestinian terrorist activity. On June 30, AI [called](#) Israel's actions “war crimes,” but did not categorize the Shalit kidnapping or the murder of Eliyahu Asheri to be “war crimes.”

After [a number of problematic statements](#) during the Lebanon war, AI published [a lengthy report](#) on August 23, 2006 consisting almost entirely of claims against Israel, reinforcing the perception that [AI's agenda is determined by political factors](#). By artificially separating Hezbollah attacks from Israeli responses, AI's analysis lacked credibility, inverted the priority of core human rights values, and glossed over Hezbollah's missile attacks and use of human shields. Similarly, the authors erased the context, including Syrian and Iranian support and provision of missiles to Hezbollah, while claiming a level of military expertise where none is evident. In addition, AI's conclusions were largely based on unverifiable evidence provided by “eyewitnesses” in Lebanon, who are likely influenced by support for or threats from Hezbollah. As a result, AI's report was internally inconsistent, lacked credibility, and should be seen as a political statement rather than a careful evaluation of human rights issues.

In its [2006 Annual Report](#), AI accused Israel of a long list of violations, including “war crimes,” “crimes against humanity,” “collective punishment,” “unlawful killings,” “impunity for soldiers,” and “other measures that violate international law.” In keeping with AI's routine political attacks against Israel, the report failed to take into account the context of mass terrorism in which Israeli policy is formulated.

It should also be noted that AI joined eleven other NGOs in endorsing an [“International Non-Governmental Organizations \(IANGO\) Accountability Charter”](#) in June 2006. Irene Kahn, Secretary-General of AI, stated that “NGOs are playing an increasingly prominent role in setting the agenda in today's globalized world. This places a clear responsibility on us to act with transparency and accountability.” However, AI's clear bias in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 2006 suggests that the NGO has yet to reach the lofty goals outlined in the IANGO charter

CHRISTIAN AID

While [allegedly aiming to](#) further “charitable purposes, which relieve or combat malnutrition, hunger, disease, sickness or distress throughout the world,” UK-based Christian Aid leads anti-Israel divestment activities and promotes a highly distorted view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Christian Aid’s longstanding bias was demonstrated in September 2006, when then-Christian Aid trustee, Baroness Jenny Tonge (also a member of the U.K.’s House of Lords) [stated at a political conference in September 2006](#) that “the pro-Israel lobby has got its grips on the Western world, its financial grips.” Tonge [previously expressed](#) empathy for Palestinian suicide bombers, stating in January 2004 “if I had to live in that situation - and I say that advisedly - I might just consider becoming one [a suicide bomber] myself.”

On February 6th, 2006, the Church of England Synod voted for “[morally responsible investment](#)” in the “Palestinian occupied territories.” Christian Aid’s Chair, Bishop John Gladwin [had been extremely vocal](#) in promoting and then defending this vote for divestment, which is part of an international campaign to delegitimize Israel. [Christian Aid partner](#) Sabeel, another highly biased NGO, contributes greatly to the divestment effort and is supported by Gladwin.

In tandem with Pax Christi, Christian Aid [helped organize Palestine Solidarity Campaign’s demonstration](#) “against the Israeli occupation of Palestine” in London on May 22. Baroness Tonge and British MP Jeremy Corbyn were among those who addressed the rally of an estimated 20,000 people. A mock-up of the security barrier and a large banner with the words “Stop Starving Palestinians, End Israel’s Occupation and Recognize Palestinian Democracy” was the backdrop for the speakers.

On June 28, Christian Aid published an emotive news report entitled “[Gaza invasion targets civilian infrastructure](#)”, after the June 25 terrorist cross border attack that killed two Israeli soldiers and led to the kidnapping of a third. Erasing the context, Christian Aid condemned Israel’s “military invasion and siege on a civilian population,” making no mention of terrorism (except in a subtitle referring to “militants”) and blaming the “humanitarian crisis” entirely on Israel. This report illustrates Christian’s Aid’s extreme bias and politicization as it ignores ongoing Palestinian violence including rocket attacks on Israeli southern towns, yet demonizes legitimate Israeli self-defense.

SABEEL ECUMENICAL LIBERATION THEOLOGY CENTER

Based in Jerusalem, the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center (Sabeel) was founded in 1989 and is directed by Naim Ateek, former Canon of St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem. Sabeel [continues to promote](#) a one-state solution and is highly active in anti-Israel political campaigns, most prominently in divestment. Reliable funding information is unavailable, but support is apparently provided by church-based groups in North America and Europe, including the [Mennonite Central Committee](#).

Instead of focusing on the [persecution of Palestinian Christians](#) following Hamas' ascent to power in 2006 or calling attention to [the destruction of a YMCA building](#) in Qalqiliya, Sabeel has maintained its efforts to demonize Israel. As such, Sabeel continues to be an important leader in the anti-Israel divestment campaign, despite the Presbyterian Church USA's June 2006 decision to overturn a 2004 anti-Israel divestment resolution [promoted by Sabeel](#). The NGO promoted the divestment motion in the Anglican Church Synod in February 2006 and [Reverend Stephen Sizer, Vice Chair of Friends of Sabeel UK, has withdrawn £140,000 of his Parish's money from the Church of England's Central Board of Finance investment account](#), in protest at its failure to implement the Synod's vote. Sizer, who threatened this action in March 2006, [accused the Church of "profiting from the colonisation of Palestine."](#) Sizer has referred to Israel as an "apartheid regime", is active in promoting the divestment campaign and is a [proponent of replacement theology](#).

In 2006, Sabeel held conferences across the USA including Pittsburgh, Washington D.C., and Kansas City which involved participation and support from the highly politicized NGO, the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD). Additionally, Sabeel was a main organizer of the World Council of Churches' (WCC) March 2006 "[Global Advocacy Week Concerning the Situation in Palestine and Israel](#)." The campaign publicity flyer for this event reflected the extreme political agenda of the conference, which included two pictures of the "Nativity Church under attack", one with an Israeli tank in the foreground and the other with the church partly concealed by smoke. The flyer "appeals to the World's church leaders to pray and act to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinians as a consequence of the extremely harsh measures and policies imposed by the Israeli occupying forces." [A Senior Fatah official has now admitted that the fighting around the Nativity Church in 2002 was [staged by the Palestinian Authority](#)]. Additionally, Sabeel continues as a partner of Christian Aid, which extends its impact and acts as a channel of influence on the UK establishment.

THE PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) claims to “protect human rights and promote the rule of law in accordance with international standards” and to promote “democratic culture within Palestinian society.” While PCHR does an important job of describing intra-Palestinian human rights abuses, the NGO is one-sided in its removal of the context of terror and its disregard of human rights abuses committed against Israeli civilians while supporting [political, economic, and academic boycotts against Israel](#). According to PCHR’s [most recent financial report](#), from 2004, the NGO received funds from Oxfam, Novib (Netherlands), the European Commission, International Commission of Jurists (Sweden), Christian Aid (UK), and others. The Ford Foundation [donated \\$370,000](#) to PCHR in 2005, but did not renew PCHR’s grant for 2006.

PCHR holds Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations and is an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, FIDH, and the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, forums which provide PCHR with international legitimacy and exposure. On May 26-28, 2006 PCHR Director Raji Sourani spoke at a conference in Geneva, organized by the European Coordinating Committee on the Palestinian Issue. Mr. Sourani [used the conference as a platform to denounce Israeli policies of](#) “torture, annexation of Jerusalem, ethnic cleansing, assassinations, house demolitions, and the Annexation Wall as war crimes.”

In 2006 PCHR continued its campaign to prosecute IDF officials for war crimes in foreign national courts, joining international and local lawyers to seek the arrest of former IDF Chief of Staff Moshe Ya’alon during his trip [to New Zealand](#) in November. The New Zealand Attorney General overturned the decision of a district court judge before the arrest could be made, citing [“unreliable materials”](#) submitted by the PCHR team.

PCHR released a [“Special Report”](#) in September 2006 entitled “Six Years of Israeli Aggression on the OPT; IOF [Israeli Occupation Forces] Commit Unprecedented War Crimes against Palestinian Civilians and Property.” It accuses Israel of war crimes, completely fails to mention Palestinian terrorism and calls on the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention “to search for and prosecute those responsible for grave breaches, namely war crimes.”

In a [June 28 press release](#), PCHR refers to the “military operation conducted by the Palestinian resistance” in which Palestinians attacked Kerem Shalom crossing and abducted an Israeli soldier. The press release calls on the international community to pressure Israel to open Gaza crossings, but does not condemn the illegal abductions, call for the soldier’s release, or call for him to be treated humanely as required by the Geneva Convention. PCHR’s biased activities raise questions about the continued funding the NGO receives from European governments and multilateral organizations.

WAR ON WANT

The UK registered charity, War on Want (WoW) [states that it](#) “fights poverty in developing countries in partnership and solidarity with people affected by globalisation.” According to its website, WoW is funded by the [European Union](#) (EU), the UK [Department for International Development](#) (DFID), [Irish Aid](#) (IA), and others. Despite a [number of investigations](#) in the past and a current probe by the UK Charity Commission for its political campaigns, WoW continues to make political use of “Holocaust and anti-Semitic themes,” leads the divestment campaign, and propagates a wholly one-sided view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

One of three cards sold on WoW’s website for its 2006 Christmas card campaign portrays Joseph and a pregnant Mary being searched by Israeli soldiers against the Bethlehem Separation Barrier.

In this image, WoW is explicitly connecting the suffering of Palestinians with that of Jesus. The card further implies that Israel is intentionally persecuting Palestinian Christians, while diverting attention from the ongoing oppression of Christians under the PA. This campaign is yet another example of WoW’s use of Holocaust and anti-Semitic themes in its publications. In the past, the NGO has [accused Israel](#) of “caging” Palestinians into “ghettos”; engaging in an “expulsion project”; and acting like a “heavyweight beating a child.”

WoW [initiated a major campaign](#) in 2006 entitled “Profiting from the Occupation: Corporate complicity in Israel’s crimes against the Palestinian people,” which advocates 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.

In July/August 2006, WoW joined with the Palestine Solidarity Campaign to promote [a letter writing campaign](#) to UK Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett. The letter laments Israel’s “assault” and “collective punishment” of the Palestinians, but ignores the reason for the IDF operation in Gaza – the Palestinian cross-border attack that resulted in the death of 2 Israeli soldiers and the kidnapping of Gilad Shalit. The prominence and resource allocation for this campaign is likely to grow in 2007. In a “2006: year of achievement” report, [WoW states that](#) “[m]uch of [our] work has focused on building coalitions in the UK to make a major push for Palestine next year.”

NGO Monitor’s [January 2007 review of the organization](#) shows that it devotes surprisingly little attention to the world’s worst human rights abusers, Sudan, Libya, and Iran, while singling out Israel in one of only two country-specific WoW campaigns.

THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (FIDH)

The International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) is a Paris-based federation of 141 NGOs from 92 countries with consultative or observer status with several international bodies. In its [mission statement](#), FIDH seeks to “contribute to the respect of all the rights defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.” However, FIDH shows a strong anti-Israel bias by [focusing disproportionate resources](#) on condemning Israel, selectively interpreting international humanitarian law, dismissing the context of terrorism, largely ignoring Israeli victims of terror, and denying Israel’s right to self defense. FIDH receives financial support from several international and national bodies and foundations, but does not disclose the sources of its funding.

In addition to the work it does with EMHRN and other European bodies, FIDH has [seven member organizations](#) in Israel and the Palestinian Authority, including Adalah, B’tselem, Al-Haq, and PCHR. FIDH frequently cites statements made by PCHR, which promotes rhetoric labeling Israel as an “apartheid” state and criticizes Israel for [“torture, annexation of Jerusalem, ethnic cleansing, assassinations, house demolitions, and the Annexation Wall as war crimes.”](#)

The International Justice Program (IJP) is one of FIDH’s central campaigns and serves as a platform for FIDH’s promotion of [“universal jurisdiction”](#) – the ability to try violators of human rights or perpetrators of war crimes in any court in the world. FIDH utilizes terminology such as [“war crimes”](#) and [“crimes against humanity”](#) when describing Israeli military or government actions, so as to seemingly place those actions within the remit of universal jurisdiction. In August 2006, FIDH [encouraged Franco-Lebanese nationals to prosecute Israelis in France](#) for “war crimes of exceptional gravity, knowingly organized by a democratic government.”

FIDH’s reporting on the 2006 Lebanon War further demonstrated its inherent anti-Israel bias. On August 1, 2006, FIDH published a statement [condemning Israel for its actions during the Lebanon War](#). The article acknowledged the “despicable game played by Syria and Iran” and the “indiscriminate attacks” on Israeli cities that “as the argument goes...amount to war crimes,” yet dismissed any justification for Israel’s military response: “Nothing can justify the losses inflicted on the [Lebanese and Palestinian] civilian populations, which are not collateral effects of legitimate actions of war but are instead a deliberate and willful punishment on the collective population, including murder.” FIDH made no mention of Hezbollah’s use of human shields, nor of Israeli victims of human rights violations. [Subsequent reports](#) issued by FIDH on the Lebanon War reflect this unbalanced approach to the conflict and are representative of FIDH’s promotion of a clear political agenda in its advocacy.

EURO-MEDITERRANEAN HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK (EMHRN)

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) is a funding and development arm of the European Union, linked to the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the European Commission Technical Assistance Office to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Though EMHRN is not an NGO, it shares many features of a typical NGO: non-profit and non-affiliated, claiming to serve the public interest with apolitical humanitarian goals.

Despite [a lofty mission statement](#) which aims to “facilitate development of human rights mechanisms” and “disseminate the values of human rights,” EMHRN partners with NGOs whose principles are inconsistent with EU funding criteria and universal human rights principles. The [EMHRN’s Palestinian partners include](#) PCHR, Al-Mezan, Al-Haq, and HRA which repeatedly condemn IDF operations while failing to criticize (or sometimes even mention) the terrorism which necessitates Israeli security measures.

On November 15, 2005, EMHRN [delivered a report](#) on its joint mission to the Gaza Strip with FIDH. EMHRN’s analysis of human rights issues included evidence from PCHR, Al-Mezan, and HRA and contained many omissions and distortions. The report erased Palestinian responsibility for violence and terrorism and attacked the legitimacy of Israeli defensive responses in both Lebanon and Gaza. For example, “general security chaos” in the Gaza Strip is blamed on Israel's unilateral disengagement that left the PA “unprepared,” rather than internal Palestinian corruption and factional rivalry. The report also condemns Israel for “disproportionate” attacks on Gaza and Lebanon during the summer, but offers no criteria for proportionality.

On April 12, 2006, EMHRN issued [a press release](#) which stated that by freezing aid to the Palestinian Authority the international community has displayed “a permanent double reasoning as, at the same time, it tolerates the multiple violations of Human Rights which the Israeli government is guilty of committing.” The statement also urged “the European Union [to] re-establish its financial aid” to the PA, which is a clearly political statement often repeated by [many pro-Palestinian NGOs](#).

EMHRN’s [highly biased approach](#) is best evidenced by an August 7, 2006 statement, in which it alleged that “the Israeli government is submitting Lebanon... to an aggression aimed at systematically destroying its infrastructure. The immense losses inflicted on the civilian population are not collateral effects of the conflict with Hezbollah, but show a deliberate wish to collectively punish a whole people, including arbitrary killing. The indiscriminate targeting and the scale and ferocity of the violence, deliberately planned by the Israeli government, constitute an exceptionally grave violation of the Geneva Conventions.” EMHRN’s activities reflect poorly on the EU and must be addressed before the EU can be considered an impartial actor in the Middle East.

FORD FOUNDATION

Following the 2001 Durban Conference, it was revealed that many Ford Foundation-funded NGOs claiming to engage in apolitical human rights activity were in fact supporting a clear anti-Israel bias. Following harsh criticism of Ford, including a 2003 Congressional investigation, Ford [released new funding guidelines](#) which instructed NGOs to “not promote or engage in violence, terrorism, bigotry, or the destruction of any state, nor will it make sub-grants to any entity that engages in these activities.” Ford [also stated that](#) “this prohibition applied to all of the organization’s funds, not just those provided through a grant from Ford.”

NGO Monitor’s report on Ford’s 2006 grantees could not determine whether Ford still funds the radical NGO recipients from 2005 (PCHR, Al-Haq, Miftah, and Al-Mezan). Ford does not list them in 2005, but would not respond to queries about whether earlier grants were multi-year (these NGOs still listed Ford as a donor in 2006). Identifiable donations were given, however, to politicized organizations such as the Palestinian Human Rights Organization, the Democracy and Workers Rights Center in Palestine, and the New Israel Fund.

In 2006, a member of EMHRN and FIDH, the Palestinian Human Rights Organization (PHRO) [received \\$150,000 in Ford grants](#). While PHRO calls itself “[a non partisan institute](#),” the NGO participated in the 2001 Durban conference and continues to advance the strategy of demonizing Israel adopted there. PHRO [published a report](#) following the 2006 Lebanon war which accused Israel of “disproportionate use of force,” “collective punishment,” and “genocide.”

The Democracy and Workers Rights Center in Palestine (DWRC), a member of the PNGO network and recipient of [\\$200,000](#) from Ford in 2006, claims to advocate for “labor rights in Palestine and the Arab region.” Besides genuine efforts to address issues within the Palestinian legal system and promoting the rights of workers in the Palestinian economy, DWRC [supports international boycott initiatives against Israel](#) and refers to the separation barrier as the “[Apartheid Wall](#).”

Ford continued its five-year, \$20m partnership with the New Israel Fund (NIF) in 2006, which provides NIF with a [peace and social justice fund](#). Through its grant program, the NIF funds many NGOs and individuals that argue for the complete removal of the Jewish elements of Israel. Some go beyond the scope of their mandates in their use of inflammatory language to promote the destruction of Israel, while others are also involved in demonization and promotion of the boycott movement. Examples include the [Mossawa Center](#) which [argues](#) that Israel is “inherently illegitimate” and [calls on](#) Israel to grant Israeli Arabs and their descendents the right to return to the land from which they fled in 1948, and argues for the abolishment of Israel’s Law of Return. This “opposition to the existence of the State of Israel” contradicts Ford’s guidelines.

ISRAEL COMMITTEE AGAINST HOUSE DEMOLITIONS (ICAHD)

[Generously funded by the EU](#), the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD) [claims](#) that its activities center on “resistance and protest actions...; efforts to bring the reality of the Occupation to Israeli society; and mobilizing the international community for a just peace.” Led by Jeff Halper, formerly affiliated with Ben Gurion University, ICAHD promotes a highly politicized international agenda, consistently partners with other extremist NGOs, utilizes the “Durban strategy” of demonizing Israel, and campaigns against the two-state solution.

ICAHD’s close partnerships with other NGOs are indicative of the wide NGO network that works to disseminate a one-sided perspective on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For example, ICAHD worked with politicized NGOs Al-Haq, Al-Mezan, [BADIL](#), and [Ittijah](#) to author a [Joint NGO submission](#) in May 2006 to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN CERD). ICAHD’s [submission to CERD](#) claims to provide “statistics” on the numbers of Palestinian homes demolished in the West Bank. No sources for these statistics are provided, making independent verification of ICAHD’s allegations impossible.

Furthermore, [Sabeel](#), which leads international church divestment campaigns and [uses anti-Semitic imagery](#) to attack Israel, continues to be one of ICAHD’s main collaborators. In 2006, Halper appeared at Sabeel conferences in [Kansas City](#), [Toronto](#), and [Washington D.C.](#), while in early 2007 Halper joined the founder of Sabeel, Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek at a “[public hearing](#)” sponsored by the Council on National Interest.

In its publications and interviews, ICAHD consistently promotes the “[Durban strategy](#)” of demonizing Israel, using terms such as “apartheid” to describe policies of the Israeli government. In a [February 2, 2007 article](#) on Al-Jazeera’s website, Halper is quoted referring to the separation barrier as the “Apartheid Wall” and describes its purpose as being “to continue ethnically cleansing Palestinians and keep those remaining virtual prisoners in restricted cantonized OPT areas.”

In a [November 25, 2006 article](#) on ICAHD’s website, Halper wrote that “the problem in the Middle East is not the Palestinian people, not Hamas, not the Arabs, not Hezbollah or the Iranians or the entire Muslim world. It’s us, the Israelis.” Halper used this article to promote his radical views that erase any Palestinian responsibility for conflict, deny serious existential threats to Israel, ignore key contexts of terrorism and Arab rejectionism, and promote a clearly pro-Palestinian narrative that describes Yasser Arafat as “by far the most congenial and cooperative partner Israel ever had.” Continued EU financial support for ICAHD cannot be justified in light of the NGO’s extremist advocacy and inflammatory rhetoric.

MOSSAWA

Mossawa was established in 1997 to "improve the social, economic and political status of the Arab citizens of Israel, while preserving their national and cultural rights as Palestinians." Donors (according to Mossawa, Dec 2006) include European Commission, New Israel Fund, Moriah Fund, Oxfam UK and Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany. Mossawa is influential in international forums, and has worked with Human Rights Watch, Amnesty, FIDH and Habitat International.

Mossawa claims to promote improved economic and social conditions for Israeli Arabs, but its activities often deepen the rift between Israel's Arabs and Jews. Its main focus is political, and aims to delegitimize on the basis of blanket charges of racism and other pejoratives. It often removes or minimizes the context of terrorism to demonize Israeli security measures; and promotes legal arguments to undermine the State.

This politicized NGO held a conference in November 2006 in which officials presented a paper entitled "The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel." This document called Israel an "ethnocratic state" which "cannot be defined as [] democratic." It claimed that only "Palestinian Arabs are the indigenous people of the country" ignoring Jewish historical ties to Israel and Jewish communal continuity. The document further demanded that the "State has to [officially] recognize that Israel is the homeland for both Palestinians and Jews. The conference proposed an Israeli constitution and called for the eradication of the Israeli flag and national anthem; the right of the Arab minority to have a veto over matters of national import; and the immediate implementation of the "Right of Return." These ideas were developed further by NIF-funded, Israeli-Arab NGO Adalah, in 2007.

Commentators in the media and blogosphere understand these arguments to reflect opposition to the existence of the State of Israel and an analysis in Ha'aretz saw it as a sign of continued conflict within Israel, even after the establishment of a Palestinian state.

EUROPEAN FUNDING FOR NGOS

The European Union and many European governments are sources of funding for a variety of politicized NGOs, including Christian Aid, the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Al Haq, and Caritas. While purporting to support the development of Palestinian civil society or human rights, many European-funded NGOs promote rejectionist anti-Israel positions, in opposition to the donor government's policy.

European Union

The European Union (EU) funds international development, aid for humanitarian disasters and human rights advocacy. It is the largest single donor to the Palestinian Authority (PA), [giving €279 million in 2005 to the PA](#), and is particularly active in supporting Palestinian NGOs. While some recipient NGOs may well be vital and worthwhile, the European Union funds certain politicized NGOs which violate the EU's own guidelines for NGO funding that stipulate "less politicized, more practical activities that will promote communications and understanding." Many of these EU-funded NGOs display a clear political bias, lobby against Israel, and promote Palestinian positions in keeping with the [2001 Durban strategy](#).

Among the NGOs and related frameworks funded by the EU are [EMHRN](#), [MIFTAH](#), the [PCHR](#), [ICAHD](#), [War on Want](#), [the East Jerusalem YMCA](#), [Adalah](#), [the Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture](#), [the Arab Association for Human Rights](#), [HaMoked](#), and [Machsom Watch](#). EU funding for Palestinian NGOs must meet certain guidelines, as specified in the [National Financing Plan 2004 of the West Bank and Gaza](#). This document states that the EU should support "local and international civil society initiatives which promote peace, tolerance, and non-violence," but as NGO Monitor has documented, EU transparency and accountability processes are weak, and many NGOs do not conform to these guidelines.

In May 2006, MEP Paul van Buitenen tabled a number of [questions](#) to the European parliament, requesting information on NGO beneficiaries of EU funds, selection criteria and monitoring procedures. The [answers](#) were incomplete, demonstrating the EU's continued transparency deficit. The document cited "security reasons" and the requests of Palestinian NGOs as justification for non-disclosure, and explained that funding decisions are made by "EC officials in local offices." Van Buitenen [responded](#) to the EU's inadequate answers by pushing for a more specific response on EU funding for PCHR, ICAHD, EMHRN and Miftah; but no further details have been given.

United Kingdom

[The UK Department for International Development \(DFID\)](#) is the “part of the UK Government that manages Britain’s aid to poor countries and works to get rid of extreme poverty.” In the Middle East, DFID claims to reduce Palestinian poverty by encouraging development, but significant funding goes towards politicized NGOs that campaign on external agendas as opposed to internal development, and their status to demonize Israel.

For UK NGOs, direct assistance from DFID mainly takes the form of long-term Partnership Programme Agreements (PPAs), which 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.” DFID has financially significant agreements with a number of British NGOs that operate in the Middle East, including Oxfam ([£20m since 2001](#)), Christian Aid ([£13.6m 2001-2005 and £5m p.a. 2006-2009](#)) and the Oversea Development Institute (ODI) ([£0.8m since 2004](#)). UK funding for Christian Aid is sent from there to radical Palestinian and anti-Israel NGOs, such as Law, Sabeel, the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Adalah, Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, and the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees.

In October 2006 NGO Monitor submitted [evidence](#) to the UK parliament's select committee examining DFID's activities related to Israel and the Palestinians. This document, which highlighted how DFID funds filter through to "radical Palestinian NGOs whose primary goals are to demonize Israel," was [discussed at the committee hearing](#), and the Christian Aid representative present avoided addressing the substance of NGO Monitor's claim. The committee chairman questioned the whole direction of DFID policy based on NGO Monitor's evidence.

Switzerland

[The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation](#) (SDC) is the foreign aid and international development arm of the Swiss federal government, and is part of the foreign ministry. Its operations in the Middle East aim to promote democratization and to “contribute to the development of a pluralist and democratic Palestinian society, to respect for constitutionality and to the creation of public institutions capable of assuming their responsibilities in a future Palestinian state.” However, SDC funds numerous politicized NGOs that contradict SDC goals. The [2005 budget included CHF 28.24m](#) (\$22M), and funding was provided to politicized NGOs such as al Mezan, the Applied Research Institute Jerusalem, Dev.tv, Swisspeace (linked to World Vision, Badil, and PNGO), Medicines Sans Frontieres, and Caritas.

Annual Report 2006

Following the publication of a 2005 NGO Monitor report on SDC activities, NGO Monitor received a response from SDC denying that it funds biased organizations, yet failing to answer any of the specific critiques made by NGO Monitor. In 2006 a number

of Swiss citizens then used NGO Monitor's research as the basis to pressure the Swiss Federal Assembly to examine its funding of NGOs in the Middle East. Though an initiative by 30 MPs to cease funding for Palestinian NGOs was [defeated by a commission of the Swiss Federal Assembly](#), commission members expressed surprise that "funding for Palestine in 2005 ... exceeded SDC funding for each of its 17 priority countries," and pledged to conduct further research. Swiss supporters of the initiative have declared their intent to pursue formal accountability through other channels.

Finland

The Finnish government provides funds to Palestinian NGOs via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Development Cooperation (FDC). Since 2000, Palestinian NGOs have been in the top sixteen recipients of Finnish development funds and have received roughly [€28 million \(\\$34 million\) in bilateral funds from Finland](#). NGOs funded by the Finnish government include the [Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group \(PHRMG\)](#), the [Palestinian Center for Human Rights \(PCHR\)](#), and the [Jerusalem Center for Social and Economic Rights \(JCSEER\)](#).

Sweden

The Swedish International Development Corporation Agency (SIDA) is the Swedish government's primary agency for [global development and cooperation](#). In 2004, [SIDA invested a total of SEK 273 million \(\\$34 million\) in the West Bank and Gaza, SEK 72m \(\\$9.1m\) of which went towards human rights and democratization" programs, SEK 147m \(\\$19m\) towards the social sectors and SEK 42.5m \(\\$5.5m\) towards infrastructure and development](#). SIDA's biased approach to the conflict is reflected in the politicized NGOs it funds, including Al-Haq, the Palestinian Solidarity Association of Sweden (PGS), the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens Rights (PICCR), and ICJ-Sweden. In explaining the [causes of Palestinian poverty](#), SIDA fails to mention the history of the conflict, the terrorism that Israeli security measures seek to prevent, and the widespread corruption within the Palestinian Authority that explains the ineffectiveness of international aid.

LEBANON WAR, AUGUST 2006

During the 2006 Lebanon war, major NGOs claiming to promote human rights, such as Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW), published numerous reports primarily condemning Israeli military actions and making allegations of Israeli “war crimes” and “violations of international law.” The claims were based on “evidence” provided by Lebanese eyewitnesses, whose credibility and links to Hezbollah were not investigated.

NGO commentary on the second Lebanon war was problematic for a number of reasons. For example, NGO claims of “disproportionate force” by Israel included no explanation of what would comprise a proportionate response to Hezbollah’s terror and missile attacks, which caused approximately 500,000 Israeli internally displaced persons and 43 deaths. Additionally, there were minimal references to the role of Iran and Syria in providing missiles and support to Hezbollah and other context related details.

Among the numerous NGOs that published statements on the war, AI and HRW were two of the most active, publishing 27 and 29 statements respectively. Eschewing an objective look at military actions by both sides, NGO observations were tainted by a clear political agenda. On July 31, 2006, *the Guardian* [published an op-ed](#) by HRW Emergencies Director Peter Bouckaert, who wrote “the pattern of Israeli behavior in southern Lebanon suggests a deliberate policy...Israel blames Hezbollah for the massive civilian toll in Lebanon, claiming that they are...fighting from within the civilian population. This is a convenient excuse.” Similarly, [Amnesty International alleged](#) that “[i]n the overwhelming majority of destroyed or damaged buildings it examined, Amnesty International found no evidence to indicate that the buildings were being used by Hezbollah fighters as hide-outs or to store weapons.”

AI’s and HRW’s whitewashing of Hezbollah’s use of civilian shields during the fighting was exposed by an NGO Monitor [report using data from the Intelligence and Terrorism Center](#) at the Israeli Center for Special Studies, which provided extensive documentation and photographic evidence of “Hezbollah’s consistent pattern of intentionally placing its fighters and weapons among civilians,” showing that Hezbollah was “well aware of the civilian casualties that would ensue” from this activity.

Organizations such as the Ford Foundation-funded Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO) also contributed extreme statements. In a [July 24, 2006 open letter to Condoleezza Rice](#), PNGO wrote that “the force being used by the Israeli troops...is inhuman and savage, aiming at exterminating as many people as possible. This brings to our minds the force used by Serbia in Bosnia as well as the crimes against humanity committed in the Second World War.”

GAZA BEACH INCIDENT

On June 9, 2006, eight Palestinian civilians were killed [in disputed circumstances](#) by an explosion on a Gaza beach. Despite the contentious nature of the incident, and while the facts remained unclear, a number of NGOs immediately adopted Palestinian claims holding the Israeli army responsible, and used the opportunity to attack Israel politically.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) issued a press release on the “findings” of Marc Garlasco, a former “battle damage expert,” who held a widely broadcast press conference in Gaza. Garlasco was also the author of HRW’s [“Razing Rafah”](#) report of 2004 which contained many unverifiable and disputed claims. Ignoring [evidence presented by the IDF](#) that concluded that the deaths were not caused by an Israeli shell, HRW claimed that “the evidence overwhelmingly supports the allegations that the civilians were killed by artillery shells fired by the IDF.” Garlasco’s report included unverifiable Palestinian claims as well as testimony and “evidence” brought by the Palestinian police – an organization whose credibility is extremely low. While not questioning the Palestinian police claims, HRW rejected the information provided by the IDF, reflecting HRW’s inherent bias. Similarly, it should be noted that no such investigation was undertaken on the source of more than 3000 rockets launched from Gaza at Israeli towns following disengagement in August 2005.

The political power of HRW and other NGOs (“the halo effect”) is underlined by this episode. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan accused Israel of causing this incident on the basis of media reports, which had repeated claims made by HRW and Palestinian NGOs. [Annan then retracted his accusation](#), stating “I responded to speculations in the press. We need to wait for Israel to publish its final report.”

In a [press release of 12 June](#), the U.S. branch of Amnesty International (AI) accused Israel of responsibility for the incident, alleging that the casualties were caused when “Israeli forces fired several artillery shells at a beach in the North of the Gaza Strip. AI has not updated its position to include evidence that contradicts these allegations. AI’s statement continued by denouncing IDF military practice saying, “many killings of Palestinians in reckless shootings, tank shelling and air strikes by Israeli forces have been unlawful.”

The Palestinian NGO MIFTAH also issued a [press release on 10 June](#) calling on the international community to stop “Israel’s state-terrorism” and stated that the casualties were caused “when an Israeli navy vessel fired 3 shells at them.” This [dubious claim](#) reiterated assertions made in a highly controversial video distributed by Palestinian Authority TV, which [Palestinian Media Watch reported to be falsified](#). According to PMW, the video was constructed from unrelated clips of an Israeli gunboat firing at the Gaza shore earlier in the day and then edited with images of the beach scene.

Al-Mezan, a Palestinian NGO funded by the Ford Foundation and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, released a [press statement on 11 June](#) which called the incident a “savage massacre.” Al Mezan also accused Israel of responsibility for the attack based on evidence gathered by “TV channels [which] reported that shells were fired from a

naval ship located close to Beit Lahia beach.” Al Mezan added that the “incident highlight[s] Israel’s organizing killing of Palestinian civilians.” Similarly, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights based its claims that Israel was responsible for the incident on the falsified video, when it stated in a [press release of 10 June](#) that “the family was hit by artillery fired from an Israeli naval boat.”

The NGO “halo effect” is highlighted by this incident. Relying on falsified evidence in the rush to accuse Israel of responsibility for civilian casualties, claims made by NGOs were quickly reinforced in the media, which then led to condemnations from around the world. This episode highlights the urgent need for greater NGO accountability, particularly regarding the promotion of a highly political agenda in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

NGOS AND HAMAS

Following the victory of Hamas in Palestinian Authority elections on March 29, a number of NGOs criticized decisions made by the U.S., Canada, the European Union, and Israel to suspend aid payments to the Palestinian authority. Despite Hamas' violent rejection of Israel's legitimacy and its failure to dismantle terror groups, Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF), Oxfam, Medecins du Monde (Mdm) and other NGOs have openly called for continued funding.

In an [April 13, 2006 statement](#), MSF said that the suspension of aid and the promise to redirect these funds via the UN and international relief bodies was "unacceptable." MSF emphasized concerns "about the socio-economic future of [the Palestinian] population already sorely tested by years of conflict and occupation." MSF's statement did not acknowledge the security concerns of the Israeli population, and the dangers inherent in funding the Palestinian Authority led by Hamas, which is classified as a terrorist organization by the U.S., EU, and other governments. MSF's statement notably failed to call for an end to Palestinian terrorism and the dismantling of terrorist organizations.

Oxfam International, in [an April 7, 2006 letter to members of the "Quartet" and international donors](#), stated that "aid should be provided...regardless of which party is in power" and that the PA "is a legitimate channel for humanitarian funds." Like MSF, Oxfam also failed to acknowledge the cause of the decisions to halt funding and referred only to the suffering of Palestinian civilians in Gaza. There was no mention of the responsibility of Hamas to end terror, or the link between violence and the Palestinian economic situation. On August 31, 2006 Oxfam held a one-day conference in Stockholm, during which [it called for donor governments to the PA](#) to "lift the current suspension of aid to the Palestinian Authority" and to "press Israel to transfer Palestinian tax revenues that are being held on behalf of the Palestinian government." Additionally, [Oxfam commissioned a poll](#) conducted by the Palestinian Centre for Public Opinion, which concluded that the "financial boycott pushes Palestinians into poverty and essential services to a meltdown." The poll ignored Palestinian corruption, factional in-fighting, and terrorism as causes of Palestinian poverty and neglected to mention that international aid to the Palestinians has actually increased since the election of Hamas.

In [a press release of March 13, 2006](#), Medecins du Monde (Mdm) labeled IDF actions and the cessation of aid "collective punishment" – an inappropriate term used to demonize legitimate Israeli security responses to terror. Mdm called on "all parties to the conflict to respect the life of humanitarian actors and civilian populations" a highly generalized statement that fails to distinguish between terror and response. In similar fashion, three Norwegian NGOs, - Norwegian Church Aid, Norwegian Refugee Council, and Norwegian People's Aid, called on the Norwegian government to reconsider aid cuts to the Palestinian Authority [in a statement of April 10](#). "The Norwegian position should be to support Hamas as the democratic elected government and not impose actions that lead to more instability." Unlike other NGOs, these NGOs stressed that "It is very important that Hamas acknowledge Israel's right to exist, renounced all use of terror and clearly signals a

willing to dialogue and negotiate with the Israeli government [sic].” However, the statement did not consider the implications of the failure to take these steps, and condemned aid cuts as “economic sanctions.” There was also no mention of the need to prevent continued diversion of funds designated for Palestinian humanitarian assistance for use in promoting incitement and terror.