



Al Mezan Center For Human Rights' Ties to the PFLP Terror Group

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NGO Monitor's mission is to provide information and analysis, promote accountability, and support discussion on the reports and activities of NGOs claiming to advance human rights and humanitarian agendas.

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INTRODUCTION

[According to its website](#), "Al Mezan Center for Human Rights is an independent, non-partisan, non-governmental human rights organization based in the Gaza Strip" that "envision[s] a free and sovereign Palestinian society where all women, men and children enjoy the benefits of social justice, human rights, the merit of the rule of law, and good governance, fully and equally."

Al Mezan is highly active in [anti-Israel lawfare campaigns](#) and has [made attempts to secure arrest warrants](#) for Israeli officials for alleged "war crimes." Al Mezan has submitted [numerous documents](#) to the International Criminal Court (ICC) requesting the investigation and prosecution of Israeli officials. During the 2014 Gaza War, Al Mezan provided [UN-OCHA](#) with [casualty statistics](#) that identified combatants and members of terror groups killed during the conflict as "civilians."

Al Mezan does not publish annual income or funding amounts, reflecting a lack of transparency. Prominent donors to Al Mezan include the [European Union, Netherlands, Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Secretariat](#),¹ [Diakonia](#), [American Friends Service Committee](#) (AFSC), and [Medico International](#) ([Germany](#)). (See Appendix I.)

Al-Mezan claims that it seeks to advance human rights. However, its officials and employees include members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Hamas – both designated as terrorist organizations by the US and the EU. Additionally, Al-Mezan officials and board members often speak at PFLP events, and many have posted material on their social media accounts promoting terror groups or utilizing antisemitic imagery and rhetoric.

¹ The Human Rights and International Law Secretariat was a joint mechanism for funding NGOs established by Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands. The Ramallah-based Secretariat was active until 2017 and [funded highly politicized NGOs](#) involved in various anti-Israel activity. The Secretariat [ended its support and funding for NGOs](#) in December 2017 after NGO Monitor and others exposed incitement to violence by grantees and ties to terror organizations.

AFFILIATIONS OF AL-MEZAN BOARD MEMBERS, OFFICIALS, AND EMPLOYEES

Based on reports from Arabic media, as well as statements from Hamas and the PFLP, a number of Al-Mezan board members, officials, and employees appear to have direct affiliations with these terrorist groups.

Nafiz Al-Madhoun, member of the Al Mezan Board²

Madhoun serves as Director General of the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Legislative Council.³

A number of Arabic-language sources have referred to Al-Madhoun as a Hamas leader, or the head of Hamas' parliamentary bloc in Gaza. Palestinian government sources have also noted his co-hosting of a September 2011 event for Gaza security personnel with Hamas spokesman, Sami Abu Zuhri.

Kamal El-Sharafi, Chairman of the Board⁴

El-Sharafi serves, inter alia, as Head of Al Aqsa University's board of trustees and as advisor to the Palestinian president on Human Rights and Civil Society.⁵

- On April 29, 2019, El-Sharafi participated in the memorial service for prominent PFLP figure Ali Darwish. The official PFLP website labels Darwish a "comrade, national leader and historical fighter," who according to the PFLP, had been arrested by Israel and incarcerated 3 times, for a total of 20 years. On February 24, 2019, El-Sharafi paid condolences upon the death of a prominent PFLP figure, Maher Al-Yamani, who helped plan the hijacking of an Israeli plane in Greece in 1968 and served as the asso-



El-Sharafi's meeting with a delegation of representatives from the PFLP's student body, PSLF. (Source: Dr. Kamal El-Sharafi's Facebook profile.)

² According to the Al-Mezan website (see July 2015 and 2020 versions), Al-Madhoun has been a board member since at least July 2015.

³ From at least 2010, according to the Hamas Refugee Committee, until 2020, according to the online magazine, Felesteen Online.

⁴ According to the Al-Mezan website (see July 2015 and 2020 versions), El-Sharafi has been a board member since at least July 2015.

⁵ See El-Sharafi's Facebook profile.

- ciate secretary of PFLP founder George Habash. (See Appendix II.)
- On October 13, 2018, El-Sharafi participated in a memorial service for the PFLP's Rafat Al-Najjar ("Abu Uthman"). The terror group described Najjar as "one of the pioneers who took up arms through his [membership in the first military apparatus of the PFLP](#) in the Gaza Strip, and was one of the first fighters in the front and revolution who lived the experience of detention... and repeated arrests... A role model." Sharafi also wrote a short [obituary](#), "To you the solace and the glory... you will remain an eternal national symbol." (See Appendix II.)
- On September 26, 2018, El-Sharafi met with a delegation of representatives from [the PFLP's student body, PSLF](#).
- On October 1, 2017, as head of Al-Aqsa University, El-Sharafi [hosted a delegation from the PFLP](#) headed by [Jameel Mazhar, head of the PFLP branch in Gaza](#) and a member of its Political Bureau.
- In June 2013, EL-Sharafi met with a member of the PFLP Political Bureau, Jameel Al-Majdalawi, in Cairo and referred to him as "[a comrade](#)." (See Appendix II.)

Jamil Sarhan, [Treasurer](#)⁶

Sarhan also serves as a [lawyer](#) and as [Deputy CEO of the Independent Commission for Human Rights \(ICHR\)](#) in Gaza. He is [part of the Democratic Union of Lawyers and Jurists](#),⁷ which [the PFLP defines as a "PFLP union framework."](#)⁸

- Sarhan regularly shares PFLP posts and press releases on his personal Facebook page. Examples include:
 - On December 9, 2017, Sarhan shared [a post](#) concerning a PFLP rally in Gaza, which said; "first pictures of the PFLP march today, More than 100 thousand participants anger for Jerusalem. The blood is coming from Gaza."
 - On July 2, 2017, Sarhan [shared a post praising a July 1986 PFLP infiltration](#) in which [two Israeli soldiers were killed](#).
- An August 2009 Palestinian Information Center article refers to Sarhan as both the head of the ICHR in Gaza, and as a "[member of the central committee of the PFLP](#)."
- Likewise, a May 11, 2007 Al-Watan article referred to him as "[a member](#)



Sarhan can be seen in the left picture (middle) [as part of a delegation of the PFLP's Democratic Union of Lawyers and Jurists](#). (Source: [Democratic Union of Lawyers and](#)

⁶ Sarhan was a board member since at least June 2015, and as of July 2020 serves as the treasurer, according to the [official Al-Mezan website](#) (see archived versions).

⁷ As of February 7, 2019, according to [a post by the Union's Facebook page in which Sarhan was tagged](#).

⁸ The Union also defines itself this way [on their Facebook page](#).

[of the central committee of the PFLP](#)," noting that he spoke at a PFLP-organized event in Khan Younis.

- Al-Watan similarly reported on [Sarhan's participation in a March 2006 PFLP-organized event](#), labeling him "a comrade" and a "leader in the PFLP."
- A March 2006 Wafa article cited Sarhan as "[one of the leaders of the PFLP](#)" who participated in an event promoting the PFLP's electoral list.⁹

Talal Awkal, [Deputy Head of the Board](#)¹⁰

- In a December 13, 2015 article, Awkal asks, "What can a person who is [proud of his history of struggle in the ranks of the PFLP](#) write, as it enters its forty-ninth year from its inception?" Later in the article, Awkal praises the PFLP's George Habash and Abu Ali Mustafa, naming them "great historical leaders."
- On July 22, 2013, the official [PFLP website published an article by Awkal](#) concerning US Secretary of State John Kerry's diplomatic initiatives.
- A 2010 Al-Jazeera article referred to Awkal as a "[former member of the PFLP](#)."

Samir Zaqt, [Deputy CEO, Director of the Monitoring, Awareness and Documentation Unit](#)¹¹

- On August 4, 2016, Zaqt [spoke at a rally](#) in support of Bilal Kaid, [a PFLP member](#), who was sentenced in 2002 to 14.5 years in prison by Israel for [perpetrating and planning terrorist attacks](#).¹²

Hussein Hammad, [responsible for the North Gaza District, Delegate to the Mobilization and Technical Assistance Unit](#)¹³

- On May 13, 2017, Hammad received an award from a PFLP branch named for Abdullah Mheisan in honor of Hamad receiving his M.A. According to the PFLP website, Abdullah Mheisan, joined "the PFLP at the beginning of the First Intifada and played a fundamental role in the uprising by resisting the occupation in all forms, and participated in many military operations that hurt the enemy, believing that armed struggle

⁹ Al-Mezan claims that this material relates to different individual having the same name and a similar position at ICHR. We have been unable to independently confirm Al Mezan's claim and the NGO did not provide any evidence in order to do so.

¹⁰ Awkal was a board member since at least June 2015, and serves as deputy head of the board as of July 2020, according to the [official Al-Mezan website](#) (see archived versions).

¹¹ Zaqt has been working in the Center since at least December 2010, [according to the Al-Mezan website](#).

¹² Text revised based on [correspondence with the Dutch government](#).

¹³ According to the [official Al-Mezan website](#) (as of July 2020, entry undated). Hammad has been working as a researcher for Al-Mezan since [at least 2011](#).

against the Zionist enemy is the shortest way to achieve victory."¹⁴

¹⁴ Text revised for greater clarity.

AL-MEZAN OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES' SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

In addition to the direct connections between Al-Mezan and its employees with terrorist organizations, several of them have posted material on their social media accounts glorifying terror attacks and groups and utilizing antisemitic rhetoric and imagery. These transgressions alone should disqualify them from enjoying foreign government support and from engaging with the UN, the International Criminal Court (ICC), and other international bodies.

Mohammed Abdullah, Head of the Rafah branch of Al-Mezan¹⁵

According to his [Facebook page](#), Abdullah has worked at Al-Mezan since 2000.

- On November 26, 2019, Abdullah [published](#) a picture of Sami Abu Diak who died of cancer in Israeli prison in 2019, following his conviction for [murdering Israeli civilian Ilya Krivitch](#) in a 2001 shooting attack. Abdullah wrote: "The prisoner Sami Abu Diak became a martyr. He is added to a long list of martyrs from the prisoner movement... #praise_to_the_martyrs." (See Appendix IV for pictures.)
- Abdullah published [a series of posts sympathizing with Bilal Kaid](#) during his [2016 hunger strike](#), calling him a "fighter-prisoner."
- In March of the same year, Abdullah uploaded a [picture](#) sympathizing with Mohammad Al-Aswad, [a PFLP terrorist from the 1970s known as "the Guevara of Gaza"](#). Al-Jazeera described how Al-Aswad "and his group carried out several daring operations during the beginning of the [armed resistance](#)."

Hussein Hammad (see above for his PFLP-awarded prize).

- Hammad has frequently posted his support for terrorist attacks, PFLP terrorists and the PFLP. (See Appendix III for additional images.)
- On October 17, 2016, Hammad shared [an anti-Semitic video](#) of an interview from Egyptian TV, where the speaker says: "We should tell them [the new generations] how America became a game in the hands of global Zionism... we should teach them... the truth told by Christian Congressman Herbert Spencer: ...The Jews in our country control everything... all that is left is to change the name of New York to Jew York... Benjamin Franklin said: The undoing of America will be at the hand of the Jews."

¹⁵ From March 2013, [according to the Al-Mezan website](#). As of July 5, 2020, he was still [employed by Al-Mezan](#).

- In July and August 2016, Hammad [uploaded a series of posts sympathizing with Bilal Kaid](#).
- At the same time, Hammad posted [a series](#) of [pictures](#) of PFLP secretary General, [Ahmad Saadat](#).
- On July 1, 2016, Hammad posted a picture celebrating the murder of Israeli civilian Michael Mark and the wounding of members of his family in a July 1, 2016 shooting attack.
- On May 13, 2016, Hammad posted a picture of the word "Palestine" in Arabic, with one of the letters made up of a [rifle](#), alongside the writing: "The resistance continues."
- On April 10, 2016, Hammad [posted a picture of the PFLP logo](#) with PFLP terrorist Ibrahim Al-Ra'i, named by the official PFLP website a "legendary leader and comrade," who was arrested by Israel several times for his activities in the Front.
- In December 2015, Hammad [posted a series](#) of photos [identifying](#) with the [PFLP](#).
- On October 22, 2015, Hammad posted an antisemitic caricature of a Jew looking behind his back in fear of a stabbing attack.



Hammad's post, celebrating the July 1, 2016 Palestinian terror attack, which led to the death of [Rabbi Michael Mark](#). Caption reads: "The Palestinians celebrate a shooting attack on settlers and the killing of one of them," with the hashtags: #road60, #fast_response, #glory_to_the_perpetrator." (Source: ...)

- On October 22, 2015, Hammad posted an antisemitic caricature of a Jew looking behind his back in fear of a stabbing attack. Hammad added: "When the settler looks behind his back on all the streets... When the occupying power encourages its residents to acquire weapons... when an occupier intentionally kills another occupier for suspicion... It means that we are on the right track. The uprising has begun and will not stop... Glory to the martyrs."

- On October 14, 2015, Hammad posted a photo of PFLP terrorist, Alaa' Abu Jamal, who carried out a deadly terrorist ramming and stabbing attack in Jerusalem on October 13, 2015, [murdering one and injuring two others](#).



Anti-semitic and terror-inciting caricature posted by Hammad. (Source: Hammad's [Facebook profile](#).)

The text accompanying the picture reads: "The Abu Ali Mustafa brigades mourn the comrade, the hero Shahid, Alaa' Abu Jamal.

Wa'el Mohammad Ahmad, [accountant](#)¹⁶

On December 11, 2018, Ahmad posted [a picture of himself with a PFLP flag](#), adding: "The revolution is strong as steel... red as embers... steadfast as an oak... deep as our brutal love for the nation" - Che Guevara. Happy anniversary to my brothers and comrades, long live our resistance and we will remain in the pledge of the martyrs."

- On November 11, 2018, Ahmad posted a picture of a Palestinian fighter with a rifle alongside the caption: "We wish for resistance. [We wish for bombing](#) of the bombers. We wish for the kidnapping of soldiers. This is Gaza, pride. Your calls for resistance, O God, support them, O God protect them and O God, have mercy on the martyrs."
- On April 13, 2018, Ahmad posted a series of pictures of him participating in what seems to be the weekly violent riots at the Israeli border known as the "marches of return," alongside the caption: "[The right will be returned by the sword and machine gun.](#)"
- On February 15, 2018, Ahmad uploaded a cartoon, alongside the caption: "The strife against the enemy, [in all its forms](#), is a legitimate right."



(Source: Ahmad's [Facebook profile](#) [since deleted])

On October 17, 2017, when the PFLP commemorated its 2001 assassination of Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi, Ahmed posted a picture of a man wrapped in a PFLP flag with the caption: "The poor are wrapped in their homeland and do not know the meaning of submission. [On October 17 the muffler resonated \(a common PFLP term alluding to the murder of Ze'evi\)](#). I salute the resistance. Good morning, brothers, and comrades, a morning of pride and dignity."

AL-MEZAN EVENTS FEATURING TERRORIST ORGANIZATION PARTICIPATION

- On April 6, 2015, Al-Mezan organized a conference on the International Criminal Court (ICC), featuring [speakers from terrorist groups](#) including senior Hamas official [Khalil Al-Hayya](#) and Islamic Jihad political bureau member Khaled Al-Batash.
 - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) logo was prominently featured at the conference. A number of NGO officials, including Al-Haq's Shawan Jabarin, Adalah's Hassan Jabareen and representatives of PFLP-linked groups such as Al-Dameer and Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) participated. (See Appendix I.)

¹⁶ Since at least August 2015, [according to the Al-Mezan website](#), and as of July 2020 according to the [official Al-Mezan website staff list](#).

- On January 30, 2020, Al-Mezan CEO Issam Younis¹⁷ led a meeting hosted by the [Independent Commission for Human Rights \(ICHR\)](#)¹⁸ concerning Palestinian reconciliation, which saw participation of representatives from [several terror groups](#), such as senior Hamas official and spokesman of the Hamas government, Taher Al-Nunu, and then-leader of the PFLP in Gaza, Rabah Muhanna.
- On November 21, 2013, Al-Mezan organized the "Transitional Justice in Palestine" conference, featuring [Hamas Legislative Council member Yahya Al-Abadseh, Islamic Jihad official Khaled Al-Batash, and PFLP Central Committee member Kayed Al-Ghoul](#). Representatives from NGOs, including Mohsen Abu Ramadan from the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO), Roland Friedrich from the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, Jameel Sarhan from the Independent Committee on Human Rights (ICHR), and Raji Sourani of the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) joined as well.

¹⁷ Younis has been serving as the CEO of the center since at least December 22, 2010, [according to the Al-Mezan website](#). As of January 22, 2020, [according to a report from the PNGO website](#), he is still in this position.

¹⁸ Younis serves as Commissioner-General of ICHR. He also served as a [board member of Al-Azhar University](#) in Gaza for 10 years (2008-2018).

APPENDIX I: FUNDING TO AL MEZAN (2014-2020)

Donor	Amount	Year (s)
European Union	<u>€449,997</u>	2017-2020
Netherlands	<u>€202,055</u>	2018-2019
Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Secretariat	<u>\$641,700</u>	2014-2017
Save the Children Norway	<u>NOK 1,165,269</u>	2018
	<u>NOK 1,333,455</u>	2017
	<u>NOK 1,233,900</u>	2016
Medico International	<u>N/A</u>	2017

Diakonia	<u>N/A</u>	2015-2017
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)	<u>N/A</u>	2016
UN-OCHA	<u>\$244,756</u>	2019
Medical Aid for Palestinians	<u>\$10,000</u>	2019

APPENDIX II

Al-Mezan conference on the ICC featuring speakers from Hamas and Islamic Jihad



(Source: [Al Mezan website](#).)

APPENDIX III

Head of Al-Mezan's board, Kamal El-Sharafi, with PFLP delegations and members:



In this picture, El-Sharafi can be seen against the background of Darwish's picture and the PFLP logo. (Source: El-Sharafi's [Facebook profile](#).)



In the picture posted on his Facebook page, Sharafi can be seen on the background of the PFLP logo and pictures of Najjar and PFLP secretary general, Ahmad Saadat (first on the right). Sharafi added on his Facebook page: "This man gave his life in defense of his people and country and the justice of his cause." (Source: El-Sharafi's [Facebook profile](#).)



El-Sharafi with member of the PFLP Political Bureau, Jameel Al-Majdalawi in Cairo,

referring to him as "[a comrade](#)." (Source: El-Sharahi's [Facebook profile](#).)

APPENDIX IV

Al-Mezan employee, Hasan Hammad's PFLP award and PFLP-supporting Facebook posts



A picture of the award Hammad received from PFLP's "Shaheed Abdullah Mheisan Organization." (May 13, 2017) (Source: Hammad's [Facebook profile](#).)



One example of the [series](#) of [pictures](#) of PFLP secretary General, Ahmad Saadat on Hammad's Facebook page. (July 31, 2016) (Source: Hammad's [Facebook profile](#).)



Examples of the many photos [identifying](#) with the [PFLP](#), [posted](#) as a [series](#) by Hammad.

(December 13, 2015) (Source: Hammad's [Facebook profile](#).)



Picture glorifying PFLP terrorist, Alaa' Abu Jamal, uploaded on Hammad's Facebook page. (October 14, 2015) (Source: Hammad's [Facebook profile](#).)

APPENDIX V

Al-Mezan employee Mohammed Abdullah terror-sympathizing Facebook posts



A poster uploaded by head of the Rafah branch of Al-Mezan, Mohammad Abdullah. The poster features Sami Abu Diak who died of cancer in Israeli prison in 2019, following his conviction for [murdering Israeli civilian, Ilya Krivitch](#) in a 2001 shooting attack. Abdullah added: "the prisoner Sami Abu Diak became a martyr. He is added to a long list of martyrs from the prisoner movement... #praise_to_the_martyrs." (Source: Abdullah's [Facebook profile](#).)



A poster sympathizing with Mohammad Al-Aswad, [a PFLP terrorist from the 1970s known](#)

[as "the Guevara of Gaza,"](#) uploaded by A