



Lack of Due Diligence and Transparency in European Union Funding for Radical NGOs

EIDHR and PfP Grants for “Coalition of Women for Peace”

Report to the European Parliament
June 2013

NGO Monitor is a Jerusalem based research institution, providing information and analysis, promoting transparency, and supporting discussion on the reports and activities of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) claiming to advance human rights and humanitarian agendas.

June 3, 2013

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Summary

- The European Commission transfers hundreds of millions of Euros annually to political advocacy organizations globally through frameworks such as EIDHR, PFP, AIDCO, the Anna Lindh Foundation, and others. In many cases, particularly in the Middle East, this European Union funding is allocated in non-transparent processes to organizations whose activities are entirely inconsistent with the stated objectives.
- In previous reports, NGO Monitor analyzed EIDHR (European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights) and PFP (Partnership for Peace) funding processes related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the **lack of transparency** and the stark **contrast between the declared objectives, as stated by the EC, and the agendas and expertise of recipient organizations (see Appendix C)**. Many of the grantees are involved in promoting the Durban strategy of political warfare and demonization of Israel.
- This report examines one case in detail – **the EIDHR and PFP grants (total €602,798 for 2011-2014) to the Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP)** and partners. CWP is a **leader in the campaigns to demonize Israel, including boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) via the “Who Profits” website**, and sponsoring “Nakba Day” activities that repeat Palestinian narratives. EC policy opposes BDS and other forms of demonization as counter-productive to peace efforts. In 2011, due to CWP’s radical activities, the US-based New Israel Fund (NIF) ended funding of CWP.
- CWP’s radical nature includes participation of officials in events in which they carried **flags of the PFLP terrorist organization**, and giving prominence to its BDS activities on its website. (See Appendix C for photographs and screenshots.)
- **Dalit Baum**, co-founder of Who Profits, is well known for her involvement in public events around the world that target Israel through highly biased and radical rhetoric.
- CWP’s partners in the PFP grant include the Palestinian Popular Struggle Coordination Committee (PSCC) and Nova, a radical Spanish political NGO.

- The overlapping grants from the EC to CWP and its partners are ostensibly to empower women’s peace movements and support non-violence in the Arab-Israeli conflict. **No evidence exists of these groups’ expertise, experience, and capacity to achieve the objectives stated in the EHIDR and PfP grants. On the contrary, the available evidence suggests that the funds will be used to promote the hatred and demonization that fuel the conflict.**
- Therefore, many questions arise regarding the EC’s decision-making, due diligence, and potential conflicts of interest among officials involved. The evidence suggests that EC officials involved in approving these grants either lacked the competence and expertise to assess the NGO applicants or chose to ignore the available information.
- However, as in similar grants for political advocacy NGOs, the EC has refused to release significant documentation that would allow for analysis of this funding. Multiple requests, documented in Appendix A, were met with minimal responses, vaguely citing “public security” as justification. While the EC argues that grants are for projects and not for the organizations, this claim is artificial and unsupported by the evidence.
- **These responses prevent critical debate, violate the EC Freedom of Information policy, and highlight the intense effort to prevent investigation of this potentially irresponsible and unaccountable EC activity.**

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Introduction

Previous reports by NGO Monitor analyzed EU funding for political advocacy groups active in the Arab-Israeli conflict, including through the frameworks of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Anna Lindh Foundation. (See Appendix B) Many of the NGOs funded by the EU were shown to promote agendas that are highly inconsistent with declared policy objectives; instead of supporting peace and democratic development, their activities increase the conflict. **Furthermore, the EU funding frameworks failed to undertake independent evaluations, instead relying on self-reporting by the NGO recipients, in violation of the norms of good governance. As a result, EU officials may not know what is actually being done with this funding.**

In addition, as demonstrated in detailed examinations of the available documentation, the decision making process in these EC frameworks is highly secretive and also violates due diligence requirements for public funding processes. The EU funding frameworks do not have a requirement for independent evaluations of the activities of these NGOs, and when there are evaluations, these documents are not made public. Requests for the relevant documents were repeatedly denied by the EC, on the grounds of dangers to “public security,” which, as detailed by NGO Monitor, lacked a substantive foundation.

In this report, NGO Monitor examines two examples of such misdirected and unsupervised EC funding for an organization known as the Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP) – one in the EIDHR framework (“[Empowering Women, Building Peace](#)” €247,668) and the other under PfP (“[Addressing fear: strengthening the nonviolent alternative](#),” €355,130). This detailed analysis demonstrates the fundamental contradiction between the objectives of this funding, as stated by the EC, and the political activities of the NGOs chosen to implement the project goals. The EC justification claiming that the funding is limited to specific projects, with no relationship to wider NGO activities and objectives, is demonstrated to be misleading and inconsistent with the evidence. The activities of many grantees promote the [Durban strategy of political warfare](#), including participating in BDS campaigns, facilitating violent protests, and demonstrating solidarity with terrorist organizations. In addition, the impact of the secrecy in the EC’s decision making processes in these two examples is presented for Parliamentary examination.

Description of EC grants for Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP)

In the EU's [effort](#) to “reduce poverty in the world, to ensure sustainable development and to promote democracy peace and security,” funding frameworks such as EIDHR (European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights) and PfP (Partnership for Peace) are major channels through which non-governmental organizations receive grants to help implement EU foreign policy.

EIDHR was formed with the [mission](#) of helping “civil society to become an effective force for political reform and defence of human rights.” Its annual budget in 2010 was €144 million, distributed to over 250 organizations and projects in dozens of countries – by any standard, this is a huge EU funding mechanism for “civil society” groups. The EU's PfP framework is not global, but rather is focused on Arab-Israeli issues and “is [designed](#) to support civil society initiatives that promote peace, tolerance and non-violence.” According to the EU delegation head in Israel, in the 12-year period of 1999 to 2011, 158 grants were given to Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, and European organizations, involving a [budget of €61 million](#). (In most years, EIDHR fails to publish a detailed list of grants, but in 2009, when this information was made available, half of EIDHR's Middle East budget went to promote human rights in Israel and the West Bank, with no grants related to Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and other chronic violators.)

Among the many NGO recipients of these grants, the CWP is currently a recipient of both EIDHR and PfP funding, involving a combined total of €602,798. (Overlapping grants from both agencies for a single NGO is quite common among these EC frameworks.) In 2011, CWP received EIDHR funding under a [project](#) entitled: “Empowering Women, Building Peace.” According to the description, this grant is intended to “contribute to the realization of social, civil and political rights of women in Israel, in accordance with international commitments made by the state of Israel.” EIDHR funding covers 70% of the total costs, which amounts to €247,668 over the course of three years.

In 2013, CWP also received a PfP grant for a [project](#) entitled “Addressing fear: strengthening the nonviolent alternative,” which is aimed at “increasing human security of communities directly affected by the conflict in the West Bank, though (sic) the creation of a Conflict Early Warning System (CEWERS) network of 13 communities able to ensure respect for rights of individuals and communities.” Other grant recipients include the Palestinian Popular Struggle Coordination Committee (PSCC), Nova –

Centre for Social Initiative (Spain), and Al Quds University. This activity was awarded €355,130 under PfP, which is 71% of the total budget.

Analysis of CWP's Activities, Agenda, and Expertise

While the EIDHR and PfP project descriptions use the language of human rights, peace, and democracy, the activities and agendas of the grantees stand in sharp contrast to these principles and to declared EU foreign policy. As shown in detail below, CWP actively promotes anti-Israel incitement, BDS (boycott, divestment, and sanctions) campaigns and demonstrates solidarity with terrorist organizations. In addition, none of the groups has a record of activities that demonstrate competence in the areas covered by the EIDHR and PfP grants. Either the EC officials involved in approving these grants were ignorant of this record, or they deliberately and inexplicably chose to ignore it.

Background:

- Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP) was founded in 2000 and [describes itself](#) as a “feminist organization against the occupation of Palestine and for a just peace.”
- The NGO [states](#) that it is committed towards “ending the occupation and creating a more just society, while enhancing women’s inclusion and participation in the public discourse.”
- CWP is a leader of the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) campaign, particularly via the **Who Profits** framework, and is involved in many aspects of anti-Israel demonization, including lawfare, apartheid rhetoric, etc.

Activities:

- “[Who Profits](#)” – CWP’s flagship BDS campaign. The website serves as an “online database and information centre” initiated “in response to the Palestinian call for boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) on Israel,” and “a [key asset](#) to the global movement of economic activism and BDS.” A number of boycott examples, such as the security company G4S, are attributed to this campaign.
- In addition to **Who Profits**, CWP repeatedly [endorses](#) anti-Israel boycotts and calls on activists to target corporations such as [Carmel Agrexco](#) and [Ahava cosmetics](#), while promoting university divestment campaigns at UC Berkeley and UC San Diego.

- The CWP Facebook page [features](#) pictures of CWP officials holding a PFLP flag during a rally in Bil'in (the site of often violent clashes between Palestinians and Israelis) in 2012 (Appendix C). The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is a terrorist organization, as recognized by the EU, and is responsible for numerous attacks against civilians.
- In May 2013, as part of CWP's "Nakba Day activities" (on which Palestinian commemorate the "catastrophe" of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948), CWP launched its four-day "[Bulldozer Campaign](#)," linked to BDS, targeting corporations. Through social media, CWP focuses on each company's activity related to "the demolition of homes and lives in communities across Palestine." This campaign is also promoted by CWP's partner – [Kairos Canada](#).
- CWP regularly uses "apartheid rhetoric" from the [2001 Durban strategy of political warfare](#) to attack Israel. For instance, CWP [refers](#) to the security barrier as "The Apartheid Wall;" CWP participated in Israeli Apartheid Week 2011, organizing an event in Jaffa called "[Life and Struggle in Apartheid](#)."
- Representatives from CWP participated in a May 12, 2010 anti-Israel divestment rally in Brussels. The event featured an antisemitic episode, when one rally leader drank fake blood out of a wine glass – an apparent reference to the libel of Jews drinking Christian blood as wine – to highlight Israel's alleged brutality. (Photos of the blood drinking at the rally are [here](#).)
- CWP is also directly involved in [anti-Israel lawfare](#) efforts. In December 2009, CWP sent a letter under the heading "[Enable prosecution of Israeli War Criminals](#)" on behalf of 99 "feminist peace organizations" to the British Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary calling for arrest warrants against "Israeli officials responsible for war crimes against the Palestinian people."
- CWP promotes anti-Israel propaganda in the UN and International forums. In 2010, the group sent a [petition](#) to the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression falsely alleging "growing political persecution in Israel and specific cases of violations of freedom of expression on human rights NGOs, peace activists, academics, and Arab Members of Knesset," and urging him to "investigate these matters and communicate your concerns to the government of Israel and to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights."
- CWP is also involved with the "[Free Gaza Movement](#)." Following the violent confrontation with the Israeli Navy (May 2010), CWP stated that it "[stands in](#)

[solidarity](#) with the people of Palestine and with heroic members of the Gaza Freedom Flotilla.”

- CWP’s “[Stop the Siege of Gaza](#)” project [aims](#) to insure that “Israel immediately removes the siege of Gaza, without delay or conditions, that Israel recognize Hamas as the elected government in Gaza and negotiate the release of prisoners... investigate the war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza and prosecute those responsible.”
- “[FORA](#)” is “an organizing [sic] of Russian-speaking activists within the Coalition of Women for Peace.” FORA “exposes the Russian-speaking community to feminist viewpoints and to critical position on militarism and the occupation, human rights and civil right.”
- In 2011, the New Israel Fund (NIF), an organization that [aims](#) to advance “democracy and equality for all Israelis,” announced that it would stop its funding of CWP.
- On March 16, 2013, CWP held the “52% Women’s day [event](#) 2013” in Tel Aviv, **as part of the EU EIDHR grant** “Empowering Women, Building Peace” intended to “contribute to the realization of social, civil and political rights of **women in Israel.**” Approximately 50 people participated. (By holding this on a Saturday, CWP excluded observant Jewish women from participating.)

Dalit Baum:

- A central figure in CWP; co-founder of CWP’s flagship BDS campaign “Who Profits” and formerly served as the campaign’s project manager. According to [Baum’s profile](#), “She has been active with various groups in the Israeli anti-occupation and democratization movement, including Black Laundry, Boycott from Within, Zochrot, Anarchists against the Wall and Women in Black.” As shown in detail below, Baum lobbies international audiences on how best to promote the global BDS campaign against Israel.
 - Main Speaker at 2013 Los Angeles [event](#) “From Protest to Resistance: How the US Solidarity Movement can make a Difference.”
 - In 2012, at a [conference](#) titled “The Time is Now: Divesting from the Israeli Occupation.”
 - 10th Annual National Organizers’ [conference](#) of *End the Occupation*, (2011) speaking on “Crafting and sharpening effective BDS campaigns: Changing the discourse and Isolating Apartheid Israel.” In 2011 Baum also spoke at the [Israeli Apartheid Week in New York in 2011](#) on “framework for examining corporate

accountability for the occupation, and offer some of the latest results of Who Profits' 4-year research effort underlying many of the campaigns around the world.”

- In 2010, Baum “testified” in the [Russell Tribunal \(RT on Palestine\) in London](#) – a propaganda forum that uses a legal façade.

CWP Funding:

- In 2011, CWP [reported](#) grants of NIS 643,406 from the European Commission, which is 27% of CWP’s total reported income, making the EU CWP’s largest funder in 2011. EIDHR [provided](#) CWP with € 247,668 from 2011 to 2013. For 2013, CWP will be [granted](#) an unknown part of €355,130 under the European Union’s PFP program. Two other major funders of CWP are the Dutch organizations ICCO (Interchurch Organization for Development and Cooperation) and Oxfam Novib. Combined, the EU, ICCO, and Oxfam Novib comprise 72% of CWP’s total reported income of 2011. (Appendix D)

CWP’s Partner in the PFP Grant: Nova – Centre per a la Innovació Social (Center for Social initiative)

Background:

- Nova is based in Spain (Catalonia) and was founded in 1999.
- It [claims](#) to promote transparency (accountability); non-violence for social change; alternative economic systems and democracy.
- Nova coordinated the Barcelona session of the intensely anti-Israel propaganda framework known as the “[Russell Tribunal on Palestine](#),” and criticizes the Spanish government for supporting Israel. (See below)

Funding:

- Nova, as contractor in partnership with CWP, PSCC, and Al Quds University, has been [granted](#) €355,130 through the PFP (Partnership for Peace) program.
- According to NOVA’s 2009 annual report (the latest available) [funders](#) of Nova in 2009 included the Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation, the Council of Barcelona, the Spanish Agency for Development Cooperation (AECID), and the Province of Barcelona. AECID continued to fund NOVA in [2010](#) and [2011](#). The Autonomous Community of Catalonia [funded](#) NOVA from 2010 up to 2012.

Activities:

- In 2009 NOVA and a number of other Spanish organizations published a [report](#) on “apartheid” in Israel. The report concludes: “At this stage, and as a result of the analysis, we can affirm that the discrimination inflicted on the Palestinian people by Israel constitutes a crime of apartheid. This case has special characteristics that distinguish it from the South African case, but nevertheless, it remains in accordance with the Convention on Apartheid.” (p. 68)
- In 2010, Nova [organized the first session of the Russell Tribunal on Palestine](#), held in Barcelona from March 1-3, 2010. Topics included “the settlements and the plundering of natural resources,” “the annexation of East Jerusalem,” “the construction of the Wall in Occupied Palestinian Territory,” and “the blockade of Gaza and operation Cast lead.”
- NOVA [supported](#) the “[Rumbo a Gaza](#)” initiative, which attempted to break the Israeli blockade of Gaza in 2011.
- In 2009, NOVA published an 84-page report titled “[Spain-Israel: Military, Armaments and Security Relations](#),” which attempts to “answer the question of how Spain contributes to violence in one of the most battered regions of the World.” The report has a forward written by Jeff Halper, director of the political NGO calling itself the “Israel Committee Against House Demolitions” (ICAHD), which has also received EU funding under [EIDHR](#).

CWP’s Partner in the PFP Grant: Popular Struggle Coordination Committee (PSCC)

Background:

- The Palestinian-based Popular Struggle Coordination Committee’s declared [objective](#) is to “encourage and strengthen the grassroots Palestinian resistance and accommodate its needs.”
- According to its [mission statement](#), “popular committees present a unique form of community based organizing and resistance in the tradition of the first Palestinian Intifada.”
- PSCC [calls for resistance](#) to the Israeli occupation through “marches, strikes, demonstrations, direct actions and legal campaigns,” as well as boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) campaigns. Moreover, PSCC has been a facilitator for protests that have turned violent (see below).

Activities:

- While PSCC has been granted money in order to strengthen “the non-violent alternative,” it has organized protests that have turned violent. Footage of PSCC protests in [Hebron](#), [Kfer Qaddum](#), [Nilin](#), [Nabi Saleh](#) and [Beituniya](#) shows protestors hurling rocks, throwing sharp objects, trying to destroy the security barrier, and arson. (Appendix E)
- PSCC uses apartheid rhetoric when referring to Israel. Its website refers to the anti-terror separation barrier as the “[Apartheid Wall](#)” and to highway 443 as the [Apartheid Road](#).
- Through its website, PSCC regularly [promotes](#) Palestinian BDS campaigns and activities.
- PSCC helped organize the [demonstrations in the E1 area](#) that took place in January 2013.

Funding:

- In partnership with CWP, NOVA, and Al Quds University, the Popular Struggle Coordination Committee has been [granted](#) €355,130 through the PfP (Partnership for Peace) program.
- Due to non-transparency, further information on funding for PSCC could not be found.

Requests and Responses for EC documentation regarding these grants

In order to understand the EU’s decision to fund these political advocacy NGOs, NGO Monitor requested documents relating to the funding of CWP under EIDHR and PfP. The response from the EC consisted of four marginal and redacted documents that provide no insight into the decision-making process and highlight the lack of transparency (Appendix A). While minutes of meetings were requested in order to understand the underlying premises of the selection, the institutions responsible were unwilling to reveal these documents.

Written assessments regarding the relevance, quality, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the projects have been completely redacted. Additionally, the scores and grading from the evaluation sheets have been concealed, making it impossible to understand the quantitative assessment of the projects.

This lack of transparency suggests that either the commission is unable to provide further information because it does not monitor, document, and appropriately evaluate the projects being funded, or this institution wants to conceal its motives for funding CWP and similar organizations.

Evaluation and Recommendation

Through frameworks such as EIDHR and PfP, the EU provides millions of Euros in taxpayer funds for political advocacy NGOs active in the Arab- Israeli conflict. However, as in the case of Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP) and many additional examples, this funding is often counter-productive, and grants intended to promote peace, human rights, and democracy are provided to organizations whose political agendas are in sharp contrast to the declared objectives of the EU frameworks. Furthermore, by not providing transparency, the EU has prevented any independent oversight or evaluation of these highly problematic policies and budget expenditures.

In order to end the abuses such as the case of CWP, the EC should:

- Implement transparency principles in order to provide full access to EU documents related to such funding of political advocacy NGOs.
- Implement a system of independent professional evaluation for all grant recipients, including the organization's full agenda and objectives, in order to ensure that grantees share the values and goals specified in allocating the funds.
- Replace reliance on rhetoric in applications for evaluation with informed and independent assessment of the applicant's capabilities and prior activities. In this case, the grants to CWP for work in promoting peace and non-violence stood in clear contrast to the organization's agenda and activities.
- Create an independent ombudsman office in EIDHR, PfP, and other EC funding frameworks for NGOs to ensure that evaluations are based on professional competence and free from conflicts of interests.
- Coordinate evaluations and grants among different EU funding frameworks to avoid situations in which a single organization obtains two grants in parallel.
- Ensure that all monitoring reports are available for independent evaluation to allow taxpayers and stakeholders to understand the use of government funds, and ensure that they are used for the purposes intended.