

# French-Funded NGOs: The Radicalization of Human Rights

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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

The banner of human rights provides non-governmental organizations (NGOs) around the world with a halo of credibility and impartiality, enhancing their access to funding and to decision making processes. Unfortunately, many NGOs routinely exploit the rhetoric of universal human rights and international law to promote narrow ideological and political campaigns.

Several government-funded NGOs involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict go further, using the façade of human rights and international law to blur the lines between "peaceful" and "nonviolent" campaigns, on one hand, and violent "resistance" including attacks against civilians, on the other. Some of these organizations also have ties to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) – a designated terrorist organization by the EU, US, and Israel. The term "resistance" is used by Palestinians to refer to armed groups that carry out attacks against Israel – including the PFLP, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad – and is used in this way by many of the NGOs discussed in this report.

By exploiting the language of human rights and by working together in a tight network, these groups are able to amplify their claims, garner undue exposure, and gain legitimacy for their radical ideologies. Their messages, which are in blatant defiance of their funders' policies, resonate in a global context of rising populism and increasing extremism that rewards fearmongering, incitement, and misleading rhetoric.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The examples that will be presented in this report are symptomatic of an overall lack of accountability and scrutiny in government funding to NGOs, in particular those that are politically active in the Arab-Israeli conflict. This results in financial backing for groups that legitimize violence, in sharp contradiction to French government commitments to facilitating a negotiated two-state framework.

In order to address this issue effectively and reduce such funding, NGO Monitor recommends:

- The establishment of inter-parliamentary working groups with Members of Knesset and French parliamentarians in order to enhance oversight and develop mutually agreed upon funding guidelines. An inter-parliamentary forum will enable pragmatic, constructive dialogue and provide a platform for the discussion of specific cases of direct and indirect funding, information exchange, and consultation with experts (research institutes, academics, journalists, etc.).
- 2) Increased coordination and information sharing among Israeli government branches, so as to identify cases of misplaced funding to Palestinian, Israeli, and French NGOs, and to address these issues with the relevant parties.
- 3) Increased coordination and transfer of information on NGO funding between Israeli security apparatuses and their French counterparts.
- 4) Regular engagement in a respectful, informed dialogue with the French government on funding to civil society via diplomatic channels.



## FRENCH FUNDED NGOS WITH TIES TO TERROR

From 2013-2016, the French regions Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and PACA provided €89,167 and €35,000 respectively for a project implemented by the Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente (MAN) and the Center for Freedom and Justice. The Palestinian NGO Center for Freedom and Justice's leader Mousa Abu Maria describes himself as a "non-violent peace activist." Abu Maria was convicted in 1999 for his involvement in the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine (PIJ), a terrorist organization recognized as such by the US, EU, and Israel. <sup>3</sup>

 According to the Israeli Military Court of Justice, Abu Maria is "a leading member of the Islamic Jihad organization...He deals with various aspects of the organization's activity, and is involved in both the organizational-financial aspects of support for terrorist infrastructure, as well as communicating with terror operatives from outside of the area." (Translation of Israeli Supreme Court verdict 6404/08).







Source:

https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10152727260968845&set=pcb.10152727261088845&type=3&theater. A state of the contraction of the contractio

From 2012-2014, France provided the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) with €301,176.<sup>4</sup> UAWC is identified by Fatah as an official PFLP "affiliate," and by USAID as the "agricultural arm" of the PFLP.<sup>5</sup>

In 2015, MAEI provided Al-Haq with €27,842.<sup>6</sup> Al-Haq is a leader of anti-Israel "lawfare" and BDS (boycott, divestment, and sanctions) campaigns. Al-Haq General Director Shawan Jabarin, who is also the vice president of the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), was convicted in 1985 for recruiting members for the PFLP.<sup>7</sup>

In 2007, the Israeli Supreme Court rejected Jabarin's appeal to go abroad stating that
"the petitioner is a senior activist in the PFLP terror group....the current petitioner is
apparently acting as a manner of Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde, acting some of the time
as the CEO of a human rights organization, and at other times as an activist in a terror
organization which has not shied away from murder and attempted murder, which have



nothing to do with rights..."8



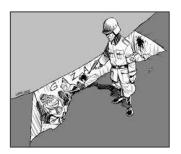
The General Consul of France in Jerusalem meets Al-Haq staff members (April 16, 2018) Source: https://jerusalem.consulfrance.org/Rencontre-du-consul-general-avec-l-ONG-al-Haq-16-avril-201

In 2011, the Consulate General of France in Jerusalem (CGF) granted the Union of Palestinian Women Committees (UPWC) with €15,000. According to the Institute for Palestine Studies, UPWC is politically affiliated with the PFLP. In 2017, UPWC declared that normalization with Israel is treason. In

# FRENCH FUNDED NGOS THAT PROMOTE VIOLENCE AND ANTISEMITISM

The French Agency for Development (AFD) supports French organizations that disseminate blatant anti-Israeli rhetoric and that are active in prohibited discriminatory boycott campaigns against Israel (according to the Court of Cassation). Senior staff members of these organizations also express sympathy for convicted terrorists.<sup>11</sup>

Since 2012, AFD provided €623,117 and €764,664 to the French NGO Secours populaire français for two projects in partnership with the Palestinian NGO Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS).<sup>12</sup> In 2015, PMRS' "independent news website" published violent and antisemitic imagery. PMRS is also active in BDS campaigns against Israel.<sup>13</sup>







Source: https://www.dropbox.com/s/2xqsmhcv7v1jc73/Factbook%202015.pdf



- In September 2017, AFD granted the Association France Palestine Solidarité (AFPS) €153,500 (first of two installments) for an agriculture project in Area C.<sup>14</sup>
  - AFPS is a prominent BDS actor in France, and coauthored BDS reports against Orange (Partner) and French banks.<sup>15</sup>
  - Legitimizes the use of armed struggle within Palestinian popular resistance.<sup>16</sup>



Source: http://www.france-palestine.org/Tee-shirts-BDS-2015

① www.france-palestine.org/-Les-projets-de-I-AFPS-en-Palestine

# Les projets de l'AFPS en Palestine

L'un des axes de la solidarité de notre association avec le peuple palestinien est le soutien à des projets concrets en Palestine occupée et dans les camps de réfugiés au Liban. Notre objectif est toujours politique. Permettre aux Palestiniens de rester sur leur terre occupée, soutenir les familles dans les camps, c'est appuyer leur résistance. Pour cela nous cherchons à développer des partenariats avec des collectivités locales, notamment par le réseau de coopération décentralisée.

O www.france-palestine.org/IMG/pdf/ro\_adopte\_congres\_2017.pdf

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#### 3.2.2.3 Pour le soutien aux Palestiniens en lutte pour la défense de leurs droits

Notre action de soutien à la résistance populaire palestinienne contre l'occupation israélienne doit prendre en compte le caractère très multiforme de cette résistance : mobilisation des villages contre le Mur et les colonies, opposition aux destructions de maisons et au nettoyage ethnique, résistance populaire non violente, attaques contre les soldats de l'occupation...

i www.france-palestine.org/Debat-Retour-sur-Gaza-25554

Les intervenants plaident pour une sortie du Hamas de l'étiquette "terroriste". Rappel est fait des exigences du congrès de l'AFPS de 2013 : l'Union européenne doit rayer Hamas et FPLP de sa liste des organisations terroristes.

- Demands that the EU remove Hamas and the PFLP from its list of terrorist organizations.<sup>17</sup>
- o In 2016 and 2014, transferred funds to the Palestinian NGOs UAWC and Union of Health Work Committees, both of which are PFLP "affiliates" (see above). 18
- AFPS claims that the objective of all projects in the West Bank "is always political," and there is no indication that this NGO possesses expertise in the field of agriculture.
- The honorary and former President of AFPS refers to the mastermind of the 2001 Sbarro massacre as a "Palestinian resistor" and accuses Israel of using "poisoned gas" against Palestinians.<sup>20</sup> He also regularly expresses sympathy to terrorists, such as George Habash (the founder of PFLP), Abu Ali Mustapha (former PFLP Secretary General), and Abu Jihad (co-founder of Fatah).<sup>21</sup>



Follow



"Georges Habache, founder of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), passed away nine years ago on January 26, 2008. My respects to this outstanding activist of the Palestinian cause."



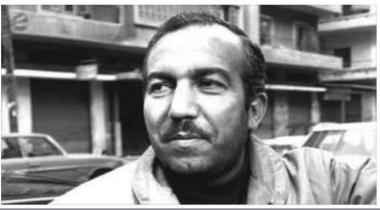
"My respects Abu Ali Mustapha.
Sixteen years ago, Abu Ali Mustapha, the
Secretary General of the Popular Front for
the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), one of
the largest organizations of the Palestine
Liberation Organization (PLO), was assassinated by the Israeli occupation army that
fired a missile directly at its office in
Ramallah."



#### ABU JIHAD, UN GRAND HOMME

Il y a 30 ans, Abou Jihad (de son vrai nom Khalil al-Wazir), l'une de ses figures historiques du mouvement national palestinien a été assassiné à Tunis par un commando israélien. Il était l'un des instigateurs et organisateurs de la première Intifada.

Depuis Tel-Aviv, c'est le Premier ministre israélien de l'époque, Itzhak Shamir, qui avait supervisé le déroulement des opérations en temps réel, minute par minute. Cette volonté criminelle des dirigeants israéliens est d'ailleurs toujours d'actualité.



"ABU JIHAD, A GREAT MAN

Thirty years ago, Abu Jihad (his real name Khalil al-Wazir), one of his historical figures of the Palestinian national movement was assassinated in Tunis by an Israeli commando. He was one of the instigators and organizers of the first Intifada.

From Tel Aviv, Itzhak Shamir, Israel's prime minister at the time, oversaw the workflow in real time, minute by minute. This criminal will of Israeli leaders is still relevant today."

- In June 2017, AFD renewed its support (€270,000) to the Platform of the French NGOs to Palestine (PFP), a platform composed of 40 NGOs, many of which support BDS. PFP acts as a coordinator for these groups and lobbies French institutions and elected officials.\*XIII AFD affirms that PFP "provides the elements of analysis, political and legal, necessary for a good understanding of the situation."XXIIII PFP:
  - Coordinates the "Made in Illegality" campaign in France, which calls upon France to end its economic relations with Israeli settlements.
  - Supports the call for the suspension of the European Union-Israel Association Agreement.
  - AFD and the regional council of Paris provide project funding for a propagandalike "game" that aims for players to "experience the life of Palestinians." The game omits the context of violence and terror.





Source: <a href="https://plateforme-palestine.org/Evenement-de-lancement-Vivre-la-Palestine-le-22-novembre">https://plateforme-palestine.org/Evenement-de-lancement-Vivre-la-Palestine-le-22-novembre</a>

"Shots of Soldiers, move back a space on the game board For you it will remain a game, for the Palestinian it is reality"

- O Disseminates one-sided information about the conflict based on pro-BDS NGOs including BADIL and Who Profits.\*\*
- o PFP partners with the Palestinian NGOs Network (PNGO), a platform composed of 132 Palestinian NGOs that prohibits its members to sign funding agreements, which include anti-terrorism clauses.\*\*
- o PFP's partners Al-Hag, Addameer, and DCI-P have links to PFLP.
- o PFP president and senior AFPS staff member, Claude Léosic, frequently expresses sympathy to terrorists, supports violence, and promotes antisemitism.



#### Selected screenshots from the President of PFP's Facebook account:



Source:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?sto-

ry\_fbid=564557717041355&id=100004 613955959

"Sa'adat, Barghouti and Kuntar, 3 resisters against the Zionist policy...But the legitimate resistance against occupation and oppression will continue as long as the Israeli colonial policy will last."



#### Source

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\_fbid=958723827624740&id=100004613955959

"The soldiers of the occupation army target deliberately Palestinian children. They shot to kill." Dominique Vidal שיתפה את הפוסט של Claude Léostic



Vous savez, la cinquième colonne, les infiltrés etc. et ben, même plus, c'est carrément l'état dans l'Etat, le Mac Carthysme sioniste affiché. Quelle honte que M. Macron se couche ainsi devant les diktats d'une officine qui travaille obstinément à défendre la politique criminelle d'un pays étranger.

Source:https://www.facebook.com/permal ink.php?story\_fbid=837280623102395&id=100004613955959

"You know, the fifth column [Crif], the infiltrators etc. and well, even more, it's downright a state in the state, the Zionist McCarthyism displayed. What a shame that Mr. Macron lies down in front of the diktats of a back room that stubbornly works to defend the criminal policy of a foreign country."



#### Source:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?sto ry\_fbid=927819014048555&id=100004613 955959



• Since 2011, CGF has funded the Burj Luq-Luq Social Center. According to Palestinian Media Watch (PMW), an NGO that reports on incitement, "[in 2012] the Burj Luq-Luq Social Center Society organization performed a puppet show for children in East Jerusalem to promote non-smoking. The educational message delivered by the puppets instructed children to replace cigarettes with machine guns." The play further states that "I wanted to stand before the audience and sing to Jerusalem, which is being kept from us. Jerusalem, whose youth are being killed by the Jews, to sing and to say: Jerusalem, we are coming, Jerusalem, the time of death has arrived. Jerusalem, we will not surrender to the enemies or be humiliated" (emphasis added). \*\*XXVIIII\*



Source: Palestinian Media Watch, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbaO1yICFeY&feature=youtu.be

# FRENCH GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION OF THE MISUSE OF ITS FUNDING

The French government recognized the phenomenon of problematic funding, when in 2018, it pulled its funding to the radical Jewish French Union for Peace (UJFP).

In October 2017, it became publicly known that UJFP was receiving funding from the French government for a project to combat racism. Abusing its government funds, UJFP published a book demonizing Israel and making false accusations against Israel and France. It also produced video clips that compare Zionism to Nazism and alleged that Zionism is antisemitic.

Parliamentarians, Jewish organizations, and journalists were alerted to this troubling misuse of taxpayer funds. Parliamentarians submitted parliamentary questions and inquiries on this matter, and the issue was published in the well-known French magazine *Causeur*. xxix

In February, the French government asked that its logo be removed from the UJFP website, halted the grant, and demanded the return of already disbursed funding.<sup>xxx</sup>



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