

Video Evidence Highlights Links between Palestinian NGOs and 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

As detailed in NGO Monitor research, numerous Palestinian NGOs have substantial ties to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) – designated as a terrorist organization by the [EU](#), [US](#), [Canada](#), and [Israel](#). In some instances, the NGOs were founded by the PFLP itself; in others, PFLP members serve as staff, on the boards, and in key decision making and financial roles. Ignoring these clear links, European governments and foundations continue to fund and cooperate with these NGOs, as officials deny the significance of the links with the PFLP and assert that the ties have long since lapsed.

A video uncovered by NGO Monitor researchers captures the breadth and ongoing relevance of the PFLP's NGO network. The video shows NGO officials, including those who were subsequently arrested and indicted for orchestrating a deadly terror attack, attending a PFLP event.

On May 14, 2019, the PFLP organized a [memorial](#) in Ramallah. The hall was decorated with PFLP paraphernalia. The focus centered on PFLP [political bureau](#) member Rabah Muhanna, who, according to information posted by the PFLP, "[contributed to the establishment](#)" of several PFLP-affiliated NGOs, including the [Union of Health Work Committees](#) (UHCW), the [Union of Agricultural Work Committees](#) (UAWC), and [Addameer](#).

This video, when added to the existing evidence of links between the NGOs and the PFLP, reinforces the clear and urgent need for a detailed, independent investigation of European government funding to these organizations.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Nine individual representatives from at least seven NGOs that receive European government funding attended this PFLP event. (See Appendices for details on funding from the EU and individual European countries.)
- At least four current and former NGO officials who attended the event were subsequently indicted on charges of being members of a PFLP terror cell. Some are currently standing trial for their direct involvement in the August 2019 murder of a 17-year-old Israeli girl.
- Four of the NGOs whose officials have been identified in the [video clip](#) are members of the [Palestinian NGO Network](#) (PNGO), an umbrella group of 142 NGOs based in the West Bank and Gaza. NGO Monitor research shows that PNGO and a number of its officials have ties to the PFLP (see NGO Monitor's report "[PNGO's Ties to Palestinian Terror Groups](#)").
 - PNGO often represents its members in negotiations with the EU and other funding frameworks. According to media reports, during a December 2019 meeting with EU officials, PNGO officials "[refused to sign an EU grant request](#) which stipulates among its criteria that beneficiaries must refuse to transfer any EU aid given to terrorist groups or entities...The organizations in question steadfastly decline to do so, claiming Palestinian terrorist groups are merely 'political parties.'" (See NGO Monitor's report "[In a first, EU to investigate if funding went to terror linked](#)

NGOs”).

PALESTINIAN NGO OFFICIALS IDENTIFIED AT THE PFLP EVENT

Shatah Odeh

Chair of the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO) Board of Directors and “General Director” of Health Work Committees (HWC) – two PFLP-linked NGOs (see NGO Monitor’s reports “Health Work Committees’ Ties to the PFLP Terror Group” and “PNGO’s Ties to Palestinian Terror Groups”).



Shatah Odeh sitting in front of the PFLP banner detailing the identity of the “martyrs.” Source:

<https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (17:00)

Shawan Jabarin

Director General of Al-Haq, Secretary General of FIDH, and member of the advisory board of Human Rights Watch’s MENA division.

- In 2007, the Israeli High Court referred to Jabarin as a “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” (NGO Monitor’s unofficial translation of the ruling by the Israeli High Court of Justice – June 20, 2007).



Shawan Jabarin standing. Source:

<https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (2:47)

Mustafa Barghouti

President of Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS).

- Barghouti was interviewed during the event and declared, “**We mourn the loss of all the shahids [martyrs] that our people have lost, and that the fighter PFLP has lost.** Comrade Muhanna was a brother and a dear friend, we were colleagues in struggle...he lived a life of a hero struggler. We are sure he left a mark on the political and national struggle. We share this mourning with our dear comrades in the PFLP... these shahids are the shahids of all the national movement in its entirety” (5:37, emphasis added, translation from Arabic by NGO Monitor).



Mustafa Barghouti interviewed. Source:

<https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (5:39)

Khitam Saafin

President of Union of Palestinian Women's Committees (UPWC), a PFLP-affiliated NGO (see NGO Monitor's report "The Union of Palestinian Women Committees Society's Ties to the PFLP Terror Group").

- In July 2017, Saafin was arrested by Israeli security forces. In a July 2017 statement, the PFLP confirmed the arrest of "a number of leaders and activists of the Front, led by the Palestinian Legislative Council member Khalida Jarrar, feminist activist **Khitam Saafin** and former prisoner Ihab Massoud, as well as a number of activists in al-Khalil" (emphasis added).
- The PFLP refers to Saafin as a "comrade."



Khitam Saafin sitting on the right.

Source: <https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (9'05")

Gebril Muhamad

Senior researcher at Bisan Center for Research and Development (Bisan), an organization with reported ties to the PFLP. (See NGO Monitor research)¹



Gebril Muhamad interviewed

Source: <https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (5'27")

Sami Khader

According to the NGO, he is "MA'AN's Director General and one of the founders of the MA'AN Development Center since its establishment in January 1989."²



Sami Khader walking with a red shirt. Source: <https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (3:29)

¹ A dissertation by Sbeih Sbeih (Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines) on Palestinian NGOs claims that "some [NGOs], because of their link to PFLP, opposed the Oslo Accords. Such was the case of Bisan." Additionally, **Ubai Aboudi** has served as Bisan's Executive Director since April 2019. He was arrested by Israeli authorities on November 13, 2019. In an indictment of another alleged PFLP leader, Aboudi is referenced as being a PFLP member who was told to recruit more members to the organization. According to the PFLP-tied NGO Samidoun, on June 2, Aboudi was sentenced to 12-months in prison. **Itiraf Hajaj (Rimawi)** served as Bisan's Executive Director in 2017, while it was receiving funding from the EU. He was arrested by Israeli forces on September, 23, 2019. A Shabak statement refers to Rimawi as responsible for PFLP clandestine operations. According to the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music, another recipient of a 2017 EC funding (€500,000),¹ Rimawi serves as the director of the organization's Ramallah office.

² In 2018, Ma'an Development Center employee Ahmad Abdallah Aladini was killed in the violence on the Gaza border. According to the PFLP, Aladini was a "comrade" and a "member of the leadership of the PFLP in Deir al-Balah."

PALESTINIAN NGO OFFICIALS WHO WERE SUBSEQUENTLY ARRESTED AND INDICTED

Several NGO officials who were arrested in 2019 by Israeli security forces and indicted on charges of being part of a PFLP-terror cell also attended the memorial event (see NGO Monitor's report "[Current and Former NGO Employees Arrested as Part of PFLP-Terror Cell](#)"). These include:

Samer Arbid

Accountant and previously "[financial officer](#)" of the PFLP-affiliated NGO the [Union of Agricultural Work Committees](#) (UAWC) (see NGO Monitor's report "[Union of Agricultural Work Committees Ties to the PFLP Terror Group](#)").

- Samer Arbid is on trial for [commanding a PFLP terror cell that carried out the August 23, 2019 bombing attack](#), murdering a 17-year-old Israeli girl and injuring her father and brother. According to the indictment against him (on file), Arbid prepared and detonated the explosive device.



Samer Arbid sitting on the left. Source: <https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (7:23)

Walid Hanatsheh (Abu Ras)

HWC's [finance and administration manager](#) and also listed as a PNGO [board member](#) on behalf of HWC.

- Hanatsheh is on trial for allegedly being the leader of PFLP "[military](#)" operations and commanding the PFLP terror cell that carried out the August 2019 bombing attack. According to the indictment against him, Hanatsheh [bankrolled the bombing](#).

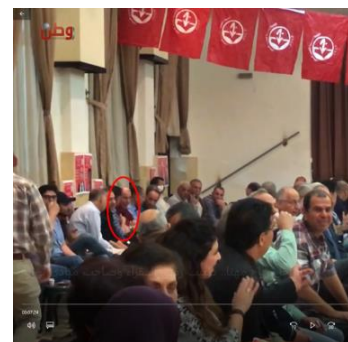


Walid Hanatsheh (Abu Ras) sitting on the left. Source: <https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (1:10)

Abdel Razeq Farraj

UAWC "[Finance and Administration Director](#)."

- According to his indictment (on file), Razeq Farraj held a senior PFLP post and authorized the August 2019 bombing. He is currently standing trial.



Abdel Razeq Farraj sitting on the left Source: <https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (7:24)

Khalida Jarrar

Former Vice President of the PFLP “[affiliate](#)” NGO [Addameer](#) (see NGO Monitor’s report “[Addameer’s Ties to the PFLP Terrorist Group](#)”)

- According to her indictment, she headed the PFLP in the West Bank since

June 2016.



Khalida Jarrar sitting on the right. Source: <https://www.wattan.net/ar/video/282626.html> (2:47)

APPENDIX 1: GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO MA'AN DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Government	Funder	Amount	Year(s)	Comment
European Union	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)	€345,000	2017-2018	
Belgium	Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD)	€986,954	2017-2021	Via Solidarité Socialiste
Canada	Government of Canada	\$2 million (CAD)	2019	
		\$1,525,431 (CAD)	2018	
France	AFD	€320,000	2016-2019 ³	Via Association France Palestine Solidarité (AFPS)
Denmark	DanChurchAid	DKK 3,075,193	2017-2018	
Germany	GIZ	N/A	2018-2021	
Italy	Government of Italy	\$862,076	2018	Via Save the Children; In partnership with two additional Palestinian NGOs
		\$136,612	2018	Via United Nations
		\$9,290	2017	Mine Action Service
Japan	Government of Japan	\$1.4 million	2016-2018	Via United Nations Mine Action Service

³ According to AFPS, the project was [extended to 2020](#).

Norway	Government of Norway	NOK 5 million	2017-2019	
		NOK 3 million	2020-2023	Via mine action in Palestine
UK	Government of UK	\$131,505	2018	Via United Nations Mine Action Service
Spain	Government of Spain	\$330,761		
Australia		\$3,729,229	2016	
UN OCHA	occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund	\$325,006	2020	Coronavirus disease Outbreak - COVID -19
UN OCHA	occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund	\$231,505	2020	
UN OCHA	occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund	\$433,821	2019	
UN OCHA	occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund	\$432,755	2019	
UN OCHA	occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund	\$491,528	2019	
UN OCHA	occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund	\$282,532	2018	

APPENDIX 2: GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO HWC

Government	Funder	Amount	Year(s)	Comment
European Union	European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI)	<u>€699,236</u>	2017-2019	Implemented by 5 Palestinian NGO partners
Belgium	Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD)	<u>€955,976</u>	2017-2021	Via Viva Salud; Implemented by at least one more Palestinian partner
Sweden	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	<u>\$3.7 million</u>	2017-2020	
	Individuell Människohjälp	<u>SEK 743,948</u>	2017	
		<u>SEK 883,179</u>	2016	
Spain	Basque Agency for Development Cooperation (AVCD)	<u>€800,764</u>	2015-2018	Via Mundubat; Implemented by 5 Palestinian NGO partners as part of the Kanan project
	Municipality of San Sebastián	<u>€11,630</u>	2018	Via SODEPAZ
	Municipality of	<u>€7,750</u>	2017	Via Al Quds

	Málaga	€13,420	2016	Association Via Al Quds Association
UN OCHA	occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund	\$305,054	2020	
		\$109,756	2017	

APPENDIX 3: GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO PNGO

Government	Funder	Amount	Year(s)	Comment
European Union	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and ENI	€261,914	2017-2020	Implemented by 2 Palestinian NGO partners
European Union	EIDHR	€446,482	2016-2019	Implemented by PNGO and Al-Dameer
European Union	Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)	€1.2 million	2017-unknown	Implemented by 4 Palestinian NGO partners
Norway	Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)	NOK 52.5 million	2016-2019	Implemented by 11 Palestinian NGO partners
Germany	German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ)	N/A	2011-2016	Project title: "Strengthening Civil Society in the Palestinian Territories."

APPENDIX 4: GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO UAWC

Government	Funder	Amount	Year(s)	Comment
Netherlands	Representative Office in Ramallah	\$11.3 million	2017-2021	
Spain	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)	€400,000	2019-2021	
Norway	Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)	NOK 52.5 million	2016-2019	Implemented by 11 Palestinian NGO partners
European Union ⁴	European Solidarity Corps	€15,378	2020-2022	Implemented by 2 NGOs
		€19,168	2019-2021	Implemented by 2 NGOs
	European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)	€3 million	2015-2017	
Belgium	Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD)	€286,002	2017-2018	Via Oxfam Solidarité
Germany	Medico International	N/A	2018	
	MFA	N/A	2018	
Italy	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)	€994,415	2018-2020	Via Organizzazione Per Lo Sviluppo Globale Di Comunita' In Paesi Extraeuropei

⁴ In 2011-2017, the EU provided €18.3 million to projects involving UAWC. For more details, read NGO Monitor's blog post "[NGO-Terror Links Case Study: EU Funding to UAWC in 2011-2017](#)"

				Onlus (Overseas); Implemented by 3 Palestinian NGO partners
		€847,701	2018-2021	Via Associazione Di Cooperazione E Solidarieta (ACS); Implemented by 3 Palestinian NGO partners
France	Agence Française de Développement	€232,000	2018-2020	Via Experts-Solidaires
	The Rhone Mediterranean Corsica Water Agency	€203,440		
	Région Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA)	N/A		
UN OCHA	occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund	\$356,117	2019	
		\$400,000	2018	via OXFAM Netherlands (NOVIB)
		\$248,941	2017	
		\$230,585	2017	

APPENDIX 5: GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO UPWC

Government	Funder	Amount	Year(s)	Comment
European Union	European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI)	€699,236	2017-2019	Implemented by 5 Palestinian NGO partners
Spain	Basque Agency for Development Cooperation (AVCD)	€800,764	2015-2018	Via Mundubat; Implemented by 5 Palestinian NGO partners as part of the Kanan project
	AVCD	€184,252	2018-2019	Via Mundubat
Norway	Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)	NOK 52.5 million	2016-2019	Implemented by 11 Palestinian NGO partners

APPENDIX 6: GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO ADDAMEER

Government	Funder	Amount	Year(s)	Comment
Germany	Heinrich Böll Foundation	N/A	2016	
Ireland	IrishAid	€75,000	2017	
		€75,000	2016	
Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, and the Netherlands	Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Secretariat	\$498,700	2014-2017	
Switzerland	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	CHF 118,280	2018	
Norway	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	NOK 1,800,000	2015-2016	
Spain	Basque Agency for Development Cooperation (AVCD)	€180,000	2017-2019	
		€199,988	2015-2019	
	Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa	€81,248	2016-2018	Via SODePAZ
	Municipality of Barcelone	€162,712	2017	
		€57,436	2016	
	Autonomous community of Navarre	€158,486	2019	Via SODePAZ
		€153,486	2018	
€153,486		2017		
Municipality of	€68,332	2016-2017	Via Nazioarteko	

	Vitoria-Gasteiz	€56,999	2018-2019	Elkartasuna - Solidaridad Internacional
	Municipality of Rivas-Vaciamadrid	€22,630	2016	
	Municipality of San Sebastián	€50,000	2018-2020	Via SODePAZ
		€66,489	2016-2018	
		€69,429	2015-2017	
UN	UNICEF	\$205,028	2016	Implemented by 5 NGO partners
	UNICEF (Japan)	\$114,144	2017	

APPENDIX 7: GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO PMRS

Government	Funder	Amount	Year(s)	Comment
France	AFD	€764,664	2018-2020	Via SECOURS POPULAIRE FRANCAIS
	Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs	€70,000	2020	
Sweden	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	\$5.7 million	2016-2020	
EU	European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)	€2.5 million	2016-2019	Implemented by 4 Palestinian NGO partners
	European Commission	€743,206	2014-2017	Implemented by 2 Palestinian NGO partners
	ENI	€346,603	2016-2020	Via Oxfam Novib
UN OCHA	occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund	\$501,502	2020	
		\$331,593	2019	
		\$337,692	2018	

APPENDIX 8: GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO BISAN

Government	Funder	Amount	Year(s)	Comment
European Union	European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI)	€699,236	2017-2019	Implemented by 5 Palestinian NGO partners
Spain	Basque Agency for Development Cooperation (AVCD)	€800,764	2015-2018	Via Mundubat; Implemented by 5 Palestinian NGO partners as part of the Kanan project
Italy	MFA	€1.6 million	2014-2017	Via CISS - Cooperazione Internazionale Sud Sud; Implemented by 4 Palestinian NGO
Belgium	Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD)	€1.2 million	2014-2016	Via Solidarité Socialiste; Implemented by 3 Palestinian NGO

APPENDIX 9: GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO AL-HAQ

Government	Funder	Amount	Year(s)	Comment
European Union	European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI)	<u>€296,600</u>	2018-2021	
Norway	NORAD	<u>NOK 2,000,000</u>	2018	
		<u>NOK 2,000,000</u>	2017	
		<u>NOK 1,600,000</u>	2016	
Italy	AICS	<u>€1,800,000</u>	2018-2020	Via COSPE – Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo dei Paesi Emergenti; Implemented by 6 NGOs
Ireland	Irish Aid	<u>€80,000</u>	2017	
		<u>€80,000</u>	2016	
Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, and the Netherlands	Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Secretariat	<u>\$1,301,700</u>	2014-2017	
France	MEAE	<u>€27,842</u>	2015	