
Swedish NGO Funding

Terror Ties, Justification of
October 7 Hamas Massacre, and
ICJ "Genocide" Lobbying

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February 2024

Introduction

On October 7, 2023 (which was the Sabbath and a Jewish holiday), thousands of Palestinian terrorists – members of Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), all EU-designated terror entities – poured across the border from Gaza into Israel, slaughtering over 1,100, and torturing, maiming, raping, and kidnapping others. Gaza Palestinians also engaged in public desecration of victims’ bodies.

NGOs funded through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) with the stated aim to promote “human rights” and “international law” have **failed to condemn these blatant violations of human rights and humanitarian principles**. In fact, many are doing the exact opposite, **justifying and celebrating the attacks** in an attempt to legitimize terrorism in general and Hamas in particular by referring to this brutality as acts of “resistance.” Some NGOs have been **explicit in defending and supporting terrorism** (see the examples below), and senior NGO representatives have spread messages **denying Hamas’ atrocities such as the [systematic rape of Israeli women](#)**.

Like other European governments, Sweden suspended aid to Palestinians in mid-October. On October 11, 2023, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs [announced](#) that the Government will suspend aid to Palestine until further notice. At the same time, Sida was instructed to conduct a review of aid to Palestine and report on this by December 1, 2023. Humanitarian aid will not be affected by the suspension.

On December 7, 2023, Sida [published the results](#) of an initial review proclaiming that “Sida does not find any links to Hamas in Swedish aid in Palestine,” and that no NGO grantees were involved in incitement to hatred and violence after the 7 October 2023 events.

In February 2023, Sweden [published a supplemental review](#) whitewashing Swedish-funded Palestinian NGOs that justified and celebrated the October 7th attacks, denied Hamas’ atrocities, and continued to advance antisemitism. The supplemental report claimed that it “screened all direct contracting parties and all cooperation partners that receive support... and found that no organization is found on the EU’s sanctions list.” This inaccurate conclusion was achieved by creating an artificially narrow scope allowing it to exclude the most problematic Palestinian NGOs funded by Sweden – BADIL, Al-Haq, Defence for Children International-Palestine (DCI-P), and Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR).

Similar reviews by the European Commission and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) reached the opposite conclusion, identifying examples of incitement to hatred and violence. Switzerland [ended](#) its contractual partnership with two Palestinian NGOs and a US-based group; and the European Commission [announced](#) the introduction of new anti-incitement contractual clauses.

Contrary to this claim, NGO Monitor has compiled extensive evidence of officials from Swedish-funded NGOs that blatantly justified and supported Hamas' attack, and denied the atrocities committed by Palestinian terrorists. (As noted above, Sida systematically ignored these examples in its review.)

This report covers 7 Palestinian NGOs, all of which have been recipients of Swedish government funding originating with Sida in the last ten years, via multiple funding channels, including Swedish-funded NGOs, and church aid organizations.

Many of the NGOs are linked to the PFLP terror group; some of them were designated by Israel in October 2021 as terror organizations due to these close interconnections.

Examples of Swedish-Funded NGOs that Justified Hamas' Attack and Denied Atrocities

BADIL

- On October 9, BADIL [tweeted](#), "Impunity and double standards are no longer acceptable! In pursuit for their liberation, the Palestinian people have an equal right to resist."
- On October 8, BADIL [tweeted](#), "Nothing about the Palestinian resistance is unprovoked. The Palestinian people have been suffering for 75 years of colonial-apartheid regime, ethnic cleansing, forcible transfer/displacement...massacres on Palestinian towns, desecration of Palestinian holy sites...In **seeking the inalienable rights of self-determination and return, resistance is the most human and legitimate act**" (emphasis added).
- In December 2023, BADIL published the report "[The Palestinian People Have a Right to Armed Struggle by Virtue of their Inalienable Right to Self-Determination](#)," blatantly denying the right of Israel to exist. According to BADIL "It is important to note that the **establishment of the State of Palestine** on the pre-1967 borders does not realize the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, and so **does not preclude the legitimacy of their collective acts in pursuit of self-determination**. Rather, **as long as their right to self-determination is not fully implemented by all and for all, the right to resist is activated**, irrespective of whether or not a state for (some) Palestinians has been created and is gradually recognized by members of the international community" (emphasis in original).

Swedish Funding to BADIL

Funded by Sweden through the [Human Rights Programme Palestine 2018-2023](#) project). NGOs [receiving funding under this framework](#) include Al Mezan, Al-Haq, Defense for Children International – Palestine (DCI-P). (See below) Sida does not disclose information about the funds allocated to each NGO.

Al-Haq

- On October 10, Al-Haq Head of the Training and Capacity Building Unit Ziad Hmaidan [wrote](#) on Facebook, “It is written in the Hadith: ‘You must wage jihad. The best jihad is preparing for war, and it is best to prepare for war in Ashkelon’.”
- On October 10, Al-Haq Legal Researcher and Advocacy Officer Ahmed Aboufoul [tweeted](#), “It is outrageous to call on Palestinian resistance (permitted by international law) to CEASE its attacks while asking the occupying power ONLY to respect IHL.”
- On October 12, Al-Haq Legal Researcher and Advocacy Officer Aseel Al-Bajeh [tweeted](#), “We don’t need to speak of our right to resist, for it is not a right, but a way of being & survival for Palestinians. We don’t demand our right to narrate. Our ability to narrate was never out of our hands & resistance doesn’t need the pre- approval of static int’l law codes. Its not ‘our duty to expose the bloody barbarism of zionism, their actions as a fascist state & a ruthless army are more than sufficient to undertake this task. We remain attached to our land & in our humanity, as Pal Arabs no need to prove our humanity to those who have lost it.”
- On October 9, Hmaidan [shared a picture on Facebook of a Palestinian terrorist Ibrahim Nabulsi aiming a gun](#), and wrote, “A message of intense love. The picture of one of the men of the ‘flood’ [referring to the name ‘the flood of Al-Aqsa’ given by Hamas to the murderous October 7 attacks], during a confrontation in one of the [israeli] bases that was stormed [by Palestinian terrorists]. This picture carries a thousand signs and meanings. Observe the picture that the sniper of the flood stuck on his rifle. Do you recognize who is in the picture? This is the intense love is for Ibrahim [Nabulsi].”
- On October 9, Hmaidan [posted on Facebook](#), “To Palestine alone we give everything, until it is pleased. And for what the world wants – may it go to hell.”
- On October 11, 2023, Al-Haq Legal Researcher and Advocacy Officer Aseel Al-Bajeh [tweeted](#), “‘The process of liberation is irresistible & irreversible & in order to avoid serious crises, an end must be put to colonialism & all practices of segregation & discrimination associated therewith’ UN resolution 1514, binding on all states!”
- On October 7, Al-Bajeh [tweeted by quoting Hamas head Ismail Haniyeh](#), “Leave our land, get out of our faces.”

Note: [Al-Haq](#) is a PFLP-linked NGO that was designated by Israel in 2021 over its close links to the PFLP terror group. See [link](#) for information on Al-Haq’s PFLP ties.

Defense for Children International – Palestine (DCI-P)

- On October 8, 2023, DCI-P Advocacy Officer Miranda Cleland [tweeted](#), “It is beyond insulting and blatantly racist to assume **Palestinians resisting Israeli colonization & trying to take back their land** will result in anti-Semitic attacks in DC. What a joke” (emphasis added). Cleland shared a statement by the Mayor of DC condemning the Hamas attacks and committing to protect the Jewish community in DC.

Note: [DCI-P](#) is a PFLP-linked NGO that was designated by Israel in 2021 over its close links to the PFLP terror group.

Al Mezan Center for Human Rights

- In October 2023, in the aftermath of the brutal Hamas attack on October 7, Al Mezan was a signatory on a statement calling for “[Immediate Action from the International Community to Stop Israel’s Reprisals against Palestinian Civilians](#).” According to the statement, “On Saturday, 7 October 2023, Palestinian armed groups engaged in an operation in response to escalating Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people...We call on the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to expedite the investigation into the Situation in Palestine...we call upon the UN Security Council, Third States, and UN Member States to immediately intervene with all necessary means to cease Israel’s attacks against the Palestinian people, and to impose sanctions and an arms embargo on Israel...and the dismantling Israel’s apartheid regime.”

Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR)

- On October 7, 2023, PCHR Fundraising and Program Officer Feda’a Murjan [posted](#) on Facebook, “We will truly step in our land. Allah, you are our protector and supporter.”

Previously, during the May 2023 Gaza conflict, PCHR published a statement in which it “[affirms the Palestinian people to resist the occupation by all available means, including armed struggle...](#)” After criticism, and under pressure from donors – including the EU – this text was amended.

Note: [PCHR](#) has close links to the PFLP terror group. In November 2023, Switzerland (FDFA) [announced](#) it ended its funding to PCHR over breach of FDFA’s Code of Conduct. Swiss media, citing FDFA’s Head of Communications, [revealed](#) that the reason for the end of the contractual relationship between FDFA and PCHR was the latter’s problematic attitudes towards violence.

Swedish funding to PCHR

PCHR received undisclosed funding as a partner of the Sida funded [Save the Children, CSO-strategy 2022-2026](#).

Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS)

- On October 7, 2023, President Mustafa Barghouti [declared](#): “Today is a glorious day for the Palestinian resistance and people. The resistance paid with interest for the attacks of the terrorist settlers, and for the attacks against the Al-Aqsa Mosque. It paid with interest for those who normalize [their relations] with the occupation.”
- On December 6, 2023, Baghouthi [tweeted](#): “The Israeli establishment and government are conducting a black media campaign spreading the false propaganda about rape of Israeli women on the 7th of October to justify the horrific war crimes they are committing in Gaza. American media itself revoked the allegations of rape.”
- According to [Wattan](#), during a demonstration held “in support of the resistance in Gaza” on October 10, Barghouti stated, “These marches affirm the Palestinian people’s support in the resistance and that the Palestinian people is united wherever it is.”
- On October 7, in an [interview with Al Jazeera](#), Barghouti stated, “This initiative by the resistance that we have seen is a response to Israeli settlers’ terror that has been taking place all over the West Bank with the protection of the Israeli army.... It is a reaction to the attacks on the Aqsa mosque and the process of judaization of not only Jerusalem and the Aqsa mosque but the whole of the West Bank...but maybe politically it is also a response to those who thought that through normalization with the Arab countries they can liquidate and marginalize the Palestinian issue. It is coming back in the most possible forcible way...It shows that Israel is not almighty and also it shows what Palestinians can do when they are determined to resist for their freedom...”
- In [televised statement broadcasted on Wattan](#) on October 15, Barghouti claimed, “The Palestinians are subjected to a new Nakba now, one that is more dangerous and worse than the 1948 Nakba...Israel, with full support from the US and unfortunate backing from western countries, is committing four dangerous actions against the Palestinian people: Dehumanizing Palestinians, collective punishment, ethnic cleansing and genocide. ‘Israel’ is **attempting to dehumanize and demonize Palestinians, and falsely claim that Hamas is ISIS, by various lies which some media outlets have retracted from, as the CNN reporter who apologized who spreading fake news about the beheading of Israeli children, in addition to the LA Times newspaper that apologized for its false claims on incidents on rape...Barghouti warned from black propaganda that is spread by ‘israel’ and fabrication of news in order to commit war crimes against the Palestinian people...‘Israel’ is exploiting current events to carry out schemes that it has been planning for the past years...**”

Swedish funding to PMRS

In 2021-2024, Sida committed SEK 39.6 million to [Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Palestine](#). The program was implemented by the [Palestinian Medical Relief Society](#) (PMRS).

Swedish-Funded NGOs Spearhead “Genocide” Accusations

On December 12, 2023, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), an international NGO based in Paris, [publicized](#) a [resolution](#) headlined, “Israel’s unfolding crime of genocide and other crimes in Gaza and against the Palestinian People.” It had been written and adopted during a meeting of FIDH’s international board in November 2023.

The resolution packages several false accusations related to the current war (“Israel’s use of starvation as a tool of warfare” and “forced displacement”), alongside recurrent themes of antisemitic NGO demonization (“apartheid,” “systematic domination and oppression over the Palestinian people for over 75 years”), to disingenuously conclude that “Israel’s actions against the Palestinian people constitute an unfolding genocide.”

This resolution is part of a campaign of atrocity inversion, aimed at portraying Israel as the worst violator of human rights in the world. NGOs accuse the Jewish State of genocide in order to distract from the October 7 Hamas pogrom, the world’s deadliest one-day massacre in more than 20 years (see NGO Monitor’s report: [“NGO Atrocity Inversion: False Accusations of Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing to Distract from Hamas Massacre”](#)).

FIDH [members](#) Al-Haq (Al-Haq is also [represented](#) on FIDH’s international board), PCHR, and Al Mezan clearly influenced the resolution. The three NGOs, all linked to the PFLP terror group, promoted the “genocide” canard at the earliest stages of the war. For instance, on October 11, Al-Haq [tweeted](#), “For the fifth day, the occupation forces continue to launch their attacks on the #Gaza Strip... in such a way that amounts to acts of **genocide**” (translated from the original Arabic). On October 15, Al-Haq, Al Mezan, and PCHR [published a joint statement](#) on Twitter/X claiming that “Palestinians are facing an impending **genocide**.”

The NGO campaign extended to the South African case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The directors of the three NGOs – Shawan Jabarin (Al-Haq), Raji Sourani (PCHR), and Issam Younis (Al-Mezan) – [served](#) as advisers of the South African delegation at the ICJ.

Shawan Jabarin

- Al-Haq’s General Director has [ties to the PFLP terrorist organization](#) and, as a result, [has been denied exit visas by Israel](#) and [Jordan](#). [Click here to see NGO Monitor’s unofficial translation of the ruling by the Israeli High Court of Justice \(June 20, 2007\)](#).
- In February 2019, Jabarin [participated](#) in an event hosted by the PFLP in memory of “comrade fighter” Maher Al-Yamani. Al- Yamani was a PFLP “[founder](#),” a “[member of the Central Committee and one of its most prominent](#)

[military commanders](#),” and “coordinated special operations...in particular [the operation against an aircraft of the Israeli company El Al in July 1968 in Greece](#).”

- According to [multiple Arabic-language media](#) sources, Al-Haq General Director Shawan Jabarin represented the PFLP at a December 2011 meeting of the Follow-Up Committee for Issues of Public Liberties and Trust Building. This body served as a [reconciliatory body](#) between Hamas, Fatah, PIJ, the PFLP, and other Palestinian factions.
- Jabarin was [convicted](#) in 1985 for recruiting and arranging training for members for the PFLP. [A 1994 Israeli statement to the UN](#) notes that he “had not discontinued his terrorist involvement and maintains his position in the leadership of the PFLP.”
- [In 2007](#), the Israeli Supreme Court rejected Jabarin’s appeal to travel abroad, stating that “*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...*”
- In 2008, the Israeli Supreme Court [noted](#) that Jabarin is “among the senior activists of the Popular Front terrorist organization.”

In 2016-2022, Shawan Jabarin [served](#) as a FIDH general secretary. In 2013-2016, Jabarin [served](#) as a FIDH vice-president.

Raji Sourani

- Raji Sourani, [founder](#) and director of PCHR, was “[prohibited](#) from leaving Palestine (sic) from 1977 to 1990.” According to a [1995 article in the Washington Report](#), Raji Sourani served “a three-year sentence [1979-1982] imposed by an Israeli court which convicted him of membership in the illegal Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine...” He was also [denied a US entry visa](#) in 2012. Sourani was imprisoned an additional three times “[in 1985 and 1986...](#)” and held in administrative detention in 1988. From 1986 to 1987 he was “[restricted from legal work](#) for one year by an Israeli military decision issued by the Israeli Military Governor.”
- In February 2014, the PFLP organized a [ceremony](#) in Gaza honoring Sourani for winning the “Alternative Noble Prize.” [Rabah Muhana](#), a member of the PFLP Political Bureau, delivered a speech at the prize ceremony. [During the ceremony](#) Sourani stated that “I was in the ranks of the Popular Front, and there were comrades who taught us with their own hands. This organization has given us much more. We hope that the direction and the sense of belonging that were planted inside us will remain in our minds. We don’t apologize and don’t regret our past; we are proud that once we were members of this organization and we fought in its ranks.”

Swedish funding to Al-Haq, Al Mezan and PCHR – See above.