

## Why does the EU continue to fund anti-peace NGOs?

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European Union and its member states actively promoting and funding the boycott and isolation of Israel.

When the head of the European Parliament Martin Schulz addresses the Knesset, he might repeat the bleak words of the European Union's Ambassador Lars Faaborg-Andersen. The EU ambassador has declared that a failed peace process would lead to more isolation for Israel, "not necessarily because of any decisions taken at a government level but because of decisions taken by... companies, ...pension funds, and... consumers." A similar message, interpreted as designed to add pressure on Israel, was also delivered by US Secretary of State Kerry.

The facts, however, demonstrate that in contrast to a spontaneous process, the European Union and its member states are actively promoting and funding the boycott and isolation of Israel. Perhaps because he has only recently taken his post, and the EU systematically blocks release of relevant documents, in violation of core democratic principles, officials such as Ambassador Faaborg-Andersen conceal and distort the EU's central role in this form of political warfare.

For years, the EU has been providing millions of euros to radical political advocacy non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that, as repeatedly demonstrated, promote the images of Palestinian victimization and Israeli oppression. In many cases, the reports and lobbying efforts of these NGO are central to EU policy formation, forming a closed circle in which biased anti-Israel narratives are reinforced.

Although claiming to support moral causes such as human rights, democracy and peace, these EU funding policies actively promote boycott and isolation of Israel.

And as a result, the Palestinians have an easy alternative to the "painful compromises" necessary for peace.

The EU's European Instrument for Human Rights and Democracy (EIDHR) is a major vehicle for this form of political pressure. For the years 2007-2010, (the last available data), EIDHR channeled more money into Israeli-Palestinian issues than to any other country or part of the world – over €11 million. It would appear that for EIDHR, human rights violations in Syria and around the world are of relatively little importance.

(Projects focused on Israel/Palestine received 57 percent of EIDHR funding for the Middle East, while Syria, Iraq, Iran, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE received no country-targeted funding.) Many of EIDHR's projects involve organizations with a clear and strong bias against Israel, as demonstrated by their political activities and agenda, and part of the campaign that exploits apartheid and similar labels.

This campaign specifically seeks "the complete international isolation of Israel... which means the imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions and embargoes, the full

cessation of all links (diplomatic, economic, social, aid, military cooperation and training) between all states and Israel,” as stated in the Final Declaration of the discredited NGO Forum of the 2001 Durban conference. This is a declaration of war, and it is being funded by Europe.

Furthermore, the basic rights of Israelis, including the basic right to life without the threat of terrorism, are systematically ignored and omitted in this framework.

Although EIDHR is supposed to promote human rights around the world, some people have more rights than others, and Israelis are entirely excluded, as reflected in the funding practices and the resulting policy pronouncements.

A brief and partial examination of the NGOs and activities that EIDHR funds illustrates the EU’s central role. In 2011, EIDHR provided an Israeli NGO, the Coalition of Women for Peace, with €247,668. CWP is a leader in the campaigns to demonize Israel, including boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) and sponsoring “Nakba Day” activities that repeat Palestinian narratives. CWP officials have participated in events in which they carried flags of the PFLP terrorist organization.

The EU claims to fund “projects” and not NGOs, but this is a technical response, as money is fungible and pays for salaries, travel and publicity.

Similarly, in 2010, a very small NGO known as the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD) received €169,661. ICAHD officials play a major role in demonization via rhetoric such as “ethnic cleansing,” “genocide,” “collective punishment,” and “apartheid.”

The EU’s Palestinian partners include the Holy Land Trust (€198,380), which is prominent in supporting BDS and the Kairos Palestine document. The Kairos Palestine document denies the Jewish historical connection to Israel and promotes church involvement in BDS, delegitimization, and demonization – a perverse way to support “human rights and democracy.”

Similarly, Al-Maqdese (€200,000) focuses on alleged “Israeli violations of Palestinians’ rights” in Jerusalem.

Al-Maqdese accuses Israel of “racist” practices, “ethnic cleansing,” and “ruthless, unforgiving, inhumane and above all illegal” actions. It also uses demonizing rhetoric, such as “Apartheid Wall” and “ghettos.”

While European Parliament head Martin Schulz is in Israel, he and Ambassador Faaborg-Anderson should use the opportunity for a comprehensive examination of the activities of each of the EU’s political NGO partners and their impacts. They will be able to learn that the campaigns of incitement and isolation of Israel in Europe are far from spontaneous reactions to the “occupation.” The next stage, when they report back to Brussels, is to take action to end the EU’s role in political warfare targeting Israel, which instead of promoting peace, is fueling the conflict.

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