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Norwegian NGO-statements on Israel's Military Operation Against Hamas: Exposing Israel's Demonization

The diplomatic and political dimensions of the war in Gaza are now receiving significant attention. This is the context for "soft power" attempts to criminalize Israeli military operations and launch "fact-finding investigations."

NGO Monitor, a Jerusalem-based research institute, has prepared the following information sheet on the major role of Danish non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the political war. Our detailed analyses of this and previous conflicts are available on our website (www.ngo-monitor.org), and our experts, including Prof. Gerald Steinberg of Bar Ilan University and president of NGO Monitor, are available for interview.

Background

- As part of their larger campaign to demonize and delegitimize Israel, European politicized NGOs are pushing for an international investigation into alleged Israeli "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity" committed during the current Israel-Hamas conflict.
- Under the façade of balance and apolitical, universal human rights, these NGOs have been active in efforts to justify unprofessional UN investigations, as seen in the 2009 Goldstone report.
- In support of this campaign, Norwegian NGOs such as Norwegian People's Aid condemn Israel in statements that gravely distort international humanitarian law and repeat unsupported allegations of "deliberate, systematic, and widespread targeting of Palestinian civilians," "collective punishment," and similar claims.
- In addition, the Norwegian government provides funding, through direct and indirect processes, to Israeli and Palestinian NGOs that make legal and factual claims, without the necessary expertise or access to objective facts on the ground.
- As NGOs continue to make unfounded statements that are often repeated in the media, it is essential that journalists and the public:
 - 1) Recognize the central role of human rights NGOs in the political dimensions of war.
 - 2) Closely scrutinize NGO allegations, in the same way claims by other political actors (i.e. politicians, government and military officials) are held accountable.

Statements by Norwegian People's Aid

[Statement by the Norwegian People's Aid Secretary](#) (July 24, 2014)

- Norwegian People's Aid Secretary General Liv Tørres declared "**We are calling on the international community to immediately put pressure on Israel to stop the war crimes and killing of innocent civilians in the Gaza Strip. All parties must end violence.**" The appeal to a ceasefire follows stating "Norwegian People's Aid is calling on the international community to immediately put all the pressure possible on the parties to end the violence and to end the blockade, the occupation and the suffering of the Palestinian people."

[Joint statement by Norwegian People's Aid, The Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees \(July 18, 2014\)](#)

- "We are deeply concerned about direct attacks by Israeli armed forces' on civilian homes in the Gaza Strip and demand an immediate ceasefire". Norwegian People's Aid Secretary

General Liv Tørres followed stating: “A ceasefire is however only sustainable if Israel also lifts its occupation and blockade of Gaza.” Downplaying Hamas’ breaches of international law, Torres further declares **“The international community must ensure the protection of civilians when the Israeli government breaks international law and kills civilian men, women and children.** Norwegian People’s Aid also condemns attacks by Palestinian groups in Gaza into Israel on the basis that they put civilian lives at risk.”

These statements are part of a larger strategy used by anti-Israel NGOs, to delegitimize and demonize Israel, which includes boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) and “lawfare” campaigns.

Government funding for Norwegian People’s Aid

Country	Mechanism	2012 Amount (NOK)
Norway	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation	52.720
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	238.352
	Other public Norwegian donors	7888
EU	Not Disclosed	4.279
Netherlands	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	5.404
Sweden	Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	17.213
Germany	Not Disclosed	6.988

In addition, the Norwegian government has provided funding to a number of Israeli and Palestinian NGOs that have issued many unfounded statements condemning Israel:

Breaking the Silence - [Facebook post, July 8, 2014](#): “... the precondition for long-awaited peace and quiet in the region is ending the occupation. ...Behind both operation ‘Protective Edge’ and ‘Brother’s Keeper’ there is a steady continuous existence of fear, oppression and injustice. This is the occupation, and millions of people live under the burden of its weight day after day.”

B’Tselem, Gisha, ACRI, PCATI, - [Joint statement to the Israeli Attorney General](#) (July 21, 2014): “The reports and data which have accumulated thus far regarding the nature of the strikes and the level of injury to noncombatant civilians as a result of these strikes raise serious concern of severe violations of international humanitarian law, and specifically the laws of war...”

Norwegian Funding for Israeli and Palestinian NGOs:

NGO	Funding Mechanism	Amounts
Breaking the Silence	Norwegian Foreign ministry	NIS 148, 315 (2012)
B’Tselem	Norwegian Foreign Ministry	NIS 1,986,789 (2012-2013)
PCATI	Norwegian Foreign Ministry	Not Disclosed
ACRI	Norwegian Foreign Ministry	NIS 2,862,772 (2012-2014)
GISHA	Norwegian Foreign Ministry	NIS 1,241,305 (2012-2013)