

August 06, 2014

Swedish Funding for Hamas Terror via Islamic Relief Worldwide?
The Burden of Proof is on Europe

Background

- The Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) is an international organization based in the UK, with offices in Gaza and the West Bank, ostensibly working as an “international relief and development charity.”
- **On June 19, 2014, Israel’s Defense Minister [declared](#) IRW to be [illegal](#), based on its alleged role in funneling money to Hamas, and banned it from operating in Israel and the West Bank.** (Hamas is a designated terror organization by Israel, the U.S., EU, and Canada.)
- [Media sources](#) have reported that the decision was made after “the Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet), the coordinator for government activities in the territories, and legal authorities provided incriminating information against IRW.”
- According to its financial reports, European governments, including Sweden, are primary funders of IRW.

Funding and Evaluation

- In 2013, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) awarded SEK 24,000,000 to IRW.
- In correspondence with NGO Monitor, SIDA provided updated information on Swedish funding for IRW, but did not give specific examples in support of its claim that effective monitoring and audit systems are in place.
- For the full correspondence between NGO Monitor and SIDA, see Appendix A.

Given the serious nature of the allegations, and particularly in light of the current war with Hamas, the Swedish government should immediately conduct a thorough review of Islamic Relief Worldwide, in cooperation with the relevant Israeli and other authorities, to ensure that Swedish taxpayer funds are not channeled to terrorist organizations.

Questions for SIDA

- In light of the serious allegations against IRW and its current status in Israel, is the Swedish government planning to open an investigation into the activities of IRW?
- The diversion of foreign aid to terror activities in Gaza has emerged as a central element in the conflict. How will the Swedish government assure both Swedish and Israeli citizens that funding to IRW has not been channeled to terror groups?

European government funding to Islamic Relief Worldwide

Source	Funding Mechanism	Amounts
UK	DFID	£1,400,000 (2012)
Switzerland	Swiss Foreign Ministry	£52,942 (2012)
EU	European Commission	£2,169,340 (2012)
Sweden	SIDA	SEK 24,000,000 (2013)
Spain	AECID	£243,942 (2012)

Appendix A: Correspondence between NGO Monitor and SIDA

NGO Monitor letter to SIDA:

June 19, 2014

Dear Mr. Petterson,

On June 19, Israel's Minister of Defense signed a warrant declaring the NGO Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) as illegal, based on information regarding the involvement of this organization in terrorism.

The Swedish government is reported as a partner/funder (2012) in the reports of the IRW. NGO Monitor is preparing a report on the relationships between the IRW and its governmental donors and partners, and we would appreciate your responses to the following questions:

1. Did the government of Sweden provide any funding to IRW in 2013 or 2014? If so, in what amounts?
2. What mechanisms are used to ensure that funding or cooperation with the IRW is not linked to terrorist activities or incitement to violence? Please provide documentation or links to specific reports or evaluations.
3. In addition to any funding, what other forms of cooperation have taken place between the government of Sweden and the IRW between 2012 and 2014?

In order that we can complete our report in a timely manner, the deadline for responses is 26 June.

Sincerely,
NGO Monitor

SIDA response to NGO Monitor:

With regards to your questions in the below about funding to IRW Sida funded them in 2013 for humanitarian operations globally with a total sum of 24 000 000 SEK. For 2014 we are currently finalising our support.

With regards to question 2 Sida conducts system audits and evaluations of partner organisations. We also conduct evaluations of projects and conflict sensitivity is an important element in that work.

Sida has only a funding cooperation with IRW.

Best regards,

Carina