

# NGO MONITOR

Making NGOs Accountable

## 1. Major NGO Monitor impact in the *New York Times*



On July 27, the [New York Times ran a profile of Michael Sfar](#), an Israeli lawyer and a key player in the European-funded NGO network. Correspondent Jodi Rudoren turned to NGO Monitor for a critical perspective on Sfar's role within the Israeli debate, quoting NGO Monitor President Prof. Gerald Steinberg, "He sees the courts as the way to force the changes that he perceives as necessary for Israel. But he doesn't convince the Israeli public. In any democratic

process, you can't use just the legal system to impose an ideology."

The *New York Times* article also highlighted a central element of NGO Monitor's analysis, noting that "Most of [Sfar's] work is financed by Israel's premier left-wing nonprofit organizations, which in turn are financed in part by European governments."

## 2. Introducing Yitzhak Santis, Chief Programs Officer



NGO Monitor is pleased to welcome Yitzhak Santis to its senior management staff. Yitzhak serves as Chief Programs Officer, a position in which he oversees quality control of NGO Monitor's key products in the research and communications area. He has expertise regarding the anti-Israel BDS (boycotts, divestment and sanctions) campaign and its strategy of co-opting churches to their cause. He is also involved in the area of resource development, including donor relations, donor development, and campaign planning.

Yitzhak is the immediate past Director of the Middle East Project at the San Francisco Jewish Community Relations Council. He served on JCRC's staff for 21 years until he and his family made aliyah in January 2011.

After the second intifada, with the explosion of anti-Israel activity in the San Francisco Bay Area, Yitzhak founded and directed JCRC's Middle East Project, created to combat the intense anti-Israel activism in the San Francisco Bay Area, the most challenging environment in the United States with respect to attitudes toward Israel. A core component of this project was to understand and analyze the attempts to delegitimize

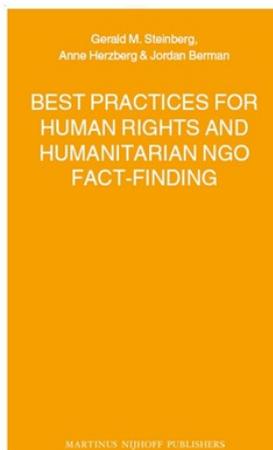


Israel and formulate a strategy for countering these efforts by the Bay Area's one hundred plus groups promoting an anti-Israel message. In this capacity, he shaped the local Jewish community's strategic approach to Israel education and advocacy.

Yitzhak served as lead spokesperson to the general and Jewish media for the Bay Area's organized Jewish community, making numerous TV and radio appearances including nose-to-nose debates with Israel's detractors. He is a prolific writer, published in major publications in the US and Israel. He has presented to hundreds of audiences including synagogues, churches, public and private schools, campuses, and created multi-media materials used in his advocacy work. His impact was also felt across the United States with JCRCs and other organizations looking for his guidance on issues pertaining to Israel advocacy.

In his early career, Yitzhak was a regional director for the Anti-Defamation League, and as a student at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, he was a pro-Israel campus activist.

### **3. New publication to increase NGO Monitor's impact and credibility in academia**



NGO Monitor and Martinus Nijhoff Publishers hosted an event in Jerusalem to mark the book launch of [\*Best Practices for Human Rights and Humanitarian NGO Fact-Finding\*](#), co-authored by NGO Monitor President Prof. Steinberg, NGO Monitor Legal Advisor Anne Herzberg, and former NGO Monitor research fellow Jordan Berman. The book, which discusses the urgent need for accuracy in NGO reporting, is a significant addition to the prestigious Nijhoff series on international law. It will be used in many university courses and cited in legal frameworks, increasing NGO Monitor's impact and credibility in academia.

Prof. Steinberg appeared on the influential Israeli public radio program "*Din u'Devarim*" to discuss the issue to a broad audience, and published an [\*op-ed in the Times of Israel\*](#). The book launch was also the [\*lead story\*](#) on the *Times of Israel's* website.

Following introductory remarks at the book launch by Herzberg and Alan Stephens, head of research at Clemens Nathan Research Centre, Prof. Françoise Hampson of the University of Essex (UK) delivered the keynote address. Prof. Hampson is a former member of the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of



Human Rights Member, and a member of fact-finding missions to former Yugoslavia and Lebanon.

A panel chaired by Prof. Steinberg, entitled “Facing the Facts: Developing Standards for Human Rights NGOs,” followed the keynote address. Panelists included Dr. Rephael H. Ben-Ari, former legal advisor at the Israeli Embassy in The Hague and professor of law at Bar Ilan University; Adv. Sigall Horovitz, former legal officer at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and Special Court for Sierra Leone; Col. Liron Libman, former head of the IDF Military Advocate General's Corps' International Law Department; and Prof. Robbie Sabel, former legal advisor at Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and professor of law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The presentations and panel discussion can be viewed on [NGO Monitor's YouTube channel](#).

The publication of the book marks the culmination of the first stage of our “Best Practices Project,” generously sponsored by Peter Simpson.

The impact of NGO Monitor research in academia is also reflected in a United States Navy publication, “Cognitive Warfare.” The author, Lt. Stuart Green, cites NGO Monitor and quotes NGO Monitor President Prof. Gerald Steinberg in a chapter on anti-Israel bias in the media. Lt. Green writes, “One problem that compounds the tendencies of advocate journalists is an over reliance on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for objective statistics. ... Reports [from NGOs] play a critical role in the formation of world perception, as their contents are often repeated by such outlets as BBC, CNN [], and...the Boston Globe's] website. ...Rather than dying or becoming discredited, dubious information finds its way back into the media, where it is picked up by the UN and academia, achieving more credibility as it goes up the chain.”

#### 4. Combating BDS – Update



In a [major setback for anti-Israel BDS activists](#), the Presbyterian Church (USA) rejected divestment from three companies doing business with Israel, opting instead to promote a “process of engagement” and active investment. This decision comes following the United Methodist Church's rejection of divestment this spring, making it the second major defeat this year for church-based divestment activists. Nonetheless, both churches did vote to support boycotts of products made in West Bank Israeli settlements.

# NGO MONITOR

## Making NGOs Accountable

In advance of the vote, NGO Monitor published a report, “[BDS in the Pews](#)” (also in [Hebrew](#)), detailing the role of churches and pro-Palestinian NGOs in advocating for BDS, and the funding for these NGOs provided by European, Canadian and U.S. governments. Jonathan Arkush, Vice-President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, referenced the report during an appearance on [BBC Radio](#).

Following the vote, NGO Monitor President Prof. Gerald Steinberg and NGO Monitor Chief Programs Officer Yitzhak Santis co-authored an op-ed in the *Jewish Week* (New York) “[Jew-washing](#)” and Santis penned op-eds in the *Jerusalem Post* (“[A Process of Engagement](#)”) and *Israel Hayom* (in [English](#) and [Hebrew](#)).

In related news, NGO Monitor also published a [report](#) and [fact sheet](#) on EAPPI (Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel), an NGO affiliated with the World Council of Churches that consistently demonizes Israel, making accusations of “apartheid,” “war crimes,” and “Bantustans”, and which calls the security barrier, which has saved countless lives from suicide bombings, “evil.”

In August, the United Church of Canada will vote on divestment, which NGO Monitor will track closely.

## 5. NGO Transparency Law implementation – Update



NGO Monitor played an “[instrumental role](#)” in the February 2011 Knesset “NGO Transparency Law,” which went into effect at the beginning of 2012, requiring political advocacy [NGOs receiving funding from foreign governments](#) to report this funding to the Israeli Ministry of Justice on a quarterly basis.

As of June 26, 2012, a number of NGOs [have submitted quarterly reports](#) for the period January-March of this year that disclose the foreign governmental funding they have received. However, other foreign-funded NGOs did not submit reports during that reporting period. It is unknown whether these groups did not receive foreign government funding during that time, whether they have failed to act in accordance with the law, or whether they did not report for other reasons.

NGO Monitor will continue to work with our partner organizations and the Israeli government to monitor the law’s implementation and impact.

## 6. European funding for NGOs – Update



NGO Monitor continues to give priority to the European Union (EU) and individual European governments, which combined provide the largest amount of foreign governmental funding for political advocacy NGOs in Israel. Our strategy of dialogue and engagement continues to yield results. For the first time, following several years of public and private contact with the EU, it released a [public document](#) on some of its funding for NGOs active in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In mid-July, EU Ambassador to Israel Andrew Standley invited NGO Monitor President Prof. Gerald Steinberg to a private working dinner in Tel Aviv with the European Parliamentary delegation (Middle East subcommittee) and other officials, in which substantive discussions took place regarding EU funding of political advocacy NGOs that campaign against human rights.

Earlier in July, Prof. Steinberg [spoke at a Knesset subcommittee session](#) attended by UK Ambassador to Israel Matthew Gould on Israeli-British academic cooperation in response to anti-Israel activities in the UK.

Also in July, NGO Monitor sent an [open letter](#) to European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, who was making his first visit to Israel. The letter included specific examples of counterproductive EU funding for political NGOs, including for [ICAHD](#), [Parents Circle Families Forum](#), and [Adalah](#).

In a [statement to the media](#), Prof. Steinberg noted, “This is an opportune time for ending the blatant lack of transparency, in violation of the EU's own principles, and for undertaking a detailed review, particularly for the NGO grants that end in June and July 2012.”

NGO Monitor also published an update on [Swedish government funding](#), highlighting the country's funding for groups that lead anti-Israel BDS (boycotts, divestment, and sanctions) campaigns and reject a negotiated “two-state” framework, anti-peace positions that contradict official Swedish foreign policy.



## 7. Looking Ahead



In early September, NGO Monitor President Gerald Steinberg will travel to the UK for meetings and briefings. In Manchester, he will meet with communal leaders and will deliver a public lecture on “The Politics of Human Rights and Assaults on Israel’s Legitimacy.” The event is jointly sponsored by the Zionist Central Council, Israel Information Centre, and the British Friends of Israeli War Disabled.

In London, he will give a briefing at the Parliament, as a guest of the Henry Jackson Society, on “Facing the Facts: The Urgent Need for Guidelines in Human Rights Fact-Finding,” will deliver public lectures sponsored respectively by the Zionist Federation; Israel Diaspora Trust; and the Board of Deputies of British Jews and Jewish Leadership Council.

## 8. Expanding our influence



Key elements of our ever-increasing impact include meetings with Israeli and international decision- and opinion-makers; public presentations to academic and general audiences; and private briefings with leading Jewish organizations.

### MEETINGS

- MK Miri Regev, *Jerusalem, July 11*
- Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Civil Society Desk, *Jerusalem, July 26*

### LECTURES

- AIJAC mission to Israel, *Jerusalem, July 8*
- Midrasha Liberalit, *Rishon Lezion, July 15*

### CONFERENCES

- Schusterman / AICE Visiting Israeli Professors Conference, *Bar Ilan University, July 1-2*
- Tikvah Fellowship, *Ein Pratt, July 3*

### MISC.

- Knesset subcommittee session: Israeli-British academic cooperation in response to anti Israel activities in the UK
- Annual Independence Day Celebration, U.S. Embassy, *Herzliya, July 3*
- Dinner hosted by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Israel, Andrew Standley, in honor of Arnaud Danjean, President, European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Tel Aviv, July 17*