

Time to expose Hamas' 'civilian' network in Europe - opinion

A new report reveals how Hamas-affiliated NGOs fundraise, lobby, and promote the agenda for the terrorist organization in the UK, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Belgium.

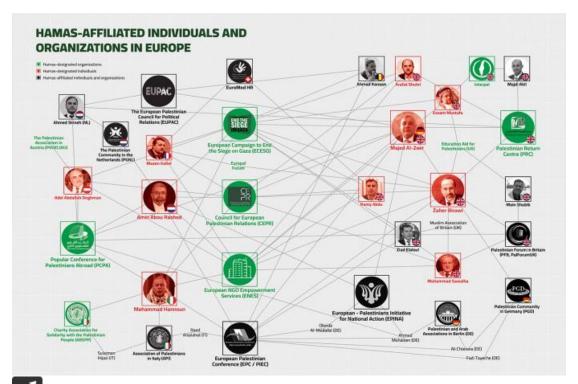
By DR. EMMANUEL NAVONOCTOBER 15, 2024



Europe must heed the warning: Hamas has spent decades building an infrastructure of "civilian fronts" in Europe.(photo credit: Courtesy)

European governments expressed shock at the atrocities perpetuated by Hamas on October 7, 2023, but Hamas has been fundraising, and continues to fundraise, in Europe for its terrorist activities while also lobbying in European political and social circles to promote the Hamas agenda.

Hamas - an EU-designated terrorist organization with close ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, which also serves as a proxy of the Islamic Republic of Iran - does not operate solely in the Middle East.



Hamas-affiliated activists know that they operate under the radar of law enforcement authorities. (Credit: Courtesy)

Therefore, Europe must heed the warning: Hamas has spent decades building an infrastructure of "civilian fronts" in Europe that garner financial, media, and political support on European soil through partnerships with its operatives and affiliates in Europe and even European politicians, the latter of whom are likely unaware that Hamas exploits them to promote its terror agenda.

The European Leadership Network (ELNET), an NGO whose mission is to strengthen relations between Europe and Israel, exposes in a new report six Hamas-affiliated groups that operate in Europe: The European Campaign to End the Siege on Gaza (ECESG), the Council for European Palestinian Relations (CEPR), European NGOs Empowerment Services (ENES), the Palestinians in Europe Conference (PIEC/EPC), the European Palestinian Council for Political Relations (EUPAC), and the European Palestinians Initiative for National Action (EPINA).

Three of these groups –ECESG, CEPR, and ENES—were dissolved after being recognized as Hamas affiliates. As for PIEC/EPC, EUPAC, and EPINA, they were merely rebranded but continue to lobby EU officials, spread Hamas propaganda, and fundraise for Hamas.

All six organizations are overseen by the very same leaders who have been designated as Hamas operatives by Israel, including Amin Abou Rashed, Majed Al-Zeer, Mazen Kahel, Adel Abdullah Doghman, Mohammad Hannoun, and Zaher Birawi.

The fact that three Hamas-affiliated groups in Europe were shut down only to reemerge under different names is crucial to understanding how Hamas operates in Europe. Hamas-affiliated activists know that they operate under the radar of law enforcement authorities. Therefore, they try to bypass those authorities by opening new organizations.

ELNET published this report because information on Hamas in Europe was scattered across multiple sites, in different languages, and without a coherent picture. Thanks to ELNET, there are now integrated reports that cover all Hamas-related activities in Europe. This will make it easier for policymakers, law enforcement authorities, and financial institutions to do their jobs.

On the first anniversary of the October 7 massacre, the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated Al-Zeer, Doghman, Hannoun, and Hannoun's Italy-based "charity" organization (Charity Association of Solidarity with the Palestinian People or (ABSPP), as Hamas' fundraising facades.

ELNET calls upon European leaders and law-enforcement authorities to examine its findings and investigate Hamas-affiliated organizations still operating in Europe. Banks and other financial institutions should monitor Hamas-affiliated individuals in Europe and review their financial activity. We also encourage research institutes, think tanks, and journalists to expose Hamas' fundraising activities in Europe.

Hamas has declared war not only on Israel and on the Jews but also on the West. This common enemy requires a common strategy. Hamas must be denied not only its military power but also its fundraising capabilities. Israel is taking care of the former; it is time for Europe to handle the latter.

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