



הארגון הבינלאומי של עורכי-דין ומשפטנים יהודים (ע"ר)  
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LAWYERS AND JURISTS (I.A.J.)

Vienna, June 10, 2015

An das  
Bundesministerium für Europa, Integration und Äußeres  
z.H. Herr Bundesminister Sebastian Kurz  
Minoritenplatz 8, 1010 Wien  
per E-Mail: [sebastian.kurz@bmcia.gv.at](mailto:sebastian.kurz@bmcia.gv.at)

Dear Minister of foreign affairs, dear Mr. Kurz, sehr geehrter Herr Bundesminister!

We write to you regarding the June 1, 2015 decision by the UN Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to recognize the Palestine Return Centre as a UN accredited NGO. We understand that this decision is awaiting ECOSOC approval and urge your country, as an ECOSOC member, to vote against this accreditation.

The Palestine Return Centre is recognized by the government of Israel as an organization with significant ties to Hamas. I refer you to an 87-page [report](#) dated March 30, 2011 published The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center on this topic.

The report states that while the PRC "announced that its activity was meant exclusively to further the cause of the Palestinian refugees, "in reality it serves as the organizational and coordinating arm of the Hamas movement in Europe."

The cover page of this report shows a picture of Ismail Haniya, head of the Hamas government in Gaza, giving a televised speech at the PRC's 2009 annual conference held in Milan as he is banned from entering EU countries as it designed Hamas a terrorist organization.

Among the report's numerous findings are that "the PRC was founded in 1996 in rejection of the Oslo Accords," that the Israeli Shin Bet determined that "three members of the PRC's board of trustees are Hamas activists who found refuge in Britain in the 1990s," and that on December 5, 2010, then Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak signed an order outlawing the PRC as an "unlawful association because it is part of the Hamas movement."

Former Minister Barak's order also stated that "two senior PRC activists" are "key figures in Interpal," designated by the United States and Israel as a terrorist organization "because it is one of the main components in global network funding Hamas."

As president of an association which is an accredited NGO, I understand the value and significance of having UN accreditation and the access to UN affairs and meetings not open to the public that UN accreditation provides. That the UN may soon provide this status to a Hamas-affiliated organization is surely not in accordance with its values and goals.

We therefore ask that you carefully review the matter and vote against accreditation of the Palestine Return Centre.

Sincerely,

Irit Kohn  
Irit Kohn, Adv.  
President

  
Julia Andres, Adv.  
IAJLJ's Austrian Representative

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