



AGPI Report Calling for Immediate Defunding and Dismantling of UNRWA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), founded in 1949 to resettle Palestinian Arabs displaced by their unsuccessful war against Israel's founding, is an institution that has lost its way and that now does far more harm than good.

Though its original mission was short-term refugee resettlement, UNRWA was pressured by militant opponents of Israel into changing its mission to one of long-term refugee perpetuation, even as an increasing share of its clientele had ceased to manifest the attributes of actual refugees. UNRWA also supplemented its new refugee perpetuation mission with a broad-based indoctrination mission, namely, to inculcate in its ever-expanding clientele a genocidal hatred of Israel, a hope for Israel's eventual destruction, and a self-sacrificial commitment to murderous terrorism designed to turn that hope into reality.

Part 1 of this report documents the transformation of UNRWA's founding mission of short-term refugee resettlement into its present one of long-term refugee perpetuation. Parts 2 and 3 document the extensive evidence of UNRWA's terrorism promotion mission, which includes the use of its schools to indoctrinate each rising generation in Jew-hatred and terror worship, and the use of its client population and facilities for the promotion and support of terrorism.

Finally, Part 4 explains that those two harmful missions have become entrenched into UNRWA's institutional DNA, rendering UNRWA a chief obstacle to Israel-Palestinian peace, to Palestinian flourishing, and to Israeli security. Accordingly this Report calls for the immediate defunding and dismantling of UNRWA, as a first step toward enabling a less violent and more peaceful relationship between the Palestinian people and Israel

FULL REPORT

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the UN donor-supported agency founded in 1949 to assist displaced Palestinian Arabs, not only has long outlived its usefulness, but in fact now functions both as a central obstacle to Palestinian-Israeli peace, and as a major cause of Palestinian statelessness and misery. For the sake of both Palestinian Arabs and Israelis, the time has long past come to end all aid to UNRWA, and for UNRWA to be permanently dismantled.

There are four principal reasons for this recommendation, each documented in this report:

- (1) UNRWA, instead of helping displaced Palestinians from 1948 get on with their lives, and contrary to established refugee assistance practice, has instead locked them in a multigenerational limbo, all while stoking their distress and directing it outward against Israel.
- (2) UNRWA schools are a principal source for incitement of each rising generation of Palestinian Arabs in hatred of Israel and Jews, and in ideological promotion of terrorism.
- (3) UNRWA employees, school alumni, and facilities are also extensively involved in promoting and carrying out murderous terrorist attacks against Israelis, by providing recruits and material support for the terrorist Hamas organization.

- (4) UNRWA, despite abundant public evidence of its institutional role in inciting, promoting, and facilitating terrorism, has done virtually nothing to effectively change and eradicate those practices.

1. UNRWA's Failed and Corrupted Refugee Assistance Mission

UNRWA's harmful mission failure becomes readily apparent in the context of its origins amid the worldwide refugee crisis that followed World War II, and in light of the U.N.-led response to that broader crisis. In sum, instead of resolving the issues of displaced Palestinians soon after the 1948 war, as happened then with all other refugee populations, UNRWA has deliberately perpetuated and exacerbated the Palestinian refugee problem.

World War II ended in 1945 with more than 16 million refugees and displaced persons across Europe. Two years later, ethnic strife accompanying the partition of India and Pakistan created another 13 million refugees, while civil wars in China and Greece added millions more.¹ These crises prompted the new United Nations first to create the International Refugee Organization (IRO) in December 1946, and then to replace it with the U.N. High Commissioner's Office for Refugees (UNHCR) in January 1951.²

The UNHCR's mandate was to respond to all of the world's ongoing refugee crises – except for the one caused by the 1948 Arab/Palestinian war against the new state of Israel: for this one, the U.N. instead created UNRWA. But it was the UNHCR that established global standards both for how to define “refugee” and for how to respond to refugee crises, and both of those standards were implemented for every refugee crisis on the planet – except, for the displaced Palestinian Arabs.

A. UNHCR's refugee definition – under which UNRWA “refugees” are not in fact refugees

The UNHCR's definition of “refugee” set forth multiple criteria, all of which had to be satisfied to qualify for refugee status:

- a. That the displaced persons' nation was the target of aggression, not the instigator of it – which is why the UNHCR's predecessor, the IRO, actually denied refugee status to displaced Germans after World War II.
- b. That the displaced persons are now outside their national homeland.
- c. That the displaced persons fled their homeland because of a “well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.”³

In addition, only the displaced persons themselves, not their descendants, qualify for refugee status. In limited circumstances, children of refugees may qualify for UNHCR services, but *not* for actual refugee status.⁴

Under these criteria, most of the originally displaced Palestinian Arabs from 1948-49 failed to qualify as refugees under the UNHCR definition. While their total numbers are debated, extensive archival research by historian Efraim Karsh found that the actual number of Palestinian Arabs displaced from the war falls between 583,000 and 609,000.⁵

The first disqualifying factor is that many of the so-called 1948 Palestinian refugees were effectively members of the aggressor nation, not the aggressed-against nation. The U.N. offered Palestinian Arabs their own state along with and alongside the new Israeli state in 1948, and Israel endorsed that statehood offer. Israel's founders also made clear that Palestinian Arabs within their own borders would be guaranteed equal rights and respect. But the leaders both of the incipient Palestinian state and of Palestinian Arabs in Israel chose instead to make war on Israel, publicly declaring their intent to annihilate it and claim all its land for themselves.

A second disqualifying factor applies to displaced Palestinians located in the West Bank and Gaza Strip: none of them were "outside" their national homeland. Rather, they lived in the very land designated in 1948 for the Palestinian state. As Efraim Karsh explains, "480,000 of the 600,000 Palestinian Arabs who fled their homes during the 1948-49 war – or 80 percent – remained in what used to be the country of their nationality at the outbreak of hostilities, namely mandatory Palestine."⁶

A third disqualifying factor, as Karsh also documents, is that the Palestinian Arabs who fled in 1948-49 lacked a "well-founded fear of being persecuted" by the new Israeli state, especially given that:

the Zionist leadership went out of its way to articulate its desire for peaceful coexistence with the country's Arab population. Indeed, no sooner had the guns fallen silent than a senior British diplomat on a fact-finding mission to Gaza in June 1949 was told by the refugees that "they have no quarrel with the Jews, that they have lived with the Jews all their lives and are perfectly ready to go back and live with them again."⁷

Finally, even if the above three refugee criteria did not disqualify 1948's displaced Palestinians, the number of them alive today is just a fraction of their population 65 years ago. In 2018, it was reported that a confidential U.S. State Department assessment found "that only 20,000 of the [alternatively estimated] 700,000 Arab refugees who fled Palestine during the War of Independence are still alive and displaced from their homes."⁸

In sum, few if any of the approximately 600,000 Palestinian Arabs who actually fled Israel in 1948-49 qualified as refugees under the established United Nations criteria for such status; and even if they did, only a small fraction of them survive today.

Yet in flagrant disregard of UNHCR's long-standing refugee definition, UNRWA now provides refugee subsidies and services for *5.9 million* Palestinian Arabs – 75 years after the events that gave rise to the original generation's displacement, and 295 times the number of originally-displaced Palestinians actually living today.⁹

The unreality of this figure is further highlighted by the post-World War II refugee response protocol established by UNHCR, which was applied to every other refugee population worldwide – and which if implemented for displaced Palestinians, most likely would have resolved and ended the Palestinian “refugee” problem well before 1960.

B. UNHCR’s refugee response protocol – under which all UNRWA “refugees” would have been resettled more than 60 years ago

The UNHCR, like its IRO predecessor, was established on the assumption that refugee status is “a temporary plight that needs to be rectified swiftly.”¹⁰ Hence even amid millions of refugees worldwide in the late 1940s, “the High Commissioner’s Office for Refugees was initially conceived as a three-to-five-years-long agency.”¹¹ And in fact, within a decade following the end of World War II, millions of displaced persons across Europe had been either repatriated back home or resettled in their new countries of residence.¹²

That same short-term intention governed the UN’s plans for UNRWA, which initially “was set up on the assumption ‘that the problem would be resolved in a matter of months.’”¹³ Tel Aviv University Professor Nitza Nachmias explains:

UNRWA was created to provide short-term, emergency, humanitarian aid to Palestinian refugees, just as the newly formed United Nations sought to assist millions of refugee populations in other parts of the world created by the upheavals of World War II and its aftermath. The UNRWA operation was expected to be completed within two or three years, once the emergency conditions were resolved and the refugees resettled.¹⁴

And in fact, then-UN Secretary-General Dag Hammerskjold led a UN effort directing UNRWA “to work to reintegrate the refugees in the places of their refuge,” just as UNHCR was doing with other refugee populations around the world.¹⁵ Most displaced Palestinians were then residing either in the West Bank, which Jordan had unlawfully seized in 1948, or in Gaza, which Egypt had unlawfully seized in 1948. Both displaced populations easily could have been resettled in those respective Arab-governed locales within a few years, thus ending their refugee status.¹⁶

All of which invites the question: Why did that resettlement not happen, unlike the settlement of all other refugee populations worldwide from the same time frame?

The answer involves the post-1948 conduct of the Palestinian Arabs’ principal leader, the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini. As al-Husseini’s biographer Zvi Elpeleg explains, “[f]or Haj Amin, the destruction of the State of Israel was the only possible solution,”¹⁷ hence he opposed Hammerskjold’s efforts to resettle displaced Palestinians:

Haj Amin . . . continued to believe that . . . history could be altered if the Palestinians would only refuse to accept the existing situation [of settlement

outside the new state of Israel]. His aim during the following years was to establish contact with the refugees living in camps in Arab states, and to prevent any solution that would involve their remaining in those countries. To this end he conducted a propaganda campaign throughout the Arab world . . . to persuade the refugees to reject the UN plan to settle them permanently in the places where they were now resident.¹⁸

In early 1962 al-Husseini wrote the leaders of every Arab country, demanding that they oppose the U.N.'s then-continuing efforts to resettle displaced Palestinians. In May of that year, at an Arab summit in Mecca, those leaders formally gave al-Husseini their pledge to "reject[] the attempts to settle the [Palestinian] refugees in the Arab states."¹⁹

Notably, the same Arab leaders obstructing such resettlement had since 1948 forced the expulsion of over 800,000 Jews from their own countries, letting not one of them return, and hence forcing all of them to be resettled. Most were absorbed by Israel.²⁰

Amid such political pressures against resettling displaced Palestinians, UNRWA effectively surrendered its mission of emergency aid and resettlement, but continued to operate by "providing non emergency, civil services" such as welfare, housing, and schooling to Palestinian Arabs across the region.²¹ This happened despite the fact that by the 1950s, "[m]ost Palestinians living in the West Bank, Gaza and Jordan have been integrated in the local communities, and many in Jordan have acquired Jordanian citizenship"²² – which again, under established UNHCR standards, would have conclusively ended their refugee status. Yet even now, those still living from among the "resettled-in-fact" Palestinians, along with their children and grandchildren, retain UNRWA refugee status and continue to receive UNRWA subsidies and social services.

This explains why the existence of UNRWA's 5.9 million-strong clientele of Palestinian refugees represents a complete inversion of established international refugee standards and practice. Had those standards and practice been followed, the plight of Palestinian refugees would likely have been addressed and ended before 1960 – and today's teeming slums and cities of third- and fourth-generation Palestinian "refugees" would not exist.

All this is the legacy of the Mufti al-Husseini's deliberate subversion of UNRWA's mission well over half a century ago, which turned UNRWA into both a permanent welfare agency, and as documented below, the disseminator of al-Husseini's annihilationist ideology in its schools. As a result, UNRWA has transformed more than five million descendants of the originally displaced Palestinians into the foot-soldiers of annihilationist Palestinian politics, serving as a permanent obstacle to Israeli-Palestinian peace. Itamar Marcus, founder and director of the NGO Palestine Media Watch, aptly summed up the problem in 2021:

By refusing to resettle the original refugees, UNRWA intentionally turned a limited problem into permanent misery, both for those actual refugees and the 5.5 million people who were born [and counted as] refugees. Possibly,

the worst thing that ever happened to Palestinians was the creation of UNRWA. UNRWA is the real Palestinian Nakba (catastrophe).²³

2. UNRWA Schools' Pervasive Incitement to Terrorism

For decades now, UNRWA schools across the Middle East have faithfully carried forward the Mufti al-Husseini's legacy of annihilationist Israel-hatred, by inculcating that mindset into each rising generation of Palestinian children. This has been documented at length by several NGO monitoring groups, including IMPACT-se, UN Watch, Palestine Media Watch (PMW), and the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI).

UNRWA operates hundreds of schools across Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, reportedly teaching a total of over 540,000 Palestinian children.²⁴ In the Gaza Strip alone, it operates 183 schools serving over 286,000 children.²⁵ Those UNRWA Gaza schools all use "the Palestinian Authority's curriculum, which is taught across the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem."²⁶

The UNRWA schools' pedagogy of Jew-hatred and terror-worship has been documented for well over a decade. In 2008, IMPACT-se reported on the proliferation of such content in Palestinian Authority textbooks, which were (and still are) used in UNRWA schools across the Palestinian territories:

The PA schoolbooks for grades 11 and 12 . . . deny the Jewish and Israeli "others" any legitimacy, demonize them, assign them exclusive responsibility for the Mideast conflict, avoid any expression that would openly advocate peace, and encourage instead violent struggle against them. These fundamentals, in their various manifestations, are spread throughout the Palestinian curriculum and are found in books for all grades²⁷

A subsequent report in 2011 found similar inflammatory content:

UNRWA schools use Palestinian Authority textbooks, which teach anti-Israel attitudes, . . . encourage and praise jihad against Israel [and] promot[e] the refugees' return to 1948 homes. . . . [IMPACT-se] has analyzed these books and found that peace is not mentioned at all. Israel is presented as a usurper, occupier and aggressor, and Jews and Israelis as cunning and deceitful.²⁸

A 2016 report by the Mideast Freedom Forum Berlin reviewed Palestinian school texts for grades 1 through 9 used in UNRWA schools. The report found that the texts "propagate a climate of violence"; "consistently portray Jews in a strongly negative manner, . . . often demoniz[ing] them"; portray maps that deny the existence of Israel; glorify the "Palestinian resistance against Jews"; falsely claim "the Jews destroyed the majority of Palestinian villages" and expelled "the remaining native population"; depict

Israel as “a Zionist terror organization”; and emphasize “the significance of martyrs,” i.e., Palestinian suicide bombers.²⁹

In 2017, IMPACT-se reviewed the PA/UNRWA school curriculum and found no improvement. On the contrary, the Palestinian curriculum had been made even more extreme:

The new Palestinian curriculum, which includes new textbooks for grades 1-4, is significantly more radical than previous curricula. To an even greater extent than the 2014-15 textbooks, the curriculum teaches students to be martyrs, demonizes and denies the existence of Israel and focuses on a “return” to an exclusively Palestinian homeland. Within the pages of the textbooks children are taught to be expendable. Messages such as: “the volcano of my revenge”; “the longing of my blood for my land”; and “I shall sacrifice my blood to saturate the land” suffuse the curriculum. Math books use numbers of dead martyrs to teach arithmetic.³⁰

That same year, a 2017 study by UN Watch reported on the social media postings of 40 UNRWA schoolteachers. Among other things, it found:

UNRWA teachers and staffers celebrating the terrorist kidnapping of Israeli teenagers, cheering rockets being fired at Israeli civilian centers, endorsing various forms of violence, erasing Israel from the map, praising Hitler and posting his photo, and posting overtly antisemitic videos, caricatures, and statements.³¹

One self-identified UNRWA teacher posted two photos of Adolf Hitler, describing him as “our beloved,” and “Hitler the great,” and adding, “God bless Hitler.”³² Another posted on Facebook “an image of a Jew with three guns and a knife trained on his head; the Hebrew caption reads ‘Blood = Blood. #KillThem.’ In Arabic, it says ‘Kill the settlers.’”³³ Yet another educator, who self-identified as an Assistant Head Teacher at UNRWA, praised “the ‘awesome kidnapping’ of three Israeli teenagers famously killed in a Hamas terrorist operation which precipitated the 2014 Gaza war.” The other 37 UNRWA teachers posted similar expressions of Jew-hatred and terror-worship.

In 2018, a subsequent update of the Palestinian schools’ curriculum was found to have further radicalized its materials, as reported by IMPACT-se:

The new textbooks for grades 1–4 proved to be more radical than those published before. There was, simultaneously, both a denial of Israel’s existence and hatred of it as a neighbor.

...

[N]ew textbooks for grades 5–11 . . . emphasi[zed] . . . extreme nationalist and Islamist ideologies in both Gaza and the Palestinian Authority . . .

manifested in the severe demonization of Israel . . . [and] themes of heroism and martyrdom in a sophisticated program to lure Palestinian boys and girls to their deaths in clashes with Israelis.

. . .

In sum, the PA elites are teaching Palestinian children that there can be no compromise. Israel is an occupying colonial power. The conflict will remain alive and violent until such time as a new Arab or Muslim coalition . . . removes all things Israel and Israeli from the landscape.³⁴

Almost three years later, a review of the 2020-2021 PA/UNRWA curriculum disclosed that the materials had been revised again, and yet again only in a yet more extreme direction:

The latest IMPACT-se analysis of the new Palestinian curriculum found it has moved further from meeting UNESCO standards and the newly published textbooks were found to be more radical than those previously published. There is a systematic insertion of violence, martyrdom and jihad across all grades and subjects. Extreme nationalism and Islamist ideologies are widespread throughout the curriculum, including science and math textbooks. The possibility of peace with Israel is rejected. Any historical Jewish presence in the modern-day territories of Israel and the Palestinian Authority is entirely omitted from the textbooks.³⁵

In March 2023 – seven months before Hamas’s October 7 invasion – UN Watch published a comprehensive report both of UNRWA schools’ teaching materials and of UNRWA teachers’ social media postings.³⁶ The report documented an abundance of textbooks and lesson plans promoting Jew-hatred and terror-worship. The following examples are a partial but representative sampling, all drawn from UNRWA classroom displays, school texts, and lesson plans:

- A 5th grade classroom display featured a photo of Dalal Mughrabi, who led a 1978 Israeli bus ambush that murdered 38 Israelis, 13 of them children. The accompanying text praised Mughrabi as a “fighting leader” and her fallen comrades as “heroes.”³⁷ Those words came from a 5th grade UNRWA lesson plan titled “Hooray for the Heroes,” which said of the ambush team: “We sing their praises . . . name our children after them . . . [and] name our streets and squares after them.”
- A 9th grade Arabic Language assignment included a story about another Palestinian firebomb attack on “a Jewish bus,” in the vicinity of Ramallah; it mockingly praised the attack as “a barbecue party” on “the buses of the colonial settlement.”³⁸

- A poem from a 7th grade Arabic Language text described Israel as a “despicable enemy” and “the occupier,” which will be expelled from the land “with blood and flesh.”³⁹
- An essay in a 5th grade Arabic Language text states, “What I love about [my village] is the smell of the ground mixed with the blood of martyrs”; the lesson further instructs that martyrdom and jihad are “the most important meanings of life . . .”⁴⁰
- A 6th grade Arabic Study lesson, titled “Loving the Homeland,” urges each student to “nourish the homeland with his blood,” and lists as an example of good grammar, the sentence “I will commit jihad to liberate the homeland.”⁴¹
- A 9th grade Islamic Studies assignment required students to complete a sentence about what happens to those who neglect their duty to wage jihad. The listed corrected answer was, “God curses him, blinds his eyesight, and deafens his hearing.”⁴²
- A 9th grade Arabic language textbook included a series of exam questions about the city of Safed, portrayed as another Palestinian town stolen by “Zionist gangs” who “sank their fangs of hatred” into “her [Safed’s] pure body.”⁴³
- A 9th grade social studies booklet recycles and updates the medieval blood libel, falsely accusing Israelis of dumping toxic waste across the West Bank and Gaza, thereby causing Palestinians to suffer “numerous deadly diseases such as cancer.”⁴⁴

That same March 2023 report quoted numerous social media postings of self-identified UNRWA teachers, who repeatedly lavished praise on Palestinian terrorists for murdering Jews.⁴⁵ One such teacher’s post denounced Jews as “bloodthirsty people” and called on Adolf Hitler to “wake up” because ““there are still some people you need to burn.”⁴⁶

Considered as a whole, the evidence assembled by UN Watch and similar NGOs establishes beyond a reasonable doubt that UNRWA schools pervasively and systematically indoctrinate each new generation of Palestinian children in genocidal hatred of Israel and in emulation of martyrdom operations against Israel, that is, mass-slaughter suicide missions. This is profoundly incriminating, given the abundance of evidence demonstrating that mass hate indoctrination, especially across the Middle East, functions as a central causal trigger of both terror campaigns and genocides.⁴⁷

The problem has been succinctly summarized by Richard Goldberg of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, in recent testimony before the U.S. Congress:

Put simply, UNRWA raises children to internalize the genocidal campus slogans you see on college campuses today – only they will be perpetrators

of the genocide, not the college kids cheering it on. In that respect, October 7 was the logical conclusion of UNRWA's indoctrination.⁴⁸

As the next section documents, the events of October 7 powerfully validate Goldberg's conclusion.

3. UNRWA Teachers and Alumni Cheering and Perpetrating October 7 Attacks, and UNRWA Facilities Used to Support Those Attacks

In its October 7, 2023 invasion of southwest Israel, a Hamas terror army massacred over 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals, including 35 Americans and 7 Canadians.⁴⁹ Hamas also seized 253 hostages.⁵⁰ As was widely reported, the killings were committed in the most savage manner possible: Entire families executed in their homes, many bearing the marks of excruciating tortures. Other families strapped together and burned alive. Forty babies at a kibbutz massacred, many beheaded. Dozens of women brutally raped, with body parts cut off while still alive. The mutilated body of a dead rape victim paraded on display for throngs of cheering Gazans.

Within hours of the October 7 invasion, and continuing for weeks amid widespread media reports detailing the gruesome savagery of the attacks, UNRWA employees across the Gaza Strip erupted in online praise and cheers for the attackers. On the Telegram platform, a chat group of 3,000 UNRWA teachers was found to be "replete with posts celebrating the Hamas massacre of October 7th minutes after it began, praising the murderers and rapists as 'heroes,' glorifying the 'education' the terrorists received, gleefully sharing photos of dead or captured Israelis and urging the execution of hostages."⁵¹ The chat group listed UNRWA teachers' names, schedules, and school curricula, and revealed that "UNRWA teachers regularly share videos, photos and messages inciting to Jihadi terrorism, and openly celebrating the Hamas massacre and rape of civilians."⁵²

The several UNRWA teachers' post-October 7 posts not only celebrated the savage attacks on Israelis, but openly called for more mass murders, described Jews as the "sons of apes and pigs," denied Israel's right to exist, and urged Gazan civilians to ignore Israeli target warnings and remain in place to serve as human shields for Hamas – that is, actively encouraging Palestinian civilians to die for Hamas propaganda gains.⁵³

In addition, IMPACT-se has documented over 100 UNRWA school graduates who have carried out terrorist murders and attempted murders of Israeli civilians in recent years.⁵⁴ At least 118 participants in the October 7 invasion were graduates of UNRWA schools.⁵⁵ One of the hostages released by Hamas in November reported that "he was held captive by an UNRWA teacher, who barely fed him and denied him medical treatment."⁵⁶

Intelligence reports now show that at least twelve UNRWA employees actually participated in Hamas's October 7 Hamas attacks and abductions.⁵⁷ Those same reports show that about 10 percent of UNRWA's 12,000 employees in Gaza – that is, 1,200

employees – have direct ties to either Hamas or Palestine Islamic Jihad (both listed as foreign terrorist organizations by the U.S. State Department); and that up to 50 percent – or 6,000 UNRWA employees in Gaza – “have at least one close relative with ties to the terror groups.”⁵⁸

Polling data confirms that UNRWA staffers who support terrorism are by no means “outliers” within their community, but rather reflect majority sentiment among Palestinians. A Palestinian poll conducted two months into the Gaza-Israel war, between November 22 and December 2, 2023, found that “57% of respondents in Gaza and 82% in the West Bank believe Hamas was correct in launching the October attack.”⁵⁹

UNRWA also has been implicated in lending its infrastructure and facilities to support Hamas’s terror campaigns, including the October 7, 2023 invasion of Israel. In the months since October 7, the IDF has discovered several UNRWA school buildings used by Hamas “to store weapons, such as rockets, anti-tank missiles, launchers and automatic rifles. The military warehouses were found in close proximity to functioning classrooms or to a civilian population that found shelter in the schools.”⁶⁰

Specifically, over approximately six weeks between November 2023 and January 2024, the IDF found several Gaza schools used as weapons depots, terrorist assembly areas, and terrorist escape routes, including:

- Mortar shells hidden in a kindergarten in the northern Gaza Strip.
- A Hamas operational shaft dozens of meters deep located in a school yard.
- An explosive wreath and other weapons in a school compound in Beit Hanaoun, which also contained multiple tunnel shafts, one of which was booby-trapped with explosives.
- An underground shaft and other terrorist facilities in a school area near a clinic and another school in the northern Gaza Strip.
- A school in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip containing sniper rifles, explosives, anti-tank missiles, rockets, and operational shafts, with swastikas painted on the walls. Warehouses near the school contained rocket launchers.
- A terrorist squad on the grounds of a school in the Shejaiya neighborhood, which exchanged fire with IDF soldiers. After the terrorists were eliminated, the IDF found Kalashnikov assault rifles, grenades, and ammunition in the classrooms, along with a shaft connecting to an extensive underground tunnel.
- Two schools in the Rimal neighborhood of Gaza City found to contain numerous terrorists, several of whom surrendered.
- Terrorists and a large quantity of weapons stored in a school in the Jabalia region.

- Schools in Sheikh Radwan in Gaza City – adjacent to mosques and residential buildings – containing hundreds of weapons, including grenades, RPG launchers, explosives and various media.
- A building housing an education office, a cultural center and a school, from which shots were fired, and inside of which the IDF found rocket launchers, documents and Hamas weapons.
- A kindergarten in the central Gaza Strip containing a large quantity of weapons and other signs of terrorists.⁶¹

UNRWA support for Hamas terror is also compellingly demonstrated by the IDF's discovery, directly below UNRWA's main Gaza headquarters, of an underground Hamas intelligence center and computer server farm. The air-conditioned center contained several computer servers along with "an electrical room, industrial battery power banks and living quarters for Hamas terrorists operating the computer servers"⁶² Adjacent to the underground center were "several rooms, including a kitchenette, a meeting room with office chairs, two bathrooms and living quarters with several mattresses."⁶³

The Hamas intel center was located 20 meters underground, directly below the server room for the UNRWA headquarters. Most significantly, electric cables connected the UNRWA and Hamas server rooms, through which UNRWA provided the Hamas data center's large electricity needs.⁶⁴

UNRWA's pleas that it was unaware of the Hamas intel center/server farm are refuted by several damning facts. First, UNRWA would have experienced a major and continuing spike in its electricity bills once the Hamas center was up and running. Second, UNRWA staff could not possibly have ignored the major construction work for the center, as the UNRWA headquarters has "a perimeter wall, a gate, cameras, [and] at the gate they log who comes in and out. Whoever worked at UNRWA knew very well who was coming in, and who they were covering for."⁶⁵ Third, it turns out that Hamas also used UNRWA's above-ground headquarters to store large quantities of weapons and equipment, including "[g]renades, rockets, launchers, [and] explosives"⁶⁶

In sum, throughout UNRWA's Gaza school system, and among UNRWA's thousands of Gaza employees, and even in and under UNRWA's Gaza headquarters, the story is the same: Fervent support for Hamas; endorsement of its oft-proclaimed genocidal hatred of Israel; indoctrination of its hundreds of thousands of students in that same genocidal hatred; and widespread use of facilities to house and hide Hamas weapons, explosives, and rockets – all intended for the mass slaughter of Israelis. The extensive integration of UNRWA with Hamas has been systemic, pervasive, and catastrophically lethal.

4. UNRWA's Knowing & Willful Refusal to End Terror-Promoting Practices

For at least sixteen years, UNRWA's promotion of Jew-hatred and glorification of terrorism have been publicly disclosed in a number of widely-disseminated reports, as documented by the several examples set forth in Part 2, above. Despite these several public disclosures, UNRWA's practices regarding terror incitement remain as bad as ever, if not worse. This long sequence of public disclosures effectively refutes any claims by UNRWA that its leaders were unaware of such pervasive practices. And the fact that those practices have persisted despite such a history of disclosures strongly suggests that they reflect the UNRWA leadership's deliberate preferences and policies.

As Part 2 reported in greater detail, between 2008 and 2023 at least seven major studies and resulting reports have publicly documented a pervasive pattern of incitement to Jew-hatred and terror-worship throughout the UNRWA schools' curricula. These include reports published in 2008, 2011, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2021, and 2023. Significantly, three of the reports, from 2017, 2018, and 2021, did document changes in the trendline of the incitement pattern. But rather than UNRWA's reducing the volume and intensity of curricular terror-incitement, the trendline change in each case went in the opposite direction, toward ever more extreme forms of terror incitement.

In 2021, AGPI CEO Avi Benlolo traveled to Jerusalem and met with senior United Nations officials, including Lynn Hastings, the Deputy Head of the UN Mission in Jerusalem, and the heads of UNRWA responsible for the West Bank and Gaza. During the meeting, he raised concerns about UNRWA schools teaching Palestinian children a curriculum that includes antisemitism, incitement, and denial of Israel's existence. Mr. Benlolo referenced reports from Human Rights Watch and Impact-SE, the same ones cited in our study.

While the UN and UNRWA officials denied the allegations overall, they acknowledged that many teachers have the freedom to interpret the curriculum independently. They also admitted to having to comply with the Palestinian Authority's historical interpretation of the conflict in the curriculum, which includes denying Israel's existence and sometimes includes antisemitic content. When questioned about this, they rhetorically asked if Israel preferred the PA and Hamas to have full control over the curriculum.

In essence, the UN and UNRWA officials were aware of the incitement in their schools but believed it was the only viable path forward. Unfortunately, as evidenced on October 7th, the deep-seated animosity cultivated in UNRWA-run schools against Israel and Jews contributed to the violence witnessed on that day.

Despite both this explicit notice and warning in 2021, and years of published evidence documenting UNRWA's antisemitic and terror-promoting curricula, UNRWA continued to do nothing to clean out this harmful content from its schools. And in addition to ignoring that evidence, UNRWA went on the offensive, issuing several public denials

that its schools' promoted terrorism and Jew-hatred, and publicly condemning the organizations that had exposed it.

In June 2021, UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini denounced several unnamed organizations for making “irrational allegations such as incitement to violence or anti-Semitism” in UNRWA schools.⁶⁷ In August 2021, UNRWA issued a public statement denying “politically-driven assertions against the Agency” and accusing UN Watch of making . . . ‘sensationalist and politically-motivated attacks.’⁶⁸ In September 2021, Commissioner-General Lazzarini publicly complained of “growing attacks from politically motivated pressure groups on its education programme.”⁶⁹

Then in October 2021, before a United Nations committee, Lazzarini again denounced “politically motivated attacks on our education system” and “claim[ed] that ‘those behind these attacks’ . . . do not have the wellbeing of Palestine refugee children at heart.”⁷⁰ In July 2022, UNRWA Deputy Commissioner Leni Stensith denounced IMPACT-se as “an organization already well known for its previous sensationalized attempts to delegitimize the Agency’s work,” and denigrated its reports as “premised upon smoke and mirrors – obfuscation, not truth”⁷¹

Among other things, this pattern of denial and denunciation signifies that UNRWA is profoundly lacking in the capacity for self-repair and constructive reform. UNRWA is not only a failed institution, but one that is irretrievably locked into its pattern of failure. The hard but glaring reality is this: promoting Jew-hatred and terrorism long ago became central components of UNRWA’s mission; they remain so to this day; and they show no realistic prospect of ever being expunged.

Conclusion

The evidence assembled in this report makes undeniably clear that more than 60 years ago, UNRWA’s designated mission of refugee resettlement was transformed into one of refugee perpetuation, even as an increasing share of its clientele had ceased to manifest the attributes of actual refugees. The evidence also makes undeniably clear that UNRWA has supplemented this refugee perpetuation mission with a broad-based indoctrination mission, namely, to inculcate in its ever-expanding clientele a genocidal hatred of Israel, a hope for Israel’s eventual destruction, and a self-sacrificial commitment to murderous terrorism designed to turn that hope into reality.

What this also makes clear is that UNRWA has played a central role in obstructing and sabotaging all possibility of Israel-Palestinian peace, and hence also has prevented its 5.9 million Palestinian clients from finally starting to live normal lives, unlike the more than 20 million displaced persons after World War II who did just that. The conclusion to be drawn from these facts is clear, namely: There will be no peace, no Palestinian flourishing, and no Israeli security on its borders unless and until UNRWA is fully defunded and dismantled. Its responsibilities can be transitioned to other agencies, including the UNHCR, which will need to be closely monitored and prevented from resuming UNRWA’s destructive terror-promoting mission.

Accordingly, AGPI urges that the following actions be taken as soon as possible, and that the countries which have been UNRWA's foremost contributors now take the lead in urging the adoption of these recommendations:

1. Dismantle UNRWA.
2. Transfer emergency Gaza aid responsibilities to non-UN organizations that have proven records of effective and non-partisan aid provision.
3. Bring together a multi-national force under Israel's command to oversee ongoing relief efforts in Gaza.

The permanent dismantling of UNRWA will be only a first step, but a real and vitally necessary step, toward giving Israeli-Palestinian peace a chance. It is long overdue.

¹ Efraim Karsh, "The Privileged Palestinian 'Refugees,'" *Middle East Quarterly*, Summer 2018, at <https://www.meforum.org/7241/the-privileged-palestinian-refugees>.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ "Is UNRWA's hereditary refugee status for Palestinians unique?" *Kohelet Policy Forum*, January 2019, at <https://en.kohelet.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Background-paper-Is-UNRWAs-hereditary-refugee-status-for-Palestinians-unique.pdf>.

⁵ Efraim Karsh, "How Many Palestinian Arab Refugees Were There?" *Middle East Forum*, April 2011, at <https://www.meforum.org/2875/how-many-palestinian-arab-refugees>.

⁶ Karsh, "The Privileged Palestinian 'Refugees.'"

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Ariel Kahana, "US report finds only 20,000 Palestinian refugees in the world," *Israel Hayom*, July 18, 2018, at <https://www.israelhayom.com/2018/07/18/report-us-finds-only-20000-palestinian-refugees-in-the-world/>.

⁹ "Palestinian Refugees," *UNRWA*, at <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>.

¹⁰ Karsh, "The Privileged Palestinian 'Refugees.'"

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Milan J. Kubic, "A refugee looks back: What the 1940s teach us about today's crisis," *The Wilson Quarterly*, at https://www.wilsonquarterly.com/quarterly/_/a-refugee-looks-back-what-the-1940s-teach-us-about-todays-crisis.

¹³ Karsh, "The Privileged Palestinian 'Refugees.'"

¹⁴ Nitzza Nachmias, "UNRWA at 60: Are There Better Alternatives?" *Middle East Forum*, October 12, 2009, at <https://www.meforum.org/2481/unrwa-at-60-better-alternatives>.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Zvi Elpeleg, *The Grand Mufti Haj Amin Al-Husseini: Founder of the Palestinian National Movement* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1993), 136.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 128.

²⁰ Lucette Lagnato, "When the Arab Jews Fled," *Wall Street Journal*, October 12, 2012, at <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10000872396390443294904578048451218760728>.

²¹ Nachmias, "UNRWA at 60."

²² *Ibid.* Displaced Palestinians residing in both the West Bank and Jordan were given Jordanian citizenship under Jordan's King Abdullah, who ruled from 1921 to 1951. Shaul Bartal, "The Palestinian Refugee Problem Resolved," *Middle East Quarterly*, Fall 2013, 32.

²³ Itamar Marcus, "UNRWA - the worst thing that ever happened to Palestinians," *Jerusalem Post*, November 13, 2021, at <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/unrwa-the-worst-thing-that-ever-happened-to-palestinians-opinion-684892>.

²⁴ "UNRWA Education: Textbooks and Terror," *IMPACT-se*, 3, at <https://www.impact-se.org/wp-content/uploads/UNRWA-Education-Textbooks-and-Terror-Nov-2023.pdf>.

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²⁷ Dr. Arnon Groiss, Executive Summary of "Palestinian Textbooks: From Arafat to Abbas and Hamas," *IMPACT-se*, March 2008, at https://www.impact-se.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/PA2008_summary.pdf.

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³³ *Ibid.*, and at <https://unwatch.org/16713-2/>.

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³⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

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⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 57.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 62-63.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 12-40.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁴⁷ See Henry Kopel, *War on Hate: How to Stop Genocide, Fight Terrorism, and Defend Freedom* (New York: Lexington Books, 2021), especially Chapters 2, 4, 5, and 7.

⁴⁸ Richard Goldberg, "UNRWA Exposed: Examining the Agency's Mission and Failures," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, submitted as Congressional testimony before the House

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⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ "UNRWA Education: Reform or Regression?" 6.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 8.