UN Employee Resigns Amid Allegations He Was Elected to Hamas Leadership

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Suhail al-Hindi, an United Nations Relief Works Agency employee who was allegedly elected to the Hamas leadership, resigned from his position at the UN body, the Palestinian news site al-Rishalah reported on Saturday.

UNRWA Spokesman Chris Gunness confirmed Hindi is no longer employed by UNRWA. “I can confirm that Mr. al-Hindi is no longer working for UNRWA. It is not the policy of the Agency to discuss the terms of departure of individual staff members,” Gunness said in an email statement.

UNRWA suspended Hindi in February, pending an investigation into the allegations against him.

Israel’s Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, which is responsible for coordinating civil, economic, and security affairs in the Palestinian territories, accused Hindi of being elected to the Hamas leadership in February.

“The name Suheil Ahmad Hassan al-Hindi has emerged as one of those selected for membership in the Hamas politburo,” COGAT said in a report published on its website.

Hamas held leadership elections for its Gaza branch in the beginning of 2017, but has yet to announce all of their results.

Hindi has vehemently denied that he was elected to the Hamas leadership. “I have no relation to that issue in any way and I will sue the parties that are throwing around my name on social media and news sites,” Hindi said in early February.

UNRWA Employees’ Union Secretary General Yousif Hamoudna told al-Risalah on Saturday that Hindi’s resignation is unrelated to the allegations against him, without elaborating. Hamoudna added that Hindi plans to continue to serve refugees through alternative means.

Hindi was a teacher at an UNRWA school and the chairman of the UNRWA Employees’ Union in Gaza.

Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon welcomed Hindi’s resignation.

"It is time to finally put an end to the absurd situation in which UN employees, who are supposed to focus on humanitarian aid, abuse their positions and work simultaneously with terrorist organizations who call for the destruction of Israel,” Danon said in a statement.

COGAT was not immediately available to comment on Hindi’s resignation.