If We Can’t Dismantle UNRWA, Here’s How We Can Reform It

June 15, 2017

[By David Bedein](https://www.algemeiner.com/author/david-bedein)

The Algemeiner

<https://www.algemeiner.com/2017/06/15/if-we-cant-dismantle-unrwa-heres-how-we-can-reform-it/>

Virtually every media ​outlet ​took the recent UNRWA condemnation of Hamas terror tunnels found under an UNRWA school at face value. Yet none of these outlets acknowledged that ​the ​UNRWA teachers and workers unions in Gaza have been under the tight control of Hamas since 1999 — without a word of disapproval from UNRWA​.

The timing of the tunnel discovery was ironic; it took place just before Hamas will conduct its annual summer military training camp to teach upwards of 50,000 UNRWA students, aged 9-15, how to use live guns (and, in the future, kill Jews).

In light of UNRWA’s complicity in Hamas’ activities, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently called for the organization to be “dismantled.” Unfortunately, it is not within Israel’s power to ​”dismantle” UNRWA– as it operates under the mandate of the UN General Assembly.

Furthermore, if Western democratic nations were to cut funds to UNRWA, two scenarios ​would likely​ occur​:

First, the radical Islamic state of ​Qatar, which has a ​​presence in Gaza and Judea/Samaria​, would ​likely step in to replace any income lost from ​West​ern cuts​.

Second, Saudi Arabia, which recently stepped up its funding of UNRWA (and is now the third largest donor), would ​likely ​increase its contributions to make up for the difference.

If Qatar and Saudi Arabia ​become the largest donors to ​UNRWA, Israel and the West will lose all leverage over the organization — and UNRWA would likely become even more beholden to Hamas.

The best answer, then, is for Israel and Western nations to demand that UNRWA make the following reforms — and to condition all future financial support on whether or not these reforms are enacted.

1. Demand an audit of donor funds that have been given to UNRWA. This would expose the widespread problems of corruption and wasteful spending at UNRWA — and uncover any financial links between the organization and Hamas.

2. Demand that UN organizations work to permanently resettle Palestinian refugees, and end the false myth of a Palestinian “right of return” to Arab villages that existed before 1948.

3. Remove any part of the UNRWA curriculum that supports or justifies terrorism, jihad, martyrdom and the “right of return” by force of arms.

4. End all paramilitary training in UNRWA schools. How can UNRWA, as a UN agency, promote peace if it allows violence to be taught to Palestinian children?

5. Insist that UNRWA fire all employees affiliated with Hamas, in accordance with laws on the books in all Western nations that outlaw funding to international agencies that employ members of a terrorist organization.

6. Demand that UNRWA cancel its contract with its “youth ambassador” — Mohammad Assaf — who openly promotes the murder of Jews and Israelis.

UNRWA, in its current form, is a clear impediment to peace. Israel and the West must now act within reality to curb UNRWA policy, and to reform the organization. Empty calls for UNRWA to be “dismantled” simply aren’t enough.