



BRAD SHERMAN
UNITED STATES CONGRESS

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June 14, 2010

Secretary Janet Napolitano
Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

I am writing to urge the Department of Homeland Security to investigate and bar from entry into the United States, where appropriate under 8 USC 1182(a)(3), any foreign individual who participated in the so-called Free Gaza Flotilla that was stopped by Israeli forces and diverted to the port of Ashdod on May 31.

The participants in the Gaza flotilla knew that the materials on the ships in the flotilla were intended to be provided to the Hamas organization. The Hamas organization, which effectively controls the Gaza territory, was first designated a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) by the Secretary of State in 1997. The Israeli government and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency provide legitimate channels for aid via land routes. These allow for proper inspection and safeguards to prevent weapons smuggling and direct assistance to Hamas. By attempting to bypass legitimate channels, which were offered to the flotilla by the Israeli government,¹ the flotilla participants in effect were attempting to provide assistance directly to Hamas.

Several of the flotilla participants have contacts with the Hamas organization. Photos from an early Free Gaza visit to the region shows members of the group, including a U.S. participant in the latest flotilla, meeting with Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and receiving medals from the group.² The Israeli government has described a U.S. national participant in the flotilla as a Hamas operative who intended to enter Gaza for the purposes of conducting terrorist activity.³ In addition, an Iranian national residing in the United

¹ The Israeli government offered numerous times to provide for the delivery of the aid to the Gazan people through the existing land corridor if the flotilla ships were to be diverted to the Israeli Port of Ashdod, and did in fact do so once the ships were seized in the May 31 raid. Similarly, a subsequent vessel, the *Rachel Corrie*, was peacefully diverted by the Israeli forces to Ashdod so that the aid could be delivered through legitimate channels.

² See June 2 briefing by the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Bay Area, available at <http://www.theisraelproject.org/atf/cf/%7B84dc5887-741e-4056-8d91-a389164bc94e%7D/JCRC%20SF%20BRIEFING%20ON%20THE%20GAZA%20FLOTILLA%20CRISIS.PDF>

³ See June 6 Israeli Defense Briefing (attached)

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States who participated in the flotilla has been accused by the Israelis of attempting to smuggle forbidden electronic equipment into the territory.⁴

One of the groups responsible for organizing the flotilla, the Insani Yarhim Vakfi (IHH) was accused in testimony provided by a highly respected French counter-terrorism jurist of playing “an important role” in planning the Al Qaeda millennium plot.⁵ The umbrella organization to which IHH belongs, the Union of Good, was designated under Executive Order 13224 in 2008 by the Treasury Department – specifically for being a fundraiser for Hamas.⁶

There are appropriate channels for providing aid to the people of Gaza through various international organizations. Individuals that are moved to help should be encouraged to provide assistance through these channels and discouraged in the strongest possible ways from providing the assistance in ways that will aid Hamas. The United States should not welcome any citizen into our country who has provided material assistance to terrorist organization.

I thank you for your attention to this request and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



BRAD SHERMAN
Member of Congress

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ This testimony is available at http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/art/news/nation_world/terroristwithin/testimony16.pdf

⁶ See Treasury Press Release <http://treas.gov/press/releases/hp1267.htm>.

6 June 2010

**Several Flotilla Passengers are Active terror Operatives linked to Al-Qaeda, Hamas, and other Organizations
(Communicated by the IDF Spokesperson)**

The following passengers on board the Mavi Marmara are known to be involved in terrorist activity. The Mavi Marmara attempted to break the maritime closure on the Gaza Strip on Monday, May 31, 2010, and was boarded by Israel Navy forces.

Fatima Mahmadi (born 1979), is a United States resident of Iranian origin, and an active member of the organization "Viva Palestine", she attempted to smuggle forbidden electronic components into the Gaza Strip.

Ken O'Keefe (Born 1969), an American and British citizen, is a radical anti-Israel activist and operative of the Hamas terror organization. He attempted to enter the Gaza Strip in order to form and train a commando unit for the Palestinian terror organization.

Hassan Iynasi (born 1982), a Turkish citizen and activist in a Turkish charity organization, is known of providing financial support to the Palestinian Islamic Jihad terror organization.

Hussein Urosh, a Turkish citizen and activist in the IHH organization, was on his way to the Gaza Strip in order to assist in smuggling Al-Qaeda operatives via Turkey into the Strip.

Ahmad Umimon (born 1959), is a French citizen of Moroccan origin, and an operative of the Hamas terrorist organization.

From: Dugan, Catherine
Sent: Tuesday, July 06, 2010 4:03 PM
To: 'sarkiss@[REDACTED]'
Cc: ESLIAISON1
Subject: Transfer of letter from DHS to DOS
Attachments: 10-7021 Sherman 06.14.10.pdf; 10-7021 Sherman attachment 7.2.10.doc

Ms. Sarkis,

The Department of Homeland Security received the attached incoming letter and enclosure from Rep. Sherman regarding participants in the Free Gaza Flotilla. I believe this matter falls within the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of State, and I would appreciate it if appropriate inquiries could be initiated and a response prepared for Rep. Sherman.

Please reply to this email, so I know that it has been received.

Thank you,

Catherine Dugan
Correspondence Analyst
Office of the Executive Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
[REDACTED]