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## Al-Awda, The Palestine Right to Return Coalition Support for Terrorism

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One of the prominent themes at Al-Awda's demonstrations has been support for terrorist groups. In addition to [Hamas](#) and [Hezbollah](#) flags and signs at public rallies, members and supporters of Al-Awda have legitimized violent resistance against Israel in articles published on pro-Palestinian Web sites and on listserv e-mail messages distributed by the group.

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- **February 2009:** An e-mail distributed on the Al-Awda listserv with the subject line "The Right to Resist" was written by an Al-Awda supporter in Amsterdam who threateningly wrote that Palestinians "shall resist" as long as Israeli Jews don't move back "to Kiev, to Warsaw, Brooklyn and to Vilnius." His message concluded with, "Peace will come, after Israel leaves!! Peacefully [sic] or otherwise..."
- **December 2008:** An Al-Awda listserv posted a statement from Jamil Muzhir, a member of the [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine](#) (PFLP), that opposed renewing the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.
- **November 2008:** An Al-Awda listserv posted a list of several recent terrorist attacks against Israelis with the subject line, "Resistance: More PFLP attacks against the Zionist occupiers."
- **August 2008:** In a message to an Al-Awda listserv, Christopher Leadbeater, a member of Al-Awda in the United Kingdom, wrote, "I personally believe that the Palestinians, and all occupied peoples, have every right to resort to violence, whatever is necessary, to resist being occupied..."
- **July 2007:** At least five communiqués from the [PFLP](#), including one in conjunction with the [Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade](#), and one joint statement with [Hamas](#), were distributed via Al-Awda's main listserv. Nearly all of the communiqués expressed support for terrorist activity, extolling "martyrs," encouraging the "resistance," and detailing violence against Israeli troops.
- **March 2007:** Al-Awda issued a press release in support of Ahmad Saadat, the general secretary of the PFLP, who is currently in Israeli custody. The release encouraged "freedom loving people" to demand his release from prison.
- **November 16-19, 2006:** Samia Halaby, a former Al-Awda co-chair, served on a delegation at the "Solidarity with the Resistance" conference in Beirut, which was organized by [Hezbollah](#) and the Communist Party of Lebanon. The gathering was held to consolidate international support for "the resistance movements in Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq, without distinction," including Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, and the Iraqi insurgency. The conference's final statement indicated that participants agreed "to establish a worldwide network against the American-Zionist project which does not only target the area but also humanity." This, they agreed, would be achieved by "developing more and greater relations between leftist, democratic and nationalist currents and Islamic and resistance movements."
- **July-September 2006:** Several Al-Awda-organized events to protest the Lebanon war were marked by support for Hamas and Hezbollah. At a rally in Brooklyn, New York in September, Charlotte Kates of Al-Awda New York stated, "Our troops are Hezbollah. Our troops are the Palestinian resistance, and we do support our troops. And we will struggle and we will build the resistance here until all Palestine is free." Ahmed Eid, another Al-Awda representative who spoke at the event, declared: "We are all Hezbollah...I believe in armed struggle." Similarly, at a rally in New York a month earlier, Samia Halaby said of the fighting, "This will not come to an end until Israel is finished, until there is no Israel...We need to shut down the media and their corporations [we need to] shut down Israel."
- **September 2, 2004:** Al-Awda co-founder [Mazin Qumsiyeh](#) published an article in the Egyptian weekly Al-Ahram, calling for support of the "Iraqi resistance" against what he described as the pro-Israel "cabal pulling the strings in the White House." Qumsiyeh argued that U.S. support for Israel had been having a catastrophic effect with global implications and that "only by awakening the U.S. public and linking it to resistance movements from within the world community (including the Iraqi resistance), will this pathway to destruction be avoided."
- **Spring 2004:** Al-Awda joined two separate rallies across from the Israeli consulate in New York to protest the killing of Hamas leaders Sheik Ahmed Yassin and [Abdel Aziz Rantisi](#) by Israeli security forces. The first rally, following Yassin's death, was co-sponsored by the [ANSWER Coalition](#) and New Jersey Solidarity. Speakers memorialized Yassin while the crowd chanted, "Hey hey, ho ho, Hamas will never go" and "Long live jihad."

Another rally following Rantisi's death was co-sponsored by New Jersey Solidarity, the IAC and [Neturei Karta](#). Al-Awda coordinator Abbas Hamideh told the crowd that Rantisi "was a leader who defended and fought for Palestinian rights." Members of the crowd waved signs that said: "What's next Sharon. Ovens!," "Globalize the Intifada," and "All of Israel is occupied territory." An Al-Awda New York-New Jersey representative, Rama Kased, lauded the Hamas leader: "Abdel Aziz Rantisi was a son of Palestine, a refugee, and a symbol of resistance against a racist apartheid regime."
- **December 13-14, 2003:** Elias Rashmawi, a member of Al-Awda Sacramento, served as one of the coordinators of the [Second International Cairo Conference](#) in Egypt, which was held under the banner, "Yes to resistance in Iraq and Palestine, no to capitalist globalization and U.S. hegemony." The conference had representatives from the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas. Also in attendance was Osama Hamdan, a Hamas leader in Lebanon who openly supports suicide bombing.
- **April 20, 2002:** Al-Awda helped organize the ANSWER Coalition's "National March for Palestine Against War and Racism" in Washington, D.C. The rally served as a platform for anti-Semitism, as well as support for violence and terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, whose flag flew from the speakers' podium. It was part of several protests held simultaneously that focused on a range of issues from the war on terror to globalization.
- **March 17, 2001:** Al-Awda's listserv featured a communiqué from a coalition that included [Hamas](#), [Islamic Jihad](#), Fatah and the PFLP reaffirming their commitment to armed struggle.
- **September 16, 2000:** Al-Awda's first large rally, which took place in Washington, DC, included a speech by Sabri Samirah, then-chairman of IAP, a group described by the U.S. government as part of "Hamas' propaganda apparatus." Samirah said, "Jerusalem is an Arab, Palestinian and Islamic holy city; and will stay forever as such."



Defending terrorist organizations Hamas and Hezbollah at a New York City rally co-organized by Al-Awda, July 28, 2006.

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