



One of the members of a recent Hamas delegation to Russia was Muhammad Sawalha, a London-based Hamas operative engaged in extensive anti-Israel activities.

October 19, 2017

Overview

Muhammad Kazem Sawalha is a senior Hamas operative based in London who has held military and political positions in Hamas. At the end of the nineteen eighties **he was a senior operative in Hamas military-terrorist infrastructure in Judea and Samaria**. The infrastructure was exposed by the Israeli security forces. Sawalha, who was put on Israel's wanted list, fled to Jordan with forged identity papers (October 1990) and from there went to Britain. **In London he conducted extensive activities against Israel** while also **a member of Hamas' political bureau (2013-2017)**.

- ▶ **Muhammad Sawalha assimilated well into Britain's Muslim community, especially among members of the Muslim Brotherhood** (Hamas' parent movement). He and other Hamas- and Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated activists found a refuge in Britain. **He played an important role in turning Britain into Europe's center for the campaign to delegitimize Israel. At the same time he contributed to inculcating the Muslim community in Britain with the radical Muslim ideology of Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.**¹
- ▶ So far, Muhammad Sawalha and other Hamas operatives who fled to Britain have been careful **not to publicly admit to Hamas affiliation in order not to get into trouble with the British authorities**. However, Hamas recently publicly announced that a delegation, which included members of its previous political bureau, visited Russia (September 19, 2017). The delegation was headed by **Musa Abu Marzouq** (who until recently was deputy head of Hamas' political bureau).² One of the members of the delegation was **Muhammad Sawalha**, a member of the previous political bureau (2013-2017). **The Hamas website and the Arabic media published pictures of Sawalha and the other members of the Hamas delegation**

¹ See the February 21, 2010 bulletin, "Britain as a Focus for Hamas' Political, Propaganda and Legal Activities in Europe."

² The members of the delegation who visited Moscow, including Muhammad Sawalha, were members of Hamas' former political bureau, which was elected in 2013 and replaced at the beginning of October 2017.

meeting with Mikhail Bogdanov, deputy Russian foreign minister (Hamas website, September 21, 2017).

► It was not the first time Sawalha was identified in the British, Arabic and Israeli media as a senior Hamas figure. For example, **Muhammad Jumaa', a researcher in the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, wrote about the rise in Sawalha's position in Hamas and his election to the political bureau in April 2013.** He wrote that **Muhammad Sawalha belonged to Khaled Mashaal's camp and was responsible for Hamas' international relations. He also wrote Sawalha had close relations with senior Muslim Brotherhood figures** (Shuruq News, April 28, 2014). However, the difference between past and present reports is that **this time it was the Hamas website that reported Sawalha's participation in the visit to Moscow along with other members of the political bureau, publishing pictures.**



Hamas delegation meets with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov (Hamas website, September 21, 2017). The members of the Hamas delegation are sitting on the right. Hamas made their names public. They are [as identified by the ITIC] (right to left) Sami Khater, Husam Badran, Musa Abu Marzouq (center), Muhammad Sawalha (red box) Saleh al-'Arouri and the Hamas representative in Russia (unnamed).



Muhammad Sawalha (red arrow, next to Musa Abu Marzouq) at a meeting of a Hamas delegation and Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov (al-Ghad YouTube channel, September 19, 2017).

So far the British authorities have not prevented Muhammad Sawalha's extensive activities in London with other activists affiliated with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. Those activities include **involvement in transferring money from the United States to Hamas operatives in Judea and Samaria** (during the first half of the nineteen nineties); **initiating and participation in flotillas and convoys to the Gaza Strip** (in collaboration with radical British anti-Israel activists and organizations); **establishing and running Muslim Brotherhood front organizations** spreading radical Islamist ideology to local Muslim communities; and **participating in anti-Israel propaganda activities in London.** All of the above are **carried out with activists affiliated with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood who found a refuge in London**, the most prominent of whom is **Zaher Birawi**. Now, following the formal identification of Sawalha as a senior figure in the Hamas leadership, **only time will tell if the British authorities will continue to allow him to operate in Britain** (alongside other Hamas and Muslim Brotherhood activists), or if they take steps to bring his activities to an end.

► Two appendices follow:

- ◆ **Appendix A** – Visit of a Hamas delegation to Russia.
- ◆ **Appendix B** – Portrait of Muhammad Sawalha and milestones in his activities in Judea, Samaria and Britain.

Appendix A

Visit of a Hamas delegation to Russia

► On **September 19, 2017**, a **delegation of senior Hamas figures visited Moscow**, among them members of the previous Hamas political bureau.³ The delegation met with **Mikhail Bogdanov, the Russian deputy foreign minister**, and other officials in the Russian foreign ministry. The delegation was headed by **Musa Abu Marzouq** (the former deputy head of Hamas' political bureau) and **Saleh al-'Arouri** (who has a long history of handling Hamas terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria). Another former member of Hamas' political bureau in the delegation was **Muhammad Sawalha** (Hamas website, September 21, 2017), who represented Judea and Samaria.

اختتم وفد حركة المقاومة الإسلامية "حماس" إلى العاصمة الروسية موسكو زيارة
مثمرة مساء الثلاثاء 19 سبتمبر.

والتقى الوفد الذي ترأسه نائب رئيس المكتب السياسي للحركة موسى أبو مرزوق
وعضوية أعضاء المكتب السياسي صالح العاروري وحسام بدران وسامي خاطر
ومحمد صوالحة وممثل حركة حماس لدى روسيا، بالسيد ميخائيل بوغدانوف مبعوث
الرئيس بوتين للشرق الأوسط وأفريقيا نائب وزير الخارجية الروسي، والمسؤولين في
وزارة الخارجية السيد ألكسندر نيكلايفوتش روداكوف والسيدة فيكتوريا ستيفنيي.

The Arabic reads, "The delegation of the Islamic resistance movement Hamas ended its fruitful visit to Moscow, the capital of Russia, on September 19 [2017]. The delegation was headed by Musa Abu Marzouq, deputy head of movement's political bureau, [and included] members of the [previous political bureau, among them Saleh al-'Arouri, Husam Badran, Sami Khater, Muhammad Sawalha [highlighted in yellow], and a representative of Hamas movement in Russia. The delegation met with Mr. Mikhail Bogdanov, President Putin's envoy to the Middle East and Africa, and deputy Russian foreign minister..." (Hamas website, September 21, 2017).

³ About two weeks after the visit a new Hamas political bureau was elected, headed by Isma'il Haniyeh. Saleh al-'Arouri was appointed as his deputy instead of Musa Abu Marzouq.



Musa Abu Marzouq, deputy head of Hamas' political bureau, in conversation with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov. Muhammad Sawalha has his back to the camera (Hamas website, September 21, 2017).



Muhammad Sawalha (red arrow, next to Musa Abu Marzouq) at a meeting of a Hamas delegation and Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov (al-Ghad YouTube channel, September 19, 2017).



Muhammad Sawalha (red arrow, next to Musa Abu Marzouq) at a meeting of a Hamas delegation and Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov (al-Ghad YouTube channel, September 19, 2017).

Subjects discussed

- ▶ The Arabic newspaper al-Hayat reported that the Hamas delegation asked Bogdanov **to end the "siege" of the Gaza Strip**. They also asked the Russians to work in the international arena to keep the United States from exerting pressure on Hamas. The paper reported that according to Musa Abu Marzouq, Bogdanov stressed that Russia did not consider Hamas a terrorist organization but rather as an important Palestinian factor that won in fair elections. Musa Abu Marzouq added that he felt Russia wanted to play an active role in future dialogues (al-Hayat, September 22, 2017). After the visit the Arabic media reported that **Hamas had appointed a permanent representative to Russia** (al-Quds al-Arabi, date, 2017). Hamas did not publish his name.
- ▶ The Russians issued a press briefing after the Hamas-Bogdanov meeting stating that the **Hamas delegation had presented a positive position about the need to overcome internal Palestinian divisions as quickly as possible. Russia responded that Moscow welcomed Hamas' position**. That position, according to the Russian announcement, showed Hamas' new "moderation," disclosed on May 1, 2017, which included the establishment of a Palestinian state with the 1967 borders and achieving Palestinian national unity (website of the Russian foreign ministry, September 19, 2017). **Note:** The announcement was referring to Hamas' new political document, issued on May 1, 2017 with the title "A Document of General Principles and Policies."⁴

⁴ See the May 8, 2017 bulletin, "The goals and significance of Hamas's new political document."

Appendix B

Portrait of Muhammad Sawalha and milestones in his activities in Judea, Samaria and Britain



Muhammad Sawalha (Palinfo, July 12, 2017).

Sawalha's activities in Judea and Samaria (end of the nineteen eighties)

- ▶ **Muhammad Kazem Rashid Maaruf Sawalha (Abu 'Abada)** was born in Tubas (Samaria) in 1961. In 1980 he went Jordan and studied Islamic law at Amman University. In 1988 he received a degree in Islamic law. He then returned to Judea and Samaria and lived in al-Bireh until he fled to Britain. In Judea and Samaria he worked in the school for Islamic law in al-Ram and the College of Dawah and Religious Principles in Beit Hanina in east Jerusalem. He also represented the Dubai Human Appeal in Judea and Samaria.
- ▶ **At the same time, he was also a senior operative in Hamas' military-terrorist wing in Judea and Samaria.** He helped establish Hamas headquarters in Judea and Samaria at the end of 1989 and throughout 1990, and was in communication with Hamas headquarters in the Gaza Strip. Part of his role was **directing the regional commanders of Hamas to establish military networks.**
- ▶ After the Hamas infrastructure in Judea and Samaria was exposed **Sawalha reestablished it.** He continued handling Hamas operatives and had them replace regional commanders who had been detained by the Israeli security forces. **When the Israeli security forces put him on their wanted list he fled to Jordan (October 1990) with forged documents.** From Jordan he went to Britain, where he lives today.

Sawalha's involvement in transferring funds to Hamas terrorist operatives in Judea and Samaria (first half of the nineteen nineties)

His stay in Britain did not prevent Sawalha from continuing his political and military activities. In 1992 he participated in Hamas-PLO reconciliation talks held in Sudan. During the first half of the nineteen nineties he was in contact with Hamas operatives in the United States, Judea and Samaria. He met with **Hamas operatives in the United States** en route to the Middle East. He instructed them to which operatives in Judea and Samaria to transfer the funds donated in the United States. **His activities were exposed by the American authorities when the identity of the donors in the United States was revealed.**

► **Muhammad Sawalha's name and activities were mentioned in an indictment handed down by the United States against Muhammad Hamid Khalil Salah (Abu Ahmed),** a Hamas operative who was born in Jerusalem and emigrated to the United States. Muhammad Salah settled in Chicago and received American citizenship. He raised funds in the United States and transferred them to Hamas operatives in Judea and Samaria. Also involved was **Musa Abu Marzouq, who at the time was a Hamas operative in the United States.**

► Between 1989 and 1993 Muhammad Salah frequently made trips between the United States, Britain (London), Israel, Judea and Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. **He met with senior operatives in the Hamas leadership and its military-terrorist wing, the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades. He brought the terrorist operatives funds from the United States to support Hamas' terrorist activities.** According to the 2003 indictment, during trips taken in 1992 and 1993, **Salah and another American-based operative who accompanied him customarily met with Sawalha in London** en route from the United States to Israel, Judea and Samaria. During the meetings they received instructions from Sawalha about specific Hamas-related activities they were to carry out while in Israel, Judea and Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

ii. **Mohammed Qassem Sawalha**, a/k/a “Muhammad Khadhem Sawalha,” “Abu Obeida,” “Abu Ubada,” “Abu Ubaydah,” and “Abu Ubeida,” was initially a Hamas leader in the West Bank until he relocated to London, England in the early 1990s. Defendants SALAH and Co-conspirator A met with Sawalha in London while en route from the United States to Israel in 1992 and 1993. During these meetings, defendant SALAH and Co-conspirator A received instructions from Sawalha regarding particular Hamas-related activities they were to carry out while in Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.

Part of the indictment handed down by the United States against Muhammad Sawalha Musa Abu Marzouq and Abd al-Hamid Ashkar.

- ▶ **One of the meetings was held on January 13, 1993.** The participants discussed ways to restore Hamas activity in Judea and Samaria. **Muhammad Sawalha gave Muhammad Salah the names of Hamas operatives in Judea and Samaria who could be handled. One of them was Saleh al-'Arouri** (who became a senior Hamas figure in Judea and Samaria and today is deputy head of Hamas' political bureau). Another was **Ahmed Awadallah** (who commanded Hamas' military-terrorist wing in Judea and Samaria and orchestrated deadly suicide bombing attacks in Jerusalem) (investigativeproject.org).
- ▶ The Israeli security forces exposed Muhammad Salah's activities and he was detained, tried and sentenced to five years in prison. **In 1997 he returned to Chicago and renewed the transfer of funds to Hamas.** The American authorities exposed his activities and he was arrested and indicted in 2003. Also indicted was **Musa Abu Marzouq**, at that time a Hamas activist in the United States, and a Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) activist named **Abd al-Hamid Ashkar**. The three were accused on various charges, among them conspiracy to transfer funds illegally and using bank accounts in the United States to launder money.

Muhammad Sawalha's central role in sending convoys and flotillas to the Gaza Strip

The exposure of Muhammad Sawalha's terrorist activities in the trial held in the United States **clearly indicated that he was a senior Hamas military operative who continued his involvement in handling terrorist operatives in Judea and Samaria from London. Nevertheless, the British authorities did not take action against him, did not expel him or limit his activity.** Rather, **his activities in London expanded to other areas, and he became a key figure in the project to send aid convoys and flotillas to the Gaza Strip to**

embarrass Israel and support Hamas. He was also involved in **establishing and running Muslim Brotherhood front organizations and engaging in intensive anti-Israel activities.**

► In 2009 and 2010 Muhammad Sawalha was involved in sending aid convoys to the Gaza Strip, called "Lifeline" convoys. They were organized by the British organization "Viva Palestina," headed by George Galloway (a pro-Hamas anti-Israel former member of the British parliament). Muhammad Sawalha was involved in planning the convoys and flotillas, and in several instances actively participated in them. **The Lifeline 3 convoy**, which left Britain on December 6, 2009, was composed of about 500 activists from several countries (about half from Turkey, IHH activists prominent among them). **The convoy clashed violently with the Egyptian security forces, after which Galloway was declared persona non-grata in Egypt.**⁵



Egyptian forces clash with participants of the Lifeline 3 convoy in El Arish after Egypt refused to allow some of the trucks to pass through the Rafah crossing into the Gaza Strip (ihh.org.tr, January 2010).

► Muhammad Sawalha announced that he had learned the lesson of the violent clashes between the Lifeline 3 activists and the Egyptian security forces. Interviewed by Hezbollah's Internet site he said he was involved in preparations for a new aid convoy to the Gaza Strip, which would include six or seven ships sailing from Turkey, Greece and Cyprus. This time, he said, **they would go by sea to confront Israel, not Egypt.** He said, **"the next time there will be a direct confrontation with the Zionist enemy on the high seas."** In retrospect his remark was an explicit reference to the motivation for the IHH's *Mavi Marmara* flotilla to the Gaza Strip four months later (May 2010). Sawalha also stressed the importance for support of the Palestinians and the de facto Hamas administration in the

⁵ Eventually, with the intervention of the Turkish prime minister and foreign minister, some of the activists were permitted to enter the Gaza Strip, where Hamas prepared a reception for them.

Gaza Strip, saying "the idea of resistance [i.e., terrorism] exists and is well-preserved [in the Gaza Strip]. The idea exists on the ground, among the public of the [Muslim] nation, which is encouraging for the future" (al-Intiqad, January 17, 2010).

Muhammad Sawalha interviewed by Hezbollah's al-Intiqad website (January 17, 2010).
 "The next time there will be a direct confrontation with the Zionist enemy on the high seas"
 [marked in yellow].

► Muhammad Sawalha participated in the preparations for the IHH-led *Mavi Marmara* flotilla. He attended the ceremony in Istanbul when the boat sailed but was not a passenger (probably fearing he would be detained by Israel, where he was wanted for his terrorist activity in Judea and Samaria). However, apparently members of the BMI, an organization he headed, did participate in the flotilla. Prominent among them was **Isma'il Adham Patel**, a British citizen of Pakistani origin, who founding the pro-Palestinian organization called Friends of al-Aqsa in Leicester (where there is a large Muslim population).



**Ceremony held in Istanbul before the *Mavi Marmara* sailed. The white flags are IHH flags
Zaher Birawi is third from right in the first row, fourth from the left (gray suit) is Muhammad
Sawalha (hurryupharry.org).**

- ▶ Muhammad Sawalha participated in a convoy organized by Viva Palestina, **which entered the Gaza Strip on October 21, 2010**. The convoy included a delegation from Turkey, which in ITIC assessment was composed mainly of IHH activists. **They brought aid valued at about \$5 million**. They stayed in the Gaza Strip for three days, during which they attended ceremonies and events organized and directed by the de facto Hamas administration.
- ▶ On **October 22, 2010**, a festive reception was held for the members of the convoy at the Rashad al-Sawa center in Gaza City, attended by Muhammad Sawalha. It was also attended by **senior Hamas and PIJ figures**. Zaher Birawi, spokesman for the convoy, gave a speech, as did Muhammad Sawalha, and other Hamas activists from Britain. Last to speak was **Isma'il Haniyeh**, who welcomed those present and said **the arrival of the convoy was the "continuation of the Palestinian victory in [Operation] Cast Lead."** He called it a historic moment which meant **the end of international support for Israel**. He asked the members of the convoy to **continue "until the lifting of the siege."**⁶

⁶ See the October 28, 2010 bulletin, "The Viva Palestina convoy arrived in the Gaza Strip and was given festive ceremonies by senior Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad figures. They stressed the Hamas themes of the establishment of a Palestinian state instead of the State of Israel and glorified shaheeds of the Palestinian terrorist campaign."



Picture of convoy participants at the ceremony in Gaza. Zaher Birawi is at the center, apparently next to Muhammad Sawalha

- ▶ **At the beginning of January 2010** Muhammad Sawalha and Zaher Birawi participated in **a conference held in Beirut**, attended by several organizers, about a march to the borders of Israel. They discussed issues related to organizing the march and other events planned for March 30, 2012, the date Israeli Arabs mark "Land Day." Events were planned for Britain as well. March 30, 2012, was also a day of BDS events (for the demonstration held in front of the Israeli embassy in London with the involvement of the BMI, see below).
- ▶ Although attempts to send flotillas and convoys to the Gaza Strip failed, Muhammad Sawalha did not abandon the idea. On July 21, 2007, Palinfo, a Hamas website, reported that Muhammad Sawalha headed an umbrella organization called "**The International Committee to Fight the Siege on the Gaza Strip.**" Today the organization is headed by **Zaher Birawi**, who is also affiliated with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood,⁷ and who also played a central role in sending convoys and flotillas to the Gaza Strip.

⁷ See the September 17, 2017 bulletin, "A Hamas-affiliated Palestinian in Britain admitted the flotilla project to the Gaza Strip was not intended to "break the siege" and bring humanitarian aid, but rather to promote the battle for hearts and minds against Israel."



The logo of The International Committee to Fight the Siege on the Gaza Strip.

Sawalha's activities in Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated organizations in London

Overview

During his long-term residence in London Muhammad Sawalha and other Hamas activists have played an important role **in establishing and running Muslim Brotherhood front organizations**.⁸ Muhammad Sawalha, with other activists affiliated with those organizations, has been intensively involved in anti-Israel activities, including demonstrations and rallies.

The Muslim Association of Britain (MAB)

► Muhammad Sawalha was one of the founders of **The Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), and headed the organization from 1999 to 2007**. In 2007 disagreements broke out within the MAB and Muhammad Sawalha and several other leaders left. For many years the **MAB was the Muslim Brotherhood's most active organization in Britain**, collaborating with leftist British radical groups (primarily by involving the Muslim Brotherhood's younger generation) to keep their political activities separate.⁹ The organization claims it devotes itself to public service by promoting the defense of Islam and its moral values. **In reality, its**

⁸ On March 19, 2004 the Muslim Brotherhood's Internet site called Sawalha the "UK official [*mas'u*] of the Political Committee of the International Muslim Brotherhood Organisation in the UK" (<http://www.hurryupharry.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/sawalha.JPG>).

⁹ David Rich, *The Very Model of a British Muslim Brotherhood*, in Barry Rubin, ed., *The Muslim Brotherhood: The Organization and Policies of a Global Islamist Movement*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 127.

activists participate in anti-Israel activities in London as part of the campaign to delegitimize Israel.



Right: The MAB logo. Left: MAB activists at a demonstration held in London on September 28, 2002.

On November 21, 2017, the MAB will hold its annual conference. According to the invitations issued, during the conference '**Abada Sawalha, Muhammad Sawalha's son, who is head of the MAB's National Youth Division, will give a speech.** Thus he is following in his father's footsteps.

British Muslim Initiative (BMI)

► Disagreements surfaced in the MAB in 2007 and Muhammad Sawalha and other activists left the organization, although they remained in contact with it. They founded the **British Muslim Initiative (BMI), electing Muhammad Sawalha as president.** Other key figures in its establishment were **Anas al-Takriti, Dr. Azzam al-Tamimi and Muhammad Qozbar, all affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood.** On its Facebook page the BMI represents itself as fighting racism and Islamophobia, supporting the Muslims in Britain and around the globe, and seeking to improve relations between the West and Islam. However, **in reality the organization is affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, especially the movement's younger generation, which follows radical Islamic ideology.** BMI activists spread the doctrine of radical Islam to members of London's Muslim community and also participate in anti-Israel activities as part of the campaign to delegitimize Israel.

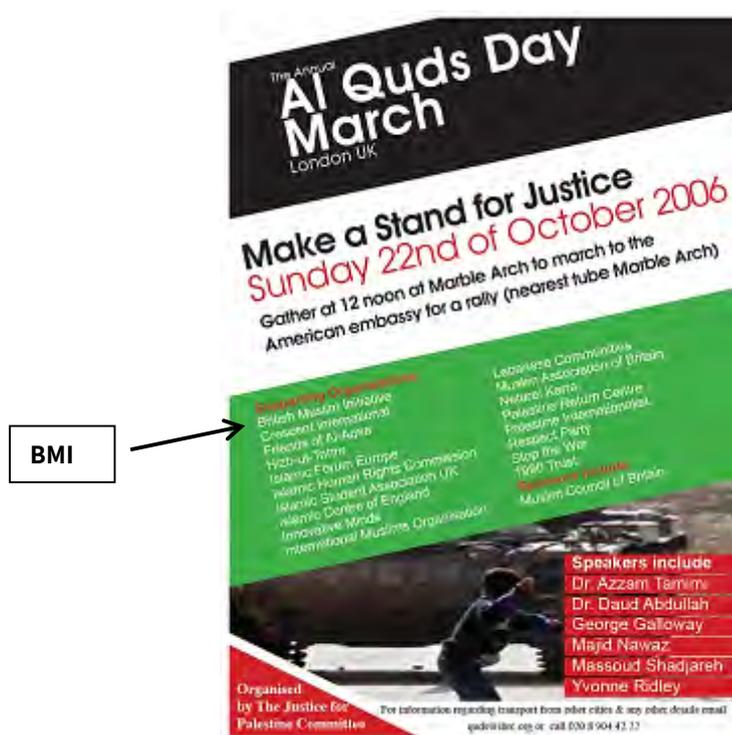


Right: The BMI logo. Left: Muhammad Sawalha (center) at a BMI demonstration in London in August 2009. He carries a sign reading, "Freedom for Palestine." Behind him is a sign reading, "Stop the holocaust in Gaza" (from the Demotis website, which no longer exists. Picture from the British Guardian, March 14, 2010).

On October 22, 2006, a Jerusalem Day parade was held in London. The parades are organized and orchestrated by Iran and held annually on the last Friday of the Muslim religious month of Ramadan. Demonstrations and rallies are held on Jerusalem Day in Iran and around the globe where there are blatant and undisguised calls to eliminate the State of Israel and the West is savagely criticized. Several hundred people participated in the march held in London. There were prominent Islamic radical groups and groups supporting Iran and Hezbollah. The invitations to the event included a list of participating groups, headed by the BMI. During the march people shouted slogans such as "Victory to intifada," "Down with Israel," "Judaism is OK, Zionism no way," "Allah is greatest," and "We are all Hezbollah." The marchers held a rally in front of the American embassy and shouted pro-Hezbollah anti-British and Islamist slogans, such as "With blood, with guns, we'll free Lebanon and Palestine," "Bush and Blair will get their asses kicked," "Olmert watch your back, Hezbollah is coming back," "Bush, Blair, Olmert – Who's scared of Nasrallah?"



Demonstrators in London (October 22, 2006) carry Lebanese and Hezbollah flags and pictures of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. The Dome of the Rock is to the right of Nasrallah's face (publicansdecoy.livejournal.co2).



Poster hung in London, October 2006, for Jerusalem Day. It has a list of supporters; BMI is first. Jerusalem Day is an Iranian event and held annually on the last Friday of Ramadan.

► **On March 30, 2012**, rallies and demonstrations were planned for London, Manchester, Birmingham, Brighton and Dorham. Among the organizations sponsoring the events were the **MAB and BMI**. A demonstration in front of the Israeli embassy in London was planned, sponsored by British organizations, some of them affiliated with the radical left and some with radical Islam. Muhammad Sawalha was involved in organizing the events in both Britain and other locations, and also participated in the coordinating conference held in Beirut in

January 2012. Several hundred people, including BMI activists, participated in the demonstration at the Israeli embassy.



Right: Demonstrators holding BMI signs in front of the Israeli embassy on March 30, 2012. Left: A demonstrator draped in a yellow Hezbollah flag. Over his head is a sign calling for the end of the "siege" of the Gaza Strip (YouTube).

► **On June 13, 2017, a conference in support of Qatar was held in London** with the participation of the Qatari ambassador to Britain and forty members of Islamic and civilian organizations. Among those present was **Muhammad Sawalha, who was introduced as president of the BMI**. He praised Qatar's long-term humanitarian conduct and called for the lifting of the sanctions imposed by several Persian Gulf states. Also present at the conference were Hamas-affiliated **Zaher Birawi**, introduced as chairman of European-Palestinian Forum, and Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated **Dr. Azzam al-Tamimi**, chairman of the al-Hiwar satellite TV channel in Britain (al-Sharq, June 13, 2017).

Muhammad Sawalha's term on the board of trustees of the Finsbury Park Mosque

► **Muhammad Sawalha and others affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood are on the board of trustees of the Finsbury Park Mosque, in north London.**¹⁰ The mosque was inaugurated in 1994 by Prince Charles and Fahed, at the time the king of Saudi Arabia. In 1997 jihadist **Abu Hamza al-Masri**, became the mosque's imam. He had fought in Afghanistan alongside Osama bin Laden and was suspected of sending one of his sons to carry out an (unsuccessful) attack in Yemen in 1998. Abu Hamza al-Masri was detained by the British authorities in August 2004 and sentenced to seven years in prison. He was extradited to the United States in 2012, accused of sponsoring terrorism in Afghanistan and Yemen. In 2015 a court in New York sentenced him to life imprisonment without parole.

¹⁰ Steven Merley, Global Muslim Brotherhood Research Center, "The Global Anti-Aggression Campaign 2003-2016," (November 2016, published February 2017). https://www.globalmbresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Global_Anti-Aggression_Campaign_2003-2016.pdf

► After reports in December 2004 that extremists had again taken control of the mosque, **the British Charity Commission decided to appoint a new board of trustees.** The mosque was reopened in 2005 and defines its main objective as serving the various welfare needs of the Muslim population in northern London. According to the mosque website's home page, between 1997 and 2005 was a black period in the mosque's history because it was under the control of extremists led by Abu Hamza al-Masri. However, in 2005, according to the website, a new era began (website of the Finsbury Park Mosque, October 18,2017). **The presence of Muhammad Sawalha on the mosque's board of trustees questions the reliability of the claim of a fundamental change in the mosque's character.**



Finsbury Park Mosque (Facebook page of the Finsbury Park Mosque, June 6, 2017).

The al-Hiwar satellite TV channel

► Al-Hiwar is a satellite TV channel operating in London and affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood. **Its chairman is Dr. Azzam al-Tamimi, a Muslim Brotherhood activist.**¹¹ **Zaher Birawi** is program director and chief presenter. Al-Hiwar appeals to Muslims around the globe, especially in Europe and the Middle East.

¹¹ **Dr. Azzam al-Tamimi** was born in Hebron in 1955. He has lived in London for many years. He has a PhD from Westminster University in London. He wrote his PhD thesis on Islam and democracy. He headed the Institute of Islamic Political Thought until 2008 (aljazeera.net, September 15, 2016). He is an academician and lectures at institutions of higher learning in Britain. **He is considered a senior figure in the Muslim Brotherhood and a Hamas supporter.** He is also a journalist, and recently attacked Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf States in the media for their boycott of Qatar, **which funds the London-based al-Hiwar** (al-Arabiya on YouTube, June 5, 2017).



Dr. Azzam al-Tamimi, director of al-Hiwar TV, posted a picture of himself and Mohamed Morsi, Muslim Brotherhood leader and deposed president of Egypt to his Facebook page (Facebook page of Dr. Azzam al-Tamimi, June 30, 2012).

► **Muhammad Sawalha is often interviewed by al-Hiwar TV.** During an interview on August 28, 2015, the interviewer represented him as a Palestinian researcher. The chyron described him as a "Palestinian activist." At the time Muhammad Sawalha was a member of Hamas' political bureau and the interviewer (possibly deliberately) hid his real identity. Sawalha dealt with the efforts of Tony Blair, at the time international quartet envoy to the Middle East, to achieve a long-term ceasefire with Israel. During the interview Sawalha fluently displayed his expertise on the subject of Hamas (YouTube, August 28, 2015).



Right: Muhammad Sawalha interviewed by al-Hiwar TV (YouTube, October 28, 2015). Discourse between two Hamas figures. Left: Hamas activist Zaher Birawi (left) interviews Muhammad Sawalha for a program on al-Hiwar TV. The program dealt with the visit of a Hamas delegation to Russia, led by Khaled Mashaal (al-Hiwar TV, July 25, 2015).

Sawalha's involvement in global organizations

► Muhammad Sawalha is one of the founding members of the **Global Anti-Aggression Campaign**. It is a radical Sunni Islamic anti-western umbrella organization founded in Saudi Arabia in 2003, immediately after the outbreak of the Second Gulf War. It was re-

opened in Qatar in 2005. The Campaign was founded by about 500 radical Sunni religious figures, among them Salafist-jihadists, Salafists, the Muslim Brotherhood leadership and senior Hamas and PIJ figures. The Campaign operates against the West and Israel. Its fundamental concept is that the West has declared war on the "Islamic nation" and therefore war must be waged in return. At least seven of its central figures were designed by the United States and the EU as linked to the global jihad (particularly al-Qaeda).¹²



**Logo of the Global Anti-Aggression Campaign
(Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Watch)**

¹² Steven Merley, "The Global Anti-Aggression Campaign."