



June 4, 2015

Hamas's media reported that Hamas's senior figure Ismail Haniya congratulated Majed al-Zeer, the general director of the Palestinian Return Centre (PRC), on receiving a non-governmental observer status in the UN Committee on NGOs. The PRC's spokesman denied the report.¹



Majed al-Zeer and Ismail Haniya (UN Watch Facebook page)

Overview

1. Hamas's English-language and Arabic-language media announced on June 3, 2015, that Ismail Haniya, deputy chief of Hamas's Political Bureau, congratulated Majed al-Zeer, the general director of the Palestinian Return Centre (PRC), for having been granted a non-governmental observer status in the UN Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. The congratulations were conveyed on a telephone call, apparently on June 2.

¹ See the ITIC's Information Bulletin from June 3, 2015: "UN Committee on NGOs voted to grant the Palestinian Return Centre observer status, pending authorization. The London-based PRC is affiliated with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood and has played an important role in the campaign to delegitimize Israel."

2. Following is the text of the announcement on Ismail Haniya's telephone call as appeared on Hamas's websites in Arabic and in English:



Wording of the announcement as appeared on Hamas's website in Arabic (PALINFO, June 2, 2015). The announcement also appeared on the website of Hamas's organ Al-Resalah.



Wording of the announcement as appeared on Hamas's website in English (PALINFO, June 2, 2015). Emphasis added by the ITIC.

3. AP (as well as other media outlets, including Reuters) reported that PRC's spokesman Sameh Habeeb claimed that Majed al-Zeer had not received a telephone call from Ismail Haniya. According to AP, later on that day (June 2, 2015), Ismail Haniya's spokesman sent a message to reporters asking them "not to deal with the earlier announcement about the phone call". However, an examination conducted by the ITIC showed that the report on a phone call by Ismail Haniya to Majed al-Zeer was still in place on Hamas's websites (as on June 4, 2015).

Notes

4. During recent days, following the news on granting the PRC a non-governmental observer status in a UN Committee, the organization once again denied that it had any affiliation with Hamas, and even threatened to take legal action against Israel because of these accusations. Based on this development, it is the ITIC's assessment that the PRC was embarrassed due to the Hamas media reports on Haniya's phone call, in which he congratulated Majed al-Zeer. In the ITIC's assessment, this is the background for Haniya's spokesman's request to the reporters "not to deal" with the announcement. In addition, an examination by the ITIC found that there had been no similar congratulation on the part of the Palestinian Authority.

5. Majed Khalil Musa al-Zeer serves as the general director of the PRC, an organization which is affiliated with Hamas and with the Muslim Brotherhood in Britain. In the past, Majed al-Zeer had spoken in favor of eliminating Israel ("the Zionist Project") and emphasized the need for "military resistance" (i.e., terrorist attacks) inside the territory of Palestine (i.e., the state of Israel), in addition to his intensive activity for promoting the so-called "right of return" of the Palestinian refugees.

ورغم ما وصفها بمشاعر الإحباط والتراجع والانقسام الفلسطيني فإنه أشار إلى أمل يحاكي الواقع، وعدد ما وصفها بشواهد على ضعف المشروع الإسرائيلي اقتصاديا بالحرب على منتجات المستوطنات في أوروبا، وسياسيا بانسحابها من جنوب لبنان وقطاع غزة دون شروط، وأمنيا بفشلها باستعادة جنودها المأسورين لدى المقاومة في جنوب لبنان وغزة رغم شنها حربين.

ولاستغلال هذا الواقع شدد الزبير على ضرورة المقاومة العسكرية في الداخل الفلسطيني، والعمل السلمي لحق العودة في الخارج والغرب بوصفه موازيا للمقاومة العسكرية.

An excerpt from an interview with Majed al-Zeer that appeared on Al-Jazeera Channel website, May 2, 2010.

The emphasized line is where Al-Zeer pointed out the need for "military resistance inside the territory of Palestine". The text was written as a paraphrase by the journalist and not constructed as an interview, with questions and answers.



Majed al-Zeer (left) at a Damascus congress on the “right of return” (November 2008). Sitting next to him (left to right) are the Iranian representative Ali Akbar Mohtashami-Pour (who played a major role in establishing Hezbollah in Lebanon), Mahathir Mohamad (former president of Malaysia who was known for his anti-Semitic rhetoric) and Hamas leader Khaled Mash’al (photo: hurryupharry.org)