

TURKEY AND QATAR – FROM GAZA TO JERUSALEM

The ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, which purports to end the Iron Swords War (now officially known by Israel as the War of Revival), enables the deepening of two countries' penetration into Jerusalem and its affairs: Turkey and Qatar, both of which are not Israel's friends. The two of them have long been involved in Jerusalem activities.

Turkey has been active in the Israeli capital for years, via official Turkish bodies such as the General Consulate (which serves as the "Turkish Embassy to Palestine") and the openly-active Yunis Amra Cultural Center. Turkey also operates organizations that work below the radar, such as the presidential aid agency TIKA, with its various projects (such as "We're All Maryam" [on behalf of women against Israel's "occupation"], various projects related to the Temple Mount, and learning and health centers).

Qatar, for its part, was openly active via the Qatar Charity organization (known as QC) until it was outlawed by Israel some 15 years ago. Today it continues to function, but only under the camouflage of a Qatar-Turkey cooperation agreement (Qatari funding, Turkish activities). It is led by a permanent committee founded by the Emir of Qatar, with members including Qatari government figures as well as senior PA leaders such as Jerusalem Mufti Mahmud Hasin; Balal Natshe, who spent 10 years in Israeli prisons or other forms of detention; and the PA Governor of Jerusalem Adnan Ghaith of Fatah. In 2013, the Emir founded the Jerusalem Foundation, granting it one billion dollars for designation to activities in eastern Jerusalem.

Turkish strongman President Erdogan, who has often referred to Turkey's triumphant "return" to Jerusalem, and who threatened last summer to invade Israel, is promoting very concretely the Turkish presence as close to Israel as possible. In both north and south, Turkish forces took up positions in Syria after the fall of the Assad regime nearly a year ago. Turkey also has a guaranteed spot in Gaza, as part of the international force that is to run the Strip, based on the Trump-brokered deal.

As of now, even before an official Turkish force enters Gaza as part of the international force, the Turkey-based terrorist organization IHH is already active there. IHH is the org that sponsored and arranged the belligerent Marmara flotilla to Gaza about 15 years ago, and which serves as a forward arm of Turkey, including in al-Julani's Syria. This organization also cooperates with Turkish bodies and initiatives in Jerusalem, such as "We're All Maryam" and TIKA.

Qatar operates the Aisha Aid Foundation in Gaza on a massive scale. It has now been learned, with near certainty, that Aisha has acquired the rights to housing units in the Old City of Jerusalem, which it gives or rents out cheaply to local residents.



IHH head Bulent Yildirim (left) has a record of pro-terror statements against Israel and is an open supporter of the formation of an Islamic caliphate as in the days of the Ottoman Empire. On the right is al-Julani, who now leads Syria following the coup and the fall of the Assad regime.

This, as noted, is in addition to the contractual cooperation between Turkey and Qatar regarding their activities in Jerusalem. For over a decade, the Turkish association Miratna, which works to strengthen Ottoman heritage in Jerusalem, has been funded by Qatari money. Qatari funds, including from the illegally-operating QC, also support a number of international organizations that act unhindered in the city.



A screenshot of the IHH march of support for "We're All Maryam"

The details of the cooperation between them have largely been removed from the reports of "Palestine" OCHA (the United Nations organization for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), although they do appear elsewhere. In the general OCHA reports, the financial contributions of the illegal organization are reported, as indicated in the photo here.

The two countries are therefore moving towards Israel and Jerusalem in a manner that is partly open and coordinated with Israel, and partly covert. Either way, it has been largely overlooked until now. Both Turkey and Qatar are led in practice by figures identified with the Muslim Brotherhood – Erdogan – or even actively supported by it, in the case of the Emir of Qatar. The latter carried out a coup against his father several years ago with the

Brotherhood's help, and his mother, who has great influence over him, is known to support the organization. In both cases Hamas serves as their local branch.

Erdogan's intentions are entirely clear, and he makes no effort to conceal them. He is recognized as the physically powerful and financially-supported force between the two. His many years of activities encompass Jerusalem from every possible direction in various fields – including, gradually, geographically as well – point to his clear aspirations to take over the leadership of the Muslim world. First, however, he must position himself as a leading rival to Saudi Arabia, and this he is doing by means of controlling the Temple Mount in various ways. Syria and Gaza, in his view, are merely rungs on the ladder he is climbing to reach Jerusalem, while Qatar serves as his banker and the political backer of his ambitions.

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Grouped view: Qatar, Government of 2024

Select Year 2024

Flow ID	Source Org.	Destination org.	Description	Sector	Amount (US\$)	Funding status	Total Contribution (US\$)
#293453	Qatar Fund for Development	World Health Organization	TO SUPPORT HEALTH FACILITIES IN UNDERSERVED AREAS OF AFGHANISTAN 2023		0 (remaining amount) (shared on boundary)	Paid Contribution	\$2,269,785
#292240	Qatar Charity	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	Qatar Charity (QC) Contribution to OCHA 2024		1,000,000	Paid Contribution	
#298065	Qatar Charity	Qatar Charity	Food Security	Food Security	205,509	Paid Contribution	
#298070	Qatar Charity	Qatar Charity	Health	Health	42,765	Paid Contribution	
#298072	Qatar Charity	Qatar Charity	Water Sanitation Hygiene	Water Sanitation Hygiene	168,625	Paid Contribution	
#300166	Qatar Fund for Development	International Rescue Committee	Supporting the provision of primary healthcare services in Za'atari Syria 2021-2024	Multi-sector	0 (remaining amount)	Commitment	\$3,138,643