UN obstructed US investigation into UNRWA ties to Hamas

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The United Nations obstruction an investigation by the American government into the ties between UNRWA employees in Gaza and the Hamas terrorist organization, according to a USAID report released last month.

The report, titled ‘USAID OIG’s Investigative Work to Prevent UNRWA Staff Associated With Hamas From Circulating to Other U.S. Government-Funded Aid Organizations,’ documented how the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) redacted the names of UNRWA employees who had been investigated for alleged ties to Hamas, rendering the documents provided useless for the investigation.

Eitan Fischberger, the journalist who first reported the USAID report, stated that ‘the United Nations appears to have gone out of its way to obstruct’ USAID's investigation.

USAID's summary of the report states, ‘Following the October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorist attacks in Israel, USAID’s Office of Inspector General (USAID OIG) identified Gaza as a high-risk for potential diversion and misuse of U.S.-funded assistance. It remains USAID OIG’s investigative priority to ensure that U.S.-funded humanitarian assistance in Gaza does not fall into the hands of Hamas and other foreign terrorist organizations.’

‘To advance this priority, we initiated a proactive investigation into allegations that staff at the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) participated in the October 7 terrorist attacks and/or were affiliated with Hamas.

‘USAID OIG independently found evidence connecting three current or former UNRWA employees to the October 7 terror attacks and affiliating 14 other current or former UNRWA employees with Hamas. The UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) gave USAID OIG an opportunity to review the report of its independent investigation into UNRWA staff involvement in the October 7 attacks. However, OIOS redacted the names of subjects, rendering the report unusable for our purposes. We were also unable to obtain from UNRWA the names of any terminated personnel,’ the summary stated.

UNRWA has long been criticized for its cooperation with Hamas. That criticism has increased since Israel revealed a year ago that UNRWA staff participated in the October 7, 2023 Hamas attacks.

It then [presented a dossier](https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/384323) showing that the UNRWA workers who participated in the Hamas massacre kidnapped a woman, handed out ammunition and actively took part in the massacre at Kibbutz Be’eri, where 97 people were murdered.

Following the Israeli revelations, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres [announced the creation](https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/388915) of a review group, headed by former French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna, to look into the Israeli allegations.

The group, which [released](https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/388915) its report last April, said it found neutrality-related issues’ in UNRWA but also claimed that Israel had yet to provide evidence for allegations that a significant number of its staff were members of terrorist organizations.

More recently, Emily Damari, a former Hamas hostage who was freed after 470 days in captivity, [said that](https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/403216) she was held at an UNRWA facility while in captivity.