

# Islamic Movement institutions banned by Israel

*Report prepared by the Meezaan Organisation for Human Rights, Nazareth*

In November 2015, the Israeli government outlawed the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in the country, using British Mandate-era “Emergency Regulations” to do so. Following this decision, a number of organisations deemed to be affiliated with the group were closed and their premises were raided by the Israeli authorities.

This report looks at 10 such institutions proscribed recently by Israel. They have been providing a diverse range of services for Palestinian citizens of Israel, including: higher education support, religious studies, medical assistance, poverty alleviation and support for small businesses. Their closure is likely to have a profoundly negative effect on Israel’s non-Jewish citizens.

## **Iqraa — supporting education in the Arab community**

Iqraa was founded in 1995. Its work has focused on supporting university students, providing scholarships and guidance in the selection of academic studies; Psychometric Entrance Test (PET) courses and MOR exam courses for medical and dental school admissions; academic research and publications; events in various universities and colleges according to national, religious and social activities; and student camps.

- Iqraa developed an integrated guidance system that includes special programmes and courses for student enrichment, giving them a broad view of the study topics available to them, something that is much-needed in the community. It takes into account the market and professions.
- The guidance programme is staffed by competent professionals who also develop new materials which help students to get acquainted with the academic and professional environment that stretches before them.
- The organisation is interested in all aspects of higher education in Israel; its publications cover such matters. It aims to emphasise the role of academic and professional education in the progress of our community in Israel and elsewhere.
- Iqraa has dedicated a special link on its website to provide instructions for conducting scientific research. Articles give basic information about preparing outlines for such research.
- Free professional courses are held for students of human and social sciences.
- The Psychometric Entrance Test (PET) project aims to prepare Palestinian students for the test by providing them with adequate skills and the means to pass. The PET is an obstacle to university admission for many Arab students and is an important element in the calculation of acceptance marks. Iqraa holds special preparatory courses for both exam dates in April and December.
- “Three stages and you're at the pinnacle” is an integrated educational project that addresses the psychometric theme for the Arab students in a programmed and well-advised way. The project is implemented in three stages, starting with grade ten, then grade eleven and ending with grade twelve. A course lasts for 260 hours, during which the student applies twice for a genuine exam and is given books and internal examinations. The three aspects of the PET are addressed: quantitative reasoning, verbal reasoning and English Language.

## **Hiraa Foundation for Qur'an Memorisation**

Hiraa Foundation for teaching and memorisation of the Qur'an was established in 1999. The objective of the foundation is to provide Qur'anic education, memorisation skills, sciences and exegesis for all ages from three upwards. The aim is to imbue Qur'anic values in the hearts of people in general and students in particular.

The foundation holds training courses for instructors and teachers. Hundreds of its students have memorised the whole Qur'an. It runs summer and educational camps.

Hiraa Foundation has a number of departments: Education; Memorisation; High School; Tajweed (Recitation) and Certification; Pre-School; Scouts; Computing and Statistics; Information; Women's.

The 29 employees of the foundation include lecturers, memorisation committees and two advisors. Hiraa has 180 Qur'an centres, 90 for men and 90 for women; each centre is headed by a principal and caters for almost 1,000 students.

The objectives of the Hiraa Foundation are educational and this is manifested through its programmes, activities and events covering personal and environmental hygiene, good behaviour and manners, respect for others and duties towards parents.

## **Humanitarian Relief Foundation**

The Humanitarian Relief Foundation was established in 2003. It provides assistance to orphans and needy families, and gives aid to refugees as well as other projects. Its work focuses on poor and destitute families in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, where it supports 23,000 orphans with an annual budget of around 45 million shekels (\$11.5 million)

Larger projects include:

- Providing food to the needy to break their fast during the month of Ramadan.
- Facilitating the religious sacrifice of animals and distributing the meat to widows and needy families.
- Providing support for medical fees in particularly difficult cases, such as organ transplantation. Hundreds of patients have been helped in this way across the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- Aiding Syrian refugees on the Jordanian and Turkish borders. The HRF has paid for the shelter of hundreds of refugees in Turkey and Jordan.
- Providing new clothes and gifts for orphans on the two Eid Festivals.
- Paying for casualties of the war in Syria to be treated in Israeli hospitals, including the provision of artificial limbs.
- HRF provides monthly assistance to hundreds of poor families in the Negev Desert and the coastal cities of Haifa, Jaffa, Acre, Ramle and Lod.

## **Eamar Association for Economic Development**

Eamar Association for Economic Development was founded in 2008 and is registered as a non-profit organisation. It works to disseminate economic awareness among Israel's Palestinian community through a variety of programmes and activities. The foundation stresses the importance of economic development for this oppressed community, which is suffering from a raft of unjust governmental policies.

Given the difficult and complex economic conditions experienced by our community in Israel, and owing to the lack of competent bodies and organisations paying attention to the economic aspects, the foundation has tried to engage at all levels of the economy, including producers, consumers, workers, entrepreneurs, businessmen and investors, covering the micro aspects of the mono-economic unit as well as the macro-aspect of the whole Palestinian community in Israel.

The E'mar Foundation fosters the following projects:

- A fund for supporting small enterprises. This was set up to assist small projects by young entrepreneurs. The fund provides support for the establishment of new projects, as a step towards encouraging investment and initiative among those aged 21-35 years.
- E'mar provides a forum for businessmen and women as it believes that when the business sector is strong and well-organised, it reflects positively on the whole community. The forum organises conferences and seminars of interest to Palestinian entrepreneurs which contribute to the development of their businesses. Delegations are organised to attend trade exhibitions and conferences around the world.
- The foundation has had links with the MUSIAD conference since 1990. Established by a group of businesses in Turkey, it is an association of independent industrialists and businessmen for small and medium-sized businesses.

The objectives of E'mar Foundation are as follows:

- To disseminate new economic awareness and culture that encourages new initiatives, partnerships, manufacturing and production.
- The organisation of delegations to meet and receive businessmen from around the world, and for participation in exhibitions and international conferences, to provide opportunities for the exchange of experiences and ideas, and to build partnerships.
- To provide advisory services and professional support for economic initiatives and small enterprises.
- To search for local and international opportunities, trade offers and investment, and circulate details among the members of the forum.
- To distribute publications free to members of the forum, such as the E'mar magazine, annual reports and other publications issued by the foundation's research department.

## **The Negev Foundation for Land and Man**

Founded in 2001, the Negev Foundation for Land and Man is an independent body. It was established to cater for the Arabs of the Negev Desert. It shares their concerns and tragedies, and helps them to remain steadfast on their land, while preserving human dignity. The foundation works largely in humanitarian relief; as such, it has left its mark in every village and locality. With a main office in the village of Hura, in the centre of the Arab localities of the Negev, it also has a branch in Be'er Sheva.

The foundation sponsors more than 45 “unrecognised” (by the state) villages in the Negev, in which more than 100,000 people live under severe conditions. None are connected to the public grid for water, electricity and other basic services normally provided by the state.

The foundation’s projects and activities include the following:

- It handles the affairs of the people of the Negev, especially in villages that are not recognised by the Israeli authorities.
- The foundation has built and renovated more than 400 houses in the Negev.
- It supports needy students and provides the community with school bags and textbooks.
- It bestows dozens of scholarships annually upon university and college students in the Negev.
- The foundation provides financial and material aid to families affected by natural disasters.
- At least 20 mosques have been built for community use in the local areas.
- More than 50 localities now have solar power thanks to the foundation’s support.
- Thirty roads have been built to remote villages.
- Around 100 localities have been supplied with water, especially “unrecognised” villages.
- The foundation distributes more than 500 food parcels to needy families every month.
- More than 30 concrete bridges over valleys and areas prone to flooding have been built to protect vulnerable communities.
- The foundation organises an annual camp with dozens of workshops to commemorate Land Day.
- More than 10,000 olive seedlings have been planted in the villages of the Negev.
- Thirty schools have been repaired and reconstructed in the Negev villages, as have 50 mosques.

- The foundation has organised dozens of cultural and scientific seminars and conferences for the local communities in the Negev.
- An annual sports tournament is organised by the foundation, and facilities for recreation and sports are maintained in many “unrecognised” villages.

## **Jaffa Charity Foundation**

The Jaffa Charity Foundation was established in 2001 to serve the poor and needy people of the coastal city. It is an independent civil society body which sponsors a number of projects to serve the people of Jaffa. The foundation's annual revenue is around 1.5 million shekels (\$380,000); it receives funding requests from Muslim, Christian and Jewish families.

The foundation's projects include:

- Food parcels distributed monthly to scores of needy families.
- The foundation sponsors 150 orphans in Jaffa, paying monthly sums of between 500 and 1,500 shekels (\$125-380). It is a unique project in the city.
- The patient care project sponsors dozens of patients with various medical conditions when they are in hospital.
- Needy families are given monthly financial support. Altogether, the foundation distributes around 50,000 shekels (almost \$13,000) to dozens of families every month for this project.
- The foundation runs a property maintenance project for poor and needy families in Jaffa. More than 300,000 shekels (\$76,000) has been spent on this.
- The foundation sponsors poor students in the city through the distribution of scholarships, books, bags and stationery worth 60,000 shekels (\$15,000). It also contributes towards the running costs of some public schools.
- Divorcees and widows in the city of Jaffa are given financial and other welfare support by the organisation.
- Jaffa social welfare office sends the foundation dozens of aid requests every month, through which it helps 500+ families to meet their needs.
- More than 2,800 families in Jaffa have received assistance from Jaffa Charity Foundation in one way or another.
- The foundation performs a number of seasonal projects such as the religious sacrifice of animals. The meat is distributed to local needy families.



## **Al-Takaful (Social Solidarity) Foundation**

Al-Takaful Foundation supports approximately 200 Imams, clerics and muezzins (those who give the call to prayer) in mosques around Israel. This is the main activity of the foundation, with the personnel getting involved in the following:

- Social week programmes for inviting people to hear the message of Islam.
- The annual campaign to inculcate Islamic values and ethics in personal and public life.
- Special nights for passing on the message of the faith in homes, cafes and mosques.
- Reviving the remembrance of Islamic events such as the Prophet's migration (peace be upon him); the night of his miraculous journey and ascension to heaven; Prophet Muhammad's birthday; and the holy month of Ramadan.
- Holding cultural lectures.
- Holding educational and social courses on topics such as raising children in Islam, communicating the message of Islam in the Negev and coastal cities, and development and guidance meetings.
- The annual conference of preachers and Imams.

The foundation has also sought to communicate with civil and civic institutions to spread awareness of faith and culture.

## **Al-Masra Fund**

Al-Masra Fund is a charity which supports civil institutions in the educational, cultural and social fields inside Israel. It has supported financially many projects carried out by civil institutions such as building schools and kindergartens, academic projects for university students and suchlike.

## **Alresalah (The Message) Foundation for Publishing and Media**

Alresalah Foundation deals with media, printed and electronic publications and research into historical affairs. It employs more than 50 people.

Projects and activities include the following:

- The foundation has published the *Sawt Al-Haq Wal-Huriya (Voice of Right and Freedom)* newspaper since 1989; it aims to maintain Palestinian and religious identity. The newspaper is distributed free every week in 87 Arab localities. Twelve people are employed in its production.
- With 8 employees, the website *Palestine48* has been run by the foundation since 2003. It attracts an average of 5,000 browser visits daily. It is a conservative website that covers local news, as well as news of the Arab and Muslim world.
- The foundation issues *Eshraqa* magazine which has been published since 2000. More than 7,000 copies are usually distributed in all of the Arab localities in Israel. The magazine covers family issues, looking to educate and preserve the nature of families and prevent Palestinian identity from disappearing. Edited and produced mainly by women, it employs 6 people.
- A Centre for Contemporary Studies run by the foundation researches Palestinian community issues in Israel. Its findings are produced and distributed free of charge by 9 in-house researchers and 5 freelancers. The centre maintains a statistics department.

## **Al-Aqsa Foundation for Religious Endowments and Heritage**

Al-Aqsa Foundation works on preserving the Awqaf (religious endowments) and sacred places in general and Al-Aqsa Mosque in particular. For that purpose, it harnesses the energies of young people and cadres of engineers and experts. The foundation has also prepared and issued a comprehensive encyclopaedia of the Islamic holy sites in Israel.

The foundation's projects include:

- The restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque with renovations and maintenance projects in coordination with the Awqaf Authority as far as possible.
- Encouraging Muslims to visit Al-Aqsa Mosque for worship all year round, as commanded by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).
- Serving Iftar (breaking of the fast) meals in the holy month of Ramadan every year in Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- Carrying out maintenance works in Islamic sacred places and Awqaf properties such as mosques, cemeteries and prayer halls.
- Challenging engineering schemes by the authorities aimed at effacing Islamic holy places under the pretext of building new roads or expanding existing roads, erecting buildings thereon or even turning them into public parks. Such schemes are tracked through advertisements for tenders, etc., on a daily basis. They are compared against a list of Islamic holy places and challenged through the courts and public opinion.
- Developing the encyclopaedia of Islamic holy sites in Israel.
- Producing documentary films to reveal the risks that beset our holy places in general and Al-Aqsa Mosque in particular.
- Holding local and regional workshops to maintain sacred places in endangered geographic areas such as the coastal cities, the Negev and the depopulated villages.
- Holding training courses for tourist guides for the landmarks of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the depopulated villages.
- Monitoring the media and preparing news reports, organising conferences and memorandums and observing the latest developments affecting Al-Aqsa Mosque.