Germany to permit Palestinian terror group to run for parliament

August 31, 2017

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The Jerusalem Post

<http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Germany-to-permit-Palestinian-terrorist-group-to-field-Bundestag-candidates-503836>

The German Interior Ministry declined on Tuesday to bar the [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine from campaigning as a political party](http://www.jpost.com/BDS-THREAT/Palestinian-terror-group-campaigns-to-enter-Bundestag-503539) in the September general election to the Bundestag.

The PFLP has been designated by the EU and US as a terrorist organization.

A spokeswoman for the Interior Ministry told The Jerusalem Post a party’s entitlement to run is “not dependent on the assessment of politics or candidates.”

When asked by the Post if the Interior Ministry plans to outlaw the PFLP, the spokeswoman said it “does not, in general, comment on bans.”

The spokeswoman said, “candidates from parties and candidates in Germany cannot be banned or allowed by the Interior Ministry in Germany,” adding that the federal election committee determines the registration of candidate lists.

The PFLP is running on a joint list with the Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany.

The PFLP has murdered scores of Israelis in terrorist attacks and hijacked airplanes. According to a Post investigation of the PFLP in Germany, it has conducted multiple celebratory events over the years in Berlin.

The ministry said, “The organization PFLP is not a party in the meaning of Article 21 of the Basic Law [Germany’s constitutional law] party laws and cannot campaign [independently] in the election.”

Asked about a letter from MKs from Yesh Atid and German lawmakers urging Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière to ban Hezbollah and the PFLP in Germany, the spokeswoman said she will not comment on the facts of the case.

According to Germany’s most recent intelligence report from 2016, there are 950 active Hezbollah operatives in the country.

Volker Beck, a Green Party Bundestag deputy who co-signed the letter to de Maizière, told the Post on Wednesday that the Interior Ministry has not addressed the concerns of the letter.

“The problem is that a terrorist organization [such as the] PFLP can do what it wants and how it wants because it is not banned.”

This leads to an absurd situation where the PFLP can participate in an election, he said.

“The Interior Minister must finally issue a ban of the PFLP in Germany,” said Beck.

For observers of terrorism in Germany, it is unclear why the ministry is reluctant to outlaw the Palestinian organization, which is widely recognized as a terrorist group.

The ministry did shut down the radical left-wing website linksunten.indymedia.org last Friday.

De Maizière said the portal was closed because it was “showing hate and legitimizing violence against police officers.”