[New Israel Fund Groups Influenced UN Report on Gaza by Accusing Israel of War Crimes](http://www.algemeiner.com/2015/07/16/new-israel-fund-groups-influenced-un-report-on-gaza-by-accusing-israel-of-war-crimes/%22%20%5Co%20%22Permanent%20Link%20to%20New%20Israel%20Fund%20Groups%20Influenced%20UN%20Report%20on%20Gaza%20by%20Accusing%20Israel%20of%20War%20Crimes)

July 16, 2015

By Matan Peleg

The Algemeiner

<http://www.algemeiner.com/2015/07/16/new-israel-fund-groups-influenced-un-report-on-gaza-by-accusing-israel-of-war-crimes/>

he latest UN report on the Gaza War determined that both Israel and Hamas committed war crimes during the fighting in the summer of 2014. The members of the Commission of Inquiry hinted at the possibility that Israel’s top officials are responsible for a policy that led to the committing of war crimes by the Israeli Defense Forces. The Commission’s chairperson, Judge Mary McGowan Davis, recommended that the international community take steps to ameliorate this policy, chief among them supporting an investigation by the International Court of Justice, situated in The Hague.

A reading of the report shows that key, central parts of the study were based on reports presented to the United Nations by a number of organizations supported by the New Israel Fund and by the Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Secretariat, which is situated in al-Bireh, near Ramallah.

In response to the report and the accusations against it, the New Israel Fund wrote: “Following last week’s release of the UN report on Operation ‘Protective Edge’, the usual argument was made by politicians and organizations from the right wing – ‘left wing organizations provided information for the report.’ This is a mix of demagoguery and lies. Demagoguery – because the vast majority of information the organizations supposedly ‘provided to the UN commission of inquiry’ was taken from their internet websites by use of copying and pasting…”

And yet it seems that the New Israel Fund itself is the one using demagoguery and lies in order to rebuff the claims made against them. At least four prominent organizations that are supported by the New Israel Fund presented their own reports to the United Nations, reports in which they accused the State of Israel and the Israeli Defense Forces of war crimes, violating international law, torture, and more.

The ‘Public Committee Against Torture in Israel’ (PCATI), for instance, filed a report to the United Nations Human Rights Council. In the report, the organization claimed that the Israeli Security Agency (Shin Bet) systematically tortures Palestinian detainees during the course of their interrogations, and that both soldiers and security forces make use of violence and humiliation, and at times torture as well.

An additional example is the ‘Adalah’ organization, which following “Operation Protective Edge” presented a report to the Commission of Inquiry. This report dealt primarily with the IDF’s lack of ability to adequately and properly investigate its own conduct, and the Israeli justice system’s lack of willingness to provide aid to Palestinians harmed as a result of the operation.

In this report, ‘Adalah’ also criticized the Israeli Supreme Court, and filed a list of complaints against the IDF for war crimes. At the end of the report, ‘Adalah’ called for the Commission of Inquiry to “urge Israel to cease violating IHL and IHRL rules and norms…”

The organization ‘Physicians for Human Rights-Israel’, which as was mentioned above, receives funding and support from the New Israel Fund, published a report accusing Israel of severe violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law. The organization, in collaboration with the Palestinian organization ‘Al Mezan Center For Human Rights,’ put together a delegation of medical experts who traveled to Gaza in order to investigate suspicions regarding violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law during the conflict. The report concluded, among other things, that “The incidents recorded at Khuza’a are in general indicative of several violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.”

The New Israel Fund can’t downplay the severity of the actions of several of the organizations that it funds and supports. These organizations presented their information to the United Nations with their own hands, arguing that Israel and the Israeli Defense Forces are cruel occupiers committing war crimes and torture. It is specifically for this reason that the NGO Bill and Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), presented by MK Yinon Magal (Jewish Home) three weeks ago, must be passed into law.