Cut US funding over UNRWA's antisemitism

March 23, 2023

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Washington Examiner

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/restoring-america/community-family/cut-us-funding-over-unrwa-antisemitism>

Why is the [Biden administration](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/tag/biden-administration) allowing U.S. tax dollars to be used to incite violence against Jews?

President [Joe Biden](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/tag/joe-biden) decided early after entering office to fund the [United Nations](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/tag/un) Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). That organization's employees and classes have repeatedly promoted antisemitism and glorified terrorism despite commitments by management to stop these activities.

For these and other reasons, the Trump administration announced in 2018 that the U.S. would ‘not make additional contributions to UNRWA.’ The Biden administration reversed this decision in 2021, restoring funding ($338.4 million in 2021 and $343.9 million in 2022) and declaring: ‘The United States is deeply committed to ensuring that our partnership with UNRWA promotes neutrality, accountability, and transparency. As with all of our engagements with U.N. institutions, the United States needs to be at the table to ensure that the reforms advance efficiencies and are in accord with our interests and values.’

A few months later, the State Department announced a new ‘ [Framework for Cooperation](https://www.state.gov/2021-2022-u-s-unrwa-framework-for-cooperation/) ’ with UNRWA intended to strengthen ‘accountability, transparency, and consistency with U.N. principles, including neutrality.’ Under the agreement, UNRWA committed to review textbooks, educate staff on expectations of neutrality, discipline staff for violations, and similar measures.

Continued U.S. funding was supposedly contingent on UNRWA better policing its employees and classrooms to eliminate antisemitism, incitement of violence, and glorification of terrorism. However, dollars continue to flow despite reports and studies by [journalists](https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/11/05/unrwa-palestine-israel-refugees-united-states-funding-corruption-education/) , non-governmental organizations, and even the European Union illustrating that extremism still runs rampant.

The [latest example](https://unwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-Report-UNRWA.pdf) comes from U.N. Watch, a Geneva-based non-governmental organization. The report documents numerous examples of ‘UNRWA’s gross and systematic violations of neutrality and other U.N. rules in their hiring of teachers and in their use of curricula inside UNRWA schools that constitute incitement to hatred, antisemitism and terrorism.’ Specific examples include:

* Social media posts by UNRWA teachers praising Palestinian ‘martyrs’ who killed Israeli soldiers and civilians, praising Hamas rocket attacks against civilians, expressing support for terrorist groups such as the al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and Palestine Islamic Jihad Movement, and expressing support for the Holocaust and other antisemitic views.
* Praising martyrdom and jihad, perpetuating antisemitic stories and stereotypes, rejecting Israel’s right to exist, and using maps that do not include Israel.

UNRWA was established as a ‘temporary’ initiative to assist Palestinian refugees from the 1948 Israeli-Arab conflict and to facilitate their resettlement and/or repatriation. Seven decades later, it is clear that UNRWA is not helping resolve the Palestinian refugee challenge but is perpetuating it. Worse, it has been shown repeatedly to promote violent extremism in its classrooms and to employ individuals linked to extremist groups. How is the cause of Israeli-Palestinian peace served when UNRWA schools are poisoning the minds of Palestinian children, teaching them to hate Jews and love terrorism?

UNRWA is clearly in violation of its own supposed ‘zero-tolerance policy for discrimination or for incitement to hatred and violence in its schools, educational materials, or in any of its operations.’ UNRWA is also clearly violating the Framework for Cooperation with the United States. The only question remaining is whether the Biden administration will live up to its commitment to hold UNRWA accountable.

The administration has given UNRWA nearly $700 million over the last two years. It is past time for the White House and Congress to hold UNRWA to its obligation to police its staff, its classes, and its structures. Until these incidents cease, the U.S. should cease supporting UNRWA.