Qatar Candidacy for UNESCO Director-General: “He Who Apparently Endorses the Language of Goebbels Must Not Head the Intellectual Arm of the United Nations”

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The Simon Wiesenthal Center

<http://www.wiesenthal.com/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=lsKWLbPJLnF&b=8776547&ct=14988983&notoc=1>

In a letter to Ambassador Michael Worbs, Chair of the UNESCO Executive Board, the Simon Wiesenthal Centre Director for International Relations, Dr. Shimon Samuels, expressed astonishment to find “among the nine candidates for the post of UNESCO Director-General – on your list of 16 March and to be interviewed by the Executive Board on 26-27 April – there appears Qatar Minister of Culture, Hamad bin Abdulaziz Al-Kawari.”

The letter noted, “Only yesterday, Qatar supported a draft resolution contesting all Israeli/Jewish ties to Jerusalem, both East and West.”

The Centre reported, “For five years, 2012-2016, our Centre has awarded its annual “Worst Offender Prize” at the Frankfurt Book Fair to the Qatari stand, “for fomenting conspiracy theories and Jew-hatred”, continuing, "in a 2015 letter to Culture Minister Al-Kawari, already then regarding press reports of his proposed UNESCO candidacy, we called his attention to the antisemitic hate-fest under his authority at the Doha International Book Fair. There was no response":

Samuels explained, “We have just received a 2013 title in Arabic, published by the Qatar Ministry of Culture and Sport:
'Jerusalem in the Eyes of the Poets' by Mohammed Kujjah, 'Adviser to UNESCO in Syria for Intangible Cultural Heritage'

The Centre's letter pointed to the book’s Foreword as “an endorsement from Dr. Hamad bin Abdulaziz Al-Kawari (page 5).

- His first paragraph refers to the significance of Jerusalem to Arabs and Muslims (Al-Aqsa Mosque): Jerusalem under Muslim rule was a symbol of Islamic unity and greatness while under occupation a symbol of breakup and weakness;

- The second paragraph refers to the poems about Jerusalem under Muslim rule and 'occupation' (Crusades/Israel);

- The third (last) paragraph (refer to attached image) states: ‘The Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage printed this book in its faith that it will contribute in documenting what was said about Jerusalem from poems and the events she went through, and we pray to God to release her from captivity and to drive the Muslims to liberate her’… Signed Dr. Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al-Kawari, Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage.”

The Centre emphasized, “Although the book is mainly about poems on Jerusalem by Arab poets through different periods, it appears to include anti-Semitic conspiracy theories.
Examples:

- Israel's connection to Jerusalem is a myth as exposed by French philosopher Roger Garaudy (page 7). [It must be stressed that Garaudy was an indicted Holocaust denier];

- Israel is behind every problem in the Middle East and beyond: the Lebanese civil war, the first and second Gulf wars, the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, the turmoil in Sudan, Egypt etc, (page 31-32);

- The Jews control the media, newspapers, publishing houses in the United States and the West (page 34).

“Mr. Chairperson, he who apparently endorses the language of Goebbels must not head the intellectual arm of the United Nations. We expect you to advise the Executive Board accordingly,” concluded Samuels.