Biden’s reward to UNRWA for bad behavior

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By Ruthie Blum

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The United States [transferred](https://www.jns.org/us-gives-135-million-to-unrwa-after-agency-condemns-anti-israel-hatred/) $135 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) on Saturday. This was in addition to the nearly $33 million that it gave to the organization in May to help the Gaza Strip, ravaged by Hamas rockets and Israel’s response to them during “Operation Guardian of the Walls.”

The latest cash bonanza also came three months after Washington provided an initial gift of $150 million to “restore” the aid that was cut in 2018 by then-President Donald Trump.

It’s not necessary to do the math in order to calculate how nicely the coffers of UNRWA have been padded since April alone. Nor is the reopening of the faucet for the flow of funds into the [corrupt](https://www.jns.org/opinion/schadenfreude-and-the-unrwa-scandal/) U.N. agency the least bit surprising.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken had announced with great fanfare that doing so would be part of the new administration’s efforts to repair America’s relations with the Palestinian Authority. You know, the ones that Trump supposedly destroyed by holding the P.A. accountable for its actions, chief among them its “[pay for slay](https://www.jns.org/opinion/palestinian-pay-for-slay-policy-will-go-on-despite-israels-new-law/)” policy.

As UNRWA’s largest donor, the United States has sway that it hadn’t bothered to leverage until Trump came along and made the money contingent on comprehensive reforms. Not only did the “humanitarian” body abuse its original mandate, which wore out its welcome and purpose a short time after its inception more than 70 years ago, but it worked tirelessly to perpetuate the problem that it was established to solve.

Furthermore, its entire existence is based on a contrived U.N. definition of “refugee” that enables Palestinians to be categorized as such for generations. It’s this special status that has led to an outrageous situation, whereby the number of Palestinian “refugees” hasn’t declined over the decades but has increased exponentially. So, UNRWA continues to provide “relief, human development and protection services” to people who aren’t “refugees” by any measure other than a fabricated one.

As if this weren’t sufficient cause to shutter the self-serving political entity, UNRWA has another claim to infamy: its passive and active abetting of terrorists. This takes the form, among others, of allowing Fatah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad to stockpile weapons in and under its schools, whose revisionist textbooks indoctrinate Palestinian children to hate and aspire to kill Israelis.

Many of the teachers employed in these disgraceful institutions of lower learning post-anti-Semitic cartoons on Facebook. These include caricatures of Israeli soldiers committing atrocities and, more recently, of the Jewish state intentionally infecting Palestinians with COVID-19. Oh, and of denying them vaccines.

This isn’t the only reality that the Biden administration conveniently ignored when it signed a “[Framework for Cooperation](https://www.state.gov/2021-2022-u-s-unrwa-framework-for-cooperation/)” with UNRWA on July 7, [which](https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/united-states-announces-additional-support-palestine-refugees) “establishes shared goals and priorities in support of humanitarian assistance, human development and protection of Palestine refugees.”

According to UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini, the inking of the agreement and additional financial support “demonstrates we once again have an ongoing partner in the United States that understands the need to provide critical assistance to some of the region’s most vulnerable refugees.”

Really.

“Frameworks for cooperation are the traditional mechanism by which the United States and international agencies establish shared goals and priorities,” he stated. “The agreement between UNRWA and the United States reaffirms both parties’ commitment to the United Nations’ humanitarian principles, including the principle of neutrality.”

Though such pontification is par for press releases from NGOs in general, this particular description of the deal would be funny if it weren’t so sad. Nevertheless, media outlets in Israel and abroad pounced on the item by highlighting a specific element of a single paragraph in the “framework” document and reporting on it as some kind of encouraging hot-news flash.

The passage in question reads: “UNRWA commits to take all possible measures to ensure funding by the United States … does not provide assistance to, or otherwise support, terrorists or terrorist organizations. Further, the United States and UNRWA condemn without reserve all manifestations of religious or racial intolerance, incitement to violence, harassment or violence against persons or communities based on ethnic origin or religious beliefs, including anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-Catholicism, anti-Arabism or other forms of discrimination or racism against Palestinians, Israelis or other individuals or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief.”

Leaving aside the fact that every syllable of this ostensible commitment on UNRWA’s part is a lie, journalists were bowled over by the inclusion of “anti-Semitism” and “Israelis” in the long list of false denunciations of practices in which the organization has never ceased engaging.

How quickly everyone has forgotten the fate of now-former UNRWA Gaza director Matthias Schmale, for example. Schmale was first raked over the coals—and then ousted from his job in disgrace—for presenting a more complex view of “Operation Guardian of the Walls” than his U.N. and Hamas bosses could tolerate.

In an interview in May with Israeli Channel 12’s Arad Nir, he said: “During the 11 days of war, we did not run out of food, water and supplies, [though] we would have if Kerem Shalom and the border would have stayed closed. So, from my point of view, there is no acute or serious shortage of medical supplies, food or water, as long as this now starts—continues—to come in.”

Asked by Nir for his opinion on “claims by Israeli officials that the IDF bombardments were very precise,” Schmale replied: “I’m not a military expert, but I would not dispute that. I also have the impression that there is a huge sophistication in the way the Israeli military struck.”

The angry reaction was fast and furious.

“We were shocked by the statements of Mr. Matthias Schmale … where he installed himself as a military analyst or spokesman for the occupation army,” declared Hamas, according to a tweet by its official mouthpiece, Al-Aqsa TV.

Realizing that he was in hot water, Schmale accused those who had praised him for his honesty of “blatant manipulation of [his] interview,” and [tweeted](https://twitter.com/matzschmale/status/1397122729241944070): “Recent remarks I made on Israeli TV have offended & hurt those who had family members & friends killed & injured during the war that has just ended. I truly regret to have caused them pain, & reiterate following points I have made through countless interviews & tweets.”

Responding to Twitter users who suggested that he had been coerced into [backtracking](https://www.jns.org/unrwa-gaza-director-backtracks-on-interview-about-israeli-war-actions/), he [announced](https://twitter.com/matzschmale/status/1397394100471672837): “No one has forced me into an apology. Responsible leaders listen carefully to people they serve—in my case Palestine refugees; civilians, not political or military actors—and accept and correct errors of judgment.”

Within less than a week, UNRWA [said](https://www.jns.org/unrwa-gaza-chief-to-take-leave-of-absence-amid-uproar-over-israeli-airstrike-remarks/) in a statement that Schmale would be taking a “long leave of absence.” Someone ought to look into whether he’s still among the living, but it won’t be President Joe Biden, that’s for sure.

After all, he’s too busy looking the other way while tax dollars get shipped to the bad guys.