

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE HOLY LAND FOUNDATION FOR RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT,)
)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.)
)
 JOHN ASHCROFT, in his official)
 capacity as Attorney General of)
 the United States, et al.,)
)
 Defendants.)
 _____)

No. 1:02CV00442
(Judge Kessler)

DECLARATION OF SHUKRI ABU BAKER

3. My desire for Palestine and Israel is that there be a single nation, Muslims, Jews and others. I categorically reject the idea that Jews should be killed or driven

FILED

JUN 28 2002

United States District Court
For the District of Columbia
A TRUE COPY
NANCY MAYER WHITTINGTON, Clerk
By Colin J. Craven
7/9/07 Deputy Clerk
Exhibit #1 of doc. #29

1:02CV00442(GK)

NANCY MAYER WHITTINGTON, CLERK
GOVERNMENT EXHIBIT
Baker Declaration
3:04-CR-240-G
U.S. v. HLF, et al.

of Israel. I reject and abhor Hamas, its goals and its methods. I reject terrorism by anyone. I do not believe that it accomplishes anything and I believe it to be morally wrong. The organization that I helped found, the Holy Land Foundation, is dedicated to the alleviation of the suffering of people who have been caught and injured in conflicts and disasters around the world, particularly in Palestine, where the suffering by the Palestinians is staggering.

7. Neither I nor, to my knowledge, any of the other founders of this charity have had any connection whatever to Hamas, or to any terrorist groups or to terrorism. I do not believe that suicide bombing is countenanced by the Islamic religion. I have always opposed radicalism. I have always been for dialog and for peace and I am firm in these convictions. I am confident that the Other founders of the Holy Land Foundation feel the same way. Our objective was and has always been simply to alleviate suffering in Palestine and elsewhere.

13. Because a government agency has taken our records, I am providing many of the financial and other details from memory. During our first year of fund-raising, ending in 1990, we raised approximately \$700,000. Because the intifada was going on in Palestine, we focused our charity on orphans, food and aid to hospitals.

19. In the receipt and expenditure of our funds, we have always maintained transparency. Our books have been open for inspection and every dollar accounted for.

23. By early 1994, we established our offices in Jerusalem and Gaza. Before that time, we had delivered charity through organizations licensed and authorized by the Israeli government which, up until that time, occupied Palestine and exercised authority over all charitable and other agencies operating anywhere in Palestine or Gaza. In other words, although HIF provided funds to zakat committees and other organizations before 1994, the existence and activities of every one of those organizations had been approved by the Israeli government. It is important to note that HIF, even before Hamas was banned by the Israeli government, did not provide any funds to Hamas or devote any of its funds to support Hamas. It was my view then, and it continues to be my view, that connections with political organizations, including any organization that engages in any sort of terrorist activities, would compromise our ability to provide charity.

31.

F. The 1993 "Philadelphia" meeting was a meeting of Islamic intellectuals, academicians, community leaders and representatives of American Islamic organizations, such as ours. It was not a meeting of any organization. No decisions were made by any organization about anything. Everyone there spoke their minds.

Some people at the meeting spoke of Hamas openly and there was no reason for them not to, since Hamas' role in Palestine was a natural subject of discussion, and Hamas was not a banned organization at that time. The use of the word "Samah" was a whimsical and ironic play on words. "Samah" means "forgiveness" in Arabic, and, in my opinion, those who used the term were making ironic fun of Hamas, not adopting a secret term to disguise their references to the organization.

H. I was not aware, nor am I aware now, that Dr. Akram Harubi holds some sort of position in Hamas. I understood him to be an academician, had no idea that he had any connection with Hamas, and find it hard to believe now.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on this 4th day of April, 2002.


Shukri Abu-Baker