

The 2016 National Conference of Students for Justice in Palestine at George Mason University

Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) is a nation-wide anti-Israel organization devoted to Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) efforts, and organized into chapters which exist on over 100 college campuses around the country.

These chapters are coordinated through the National Students for Justice in Palestine (NSJP) organization, formally stood up in 2010.¹

Students for Justice in Palestine was founded by Hatem Bazian at University of Berkeley in 2001, out of the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS). Bazian was also a leader Muslim Students Association (MSA) on campus.² The MSA was founded in the 1960s as an organization of the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood, according to documents submitted by the U.S. government at a federal terrorism trial in 2008. Bazian would go on to become the Chairman of American Muslims for Palestine (AMP), an organization devoted to organizing anti-BDS activities and which supports SJP financially.³ AMP also provides activism training for SJP members.⁴ The AMP noted in 2010 that it had worked with hundreds of members of Students for Justice in Palestine" and has held three regional SJP conferences.⁵

Who are Americans Muslim for Palestine (AMP)?

According to former Treasury official and terrorism researcher Jonathan Schanzer, AMP is an organization founded and led by individuals with multiple ties to terror finance. Specifically the following individuals who make up AMP:

Individuals Associated with the Holy Land Foundation (convicted of terror finance 2008):

- **Hossein Khatib:** Former Regional HLF director, now AMP board member.
- **Jamal Said:** An unindicted co-conspirator in the HLF trial, Said is the director of the Mosque Foundation of Chicago, which financially supports AMP, and Said has repeatedly presented at AMP conferences. The Mosque Foundation

¹ <http://www.nationalsjp.org/about.html>

² <http://www.thetower.org/article/on-many-campus-hate-is-spelled-sjp/>

³ Jonathan Schanzer, "Testimony before the Joint House Foreign Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa", <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA18/20160419/104817/HHRG-114-FA18-Wstate-Schanzer-20160419.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.sdjewishworld.com/2016/06/08/who-behind-sjp-organization/>

⁵ <http://www.adl.org/israel-international/anti-israel-activity/c/amp-seeks-to-coordinate.html>

and its associated Bridgeview Mosque were associated with the Muslim Brotherhood by a 2004 Chicago Tribune investigative report.⁶

- **Salah Sarsour:** Spent 8 months in prison in Israel for Hamas related activities. Reportedly participated with his brother Jamil Sarsour in an effort to use proceeds from his furniture store business to fund Hamas. An FBI memo to the Treasury department linked Sarsour to the Holy Land Foundation.

*Individuals Associated with the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP): Propaganda arm for Hamas operations in U.S.*⁷

- **Rafeeq Jaber:** IAP's former President, listed on tax forms for AMP's "non-profit" wing.
- **Abdelbasset Hamayel:** Former IAP Secretary General. Listed as "registered agent" on tax forms for AMP's "educational" arm, self-described "Director" of AMP Chicago. Also listed as "executive director."
- **Sufian Nabhan:** AMP board member and former leader of IAP-Michigan.
- **Osama Abuirshaid:** AMP "National coordinator", served as board member of IAP and as editor for IAP publication, "Zaytuna", which routinely advertised for Islamic charities subsequently convicted/designated of terror finance.

What is the impact of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) for college students?

According to a report by the AMCHA initiative, the presence of organized BDS activity on campus has a direct correlation with reported cases of anti-Semitic incidents. The report notes that on campuses with an active SJP chapter or equivalent organization, 99% reported anti-Semitic activity, compared to only 16% of schools without such organizations.⁸ The AMCHA initiative also reported that 81% of schools where professors were recorded to be engaged in BDS activism saw expressions of anti-Semitic activity on campus, compared to 17% of campuses without such pro-BDS faculty members.

⁶ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-0402080265feb08-story.html>

⁷ See Memorandum Opinion Order, "U.S. v.HLF, et.al." U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas, July 1st, 2009, for a summary of the government's case regarding HLF and the role of IAP, described by the government as an "information and propaganda" organization for the Palestine Committee of the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood, accessed:

https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/1425.pdf

What is SJP's role at George Mason University?

GMU Students Against Israel Apartheid (SAIA) appears to be the official SJP chapter on GMU campus. Despite not sharing the SJP name, GMU SAIA is a recognized SJP affiliate.⁹ According to SAIA co-founder Tareq Radi, SAIA was founded in part because the existing SJP in GMU chapter was insufficiently radical.¹⁰

Radi is now a "Present Events Coordinator" for the George Town University Center for Contemporary Arab Studies. As a student Radi reportedly worked closely with GMU's Muslim Students Association (MSA) in order to oppose a proposed Muslim-Jewish peace event.¹¹ Radi has written for Mondoweiss, an online anti-Israel publication that George Mason University Foundation Professor David Bernstein identified as notably anti-Semitic,¹² and Electronic Intifada, a website which has been documented for its openly pro-Hamas stance.¹³

Radi is reportedly an "activist" for the US Palestinian Community Network (USPCN).¹⁴ USPCN openly supports convicted PFLP terrorist Rasmia Odeh, who was convicted by Israel of a supermarket bombing which killed two.¹⁵ Odeh would later immigrate to the United States under false pretenses, leading to a successful criminal prosecution for Immigration fraud (the case is currently being appealed).

Fellow SAIA co-founder Mohammad Abou-Ghazala openly stated his opposition to the "continuation" of the state of Israel, and said Jews had a "golden age" under Muslim rule.¹⁶ Like Radi, Abou-Ghazala also appears to oppose Jewish-Muslim dialogue, being quoted saying "Dialogue is haram (forbidden)" in a July 4th, 2015 tweet.¹⁷

⁹ Notably GMU SAIA's facebook page is advertising the National SJP conference and a list of SJP chapters in the "SJP East conference" advertises a George Mason University SJP chapter links to the GMU SAIA facebook page.

¹⁰ "Conference on Israel's influence: Tareq Radi ", accessed: <https://youtu.be/DA-Dcg0EtGk>

¹¹ <https://electronicintifada.net/content/how-students-are-resisting-efforts-normalize-israeli-apartheid/14218>

¹² https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2015/05/04/mondoweiss-is-a-hate-site/?utm_term=.7010f02bc254

¹³ <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/03/08/the-pro-palestinian-left-s-hamas-blindspot.html>

¹⁴ Tareq Radi at DC4Gaza Protest, accessed, <https://youtu.be/IKZ0FVqo-Ig>

¹⁵ <http://www.detroitnews.com/story/opinion/2014/12/05/rasmia-odeh-victim/19913157/>

¹⁶ <http://www.campusreform.org/?ID=4970>

¹⁷ Screenshot available.

The role of GMU faculty in supporting SJP/SAIA:

SJP/SAIA activism is not solely student supported, but receives major support and influence from at least two GMU faculty members.

Noura Erakat is an associate professor of “Legal Studies, International Area Studies, and Social Justice/Human Rights”, at George Mason University. Erakat was a founder of Students for Justice in Palestine together with Bazian at UC Berkley. Erakat is the niece of former Palestinian Liberation Organization Secretary General and PA chief negotiator Saeb Erekat.¹⁸

Erakat’s husband, Bassam Haddad¹⁹, is also a George Mason professor, and Director of it’s Middle East Studies Program. Haddad is the Executive Director of the Arab Studies Institute (ASI).²⁰ The ASI describes itself as an “umbrella organization” for five subsidiary publications: Arab Studies Journal, Jadaliyya, Quilting Point, FAMA (Forum on Arab and Muslim Affairs), and Tadween Publishing.²¹ ASI is funded by (among others) the Open Society Institute.²²

ASI is the publisher of *Gaza in Context*, which it describes as a “Pedagogical project”. The project, a 28 minute documentary on Gaza with accompanying resources, features Erakat, Bassam Haddad, as well as GMU SAIA founder Tareq Radi, and D.C.,Maryland and Virginia (DMV) SJP regional leader Lena Ibrahim.²³ GMU’s SAIA Facebook page promotes the film project and claims that it uses the materials “as part of our curriculum”.²⁴

¹⁸ <http://www.meforum.org/5314/erakat-lawfare-israel>
http://lawrenceofcyberia.blogs.com/palestinian_biographies/saeb-erakat-biography-1.html

¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/noura.erakat>

²⁰ <http://www.arabstudiesinstitute.org/en/people>

²¹ <http://www.arabstudiesinstitute.org/en/pages/about>

²² <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/about>

²³ <http://www.gazaincontext.com/team.html>

²⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/GMUSAIA/posts/1044450845642451>