

# SOUTH AFRICA, HAMAS, IRAN, AND QATAR

## THE HIJACKING OF THE ANC AND THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

2024

**ISGAP**

THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF  
GLOBAL ANTISEMITISM & POLICY

**The Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) is committed to fighting antisemitism on the battlefield of ideas.**

ISGAP is dedicated to scholarly research into the origins, processes, and manifestations of global antisemitism and of other forms of prejudice, including various forms of racism, as they relate to policy in an age of globalization.

On the basis of this examination of antisemitism and policy, ISGAP disseminates analytical and scholarly materials to help combat hatred and promote understanding.

For further information contact:

The Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy  
[info@isgap.org](mailto:info@isgap.org)  
[www.isgap.org](http://www.isgap.org)

© ISGAP 2024 — All rights reserved  
ISBN 978-1-940186-22-1

# Contents

Foreword.....	<a href="#">1</a>
Executive Summary.....	<a href="#">4</a>
Introduction.....	<a href="#">5</a>
South Africa’s Case against Israel at the ICJ .....	<a href="#">7</a>
<i>Allegations of Iranian Funding</i> .....	<a href="#">11</a>
<i>Russian Funding of the ANC</i> .....	<a href="#">14</a>
<i>Case Study: Extremist Links and Inherent Bias of South Africa’s Legal Team</i> .....	<a href="#">18</a>
Roots of Iranian Activity within South African Society .....	<a href="#">24</a>
Recent Developments in South Africa–Iran Relations .....	<a href="#">27</a>
South Africa–Qatar Relations .....	<a href="#">32</a>
The African National Congress (ANC) .....	<a href="#">35</a>
<i>ANC– Hamas Relations</i> .....	<a href="#">35</a>
<i>Spotlight on Naledi Pandor</i> .....	<a href="#">41</a>
Radical Political Islamism in South Africa.....	<a href="#">44</a>
<i>Expansion of Political Islamism in Surrounding Countries</i> .....	<a href="#">47</a>
<i>Radical Political Islamist Associations in South Africa</i> .....	<a href="#">49</a>
Conclusion.....	<a href="#">56</a>

## Foreword

In 1986, as a political science student at McGill University in Montreal, I took a course on South African society that changed my life. To my shock, I discovered that the apartheid regime was still well ensconced in South Africa and that people of European descent were controlling every facet of the lives of Africans. The apartheid regime was based on an ideology of racism that had its roots in European colonialism and Nazi ideology. As a young Jew, it boggled my mind that this worldview not only still existed but that it formed the basis of power and domination over millions of people. I had assumed that the kind of ideas that had led to the indignities that had destroyed and displaced the European and North African Jewry of my grandparents' generation could not possibly exist in my lifetime. I assumed, incorrectly, that the world had learned the lesson that racist antisemitism was not only immoral but ultimately led to the systematic murder of more than six million Jews and the destruction of European society.

The realization that the apartheid system, with its racism based on colonial and Nazi ideology, was somehow alive and well, impacting the lives of millions of people in southern Africa, led me to become involved in the struggle against apartheid. I did so in the spirit of human rights and a commitment to the principles of social democracy, coupled with an honest and exhaustive search for truth in the best traditions of being a student and scholar. I spent months researching South African society: its history, politics, economics, and culture. I also studied the anti-apartheid movement and the political parties that formed the coalition that fought to end this crime against humanity. Through months of careful research, I learned that the African National Congress (ANC), the vanguard of the struggle, was also committed to social democratic values and an agenda to create a democratic society in which all would be equal under the law, regardless of race, religion, or gender. It was at this point that I became committed to the struggle for human dignity, respect, and equality.

At this time, I had the good fortune to meet Professor Chengiah Rogers Ragaven in Montreal. Chengiah was a former South African student leader who had been sent into exile by the South African regime for his political activism with the ANC and the Black Consciousness Movement. He had taught Steve Biko about politics when they were students at the University of Natal, where Biko emerged as a leader of the

Black Consciousness Movement. In 1987, Chengiah appointed me as the chairperson of the ANC Solidarity Committee of Canada. There I worked with student and faculty groups, unions, and eventually the Canadian government to combat apartheid. I also had the good fortune to work with the ANC leadership and was sent to South Africa in coordination with the ANC and the Canadian government to monitor the transition from apartheid to democracy. I attended the first legal gatherings of South Africa's newly unbanned political parties and organizations, including local, regional and national congresses of the ANC. I also worked on the ground on behalf of the ANC in cities, townships, squatter camps, and rural areas, meeting activists and supporters and occasionally running into apartheid state actors in precarious situations. This was an intense and, at times, challenging endeavor. However, I was lucky enough to meet and work with incredible people who risked everything—including their own safety—not only to end apartheid but also to create a democratic and egalitarian society.

It therefore pains me deeply to publish this report, which reveals that South Africa's current ANC-led government, which has been marked by decades of corruption and an inability to provide essential goods and services for the vast majority of its citizens, has sold its soul for cash and an alliance with entities whose ideology is incompatible with the basic principles of a free democratic South Africa. As detailed in these pages, the ANC and the government it leads have developed close ties with the Iranian revolutionary regime despite the latter's fundamental opposition to basic democratic principles such as the rights of women and minorities, equality, and the rule of law. In addition, South Africa's ANC-led government maintains close relations with Qatar, which still hosts the leadership of Hamas, an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, whose core ideology embraces Nazi-inspired racism and antisemitism. In fact, the Muslim Brotherhood's longtime spiritual leader, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, preached throughout his life that true believers (i.e. proper Muslims) are obligated to complete the work of Hitler.

It is these nefarious actors that are currently funding the ANC, which has effectively sold out the history of the struggle of the South African people, who sacrificed so much for decades to replace the apartheid system with a democratic, free nation. In exchange for support from radical Islamist and anti-democratic sources, the ANC has sacrificed its principles to falsely and misleadingly accuse Israel and the Jewish people of apartheid and genocide before the International Court of Justice. It is deeply tragic that the once-great ANC has chosen to portray Israel and the Jewish people—a people persecuted and murdered by the Nazis for not being white—as a nation of evil white colonizers in an effort to placate its antisemitic paymasters, who are determined to destroy the world's only Jewish state. Who would have thought that the ANC would support those with an ideology that uses Nazi racist-inspired ideas? How sad—and what a profound scandal. It is to be hoped that the people of

South Africa, and all people who care about defending democratic principles, will read this report and put pressure on the South African government and the ANC to stop supporting this modern antisemitism that calls for the destruction of Israel and, by extension, the Jewish people.

Charles Asher Small

*Founding Director of the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP); the Woolf Institute and St Edmunds College, University of Cambridge*

## Executive Summary

This report examines the positions and alliances of the South African government in light of its decision to bring a legal case against Israel before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague. The report reveals a persistent pattern of anti-Israel rhetoric and behavior by South Africa and specifically by the ruling African National Congress (ANC). The report focuses on the nature of South Africa's strategic ties with Iran, Qatar, and Hamas, as well as the problematic political and financial backing of the country's ICJ case by Iran, Qatar, and political entities such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Given the obstacles the South African government faced in bringing such a complex legal case, this report examines the anti-democratic and terror organizations that the South African government partnered with in order to advance this anti-Israel and overtly antisemitic project. A case study examining the members and advisors of South Africa's legal team at the ICJ provides additional insight into the bias, antisemitism, and even terrorist sympathies of the individuals and entities involved, including Law for Palestine (L4P) and Shawan Jabarin. In addition, the report examines the expansion and influence of radical Islamism in South Africa and their close relations with the ANC today. All this demonstrates the extent to which the South African government has discredited itself through political and financial corruption, thus proving that it is in no position to act as an agent of justice at the ICJ.

## Introduction

Following the Hamas attack and massacre on October 7, 2023, Israel is facing perhaps the most challenging period since its establishment. Globally, the explosion of hatred against the Jewish people is extremely alarming, while the radical left, the extreme right, and political Islam jointly threaten social cohesion and basic democratic practices. The brutality of the acts perpetrated that day, brazenly shared live by the attackers themselves on social media and accompanied by calls of *Allahu akbar!*, led to an outpouring of support from nations around the globe for Israel. In some quarters, however, this support was short-lived, as almost immediately following the attacks anti-Israel and antisemitic rallies began across the globe. As a result of its relations with the Iranian revolutionary regime, Qatar and Hamas, the African National Congress (ANC) soon became one of the leaders of this global antisemitic explosion.

In fact, the ANC has been one of the earliest and most vociferous voices condemning Israel since the attacks on October 7. Seemingly oblivious to the facts on the ground, the ANC-led South African government immediately adopted an adversarial stance and began promoting the pernicious narrative that Israel was committing a genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza. These allegations were first made on November 6, 2023, merely a month after the Hamas attacks, leading to a formal application to the Hague-based International Court of Justice (ICJ) on December 29. Beyond that, an in-depth inquiry into South Africa's representatives at the ICJ will show that its legal team is composed of highly biased individuals and NGOs with a history of overt anti-Israel activism, including some with links to terrorist entities. Given the significance of such allegations, it is necessary to investigate not only the veracity of these claims but the likely sources and motivation behind them.

As such, this report seeks to examine South Africa's claims from multiple perspectives. First of all, it looks into the problematic procedural aspects of the case, while also analyzing the political dynamics that appear to be at the core of the application. Beyond that, it addresses the question of who is funding the case in order to better illuminate the background to South Africa's position. In addition, it seeks to provide a detailed overview of South Africa's current political regime and the associations that have so firmly aligned it against Israel. The ruling ANC has



evolved significantly from the anti-apartheid days of Nelson Mandela, and its representatives now rank among the most outspoken, unbalanced, and antisemitic critics of Israel in the world. In this context, the report also assesses the depth of South Africa's relationship with Hamas, an internationally recognized terrorist organization, and the Iranian regime. As will be shown, South Africa has developed a deep and decades-long relationship with both entities, while conspicuously ignoring international sanctions against them in the process.

Furthermore, this report examines the spread of radical Islamism in South Africa and exposes the religious and cultural institutions that dedicate themselves to its promotion. As will be shown, South Africa continues to turn a blind eye to the extremist forces operating within its territory and has developed into a logistical and operational hub for international terror activity.

Ultimately, as demonstrated in this report, South Africa's anti-Israel stance, culminating in its application to the ICJ, is part of a politically motivated maneuver that is both lacking in merit and nurtured by its relations with Hamas, Qatar, and the Iranian regime.

## South Africa's Case against Israel at the ICJ

The decision by the ANC leadership to bring a case against Israel at the ICJ raises questions not only about its motivation but also about its capacity to do so. At one level, this is in keeping with the goals outlined by Hamas in its 1988 Covenant. Quoting Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, the preamble declares the exterminationist aims of Hamas: “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.”<sup>1</sup> In this context, Israel is a reference to the Jewish people, not the Jewish state, which means this is a call for the murder of Jews everywhere. Who, then, is funding South Africa's campaign? As this report demonstrates in detail, South Africa has openly exhibited its disregard for international sanctions, while simultaneously developing relationships with entities such as Hamas and the Iranian regime, which Ayatollah Khomeini modeled on the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood. It therefore seems an unlikely candidate to commit itself to taking such action in the pursuit of actual justice. Its true motivations, it seems, are mainly political in nature.

In the months leading up to the South African elections in May 2024, there appear to have been coordinated attempts to convince increasingly weary South Africans to maintain their support for the ruling ANC. A [survey](#) published in April 2024, for example, showed that corruption was the second-biggest concern for South Africans, after electricity blackouts that left homes and businesses without power for up to twelve hours a day.<sup>2</sup> Other issues include ongoing water shortages and deteriorating roads and railways.

Given these challenges, the ANC has relied heavily on its past glories at the forefront of the fight against the apartheid system and the creation of a welfare state. Taking Israel to the ICJ on charges of genocide attempts to leverage the ANC's historic status and restore an image of righteousness, despite becoming known among all South Africans for corruption and for failing to ensure that citizens have access to basic goods, services, and human rights. At his final campaign rally before the election, Ramaphosa repeated the popular slogan, “Free, Free Palestine. From

---

<sup>1</sup> Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas Charter), August 18, 1988, available at: [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/hamas.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp).

<sup>2</sup> Farouk Chothia, “The ANC Hopes to Conquer But Will It Struggle in South Africa Poll?,” *BBC News*, May 26, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg33yyl4mzzo>.

the river to the sea, Palestine shall be free,” that is to say, free of Jews, while ANC member Salome Makgoba welcomed his support, telling reporters that “when we were under apartheid, Palestinians supported us. It is our turn to return the favour.”<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the actual case, any decision by the ICJ is likely to take years and would require South Africa to prove Israel’s *intent* to destroy a specific group in whole or in part. Therefore, South Africa’s lawyers focused on asking the Court to indicate “provisional measures,” which can be imposed at any time.<sup>4</sup> On January 26, 2024, the ICJ issued a ruling on this request wherein it declined to order Israel to suspend its military operations in Gaza, instead ordering it to “limit harm to Palestinians, preserve evidence, and submit a report within a month on all measures taken in response to the Court’s order.”<sup>5</sup> This would appear to suggest that the ICJ did not have any evidence that Israel was committing a genocide in Gaza at this time. Instead, the Court directed Israel to comply with its obligations under the Genocide Convention, which, as a party to the Convention since 1950, Israel has been committed to doing.<sup>6</sup> On March 28, the ICJ supplemented these provisional measures, once again rejecting South Africa’s request to order Israel to cease its operations in Gaza and its request to call on third party states supporting Israel’s military effort to cease doing so. In addition, the Court did not issue any findings to the effect that Israel was acting in violation of its international legal obligations.<sup>7</sup> Instead, it ordered Israel to “ensure ... the unhindered provision at scale” of humanitarian aid and to increase the “capacity and number of land crossing points.”<sup>8</sup>

Given these facts, it is reasonable to question South Africa’s actual intent in bringing its case to the ICJ. Rather than acting in the pursuit of actual justice, South Africa appears to be engaged in a politically motivated attack, referring its claims to an overzealous Court that has proved unwilling to dismiss the case for lack of merit. This was directly reflected in the Biden administration’s response to South Africa’s submission, with US National Security Council spokesman John Kirby calling it

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Imogen Foulkes, “South Africa, Israel, and the ICJ,” *Swiss Info*, January 23, 2024, <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/business/south-africa-israel-and-the-icj/49151276>.

<sup>5</sup> “Experts React: What the International Court of Justice Said (and Didn’t Say) in the Genocide Case against Israel,” *Atlantic Council*, January 26, 2024, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/experts-react/experts-react-what-the-international-court-of-justice-said-and-didnt-say-in-the-genocide-case-against-israel/>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> “What You Need to Know about the Latest International Court of Justice Action in the Case against Israel,” *American Jewish Committee*, May 24, 2024, <https://www.ajc.org/news/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-latest-international-court-of-justice-action-in-the-case>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

“meritless, counterproductive and completely without any basis in fact whatsoever.”<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Orde Kittrie, a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, noted that South Africa’s claim “fails to offer substantive evidence, let alone proof, of its false allegations that Israel is committing genocide.”<sup>10</sup> In this context, he points to “Israel’s extensive advanced warning and other measures,” which include urging temporary evacuations through designated safe routes, establishing humanitarian corridors and zones, and aborting operations where anticipated civilian harm is deemed excessive.<sup>11</sup> This shows the lengths to which Israel goes to minimize harm to noncombatants while exercising its lawful right to “rescue its hostages, apprehend the October 7 perpetrators, and ensure that Israel’s population is secure from further attacks.”<sup>12</sup>

These points also reflect South Africa’s tendency to engage in “factual cherry picking” and ignore “inconvenient facts” in its submission.<sup>13</sup> This is evident, for example, from the fact that South Africa’s application never mentions Hamas’s practice of embedding itself within Gaza’s civilian population, using civilians and civilian infrastructure as shields “and effectively rendering it impossible for any attack directed against its military apparatus not to cause significant collateral damage.”<sup>14</sup> Making accusations of genocide against Israel while completely ignoring these critical facts directly contradicts one of the ICJ’s own standards for demonstrating genocidal intent, namely the “pattern of conduct” test. This standard, referenced in the ICJ’s judgment in *Bosnia v. Serbia* (2007), accepts the possibility of inferring specific genocidal intent from a pattern of conduct, but makes it clear that “for a pattern of conduct to be accepted as evidence of its existence, it would have to be such that it could only point to the existence of such intent.”<sup>15</sup> This was further emphasized in the Court’s judgment in *Croatia v. Serbia* (2015), which concluded that for “the Court to infer the existence of genocidal intent from a pattern of conduct it must be ‘the only inference that could reasonably be drawn from the acts in question.’”<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Jacob Magid and Jeremy Sharon, “US Lambasts ‘Meritless’ South African Request for ICJ to Charge Israel with Genocide,” *The Times of Israel*, January 4, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/us-lambasts-meritless-south-african-request-for-icj-to-charge-israel-with-genocide/>.

<sup>10</sup> “U.S. Rejects ‘Meritless’ South Africa ICJ Case against Israel,” *Foundation for the Defense of Democracies*, January 5, 2024, <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2024/01/05/u-s-rejects-meritless-south-africa-icj-case-against-israel/>.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Amichai Cohen and Yuval Shany, “Selective Use of Facts and the Gaza Genocide Debate,” *Just Security*, January 2, 2024, <https://www.justsecurity.org/90939/selective-use-of-facts-and-the-gaza-genocide-debate/>.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

South Africa's selective use of decontextualized and manipulated facts in its genocide claim against Israel, which wholly ignores Hamas's role both in the lead-up to and in the midst of the current war, goes a long way toward discrediting its case.

Given the lack of merit in South Africa's case, and the unlikely possibility that it was brought unilaterally by an unpopular and near-bankrupt ANC, a crucial question arises. Who is actually funding South Africa's case at the ICJ? Financially, the ANC has been in dire straits for some time. In 2022, for example, the party considered selling off assets to pay off a reported 500 million rand (roughly \$27.7 million) in debt.<sup>17</sup> Curiously, in early January 2024, President Ramaphosa announced that the ANC had mysteriously managed to stabilize its finances, pay off its staggering debt, and recover from the verge of bankruptcy, without providing any specifics on how this had occurred.<sup>18</sup> Ramaphosa also announced the establishment of a crowdfunding initiative through which its membership and the public could make monetary contributions aimed at stabilizing the party's finances.<sup>19</sup> The crowdfunding initiative came only days after the ANC reached an out-of-court settlement concerning debts in the amount of R102 million (\$5.39 million).<sup>20</sup>

Crucially, this money appeared in the ANC's coffers without explanation, mere days after the South African government brought its case against Israel at the ICJ. The debt was owed to a South African company called Ezulweni Investments, which printed material for the ANC's 2019 election campaign.<sup>21</sup> On December 29, 2023, South Africa approached the ICJ to ask that Israel's actions in Gaza be classified as genocide.<sup>22</sup>

In March 2024, recognizing the suspicious circumstances surrounding the settlement, the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) announced that it was acceding to the request by a political party called ActionSA to investigate how the

---

<sup>17</sup> Queenin Masuabi, "Cash-strapped ANC Considers Selling Off Assets to Pay Off R500m in Arrears," *Daily Maverick*, November 14, 2022, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2022-11-14-cash-strapped-anc-considers-selling-off-assets-to-pay-off-r500m-in-arrears/>.

<sup>18</sup> Rebecca Davis, "Fact Check—Did Iran Fund South Africa's Approach to the ICJ over Israel?," *Daily Maverick*, January 25, 2024, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2024-01-25-iran-fund-south-africa-icj-israel-palestine-fact-check/>.

<sup>19</sup> Nonkululeko Njilo, "ANC Turns to Crowdfunding to Stabilise Its Finances," *Daily Maverick*, January 13, 2024, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2024-01-13-anc-turns-to-crowdfunding-to-stabilise-its-finances/>.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> "Factsheet: South Africa, Hamas, and the ICJ 'Genocide' Case against Israel," AIJAC, February 6, 2024, <https://aijac.org.au/fact-sheets/factsheet-south-africa-hamas-and-the-icj-genocide-case-against-israel>.

<sup>22</sup> Rebecca Davis, "Fact Check—Did Iran Fund South Africa's Approach to the ICJ over Israel?," *Daily Maverick*, January 25, 2024, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2024-01-25-iran-fund-south-africa-icj-israel-palestine-fact-check/>.

ANC had settled the above-mentioned debt, in accordance with the Political Party Funding Act.<sup>23</sup> ActionSA national chair Michael Beaumont welcomed the investigation into what he deemed a “dodgy” settlement agreement, noting that “it has been obscene that South Africans have been expected to believe that R10 million in disclosed donations somehow funded the R102 million debt settlement for a political party that six months ago could not pay salaries.”<sup>24</sup> On September 3, 2024, ActionSA reported that the IEC had reversed its earlier position and now claimed that there was “no *prime facie* case to investigate.” As a result, ActionSA decided to bring a legal action against the IEC to obtain the record of the decision from the IEC in order to assess—and if necessary challenge—the rationality of the decision to abandon the investigation.<sup>25</sup>

## Allegations of Iranian Funding

Immediately following South Africa’s application to the ICJ, suspicions of Iranian funding arose. These allegations, unsurprisingly, have been denied by the ANC, with South African Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Naledi Pandor dismissing the claims as a “counteroffensive” by Israel and its allies.<sup>26</sup> South Africa’s *News24* news website, which acts as a mouthpiece for the ANC, [reported](#) that the Iranian funding allegations didn’t “hold up” as there was no “substantive proof.”<sup>27</sup> It is worth noting that *News24* is owned by Naspers Limited, which donated at least R3 million (\$158,000) to the ANC in 2022 and 2021.<sup>28</sup> Multiple sources in South Africa have made claims to the contrary. Frans Cronje, former CEO of the South African Institute of Race Relations (IRR), claimed Iran paid the ANC to litigate against Israel at the ICJ in an [interview](#) with radio station Chai FM.<sup>29</sup> He further stated that the ICJ case came as “no surprise” and that “the South Africans have for

---

<sup>23</sup> Sisanda Mbolekwa, “IEC to Probe ANC’s R102m Ezulweni Debt Settlement,” *Business Live*, March 12, 2024, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2024-03-12-iec-to-probe-ancs-r102m-ezulweni-debt-settlement/>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Beaumont, “ActionSA Initiates Legal Action against IEC, Lodges Complaints against EFF and MK,” ActionSA, September 3, 2024, <https://www.actionsa.org.za/actionsa-initiates-legal-action-against-iec-lodges-complaints-against-eff-and-mk/>.

<sup>26</sup> “Gaza, the Government of South Africa: “Iran Did Not Finance Our Cause against Israel,” *Agenzia Nova*, February 1, 2024, <https://www.agenzianova.com/en/news/gaza-the-government-of-south-africa-lira-did-not-fund-our-case-against-israel/>.

<sup>27</sup> Jason Felix, “Fact Check: No Substantive Proof: Claims by ex-IRR CEO Frans Cronje about SA and Iran Don’t Hold Up,” *News24*, January 19, 2024, <https://www.news24.com/news24/politics/parliament/fact-check-former-institute-of-race-relations-ceo-frans-cronje-says-sa-is-a-useful-idiot-for-iran-20240119>.

<sup>28</sup> Madeleine Hubbard, “South Africa’s Ties to Hamas, Iran Exposed amid Financial Troubles, Genocide Case against Israel,” *Just the News*, January 26, 2024, <https://justthenews.com/government/diplomacy/south-africas-ties-hamas-iran-exposed-amid-financial-troubles-genocide-case>.

<sup>29</sup> Rebecca Davis, “Fact Check—Did Iran Fund South Africa’s Approach to the ICJ over Israel?,” *Daily Maverick*, January 25, 2024, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2024-01-25-iran-fund-south-africa-icj-israel-palestine-fact-check/>.

an extended period of time been fronting an Iranian strategy to do two things: the first is to so poison opinion against Israel in the Western world that military aid to Israel becomes increasingly conditional and secondly, to so traumatize and stigmatize young Jews around the world that service in the IDF becomes increasingly controversial.”<sup>30</sup> Cronje also offered his assessment in an [interview](#) with Alec Hogg from *BizNews*.<sup>31</sup> Hogg, for his part, noted that it was hard to miss the coincidence between the ANC’s dramatic financial turnaround after October 2023 and the government’s interest in Gaza.<sup>32</sup>

A similar claim was made by advocate Paul Hoffman from the civil society organization Accountability Now in an [interview](#) with *BizNews*.<sup>33</sup> Hoffman agreed that the ICJ case was an “ideologically-based ploy to isolate Israel” that was possibly sponsored by Iran, while also noting that South Africa itself is in breach of its own human rights obligations.<sup>34</sup> He specifically referred to a December 2023 verdict from South Africa’s highest court, “which found that the ANC government had violated multiple constitutional rights over load shedding—the regular shutting down of the power supply across the country.”<sup>35</sup> Hoffman pointed out that the Constitutional Court had “unanimously ruled that the government had breached ‘the rights to human dignity, life, freedom and security of the person, to an environment that was not harmful to people’s health and well being, the right of access to healthcare services, food, and water and the right to basic education.’”<sup>36</sup> Finally, *Daily Maverick* journalist Rebecca Davis has written that “to some people, the timing of these two events is suspicious. This figure is difficult to fact check.... But it’s an important one because it has been repeated by some fairly high-profile public figures.”<sup>37</sup> To date, the South African government has not disclosed the financial sources that have enabled it to pursue the ICJ case, but the costs for the preliminary application are estimated at R200 million (\$10.5 million) and the trial

---

<sup>30</sup> “Factsheet: South Africa, Hamas, and the ICJ ‘Genocide’ Case against Israel,” AIJAC, February 6, 2024, <https://aijac.org.au/fact-sheets/factsheet-south-africa-hamas-and-the-icj-genocide-case-against-israel>.

<sup>31</sup> Alec Hogg, “Frans Cronje Gives ANC Hope for Election24, But Disgusted at Another “Sale” of SA Foreign Affairs,” *BizNews*, January 18, 2024, <https://www.biznews.com/interviews/2024/01/18/frans-cronje-anc-hope-election24-disgusted-sale-foreign-affairs>.

<sup>32</sup> Jonathan Katzenellenbogen, “Lawfare: South Africa at the ICJ,” *defenceWeb*, January 17, 2024, <https://www.defenceweb.co.za/governance/governance-lawfare-south-africa-at-the-icj/>.

<sup>33</sup> Chris Steyn, “Paul Hoffman—South Africa Is Looking to Some Like the ‘Useful Idiot’ for Hamas, Iran,” *BizNews*, January 15, 2024, <https://www.biznews.com/interviews/2024/01/15/paul-hoffman-sa-looking-useful-idiot-hamas-iran>.

<sup>34</sup> “Factsheet: South Africa, Hamas, and the ICJ ‘Genocide’ Case against Israel,” AIJAC, February 6, 2024, <https://aijac.org.au/fact-sheets/factsheet-south-africa-hamas-and-the-icj-genocide-case-against-israel>.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Rebecca Davis, “Fact Check—Did Iran Fund South Africa’s Approach to the ICJ over Israel?,” *Daily Maverick*, January 25, 2024, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2024-01-25-iran-fund-south-africa-icj-israel-palestine-fact-check/>.

cost is expected to be in the region of R1.5 billion (\$79 million).<sup>38</sup> Given the enormity of the cost, it is difficult to dismiss the argument that South Africa was the beneficiary of considerable external support.

International sources have also made the case for Iranian funding of South Africa's case. Former Trump Deputy National Security Advisor Victoria Coates, for example, told *Just the News, No Noise* that "one has to at least wonder" whether Iran is funding the ANC.<sup>39</sup> Coates also referenced Iran's benefits, which include South Africa's provision of nuclear support to Iran, in addition to potential Iranian pressure on the shipping route around South Africa's Cape of Good Hope, which, combined with the Houthi shutdown of Red Sea routes, threatens the global economy.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, Israeli commentator Ben-Dror Yemini wrote in January 2024 that South Africa had brought the ICJ case at Iran's request, after Tehran "provided generous funding to the governing party in South Africa."<sup>41</sup>

Given the meritless claims inherent to South Africa's case, it is worth emphasizing the degree of cooperation and coordination between the ANC and the Iranian revolutionary regime, which further substantiates the allegations of Iran's central role in supporting South Africa's case at the ICJ. On July 30, 2024, the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported on South Africa's new Foreign Minister, Ronald Lamola, trip to Tehran to participate in the swearing-in ceremony of the new Iranian President, Massoud Pezeshkian. During the trip, Lamola met with Iran's acting Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri, who reportedly "highlighted the high capacities for cooperation between the two countries in international political and judicial fields by adopting multilateral mechanisms to counter unilateral approaches and the illegitimate restrictions imposed by some Western countries."<sup>42</sup> More specifically, "Bagheri hailed Lamola for his outstanding role as an undaunted and innovative diplomat in pursuing the case of the Zionist regime's crimes at the International court of Justice (ICJ), and the special efforts by the South African government to denounce the regime's crimes in international legal and judicial

---

<sup>38</sup> Bryan Miller, "South Africa's Claim of Genocide by Israel Turns the Law on Its Head," *Times of Israel*, January 24, 2024, <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/south-africas-claim-of-genocide-by-israel-turns-the-law-on-its-head/>.

<sup>39</sup> Rebecca Davis, "Fact Check—Did Iran Fund South Africa's Approach to the ICJ over Israel?," *Daily Maverick*, January 25, 2024, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2024-01-25-iran-fund-south-africa-icj-israel-palestine-fact-check/>.

<sup>40</sup> "Gaza, the Government of South Africa: "Iran Did Not Finance Our Cause against Israel," *Agenzia Nova*, February 1, 2024, <https://www.agenzianova.com/en/news/gaza-the-government-of-south-africa-lira-did-not-fund-our-case-against-israel/>.

<sup>41</sup> Bethan McKernan, "Israel Braces for Interim ICJ Ruling on Allegation of Genocide in Gaza," *The Guardian*, January 25, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/25/israel-braces-for-interim-icj-ruling-on-allegation-of-genocide-in-gaza>.

<sup>42</sup> "Iran Acting FM, South Africa Top Diplomat Stress on Confronting Western Unilateralism," Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 30, 2024, <https://en.mfa.ir/portal/newsview/750539>.



circles.”<sup>43</sup> Bagheri stressed that Iran “fully supports South Africa’s vital role in this regard,” specifically referring to the expansion of cooperation, notably within the framework of the ICJ and the ICC.<sup>44</sup>

## Russian Funding of the ANC

Further avenues of questionable funding connected to the ANC may also be linked to Russian sources. Financial information in the ANC’s 2022-2023 political funding disclosure report shows that the party declared a total of R32 million (\$6.4 million) in the third quarter as a funding boost to settle part of its multimillion-rand tax debt and fund its national conference.<sup>45</sup> It received a donation of R15 million (\$797,535) from the Batho Batho Trust, a company run by Patrice Motsepe, who is ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa’s brother-in-law and a significant ANC donor.<sup>46</sup> It also provided R15 million in 2021.<sup>47</sup> A second donation of R15 million was received from United Manganese of Kalahari (UMK),<sup>48</sup> which was paid to the Johannesburg Expo Centre, the venue that hosted the ANC’s national conference.<sup>49</sup> In Q1 2020-2021, UMK also donated R7.5 million (\$398,756) to the ANC, becoming the largest single donor during that quarter.<sup>50</sup> Overall, UMK’s R30 million (\$1.5 million) in donations to the ANC over the past two years accounts for over 27 percent of the party’s disclosed funding.<sup>51</sup>

This is noteworthy because UMK, a top ANC funder, is partially owned by Viktor Vekselberg, a sanctioned Russian oligarch with close ties to Vladimir Putin. Vekselberg owned 49 percent of UMK, with the remaining shares of the mining group belonging to an ANC funding front, Chancellor House, and an ANC-linked community group.<sup>52</sup> For years, Chancellor House hid its connections to the ANC, but following extensive investigations by media outlets these links were confirmed

---

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> “Party Funding Disclosures: ANC Declares R30 Million to Pay for Tax Debt, National Conference,” *Africa Press*, February 28, 2023, <https://www.africa-press.net/south-africa/all-news/party-funding-disclosures-anc-declares-r30-million-to-pay-for-tax-debt-national-conference>.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Daniel Steyn, “How to See Where Political Parties Get Their Money,” *Ground Up*, August 4, 2023, <https://groundup.org.za/article/how-to-see-where-political-parties-get-their-money/>.

<sup>50</sup> James Lorimer, “ANC Slow to Act against Its Paymaster,” *Democratic Alliance*, February 27, 2022, <https://www.da.org.za/2022/02/anc-slow-to-act-against-its-paymaster>.

<sup>51</sup> Daniel Steyn, “How to See Where Political Parties Get Their Money,” *Ground Up*, August 4, 2023, <https://groundup.org.za/article/how-to-see-where-political-parties-get-their-money/>.

<sup>52</sup> James Lorimer, “ANC Slow to Act against Its Paymaster,” *Democratic Alliance*, February 27, 2022, <https://www.da.org.za/2022/02/anc-slow-to-act-against-its-paymaster>.

in 2021.<sup>53</sup> As a result, as Karam Singh has noted, there is “increasing concern that ... there could be foreign money from a Russian origin that comes to South Africa, but flows into different political coffers,” which “could absolutely have an impact on how South Africa takes a position on certain policies.”<sup>54</sup>

Furthermore, Vekselberg was mentioned in relation to Chancellor House in 2006, where he signed agreement documents with Putin next to him at a business forum in Cape Town.<sup>55</sup> This prompted questions as to whether these activities were shaped by party rather than public interests, which focused on the minerals and energy sector.<sup>56</sup> Ultimately, the US Treasury sanctioned Vekselberg, first in 2018, and again in 2022, for supporting Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.<sup>57</sup> Facing increasing scrutiny, Vekselberg sold down his stake in UMK, which was owned by his Renova Group, but is a 25 percent beneficiary of a trust that remained invested in UMK and replaced Renova, New African Manganese Investments Limited (NAMI).<sup>58</sup> Moreover, despite the aforementioned sanctions, Vekselberg still holds a significant stake in UMK, according to business records held in Cyprus.<sup>59</sup> Crucially, by maintaining an ownership stake of below 50 percent, Vekselberg was able to avoid US sanctions.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> David McKenzie, “South Africa’s Stance on Russia Puzzles Many. Could a Mine in the Desert Hold Answers?,” *CNN*, July 28, 2023, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/07/28/africa/south-africa-russia-manganese-mine-anc-intl-cmd/index.html>.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> “ANC Sets Up Funding Front’,” *IOL*, November 10, 2006, <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/anc-sets-up-funding-front-302604>.

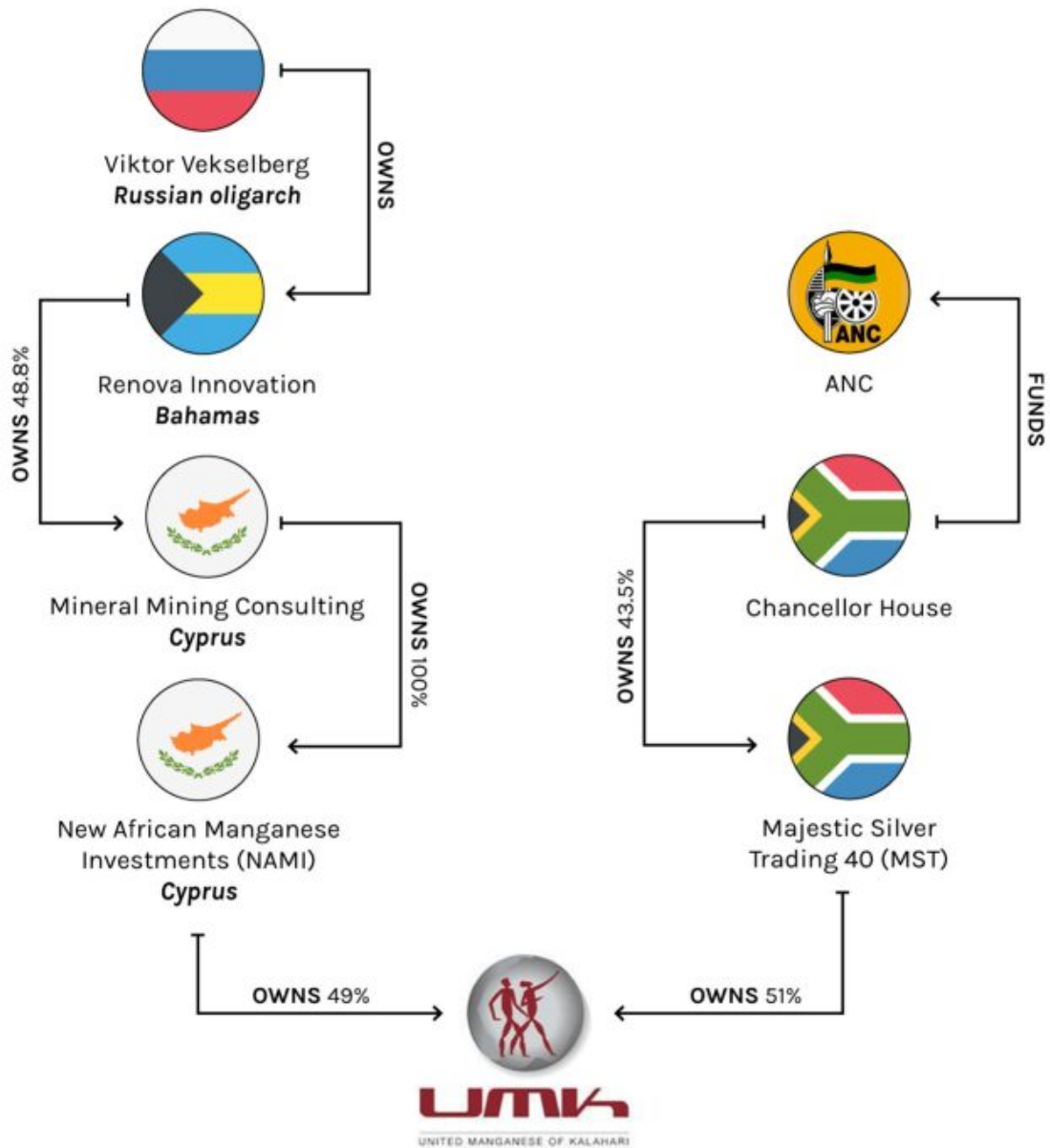
<sup>57</sup> David McKenzie, “South Africa’s Stance on Russia Puzzles Many. Could a Mine in the Desert Hold Answers?,” *CNN*, July 28, 2023, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/07/28/africa/south-africa-russia-manganese-mine-anc-intl-cmd/index.html>.

<sup>58</sup> “Blow for ANC-backing, Russian Oligarch-linked Mining Firm in R350m SARS Battle,” *News24*, March 27, 2023, <https://www.news24.com/fin24/companies/blow-for-anc-backing-russian-oligarch-linked-mining-firm-in-r350m-sars-battle-20230327>.

<sup>59</sup> David McKenzie, “South Africa’s Stance on Russia Puzzles Many. Could a Mine in the Desert Hold Answers?,” *CNN*, July 28, 2023, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/07/28/africa/south-africa-russia-manganese-mine-anc-intl-cmd/index.html>.

<sup>60</sup> Kate Bartlett, “South Africa’s ANC Received Big Donation from Russian Oligarch-linked Firm,” *VOA News*, March 7, 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/south-africa-s-anc-received-big-donation-from-russian-oligarch-linked-firm-/6994504.html>.

Figure 1: Financial links between Viktor Vekselberg, UMK, and the ANC<sup>61</sup>



<sup>61</sup> Dewald van Rensburg, "The ANC's Manganese 'Gold' Mine," *amaBhungane*, May 9, 2022, <https://amabhungane.org/220510-the-ancs-manganese-gold-mine/>.

**Figure 2: Donations received by the ANC over the past five years<sup>62</sup>**

<b>Donor Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Year</b>
3Sixty Health (Pty) Ltd	R800,000	2021
African Rainbow Minerals Limited	R6,900,000	2024
African Rainbow Minerals Limited	R5,853,969	2021
Batho Trust	R15,000,000	2023
Batho Batho Trust	R15,000,000	2022
Batho Batho Trust	R15,000,000	2021
Botho Botho Commercial Enterprise	R10,000,000	2022
Cedric Matamela Ntombela	R500,000	2021
Cedric Muziwakhile Ntombela	R400,000	2021
Chancellor House Trust	R5,000,000	2023
Chancellor House Trust	R5,000,000	2023
Chancellor House Trust	R5,000,000	2023
Chancellor House Trust	R7,500,000	2022
Chancellor House Trust	R15,000,000	2021
Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa	R166,000	2021
Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa	R200,000	2021
Discovery Central Services	R150,000	2021
Education and Training Unit	R496,880	2023
Elohim Erets Retaile	R472,000	2024
Elohim Erets Retaile	R150,000	2023
Harmony Gold Mining Company Limited	R6,900,000	2024
Harmony Gold Mining Company Limited	R5,853,969	2021
Iceburg Trading	R428,309	2023
Majestic Silver Trading 40	R2,500,000	2021
Mr Cedric M Ntombela	R500,000	2021
Mr L Sibiya	R620,000	2021
Naspers Ltd	R2,000,000	2024
Naspers Ltd	R2,000,000	2022
Naspers Ltd	R1,000,000	2021
Nep Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd	R1,000,000	2021

<sup>62</sup> “Whose Vote Counts? Political Party Donations in South Africa,” My Vote Counts, <https://myvotecounts.org.za/whose-vote-counts/>.

Nonkwelo Investment Holdings	R1,000,000	2021
Nonkwelo Investment Holdings	R2,000,000	2021
Phepha MV Security Services (Pty) Ltd	R200,000	2023
Tyekes Security	R100,000	2021
United Manganese of Kalahari	R10,000,000	2022
United Manganese of Kalahari	R15,000,000	2022
United Manganese of Kalahari	R5,000,000	2021
Vukuzenzele Boukontrakteurs	R510,000	2024

## Case Study: Extremist Links and Inherent Bias of South Africa’s Legal Team

Some of the individuals in the legal advisory team behind South Africa’s claim in The Hague have not only previously exhibited anti-Israel bias but have also been affiliated with internationally recognized terrorist entities. The political-Islamist camp has been utilizing international law as part of its “civilian” struggle against Israel for some time, through Western networks of Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas-affiliated bodies. This fact was actually raised by Hamas’s Khaled Mashal in a 2005 speech at the relaunch of the Global Anti-Aggression Campaign (GAAC) in Qatar.<sup>63</sup> The GAAC, which was active primarily between 2003 and 2016, was a global umbrella framework that raised support for Al-Qaeda among Salafi, Salafi-Jihadi, Muslim Brotherhood, and Hamas leaders, including several figures designated as terrorists by the United States, the United Nations, and the European Union.<sup>64</sup> Mashal asserted that the aim of “resistance” (*muqawamah*) “is to subdue the enemy in all domains and prevent it from achieving a breakthrough which will eventually contribute to neutralizing the nation’s efforts and its will-power.”<sup>65</sup>

As in other areas of the “civilian” struggle against Israel, acting under the mantle of NGOs enables rival Palestinian factions to collaborate on specific issues that are perceived as a common cause.<sup>66</sup> In 2020, for example, actions were taken to coordinate legal efforts through the launch of Law for Palestine (L4P), “a youth-led,

<sup>63</sup> “الحملة العالمية لمقاومة العدوان تؤكد شمولية المقاومة,” *Al Jazeera*, February 24, 2005, archived on Wayback Machine, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2s4juf32>.

<sup>64</sup> Steven Merley, “The Global Anti-Aggression Campaign 2003–2016: A Global Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi and Jihadi Alliance against the West,” Global Muslim Brotherhood Research Center, February 2017, [https://www.globalmbresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Global\\_Anti-Aggression\\_Campaign\\_2003-2016.pdf](https://www.globalmbresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Global_Anti-Aggression_Campaign_2003-2016.pdf).

<sup>65</sup> “الحملة العالمية لمقاومة العدوان تؤكد شمولية المقاومة,” *Al Jazeera*, February 24, 2005, archived on Wayback Machine, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2s4juf32>.

<sup>66</sup> Ehud Rosen, “The Spider Web: The Roots of BDS and the Campaign to Delegitimize Israel,” Jerusalem Center for Security and Foreign Affairs (JCSA), July 9, 2018, <https://jcpa.org/the-spiders-web/>.

non-profit human rights organization”<sup>67</sup> aiming “to create, train and connect jurists interested in Palestine from all over the world, and provide rich and objective Palestinian legal content.”<sup>68</sup> L4P conducts research on the Palestinian question and international law and creates dialogue with other legal and human rights bodies. Critically, this includes bodies that some associate with the terror group known as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP),<sup>69</sup> as well as Western Islamist-led bodies such as the US-based Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN).<sup>70</sup> This effective network of legal experts who are united in their attempts to delegitimize Israel in international legal forums played a key role in the submission of South Africa’s ICJ case against Israel.

It is also worth noting that this network includes the Geneva-based Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor (Euro-Med Monitor). Despite referring to itself as a “youth-led independent, non-profit organization that advocates for the human rights of all person across Europe and in the MENA region,” it is in fact an openly anti-Israel organization that is intent on influencing EU policy.<sup>71</sup> Among the accusations and conspiracies promoted by Euro-Med Monitor, the organization refers to Israel “as one of the world’s biggest hubs for the illegal trade of human organs,” and it has published a [report](#) arguing that “Israeli army forces expanded the policy of summary executions ... targeting, shooting and killing women and children was a routine practice of Israeli forces.”<sup>72</sup> This is a clear reiteration of age-old blood libels aimed at demonizing the Jews. Euro-Med Monitor founder Ramy Abdu and its chair in 2015-2019 Mazen Awni Issa Kahel both appeared on a 2013 Israeli Ministry of Defense list of Hamas’s “main operatives and institutions” in Europe.<sup>73</sup> Enas Zayed, former chair and legal advisor at Euro-Med Monitor, also served as a member of the legal committee of the Popular Conference for Palestinians Abroad (PCPA),<sup>74</sup> a key global Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated, pro-Hamas umbrella group that focuses on the Palestinian “diaspora.”<sup>75</sup> The PCPA was declared an unlawful association in Israel in 2022 due to its affiliations with

---

<sup>67</sup> “About Us,” Law for Palestine, <https://law4palestine.org/about-us/>.

<sup>68</sup> “Law for Palestine Organization Announces Its Official Launch,” *Shehab News Agency*, July 27, 2020, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/49v5smpj>.

<sup>69</sup> “ARDD Is Organising a Webinar on Palestinian Prisoner’s Day (17 April),” Law for Palestine, April 16, 2023, <https://law4palestine.org/ardd-is-organising-a-webinar-on-palestinian-prisoners-day-17-april/>.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> “Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor,” NGO Monitor, December 27, 2023, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/euro-med-human-rights-monitor/>.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> “UNRWA’s Legal Importance and Its Impact on Refugees’ Future: Seminar Held by Association 302,” *Popular Conference for Palestine Abroad*, September 10, 2020, <https://palabroad.org/en/post/3Q94>.

<sup>75</sup> Ehud Rosen, “Are the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas Mobilizing to Take Over the PLO?,” Jerusalem Center for Security and Foreign Affairs (JCSA), March 26, 2018, <https://jcpa.org/article/are-the-muslim-brotherhood-and-hamas-mobilizing-to-take-over-the-plo/>.

Hamas.<sup>76</sup> Iman Zueiter, coordinator of L4P's Jurists for Palestine Forum, has also worked at Euro-Med Monitor.<sup>77</sup> Zueiter was among the writers of a 2019 *Practical Guidebook for Active and Professional Participation in the UN Human Rights Council* for NGOs, demonstrating the importance of using the UN as a front for spreading the anti-Israeli narrative via NGOs.<sup>78</sup>

John Dugard, the leader of South Africa's ICJ legal team, has been a member of the board of trustees of L4P since 2020.<sup>79</sup> Dugard has a history of anti-Israel activism. In 2007, for example, while serving as the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Dugard issued a report calling on NGOs and UN bodies to address "the legal consequences of a regime of prolonged occupation with features of colonialism and apartheid for the occupied people, the occupying Power and third states."<sup>80</sup> In addition, L4P's board of trustees includes renowned international jurists, some of whom are affiliated with the political-Islamist camp and others with the Palestinian Authority (PA). For instance, Anis Fawsi Kassim is a Jordanian-Palestinian legal expert who served as a legal adviser to the Palestinian delegation in the peace negotiations held in Madrid and Washington from 1991 to 1993.<sup>81</sup> He later served as the Chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated, pro-Hamas Popular Conference for Palestinians Abroad (PCPA).<sup>82</sup> Ammar Dwaik is the Director General of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR),<sup>83</sup> a Palestinian human rights organization established in 1993 upon a presidential decree issued by Yasser Arafat in his capacity as President of the State of Palestine and Chairman of the PLO.<sup>84</sup> Rawan Husseini has worked for UN Women and other international organizations and served as the legal consultant for the Palestinian Minister of Justice in 2017-2018.<sup>85</sup>

L4P reportedly created a database for the ICJ suit "with over 500 statements of senior Israeli officials expressing so-called genocidal intent with respect to Israel's

---

<sup>76</sup> "Euromid Observer for Human Rights," OpenSanctions, <https://www.opensanctions.org/entities/il-nbctf-e5fa691f5984ddd5f2ee4a41886b1bc8ac8546a7/>.

<sup>77</sup> "Staff," Law for Palestine, <https://law4palestine.org/staff/>.

<sup>78</sup> "Practical Guidebook for an Active and Professional Participation in the UN Human Rights Council," Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, January 2019, <https://euromedmonitor.org/uploads/reports/practicalguidbooken.pdf>.

<sup>79</sup> "Professor John Dugard," Law for Palestine, <https://law4palestine.org/prof-dr-christopher-john-robert-dugard/>.

<sup>80</sup> "FAQs: The International Court of Justice and the Question of Israel," NGO Monitor, March 20, 2023, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/faqs-the-international-court-of-justice/>.

<sup>81</sup> "Dr. Anis. F. Kassim," Law for Palestine, <https://law4palestine.org/dr-anis-f-kassim/>.

<sup>82</sup> Ahmed Asmar, "Seminar Focuses on Palestinian Prisoners amid COVID-19," *Anadolu Agency*, April 15, 2020, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/latest-on-coronavirus-outbreak/seminar-focuses-on-palestinian-prisoners-amid-covid-19/1805153>.

<sup>83</sup> "Dr. Ammar Dwaik," Law for Palestine, <https://law4palestine.org/dr-ammar-dwaik/>.

<sup>84</sup> "About Us," *Independent Commission for Human Rights*, <https://www.ichr.ps/en/about-us>.

<sup>85</sup> "Rawan Husseini," Law for Palestine, <https://law4palestine.org/rawan-husseini/>.

conduct of the war in Gaza.”<sup>86</sup> Euro-Med Monitor claimed it had provided the South African legal team and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with an initial memorandum “detailing the most prominent mass graves established in the Gaza Strip during Israel’s ongoing genocide, launched on 7 October.”<sup>87</sup> Similarly, a roundtable organized by US-based DAWN, in cooperation with L4P and other groups, concluded that Israel’s assault on Gaza “likely amounts to genocide under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.”<sup>88</sup> On this basis, DAWN urged state parties to the Genocide Convention to submit their own Declarations of Intervention to support South Africa’s submission to the ICJ.<sup>89</sup>

In the days prior to the joint DAWN–L4P roundtable, the Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Committee (PAACC) saluted South Africa for bringing its case.<sup>90</sup> According to an open letter published on the website of Investigate & Dismantle Apartheid in January 2024, PAACC comprises the Anti-Apartheid Department of the PLO, the BDS Movement (probably a reference to the BDS National Committee or BNC, which is considered to be close to the PA), the Palestinian Human Rights Organization Council (PHROC), and the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO).<sup>91</sup> PAACC welcomed the support of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for the case and called on other umbrella organizations to support the proceedings.<sup>92</sup> Both of these coalitions include PFLP affiliates.<sup>93</sup>

Shawan Jabarin, the general director al Al-Haq, a Palestinian “human rights organization” known for promoting the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, is a prominent member of the South African legal team. Jabarin was a

---

<sup>86</sup> “Solidarity Visit to the South African Embassy in Jordan by ARDD, Civil Society, and Private Sector Delegation,” Arab Renaissance for Democracy & Development, January 9, 2024, <https://ardd-jo.org/news/solidarity-visit-to-the-south-african-embassy-in-jordan-by-ardd-civil-society-and-private-sector-delegation/?fbclid=IwAR3YhxnkehSz1-S46FQ79FNGNlYmY0baruYU3EEHHdmzgTzEk951KvnVwNs>.

<sup>87</sup> “On Eve of ICJ Session, Euro-Med Monitor Provides OHCHR, South African Legal Team with Document Detailing Most Prominent Mass Graves in Gaza Strip,” Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, January 10, 2024, <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6090/On-eve-of-ICJ-session,-Euro-Med-Monitor-provides-OHCHR,-South-African-legal-team-with-document-detailing-most-prominent-mass-graves-in-Gaza-Strip>.

<sup>88</sup> “Expert Panel Concludes Israel Committing Genocide against Palestinians in Gaza,” DAWN, January 9, 2024. <https://dawnmena.org/expert-panel-concludes-israel-committing-genocide-against-palestinians-in-gaza/>.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> “Urgent Call from Palestine to States Parties of the Genocide Convention: Support South Africa’s ICJ Suit against Israel over its Gaza Genocide,” Investigate & Dismantle Apartheid, January 2, 2024, <https://antiapartheidmovement.net/home-slider/view/urgent-call-from-palestine-to-states-parties-of-the-genocide-convention-support-south-africas-icj-suit-against-israel-over-its-gaza-genocide/24>.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> “Swiss Government Stops Funding for Three Palestinian NGOs,” *Jerusalem Post*, November 27, 2023, <https://www.jpost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/gaza-news/article-775290>.



senior member of the PFLP who was convicted for his involvement with the organization and served multiple prison sentences.<sup>94</sup> In a 2007 [ruling](#), the Israeli Supreme Court described Jabarin as “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” in light of his dual roles. For instance, he reportedly recruited PFLP members to Al-Haq and reaffirmed his status as a senior member of the PFLP in 2008.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, in May 2013, Jabarin participated in a Birzeit University conference that discussed how to implement the apartheid label strategy at the ICJ.<sup>96</sup> Despite denying his involvement with the PFLP, Jabarin [participated](#) in an event hosted by the PFLP in memory of “comrade fighter” Maher Al-Yamani in February 2019.<sup>97</sup> Al-Yamani was a “founder” of the PFLP and a “member of the Central Committee and one of its most prominent military commanders,” who also “coordinated special operations ... in particular the operation against an aircraft of the Israeli company El Al in July 1968 in Greece.”<sup>98</sup>

Another member of the South African delegation with non-governmental ties to the PFLP is Raji Sourani, founder and director of the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR). According to a 1995 article in the *Washington Report*, Sourani served “a three-year sentence [1979–1982] imposed by an Israeli court which convicted him of membership in the illegal Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.”<sup>99</sup> He was also denied a US entry visa in 2012.<sup>100</sup> In February 2014, while attending a PFLP [ceremony](#) honoring him in Gaza, Sourani stated, “I was in the ranks of the Popular Front, and there were comrades who taught us with their own hands.... We don’t apologize and don’t regret our past, we are proud that once we were members of this organization and we fought in its ranks.”<sup>101</sup> Both Sourani and Shawan Jabarin have spoken at panels and webinars organized by L4P.<sup>102</sup> Jabarin also gave the

---

<sup>94</sup> “Former Member of Terrorist Org. Included in South African Delegation to ICJ,” *Jerusalem Post*, January 1, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-782083>.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> “The Role of NGOs in Supporting the International Court of Justice Case Targeting Israel,” NGO Monitor, March 20, 2023, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos-international-court-of-justice/>.

<sup>97</sup> “Al-Haq,” NGO Monitor, March 21, 2024, [https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/al\\_haq/](https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/al_haq/).

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> “The South African Genocide Complaint and PFLP-linked NGOs,” NGO Monitor, January 21, 2024, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/the-south-african-genocide-complaint-and-pflp-linked-ngos/>.

<sup>100</sup> Alex Kane, “Gaza-Based Human Rights Worker Prevented from Entering US,” *Mondoweiss*, October 8, 2012, <https://mondoweiss.net/2012/10/gaza-based-human-rights-worker-denied-entry-to-u-s/>.

<sup>101</sup> “The South African Genocide Complaint and PFLP-linked NGOs,” NGO Monitor, January 21, 2024, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/the-south-african-genocide-complaint-and-pflp-linked-ngos/>.

<sup>102</sup> “Jurists for Palestine Forum (Season 2),” Law for Palestine, <https://law4palestine.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Summary-of-Absence-of-Palestine-in-the-International-Criminal-Court.-Why-is-Palestine-De-Prioritized-and-What-is-to-be-Done.pdf>; “In a High-Profile Webinar, Jurists for Palestine Forum is Discussing the Updates or Lack thereof in Palestine Case before the ICC and What Is There for Its Future,” Law for Palestine, August 10, 2022, <https://law4palestine.org/in-a-high-profile-webinar-jurists-for-palestine-forum-is-discussing-the-updates-or-lack-thereof-in-palestine-case-before-the-icc-and-what-is-there-for-its-future/>; “Law for Palestine Speaks at Al-Haq Report Launch Event on Israeli Apartheid as a Tool of Zionist Settler Colonialism,” Law for Palestine, November 30, 2022, <https://law4palestine.org/law->

keynote address at a November 2022 panel where the current, controversial UN Special Rapporteur on Palestine, Francesca Albanese, also spoke.<sup>103</sup> The following month, L4P promoted another event that included Albanese, along with Issam Younis, Sourani, and Jabarin.<sup>104</sup> Another figure, Issam Younis, is general director of the Gaza-based Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights. Numerous Al-Mezan officials are members of the PFLP and Hamas.<sup>105</sup> Younis has also served as the commissioner general of the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), which collaborates with and has openly demonstrated support for Hamas, the PFLP, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.<sup>106</sup> Other advisors to the South African delegation to the ICJ who share similar affiliations include Ammar Hijazi, Assistant Foreign Minister for Multilateral Affairs of the State of Palestine, Omar Awadallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies of the State of Palestine, and Varsha Gandikota-Nellutla, co-general coordinator of the far-left Progressive International.

Out of the 574 citations in the South African application to the ICJ, 45 originate with biased, overtly anti-Israel NGOs. Three of them, the aforementioned Al-Haq, Al-Mezan, and Palestinian Center for Human Rights, have ties to the PFLP.<sup>107</sup> It is concerning that these entities and individuals are considered legitimate advisors to an international judicial panel.

---

[for-palestine-speaks-at-al-haq-report-launch-event-on-israeli-apartheid-as-a-tool-of-zionist-settler-colonialism/](#).

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> “The International Institute for Social Studies Organizes an Important Panel Discussion on ‘Palestine at the ICC: Justice Delayed is Justice Denied,’” Law for Palestine, November 26, 2022, <https://law4palestine.org/the-international-institute-for-social-studies-organizes-an-important-panel-discussion-on-palestine-at-the-icc-justice-delayed-is-justice-denied/>.

<sup>105</sup> “Al Mezan Center For Human Rights’ Ties to the PFLP Terror Group,” NGO Monitor, August 31, 2020, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/al-mezan-center-for-human-rights-ties-to-the-pflp-terror-group/>.

<sup>106</sup> “The South African Genocide Complaint and PFLP-linked NGOs,” NGO Monitor, January 21, 2024, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/the-south-african-genocide-complaint-and-pflp-linked-ngos/>.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

## Roots of Iranian Activity within South African Society

The Iranian interest in establishing ties with South Africa is directly linked to the Islamic Republic's bid to expand its influence, both regionally and globally. Today, Iran continues its decades-long support of the ANC. However, Iranian activity in South Africa previously supported the apartheid regime, supplying over 90 percent of South Africa's petroleum imports by 1978.<sup>108</sup> During the same period, South Africa had an advanced nuclear weapons program and supplied Iran with 600 tons of uranium oxide.<sup>109</sup> However, after the Shah was overthrown, Iran reversed its policies, breaking its diplomatic and commercial ties with apartheid South Africa, and announced its support for the then-outlawed ANC.<sup>110</sup> It offered political, financial, and cultural support to anti-apartheid groups and lobbied for the release of Nelson Mandela. By the end of apartheid in the early 1990s, Mandela travelled to Tehran, along with members of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), and Iran expanded its connections with Muslim businesses in South Africa.<sup>111</sup>

The Mandela administration deepened relations with Iran under President Mohammad Khatami. This culminated in 2004, when Iran and South Africa's defense ministers—Rear Admiral Ali Shamkhani and Mosiuoa Lekota, respectively—signed a military memorandum of understanding pursuant to which South Africa would sell uranium to Iran. It was the first such trip by a South African defense minister to Tehran since the Islamic Revolution.<sup>112</sup> In the years since, South Africa and Iran have continued to share common positions, most notably exhibited through South Africa's continued support for Iran during sanctions over the Iranian

---

<sup>108</sup> J. Peter Pham, "Iran's Ties to Africa," *Jerusalem Strategic Tribune*, February 2022, <https://jstribune.com/pham-irans-ties-to-africa/>.

<sup>109</sup> "Iran's Relations with African Countries," United against Nuclear Iran, <https://www.unitedagainstnucleariran.com/irans-relations-african-countries>. David Albright et. al, "New Indications for Iran's Lack of Domestic Uranium Resources for Nuclear Power Purposes; Plenty for Nuclear Weapons," Institute for Science and International Security, August 19, 2024, <https://isis-online.org/isis-reports/detail/new-indications-for-irans-lack-of-domestic-uranium-resources-for-nuclear-po/>.

<sup>110</sup> J. Peter Pham, "Iran's Ties to Africa," *Jerusalem Strategic Tribune*, February 2022, <https://jstribune.com/pham-irans-ties-to-africa/>.

<sup>111</sup> Banafsheh Keynoush, "Revolutionary Iran's Africa Policy," King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, June 2021, <https://kfcris.com/pdf/dd448fcd67b35ab48903bd18c6fcffd160d99d2290923.pdf>.

<sup>112</sup> J. Peter Pham, "Iran's Ties to Africa," *Jerusalem Strategic Tribune*, February 2022, <https://jstribune.com/pham-irans-ties-to-africa/>.

nuclear program, despite the blacklisting of several South African companies by the US Department of the Treasury.<sup>113</sup> Beyond that, South Africa's maritime capabilities proved crucial to Iran's geopolitical expansion in the form of South African naval routes.

It is clear that Iran has viewed South Africa as a hub for circumventing Western sanctions. In late 2005, an Iranian delegation led by Hassan Rouhani, then Iran's chief nuclear negotiator and head of the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), reportedly met with South African President Thabo Mbeki to request technical expertise for its nuclear program.<sup>114</sup> In addition, Iran has sought to acquire satellite interception, online surveillance, hacking, and missile guidance technologies from South Africa.<sup>115</sup>

The ongoing development and expansion of the relationship between Iran and South Africa led to the establishment of joint commissions focusing on even greater cooperation and coordination between the two nations. In May 2015, for example, a South African delegation travelled to Tehran for the "12th Meeting of the Joint Commission between the Republic of South Africa and the Islamic Republic of Iran." According to the South African Parliamentary Monitoring Group, this particular meeting "was regarded as one of the most successful bilateral engagements South Africa has had with many countries."<sup>116</sup> The South African delegation at this meeting of the Joint Commission was "the biggest and strongest to ever visit the Islamic Republic of Iran" and committed to ensuring the implementation of all agreements between South Africa and Iran.<sup>117</sup> The broad range of issues discussed included initiatives in the fields of "education, energy, health, investment, mining, transport, agriculture, science and technology," as well as "international developments relating to the political agreement recently reached in the nuclear talks."<sup>118</sup>

Finally, at a 2019 meeting in Cape Town between South African Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Reginah Mhaule and her Iranian

---

<sup>113</sup> Banafsheh Keynoush, "Revolutionary Iran's Africa Policy," King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, June 2021, <https://kfcris.com/pdf/dd448fcd67b35ab48903bd18c6fcffd160d99d2290923.pdf>.

<sup>114</sup> "Iran's Relations with African Countries," United against Nuclear Iran, <https://www.unitedagainstnucleariran.com/irans-relations-african-countries>.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> "Report of the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation on a mission of conducting oversight on the implementation of the Joint Commission of Cooperation between South Africa and the Islamic Republic of Iran and the execution of South Africa's international relations policy, in Teheran, Iran and Doha, Qatar from 9–12 May 2015, dated 3 May 2017," Parliamentary Monitoring Group, May 3, 2017, <https://pmg.org.za/taled-committee-report/3071/>.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

counterpart, Abbas Aragchi, Mhaule once again expressed South Africa's continued support for the Iranian regime.<sup>119</sup> Lamenting President Trump's decision to pull out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) the previous year, she stated that "despite all the constraints, we [South Africa] remain committed to continue to support the Islamic Republic of Iran."<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>119</sup> Hassan Isilow, "South Africa Pledges to Continue Supporting Iran," Anadolu Agency, March 9, 2019, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/energy/nuclear/south-africa-pledges-to-continue-supporting-iran/23783>.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

## Recent Developments in South Africa–Iran Relations

Today, South Africa serves as a valuable defense and trading partner of the Iranian regime. On March 1, 2023, it was reported that Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) intended to establish a trade center in South Africa in the near future to introduce the export capabilities of Iranian companies to their South African counterparts.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, in January 2023, following the inauguration of eight trade centers across Africa, TPO Director-General Mohamad Sadeq Qanadzadeh announced the establishment of a direct aviation route between Iran and South Africa by the end of the year.<sup>122</sup>

In July 2023, Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi toured Africa with the aim of expanding economic and trade ties and political commonalities. It was the first visit of an Iranian leader since Mahmoud Ahmadinejad over a decade earlier.<sup>123</sup> Then, in July 2023, Vice-Admiral Monde Lobese, Chief of the South African Navy, highlighted South Africa’s willingness to increase its cooperation with Iran when meeting with Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani.<sup>124</sup> Lobese emphasized that “all Iranian military and non-military vessels are welcome in South Africa’s waters and ports.”<sup>125</sup>

As a member of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) club of emerging economies and the G20, South Africa represents significant market potential for Tehran. In August 2023, Iran and South Africa [signed a cooperation agreement](#), and Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian and his counterpart, Naledi Pandor, co-chaired the 15th meeting of the South Africa–Iran

---

<sup>121</sup> “Iran to Open Trade Center in South Africa Soon,” *Tehran Times*, March 1, 2023, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/482464/iran-to-open-trade-center-in-south-africa-soon>.

<sup>122</sup> “Iran Opens 8 Trade Centers in Africa,” *Tehran Times*, October 1, 2023, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/480667/iran-opens-8-trade-centers-in-africa>.

<sup>123</sup> Eric Lob, “Raisi Goes to Africa in Search of Allies for Iran,” *Stimson*, July 26, 2023, <https://www.stimson.org/2023/raisi-goes-to-africa-in-search-of-allies-for-iran/>.

<sup>124</sup> “Venezuela, South Africa Embrace Close Defense Ties with Iran,” *Tehran Times*, July 31, 2023, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/487430/Venezuela-South-Africa-embrace-close-defense-ties-with-iran>.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

Joint Commission of Cooperation.<sup>126</sup> There, Iran requested South Africa’s assistance in expediting its membership of the BRICS group of nations.<sup>127</sup> In the same month, at the 15th BRICS summit in Johannesburg, the leaders of the group invited Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates to become members, effective January 1, 2024.<sup>128</sup> Meanwhile, Tehran agreed to develop five oil refineries in South Africa by exporting “technical and engineering services” from Iran.<sup>129</sup>

The implications of Iran’s inclusion in BRICS are significant. By attaining membership, Iran has gained access to a bloc that represents 46 percent of the world’s population and accounts for 37 percent of global GDP.<sup>130</sup> Its inclusion could therefore help increase its political legitimacy while also disturbing the power balance between the other members. The leading member states (Brazil, India, and South Africa) maintain close ties with the West. Iran’s inclusion thus appears to serve the interests of Russia and China, advancing their aim of positioning the group as a counterforce to the Western bloc. This assertion was seemingly substantiated when, on the sidelines of the BRICS summit, Iran’s President Raisi told Chinese president Xi Jinping that “Iran’s membership in the bloc is opposition to American unilateralism.”<sup>131</sup> In fact, South Africa’s Democratic Alliance opposition party lamented Iran and Saudi Arabia’s admission, noting that “the addition of two new member states run by authoritarian regimes with concerning totalitarian tendencies may tip the scales in favor of an illiberal, oppressive, and autocratic approach to foreign relations and trade.”<sup>132</sup>

South Africa is the largest buyer of Iranian commodities.<sup>133</sup> A 2021 [report](#) by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) found that South Africa had “failed to

---

<sup>126</sup> Jack Dutton, “Iran, South Africa Sign Agreement in Pretoria ahead of BRICS Summit,” *Al-Monitor*, August 11, 2023, <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/08/iran-south-africa-sign-agreement-pretoria-ahead-brics-summit>.

<sup>127</sup> Hakeem Alade Najimdeen, “Dimensions of the Iranian President’s Recent Tour to Africa,” *Al Jazeera*, August 24, 2023, <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/dimensions-iranian-presidents-recent-tour-africa>.

<sup>128</sup> Claudia Chiappa, “6 New Countries to Join BRICS, Including Iran and Saudi Arabia,” *Politico*, August 24, 2023, <https://www.politico.eu/article/brics-summit-south-africa-six-new-countries-join-alliance/>.

<sup>129</sup> “Iran to Help Develop 5 Refineries in South Africa: President,” *Xinhua*, August 25, 2023, <https://english.news.cn/20230825/8fe9c67276ed4d5780642c536d3dfa28/c.html>.

<sup>130</sup> Shahir Shahidsaless, “The Implications of Iran’s Inclusion in BRICS,” *Stimson*, August 31, 2023, <https://www.stimson.org/2023/the-implications-of-irans-inclusion-in-brics/>.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> Emma Louise Powell, “Iran and Saudi Arabia’s Admission Creates a BRICS Where South Africa Does Not Belong,” *Democratic Alliance*, August 24, 2023, <https://www.da.org.za/2023/08/iran-and-saudi-arabias-admission-creates-a-brics-where-south-africa-does-not-belong>.

<sup>133</sup> “Iran FM Hails South Africa’s Firm Support for Palestine, Calls for Joint Efforts against Israel,” *PressTV*, December 21, 2023, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2023/12/21/716746/Iran-South-Africa-Amir-Abdollahian-counterpart-Naledi-Pandor-Palestine-Israel-Gaza-war-crimes>.

demonstrate that it is effectively identifying, investigating or prosecuting terrorist financiers or addressing terrorism finance through alternate measures.”<sup>134</sup> As a result, FATF “grey-listed” South Africa in February 2023, making it only the second G20 country to be added to the list.<sup>135</sup> As a result, South Africa was subjected to enhanced monitoring of the measures taken to counter the financing of serious crimes.<sup>136</sup> To cite one example, South African telecommunications giant MTN owns 49 percent of Irancell.<sup>137</sup> In 2006, MTN made a deal with Irancell, beating out Turkcell, allegedly through bribery and corruption.<sup>138</sup> Turkcell claimed that MTN obtained the deal by promising Iran that it would deliver South Africa’s vote in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in favor of Iran and that it would help Iran obtain embargoed defense equipment.<sup>139</sup> According to evidence from a [lawsuit](#) filed by Turkcell against MTN in 2012, MTN paid roughly \$200,000 to bribe the South African ambassador to Iran, in addition to paying approximately \$400,000 to Iran’s deputy foreign minister through false consulting contracts, in exchange for granting the license to MTN.<sup>140</sup> MTN also allegedly promised Iran’s defense bodies around \$88 million in illicit payments disguised as sham loans to secure their backing.<sup>141</sup> Later, in 2017, MTN agreed to invest in Iran and lend \$750 million to develop the Iranian fiber-optic network. Two years later, South Africa’s ambassador to Iran, Yusuf Saloojee, was charged with receiving bribes related to the MTN deal with Iran.<sup>142</sup>

MTN’s plan to both support the Iranian development of nuclear weapons and aid in the procurement of embargoed high-tech defense equipment was codenamed “Project Snooker.”<sup>143</sup> The 2012 lawsuit claims that MTN “worked feverishly ... engaging numerous Iranian officials, all of whom it knew to be connected to the

---

<sup>134</sup> Peter Fabricius, “Are Red Flags about Islamic State in South Africa Alarmist?” Institute for Security Studies, November 11, 2022, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/are-red-flags-about-islamic-state-in-south-africa-alarmist>.

<sup>135</sup> Peter Fabricius, “Shades of Grey: FATF Lists South Africa and Nigeria,” Institute for Security Studies, March 3, 2023, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/shades-of-grey-fatf-lists-south-africa-and-nigeria>.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> “Iran ‘Puts the Screws’ on MTN,” *amaBhungane*, April 5, 2012, <https://amabhungane.org/iran-puts-the-screws-on-mtn/>.

<sup>138</sup> “Iran’s Relations with African Countries,” United against Nuclear Iran, <https://www.unitedagainstnucleariran.com/irans-relations-african-countries>.

<sup>139</sup> “Appendix 1—Independent Special Committee Charter,” MTN Group Limited, 2013, [https://mtn-investor.com/html/pdf/circulars/2013/hoffman\\_appendices.pdf](https://mtn-investor.com/html/pdf/circulars/2013/hoffman_appendices.pdf).

<sup>140</sup> *Turkcell İletişim Hizmetleri A.S. et al. v. MTN Group, Ltd. et al.* (D.D.C. 2012), at p. 6, <https://www.mtn.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/usa-district-court.pdf>.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., at p. 42.

<sup>142</sup> Naledi Shange, “Ex SA Ambassador to Iran Arrested for Bribery Relating to MTN deal,” *Times Live*, February 15, 2019, <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2019-02-15-ex-sa-ambassador-to-iran-arrested-for-bribery-relating-to-mtn-deal/>.

<sup>143</sup> *Turkcell İletişim Hizmetleri A.S. et al. v. MTN Group, Ltd. et al.* (D.D.C. 2012), at p. 3, <https://www.mtn.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/usa-district-court.pdf>.



Iranian defense establishment and to the so-called ‘Supreme Leader’ in its efforts.”<sup>144</sup> Furthermore, it apparently “openly and brazenly discussed the conspiracy at the highest corporate levels.”<sup>145</sup> The chairman of the MTN group at this time was Cyril Ramaphosa.<sup>146</sup> While his direct knowledge of or involvement in the specific acts of bribery remains unclear, the lawsuit maintains that MTN and its former board (including Ramaphosa) “were direct participants in the matters at issue in this case.”<sup>147</sup>

**Figure 3: Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa speaking at a joint South Africa–Iran Economic & Trade Cooperation meeting in Tehran, November 8, 2015**<sup>148</sup>



In addition to the corruption allegations, Ramaphosa’s tenure also coincided with significant avoidance practices by MTN. According to a joint investigation by the amaBhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism and Finance Uncovered, MTN moved over R4 billion (\$212 million) from countries including Nigeria and Ivory Coast to Dubai and Mauritius in 2008–2013 under the guise of “management fees.”<sup>149</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Craig McKune, “Ramaphosa and MTN’s Offshore Stash,” *Mail & Guardian*, October 8, 2015, <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-10-08-ramaphosa-and-mtns-offshore-stash/>.

<sup>147</sup> *Turkcell İletişim Hizmetleri A.S. et al. v. MTN Group, Ltd. et al.* (D.D.C. 2012), at p. 10, <https://www.mtn.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/usa-district-court.pdf>.

<sup>148</sup> Government of South Africa (GovernmentZA), “Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa Visits Iran, 7 to 8 Nov 2015,” Flickr, November 9, 2015, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/governmentza/22702470140/in/photostream/>.

<sup>149</sup> Craig McKune, “Ramaphosa and MTN’s Offshore Stash,” *Mail & Guardian*, October 8, 2015, <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-10-08-ramaphosa-and-mtns-offshore-stash/>.

This occurred despite MTN having little or no operations in those jurisdictions.<sup>150</sup> This practice directly contradicts the public stance Ramaphosa took against corporate tax avoidance shortly after leaving MTN to become South Africa’s deputy president in 2014.<sup>151</sup> Notably, during Ramaphosa’s tenure, large sums were regularly routed away from MTN’s operating subsidiaries to tax havens like Mauritius, where the company “employs no staff and appears to own little more than a post-box.”<sup>152</sup>

Critically, a [US lawsuit](#) filed in 2022 claims that MTN, along with codefendants ZTE and Huawei (both Chinese telecom companies and tech manufacturers), conspired with and provided substantial assistance to multiple foreign terrorist organizations.<sup>153</sup> The lawsuit claims that the companies directly conspired with known fronts for terrorist organizations and served as full-spectrum telecommunications and computing partners of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).<sup>154</sup> The lawsuit also noted that MTN Irancell is a joint venture between the MTN group, which took a minority 49 percent stake in a joint venture with the Bonyad Mostazafan foundation and Iran Electronics Industry (IEI), which collectively own 51 percent of the venture and are both fronts for the IRGC, including its Hezbollah division and Quds Force.<sup>155</sup> Both Bonyad Mostazafan and IEI were [sanctioned](#) by the US Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) in November 2020 but continued to do business freely in South Africa.<sup>156</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> *Stephanie Zobay et. Al. v. MTN Group, Ltd. et al.* (E.D.N.Y. 2022), at p. 1, <https://terrorismcase.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Zobay-Amended-Complaint-Dkt-52.pdf>.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., at p. 19.

<sup>156</sup> “Treasury Targets Vast Supreme Leader Patronage Network and Iran’s Minister of Intelligence,” US Department of the Treasury, November 18, 2020, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1185>.

## South Africa–Qatar Relations

Qatar's relations with African nations are relatively recent, but South Africa and Nigeria (as the continent's two largest economies) enjoy a special status for Qatar. Diplomatic relations between Qatar and South Africa date back to 1994, immediately following the end of apartheid.<sup>157</sup> The South African embassy in Doha opened in 2003, and by 2004 the Qatari Minister of Energy and Industry, Abdullah Al-Attiyah, visited South Africa, where an agreement with South African firm Sasol was reached.<sup>158</sup> Since 2007, Sasol has worked with state-owned Qatar Petroleum (now QatarEnergy) to construct a GTL (gas-to-liquid) plant for converting Qatari gas into liquid petroleum products.<sup>159</sup> Sasol holds a 49 percent stake in a joint venture with Qatar Petroleum to establish Oryx GTL.<sup>160</sup> Qatar has also made substantial investments of around \$9 billion in South Africa's crucial energy sector.<sup>161</sup> This includes QatarEnergy's 25 percent stake in the offshore oil and gas exploration Block 11B/12B, which is operated by TotalEnergies.<sup>162</sup> South Africa has also made successful investments in Qatar's energy sector.

South Africa's value to Qatar should not be understated. South Africa was the first country to negotiate with Qatar to import liquefied gas, with officials such as former president Thabo Mbeki offering their services to help Qatar understand the political dynamics of Africa.<sup>163</sup> Furthermore, President Ramaphosa encouraged Qatari investors to explore developing sectors such as infrastructure, industry, mining, food processing, and pharmaceuticals, expressing South Africa's readiness to build

---

<sup>157</sup> Benjamin Augé, "Diplomatic Relations between Qatar and Sub-Saharan Africa: An Evolving Affair," *Notes de l'Ifri* (August 2016), [https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/notes\\_qatar\\_afrique\\_en\\_oksl.pdf](https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/notes_qatar_afrique_en_oksl.pdf).

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., at p. 12.

<sup>160</sup> "Qatar," Sasol, August 15, 2019, [https://society.sasol.com/map\\_maps/qatar/](https://society.sasol.com/map_maps/qatar/).

<sup>161</sup> "Qatar and South Africa: Growing Partnership and Promising Investment Opportunities," *Qatar News Agency*, November 14, 2023, <https://www.qna.org.qa/en/News-Area/Special-News/2023-11/14/0076-qatar-and-south-africa--growing-partnership-and-promising-investment-opportunities>.

<sup>162</sup> "South Africa, Block 11B/12B," Africa Energy, <https://africaenergycorp.com/operations/south-africa-block-11b-12b/>.

<sup>163</sup> Benjamin Augé, "Diplomatic Relations between Qatar and Sub-Saharan Africa: An Evolving Affair," *Notes de l'Ifri* (August 2016), p. 12 at n. 129, [https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/notes\\_qatar\\_afrique\\_en\\_oksl.pdf](https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/notes_qatar_afrique_en_oksl.pdf).

“boundless partnerships” with Qatari businesses.<sup>164</sup> The benefits of mutual strategic economic integration are based on Qatar’s superiority in the production of energy and fertilizers and South Africa’s strong position in the field of agricultural products.<sup>165</sup> This strategic partnership also provides added protection during the current period of increased international turmoil, especially following the outbreak of the Russia–Ukraine war.<sup>166</sup> Both Qatar and South Africa understand the importance of ensuring a reliable partnership to maintain energy supplies from Qatar and secure food sources and supply chains from South Africa.<sup>167</sup>

In November 2023, the ANC released a [statement](#) celebrating 30 years of South Africa–Qatar diplomatic relations. It recalled the establishment of formal diplomatic relations at the time of President Nelson Mandela’s inauguration on May 10, 1994, which was followed by Mandela’s “landmark” visit to Qatar in 1995.<sup>168</sup> The statement also points out how bilateral trade between the nations has surged from R5.6 billion (roughly \$307 million) in 2012 to R18.5 billion (roughly \$1 billion) in 2022, with Qatar becoming South Africa’s 22nd-largest trading partner globally.<sup>169</sup> The publication of the statement followed President Ramaphosa’s first official visit to Qatar in the same month, where he met with Emir Tamim bin Hamas Aal Thani, ostensibly to discuss strengthening trade relations, though it was also speculated that he sought funding for the ANC’s electoral campaign.<sup>170</sup>

Notably, it was during Ramaphosa’s state visit to Qatar that he announced that South Africa had taken steps toward lodging a formal complaint with the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Israel.<sup>171</sup> Prior to that, the Qatari ambassador to the Netherlands, Mutlaq bin Majed Al-Qahtani, met with ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan on November 2, 2023, to discuss the escalation in the Gaza Strip and a number of other

---

<sup>164</sup> “Ramaphosa Calls on Qatari Business Sector to Invest in South Africa,” *Gulf Times*, December 16, 2023, <https://www.gulf-times.com/article/671868/business/ramaphosa-calls-on-qatari-business-sector-to-invest-in-south-africa>.

<sup>165</sup> “Qatar, South Africa Trade Exchange Surged by 32.5% in 2022,” *Zawya*, November 17, 2023, <https://www.zawya.com/en/economy/gcc/qatar-south-africa-trade-exchange-surged-by-325-in-2022-ghxat8uo>.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> “ANC Celebrates 30 Years of South Africa-Qatari Diplomatic Relations,” African National Congress, November 14, 2023, <https://www.anc1912.org.za/anc-celebrates-30-years-of-south-africa-qatar-diplomatic-relations/>.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> Piet Croucamp, “Pandor Hits the Pragmatic Spot on Qatar,” *Vrye weekblad*, November 17, 2023, <https://www.vryeweekblad.com/en/opinions-and-debate/2023-11-17-pandor-hits-the-pragmatic-spot-on-qatar/>.

<sup>171</sup> Queenin Masuabi, “Ramaphosa Asks International Criminal Court to Probe War Crimes Charges against Israel,” *Daily Maverick*, November 15, 2023, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2023-11-15-ramaphosa-asks-international-criminal-court-to-probe-war-crimes-charges-against-israel/>.

issues of “common interest.”<sup>172</sup> On December 5, 2023, Qatar’s news agency reported that Al-Qahtani had also met with ICC President Piotr Hofmanski to exchange views on the same issues.<sup>173</sup> Moreover, Qatar’s ambassador to South Africa, Mubarak bin Nasser Aal Khalifa, emphasized that the visit was taking place “amid the extermination faced by the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip,” and noted that South Africa was one of the only countries in the world that had clearly condemned Israel’s violations against the Palestinians and recalled its representatives from Israel in protest against its actions.<sup>174</sup>

The International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS) met with members of the ANC on May 5, 2024. At the event, the IUMS presented the ANC officials with a [message](#) to South Africa, written by its president Ali al-Qaradaghi, acknowledging “the role of a free and just South Africa—charting a path to a dignified and Free Palestine” and thanking the people of South Africa “from where a beam of light has been shone on the continuing genocide in Palestine.”<sup>175</sup> For greater context, the Doha-based IUMS was founded by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, who has called upon Muslims to finish what Hitler started and was succeeded by al-Qaradaghi. While the source of its funding cannot be verified, IUMS likely benefits from Qatari government support. In May 2012, for example, a charity dinner in Qatar raised QR24 million (\$6,586,170) for IUMS causes, QR5 million (\$1,372,120) of which was donated by Shaikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al Thani, owner of the Al Faisal Without Borders Charity Foundation.<sup>176</sup> At the same event, IUMS announced its plans to invest \$100 million over the following ten years to help secure financial returns that will be used for its charity work.<sup>177</sup>

A final noteworthy point is that, according to senior Hamas official Mousa Abu Marzouk, it was Hamas’s mediation between South Africa and Qatar that prompted them to strengthen their relations. He claims it was at former Hamas politburo leader Khaled Mashal’s behest that Jacob Zuma was invited to Doha in March 2016 and that Qatari investments in South Africa were increased significantly.<sup>178</sup>

---

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> “South Africa’s Diplomatic Campaign against Israel—In Service of Hamas and in Cooperation with Hamas’ Patron, Qatar,” MEMRI, January 18, 2024, <https://www.memri.org/reports/south-africas-diplomatic-campaign-against-israel—service-hamas-and-cooperation-hamas>.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ali Al Quradaghi, “Message to South Africa,” posted by Fikile Mbalula, Facebook, May 13, 2024, <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=993491205472355&set=pcb.993491258805683>.

<sup>176</sup> Habib Toumi, “Charity Dinner Raises \$6.5 Million for Religious Scholars’ Union.” *Gulf News*, May 15, 2012, <https://gulfnews.com/world/gulf/qatar/charity-dinner-raises--65-million-for-religious-scholars-union-1.1023293>.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> “South Africa’s Diplomatic Campaign against Israel—In Service of Hamas and in Cooperation with Hamas’ Patron, Qatar,” MEMRI, January 18, 2024, <https://www.memri.org/reports/south-africas-diplomatic-campaign-against-israel—service-hamas-and-cooperation-hamas>.

# The African National Congress (ANC)

## ANC– Hamas Relations

Among the most alarming facts regarding the South African government, especially in the context of its decision to accuse Israel of genocide at the ICJ, is the ANC's very close relationship with Hamas. Since the founding of its politburo in 1991, Hamas has developed its relations with South Africa while presenting its fight against Israel as a struggle against racism and apartheid.<sup>179</sup> Moussa Abu Marzouk, the former head of Hamas's politburo, has stated that the organization's efforts to strengthen its relations with South Africa began in 1995, when it formed a special committee to build ties with South African diplomats in the Middle East.<sup>180</sup> At the same time, organizations affiliated with Hamas were established in South Africa, such as the Al-Aqsa Foundation and the Middle East Studies Center.<sup>181</sup> The US Treasury [designated](#) the Al-Aqsa Foundation as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) entity in 2003, finding it to be "a critical part of Hamas' transnational terrorist support infrastructure," and named South Africa as one its branch offices.<sup>182</sup> Beyond this, in 2014, five representatives of the Lebanon-based al-Quds International Foundation (AQIF) travelled to South Africa to participate in programs across the country, despite also being [sanctioned](#) by the US Treasury in 2012 for being controlled by and acting on behalf of Hamas.<sup>183</sup> At the time, the Treasury noted that

Hamas's leadership runs all of the foundation's affairs through Hamas members who serve on the Board of Trustees, the Board of Directors, and other administrative committees. All documents, plans, budgets, and projects of Al-Quds are drafted by Hamas officials. Several senior Hamas officials, including Specially Designated Global Terrorists Musa Abu-Marzuq and Usama Hamdan, served on Al-Quds' Board of Trustees. Representatives at an Al-Quds conference were told to

---

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> "Treasury Designates Al-Aqsa International Foundation as Financier of Terror Charity Linked to Funding of the Hamas Terrorist Organization," US Department of the Treasury, May 29, 2003, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/js439>.

<sup>183</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, "Warming Ties between Hamas and South Africa," Foundation for Defense of Democracies, October 23, 2015, <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2015/10/23/warming-ties-between-hamas-and-south-africa/>.

consider themselves unofficial ambassadors for Hamas in their respective countries.<sup>184</sup>

AQIF also sent Hamas operative Abdul Aziz Umar to South Africa in 2012 to promote the release of Hamas prisoners.<sup>185</sup> Despite their sanctioned status in the US, the South African branches of the Al-Aqsa Foundation and the Al-Quds Foundation are able to operate in the country with impunity.

Relations between the ANC and Hamas have only grown stronger over time. To demonstrate, South Africa's former Minister of Intelligence Ronnie Kasrils invited Ismail Haniyeh to lead a delegation to South Africa in 2007, demanding that the international community lift its embargo against Hamas.<sup>186</sup> Abu Marzouk also wrote that an October 2010 meeting in Damascus between Khaled Mashal (the head of Hamas's politburo) and South Africa's then-deputy president Kgalema Motlanthe paved the way for the establishment of official relations between Hamas and the ANC.<sup>187</sup> This led to further developments in their political relationship, which included the signing of two memorandums of understanding in 2015 and in 2018.<sup>188</sup> In October 2015, Hamas sent a [delegation](#) to South Africa, led by Khaled Mashal and Mousa Abu Marzouk, which met with senior officials from the ANC, including then President Jacob Zuma, over the course of a three-day visit.<sup>189</sup> During the visit, the ANC signed a "letter of intent" with Hamas to build a long-lasting relationship, and formal party-to-party relations between the ANC and Hamas were established.<sup>190</sup> In light of the visit, ANC Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe said, "We are starting a relationship with Hamas ... we are happy today we are together, we are formally formalizing our relationship. We'll exchange delegations, we'll share experiences and we'll talk to each other regularly."<sup>191</sup> Abu Marzouk noted that the 2015 visit

---

<sup>184</sup> "Treasury Sanctions Two Hamas-Controlled Charities," US Department of the Treasury, October 4, 2012, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg1725>.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, "Warming Ties between Hamas and South Africa," Foundation for Defense of Democracies, October 23, 2015, <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2015/10/23/warming-ties-between-hamas-and-south-africa/>.

<sup>187</sup> "South Africa's Diplomatic Campaign against Israel—In Service of Hamas and in Cooperation with Hamas' Patron, Qatar," MEMRI, January 18, 2024, <https://www.memri.org/reports/south-africas-diplomatic-campaign-against-israel—service-hamas-and-cooperation-hamas>.

<sup>188</sup> "Factsheet: South Africa, Hamas, and the ICJ 'Genocide' Case against Israel," AIJAC, February 6, 2024, <https://aijac.org.au/fact-sheets/factsheet-south-africa-hamas-and-the-icj-genocide-case-against-israel>.

<sup>189</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, "Warming Ties between Hamas and South Africa," Foundation for Defense of Democracies, October 23, 2015, <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2015/10/23/warming-ties-between-hamas-and-south-africa/>.

<sup>190</sup> "ANC Parliamentary Caucus Signs MoU with Hamas Parliamentarians," Palestinian Information Center, December 4, 2018, [https://english.palinfo.com/o\\_post/ANC-Parliamentary-Caucus-signs-MoU-with-Hamas-parliamentarians/](https://english.palinfo.com/o_post/ANC-Parliamentary-Caucus-signs-MoU-with-Hamas-parliamentarians/).

<sup>191</sup> Shafiq Morton, "Hamas in South Africa: Opening a New Discourse?," *Palestine Chronicle*, October 22, 2015, <https://www.palestinechronicle.com/hamas-in-south-africa-opening-a-new-discourse/>.

established a direct line of communications between the Hamas leadership and the ANC.<sup>192</sup>

At the 2018 meeting, South African leaders warmly welcomed members of Hamas's Change and Reform Bloc (CPRB) to South Africa, including veteran Hamas leader Mahmoud al-Zahar.<sup>193</sup> The memorandum of understanding [signed](#) by al-Zahar and ANC parliamentary caucus member Jackson Mthembu stressed "the Palestinian historic right" and stated that South Africa would attempt to sway global public opinion against the Israeli occupation and promote the boycott of Israel on various levels.<sup>194</sup> The visit also included a private visit to the Robben Island prison cell of Nelson Mandela, where al-Zahar compared Hamas prisoners in Israeli jails to Mandela and said, "Allah willing, you will get out of your prisons and rule the country, just like Mandela got out of prison and ruled this country."<sup>195</sup>

More recently, on December 3–5, 2023, a Hamas delegation visited Cape Town in the framework of the Fifth Global Convention of Solidarity with Palestine, where discussions were held with the ANC, in addition to meetings with local and national figures and representatives of civil society and Muslim communities.<sup>196</sup> The conference, whose theme was "Nelson Mandela and Palestine: Confronting Racism till Liberation," was held in conjunction with the tenth anniversary of Mandela's death and was opened by Mandela's grandson Mandla Mandela.<sup>197</sup> On December 5, 2023, ANC Secretary General Fikile Mbalula posted on [Twitter](#) (now X) that "an ANC delegation led by ANC Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula, along with the General-Secretary of SACP Comrade Solly Mapaila, held a bilateral meeting with the HAMAS and FATAH delegations of Palestine, at Chief Albert Luthuli House."<sup>198</sup> ANC spokesperson Obed Bapela stated that the ANC assured the Hamas and other

---

<sup>192</sup> "South Africa's Diplomatic Campaign against Israel—In Service of Hamas and in Cooperation with Hamas' Patron, Qatar," MEMRI, January 18, 2024, <https://www.memri.org/reports/south-africas-diplomatic-campaign-against-israel—service-hamas-and-cooperation-hamas>.

<sup>193</sup> "ANC Parliamentary Caucus Signs MoU with Hamas Parliamentarians," Palestinian Information Center, December 4, 2018, [https://english.palinfo.com/o\\_post/ANC-Parliamentary-Caucus-signs-MoU-with-Hamas-parliamentarians/](https://english.palinfo.com/o_post/ANC-Parliamentary-Caucus-signs-MoU-with-Hamas-parliamentarians/).

<sup>194</sup> "South Africa's Diplomatic Campaign against Israel—In Service of Hamas and in Cooperation with Hamas' Patron, Qatar," MEMRI, January 18, 2024, <https://www.memri.org/reports/south-africas-diplomatic-campaign-against-israel—service-hamas-and-cooperation-hamas>.

<sup>195</sup> Ben Cohen, "ANC Leaders Roll Out Red Carpet in South Africa for Visiting Hamas Delegation," *The Algemeiner*, December 4, 2018, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2018/12/04/anc-leaders-roll-out-red-carpet-in-south-africa-for-visiting-hamas-delegation/>.

<sup>196</sup> Rolene Marks, "Hamas Delegation in South Africa for Palestinian Solidarity Event," *JNS*, December 2, 2023, <https://www.jns.org/hamas-delegation-in-south-africa-for-palestinian-solidarity-event/>.

<sup>197</sup> Ahmed Jazbhay, "Palestine Conference in Johannesburg Calls for True, Meaningful Liberation," *Palestine Chronicle*, December 7, 2023, <https://www.palestinechronicle.com/palestine-conference-in-johannesburg-calls-for-true-meaningful-liberation/>.

<sup>198</sup> Chris Hattingh, "[Opinion] ANC's Hamas meeting Could Hurt Us Badly," Centre For Risk Analysis, December 21, 2023, <https://cra-sa.com/media/opinion-ancs-hamas-meeting-could-hurt-us-badly>.



Palestinian delegates that South Africa had “approached the ICC on the issuing of an indictment of Prime Minister Netanyahu to be charged for those three elements: genocide, violation of human rights, and war crimes.”<sup>199</sup>

**Figure 4: ANC members with Hamas and Fatah delegates during convention in December 2023**



An ANC delegation and South African Communist Party leader Solly Mapaila hold a bilateral meeting with Hamas and Fatah delegations at Chief Albert Luthuli House in Johannesburg, Dec. 5, 2023. Source: ANC SECRETARY GENERAL | Fikile Mbalula/X.

Among those in [attendance](#) at the convention were Dr. Bassem Naim (Hamas politburo member), Dr. Khaled Qaddoumi (Hamas representative in Iran), and Emad Saber (Hamas international relations director for Africa).<sup>200</sup> Qaddoumi, who currently lives in Iran, was featured in an October 27, 2023, [press release](#) from the US Treasury, which focused on targeting additional sources of support and financing for Hamas.<sup>201</sup> Qaddoumi expressed Hamas’s gratitude for South Africa’s support in an [interview](#) with SABC television. He described October 7 as a defensive reaction to Israeli atrocities.<sup>202</sup> Saber denied that Hamas killed women and children

---

<sup>199</sup> Ben Cohen, “South African Government Fetes Hamas Official Sanctioned by US Administration,” *The Algemeiner*, December 13, 2023, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2023/12/13/south-african-government-fetes-hamas-official-sanctioned-by-us-administration/>.

<sup>200</sup> Peter Fabricius and Queenin Masuabi, “Hamas Leaders’ Presence in SA for a Palestine Solidarity Convention Stirs Controversy,” *Daily Maverick*, November 30, 2023, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2023-11-30-hamas-leaders-presence-in-sa-for-a-palestine-solidarity-convention-stirs-controversy/>.

<sup>201</sup> Chris Hattingh, “[Opinion] ANC’s Hamas meeting Could Hurt Us Badly,” Centre For Risk Analysis, December 21, 2023, <https://cra-sa.com/media/opinion-ancs-hamas-meeting-could-hurt-us-badly>.

<sup>202</sup> Sameera Casmond, “Hamas Delegation in South Africa,” *Radio Islam International*, December 4, 2023, <https://radioislam.org.za/a/hamas-delegation-in-south-africa/>.

on October 7, and claimed that Israeli civilians were killed by Israeli forces.<sup>203</sup> He also denied that Hamas had taken hostages or targeted civilians.<sup>204</sup> Members of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the PLO, and Hezbollah were also reportedly in attendance.<sup>205</sup> Despite this, on November 30, Minister in the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni said that the government had no intention of meeting with Hamas, while also denying any evidence of a Hamas presence in South Africa and lambasting the notion that Hamas is a terrorist organization.<sup>206</sup> These statements were made despite the ANC's spokesperson in the Western Cape, Khalid Sayed, reporting a "very positive engagement" with the Hamas delegation consisting of Naim, Qaddoumi, and Saber on the same day.<sup>207</sup>

On February 6, 2024, Republican Congressman John James and Democratic Congressman Jared Moskowitz introduced a [bipartisan bill](#) calling for a full review of the bilateral relationship between the US and South Africa.<sup>208</sup> The bill argued that the South African government, contrary to its publicly stated stance of nonalignment in international affairs, has a history of siding with malign actors such as Hamas. The bill further claimed that South Africa's relationship with Hamas dates back to 1994, when the ANC first came to power, and lists antisemitic and anti-Israel remarks made by the South African government and ANC leaders since October 7, 2023.<sup>209</sup> Moreover, the bill found the ANC to be firmly aligned with Hamas, Russia, and China.<sup>210</sup> Given the severity of these accusations, the bill is seen as a potential threat to South Africa's ability to continue to benefit from the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).<sup>211</sup> This is a significant development, as the AGOA trade agreement with the US provides duty-free product coverage for 1,835 products across sub-Saharan Africa. Further benefits include job creation in agriculture and manufacturing, export earnings, and economic development.<sup>212</sup>

---

<sup>203</sup> "Hamas: We Deal with the ANC, Not SA's Government," *Daily Friend*, December 20, 2023, <https://dailyfriend.co.za/2023/12/10/hamas-we-deal-with-the-anc-not-sas-government/>.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> "Hamas Delegation Takes Centre Stage at Palestine Solidarity Conference in South Africa," *Media Review Network*, December 4, 2023, <https://mediareviewnet.com/2023/12/hamas-delegation-takes-centre-stage-at-palestine-solidarity-conference-in-south-africa/>.

<sup>206</sup> Chris Hattingh, "[Opinion] ANC's Hamas meeting Could Hurt Us Badly," Centre For Risk Analysis, December 21, 2023, <https://cra-sa.com/media/opinion-ancs-hamas-meeting-could-hurt-us-badly>.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> "H.R. 7256: To Require a Full Review of the Bilateral Relationship between the United States and South Africa," US House of Representatives, February 6, 2024, <https://www.govinfo.gov/bulkdata/BILLS/118/2/hr/BILLS-118hr7256ih.xml>.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> "US to Review SA Relations Following ICJ Case against Israel," *Bulawayo 24 News*, February 10, 2024, <https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-news-sc-local-byo-240054.html>.

<sup>212</sup> Lizika Tandwa, "US Says Reciprocal Access to Duty Free Still on the Cards," *Mail & Guardian*, November 6, 2023, <https://mg.co.za/business/2023-11-06-us-says-reciprocal-access-to-duty-free-still-on-the-cards/>.

Considering South Africa’s total goods exports to the US amounted to \$14.5 billion in 2021,<sup>213</sup> the benefits lost could be immense.

Justifying its reasoning, the bill cites the hypocrisy of wrongfully accusing Israel of genocide at the ICJ while simultaneously pursuing increasingly close relations with Russia, which has been accused of perpetrating war crimes in Ukraine and violating human rights indiscriminately.<sup>214</sup> It adds that South Africa has dispatched multiple high-level official delegations to Russia to further political, intelligence, and military cooperation, which included allowing a US-sanctioned Russian cargo ship, the *Lady R*, to transfer arms at a South-African naval base in December 2022.<sup>215</sup> These concerns were similarly reflected in a 2023 Standard Bank analysis warning that Ramaphosa was at risk of losing investor confidence, following claims by US ambassador to South Africa Reuben Brigety that Washington was “confident” that weapons and ammunition were loaded onto the sanctioned *Lady R*.<sup>216</sup> The analysis also noted that around \$3 billion in South African exports that benefited from US preferential access under AGOA in 2022 would be at risk if South Africa’s claims of neutrality were continually challenged.<sup>217</sup>

The bill additionally points to the ANC’s ongoing inter-party cooperation with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). This includes recruiting former US and NATO fighter pilots to train Chinese People’s Liberation Army pilots at the Test Flying Academy of South Africa and South Africa’s participation in a political training school in Tanzania funded by the CCP.<sup>218</sup> This is significant due to the gross human rights violations carried out by the Chinese government against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. According to multiple human rights agencies, and the US State Department, the CCP is waging a “targeted campaign” against Uyghurs, with documented abuses that include “coercive population control, forced labor, arbitrary detention, torture, physical and sexual abuse, mass surveillance, family separation, and repression of culture and religious expression.”<sup>219</sup> Over a million Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and members of other minority Muslim groups have been arbitrarily detained in Chinese internment camps since April 2017.<sup>220</sup>

---

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Lizeka Tandwa, “US Congress Receives Bill to Review South Africa Relations,” AGOA, February 9, 2024, <https://agoa.info/news/article/16433-us-congress-receives-bill-to-review-sa-relations.html>.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Lizeka Tandwa, “Ramaphosa on Verge Of Losing Investor Confidence after US Claims—Standard Bank,” *Mail & Guardian*, May 12, 2023, <https://mg.co.za/politics/2023-05-12-ramaphosa-on-verge-of-losing-investor-confidence-after-us-claims-standard-bank/>.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Lizeka Tandwa, “US Congress Receives Bill to Review South Africa Relations,” AGOA, February 9, 2024, <https://agoa.info/news/article/16433-us-congress-receives-bill-to-review-sa-relations.html>.

<sup>219</sup> “The Chinese Communist Party’s Human Rights Abuses in Xinjiang,” US Department of State, 2021, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/ccpabuses/>.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

## Spotlight on Naledi Pandor

The South African Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Naledi Pandor, has been a member of parliament for the ANC since 1994. She has voiced anti-Israel positions and rhetoric throughout her career and has fostered close working relationships with Hamas and the Iranian regime. For example, Pandor participated in a hunger strike in May 2017 in protest against Israeli detention policies.<sup>221</sup> In February 2018, while serving as South Africa's Science and Technology Minister, Pandor announced the country's resolution to cut diplomatic ties with Israel, blaming it for failing to secure lasting peace and a viable two-state solution.<sup>222</sup> A month prior, a South African representative told the UN Human Rights Council that Israel was the "only state in the world that can be described as an apartheid state," days after the ANC called for ministers to tighten visa restrictions for Israel.<sup>223</sup> Moreover, while speaking at an Israel Apartheid Week event at the University of Cape Town in 2019, Pandor, then South Africa's Minister of Higher Education, called on students to lobby for the issue of Palestine to be included in the BRICS agenda.<sup>224</sup>

In a further display of the ANC's hypocrisy in April 2022, Pandor stressed the need for diplomacy in discussing the governmental "nonaligned" position in opposing the UN General Assembly vote to suspend Russia from the UN Human Rights Council.<sup>225</sup> Meanwhile, Pandor criticized the global failure to stop Israel's killing of Palestinian children.<sup>226</sup> In July 2022, Pandor [addressed](#) the Palestinian Heads of Mission in Africa Conference, where she continued to call for the UN to form a committee against Israeli apartheid and deplored the decision of the African Union (AU) to grant Israel observer status.<sup>227</sup> While attending an AU summit in February 2024, Pandor doubled down in confirming that South Africa will continue to "argue this onslaught on Palestinian people is designed to commit genocide."<sup>228</sup>

---

<sup>221</sup> John Campbell, "South Africa's New Foreign Minister is a Starting Point for Improved US Ties," Council on Foreign Relations, June 6, 2019, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/south-africas-new-foreign-minister-starting-point-improved-us-ties>.

<sup>222</sup> "South Africa to Cut Diplomatic Ties with Israel," *Middle East Monitor*, February 20, 2018, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180220-south-africa-to-cut-diplomatic-ties-with-israel/>.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Ramzy Baroud, "'Elected by Donors': The University of Cape Town Fails Palestine, Embraces Israel," *Everand*, December 10, 2019, <https://www.everand.com/article/439319765/Elected-By-Donors-The-University-Of-Cape-Town-Fails-Palestine-Embraces-Israel>.

<sup>225</sup> "Letter: ANC's Real Stance on Israel Revealed," *Business Day*, April 11, 2022, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/opinion/letters/2022-04-11-letter-ancs-real-stance-on-israel-revealed/>.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Sharon Salomon, "Naledi Pandor Dons Keffiyeh & Demands a UN Committee on Apartheid," *Daily Friend*, August 8, 2022, <https://dailyfriend.co.za/2022/08/08/naledi-pandor-dons-keffiyeh-demands-a-un-committee-on-apartheid/>.

<sup>228</sup> Kalkidan Yibeltal, "We Are Not Representing Hamas—SA Foreign Minister," *BBC News*, <https://www.bbc.com/news/live/world-africa-68124897/page/2>.

Since October 7, Hamas claimed that Ismail Haniyeh received a call from Minister Pandor on October 17, in which she affirmed “South African solidarity with the Palestinian people and with Gaza in the Al-Aqsa flood battle” (Hamas’s term for the October 7 massacre).<sup>229</sup> Both Pandor and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa denied they had expressed such support, after initially denying the call had even taken place.<sup>230</sup> On the same day, however, Pandor justified the Hamas massacre, saying “we recognise the desperation that leads to actions of this nature. I don’t know whether we can condemn it [the Hamas atrocities]. I don’t have sufficient information on who the responsible parties are.”<sup>231</sup>

Pandor has continuously implemented punitive policies against Israel—and even against South Africans who support it. For instance, on November 6, 2023, the South African government recalled its ambassador and diplomatic mission to Israel, citing Israel’s actions in Gaza as a “genocide.”<sup>232</sup> It also threatened action against the Israeli ambassador to South Africa over what it deemed “disparaging remarks” he made against the government.<sup>233</sup> Pandor justified the South African government’s actions by accusing Israel of the “continued killing of children” and describing its military campaign against Hamas as collective punishment.<sup>234</sup> Speaking before parliament in the following days, Pandor argued that the ICC had more ground to act against Netanyahu than when it acted against Putin.<sup>235</sup> She accused Israel of “the murder of children and women” when [calling upon](#) the ICC to make arrests.<sup>236</sup> Paradoxically, the ANC avoided its obligations as a state party to the Rome Statute to execute the ICC’s arrest warrant against Sudan’s Omar al-Bashir when he was in South Africa in 2015. Despite being wanted by the ICC for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide in Darfur since 2005, al-Bashir freely attended an AU summit in Johannesburg.<sup>237</sup> Moreover, despite ICC judges unanimously finding that

---

<sup>229</sup> Emsire Ferreira, “Presidency, Pandor Dismiss Hamas’s Claim of SA Support,” *Mail & Guardian*, October 17, 2023, <https://mg.co.za/news/2023-10-17-presidency-pandor-dismiss-hamass-claim-of-sa-support/>.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Tali Feinberg, “Pandor’s Pandering to Hamas Aligns SA with Terrorists,” *South African Jewish Report*, October 19, 2023, <https://www.sajr.co.za/pandors-pandering-to-hamas-aligns-sa-with-terrorists/>.

<sup>232</sup> Mogomotsi Magome, “South Africa Recalls Ambassador to Israel and Accuses Country of Genocide in Gaza,” *PBS*, November 6, 2023, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/south-africa-recalls-ambassador-to-israel-and-accuses-country-of-genocide-in-gaza>.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Abbey Makoe, “Shameless Double Standard to Shield Israel Exposes Western Hypocrisy,” *IOL*, November 12, 2023, <https://www.iol.co.za/sundayindependent/dispatch/shameless-double-standards-to-shield-israel-exposes-western-hypocrisy-213d3ee2-751b-4a6a-8690-1850cb902e99>.

<sup>236</sup> Rolene Marks, “South Africa’s FM Calls for Netanyahu to Be Charged with War Crimes,” *JNS*, November 8, 2023, <https://www.jns.org/south-africas-fm-calls-for-netanyahus-arrest-for-war-crimes/>.

<sup>237</sup> Allan Ngari, “The Real Problem behind South Africa’s Refusal to Arrest al-Bashir,” Institute for Security Studies, July 10, 2017, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/the-real-problem-behind-south-africas-refusal-to-arrest-al-bashir>.

South Africa had obstructed justice in failing to comply with the Court's request for cooperation, South Africa faced no sanctions for doing so.<sup>238</sup>

In March 2024, it was reported that Pandor had announced that South African citizens who served in the Israeli armed forces, or alongside them in Gaza, would be arrested when they returned home.<sup>239</sup> Pandor made the comments while speaking at a Palestinian solidarity rally attended by multiple ANC officials. She also encouraged people to demonstrate outside the embassies of what she called the “five primary supporters” of Israel. The foreign ministry added that those with dual South African–Israeli citizenship could be stripped of their South African citizenship.<sup>240</sup> Finally, Pandor [addressed a mosque](#) in Cape Town on May 28, 2024, stating among other things that countries and officials that fund Israel's war machine will be liable for ICC prosecution, that a class action was being planned against foreign citizens serving in the IDF, and that the goals of jihad can also be achieved through international institutions.<sup>241</sup>

---

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Gerald Imray, “South Africa's Foreign Minister Says Citizens Fighting with Israeli Forces in Gaza Will Be Arrested,” *Associated Press*, March 13, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/south-africa-israel-military-gaza-war-genocide-0f17e9cbda2a3e2d90829b65606a2f14>.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> “South African Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Naledi Pandor at Cape Town Mosque: America is Next,” MEMRI, May 28, 2024, <https://www.memri.org/tv/south-africa-minister-intl-relations-naledi-pandor-countries-officials-fund-arm-israel-war-liable-prosecution-icc>.

## Radical Political Islamism in South Africa

While this report has thus far focused mainly on South Africa's relations with Hamas and the Iranian regime, especially in the light of its application to the ICJ against Israel, it is also important to explore the landscape and expansion of radical Islamism in South Africa over time. In a nutshell, the Islamic revival in South Africa began in the 1950s and expanded following the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, which led to the formation of the Qibla mass movement, based in Cape Town.<sup>242</sup> In the 1980s, the activities of the Qibla movement focused on promoting the ideals of the Islamic revolution, and turning South Africa into an Islamic state.<sup>243</sup> Qibla's ideology also led to the emergence of People against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) in 1995, which was used by Qibla to marshal support for its Islamic revolutionary aims.<sup>244</sup> Today, the most common Islamic groups in sub-Saharan Africa are Sunni, specifically Wahhabis and Muslim Brotherhood affiliates.<sup>245</sup>

In effect, South Africa has been used as the basis of the territorial crux of Islamists in Africa. Given its relatively sophisticated infrastructure compared to the rest of the continent, it can be used as a logistical and operational hub by pan-Islamic extremists.<sup>246</sup> Organized crime syndicates that have pre-existing relationships with Islamists can piggy-back on criminal networks already operating in the region, while terror groups like Hezbollah are already regionally anchored from Abidjan in the Ivory Coast to Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Johannesburg in South Africa.<sup>247</sup>

Commenting on how South Africa has become the nerve center for jihadist financing on the continent, Pretoria-based counter-terrorism expert Jasmine

---

<sup>242</sup> Moshe Terdman, "Factors Facilitating the Rise of Radical Islamism and Terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa," Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, March 16, 2006, at p. 6, [https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF\\_07\\_061\\_2.pdf](https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF_07_061_2.pdf).

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> Anton Emelianov, "Trends in the Spread of Radical Islam in Africa," Future Academy, December 2019, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338214594\\_Trends\\_In\\_The\\_Spread\\_Of\\_Radical\\_Islam\\_In\\_Africa](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338214594_Trends_In_The_Spread_Of_Radical_Islam_In_Africa).

<sup>246</sup> Hussein Solomon, *Jihad: A South African Perspective* (SunBonani Scholar, 2013), <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/60628/1/9781920382315.pdf>.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

Opperman has noted that “South Africa is open hunting ground” that is internationally recognized as a terror financing hub.<sup>248</sup> To demonstrate this, according to one report, some R6.3 billion (\$342 million) was wired from South Africa to Kenya, Somalia, Nigeria, and Bangladesh through mobile money transfers between 2020 and 2021, using nearly 57,000 unregistered phone SIM cards.<sup>249</sup> One system used to covertly transfer money is the *hawala* system, an informal method of payment based on trust that is far more difficult to trace than bank transfers.<sup>250</sup>

When mapping Hamas’s South African support network, the Foundation for Defense of Democracies reported that Muslim cleric [Ebrahim Gabriels](#) (aka Ibrahim Jibril) was a key member of this network.<sup>251</sup> It includes the South African branches of the Al-Quds International Foundation (AQIF), the Al-Aqsa Foundation (AAF), and the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC).<sup>252</sup> Gabriels has been actively cultivating support for Hamas for over 20 years in South Africa. In 2004, for example, as the president of MJC, he organized a protest march at which he stated that the MJC supported Hamas “100 percent.”<sup>253</sup> Gabriels also met Hamas officials in Damascus in 2009, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Gaza in 2011, and politburo members Mohammad Nazzal and Maher Obeid in South Africa in 2017. In addition, he was part of a small group that welcomed a Hamas delegation to South Africa in 2015.<sup>254</sup> Notably, a 2021 Arabic-language biography of Hamas leader Mousa Abu Marzouk [named](#) Ebrahim Gabriels as an associate and as Abu Marzouk’s gateway to South Africa’s Muslim community.<sup>255</sup> Finally, on October 8, 2023, the Al-Aqsa Foundation in South Africa held an event “in support of Palestine and Masjid Al-Aqsa” at which Gabriels praised Hamas.<sup>256</sup>

A [classified report](#), allegedly drafted by South Africa’s National Intelligence Agency in 1998, provides further context as to the extent of radical Islamist and terror activity in South Africa. The report noted the presence of Hamas delegates and affiliated individuals in the country and detailed their fundraising efforts and attendance at conferences near Pretoria that were attended by other Islamist militant organizations such as the Taliban, al-Qaeda, the Algerian Islamic Salvation

---

<sup>248</sup> “South Africa in the Spotlight over Terror Funding,” *France24*, June 13, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230613-south-africa-in-the-spotlight-over-terror-funding>.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> David May, “Hamas’ South African Support Network,” Foundation for Defense of Democracies, March 1, 2024, [https://www.fdd.org/analysis/op\\_ed/2024/03/01/hamas-south-african-support-network/](https://www.fdd.org/analysis/op_ed/2024/03/01/hamas-south-african-support-network/).

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> “South African Islamic Scholars Laud October 7 Massacre by Hamas,” MEMRI, October 8, 2023, <https://www.memri.org/tv/south-africa-muslim-celebrate-oct-seven-attacks-extremely-proud-mujahideen-hamas-morning-glory-qassam-brigades>.



Front, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah.<sup>257</sup> The report further stated that foreign Islamist militants “prefer[red] to keep South Africa [as a] rear base for military training, convalescence, fund raising, media and proselytizing,” claims that were later confirmed by the head of the National Intelligence Coordinating Committee in 2007.<sup>258</sup>

These assessments came after the arrest of two South Africans, Dr. Feroz Ganchi and Zubair Ismail, in a joint US–Pakistani raid in Gujrat, Pakistan, in 2004. Ganchi and Ismail were captured in the company of one of the perpetrators of al-Qaeda’s 1998 bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and were alleged to have been planning attacks in South Africa at the time of their arrest.<sup>259</sup> Then, in 2007, the US government sought to add two South African cousins, Farhad Ahmed Dockrat and Junaid Ismail Dockrat, to a UN sanctions list targeting al-Qaeda and Taliban members.<sup>260</sup> According to the US Treasury, the cousins worked as al-Qaeda financiers who had “facilitate[ed] travel for individuals to train in al Qaida camps” in Pakistan.<sup>261</sup>

Starting in 2013, a number of South Africans sought to travel to Iraq and Syria to join Islamic State (IS). Between 60 and 100 are estimated to have succeeded in doing so. Among the best known individuals to make the journey were Port Elizabeth cleric Rashid Moosagie, Musa Abu Mujahid Oscar from Pretoria, Abu Hurayra al-Hindi/al-Afriki, and brothers Bilal and Ahmed Cajeel.<sup>262</sup> In 2015, twin brothers Brandon-Lee Thulsie and Tony-Lee Thulsie and an accomplice, Ronaldo “Arashad” Smith, attempted to travel to Syria to join IS before they were stopped by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (also known as the Hawks) and placed under surveillance.<sup>263</sup> As an alternative to their failed plans to travel to Syria, the trio allegedly began plotting attacks against government targets, as well as Jewish and American institutions in South Africa on behalf of IS.<sup>264</sup> Meanwhile, the threat of IS—or any jihadist terror group—to South Africa was debated and often dismissed.<sup>265</sup>

---

<sup>257</sup> Brenda Githing’u, “The Counterterrorism Conundrum: Exploring the Evolution of South Africa’s Extremist Networks,” Hudson Institute, October 23, 2021, <https://www.hudson.org/national-security-defense/the-counterterrorism-conundrum-exploring-the-evolution-of-south-africa-s-extremist-networks>.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Peter Fabricius, “How Serious Is the Islamic State Threat to Attack South Africa?,” Institute for Security Studies, July 23, 2020, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/how-serious-is-the-islamic-state-threat-to-attack-south-africa>.

Finally, on November 7, 2022, the US Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) [identified](#) four members of an IS cell operating in South Africa. Nufael Akbar, Yunus Mohamad Akbar, Mohamad Akbar, and Umar Akbar were associates of cell-leader Farhad Hooper, who pursued IS’s agenda in South Africa. The cell was designated for providing technical, financial or material support to the terrorist group.<sup>266</sup> OFAC also designated four South Africa–based companies for being owned, controlled, or directed by Nufael Akbar and/or Yunus Mohamad Akbar: MA Gold Traders (PTY) LTD, Bailey Holdings (PTY) LTD, Flexoseal Waterproofing Solutions (PTY) LTD, and HJ Bannister Construction CC. Additionally, four South Africa–based companies were designated for being owned, controlled, or directed by Farhad Hooper: Sultans Construction CC, Ashiq Jewellers CC, Ineos Trading (PTY) LTD, and Shaahista Shoes CC.<sup>267</sup>

## Expansion of Political Islamism in Surrounding Countries

Within the last two decades, there has been an upsurge in terror activities linked to radical Islamic expansionist groups on the African continent, particularly those led by groups subscribing to the Salafi jihadi doctrine.<sup>268</sup> Often referred to as jihadist Salafism, this doctrine is a blend of religious and political ideologies based on the Islamist call for a global caliphate, the endorsement of jihad, and a return to puritanical or true Islam.<sup>269</sup> In *A Genealogy of Evil*, David Patterson discusses the emergence of Salafism in the mid-nineteenth century “as a collective movement, rather than at the instigation of a single individual.”<sup>270</sup> Derived from the word *salaf*, meaning “pious ancestor,” Salafists are “purists” who only accept the first three generations of Islamic scholars as authoritative.<sup>271</sup> Patterson points to key figures such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839–1897), Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905), and Rashid Rida (1865–1935), all of whom were “among the modern intellectuals at the renowned Al-Azhar University in Cairo and all of whom had a very powerful impact on the Jihadist movements of the twentieth century.”<sup>272</sup> The ideological framework for Salafism was further elaborated by the Egyptian Islamic scholar Sayyid Qutb in the 1960s.<sup>273</sup> Qutb gravitated toward the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1950s, becoming

---

<sup>266</sup> “Treasury Designates Members of ISIS Cell in South Africa,” US Department of the Treasury, November 7, 2022, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1084>.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> “The Search for a Caliphate: Expansionist Agenda of Radical Islam from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa,” *SBM Intelligence*, May 2021, [https://www.sbmintel.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/202105\\_Caliphate.pdf](https://www.sbmintel.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/202105_Caliphate.pdf).

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> David Patterson, *A Genealogy of Evil* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> “The Search for a Caliphate: Expansionist Agenda of Radical Islam from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa,” *SBM Intelligence*, May 2021, [https://www.sbmintel.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/202105\\_Caliphate.pdf](https://www.sbmintel.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/202105_Caliphate.pdf).

one its most influential ideologues. He subsequently composed his political manifesto *Milestones* in the early 1960s. This work is viewed almost universally by scholars as marking “the intellectual origin of the Salafi Jihadist movement.”<sup>274</sup>

In East Africa, leading proponents of Salafism in Kenya and Tanzania have spread this ideology to hundreds of mosques and Islamic schools since their emergence in the 1990s.<sup>275</sup> A major contributing factor to East Africa’s shift toward more militant interpretations of Islam is the influence of well-funded Islamist Wahhabi organizations from Saudi-Arabia and the Gulf states that sponsor educational and religious activities.<sup>276</sup>

In studying this trend, Hussein Solomon of South Africa’s University of the Free State has noted Saudi Arabia’s support of conservative Islam across the African continent and the replacement of Africa’s traditional Sufi form of Islam by Wahhabi/Salafi Islam.<sup>277</sup> As a result, Saudi Arabia has built mosques across the continent. Furthermore, according to a [report](#) by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) offer scholarships to young Africans to attend religious schools in the Gulf states, rising from several hundred students in 2010 to over 10,000 in 2014.<sup>278</sup>

Another noteworthy development is the emergence of the Mozambican jihadist group Ahlus Sunnah Wal-Jama’ah (ASWJ), which has waged an insurgency in the northern Cabo Delgado province since 2017. ASWJ have killed over 4,000 civilians, and over 670,000 people have been internally displaced.<sup>279</sup> Violent extremism has spread outside of its traditional epicenters to previously low-risk countries. Given the porous border between Mozambique and South Africa, and the South African government’s reluctance to pursue meaningful counter-terrorism solutions in favor of a non-interventionist foreign policy, it is at further risk of expanded terrorist activity.<sup>280</sup> Many South Africa-based IS sympathizers reside in Mozambique, where

---

<sup>274</sup> Robert Manne, “Sayyid Qutb: Father of Salafi Jihadism, Forerunner of the Islamic State,” *ABC*, November 7, 2016, <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/sayyid-qutb-father-of-salafi-jihadism-forerunner-of-the-islamic-10096380>.

<sup>275</sup> Abdisaid M. Ali, “Islamist Extremism in East Africa,” Africa Center for Strategic Affairs, August 9, 2016, <https://africacenter.org/publication/islamist-extremism-east-africa/>.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Salem Solomon, “As Africa Faces More Terrorism, Experts Point to Saudi–spread of Fundamentalist Islam,” *VOA News*, June 20, 2017, <https://www.voanews.com/a/africa-terrorism-saudi-fundamentalist-islam/3908103.html>.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> “Cabo Ligado Weekly: 15-21 February,” Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED), February 23, 2021, [https://acleddata.com/acleddatanew/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Cabo-Ligado-Weekly\\_15-21-February.pdf](https://acleddata.com/acleddatanew/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Cabo-Ligado-Weekly_15-21-February.pdf).

<sup>280</sup> “Understanding and Responding to Extremist Threats in Southern Africa,” ALPS Resilience, Policy Brief No. 1, March 2018, available at: [https://www.saferspaces.org.za/uploads/files/ALPS\\_-\\_extremist\\_threats.pdf](https://www.saferspaces.org.za/uploads/files/ALPS_-_extremist_threats.pdf).

joining the IS-affiliated ASWJ is viewed as an appealing alternative that does not require travel to Syria or Iraq.<sup>281</sup> The UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate reports that the African continent now accounts for almost half of all terrorist acts worldwide, with the central Sahel accounting for about 25 percent of such attacks.<sup>282</sup>

## Radical Political Islamist Associations in South Africa

### **BDS South Africa** (now [Africa4Palestine](#))

- Initially formed in 2009, and rebranded in 2020, the movement developed as a product of the 2001 UN-sponsored World Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa, which devolved into an anti-Israel plenum calling for the “complete and total isolation of Israel as an apartheid state” and became the touchstone for activists and NGOs seeking the delegitimization of Israel.<sup>283</sup>

### **Al-Quds Foundation** ([AQF](#))

- South African branch of the [sanctioned](#) Al-Quds International Foundation, designated by the US for “being controlled by and acting on behalf of Hamas” in 2012.<sup>284</sup>
- AQF has several senior Hamas leaders on its board.<sup>285</sup>
- Research conducted in 2024 uncovered an apparent network of multiple South African organizations and straw-man companies deeply involved in funding Hamas through the Al-Quds Foundation, using accounts registered in major local South African banks, including Standard Bank, Nedbank, and Absa.<sup>286</sup>
- AQF appointed Ebrahim Gabriels as its new national director for operations in January 2019.<sup>287</sup>

---

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> “Islamic State Group Poses Rising Threat in Africa Despite Progress, UN Experts Say,” *Africanews*, February 16, 2024, <https://www.africanews.com/2024/02/16/islamic-state-group-poses-rising-threat-in-africa-despite-progress-un-experts-say/>.

<sup>283</sup> David May, “War by Other Means,” Foundation for Defense of Democracies, January 20, 2020, <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2020/1/20/war-by-other-means/>.

<sup>284</sup> “Treasury Sanctions Two Hamas-Controlled Charities,” US Department of the Treasury, October 4, 2012, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg1725>.

<sup>285</sup> David May, “Hamas’ South African Support Network,” Foundation for Defense of Democracies, March 1, 2024, <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/oped/2024/03/01/hamas-south-african-support-network/>.

<sup>286</sup> Ohad Merlin, “Major South African Banks Provide Platform to Fund Hamas,” *Jerusalem Post*, January 24, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-783558>.

<sup>287</sup> “Al-Quds Foundation (SA) Inaugurates New National Director,” Muslim Judicial Council, January 20, 2019, <https://mjic.org.za/2019/01/30/al-quds-foundation-sa-inaugurates-new-national-director/>.

### **Al-Aqsa Foundation (AAF)**

- South African branch of Al-Aqsa International Foundation (AAIF), which was [sanctioned](#) by the US Treasury on May 29, 2003, for acting as a vital source of funding for Hamas.<sup>288</sup>
- South African Hamas members affiliated with AAIF include Taufique Ali, Riaz Gameeldien, Shamsudien Ariefdien, and Moeaath Gabier, who were trained in Sudan by Hamas and Hezbollah operatives, and reside in Cape Town. They were mentioned in a National Intelligence Agency (NIA) report<sup>289</sup> and may still reside in Cape Town.<sup>290</sup>
- On October 8, 2023, the AAF held an event “in support of Palestine and Masjid Al-Aqsa” at Masjidul Quds in Cape Town. South African Islamic scholar Moulana Abdul Khaliq, the deputy president of the Muslim Judicial Council, asserted that the event was in support of the brothers and sisters in Hamas, as well as the mujahideen, “of whom we are extremely proud.”<sup>291</sup>

### **Muslim Judicial Council (MJC)**

- MJC was established in South Africa in 1945 and opened its first formal office in 1982.
- The Muslim Brotherhood–linked organization describes itself as a “Muslim judiciary” for South Africa and manages diverse matters, from the Halal inspection of food to the issuing of Islamic legal rulings or fatwas.<sup>292</sup>
- MJC is part of the “Union of Good,” an umbrella organization comprising over 50 global charitable organizations that engage in fundraising for Hamas activities. The organization has been designated as a terror group under US law since 2008.<sup>293</sup>
- South African organizations and activists belonging to the Union of Good, including the Al-Aqsa Foundation and MJC, were involved in sending aid convoys across Africa to Gaza in 2011. These convoys were assessed (though not

---

<sup>288</sup> “Treasury Designates Al-Aqsa International Foundation as Financier of Terror Charity Linked to Funding of the Hamas Terrorist Organization,” US Department of the Treasury, May 29, 2003, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/js439>.

<sup>289</sup> National Intelligence Agency report on international Muslim militancy and its presence in South Africa (1988), posted anonymously on Cryptome on September 24, 2001, <https://cryptome.org/za-hamas.htm>.

<sup>290</sup> Amit Schandillia (@Schandillia), “Did you know that the African National Congress hosted a Hamas delegation in 2015?,” Twitter (now X), January 13, 2024, <https://twitter.com/Schandillia/status/1746086745702019209>.

<sup>291</sup> “South African Islamic Scholars Laud October 7 Massacre by Hamas,” MEMRI, October 8, 2023, <https://www.memri.org/tv/south-africa-muslim-celebrate-oct-seven-attacks-extremely-proud-mujahideen-hamas-morning-glory-gassam-brigades>.

<sup>292</sup> Kyle Shideler, “South African Hosts Hamas,” Center for Security Policy, October 23, 2015, <https://centerforsecuritypolicy.org/south-africa-hosts-hamas/>.

<sup>293</sup> Ohad Merlin, “Major South African Banks Provide Platform to Fund Hamas,” *Jerusalem Post*, January 24, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-783558>.

proven) to be providing financial assistance to Hamas on top of delivering humanitarian aid.<sup>294</sup>

### **KZN Palestine Solidarity Forum** ([link](#))

- The Forum is part of the Africa4Palestine network and serves as an “umbrella group for all organizations” in KwaZulu-Natal that are engaged in “Palestine solidarity work.”<sup>295</sup>

### **Ahmed Kathrada Foundation** ([link](#))

- Named after the leading South African anti-apartheid activist and former ANC member Ahmed Kathrada. Kathrada ardently supported the BDS movement and was honored by the National Coalition for Palestine in South Africa upon his death as “a staunch friend of the Palestinian struggle and the BDS movement.”<sup>296</sup>

### **National Coalition for Palestine** ([NC4P](#))

- Established in 2014, NC4P is an umbrella group comprising over 40 organizations, including the MJC and the Al-Quds Foundation, that coordinates Palestinian solidarity and BDS work.<sup>297</sup>

### **Kairos South Africa** ([link](#))

- Responsible for the 1985 Kairos South Africa document that condemned apartheid as a sin and that inspired the Kairos Palestine document, which was launched in Bethlehem in December 2009 and calls on churches to join BDS actions.<sup>298</sup>

### **Samidoun** ([link](#))

- Samidoun is a leading promoter of BDS that describes itself as the Palestine Prisoner Solidarity Network.

---

<sup>294</sup> “Seniors in Interpal, a British fund that supports Hamas, play a major role in sending aid convoys to Gaza. South African organizations belonging to the Union of Good are also involved,” *The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center*, August 11, 2011, <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/17866/>.

<sup>295</sup> Official Facebook page of KZN Palestine Solidarity Forum, <https://www.facebook.com/KZNPalestineSolidarityForum/>.

<sup>296</sup> Ali Abunimah, “Ahmed Kathrada, Icon of South Africa’s Freedom Struggle, Dies,” *The Electronic Intifada*, March 28, 2017, <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/ahmed-kathrada-icon-south-africas-freedom-struggle-dies>.

<sup>297</sup> Sarah Lazare, “South African Activists Reflect on Parallels between Life under Apartheid and Israel/Palestine Today,” *Mondoweiss*, November 21, 2014, <https://mondoweiss.net/2014/11/activists-apartheid-israelpalestine/>.

<sup>298</sup> David Wildman, “What Does the Lord Require of the Ecumenical Movement Today? Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions as Nonviolent, Loving Actions,” *Kairos Palestine*, [https://kairopalestine.ps/images/BDS\\_and\\_Churches\\_Now.pdf](https://kairopalestine.ps/images/BDS_and_Churches_Now.pdf).

- It is closely affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) terrorist organization.<sup>299</sup>
- In the framework of Samidoun and the PFLP's joint activities with foreign diplomats in support of the release of terrorists, Samidoun leaders Charlotte Kates, Khaled Barakat, and Mustapha Awad [met](#) with the South African ambassador to Belgium in 2016 and the South African ambassador to Germany in 2018.<sup>300</sup>

### **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)**

- During the ICJ hearings on January 11–12, 2024, South Africa relied on a number of highly biased NGOs with links to the PFLP to make its case for genocide against Israel.<sup>301</sup>

### **Muslims against Global Oppression (MAGO)**

- One of the front names used by People against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) under which it launches anti-Western campaigns.<sup>302</sup>

### **Muslims against Illegitimate Leaders (MAIL)**

- Another front name used by PAGAD.<sup>303</sup>
- Almost immediately following the attacks of September 11, 2001, MAIL launched a campaign to recruit Muslims to fight alongside the Taliban.<sup>304</sup>

### **African Muslim Agency ([link](#))**

- Primarily Kuwait-sponsored aid organization with branches in most of Africa, particularly in South Africa, that engages in *da'wah* (proselytism for Islam).<sup>305</sup>

### **Majlisul Ulama of South Africa (MUSA)**

- Grouping of radical Islamist teachers that is thought to be close to Hezbollah.<sup>306</sup>

---

<sup>299</sup> "Terrorism in Suits: The Ties between NGOs Promoting BDS and Terrorist Organizations," Israel Ministry of Strategic Affairs, February 2019, [https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/generalpage/terrorists\\_in\\_suits/en/De-Legitimization%20Brochure.pdf](https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/generalpage/terrorists_in_suits/en/De-Legitimization%20Brochure.pdf).

<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

<sup>301</sup> "The South African Genocide Complaint and PFLP-linked NGOs," NGO Monitor, January 21, 2024, <https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/the-south-african-genocide-complaint-and-pflp-linked-ngos/>.

<sup>302</sup> "People against Gangsterism and Drugs," South African History Online, <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/people-against-gangsterism-and-drugs>.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

<sup>304</sup> Moshe Terdman, "Factors Facilitating the Rise of Radical Islamism and Terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa," Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, March 16, 2006, [https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF\\_07\\_061\\_2.pdf](https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF_07_061_2.pdf).

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Hussein Solomon, *Jihad: A South African Perspective* (SunBonani Scholar, 2013), <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/60628/1/9781920382315.pdf>.

### **Karbala Liberation Front**

- Hezbollah-established organization based in Johannesburg that funds Hezbollah in Lebanon.<sup>307</sup>

### **Jihad Movement of South Africa (JMSA)**

- Durban-based Islamist group that claims its objective is “to defend Islam against attacks of the government and individual persons.”<sup>308</sup>

### **Afro-Palestine Forum ([Afropal](#))**

- Registered NGO in South Africa that has received political and media support from Hamas to promote its goals and pressure the government to adopt anti-Israel positions in conjunction with BDS-SA.<sup>309</sup>

### **South African Muslim Network ([SAMNET](#))**

- Durban-based group that created a training initiative in April 2024 to provide volunteers with “necessary skills and strategies to confront Zionist propaganda on social media.”<sup>310</sup>

### **Islamic Relief Agency ([ISRA](#))**

- Mentioned in a 1998 NIA intelligence report, where it was noted that pro-Hamas financial activity is centered in Sudan through the head office of ISRA.<sup>311</sup>
- On December 22, 2020, the Oversight and Investigations Unit of the US Senate Finance Committee [published a memo](#) detailing its investigation into a World Vision project funded through USAID in which World Vision entered into an agreement with ISRA despite its “extensive history of supporting terrorist organizations.”<sup>312</sup>

---

<sup>307</sup> Hussein Solomon, “Legislation against Terrorism and Violent Extremism,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies, April 13, 2018, <https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/3-Solomon-EN.pdf>.

<sup>308</sup> Hussein Solomon, *Jihad: A South African Perspective* (SunBonani Scholar, 2013), <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/60628/1/9781920382315.pdf>.

<sup>309</sup> “South Africa’s Diplomatic Campaign against Israel—In Service of Hamas and in Cooperation with Hamas’ Patron, Qatar,” MEMRI, January 18, 2024, <https://www.memri.org/reports/south-africas-diplomatic-campaign-against-israel—service-hamas-and-cooperation-hamas>.

<sup>310</sup> Azra Hoosen, “Empowering Advocacy: SAMNET Launches Social Media Training to Counter Negative Media and Zionist Propaganda,” *Radio Islam International*, April 16, 2024, <https://radioislam.org.za/a/empowering-advocacy-samnet-launches-social-media-training-to-counter-negative-media-and-zionist-propaganda/>.

<sup>311</sup> National Intelligence Agency report on international Muslim militancy and its presence in South Africa (1988), posted anonymously on Cryptome on September 24, 2001, <https://cryptome.org/za-hamas.htm>.

<sup>312</sup> “World Vision,” NGO Monitor, July 26, 2023, [https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/world\\_vision\\_international/](https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/world_vision_international/).



### **Jamaat al-Tabligh wal-Da'wa** (Society for Propagation and Preaching)

A Pakistan-based Islamist organization, focused on spreading *da'wah*, with a large presence in South Africa.<sup>313</sup> Also known as Tableegh Jamaat.

- Organization involved in the radicalization of Muslims and their recruitment to the Islamist cause. It has an international presence and a growing footprint in South Africa.<sup>314</sup>
- The Asia-Pacific Foundation has noted that Tableegh Jamaat facilitated contacts between South Africans and Pakistanis of similar ideological dispositions on account of the fact that South Africa serves as a “very good and convenient terrorist hub where extremists can plot and plan and then move on to carry out attacks.”<sup>315</sup>

### **Media Review Network** ([MRN](#))

- In May 2024, it was reported that a Hamas pamphlet entitled “Our Narrative: Operation Flood of Al-Aqsa” was distributed at an event in South Africa co-hosted by the Nelson Mandela Foundation. The pamphlet was printed by MRN, which openly stated that it had distributed the material “in solidarity with Hamas.”<sup>316</sup>

### **Union of Good**

- The following is a list of South African organizations that were, and in some cases remain, part of the Union of Good, an umbrella organization comprised of over 50 Islamic charitable organizations that provide support to Hamas-affiliated institutions:<sup>317</sup>
  - Benoni Muslim Jamaat
  - Jamiatul Ulama Transvaal
  - Johannesburg Charitable Organization
  - KwaZulu Jamiatul Ulama
  - Muslim Hands
  - Muslim Judicial Council (SA)
  - Muslim Students’ Association (SA)
  - Muslim Youth Movement (SA)
  - South African National Zakkah Fund

---

<sup>313</sup> Hussein Solomon, “Legislation against Terrorism and Violent Extremism,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies, April 13, 2018, <https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/3-Solomon-EN.pdf>.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid.

<sup>316</sup> Ohad Merlin, “Official Hamas Propaganda Distributed at Mandela Foundation and Fringe Jewish Organization Event,” *Jerusalem Post*, May 14, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-801116>.

<sup>317</sup> Moshe Terdman, “Factors Facilitating the Rise of Radical Islamism and Terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa,” Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, March 16, 2006, [https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF\\_07\\_061\\_2.pdf](https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/pdf/PDF_07_061_2.pdf).

- Soweto Muslim Association
  - Sunni Ulama Council
  - Waqf al-Waqifeen
  - Channel Islam International (SA)
  - Radio Islam (SA)
  - Radio 1584 (SA)
  - The Voice (SA)
  - Voice of the Cape
- 
- The Union of Good was run by noted Muslim cleric and terrorist spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood Sheikh Yussuf al-Qaradawi and Essam Yussuf of INTERPAL.<sup>318</sup> Al-Qaradawi is known for his pronouncement that the ultimate aim of the Muslim Brotherhood is to finish what Hitler started.
  - On November 12, 2008, the US Treasury [designated](#) the Union of Good as an organization created by Hamas's leadership to transfer funds to the organization. Despite this, none of the affiliated South African organizations listed above have been placed under sanctions.<sup>319</sup>

---

<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> David May, "Hamas' South African Support Network," Foundation for Defense of Democracies, March 1, 2024, [https://www.fdd.org/analysis/op\\_ed/2024/03/01/hamas-south-african-support-network/](https://www.fdd.org/analysis/op_ed/2024/03/01/hamas-south-african-support-network/).

## Conclusion

The findings of this report should offer a broad view of South Africa's varied motivations for taking such a public stance against Israel, culminating in its submission to the ICJ claiming that Israel is committing a genocide in Gaza. While some have labelled it as the exercise of 'moral leadership', South Africa's application to the ICJ may be more accurately viewed as a cynical, politically motivated maneuver that appears to be heavily influenced by foreign economic and political factors.

In practice, the claims against Israel at the ICJ have been shown to be lacking in actual merit and are seemingly driven by political motivations designed to improve the government's local standing among a frustrated population. The ANC has in recent years faced unprecedented opposition among voters, who are fed up with the party's rampant corruption and the lack of basic services. Against this background, the ANC hopes to galvanize support and distract from the many controversies it faces by attempting to draw comparisons between its historic fight against apartheid and the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Moreover, the ANC was previously on the verge of bankruptcy, but its debts were curiously cleared soon after it announced its intention to bring the case. Given the high cost of bringing a case before the ICJ, let alone the costs of a protracted trial, legitimate questions remain as to how South Africa can afford to take such steps, leading many to conclude that it has benefitted from considerable external financial support. While the exact funding sources behind South Africa's case are unverified, the timing and circumstances of its announcement are highly suspicious and have been linked to Iran by multiple sources.

A review of South Africa's submission to the ICJ further underlines the political nature of its case, which lacks credible evidence in support of the claim that Israel is committing a genocide. The submission relies on decontextualized and 'cherry-picked' accusations in an attempt to frame Israel's actions as amounting to genocide. At the same time, the submission does not even mention Hamas's history of violence and terror against Israeli civilians or acknowledge the complexities of the combat environment in which Israel currently finds itself. It also makes no mention of the unparalleled lengths to which Israel goes to protect civilians in Gaza

and minimize collateral damage, much less the lengths to which Hamas goes to embed itself among the civilian population and use them as human shields.

In addition, the panel of delegates and advisors presenting the case at the ICJ is largely composed of known anti-Israel activists, including John Dugard, the leader of the South African legal team. It is also supported by NGOs and individuals with connections to designated terrorist groups such as the PFLP, including Shawan Jabarin, who has previously served multiple prison sentences for his affiliation with the group.

Beyond the issues relating to South Africa's submission to the ICJ, this report has also highlighted the close and enduring ties that the ruling ANC has developed with Hamas and its patrons in Iran. While they have been growing and developing for decades, these ties have strengthened substantially in recent times. This includes several crucial developments, such as South Africa's assistance in expediting Iran's admission to the BRICS group of nations, which was confirmed in January 2024. As for Hamas, further evidence of its deepening ties with the ANC includes a phone conversation between South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor and Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh. This occurred mere days after the October 7 attacks, during which Pandor pledged her support to the Palestinian cause and, according to Hamas, praised the October 7 attacks themselves.<sup>320</sup> This was followed by the arrival of a high-level Hamas delegation in South Africa in December,<sup>321</sup> shortly before the government announced its case against Israel. As such, it is unsurprising that South Africa finds itself under increased international scrutiny, threatening lucrative trade deals and its reputation in the West.

Finally, while maintaining historically close ties with the West, South Africa has simultaneously accommodated radical Islamist entities and has become a logistical and organizational hub for terrorist activity. The ANC has likewise openly welcomed extremist elements into its ranks and its support networks, while attempting to maintain an air of legitimacy. This was clearly on display recently when the president of South Africa's Muslim Judicial Council, Sheikh Riad Fataar, openly expressed support for Hamas. In a speech given in Cape Town in September 2024, Fataar was overheard saying, "I am Hamas, Cape Town is Hamas. Viva Hamas Viva!"<sup>322</sup>

---

<sup>320</sup> Emsire Ferreira, "Presidency, Pandor Dismiss Hamas's Claim of SA Support," *Mail & Guardian*, October 17, 2023, <https://mg.co.za/news/2023-10-17-presidency-pandor-dismiss-hamass-claim-of-sa-support/>.

<sup>321</sup> Rolene Marks, "Hamas Delegation in South Africa for Palestinian Solidarity Event," *JNS*, December 2, 2023, <https://www.jns.org/hamas-delegation-in-south-africa-for-palestinian-solidarity-event/>.

<sup>322</sup> Ohad Merlin, "South African Chief Sheikh Riad Fataar Proclaims: 'I am Hamas!,'" *The Jerusalem Post*, September 10, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/international/islamic-terrorism/article-819581>.

The activities and relationships of the ANC as presented in this report should serve as a wake-up call to all those who continue to support South Africa's claims at the ICJ and believe that it is genuinely acting in the pursuit of justice.