



# **FOREIGN INFILTRATION:** **GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY,** **QATAR, AND THE MUSLIM** **BROTHERHOOD**

**2025**



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.**

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## Executive Summary

**Extensive Foreign Funding:** Georgetown University has received approximately \$1.073 billion from Qatar since establishing its Qatar campus in 2005, with credible evidence of underreporting to the U.S. Department of Education. This is in addition to other grants and funding it has received from various other Arab countries. A federal investigation initiated in 2019 raised substantial concerns regarding compliance with reporting requirements and the impact of foreign influence on academic independence.

**Strategic Ideological Influence:** These foreign contributions have significantly influenced Georgetown's academic environment, research priorities, and faculty recruitment, particularly within the School of Foreign Service (SFS), the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS), and the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU).

**Normalization of Islamist Ideology:**<sup>1</sup> Georgetown's key centers function as platforms promoting political Islam, minimizing the threat of Islamist extremism, and advancing anti-Israel narratives. Affiliations include extensive networks linked to Islamist movements and entities associated with the Muslim Brotherhood.

**Compromised Academic Freedom in Qatar:** Georgetown University Qatar (GU-Q) operates under significant Qatari governmental oversight, raising critical concerns regarding academic freedom, ideological bias, and the institution's facilitation of extremist-linked scholars.

**Influence on U.S. Government and Media:** A substantial number of Georgetown alumni occupy prominent positions in the U.S. State Department, intelligence agencies, media, and NGOs, effectively introducing and reinforcing these ideological perspectives within American foreign policy-making processes.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that in discussing Islamism, a radical religious and socio-political ideology with its own distinct history, we are not referring to Islam, one of the world's main monotheistic religions.

**Antisemitism and Radical Activism:** Georgetown has experienced a pronounced increase in antisemitic activities, pro-Hamas demonstrations, and BDS-related activism, especially since the Hamas attack of October 7, 2023. Faculty and students associated with Middle East-focused centers have frequently supported these activities.

**Interconnected Ideological Networks:** A pattern of overlapping personal, academic, and ideological affiliations—including familial connections to convicted extremists—reinforces and expands pro-Islamist narratives across the university.

**Impact on Academic Integrity and Jesuit Mission:** Foreign financial and ideological influences have fundamentally reshaped Georgetown’s foundational Jesuit principles, diluted its commitment to diverse intellectual inquiry, and turned it into a prime example of foreign interference in American higher education.

**Concerns from Alumni:** Georgetown’s graduates frequently report hostility toward pro-Western viewpoints and heightened sympathy for extreme anti-Israel positions.

**Ethical and Professional Concerns:** Incidents involving Georgetown’s medical students and faculty publicly justifying violence by Hamas have raised critical ethical concerns regarding the training and values of future healthcare professionals.



## Prologue

On 16 April 2025, at a major gala and awards ceremony marking the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of its Doha campus,<sup>2</sup> which is officially known as Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q), Georgetown formally renewed its institutional-contractual partnership with the Qatar Foundation (QF),<sup>3</sup> an entity directly controlled by the ruling Emir and the country's royal family.<sup>4</sup> The renewal agreement extends the original 2005 partnership agreement by another ten years, reaffirming what amounts to an unprecedented level of financial collaboration between an American university and a foreign state-linked entity.<sup>5</sup> The event was celebrated as a shared commitment to educational excellence, global citizenship, and intercultural engagement.

The ceremony, held in Doha's Education City, was attended by senior figures from Georgetown's main campus, including interim university president Robert Groves and dean of the School of Foreign Service Joel Hellman, and senior Qatari officials, including Sheikha Moza bint Nasser (QF chair), Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani (QF vice-chair and CEO), Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani (Qatar Museums chair), and Lolwah Alkhater (Minister of Education and Higher Education).<sup>6</sup> The presence of the latter reaffirms the centrality of GU-Q in Qatar's soft power and educational diplomacy strategy.

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<sup>2</sup> "Her Highness Attends Georgetown University in Qatar's 20 Year Anniversary Celebration," Georgetown University Qatar, April 17, 2025, <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/her-highness-attends-georgetown-university-in-qatars-20-year-anniversary-celebration/>.

<sup>3</sup> "Georgetown University Qatar Marks 20 Years with Renewed QF Partnership and Alumni Recognition," *Doha News*, April 16, 2025, <https://dohanews.co/georgetown-university-qatar-marks-20-years-with-renewed-qf-partnership-and-alumni-recognition/>.

<sup>4</sup> *Networks of Hate: Qatari Paymasters, Soft Power, and the Manipulation of Democracy* (Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, 2023), [https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Networks-of-Hate\\_5DEC.pdf](https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Networks-of-Hate_5DEC.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Zainab Fattah and Janet Lorin, "Georgetown Extends Qatar Contract amid Trump Fight with Colleges," *Bloomberg*, April 16, 2025, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-04-16/georgetown-extends-qatar-contract-amid-trump-fight-with-colleges>.

<sup>6</sup> "Georgetown University Qatar Marks 20 years with Renewed QF Partnership and Alumni Recognition," *Doha News*, April 16, 2025, <https://dohanews.co/georgetown-university-qatar-marks-20-years-with-renewed-qf-partnership-and-alumni-recognition/>.

While the renewal of the agreement between Georgetown and the Qatar Foundation represents an institutional milestone, it also raises important questions concerning the political, ideological, and regulatory dimensions of transnational cooperation in the field of higher education, especially in the light of Qatar's clear desire to boost its global influence through knowledge institutions.

Qatar's record of support for terrorism and Islamist extremism over the past three decades casts a long shadow over its partnerships with Western institutions, particularly in the educational sphere. As early as the 1990s, Qatar harbored high-level al-Qaeda operatives, most notably Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the architect of the 9/11 attacks, who was offered refuge by a former Qatari cabinet minister, Sheikh Abdallah bin Khalid bin Hamad al Thani, and was given a government job as a project engineer with the Qatari Ministry of Electricity and Water.<sup>7</sup> This was not an isolated episode but part of a broader pattern. Qatari state actors, including senior members of the royal family, have repeatedly provided diplomatic cover, financial aid, and public platforms to individuals and entities designated as terrorist by the United States and its allies.<sup>8</sup> From being a major funder of the Muslim Brotherhood's global operations to providing resources to Hamas—the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood—and harboring the remnants of its leadership, Qatar has consistently positioned itself as both an ideological incubator and logistical facilitator of Islamist extremism.<sup>9</sup> The Muslim Brotherhood is committed to destroying democracies, including the United States and Israel, and to replacing them with a distorted version of an Islamist caliphate.<sup>10</sup>

Under these circumstances, how can the Qatari regime be permitted to fund one of the most important and sensitive universities in the United States? This question is particularly relevant when assessing the implications of Georgetown University's enduring partnership with the Qatar Foundation. While framed as a transnational academic venture aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue, the partnership exists

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<sup>7</sup> "Al Qaeda Aims at the American Homeland," in *The 9/11 Commission Report* (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, 2004), available at [https://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report\\_Ch5.htm](https://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report_Ch5.htm).

<sup>8</sup> Richard A. Clarke, "We Always Knew Qatar Was Trouble, As the 1990s Escape of Terror Mastermind Khalid Sheikh Muhammad Showed," *New York Daily News*, July 6, 2017, <https://www.nydailynews.com/2017/07/06/we-always-knew-qatar-was-trouble-as-the-1990s-escape-of-terror-mastermind-khalid-sheikh-muhammad-showed/>.

<sup>9</sup> Benjamin Weinthal, "Leaks Show Qatar Secretly Sent \$15 Million to Islamist Movements in Mali," *i24 News*, December 3, 2023, <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/middle-east/the-gulf/1701623547-qatar-secretly-sent-15-million-to-islamist-movements-in-northern-mali-report>.

<sup>10</sup> *The Qatari Regime, Hamas, and the Muslim Brotherhood* (Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, 2023), [https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/QATAR-REGIME\\_HAMAS\\_MB\\_FINAL.pdf](https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/QATAR-REGIME_HAMAS_MB_FINAL.pdf).



within a broader system of Qatari influence operations that seek to legitimize illiberal ideologies within and by means of elite Western institutions.

A key moment in the contract renewal ceremony was the award of the Georgetown University President's Medal to Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, the mother of the current Emir.<sup>11</sup> This is one of the institution's highest honors, which is traditionally reserved for individuals who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to the university's values of peace, justice, and intercultural understanding.<sup>12</sup> The award was presented in recognition of Sheikha Moza's role in founding GU-Q and supporting its continued operation in the framework of Qatar's flagship educational initiative. In the wake of the Hamas-led attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, Sheikha Moza posted a tribute to Yahya Sinwar, the Hamas leader widely identified as the architect of the massacre. Her statement—"They thought he died, but he lives ... he will live on, and they will be gone"—was interpreted as sympathetic to Sinwar and the genocidal ideology of Hamas.<sup>13</sup> Given that Hamas has been designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) by the U.S. State Department,<sup>14</sup> the award of Georgetown's highest institutional honor to a public figure who has made such statements raises significant questions about normative alignment, reputational exposure, and the symbolic politics of academic recognition. Furthermore, Sheikha Moza has declared that "the entire nervous system of the Qatari state ... is in the hands of the Muslim Brotherhood."<sup>15</sup>

When Georgetown honors Sheikha Moza, who has publicly praised Hamas and its leaders since the October 7 massacre, it does more than accept foreign funding: it lends institutional legitimacy to ideological actors who celebrate violence against innocent civilians and propagate antisemitic narratives. The fact that such an endorsement comes amid growing concerns about ideological radicalization on U.S. campuses only underscores the need for an urgent reassessment of these academic alliances.

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<sup>11</sup> "Her Highness Attends Georgetown University in Qatar's 20 Year Anniversary Celebration," Georgetown University Qatar, April 17, 2025, <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/her-highness-attends-georgetown-university-in-qatars-20-year-anniversary-celebration/>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Hank Berrien, "'We Are All Hamas': Qatari Official Shows Support for Terrorist Group Then Quickly Deletes Post," *Daily Wire*, April 17, 2025, <https://www.dailywire.com/news/we-are-all-hamas-qatari-official-shows-support-for-terrorist-group-then-quickly-deletes-post>.

<sup>14</sup> "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," U.S. Department of State, n.d., <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations/> (accessed April 20, 2025).

<sup>15</sup> N. Mozes, "Mrs. Muslim Brotherhood Wears Prada: The Comprehensive Islamist Activity of Sheikha Moza, Mother of the Qatari Emir, and Her Support for Islamic Terrorism, Antisemitism, the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas," Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), January 16, 2025, [https://www.memri.org/reports/mrs-muslim-brotherhood-wears-prada-comprehensive-islamist-activity-sheikha-moza-mother#\\_edn4](https://www.memri.org/reports/mrs-muslim-brotherhood-wears-prada-comprehensive-islamist-activity-sheikha-moza-mother#_edn4).

Also in attendance and playing leading roles in the ceremony were Qatar's Minister of Education and Higher Education, Lolwah Rashid Alkhater,<sup>16</sup> and the current dean of GU-Q, Safwan Masri.<sup>17</sup> In August 2024, Alkhater took to X to mourn the death of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and praised his life and heroism, referring to him as a divine miracle.<sup>18</sup> In November 2024, after the killing of the mastermind of the October 7 massacre, Yahya Sinwar, Alkhater eulogized him in an emotional poem,<sup>19</sup> and in January 2025 she used a linguistic parable to praise the heroism of Hamas's military wing, the Qassam brigades.<sup>20</sup>

These are not isolated incidents, and there have been others where Qatari government figures have behaved in a similar manner. For example in 2014, Qatari Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Affairs Minister Sa'oud bin Abd Al-Rahman Al Thani posted and quickly deleted a message on Twitter (now X) under the hashtag "We Are All Hamas": "O Jerusalem, rise up, rise up. Revive the memory of al-Qassam."<sup>21</sup>

This report will show that, over the past two decades, Georgetown's partnership with the State of Qatar has involved significant financial contributions, amounting to over \$1 billion in disclosed and in-kind support. These funds have sustained the operations of GU-Q and helped finance research and programming at key academic centers, including its Center for International and Regional Studies (CIRS) and the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS), which is part of Georgetown's School of Foreign Service (SFS). These centers act in tandem with the Saudi-funded Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU), which is also part of SFS, while playing a discernible role in shaping the discourse on Islam, Arab political movements, and U.S. foreign policy within Georgetown University

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<sup>16</sup> "Leaders," Ministry of Education and Higher Education–State of Qatar, n.d., <https://www.edu.gov.qa/en/leaders> (accessed April 20, 2025).

<sup>17</sup> "Safwan Masri," Georgetown University Qatar, n.d., <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/about/safwan-masri/> (accessed April 20, 2025).

<sup>18</sup> Lolwah Alkhater (@Lolwah\_Alkhater), "The body of the righteous servant #Ismail\_Haniyeh will be buried in Qatar today" (in Arabic), X, August 2, 2024, [https://x.com/Lolwah\\_Alkhater/status/1819330752837832891](https://x.com/Lolwah_Alkhater/status/1819330752837832891); Lolwah Alkhater (@Lolwah\_Alkhater), "#Ismail\_Haniyeh ... The poet's saying applies to you" (in Arabic), X, August 2, 2024, [https://x.com/Lolwah\\_Alkhater/status/1819311440135704906](https://x.com/Lolwah_Alkhater/status/1819311440135704906)

<sup>19</sup> "Qatari Minister of Education, Lolwah Alkhater, dedicates a poem titled 'The Time of Wandering and Moses' Staff' to the people of Gaza" (in Arabic), posted November 18, 2024, by Quds News Network, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlShWq72mgs>.

<sup>20</sup> Lolwah Alkhater (@Lolwah\_Alkhater), "It is narrated by grammarians and linguists..." (in Arabic), X, January 25, 2025, [https://x.com/Lolwah\\_Alkhater/status/1883061702679261417](https://x.com/Lolwah_Alkhater/status/1883061702679261417).

<sup>21</sup> "Qatari Defense Minister in Past Tweets: 'We Are All Hamas'; 'We Must Plan How to Influence the Decision-Makers in the U.S.," MEMRI, March 27, 2025, [https://www.memri.org/reports/qatari-defense-minister-past-tweets-we-are-all-hamas-we-must-plan-how-influence-decision#\\_edn2](https://www.memri.org/reports/qatari-defense-minister-past-tweets-we-are-all-hamas-we-must-plan-how-influence-decision#_edn2).

and beyond—areas in which the academy’s ideological neutrality is increasingly being called into question.

In recent years, U.S. federal authorities have begun to investigate the institutional implications of such partnerships more rigorously. The U.S. Department of Education has cited several universities, including Georgetown, for failing to fully disclose foreign gifts and contracts as required under Section 117 of the Higher Education Act. Congressional hearings and Department of Justice inquiries have further underscored concerns that certain foreign partnerships may facilitate the dissemination of propaganda and the exercise of undue influence over curricula and hiring decisions.<sup>22</sup>

The renewal agreement was adopted against the backdrop of escalating domestic concern about ideological radicalization within U.S. academic institutions. In early 2025, U.S. federal authorities initiated a series of high-profile enforcement actions against foreign nationals affiliated with American universities. These included the deportation or detention of individuals on the grounds of undisclosed affiliations with extremist groups or the promotion of antisemitic and pro-Hamas content.<sup>23</sup>

In parallel, U.S. federal authorities have upped their scrutiny of campus groups such as Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and American Muslims for Palestine (AMP) on account of their ties to extremist and terrorist groups.<sup>24</sup> In March 2025, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee launched an investigation into AMP, citing its support for National Students for Justice in Palestine (NSJP) and potential connections to Hamas. Chairman Bill Cassidy emphasized the need to examine AMP’s activities on college campuses.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability has been investigating the funding sources of NSJP, highlighting AMP’s role as its controlling entity, and raising concerns about the promotion of antisemitic and pro-Hamas propaganda on campuses. These investigations reflect a broader effort by federal authorities to address the influence of organizations that may facilitate the

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<sup>22</sup> “Follow The Money: Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood Funding of Higher Education in the United States,” Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, n.d., <https://isgap.org/follow-the-money/> (accessed 25 April 2025).

<sup>23</sup> Lexi Lonas Cochran, “Here Are the International Students and Faculty Known to Be Targeted by ICE,” *The Hill*, March 27, 2025, <https://thehill.com/homenews/education/5217595-international-students-faculty-trump-immigration-crackdown-ice-tufts-student-detained-columbia-alabama/>.

<sup>24</sup> *National Students for Justice in Palestine (NSJP): Antisemitism, Anti-Americanism, Violent Extremism, and the Threat to North American Universities* (Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, 2024), [https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/SJP\\_Report.pdf](https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/SJP_Report.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Emily Jacobs and Marc Rod, “Senate HELP Committee Launches Probe of American Muslims for Palestine,” *Jewish Insider*, March 27, 2025, <https://jewishinsider.com/2025/03/senate-help-committee-launches-probe-of-american-muslims-for-palestine/>.

dissemination of extremist ideologies within academic institutions.<sup>26</sup> The ideological framework and operational dynamics of these groups are thoroughly documented in a recent ISGAP [report](#) that outlines NSJP's propagation of antisemitic rhetoric, its alignment with Hamas messaging, and its broader threat to democratic values and campus safety across North America.<sup>27</sup>

While these recent enforcement actions and federal investigations constitute an important and overdue shift in U.S. policy on combating extremism on campus, they are only an initial response to a much larger and more entrenched problem. The revocation of visas and deportation of individuals for promoting antisemitic and pro-Hamas propaganda and supporting a designated terror organization and the intensification of congressional scrutiny of domestic networks such as SJP and AMP are necessary steps. However, they primarily address the visible manifestations of a wider ecosystem of ideological influence. The more fundamental issue lies in the long-standing financial relationships and institutional partnerships between American universities and entities affiliated with Qatar, a country that is known to be a key sponsor of Hamas and other extremist movements, as documented in a 2023 ISGAP [report](#) on Qatar, Hamas, and the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>28</sup> SJP and AMP have become the campus enforcers of an ideological agenda and routinely engage in the harassment and intimidation of Jewish students. They are the grassroots agitators at the bottom of the Muslim Brotherhood's influence hierarchy, while at the top the Qatari regime channels billions of dollars in declared and undeclared funding into higher education—one of democracy's most vital institutions. This flow of money is reshaping how young Americans think, engage, and define citizenship.

Through sustained funding of academic programs, research centers, and full satellite campuses such as GU-Q, Qatari actors have long exerted influence over the intellectual and ideological landscape of U.S. higher education. These partnerships have enabled the normalization of narratives aligned with Qatari foreign policy interests, including the legitimization of groups like Hamas. As such, while the removal of individual actors is necessary, it is insufficient. Structural reform is needed to address the flow of foreign funds from state sponsors of terrorism and to

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<sup>26</sup> James Comer, Chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, U.S. House of Representatives, letter to National Students for Justice in Palestine, c/o Dr. Osama Abuirshaid, Executive Director of American Muslims for Palestine, May 29, 2024, available at <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Letter-to-National-SJP-5.29.24.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> *National Students for Justice in Palestine (NSJP): Antisemitism, Anti-Americanism, Violent Extremism, and the Threat to North American Universities* (Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, 2024), [https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/SJP\\_Report.pdf](https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/SJP_Report.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> *The Qatari Regime, Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood: The Globalization of Antisemitism and Anti-Democracy* (Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, 2023), [https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/QATAR-REGIME\\_HAMAS\\_MB\\_FINAL.pdf](https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/QATAR-REGIME_HAMAS_MB_FINAL.pdf).

ensure that academic institutions do not serve as platforms for the diffusion of extremist ideologies under the guise of global engagement.

This report addresses Georgetown's long-term partnership with the Qatar Foundation as a case study in the broader landscape of foreign funding, academic diplomacy, and ideological entrenchment in higher education. It argues that such relationships, while often framed in terms of academic exchange and intercultural understanding, can pose significant risks to institutional autonomy, regulatory compliance, and intellectual pluralism. These risks are magnified in cases where the foreign partner is a state actor with known affiliations to or support for ideologically extreme or illiberal movements.

The April 2025 renewal of the GU-Q agreement is not an isolated administrative event. It represents the reaffirmation of a structural relationship that has implications for knowledge production, faculty governance, and the ideological boundaries of scholarship. In awarding Sheikha Moza one of its highest institutional honors amid ongoing concerns about her public alignment with the Hamas leadership, Georgetown has boosted the acceptability of taking funds from and partnering with individuals and entities whose values and interests are diametrically opposed to those of the United States and other liberal democracies.

As American universities continue to pursue internationalization strategies, the realities and implications of the Georgetown-Qatar partnership, as discussed in this report, highlight the need for robust internal governance, improved transparency mechanisms, and a more rigorous ethical framework for foreign engagement. The stakes are not only institutional but societal, affecting public trust in the integrity of higher education and its role in upholding democratic norms in a globally interconnected landscape.

## Introduction

Over the past fifty years, Georgetown University has transformed from a prestigious academic institution rooted in Jesuit traditions into a pivotal nexus where radical ideologies, academic inquiry, and geopolitical influence converge. This transformation is largely attributable to decades of substantial foreign funding from Middle Eastern countries—including Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, Jordan, and Qatar, the largest funder of them all—which have not only redefined Georgetown’s academic and cultural identity but also steered its intellectual discourse toward a distinctive pro-Islamist and anti-Israel orientation.<sup>29</sup> This report examines the impact of this funding, highlighting how ideologically driven strategic donations have influenced curriculum development, research agendas, appointments, and institutional partnerships, thereby shaping the perspectives of academics and future U.S. diplomats and policymakers.

At the heart of this transformation lie several key entities within the university, notably the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS), the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU), both departments in Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service (SFS), and the Georgetown University’s Qatar campus (GU-Q). These entities serve as conduits through which external capital and ideological impulses converge to promote narratives that challenge the traditional American bipartisan consensus on international relations and cultural understanding. By fostering environments that often blur the lines between academic freedom and ideological advocacy, these centers have not only influenced scholarly discourse but have also played a significant role in the formation of activist networks and policy-oriented debates.

This report is structured to provide a comprehensive analysis of this complex phenomenon. The first chapter examines the history of Middle Eastern funding at Georgetown, charting the evolution of foreign influence from the university’s early engagements to its current state. It examines Georgetown’s political significance as

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<sup>29</sup> It should be noted that in discussing Islamism, a radical religious and socio-political ideology with its own distinct history, we are not referring to Islam, one of the world’s main monotheistic religions.



a training ground for U.S. foreign service professionals and explores the long-standing connections with Arab nations that have been instrumental in establishing and sustaining academic centers like CCAS and ACMCU.

The second chapter focuses specifically on ACMCU, offering a critical assessment of its ideological underpinnings. Here, the report explores how the center—originally established to foster Muslim-Christian dialogue—has evolved into an influential hub of pro-Islamist thought, largely due to its founding personalities and the strategic infusion of funds from powerful donors such as Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal. This section scrutinizes the center’s commitment to ideological uniformity and its broader implications for academic and policy debates in the United States.

In the third chapter, the analysis shifts to the extensive network of relationships that link ACMCU with prominent organizations and figures promoting pro-Islamist and anti-Zionist ideologies. This network, which extends across both U.S. and international arenas, underscores the report’s central argument, namely that the infusion of foreign capital has fostered an academic ecosystem where ideological predispositions can have a direct influence on public policy and diplomatic practice. The section details the institutional and personal affiliations that serve to amplify specific narratives about Islam and Middle Eastern politics.

The fourth chapter examines Georgetown’s Qatar campus, an extension of the university that operates under a distinctly different set of political and academic constraints. The report analyzes how Qatari funding and oversight have contributed to a selective, ideologically charged academic environment that is used to legitimize Islamist intellectuals worldwide. This section also considers the broader implications of such funding on labor rights and the overall integrity of Georgetown’s educational mission.

Finally, the fifth chapter addresses the increasingly visible manifestations of antisemitism and political activism within Georgetown’s academic landscape. By tracing developments before and after the Hamas-led massacre of October 7, the report highlights how foreign funding and ideological influence have not only shaped academic discourse but have also contributed to a contentious and often antisemitic environment. This section lays the groundwork for a critical discussion of the implications of such activism for U.S. foreign policy and national security.

Throughout the report, evidence from historical documentation, institutional records, and personal testimonies is interwoven to build a nuanced account of how foreign funding has fundamentally altered the trajectory of one of America’s most influential academic institutions. In concluding, the report offers actionable recommendations for policymakers, academic leaders, and stakeholders aimed at

safeguarding academic independence and promoting a balanced, non-ideological discourse that upholds democratic values.

By providing a detailed exploration of Georgetown University's evolution under the influence of Middle Eastern funding, this report seeks to illuminate the covert dynamics at play and prompt a broader reassessment of the relationship between academic institutions and global geopolitics.

# 1. History of Middle East Funding at Georgetown

## 1.1 Introduction

2025 will mark 50 years since Georgetown's School of Foreign Service received its first donations from foreign funders from the Middle East. It is therefore imperative to examine the long-term influence of foreign funding at Georgetown on its academics and curriculum.

Since its establishment in 1919, Georgetown's Edmund Walsh School of Foreign Service (SFS) has been the leading Washington, D.C., area institution for training diplomats and foreign service professionals for U.S. and foreign governments, as well as journalists, finance professionals, and foreign students. It is the oldest program for the study of international relations in the United States. In 2024, William & Mary's Global Research Institute and *Foreign Policy* magazine ranked Georgetown's SFS as first in the world for its international master's and undergraduate programs.<sup>30</sup>

Recently, Henrik Schildt, a Swedish military veteran and diplomat who studied in the SFS master's program, described the extremely hostile environment that he endured due to the discordance between his European background and the extreme anti-Western and antisemitic sentiments on campus. As he explains, "The pervasive anti-Semitism at the School of Foreign Service has unusual significance, when compared to that at other elite schools, in that the school has a direct pipeline to the U.S. diplomatic and national security apparatus. I regularly heard my classmates express their intention to change U.S. policy from within."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ara Friedman, "Georgetown ranks #1 in Foreign Policy 2024 Rankings," Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, August 12, 2024, <https://sfs.georgetown.edu/georgetown-ranks-1-in-foreign-policy-2024-rankings/>.

<sup>31</sup> Henrik Schildt, "I Saw How Georgetown's Prestigious School of Foreign Service Coddles Violent Anti-Semites—Who Are Plotting to Transform US Policy from Within," *Washington Free Beacon*, November 19, 2024, <https://freebeacon.com/campus/i-saw-how-georgetown-prestigious-school-of-foreign-service-coddles-violent-anti-semmites-who-are-plotting-to-transform-us-policy-from-within/>.

As an example, Schildt notes that a former SFS classmate of his, Sylvia Yacoub, had been hired as a career foreign service officer by the State Department. In November 2024, Yacoub tweeted the accusation that President Biden was complicit in genocide. Schildt continues, “Her accusations were hardly a surprise to those who had attended classes with her. During an ethics class taught by a former U.S. military officer, Ms. Yacoub had said that she would use her position at the State Department to change it from within. When I asked if this would be appropriate conduct for a junior foreign service officer, a second student answered: ‘Progress is messy.’”<sup>32</sup>

More recently, a group of some three dozen former junior Biden administration staffers organized a vigil outside of the White House in mid-December 2024, proclaiming “President Biden, your staff demands a ceasefire.”<sup>33</sup> Josh Paul, a former director in the State Department’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs<sup>34</sup> who resigned several weeks after the October 7 Hamas-led massacre,<sup>35</sup> made an opening statement. “The American people and respected institutions like the United Nations are pleading for a ceasefire, but this administration has yet to listen. We demand President Biden and members of the Cabinet to speak up: Call for a permanent ceasefire, a release of all hostages and an immediate de-escalation now.”<sup>36</sup> A second former administration staffer read a statement from Palestinian officials.<sup>37</sup>

Another window into the sentiments of State Department and other government officials was recently provided by Josef Burton, a former U.S. diplomat who wrote an article in *The Nation*. The article, titled “The ‘Blob’ Is Furious About Gaza. But That’s Not Enough,” describes a rash of recent resignations among midlevel officials in the U.S. State Department and intelligence community over the Hamas-Israel war in Gaza.<sup>38</sup> The article mentions Josh Paul, as well as U.S. Army Major Harrison

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Tamara Suter, “Biden Administration Staffers Call for Ceasefire While Protesting outside White House,” *The Hill*, December 13, 2023, <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/4359447-biden-administration-staffers-call-ceasefire-protest-outside-white-house/>.

<sup>34</sup> Josh Paul, “This Is Not the State Department I Know. That’s Why I Left My Job,” *Washington Post*, October 23, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/10/23/state-department-quit-israel-arms/>.

<sup>35</sup> Laura Flanders, “‘Why I Resigned from the State Department’: An Interview with Josh Paul,” *The Nation*, October 30, 2023, <https://www.thenation.com/article/society/josh-paul-resignation-interview/>.

<sup>36</sup> Tara Suter, “Biden Administration Staffers Call for Cease-Fire While Protesting outside White House,” *The Hill*, December 13, 2024, <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/4359447-biden-administration-staffers-call-ceasefire-protest-outside-white-house/>.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Josef Burton, “The ‘Blob’ Is Furious about Gaza. But That’s Not Enough,” *The Nation*, December 19, 2024, <https://www.thenation.com/article/world/blob-gaza-biden-blinken/>.

Mann, who had been assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency as a foreign area officer<sup>39</sup> and had resigned in November 2023.<sup>40</sup>

According to Burton, “These midlevel officials know that what is happening in Gaza is a genocide, and they know the White House is breaking U.S. law to facilitate it.” From where do these officials know this? Their education, Burton explains. “The scholarships, the study abroad opportunities, and the expertise you must develop to qualify for these jobs does change you on some level. I’ve known Foreign Service Officers with an almost academic knowledge of Frantz Fanon [the Marxist radical anticolonial ideologue], and Army military attachés with a startlingly emotional investment in the success of the Turkish left. Your average CIA officer with Middle East experience is likely to be significantly more suspicious of Israel than the average congressperson.”<sup>41</sup>

To date, Georgetown has one school, Georgetown University Qatar (GU-Q), and two departments within SFS, the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS) and the Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU), that play major roles in influencing the sentiments of students who study at Georgetown. In order to understand the role that these programs play in the shaping of the sentiments of future government officials, an understanding of their history and funding is required.

## 1.2 Georgetown’s Political Significance

Georgetown University is a private Catholic research university that was founded in Washington, D.C., in 1789. It was founded by the Jesuit order of the Catholic Church and is the first and oldest Catholic and Jesuit university in the United States,<sup>42</sup> as well as the nation’s first federally chartered university. The university’s historical significance is also marked by its location in the nation’s capital, which has allowed it to forge strong connections with U.S. political, diplomatic, and cultural institutions. Over the centuries, Georgetown evolved from a small college into a leading global research university. Its history reflects both American history itself

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<sup>39</sup> Sara Jones, “The Army Officer Who Resigned over Gaza,” *New York Magazine*, June 13, 2024, <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/army-major-harrison-mann-resign-gaza-israel.html>.

<sup>40</sup> Phil Stewart and Idrees Ali, “Former US Military Intelligence Official Says He Resigned over Gaza War,” *Reuters*, May 13, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/former-us-military-intelligence-official-says-he-resigned-over-gaza-war-2024-05-13/>.

<sup>41</sup> Josef Burton, “The ‘Blob’ Is Furious about Gaza. But That’s Not Enough,” *The Nation*, December 19, 2024, <https://www.thenation.com/article/world/blob-gaza-biden-blinken/>.

<sup>42</sup> Saroja Ramchandren and Matthew Mancini, “What’s the Value in Jesuit Values?: Exploring Spirituality on an Interfaith Campus,” *The Hoya*, April 26, 2024, <https://thehoya.com/features/whats-the-value-in-jesuit-values-exploring-spirituality-on-an-interfaith-campus/>.

and the country's tendency towards global engagement. Emphasizing Georgetown's history as being intertwined with that of the United States, Peter F. Krogh, dean emeritus of Georgetown's SFS has written, "It is not simply nostalgic that Georgetown was founded in the year in which this country adopted its federal constitution, that it was located in the Nation's Capital and received a charter from the Congress of the United States. These facts of Georgetown's formation, simultaneous with and contiguous to America's national formation, dramatize the extent to which this University, more than most, was conceived as an implementation of the American way of life."<sup>43</sup>

Georgetown continues to maintain its religious heritage and includes prominent Jesuit clergy on its board. It is ranked as #1 in the 2025 Niche Best Colleges rankings of "Best Catholic Colleges in America."<sup>44</sup>

Georgetown's mission statement, called "The Spirit of Georgetown," includes a commitment to promoting interfaith dialogue based on Jesuit Catholic principles,<sup>45</sup> which prioritizes global interreligious dialogue as one of its "frontier ministries." Emphasizing the importance of interreligious dialogue in its mission, the Jesuit order explains that that it has been specifically tasked by the Vatican to do so: "Popes have asked the Jesuits to make this [interreligious dialogue] a priority in the 21st century."<sup>46</sup> The late Pope Francis was the first Jesuit Pope and previously headed the Jesuit order in Argentina.<sup>47</sup>

Georgetown is ranked as #24 in the United States by U.S. News and World Report and as third in the country for international business and fifth in the country for graduate studies in global policy and administration. It is also ranked as fifth in the country for studying abroad.<sup>48</sup> In 2025, Niche Best Colleges, a separate university ranking system, gave Georgetown an "A+" overall and ranked it as first in the United States for studying international relations and political science, third for studying business, and seventh

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<sup>43</sup> Peter F. Krogh, *From the Dean's Chair: A Quarter Century Saga: The Resurgence of Georgetown's School of Foreign Service, 1970–1995* (Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 2018), 30, <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/1063129/From%20the%20Dean%27s%20Chair%20A%20Quarter%20Century%20Saga.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

<sup>44</sup> "2025 Best Catholic Colleges in America," Niche, n.d., <https://www.niche.com/colleges/search/best-catholic-colleges/>.

<sup>45</sup> "Spirit of Georgetown," Mission and Ministry, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://missionandministry.georgetown.edu/mission/spirit-of-georgetown/>.

<sup>46</sup> "Interreligious Dialogue," Jesuits, n.d., <https://www.jesuits.org/our-work/interreligious-dialogue/>.

<sup>47</sup> Caleb K. Bell, "Why The First Jesuit Pope Is a Big Deal," *Religion News Service*, March 14, 2013, <https://religionnews.com/2013/03/14/why-the-first-jesuit-pope-is-a-big-deal/>.

<sup>48</sup> "Best National University Rankings," *U.S. News and World Report*, n.d., <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities?sort=rank&sortDirection=asc>.



for religious studies.<sup>49</sup> SFS embodies Georgetown's role as a training ground for the most influential politicians and statesmen. The school is comprised of 22 centers and institutes focusing on the interdisciplinary study of international relations, including the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, the Mortara Center for International Diplomacy, the Institute for the Study of International Migration, the Center for Security and Emerging Technology, the Center for Security Studies, the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security, the Global Human Development Program, the Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics, the Master of Science in Environmental and International Affairs Program, the Master of Science in Foreign Service Program, the Landegger Program in International Business Diplomacy, and the Science, Technology and International Affairs Program.<sup>50</sup>

SFS also comprises area studies programs, including the African Studies Program, the Center for Australian and New Zealand Studies, the Asian Studies Program, the BMW Center for German and European Studies, the Center for Eurasian, Russian, and East European Studies, the Center for Jewish Civilization, the Center for Latin American Studies, the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, the Center for International and Regional Studies at Georgetown University in Qatar, and the Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding.<sup>51</sup>

Georgetown has a satellite campus and two centers that have received foreign funding from Middle Eastern countries. They include the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS), founded in 1975,<sup>52</sup> and the Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU), initially established in 1993 as the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding and renamed in 2006 after receiving an endowment from Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal.<sup>53</sup> Both centers are part of Georgetown's SFS. The third entity that has received funding from Middle Eastern countries is Georgetown University's Qatar campus (GU-Q), which was founded in 2005.

ACMCU promotes its faculty as "a primary resource for authoritative information on Islam and the Muslim World"<sup>54</sup> and has played a longtime and central role in effectively whitewashing political Islam (Islamism) and providing legitimacy for

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<sup>49</sup> "Georgetown University," Niche, n.d., <https://www.niche.com/colleges/georgetown-university/>.

<sup>50</sup> "Centers and Institutes," Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://sfs.georgetown.edu/academics/centers-institutes/>.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Liz Howard, "Arab Studies Center Founder Dies," *The Hoya*, January 1, 2005, <https://thehoya.com/uncategorized/arab-studies-center-founder-dies/>.

<sup>53</sup> *Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding: Celebrating 20 Years of Building Bridges of Understanding* (Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d.), available at [https://millercox.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ACMCU\\_Center-Bro.pdf](https://millercox.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ACMCU_Center-Bro.pdf).

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

various Islamist movements and related anti-Western, anti-colonial and antisemitic ideologies. John Esposito, the founding director of ACMCU, was a leading force in establishing the center and hiring and appointing like-minded academics to staff the center. Esposito has a longtime relationship with leading Islamists and extremists both in the United States and globally. He has engaged with prominent Islamist hubs and institutions. In addition, he has recruited younger like-minded academics with whom he has coauthored dozens of books. Together with this younger generation of academics, Esposito provides an academic foundation to promote Islamism and attack opponents by accusing them of Islamophobia. For more information on ACMCU and Esposito, see chapter 2.

In 2005, in coordination with the Qatari government–sponsored Qatar Foundation, Georgetown opened a satellite campus in Doha’s Education City that was initially named the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar. Until 2015, the school conferred bachelor’s degrees. Georgetown also inaugurated the Center for International and Regional Studies, which has become the satellite campus’s foremost research institute. In 2015, Georgetown expanded its programs to include executive and professional training and renamed the campus Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q). Academics at Georgetown’s Qatar campus also prominently promote Islamism and anti-Western ideology.<sup>55</sup>

### 1.3 Georgetown’s Early Foreign Funding: CCAS

Substantial funding from Arab countries helped establish Georgetown’s Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS) in 1975. In significant and continuing efforts to influence its academic curriculum and, in particular, its Middle East and Islamic studies programs, Georgetown has been targeted by foreign donors from the region both prior to and following the 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict and the Arab oil-producing countries’ boycott against the United States. An obituary for Hisham Sharabi, one of the center’s founders, described the atmosphere and motivation for establishing CCAS:

*“In the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli war of 1973 and the Arab oil boycott, U.S. relations with the Arab world were shaken and confused. Dr. Sharabi and a small group of Georgetown faculty members and Washington area colleagues, concerned about the evident lack of knowledge and understanding of the Arab world in this country, co-founded the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS) at Georgetown University.”<sup>56</sup>*

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<sup>55</sup> For more on this, see section 4.8 below.

<sup>56</sup> “Hisham Sharabi, Prominent Arab Intellectual and Georgetown Professor, Dies at 77,” Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, n.d., archived April 9, 2005, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20050409104053/http://ccas.georgetown.edu/files/SHARABI.pdf>.

According to Peter F. Krogh, the dean emeritus of SFS, CCAS was established via the efforts of then Egyptian ambassador to the United States Ashraf Ghorbal and his wife, whose daughter attended SFS in the early 1970s. Krogh and the ambassador became extremely close friends, and in late 1972 Ghorbal invited Krogh to visit Egypt to give lectures on American foreign policy. Krogh agreed, and he embarked on a visit to Egypt in January 1973.<sup>57</sup>

Krogh recalled: “As the trip unfolded, I was preoccupied by one consuming query; to wit: how and why had this leading Arab country and the Arab world writ large been kept from me for so long?”<sup>58</sup> Krogh blamed what he describes as “the fact that American higher education was deficient in attention to the dynamic contemporary Arab world. Such Middle East studies programs as existed were locked into studies of the distant past (e.g., ‘orientalism’) and/or dominated by a focus on Israel. I resolved to do what I could, from my base at Georgetown, to fill-in a blind spot.”<sup>59</sup>

Upon his return from Egypt, Krogh embarked on a years-long effort to create CCAS. Initially he met with members of the Georgetown faculty who had a background and an interest in the Arab world.<sup>60</sup> Among them was the late professor of economics Ibrahim Oweiss, an economic advisor to Egypt, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Panama, and Taiwan. Oweiss also served in the Egyptian government in 1977 as First Undersecretary for Economic Affairs and was later appointed Chief of the Economic Mission of Egypt to the United States.<sup>61</sup> Others included the late Hisham Sharabi, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization’s Palestine National Council and later a vocal opponent of the 1993 Oslo peace accords,<sup>62</sup> Jack Ruedy, a specialist in Ottoman and Arab history, Irfan Shahid, a scholar on the Byzantine Empire and Islamic culture, and Wally Erwin, then the chair of the Arabic department.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Peter F. Krogh, *From the Dean’s Chair: A Quarter Century Saga: The Resurgence of Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service, 1970–1995* (Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 2018), 54, <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/1063129/From%20the%20Dean%27s%20Chair%20A%20Quarter%20Century%20Saga.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., at 55.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> “Dr. Ibrahim Oweiss,” Faculty, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://faculty.georgetown.edu/imo3/>.

<sup>62</sup> “Arafat Faces Yet Another Challenge from His Constituency,” *Mideast Mirror*, August 23, 1994.

<sup>63</sup> Peter F. Krogh, *From the Dean’s Chair: A Quarter Century Saga: The Resurgence of Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service, 1970–1995* (Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 2018), 55, <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/1063129/From%20the%20Dean%27s%20Chair%20A%20Quarter%20Century%20Saga.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

In his initial efforts to establish the center Krogh describes himself as making the rounds to solicit “all the Arab embassies in Washington, regardless of their stripes.”<sup>64</sup> Krogh gives particular credit to the other co-founders of CCAS who, in addition to Ghorbal, enabled him to directly fundraise and solicit Arab governments. Chief among them was the Palestinian-American professor Hisham Sharabi,<sup>65</sup> who introduced Krogh to his close friends Clovis Maksoud, then Arab League ambassador to the United Nations and the United States, and Ali Ghandour, then the president of Royal Jordanian Airlines. Describing their roles, Krogh writes, “Clovis gave us introductions and credibility across the Arab world and Ali, with his airline, gave us the way to reach those in the Arab world with the means to support the envisaged Center.”<sup>66</sup>

Krogh reminisces, “I hopped on to Ali Ghandour’s Royal Jordanian Airlines and led fundraising delegations/expeditions to the Arab world. Over the next five years, travel and solicitation covered, sometimes several times, the following countries: Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Iraq. Along the way, endowed chairs were contributed by Kuwait, the UAE, Oman and Libya. Iraq contributed a fund to facilitate research collaboration between the Georgetown Center and its strategic studies center.”<sup>67</sup> Ghandour served as the first chairman of the CCAS advisory council. The center’s first foreign donor was the Sultanate of Oman, which, according to Krogh, “jump-started the Center”<sup>68</sup> by donating \$100,000 in 1975<sup>69</sup> (equivalent to \$585,111 today). Krogh praised the Omani donation as having “enabled the Center to open its doors.”<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Anour Esa, “The Life of an Arab Intellectual: Dr. Hisham B. Sharabi, 1927–2005,” Jerusalem Fund for Education and Community Development, January 14, 2005, <https://thejerusalemfund.org/2005/01/the-life-of-an-arab-intellectual-dr-hisham-b-sharabi-1927-2005/>.

<sup>66</sup> Peter F. Krogh, *From the Dean’s Chair: A Quarter Century Saga: The Resurgence of Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service, 1970–1995* (Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 2018), 55, <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/1063129/From%20the%20Dean%27s%20Chair%20A%20Quarter%20Century%20Saga.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., at 56.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> “Georgetown University Gets Another \$1 Million from an Arab Government for Its Center on Contemporary Arab Studies,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 17, 1980, <https://www.jta.org/archive/georgetown-university-gets-another-si-million-from-an-arab-government-for-its-center-on-arab-studies>.

<sup>70</sup> Peter F. Krogh, *From the Dean’s Chair: A Quarter Century Saga: The Resurgence of Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service, 1970–1995* (Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 2018), 55, <https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/1063129/From%20the%20Dean%27s%20Chair%20A%20Quarter%20Century%20Saga.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

During that same year, the United Arab Emirates donated \$250,000 (equivalent to \$1,085,747 today) to fund a visiting professorship in Arab history.<sup>71</sup> Georgetown was estimated to have received donations totaling some \$3.5 million (equivalent to \$15,200,461 today)<sup>72</sup> from Middle Eastern countries including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Jordan.<sup>73</sup>

In 1977, the Libyan government, then headed by dictator Muammar Gaddafi, announced that it would donate \$750,000 (equivalent to \$3,902,240 today) to create and endow the Umar al-Mukhtar Chair in Arab Culture.<sup>74</sup> The chair was named after the Libyan revolutionary and anti-colonial nationalist hero who fought against Italian rule in the early 20th century. The initial donation for the chair was \$150,000, with the remainder of \$600,000 to be donated over a period of four years.<sup>75</sup> Addressing the harsh criticism that the university received for accepting the donation, Krogh defended its actions asserting, “One cannot freeze out a country because their ideology differs from ours.”<sup>76</sup>

Two years after the establishment of CCAS, its annual report proudly pointed to the participation of three CCAS faculty members in a program in Iraq under the late dictator Saddam Hussein. The three participated in a 1976 Baghdad University symposium on Zionism. One of them was CCAS founding director Michael Hudson. The report further proudly noted the participation of another faculty member in a Washington, D.C., conference promoting “Zionism and Racism.”<sup>77</sup>

The impact of the Libyan gift and CCAS’s continuing relationship with Libya was evident in a 1979 seminar conducted by CCAS on how to “win favor from American media for Arab perceptions.”<sup>78</sup> CCAS founding director, Michael Hudson, who was known for promoting Arab positions against Israel, stated that he “obtained the idea

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<sup>71</sup> “Saudis Buy a Campus Presence: Georgetown Shares in Largesse to Fund Islamic Studies Programs,” *Washington Times*, December 10, 2007.

<sup>72</sup> CPI Inflation Calculator, <https://www.in2013dollars.com/us/inflation/1979?amount=3500000>.

<sup>73</sup> Gene I. Maeroff, “University Returns \$600,000 Libyan Gift,” *New York Times*, February 24, 1981.

<sup>74</sup> Eric Wentworth, “Libya Endows Chair at Georgetown University,” *Washington Post*, May 4, 1977, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1977/05/04/libya-endows-chair-at-georgetown-u/ea6f2ddb-84d7-45d7-812a-b26522b4d223/>.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> “Kuwait Endows Georgetown Center with \$1 Million Gift,” *New York Times*, September 14, 1980.

<sup>77</sup> Gordon F. Sander, “[Petro] Dollars for Scholars,” *Moment Magazine*, September 1978, available at <https://www.gordonsander.com/news/petro-dollars-for-scholars>.

<sup>78</sup> “Georgetown University Gets Another \$1 Million from an Arab Government for Its Center on Contemporary Arab Studies,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 17, 1980, <https://www.jta.org/archive/georgetown-university-gets-another-si-million-from-an-arab-government-for-its-center-on-arab-studies>.

for it from a seminar in Libya he had attended.”<sup>79</sup> Attendees at the Libyan seminar included American media representatives as well as other supporters of the Arab position on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Some participants from the Libya seminar also participated in the CCAS seminar, which was described as being attended by an “audience that appeared predominantly sympathetic to the Palestine Liberation Organization and against Israel.”<sup>80</sup>

Hudson was the Seif Ghobash Professor of International Relations and Arab Studies, Emeritus, at SFS, where he began as a professor of international relations in 1979.<sup>81</sup> He was the director of CCAS and was eulogized in 2021 by his student and friend As’ad AbuKhalil for establishing the center. AbuKhalil lauded him for collaborating with Hisham Sharabi to “creat[e] a radical alternative to Middle East studies in the U.S.”<sup>82</sup> Accusing other Middle East studies centers of “orientalism,” AbuKhalil asserted that “the very creation of the center and its name was a direct challenge to orientalist centers for Middle East studies in the U.S. and Europe” because it promoted pan-Arab nationalism. He continued, “The center regarded the Arab world as one political unit when the U.S. (government, media and academia) fought all manifestations of Arab nationalism and refused to accept the legitimacy of the Arab nationalist project, or even its political existence ... The Center for Arab Studies at Georgetown was a brave academic recognition of the political salience of analysis of the Arab political unit.”<sup>83</sup>

In 1979, the U.S. government placed export controls on Libya, Iraq, Syria, and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen, sanctioning them as states which “repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism.”<sup>84</sup> The State Department specifically called out Libya for “supporting a wide range of terrorist groups in every area of the globe” and declared it responsible for organizing the assassinations of Libyan dissidents abroad. The export controls were renewed again in 1980.<sup>85</sup>

Following continuing criticism of the university’s relationship with Libya, Georgetown president Rev. Timothy Healy announced in 1981 that the gift would be

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<sup>79</sup> “Georgetown University Accepts \$1 Million Endowment from Kuwait for Its Arab Studies Center,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, September 15, 1980, <https://www.jta.org/archive/georgetown-university-accepts-1-million-endowment-from-kuwait-for-its-arab-studies-center>.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> As’ad AbuKhalil, “The Angry Arab: Michael C. Hudson and the Arabs,” *Yerepouni Armenian Independent News*, June 9, 2021.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> “Georgetown University Returns to Libya Its Gift of \$600,000,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, February 25, 1981, <https://www.jta.org/archive/georgetown-university-returns-to-libya-its-gift-of-600000>.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.



returned. “Libya’s continued accent on violence as a normal method of international policy and its growing support of terrorism as a tool of government has made it increasingly impossible for Georgetown University to feel comfortable in having its name associated with the Libyan government,” he said.<sup>86</sup> Separately Healy asserted, “I was under absolutely no heat and no pressure” to return the funds. He continued, “But it worried me. I guess I am just kind of slow to move. But I came to a growing realization that what Libya is up to is incompatible with Georgetown.”<sup>87</sup>

Georgetown announced that it would instead continue to fund the Umar al-Mukhtar chair on its own but would still retain its name.<sup>88</sup> In a letter to faculty, Healy declared, “University finance must take second place to keeping a Catholic moral understanding without which Georgetown University, no matter how well endowed, would be meaningless.”<sup>89</sup> Responding to the return of the gift, Hisham Sharabi, the holder of the Umar al-Mukhtar chair, defended the Libyans, stating that they had been “very decent, very thoughtful, very considerate, very correct” in funding his professorship.<sup>90</sup>

### **Umar al-Mukhtar Chair and CCAS Founder Hisham Sharabi**

Georgetown’s CCAS Umar al-Mukhtar Chair was first held by the late Hisham Sharabi, who came to the United States from Lebanon in 1947 to undertake graduate studies.<sup>91</sup>

Sharabi returned to Lebanon in 1948,<sup>92</sup> where he was an active member of the leadership<sup>93</sup> of the fascist Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP)<sup>94</sup> and assisted its founder and leader, Antoun Saadeh, to reorganize and restructure its ranks.

<sup>86</sup> Gene I. Maeroff, “University Returns \$600,000 Libyan Gift,” *New York Times*, February 24, 1981.

<sup>87</sup> “Georgetown University Returns to Libya Its Gift of \$600,000,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, February 25, 1981, <https://www.jta.org/archive/georgetown-university-returns-to-libya-its-gift-of-600000>.

<sup>88</sup> Gene I. Maeroff, “University Returns \$600,000 Libyan Gift,” *New York Times*, February 24, 1981.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> “Georgetown University Returns to Libya Its Gift of \$600,000,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, February 25, 1981, <https://www.jta.org/archive/georgetown-university-returns-to-libya-its-gift-of-600000>.

<sup>91</sup> “Hisham Sharabi, Prominent Arab Intellectual and Georgetown Professor, Dies at 77,” Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, n.d., archived April 9, 2005, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20050409104053/http://ccas.georgetown.edu/files/SHARABI.pdf>.

<sup>92</sup> Anour Esa, “The Life of an Arab Intellectual: Dr. Hisham B. Sharabi, 1927–2005,” Jerusalem Fund for Education and Community Development, January 14, 2005, <https://thejerusalemfund.org/2005/01/the-life-of-an-arab-intellectual-dr-hisham-b-sharabi-1927-2005/>.

<sup>93</sup> “Hisham Sharabi (1927–2005),” Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), n.d., <http://passia.org/personalities/727>.

<sup>94</sup> Ehud Yaari, “Behind the Terror,” *The Atlantic*, June 1987.

Sharabi was appointed as the SSNP's "deputy chief of cultural affairs and fine arts" and became the editor of its monthly publication *Al-Nizam Al-Jadid* (The New Order).<sup>95</sup> Following the SSNP's attempted coup against the Lebanese government in 1949 and the ensuing crackdown on its members, Sharabi fled to Jordan and returned to the United States to complete his doctorate in 1953.<sup>96</sup> He continued his political activities by running the SSNP's American branch until 1955, when he ended his affiliation with the party.<sup>97</sup>

Sharabi was also a prominent supporter of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) when it was actively engaged in terrorist violence, including airline hijackings. The most notable example of this was the September 1970 coordinated hijacking of three civilian airliners to Jordan and one to Egypt by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a Marxist-Leninist terrorist organization and one of several PLO factions.<sup>98,99</sup> The U.S. State Department has designated the PFLP as a foreign terrorist organization since October 1997.<sup>100</sup>

In 1969, Sharabi visited the PLO terrorist training camps then located in Jordan, where he met leaders of several factions of the organization. At this time, PLO factions were carrying out terrorist attacks across the Israeli border as well as within Jordan, culminating in the April 1970 attack on the U.S. Embassy in Amman by the various PLO factions<sup>101</sup> and an assassination attempt against the then King Hussein in September 1970.<sup>102</sup> Among the PLO leaders Sharabi met was Salah Khalaf, a cofounder of Fatah (with Yasser Arafat), who also served as the PLO leader's deputy and as the head of the PLO's internal security, intelligence, and counterintelligence apparatus.<sup>103</sup> In 1970, Khalaf established

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<sup>95</sup> "Hisham Sharabi," Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question, n.d., <https://www.palquest.org/en/biography/30046/hisham-sharabi>.

<sup>96</sup> "Hisham Sharabi, Prominent Arab Intellectual and Georgetown Professor, Dies at 77," Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, n.d., archived April 9, 2005, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20050409104053/http://ccas.georgetown.edu/files/SHARABI.pdf>.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> "1970 Hijackings," American Experience: Hijacked!, PBS, aired February 27, 2006, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/hijacked-1970-hijackings/>.

<sup>99</sup> "The People Involved and Affected," American Experience: Hijacked!, PBS, aired February 27, 2006, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/people-involved-and-affected/>.

<sup>100</sup> "Popular Front for the Liberations of Palestine," Counter Terrorism Guide, US National Counterterrorism Center, November 2022, [https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/pflp\\_fto.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/pflp_fto.html).

<sup>101</sup> "Jordan, 1970—An Attack on the Embassy and a Dispute with the King," Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, n.d., <https://adst.org/2015/03/jordan-1970-an-attack-on-the-embassy-and-a-dispute-with-the-king/>.

<sup>102</sup> "Jordan's Black September, 1970," Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, n.d., <https://adst.org/2015/07/jordans-black-september-1970/>.

<sup>103</sup> "Khalaf, Salah (Abu Iyad; 1933–1991)," *Encyclopedia.com*, n.d., <https://www.encyclopedia.com/politics/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/khalaf-salah-abu-iyad-1933-1991>.

and subsequently headed the PLO's Black September organization,<sup>104</sup> which was responsible for the assassination of Jordanian prime minister Wasfi al-Tal in 1971<sup>105</sup> and the 1972 massacre of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics.<sup>106</sup> Sharabi also met with George Habash, the founder and leader of the PFLP,<sup>107</sup> and Khaled al-Hassan, a close political advisor to Yasser Arafat and a founding member of Fatah who also served as a member of Fatah's Central Committee and the president of the Palestine National Council's external relations committee.<sup>108</sup>

In 1970, following his visit, Sharabi wrote a monograph called *Palestine Guerrillas: Their Credibility And Effectiveness*, which was originally published by Georgetown's Center for Strategic and International Studies<sup>109</sup> and was also published in Arabic by the PLO's Institute for Palestine Studies in Beirut.<sup>110</sup> Referring to terrorist violence as "armed struggle," the same terminology used in the PLO Charter,<sup>111</sup> Sharabi justified this by claiming that Palestinians engage in such violence for social and psychological reasons:

*"Armed struggle has special attraction to Palestinians not because, as they say, it is the only kind of struggle by which an underdeveloped people can successfully fight against a technologically superior power, but for psychological and sociological reasons. Palestinians suffer 'not only from the agony of defeat, deprivation, refugee status, and living in camps, but from contempt by the other Arabs.' Other Arabs feel contempt toward them because to lose their land and property was a blow to their dignity, for in Arab society 'the criterion for position and prestige is ownership of*

<sup>104</sup> Moeen al-Taher, "Living Martyrs: Salah Khalaf's Last Will," *Al-Quds*, March 15, 2023, <https://www.alquds.com/en/posts/53642>.

<sup>105</sup> "Jordan Remembers Wasfi Tal," *Ammon News*, November 28, 2012, <https://en.ammonnews.net/mobile/article/19243>.

<sup>106</sup> Rafael Reuveny, "Black September," *Britannica*, December 24, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Black-September-political-organization-Palestine>.

<sup>107</sup> "Former Leader of PFLP, George Habash, Dies," *Reuters*, January 27, 2008, <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/middle-east/factbox-former-leader-of-pflp-george-habash-dies-idUSL27709505/>.

<sup>108</sup> "Khaled al-Hassan," *Associated Press*, October 9, 1994.

<sup>109</sup> Hisham Sharabi, *Palestine Guerrillas: Their Credibility and Effectiveness* (Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, 1970), available at [https://www.freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC12\\_scans/12.palestine.guerrillas.1970.pdf](https://www.freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC12_scans/12.palestine.guerrillas.1970.pdf).

<sup>110</sup> Hisham Sharabi, *Palestine Guerrillas: Their Credibility and Effectiveness* (Institute for Palestine Studies, 1970) (in Arabic), <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1648239>.

<sup>111</sup> "The Palestinian National Charter: Resolutions of the Palestine National Council, July 1–17, 1968," *The Avalon Project: Documents in Law History and Diplomacy*, Yale Law School, n.d., [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/plocov.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/plocov.asp). Article 9 of the Charter states: "Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine."

*real estate.’ Moreover, armed struggle represents ‘a manly quality, hailed in masculine society.’”<sup>112</sup>*

In 1970, Sharabi returned to Lebanon and worked at the PLO’s Palestine Planning Center and also taught as a visiting professor at the American University of Beirut.<sup>113</sup> He was described at the time as a friend of then PLO chairman Yasser Arafat.<sup>114</sup>

Sharabi also expressed antisemitic views. During a 2002 visit to Balamand University in Lebanon, Sharabi promoted an antisemitic conspiracy theory accusing the “international Zionist movement” of being at the forefront of controlling the United States by “leading [it] to wage war against the Arab world with the intentions of colonizing the region,” adding that “Jews are getting ready to take control of us and the Americans have entered the region to possess the oil resources and redraw the geopolitical map of the Arab world.”<sup>115</sup>

Further controversy followed a 1978 donation of \$50,000 (equivalent to \$241,795 today) that Georgetown received from the Iraqi government, which was led by then dictator Saddam Hussein. The donation was quietly returned.<sup>116</sup> Describing the controversy at the time, a *New York Times* article explained that Georgetown “has been a leader among a growing number of American institutions of higher education seeking support from oil-rich Middle Eastern countries. The trend has been [sic] drawn some expressions of alarm about possible influence on academic policies.”<sup>117</sup>

In 1980, the United Arab Emirates donated \$750,000 (equivalent to \$2,869,851 today) for an endowed chair at CCAS in memory of Seif Ghobash, the late Emirati deputy foreign minister who had served on the center’s advisory council.<sup>118</sup> When asked about possible

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<sup>112</sup> Hisham Sharabi, *Palestine Guerrillas: Their Credibility and Effectiveness* (Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, 1970), 5 (footnotes omitted), available at [https://www.freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC12\\_scans/12.palestine.guerrillas.1970.pdf](https://www.freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC12_scans/12.palestine.guerrillas.1970.pdf).

<sup>113</sup> “Hisham Sharabi,” Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question, n.d., <https://www.palquest.org/en/biography/30046/hisham-sharabi>.

<sup>114</sup> Lawrence Feinberg, “United Arab Emirates Give GU \$750,000 for Chair in Arab Studies,” *Washington Post*, May 12, 1980, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1980/05/12/united-arab-emirates-gives-gu-750000-for-a-chair-in-arab-studies/be4813de-0d01-4438-8c03-2cd29bbbefad/>.

<sup>115</sup> Maha al-Azar, “US Based Professor Claims Jews Want to Control Arab World,” *The Daily Star Online*, November 20, 2002, [http://www.dailystar.com.lb/20\\_11\\_02/art17.asp](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/20_11_02/art17.asp).

<sup>116</sup> Gene I. Maeroff, “University Returns \$600,000 Libyan Gift,” *New York Times*, February 24, 1981.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Lawrence Feinberg, “United Arab Emirates Give GU \$750,000 for Chair in Arab Studies,” *Washington Post*, May 12, 1980, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1980/05/12/united-arab-emirates-gives-gu-750000-for-a-chair-in-arab-studies/be4813de-0d01-4438-8c03-2cd29bbbefad/>.

influence or restrictions in connection with such donations, then Georgetown dean Peter Krogh asserted, “The checks are conveyed, the name of the chair [professorship] is identified, and we go about our business. The most intervention with any money we receive at Georgetown is from the United States government. The least intervention is from foreign governments, and you can quote me.”<sup>119</sup>

Later that year, Kuwait donated \$1 million (equivalent to \$3,826,468 today) to endow a chair in memory of the late Kuwaiti emir Sheikh Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah at CCAS.<sup>120</sup> The chair was designated for a senior professor specializing in contemporary Arab affairs and public policy. At the time, the donation was considered one of the largest academic endowments given by a Middle Eastern country to an American university.<sup>121</sup> A month later, Oman similarly donated \$1 million to create the Sultanate of Oman Chair in Arab Studies. Prior to its donation of the endowed chair, Oman reportedly gave grants totaling \$300,000 (equivalent to \$1,147,940 today) to Georgetown, as well as undisclosed sums for scholarships to the center’s Arabic summer program.<sup>122</sup> In 1980, Oman established a second chair, the Sultan Qaboos bin Said Chair for Arab and Islamic Studies,<sup>123</sup> which was initially held by the late Irfan Shahid.<sup>124</sup>

Oman also established a scholarship fund for Arab students to attend Georgetown, which, as of 2000, “boast[ed] the largest Arab undergraduate student population in the United States.”<sup>125</sup>

In 1980, Kuwait donated a \$1 million endowment (equivalent to \$3.83 million today) for a professorship at CCAS. In the same year, 24 U.S. multinational corporations with Middle Eastern interests contributed to the center, including Allis Chalmers, Texaco, Bechtel, Exxon, General Motors, Ford, Chase Manhattan Bank, and Citibank.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Michael Z. Wise, “Kuwait Gives Million Dollars to Georgetown University,” *Associated Press*, September 8, 1980.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Eugene Robinson, “Oman Gives GU \$1 Million for Arab Literature Chair,” *Washington Post*, October 10, 1980, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1980/10/10/oman-gives-gu-1-million-for-arab-literature-chair/f54e9308-17e7-417b-b15c-3c9f5076c26d/>.

<sup>123</sup> “Sultan Qaboos Academic Chairs,” Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science, Diwan of Royal Court, Sultanate of Oman, n.d., <https://sqhccs.gov.om/index.php/affiliates/page/16/112?lang=english>.

<sup>124</sup> Irfan Shahid, “Amin Rihani, 1876–1940: Apostle of the Arab-American Relationship,” Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 2010, available at [https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/wps/ccas/0018867/f\\_0018867\\_16128.pdf](https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/wps/ccas/0018867/f_0018867_16128.pdf).

<sup>125</sup> Carl Senna, “Georgetown Honors a Sultan,” *Providence Journal Bulletin*, May 24, 2000.

<sup>126</sup> “Georgetown University Accepts \$1 Million Endowment from Kuwait for Its Arab Studies Center,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, September 15, 1980, <https://www.jta.org/archive/georgetown-university-accepts-1-million-endowment-from-kuwait-for-its-arab-studies-center>.



Between 1975 and 1980, the CCAS was reported to have received \$4,305,000 from eight Arab governments (Oman, Kuwait, UAE, Libya, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar).<sup>127</sup> CCAS was also reported to have received \$275,000 (equivalent to \$1,052,278 today) in gifts and pledges from U.S. corporations engaged in business in the Middle East.<sup>128</sup>

An early indication of the depth of the foreign funders' influence in the development of the center was Georgetown's appointment of Arab ambassadors and government officials as advisors to CCAS, including the then Libyan ambassador to the United States representing the Gaddafi regime, Mansur Kikhia, Qatar's then minister of information, Issa al-Kawari, and the Omani foreign minister, Qais al-Zawawi. Two other advisors were multinational corporations with interests in the Middle East, including a Mobil Oil vice president and the director of international relations for the Middle East at Chase Manhattan Bank (now JP Morgan Chase Bank).<sup>129</sup> Lastly, Georgetown also appointed former senator J. William Fulbright, a former chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, as an advisor to CCAS. Fulbright registered as a foreign agent representing the United Arab Emirates in 1976.<sup>130</sup>

More recently, CCAS established the Clovis and Hala Salaam Maksoud Chair in Arab Studies in 2007. The chair was named in honor of the late Arab League ambassador to the United Nations, Clovis Maksoud,<sup>131</sup> and his late wife, Hala Salaam Maksoud, a founder and former director of the American Anti-Discrimination Committee.<sup>132</sup> Maksoud was also the senior editor of the Egyptian daily *Al-Ahram* and chief editor of the Lebanese weekly *An-Nahar* from 1967 to 1979.<sup>133</sup> Following the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Maksoud was appointed the Arab League's special envoy<sup>134</sup> to the

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Lawrence Feinberg, "United Arab Emirates Give GU \$750,000 for Chair in Arab Studies," *Washington Post*, May 12, 1980, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1980/05/12/united-arab-emirates-gives-gu-750000-for-a-chair-in-arab-studies/be4813de-0d01-4438-8c03-2cd29bbbefad/>.

<sup>129</sup> Gordon F. Sander, "[Petro] Dollars for Scholars," *Moment Magazine*, September 1978, available at <https://www.gordonsander.com/news/petro-dollars-for-scholars>.

<sup>130</sup> "Fulbright Registers as a Foreign Agent," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, January 28, 1976, <https://www.jta.org/archive/fulbright-registers-as-foreign-agent>.

<sup>131</sup> "Loss of a stellar intellectual," *Jordan Times*, May 16, 2016.

<sup>132</sup> Emily Langer, "Clovis Maksoud, Envoy of the Arab World to the West, Dies at 89," *Washington Post*, May 18, 2016, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/clovis-maksoud-envoy-of-the-arab-world-to-the-west-dies-at-89/2016/05/18/dd8f6708-1c38-11e6-b6e0-c53b7ef63b45\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/clovis-maksoud-envoy-of-the-arab-world-to-the-west-dies-at-89/2016/05/18/dd8f6708-1c38-11e6-b6e0-c53b7ef63b45_story.html).

<sup>133</sup> Mark Hicks, "Ex-Arab Diplomat with Metro Detroit Ties Dies at 89," *Detroit News*, May 18, 2016, <https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/wayne-county/2016/05/18/ex-arab-diplomat-metro-detroit-ties-dies/84575776/>.

<sup>134</sup> "Arab American Scholar Clovis Maksoud Dies Aged 90," *Al Jazeera*, May 16, 2016, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/5/16/arab-american-scholar-clovis-maksoud-dies-aged-90>.



United Nations and the United States to combat “negative Arab stereotyping in the American media.” In 1979, he was promoted to the position of Arab League ambassador to the United Nations and the United States.<sup>135</sup>

At Maksoud’s funeral in 2016, Michael Hudson, then director of CCAS and holder of the Seif Ghobash Chair, lauded Maksoud for having played “an indispensable role in the establishment of our Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University.”<sup>136</sup> For its part, CCAS issued a press release stating that Maksoud was “instrumental in inaugurating the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies in the late 1970s, and he remained to the end a steadfast supporter of its activities,” and further described him as having been “a longstanding member of the CCAS Board of Advisors, and helped establish in 2005 the Clovis and Hala Salaam Maksoud Chair in Arab Studies.”<sup>137</sup>

Most recently, a CCAS graduate student in the Master of Arts in Arab Studies program named Mapheze Saleh (aka Maphaz Ahmad Yousef Saleh) was revealed to be the daughter of Hamas official Ahmad Yousef,<sup>138</sup> a former advisor to the late Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.<sup>139</sup> In her earlier career, Saleh worked together with her father on the Hamas “Committee to Break the Siege,” in which they hosted international delegations that came to visit Hamas-controlled Gaza.<sup>140</sup>

In her profile on the CCAS website, Saleh is described as having studied at the Hamas-controlled Islamic University of Gaza and as having previously worked as a researcher at the Qatari Embassy in New Delhi, India. Additionally, she worked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Gaza, which is controlled by Hamas.<sup>141</sup>

Eight days after the Hamas-led October 7 massacre, Yousef posted a video celebrating the event. The video depicted a Palestinian man on horseback riding

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<sup>135</sup> Mark Hicks, “Ex-Arab Diplomat with Metro Detroit Ties Dies at 89,” *Detroit News*, May 18, 2016, <https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/wayne-county/2016/05/18/ex-arab-diplomat-metro-detroit-ties-dies/84575776/>.

<sup>136</sup> “Loss of a Stellar Intellectual,” *Jordan Times*, May 16, 2016.

<sup>137</sup> “CCAS mourns the passing of H.E. Ambassador Clovis Maksoud,” Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, May 15, 2016, <https://ccas.georgetown.edu/2016/05/16/ccas-mourns-the-passing-of-h-e-ambassador-clovis-maksoud/>.

<sup>138</sup> David M. Litman, “Georgetown’s Daughter of Hamas,” *National Review*, February 13, 2025, <https://www.nationalreview.com/2025/02/georgetown-daughter-of-hamas/>.

<sup>139</sup> “Ahmed Yousef,” All4Palestine, n.d., <https://all4palestine.org/ModelDetails.aspx?gid=14&mid=77738&lang=en>.

<sup>140</sup> “Hamas Leader Dr. Ahmed Yousef Recounts His Experience Allowing to His Daughters to Marry a Turk and an Indian: Details, Witty Remarks, and Jokes,” *Alwatan Voice*, June 20, 2013 (in Arabic).

<sup>141</sup> “Mapheze Saleh,” Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d., archived January 30, 2025, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20250130070459/https://ccas.georgetown.edu/profile/mapheze-saleh/>.

along the beach in Gaza displaying a Palestinian flag. The man is fully dressed in black, including a black hood and mask covering his entire face and head, mimicking the dress of Hamas terrorists. Yousef gloated, “O Allah, the victory that you promised .

### **Fida Adely, holder of the Clovis and Hala Salaam Maksoud Chair in Arab Studies**

The current holder of the Maksoud Chair is Fida J. Adely, an anthropologist and associate professor who is also the current chair of CCAS.<sup>142</sup> She teaches a course called “Women & Gender in the Arab World” in cooperation with Georgetown’s Gender+ Justice Initiative.<sup>143</sup> The initiative describes its goals as “foster[ing] intersectional and interdisciplinary research on gender justice.”<sup>144</sup>

Adely is a prominent member of Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine (FSJP) and a supporter of the BDS campaign. Omar Barghouti, a cofounder of the BDS campaign,<sup>145</sup> has declared that its ultimate goal is the destruction of Israel.<sup>146</sup> Adely played a significant role as a proponent of the 2023 anti-Israel boycott resolution that was adopted by the American Anthropological Association (AAA).<sup>147</sup> In September 2023, she co-authored an article hailing the passage of the AAA’s resolution to boycott Israeli academic institutions.<sup>148</sup> Additionally, she has denounced dialogue efforts between Israelis and Palestinians, including the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords, as a “diversion,” accusing them of “disguis[ing] the real issues of settler-colonialism, oppression, and occupation.”<sup>149</sup>

Reacting to the Hamas-Israel war, Adely questioned the future curriculum of SFS stating, “We’ve been having all these conversations about diversity, about

<sup>142</sup> “Fida J. Adely,” Georgetown360, n.d., <https://gufaculty360.georgetown.edu/s/contact/00336000014RXsSAAW/fida-adely>.

<sup>143</sup> “Gender+ Courses,” Gender+ Justice Initiative, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://genderjustice.georgetown.edu/gender-courses/>.

<sup>144</sup> “Our People,” Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://ccas.georgetown.edu/people/faculty/>.

<sup>145</sup> Omar Barghouti, “The BDS Movement Explained: Why I’ve Boycotted Israel,” *New York Daily News*, February 25, 2013, archived March 1, 2013, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20130301072520/http://www.nydailynews.com/boycott-israel-article-1.1271226>.

<sup>146</sup> “BDS Co-Founder Says Goal of Movement Is End of Israel,” *Jewish News Syndicate*, June 1, 2020, <https://www.jns.org/bds-founder-says-movements-goal-will-lead-to-the-end-of-israel/>.

<sup>147</sup> “The Resolution,” AnthroBoycott Collective, July 24, 2023, <https://www.anthroboycott.org/the-resolution>.

<sup>148</sup> Thea Abu El Haj, Fida Adely, and Ilana Feldman, “Why the American Anthropological Association Boycott Vote Victory Is Important for Palestine Solidarity,” *The New Arab*, September 10, 2023, <https://www.newarab.com/opinion/another-us-academic-boycott-win-palestine-solidarity>.

<sup>149</sup> Fida Adely and Amahl Bishara, “Dialogue As Diversion,” AnthroBoycott Collective, 2015, <https://www.anthroboycott.org/resources/dialogue-as-diversion>.

global anti-racism and how racism is also a global issue, it's not just something that happens within our borders. Within the School of Foreign Service, we've been talking about building a different kind of school." She then asked pointedly, "Are we going to be a school of U.S. Empire?"<sup>150</sup>

Adely participated in a spring semester 2024 march from Georgetown to join students and faculty from seven local universities demonstrating at a pro-Hamas tent encampment at George Washington University (GWU). Praising the demonstrators, she stated, "We had faculty and students, I think almost 200 of us walked over here together." She enthused, "It was very powerful, and I think in this moment—where we're seeing student activism across the country, on a scale that we haven't seen in decades, maybe, and student activism that has been really strongly repressed in many places—it was good to be able to show our solidarity."<sup>151</sup>

On May 8, 2024, Washington, D.C. mayor Muriel Bowser decided to clear the encampment due to indications that the demonstration "was becoming more volatile and less stable."<sup>152</sup> Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) chief Pamela Smith noted that, although the demonstration had started out "very peacefully," intelligence gathered over the course of the demonstration indicated an increasing level of violence. Smith elaborated that a GWU campus police officer "was pushed by protesters and an item was grabbed out of the police officer's hand during the performance of her duties." Police officers at the encampment reported that pro-Hamas protesters had assaulted counter protesters.<sup>153</sup> Additionally, some of the protestors had "gathered improvised weapons" and were reported to be "casing" buildings at GWU in preparation for taking them over and occupying them as had been done at Columbia University.<sup>154</sup>

Following the encampment's shutdown, Adely was the first signatory of an FSJP open letter directed to then Georgetown president John DeGioia defending it as

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<sup>150</sup> Katie Doran, and Franziska Wild, "'An Obligation to Speak:' Georgetown Faculty Organize for Justice in Palestine," *The Georgetown Voice*, January 19, 2024, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2024/01/19/an-obligation-to-speak-georgetown-faculty-organize-for-justice-in-palestine/>.

<sup>151</sup> Evie Steele, Aamir Jamil, Maran Fagan, and Paulina Inglima, "Georgetown Students, Faculty, Staff Join Tent Encampment at George Washington University," *The Hoya*, April 25, 2024, <https://thehoya.com/news/georgetown-students-faculty-staff-join-tent-encampment-at-george-washington-university/>.

<sup>152</sup> Emily Venezky, "DC Police Clear Out GWU Pro-Palestinian Encampment, 33 Protesters Arrested," *WTOP News*, May 8, 2024, <https://wtop.com/dc/2024/05/dc-police-clear-out-gw-encampment-site-as-israel-hamas-protests-reach-2-week-mark/>.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ashraf Khalil, "Police Clear Pro-Palestinian Protest Camp and Arrest 33 at DC Campus As Mayor's Hearing Is Canceled," *Associated Press*, May 8, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/campus-protests-george-washington-encampment-eac5c1cc396551bee1b110b48a94aefd>.

a “peaceful protest encampment.” The letter went on to condemn the MPD, Washington, D.C. mayor Muriel Bowser, and the president of GWU. Claiming that the MPD carried out a “full-blown riot police attack” on the protestors, the letter also blamed the mayor and GWU administration for “creating the very conditions that it had accused the students of fostering: chaos, conflict, and violence.”<sup>155</sup> The letter demanded that the university “refrain from taking any punitive action against any Georgetown students” who participated in the encampment and further demanded that Georgetown divest from companies doing business with Israel, shut down research collaborations with Israeli universities, and cancel its exchange program with Tel Aviv University.<sup>156</sup>

In a separate joint statement that was issued on the SFS website, Adely’s CCAS, together with ACMCU and the Bridge Initiative, praised the protestors as “courageous” and declared their “full support of student protestors who are playing a key role in driving social change and progress for our country.” They condemned university administrators for calling in the MPD to shut down the encampment. The statement claimed that describing the protestors as “antisemitic” or “terrorists” was an effort to smear them and “puts their lives in danger.”<sup>157</sup>

## 1.4 U.S. Government Concerns over Foreign Gifts

In the wake of the controversy following the donations to Georgetown and concerns over Japanese companies partnering with U.S. research institutions that could potentially play a role in undercutting U.S. competitors, Congress imposed a requirement on U.S. institutions of higher education to report foreign gifts and contracts to the Department of Education. The reporting requirement was based on concerns that foreign gifts and contracts could compromise the academic integrity of U.S. academic institutions.<sup>158</sup>

Since 1986, the U.S. Department of Education (DoEd) has required American institutions of higher learning to produce public reports detailing foreign gifts and contracts. The reporting requirement is now referred to as Section 117 of the Higher

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<sup>155</sup> “Open Letter to President DeGioia Concerning the MPD Attacks on GWU Protest Encampment,” Georgetown Faculty & Staff for Justice in Palestine, May 13, 2024, <https://gufsjp.org/faculty-staff-statements-and-letters/>.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> “Statement on Campus Protests,” Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, May 6, 2024, <https://ccas.georgetown.edu/2024/05/06/statement-on-campus-protests/>.

<sup>158</sup> “Institutional Compliance with Section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965,” Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Department of Education, October 2020, 4, <https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/policy/highered/leg/institutional-compliance-section-117.pdf>.

Education Act 1965, §1011f: Disclosure of Foreign Gifts. The description of the reporting requirement states:

*“Whenever any institution is owned or controlled by a foreign source or receives a gift from or enters into a contract with a foreign source, the value of which is \$250,000 or more, considered alone or in combination with all other gifts from or contracts with that foreign source within a calendar year, the institution shall file a disclosure report with the Secretary on January 31 or July 31, whichever is sooner.”*<sup>159</sup>

Following the 9/11 attacks against the United States, a Senate committee raised national security and domestic policy concerns regarding Saudi Arabia’s “significant and substantial” donations to Middle Eastern studies centers. The committee directed the DoEd to verify “the integrity of the reporting requirements” and confirm that “donations are reported and categorized correctly.”<sup>160</sup>

In 2019, the DoEd initiated an investigation of Georgetown University in which the university was required to turn over documentation related to Qatari, Saudi and Chinese foreign contracts and gifts. On June 13, 2019, the general counsel of the DoEd wrote a letter to Georgetown stating that “the Department believes Georgetown University’s reporting may not fully capture all gifts, contracts, and/or restricted and conditional gifts or contracts, from or with all foreign sources.” It requested information on Chinese funding of Georgetown’s U.S.-China Dialogue on Global Issues and requested information on the Chinese government and Chinese nationals involved with funding the program. It also requested information regarding funding from “the government of Saudi Arabia, its agencies, and agents; the government of Qatar, its agencies, and agents, including but not limited to the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development.”<sup>161</sup>

The DoEd specified that Georgetown’s reporting should have included Georgetown University Qatar as well as all other Georgetown University’s locations. It also requested information on all of Georgetown’s “affiliated foundations and non-profit organizations, whether or not organized under the laws of the United States (e.g.,

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<sup>159</sup> Section 1011f: Disclosures of Foreign Gifts, Title 20—Education, United States Code, 2021 edition, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2021-title20/html/USCODE-2021-title20-chap28-subchapl-partB-sec1011f.htm>.

<sup>160</sup> “Institutional Compliance with Section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965,” Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Department of Education, October 2020, 4, <https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/policy/highered/leg/institutional-compliance-section-117.pdf>.

<sup>161</sup> “Notice of Investigation and Record Requests,” Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Department of Education, June 13, 2019, in Federal Register, vol. 84, no. 125, Friday, June 28, 2019, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-06-28/pdf/2019-13904.pdf>.

the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding), that receive gifts, enter into contracts, and/or receive or enter into restricted or conditional gifts or contracts from or with a foreign source that operate substantially for the benefit or under the auspices of Georgetown University.”<sup>162</sup>

According to the subsequent 2020 DoEd report, there were already concerns in 2005 regarding Georgetown’s Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding from the time that it received the Saudi donation. Addressing the leadership of the university in 2008, then Congressman Frank Wolf wrote: “I therefore feel compelled to seek further information and request your assistance that, as this center carries out its mission of ‘building a stronger bridge of understanding between the Muslim world and the West,’ it maintains the impartiality and integrity of scholarship that befits so distinguished a university of Georgetown and that is required by the exigencies of national security for training American officials.”<sup>163</sup>

Wolf went on to ask whether the center “examined Saudi links to extremism and terrorism, including the relationship between Saudi public education, and the Kingdom-supported clerical establishment, on the one hand, and the rise of anti-American attitudes, extremism and violence in the Muslim world, on the other.” Lastly, Wolf requested information regarding whether any of the center’s “Saudi-source funds have been used in the training, briefing or education of those going into or currently employed by the U.S. government.”<sup>164</sup>

Eleven years later, the DoEd report noted, “This donation empowered the Saudi Arabian government to advance a particular narrative about Islamic society to the West via a legitimate Western institution like Georgetown University. ‘Soft power’ is a political science term that explains states’ ‘ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one wants through attraction...’ and continues to explain, ‘a country’s soft power rests on its resources of culture, values, and policies.’ Saudi Arabian ‘soft power’ efforts were on display through Prince Alwaleed’s efforts.”<sup>165</sup>

The report concluded, “Worries over soft power were manifest by Karen Hughes, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs during the George W. Bush Administration admission that she was ‘influenced by the Center.’ The

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Letter from Congressman Frank Wolf to Georgetown president John DeGioia, February 14, 2008, available at <https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/98.pdf>.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> “Institutional Compliance with Section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965,” Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Department of Education, October 2020, 4, <https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/policy/highered/leg/institutional-compliance-section-117.pdf>.



Saudi Arabian government had successfully impacted American foreign policy thinking through money alone.”<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

## 2. The Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU) and Its Ideology

### 2.1 What is ACMCU?

The Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU), formerly known as the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, is one of the country's most influential hubs of pro-Islamist and anti-Israel activism. In a 2020 report by the Department of Education on the influence of foreign funding on American universities, ACMCU was singled out as exemplifying "how foreign money can advance a particular country's worldview within U.S. academic institutions."<sup>167</sup> The center was established in Georgetown's School of Foreign Service (SFS) in 1993 under the leadership of John Esposito. The idea for the center was born from discussions in Washington between Palestinian businessman Hasib Sabbagh, Palestinian historian-activist Walid Khalidi, and Palestinian politician Basel Aql about the consequences of the fall of the USSR, the rise of political Islam, and the need to advance favorable views of Muslims in the West. They agreed that starting a new institute dedicated to promoting the study of Muslim societies housed within a major university was the best way forward. Georgetown University was their first choice due to its political importance and its existing connections to the Arab world through Palestinian intellectual Hisham Sharabi, with whom, along with Palestinian-American intellectual Edward Said, they already had major collaborations.

Eventually, the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding was founded through a substantial donation from Sabbagh, who chose Esposito to design and run the center.<sup>168</sup> According to Khalidi, Sabbagh was a partisan Palestinian who was eager to "devote his great energy to the service of Palestine, not only through his philanthropic ventures promoting social and educational causes but also through his behind-the-scenes political mediation and reconciliation efforts."<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> "About Page," ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/about/history/>.

<sup>169</sup> Waleed Khalidi, "Remembering Hasib Sabbagh (1920–2010)," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 39(3) (2010): 52–65, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2010.XXXIX.3.52>.

Upon its establishment, the center's stated primary goal was to improve relations between the Muslim world and the West and enhance Muslims' understanding of Western societies. Its focus extends across the Muslim world, from North Africa to Southeast Asia, as well as to Europe and America. Over its existence, the center has earned international recognition as a leader in fostering Muslim-Christian relations.<sup>170</sup>

In addition to the presence of Sharabi, the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS), and existing Arab patronage, Georgetown University was selected as the center's home due to its Catholic credentials and its strategic location in Washington, D.C., at the heart of global political affairs. Similarly to CCAS, ACMCU operates within Georgetown's SFS, giving it direct access to world leaders, diplomats, and academics. The fact that SFS has educated more U.S. ambassadors and diplomats than any other university in the country positions the center as a vital contributor to the education of future international leaders.

In 2006, the center was renamed the Alwaleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding in recognition of a generous gift from Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz al-Saud to guarantee the center's future and support its mission and activities.<sup>171</sup> Prince Alwaleed is known for his strong anti-Zionist sentiments, and he once tweeted, "I have not and will not visit Jerusalem or pray inside it until its liberation from the Zionist enemy. And I carry an honorary Palestinian passport."<sup>172</sup> This relaunch of the center with Saudi funding placed it within Prince Alwaleed's large network of Islamic studies centers, which include the Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World in Edinburgh, the Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program at Harvard, and the Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre for Islamic Studies in Cambridge.<sup>173</sup> According to John Esposito, the center's founder, Alwaleed Bin Talal made these donations in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, having "recognized the implications of 9/11 and the Global War on Terrorism" and the "need to foster and strengthen much greater mutual understanding among the next generations in the Arab world and in the West."<sup>174</sup> His foundation formed a small committee to advise and vet candidates for a

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<sup>170</sup> "About Page," ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/about/history/>.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Mamoo Alabassi, "Fabricated Quotes Attributed to Saudi Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal on Israel-Palestine Go Viral," *Middle East Eye*, October 30, 2015, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/fabricated-quotes-attributed-saudi-prince-alwaleed-bin-talal-israel-palestine-go-viral>.

<sup>173</sup> "The Alwaleed Network," HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World, University of Edinburgh, n.d., <https://www.ed.ac.uk/literatures-languages-cultures/alwaleed/about/alwaleed-network>.

<sup>174</sup> John L. Esposito, "The Legacy of a Multi-Dimensional Man," in *A Socially Engaged Global Muslim: Dr Jamal Al-Barzinji*, ed. Imtiyaz Yusuf (Center for Islam in the Contemporary World, 2023), 44.

generous endowment. The committee was chaired by Jamal al-Barzinji, one of the founders of the Muslim Students Association (MSA),<sup>175</sup> who was also heavily involved in the foundation of various other Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated groups in the United States.<sup>176</sup>

Approximately 25% of the center's graduates go on to pursue doctoral studies, while another 25% enter government service worldwide.<sup>177</sup> Many others find careers in non-governmental organizations, the private sector, law, and media, contributing to the center's mission in various fields.

According to Esposito, in addition to teaching, ACMCU faculty members "engage in significant outreach work, serving as consultants to government leaders, diplomats, policymakers, corporate executives, and members of the media in the U.S. and internationally." Faculty members also "provide background presentations and briefings on Capitol Hill for members of the Congress and the Senate." They cooperate with many civic groups, such as "the World Affairs Council and the Council on Foreign Relations. The Center's faculty advises foreign affairs think tanks and policy-making government agencies and participates in training sessions and briefings for the U.S. State Department, the Pentagon, and other government agencies."<sup>178</sup>

Moreover, through its stream of publications (including books, articles, occasional papers, and journals), the center "is a major source of information on Islam, the Muslim world and Muslim-Christian relations. These projects have placed ACMCU in a leadership position working with a network of hundreds of Muslim and non-Muslim scholars globally."<sup>179</sup> ACMCU has produced many major reference works, including *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, four vols. (Oxford University Press, 1995), *The Oxford History of Islam* (Oxford University Press, 2000), *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam* (Oxford University Press, 2003), and *The Islamic World: Past and Present*, three vols. (Oxford University Press, 2004). Members of the center's faculty also worked on the Oxford Online Resource Center for the Islamic World and *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam*, six vols. (Oxford University Press, 2009).<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Steven Merley, "The Muslim Brotherhood in the United States," Research Monographs on the Muslim World, Series No. 2, Paper No. 3, Hudson Institute, April 2009, 9, [https://www.globalmbresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/20090411\\_merley.usbrotherhood.pdf](https://www.globalmbresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/20090411_merley.usbrotherhood.pdf).

<sup>176</sup> Omar, "Biography of Dr Ahmed Totonji," TYLP, June 25, 2020, <https://tylp.org/topic/biography-of-dr-ahmed-totonji/>.

<sup>177</sup> John L. Esposito, "The Prince Alwaleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding," *Islamic Studies* 45(1) (2006): 121–128, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20839004>.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

In addition to academic and public activities, the Center also offers a K-14 educational program through which it offers workshops for teachers and educators to train them on teaching about Islam in the classroom. According to the center's website, "The speaker's honorarium and all travel expenses are paid by the ACMCU."<sup>181</sup>

### 2.1.1 Ideological uniformity

From its very early days, ACMCU has shown a remarkable degree of uniformity in the ideological outlook of its members and their publications. Its founders and staff mainly consist of political Islamist sympathizers who generally attack U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and defend Islamists as being pro-democracy, turning Islamophobia into a category of political abuse that conflates anti-Muslim and anti-Islamist sentiments. All this contributes to the uniform ideological conditions of the center as expressed by its faculty in their publications, public appearance, activism, and networks of relations that have formed around the center.

These networks include prominent Islamists, such as Sami al-Arian, a leading Palestinian radical Islamist activist who pleaded guilty in 2006 to engaging in a "conspiracy to make or receive contributions of funds, goods or services to or for the benefit of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad,"<sup>182</sup> a group that has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States since 1997<sup>183</sup> and which took part in the October 7 massacre.<sup>184</sup> According to the U.S. Department of Justice's announcement of al-Arian's sentence, "In his guilty plea, Al-Arian admitted that, during the period of the late 1980's and early to mid-1990's, he and several of his co-conspirators were associated with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). He further admitted that he performed various services for the PIJ in 1995 and thereafter, knowing that the PIJ had been designated as a Specially Designated Terrorist and that the PIJ engaged in horrific and deadly acts of violence."<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> "Workshops," ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/outreach/k14/teaching-workshops/>.

<sup>182</sup> Plea Agreement, *U.S. v. Sami Al-Arian*, U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division, April 17, 2006, [https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case\\_docs/70.pdf](https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/70.pdf).

<sup>183</sup> "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," Bureau of Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State, n.d., <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations/>.

<sup>184</sup> "West Bank and Gaza 2023 Human Rights Report," Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2023, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, n.d., [https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/528267\\_WEST-BANK-AND-GAZA-2023-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf](https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/528267_WEST-BANK-AND-GAZA-2023-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf).

<sup>185</sup> "Sami Al-Arian Sentenced To 57 Months in Prison for Assisting Terrorist Group," U.S. Department of Justice, May 1, 2006, [https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2006/May/06\\_crm\\_260.html](https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2006/May/06_crm_260.html).

He was sentenced to 57 months in prison for providing material support to a terrorist group<sup>186</sup> and was deported from the United States to Turkey in 2015.<sup>187</sup> Since his arrival in Turkey, al-Arian has established his own Islamist organization, the Center for Islam and Global Affairs (CIGA),<sup>188</sup> and constantly gives speeches about the need to destroy Israel and expel its Jewish population.<sup>189</sup>

In 2017, al-Arian travelled to Qatar, where he spoke at the annual conference of Georgetown University Qatar’s Middle Eastern Studies Student Association, which falsely described him as a “civil rights activist.”<sup>190</sup>

During the 2024 spring semester, al-Arian gave a lecture at Qatar’s Hamid Bin Khalifa University (HBKU).<sup>191</sup> In this lecture, he promoted the well-worn antisemitic conspiracy theory that Europe expelled its Jews to the Middle East in order to control the Muslim world and prevent it from achieving any advancement: “The [Europeans] planted their Jewish problem—because they didn’t like the Jews, they were persecuting them—so they transplanted them from Europe into the heart of the Muslim world. So they dealt with two problems at once, on one hand, [sic] they got rid of their excess Jews that they didn’t like, they implanted them in the heart of the Muslim world to make sure [the Muslims] would be kept weak, fragmented, exhausted, dependent, unable to make any kind of civilization progress.”<sup>192</sup>

Hailing the Hamas-led massacre of October 7 and the Gaza war as a watershed moment, al-Arian continued, “So this issue actually has the potential to free the whole world from this notion of supremacy—Western supremacy and Jewish supremacy and white supremacy. Once you engage that, you have a difference [sic] culture, you have a different framework of mind, that is the real effort to resist Western hegemony, and we have a clear goal—to dismantle that state. If Israel is

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Josh Gerstein, “Al-Arian Saga Ends with Deportation,” *Politico*, February 6, 2015, <https://www.politico.com/blogs/under-the-radar/2015/02/al-arian-saga-ends-with-deportation-202233>.

<sup>188</sup> For more on CIGA, see section 3.1.5 below.

<sup>189</sup> “Professor Sami al-Arian, Deported from the U.S. for Terror Links: Our Goal Is to Dismantle the State of Israel; October 7 Gave Us Ideas on How This Can Be Done; Israeli Jews Can Go to Muslim Countries from Morocco to Indonesia,” MEMRI, January 24, 2025, <https://www.memri.org/tv/sami-al-arian-israel-jews-go-muslim-countries-october7-gave-ideas>.

<sup>190</sup> “Georgetown Student Society to Host Public Lecture by Dr. Sami al-Arian,” Georgetown March 27, 2017, <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/georgetown-student-society-host-public-lecture-dr-sami-al-arian/>.

<sup>191</sup> For more on HBKU see section 3.1.4 below.

<sup>192</sup> “Kuwaiti-Palestinian Academic Sami Al-Arian, Who Was Deported from the U.S. Due to Terror Links: Dismantling the State of Israel Has the Potential to Free the World from Western and Jewish Supremacy—This Is Our Goal,” MEMRI, April 24, 2024, <https://www.memri.org/tv/kuwait-palestine-academic-sami-al-arian-deported-america-terror-links-dismantling-israel-free-world-from-west-jewish-supremacy>.



dismantled in 5, 10, 20 years—whatever it takes, Western hegemony and influence will be immediately weakened.”<sup>193</sup>

In May 2024, al-Arian encouraged and praised the pro-Hamas campus protestors at the encampments taking place throughout the United States in an op-ed, declaring, “The courage and determination shown by students across the US in the past few weeks has been breathtaking.”<sup>194</sup>

He has also been featured as a commentator on Qatar’s Al Jazeera network,<sup>195</sup> where he was most recently called upon to comment on the Gaza war.<sup>196</sup>

The networks and connections are not merely ideological or professional but sometimes also become personal or familial. For instance, Jonathan A.C. Brown is married to al-Arian’s daughter, Laila, who works as a producer for the Qatari-funded Al Jazeera network. In April 2024, Laila al-Arian accompanied her mother, Nahla al-Arian, on a visit to the pro-Hamas encampment then taking place at Columbia University.<sup>197</sup> Explaining their presence on campus, Laila al-Arian asserted, “My mother wanted to see this beautiful act of solidarity up close.”<sup>198</sup> Sami al-Arian praised his wife and the demonstrators on X, posting a picture of Nahla sitting on a mat outside one of the encampment tents with the caption, “My wife Nahla in solidarity with the brave and very determined Columbia University students.”<sup>199</sup>

John Esposito is a personal friend of al-Arian and publicly defended him as a man of good conscience despite his ties to Palestinian Islamic Jihad.<sup>200</sup> Al-Arian’s son Abdullah received his Ph.D. from Georgetown and is now a history professor at

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Sami al-Arian, “How Student Activists Across US Campuses May Change the World,” *Anadolu Agency*, May 6, 2024, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/analysis/opinion-how-student-activists-across-us-campuses-may-change-the-world/3211120>.

<sup>195</sup> For more on Al Jazeera, see the sidebar on the Al Jazeera Media Network in Chapter 3.

<sup>196</sup> Al Jazeera English (@aljazeeraenglish) “Sami al-Arian, director of the Center for Islam and Global Affairs at Istanbul Zaim University,” Instagram, January 3, 2025, <https://www.instagram.com/p/DEXo9HHziQS/?igsh=MXZvZ2NtZ3YydmztNQ==>.

<sup>197</sup> Jake Offenhart, “Eric Adams Called This Palestinian Activist and Retired Teacher an ‘Outside Agitator.’ She Saw Inspiration at Protests,” *PBS News*, May 1, 2024, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/eric-adams-called-this-palestinian-activist-and-retired-teacher-an-outside-agitator-she-saw-inspiration-at-protests>.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Sami Al-Arian (@SamiAlArian), “My wife Nahla in solidarity with the brave and very determined Columbia University students,” X, April 26, 2024, archived April 27, 2025, at <https://archive.is/HXxDD>.

<sup>200</sup> John L. Esposito, letter to Judge Leonie Brinkema, July 2, 2008, Investigative Project on Terrorism, n.d., [https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case\\_docs/638.pdf#page=13](https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/638.pdf#page=13).

Georgetown's campus in Qatar. In an interview on Al Jazeera in August 2024, Abdullah al-Arian claimed that the ongoing Gaza war is a genocide carried out by Israel against a "defenseless, besieged population."<sup>201</sup>

Given this uniform ideological framework, it is essential to look closer at ACMCU's operational dynamics and its broader implications within the academic and geopolitical landscape. ACMCU's steadfast alignment with political Islamist ideologies is not merely confined to its internal policies and publications but extends into its strategic partnerships and influence networks. This pervasive ideological consistency serves to amplify specific narratives that promote pro-Islamist and anti-U.S. foreign policy sentiments, thereby shaping the discourse both within Georgetown University and in the wider academic community.

A significant aspect of ACMCU's influence is its ability to attract and retain individuals who are deeply entrenched in Islamist activism. The presence of such figures and their associates exemplifies the center's commitment to fostering an environment that supports pro-Islamist perspectives. Al-Arian's admission of his involvement in terrorism underscores the controversial nature of the center's affiliations. Despite his conviction, al-Arian remains a polarizing figure who continues to draw support from certain academic circles, as evidenced by John Esposito's public defense of his character and intentions. This defense not only legitimizes al-Arian's stance but also reinforces the center's narrative that Islamist activism is part of a pro-democracy framework.

Moreover, the familial ties within the ACMCU's network further illustrate the intertwining of personal relationships and institutional affiliations. Abdullah al-Arian's appointment as a history professor at Georgetown's Qatar campus highlights the perpetuation of a specific ideological legacy within the university. This continuity raises concerns about the potential for biased academic environments where critical perspectives on U.S. policies and Middle Eastern politics may be systematically marginalized. The influence of such networks extends beyond academia, potentially impacting policy discussions and public opinion through media channels like Al Jazeera, where Laila al-Arian contributes as a producer.

Another interesting case of familial ties within various Georgetown frameworks is Professor Wadie Edward Said, son of the late Edward Said and a professor of law at the University of Colorado (CU) School of Law.<sup>202</sup> Wadie Said was a Senior Visiting

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<sup>201</sup> "The War on Gaza is Wrongly Portrayed As a Conflict, But It's Genocide against Palestinians: Analyst," posted August 11, 2024, by Al Jazeera English, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AHaHokTfBQ>.

<sup>202</sup> "Wadie Said," University of Colorado School of Law, n.d., <https://lawweb.colorado.edu/profiles/profile.jsp?id=1130>.

Fellow at GU-Q for at least part of 2023.<sup>203</sup> On November 7, 2023, a month after the Hamas-led massacre, Said spoke at GU-Q about “Palestine and the Limits of the Law.” The event was co-sponsored by CCAS and ACMCU. Abdullah al-Arian, the event’s moderator, spoke about an “unfolding genocide” which “today enters its second month.”<sup>204</sup>

Wadie Said was one of four members of the legal defense team of Hatem Fariz,<sup>205</sup> who pleaded guilty in Tampa, Florida (alongside Sami al-Arian and two others) for providing material support to Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). In July 2006, Fariz agreed to plead guilty to a single count of conspiracy to provide “funds, goods, or services” to PIJ and was sentenced to 37 months in prison.<sup>206</sup> Fariz also pleaded guilty to separate charges on one count of money laundering and one count of wire fraud for defrauding a food stamp program in Chicago of \$1.4 million. For this, he was sentenced to an additional 51 months in prison.<sup>207</sup>

In his lecture at GU-Q, Wadie Said criticized the U.S. law<sup>208</sup> that bans providing material support to U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organizations (FTOs), such as Hamas, PIJ, and Hezbollah. According to Said, the law unjustly and overbroadly taints anything said or done by the aforementioned terror organizations: “It’s as if they’re saying that Hamas and the other Palestinian groups are so tainted by their violent conduct that anything they say or claim or anyone perceived to be affiliated with [what] those groups says or claims is de facto suspect.”<sup>209</sup> In April 2024, Said spoke at Stanford University Law School’s “Shaking the Foundations” conference. He appeared on a panel called “How Did We Get Here? The War on Terror: Past and

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<sup>203</sup> “Wadie E. Said,” Georgetown University Qatar, n.d., <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/wadie-e-said/>.

<sup>204</sup> “‘Palestine and the Limits of the Law’ featuring distinguished legal scholar, Professor Wadie Said,” posted November 8, 2023, by Georgetown University Qatar, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3egnJc1Z8s>.

<sup>205</sup> *United States v. Al-Arian*, 308 F. Supp. 2d 1322 (M.D. Fla. 2004), March 12, 2004, <https://www.courtlistener.com/opinion/2491057/united-states-v-al-arian/>.

<sup>206</sup> Josh Gerstein, “Floridian Sentenced to 37 Months for Terrorist Offense,” *New York Sun*, July 26, 2006 (updated February 10, 2022), <https://www.nysun.com/article/national-floridian-sentenced-to-37-months-for-terrorist>.

<sup>207</sup> “Jihad Backer Sentenced in Food Stamp Scam,” *Associated Press*, August 19, 2006, <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna14416473>.

<sup>208</sup> “Providing Material Support to Designated Terrorist Organizations (Fundraising) (18 U.S.C. 2339B),” Criminal Resource Manual, U.S. Department of Justice, n.d., archived at <https://www.justice.gov/archives/jm/criminal-resource-manual-16-providing-material-support-designated-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>209</sup> “‘Palestine and the Limits of the Law’ featuring distinguished legal scholar, Professor Wadie Said,” posted November 8, 2023, by Georgetown University Qatar, YouTube, <https://youtu.be/b3egnJc1Z8s>.

Current Harms.” The panel was described as “seek[ing] to expose the underlying human rights violations that underlie the country’s national security apparatus.”<sup>210</sup>

In the fall of 2024, Said together with other faculty members from CU Boulder denounced the University of Colorado Board of Regents for a resolution condemning the use of the term “intifada” as antisemitic during the pro-Hamas demonstrations on campus. During the spring 2024 semester, a group of pro-Hamas demonstrators calling themselves Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) protested outside the private residences of members of the Board of Regents. The Regents stated, “[C]alls for ‘intifada’ are calls for violence and murder against the Jewish people, are antisemitic, and are racist in nature.”<sup>211</sup> The resolution continued, “The Board of Regents condemns SDS for its actions directed at Jewish people in the Town of Superior and Arapahoe County, Colorado. Furthermore, the University of Colorado welcomes our Jewish university members who deserve to work, matriculate, and live in a welcoming, inclusive, and safe community just like all our students, staff, and faculty deserve.”<sup>212</sup>

Said, together with other faculty representatives of CU Boulder and members of Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine, denied that the use of the term “intifada” was antisemitic, accused the regents of Islamophobia, and demanded that they retract and apologize for the resolution.<sup>213</sup>

More recently, in a January 2025 interview with his three cousins on the Makdisi Street podcast, Said maintained that the “isolationists” in the new Trump administration “still think we are savages” and expressed his hope that the administration’s opposition to foreign aid would also affect Israel.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> “How Did We Get Here? The War on Terror: Past and Current Harms,” Shaking the Foundations conference, Stanford University Law School, April 27, 2024, <https://conferences.law.stanford.edu/shaking-the-foundations-2024/sessions/how-did-we-get-here-the-war-on-terror-current-and-past-harms/>.

<sup>211</sup> Melanie Kay, Omer Mei-Dan, and Elyana Funk, “Broader Examination of Facts and Relevant Context Justifies CU Regents’ Resolution in Response to June Protests,” *Colorado Sun*, September 24, 2024.

<sup>212</sup> “A Resolution of the Board of Regents of the University of Colorado in Response to Protests That Occurred on June 1, 2024, and June 17, 2024, at the Private Residences of Regents,” University of Colorado Board of Regents, June 20, 2024, [https://go.boarddocs.com/co/cu/Board.nsf/files/D6DRKW6E6E20/\\$file/Resolution%20in%20Response%20to%20Protests%20at%20Regents%20Homes.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/co/cu/Board.nsf/files/D6DRKW6E6E20/$file/Resolution%20in%20Response%20to%20Protests%20at%20Regents%20Homes.pdf).

<sup>213</sup> Wadie Said, “University of Colorado Regents’ Resolution on ‘Intifada’ Undermines Free Speech and Inclusivity,” *Colorado Sun*, September 27, 2024, <https://coloradosun.com/2024/09/05/opinion-colorado-regents-resolution-intifada/>.

<sup>214</sup> “They still think we are ‘savages’ w/ Wadie Said,” posted January 28, 2025, by Makdisi Street, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrWYZWIKvYA>.

## 2.2 Founding Personalities

### 2.2.1 John L. Esposito

Professor John L. Esposito is the current director of Georgetown's Bridge Initiative (GBI) and the founding director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU) in Georgetown's Walsh School of Foreign Service (SFS). He is further described as "University Professor as well as Professor of Religion and International Affairs and of Islamic Studies at Georgetown University."<sup>215</sup> Esposito is a supporter of the BDS campaign and is a signatory of a letter from the U.S. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI) that was co-signed by 560 Middle East scholars and librarians that called for a boycott of Israeli academic institutions.<sup>216</sup>

Esposito has also defended individuals who raised funds for Hamas in the United States. He served as a defense witness on behalf of the Holy Land Foundation (HLF), the now defunct U.S.-based charity that was shut down for serving as a front for Hamas fundraising. HLF and its leadership were tried and found guilty of funneling over \$12 million to Hamas in 2009.<sup>217</sup> During the trial, Esposito obfuscated the terms "jihad" and "Islamist" by claiming that they do not always connote extremism.<sup>218</sup>

Esposito is the original brains behind the architecture and design of ACMCU. He is also the vital link that enabled all the major foreign donations and endowments that made the center possible. As a matter of fact, many Arab donors directly tied their funds directly not to the university but to Esposito's leadership, through which ACMCU's ideological climate and its boundaries were determined.

Academically, according to an online biography, Esposito's expertise is in political Islam and the impact of Islamic movements from North Africa to Southeast Asia. He is editor-in-chief of the four-volume *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, the *Oxford History of Islam*, and the *Oxford Dictionary of Islam*,<sup>219</sup> in addition to over

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<sup>215</sup> "John L. Esposito," Bridge Initiative, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://bridge.georgetown.edu/team/john-l-esposito/>.

<sup>216</sup> "Over 500 Middle East Scholars Call for Academic Boycott of Israel," US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, August 6, 2014, <https://usacbi.org/2014/09/over-200-middle-east-scholars-and-librarians-call-for-academic-boycott-of-israel/>.

<sup>217</sup> "Federal Judge Hands Down Sentences in Holy Land Foundation Case," U.S. Department of Justice, May 27, 2009, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/federal-judge-hands-down-sentences-holy-land-foundation-case>.

<sup>218</sup> "Highlights of Testimony in Second Holy Land Foundation Trial," Charity and Security Network, August 2009, [https://charityandsecurity.org/litigation/exhibits\\_transcripts\\_second\\_hlf\\_trial/](https://charityandsecurity.org/litigation/exhibits_transcripts_second_hlf_trial/).

<sup>219</sup> "Professor John L. Esposito," UN Alliance of Civilizations, March 29, 2011, <https://www.unaoc.org/2011/03/professor-john-esposito/>.

50 books on Islam he has authored. Esposito's biography on the ACMCU website also notes that he has served as a consultant to the U.S. Department of State and other agencies, European and Asian governments, corporations, universities, and media worldwide, as an ambassador for the UN Alliance of Civilizations, and as a member of the World Economic Forum's Council of 100 Leaders and the E.C. European Network of Experts on De-Radicalisation.<sup>220</sup>

Born in 1940 to a Catholic family in New York, Esposito was described in a video celebrating his academic legacy as always interested in religion. After an unsuccessful attempt to join the Catholic clergy, he went to Temple University to obtain a PhD in Catholic theology. During his time at Temple, Esposito's interests were radically transformed in great part thanks to the influence of one of his professors, Ismail al-Faruqi, a major figure in the history of Western Islamism.<sup>221</sup>

Under al-Faruqi's influence, Esposito's interest shifted from the study of Catholicism to the study of Islam. He traveled to Lebanon, where he learned Arabic for two years.<sup>222</sup> Upon his return to the United States, Al-Faruqi offered Esposito a teaching job in Gaddafi's Libya, which he turned down, preferring to stay in North America.<sup>223</sup>

### **Ismail al-Faruqi**

Ismail Raji al-Faruqi (1921–1986) was a Palestinian-American intellectual and activist who was one of the most influential Muslim figures in the United States in the 20th century. Born in Jaffa to a prestigious Muslim family, al-Faruqi received his primary education at a missionary French Catholic school before obtaining a BA in philosophy from the American University of Beirut in 1941. Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, al-Faruqi moved to the United States, where he obtained MAs from Indiana University and Harvard before returning to the former to obtain his PhD in 1952, all of which were in German philosophy. Before starting his teaching career in some of North America's most prestigious universities, al-Faruqi traveled to Egypt and spent four years pursuing post-doctoral studies in Islam at Cairo's al-Azhar University.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> "John Esposito," ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/profile/john-esposito/>.

<sup>221</sup> Jean Esposito, "The Legacy of John Esposito," posted April 22, 2024, by ACMCU, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFwdZx4qcyM&t=1s>.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> All biographical details taken from "Ismail Raji al-Faruqi," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford University Press, 2004), 223–224.



According to one of his accomplished students, the prolific Islamic thinker Malik Badri, “Faruqi underwent three major ideological changes during his life: from an average Palestinian to a devoted Arab nationalist, from an Arabist to an Islamist, and from an Islamist to an intellectual jihadist against Zionism.”<sup>225</sup> During his Arabist phase, al-Faruqi produced literature that provided a Hegelian political theodicy of Arabism that ultimately supersedes and negates Judaism and achieves its historical realization in a modern political consciousness. While in Cairo, he published two volumes of antisemitic works, providing a view of Judaism as the diametrical opposite of his providential Arabism. In al-Faruqi’s words, Judaism is exposed as a religion of “resentment, loathing, hatred, and vengeance” of a God who enjoys “murder and sabotage” and shapes “Jewish racism.” At the end of this historical saga of evil, modern Zionism came as the final expression of this Jewish evil force as a “resurrection for that [Jewish] religion and thought and this loathing racist impulse. Zionism didn’t come with any new ideology, only one that it inherited from Judaism.”<sup>226</sup>

After his return to the United States in 1958, al-Faruqi joined McGill University in Montreal, Canada, where he taught for a few years before moving to the University of Chicago and then to Temple University in 1968, where he stayed until the end of his life and tutored generations of influential activists and professors, such as James Zogby, John Esposito, and countless Islamist activists. Following the mass disillusionment with the Arabist ideology after the 1967 Six-Day War, al-Faruqi abandoned the cult of Arabism and decided to replace it with that of Islam as the Idea of history through which consciousness realizes its highest form. He transposed his Arabist antisemitic ideology structure, heavily influenced by German Idealism, into a new ideology of Islamism, of which he would become a leading proponent. Al-Faruqi coined the concept of the “Islamization of Knowledge,” which would become the intellectual battle cry of Western Islamism until today. In 1980, al-Faruqi published *Islam and the Problem of Israel*, in which he provided a restatement of his views on Judaism and Zionism, declaring that the fact that “Islam cannot and will not compromise on Zionism is a lesson which is to be taught to every Jew living in the Muslim world” and calling for “the Zionist State, its army, and other public institutions ... [to be] destroyed” and promising to deal with “the problem of what to do with its [Jewish] population.” As a matter of fact, and as Badri’s earlier comment shows, at the end of his life al-Faruqi’s mature Islamism ultimately came down to nothing but a core of “intellectual jihad against Zionism.”

It was under the influence of the charismatic al-Faruqi that John Esposito found his lifelong calling to dedicate his life to studying Islam and Muslim societies. After

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<sup>225</sup> Malik Badri, “Psychological Reflections on Ismail al-Faruqi’s Life and Contributions,” *American Journal of Islam and Society* 31(2) (2014): 145–152, <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v31i2.1052>.

<sup>226</sup> Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, *Zionism in the Jewish Religion*, 2nd ed. (Maktabet Wahba, 1988), 96.

completing his studies under al-Faruqi's supervision, Esposito embarked on a career of activism and teaching, advocating for a sympathetic view of Islam and the political Islamic movement, earning himself the polemical title of "academia's high priest of Islamic apologetics."<sup>227</sup> He defended groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas against being called "terrorist" and pressed American policymakers to consider them social movements inside the mainstream of their societies.<sup>228</sup> Esposito went as far as defending Islamism just months before 9/11, undermining the importance of Bin Laden for global Islamic politics.<sup>229</sup>

After, Esposito was handpicked by Hasib Sabbagh in 1993 to run the newly founded Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown, he picked like-minded John Voll, Yvonne Haddad, and Amir Sonbol as his first faculty members and co-founders. Together, this core group shaped the center in their ideological image, turning it into the country's most prominent pro-Islamist academic center.

In December 2015, the center announced that it was receiving an endowment of \$20 million dollars from Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, after which the name of the center was changed to the Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding.<sup>230</sup>

### 2.2.2 John O. Voll

John O. Voll, another key figure within ACMCU, further entrenches the center's ideological leanings towards Islamism. As the center's associate director, Voll has not only collaborated closely with Esposito but has also contributed significantly to the discourse that often blurs the lines between moderate Islam and its more radical interpretations.

Voll's academic background in Islamic history from Harvard positions him as a scholar with deep insights into Muslim societies. However, his scholarly work, particularly when co-authored with Esposito, like *Islam and Democracy*,<sup>231</sup> tends to present an idealized view of Islamic governance that downplays the complexities and potential for extremism within Islamist movements. Such work has been

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<sup>227</sup> A.J. Caschetta, "John Esposito, Part 1," *IPT News*, July 11, 2023, <https://www.investigativeproject.org/9335/john-esposito-part-1-a-terrorist-best-friend>.

<sup>228</sup> Scott Jaschik, "John Esposito," *Middle East Forum*, March 21, 2005, <https://www.meforum.org/campus-watch/professor-john-l-esposito-a-profile>.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> "Georgetown University Receives \$20 Million Gift from HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal to Expand Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding," press release, Office of Communications, Georgetown University, December 12, 2005, archived September 4, 2006, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20060904131933/http://explore.georgetown.edu/news/?ID=3762>.

<sup>231</sup> John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (Oxford University Press, 1996).

pivotal in shaping the narrative at ACMCU, where discussions often lean towards portraying Islamism as a viable, democratic alternative.

## 2.3 ACMCU and the Evolution of Islamic Studies

It seems that the history of teaching Islamic studies in the United States, the legacies of al-Faruqi and his student Esposito, and the overall pro-Islamist ideological uniformity at Georgetown have greatly contributed to the mainstreaming of the academic thinking that the Muslim Brotherhood and the adherents of its ideology are the face of “modern,” “moderate,” “mainstream” Islam. Via his various academic and activist roles, al-Faruqi is said to have led the efforts in the 1970s to place Islamic studies under the umbrella of the American Academy of Religion (AAR). Until then, the field had been mainly defined and hosted by the American Oriental Society. A group for Islamic Studies was launched within the AAR, and in 1986 the AAR finally established a full section dedicated to Islamic studies.<sup>232</sup> It should be noted that the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT, see below) sponsors a lecture and a reception memorializing al-Faruqi at the AAR’s annual meeting to this day.<sup>233</sup>

According to John O. Voll, Islamic studies were in the past affected by American missionaries and Christianity in the Middle East, which subjugated them to certain agendas and anti-Islamic considerations.<sup>234</sup> The importance of such studies grew with the rise of the global role that the United States started playing after the Second World War and the need for policymakers, strategists, the military, and security institutions to have sufficient and accurate information regarding several areas in the world.<sup>235</sup> Thus, another body of knowledge was provided by American corporations, which were mainly interested in economic and technical data. It was soon connected to scholars who wrote within the framework of the Cold War and the ongoing competition between the West and the East, utilizing government funding.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Mohamed Mosaad Abdelaziz Mohamed, “The Influence of the Muslim Brotherhood on Teaching Islam in American Universities,” *Tashwirul Afkar* 42(1) (2023): 89, <https://tashwirulafkar.or.id/index.php/afkar/article/download/162/118/718>.

<sup>233</sup> “IIIT Al Faruqi Memorial Lecture and Reception at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR),” IIIT, 2024, <https://iiit.org/en/2024-annual-meeting-of-the-american-academy-of-religion-aar/>.

<sup>234</sup> Mumtaz Ahmad, “Islamic Studies in American Universities: Conversations, Discourses, & Dialogue with Scholars,” in *Observing the Observer: The State of Islamic Studies in American Universities* (IIIT, 2012), 220–221.

<sup>235</sup> Mohamed Mosaad Abdelaziz Mohamed, “The Influence of the Muslim Brotherhood on Teaching Islam in American Universities,” *Tashwirul Afkar* 42(1) (2023): 90–91, <https://tashwirulafkar.or.id/index.php/afkar/article/download/162/118/718>.

<sup>236</sup> Mumtaz Ahmad, “Islamic Studies in American Universities: Conversations, Discourses, & Dialogue with Scholars,” in *Observing the Observer: The State of Islamic Studies in American Universities* (IIIT, 2012), 220–221.

Another factor that contributed to rising academic interest in Islamist movements, including the Muslim Brotherhood, as legitimate political forces consisted of intellectual developments in Western scholarship itself. The switch from the modernization theory to Marxism and conflict theory in the mid-1970s, the interest in postmodern and post-structuralist approaches that paid attention to culture, identity, diversity, plurality, globalization, and gender, and the new role of social media helped pave the way to the common approach that looks at Islam as a Third Worldist, anti-capitalist, non-Western identity that can be regarded as a native grassroots response to the crisis of modernity.<sup>237</sup>

The publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1979 had a huge effect on the academic field, and a new generation of scholars who were hostile to what they perceived as Orientalist attitudes and scholars gradually came to lead the way. The Iranian Revolution also contributed to this process. These developments led to the advancement of the subject under area studies. In addition, the growing contest between federal funding and foundations like the Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, and RAND, eventually led the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) to view receiving funds from the military or intelligence entities as unacceptable.<sup>238</sup> Islamist ideologies and networks like the Muslim Brotherhood, which have been portrayed by John Esposito and ACMCU as representing a "revivalist," "mainstream," and "moderate" version of Islam, have thus been the main beneficiaries of these changes. Esposito and the scholars he mentored and inspired, who are regarded by some as "post-Orientalists," are allegedly seen as representative and authentic by many American Muslims. They have also had a significant impact within the academy and on U.S. government policy.<sup>239</sup>

In April 2005, Georgetown hosted a panel of experts to examine the state of the art in Islamic studies in American universities. John O. Voll from ACMCU spoke about a "contemporary crisis which is clearly embodied in the impact of 9/11 on the American academy." He illustrated this through the saga of Tariq Ramadan, Muslim Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna's grandson, who had been appointed as a professor of Islamic studies at Notre Dame University but was denied entry to the United States. Voll saw Ramadan as a symbol of the new relationship between traditionality and modernity among young Muslims living in Western Europe and

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<sup>237</sup> Mohamed Mosaad Abdelaziz Mohamed, "The Influence of the Muslim Brotherhood on Teaching Islam in American Universities," *Tashwirul Afkar* 42(1) (2023): 94, <https://tashwirulafkar.or.id/index.php/afkar/article/download/162/118/718>.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid., at 90–91.

<sup>239</sup> M.A. Muqtedar Khan, "Post-Orientalism and Geopolitics: Three Debates That Inform Islam and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Insight Turkey* 22(2) (2020): 133, 136, <https://www.insightturkey.com/file/1252/post-orientalism-and-geopolitics-three-debates-that-inform-islam-and-us-foreign-policy>.

added that “not only is Dr. Ramadan an important broker between Islam and the West, but he could become an effective bridge through his writings, speeches, and activism on behalf of the young Muslims.”<sup>240</sup> Voll pointed to the whole case as part of the negative consequences of 9/11 and the ongoing Middle Eastern crisis festering between pro-Palestinian and pro-Zionist groups.<sup>241</sup> Ramadan later moved to the University of Oxford and, in 2024, was convicted on several charges of rape.<sup>242</sup>

Others from Georgetown also spoke out. Dr. Ahmad Dallal, then at the university’s Arabic and Islamic studies department and currently president of the American University in Cairo, argued that the phase of Orientalism was not yet over. His remarks reveal Georgetown’s perception of itself, its place, and the unity of thought that it suffers from, including his statement that there are not many scholars of Islam and that half of them are at Georgetown.<sup>243</sup> Osman Bakar, the current rector of the prominent Islamist International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) and then a visiting professor at ACMCU, agreed that the current study of Islam in the United States “does not represent the rich diversity of Islamic intellectual traditions and experiences.” The other issue, according to Bakar, was that the dominant trend remains the study and critique of Islam from without and a total lack of appreciation of categories derived from within Islam. “We will not be able to do full justice to Islamic scholarship if we don’t bring into play both perspectives from within and without,” he said. Bakar believed that the body of knowledge developed from within the Islamic traditions is the only source to understand Muslims own perspectives on theology, law, ethics, and spirituality.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Mumtaz Ahmad, “Islamic Studies in American Universities: Conversations, Discourses, & Dialogue with Scholars,” in *Observing the Observer: The State of Islamic Studies in American Universities* (IIIT, 2012), 220.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> “Swiss Court Convicts Islamic Scholar on Rape Charges,” *Al Jazeera*, September 10, 2024, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/9/10/swiss-court-convicts-islamic-scholar-on-rape-charges>.

<sup>243</sup> Mumtaz Ahmad, “Islamic Studies in American Universities: Conversations, Discourses, & Dialogue with Scholars,” in *Observing the Observer: The State of Islamic Studies in American Universities* (IIIT, 2012), 224–225, <https://iiit.org/wp-content/uploads/Observing-The-Observer-1.pdf>.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., at 225.

### 3. ACMCU's Ties to Pro-Islamist and Anti-Zionist Entities and Individuals

As a result of Middle Eastern, ideologically-driven funding, ACMCU came to serve as a major hub in a large network of like-minded individuals and bodies that share its pro-Islamist ideological outlook. Inside this network, individuals, ideas, publications, and funds constantly circulate and feed the network's various branches.

#### 3.1 Institutional Relationships

This analysis identifies a complex network of interconnected organizations, united by a shared Islamist ideological orientation, that converge specifically around Georgetown University. This intricate ecosystem enables the exchange of intellectual frameworks, personnel, and financial resources between Georgetown and entities linked to broader Islamist movements. Such associations raise substantial concerns regarding academic independence and the extent of ideological influence on an institution that plays a critical role in educating future American diplomats and policymakers.

##### 3.1.1 International Institute of Islamic Thought

The International Institute for Islamic Thought (IIIT) is a Herndon, Virginia-based non-profit 501(c)(3) non-denominational organization established in 1981. It describes itself as a “center of excellence in educational research and Islamic thought whose main interest is on [sic] carrying out evidence-based research in advancing education in Muslim Societies and the dissemination of this research through publication and translation, teaching, policy recommendations, and strategic engagements.”<sup>245</sup> Its foundation came after a 1977 meeting in Lugano, Switzerland, between several key Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated figures like Yousef Nada, Ghaleb Himmat, Yusuf al-Qaradawi and two U.S.-based activists of Iraqi

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<sup>245</sup> “The International Institute of Islamic Thought,” IIIT, n.d., <https://iiit.org/en/home/>.



descent, the aforementioned Jamal al-Barzinji and Ahmad Totonji,<sup>246</sup> who were both heavily involved in the foundation of various Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated groups in the United States.<sup>247</sup> The group chose to establish the headquarters of the IIIT in the United States largely because of the presence there of Ismail al-Faruqi.<sup>248</sup> Al-Faruqi's vision of the "Islamization of Knowledge" grew out of a conference in Islamabad, Pakistan, whose insights he incorporated into his book *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*.<sup>249</sup>

## Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood is a global Islamist extremist movement that was founded by Hassan al-Banna in 1928. Its ultimate goal is to create a pan-Islamist caliphate. Its motto, which evolved over time based on al-Banna's writings and speeches, is: "Allah is our objective. The Prophet [Muhammad] is our leader. The Quran is our law. Jihad is our way. Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope."<sup>250</sup>

According to al-Banna, "Islam does not recognize geographical boundaries, nor does it acknowledge racial and blood differences, considering all Muslims as one *Umma* [Nation]."<sup>251</sup> Al-Banna further explained, "The Muslim Brethren consider this unity as holy and believe in this union, striving for the joint action of all Muslims and the strengthening of the brotherhood of Islam, declaring that every inch of land inhabited by Muslims is their fatherland.... The Muslim Brethren do not oppose every one's working for one's own fatherland. They believe that the caliphate is a symbol of Islamic Union and an indication of the bonds between the nations of Islam."<sup>252</sup> Al-Banna concluded that followers of his movement "see the Caliphate and its re-establishment as a top priority, subsequently; an association of Muslim people should be set up, which would elect the imam,"<sup>253</sup> who would become its caliph.

<sup>246</sup> Ian Johnson, "The Brotherhood's Westward Expansion," *Hudson*, February 5, 2005, <https://www.hudson.org/national-security-defense/the-brotherhood-s-westward-expansion>.

<sup>247</sup> Omar, "Biography of Dr Ahmed Totonji," *TYLP*, June 25, 2020, <https://tylp.org/topic/biography-of-dr-ahmed-totonji/>.

<sup>248</sup> Ian Johnson, "The Brotherhood's Westward Expansion," Hudson Institute, February 5, 2005, <https://www.hudson.org/national-security-defense/the-brotherhood-s-westward-expansion>.

<sup>249</sup> M. Muslih, "Ismail Raji al-Faruqi's Thought on Islamization of Knowledge and Its Significance for Islamic Education," *Indonesian Journal of Religion, Spirituality, and Humanity* 2(2) (2023): 180, <https://ejournal.uinsalatiga.ac.id/index.php/ijoresh/article/view/755>.

<sup>250</sup> See, e.g., "Imam Hassan al-Banna's Message to the Youth" (in Arabic), *Ikhwanweb*, n.d., <https://www.ikhwanwiki.com/index.php?title=رسالة إلى الشباب>.

<sup>251</sup> "Hasan al-Banna and His Political Thought of Islamic Brotherhood," *Ikhwanweb*, May 13, 2008, <https://ikhwanweb.com/hasan-al-banna-and-his-politic/>.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

Leaders of the Brotherhood hold vehemently antisemitic views of Jews. Muhammad Badie, the Brotherhood's supreme guide in Egypt, has declared that the Jews are his movement's "foremost enemies."<sup>254</sup> He further called for the Brotherhood to "continue to raise the banner of jihad" against Jews.<sup>255</sup> In a sermon, Badie called for a jihad to liberate Palestine, and avowed that "every Muslim must act to save Jerusalem from the usurpers and to [liberate] Palestine from the claws of occupation. This is a personal duty for all Muslims. They must participate in jihad by [donating] money or [sacrificing] their life, in order to save [Palestine] and the men and women imprisoned [in Israeli jails], as well as [Jerusalem]."<sup>256</sup>

The late Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the Qatar-based Brotherhood's virulently antisemitic spiritual leader at the global level, declared, "Allah has imposed upon the [Jews] people who would punish them for their corruption. The last punishment was carried out by Hitler."<sup>257</sup> Anticipating a future punishment against Jews, al-Qaradawi expressed his desire that the "the next time" will be carried out by his followers, "at the hand of the Believers."<sup>258</sup> He also expressed his wish that he would be able to end his life in martyrdom fighting against Jews. Al-Qaradawi hoped to "go to the land of Jihad and resistance, even if in a wheelchair."<sup>259</sup> He concluded, "I will shoot Allah's enemies, the Jews, and they will throw a bomb at me, and thus, I will seal my life with martyrdom."<sup>260</sup>

Muhammad Badie has decried American imperialism and called for the creation of an Islamist state. He has denounced the United States as "a nation that does not champion moral and human values [which] cannot lead humanity, and its wealth will not avail it once Allah has had His say."<sup>261</sup> Referring to Israel and the United States as "the Zio-American arrogance," Badie has called for violent "resistance" against the two countries. "Resistance is the only solution against the Zio-American arrogance and tyranny, and all we need is for the Arab and

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<sup>254</sup> Charles Levinson, "'Brothers' in Egypt Present Two Faces," *Wall Street Journal*, February 15, 2011, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704629004576135882819143872>.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> "Mursi: Recognition of Peace Agreement with Israel—Conditional; MB Calls for Jihad to Liberate Palestine," MEMRI, July 23, 2012, <https://www.memri.org/reports/mursi-recognition-peace-agreement-israel—conditional-mb-calls-jihad-liberate-palestine>.

<sup>257</sup> "Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi: Allah Imposed Hitler on the Jews to Punish Them—'Allah Willing, the Next Time Will Be at the Hand of the Believers,'" MEMRI, February 4, 2009, <https://www.memri.org/reports/sheikh-yousuf-al-qaradhawi-allah-imposed-hitler-jews-punish-them—allah-willing-next-time>.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Charles Levinson, "'Brothers' in Egypt Present Two Faces," *Wall Street Journal*, February 15, 2011, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704629004576135882819143872>.

Muslim peoples to stand behind it and support it.”<sup>262</sup> Addressing Hamas, the Brotherhood’s sister movement in Gaza,<sup>263</sup> Badie declared, “We say to our brothers the *mujahideen* [holy warriors] in Gaza: Be patient, persist in [your jihad], and know that Allah is with you.”<sup>264</sup>

IIIT was mentioned in the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood’s infamous 1991 “Explanatory Memorandum” by Mohammed Akram, a leading officer in the organization, where it was described as a Brotherhood-allied organization.<sup>265</sup> IIIT was associated with the now defunct SAAR Foundation, a network of Islamic organizations that was raided by the FBI in March 2002 in connection with the financing of terrorism. Around this time and until at least mid-2007, both organizations were also under investigation by the U.S. Justice Department.<sup>266</sup>

The chairman of the board of IIIT and one of its co-founders, former Malaysian prime minister and Islamist politician Anwar Ibrahim,<sup>267</sup> is also a senior fellow at ACMCU.<sup>268</sup>

IIIT and Georgetown University are involved in a long-term relationship that includes financial ties. In June 2010, for example, Westminster University in London hosted a two-day seminar that was jointly organized by its own Centre for the Study of Democracy, IIIT and ACMCU. The seminar focused on Ismail al-Faruqi’s legacy, and participants reportedly included his colleagues, friends, and students, as well as independent researchers. John Esposito, one of al-Faruqi’s former students, was a keynote speaker on one of the days.<sup>269</sup>

In March 2010, Esposito represented ACMCU at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in a series of public panels promoting Islamic-Western understanding as part of the Second Annual Meeting of Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centers. The panels

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> “Hamas,” Counterterrorism Guide, U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, September 2024, [https://www.odni.gov/nctc/terrorist\\_groups/hamas.html](https://www.odni.gov/nctc/terrorist_groups/hamas.html).

<sup>264</sup> Charles Levinson, “‘Brothers’ in Egypt Present Two Faces,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 15, 2011, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704629004576135882819143872>.

<sup>265</sup> “The Muslim Brotherhood’s Strategic Plan For America—Court Document,” Clarion Project, n.d., archived on September 30, 2017, at [https://web.archive.org/web/20170930092053/https://clarionproject.org/muslim\\_brotherhood\\_explanatory\\_memorandum/](https://web.archive.org/web/20170930092053/https://clarionproject.org/muslim_brotherhood_explanatory_memorandum/).

<sup>266</sup> “Forgotten Investigation, Emails Offer Insight into IIIT Probe,” Investigative Project on Terrorism, August 3, 2008, <https://www.investigativeproject.org/737/forgotten-investigation-emails-offer-insight-into-iiit-probe>.

<sup>267</sup> Anwar Ibrahim, “Chairman’s Address,” IIIT, n.d., <https://iiit.org/en/chairman-of-the-board/>.

<sup>268</sup> “Anwar Ibrahim,” ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, July 12, 2024, <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/profile/anwar-ibrahim/>.

<sup>269</sup> Zakyi Ibrahim, “The Legacy of Isma’il Raji al-Faruqi: Thought and Institution,” *American Journal of Islam and Society* 27(3) (2010): 143, <https://www.ajis.org/index.php/ajiss/article/view/1321>.

were co-organized by the Alwaleed Bin Talal Center at AUB, the Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, and IIIT.<sup>270</sup> In March 2017, Rev. Dr. Dan Madigan, an associate professor at Georgetown University and a senior fellow at ACMCU spoke at an event named in honor of senior U.S. Islamist thinker Taha Jabir Alalwani, alongside the IIIT Chair in Islamic Studies at George Mason University. The event took place at the El-Hibri Foundation in Washington, “a philanthropic organization that empowers and equips Muslim leaders and their allies to build thriving, inclusive communities.”<sup>271</sup>

IIIT’s financial support for Georgetown was acknowledged in April 2017, when IIIT President Hisham Altalib and his deputy Ahmed Alwani (a businessman and son of the prominent Islamist scholar Taha Jabir Alalwani who had previously served as IIIT’s president) attended the 1789 Society at Georgetown University. The 1789 Society is the university’s most prestigious fellowship, which recognizes those benefactors—individuals or organizations—that have contributed \$1 million or more to Georgetown, as IIIT did in 2017. The donation helped establish the Bridge Initiative, a project that aims to weaponize the charge of “Islamophobia” against those critical of Islamism (see below) “to connect the academic study of Islamophobia with the general public.”<sup>272</sup> In an article on Jamal al-Barzinji, Esposito also acknowledged the role he played in the creation of the Bridge Initiative.<sup>273</sup> On February 12, 2019, Altalib and Alwani were invited to attend a lecture at ACMCU by Malaysia’s Anwar Ibrahim, who was hosted by the university’s then president John DeGioia and ACMCU. John Esposito was the discussant.<sup>274</sup> Two weeks afterward, DeGioia sent a letter to IIIT thanking it for another gift to ACMCU.<sup>275</sup>

In 2002, federal agents conducted a raid on the offices of IIIT in Herndon, Virginia, as part of an investigation into terrorism financing. IIIT was believed to be the largest donor to a group led by Sami al-Arian,<sup>276</sup> who later pleaded guilty to being one of the leaders of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, which has ties to the Muslim

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<sup>270</sup> “AUB to Hold Two Public Panels on March 10 Promoting Islamic-Western Understanding,” American University of Beirut, March 8, 2010, <https://www.aub.edu.lb/communications/media/Documents/AUB%20to%20hold%20two%20public%20panels%20on%20March%2010%20promoting%20Islamic-Western%20understanding.pdf>.

<sup>271</sup> “About,” El Hibri Foundation, n.d., <https://www.elhibrifoundation.org/about>.

<sup>272</sup> “IIIT Recognized by 1789 Society,” IIIT, June 27, 2018, <https://iiit.org/en/iiit-recognized-by-1789-society/>.

<sup>273</sup> John L. Esposito, “The Legacy of a Multi-Dimensional Man,” in *A Socially Engaged Global Muslim: Dr Jamal Al-Barzinji*, ed. Imtiyaz Yusuf (Center for Islam in the Contemporary World, 2023), 45–46.

<sup>274</sup> “IIIT President & Vice President Attend Lecture at ACMCU,” IIIT, February 12, 2019, <https://iiit.org/en/iiit-president-vice-president-attend-lecture-at-acmcu/>.

<sup>275</sup> “Letter from the President of Georgetown University,” IIIT, February 28, 2019, <https://iiit.org/en/letter-from-the-president-of-georgetown-university/>.

<sup>276</sup> Jerry Markon, “Witness Is Silent in Terror Probe,” *Washington Post*, November 14, 2006, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/13/AR2006111301205.html>.

Brotherhood.<sup>277</sup> A letter from 1992 reveals that al-Arian claimed that his organization and IIIT were essentially the same entity.<sup>278</sup>

IIIT's continuing relationship with Georgetown University includes the hosting of Georgetown-affiliated speakers, such as Louay Safi, who spoke at the institute when he was working for Georgetown. IIIT also runs the Fairfax Institute, "the educational division of IIIT" that "connects IIIT's networks of scholars and ideas by translating scholarship into practical courses and training programs, with the objective of contributing to individual career development and communal understanding."<sup>279</sup> Senior ACMCU staff members John Voll and Jonathan Brown taught at the 2016 and 2019 summer programs offered to students.<sup>280,281</sup>

Al-Faruqi was also a co-founder of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists of North America (AMSS, since renamed as the North American Association of Islamic and Muslim Studies, NAAIMS) back in the early 1970s.<sup>282</sup> NAAIMS also has a UK branch, which retains the AMSS name and works closely with the UK branch of IIIT. The current president of NAAIMS is Dr. Mohammad Hassan Khalil,<sup>283</sup> who was also the keynote speaker at the IIIT's Al-Faruqi Memorial Lecture at the American Academy of Religion in 2018.<sup>284</sup>

### 3.1.2 International Islamic University Malaysia

In 1982, various East Asian Muslim politicians and intellectuals started to converge around al-Faruqi's concept of the Islamization of Knowledge. Based on their discussions, then Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad conceived of the

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<sup>277</sup> "Sami al-Arian Pleads Guilty to Conspiracy to Provide Services to Palestinian Islamic Jihad," U.S. Department of Justice, April 17, 2006,

[https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2006/April/06\\_crm\\_221.html](https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2006/April/06_crm_221.html).

<sup>278</sup> "Al-Arian indicted for contempt," *IPT News*, June 26, 2008,

<http://www.investigativeproject.org/700/al-arian-indicted-for-contempt>.

<sup>279</sup> "The Fairfax Institute," IIIT, n.d., <https://iiit.org/en/the-fairfax-institute-tfi/>.

<sup>280</sup> "Opening Day at IIIT/TFI Summer Students Program 2016," IIIT, 2016,

<https://iiit.org/en/opening-day-at-iiit-tfi-summer-students-program-2016/>.

<sup>281</sup> The Fairfax Institute, "DEADLINE EXTENDED! The Summer Student Program deadline has been extended to March 31, 2019! Apply today!," Facebook, March 25, 2019,

<https://www.facebook.com/TheFairfaxInst/posts/pfbid024RY4DAHKE9sHXqVmXor4oi5uhJBEBP uY8UCcPysKmrWjUhrMQXNH8vuatXJtgQ2l>.

<sup>282</sup> "Introduction," North American Association of Islamic and Muslim Studies (NAAIMS), n.d., <https://naaims.org/introduction/>.

<sup>283</sup> "Learn More about the Members of Our Academic Organization," NAAIMS, n.d., <https://naaims.org/board-of-directors/>.

<sup>284</sup> "Dr. Mohammad Hassan Khalil—Islam & New Atheism—Al-Faruqi Memorial Lecture at AAR 2018," posted December 7, 2018, by IIIT Media, YouTube, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WW7M1a0N\\_AA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WW7M1a0N_AA).

idea of a new university dedicated to al-Faruqi's intellectual framework. In 1983, he helped co-found the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in partnership with IIIT.<sup>285</sup> Mohamad himself is known for his strong Islamist leanings and virulent antisemitism, which he has aired frequently in international forums. In 2019, he wrote, "Jews aren't just hook-nosed, they understand money instinctively."<sup>286</sup> In 1994, he banned the film *Schindler's List* from playing in Malaysia for being "anti-German pro-Jewish propaganda."<sup>287</sup> In a 2003 speech at a summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), he declared that "Jews rule the world by proxy."<sup>288</sup>

The Islamist sympathies of senior Malaysian politicians and the IIUM project turned Kuala Lumpur into an important center of Islamist activities to the extent that it became a training ground for Hamas. It has been reported that Hamas recruited Palestinians to be sent to Malaysia to receive technical training for terror operations.<sup>289</sup> In 2014, captured Hamas operatives told Israeli interrogators that they received paragliding training in Malaysia.<sup>290</sup> This led to Israeli intelligence services pursuing Hamas terrorists there. In April 2018, a Hamas engineer who was receiving training in Kuala Lumpur was assassinated, allegedly by Israel.<sup>291</sup> According to a 2015 report from the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, "Hamas conducts extensive social and cultural activities for students at the International Islamic University Malaysia. The activities are carried out by Palestinian students and lecturers in committees directed by Hamas ... the social and cultural activities are also exploited for covert activities in which operatives are recruited to Hamas' military-terrorist wing, sent to a course in Turkey (at Hamas' expense), given money by Hamas and then sent to Judea and Samaria."<sup>292</sup> For the record, it should be noted that Malaysia denies that Hamas

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<sup>285</sup> "History of International Islamic University Malaysia," eTawau.com, April 22, 2021, [https://www.etawau.com/edu/UniversitiesPublic/IIUM/History\\_HUM.htm](https://www.etawau.com/edu/UniversitiesPublic/IIUM/History_HUM.htm).

<sup>286</sup> Daniel Sugarman, "Oxford Union Criticized for Inviting Antisemitic Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad to Speak," *Jewish Chronicle*, January 17, 2019, <https://www.thejc.com/news/oxford-union-criticised-for-inviting-antisemitic-malaysian-prime-minister-mahathir-mohamad-to-speak-fw8zrzwg>.

<sup>287</sup> Moshe Yegar, "Malaysia: Antisemitism Without Jews," *Jewish Political Studies Review* 18(3–4) (2006): 81–97, available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25834698> (accessed October 21, 2024).

<sup>288</sup> "Mahathir Mohamad Fast Facts," *CNN*, December 17, 2024, <https://edition.cnn.com/2012/12/30/asia/mahathir-bin-mohamad-fast-facts/index.html>.

<sup>289</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, "How Malaysia Became Hamas Training Ground," *Tablet*, May 4, 2018, <http://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/261464/how-malaysia-became-a-training-ground-for-hamas>.

<sup>290</sup> Adiv Sterman, "Malaysia Denies It Trained Hamas Operatives," *Times of Israel*, July 31, 2014, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/malaysia-denies-it-trained-hamas-operatives/>.

<sup>291</sup> Lior Levy, "Palestinian Electrical Engineer Shot Dead in Malaysia," *Ynet*, April 21, 2018, <https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-5236433,00.html>.

<sup>292</sup> Meir Amit, "Hamas Activity in Malaysia," Meir Amir Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, May 6, 2015, [https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/articles/Art\\_20805/E\\_085\\_15\\_936313463.pdf](https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/articles/Art_20805/E_085_15_936313463.pdf).



carries out training activities on its soil. In December 2013, Khaled Meshal, then head of the Hamas politburo, visited IIUM and gave a speech calling for jihad against Israel.<sup>293</sup>

The current prime minister of Malaysia, Anwar Ibrahim, connects many nodes in the international Islamist network in which ACMCU is a central institution. In Malaysia, he helped found the Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM),<sup>294</sup> which is very supportive of Hamas<sup>295</sup> and has hosted John Esposito at past speaking events.<sup>296</sup> As associate of al-Faruqi, Ibrahim was one of the original co-founders of IIIT and currently serves as the chairman of the board, while also being a senior fellow at ACMCU and a former president of IIUM.<sup>297</sup>

### 3.1.3 Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research

The Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research is a U.S.-based Islamist research institution<sup>298</sup> that seeks to propagate its views through media and research production.<sup>299</sup> While it has no direct affiliation with ACMCU, many of its staff members are ACMCU and Georgetown graduates. In addition, ACMCU's Jonathan A.C. Brown serves as an advisor and director of research of the institute,<sup>300</sup> and Yaqeen's assistant director of research, Tesneem Alkiek, received her PhD from Georgetown under the supervision of Brown.<sup>301</sup>

In August, Imam Tom Facchine, Yaqeen's research director of Islam and society, came under fire for calling on his followers to target and "take out" Israeli Columbia

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<sup>293</sup> "Ucapan Khalid Meshaal | IIUM | Asqsa Syarif," posted December 5, 2013, by Aqsa Syarif, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n48SxTBZEzA>.

<sup>294</sup> Home page, ABIM website, n.d., <http://www.abim.org.my/>.

<sup>295</sup> ABIM Pusat, "Pembunuhan Rakyat Palestin Oleh Israel Di Gaza," Facebook, April 11, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1679929418720254&set=pcb.1679930632053466&type=3&theater>.

<sup>296</sup> ABIM, "Live: [Lecture Series in Malaysia] Islam & Democracy in Southeast Asia: Challenges and Prospect: Professor John L. Esposito," Facebook, April 24, 2018, [https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=1947634431915867&id=126121114067217](https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1947634431915867&id=126121114067217).

<sup>297</sup> "Anwar Ibrahim," *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford University Press, 2004), 139.

<sup>298</sup> "United States," in *World Almanac of Islamism* (American Foreign Policy Council, 2021), 7, <https://almanac.afpc.org/uploads/documents/United%20States%202020%20Website.pdf>.

<sup>299</sup> Hira Qureshi, "With Mosques Closed During the Pandemic, Muslim Converts Navigate Their New Spiritual Path Online," *Washington Post*, September 1, 2020.

<sup>300</sup> "How Yaqeen Works to Educate the Public—Dr. Jonathan A.C. Brown: Making Principled Progress," posted December 17, 2018, by Yaqeen Institute, YouTube, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLI\\_O2WtmTk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLI_O2WtmTk).

<sup>301</sup> "Confident Muslim by Tesneem Alkiek (ICNA-MAS Convention)," posted October 29, 2017, by ICNA, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hs9QIGMkL0>.

professor Shai Davidai, explaining, “If you’re able to take out somebody like that and make an example, that might shut up a hundred more.”<sup>302</sup>

### 3.1.4 Hamad Bin Khalifa University’s College of Islamic Studies

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) is the primary native Qatari higher education institution in the educational ecosystem maintained by the Qatar Foundation. It is based in Education City in Doha, which also hosts the Qatari campuses of several American universities. HBKU is the Qatari royal family’s main apparatus of cultural and educational power and sits at the core of a network of influence in which ideas, people, and finances move around with ease. HBKU’s College of Islamic Studies (CIS) is HBKU’s main center for Islamist scholars and activists. It offers various academic programs and operates five research centers, including:

- The Al-Qaradawi Center for Islamic Moderation and Renewal (QCIMR), which was founded in 2008 and is named after the late Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the former international spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. QCIMR claims to be “devoted to promoting moderation and the revival of Islamic thought through scientific research.” It has a specialized database and library, collects, translates, and publishes books and papers on the subject, hosts public lectures and dedicated workshops, and awards the Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi International Prize for Islamic Studies.<sup>303</sup>
- According to its website, the Research Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics (CILE), which was founded in 2012, “leads the reform and renewal of contemporary Islamic legal and ethical thought and behavior by contributing a sustainable ethical framework for addressing contemporary global challenges.”<sup>304</sup> The center was previously directed by Tariq Ramadan.<sup>305</sup>

Georgetown’s John Esposito sits on the CIS’s advisory board.<sup>306</sup> He was hosted by CIS at least twice In February 2018, where he gave a public lecture on “The Future of

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<sup>302</sup> Doree Lewak, “Upstate NY Imam Encourages Columbia Students to ‘Take Out’ Pro-Israel Professor,” *New York Post*, August 31, 2024, <https://nypost.com/2024/08/31/us-news/ny-imam-tells-columbia-students-how-to-take-out-pro-israel-professor/>.

<sup>303</sup> “Al-Qaradawi Center for Islamic Moderation and Renewal,” HBKU CIS, n.d., <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/cis/research/qcimr>.

<sup>304</sup> “Research Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics,” HBKU CIS, n.d., <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/cis/research/cile>.

<sup>305</sup> “Dr. Tariq Ramadan Inspires Future Leaders at Hamad Bin Khalifa University’s EBDA Leadership Program,” HBKU, November 7, 2015, <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/news/dr-tariq-ramadan-inspires-future-leaders-hamad-bin-khalifa-universitys-ebda-leadership-program>.

<sup>306</sup> “About the College of Islamic Studies,” HBKU CIS, n.d., <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/cis/about>.

Islam & Muslim-West Relations.”<sup>307</sup> In February 2020, he was hosted at an event entitled “Global Islamophobia: Understanding Its Roots, Challenging Its Impact.”<sup>308</sup> In April 2017, CIS hosted Jonathan A.C. Brown, who is listed as a former academic affiliate,<sup>309</sup> for a public lecture.<sup>310</sup> In 2019, Brown presented a course on “Slavery and Islam.”<sup>311</sup> ACMCU’s Louay Safi serves as a professor of political science and Islamic thought at CIS.<sup>312</sup> In August 2021, “Georgetown student leaders” at the Doha campus hosted workshops in partnership with Maker Majlis, a youth platform operating under the auspices of CIS.<sup>313</sup>

HBKU is also part of a larger international network. In September 2021, it signed a three-year memorandum of understanding with IIUM that was to be facilitated by CIS.<sup>314</sup>

### 3.1.5 Center for Islam and Global Affairs

The Center for Islam and Global Affairs (CIGA) is a research and public policy center affiliated with the Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University. Its director is the aforementioned Sami al-Arian, who pleaded guilty to providing material assistance to Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), a U.S. Specially Designated Terrorist Organization.<sup>315</sup> Al-Arian was subsequently stripped of his U.S. citizenship and deported to Turkey in 2015.<sup>316</sup> In an interview with the Bidum Waraq podcast in June

<sup>307</sup> “Public Lecture: The Future of Islam & Muslim-West Relations,” academic events, HBKU CIS, 2018, <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/academic-events/future-islam-west-relations>.

<sup>308</sup> “Global Islamophobia: Understanding Its Roots, Challenging Its Impact,” academic events, HBKU CIS, 2020, <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/academic-events/global-islamophobia-impact>.

<sup>309</sup> “People,” HBKU CIS, n.d., <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/people?entity=256>.

<sup>310</sup> “Public Lecture: Prophet Muhammad as a Model for Approaching Diversity in the 21st Century,” academic events, HBKU CIS, 2017, <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/academic-events/prophet-muhammad-model-approaching-diversity>.

<sup>311</sup> “IST 670: Slavery and Islam,” academic events, HBKU CIS, 2019, <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/academic-events/slavery-and-islam>.

<sup>312</sup> “Louay Safi,” HBKU CIS, n.d., <https://ibir.hbku.edu.qa/faculty/Dr-Louay-Safi?nid=53864>.

<sup>313</sup> “Georgetown Student Leaders Host Inspirational Workshops at Qatar Youth Power Conference,” Georgetown University Qatar, August 1, 2021, <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/georgetown-student-leaders-host-inspirational-workshops-at-qatar-youth-power-conference/>.

<sup>314</sup> “HBKU’s College of Islamic Studies Signs MoU with International Islamic University Malaysia to Foster Educational Development,” HBKU CIS, September 1, 2021, <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/news/CIS-SP-SMOUIIUMFED>.

<sup>315</sup> “Sami al-Arian Pleads Guilty to Conspiracy to Provide Services to Palestinian Islamic Jihad,” U.S. Department of Justice, April 17, 2006, [https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2006/April/06\\_crm\\_221.html](https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2006/April/06_crm_221.html).

<sup>316</sup> Yehudit Barsky and Ehud Rosen, “Islamist Antisemitism in the United States,” INSS, April 23, 2023, <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/islamist-antisemitism/>.

2024, al-Arian discussed his early involvement in the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>317</sup>

CIGA has held several international conferences on the issues of “Palestine,” “Islamophobia,” and the “Muslim Ummah.” Senior ACMCU staff were among the participants of these conferences.<sup>318</sup> It is worth noting that the Second International Conference on Palestine in June 2021 also hosted Omar Shakir, the Israel and Palestine director at Human Rights Watch (HRW), whose visa was annulled by Israel due to his support for the BDS campaign (an act for which Israel was criticized).<sup>319</sup> In October 2020, ACMCU promoted a webinar organized by the Coalition for Civil Freedoms, which marked “a decade of supporting Muslim political prisoners and their families.” The webinar was titled “Breaking the Silence: Defending the Victims of America’s ‘War on Terror,’” and featured, among others, John Esposito, Jonathan A.C. Brown, Sami al-Arian, Laila al-Arian, and Dalia Mogahed (see below).<sup>320</sup>

### 3.1.6 Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy

The Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID) is a Washington-based non-profit founded in 1999. According to its website, it is “dedicated to studying Islamic and democratic political thought and merging them into a modern Islamic democratic discourse.”<sup>321</sup> Its president is Radwan Masmoudi, a veteran figure in the Tunisian Islamist Ennahda party who resigned from its ranks in 2021, stating that he wanted to “devote himself to safeguarding democracy, free of conflicts and partisan

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<sup>317</sup> “Kuwaiti-Palestinian Academic Sami al-Arian, Who Was Deported from the U.S. for His Terror Links, Discusses the Early Days of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement in the U.S.: There Was a Dispute Whether to Become a Public Organization Or Remain Clandestine,” MEMRI, June 6, 2024, <https://www.memri.org/tv/kuwait-palestinian-academic-sami-al-arian-deported-terror-links-muslim-brotherhood-us>.

<sup>318</sup> For example, John Esposito, see Fourth International Conference on Islamophobia, March 11–13, 2023, Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, Conference Program, n.d., p. 2, <http://irep.iium.edu.my/104064/4/Binder1-Dr%20Noor%20Osman.pdf>, and Jonathan Brown (Sami al-Arian’s son-in-law), see “Session VII (B): Fourth International Conference on the Muslim Ummah...,” video, posted December 17, 2020, by Center for Islam and Global Affairs, Facebook, [https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch\\_permalink&v=954276342060828](https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=954276342060828).

<sup>319</sup> “Second International Conference on Palestine (Arabic),” streamed live on June 18, 2021, by Center for Islam and Global Affairs, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OetNTpx7fGY&list=PLzTaql4NOhZuCIAeufl7QRR3sizAce9nf&index=2>.

<sup>320</sup> “Breaking the Silence: Defending the Victims of America’s ‘War on Terror,’” October 10, 2020, email announcement, ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://mailchi.mp/georgetown/ccf-breaking-the-silence-defending-the-victims-of-americas-war-on-terror?e=0ddd60f0ca>.

<sup>321</sup> “About,” Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, n.d., <https://csid-online.org/about>.

constraints.”<sup>322</sup> The CSID’s current board of directors includes Nader Hashemi, Emad Shahin, and Tamara Sonn, the Hamad Bin Khalifa al-Thani Professor in the History of Islam at Georgetown University’s Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service.<sup>323</sup> John Esposito was a founding member and an officer of CSID and in a 2022 fundraising clip praised CSID’s reputation in Arab countries like Egypt and Tunisia, as well as in Washington, among policy makers, academics, and others at think tanks.<sup>324,325</sup>

During CSID’s 17th annual conference in 2016, which hosted United States Institute of Peace (USIP) executive vice president William Taylor, posthumous Muslim Democrat of the Year Awards were granted to two senior U.S.-based Islamists and former board members of CSID<sup>326</sup> who had died that year, Jamal al-Barzinji and Taha Jabir Alalwani.<sup>327</sup> The awards were presented by IIIT president Hisham al-Talib. Also in 2016, USIP, CSID, George Mason, and the intergovernmental Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) co-hosted a conference to mark a year since President Obama’s Cairo speech. The conference hosted, among others, Farah Pandith, special representative to Muslim communities at the U.S. Department of State, and Rashad Hussain, U.S. special envoy to the OIC, alongside Islamist figures like Tariq Ramdan and Emad Shahin, then at Notre Dame University.<sup>328</sup>

CSID has long enjoyed cooperation with USIP, a U.S. federal “national, nonpartisan, independent institute, founded by Congress and dedicated to the proposition that a world without violent conflict is possible, practical and essential for U.S. and global security.”<sup>329</sup> USIP has been funded annually by Congress. Back in September 2002, a report by David Smock, director of USIP’s Religion and Peacemaking Initiative, which he wrote following a joint workshop with CSID, stated that “the United States has generally accepted the fiction that repression in the Muslim world is the best

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<sup>322</sup> “Tunisia: Radwan Masmoudi Resigns from Ennahda Movement,” *Al Mayadeen*, August 11, 2021, <https://english.almayadeen.net/news/politics/1501230/tunisia:-radwan-masmoudi-resigns-from-ennahda-movement>.

<sup>323</sup> “Board of Directors,” Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, n.d., <https://csid-online.org/board-directors>.

<sup>324</sup> “John Esposito Supporting CSID,” posted August 19, 2022, by CSID, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3dBidYM5EQ>.

<sup>325</sup> “John L. Esposito,” Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, n.d., <https://www.csid-online.org/people/john-l-esposito>.

<sup>326</sup> Frank J. Gaffney, Jr., “Dubious Company,” *Washington Times*, June 21, 2004, <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2004/jun/21/20040621-095849-8791r/>.

<sup>327</sup> “17th Annual Conference—Conference Report,” Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, n.d., <https://www.csid-online.org/post/17th-annual-conference>.

<sup>328</sup> “U.S. Relations with the Muslim World,” events, USIP, n.d., <https://www.usip.org/events/usrelations-muslim-world>.

<sup>329</sup> Home page, United States Institute of Peace (USIP) website, n.d., <https://www.usip.org/>.

way to prevent Islamism from growing as a threat to the West and to U.S. interests.”<sup>330</sup> The report criticized repression by U.S.-allied countries of “liberal, pluralistic forms of political Islam,” praised what it described as Turkish progress towards democratization, and recommended that the United States make an effort to promote effective regional mechanisms of accountability within organizations like the Organization of the Islamic Conference (now the Organization of Islamic Cooperation) and the League of Arab States.

## 3.2 ACMCU-affiliated Scholars and Fellows

The analysis below highlights Georgetown University’s extensive ties to prominent Islamist and pro-Islamist figures, scholars, and activists. These relationships serve as conduits for ideological dissemination, influencing curricular decisions, shaping faculty perspectives, and steering campus discourse toward accommodating or endorsing Islamist viewpoints. The presence and active engagement of these individuals at Georgetown raise profound concerns about the university’s scholarly objectivity, intellectual integrity, and the potential ramifications for shaping future leaders in American foreign policy and national security.

### 3.2.1 Nader Hashemi

Nader Hashemi is the successor of John Esposito as the current director of ACMCU and an associate professor at SFS. Formerly a professor at the University of Denver, Hashemi made national headlines in 2022 when he suggested that the Israeli Mossad was behind the assassination attempt of author Salman Rushdie at the hands of an Islamist extremist.<sup>331</sup> Earlier in his career, Hashemi served on the editorial board of the *Middle East Affairs Journal*, an academic publication whose Winter/Spring 1995 issue was presented as evidence in the landmark 2008 terrorism financing trial against the Holy Land Foundation, once the largest Islamic charity in the United States. The journal was published by the United Association for Studies and Research (UASR), an organization with a seemingly neutral name. According to the State of Illinois’s Articles of Incorporation (file no. 5566-789-6), dated September 18, 1989, UASR was a Virginia-based think tank founded by Mousa Abu Marzook and led by Ahmed Yousef.<sup>332</sup> In a March 1998 interview with *Middle East Quarterly*,

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<sup>330</sup> David Smock, “Islam and Democracy,” USIP, September 13, 2002, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2002/09/islam-and-democracy>.

<sup>331</sup> Paul C. Avey et al., “Pipeline to the Beltway?,” *Foreign Policy*, January 3, 2012, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/01/03/pipeline-to-the-beltway/>.

<sup>332</sup> Joe Hutchison, “Cornell, Harvard, NYU and Georgetown Have Received Billions in Funding from Arab Countries over Past 30 Years,” *Daily Mail Online*, October 19, 2023, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12649249/Cornell-Harvard-NYU-Georgetown-received-billions-funding-Arab-countries-past-30-years.html>.



Yousef confirmed his and Marzook's involvement in founding UASR.<sup>333</sup> Abu Marzook, who was detained and deported from the United States in 1995 on terrorism charges, is now a senior leader in Hamas, as is Yousef, who also holds a senior position within the organization.

Hashemi also has a long history of anti-Zionist statements and activism. He has publicly endorsed the BDS campaign<sup>334</sup> and continually accuses Israel of committing genocide, ethnic cleansing, apartheid, and a myriad of other crimes against humanity.<sup>335</sup> Since the terrorist attacks of October 7, 2023, Hashemi has increased the ferocity of his anti-Israeli rhetoric.<sup>336</sup>

### 3.2.2 Jonathan A.C. Brown

Jonathan A.C. Brown is a professor of Islamic studies at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service (SFS) and the Alwaleed Chair of Islamic Civilization at ACMCU.<sup>337</sup> A convert to Islam,<sup>338</sup> Brown has both ideological and personal affinities to the Muslim Brotherhood. He was formerly engaged to the daughter of Tareq al-Suwaidan,<sup>339</sup> one of the most prominent Muslim Brotherhood leaders in the Persian Gulf and author of the fiercely antisemitic *The Jews: The Illustrated Encyclopedia*.<sup>340</sup>

Brown is currently married to Al Jazeera producer Laila al-Arian, the daughter of prominent Palestinian radical Islamist Sami al-Arian, who currently serves as the director of the Istanbul-based Center for Islam and Global Affairs (CIGA). Brown is a former academic affiliate of CIGA.<sup>341</sup> In 2017, Brown came under heavy public

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<sup>333</sup> Ahmad Yusuf, "Hamas Is a Charitable Organization," Middle East Forum, April 24, 2009, <https://www.meforum.org/388/ahmad-yusuf-hamas-is-a-charitable-organization>.

<sup>334</sup> "Nader Hashemi, Where Do We Stand?, July 15, 2017, <https://wheredowestand.org/nader-hashemi/>.

<sup>335</sup> Nader Hashemi (@naderalhashemi), "Huge honor to share the stage at an Islamic ethics conference with 2 people I greatly admire: @Kh\_fadl & @aalodah. Topic: 'The Gaza Genocide & The Problem of Political Tyranny in the Islamic World,'" X, October 13, 2024, <https://x.com/naderalhashemi/status/1845499482965999638>.

<sup>336</sup> Nader Hashemi and James A. Millward, "Lessons on Genocide from Xinjiang and Gaza," DAWN, February 24, 2024, <https://dawnmena.org/lessons-on-genocide-from-xinjiang-and-gaza/>.

<sup>337</sup> "Jonathan A. Brown," Georgetown360, n.d., <https://gufaculty360.georgetown.edu/s/contact/00336000014RYoCAAW/jonathan-a-c-brown>.

<sup>338</sup> "What Led Me to Islam—Dr. Jonahan Brown," posted May 9, 2011, by 877-Why-Islam, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tCyqvR7QtQ>.

<sup>339</sup> May Alsuwaidan (@MaysAlsuwaidan), "@moona2201 إشاعة انتشرت : Jonathan AC Brown. ما عندي زوج ولا أولاد أخي هذي إشاعة انتشرت", <http://acmcu.georgetown.edu/acmcuprofiles/JonathanBrown.JPG>, X, August 11, 2012, <https://x.com/MaysAlsuwaidan/status/234183761447751680>.

<sup>340</sup> Yehudit Barsky and Ehud Rosen, "Islamist Antisemitism in the United States," INSS, April 23, 2023, <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/islamist-antisemitism/>.

<sup>341</sup> "People," HBKU, n.d., <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/people?entity=256>.

criticism after writing a paper published on the website of the Islamist Yaqeen Institute, where he served as director of Hadith research, and delivering a lecture in which he defended the practice of slavery and concubinage in Muslim history.<sup>342</sup> He is a supporter of the BDS campaign<sup>343</sup> and constantly takes to social media to demonize Israel and Israelis.<sup>344</sup> Brown is also known for falsely blaming the founding of ISIS on the United States.<sup>345</sup> Most recently, he posted a comment on X invoking the anti-Jewish blood libel in reference to the Israel Defense Forces, declaring, “The IDF is objectively the most effective child-killing machine in modern history. This is Israel’s new claim to fame. This is really going to mess with whole “blood libel” schtick [sic] that hasbara operatchiks [sic] regularly rely on.”<sup>346</sup>

## Al Jazeera Media Network

The Al Jazeera Media Network (AJMN) is a Qatar-based conglomerate whose Arabic channel was launched in 1996. It is effectively owned and controlled by the Qatari royal family,<sup>347</sup> and in 2020 its U.S.-based subsidiary AJ+, a social media and storytelling project, was therefore ordered by the Department of Justice to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). Qatar claimed this was a politically motivated demand and did not obey the order.<sup>348</sup> Al Jazeera has been banned in several Middle Eastern countries.

Al Jazeera promotes a strident anti-Israel and pro-Hamas line. The week after the October 7, 2023 Hamas-led massacre, then U.S. Secretary of State Tony

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<sup>342</sup> Michael Luciano, “Islamic Studies Professor on Whether Rape and Slavery Are Wrong: It Depends,” *The Daily Banter*, February 10, 2017, <http://thedailybanter.com/2017/02/islamic-studies-professor-on-whether-rape-and-slavery-are-wrong-it-depends/>.

<sup>343</sup> “Religious Studies Scholars Statement of Solidarity with the Palestinian Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement,” Jewish Voice for Peace, n.d., archived February 24, 2017, at [https://web.archive.org/web/20170224031548/http://org.salsalabs.com/o/301/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action\\_KEY=19740](https://web.archive.org/web/20170224031548/http://org.salsalabs.com/o/301/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=19740).

<sup>344</sup> Jonathan A.C. Brown (@JonathanACBrown), “Israeli security forces are lunatics. Israel is insanely racist. This guy seems to have been ... interesting,” X, March 21, 2024, <https://x.com/JonathanACBrown/status/1770864983821201881>.

<sup>345</sup> “Dr. Jonathan AC Brown – Who Created ISIS? The Deen Show Interview Part 2 of 2,” posted March 17, 2016, by Dr. Johnathan Brown Unofficial, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-aPhhd-jBQA>.

<sup>346</sup> Jonathan A.C. Brown (@JonathanACBrown), “The IDF is objectively the most effective child-killing machine in modern history,” X, August 21, 2024, <https://x.com/JonathanACBrown/status/1826289052171276558>.

<sup>347</sup> Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, “Report Concerning Qatar’s Al Jazeera Media Network & The Foreign Agents Registration Act,” Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP on behalf of the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, July 6, 2020, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/3492-Informational-Materials-20200708-59.pdf>.

<sup>348</sup> Lachlan Markay, “DOJ Pressed to Enforce Al Jazeera Foreign Agent Ruling,” *Axios*, March 2, 2021, <https://www.axios.com/2021/03/03/doj-enforce-al-jazeera-foreign-agent-ruling>.

Blinken visited Qatar. Following his trip he stated that he went so far as to tell the Qatari government to “turn down the volume on Al Jazeera’s coverage because it is full of anti-Israel incitement,” based on his concerns that the channel’s reportage could escalate the conflict.<sup>349</sup> In early 2025, for example, Al Jazeera aired a documentary featuring Hamas senior military commanders during the planning of the October 7 attack and the ensuing war.<sup>350</sup> A 2024 report by the Combat Antisemitism Movement found that AJ+, said to have been under critical scrutiny for promoting anti-Western narratives and supporting antisemitic messaging, had been using bots and fake social media accounts to disseminate anti-Israel and anti-U.S. narratives.<sup>351</sup> In 2015, the Al Jazeera America channel, which was later closed, faced a \$15 million lawsuit from former employees who claimed that they had encountered an antisemitic and sexist workplace environment.<sup>352</sup> Most recently, Tamer al-Mishal, an Al Jazeera journalist based in Qatar, was reported to be the producer of two Hamas hostage handover ceremonies in Gaza. The two ceremonies featured female Israeli soldiers who were paraded on a stage decorated with Hamas banners in front of Hamas terrorists and a hostile baying crowd prior to their release.<sup>353</sup>

In May 2019, AJ+ aired a video promoting Holocaust denial in which the presenter Muna Hawwa said that the special focus on the Jewish victims of the Nazis was because “the Jewish groups had financial resources, media institutions, research centers and academic voices that managed to put a special spotlight” on them.<sup>354</sup> Al Jazeera pulled the video, distanced itself from it and suspended Hawwa and the Syrian producer and editor Amer al-Sayed

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<sup>349</sup> Barak Ravid, “Scoop: Blinken Says He Asked Qatari PM to Rein in Al Jazeera War Coverage, Per Sources,” *Axios*, October 25, 2023, <https://www.axios.com/2023/10/25/tony-blinken-qatar-israel-hamas>.

<sup>350</sup> “Al-Jazeera Documentary on Hamas Military Commanders during the War Includes Exclusive Footage Provided by Al-Qassam Brigades of Muhammad Deif, Yahya Sinwar, Interview with Military Leader Izz Al-Din Al-Haddad, MEMRI, January 24, 2025, <https://www.memri.org/tv/jazeera-doc-hamas-military-commanders-oct7-deif-sinwar-izz-al-din-al-haddad>.

<sup>351</sup> “Strategic Deception: Unmasking the Fake Profiles Network Spreading AJ+ Antisemitic Propaganda,” Combat Antisemitism Movement, December 4, 2024, <https://combatantisemitism.org/studies-reports/strategic-deception-unmasking-the-fake-profiles-network-spreading-aj-antisemitic-propaganda/>.

<sup>352</sup> John Koblin, “Al Jazeera America, Its Newsroom in Turmoil, Is Now the News,” *New York Times*, May 5, 2015, [https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/06/business/media/al-jazeera-network-in-turmoil-is-now-the-news.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/06/business/media/al-jazeera-network-in-turmoil-is-now-the-news.html?_r=0).

<sup>353</sup> Eitan Fischberger (@efischberger), “Breaking: Senior Al Jazeera Journalist Produced Hamas’ Hostage Release Ceremonies,” X, January 29, 2025, <https://x.com/efischberger/status/1884684436173734391?s=46>.

<sup>354</sup> Stuart Winer, “Al Jazeera Pulls Video Claiming Jews Exploited Holocaust to Create Israel,” *Times of Israel*, May 19, 2019, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/al-jazeera-pulls-video-claiming-jews-exploited-holocaust-to-create-israel/>.

Omar.<sup>355</sup> The two never apologized, and Hawwa continues to present pro-Hamas and anti-Zionist programs.<sup>356</sup> Al Jazeera has also promoted various other extremist forces. For example, according to MEMRI, in December 2023, Saudi researcher Awwad al-Qarni described Al Jazeera as “a mouthpiece of Iran’s ayatollahs and of its criminal militias.”<sup>357</sup>

Qatari debate and conference outfits are often used to legitimize Islamist and terror figures by inviting them to take part in and speak at events. In February 2025, the Al Jazeera Centre for Studies organized the 16th Al Jazeera Forum, which dealt with the subject “From the War on Gaza to the Change in Syria: the Middle East ahead of New equalizers.” Among the speakers were senior Hamas officials Basem Naim and Osama Hamdan.<sup>358</sup>

### 3.2.3 Dalia Mogahed

Dalia Mogahed is a protégé of John Esposito.<sup>359</sup> The two have collaborated at the Gallup Center and co-authored the 2007 book *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*, which was later adapted into a film.<sup>360</sup> During President Obama’s first term in the White House, Mogahed was a member of his Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.<sup>361</sup> In an interview with German media in 2009, she claimed that some of the ideas she suggested were integrated by the writers of Obama’s Cairo speech,<sup>362</sup> the first speech he made in a Middle Eastern country.

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<sup>355</sup> “Al Jazeera’s Revolving Door: Suspended, Reinstated after Holocaust Denial Video,” CAMERA, November 15, 2021, <https://www.camera.org/article/al-jazeeras-revolving-door-suspended-reinstated-after-holocaust-denial-video/>.

<sup>356</sup> Jane Prinsley, “Al Jazeera Journalist Who Downplayed Shoah Returns to Channel for Film That ‘Glorifies Hamas,’” *The Jewish Chronicle*, November 29, 2024, <https://www.thejc.com/news/world/al-jazeera-journalist-who-downplayed-shoah-returns-to-channel-for-film-that-glorifies-hamas-tnrdii3c>.

<sup>357</sup> Yigal Carmon, “Al-Jazeera Arabic: The Qatari-Owned TV Channel That Promotes Islamist Terrorism Worldwide – UPDATED,” MEMRI, May 6, 2024, [https://www.memri.org/reports/al-jazeera-arabic-qatari-owned-tv-channel-promotes-islamist-terrorism-worldwide-%E2%80%93-updated#\\_ednref99](https://www.memri.org/reports/al-jazeera-arabic-qatari-owned-tv-channel-promotes-islamist-terrorism-worldwide-%E2%80%93-updated#_ednref99).

<sup>358</sup> “Al Jazeera Forum: From the War on Gaza to Change in Syria” (in Arabic), posted February 15, 2025, by Aljazeera Mubasher, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAAiqamvVWQ>.

<sup>359</sup> Josh Gerstein, “W.H. Islam Expert Says Firm Rule Nixed CAIR Speech,” *Politico*, October 22, 2009, <https://www.politico.com/blogs/under-the-radar/2009/10/wh-islam-expert-says-firm-rule-nixed-cair-speech-022289>.

<sup>360</sup> John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (Gallup Press, 2007).

<sup>361</sup> Noha el-Hennawy, “Muslim Woman’s Appointment As Obama Advisor Draws Cautious Optimism,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 22, 2009, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2009-apr-22-fg-obama-advisor22-story.html>.

<sup>362</sup> Juliane von Mittelstaedt, “Obama’s Cairo Speech: ‘The Beginning of a Dialogue with Muslims,’” interview with Dalia Mogahed, *Der Spiegel*, June 8, 2009,

Mogahed has consistently defended organizations like the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA),<sup>363</sup> both of which have ties to the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>364</sup> In September 2008, during an appearance at the Religion Newswriters Association Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., she was questioned about these organizations' connections to Islamic radicals. In response, Mogahed argued that it would be unjust for these groups to be "disenfranchised" due to what she described as "misinformation." She further asserted, without offering supporting evidence, that there was a deliberate effort to silence them.<sup>365</sup> In 2020, Mogahed participated in a CAIR campaign further defending the organization and claiming that CAIR fights misinformation.<sup>366</sup> She is also a frequent speaker at the annual Islamist MAS-ICNA conventions.

Mogahed has characterized supporters of suicide terrorism as individuals seeking freedom and democracy but who feel both culturally and militarily "threatened" by the West. According to her polling data, those who sympathize with terrorism don't hate our freedom: they actually "want freedom."<sup>367</sup> What sets these individuals apart from other Muslims, she and Esposito explain in their book, is their heightened "sense of threat." These supporters of terrorism, Mogahed continues, show that "a primary catalyst for radicalism, often seen as inseparable from the threat to Muslim religious and cultural identity, is the threat of political domination and occupation." Radicals are more likely to believe that there is an ongoing war against their religion and are also more inclined to say that advancing democracy would contribute to the progress of Muslims.<sup>368</sup> In September 2024, Mogahed blamed Islamophobia globally and in the United States' "imperialist" foreign policy on Zionist needs. According to her, it is the need of Zionists to exploit and oppress the Palestinians that made them manufacture the ideology of Islamophobia.<sup>369</sup>

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<https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/obama-s-cairo-speech-the-beginning-of-a-dialogue-with-muslims-a-629205.html>.

<sup>363</sup> "Dalia Mogahed – #womenshistorymonth," CAIR, March 29, 2022,

[https://www.cair.com/press\\_releases/dalia-mogahed-womenshistorymonth/](https://www.cair.com/press_releases/dalia-mogahed-womenshistorymonth/).

<sup>364</sup> Lorenzo Vidino, "The Hamas Networks in America: A Short History," George Washington University Program on Extremism, October 2023, 13,

<https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs5746/files/2023-10/hamas-networks-final.pdf>.

<sup>365</sup> "Dalia Mogahed: A Muslim George Gallup or Islamist Ideologue?," The Investigative Project, April 15, 2010, <https://www.investigativeproject.org/1904/dalia-mogahed-a-muslim-george-gallup-or-islamist>.

<sup>366</sup> "Dalia Mogahed: CAIR Fights Misinformation," posted May 22, 2020, by CAIR Chicago, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6JQgOyLkGU>.

<sup>367</sup> John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, "Battle for Muslim Hearts and Minds: The Road Not Yet Taken," *Middle East Policy* 14(1) (2007).

<sup>368</sup> Ibid.

<sup>369</sup> "104: Why Is the Muslim Divorce Rate Increasing? w. Dalia Mogahed," posted September 25, 2024, by The Ansari Podcast, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfH7otMK77Q&rco=1>.



### 3.2.4 Dalia Fahmy

Dalia Fahmy is an Islamist-leaning academic known for her work on Islamic political thought and Middle Eastern affairs. A professor of political science at Long Island University, Fahmy has built a career that blends scholarship with activism, often taking positions that have sparked controversy, particularly regarding her views on the Muslim Brotherhood and U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. She is a frequent speaker at CAIR events.<sup>370</sup>

An associate of John Esposito and Sami al-Arian,<sup>371</sup> Fahmy has been a vocal critic of Western policies toward the Muslim world, frequently arguing that U.S. foreign policy, particularly post-9/11, has exacerbated tensions between the West and Muslim-majority countries.<sup>372</sup> Her critiques often center on the idea that American military interventions and political strategies contribute to radicalization and undermine democracy in the region. This narrative has placed her at odds with those who argue that U.S. interventions are necessary for promoting stability and combating terrorism.

One of the more controversial aspects of Fahmy's career is her defense of the Muslim Brotherhood, which has been labeled as a terrorist group by several countries, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE,<sup>373</sup> and has recently been banned by Jordan.<sup>374</sup> Like other critics of these governments, Fahmy has often portrayed the Muslim Brotherhood as a legitimate political movement that has been unjustly persecuted by authoritarian regimes.<sup>375</sup>

In her academic work and public commentary, Fahmy has also argued that the repression of Islamist political movements—particularly in the aftermath of the Arab Spring—has led to increased violence and instability in the Middle East. Her views on political Islam, and particularly her framing of Islamist movements as potential forces for democracy and reform, align with prevalent views within ACMCU.

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<sup>370</sup> "Speaker bios," CAIR Chicago, n.d., <https://www.cairchicago.org/2021-speaker-bios>.

<sup>371</sup> "The Future of Democracy in the Middle East," video, posted October 9, 2017, by Boğaziçi Üniversitesi İslam Araştırmaları Kulübü, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1911122315876190>.

<sup>372</sup> "Dr. Dalia Fahmy," posted January 10, 2024, by Doha Forum, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Pn9MR6An50>.

<sup>373</sup> "Explainer—Who Is Targeting the Muslim Brotherhood?," *Reuters*, May 3, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-muslimbrotherhood-explainer/explainer-who-is-targeting-the-muslim-brotherhood-idUSKCN1S90YX/>.

<sup>374</sup> David Gritten, "Jordan Bans Muslim Brotherhood After Arrests over Attack Plots," *BBC*, April 23, 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn4w8prpkepo>.

<sup>375</sup> Ali Harb, "Muslim Brotherhood Blacklist: Trump's Push Threatens Muslim Americans," *Middle East Eye*, April 30, 2019, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/muslim-brotherhood-blacklist-trumps-push-threatens-muslim-americans>.



Fahmy's activism and public engagements have further contributed to consolidating her credentials as a pro-Muslim Brotherhood academic. She has participated in panels and events organized by organizations with alleged ties to Islamist groups. For example, she has spoken at conferences hosted by the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)<sup>376</sup> and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).<sup>377</sup>

Esposito, who has long been an outspoken advocate for engaging with political Islam as a legitimate and democratic force, has appeared on panels together with Fahmy.<sup>378</sup> This connection has placed Fahmy in the Esposito-centered network of scholars and public intellectuals who are often sympathetic toward Islamist organizations. Fahmy is also connected to the DAWN project,<sup>379</sup> an organization founded by the late Jamal Khashoggi, who, contrary to popular perception, was a Saudi pro-Muslim Brotherhood journalist, with the goal of advancing Islamist political opposition in the Arab world.<sup>380</sup>

### 3.2.5 Emad Shahin

Shahin is a senior fellow at ACMCU and the former dean of the College of Islamic Studies at Hamad bin Khalifa University. A member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, he was sentenced to death in absentia by an Egyptian court in 2015.<sup>381</sup> Since the ruling he has been living in Doha, where he continues to propagate his strong anti-American, anti-Israel, and pro-Islamist views. In November 2024, for instance, Shahin publicly lauded Hamas's October 7 massacre, describing it as the best "vision" for the regional transformation that "we [Arabs] long for ... [Hamas's] vision represents us" promising liberation from the United States.<sup>382</sup>

<sup>376</sup> "Dalia Fahmy," Islamic Society of North America, n.d., <https://isna.net/dalia-fahmy/>.

<sup>377</sup> "2021 Banquet Speakers," CAIR Chicago, n.d., <https://www.cairchicago.org/2021-speaker-bios>.

<sup>378</sup> Dalia Fahmy, "Today is the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. Join us tomorrow as we discuss, with Dr. Karen Armstrong, Dr. John Esposito, Baroness Sayeeda Warsi and Dr. Emad Shaheen," LinkedIn, March 16, 2023, [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/dalia-fahmy-602baa105\\_today-is-the-international-day-to-combat-activity-7041774630138732546-Flz1](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/dalia-fahmy-602baa105_today-is-the-international-day-to-combat-activity-7041774630138732546-Flz1); Tad Walsh, "'Islamophobia Is Irrational,' Antithetical to American Values, BYU Islam Conferencegoers Told," *Deseret News*, October 19, 2021, <https://www.deseret.com/faith/2021/10/19/22733587/islamophobia-is-irrational-byu-islam-faith-mormon-latter-day-saints-conference/>.

<sup>379</sup> "Dalia Fahmy," DAWN, n.d., <https://dawnmena.org/experts/dalia-fahmy/>.

<sup>380</sup> Michael Droan and Tony Badran, "Why the Saudis Despised Jamal Khashoggi," Hudson Institute, October 18, 2018, <https://www.hudson.org/foreign-policy/why-the-saudis-despised-jamal-khashoggi>.

<sup>381</sup> David Kirkpatrick, "Renowned Scholar in Egypt Charged with Espionage," *New York Times*, January 22, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/23/world/middleeast/egypt.html>.

<sup>382</sup> Emad Shahin, "طوفان الأقصى" يرمز إلى التغيير الذي يجب أن يحدث في المنطقة بفضل المقاومة, YouTube, November 16, 2024, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eq\\_hn-K0g6w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eq_hn-K0g6w).

### 3.2.6 Louay Safi

Louay Safi, born and educated in Damascus, Syria, arrived in the United States in the early 1980s. After obtaining his Ph.D. in the United States, Safi became an associate professor of political science at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in May 1992. He later served as deputy dean and then as dean of the Research Centre and College of Islamic Knowledge and Human Sciences at the Islamist IIUM. Safi was a fellow at ACMCU from 2016 to 2019. He is also a senior fellow at the Institute of Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU), an organization formerly headed by Dalia Mogahed. He is currently a professor of political science and Islamic thought at Hamad Bin Khalifa University's College of Islamic Studies in Doha.<sup>383</sup>

In 1998, Safi joined the advisory council of a journal published by the United Association for Studies and Research (UASR), which was part of the Palestine Committee of the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood and had close ties to Hamas. In January 1999, he became the research director of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT),<sup>384</sup> which is also affiliated with the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood. That same month, he became a founding member of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID), alongside several individuals connected to IIIT. It is worth recalling here that CSID maintains close relations with the U.S. State Department.<sup>385</sup>

By January 2000, Safi took on the role of editor for the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, a publication of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS), which is headquartered at IIIT. He served as president of AMSS from January 2001 to January 2003 while also serving as IIIT's Director of Research. In January 2004, he became the executive director of the Leadership Development Center of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), another significant group with ties to the ideology and objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood. In November 2005, he became chairman of the newly established Syrian American Council. He assumed the role of communications director of ISNA in September 2009.<sup>386</sup> By September 2011, U.S. media identified Safi as a leading member of the Syrian National Council, a Syrian opposition group predominantly influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>387</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> "Louay Safi," Insight: Louay Safi's Insight into Thought & Life, n.d., <https://louaysafi.com/about-me/>.

<sup>384</sup> Ibid.

<sup>385</sup> Eric Trager, "The Administration Should Not Meet with the Muslim Brotherhood in Washington," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, June 5, 2015, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/administration-should-not-meet-muslim-brotherhood-washington>.

<sup>386</sup> "Louay Safi," Insight: Louay Safi's Insight into Thought & Life, n.d., <https://louaysafi.com/about-me/>.

<sup>387</sup> Raphaël Lefèvre, "The Muslim Brotherhood's Role in Syria," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 10, 2015, <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2015/02/the-muslim-brotherhoods-role-in-syria?lang=en>.

In 1995, according to U.S. court records, Dr. Safi was in telephone contact with Sami al-Arian,<sup>388</sup> who currently heads the Istanbul-based Center for Islam and Global Affairs (CIGA). A transcript of their intercepted conversation indicates that they discussed President Clinton's new executive order banning financial transactions with terrorist organizations, including Palestinian Islamic Jihad. In January 2005, local media reported that Dr. Safi was identified as an unindicted co-conspirator in the indictment against al-Arian.<sup>389</sup>

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The positions adopted by above-mentioned scholars—including the defense of Islamist organizations, promotion of anti-Israel narratives, and reinterpretation of terrorist actions as legitimate resistance—carry significant implications for how future American diplomats and policymakers might interpret and engage with complex geopolitical issues in the Middle East and the broader Islamic world. Given Georgetown University's role as a key training ground for the U.S. State Department and diplomatic corps, these ideological influences present tangible concerns for American national security interests and diplomatic effectiveness.

### 3.3 Other ACMCU Projects and Relationships

ACMCU has strategically extended its influence beyond Georgetown University through an extensive network of affiliated initiatives and organizational partnerships. These include prominent projects such as the Bridge Initiative and Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN), as well as a long history of collaboration with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). Collectively, these affiliations significantly amplify ACMCU's ideological reach into policy arenas, media narratives, and the broader public discourse surrounding Islam and Islamism. Through these carefully cultivated relationships, ACMCU fosters an environment capable of framing critical analyses of Islamist movements as manifestations of "Islamophobia," hosting controversial personalities under the protection of academic freedom, and shaping public policy dialogues across multiple platforms. Consequently, an academic institution has effectively been transformed into a central hub of ideological dissemination, exerting considerable

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<sup>388</sup> Rep. W. Todd Akin and Rep. Sue Myrick, Congressional Letter to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, December 17, 2009, Washington, D.C., available at <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/FOID/Reading%20Room/Other/10-F-1568-Christian-and-Islam-Key-words-within-EXSEC-Correspondence.pdf>.

<sup>389</sup> Brooks Egerton, "Syrian Opposition Figure Trained U.S. Soldiers But Was Suspended over Extremist Ties," *Dallas Morning News*, September, 2013, <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/watchdog/2013/09/05/syrian-opposition-figure-trained-u-s-soldiers-but-was-suspended-over-extremist-ties-after-fort-hood-massacre/>.

influence beyond its campus boundaries and affecting American policymakers, media commentators, and the general public's perceptions of political Islam, Middle Eastern affairs, and U.S. foreign policy.

### 3.3.1 Bridge Initiative

The Bridge Initiative is a quasi-academic, quasi-activist project that, as previously mentioned, received at least one major donation from IIIT and was launched by ACMCU in April 2015.<sup>390</sup> It describes itself as “a multi-year research project on Islamophobia,” aiming to disseminate original and accessible research, analysis, and commentary on contemporary issues and to host a wide repository of educational resources to inform the general public about Islamophobia.<sup>391</sup> Its publications and claims, often produced in collaboration with other organizations such as Dalia Mogahed's Institute of Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU), are widely used by liberal organizations and are often utilized by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC).<sup>392</sup> In reality, the Bridge Initiative weaponizes charges of racism and Islamophobia and the apparent failure to address them, thus conflating politicians, decision makers, law enforcement agencies, researchers and critics of Islamism, and far-right activists.

Arsalan Iftikhar, who taught at Georgetown's SFS for five years, serves as a senior research fellow at the Bridge Initiative.<sup>393</sup> Previously, he was the national legal director of CAIR,<sup>394</sup> an American organization with ties to the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Bridge Initiative's current senior researchers include Farid Hafez, an Austrian political scientist who was investigated in the framework of Operation Luxor. According to a Bridge Initiative factsheet, this large-scale Austrian police operation against political Islamists was a “textbook example of governing with crime and fear” ... “under Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, who was known for his anti-Muslim policies.”<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>390</sup> “The Bridge Initiative Launch: Mehdi Hasan (PART 2),” posted April 30, 2015, by ACMCU, YouTube, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNFgbWw\\_SAw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNFgbWw_SAw).

<sup>391</sup> “About Us,” Bridge Initiative, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://bridge.georgetown.edu/about-us/>.

<sup>392</sup> Alejandro Beutel, “American Muslim Political Engagement Is Growing and Strong Majorities of Americans Back Muslim Civil Rights,” Southern Poverty Law Center, May 1, 2018, <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2018/05/01/latest-poll-highlights-state-anti-muslim-hate-america-and-its-links-authoritarianism>.

<sup>393</sup> “About Arsalan Iftikhar,” The Muslim Guy, n.d., archived April 19, 2025, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20250419110533/https://www.themuslimguy.com/>.

<sup>394</sup> “Mixed Attitudes Among American Muslims,” NPR, May 23, 2007, <https://www.npr.org/2007/05/23/10346029/mixed-attitudes-among-american-muslims>.

<sup>395</sup> Bridge Initiative Team, “Factsheet: Operation Luxor,” Bridge Initiative, Georgetown University, January 8, 2024, <https://bridge.georgetown.edu/research/factsheet-operation-luxor/>.

It is worth noting that Hafez also serves as a director at Hatem Bazian’s Center for Islamophobia Studies<sup>396</sup> and was previously listed as a staff member at aforementioned Center for Islam and Global Affairs (CIGA) in Istanbul.<sup>397</sup> The Bridge Initiative’s website hosts a recording of a CIGA webinar from 2020 with Dalia Fahmy, who spoke about “COVID-19 and the continued mainstreaming of Islamophobia.” The recording is said to have been uploaded with CIGA’s permission.<sup>398</sup>

### 3.3.2 Democracy for the Arab World Now

Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN) is an American non-profit organization that was founded in 2020 to promote democracy and human rights in the Middle East, yet its many ties to pro-Islamist and anti-Israel activists and scholars cast much doubt on the authenticity of these claims. DAWN is the brainchild of the late Muslim Brotherhood–affiliated Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was assassinated before the organization could be established. It was later founded by several of his associates in order to continue his life’s work. Khashoggi had previously succeeded in reinventing himself as an exiled Saudi human rights dissident, yet in reality he continued to promote Islamism and wrote *Washington Post* columns under the directive of Qatari officials.<sup>399</sup> David Hearst, editor in chief of the UK-based pro-Islamist outlet Middle East Eye recalled his last meeting with Khashoggi at a conference in London shortly before his assassination.<sup>400</sup> The conference was organized by Middle East Monitor (MEMO),<sup>401</sup> which is known for promoting a strongly pro-Muslim Brotherhood and pro-Hamas

<sup>396</sup> “Center for Islamophobia Studies: Full Text of ‘Full Filing’ for Fiscal Year Ending Dec. 2022,” ProPublica, n.d., <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/473611429/202303129349302205/full>.

<sup>397</sup> “Prof. Dr. Farid Hafez PhD,” CIGA, n.d., archived November 30, 2021, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20211130031945/https://izu.edu.tr/en/ciga/about-us/staff/staff/farid-hafez>.

<sup>398</sup> “CIGA Ramadan Webinar Series – Covid-19, and the Continued Mainstreaming of Islamophobia,” video, Bridge Initiative, Georgetown University, May 11, 2020, <https://bridge.georgetown.edu/video/ciga-ramadan-webinar-series-covid-19-and-the-continued-mainstreaming-of-islamophobia/>.

<sup>399</sup> Souad Mekhennet and Greg Miller, “Jamal Khashoggi’s Final Months As an Exile in the Long Shadow of Saudi Arabia,” *Washington Post*, December 22, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/jamal-khashoggis-final-months-an-exile-in-the-long-shadow-of-saudi-arabia/2018/12/21/d6fc68c2-0476-11e9-b6a9-0aa5c2fcc9e4\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/jamal-khashoggis-final-months-an-exile-in-the-long-shadow-of-saudi-arabia/2018/12/21/d6fc68c2-0476-11e9-b6a9-0aa5c2fcc9e4_story.html).

<sup>400</sup> “Middle East Eye’s Editor-in-Chief David Hearst speaks on Jamal Khashoggi’s Murder,” posted June 31, 2019, by Middle East Eye, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9p5ML9G2kQ>.

<sup>401</sup> “Oslo at 25: A Legacy of Broken Promises,” conference organized by Middle East Monitor, September 29, 2018, London, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/category/conferences/oslo-at-25/>.



view of the region.<sup>402</sup> The true nature of Khashoggi's career is mirrored by DAWN, a self-professed human rights organization that focuses on supporting Islamists and propagating anti-Zionism.

A clear example of this can already be seen in DAWN's inaugural publication,<sup>403</sup> in which it presented and defended Saudi Islamist scholar Salman al-Odeh, a former mentor of Osama bin Laden who is known for calling on his followers to commit to jihad.<sup>404</sup> In one sermon in 2012 he insisted that the Holocaust was a "myth" meant to allow Jews to blackmail the West.<sup>405</sup> Nevertheless, DAWN presented him as a respectable and "popular scholar," known for his "reformist" and "peaceful" views, who was being unjustly persecuted by the Saudi regime. Al-Odeh's son, Abdullah Alaoudh, served as DAWN's director of research.<sup>406</sup> He is also a sponsored university associate and former senior fellow at ACMCU.<sup>407</sup>

Many of the board members of DAWN exemplify the true nature of its mission. Before all traces of him were removed from the organization's website, Asim Ghafoor, Khashoggi's former lawyer, was listed as a board member,<sup>408</sup> and DAWN was registered under his address in the filed corporation documents.<sup>409</sup> In the past, Ghafoor represented several prominent al-Qaeda charities subsequently designated as terrorist-supporting entities by the U.S. government,<sup>410</sup> such as the Global Relief Foundation (GRF), which "has connections to, has provided support for, and has provided assistance to Usama Bin Ladin, the al Qaida Network, and other known

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<sup>402</sup> Andrew Gilligan, "How the Muslim Brotherhood Fits into a Network of Extremism, *The Telegraph*, February 8, 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/11398538/How-the-Muslim-Brotherhood-fits-into-a-network-of-extremism.html>.

<sup>403</sup> Salman Alodah, "'Expressing Cynicism about the Government's Achievements': KSA Imprisons Salman Alodah, a Popular Scholar Advocating for Reform," DAWN, October 18, 2020, <https://dawnmena.org/expressing-cynicism-about-the-governments-achievements-ksa-imprisons-salman-alodah-a-popular-scholar-advocating-for-reform/>.

<sup>404</sup> "Reactions and Counter-Reactions to the Saudi Clerics' Communiqué Calling for Jihad in Iraq," MEMRI, April 21, 2005, <https://www.memri.org/reports/reactions-and-counter-reactions-saudi-clerics-communic%C3%A9-calling-jihad-iraq>.

<sup>405</sup> "Saudi Cleric Salman al-Odeh: Jews Use Human Blood for Passover Matzos, MEMRI, August 1, 2012, <https://www.memri.org/tv/saudi-cleric-salman-al-odeh-jews-use-human-blood-passover-matzos>.

<sup>406</sup> Abdullah Alaoudh, "Saudi Arabia Is Slowly Killing My Father," DAWN, January 4, 2021, <https://dawnmena.org/saudi-arabia-is-slowly-killing-my-father-2/>.

<sup>407</sup> "Abdullah Alaoudh," ACMCU, n.d., <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/profile/abdullah-alaoudh/>.

<sup>408</sup> "Asim Ar Ghafoor," DAWN, n.d., archived July 8, 2022, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20220708140923/https://dawnmena.org/about/who-we-are-2/asim-ar-ghafoor/>.

<sup>409</sup> Martha Lee, "The Dawn of an Islamist Think Tank in DC," Middle East Forum, January 4, 2021, <https://www.meforum.org/61908/dc-acquires-yet-another-disinformation-thinktank>.

<sup>410</sup> Benjamin Baird, "Exposed: Indian American Muslim Council's 20-Year Love Affair with the Taliban," Middle East Forum, October 12, 2021, <https://www.meforum.org/indian-american-muslim-council-loves-taliban>.



terrorist groups.”<sup>411</sup> Ghafoor also represented the U.S. branch of the Saudi Al Haramain Foundation (AHF) charity,<sup>412</sup> which was designated as a terrorist-supporting entity in 2004 for being directly linked to Bin Laden.<sup>413</sup> Another current board member and co-founder of DAWN is CAIR’s Nihad Awad (see below).

DAWN is another key component in the network of Islamist activism and influence in which Georgetown plays a major role. Many of its personnel have ties to both entities. For instance, Nader Hashimi,<sup>414</sup> the current director of ACMCU, Emad Shahin, and Dalia Fahmy<sup>415</sup> are all non-resident fellows at DAWN.<sup>416</sup> Georgetown was also among the sponsors of DAWN’s first “Integrity Awards” distributed in 2023 at a gala dinner marking the fifth anniversary of Khashoggi’s assassination.<sup>417</sup>

### 3.3.3 Council on American-Islamic Relations

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is a large Islamic civil rights and advocacy group that was founded in 1994. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has regional offices nationwide. CAIR is also a founding member of the U.S. Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO), the largest Islamist umbrella group in the United States.<sup>418</sup> Federal prosecutors named CAIR as an unindicted co-conspirator in the 2007 Hamas terror financing case.<sup>419</sup> Following this case, the FBI adopted a policy for its field offices that was intended to significantly restrict non-investigative interactions with CAIR.<sup>420</sup> In December 2023, CAIR executive director Nihad Awad praised the Hamas-led October 7 massacre, declaring that he was

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<sup>411</sup> “Treasury Department Statement Regarding the Designation of the Global Relief Foundation,” press release, U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 18, 2002, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/po3553>.

<sup>412</sup> Philip Shenon, “Lawyers Fear Monitoring in Cases on Terrorism,” *New York Times*, April 28, 2008, <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/28/us/28lawyers.html>.

<sup>413</sup> “Treasury Designates Al Haramain Islamic Foundation,” press release, U.S. Department of the Treasury, June 19, 2008, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/hp1043>.

<sup>414</sup> “Nader Hashemi,” DAWN, March 2, 2024, <https://dawnmena.org/experts/nader-hashemi/>.

<sup>415</sup> “Dalia Fahmy,” DAWN, February 14, 2024, <https://dawnmena.org/experts/dalia-fahmy/>.

<sup>416</sup> “Welcome Dr. Nader Hashemi: New ACMCU Director,” ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, July 7, 2023, <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/2023/07/07/welcome-dr-nader-hashemi-new-acmcu-director/>.

<sup>417</sup> “DAWN’s 2023 Annual Report,” DAWN, March 14, 2024, <https://dawnmena.org/dawns-2023-annual-report/>.

<sup>418</sup> “Founding Members,” US Council of Muslim Organizations, n.d., [https://uscmo.org/founding\\_members/](https://uscmo.org/founding_members/).

<sup>419</sup> Josh Gerstein, “Judge’s Ruling on Islamic Groups As ‘Unindicted Co-Conspirators’ Made Public,” *Politico*, November 19, 2010, <https://www.politico.com/blogs/under-the-radar/2010/11/judges-ruling-on-islamic-groups-as-unindicted-co-conspirators-made-public-030922>.

<sup>420</sup> “Review of FBI Interactions with the Council on American-Islamic Relations,” Evaluation and Inspections Division, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Justice, September 2013, <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2013/e0707r.pdf>.

“happy to see people breaking the siege and throwing down the shackles of their own land and walk free into their land, which they were not allowed to walk in.”<sup>421</sup> CAIR had previously been invited as a partner organization to participate in the implementation of the Biden administration’s 2023 National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism. Following Awad’s statement, the White House condemned his remarks as “shocking, antisemitic statements”<sup>422</sup> and removed CAIR from the list of partner organizations.<sup>423</sup>

CAIR and Georgetown are known to cooperate. Back in 2007, a symposium on “What It Means to Be Muslim in America” that was co-sponsored by Georgetown’s Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs hosted, among others, John Esposito, Georgetown’s Muslim chaplain Imam Yahya Hendi, then president of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) Ingrid Mattson, and Hadia Mubarak, then a senior researcher at ACMCU, the first woman and first native-born American to be elected to lead the Islamist National Muslim Students Association, and a member of CAIR’s national board.<sup>424</sup> In January 2018, Georgetown’s Center for Public & Nonprofit Leadership (CPNL) partnered with CAIR to develop a five-day program “to build financial sustainability, develop human talent, and create strong governance and management structures for its chapters in communities across the country.”<sup>425</sup> In addition, in one of many other examples, Esposito took part in a CAIR congressional briefing on “Anti-Muslim Bias in Politics” in October of that year.<sup>426</sup> In addition to the above, CAIR has a notable presence at Georgetown University through the ACMCU’s aforementioned Bridge Initiative. This connection is evidenced by the hiring of Arsalan Iftikhar, an individual with strong ties to CAIR, as a senior research fellow at the Bridge Initiative.<sup>427</sup> While not a formal partnership

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<sup>421</sup> Betsy Klein, “White House Slams Comments from CAIR Leader about October 7, CAIR Says Remark Was Taken out of Context,” *CNN*, December 8, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/12/08/politics/white-house-cair-leader/index.html>.

<sup>422</sup> Ibid.

<sup>423</sup> “White House Removes CAIR from National Strategy on Antisemitism,” *Jewish News Syndicate*, December 7, 2023, <https://www.jns.org/white-house-removes-cair-from-national-strategy-on-antisemitism/>.

<sup>424</sup> “CAIR Board Member to Speak at Georgetown,” CAIR, n.d., [https://www.cair.com/cair\\_in\\_the\\_news/cair-board-member-to-speak-at-georgetown/](https://www.cair.com/cair_in_the_news/cair-board-member-to-speak-at-georgetown/).

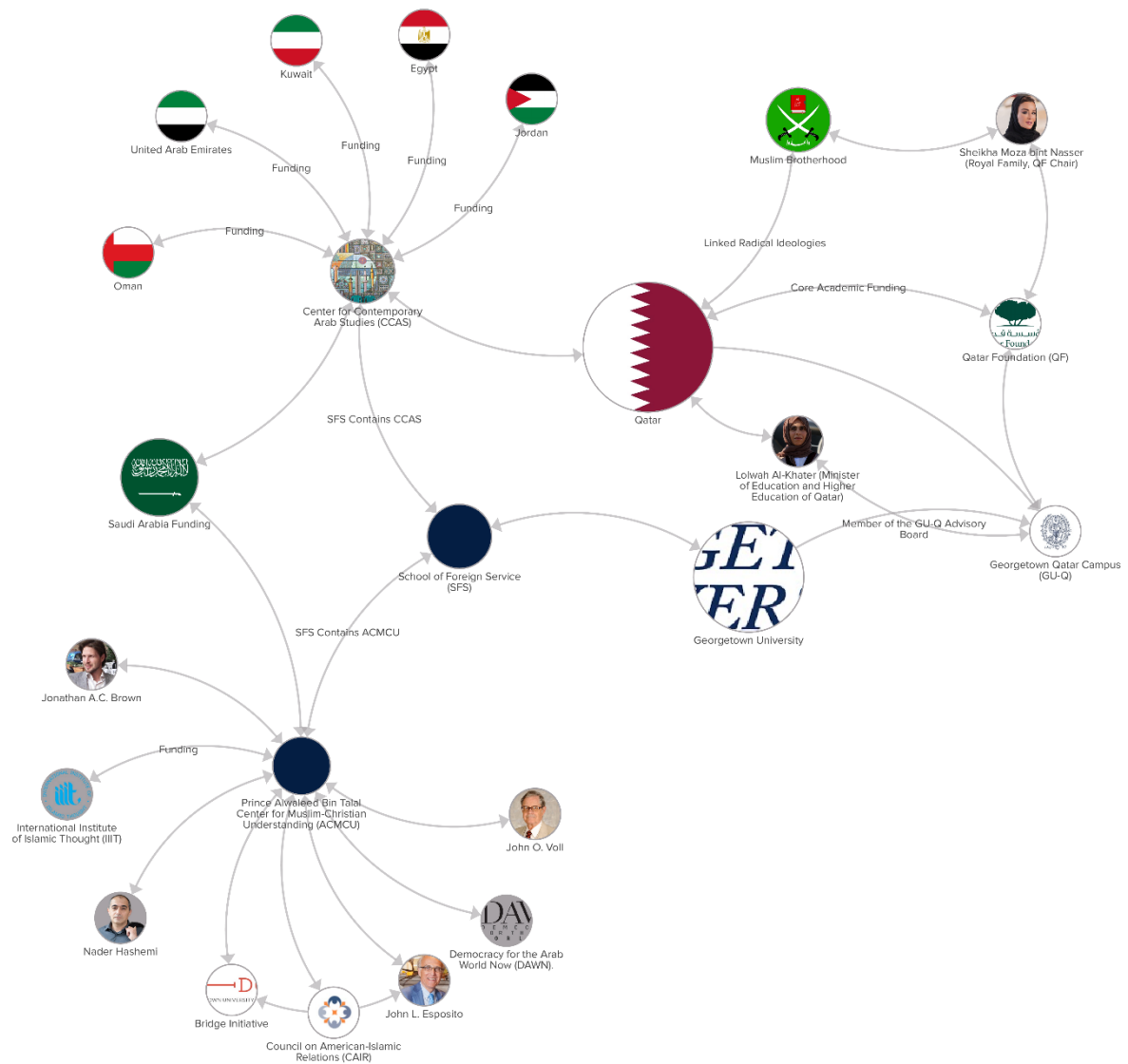
<sup>425</sup> “Partnering with the Council on American-Islamic Relations to Promote Robust Muslim Communities Nationwide,” Center for Public & Nonprofit Leadership, School of Public Policy, Georgetown University, n.d., [https://cpnl.georgetown.edu/news-story/cair\\_training/](https://cpnl.georgetown.edu/news-story/cair_training/).

<sup>426</sup> “CAIR to Hold Congressional Briefing on Anti-Muslim Bias in Politics,” CAIR, October 2, 2018, [https://www.cair.com/press\\_releases/cair-to-hold-congressional-briefing-on-anti-muslim-bias-in-politics](https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-to-hold-congressional-briefing-on-anti-muslim-bias-in-politics).

<sup>427</sup> “Bridge/ACMCU Welcomes Arsalan Iftikhar As Senior Research Fellow,” Georgetown University, July 21, 2017, <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/2017/07/21/bridge-acmcu-welcomes-arsalan-iftikhar-as-senior-research-fellow/>.

like the 2018 program, this relationship indicates CAIR's continued influence over and involvement in Georgetown's academic activities.

**Figure 1: Qatar's influence at Georgetown and beyond**



## 4. Georgetown's Qatar Campus (GU-Q)

### 4.1 Key Findings

- Georgetown University (GU) established its Georgetown University Qatar (GU-Q) campus in part due to its financial difficulties and dependence on federal grants.
- Georgetown and the Qatar Foundation have thus far signed three agreements relating to the establishment and operation of GU-Q, covering the periods 2005–2015, 2015–2025, and 2025–2035.<sup>428</sup>
- As of October 15, 2024, Georgetown had reported a total of \$927,598,923 in Qatari funding to the U.S. Department of Education (DoEd), as required by law.
- Based on its own financial statements, however, Georgetown is estimated to have received \$1,073 million in Qatari funding during this period. The \$146 million gap between the two figures would appear to represent Georgetown's underreporting to the DoEd.
- In addition to the above, the total amount of undisclosed Qatari grants to Qatari students at GU-Q between 2005 and 2024 is estimated at over \$102 million.
- Georgetown's 2021–2024 financial statements also reveal significant non-cash benefits from the Qatar Foundation, which owns and operates Georgetown's School of Foreign Service campus in Doha's Education City. Our analysis suggests that Georgetown has underreported approximately \$8 million in Qatar Foundation contributions over this period, potentially indicating a broader pattern of incomplete financial disclosure regarding Qatari support.
- Finally, Georgetown's financial statements further indicate that the university's average expenditure per student is considerably higher at its Qatar campus than at its campus in Washington, D.C., which means that per capita GU invests much more in educating foreign students than it does in educating American students.

### 4.2 Going to Qatar

In 1997, the Qatar Foundation founded Doha's Education City, a large education hub that is home to several American and European universities, as well as Hamid Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) and a handful of other Qatari education centers. It

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<sup>428</sup> On April 16, 2025, GU renewed its agreement with Qatar for another decade. See Ajani Stella and Ruth Abramovitz, "GU Renews Qatar Campus Contract for Another Decade," *The Hoya*, April 25, 2025, <https://thehoya.com/news/gu-renews-qatar-campus-contract-for-another-decade/>.

constitutes “the largest overseas enclave of American colleges.” anywhere in the world.<sup>429</sup> The first American university to set up a satellite campus in Doha’s Education City was Virginia Commonwealth University, and it was soon joined by several others, including Weill Cornell Medicine (2001), Texas A&M (2003),<sup>430</sup> Carnegie Mellon (2004), Georgetown (2005), and Northwestern (2008).

Universities located in Qatar enjoy several unique advantages, including access to Qatari research funding, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and a generous management fee. The government-run Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) offers grants exclusively to institutions based in Qatar. Consequently, universities with campuses in Qatar are eligible to apply for valuable QNRF grants, enhancing their research capabilities and academic programs. However, the relevant research proposals must demonstrate that they benefit Qatar and are aligned with the Qatari national vision.

As discussed below, Georgetown’s financial difficulties may have motivated it to seek new revenue sources, leading to the establishment of its Qatar campus.

### 4.3 Georgetown’s Financial Difficulties

According to Georgetown’s 2024–2025 financial report, “the University ended FY 2005 with a \$15.9 million deficit from operations. Capital contributions of \$32.7 million together with other non-operating losses of \$31.0 million (most of which were non-cash) resulted in a decrease in University net assets of \$14.2 million to \$845.4 million. ... Total return on the pooled endowment was 9.4% compared with a 19.7% return in FY 2004. New endowment gifts totaled \$22.8 million, while distributions to operations totaled \$35.5 million.”<sup>431</sup>

The report further notes that “during FY 2005 the University’s Operating Cash and Investments (OCI) portfolio increased by \$22.7 million, primarily due to the sale of assets (NAS and Wormley buildings).”<sup>432</sup> These property sales generated \$64.4 million in revenue. The transaction was largely necessitated by the need to repay a \$38.5 million line of credit during the 2005 fiscal year.<sup>433</sup> As further evidence of

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<sup>429</sup> Wasserman, Gary. *The Doha Experiment: Arab Kingdom, Catholic College, Jewish Teacher* (p. 22). Skyhorse. Kindle Edition.

<sup>430</sup> In February 2024, Texas A&M voted to close its Qatar campus by 2028, citing regional instability and a desire to focus on U.S. campuses. The decision was apparently also motivated by concerns about national security risks and academic restructuring.

<sup>431</sup> *Report of the Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2005*, Georgetown University, n.d., p. 1, available at <https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/raioiooql4dezjqieql>

<sup>432</sup> *Ibid.*, at 29.

<sup>433</sup> *Ibid.*

Georgetown's financial challenges during this period, the university implemented a sale-and-leaseback arrangement,<sup>434</sup> clearly indicating the financial constraints it was experiencing at the time.

### 4.3.1 Dependence on Government Grants

As stated in Georgetown's 2005–2006 financial report, "The University receives a substantial amount of its revenues from U.S. Government grants and contracts. The ultimate determination of amounts received under these programs generally is based upon allowable costs, which are subject to audit, and are reported to the U.S. Government. Recovery of indirect costs is based on predetermined rates negotiated with the government."<sup>435</sup>

### 4.3.2 Georgetown's Debt and Negative Operating Results

Georgetown's financial reports reveal significant debt as a motivating factor for establishing its Qatar campus. According to its 2005–2006 financial report, the fair value of the university's debt obligations was approximately \$689,221,000 as of June 30, 2006, down from \$705,341,000 in 2005.<sup>436</sup> In the same report, we also see a major increase the net operating deficit starting in 2005. During this period, Georgetown increased various debt activities, such as issuing new bonds, refunding existing debt, and using interest rate swaps to manage borrowing costs. This substantial debt burden suggests that the university faced increased capital needs and suffered from budget constraints, likely influencing its decision to expand internationally.

**Figure 2: Financial summary from Georgetown's 2005–2006 financial report (in \$ millions)<sup>437</sup>**

Financial Overview	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Operating Results:					
Revenues	\$599.4	\$619.1	\$656.6	\$696.0	\$740.3
Expenses	584.3	639.3	680.5	711.8	744.1
Operating Net	15.1	(20.2)	(23.9)	(15.9)	(3.8)

<sup>434</sup> Vel Hernandez, "British Private School Leases Space on Wisconsin Ave. from University," *The Hoya*, January 19, 2007, <https://thehoya.com/uncategorized/british-private-school-leases-space-on-wisconsin-ave-from-university/>.

<sup>435</sup> *Report of the Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2006*, Georgetown University, n.d., p. 23, note 13, available at <https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/rfpvxumh6192ey7wvcjk>.

<sup>436</sup> *Ibid.*, at 16.

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid.*, at 3.



## 4.4 Additional Financial Incentives to Establish GU-Q

The financial incentives for Georgetown to open its Qatar campus did not end with the full funding of the construction of the campus by the Qatari government, which dedicated the revenue from an entire natural gas facility to the project, but also extended to an understanding that Georgetown was “worthy of gifts.” For instance, in the initial negotiations concerning the campus, as recounted in Gary Wasserman’s *The Doha Experiment*, “there was an early understanding that Qatar would endow three faculty chairs at \$5 million apiece for studies of the Middle East, an agreement signed in late 2005.”<sup>438</sup>

Potential faculty members were offered “some one-and-a-half times conventional salary, plus housing, a round-trip business ticket for home leave, a car allowance, private school education for the children, and the prospect of a glistening pot of research monies.”<sup>439</sup> When the agreement first started in 2005, the Washington campus received \$5.8 million as an annual management fee, as well the cost of the three chairs Doha funded in Middle East studies, and 30% of the compensation funds of the Doha campus that were sent to Washington to pay for benefits.<sup>440</sup> Since then, the Doha campus has grown multiple-fold.

## 4.5 The Establishment of GU-Q

According to Georgetown’s 2004–2005 financial report, “On May 17, 2005, the University entered into an agreement with an unrelated Foundation to establish a degree granting branch campus as part of the School of Foreign Service. The Foundation will own the facility and be responsible for construction and maintenance. The University will be reimbursed for all allowable costs and expenses incurred by the Foundation. An irrevocable standby letter of credit will be established by the Foundation. A management fee will be paid to the University on an annual basis. This agreement is in place until June 30, 2015.”<sup>441</sup>

Georgetown’s 2014–2015 annual financial report notes that “the initial ten-year agreement ended on June 30, 2015. The new ten-year agreement which ends on June 30, 2025 was entered into during fiscal year 2015.”<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>438</sup> Gary Wasserman, *The Doha Experiment: Arab Kingdom, Catholic College, Jewish Teacher* (Skyhorse Publishing, 2017), 25.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.*, at 26.

<sup>440</sup> *Ibid.*, at 28.

<sup>441</sup> *Report of the Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2005*, Georgetown University, n.d., pp. 23–24, <https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/raioiooql4dezjqieql>.

<sup>442</sup> *Annual Financial Report 2014–2015*, Georgetown University, n.d., p. 42, <https://georgetown.box.com/s/nj08kk6rslujhlneqfz414nubefvi58g>.

### 4.5.1 Terms of Georgetown's Agreements with the Qatar Foundation

The full text of the agreements between Georgetown and the Qatar Foundation has not been made public. However, based on Georgetown's annual financial reports and statements,<sup>443</sup> the terms of these agreements include:

- a. *Establishment of a Branch Campus:* The agreement established a branch campus of Georgetown's School of Foreign Service in Doha, Qatar.
- b. *Ownership and Responsibility:* The Qatar Foundation owns the facilities and is responsible for their construction and maintenance.
- c. *Reimbursement of Costs:* Georgetown University is reimbursed for all allowable costs and expenses incurred in operating the branch campus.
- d. *Management Fee:* Georgetown University receives an annual management fee.
- e. *Term:* The initial agreement was for ten years, from May 17, 2005, to June 30, 2015. It was renewed for another ten years in April 2015 (until June 30, 2025) and again in April 2025 (until June 30, 2035).
- f. *Funding of Operational Costs:* Since 2020, the Qatar Foundation directly funds Georgetown's operational costs at the Qatar campus based on agreed-upon annual budgets.

## 4.6 Financial Overview

A close examination of Georgetown's annual financial reports and statements reveals an incomplete disclosure of the financial support received from Qatari sources throughout the reporting period.<sup>444</sup>

Georgetown's annual financial reports (2006–2017) and annual financial statements (2018–2024) refer to the Qatar Foundation and Georgetown's Qatar campus by various different names, including the Qatar Foundation (2011, 2014–2024), the Foundation (2011), the Qatar Campus (2006, 2008, 2017), GU-Q (2017), the SFS campus and the School of Foreign Service campus in Qatar (2007–2014, 2016). All these different names are used to identify the allocation of funding from the Qatar Foundation to Georgetown University in Georgetown's annual financial reports and statements.

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<sup>443</sup> Georgetown's annual financial reports and statements are available on the website of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer at <https://ocfo.georgetown.edu/gao/financial-reports-and-disclosures/>.

<sup>444</sup> Ibid.

### 4.6.1 Reporting to the DoEd

According to data reported to the U.S. Department of Education (DoEd) as of October 15, 2024, Georgetown University has received \$927,598,923 in grants from Qatari sources since December 31, 2005.<sup>445</sup>

### 4.6.2 Qatari Funds under Each Agreement

Based on the numbers, dates of contracts, and receiving dates in the DoEd data, it appears that Georgetown received \$557,727,358 in Qatari funding under the initial agreement (2005–2015) but only \$347,687,113 in Qatari funding under the second agreement. In other words, the second agreement appears to have generated \$210 million less in revenue than the initial agreement, despite a near doubling in student numbers during this period. A potential explanation for this is that Georgetown did not accurately report all the funding and benefits it received from Qatar under the second agreement to the DoEd. This possibility is examined below.

### 4.6.3 Estimated Qatari Funding based on Georgetown's Financial Reports

The specific details of the financial relationship between the Qatar Foundation and Georgetown have not been publicly disclosed. However, after reviewing Georgetown's annual financial reports and statements for the years 2006–2024, we developed the following formula to estimate the amount of funding from the Qatar Foundation to Georgetown University during this period.

Given that the Qatar Foundation is the most substantial foundation that Georgetown works with— and that it is the only foundation that is mentioned by name in Georgetown's financial reports and statements—we estimate that Qatar Foundation funding likely represents the vast majority (90%) of all foundation-based revenue listed in the Georgetown's financial statements. In the following table, we apply this percentage to the share of overall revenue that is identified as originating from foundations in Georgetown's financial reports and statements.

As shown in the table below, total funding from the Qatar Foundation to Georgetown during the period in question is estimated to amount to \$1.073 billion. During the same period, however, Georgetown only reported \$927 million in Qatari funding to the DoEd, which is \$146 million less than what can be extrapolated from

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<sup>445</sup> Calculated based on Section 117 Foreign Gift and Contract Data as of October 15, 2024, available on the website of Federal Student Aid, an Office of the U.S. Department of Education, at <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/sites/default/files/2024-11/Sec117PublicRecordsCompleteOct152024.xlsx>.

its own financial reports and statements. This represents a potential underreporting of approximately 13.6% of the total amount of Qatari funding received by Georgetown.

**Figure 3: Total estimated Qatar Foundation funding received by Georgetown (2005–2024)<sup>446</sup>**

A	B	C	D	E	F
Fiscal year	Grants and contracts (in millions)	Foundations share	Estimated QF share	Estimated QF funding (in millions)	Source as described in reports and statements
2005–2006	–	–	–	\$15.7	“opening of the new SFS campus in Qatar (\$15.7 million)”
2006–2007	\$232	29%	90%	\$60.55	Grants and contracts
2007–2008	\$234	27%	90%	\$56.86	
2008–2009	\$250	29%	90%	\$65.25	
2009–2010	\$279.3	35%	90%	\$72.89	
2010–2011	\$230.1	31%	90%	\$64.19	
2011–2012	–	–	–	\$45.27	“reimbursed a total of \$45,272,000 by the Foundation”
2012–2013	\$234.2	37%	90%	\$77.98	Grants and contracts
2013–2014	\$228.1	47%	90%	\$96.48	
2014–2015	\$212.7	38%	90%	\$72.74	
2015–2016	\$213.8	12%	90%	\$23.09	
2016–2017	\$209.3	23.4%	90%	\$44.07	
2017–2018	\$34.785	–	90%	\$31.30	Grants and contracts related to private foundations
2018–2019	\$46.699	–	90%	\$42.02	
2019–2020	\$53.689	–	90%	\$48.32	
2020–2021	\$60.854	–	90%	\$54.76	
2021–2022	\$66.108	–	90%	\$59.49	
2022–2023	\$73.601	–	90%	\$66.24	
2023–2024	\$84.495	–	90%	\$76.04	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,073.24</b>	

<sup>446</sup> All the data in columns B and C are taken from Georgetown’s annual financial reports and statements for the relevant fiscal years, which are available on the website of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer at <https://ocfo.georgetown.edu/gao/financial-reports-and-disclosures/>. The estimated Qatari funding in column E is calculated by multiplying the values in columns B, C, and D.

#### 4.6.4 Value of Facilities Contributed by the Qatar Foundation

Georgetown's financial statements for 2021–2024 casts fresh light on the value of the campus facilities provided by the Qatar Foundation in Doha. This arrangement represents a significant non-cash benefit for Georgetown, as the Qatar Foundation has taken responsibility for the construction, ownership, and running of the School of Foreign Service campus infrastructure. Georgetown is thus able to utilize these state-of-the-art facilities without incurring any construction or running costs.

Before 2020, Georgetown did not explicitly report this substantial economic advantage in its financial disclosures. Based on Georgetown's 2021–2024 financial statements, which present total operating revenue and other support as a percentage of facility costs compared to the value of facilities contributed by the Foundation, it appears that Georgetown likely underreported approximately \$8 million in Qatar Foundation contributions over this four-year period. This significant discrepancy represents facility-related value that the Qatar Foundation provided but Georgetown did not properly disclose in its financial statements. Given that the value of the facilities at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and Georgetown University in Qatar are likely similar, this suggests potential underreporting of Qatari support.

The above analysis suggests that this underreporting may extend beyond this four-year period, potentially indicating a broader pattern of incomplete disclosure of the Qatar Foundation's financial support of Georgetown.

**Figure 4: Value of facilities contributed by the Qatar Foundation<sup>447</sup>**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Year	Facility costs	Total operating revenue	Facility costs as % of operating revenue	Conditional grants from private foundations	Value of facilities contributed	Value of facilities as % of grants	Expected facility costs	Gap between expected and reported facility costs
			(A : B)			(E : D)	(D x C)	(G – E)
2021	\$73,794	\$1,274,345	5.80%	\$60,854,000	\$1,801,000	2.96%	\$3,529,000	\$1,728,000
2022	\$77,025	\$1,591,113	4.80%	\$66,108,000	\$1,523,000	2.30%	\$3,173,000	\$1,650,000
2023	\$80,024	\$1,654,876	4.80%	\$73,601,000	\$1,385,000	1.88%	\$3,532,000	\$2,147,000
2024	\$84,732	\$1,797,872	4.70%	\$84,495,000	\$1,500,000	1.78%	\$3,970,000	\$2,470,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$315,575</b>	<b>\$6,318,206</b>	–	<b>\$28,5058,000</b>	<b>\$6,209,000</b>	–	<b>\$14,204,000</b>	<b>\$7,995,000</b>

<sup>447</sup> All the non-calculated data in this table (columns A, B, D, and E) are from Georgetown's annual financial reports and statements for the relevant fiscal years, which are available on the website of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer at <https://ocfo.georgetown.edu/gao/financial-reports-and-disclosures/>.

## 4.7 Operating Expenses and Grants

### 4.7.1 Annual Operating Expenses per Student: GU vs. GU-Q

A review of Georgetown’s financial statements, reports, and disclosures during the period under investigation reveals the number of students at Georgetown’s Washington, D.C., and Qatar campuses. A comparison of the average operating expenses per student reveals that these expenses are significantly higher at the Qatar campus, as illustrated in Figure 5. This means that per capita Georgetown invests much more in educating foreign students than it does in educating American students.

**Figure 5: Annual operating expenses per student: GU vs. GU-Q<sup>448</sup>**

Fiscal year	Georgetown University			Georgetown University Qatar		
	Total operating expenses (in \$M)	Number of students	Expenses per student	Total operating expenses (in \$M)	Number of students	Expenses per student
2005–2006	\$718.80	12,723	\$56,496	\$15.70	25	\$628,000
2006–2007	\$794.70	13,141	\$60,475	\$67.28	60	\$1,121,333
2007–2008	\$890.10	13,395	\$66,450	\$63.18	100	\$631,800
2008–2009	\$942.00	13,934	\$67,604	\$72.50	138	\$525,362
2009–2010	\$965.80	15,093	\$63,990	\$90.58	146	\$620,411
2010–2011	\$1,014.80	15,386	\$65,956	\$71.33	169	\$422,071
2011–2012	\$1,053.80	15,663	\$67,280	\$45.27	189	\$239,524
2012–2013	\$1,115.60	15,869	\$70,301	\$86.65	237	\$365,612
2013–2014	\$1,117.90	16,283	\$68,654	\$107.21	249	\$430,562
2014–2015	\$1,147.90	16,751	\$68,527	\$80.83	251	\$322,032
2015–2016	\$1,180.30	16,751	\$70,461	\$25.66	241	\$106,473
2016–2017	\$1,224.40	16,696	\$73,335	\$48.98	253	\$193,597
2017–2018	\$1,268.70	19,005	\$66,756	\$34.79	310	\$112,226
2018–2019	\$1,322.90	19,200	\$68,901	\$48.67	336	\$144,851
2019–2020	\$1,366.20	19,200	\$71,156	\$53.69	398	\$134,899
2020–2021	\$1,299.70	19,500	\$66,651	\$60.85	434	\$140,207
2021–2022	\$1,501.50	20,000	\$75,075	\$66.11	454	\$145,617
2022–2023	\$1,652.40	20,392	\$81,032	\$73.60	470	\$156,596
2023–2024	\$1,790.40	20,392	\$87,799	\$84.50	462	\$182,900

<sup>448</sup> All the non-calculated data in this table are taken from Georgetown’s annual financial reports and statements for the relevant fiscal years, which are available on the website of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer at <https://ocfo.georgetown.edu/gao/financial-reports-and-disclosures/>.



#### 4.7.2 Student Grants: The Amiri Scholarship Program

The Amiri Scholarship Program, which is fully funded by the Qatari state, is designed to sponsor Qatari students undertaking full-time undergraduate or graduate studies at leading international universities. The program offers comprehensive support, including coverage for tuition, mandatory fees, monthly living stipends, books, medical insurance, and more.

Partnering with 28 elite institutions, the program provides educational opportunities for Qatari students in the United States (13 institutions), the United Kingdom (four institutions), China (two institutions), Australia (three institution), Singapore and Switzerland (one institution each), and Qatar (four institutions). Georgetown's Qatar campus is one of the four foreign institutions in Qatar that partner with the program.

Georgetown has thus far not reported the revenue it has gained from these scholarships to the DoEd, despite being required to do so under Section 117 of the Higher Education Act. In response to the question whether institutions are required to disclose payments of tuition and fees for students paid by foreign individuals, entities, or governments, the DoEd's Federal Student Aid website notes as follows:

*"The Department generally views instances where a foreign source pays tuition for a student or students to meet the definition of a "contract" under Section 117(h)(1). Student sponsorship agreements generally would be considered restricted or conditional contracts as they concern the payment of tuition and fees on behalf of a student from a particular country. See 20 U.S.C. § 1011f(h)(5)(D).*

*Generally, each covered transaction should be reported individually, provided the transactions meet or exceed the \$250,000 threshold. The Department acknowledges, however, that institutions may have many student sponsorship agreements with the same foreign source and that reporting by individual transaction may be challenging. In such circumstances, if the terms and conditions of the sponsorship agreements with a particular foreign source are substantially the same, an institution may aggregate the transactions and report them collectively."*<sup>449</sup>

In order to estimate the total value of the tuition grants given to Qatari students at Georgetown University Qatar (GU-Q) in the framework of the Amiri Scholarship

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<sup>449</sup> Answer to CR-Q6: Are institutions required to disclose payments of tuition and fees for students paid by foreign individuals, entities, or governments?, FAQs, website of Federal Student Aid, an Office of the U.S. Department of Education, n.d., at <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/topics/section-117-foreign-gift-and-contract-reporting/resources/frequently-asked-questions>.

Figure 6: Institutional partners in the Amiri Scholarship Program<sup>450</sup>



وزارة التربية والتعليم والتعليم العالي  
Ministry of Education and Higher Education  
دولة قطر • State of Qatar

العام الأكاديمي 2024 / 2025

قائمة الجامعات الأميرية المعتمدة للابتعاث الخارجي		
#	اسم الجامعة	الدولة
1	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	US
2	Stanford University	US
3	Harvard University	US
4	University of California, Berkeley	US
5	California Institute of Technology	US
6	Princeton University	US
7	University of Chicago	US
8	Yale University	US
9	University of Pennsylvania	US
10	Johns Hopkins University	US
11	Cornell University	US
12	Columbia University	US
13	University of California, Los Angeles	US
14	University of Oxford	UK
15	University of Cambridge	UK
16	Imperial College London	UK
17	University College London	UK
18	ETH Zurich	Switzerland
19	National University of Singapore	Singapore
20	Peking University	China
21	Tsinghua University	China
22	The University of New South Wales	Australia
23	The University of Melbourne	Australia
24	The University of Sydney	Australia
قائمة الجامعات الأميرية المعتمدة للابتعاث الداخلي		
1	جامعة كارنيغي ميلون في قطر	Carnegie Mellon University, Qatar
2	جامعة جورج تاون في قطر	Georgetown University, Qatar
2	جامعة جورج تاون في قطر	Georgetown University, Qatar
4	كلية طب وايل كورنيل في قطر	Weill Cornell Medical College, Qatar

Program between 2005 and 2024, we assumed that 40%<sup>451</sup> of the students at GU-Q were Qataris who received an Amiri Scholarship, since there are also many non-Qatari students in Education City, including at GU-Q. Undergraduate tuition fees at

<sup>450</sup> List of universities approved for foreign scholarships under the Amiri Scholarship Program, Qatar Ministry of Education and Higher Education, n.d., [https://scholarship.edu.gov.qa/home/assets/files/3\\_List\\_of\\_American\\_uni\\_approved\\_for\\_foreign\\_sch.pdf](https://scholarship.edu.gov.qa/home/assets/files/3_List_of_American_uni_approved_for_foreign_sch.pdf).

<sup>451</sup> Estimate based on data available in *Annual Report: 2018–2019 in Review* (Georgetown University Qatar, 2019), available at [https://issuu.com/sfsqcomm/docs/ar\\_2018-19-final](https://issuu.com/sfsqcomm/docs/ar_2018-19-final).

GU-Q consistently mirror those at Georgetown’s main campus in Washington, D.C.<sup>452</sup> Based on the above, the total estimated value of undisclosed Qatari tuition grants at Georgetown’s Qatar campus between 2005 and 2024 is over \$102 million, as indicated in the table below.

**Figure 7: Estimated value of undergraduate tuition grants given to Qatari students at GU-Q in the framework of the Amiri Scholarship Program**

Academic year	Tuition fees per student	Number of students at GU-Q <sup>453</sup>	Estimated proportion of Amiri Scholarship recipients	Value of Qatari tuition grants
2005–2006	\$31,656 <sup>a</sup>	25	40%	\$316,560
2006–2007	\$33,555 <sup>b</sup>	60	40%	\$805,320
2007–2008	\$35,568 <sup>c</sup>	100	40%	\$1,422,720
2008–2009	\$37,536 <sup>d</sup>	138	40%	\$2,071,987
2009–2010	\$38,616 <sup>e</sup>	146	40%	\$2,255,174
2010–2011	\$39,768 <sup>f</sup>	169	40%	\$2,688,317
2011–2012	\$40,920 <sup>g</sup>	189	40%	\$3,093,552
2012–2013	\$42,360 <sup>h</sup>	237	40%	\$4,015,728
2013–2014	\$44,280 <sup>i</sup>	249	40%	\$4,410,288
2014–2015	\$46,200 <sup>j</sup>	251	40%	\$4,638,480
2015–2016	\$48,048 <sup>k</sup>	241	40%	\$4,631,827
2016–2017	\$49,968 <sup>l</sup>	253	40%	\$5,056,762
2017–2018	\$51,720 <sup>m</sup>	310	40%	\$6,413,280
2018–2019	\$53,520 <sup>n</sup>	336	40%	\$7,193,088
2019–2020	\$55,440 <sup>o</sup>	398	40%	\$8,826,048
2020–2021	\$57,384 <sup>p</sup>	434	40%	\$9,961,862
2021–2022	\$59,784 <sup>q</sup>	454	40%	\$10,856,774
2022–2023	\$61,872 <sup>r</sup>	470	40%	\$11,631,936
2023–2024	\$64,904 <sup>s</sup>	462	40%	\$11,994,259
			<b>Total</b>	<b>\$102,283,962</b>

<sup>a</sup> Robert Heberle, “Board Increases Tuition by 6.2 Percent,” *The Hoya*, February 11, 2005, <https://thehoya.com/uncategorized/board-increases-tuition-by-6-2-percent/>. <sup>b</sup> Robert Heberle, “Board Votes to Raise Tuition by 6 Percent,” *The Hoya*, February 24, 2006, <https://thehoya.com/uncategorized/board-votes-to-raise-tuition-by-6-percent/>. <sup>c</sup> Max Sarinsky, “Tuition to Increase by 6 Percent Next Year,” *The Hoya*, February 13, 2007, <https://thehoya.com/uncategorized/tuition-to-increase-by-6-percent-next-year/>. <sup>d</sup> Sarah Mimms, “Tuition to Rise by 2.9% Next Year,” *The Hoya*, February 27, 2009, <https://thehoya.com/uncategorized/tuition-to-rise-by-2-9-next-year/>. <sup>e</sup> Ibid. <sup>f</sup> Jonathan Gillis, “Tuition to Rise 2.9 Percent in Upcoming Year,” *The Hoya*, February 11, 2011, <https://thehoya.com/news/tuition-to-rise-2-9-percent-in-upcoming-year/>. <sup>g</sup> Ibid. <sup>h</sup> Christian Paz, “Tuition Sees 4 Percent Hike for 2016-17,” *The Hoya*, August 12, 2016, <https://thehoya.com/news/tuition-sees-4-percent-hike-for-2016-2017/>. <sup>i</sup> Ibid. <sup>j</sup> Ibid. <sup>k</sup> Ibid. <sup>l</sup> Ibid. <sup>m</sup> Editorial Board, “Increase Transparency and

<sup>452</sup> “Tuition & Fees,” Georgetown University Qatar, n.d., <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/admissions/financial-aid/tuition-and-fees/>.

<sup>453</sup> The figures in this column are taken from Georgetown’s annual financial reports and statements for the relevant fiscal years, which are available on the website of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer at <https://ocfo.georgetown.edu/gao/financial-reports-and-disclosures/>.

Reevaluate Priorities in Tuition Increases,” *The Georgetown Voice*, December 7, 2018, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2018/12/07/increase-transparency-and-reevaluate-priorities-in-tuition-increases/>.<sup>n</sup> Ibid. <sup>o</sup> Alec Dewar, “University Increases Tuition For 9th Consecutive Year,” *The Hoya*, January 31, 2020, <https://thehoya.com/news/university-increases-tuition-for-9th-consecutive-year/>.<sup>p</sup> Ibid. <sup>q</sup> Samuel Yoo, “Georgetown Raises Undergraduate Tuition 3.5 Percent,” *The Hoya*, February 18, 2022, <https://thehoya.com/news/georgetown-raises-undergraduate-tuition-3-5-percent/>.<sup>r</sup> Ibid. <sup>s</sup> Catherine Alaimo, “Georgetown Raises Tuition Yet Again Amid Community Frustration,” *The Hoya*, March 3, 2023, <https://thehoya.com/news/georgetown-raises-tuition-yet-again-amid-community-frustration/>.

## 4.8 Challenges to Academic Freedom

Financial dependency is a critical factor that influences academic agendas. GU-Q is entirely financed by Qatar, including a substantial annual management fee remitted to Georgetown University’s main campus in Washington, D.C.

Despite the initial hopes of Georgetown’s administration that the university would be the spearhead of American liberal education in the Middle East, operating in Qatar’s restrictive legal environment has proved to be an insurmountable challenge to academic freedom. Qatari law criminalizes criticism of the Emir, restricts discussion of certain religious and cultural topics, and censors materials deemed offensive to local moral and political standards.<sup>454</sup>

The physical presence of American schools means that they must abide by Qatar’s restrictive laws when it comes to freedom of speech. As a matter of fact, the Qatari government operates an extensive system of censorship<sup>455</sup> that even censors and controls what reading lists are given to the students, forcing Stephan Eisenman, then president of Northwestern, to admit in 2015 that his faculty have “limited academic freedom” in Qatar.<sup>456</sup> The stories of censorship extend, most notably, to issues relating to homosexuality and atheism, the critical examination of Qatar’s domestic and foreign policies, and even scholarship critical of Qatar’s ally, the Islamic Republic of Iran. Strategies of academic control include banning texting books and denying visas to scholars.<sup>457</sup> All this led the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) to name GU-Q as one of the 10 U.S. colleges with the most restrictive censorship in 2019.<sup>458</sup> Even after it was placed on this list, the

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<sup>454</sup> “Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2022: Qatar,” Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, n.d., <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/qatar/>.

<sup>455</sup> Shannon Sims, “My Article Was Censored. I Found Out Why,” *New York Times*, August 1, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/01/insider/censorship-qatar-newspapers.html>.

<sup>456</sup> Peter Kotecki, “Former Faculty Senate President’s Concerns about NU-Qatar Remain,” *Daily Northwestern*, January 11, 2016, <https://dailynorthwestern.com/2016/01/10/campus/former-faculty-senate-presidents-concerns-about-nu-qatar-remain/>.

<sup>457</sup> A.R.K. Watson, “The Doha Experiment by Gary Wasserman,” book review, *Catholic Reads*, June 16, 2018, <https://catholicreads.com/2018/06/16/the-doha-experiment-by-gary-wasserman/>.

<sup>458</sup> Catriona Kendall, “Georgetown in Qatar Ranks Poorly on Free Speech,” *The Hoya*, February 15, 2019, <https://thehoya.com/news/gu-q-ranks-poorly-free-speech/>.

university responded by doubling down on its system of censorship at its Doha campus.<sup>459</sup>

In addition, GU-Q's curricula and research agendas frequently emphasize themes that are harmonious with Qatar's global image-building and foreign policy objectives. Courses focusing on diplomacy, conflict resolution, and Middle Eastern politics may frame regional issues in line with Doha's stances, including sympathetic views of Islamist movements that Qatar has historically supported. While overt censorship of syllabi may be rare, faculty often describe an unspoken understanding that certain topics—such as direct criticism of Qatar's migrant labor policies, evaluation of the country's support for political Islamists, or critical examinations of Hamas, Iran, and the Muslim Brotherhood—are to be handled with caution.<sup>460</sup>

Research funding patterns further reveal a preference for studies that either valorize Qatar's modernization narrative or avoid openly contentious subjects. The implications are subtle but significant: GU-Q has become a site where scholarship is selectively nurtured, advancing the host state's reputational interests rather than genuine intellectual plurality.

## 4.9 Workers' Rights

Qatar has always been known to have serious human rights issues when it comes to migrant workers. According to the U.S. State Department's 2022 report on human rights in Qatar, some of the issues include "restrictions on migrant workers' freedom of movement, access to justice, and vulnerability to abuses, including forced labor," besides a host of other legal abuses.<sup>461</sup> The abuses are often not just the work of bad employers but are executed directly by government agencies. According to an editorial from *The Hoya*, Georgetown University's most important student publication, "In Qatar, abuse and exploitation of workers is the norm rather than the exception."<sup>462</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> Sarah McLaughlin, "Georgetown University Doubles Down on Censorship of Religious Debate at Qatar Campus," FIRE, February 20, 2019, <https://www.thefire.org/news/georgetown-university-doubles-down-censorship-religious-debate-qatar-campus>.

<sup>460</sup> Neetu Arnold, "Outsourced to Qatar: A Case Study of Northwestern University-Qatar," National Association of Scholars, September 12, 2022, <https://www.nas.org/reports/outourced-to-qatar/full-report>.

<sup>461</sup> "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2022: Qatar," Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, n.d., <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/qatar/>.

<sup>462</sup> "Editorial: Extend Rights to Qatar Campus," *The Hoya*, January 26, 2018, <https://thehoya.com/opinion/editorial-opinion/editorial-extend-rights-qatar-campus/>.

In August 2017, the UK-based Business & Human Rights Resource Centre reached out to 19 institutions with campuses in Qatar or the UAE to assess their treatment of migrant workers' human and labor rights.<sup>463</sup> Georgetown University chose not to participate. Instead, the administration released a statement asserting that it would “continuously review our policies and practices to ensure labor standards and practices that align with our values as a Catholic and Jesuit institution.”<sup>464</sup> However, this response did not address the underlying issue. While Georgetown may have appropriate workplace protection policies, it has failed to ensure their implementation at the GU-Q campus. Additionally, the administration has lacked transparency, which is particularly disappointing given previous reports on similar campuses.<sup>465</sup>

The administration has frequently deflected criticism of its Qatar campus by emphasizing the importance of maintaining dialogue with the Gulf state. In 2015, then University president John J. DeGioia stated, “Being engaged is better than not. We are contributing, I think, to building a common good in the region.”<sup>466</sup>

## 4.10 Institutional Governance and Embedded Ideological Influences

The governance structure of GU-Q involves advisory boards and key figures who wield substantial cultural, political, and ideological influence. Qatar Foundation officials, members of the Al Thani ruling family, and Qatari diplomats often sit on boards that guide strategic priorities. For example, Lolwah Rashid Alkhater, Qatar's Minister of Education and Higher Education who is known for her vehement anti-Israel rhetoric,<sup>467</sup> has been involved in advising on aspects of Education City's programming.

In addition, visiting professors and affiliated scholars who champion political narratives ranging from anti-Israel positions to apologia for terrorist groups are often welcome. This governance ecosystem can steer the intellectual direction of GU-Q in ways that reflect Qatari diplomatic, religious, and ideological stances.

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<sup>463</sup> “Educational Institutions Fail to Respond to Questions on Migrant Worker Welfare in Qatar & UAE Operations,” Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, August 1, 2017, <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/educational-institutions-fail-to-respond-to-questions-on-migrant-worker-welfare-in-qatar-uae-operations/>.

<sup>464</sup> Ibid.

<sup>465</sup> “Editorial: Extend Rights to Qatar Campus,” *The Hoya*, January 26, 2018, <https://thehoya.com/opinion/editorial-opinion/editorial-extend-rights-qatar-campus/>.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid.

<sup>467</sup> “Lolwah Alkhater: The Genocide in Gaza Deserves the Title of a Massacre of Children” (in Arabic), posted February 18, 2024, by Al Jazeera Arabic, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HUQaoEkD6I>.



Some of the current members of GU-Q's advisory board include:<sup>468</sup>

### **Lolwah Rashid Alkhater**

Lolwah Rashid Alkhater is Qatar's Minister of Education and Higher Education.<sup>469</sup> She previously served in various senior positions in Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including official spokesperson, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Minister of State for International Cooperation.<sup>470</sup> Alkhater is notable for her academic interests and previously served as the Director of Research at the Qatar Foundation.<sup>471</sup> She is currently a Research Associate at the Oxford Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Forum at St. Antony's College, Oxford, and a board member of the Beirut-based Institute for Palestine Studies,<sup>472</sup> which is closely associated with the PLO.

Since October 7, 2023, Alkhater has been one of Qatar's strongest public anti-Israel voices. She appears regularly on Al Jazeera to mourn Palestinian martyrs and accuse Israel of genocide and crimes against humanity.<sup>473</sup> During the November 2023 ceasefire in Gaza, Alkhater posted a video of herself visiting on the Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing with the Qatar Fund, delivering a solidarity message from the Qatari leadership praising the Gazans who "restored our humanity that was stolen from us," adding that Gaza was paying "the price of breaking the arrogant occupation machine" and that, in the blood of their children, the Gazan people teach them what freedom is and what steadfastness looks like.<sup>474</sup> She also took to X to mourn the death of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, praising his life and heroism and referring to him as a divine miracle.<sup>475</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> "Advisory Board," Georgetown University Qatar, n.d., <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/about/gu-q-people/advisory-board/>.

<sup>469</sup> "Her Excellency Lolwah Bint Rashid Alkhater," Ministry of Education and Higher Education State of Qatar, n.d., <https://www.edu.gov.qa/en/leaders>.

<sup>470</sup> "H.E. Lolwah bint Rashid Alkhater," Media City Qatar, n.d., [https://mediacity.qa/en/mediacity\\_team/h-e-lolwah-bint-rashid-mohammed-al-khater/](https://mediacity.qa/en/mediacity_team/h-e-lolwah-bint-rashid-mohammed-al-khater/).

<sup>471</sup> Ibid.

<sup>472</sup> Ibid.

<sup>473</sup> "Lolwah Alkhater: The Genocide in Gaza Deserves the Title of a Massacre of Children" (in Arabic), posted February 18, 2024, by Al Jazeera Arabic, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HUQaoEkD6I>.

<sup>474</sup> Doha News (@dohanews), "Lolwah Al Khater shares a moving message from the Gaza Strip, conveying heartfelt words to the people of Gaza and Palestine," Instagram, November 27, 2023, <https://www.instagram.com/dohanews/reel/C0J1veYrsaC/>.

<sup>475</sup> Lolwah Alkhater (@Lolwah\_Alkhater), "The body of the righteous servant #Ismail\_Haniyeh will be buried in Qatar today" (in Arabic), X, August 2, 2024, [https://x.com/Lolwah\\_Alkhater/status/1819330752837832891](https://x.com/Lolwah_Alkhater/status/1819330752837832891); Lolwah Alkhater (@Lolwah\_Alkhater), "#Ismail\_Haniyeh ... The poet's saying applies to you" (in Arabic), X, August 2, 2024, [https://x.com/Lolwah\\_Alkhater/status/1819311440135704906](https://x.com/Lolwah_Alkhater/status/1819311440135704906).

## Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani

Al-Mayassa Al Thani is the sister of Qatar's current ruler, Emir Tamim bin Hamad. She is the head of the National Qatar Museum and is known for her love of art and culture.<sup>476</sup> In August 2022, after Palestinian-American supermodel Bella Hadid, who is known for her fierce anti-Israel stances, mentioned that her support for Palestine had cost her several job deals, Sheikha Al-Mayassa expressed support for Hadid by sharing the story on her Instagram account, writing in response "When principles trump everything."<sup>477</sup> On October 10, 2023, three days after the Hamas-led massacre, she shared images on social media of the Palestinian flag projected on the façades of the Museum of Islamic Art and the National Museum of Qatar in demonstration of her support.<sup>478</sup>

## Robert Groves

Robert Groves is a former director of the U.S. Census Bureau and is currently the interim president of Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.<sup>479</sup>

## Joel Hellman

Joel Hellman is a former World Bank Chief Institutional Economist and is currently the dean of the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University.<sup>480</sup>

## Ebrahim Moosa

Ebrahim Moosa is a professor of Islamic studies at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and in the Department of History at the University of Notre Dame.<sup>481</sup> He

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<sup>476</sup> David Belcher, "Qatar Cultural Leader Says Heritage Can Be a Bridge to Art's Future," *New York Times*, April 25, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/25/arts/design/qatar-culture-sheikha-mayassaa.html>.

<sup>477</sup> Menatalla Ibrahim, "Qatar's Sheikha Al Mayassa Praises 'Principled' Bella Hadid over Palestine Support," *Doha News*, August 23, 2022, <https://dohanews.co/qatars-sheikha-al-mayassa-praises-principled-bella-hadid-over-palestine-support/>.

<sup>478</sup> Tom Seymour, "Qatar Museums Fly Palestinian Flag in the Aftermath of Hamas Attack on Israel," *The Art Newspaper*, October 10, 2023, <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2023/10/10/qatar-museums-palestinian-flag-hamas-attack-israel>.

<sup>479</sup> "Robert M. Groves," Office of the President, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://president.georgetown.edu/profiles/robert-m-groves/>.

<sup>480</sup> "Joel Hellman," Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://sfs.georgetown.edu/profile/joel-hellman/>.

<sup>481</sup> "Ebrahim Moosa," Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University, n.d., <https://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/people/ebrahim-moosa>.

uses his social media to publish strongly anti-Israel messages and accuse Israel and the United States of committing genocide in Gaza.<sup>482</sup>

## Francisco Marmolejo

Francisco Marmolejo is the President of Higher Education at the Doha-based Qatar Foundation.<sup>483</sup> He is tasked with managing Qatar's relationships with American universities. He defends Qatar's strong financial ties to American higher education institutions and considers occasional congressional probing into the issue to be unfounded.<sup>484</sup>

## Safwan Masri

Safwan Masri is a Jordanian professor and is currently the dean of Georgetown University Qatar and Distinguished Professor of the Practice at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service.<sup>485</sup> He is a close advisor to Queen Rania al-Abdullah of Jordan.<sup>486</sup> He was also a senior research scholar at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) and is a lifetime member of the Council on Foreign Relations.<sup>487</sup>

## 4.11 Legitimizing Extremist Speakers

In September 2024, GU-Q hosted a conference entitled "Reimagining Palestine,"<sup>488</sup> an anti-Israel event that hosted speakers with ties to terrorism. Shawan Jabarin, a former senior member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the general director of the Al-Haq organization, an Israeli-designated terrorist group,<sup>489</sup>

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<sup>482</sup> Ebrahim Moosa (@EbrahimMoosa), "This is genocide Joe Biden's persistent doing," X, August 10, 2024, <https://x.com/EbrahimMoosa/status/1822224836963270787>.

<sup>483</sup> "Francisco Marmolejo," Qatar Foundation, n.d., <https://www.qf.org.qa/about/profile/francisco-marmolejo>.

<sup>484</sup> Katherine Knott, "Qatar Foundation Pushes Back on House Republicans' Accusations," Inside Higher Ed, May 28, 2024, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2024/05/28/qatar-foundation-pushes-back-house-republican-accusations>.

<sup>485</sup> "Safwan Masri," Georgetown University Qatar, n.d., <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/about/safwan-masri/>.

<sup>486</sup> "Professor Safwan Masri," Global Thinkers Forum, n.d., <https://www.globalthinkersforum.org/people/professor-safwan-masri/>.

<sup>487</sup> "Safwan Masri," Georgetown University Qatar, n.d., <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/about/safwan-masri/>.

<sup>488</sup> "Reimagining Palestine," Hiwaraat Conference Series, Georgetown University Qatar, Doha, September 20-22, 2024, archived September 24, 2024, at <https://web.archive.org/web/20240924225527/https://hiwaraat.qatar.georgetown.edu/reimagining-palestine/>.

<sup>489</sup> "Former Member of Terrorist Org. Included in South African Delegation to ICJ," *Jerusalem Post*, January 14, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-782083>.

was among the speakers.<sup>490</sup> As a senior PFLP operative, Jabarin was convicted in 1985 and sentenced to 24 months in prison for recruiting for the terrorist group. In 2008, the Israeli Supreme Court described him as “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” for serving with Al-Haq while moonlighting with the PFLP.<sup>491</sup>

Waddah Khanfar, a senior Hamas member and a former head of Al Jazeera, also spoke at the conference. Khanfar was close to the late Muslim Brotherhood ideologue Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who praised Khanfar for his work at the Al Jazeera network.<sup>492</sup> Khanfar later eulogized al-Qaradawi at his funeral in Doha in 2022.<sup>493</sup> Described by the Muslim Brotherhood as “one of the most prominent Hamas leaders in Sudan,” Khanfar continues to be one of the staunchest and most sophisticated defenders of Hamas and terrorism in the Arab media sphere.<sup>494</sup>

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<sup>490</sup> Ohad Merlin, “Qatar Campus of Georgetown University Hosts Hamas-affiliated Media Personality,” *Jerusalem Post*, September 20, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-820993>.

<sup>491</sup> “Former Member of Terrorist Org. Included in South African Delegation to ICJ,” *Jerusalem Post*, January 14, 20-2024, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-782083>.

<sup>492</sup> Ohad Merlin, “Qatar Campus of Georgetown University Hosts Hamas-affiliated Media Personality,” September 20, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-820993>.

<sup>493</sup> Corey Walker, “Georgetown University Qatar Campus to Host Hamas Member for Talk on ‘Reimagining Palestine,’” *The Algemeiner*, September 10, 2024, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2024/09/10/georgetown-university-qatar-campus-host-hamas-member-talk-reimagining-palestine/>.

<sup>494</sup> Ohad Merlin, “Qatar Campus of Georgetown University Hosts Hamas-affiliated Media Personality,” September 20, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-820993>.

## 5. Antisemitism at Georgetown

### 5.1 Pre-October 7

The following description of antisemitic incidents at Georgetown is based on the 2016 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism,<sup>495</sup> which is the definition used by the U.S. government,<sup>496</sup> the European Union, the Council of Europe, and the United Nations.<sup>497</sup>

As described below, antisemitism at Georgetown prior to October 7 was mainly comprised of antisemitic graffiti and antisemitic speakers. While the university's leadership has unequivocally condemned antisemitic incidents inspired by right-wing or neo-Nazi antisemitism, its response to Islamist and far-left antisemitism expressed by pro-Hamas supporters on campus diverges from the clarity it has previously expressed on this issue. Since the October 7 massacre, the leadership's policy towards pro-Hamas oriented antisemitic expressions has ranged from permissiveness to issuing broad condemnations denouncing all forms of hate rather than specifically calling out and denouncing antisemitic incidents when they occur.

Some of the pre-October 7 antisemitic speakers were invited by the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS), such as in the case of a 1998 CCAS program marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of Israel. At that time, CCAS organized a lecture series titled: "Palestine: 50 Years of Occupation." Among the speakers were Richard H. Curtiss, former chief inspector of the U.S. State Department's U.S. Information Agency,<sup>498</sup> and Andrew I. Killgore, a former U.S. ambassador to Qatar<sup>499</sup> during the Carter administration. Engaging in Holocaust

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<sup>495</sup> Working Definition of Antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) on May 26, 2016, available at

<https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>.

<sup>496</sup> "Defining Antisemitism," Office of the Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, U.S. Department of State, n.d., <https://www.state.gov/defining-antisemitism/>.

<sup>497</sup> "Permanent International Partners," IHRA, n.d., <https://holocaustremembrance.com/who-we-are/permanent-international-partners>.

<sup>498</sup> John F. Mahoney, "Tribute to Richard H. Curtiss 1927–2013," Americans for Middle East Understanding, May 9, 2023, <https://ameu.org/news/tribute-to-richard-h-curtiss-1927-2013>.

<sup>499</sup> "United States Ambassador to Qatar Nomination of Andrew I. Killgore," July 26, 1977, archived by the American Presidency Project, n.d., <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/united-states-ambassador-qatar-nomination-andrew-i-killgore>.

denial, one of the speakers at the program referred to the murder of six million Jews during the Holocaust as “Jewish propaganda.”<sup>500</sup>

Killgore and Curtiss were, respectively, the publisher<sup>501</sup> and executive editor<sup>502</sup> of the antisemitic *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*. Referring to American Jews as “Zionists,” the magazine has championed various antisemitic tropes, including the conspiracy theory that there is undue “liberal Zionist control” over discourse on the Middle East.<sup>503</sup> The magazine also accuses American Jews of dual loyalty and engages in Holocaust revisionism.<sup>504</sup>

In December 1999, the Jewish Student Association erected a menorah in celebration of the Chanukah holiday in Georgetown’s Red Square. In the early hours of December 5, the menorah was knocked over. Responding to the incident, then Georgetown president Leo J. O’Donovan, S.J., condemned it as “a deplorable act of vandalism.”<sup>505</sup> Six days later, the menorah was vandalized again, despite students standing guard to protect it. A Georgetown student named Michael Byrne was subsequently arrested and escorted off campus. He later withdrew from the university.<sup>506</sup>

On November 25, 2002, a Jewish solidarity rally was held at Georgetown’s Red Square. The rally was held to protest expressions of antisemitism made by Georgetown professor Hisham Sharabi, who had given a lecture in Lebanon in which he promoted the antisemitic conspiracy theory of global Jewish control, stating, “Jews are getting ready to take control of us.”<sup>507</sup>

The rally also protested the recent speech on campus of the late far-left Holocaust conspiracy promoter Norman Finkelstein.<sup>508</sup> In one of his most extreme

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<sup>500</sup> “Uncle Sam Funds Hate 101 at Georgetown Teach-In,” *Forward*, April 24, 1998.

<sup>501</sup> Michael Jansen, “The Death of a Great Arab Ambassador to the World,” *Jordan Times*, May 18, 2016, <https://jordantimes.com/opinion/michael-jansen/death-great-arab-ambassador-world>.

<sup>502</sup> “Richard H. Curtiss,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, November 28, 2011, <https://www.wrmea.org/old-html/richard-h.-curtiss-bio.html>.

<sup>503</sup> “Anti-Zionism as Antisemitism: How Anti-Zionist Language from the Left and the Right Vilifies Jews,” Anti-Defamation League, April 4, 2023, <https://www.adl.org/resources/article/anti-zionism-antisemitism-how-anti-zionist-language-left-and-right-vilifies-jews>.

<sup>504</sup> David Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, “Magazine Backtracks on anti-Jewish Slur,” *History News Network*, January 2, 2005, <https://www.historynewsnetwork.org/article/magazine-backtracks-on-anti-jewish-slur>.

<sup>505</sup> Tim Sullivan, “Looking back at 1999–2000,” *The Hoya*, May 26, 2000, <https://thehoya.com/uncategorized/looking-back-at-1999-2000/>.

<sup>506</sup> Ibid.

<sup>507</sup> Thomas Wigg, “Georgetown Professor and Guest Lecturer Accused of Antisemitism,” *The Hoya*, November 26, 2002, <https://thehoya.com/uncategorized/georgetown-professor-and-guest-lecturer-accused-of-anti-semitism/>. See also the sidebar on Hisham Sharabi in section 1.3 above.

<sup>508</sup> Ibid.



pronouncements, Finkelstein stated that “the Nazi Holocaust has long ceased to be a source of moral or historical enlightenment. It has become a straight-out extortion racket. A handful of American Jews have effectively hijacked the Nazi Holocaust to blackmail Europe.”<sup>509</sup> Finkelstein later went even further, crossing over ideological lines to legitimize David Irving, a notorious Holocaust denier, and minimized the Holocaust by questioning the number of Jews who had been murdered under the Nazi regime.<sup>510</sup>

Prior to the rally, the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, the Program on Justice and Peace, and the Young Arab Leadership Association at Georgetown invited Finkelstein to speak at an event, where he was described as drawing “comparisons between Hitler’s policy toward Jews during the Second World War and Israel’s opinion of the Palestinians.”<sup>511</sup> Then Jewish Student Association president Daniel Spector denounced both speeches, stating, “Incendiary statements preaching about Jewish conspiracies to extort European countries for money, as in the case of Dr. Finkelstein, and to take over the Arab World, as in the case of Dr. Sharabi, only serve to spit in the face of Georgetown’s values. It is revolting that these men have had their statements legitimated by our university’s name.”<sup>512</sup> David Bernstein, then the local director of the American Jewish Committee, called upon Georgetown to denounce Sharabi’s remarks, stating, “While professor Sharabi is free to say anything he wants, no matter how repugnant and outrageous, Georgetown University is also free and even obliged to make clear that his remarks are viewed as highly offensive to the university community and its leadership.”<sup>513</sup>

Following reports of ten incidents of antisemitic and anarchist graffiti on campus that occurred in one week in March 2009, Georgetown students organized a rally at Red Square to denounce “acts of hate” on campus. One of the incidents involved the spray-painting of an SS symbol superimposed over a cross on the outdoor wall of the student center. Additional graffiti was subsequently discovered on buildings throughout the campus.<sup>514</sup>

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<sup>509</sup> Will Yakowicz, “What is a ‘Holocaust Doubter’?,” *Tablet*, May 18, 2011,

<https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/what-is-a-holocaust-doubter>.

<sup>510</sup> Lee Harpin, “Norman Finkelstein Praises Holocaust Denier David Irving at pro-Corbyn Group Meeting,” *Jewish Chronicle*, July 31, 2020, <https://www.thejc.com/news/norman-finkelstein-praises-holocaust-denier-david-irving-at-pro-corbyn-group-meeting-ogne1mz1>.

<sup>511</sup> Thomas Wigg, “Georgetown Professor and Guest Lecturer Accused of Antisemitism,” *The Hoya*, November 26, 2002, <https://thehoya.com/uncategorized/georgetown-professor-and-guest-lecturer-accused-of-anti-semitism/>.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid.

<sup>514</sup> Lillian Kaiser, “Antisemitic graffiti prompts student rally,” *The Georgetown Voice*, April 2, 2009, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2009/04/02/anti-semetic-graffiti-prompts-student-rally/>.

In May 2017, a death threat was found together with antisemitic graffiti in a restroom in the Leavey Jewish Student Center. University police announced that they were investigating the incident, which they believed to be bias related. University administrators condemned the incident, stating, “This act of antisemitism and hate is unacceptable, antithetical to what we stand for as a university, and has no place on our campus.”<sup>515</sup>

During the first four weeks of the fall semester of 2017, four swastikas were discovered on campus. The first was found in an elevator on September 6, and two others were found in the elevator of a different building.<sup>516</sup> The fourth was found in a women’s restroom on Rosh Hashanah, the festival marking the Jewish new year, along with “threatening and derogatory” remarks encouraging violence against women.<sup>517</sup>

Condemning the incidents, then Georgetown president John DeGioia stated, “There is never a time or place for these acts, and this incident is even more disturbing during Rosh Hashanah. We stand in solidarity with our Jewish community and strongly condemn this act of hate, antisemitism, and sexism.” The statement continued, “We reject hatred, racism, bigotry, anti-Semitism, sexism, and Islamophobia. Ours is a community where all faiths are welcomed, and where we choose to come together in understanding and service towards one another.”<sup>518</sup>

Reacting to the incidents, the biweekly *Georgetown Voice* magazine published a statement by its editorial board roundly condemning the antisemitic incidents, stating, “Given the explicit, violent message that swastikas send, we stand in solidarity with the Jewish community. Jewish students belong on our campus and are integral to making our community thrive. Students of all religious backgrounds are welcome at Georgetown and must never face discrimination or hate on the campus they call home. This editorial board condemns these hateful acts of anti-Semitism and demands that the university put forth a greater effort to address and prevent them.”<sup>519</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> “Death Threat Found Next to Georgetown Jewish Center,” *Jerusalem Post*, May 9, 2017, [https://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Death-threat-found-next-to-Georgetown-Jewish-center-490254?utm\\_source=mivzakimnet&utm\\_medium=xhtml&utm\\_campaign=mivzakimnet](https://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Death-threat-found-next-to-Georgetown-Jewish-center-490254?utm_source=mivzakimnet&utm_medium=xhtml&utm_campaign=mivzakimnet).

<sup>516</sup> “No Place for Hate,” *The Georgetown Voice*, September 29, 2017, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2017/09/29/no-place-for-hate/>.

<sup>517</sup> Noah Telerski, “Fourth Swastika Found on Campus,” *The Georgetown Voice*, September 20, 2017, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2017/09/20/fourth-swastika-found-on-campus/>.

<sup>518</sup> Ibid.

<sup>519</sup> “No Place for Hate,” *The Georgetown Voice*, September 29, 2017, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2017/09/29/no-place-for-hate/>.

The *Voice* editorial board was critical of DeGioia for what they viewed as his insufficient early condemnations of the incidents as general “bias incidents” which denounced “all acts of antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism, and any form of hate.” The magazine noted that “it was not until the third email that President DeGioia recognized the graffiti for what it is: ‘an abhorrent act of antisemitism.’” It concluded, “Failing to call these incidents what they are, acts of antisemitism, limits Georgetown’s ability to send a message of inclusivity and to properly handle the seriousness of these incidents.”<sup>520</sup>

In more recent years, however, antisemitic speakers have regularly been invited to speak at the university, for example by Georgetown Students for Justice in Palestine (GSJP). GSJP is a local affiliate of National Students for Justice in Palestine (NSJP), which was established as Students for Justice in Palestine in 1992 by two graduate students at Berkely, Hatem Bazian<sup>521</sup> and Snehal Shingavi,<sup>522</sup> to build an alliance that would extend beyond Palestinian students on campus. Their target audience included Islamists and far-left sympathizers who “support liberation and anti-racism struggles in South Africa, Central America, and the United States,” as well as anti-Zionist Jewish students.<sup>523</sup>

In October 2020, GSJP and Georgetown University Qatar’s SJP cohosted a virtual event<sup>524</sup> featuring Miko Peled,<sup>525</sup> an Israeli supporter of the BDS campaign, whose ultimate goal, as admitted by its leaders, is the destruction of Israel.<sup>526</sup> Peled has a history of promoting antisemitic stereotypes, posting that “Jews have reputation 4being [sic] sleazy thieves,”<sup>527</sup> and once posted a picture of a MAGA-style red

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<sup>520</sup> Ibid.

<sup>521</sup> Hatem Bazian, “Israel’s Losing Battle: Palestine Advocacy in the University,” Al-Shabaka, April 21, 2020, <https://al-shabaka.org/commentaries/israels-losing-battle-palestine-advocacy-in-the-university/>.

<sup>522</sup> “Snehal Shingavi,” Against Canary Mission, n.d., <https://againstcanarymission.org/snehal-shingavi/>.

<sup>523</sup> Hatem Bazian, “Israel’s Losing Battle: Palestine Advocacy in the University,” Al-Shabaka, April 21, 2020, <https://al-shabaka.org/commentaries/israels-losing-battle-palestine-advocacy-in-the-university/>.

<sup>524</sup> Caitlin McLean, “Activist Accused of Antisemitism Speaks at Virtual GU Event Despite Student Backlash,” *The Hoya*, October 23, 2020, <https://thehoya.com/news/activist-accused-of-antisemitism-speaks-at-virtual-gu-event-despite-student-backlash/>.

<sup>525</sup> Miko Peled (@mikopeled), “Excited to join the @GeorgetownSJP and Georgetown University in Qatar,” Twitter (now X), October 8, 2020, <https://x.com/mikopeled/status/1314275049256284160>.

<sup>526</sup> See, for example, “BDS Co-Founder Says Goal of Movement Is End of Israel,” *Jewish News Syndicate*, June 1, 2020, <https://www.jns.org/bds-founder-says-movements-goal-will-lead-to-the-end-of-israel/>.

<sup>527</sup> Miko Peled (@mikopeled), “Then theyr [sic] surprised Jews have reputation 4being sleazy thieves,” Twitter (now X), September 14, 2016, <https://twitter.com/mikopeled/status/776147480299835392?s=61&t=k3oJvVmF2P1z019qF3b6dg>.

baseball cap emblazoned with the slogan “Make Israel Palestine Again,”<sup>528</sup> essentially calling for the obliteration of Israel. GU-Q SJP president Zain Assaf acted as the moderator of the event.<sup>529</sup> Due to Peled’s previous antisemitic pronouncements, his other speaking engagements for SJP affiliates at Princeton and San Diego State University were cancelled, but Georgetown did not do so.<sup>530</sup> More recently, Peled spoke at the Oxford Union and lauded the Hamas terrorists who carried out the October 7 Hamas-led massacre, declaring, “What we saw on October 7 was not terrorism ... these were acts of heroism of a people who have been oppressed.” His statement led UK counterterrorism police to launch an investigation into his open support for Hamas.<sup>531</sup>

Peled’s appearance at the SJP event created a backlash among some Georgetown student groups who organized a petition against granting him a platform. The groups organizing the petition included Georgetown University College Democrats, the Jewish Student Association, and the Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity.<sup>532</sup>

In November 2022, antisemitic pamphlets were found outside Bayit, a residential Jewish cultural center at Georgetown, as well as outside several other buildings on campus. Additionally, in a separate incident, a swastika was discovered defacing a sidewalk near the Georgetown campus. Georgetown denounced the incident, stating: “We strongly condemn antisemitism in all its forms, and this act of hatred has no place in our community. We stand together with our Jewish community and its allies. We recognize the effect that this deeply troubling incident has on our community, including the impacts on individual students and employees.”<sup>533</sup>

Following the January 2023 discovery of a swastika painted on the wall of the second floor hallway of Darnall Hall, the Georgetown University Police Department

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<sup>528</sup> Miko Peled (@mikopeled), “So this isn’t going away. Fine. I will explain slowly: For centuries Jews were portrayed as sleazy money lenders and petty thieves (see merchant of Venice and Oliver Twist for example),” Twitter (now X), September 21, 2016, available at <https://archive.is/MK8CA>.

<sup>529</sup> Caitlin McLean, “Activist Accused of Antisemitism Speaks at Virtual GU Event Despite Student Backlash,” *The Hoya*, October 23, 2020, <https://thehoya.com/news/activist-accused-of-antisemitism-speaks-at-virtual-gu-event-despite-student-backlash/>.

<sup>530</sup> “Georgetown SJP to Host Speaker Who Tweeted Jews Are Known for Being ‘Sleazy Thieves,’” *Jewish Journal*, October 15, 2020, <https://jewishjournal.com/news/322976/georgetown-sjp-to-host-speaker-who-tweeted-jews-are-known-for-being-sleazy-thieves/>.

<sup>531</sup> Susanna Siddell, “‘Pure Unfiltered Hatred!’ Counter-Terror Police Launch Investigation after Oxford Speaker Praised ‘Hamas Heroes,’” *GBNews*, December 7, 2024, <https://www.gbnews.com/news/oxford-union-miko-peled-hamas-heroes>.

<sup>532</sup> Caitlin McLean, “Activist Accused of Antisemitism Speaks at Virtual GU Event Despite Student Backlash,” *The Hoya*, October 23, 2020, <https://thehoya.com/news/activist-accused-of-antisemitism-speaks-at-virtual-gu-event-despite-student-backlash/>.

<sup>533</sup> “Condemning Antisemitic Graffiti Near Campus,” Georgetown University, November 21, 2022, <https://www.georgetown.edu/news/condemning-antisemitic-graffiti-near-campus/>.

announced that it was investigating the incident. It issued a condemnatory statement declaring, “We strongly condemn antisemitism in all its forms, and this act of hatred has no place in our community. We stand together with our Jewish community and its allies. We recognize the effect that this deeply troubling incident has on our community, including the impacts on individual students and employees.”<sup>534</sup>

During the academic year leading up to October 2023, Georgetown permitted Mohammed el-Kurd, a Palestinian activist who has expressed vehemently antisemitic views, to speak at Georgetown University Law Center.<sup>535</sup> In April 2022, Georgetown Law Students for Justice in Palestine (GLSJP) had invited el-Kurd to speak to their organization at Georgetown Law Center.<sup>536</sup> El-Kurd often employs extreme rhetoric and antisemitic tropes in his statements. He has denied the ancestral connection of the Jews to their homeland and has promoted the age-old antisemitic blood libel claiming that Jews lust for human blood by accusing “Zionists” of having “an unquenchable thirst for Palestinian blood & land.”<sup>537</sup> El-Kurd has also used the antisemitic blood libel to accuse Israelis of “harvest[ing] organs of the martyrs, [to] feed their warriors our own.”<sup>538</sup>

Although Jewish students at Georgetown Law wrote letters opposing el-Kurd’s lecture and bringing his antisemitic statements to the attention of the law center’s administration, the event was still allowed to proceed. The students told a reporter that they “felt their feelings had been brushed aside, with little explanation about how officials had reached their decision.”<sup>539</sup> Nick Rawlinson, then a third-year law student, told the *Washington Post*, “Free speech has limits when it’s incitement and when it’s violent speech.” He continued, “It’s a student safety issue.”<sup>540</sup>

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<sup>534</sup> “Antisemitic Graffiti Found in Darnall Hall,” Georgetown University, January 23, 2023, <https://www.georgetown.edu/news/antisemitic-graffiti-found-in-darnall-hall/>.

<sup>535</sup> Nate Hochman, “Georgetown Law Dean Defends Hosting Antisemite, Citing Previous Speakers Who ‘Find Gay Marriage Immoral,’” *National Review*, April 25, 2022, <https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/georgetown-law-dean-defends-hosting-antisemite-citing-previous-speakers-who-find-gay-marriage-immoral/>.

<sup>536</sup> Lauren Lumpkin, “After Controversies, Georgetown Law Students Call for Culture Shift,” *Washington Post*, May 5, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/05/05/after-controversies-georgetown-law-students-call-culture-shift/>.

<sup>537</sup> Matt Lamb, “‘Zionists’ Have ‘Unquenchable Thirst for Palestinian Blood,’ Duke Speaker Says,” *College Fix*, March 21, 2022, <https://www.thecollegefix.com/zionists-have-unquenchable-thirst-for-palestinian-blood-duke-speaker-says/>.

<sup>538</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>539</sup> Lauren Lumpkin, “After Controversies, Georgetown Law Students Call for Culture Shift,” *Washington Post*, May 5, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/05/05/after-controversies-georgetown-law-students-call-culture-shift/>.

<sup>540</sup> *Ibid.*

Following Hamas's horrific October 7 massacre, el-Kurd has echoed the call of Hamas leader Ghazi Hamad who declared that his terror organization would repeat October 7 over and over again until Israel is completely annihilated.<sup>541</sup> El-Kurd declared, "Our day will come. We must normalize massacres as the status quo."<sup>542</sup>

## 5.2 Post-October 7: "Glory to our martyrs"

Weeks after the 2023 Hamas-led massacre, Mohammed el-Kurd was again invited to speak at Georgetown University Law Center on October 31, where he legitimized Hamas's October 7 massacre, torture, and rape of innocent civilians as a "resistance tactic," hailed Hamas as a "liberation movement," and justified the taking of hostages as being based on good "political reasons."<sup>543</sup> He also falsely asserted that Hamas treated the Israeli hostages "relatively well" and gave them "nice dresses and food."<sup>544</sup>

When asked about the horrific acts that Hamas perpetrated on that day, including against children, el-Kurd waved off the question, advising his listeners, "You don't have to answer the question. The best approach to these kinds of things ... is to be dismissive of these claims outright, is to ridicule these claims, is to not give them the time of day, is to treat them as outrageous."<sup>545</sup> A Georgetown law faculty member expressed his dismay that, despite el-Kurd's expressions of antisemitism and support for Hamas, that the dean of the Law Center, William Treanor, had allowed the event to go ahead.<sup>546</sup> El-Kurd was again invited to speak in February 2025 by the Georgetown University Faculty for Justice in Palestine. The event was organized in cooperation with the Institute for Palestine Studies in Washington, D.C.<sup>547</sup> He was subsequently invited to speak again at the Georgetown Qatar campus in March 2025.<sup>548</sup>

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<sup>541</sup> Gianluca Pacchiani and Michael Bachner, "Hamas Official Says Group Aims to Repeat Oct. 7 Onslaught Many Times to Destroy Israel," *Times of Israel*, November 7, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-official-says-group-aims-to-repeat-oct-7-onslaught-many-times-to-destroy-israel/>.

<sup>542</sup> Emily Schrader (@emilyschrader), "Mohammed el-Kurd at the Pro-Terror Rally Today," X, January 13, 2024, <https://x.com/emilykschrader/status/1746270282757644686>.

<sup>543</sup> M. Gregg Bloche, "Justifying Hamas's Barbarism at Georgetown Law," *The Hill*, December 4, 2023, <https://thehill.com/opinion/4337687-justifying-hamass-barbarism-on-the-sly-at-georgetown-law/>.

<sup>544</sup> Ibid.

<sup>545</sup> Ibid.

<sup>546</sup> Ibid.

<sup>547</sup> "Perfect Victims – Politics of Appeal: Mohammed el-Kurd in Conversation with Jihad Abusalim," announcement for book launch event on February 16, 2025, Institute for Palestine Studies, n.d., <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1656816>.

<sup>548</sup> "Writing Palestine," Georgetown University Qatar, March 26, 2025, <https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/event/writing-palestine/>.



On October 12, five days after the October 7 massacre and prior to any Israeli response to the invasion, GSJP held a pro-Hamas demonstration promoted as a “Vigil for Our Martyrs,” mimicking the language used by Hamas and other terror organizations to refer to their killed terror operatives. Participants lit candles and displayed signs with slogans such as “Glory to our martyrs,” “Free Palestine,” and “Solidarity Forever.”<sup>549</sup> The event was organized in coordination with National SJP’s Day of Resistance.<sup>550</sup> Participating in the event was Georgetown’s Muslim chaplain Imam Yahya Hendi, who brazenly and falsely declared, “On Saturday, our brothers and sisters in Gaza were attacked.”<sup>551</sup>

Ten days after October 7, a group of over 70 Georgetown faculty and staff calling themselves GU Faculty for Palestine issued a statement denouncing Israel as an “oppressor” of indigenous people: “We would also like to express our sorrow that the state of Israel, founded ostensibly to address the oppression of Jews, has been an oppressor of an indigenous people. As scholars and students of history, we understand that this conflict is rooted in a long, violent process of settler-colonialism.”<sup>552</sup> The statement pronounced Israel to be “a textbook apartheid state” and further called upon Georgetown to “embrace the BDS movement” and “affirm that the way to end the violence is to end the root cause of the violence: apartheid and colonial rule.”<sup>553</sup> The BDS campaign’s leadership have admitted that their ultimate goal is the destruction of Israel.<sup>554</sup>

In the days following October 7, Henrik Schildt, a Swedish military veteran and diplomat who was a graduate student in the SFS master’s program was surprised to find that “a large cohort of my classmates endorsed the attack as a ‘tangible event’ towards decolonization.” Students held vigils outside the SFS building, not for Jewish victims who were murdered or kidnapped but for Palestinian “martyrs,” the term used by Hamas and other terrorist organizations to refer to their killed terror

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<sup>549</sup> “‘Glory to Our Martyrs’: Georgetown University Students Mourn Palestinian Deaths, Ignore Hamas Atrocities,” *National Review*, October 13, 2023, <https://www.nationalreview.com/news/glory-to-our-martyrs-georgetown-university-students-mourn-palestinian-deaths-ignore-hamas-atrocities/>.

<sup>550</sup> National SJP (@nationalsjp), “Join SJPs Nationwide for the Day of Resistance,” Instagram, October 12, 2023, <https://www.instagram.com/p/CyTfGVFLDY1/>.

<sup>551</sup> “‘Glory to Our Martyrs’: Georgetown University Students Mourn Palestinian Deaths, Ignore Hamas Atrocities,” *National Review*, October 13, 2023, <https://www.nationalreview.com/news/glory-to-our-martyrs-georgetown-university-students-mourn-palestinian-deaths-ignore-hamas-atrocities/>.

<sup>552</sup> “Faculty & Staff Statement on the Situation in Gaza,” Georgetown Faculty and Staff for Justice for Palestine, October 18, 2023, <https://gufsjp.org/faculty-staff-statements-and-letters/>.

<sup>553</sup> Ibid.

<sup>554</sup> See, for example, “BDS Co-Founder Says Goal of Movement Is End of Israel,” *Jewish News Syndicate*, June 1, 2020, <https://www.jns.org/bds-founder-says-movements-goal-will-lead-to-the-end-of-israel/>.

operatives. Referring to Israel, one of his fellow students posted “nothing but violence can remove a violent and heavily equipped colonial regime” in a widely read WhatsApp chat.<sup>555</sup>

Also at this time, a student who had previously served in the U.S. military and had recently converted to Islam began posting antisemitic content on WhatsApp chats that were created and moderated by students. Schildt asked George Shambaugh, the director of the master’s program, about one of the posts. It depicted President Joe Biden, labeled “Genocide Joe,” as Satan with Stars of David for eyes, surrounded by burning Palestinian flags, invoking the antisemitic trope of Jewish control over world leaders. Shambaugh told Schildt that the post was “not even problematic.”<sup>556</sup>

Schildt further recounted that GSJP organized events called “Keffiyeh Thursdays,”<sup>557</sup> where students were encouraged to wear the headdress of Hamas and other radical Palestinian terrorist factions to obscure their faces. With the number of pro-Hamas protests on campus growing in number and intensity, Schildt participated in a small meeting of SFS Jewish students together with Joel Hellman, the dean of SFS. According to Schildt, Hellman “lamented the surge of anti-Semitism on campus but said many of the anti-Israel students’ actions are protected free speech.” Schildt further described Carla Koppell, a senior Georgetown DEI official at the meeting, as saying that Jews were not recognized as a “protected” minority group under the school’s DEI policies, but that Georgetown is reviewing the issue.<sup>558</sup>

In early November 2023, Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service (SFS) placed Aneesa Johnson (also known as Aneesa Abdul-Fattaah Johnson<sup>559</sup>), a newly hired assistant director of academic and faculty affairs for its master’s program, on administrative leave following the discovery of her “hateful, antisemitic social media commentary” dating back to 2015.<sup>560</sup>

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<sup>555</sup> Henrik Schildt, “I Saw How Georgetown’s Prestigious School of Foreign Service Coddles Violent Anti-Semites—Who Are Plotting to Transform U.S. Policy from Within,” *Washington Free Beacon*, November 19, 2024, <https://freebeacon.com/campus/i-saw-how-georgetown-prestigious-school-of-foreign-service-coddles-violent-anti-semites-who-are-plotting-to-transform-us-policy-from-within/>.

<sup>556</sup> Ibid.

<sup>557</sup> Ibid.

<sup>558</sup> Ibid.

<sup>559</sup> Catherine Kim, “Hundreds Gather for Walkout in Show of Solidarity with Muslim Students,” *Daily Northwestern*, February 2, 2017, <https://dailynorthwestern.com/2017/02/01/campus/hundreds-gather-for-walkout-in-show-of-solidarity-with-muslim-students/>.

<sup>560</sup> “Statement by SFS Dean Joel Hellman on Response to Allegations of Hateful Social Media Posts,” Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, November 2, 2023, <https://sfs.georgetown.edu/statement-by-sfs-dean-joel-hellman-on-response-to-allegations-of-hateful-social-media-posts/>.

Johnson openly posted derogatory antisemitic language on X in July 2015, declaring, “Ever since going to NU [Northwestern University] I have a deep seeded [sic] hate for Zio bitches. They bring out the worst in me.” Expanding on the theme of her first post, Johnson continued, “You know why I call them Zio bitches, because they’re dogs.” Johnson followed up the next week by posting a picture of an Orthodox Jew with the comment, “When the whole world hates you bc you a thief [sic] and you grow up looking like *shaytan* [Satan] #GrowingUpIsraeli.”<sup>561</sup>

During her undergraduate studies at Northwestern University, Johnson was a member of the Northwestern SJP<sup>562</sup> and became events coordinator for the organization<sup>563</sup> during her sophomore year. She spent the 2016 fall semester at Northwestern University in Qatar.<sup>564</sup>

In 2021, while a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University, Johnson co-hosted a podcast debate during which she accused both Israel and the United States of being “settler colonial nation states.”<sup>565</sup> In a subsequent podcast, she stated, “I think there’s a couple of important points that people usually make about U.S. foreign policy as it relates to the state of Israel. The first is that the U.S. implicitly has to support the state of Israel because both countries are settler colonial nation states, you know, Europeans settled in what we call the United States today on the land of natives, displacing them, ethnically cleansing them, committing genocide against them, and continually oppressing them since Europeans have settled on this land.”<sup>566</sup>

Despite the fact that Johnson had publicized her antisemitic views, Joel Hellman, the dean of SFS, claimed in response to the discovery of her statements that the school was unaware of them. He went on to denounce antisemitism on campus:

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<sup>561</sup> Dion J. Pierre, “‘They’re Dogs’: Georgetown University Places Staff Member on Leave over Antisemitic Posts,” *The Algemeiner*, November 3, 2023, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2023/11/03/theyre-dogs-georgetown-university-places-staff-member-leave-antisemitic-posts/>.

<sup>562</sup> “Aneesa Johnson—Palestinian Identity,” posted January 11, 2015, by *Memoirs of a Stolen Land*, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dcn6BzP06Pc>.

<sup>563</sup> Matthew Choi, “Palestinian Journalist Discusses Situation in Gaza,” *Daily Northwestern*, March 1, 2016, <https://dailynorthwestern.com/2016/03/01/campus/palestinian-journalist-discusses-conditions-in-gaza/>.

<sup>564</sup> “Evanston Students Engage the Qatar Campus,” Northwestern University in Qatar, September 18, 2016, <https://www.qatar.northwestern.edu/news/articles/2016/10-evanston-exchange.html>.

<sup>565</sup> Aneesa Johnson, “PW Pulse: What Should We Learn from the Israel-Palestine War?,” *PW Perspective*, May 23, 2021, <https://pwperspective.com/pw-pulse-what-should-we-learn-from-the-israel-palestine-war/>.

<sup>566</sup> John Reid and Aneesa Johnson, hosts, *PW Pulse*, podcast, “Except for Palestine,” July 24, 2021, <https://creators.spotify.com/pod/profile/pwpulse/episodes/PW-Pulse-Except-for-Palestine-e14u20m>.

“Antisemitic language and imagery have no place on our campus, and we strongly condemn such acts of hate.”<sup>567</sup> Hellman further stated that, pending an investigation of Johnson’s comments, “if verified we will take immediate and appropriate action.”<sup>568</sup>

At Georgetown University Medical School (GUMC), the small community of Jewish students reported that at least ten of their fellow classmates posted antisemitic social media posts following October 7. One of the posts referenced the age-old antisemitic trope of Jewish control, declaring, “It’s so infuriating to see the majority of the world on Palestine’s side, on the right side of history yet fully unable to do anything because the world’s power is condensed in a small group of very, very evil people.”<sup>569</sup>

Another social media post denounced any criticism of the Hamas onslaught targeting Israeli civilians as illegitimate, stating, “Do not let western media call this terrorism. This is DECOLONIZATION. Years of genocide, murder, apartheid. Today, Palestinians fight back. Enough is enough. #FreePalestine #Gaza #Palestine.” Referring to the Hamas massacre, another medical student expressed sympathy for the Hamas perpetrators, posting, “People will wholeheartedly say that they would ‘kill for their family’ and yet not understand this.”<sup>570</sup>

Other GUMC students posted praise for Hamas’s “Palestinian resistance” and asserted that terrorist violence against innocent civilians was “inevitable” due to Israel’s “apartheid” and “settler colonialism.” Addressing her fellow medical students, Nicole Olakkengil, a first-year student, declared, “So many of you going into medicine have been quiet or outright supporting genocide. Medicine is inherently political and we have to stand with the oppressed and for the resistance. If not, re-evaluate why you’re going into medicine and maybe try entering a different field.” She further defended Hamas’s actions, stating, “violent retribution is inevitable in the struggle for resistance.”<sup>571</sup>

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<sup>567</sup> “Statement by SFS Dean Joel Hellman on Response to Allegations of Hateful Social Media Posts,” Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, November 2, 2023, <https://sfs.georgetown.edu/statement-by-sfs-dean-joel-hellman-on-response-to-allegations-of-hateful-social-media-posts/>.

<sup>568</sup> Ibid.

<sup>569</sup> Aneesa Johnson, “PW Pulse: What Should We Learn from the Israel-Palestine War?,” *PW Perspective*, May 23, 2021, <https://pwperspective.com/pw-pulse-what-should-we-learn-from-the-israel-palestine-war/>.

<sup>570</sup> Cathryn J. Prince, “Med Students’ Antisemitic Comments after October 7 Roil Two Prominent DC Universities,” *Times of Israel*, December 19, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/med-students-antisemitic-comments-after-oct-7-roil-two-prominent-dc-universities/>.

<sup>571</sup> Alec Schemmel, “At Georgetown Med, the Doctors of Tomorrow Aren’t Hiding Their Support for Hamas,” *Washington Free Beacon*, December 21, 2023, <https://freebeacon.com/campus/at-georgetown-med-the-doctors-of-tomorrow-arent-hiding-their-support-for-terrorism/>.

Yusra Rafeeqi, another first-year student, posted a photo of Hamas's October 7 massacre on Instagram, declaring unapologetically, "No more condemning Palestinian resistance. Radical change requires radical moves."<sup>572</sup> A second-year student, Anita Kuang, defended the Hamas massacre by asserting that there is "little to nothing else" for Palestinians to do other than engage in violence in order to change their situation. Kuang also posted a meme asserting, "The root cause of all violence in this context is Israel's settler colonialism/occupation/apartheid, not the response to it."<sup>573</sup>

Two other students expressed support for "resistance" when referring to the violence carried out by Hamas and other extremist Palestinian terrorist factions. Mominah Subhan posted a meme stating, "If you support Palestine understand that necessitates supporting our right to defend ourselves and liberate our homeland by any means necessary." The post continued, "You cannot claim to stand with Palestine if you'd prefer us to be slaughtered without fighting back.... Freedom has only ever been achieved through resistance." Niyat Esaias, a second-year student, posted a defense of Hamas's violence against civilians, declaring that it is unfair to characterize them as terrorists: "Is it fair to label individuals or groups as terrorists when they are fighting against oppression?" She concluded, "Call Palestinians what you want in the moment but without a doubt history will always show that they are the oppressed battling against their oppressors."<sup>574</sup>

Dr. Aviad Haramati, an Israeli-American professor of integrative physiology and co-director of the graduate program in Integrative Medicine & Health Sciences at GUMC, related that some medical students were "posting some pretty vile stuff."<sup>575</sup> In the days following October 7, Haramati described having received "multiple emails from medical students and physician residents horrified at comments being made to them by peers praising the actions of Hamas and blaming Israel for the atrocities."<sup>576</sup>

In an op-ed portraying the atmosphere at the medical school, Haramati stated, "I found it hard to comprehend how future (and current) physicians could celebrate the willful slaughter of young concertgoers and the killing of babies, parents and

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<sup>572</sup> Ibid.

<sup>573</sup> Ibid.

<sup>574</sup> Ibid.

<sup>575</sup> Cathryn J. Prince, "Med Students' Antisemitic Comments after October 7 Roil Two Prominent DC Universities," *Times of Israel*, December 19, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/med-students-antisemitic-comments-after-oct-7-roil-two-prominent-dc-universities/>.

<sup>576</sup> Aviad Haramati, "Standing Firm for Israel and Jews at Georgetown University Medical Center," *Washington Jewish Week*, November 15, 2023, <https://www.washingtonjewishweek.com/standing-firm-for-israel-and-jews-at-georgetown-university-medical-center/>.

the elderly, much less their abduction to Gaza. Jewish students rightly worried about coming to class and having to sit next to and work with classmates who could say such vile things.”<sup>577</sup> Haramati criticized the environment as being “anathema to becoming a physician. It is antithetical to what they want to become. What will they do if they have to treat an Israeli patient or a Jewish patient?”<sup>578</sup>

Expressing his disappointment at the medical school leadership’s statement in reaction to October 7, Haramati criticized it as “lacking moral clarity and courage.” He wrote, “While stating that ‘the violence in Israel on Saturday was abhorrent and unacceptable,’ it went on to lament ‘about the loss of innocent lives across the region.’ No statement was provided about how murdering Jews intentionally, and especially civilians, is antithetical to the Jesuit values of ‘Cura Personalis’, or care for the whole person; or how hate speech and images constituted antisemitism and violated the policies at Georgetown on harassment.”<sup>579</sup>

### 5.3 Protests, Incidents, and Encampments

During the 2024 spring semester, a new pro-Hamas campus alliance advocating for BDS against Israel, known as the Divest Coalition, was formed by Georgetown’s Students for Justice in Palestine (GSJP), Zeytoun, a graduate students group promoting “decolonization” in southwest Asia and North Africa, Georgetown Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine (GFSJP), Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), GU Medical Students for Palestine (GUMS4Palestine), and Georgetown Law SJP (GLSJP).

The Divest Coalition’s first event was to stage a student, faculty, and staff walkout to disrupt classes and work on February 8, 2024. In an Instagram post promoting the walkout, GSJP and GUMS4Palestine declared, “CALLING ALL GEORGETOWN COMMUNITY MEMBERS, SHUT IT DOWN FOR PALESTINE!!” The post continued, “it is critical for us to divest now. Israel, the US, and its allies escalated their genocidal campaign against the Palestinian people in Gaza and across historic Palestine with the military, financial academic and political support of the entire Western world.”<sup>580</sup> GSJP issued a statement demanding that Georgetown “commit to

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<sup>577</sup> Ibid.

<sup>578</sup> Cathryn J. Prince, “Med Students’ Antisemitic Comments after October 7 Roil Two Prominent DC Universities,” *Times of Israel*, December 19, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/med-students-antisemitic-comments-after-oct-7-roil-two-prominent-dc-universities/>.

<sup>579</sup> Aviad Haramati, “Standing Firm for Israel and Jews at Georgetown University Medical Center,” *Washington Jewish Week*, November 15, 2023, <https://www.washingtonjewishweek.com/standing-firm-for-israel-and-jews-at-georgetown-university-medical-center/>.

<sup>580</sup> Georgetown University Students for Justice in Palestine (@sjpgeorgetown), “CALLING ALL GEORGETOWN COMMUNITY MEMBERS, SHUT IT DOWN FOR PALESTINE!!,” Instagram, February 6, 2024, [https://www.instagram.com/sjpgeorgetown/p/C3Ag1MXg2Eg/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/sjpgeorgetown/p/C3Ag1MXg2Eg/?img_index=1).



serve as a sanctuary school for Students for Justice in Palestine.” It further called for Georgetown to cancel its study abroad program at Tel Aviv University and replace it with a PalTrek (Palestine Trek) program. They asserted that it was “unethical to host a study abroad program in an apartheid state engaging in illegal military occupation and regularly committing war crimes.”<sup>581</sup> According to the PalTrek website, the organization already has a presence at Georgetown where it has “built partnerships with student groups at leading graduate programs (primarily Law, Business, and Public Policy) at key academic institutions.”<sup>582</sup>

In subsequent actions, pro-Hamas campus groups targeted a February 27, 2024, program on Israel jointly sponsored by Georgetown Jewish Life, a division of Georgetown’s University’s Campus Ministry, and the Georgetown Israel Alliance. Pro-Hamas and anti-Zionist faculty and student groups including GSJP, GFSJP, JVP, and Zeytoun held a demonstration in Georgetown’s Red Square.<sup>583</sup> The groups vehemently opposed an event called “In Their Own Words: Reflections on Serving Their Country,” a panel discussion involving three Israel Defense Forces reservists.

Several days prior to the event, GSJP targeted the event for a counterprotest, reposting the Georgetown Jewish Life/Georgetown Israel Alliance flyer on its own Instagram page with the inflammatory title: “Georgetown is hosting war criminals committing genocide. Shame on Georgetown University and Campus Ministry!”<sup>584</sup> Additionally, GSJP and its allies organized a petition denouncing the event that was signed by over 500 students and alumni.<sup>585</sup>

At the event, Rabbi Daniel Schaefer, the interim director of Georgetown Jewish Life, stated, “While I know that the choice to invite members of the IDF in a time of war is particularly upsetting to some, as well as the choice of Jewish Life to organize and sponsor this event, we know that the effort to demonize and delegitimize Israel on

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<sup>581</sup> Georgetown University Students for Justice in Palestine, “Georgetown SJP Demands University Uphold Safety and Justice for Palestinians,” n.d., available at [https://ugc.production.linktr.ee/1b9f9c0d-53ee-4817-8992-e8241696ed98\\_SJP-DEMANDS.pdf](https://ugc.production.linktr.ee/1b9f9c0d-53ee-4817-8992-e8241696ed98_SJP-DEMANDS.pdf).

<sup>582</sup> “Our Programs,” PalTrek, n.d., <https://paltrek.org/our-programs/>.

<sup>583</sup> Eddy Binford-Ross, Franziska Wild, and Sydney Carroll, “Hundreds Protest As Jewish Life and Israel Alliance Host Panel with IDF Soldiers,” *The Georgetown Voice*, February 29, 2024, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2024/02/29/hundreds-protest-as-jewish-life-and-israel-alliance-host-panel-with-idf-soldiers/>.

<sup>584</sup> Georgetown University Students for Justice in Palestine (@sjpgeorgetown), “EMERGENCY ACTION: This TUESDAY, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY and CAMPUS MINISTRY are hosting ISRAELI MILITARY WAR CRIMINALS COMMITTING A GENOCIDE!!,” Instagram, February 24, 2024, [https://www.instagram.com/p/C3v1tcTvdnP/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/C3v1tcTvdnP/?img_index=1).

<sup>585</sup> Georgetown University Students for Justice in Palestine (@sjpgeorgetown), “Joint Statement on 2/27 Event with IOF Soldiers on Georgetown Campus,” Instagram, February 25, 2024, <https://www.instagram.com/share/BAZ8S87QPS>.

this campus precedes October 7.”<sup>586</sup> During the event, 13 student counter protestors wearing keffiyehs seated themselves at the rear of the auditorium and attempted to disrupt the discussion. They displayed signs, held up their hands, which were painted red to signify blood, and turned their backs towards the panel to show their disrespect during rounds of applause by the audience. Near the end of the event, the protestors each stood up and shouted “Shame!” with some shouting, “I’m Jewish and I stand for Palestine!”<sup>587</sup> Outside the event, pro-Hamas protesters chanted, “We don’t want no two-state,” “Give us back ‘48,” thus essentially calling for the obliteration of Israel. Additionally they chanted, “We will free Palestine, within our lifetime,” and “We want justice, you say how? IOF [Israel Occupation Forces] off campus now.”<sup>588</sup>

Henrik Schildt, the aforementioned graduate student studying in the SFS master’s program, recounted that the Georgetown Jewish Life event was guarded by armed police officers. Outside the venue, pro-Hamas protesters “gathered by the hundreds, calling for the death of Israel and Jews.” Schildt spoke to an undergraduate Jewish student who told him that one of the protestors threatened to kill him directly in front of a police officer, who did not respond. Schildt pressed him to report the officer, to which the Jewish student responded, “To whom? The police officer?”<sup>589</sup>

Continuing their targeting of Jewish events on campus, Georgetown Law Students for Justice in Palestine and Georgetown Jewish Students for Justice attempted to disrupt a Georgetown University Law Center event organized by Georgetown Law Zionists on March 21, 2024. The event, titled “The Intersections of Judaism and Zionism,” featured Israel Defense Forces soldier Rudy Rochman. Rochman spoke about his experiences serving in the IDF. He also called for Israeli-Palestinian coexistence and decried antisemitism. Pro-Hamas protestors outside the venue demanded the university end programs at Georgetown Law Center for students to

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<sup>586</sup> Catherine Alaimo, Lauren Doherty, and Jack Willis, “Israeli Soldiers Panel Sparks Student, Faculty Protests,” *The Hoya*, February 29, 2024, <https://thehoya.com/news/israeli-soldiers-panel-sparks-student-faculty-protests>.

<sup>587</sup> Eddy Binford-Ross, Franziska Wild, and Sydney Carroll, “Hundreds Protest As Jewish Life and Israel Alliance Host Panel with IDF Soldiers,” *The Georgetown Voice*, February 29, 2024, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2024/02/29/hundreds-protest-as-jewish-life-and-israel-alliance-host-panel-with-idf-soldiers/>.

<sup>588</sup> Catherine Alaimo, Lauren Doherty, and Jack Willis, “Israeli Soldiers Panel Sparks Student, Faculty Protests,” *The Hoya*, February 29, 2024, <https://thehoya.com/news/israeli-soldiers-panel-sparks-student-faculty-protests>.

<sup>589</sup> Henrik Schildt, “I Saw How Georgetown’s Prestigious School of Foreign Service Coddles Violent Anti-Semites—Who Are Plotting to Transform US Policy from Within,” *Washington Free Beacon*, November 19, 2024, <https://freebeacon.com/campus/i-saw-how-georgetown-precious-school-of-foreign-service-coddles-violent-anti-semmites-who-are-plotting-to-transform-us-policy-from-within/>.

study abroad in Israel. They further demanded divestment from Israeli corporations and a ceasefire.<sup>590</sup>

In April 2024, GSJP held its annual “Israel Apartheid Week,” which it renamed “Apartheid Week 2024.” Promotion of the event included an Instagram post illustrated with an inverted red triangle, a symbol employed by Hamas throughout the present war. The Hamas triangle has been used to mark Israeli targets for death in its propaganda videos. In the background of the GSJP post are the words, “LIBERATION NOW!” One of the events was titled “CALLING IT WHAT IT IS: GENOCIDE IN GAZA TEACH-IN.” GSJP invited students to participate in the event to “strengthen your knowledge about Gaza’s history, resistance, and people who remain steadfast while facing genocide,” and called upon participants, “LET US REMIND THE UNITED STATES AND ZIONIST REGIME WHAT THEY ARE COMMITTING: GENOCIDE.” The post also included a reiteration of the demands of the Divest Coalition from earlier in the semester, promoting the goals of the BDS movement.<sup>591</sup>

## 5.4 2024 Spring Semester Encampments

During the 2024 spring semester, pro-Hamas Georgetown students joined like-minded students from seven local universities to participate in a joint pro-Hamas Gaza solidarity encampment called the “Popular University of Gaza” at University Yard on George Washington University’s campus.<sup>592</sup> According to the December 2024 U.S. House of Representatives Staff Report on Antisemitism, mock trials at the encampment “called for the GWU president and other officials to be beheaded and hanged for not divesting from Israel.”<sup>593</sup>

In early May, Washington, D.C.’s Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) provided three warnings to the protesters that they were planning to clear the “Gaza Solidarity Encampment” at University Yard. Washington, D.C. mayor Muriel Bower

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<sup>590</sup> Jack Willis and Catherine Alaimo, “Students Protest As IDF Soldier Speaks on Gaza, Campus Dialogue,” *The Hoya*, March 23, 2024, <https://thehoya.com/news/students-protest-as-idf-soldier-speaks-on-gaza-campus-dialogue/>.

<sup>591</sup> Georgetown University Students for Justice in Palestine (@sjpgeorgetown), “Announcing APARTHEID WEEK 2024! As the brave people of Gaza endure the 25TH WEEK OF GENOCIDE, we reflect on the RESISTANCE against the APARTHEID SETTLER-COLONIAL ZIONIST ENTITY and the ongoing struggle for liberation!,” Instagram, April 2, 2024, [https://www.instagram.com/p/C5QbON3o2Sa/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA%3D%3D&img\\_index=2](https://www.instagram.com/p/C5QbON3o2Sa/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA%3D%3D&img_index=2).

<sup>592</sup> Margaret Hartigan, Sydney Carroll, and Katie Doran, “The Past Three Days at GW’s Gaza Solidarity Encampment,” *The Georgetown Voice*, May 4, 2024, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2024/05/04/the-past-three-days-at-gws-gaza-solidarity-encampment/>.

<sup>593</sup> “U.S. House of Representatives Staff Report on Antisemitism,” December 18, 2024, available at <https://www.speaker.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/House-Antisemitism-Report.pdf>.

decided to disband the camp on May 8 after receiving reports that the protest “was becoming more volatile and less stable.” According to MPD police chief Pamela Smith, intelligence collected during the encampment indicated an escalating amount of violence. Smith further explained that a campus police officer “was pushed by protesters and an item was grabbed out of the police officer’s hand” while she was performing her duties. Police officials at the campsite reported that pro-Hamas demonstrators had allegedly assaulted counterdemonstrators.<sup>594</sup> Additionally, some of the protestors had “gathered improvised weapons” and were reported to be “casing” buildings at GWU in preparation for taking them over and occupying them as had been done at Columbia University.<sup>595</sup>

Thirty-three protestors were arrested. Twenty-nine were charged with “unlawful entry,” including seven Georgetown students,<sup>596</sup> who were reported to have entered into agreements with the U.S. Attorney’s Office for Washington, D.C. The agreements required the students to abide by the terms of a stay away order from the George Washington University campus and avoid being arrested again. If those who were arrested adhered to the conditions, the charges would be dismissed after six months. If they violated the agreement, the students would risk having their charges reinstated, face new charges, be found in contempt of court, or all three.<sup>597</sup> The arrests were condemned by ACMCU, the Bridge Initiative, and CCAS.<sup>598</sup>

Prior to the start of the 2024 fall semester classes, Georgetown’s Office of Student Conduct sent a letter to GSJP informing the group that it was “subject to” two charges of violations of university conduct, including “disruption of Official University Functions” and “violations of University policies and regulations.” GSJP claimed that the university was attempting to “repress pro-Palestine speech on campus.”<sup>599</sup>

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<sup>594</sup> Emily Venezky, “DC Police Clear Out GWU Pro-Palestinian Encampment, 33 Protesters Arrested,” *WTOP News*, May 8, 2024, <https://wtop.com/dc/2024/05/dc-police-clear-out-gw-encampment-site-as-israel-amas-protests-reach-2-week-mark/>.

<sup>595</sup> Ashraf Khalil, “Police Clear Pro-Palestinian Protest Camp and Arrest 33 at DC Campus As Mayor’s Hearing Is Canceled,” *Associated Press*, May 8, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/campus-protests-george-washington-encampment-eac5c1cc396551bee1b110b48a94aefd>.

<sup>596</sup> Graham Krewinghaus, “Seven GU Students Arrested in GW Encampment Sweep,” *The Georgetown Voice*, May 9, 2024, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2024/05/09/seven-gu-students-arrested-in-gw-encampment-sweep/>.

<sup>597</sup> Franziska Wild, “Students Arrested at GW Encampment Enter into Agreements to Avoid Charges,” *The Georgetown Voice*, August 30, 2024, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2024/08/30/students-arrested-at-gw-encampment-enter-into-agreements-to-avoid-charges/>.

<sup>598</sup> “Statement on Campus Protests,” ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, May 6, 2024, <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/2024/05/06/statement-on-campus-protests/>.

<sup>599</sup> Georgetown University Students for Justice in Palestine (@sjpgeorgetown), “COMMUNITY CALL TO ACTION—FLOOD ADMIN INBOXES, DEMAND AN END TO THE REPRESSION!!,” Instagram, September 3, 2024, [https://www.instagram.com/sjpgeorgetown/p/C\\_d6ZvQSw-f/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/sjpgeorgetown/p/C_d6ZvQSw-f/?img_index=1).

On September 4, GSJP held a protest calling on Georgetown students to “Stand Up Fight Back for Palestine! End Student Repression! Let Georgetown Know: The Students Have All the Power!” A social media post promoting the protest stated, “As Georgetown University begins the school year with an escalation against student organizing, enforcement of repressive school policy, and attempted intimidation of Pro-Palestinian students, we come together as the DMV [DC, Maryland, Virginia] community to say that WE WILL NOT BE SILENCED as we continue to fight for our demands!”<sup>600</sup>

One of the masked student demonstrators at the protest carried a sign incongruously stating “Jews for Intifada,”<sup>601</sup> which was adorned with three downward-facing red triangles. The term “intifada” refers to the campaign of violent attacks carried out by Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Fatah, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine against Israelis between 1987 and 1993 and between 2000 and 2010. 160 Israelis were killed during the first intifada,<sup>602</sup> and 1,178 Israelis were killed during the second intifada, with the majority of the casualties caused by suicide bombing attacks.<sup>603</sup>

Several weeks later, in late September 2024, a pro-Hamas act of vandalism was discovered outside Georgetown’s Healy Hall, where a statue of Georgetown founder John Carroll had been spray painted with an inverted Hamas red triangle. Additionally, the university’s homecoming “Hoya Saxa” installation was defaced with the words “200K dead,”<sup>604</sup> referencing the inflated number<sup>605</sup> of civilian casualties claimed in Hamas propaganda.

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<sup>600</sup> Georgetown University Students for Justice in Palestine (@sjpgeorgetown), “Stand Up Fight Back for Palestine!,” Instagram, September 2, 2024, [https://www.instagram.com/p/C\\_afd29RpkS/](https://www.instagram.com/p/C_afd29RpkS/).

<sup>601</sup> “Incident Number 8605,” Database of Antisemitic Activity on U.S. College and University Campuses, Amcha Initiative, September 4, 2024, <https://amchainitiative.org/search-by-university#university/name2/campus-monitor2/5b4bd8b12d7f5f28788b1661/view-incident-details5/66d8f48ff8ee1902cd476268/>.

<sup>602</sup> Linda Gradstein, “34 Years after First Palestinian Intifada, Peace with Israelis Remains Elusive,” *VOA News*, December 7, 2021, <https://www.voanews.com/a/thirty-four-years-after-first-palestinian-intifada-peace-with-israelis-remains-elusive-/6343819.html>.

<sup>603</sup> Yoram Schweitzer, “The Rise and Fall of Suicide Bombings in the Second Intifada,” Strategic Assessment, Vol. 13, No. 3, Institute for National Security Studies, October 2010, <https://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/fe-3014381841.pdf>.

<sup>604</sup> Sydney Carroll, “John Carroll and Hoya Saxa Installation Spray-Painted in Protest of Israel’s Bombardment of Gaza,” *The Georgetown Voice*, September 20, 2024, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2024/09/20/john-carroll-and-hoya-saxa-installation-spray-painted-in-protest-of-israels-bombardment-of-gaza/>.

<sup>605</sup> Rahim Mohamed, “Hamas Death Numbers Can’t Be Trusted—Here’s More Evidence They Are Inflated,” *National Post*, March 27, 2024, <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/rahim-mohamed-hamas-death-numbers-cant-be-trusted-heres-more-evidence-they-are-inflated>.



In October 2024, ACMCU, CCAS, Georgetown University Qatar, the African Studies Program, and Institute for the Study of International Migration cosponsored the “Gaza Lecture Series: Anatomy of Genocide in Gaza,” which featured Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories, as a speaker.<sup>606</sup> In addition to her UN position, Albanese is an affiliate scholar at Georgetown’s Institute for the Study of International Migration.<sup>607</sup> Albanese spoke at two events on the same day. Her first lecture took place during a luncheon cosponsored by the five departments mentioned above. Later in the day, she spoke at an evening event at a bookstore/restaurant called Busboys and Poets, which was also sponsored by ACMCU.<sup>608</sup> CCAS director Fida Adely introduced Albanese during the event.<sup>609</sup> ACMCU promoted Albanese’s lecture as “describ[ing] the relationship between settler-colonialism and genocide, the genocidal acts and intent present in this current moment, and the act of ‘de-civilianizing’ Palestinians to conceal those acts and intentions.”<sup>610</sup>

Prior to the “Anatomy of Genocide” event, the Georgetown Israel Alliance appealed to the university’s leadership in an Instagram post, stating, “As a Jesuit institution that prides itself on religious diversity and inclusion, we ask that you reconsider your decision to bring Francesca Albanese to this campus. She is an antisemite recognized by multiple countries and organizations (including the UN and government officials) for her hateful and bigoted remarks. Allowing her on this campus to speak is dangerous and demonstrates a significant disregard for the safety and wellbeing of Jewish students.”<sup>611</sup>

## Francesca Albanese

Prior to her appointment as the UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories by the UN Human Rights Council, Francesca Albanese published an antisemitic post on Facebook aimed at aiding fundraising for

<sup>606</sup> “Anatomy of a Genocide in Gaza,” ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, November 4, 2024, <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/2024/11/04/anatomy-of-genocide-in-gaza/>.

<sup>607</sup> “Francesca P. Albanese,” entry on Academia.edu, n.d., <https://georgetown.academia.edu/FrancescaAlbanese>.

<sup>608</sup> “Anatomy of Genocide in Gaza: A Conversation with UN Special Rapporteur Francesa Albanese,” Busboys and Poets, October 28, 2024, <https://www.busboysandpoets.com/events/th-evt-41646542>.

<sup>609</sup> Nora Toscano, “UN Expert Says Israel Committing Genocide, Calls for International Response,” *The Hoya*, October 31, 2024, <https://thehoya.com/news/un-expert-says-israel-committing-genocide-calls-for-international-response/>.

<sup>610</sup> “Anatomy of a Genocide in Gaza,” ACMCU, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, November 4, 2024, <https://acmcu.georgetown.edu/2024/11/04/anatomy-of-genocide-in-gaza/>.

<sup>611</sup> Georgetown Israel Alliance (@GIAHoyas), “Georgetown University is bringing Francesca Albanese to lecture to students,” Instagram, October 24, 2024, [https://www.instagram.com/giahoyas/p/DBhIKYGPPoD/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/giahoyas/p/DBhIKYGPPoD/?img_index=1).



UNRWA,<sup>612</sup> where she had previously worked.<sup>613</sup> In the post, she accused the United States of being controlled by the “Jewish lobby,” writing, “America and Europe, one of them subjugated by the Jewish lobby, and the other by the sense of guilt about the Holocaust, remain on the sidelines and continue to condemn the oppressed—the Palestinians—who defend themselves with the only means they have (deranged missiles), instead of making Israel face its international law responsibilities.”<sup>614</sup> In a separate post invoking the antisemitic tropes of Jews spreading disease and Jewish “greed,” Albanese blasted the BBC, declaring, “The Israel lobby is clearly inside your veins and system and you will be remembered to have been on the [B]ig [B]rothers’s side of this [O]rwellian nightmare caused once again by Israel’s greed.”<sup>615</sup> Following media reports about her antisemitic posts, Albanese at first tried to distance herself from them but then doubled down, falsely insisting that her comments “were wrongly mischaracterized as antisemitic.”<sup>616</sup>

Then U.S. ambassador to the UN Human Rights Council Michele Taylor condemned Albanese’s remarks, declaring, “We are appalled by recently uncovered antisemitic remarks on social media made by a UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur before taking on the role. References to the “Jewish Lobby” are an age-old trope; this is outrageous, inappropriate, corrosive, & degrades the value of the UN.”<sup>617</sup> Deborah Lipstadt, then Special Envoy to Combat and Monitor Antisemitism in the U.S. State Department, assailed Albanese for her posts, stating, “Such blatant antisemitic rhetoric—particularly when it’s an established pattern—is simply unacceptable. It severely undermines the credibility of the UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur to deal with the issue of human rights in the context of Israel & the Palestinian territories.”<sup>618</sup>

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<sup>612</sup> The U.S. Congress has continued a ban on U.S. funding for UNRWA through March 2025 due to 12 UNRWA employees reportedly having taken part in the October 7 Hamas-led massacre. See “U.S. Congress Deal Bars U.S. Funds to UNRWA until March 2025, Sources Say,” *Reuters*, March 19, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-congress-deal-bars-us-funds-unrwa-until-march-2025-sources-say-2024-03-19/>.

<sup>613</sup> Luke Tress, “UN Palestinian Rights Official’s Social Media History Reveals Antisemitic Comments,” *Times of Israel*, December 24, 2022, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/un-palestinian-rights-officials-social-media-history-reveals-antisemitic-comments/>.

<sup>614</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>615</sup> Acsecnarf Albanese, “Write to the media!,” Facebook, July 25, 2014, available at <https://static-cdn.toi-media.com/www/uploads/2022/12/Untitled-1-4.jpg>.

<sup>616</sup> Luke Tress, “UN Palestinian Rights Official’s Social Media History Reveals Antisemitic Comments,” *Times of Israel*, December 24, 2022, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/un-palestinian-rights-officials-social-media-history-reveals-antisemitic-comments/>.

<sup>617</sup> U.S. Ambassador to the UN Human Rights Council (@U.S.AmbHRC), “We are appalled...,” Twitter (now X), December 14, 2022, <https://twitter.com/usambhrc/status/1603091256082563075?s=61&t=M8hfyWOP52nd0mkvLUZAIA>.

<sup>618</sup> Special Envoy to Combat and Monitor Antisemitism (@StateSEAS), “Such blatant antisemitic rhetoric...,” Twitter (now X), December 14, 2022, <https://twitter.com/stateseas/status/1603160247417405441?s=61&t=wzkMW1D-bP3rSpzmSE65Rw>.

Congresswoman Kathy Manning, then co-chair of the House Bipartisan Task Force on Combating Antisemitism, called Albanese's posts "completely unacceptable and frankly shocking."<sup>619</sup>

Albanese has more recently made another series of antisemitic statements and has falsely accused Israel of committing genocide, including the claim that Israel "dropped ammunitions [sic] equal to two nuclear bombs" on Gaza.<sup>620</sup> She has also supported and legitimized Hamas terrorism by attending a Hamas conference in 2022 where she exhorted the attendees, "You have the right to resist." Additionally, Albanese minimized the October 7 Hamas-led massacre by calling it a "reaction to Israel's oppression."<sup>621</sup>

## 5.5 2025 Spring Semester

Most recently, Georgetown Law SJP, George Washington University Law SJP, and Zeytoun posted a flyer on Instagram promoting a February 11, 2025, event on campus featuring Ribhi Karajah,<sup>622</sup> a convicted terrorist from the Marxist-Leninist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).<sup>623</sup> The PFLP has been designated by the U.S. State Department as a foreign terrorist organization since October 1997.<sup>624</sup>

Karajah was found responsible for a 2019 roadside bombing that murdered 17-year-old Rina Shnerb and severely injured her father Rabbi Eitan Shnerb and her brother Dvir.<sup>625</sup> In a plea agreement with the Israeli court, Karajah admitted that he had been made aware of the planned attack by several of his PFLP terrorist associates,

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<sup>619</sup> Luke Tress, "UN Palestinian Rights Official's Social Media History Reveals Antisemitic Comments," *Times of Israel*, December 24, 2022, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/un-palestinian-rights-officials-social-media-history-reveals-antisemitic-comments/>.

<sup>620</sup> "UN Watch Calls for Sanctions against Francesca Albanese over Antisemitism and Terrorism Support," *Jerusalem Post*, October 24, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-825935>.

<sup>621</sup> "'Rotten to the Core': UN's Albanese Deflects Blood Libel, Implies Most Israelis Are Pro-Genocide," *Jerusalem Post*, December 28, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-835149>.

<sup>622</sup> Georgetown Law Students for Justice in Palestine (@Isjgeorgetown), "Palestinian Prisoners, an evening with Ribhi Karajah, student activist and former political prisoner," Instagram, February 5, 2025, <https://www.instagram.com/p/DFaUaXWxkcF/> (page no longer available).

<sup>623</sup> Haley Cohen, "Georgetown Law Student Group to Host Convicted Member of PFLP Terror Group," *Jewish Insider*, February 5, 2025, <https://jewishinsider.com/2025/02/georgetown-law-student-students-for-justice-in-palestine-pflp-terror/>.

<sup>624</sup> "Popular Front for the Liberations of Palestine," Counter Terrorism Guide, U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, November 2022, [https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/pflp\\_fto.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/pflp_fto.html).

<sup>625</sup> Judah Ari Gross, "Teen Israeli Girl Killed As Family Hit by Bomb at West Bank Spring," *Times of Israel*, August 23, 2019, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/three-israelis-seriously-hurt-in-explosion-at-west-bank-spring/>.

which included specific details about the location, yet he took no action to prevent it.<sup>626</sup> He was sentenced to three and a half years in prison.<sup>627</sup>

Julia Wax Vanderwiel, a second-year law student and founder and president of Georgetown Law Zionists stated that Karajah's presence on campus "threatens the security of all Jewish students." She characterized antisemitism on campus as "rampant" and described the Georgetown administration as having "ignored" what has "gone on so long."<sup>628</sup> Responding to news reports of the event, Congressman Richie Torres condemned the event and had his staff contact Georgetown University Law Center to express concern. A university official responded that the administration had informed GLSJP that its event would "have to be postponed so that the University could conduct a thorough investigation into serious safety and security concerns that had arisen in connection with the event."<sup>629</sup>

In mid-April 2025, a poster located in a residential hall at Georgetown was vandalized with antisemitic graffiti. Georgetown University's Police Department (GUPD) was reported to have identified a suspect and is in the process of investigating the incident as a possible hate crime and bias incident.<sup>630</sup> Four university vice-presidents signed a message to the university community in which they stated, "We strongly condemn antisemitism in all its forms, and this act of hatred has no place in our community. We stand together with our Jewish community. We recognize the effect that this deeply troubling incident has on our community, including the impacts on individual students and employees."<sup>631</sup>

That same month, the university's student government, the Georgetown University Student Association (GUSA), held a vote to push through a pro-BDS referendum that would poll undergraduates on whether Georgetown should divest from academic institutions and companies linked to Israel. GUSA initially scheduled the referendum to occur during the Passover holiday, with 16 of its 28 members voting in favor of holding it on April 14–16.<sup>632</sup>

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<sup>626</sup> Haley Cohen, "Georgetown Law Student Group to Host Convicted Member of PFLP Terror Group," *Jewish Insider*, February 5, 2025, <https://jewishinsider.com/2025/02/georgetown-law-student-students-for-justice-in-palestine-pflp-terror/>.

<sup>627</sup> Ibid.

<sup>628</sup> Ibid.

<sup>629</sup> Haley Cohen, "Georgetown Law Event with PFLP Terror Group Member Postponed," *Jewish Insider*, February 10, 2025, <https://jewishinsider.com/2025/02/georgetown-law-event-with-pflp-terrorist-postponed/>.

<sup>630</sup> Ajani Stella, "GUPD Investigating Potential Antisemitic Hate Crime," *The Hoya*, April 16, 2025, <https://thehoya.com/news/developing-gupd-investigating-potential-antisemitic-hate-crime/>.

<sup>631</sup> "Antisemitic Graffiti Found in Residence Hall," Georgetown University, April 16, 2025, <https://www.georgetown.edu/news/antisemitic-graffiti-found-in-residence-hall/>.

<sup>632</sup> Haley Cohen, "Georgetown Student Association Set to Hold BDS Vote over Passover," *Jewish Insider*, April 9, 2025, <https://jewishinsider.com/2025/04/georgetown-student-association-holding-bds-vote-over-passover/>.

Georgetown's student newspaper, *The Hoya*, noted that the vote was taken "without public attribution — a departure from standard GUSA procedures." It further described that, "during the meeting, senators voted to break GUSA rules to advance the referendum without the approval of the senate's Policy and Advocacy Committee (PAC), which determines whether to send legislation before the full senate."<sup>633</sup>

Georgetown's Students Supporting Israel (SSI) group wrote a letter to interim president Robert Groves criticizing the referendum: "The process by which this vote was initiated raises further alarm. Reports of procedural irregularities, including a violation of student government rules, call into question the legitimacy of the referendum and risk setting a precedent where activist agendas bypass due process to achieve political outcomes." It continued, "[T]he passage of this measure would not occur in isolation. It would embolden future efforts to marginalize Jewish and Israeli students, deepen campus polarization, and risk fueling the disturbing rise in antisemitism seen at other institutions."<sup>634</sup> Other Jewish organizations on campus, including the Jewish Student Association, Georgetown Israel Alliance, and Chabad Georgetown also decried the violation of procedure as well as the referendum itself.<sup>635</sup> On April 14, GUSA announced that it had rescheduled the referendum, and SSI stated that it would continue to contest the referendum based on the violation of procedures.<sup>636</sup> On April 29, 2025, the referendum passed with 67.9% voting in favor and 32.1% voting against, with 29.5% of the student body participating.<sup>637</sup> Georgetown's interim president Robert Groves responded to the results, stating, "Georgetown will not implement this referendum, based on our institutional values and history and existing university resources and processes that address our investments."<sup>638</sup>

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<sup>633</sup> Evie Steele, Nora Toscano, Jack Willis, and Maran Fagan, "GU Students to Vote on Israel Divestment," April 6, 2025, <https://thehoya.com/news/gu-students-to-vote-on-israel-divestment/>.

<sup>634</sup> Dion J. Pierre, "Passover BDS Referendum at Georgetown University Decried by Jewish Students," *The Algemeiner*, April 11, 2025, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2025/04/11/passover-bds-referendum-georgetown-university-decried-jewish-students/>.

<sup>635</sup> Georgetown Israel Alliance (@giahoyas), "Vote No: GIA, Chabad, SSI, and JSA Statement on Recent GUSA BDS Referendum," Instagram, April 11, 2025, [https://www.instagram.com/p/DITy5SsOIA1/?img\\_index=1&igsh=Z3Z2dGowZ3ZleWlv](https://www.instagram.com/p/DITy5SsOIA1/?img_index=1&igsh=Z3Z2dGowZ3ZleWlv).

<sup>636</sup> Dion J. Pierre, "Georgetown University Postpones Passover BDS Vote Following Outcry," *The Algemeiner*, April 15, 2025, <https://www.algemeiner.com/2025/04/15/georgetown-university-postpones-passover-bds-vote-following-outcry/>.

<sup>637</sup> Katie Doran, "Divestment Referendum Passes; University Announces It Will Not Implement Demands," *The Georgetown Voice*, April 29, 2025, <https://georgetownvoice.com/2025/04/29/divestment-referendum-passes-with-68-of-the-vote/>.

<sup>638</sup> Ibid.

## Conclusions

The evidence laid out in this report reveals a complex network linking Georgetown University to Qatar’s strategic use of financial influence to promote Islamist ideologies, often with evident antisemitic undertones. The Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU) at Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service (SFS) is proof of how Gulf-state funding can penetrate Western academic institutions under the banner of interfaith dialogue but with an evident focus on advancing a singular, politicized agenda.

### Foreign Funding as an Instrument of Ideological Power

Qatar’s substantial monetary support, channeled through the Qatar Foundation and other vehicles, plays a pivotal role in shaping Georgetown’s institutional direction—especially in research priorities and faculty appointments—as seen in the case of Georgetown’s Qatar campus. Far from being purely benevolent, these financial flows are strategic investments that are designed to legitimize ideological narratives associated with Islamist political currents, including the Muslim Brotherhood and similar networks. Georgetown’s repeated engagement with individuals openly sympathetic to Islamist and antisemitic jihadist movements has effectively positioned the university as a *de facto* platform for normalizing political Islamism, often shielding its advocates from serious critique.

### Weaponizing Academic Platforms to Subvert the Discourse on Extremist Ideologies

Further compounding these concerns, ACMCU—and affiliated initiatives like the Bridge Initiative—commonly invoke allegations of “Islamophobia” to discredit or silence criticism of Islamist ideologies. This tactic creates a protective barrier around scholars and organizations with pronounced antisemitic leanings, rationalizing their rhetoric in the name of defending Muslim civil rights. The net result is a troubling convergence in which putative advocacy against bigotry and racism deliberately becomes a mechanism for propagating anti-Zionist and antisemitic messaging. In framing Israel as a principal global antagonist, these programs cultivate a narrative congruent with radical Islamist doctrines.

## **Compromised Academic Neutrality**

Key Georgetown-affiliated personalities such as Jonathan A.C. Brown and Nader Hashemi further illustrate how Qatar-linked intellectuals can steer discourse away from evidence-based scholarship and toward overt apologetics for political Islam. Their published positions—ranging from apologies for Islamist dogma to inflammatory accusations of apartheid against Israel—underscore a deeper erosion of academic rigor. These perspectives not only corrode the integrity of Georgetown’s research environment but also confer institutional legitimacy upon antisemitic tropes in broader policy and intellectual arenas.

## **Georgetown as a Feeder for U.S. Diplomatic Leadership**

Compounding these concerns is Georgetown University’s pivotal role in shaping the intellectual and professional pipeline for American diplomacy. As one of the primary feeder schools for future State Department officials and policy experts, the institution exerts a disproportionate influence on the outlook and training of the very individuals who will guide U.S. foreign relations. The infiltration of ideologically driven foreign money, particularly from undemocratic powers, thus has significant national security implications: by steering the curriculum, faculty hires, and campus discourse, these external actors gain leverage over how prospective American diplomats are taught to interpret global conflicts and prioritize specific regional agendas. The end result is not simply an academic distortion but a potential compromise of the mechanisms by which U.S. society grooms its statesmen and negotiators. If foreign interests wield undue sway within Georgetown’s corridors, it means that American democracy itself is subtly eroded: the foundational process of diplomatic education risks being co-opted by non-transparent funding streams, ultimately shaping policies and strategies in ways that may run counter to the nation’s long-term security and democratic ideals.



# Policy Recommendations

## 1. Stakeholders should support Senate passage of the DETERRENT Act.

Stakeholders should support Senate passage of the DETERRENT Act to strengthen foreign influence transparency in higher education and ensure robust enforcement of foreign funding disclosures that protect the integrity of U.S. institutions from undue foreign influence.

The Defending Education Transparency and Ending Rogue Regimes Engaging in Nefarious Transactions (DETERRENT) Act has been passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and is currently under consideration in the Senate. This legislation aims to enhance transparency and accountability regarding foreign gifts and contracts in U.S. higher education institutions.

Key Provisions of the DETERRENT Act:

- *Lower Reporting Thresholds:* Reduces the foreign gift reporting threshold from \$250,000 to \$50,000, with a \$0 threshold for countries of concern, including China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.
- *Mandatory Waivers:* Prohibits institutions from entering into contracts with countries of concern without obtaining a waiver from the DoEd.
- *Individual Reporting:* Requires disclosure of foreign gifts to individual faculty and staff members at research-intensive institutions.
- *Investment Disclosures:* Mandates annual reporting of investments with countries or entities of concern, to be published in a publicly searchable database.
- *Enforcement Mechanisms:* Institutions found non-compliant may face substantial fines or loss of Title IV federal student aid eligibility.

## 2. Condition access to Title IV federal student aid on Section 117 compliance.

Ensure that access to federal student aid is dependent on transparent foreign funding disclosure:

- Make full compliance with Section 117 of the Higher Education Act a condition for eligibility to receive Title IV federal funds, including Pell Grants and federal loans.
- Require annual DoEd certification of compliance from all institutions receiving Title IV support.
- Institutions found to be out of compliance may face suspension or termination of student aid eligibility and public designation as non-compliant.

### **3. Adopt the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism in higher education institutions.**

Require all universities receiving federal funds to formally adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism, including its illustrative examples, as a standard for addressing antisemitism on campus:

- Incorporate the IHRA definition into university codes of conduct and civil rights compliance policies.
- Make adoption a condition for access to Title IV federal student aid and research grants.
- Task the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) with monitoring enforcement and investigating violations.

### **4. Require comprehensive disclosure of all agreements with foreign entities (2005–present).**

The U.S. Department of Education should require universities to publicly disclose:

- all agreements with foreign governments or foreign entities; and
- all appendices, modifications, and updates to such agreements.

Retroactive disclosure should cover all agreements from 2005 to the present.

### **5. Require public reporting of all funding arising from foreign agreements.**

The U.S. Department of Education should require universities to disclose all funding resulting from agreements with foreign entities, including:

- direct institutional funding;
- indirect funding to faculty (seminars, travel, accommodations);
- in-kind contributions (equipment, services, scholarships);
- tuition, living expenses, and stipends for students funded by foreign entities;
- research funding arrangements (including disclosure of IP ownership);
- faculty endowments and sponsorships; and
- funding of schools, centers, or area studies programs (e.g., Middle East studies).

### **6. Enforce transparency and oversight of funding to student associations.**

The U.S. Department of Education should require universities to report:

- all financial support to student associations on all campuses (in Qatar and the United States);
- full annual reports detailing expenditures by these associations; and
- all use of university facilities by such groups.

In addition, universities must retain full control over disbursed funds and ensure compliance with civil rights obligations.

### **7. Investigate potential FARA designations for foreign-influenced programs.**

The U.S. Department of Justice should conduct a review to determine whether any university schools, centers, or programs should be designated under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA).

Such a review should focus on centers engaged in:

- public advocacy;
- policy influencing activities; and
- public-facing research promoting foreign government narratives.

### **8. Establish independent antisemitism task forces with enforcement powers.**

Every university must establish an independent antisemitism task force that is empowered to:

- Investigate allegations of antisemitic speech, harassment, or incitement.
- Recommend suspension of students or faculty found responsible.
- Sanction misuse of university facilities for antisemitic or extremist activities.
- Issue warrants for access to organizational records if necessary.

Such task forces must operate independently of university administrations and report publicly.

### **9. Conduct a strategic reassessment of Georgetown's presence in Qatar.**

Following the precedent set by Texas A&M University's decision to exit Education City in Doha, which was announced in 2024, Georgetown should:

- Conduct an independent review of its Qatar operations.
- Assess compliance with academic freedom, Jesuit values, and U.S. national interests.
- Plan for a phased withdrawal to preserve the university's integrity and global standing.

## Abbreviations

AAA	American Anthropological Association
AAR	American Academy of Religion
ABIM	Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia
ACMCU	Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding
AHF	Al Haramain Foundation
AJMN	Al Jazeera Media Network
AMP	American Muslims for Palestine
AMSS	Association of Muslim Social Scientists of North America (see also NAAIMS)
AUB	American University of Beirut
BDS	Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions
CAIR	Council on American-Islamic Relations
CCAS	Center for Contemporary Arab Studies
CIGA	Center for Islam and Global Affairs
CILE	Research Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics
CIRS	Center for International and Regional Studies
CIS	College of Islamic Studies
CPNL	Center for Public & Nonprofit Leadership
CSID	Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy
DAWN	Democracy for the Arab World Now
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
FARA	Foreign Agents Registration Act
FSJP	Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine
FTO	Foreign Terrorist Organization
FY	fiscal year
GBI	Georgetown Bridge Initiative
GFSJP	Georgetown Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine
GLSJP	Georgetown Law Students for Justice in Palestine
GRF	Global Relief Foundation
GSJP	Georgetown Students for Justice in Palestine
GU	Georgetown University
GUMC	Georgetown University Medical School

GUMS4Palestine	Georgetown University Medical Students for Palestine
GUPD	Georgetown University Police Department
GU-Q	Georgetown University Qatar
GUSA	Georgetown University Student Association
GWU	George Washington University
HBKU	Hamid Bin Khalifa University
HLF	Holy Land Foundation
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICESCO	Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
ICNA	Islamic Circle of North America
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
IHRA	International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance
IIIT	International Institute of Islamic Thought
IIUM	International Islamic University of Malaysia
ISGAP	Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy
ISNA	Islamic Society of North America
ISPU	Institute of Social Policy and Understanding
JVP	Jewish Voice for Peace
MAS	Muslim American Society
MEMO	Middle East Monitor
MEMRI	Middle East Media and Research Institute
MESA	Middle East Studies Association
MPD	Metropolitan Police Department
MSA	Muslim Students Association
NAAIMS	North American Association of Islamic and Muslim Studies
NSJP	National Students for Justice in Palestine
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PIJ	Palestinian Islamic Jihad
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
QCIMR	Al-Qaradawi Center for Islamic Moderation and Renewal
QF	Qatar Foundation
QNRF	Qatar National Research Fund
SDS	Students for a Democratic Society
SFS	School of Foreign Service
SJP	Students for Justice in Palestine
SPLC	Southern Poverty Law Center
SSI	Students Supporting Israel
SSNP	Syrian Social Nationalist Party
UAE	United Arab Emirates

UASR	United Association for Studies and Research
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine
USACBI	U.S. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel
USCMO	U.S. Council of Muslim Organizations
USIP	United States Institute of Peace



