

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 21, 2024

Mr. Michael Schill
President
Northwestern University
633 Clark Street
Evanston, IL 60208

Dear Mr. Schill:

On Saturday, June 8, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launched a daring raid on Hamas to rescue Israeli hostages abducted during the horrific events of October 7. During the raid, the IDF discovered that three of the rescued hostages were held at Abdallah Aljamal's home in Nuseirat. Aljamal, who was killed during the rescue, was a journalist who had published an article on Al Jazeera and whose information can be found on the Al Jazeera website.¹

Unfortunately, this is not the first time Al Jazeera has been connected to terrorists or terrorist organizations. According to the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), Al Jazeera and its reporters have been connected to Hamas throughout the Israel-Hamas War.² For example, a Palestinian journalist named Mohammad Wishah working for Al Jazeera was discovered to have been a commander in Hamas's anti-tank missile unit³ who went on to work in research and development for Hamas, and posted a photograph of himself with Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar on social media.⁴ In addition, another Al Jazeera correspondent named Ismail Abu Omar, who documented and praised the October 7 attack, has been accused by the IDF of being a Hamas platoon deputy commander.⁵

In another incident, the IDF carried out an airstrike on two Al Jazeera journalists who were operating a drone that posed a threat to Israeli soldiers.⁶ One journalist, Hamza al-Dahdouh, was an operative of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the other journalist was Mustafa Thuraya, who was connected to Hamas's Al-Qadisiya Battalion. Thuraya was the individual believed to have been operating the drone, and Al Jazeera admitted that he was a freelance drone operator for the network.

Furthermore, Al Jazeera has acted as Hamas' mouthpiece by providing a platform for Hamas leaders' messages and pro-Hamas propaganda. On October 7, following the horrific attack on civilians, Hamas's political leader, Ismail Haniyeh, issued a statement on Al Jazeera in which he

¹ https://www.aljazeera.com/author/abdallah_aljamal_190122103235277

² <https://www.memri.org/reports/al-jazeera-arabic-qatari-owned-tv-channel-promotes-islamist-terrorism-worldwide-%E2%80%93updated>

³ <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-786392>

⁴ <https://www.memri.org/reports/al-jazeera-arabic-qatari-owned-tv-channel-promotes-islamist-terrorism-worldwide-%E2%80%93updated>

⁵ <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/byjpcge26#autoplay>

⁶ <https://www.commentary.org/jonathan-schanzer/the-growing-list-of-al-jazeera-terrorists/>

declared “sons of our Palestinian people and Arab and Islamic nation: Today, you are on the verge of a great triumph and a manifest victory.”⁷ That same day, Al Jazeera broadcast an address by Saleh Al-Aroui, Hamas’s Deputy Chairman of the Political Bureau, in which he said Hamas did not target civilians and that those who surrendered were treated humanely.⁸ Then Al Jazeera interviewed Al-Aroui on October 12 where he again denied that Hamas had purposely killed civilians and rejected claims that Hamas terrorists had participated in rape.⁹ Even Secretary of State Antony Blinken acknowledged Al Jazeera’s bias and asked that Qatar “turn down the volume on Al Jazeera’s...anti-Israel incitement.”¹⁰

The fact that Northwestern would partner with Al Jazeera despite evidence showing a number of its journalists are active members, and even leaders, of Hamas, as well as its dissemination of propaganda on behalf of Hamas, is deeply troubling. It is unacceptable for an American university that receives hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding annually to partner with organizations whose members are terrorists or whose reporting propagandizes on behalf of terrorist organizations. It is anathema to the American way of life and contrary to our education system which seeks to change hearts and minds through persuasion and dialogue rather than through brute force.

Mr. Schill, in the Congressional hearing held on May 23rd, you expressed concern regarding Northwestern University in Qatar’s partnership with Al Jazeera. You promised in that hearing that you would look into that partnership. In light of these reports, we urge Northwestern University to take immediate action to end the existing partnership between Northwestern University in Qatar and Al Jazeera. We request that you respond to this letter by noon ET on Friday, July 19.

Sincerely,



Burgess Owens
Member of Congress



Andrew Ogles
Member of Congress

⁷ <https://www.memri.org/tv/hamas-leader-ismail-haniyeh-statement-jazeera-operation-aqsa-deluge-palestinians-west-bank-israel-abroad-join-battle>

⁸ <https://www.memri.org/tv/saleh-arouri-dep-chairman-hamas-politburo-ground-invasion-end-conflict-defeat-enemy>

⁹ <https://www.memri.org/tv/saleh-arouri-dep-chair-hamas-politburo-not-target-cvilians>

¹⁰ <https://www.axios.com/2023/10/25/tony-blinken-qatar-israel-hamas>



Jefferson Van Drew
Member of Congress



Elise M. Stefanik
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