

**QUESTIONS TO THE CHARITY
COMMISSION REGARDING
CHARITIES GRANTING AID TO
ORGANISATIONS AND CHARITIES
IN ISRAEL INCLUDING BUT NOT
EXCLUSIVELY THE ISRAELI
DEFENSE FORCES**

7 DECEMBER 2015

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Questions to the Charity Commission regarding charities granting aid to organisations and charities in Israel including but not exclusively the Israeli Defense Forces

The following questions are raised regarding the activity of UK Toremet Ltd, a registered charity in the UK number 1140972 (<http://uktoremet.org.uk/>) with regard to its activities.

Gift-aid is a facility available to registered charities whereby the recipient charity receives the donor's tax relief on a donation amounting to 25% of the donation.

UK Toremet Ltd. operates as a portal for UK based donors to donate to charities in the UK, Israel and the USA. Its facility is also used by the online Jewish Charities Guide (<http://www.jewishcharityguide.co.uk/>). The founder of UK Toremet (UKT) explains how both function in an article on the Jewish Charities Guide website: as follows (full text in Appendix A¹):

UK Toremet CEO Jonny Cline explains: 'We are proud to partner with the long-established and highly respected Jewish Charity Guide to facilitate philanthropy among individual donors, companies, giving circles, and their financial and legal representatives. Transforming the Jewish Charity Guide website into an online giving portal has made it easier for people to donate, and encourages the younger generation of donors, who are more comfortable donating online, to discover and support the charities of their choice. In particular, UK Toremet makes it easier to gift money to charities outside the UK by facilitating a UK tax receipt and Gift Aid qualification.'

Alongside the Jewish Charity Guide website, UK Toremet has its own website (www.uktoremet.org.uk) listing charities (Recipient Agencies) which operate according to UK charity law guidelines, to facilitate tax-efficient online donations to good causes around the world. 'Since many philanthropic organizations in Israel and overseas do not have UK offices or bank accounts, UK Toremet acts as their fiscal sponsor, issuing UK tax receipts and re-granting the money to their project of choice', explains Cline. 'There are many good causes with small budgets that UK donors rarely come across, which we are happy to showcase on the UKT website,' says Jonny.

As of 2013, UK Toremet has also been offering charity account management services to individuals, companies, giving circles, and charitable trusts, including full account management facilities. A charity account can help people to allocate regular sums to charity and manage their donations online. You can arrange a monthly direct debit, make payments via credit card, or link your charity account to your Give As You Earn scheme. Donors can access and print statements listing all their donations, which can be useful for preparing annual accounts. A one-time Gift Aid Declaration and charity receipt covers all your donations and cuts down your paperwork.

A UKT Charity Account can be used to streamline your School Voluntary Payments and Charity Membership Fees, or to support anything charitable in the UK or EU or any UK Toremet Recipient Agency. You can even recommend a charity that you wish to support and if it qualifies under UK charities law we will facilitate your donation – unlike many charity account schemes run by individual

charities, we will not limit your (legal) choices! UK Toremet will also accept charity cheques and vouchers from other charity accounts. Many charity accounts impose restrictions on their members, so UK Toremet can extend their donation opportunities by processing their cheque or voucher in the UK and re-granting the funds to charities outside the UK.

UK Toremet exists to make it more convenient and tax-efficient to support the charities of your choice, in the UK and overseas. We keep our costs to a minimum – our fee is just 5% of 125% of your starting balance, so if you pay £5000 into your account and sign a Gift Aid form, we will take our fee from the Gift Aid and credit £5937.50 to your account! There are no further deductions when you make allocations to charities – they receive 100% of the amount you specify. UK Toremet (Registered Charity No. 1140972) is a member of the Fundraising Standards Board scheme, committed to the highest standards in fundraising.

Together with the Jewish Charity Guide, UK Toremet invites you to visit our websites to click-start your philanthropy and manage all your charitable giving online. (Our emphasis)

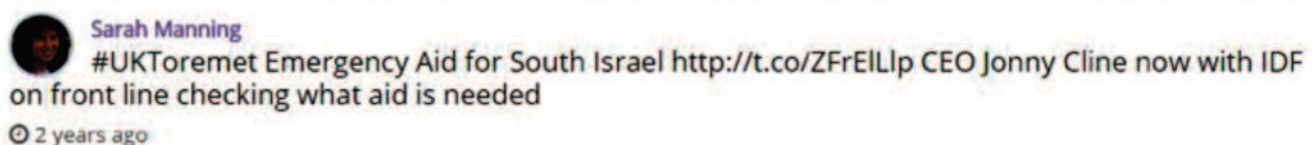
Indeed the granting of gift aid is according to UKT's founder Jonny Cline, one of the motivators for him to set up UKT. In an interview he states:

"The breaking point for me was when I, as a Brit, was offered a donation by a friend of the family for a cause I was working for, and I simply had no channel through which to process the funds that would get him the tax relief he deserved on his gift. Apparently that was a niche that was just not serviced."²

On the page 'Charity Accounts' on the UKT website <http://uktoremet.org.uk/for-donors/charity-accounts/> an excel file of how a charity account with UKT will work is given as a download. The excel sheet downloaded on 24 October 2015 is appended in A. It suggests that monies can be donated to a UKT Charity account and processed for Gift Aid before allocation to any cause.

Concern and relationship with for the IDF

Jonny Cline is also very concerned with matters relating to the IDF, and was reported to be on the IDF frontline during Operation Pillar of Defense in 2013 (see the Twitter stream of Sara Manning³, relevant tweet excerpted below).



The link in the tweet above goes to this page:

Emergency Relief for Israel⁴, which lists care packages to the IDF and Emergency Response as two items such relief provides for.

Due Diligence / Charitable Donations / Eligibility

The foregoing text implies that all donations processed are processed as charitable donations eligible for gift aid. It further suggests that all charities listed by the two organisations would be considered charitable under UK Charity guidelines.

On its own website, UKT claims it undertakes due diligence.

Questions for the Charity Commission

Q1. According to the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission Helpsheet 342⁵ Gift Aid:

“... is a scheme providing relief for gifts of money to charities, including organisations in EU Member states, Norway and Iceland that meet the UK tax definition of a charity.”

UK Toremet, in its founder’s words, is acting as a fiscal sponsor to organisations and charities in Israel and the USA. This appears to contradict the advice from the Charity Commission above.

Was the Charity Commission aware of UK Toremet’s activities and if so has an exception been made to the Gift Aid rules for UK Toremet? If not, what action does the Charity Commission propose to take?

Q2 Has the Charity Commission ever queried or opened an investigation into UKT to assess what sort of due diligence it employs in ensuring that all donations processed by UKT are given to eligible charities?

Q3 Has the Charity Commission ever queried or opened an investigation into UKT to assess what sort of due diligence it employs in ensuring that all donations processed by UKT are only employed in furtherance of charitable objects and are not in fact mismanaged by the recipient?

Q4 Where donations are given to non-charitable organisations for charitable purposes, what due diligence is employed by UKT to ensure that such grants are in furtherance of Charitable objects and are not in fact mismanaged by the recipient?

Q4 If they have and if grantee / donee organisations are not eligible, has the Charity Commission queried or opened an enquiry into the due diligence employed by UKT on grants / donations to ineligible organisations AND projects?

Ineligibility

Given the concern raised about the donee / grantee organisations listed on the UKT website the following questions to the Charity Commission are raised.

Questions for the Charity Commission

Q5 Do all the foregoing organisations (including any which are not charities) and grants / donations to these organisations qualify as charitable under UK Charity laws and guidelines?

Q6 Is an organisation allowed to claim Gift Aid for organisations that are not based in the UK or EU?

Q7 If not, what sanction has there been or will there be for violation of the laws and guidelines?

Reputation

Given the concerns listed above about the charities and organisations listed on the UKT site, the following questions are asked of the Charity Commission:

Questions for the Charity Commission

Q8 Is a charity's reputation (in this case UK Toremot Ltd) its property? If so, does the charity have a duty to ensure that it is not associated with anything that can tarnish that reputation?

Does the Charity Commission believe that donating to military, (openly) racist, violent and / or discriminatory causes damage a charity's reputation?

These questions are asked with regard to (but not solely) the following organisations listed on the UKT website:

1. IDF Widow and Orphans Funds

(a) Gift Aid available is made available to donors despite not being registered in the UK via UK Tomeret / Jewish Charity Guide. The relevant donation page states:

"If you are a UK taxpayer, you can increase the value of your donation at no extra cost to you. Thanks to the Government's Gift Aid Scheme, UKT - as a registered UK charity - will be able to claim back 25p for every £1 you donate, to help towards the costs of processing your donation via credit card and PayPal. All you have to do is indicate your permission by ticking the box below."⁶

The IDF Widows and Orphans Fund's page also states⁷:

Gifts are tax deductible only if a check is sent to the following address and made in the order of one of these foundations, in a separate note stating the donation is for IDFWO:

U.K.
UK Toremnet Limited
Shenkers LLP,
4th Floor, Sutherland House
70/78 West Hendon Broadway
London NW9 7BT
United Kingdom
www.uktoremnet.org
<http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/idf-widows-and-orphans-organization/>
Tel: 020 8450 4533
Email: jonnyc@uktoremnet.org.uk

IDF Widows and Orphans appears to be a project of Yashar LaChayal⁸, an organisation that describes itself as 'Your Direct Connection with Israel's Soldiers'. Its website states:

'Yashar LaChayal was established as a recognized non-profit organization in Israel and the United States, dedicated to helping Israeli soldiers serving on the front lines...

"...Combat soldiers, the soldiers serving on the front lines to ensure Israel's security, are the primary focus of Yashar LaChayal's services. We reach out regularly to units in the north, on the borders of Lebanon and Syria, those serving in the south on the Egyptian border, to soldiers on our border with Gaza, and to the Special Forces – the elite units charged with tasks critical to our national security."⁹

Stanmore and Canons Park Synagogue guide to fundraising describes Yashar LaChayal (which it suggests people donate to) as providing equipment to the IDF as needed).¹⁰ This page appears to be based on a blog in the Times of Israel published during Operation Protective Edge in 2014.¹¹

Further information Yashar LaChayal can be found in (6) below, as it also listed as a charity that UKT donors can donate to.

2. Am Yisrael

UKT's website lists this organization under 'Diplomacy'.¹²

One of its projects is called 'Join the IDF'¹³

It encourages enlisting in the Israeli Defense Force stating inter alia:

"When the Jewish People were about to enter the Land of Israel, the Tribes of Reuven & Gad requested that they be given property on the other side of the Jordan to reside. Moshe responded that they could with the provision that they had a duty to fight in Israel before choosing to settle outside the Land. Moshe feared that these Tribes wouldn't have the merit of fulfilling the mitzvah of defending Jewish lives and Milkhemet Mitzvah because they would become too complacent while living in Chutz L'Aretz. Join The IDF would like the opportunity to present the same beautiful Torah concept which is still relevant today to all young Jews internationally."

3. Karemy Chesed

UKT's site lists various activities for this charity¹⁴, but does not mention as the organisation's own site does that it provides aid for the IDF¹⁵. This includes the provision of care packages to combat soldiers. Its site describes at length the support it provided combat troops during Operation Protective Edge in 2014.¹⁶

The following video on Youtube shows IDF soldiers thanking the organization for their support during Operation Protective Edge:

<https://youtu.be/AxwLO8qX9AI>

The UK Jewish Charity Guide provides the ability to give gift aided donations via the UKT donation facility.¹⁷

4. Standing Together

UKT's site promotes Standing Together as providing food and care packages for soldiers in the IDF.¹⁸ It is listed as a charity under 'Welfare'.

Standing Together's Facebook page contains an entry on 16 June 2015 that states¹⁹:

"Today, we visited the Elite Egoz #IDF unit and with the help and a very generous donation from the Young Israel of Lawrence-Cedarhurst we delivered water packs, Leatherman knives, Gear bags and dry-fit clothing to IDF soldiers."

Its website calls for funds for military equipment such as thermal gloves and clothing that will enable soldiers to be 'trigger-ready'.²⁰ It provides: "the Standing Together tactical gloves [which] are made of fleece but have a retracting trigger-finger so that they may be worn even during operations."²¹

It further states that it gets its equipment through authorized military equipment suppliers. Types of equipment they cite as part of their purchase lists includes:

- Knee Pads
- Dri-fit T-Shirts
- Socks
- Multi-purpose tools
- LED headlamps
- Sunglasses

All are listed as being provided for soldiers in the course of their active duty in combat in Operation Protective Edge.²²

The site contains testimonies from serving soldiers in operations such as the Lebanon War of 2006²³ and Operation Protective Edge where war crimes were committed, thanking Standing Together for the 'gear' they received.

Elsewhere on their site they talk about Muslim and Islamic terrorists.²⁴ On its Facebook page on 10 October the organization calls for setting up support evenings for the IDF, and states:

"Over the past two weeks Muslim terrorists have been attacking both civilians as well as IDF soldiers throughout Israel."²⁵



On 12 October (See Appendix B4 and below) a comment is posted under a post by Standing Together. It states:

“Arm the tourists ! I’d love to take a shift and watch.
And snipe.”²⁶



Standing Together, www.stogether.org

12 October at 11:07 · 🌐

Terrorist attempted to murder a soldier and grab his gun. Security forces take out terrorist and soldier was lightly injured



UPDATE: Terrorist Killed Trying to Steal Soldier's Gun on Bus, 2 Wounded

The terrorist tried to steal the soldier's gun. The terrorist is dead.

WWW.JEWISHPRESS.COM | BY JEWISH PRESS NEWS BRIEFS

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

Navit Shchigel, Debra Kurtz, Abie Bilgoray and 6 others like this.

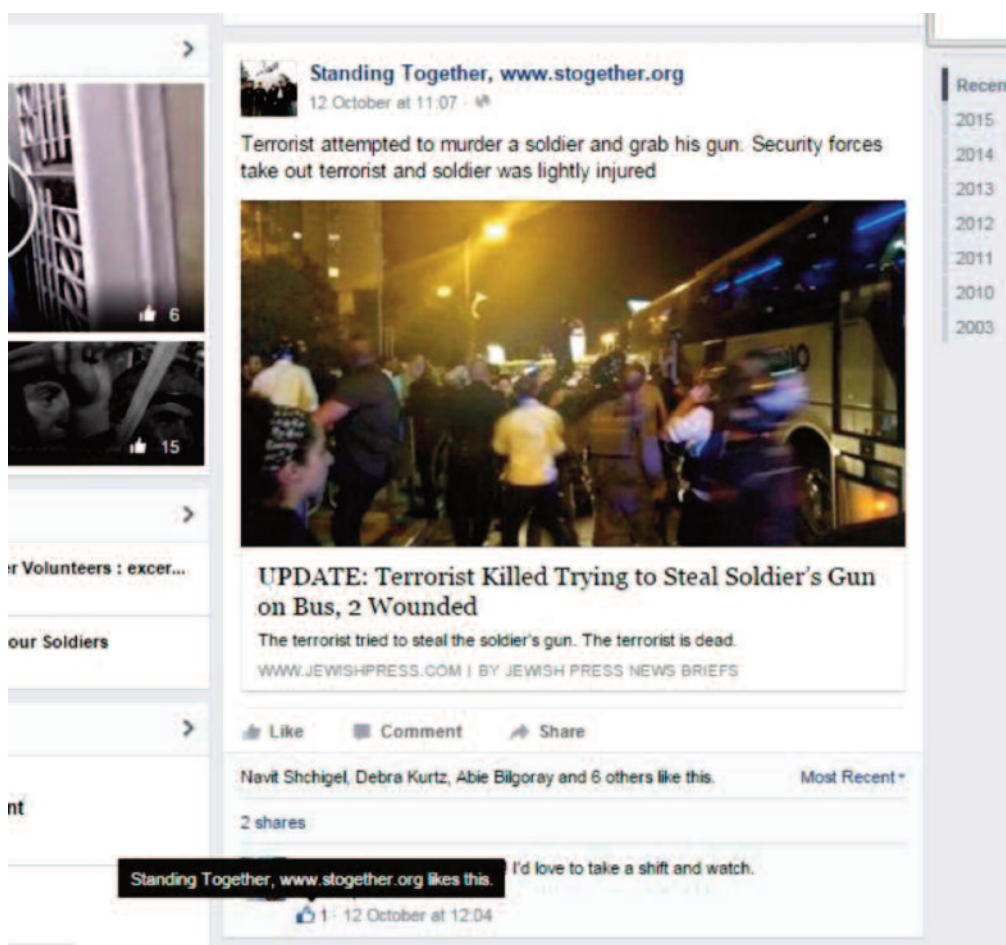
Most Recent

2 shares

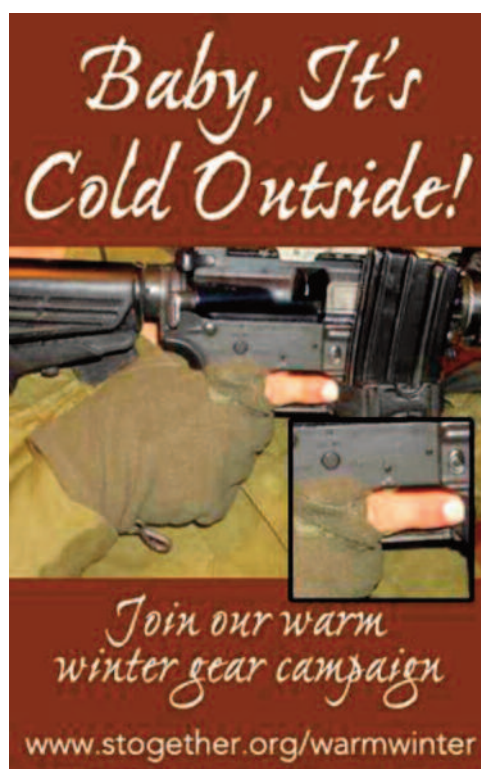


Yoel Fuld Arm the tourists ! I'd love to take a shift and watch.
And snipe.

👍 1 · 12 October at 12:04



Its winter campaign page to be found on its front page (www.247idf.org - 25 October 2015) emphasizes the trigger-ready glove in use²⁷:



Both the front page and other pages (including this²⁸), state that the organization donates 'operational equipment' without further specifying what that could be (this is distinct from its listing of dry-fit apparel and operational water packs).

The site emphasizes that it gets all its supplies from military suppliers and that it works closely with the IDF and IDF commanders, and also that with regard to its winter campaign, the IDF ultimately decides what goes in and may change what is in the pack from what the donor originally envisaged²⁹.

5. Shavei Chevron

Shavei Chevron³⁰ is listed on the UK Toremet page. It uses the description from the Shavei Hevron website to describe the organization³¹. Until October 2014 the leader of the Shavei-Hevron yeshiva at Kiryat Arba, was Rabbi Dov Lior³².

During operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014, Lior "published a letter... saying that Jewish law permits destroying the entire Gaza Strip to bring peace to the south of the country."³³ According to the Jerusalem Post this letter prompted Meretz chairwoman Zehava Gal-On to call on the Israeli attorney-general to open an investigation against Lior for incitement. She is reported to have said:

"“Rabbi Dov Lior’s racist comments have for some time not been in the realm of freedom of speech. We’re talking about a man who praises mass murder, who stands behind those who murder innocents and who took part in the incitement that led to the murder of a prime minister,” Gal-On said in reference to prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated in 1995.”³⁴

In 2009 Lior wrote an 'approbation for a book called The King's Torah that was co-written in 2009 by radical settler figure Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira, which permitted killing civilian non- Jews in times of war' ³⁵ Further information on Shapira's views inciting violence against Palestinians and his various arrests regarding terrorist incidents can be found in Max Blumenthal's article appended in B5³⁶. Blumenthal also recounts Lior's various racist views that incite or condone violence:

"His most wellknown backer is Dov Lior the leader of the Shavei Hevron yeshiva at Kiryat Arba, a radical Jewish settlement near the occupied Palestinian city of Hebron and a hotbed of Jewish terrorism. Lior has vigorously endorsed Torat Ha'Melech, calling it "very relevant, especially in this time."

Lior's enthusiasm for Shapira's tract stems from his own eliminationist attitude toward nonJews.

For example, while Lior served as the IDF's top rabbi, he instructed soldiers: "There is no such thing as civilians in wartime... A thousand non-Jewish lives are not worth a Jew's fingernail!" Indeed, there are only a few non-Jews whose lives Lior would demand to be spared. They are captured Palestinian militants who, as he once suggested, could be used as subjects for live human medical experiments.

Otherwise, Lior appears content to watch Palestinians perish as they did at the muzzle of Dr. Baruch Goldstein's machine gun in 1994. Goldstein, who massacred 29 Palestinians and wounded 150 in a shooting spree while they prayed in Hebron's Cave of the Patriarchs mosque, was a compatriot and neighbor of Lior in the settlement of Kiryat Arba. At Goldstein's funeral, Lior celebrated the

massacre as an act carried out “to sanctify the holy name of God.” He then extolled Goldstein as “a righteous man.” Thanks to Lior’s efforts, a shrine to Goldstein was constructed in the center of Kiryat Arba so that locals could celebrate the killer’s deeds and pass his legacy down to future generations.

Though Lior’s inflammatory statements resulted in his being barred from running for election to the Supreme Rabbinical Council, according to journalist Daniel Estrin, the rabbi remains “a respected figure among many mainstream Zionists.” By extension, he maintains considerable influence among religious elements in the IDF. In 2008, when the IDF’s chief rabbi, Brigadier General Avichai Ronski, brought a group of military intelligence officers to Hebron for a special tour, he concluded the day with a private meeting with Lior, who was allowed to reveal the officers with his views on modern warfare “no such thing as civilians in wartime.”

Information on Sahvei Chevron on the UKT site dates from at least 2012 (see appendix)

6. Yashar Lachayal

Yashar Lachayal is listed on the UKT page under ‘Israel’ ‘Welfare’ and ‘Youth at Risk’. It deals solely with support for IDF soldiers, including care packages. It is the organization that runs the IDF Widows and Orphans Fund (see 1 above).

The UKT website states about Yaschar Lachayal, inter alia:

“From its inception in July, 2006, during the height of the Second Lebanon War, Yashar LaChayal has been providing for the basic needs of Israeli soldiers. Initially, a small group of volunteers worked to collect and package much-needed supplies and transport them directly to the soldiers on the front. When the war ended, the volunteers continued to receive requests for supplies from army commanders.”³⁷

The organisation itself describes its works its focus:

“Combat soldiers, the soldiers serving on the front lines to ensure Israel’s security, are the primary focus of Yashar LaChayal’s services. We reach out regularly to units in the north, on the borders of Lebanon and Syria, those serving in the south on the Egyptian border, to soldiers on our border with Gaza, and to the Special Forces – the elite units charged with tasks critical to our national security.”³⁸

It explains the organisation’s genesis was during the Lebanon War of 2006, and that the name of the organization means ‘straight to the soldier’.³⁹

The organization claims to have since that time:

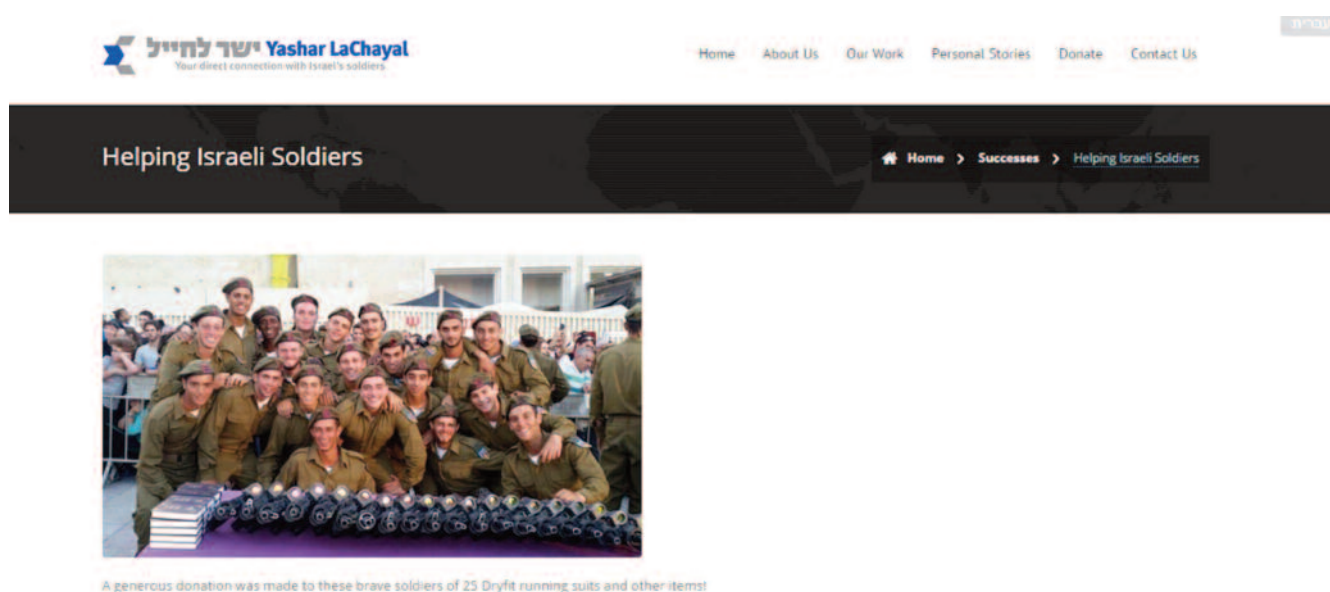
“...continued to receive requests for supplies from army commanders. In response to this need, Yashar LaChayal was established as a recognized non-profit organization in Israel and the United States, dedicated to helping Israeli soldiers serving on the front lines and making them more comfortable while they are protecting the Jewish homeland.”⁴⁰

It also states that:

“Finally, Yashar LaChayal – Straight to the Soldier – means exactly that: we bring the goods to the army bases and speak directly with the soldiers, reminding them that we stand with them and that they have a huge wall of international Jewish support behind them.”

Whilst the organization lists some of the support they send in terms of care packages for soldiers, they are vague about other items, using phrases such as ‘basic needs’ ‘whatever is needed’ ‘equipment’ etc. It is unclear as to whether other types of support including combat / combat support items are being purchased by the organization.⁴¹ Items with direct combat function listed include backpacks and headlamps.

Pictures of soldiers with donated items are confusing and can arguably imply to a donor that military equipment has been donated as ‘other items!’ e.g.⁴².



Screenshot of <https://www.yasharlachayal.org/success/helping-israeli-soldiers-7/> taken 21st October 2015

Amongst its projects Yashar Lachayal have an Adopt a Unit option.⁴³

During Operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014 the organization stated⁴⁴:

Since the beginning of Operation Protective Edge , we drove supplies down to our troops, visited hospitalized soldiers, and made sure our IDF troops know that there are Jews all over the world that are standing by their side. Because of the exclusive connections we have forged with company commanders over the past eight years, we have been able to accomplish amazing things. They know us, they trust us, and they call on us to fill specific needs – whether it's food, toiletries, water backpacks, kneepads, leatherman tools, head flashlights, clothing, recreation equipment, and religious items. We met soldiers as they came out of Gaza, and we “debriefed” them on the needs and what we can do to make them more comfortable. We were in the field every day of this terrible conflict to assess needs and bring exactly whatever supplies each unit so desperately needs – despite the constant Code Red alerts reminding us of the danger from overhead.

We gave out:

- Thousands of underwear, socks, undershirts, hats, and dryfit shirts
- Thousands of items including soaps, shampoos, towels, wipes, haircutting equipment, toothbrushes, toothpastes, powders and other hygienic necessities.
- 3000 water backpacks to over 15 different units
- 10,000 ices and 3000 cold drinks
- 200 coffee kits
- 3000 thermoses which were filled up with ice and over 1000 travel pillows for the tank units

And more...

Again some items listed have direct combat function. The organisation is clearly an active support body for troops involved in military operations, which in the case of Operation Protective Edge is almost universally held to have violated rules of war and caused mass civilian deaths.

A fundraising plea from an IDF soldier⁴⁵ states:

“We are trying to raise money to buy items that will A) supplement our military equipment, B) make our lives a bit easier and C) free up company money to buy more modern gear. ”

And asks donors to give money to Yashar LaChayal.

7. Gush Etzion Foundation

The UKT page⁴⁶ for this organization does not make clear that it the Gush Etzion Foundation⁴⁷:

“All contributions to the organization are immediately transferred to projects including:

- Providing financial aid and holiday food packages for needy families
- Funding and furnishing schools and other educational projects
- Creating and equipping playgrounds and parks
- Purchasing and maintaining rescue teams and security equipment
- Support of our IDF soldiers in the region
- Financing Gush Etzion heritage projects
- Youth projects” (our emphasis)

On the same page it lists the figure of \$50,000 (US) as earmarked for support of soldiers.⁴⁸

In its section on its security work, the Foundation states:

“Expensive security measures must be implemented all over Gush Etzion but are even more crucial in the Eastern bloc where the local Arabs have been particularly destructive and violent.”⁴⁹

This is clearly a racist generalization.

It further lists ‘Equipment for Emergency Defense Unit’ as part of the items it fundraises for. On another page on the site it lists some of that equipment to be rifles, for which they are fundraising for flashlights to add to them⁵⁰:

“4. Equipment for Emergency Defense Unit 100 Flashlights for rifles for night activity \$80 per unit: \$8000”

Listed directly under this is the statement:

“Individuals, schools or synagogues may be interested in purchasing specific security equipment for as low as a few hundred dollars. Donations may be earmarked in honor of, or in memory of a loved one, and proper acknowledgement will be sent.” (our emphasis)

The foundation’s donate page for offline UK donations lists clearly the UK Toremnet site⁵¹. The Jewish Charity Guide provides the option to claim Gift Aid on any donation to Gush Etzion Foundation via the UKT donation facility.⁵²

8. International Young Israel Movement – Israel

The UK Jewish Charity website gives donors the ability to claim Gift Aid on donations to this organization⁵³.

UKT's website describes the organization as, inter alia:

"TYIM – International Young Israel Movement is the Israel branch of the National Council of Young Israel – a 100 year old Orthodox Synagogue umbrella group that has always been proudly Zionist.

The Israel branch is involved in its 55 branches from Beersheva and Sderot in the South through to Karmiel in the North, in community building, social welfare activities, the IDF Rabbinate, and olim of various ages."⁵⁴

The organisation's own website, aside from carrying many photographs of soldiers across its projects has a specific section for IDF projects many of which involve care packages to serving soldiers.⁵⁵ On their site they describe the dedication ceremony for Torah sponsored by a donor as containing the following statement from the organisations's head thus:

""We are always glad to contribute another Sefer Torah to the IDF. As the army Rabbi stated: Next time this unit will enter Gaza not only with tractors and other equipment but with their own Torah as well." (Daniel Meyer, Executive Director, IYIM)"⁵⁶

This ceremony took place on Sunday, November 16th, 2014, soon after Operation Protective Edge.⁵⁷

Views on refugees and migrants from Africa expressed on the site claim they are not refugees but infiltrators sent to change the Jewish demographic of Israel. One article claims that the migrants are all Muslims and goes on to make numerous racist generalisations about Eritreans, Sudanese, Muslims and Palestinians.⁵⁸

Another page gives the story of a cash donation of 25,000 Shekels made to an army unit, on active service waiting to invade Gaza.⁵⁹ The page continues:

If you would like to continue to support these efforts a contribution can be made at: <https://www.iyim.org.il/payments/secure.asp?60>

In another article, entitled Protective Edge Campaign, Day 16 – Gaza Border⁶¹ it is made clear that the organisation supported troops on active military engagement:

"During the entire day of travel, the car phone kept ringing constantly with requests from units, worried girlfriends wanting to send supplies, parents of lone soldiers in America wanting to inquire about the welfare of their boys and from thankful soldiers who had received supplies. There was a phone call from the Commander of a unit to whom head flashlights had been provided and commented that they had enabled his unit to finish their essential work."

Many other pages detailing care packages and various types of soldier support can be listed, often in anticipation of or during military campaigns.

9. Shurat Hadin – Israel Law Center

The Center states on its website that tax deductible donations can be made via UK Toremnet⁶².

The Center describes amongst its achievements⁶³:

“Strategic Offensive Planning: “Lawfare””

According to Ben White:

“Recipient agency Shurat HaDin, meanwhile, uses courts around the world “to go on the legal offensive” against those it perceives to be “Israel’s enemies.” Its director has “privately admitted to taking direction from the Israeli government over which cases to pursue.””⁶⁴

and

“Protecting IDF soldiers from war crime indictments by compelling a Spanish court to close a war crimes probe by preparing a similar indictment against a senior Spanish official.”

Its website lists ‘Defending Israeli Soldiers at the ICC as one of its programs. The relevant page states⁶⁵:

The Palestinians are planning a game changer. They are moving forward on their threat to join the International Criminal Court (ICC) and file war crimes allegations against Israeli leaders and IDF officers in the Hague.

They are convinced they have a better chance to pressure Israel and achieve their extremist demands in the ICC where the biased European judges can pass judgment on the Jewish State and impose criminal liability, than they can through direct negotiations.

The Palestinians allege that the IDF used a disproportionate use of force during the summer’s war against the Hamas terrorists and that building communities beyond the ‘67 borders constitute an illegal “population transfer” in violation of the Geneva Convention.

ICC membership for the Palestinians will be a **devastating game changer**. It will endanger thousands of IDF officers and troops and Israel cannot simply ignore it nor rely on the Obama Administration to assist in fending it off. But ICC membership and the Court’s jurisdiction are a two way street!

Shurat HaDin’s legal staff is organizing a **tsunami** of its own war crimes complaints against Palestinian leaders including the senior ranks of Hamas and the PLO, as well as against Mahmoud Abbas himself. (Bold emphasis from website, underlined emphasis ours)

10. Tzohar

Tzohar states on its website that all donations made to it from the UK are tax deductible and list UK Toremnet as the agency through which UK donors can send donations.⁶⁶

Part of its activities included providing mobile phone chargers to IDF troops during Operation Protective Edge⁶⁷.

11. Gesher

Donations to Gesher are offered via a British Registered Charity 'British Friends of Gesher'.⁶⁸

Gesher's website states one of its programs is IDF. It provides training to 6000 strong officer corps of the IDF every year, and a total of 60,000⁶⁹. The relevant page on their website states:

"Gesher's IDF Officer's Training Course is delivered to every officer today. The 6,000 young men and women who are carefully selected by the IDF each year for leadership positions undergo this intensive 5 day seminar. With Gesher delivering two days of the program and the rest coordinated in conjunction with our expert educators."⁷⁰

According to its Annual Report⁷¹ (available on the Gesher UK and Gesher US websites) US\$835,185 of its US\$2,858,707 Income came from "Gov. Funding (incl. IDF in-kind)". Additionally its states that US\$1,359,788 of its US\$2,772,936 Expenses was expended on "Programming (incl. IDF in-kind)".

A promotional video on its Youtube Channel speaks of it training every IDF soldier.⁷²

12. "Lapid – Afikei Da'at" Sderot Hesder Yeshiva

The organization is described on UKT's site as: "The Sderot Hesder Institutions' three branches comprise Israel's largest Hesder Yeshiva with 700 students⁷³" and of being "in the IDF". According to the American friends of Sderot 'Donors Book' (PDF attached)⁷⁴:

Again and again, war strikes our area: "Cast Lead", "Defensive Pillar", "Protective Edge" – the names change, but the challenges are the same. It is our armored campus which enables our boys to stay on and be of such invaluable service to the IDF and the community when other institutions close down. During the most recent conflict we were at the forefront of so many important wartime endeavors:

- We served as the home base of the Gefen Special Forces Battalion, hosting 600 soldiers who dormed with our students, ate and relaxed on our campus.
- During the war, almost 150 of our own boys were out on active IDF service - over 50 inside the Gaza Strip.
- We served as a central depot for receiving & distributing toiletries, snacks and supplies to soldiers throughout the area – delivered via our network of students in and around the Gaza Strip.⁷⁵

And...

During the most recent conflict, our protected dormitories hosted close to 1000 IDF soldiers on their way into or out of the Gaza strip. In addition, our armored campus allows all our students to remain on site during every round of terror, allowing them to take part in many emergency activities for the benefit of the community.

The Central Hesder Yeshiva: Afikei Daat⁷⁶

This, our main institution, prepares the next generation of religious Zionist leaders with a five-year program which combines Jewish study and regular army service. These close to 500 students serve in elite IDF units. Many become commanding officers, while others choose to engage in an advanced course of leadership and religious training.

The website sderot.org/ English accessed 25 October 2015 shows one of the sports halls being used as a dorm for IDF soldiers⁷⁷:



This image is one of a number of a rotating gallery on the frontpage all under the heading 'Forging Ahead on the Frontline' many of which feature soldiers on campus, or visits by the Yeshiva's head Rabbi Dovid ('Duv') Fendel on the 'frontline'.

During Operation Protective Edge in 2014: "The yeshiva [was] also hosting an IDF battalion and Rabbi Fendel, whose yeshiva combines Torah study and army service, sees soldiers and yeshiva students as a natural combination."⁷⁸

Additionally the article states:

“During the last weeks, the Afikei Da’at Hesder Yeshiva has been turned into a center that has been serving as a gathering place – both military and spiritual – for the IDF forces who are lodged there along with the dozens of yeshiva students who have come there to provide physical, moral and spiritual support.”⁷⁹

Rabbi Dovid Fendel is described as heading the Yeshiva by UKT⁸⁰. The UKT page is posted by user JonnyC in 2012. In November 2014, Fendel won a prize, where he was described as the founder of the Yeshiva in 1995 and its head ever since.⁸¹

According to the Australian Jewish Democratic Society’s newsletter of February 2009⁸², Fendel is an ‘extremist rabbi’. Referring to visits by Fendel and another rabbi to troops during Operation Cast Lead the newsletter states:

“Earlier the paper reported in Hebrew only: “Fighters in the para-trooper brigade operating in the northern Gaza Strip received “encouragement visits from two extremist rabbis during a break in the fighting this week. The chief rabbi of Safed, Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu, who has been investigated in the past for incitement, and the head of the Hesder Yeshiva in Sderot, Rabbi David Fendel, who told the soldiers that in this war “nobody is innocent” and therefore it is permissible to hit civilians.... Fendel quoted the verse from Psalms that relates to God’s revenge in Babylon: “Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the rock”. [Israeli soldiers would have heard it in Biblical Hebrew, which they would have understood to mean something like “crush the infants against the rock”.]”⁸³

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS and REMARKS

Q9: Does the Charity Commission agree that a thorough investigation and response by the Charity Commission is in order? What timeline for the investigation and for its response does the Charity Commission propose?

Q10: It is clear that any wrongly donated Gift Aided donations must be returned. Will the Charity Commission confirm that this will be demanded of UK Toremets?

The foregoing highlights the need for the Charity Commission to issue clear guideline that any support of military personnel or any type of support that may directly or indirectly support military actions, cannot be charitable.

Finally, the foregoing relates to links and direct or indirect support of the Israeli military forces in general and during specific military campaigns where those personnel have been accused of committing war crimes. Additionally senior personnel in some of the organisations listed above have expressed deeply racist, violent views and on some occasions been reported to have incited violence and war crimes.

The Charity Commission must make its view on the above support clear. If the commission has been aware of any of the foregoing and has not taken action it must provide clear reasons as to why it has not and why it seems to consider support for racism, violence and war crimes as charitable.

It is clear that there are serious questions of its own credibility that the Charity Commission must address

We await an immediate response, and confirmation that a thorough investigation will be immediately undertaken.

Endnotes:

- ¹ 'Online Giving to Jewish Charities: UK Toremnet – Supporting the Causes that you believe in, Jewish Charity Guide <http://www.jewishcharityguide.co.uk/online-giving-to-jewish-charities/> accessed 4 April 2015
- ² <http://spotlight.jewcer.com/jonny-cline/> accessed 24 October 2015 and appended in A
- ³ <https://www.toptweet.org/user/sarahman> accessed 24 October 2015 and appended in A
- ⁴ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/emergency-relief/> accessed 24 and 25 October and appended in A
- ⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/323779/hs342.pdf Accessed 21 September 2015
- ⁶ <http://www.jewishcharityguide.co.uk/donate/?charityname=IDF%20Widows%20&%20Orphans> Accessed 4 April 2015 and 21 September 2015, screenshot o 4 April 2015 appended in B1
- ⁷ <https://www.idfwo.org/donate.htm> accessed 25 October 2015 and B1
- ⁸ <http://www.yasharlachayal.org/project/idf-widows-orphans-fund/> Accessed 4 April 2015 and 21 April 2015
- ⁹ <https://www.yasharlachayal.org/history/> accessed 21 September 2015 and appended in B1
- ¹⁰ <http://www.sacps.org.uk/help-israel.pdf> accessed 4 April 2015 and appended.
- ¹¹ <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/21-ways-you-can-help-israel-today/> accessed 25 October 2015 and appended in B1
- ¹² <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/tag/diplomacy/> accessed 21 September 2015, appended in B2
- ¹³ <http://amyisraelfoundation.org/join-the-idf/> accessed 4 April 2015, appended in B2
- ¹⁴ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/karemy-chesed/> accessed 26 June 2015
- ¹⁵ Donate Israel, <http://karmeyhesed.org/english/bloge.asp?id=1013> Appended in B3
- ¹⁶ Helping the IDF, <http://karmeyhesed.org/english/programs/help-for-the-idf.asp> appended in B3
- ¹⁷ <http://www.jewishcharityguide.co.uk/donate/?charityname=Karmey%20Chesed>
- ¹⁸ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/standing-together/> accessed 3 July 2015 appended in B4 and accessed 21 October 2015
- ¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/stogether/videos/10153337364830758/> and appended in B4
- ²⁰ <http://www.stogether.org/its-raining-its-pouring/> accessed 28 June 2015 and appended in B4
- ²¹ <http://www.stogether.org/5-things-can-idf-soldiers-right-now/> and appended in B4
- ²² <http://www.stogether.org/bringing-equipment-to-the-soldiers/> and appended in B4
- ²³ <http://www.stogether.org/personal-idf-story-will-send-shivers-spine/> accessed 21 September 2015 and appended in B4
- ²⁴ <http://www.stogether.org/idf-soldiers-hate-checkpoints/> accessed 28 June 2015
- ²⁵ Appended in B4
- ²⁶ Appended in B4
- ²⁷ <http://www.247idf.org/> accessed 25 October 201r and appended in B5
- ²⁸ <http://www.stogether.org/we-heard-over-700-idf-paratroopers-finished-training-so-this-is-what-we-did/> and appended in B4
- ²⁹ <http://www.stogether.org/winter-gear-2015/> and appended in B4
- ³⁰ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/572/> accessed 23 September 2015 and appended as B5
- ³¹ http://www.shaveihevron.org/show_item.asp?levelId=62415 accessed 23 September 2015 and

appended as B5

³² See e.g.

[http://www.alternet.org/story/148016/how_to_kill_goyim_and_influence_people%3A_israeli_rabbis_defend_book's_shocking_religious_defense_of_killing_non-jews_\(with_video\)](http://www.alternet.org/story/148016/how_to_kill_goyim_and_influence_people%3A_israeli_rabbis_defend_book's_shocking_religious_defense_of_killing_non-jews_(with_video)) and

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Rabbi-Dov-Lior-steps-down-as-chief-rabbi-of-Kiryat-Arba-to-move-to-east-Jerusalem-379874>, appended in B5

³³ <http://www.jpost.com/Operation-Protective-Edge/Rabbi-Lior-Jewish-law-permits-destruction-of-Gaza-to-bring-safety-to-Israel-368605> accessed 23 September and appended in B5

³⁴ *ibid*

³⁵ *ibid*

³⁶

[http://www.alternet.org/story/148016/how_to_kill_goyim_and_influence_people%3A_israeli_rabbis_defend_book's_shocking_religious_defense_of_killing_non-jews_\(with_video\)](http://www.alternet.org/story/148016/how_to_kill_goyim_and_influence_people%3A_israeli_rabbis_defend_book's_shocking_religious_defense_of_killing_non-jews_(with_video))

³⁷ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/yashar-lachayal/> and B6, accessed 21 October 2015

³⁸ <https://www.yasharlachayal.org/history/> and B6, accessed 21 October 2015

³⁹ *ibid*

⁴⁰ *ibid*

⁴¹ <https://www.yasharlachayal.org/successes/> and B6, accessed 21 October 2015

⁴² <https://www.yasharlachayal.org/success/helping-israeli-soldiers-7/> and appended in B6

⁴³ <https://www.yasharlachayal.org/project/adopt-a-unit-2/> and B6, accessed 21 October 2015

⁴⁴ <https://www.yasharlachayal.org/success/helping-israeli-soldiers-gaza-operation-emergency-fund/> and B6, accessed 2-1 October 2015

⁴⁵ <https://beachesandbullets.wordpress.com/2011/01/16/we-need-your-help/> and B6 accessed 22 October 2015

⁴⁶ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/gush-etzion-foundation/> and B7, accessed 2-1 October 2015

⁴⁷ <http://www.gush-etzion.org.il/foundation.asp> and B7, accessed 2-1 October 2015

⁴⁸ *ibid*

⁴⁹ <http://www.gush-etzion.org.il/security.asp> and B7, accessed 21 October 2015 and 26 June 2015

⁵⁰ <http://www.gush-etzion.org.il/projects/security.htm> and B7, accessed 21 October 2015

⁵¹ http://www.gush-etzion.org.il/donate_uk.asp and B7, accessed 21 October 2015

⁵² <http://www.jewishcharityguide.co.uk/donate/?charityname=Gush%20Etzion%20Foundation> and B7, accessed 21 October 2015

⁵³ <http://www.jewishcharityguide.co.uk/donate/?charityname=IYIM%20-%20Israel> and B8, accessed 21 October 2015

⁵⁴ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/international-young-israel-movement-israel/> and B8, accessed 21 October 2015

⁵⁵ <https://www.iyim.org.il/IDF/>, <https://www.iyim.org.il/idf/?id=41>,
<https://www.iyim.org.il/idf/?id=43> and B8, accessed 21 October 2015

⁵⁶ <http://www.iyim.org.il/about/?id=576> and B8, accessed 21 October 2015

⁵⁷ *ibid*

⁵⁸ <http://www.iyim.org.il/about/?id=215> and B8, accessed 21 October 2015

⁵⁹ <http://www.iyim.org.il/news/?id=260> and B8, accessed 21 October 2015

⁶⁰ *Ibid*. The link goes to a donation page which includes a link to UK Toremnet's donation facility.

⁶¹ <http://www.iyim.org.il/news/?id=483> and B8, accessed 21 October 2015

⁶² <http://israellawcenter.org/donations/> and B9 accessed 21 October 2015

⁶³ <http://israellawcenter.org/about/our-achievements/> and B9 accessed 22 October 2015

⁶⁴ <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/middle-east/21265-revealed-the-uk-charity-facilitating-donations-to-israeli-settlements> and B9 accessed 22 October 2015

- ⁶⁵ <http://israelawcenter.org/activities/defending-israeli-soldiers-in-the-icc/> and B9 accessed 22 October 2015
- ⁶⁶ <http://www.tzohar.org.il/English/donate-to-tzohar/> and B10 accessed 22 October 2015
- ⁶⁷ http://www.tzohar.org.il/English/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/TZOHAR-breakingisraelnews-com-IDF_Combat_Soldiers_Provided_Power_To_Call_Home.pdf and B10 accessed 22 October 2015 and 1 July 2015
- ⁶⁸ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/gesher/> and <http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Showcharity/RegisterOfCharities/ContactAndTrustees.aspx?RegisteredCharityNumber=291846&SubsidiaryNumber=0&TID=2251568> B11 accessed 22 October 2015
- ⁶⁹ [http://www.gesherusa.org/public/pdf/AnnualReportFinal2013-\(scrolldownversion\).pdf](http://www.gesherusa.org/public/pdf/AnnualReportFinal2013-(scrolldownversion).pdf) and B11 accessed 26 June 2015
- ⁷⁰ <http://www.gesherusa.org/program/IDF-Officer-Training-Course-#3> and B11(x2 screenshots) accessed 26 June 2015
- ⁷¹ [http://www.gesherusa.org/public/pdf/AnnualReportFinal2013-\(scrolldownversion\).pdf](http://www.gesherusa.org/public/pdf/AnnualReportFinal2013-(scrolldownversion).pdf) and B11 accessed 26 June 2015
- ⁷² How Can Israel Become Unified? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_jVtAdmT2c
- ⁷³ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/author/jonnyc/page/5/> and <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/sderot-hesder-yeshiva/> and appended in B12
- ⁷⁴ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1cSYWk1yf00WkNaMFJuUmZpREU/view> and appended in B12
- ⁷⁵ From page entitled Courage
- ⁷⁶ P12
- ⁷⁷ Appended in B12
- ⁷⁸ <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/183605#.Vi1EPeztmkp> and appended in B12
- ⁷⁹ *ibid*
- ⁸⁰ <http://uktoremnet.org.uk/agency/sderot-hesder-yeshiva/> and appended
- ⁸¹ <http://www.moskowitzprize.com/en/award-winners/2008-winners/david-fendel/> accessed 24 October 2015 and appended in B12
- ⁸² <http://www.ajds.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Newsletter%20February%202009%20SB.pdf> accessed 24 October 2015 and appended in B12
- ⁸³ *Ibid* page 10