

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Louis D. Brandeis Center and AMCHA Center Urge Investigation of Misuse of Taxpayer Funds**

June 24, 2014, Washington, D.C. — This morning the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law (LDB) joined the AMCHA Initiative and six other groups urging California State Controller John Chiang to investigate misuse of university and state funds by Professor Rahab Abdulhadi at San Francisco State University. The Brandeis Center, a national civil rights organization established to combat campus anti-Semitism, joined a letter (below) charging that Professor Abdulhadi had used taxpayer funding to reimburse expenses for a “political solidarity tour” to meet with terrorist organizations and other political extremists in the Middle East.

These groups base their charges on documents obtained by the AMCHA Initiative through a California Public Records Act request. Based on these documents, it appears that Prof. Abdulhadi received over \$7,000 to meet with groups that have been designated by the U.S. Department of State as terrorist organizations. Abdulhadi had apparently received prior authorization to use these funds to deliver a paper at a scholarly conference, but it appears that she did not attend this conference.

These groups have requested a full investigation: AMCHA Initiative, the Brandeis Center, Institute for Black Solidarity with Israel, Proclaiming Justice to the Nations, Scholars for Peace in the Middle East, Simon Wiesenthal Center Campus Outreach, StandWithUs, and the Zionist Organization of America.

LETTER TO STATE CONTROLLER JOHN CHIANG

To: California State Controller John Chiang

Dear Controller Chiang,

One month ago, our organizations sent the letter below to CSU Chancellor White, SFSU President Wong, CSU Chief Audit Officer Mandel and CSU Attorney for Conflict of Interest and Governance Reith, regarding what we believe to be a serious and blatant misuse of University and state funds.

According to documents obtained through a California Public Records Act (PRA) request, it appears that SFSU Professor Rabab Abdulhadi received more than \$7,000 in state dollars to meet with members of known terrorist organizations and promote the boycott of Israel. On all of the PRA documents regarding the funding, insurance, and administrative approval of her travels, Abdulhadi indicated that the primary purpose of her trip was academic: to deliver a paper at a scholarly conference in Beirut. However, Abdulhadi never attended the Beirut conference. Instead, as she herself acknowledged at

a public event she had organized on the SFSU campus to report on the delegation's experiences, the trip was a "**political solidarity tour**" to Jordan, the West Bank and Israel, whose primary purpose was to promote "resolute actions in support of the academic and cultural boycott of Israel."

As part of her "political solidarity tour," Abdulhadi met with individuals affiliated with the US State Department-designated terrorist organizations Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Hamas, including convicted terrorist Leila Khaled and Islamist leader Sheik Raed Salah. Khaled is a convicted hijacker and the most famous member of the PFLP, a terrorist organization responsible for 159 terrorist acts such as bombings, armed assault and assassinations, resulting in numerous injuries and deaths including those of more than 20 US citizens. Salah was recently incarcerated for incitement to violence and aiding and abetting Hamas, an organization responsible for the murder and maiming of hundreds of Jews that is suspected in last week's abduction of three teenagers in Israel.

Although evidence demonstrates that Abdulhadi had planned the "political solidarity tour" and meetings with PFLP and Hamas members almost a year in advance, nowhere in the documents she filled out in order to receive funding and insurance from the University did she mention that the primary purpose of her trip was political advocacy -- to promote the academic boycott of Israel -- nor did she mention the intended meetings with individuals affiliated with US State Department-designated terrorist organizations.

We have asked the University to investigate this matter, but have received no response. However, according to the Palestine Solidarity Legal Support [website](#), it appears that the university is defending the professor's personal advocacy mission as "research" and clearing her of all wrong-doing. We are therefore turning to you and requesting that you investigate this potentially fraudulent use of taxpayer dollars.

We also urge you to investigate a June 2011 trip that Prof. Abdulhadi [organized and led](#), the "Indigenous & Women of Color Feminist Delegation to Israel and the West Bank." According to [a statement](#) issued by the delegation's participants, the purpose of the 2011 trip was political -- "to affirm [their] association with the growing international movement for a free Palestine" -- and the statement itself was a call to "academic and activist colleagues in the U.S. and elsewhere to join [the delegation's participants] by endorsing the BDS [Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions] campaign." The statement also indicates that the group met with the "Boycott National Committee," whose first and most important member organization is the Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine, which, according to the [Anti-Defamation League](#), was founded by Yasser Arafat at the start of the Second Intifada in 2000 for the purpose of "organizing a unified effort among major Palestinian factions to coordinate terror attacks." The Council includes among its constituent organizations Hamas, the PFLP, and PFLP – General Command, all three of which are on the U.S. Department of State's list of [Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations](#).

Thank you for looking into this matter. Professors should not be meeting with terrorists and propagating hate on the taxpayer dime. Please help put a stop to this outrageous abuse of power and resources.

Sincerely,

AMCHA Initiative  
Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law  
Institute for Black Solidarity with Israel  
Proclaiming Justice to the Nations  
Scholars for Peace in the Middle East  
Simon Wiesenthal Center Campus Outreach  
StandWithUs  
Zionist Organization of America

Cc: Attorney General Kamala Harris  
Deputy Attorney General Stepan Haytayan  
California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson  
California State Senator Mark Leno (San Francisco)  
California Assembly Member Philip Y. Ting (San Francisco)  
California Senator Carol Liu, Chair of the Senate Standing Committee on  
Education  
California Assembly Member Das Williams, Chair of the Assembly Committee  
on Higher Education  
California Assembly Member Shirley Weber, Chair of the Select Committee on  
Campus Climate  
California State Senator Marty Block, Chair of Legislative Jewish Caucus  
CSU Trustees  
CSU Chancellor Timothy White  
CSU Vice Chancellor and Chief Audit Officer Larry Mandel  
CSU Resource Attorney for Conflict of Interest & Governance Carrie Hemphill  
Reith  
CSU General Counsel Framroze Virgee  
CSU Deputy General Counsel G. Andrew Jones  
SFSU President Leslie Wong  
SFSU Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Sue Rosser  
SFSU Associate Vice President, Enterprise Risk Management Michael Martin  
SFSU Associate Risk Management Dao VanQuate  
SFSU Counsel Patricia Bartscher  
California Jewish Community Leaders

ABOUT THE LOUIS D. BRANDEIS CENTER AND CAMPUS ANTI-SEMITISM

The Louis D. Brandeis Center, Inc., or LDB, is an independent, nonprofit organization

established to advance the civil and human rights of the Jewish people and promote justice for all. The Brandeis Center conducts research, education, and advocacy to combat the resurgence of anti-Semitism on college and university campuses. It is not affiliated with the Massachusetts University, the Kentucky law school, or any of the other institutions that share the name and honor the memory of the late U.S. Supreme Court justice. For more information, call us at (202) 756-1822, contact us at [info@brandeiscenter.com](mailto:info@brandeiscenter.com), or find us at [www.brandeiscenter.com](http://www.brandeiscenter.com).

Kenneth L. Marcus

President & General Counsel

The Louis D. Brandeis Center

for Human Rights Under Law

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