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EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of The European Commission  
to the State of Israel

The Head of Delegation


Tel Aviv, November 18, 2002

Mr. Manor,

In your letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> October to Mr. Hansen, Commissioner General UNWRA you stated that "the Delegation of the EU to the State of Israel is hardly qualified to confirm the findings of academics" concerning the Palestinian textbooks.

This is a serious and deliberate misrepresentation. This Delegation in a letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> May conveyed to you, at the request of Commissioner Patten, a text on this subject agreed by Member States and the Commission in Brussels. In no way the Delegation commented this text.

If the work of your organization on the Palestinian textbooks is conducted with this same misrepresenting approach, doubts are even more than legitimate on your findings.

  
Giancarlo Chevallard  
Ambassador

Copy: Gonzalez Durantez, Leffler, Seatter

Mr. Y. Manor  
CMIP  
25 Keren Hayesod  
Jerusalem 94188

Paz Tower, 15th Floor, 31-35 Betzalel Street, Ramat-Gan 52521,  
Tel: (972) 03 - 613 77 99

<http://www.eu-del.org.il>

P.O.Box 3513, Ramat Gan 52136  
Fax: (972) 03 - 613 77 70

**360 Madison Avenue, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, N.Y. 10017 U.S.A. (212) 699-8823**  
**4 Rav Ashe Street, Jerusalem 93309, Israel Tel: 972-2-6481660 Fax: 972-2-6482823**

e-mail: [info@edume.org](mailto:info@edume.org)

<http://www.edume.org>

27th November, 2002

Ambassador Giancarlo Chevallard  
The Head of Delegation  
Delegation of the European Union to the State of Israel  
Paz Tower, 15th Floor  
31-35 Bezalel Street  
Ramat Gan 52521

Your Excellency,

We thank you for your letter of 18-11-2002.

We have been conducting correspondence with UNWRA concerning the propriety of that agency participating in the provision of education in accordance with the Palestinian Authority's new textbooks, namely those introduced in school years 2000 and 2001 and covered by our report "Jews, Israel and Peace in Palestinian School Textbooks 2000-2001 and 2001-2002" published in November 2001.

As part of that correspondence our letter dated 27th October 2002 to the Commissioner General of UNWRA was in reply to letter dated 8th October 2002 from the agency in which it was stated inter alia:- "As to the contents of our website, that is, of course, a matter for the Agency and UNWRA believes that it accurately reflects the nature of the Palestinian Authority's new textbooks to quote from objective, respected academics, such as Professor Nathan Brown and Ruth Firer, who have studied these books. The findings of these academics have been confirmed by the delegation of the European Union to the State of Israel". Our reply stated the rather obvious fact that a diplomatic mission is hardly qualified to confirm the findings of academics and at most could be said to have adopted their findings and even this does not appear to be so, as is apparent from what is written below in the last two paragraphs of this letter.

We would have thought that it is a matter of elementary prudence, before rushing to accuse us of "serious and deliberate misrepresentation", to have checked the context in which our statement was made.

After receipt from you of the European Union text on "Palestinian Schoolbooks" at the end of last May we wrote on the 9th June to the Commissioner for External Affairs and you were sent a copy of that letter. In reply we were informed by Anthony Cary in a letter dated the 4th June: "Your letter raises a number of questions which are being considered by the appropriate Commission services and about which we are also consulting EU Member states representatives. We shall let you have a detailed response as soon as possible." Last week, no response having been received, we sent Mr. Cary a reminder.

The facts seem to indicate that, at least in Brussels, it has not been possible to dismiss out of hand as misrepresentation the findings of our above mentioned report and the points raised by us in correspondence. We must say, however, that it is a matter of some amazement to us that the European Union is not more concerned at the possibility that it is financing, in one form or another, a system of education that inculcates the kind of content which our report reveals.

Sincerely,

Dr. Yohanan Manor  
Vice-Chairman

cc. Mr. Peter Hansen, Commissioner General, UNRWA  
Mr. Christopher Patten  
Mr. Christian Leffler  
Mr. Alan Seatter  
Ms. Miriam Gonzalez Durantez