

Re: Hand in Hand for Syria? (Registered Charity 1145862)

Please find the attached document outlining my concerns about the above-named charity and why I believe it warrants an urgent investigation by the police, by the Charity Commission, by the media and by relevant elected officials which all have a duty of care to ensure bogus charities are not allowed operate for either base mercenary or politically-motivated reasons. My main concerns may be summarised as follows:

- Hand in Hand for Syria is very politically partisan. It is an active, if somewhat clandestine supporter of the armed Syrian opposition and is therefore, at the very least, in breach of the Charity Commission code.
- Hand in Hand for Syria, superficial claims to the contrary notwithstanding, is financially and organisationally very opaque. This is not only unacceptable on financial probity grounds but adds to the suspicion that Hand in Hand for Syria and groups allied to it are effectively financial and propaganda tools for the armed Syrian opposition.
- Hand in Hand for Syria have engaged in a number of very dubious high-profile media coups, most notably in Saving Syria's Children, the widely criticised BBC Panorama show. If the complaints against Hand in Hand for Syria are sustained, they bring the BBC and other media outlets that have collaborated with them into disrepute.
- Hand in Hand for Syria have the active support of a relatively large number of medical professionals working for the NHS. If the complaints against Hand in Hand for Syria are sustained, they bring the NHS and all its staff into disrepute.
- Hand in Hand for Syria have been primarily funded by a notorious Saudi extremist who is now banned from entering Switzerland and Britain. That being so, a full investigation is needed to ascertain if Hand in Hand for Syria are merely well-funded and well-organised "innocents abroad" or if there is a more sinister under-current to them.
- Hand in Hand for Syria have a number of trustees, who have expressed their support for extremist actions and extremist organisations in Syria and countries contiguous to it. That being so, a full investigation is needed to ascertain if such support is the real *raison d'être* of Hand in Hand for Syria.

If you want further information or to speak to me about any of the material contained here, please contact me at the following email address londonhayes@gmail.com or on my mobile phone +447942440165. Although I can be reached at the university address and at my university email, I would prefer you used the contacts conduits given here.

Dr Declan Hayes

d.hayes@soton.ac.uk dated: 23/7/2014

Who is Hand in Hand for Syria Hand in Hand with? (Registered Charity 1145862)

I wish to draw to your attention my serious concerns with the above-named charity and their apparent links to Syrian extremists. Specifically, I believe this group, contrary to their role as a charity registered with the Charity Commission, has raised money and made fraudulent propaganda for their political aims of helping the armed Syrian rebel extremists achieve power rather than the humanitarian aims they purport to work for and for which the Charity Commission licenced them.

Although I base my beliefs on the well-documented controversies surrounding their media involvement and the apparent governance and financial contradictions and anomalies in their fund-raising activities, most of what follows will concentrate on reconciling the financial and media claims they make with what is known of the Hand in Hand for Syria organisation and the people behind it.

Despite its penchant for publicity and the relatively large number of NHS-related medical professional supporting it, Hand in Hand for Syria is not a transparent organisation. Not only are much of its media activities dubious in the extreme but the fact, claims to the contrary aside, it is so financially opaque sits uneasily with the amount of NHS medics it has supporting it. One would expect if not demand these medics and other professionals colluding with it would appreciate the importance of having a transparent money trail. Because no such transparent money trail seems to exist and the sympathies of its leading lights are so clearly aligned with those of the Syrian rebel extremists, Hand in Hand for Syria warrants an investigation into it by the police, by the Charity Commission, by the media and by relevant elected officials which all have a duty of care to ensure bogus charities are not allowed operate for either base mercenary or politically-motivated reasons. If any of Hand in Hand for Syria's principals knowingly engaged in fraudulent, dishonest or unethical behaviour, the forces of law and order and the appropriate professional bodies must take the severest punitive action against them.

Hand in Hand for Syria's Main Objective

The leaders of Hand in Hand for Syria have a political objective and their propaganda and actions are conducted to serve that objective. As the rest of this document will show, its key leaders have long supported the armed Syrian opposition and most, if not all, of their activities are in areas controlled by those extremists. That makes them, in effect, collaborators of the armed Syrian opposition.

Where Does Hand in Hand for Syria Primarily Operate?

Their website claims here <http://www.handinhandforsyria.org.uk/>: "We take medical and humanitarian aid into 90% of the country, using our unique and extensive networks on the ground in Syria. We also implement aid funded by, and on behalf of, some of the world's biggest aid agencies, who are unable to get into Syria themselves".

This is untrue. They do not work in 90% of Syria and they have no demonstrable established links with major aid agencies, who would demand a well-established audited money trail before working with them on any meaningful level. If the situation is as they claim, they should name "the world's biggest aid agencies" which work with them both for transparency and for their own credibility.

Their <http://www.handinhandforsyria.org.uk/> website makes plain they are busy collecting funds to use in the "90% of Syria" they claim to operate in. However, as they do not and cannot operate in any of the areas controlled by the Syrian government, the claim they operate in "90% of Syria" is very clearly wrong, if not deliberately misleading. The Syrian authorities would not allow any such organisation with their sympathies operate in areas they control and the Syrian government controls far more than 10% of Syria.

Contrary to their claims of impartiality, the Hand in Hand for Syria charity operates only in the areas controlled by ISIS and the other Syrian rebels and their appeals, such as their current ones for their flag-ship hospital at Atareb, are primarily to send aid to those operatives in those areas. Although their logo, which originally had the flag of the Syrian rebels embedded in it, indicates that they are politically partisan, many of their leading members have umbilical links with the leaders of the Syrian rebel militias. Because there is absolutely no way these people, given their allegiances, their track record and their blanket displays of rebel logos, would be allowed to operate in government-held areas, there is a very black cloud over them and their financial and other claims.

Here <http://tinyurl.com/rolax2> Hand in Hand for Syria claim: “Neither the Syrian government nor the Free Syrian Army (or other opposition groups) constrain our activity, which means we can work across borders and behind front lines. Therefore, we deliver aid to both opposition-held and government-held areas, including besieged areas whenever possible. And since we don’t work through third parties, we can monitor everything directly to ensure our aid reaches the right people, and those who need it most”.

This is patently untrue and, as we shall see in the following paragraph, Hand in Hand for Syria admit as much. The Syrian government would not and do not allow a group with such obvious political links to rebel extremists to operate in their areas. Were Hand in Hand for Syria operating in government-controlled areas, the Syrian authorities could tell where precisely they are operating and how they are supplying the centres they operate from. However, as there is no way Hand in Hand for Syria could run and supply any medical facilities on the government side of the lines without the cooperation of the Syrian authorities, grave doubts have to be cast not only on Hand in Hand for Syria’s claims to be non-partisan and to operate in 90% of Syria but on all of their other claims as well.

In answer to the charge that Hand in Hand for Syria only operate in rebel-controlled areas, Mr al-Dairi, one of their (three only) trustees listed with the Charity Commission, claims here <http://tinyurl.com/Fadix1> that “[In the government-controlled areas] you wouldn’t see Hand in Hand’s name; you would see a normal name. We have two schools and a hospital, but these do not look like they are associated with Hand in Hand, they would look entirely normal. This is to protect the people on the ground and the people who attend.

We do it totally differently in the government-controlled areas. In these areas we would do it in normal vehicles: small saloon cars or normal cars. In opposition held areas we can travel openly, whereas in government-controlled areas, you cannot fill a car with more than two food baskets – two is the maximum. Anyone seen with a lot of aid is targeted, it is a criminal offence.”

Mr al-Dairi goes on to explain: “Due to the enormous risk that the volunteers and workers from Hand in Hand run when they deliver aid into the government-controlled areas of the country, the charity has suffered tragic losses in personnel. We have lost 15 of our staff in Syria over the last two and a half years, which is why we are so security-conscious. We believe that they were captured and then killed – tortured to death. We do a lot of work inside Syria, but we don’t talk about it because nothing is safe”.

So, although Hand in Hand for Syria has suffered 15 fatalities for some unexplained reason in government-controlled areas where they continue to operate a token supply of aid, in addition to the two schools and a hospital they claim to have there, this and the fact “we don’t talk about it” does not seem credible for a number of reasons. Given the relative tokenism of the aid to government-controlled areas, it is not worth the risk. As for the two schools and hospital, there is no way, Mr al-Dairi’s bizarre claims to the contrary, they could exist or function without the Syrian government knowing about them. Because Mr al-Dairi does not address the question as to why they can be so (seemingly relatively) open and transparent in the rebel-controlled areas but so underhand and tokenistic in the

government-controlled areas, the inference must be that they are primarily supporters of the Syrian rebels. This view is strengthened by examining their key players and their key projects.

Hand in Hand for Syria's Guiding Lights

Hand in Hand for Syria's website was first registered with Whois here:

<http://tinyurl.com/HIHR1> only as recently as 12 April 2012 and it is registered until 12 April 2015. It is registered to Marwan Ghannam, 67 Yoxall Road, Solihull, B90 3RP. Marwan's phone number is given in a fund-raising poster here: <http://tinyurl.com/HHand8>. These links <http://tinyurl.com/HIHR2> and <http://tinyurl.com/HHand2> indicate he is very involved in the local Islamic Centre and has taught Islamic courses in the USA and Syria; he has also been mentioned here <http://tinyurl.com/HHand3> in a BBC account of outreach programmes in London. Interestingly, given the lack of audited accounts to date, he is a chartered accountant by profession. Interesting, as this link <http://tinyurl.com/HHand1> on their webpage states, Razan Zehrawi, one of Hand in Hand for Syria's trustees, whose background is decorative arts, is in charge of their banking, rather than Marwan Ghannam, who, as a qualified chartered accountant, is much more competent to fulfil that role. Given his relevant training, one would a priori expect Mr Ghannam rather than Ms Zehrawi to be in charge of the accounts but that is not the case. Hand in Hand for Syria should explain why this is not the case.

Ms Zehrawi is pictured with her daughter here <http://tinyurl.com/HHand4> at a Hand in Hand for Syria fund-raising event. Her contact details, including phone numbers and address are here: <http://tinyurl.com/HHand5> Her address is given in this newspaper report <http://tinyurl.com/HHand6> As this link <http://tinyurl.com/HHand7> indicates there is a Razan Zehrawi Sahloul living nearby, it is possible she is related to Faddy Sahloul, the chairperson of the Hand in Hand for Syria group. This link gives the same address that Razan Zehrawi uses for Faddy Sahloul. <http://tinyurl.com/homex1> it also lists him as directors of two separate companies, both with similar names (Global Fresh Produce and Ideal Fresh Produce) and both of which have since been dissolved. Both Faddy and Razan Sahloul are also listed here <http://tinyurl.com/finestx1> as former directors of Finest Fresh Produce Ltd company, which also included Vicki Steward as a director¹². This link <http://tinyurl.com/finestx2> tells us that "Vikki Steward ...has resigned from 199 companies and held 9 appointments at 9 dissolved companies". Faddy's extended family are reputedly big players in the transfer of currencies to the world's more exotic locations; much of this grey market is reputedly controlled by Zuhair Sahloul: <http://tinyurl.com/sahloul1> and <http://tinyurl.com/sahloul2>

Hand in Hand for Syria's website claims here <http://www.handinhandforsyria.org.uk/about-us/>: "We don't ask questions. We bring aid to anyone who needs it, regardless of their politics or religion. We are humanitarian in the full sense of the word". Although the blood-curdling sympathies of Mr Faddy Sahloul, their trustee, would suggest not all of them are "humanitarian in the full sense of the word", their clear and constant political pro-rebel stance is a breach of the Charity Commission's guidelines.

As this Skynews report on one of their doctors killed in Syria shows <http://tinyurl.com/HIHTrustee> one such trustee (unlisted with the Charity Commission) is Dr Mahmoud al Akraa who led a mob that disrupted a peaceful and inclusive meeting in London. Details of that meeting, where they heckled children and hurled abuse at them,

¹ They expand on these unrealistic claims here <http://tinyurl.com/HHclaims1>

² Here is a link with slightly more information on this company <http://tinyurl.com/handchopx1>

are here: <http://tinyurl.com/HHTrustee2>. His Facebook page shows here <http://tinyurl.com/HHTrustee3> he and Dr Rola Alkurdi Hallam are friends. As this link <http://tinyurl.com/trusteexx1> shows, Dr Mahmoud al Akraa also shares platforms with disgraced and discredited provocateur Danny Abdel Dayyem; more to the point perhaps, Dr al Akraa claims that the Syrian government forces will summarily and sadistically torture and then kill any Syrian seen to have been getting medical aid from non-approved sources which, if true, would have to call into the question Hand in Hand for Syria's clearly suicidal policy, as enunciated by his fellow trustee, Mr al-Dairi, of running token medical services in government-controlled Syria. Equally importantly, at 2:43 into the video, he expresses his delight that "the Muslim Brotherhood is coming back" to Syria. Hand in Hand for Syria should explain whether or not they support the Muslim Brotherhood, the Syrian National Council and the various rebel extremist groups they have been associated with. They should also clearly state what, if any, disciplinary action they intend to take against Dr al Akraa as well as the blood-thirsty Mr Sahloul.

This link <http://tinyurl.com/rola1> points out that Dr Rola Hallam, who is at the centre of the Hand in Hand for Syria movement, is the daughter of Dr. Mousa al Kurdi, a leading apologist for Syrian extremist militias, who has been involved at the highest levels with the rebels. Dr Rola was one of the signatories and organisers of the 16 September 2013 letter to The Lancet, signed by a large number of medics, many globally prominent, asking that they be allowed to work unhindered in Syria. Given that all of them, Dr Rola included, declared "that we have no conflicts of interest", Dr Rola should clarify whether that is, in fact, the case³. Dr Rola should, in other words, explain whether her 16 September 2013 declaration is true that she has no conflict of interest or whether her real sympathies and those of Hand in Hand for Syria, like their actions, are partisan.

To aid her in that process, further information on her dubious links and more evidence showing Panorama's apparent fake reporting can be had here⁴ <http://tinyurl.com/rolaw1>



Figures 1 and 2: Pro-rebel screenshots of the Facebook page of Faddy Salhoul. More screenshots are in Appendix 1. The actual photo is one of a very large number of staged photos rebel extremists in Kafranbel flood the Internet with.

³ See here for the letter <http://tinyurl.com/medicsign1> and here <http://tinyurl.com/medicsign2> for the list of signatories.

⁴ The Wikispooks page does get the dates and names of programmes Dr Hallam appeared on muddled up. Though Malik al-Kurdi, deputy commander of the Free Syrian Army may not be related to her, there are many questions concerning her Hand in Hand for Syria role she should answer directly to clarify matters.

Until early July 2014, the Facebook banner of Faddy Salhoul, Hand in Hand for Syria's co-founder and chairman, read⁵ "We will bring Assad to justice, no matter what lives it takes, no matter how much catastrophe it makes". This blood lust contradicts Hand in Hand for Syria's declared purpose (on the Charity Commission website) of "the advancement of health or saving lives" even though it sits four-square with the aims of the Syrian rebel extremists. As can be seen from the screenshots, his Facebook page also prominently displays Hand in Hand for Syria's original pro-rebel logo. Hand in Hand for Syria should declare whether or not they and their leaders support the Kafranbel rebel extremists. If they do, the Charity Commission should take the appropriate action; if they do not, they should dispense with the services of Mr Sahloul and have his services professionally audited for fear of bringing Hand in Hand for Syria into disrepute.

Hand in Hand People: Mohammad bin Abdul Rahman Al Arefe



Figure 3: Mohammad Al-Arefe, the extremist Saudi preacher, speaks at a Hand in Hand for Syria event (where the rebel emblem can clearly be seen on their logo).

Hand in Hand for Syria has other extremist links as shown here:

<http://tinyurl.com/HHfounder> and <http://tinyurl.com/HHfounder2> where extremist Saudi Salafist preacher Mohammad bin Abdul Rahman Al Arefe is photographed speaking at a Hand in Hand for Syria function and, worryingly, is named as its primary financier. Al-Arefe, who holds the position of Imam of the Mosque of the King Fahd Academy of the Saudi Navy, is banned from entering Switzerland due to his extreme sectarian views. Following the airing of video footage depicting young British ISIS jihadists he helped radicalise urging their compatriots to follow them to Syria, the Home Office belatedly banned al Arefe from Britain too after it was revealed he preached at the al-Manar Centre the young jihadists attended⁶.

As this report in the Independent <http://tinyurl.com/HHclaims2> states, Al-Arefe supports the concept of jihad in Syria "in every possible way" He has in the past accused Shias of being responsible for kidnapping, cooking and skinning children before placing their remains outside the family home for their parents to find, and he recently called for Muslim women to travel to Syria to perform sex jihad. Al-Arefe is a disciple of the late Abdul Aziz bin

⁵ The image was removed shortly after this comment was made on a Guardian article about Hand in Hand for Syria www.tinyurl.com/q5kroj. Although he subsequently made his Facebook page private, screenshots of his page are appended in the appendices.

⁶ <http://tinyurl.com/arefeban1> and <http://tinyurl.com/arefeban2>

Abdullah bin Baz who, as Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia from 1993 until his death in 1999 was an ardent supporter of Osama bin Ladin.



Figure 4: Mohammad Al-Arefe is honoured at a major jihadist fund-raising event. The above photo was retrieved from this link <http://tinyurl.com/arefex2> which discusses Al-Nusra's structure. The photo is from a jihadist fund-raising meeting and Arefe is portrayed as one of their key fund-raisers.

The similarity between this jihadist "hand in hand" logo and that of Hand in Hand for Syria is not accidental as they are both based on the original rebels' emblem, explained in this BBC report <http://tinyurl.com/arefef> where the founding statement of the Free Syrian Army states they "work hand in hand with the people to achieve freedom and dignity, topple the regime, protect the revolution and the country's resources and stand up to the irresponsible military machine which is protecting the regime." Hand in Hand for Syria, it seems is hand in hand with some very unsavoury characters.



Figures 5a (Free Syrian Army Flag), 5b (Hand in Hand for Syria logo), 5c. (Flag of the Syrian Arab Republic). It is apparent that the emblem of Hand in Hand for Syria (5b), is modelled on the flag of the Free Syrian Army and is therefore aligned to those Mr Al-Arefe used in Cairo. Not only do both Hand in Hand for Syria and Mr Al-Arefe, their extremist benefactor, use the flag of the Free Syrian Army as their prototype but they both used clasped hands alluded to in the founding document of the Free Syrian Army.

Hand in Hand for Syria People: Ms Iman Mujahed



Figure 6: Ms Iman Mujahed, who is listed here, but not on the Charity Commission website, as a trustee of Hand in Hand for Syria. Note the Free Syrian Army emblem on the Hand in Hand for Syria logo on this poster by the Leeds Friends of Syria Group.

Because of its opaqueness, it is hard to ascertain who exactly is in charge of the Hand in Hand for Syria organisation. Although, for example, Faddy Sahloul is used as the main contact point on the Charity Commission page, which also lists Razan, his (apparent) wife and Fadi al Dairi as the only other two trustees, some others, such as accountant Marwan Ghannam who registered their website (but who is not involved in doing their accounts) also play key roles. Another person who has played a prominent if at times coy role in this group is marble entrepreneur Iman Mujahed who we now discuss.

This April 2013 video <http://tinyurl.com/kilburnx3> features a woman with an Irish accent in Kilburn who goes by the name of Iman describing a convoy leaving Kilburn for Syria. She sports the logo of the Free Syrian Army. This article <http://tinyurl.com/xlrishlman2> describes her as “a trustee of Hand in Hand for Syria” and has her claiming, wrongly, that “Hand in Hand have been established for quite some time” and that is why she is “very confident that the aid we deliver goes into (HIHS) - a London-based charity” Although she has a discernibly Dublin accent, the report says “she would prefer her home county in Ireland not to be published.” In this link <http://tinyurl.com/Irishlman1> she is described as the national organiser for Hand in Hand for Syria and she has, as the above picture shows, been variously described as a trustee of Hand in Hand for Syria. In this link <http://tinyurl.com/Mujahed1> she is “the Head of Fundraising at the charity”.

In this video report <http://tinyurl.com/Irishlman11>, which gives her full name as Iman Mujahed, she admits that Hand in Hand for Syria buy most of their products in Turkey, thus leading to the question as to how Hand in Hand for Syria get it over the lines into the government-held areas they also purport to service. In this article

<http://tinyurl.com/xIrishIman1>, we hear that Ms Iman “accompanied deliveries all across Syria and was greeted by women with cries of adoration for her gifts...the gifts that we need only walk to the corner shop here in Britain”. If this is so, the Hand in Hand for Syria organisation must be as big as their claims make it out to be. Although her pro-rebel sympathies would preclude her from entering government-controlled Syria, a simple perusal of her passport for relevant visa stamps would prove the veracity or otherwise of that claim that she travelled “all across Syria”.

In this link <http://tinyurl.com/IrishIman2> she claims “Hand in Hand for Syria has opened a children’s hospital in the Atmeh border town in Idlib province, which hosts the largest number of refugees in Syria. There is also a new maternity unit nearby, established for an obstetrician previously delivering babies on her kitchen floor, highlighting the fortitude with which many women are dealing with the crisis”. Given their expertise and her own experience in running marble businesses in England, one must ask how their accounts seem to be so late and their organisation so opaque. One must also wonder why they are so heavily entrenched in Atareb, which is firmly under the control of Syrian extremist rebels.

In this link <http://tinyurl.com/IrishIman5> Ms Iman speaks with noted academics in her capacity as a Hand in Hand for Syria trustee. Here <http://tinyurl.com/IrishIman6> Amnesty International host her at the Quaker Centre in Milton Keynes whereas in this transcript, <http://tinyurl.com/IrishIman8> Ms Iman tells us she checks the stock at Hand in Hand for Syria's warehouses “even down to the antiseptic”, thus confirming the claims made on the Hand in Hand for Syria website and by their other speakers that they keep meticulous records “even down to the antiseptic”.

In this video <http://tinyurl.com/IrishIman7> Ms Iman is shown packing a truck for delivery to Syria. Though she states she has no interest in politics, the Hand in Hand for Syria logo she wears on her shirt implies otherwise. The back of the shirt is emblazoned with the words “Stand by Syria”, which is the pro-rebel group Ms Iman was formerly involved with before Hand in Hand for Syria gained traction. Here, Ms Iman is photographed driving to a clinic in Northern Syria <http://tinyurl.com/IrishIman9>; although it is unclear who paid Anna Branthwaite, the professional photographer for her time and expertise, issues like this could easily be cleared up by a forensic review of the accounts of Hand in Hand for Syria.

In this Islam Channel video, <http://tinyurl.com/IrishIman3> she shares a platform with Dr Mousab Azawi of the pro rebel Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and she speaks as a spokesperson for Stand by Syria. At 7.10 into the video, she praises the work of Danny Abdul Dayem <http://tinyurl.com/IrishIman4> who has since been exposed as a fraudulent propagandist for the Syrian rebels. After 10 minutes into the interview, Dr Azawi makes a number of heroic logistical claims on behalf of the SOHR. After 19 minutes, he downplays the Libyan carnage, claims to have links with groups similar to his own in Libya, and says his own Syrian-focused organisation has three demands: a buffer zone, a humanitarian corridor and a no-fly zone, three concessions which, based on the Libyan experience, would topple the Syrian government and lead to massive loss of life at the sort of scale only Mr Sahloul would perhaps be happy with. Iman Mujahed not only concurs with Dr Mousab Azawi’s wish list but also calls for more support for the Syrian rebels “to defend themselves”. Ms Iman’s phone numbers are given here:

<http://www.solaceuk.org/index.php/whats-on>

ISLAM TV

As the 10 June 2014 deadline for Hand in Hand for Syria to submit their accounts to the Charity Commission is long past, their attacks on the Commission, which they now brand as Islamophobic for asking them to submit their accounts, have become more virulent.

<http://tinyurl.com/rolax9> Here Hand in Hand for Syria features in a discussion on IslamTV about sending money to Syrian extremists. They attack the Charity Commission, they claim they are working with very many NGOs and that everything they do is fully accountable. Yet most major charities will only work with organisations with an audited track record, which Hand in Hand for Syria currently do not have.

Going through the IslamTV video:

10.55 They claim Hand in Hand for Syria's accounts are open and they help everyone. Yet their website freely admits they have yet to open their books as they are only a (very successful) start up.

11.00 they have seven hospitals on the ground. This would take a lot of money and a lot of organisation to do and, of course, a money trail to prove it.

11.15 "we report properly" They have yet to report at all.

17.10: 17.25 they are going to submit their accounts to the Charity Commission "in the next few days" (this was in 24 April 2014 but they still have not submitted them in late-July).

21.40: they make excuses for not having receipts, and they complain Syria is harder to get records for than an earthquake or flood zone. This is no excuse not to submit audited accounts and it contradicts their earlier claims that they document everything "even down to the antiseptic" as Ms Iman so clearly puts it.

<http://tinyurl.com/rolax10> This sympathetic Channel 4 clip shows warehouses brimming full of donations and contains more attacks on the Charity Commission. Though all they have to do is produce their books and have them audited, at least one sinister inference is possible. Hand in Hand for Syria are a rebel support front, who have collected money and material by fraudulent means and they cannot account for it as they have passed most of it on to either Islamic rebels or their handlers and enablers in ways analogous to how arms to the "moderate" rebels have been found to be funnelled to their more extreme allies. A forensic examination of their audited accounts would now be essential to ascertain where and to whom their aid has gone.

Fellow-Travellers: The case of Christine Gilmore



Figure 7: Children, supposedly from Yarmouk camp, thank Qaradawi admirer, Leeds University student and serial Hand in Hand for Syria fund-raiser Christine Gilmore for her help. The shop in the background has Western lettering and the road looks interestingly clean for a teeming refugee camp, whose residents have suffered so much. One should, of course ask how they got the (tokenistic?) aid to Yarmouk as it would almost certainly

involve having to go through government lines and, as Mr al-Dairi previously explained, the penalty for providing such tokenistic aid is death.

There are a large number of smaller and often overlapping organisations which work hand in hand with Hand in Hand for Syria under the British Syrian Centre umbrella⁷. One such group is the hard-line Leeds University based Leeds Friends of Syria whose Leeds University web entry tells us their oxymoronic “mission” includes a “campaign against sectarianism in pursuit of a pluralistic society in Syria” and “To work with other organisations in the UK and international organisations including those based in Syria to try to bring about an immediate end to the violence, the implementation of political reform and the fall of the Assad regime”⁸.

Their main organiser is Christine Gilmore, a mature student, who got romantically tied to Ziad Arabi-Katbi, a much older Syria rebel, when she visited Damascus in 2010 and who now campaigns for her him to be admitted to the relative safety of Britain but for “Assad’s Syria” to be put to the sword. Although Ms Gilmore is in Leeds University to research “Nubian Studies” for a PhD, most of her writings are paeans to arch-extremist, homophobic Hitler admirer and Muslim Brotherhood High Priest Yusuf al-Qaradawi as some kind of protector of minorities and enlightened enhancer of society rather than the intolerant promoter of sectarian slaughter that he is. As they support the overthrow of the Syrian government, which can only happen by armed foreign intervention, as they have hosted Ms Iman Mujahed, as they collect exclusively for Hand in Hand for Syria⁹ and as their leading light is a fervent admirer of arch-bigot Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Leeds Friends of Syria should themselves be subject to scrutiny.

Suspect Claims

Hand in Hand for Syria’s website claims here <http://www.handinhandforsyria.org.uk/about-us/>: “We are extremely fast and cost-efficient. We owe it to our donors and to Syrians to make donations stretch as far as possible. Most of our aid is purchased in Turkey and in Syria, where £1 buys a lot more. And this way, we don’t have the delay or expense of shipping from the UK”.

Their accounts, despite promises to the contrary, are long overdue. This would indicate that they are not as efficient as they claim. They have also not indicated where precisely they buy their materials: though groups like the Turkish Red Crescent would, for example, be the obvious place to locate such material in Turkey which is a major hub for jihadists fighting in Syria, such groups would insist on paper trails and Hand in Hand for Syria have so far failed to produce any paper trail.

Their website claims: “We believe in sustainable aid. No one wants to live on hand-outs, and everyone wants to have dignity. That’s why we fund community empowerment projects in Syria (providing livelihoods for many people) and why we source some of our aid from those projects”. Because there is no financial or other evidence they are supplying such expensive services, their critics could argue that they are making extravagant claims for publicity and fund-raising reasons only. Hand in Hand for Syria could silence their critics by submitting their accounts for a full, forensic examination by independent auditors.

⁷ See <http://britishsyriancentre.com/node/225> for more of these groups.

⁸ <http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/groups/FriendsofSyria>

⁹ <http://www.justgiving.com/teams/friendsofsyria>

The same page of their website claims: “We’re as concerned as you are about aid getting through. We’ve read the stories about bogus charities and diverted aid, and we want to reassure you that we can guarantee that your donations will be used to help those in the greatest humanitarian need. Not only are we regulated by the Charity Commission but we also accompany all aid and cash donations to their eventual destinations (we don’t delegate their delivery), and we keep meticulous records. And we never take people we don’t know into Syria”.

Leaving aside the fact they have still to submit any accounts to the Charity Commission, they claim to accompany all aid to its final destination and to keep meticulous records “even done to the antiseptic” as Ms Iman previously explained. If so, there is no reason for their accounts to be so late. They have also provided no evidence of the governance safeguards they purport to have in place. Hand in Hand for Syria could clarify these matters by showing us the minutes of the meetings of when and why Ms Iman, Dr Mahmoud al Akraa and other controversial characters were appointed as trustees.

They claim <http://tinyurl.com/HandC2> : (paraphrasing the poor translation) to operate five different hospitals, support over 140 makeshift hospitals, operate a fleet of 32 ambulances and a permanent blood bank and to train large numbers of medical workers in the treatment of conflict injuries. Yet they have no paper trail. Their FAQs <http://tinyurl.com/faqsW1> say, amazingly in the context of transparency and audited accounts, they will not disclose the addresses of their hospitals and they will accept no volunteers to work with them inside or outside Syria. The main inference to be drawn from all this is, their string of media coups notwithstanding, they are much too opaque an organisation to be allowed operate as a charity. Although this opaqueness is a critical concern, their FAQs lead to a host more questions such as why they still collect goods but do not run convoys.

Hand in Hand for Syria’s website claims: “We don’t subtract anything from your donation to cover admin costs. If you donate £1 to Hand in Hand for Syria, £1 goes into Syria. All of our operational costs in the UK are covered by what we recoup on Gift Aid, and our costs in Turkey and Syria are covered by our partnerships with major aid agencies”.

If they were so cost-effective, they would be the most efficient Western charity organisation there is. This can be seen by examining this site www.charitynavigator.org/ which gives relevant information for all of the USA’s major charities, all of which are infinitely more transparent than Hand in Hand for Syria and none of which meet its exacting but unproven efficiency standards.

They have produced no evidence of any significant partnerships with major aid organisations working in Syria and, if they had any such partnerships, those partners would ensure they had the paperwork to show they did. As they are currently very late in submitting their accounts to the Charity Commission <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/find-charities/> this cannot presently be fully verified. Despite collecting huge amounts of money from the British public and claiming to have huge support networks in Syria, they have, as yet, verified none of that.

This link <http://tinyurl.com/rolax5> verifies they still have money for (presumably) very expensive ad campaigns on the London underground tube service. How does this sit with their claims that all monies donated go to Syria and not on administration? Although all of the major charities could be criticised for media spending, they are all almost infinitely less opaque and more transparent than Hand in Hand for Syria, which claims to be more cost efficient than any of them.

This page <http://tinyurl.com/handhosp4> says they source ambulances decommissioned by the NHS, repair them and drive them, packed with aid and two way radios to the front lines

of Syria. Clearly a massive undertaking and all done, it seems, on less than a shoe string and with no full-time staff to co-ordinate. They should have receipts for all of this. Certainly, people like their webmaster (links here: <http://tinyurl.com/handwebm1> <http://tinyurl.com/handwebm2> <http://tinyurl.com/handwebm3>) should have receipts for the work she has done for them and such receipts should help indicate how financially efficient this organisation actually is.

This page <http://tinyurl.com/handhosp5> has them claiming: “Working with our partner INGOs, we begin by finding some of the world’s experts in war surgery from the UK and Europe. We then invite them to Turkey, where they meet up with the Syrian doctors, nurses and paramedics we’ve managed to bring out of the country. These experts, together with our own medical lead, spend 3 days transferring vital skills, including the latest techniques in emergency trauma care and resuscitation, as well as how to handle the effects of chemical and biological warfare. We translate all training materials into Arabic, ready for the participants. On their return to Syria, these doctors can perform more effectively — but most importantly, they can also train their colleagues”.

Again, another massive and massively-expensive undertaking, all done with no permanent staff and no partners, except the UN’s OCHA (Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs) with which they claim “to plan the distribution of aid”. Nor, it seems, are Hand in Hand for Syria averse to spending big sums on what almost amounts to frivolities. This link <http://tinyurl.com/rolax4> claims that they buy satellite phones cost at a cost of US3000\$ each, not including the cost of using them. They have money to spend on expensive phones and, as we have seen, on expensive webmasters but not on accountants. Here they claim their convoys have now been suspended so again more opaqueness and more confusion as to whether they are still running them or not.

Although Hand in Hand for Syria is, superficially at least, secular, Islamic Relief, to take but one pertinent example, has overheads of £7.4 million and most other similar organisations claim efficiency ratios of no more than 90%¹⁰. International Medical Corps, which operates all over Syria and which, we later discuss, is infinitely more transparent and accountable than Hand in Hand for Syria, who should explain why this is the case.

Website’s Specific Claims

Although they make a number of unsubstantiated claims that they are educating Syria’s children, their core claims are that they supply 100 Syrian hospitals, have opened 6 new hospitals and have brought 32 ambulances to Syria.

The video on this page (<http://tinyurl.com/handhosp1>), also available on youtube here <http://tinyurl.com/handhosp2> gives a guide to one of the very expensive and modern hospitals they claim to have opened. This hospital, contrary to their claims, cannot be in the centre of Damascus as claimed because, as shown on the video, the charity’s logo includes the distinctive three-star emblem of the Free Syrian Army. Though they later removed the rebels’ flag from their logo to mask their political affiliations, put bluntly, no-one with those evident rebel sympathies would have been allowed to open or operate such a hospital in government-held Damascus. That being so, their claims to operate on both sides of the line have to be false.

¹⁰ <http://www.5pillarz.com/2013/09/17/islamic-or-capitalist-charities/> Christine Gilmore of Leeds Friends of Syria, a Hand in Hand for Syria affiliate, had problems with this article, in particular these lines: Islamic Relief’s strapline proudly states, “Dedicated to alleviating the suffering of the world’s poorest people” whilst Help for Syria disgracefully proclaims, “Help Syrians in need. No politics, just aid”.

In this page (<http://tinyurl.com/handhosp3>) Hand in Hand for Syria purport to be helping in Lebanon but they now say all their aid goes into Syria itself. Though the Free Syrian Army emblem is prominently displayed on the t-shirts and other apparel of the helpers, the aid given here looks very modest in comparison to the hospitals, ambulances and kidney dialysis machines claimed elsewhere. That being so, this may be another fraudulent claim¹¹.

This page <http://tinyurl.com/handhosp6> tries to entice NGOs and charities to work with Hand in Hand for Syria, claiming, with no proof, that it has access and networks all over (rebel-held) Syria and all with no paid administrative staff: "Our partners provide funding for specific programmes such as hospital supplies (medicines, consumables and equipment), tents to provide shelter, and WASH programmes (water, sanitation & hygiene). They also help to cover our costs for logistical support. Most of them however have to work anonymously for security reasons".

Leaving aside the obvious and important fact that a registered charity should not be cloaked in so many layers of opaqueness, one wonders how this anonymity will affect their accounts if and when they submit them. Here we have an organisation making huge logistical claims but presenting no evidence to back them up. One has to, for example, wonder whether their anonymous collaborators will present receipts and invoices and thereby shed their anonymity. Hand in Hand for Syria should present the minutes of their meetings so interested scholars, along with the relevant authorities, can see how they addressed this problem on an ongoing basis.

Fund-raising

<http://tinyurl.com/handhosp7> In this video, Luke McManus, their (one-time?) director of medical projects, bemoans the high costs of their operations and appeals for money. Outside of raising money for them here <http://tinyurl.com/handhosp8> he has no relevant internet foot print. Many local and national English papers have also commented on their formidable fund-raising successes with even the Anglican Church¹² helping <http://tinyurl.com/babies3x> and a number of Catholic, Anglican and other schools donating to them <http://tinyurl.com/rolax8>

¹¹ Another such umbrella group they have links with is the "British Syrian Centre" which is run by Dr Saladin Sawan, a Syrian native and rebel supporter who has appeared on BBC several times. His website <http://www.britishtsyriancentre.com/organizers> contains the logo of the Free Syrian Army and advertises groups like this <http://tinyurl.com/napalmx2> human rights organisation, which falsely claims to be based in Damascus. <http://tinyurl.com/napalmx3> "Damascus Center for Human Rights studies (DCHRS) is an independent, non-governmental organization, established in 2005, located in the Syrian capital of Damascus". Yet none of their staff or contact points are in Damascus. As the "British Syrian Centre" site shows, there seems to be a large network of such opaque groups, one of which is Hand in Hand for Syria. Here <http://tinyurl.com/handchopx2> the British Syrian Centre advertise a function Hand in Hand for Syria are running with other opaque groups.

This recent BBC story <http://tinyurl.com/convoyx1> about a 4 July 2014 programme highlighting British convoys going to the rebels cites fears the authorities have about these convoys helping the rebels. This 10 July 2014 report <http://tinyurl.com/convoyx2> says that Kasim Jameel, the leader of that convoy, has been charged with child porn and sex related offences.

¹² The wife of the bishop of Stepney collected £10,000 for them according to this report <http://www.london.anglican.org/articles/special-event-highlighting-syria-crisis/>

Fundraising also features prominently here <http://tinyurl.com/atareb4> and on Hand in Hand for Syria's Facebook page <http://tinyurl.com/handhosp9> as does its very considerable media coups. This page cites over \$500,000 in one donation but again with no clear evidence of where it went. This link <http://tinyurl.com/rolax3> mentioned another £100,000 raised. Here <http://tinyurl.com/rolax6> a figure of \$1.5 million is mentioned. This link <http://tinyurl.com/HHand9> mentions a further £76,647.67 being raised. It also gives a large number of phone numbers and contact addresses/storage points, as does this one <http://tinyurl.com/homex2>. The Nottingham storage address at 20 Lenton Lane Nottingham NG7 2NR is a self-service one. The drop-off point at 254 Kilburn High Road London NW6 2BX seems, according to Google but not by a current physical check, to double as Qaran International Money Transfer which, as this link <http://tinyurl.com/HHandX1> suggests, has been in trouble with the financial authorities before. It is now called Marble House and seems to be a private house with a possible connection to Ms Iman, the Hand in Hand for Syria trustee, fund raiser tsar and marble entrepreneur¹³, who audits Hand in Hand for Syria's supplies "even down to the antiseptic".

<http://tinyurl.com/HandHx6> says they send the colossal sum of up to £200,000 a month of medical aid¹⁴. By way of comparison, the accounts of Syria Relief (listed here <http://tinyurl.com/HandHx4> with Hand in Hand for Syria and other organisations under the British Syrian Centre and the FSA logo umbrellas) gives annual revenue figures of £2.4 million. Hand in Hand for Syria should clarify precisely how much Atareb hospital and similar enterprises costs to run and how much the capital equipment they supply them with costs¹⁵. Until their audited accounts can be forensically examined to see if they have dealt properly with those vast sums, grave doubts about them, justifiable or not, have to remain.

The Controversial Atareb Hospital

One of Hand in Hand for Syria's major fund-raising endeavours has been for Atareb Hospital <http://tinyurl.com/atareb1> which they belatedly admitted was at the centre of the widely circulated but now largely discredited Panorama programme, Saving Syria's Children, very detailed criticisms of which may be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/atareb2> and, to a lesser extent here <http://tinyurl.com/atareb5> and here <http://tinyurl.com/syriaq2> by former British Ambassador, Mr Craig Murray. Indeed, as this report <http://tinyurl.com/atareb7> says: "Footage of the horrific incident in northern Syria was broadcast by the BBC last night just before MPs voted down a motion designed to pave the way for military intervention against the Assad regime¹⁶."

¹³ In these links <http://venice-marbles-ltd.london.amfibi.com/uk/c/610376-venice-marbles-ltd> <http://bizzy.co.uk/uk/03756037/venice-marbles> we learn that Venice Marbles Ltd was incorporated in England & Wales on 21 April 1999 and is actively trading in other business support service activities. Venice Marbles Ltd had a single current director, Yousef Mujahed who may be now estranged from his Irish-born wife, Iman.

¹⁴ "First and foremost, there's the medicine. We provide vital medical supplies for each of the 84 field hospitals and makeshift clinics we support – and this is no simple feat. Put in perspective, our latest shipment is made up of £200,000 of medical aid"

¹⁵ We are assuming it has not been pilfered from the Syrian medical authorities.

¹⁶ As the Westminster vote closed at 10pm and as the report was on BBC News at 10pm, this is therefore not fully correct. Mr Murray returned to this topic here <http://tinyurl.com/murrayd1> and <http://tinyurl.com/murrayd2>

Given its timing, their critics cogently argue that this event was staged to bolster public support for intervention in Syria after the anticipated Commons “yes” vote. As a practising doctor informally consulted about this says about the medical part of the programme: “*I have watched the Panorama BBC documentary. Makes for interesting viewing but I think the scene of the school children coming in with the burns was an act.*

I worked on trauma and orthopaedics last year for four months, so I have worked with burns victims first hand. These victims displayed what appeared to be "less painful" burns. They were able to sit down, be touched by others even talk. This is not how a severe burn victim would present. Most victims:

- *would be screaming the place down in agony. Even after treatment and with all sorts of pain drugs they still hurt and still scream.*
- *Many burns victims cannot even focus enough to follow instructions such as sit down and wait because of pain. This young boy, I found very odd (I don't think it is cultural thing as pain is pain and it can drive a person mad).*
- *would have difficulties with their airways, almost immediately, hence in the UK many are intubated and treated in ITU. This shows them able to speak and breathing very well no obvious signs of respiratory distress like coughing, shallow breathing etc. In such an attack the poisons are inhaled.*
- *They say they douse them in water (wouldn't the high spray of the hose cause more problems to burnt skin).*
- *when they came to the hospital they have evidence of this white powder on their skin but not evident burn blisters which fill with fluid within minutes. Some are shown with skin hanging off but the flesh beneath is not that convincing it actually looks like more skin.*
- *The walk is very odd. why??*
- *The other concern in burns is their fluid status as they will be losing large amounts of fluid through their burns. The cannula is essential to resuscitate them. I'm not sure what A and E that doctor worked in but I have not worked in A and E this year and I have placed I think almost 6 cannulas in peoples feet. Any access is essential in burns, a standard training skill!*
- *If the poison was dropped from above (a plane) their hair would have been lost and patches would be evident. Many still had a full heads”.*

Perhaps it is a case of doctors differing and patients dying. In this link <http://tinyurl.com/thermalx1> Dr Saleyha Ahsan claims it was a “thermal bomb” and that it exploded at the “nearby school, the Iqraa Institute” and its “headmaster, Mohammed Abu Omar” is quoted as saying there were three immediate fatalities and a further eight later on¹⁷. The same article claims Hand in Hand for Syria only operate two hospitals in Syria and, though Mr Faddy Sahloul, Hand in Hand for Syria’s director, is quoted as saying: ‘We have a very small secret back-up generator that we run to get when the electricity goes off to keep the incubators working’, as he does not explain why they have to keep the

¹⁷ Dr Ahsan makes the same point in this article <http://tinyurl.com/ahsanx1> where she claims the solution to Britain’s Syrian-related problem of young and vulnerable Britons being indoctrinated by jihadist extremists is not to ask Muslim women to work with the police but to send more aid to the opaque Hand in Hand for Syria organisation. Dr Ahsan’s “innocent abroad” approach in the Saving Syria’s Children has been questioned as she is a former officer in the British Army and a seasoned media performer.

generator hidden, this can only be seen as further entrenching Hand in Hand for Syria's needless opaqueness.

Though it has to be said journalist Ian Pannell attempts to refute some of the allegations made against this programme here <http://tinyurl.com/atareb2> and here <http://tinyurl.com/complaintBBC1> a growing consensus, looking at when it was aired and the very strange sequence of events documented in it and discussed here <http://tinyurl.com/atareb2> is that this was a fraudulent programme concocted to forward a fraudulent objective, a fraudulent charity and a fraudulent war¹⁸.

In passing, it should be noted that Dr Hallam has suggested that napalm was used and links like this <http://tinyurl.com/this-time-white-phosphorous> have "activists" suggesting that white phosphorous was used¹⁹. If Dr Hallam cannot tell the difference between symptoms of nerve gas attacks from other, burns-related attacks, her medical competence and that of her collaborators has to be called into question in a most serious way.

Although the afore-mentioned Panorama programme, along with Ian Pannell, its previously-compromised reporter <http://tinyurl.com/atareb7> and <http://tinyurl.com/atareb8> and <http://tinyurl.com/atareb9>, is now largely discredited, Hand in Hand for Syria are still energetically collecting for this most dubious of hospitals even though, as these BBC reports <http://tinyurl.com/atareb3> and <http://tinyurl.com/rolaw2> makes plain, its allies now question the amount of logistical medical help it is giving to ISIS and other frontline rebel fighters. As the <http://tinyurl.com/atareb3> report says: "Hand-in-Hand for Syria's former partner decided not to seek further funding for the hospital because of security fears, including for its own staff. But the BBC understands it also had concerns about the proportion of fighters being treated at the hospital...."

This should not be such a surprise. The Times of 15 February 2013 reported²⁰ on a Hand in Hand for Syria run hospital in the rebel stronghold of Ma'arat al-Nu'aman where "Last month they treated more than 2,600 patients — roughly half of them fighters and the rest civilians". If at least half of the patients are Syrian rebel fighters, then the Ma'arat al-Nu'aman hospital can only be regarded as a Syrian rebel field hospital which will treat rebel non-combatants only if the rebellion's immediate priorities allow it. As it is in Hand in Hand for Syria's Ma'arat al-Nu'aman hospital, so also should it be in Hand in Hand for Syria's Atareb hospital: given the proximity of the war and the danger to life and limb the Syrian rebels who control the area run, we must suppose, unless contrary evidence is presented, that it is the Syrian rebel fighters and their families rather than the local non-

¹⁸ The full Panorama documentary was aired on 30 September. The BBC's first news item was aired AFTER the Commons vote closed on 29 August 2013.

¹⁹ Dr Hallam says "I need a pause because it's just absolute chaos and carnage here, we've had a massive influx of what look like serious burns, seems like it must be some sort of chemical weapon, I'm not really sure, maybe napalm, something similar to that" Ian Pannell says "Napalm or thermite" was used in this 29 August 2013 piece: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-23892594>. There are references to white phosphorous in these two articles but again not from the doctors: <http://tinyurl.com/HandC3> and <http://tinyurl.com/HandC4> This reference claims napalm was used: <http://tinyurl.com/napalmx1> and this link <http://tinyurl.com/napalmx6> claims white phosphorous was used; though it has many supposedly corroborating videos, it does not mention a school at all.

²⁰ The account can be read on this Facebook posting <https://www.facebook.com/handinhandsforsyria/posts/487106314658409>

combatants who will be prioritised and that, as a consequence, Atareb Hospital can only be regarded as a field hospital for the Syrian rebels.

“The Men with Guns”

This link <http://tinyurl.com/HIHKurd1> tells us “In al-Dana in Idlib, Mahmoud Hussein, an activist from the NGO Hand in Hand for Syria who conducted research on this subject (sex jihad), told Al-Monitor that a large proportion of these marriages end in divorce after two months, at which time the foreign fighters marry another woman. Sexual relations under the appropriately sanctioned institution of marriage is their main concern”.

Mr Hussein, the Hand in Hand for Syria activist, then tells us: “All the 'immigrants' who come to the medical center in the countryside of Latakia insist that the female doctors marry them. These doctors say they are engaged, and the fighters insist on being introduced to other Syrian girls”.

Mr Hussein next recounts a wealthy Libyan who was kidnapped by jihadists seeking assistance in marriage. “He told us that he came to Syria with the intention to help out Syrian families by donating money. But upon his arrival, ISIS captured him and kept him hostage until he paid a sum of 5,000 euros [\$6,928] to help a Libyan jihadist fighter get married. When he asked the jihadist about his wife residing in Libya, the latter answered, ‘This is her punishment because she refused to come with me to wage jihad in Syria.’”

Mr Hussein, then, adopts a very blasé attitude to the victims of sex jihad and it appears that the Hand in Hand for Syria hospital he works in are more than happy to treat injured jihadists as long as they confine their rapes to those not employed by the hospital Hand in Hand for Syria run. Hand in Hand for Syria should explain whether or not this is their general policy regarding the victims of sex jihad.

Paul McMaster, who co-signed the afore-mentioned Lancet letter with Dr Rola of Hand in Hand for Syria is featured in this self-written article <http://tinyurl.com/medicsign3> where he recounts his experiences working in an illegal hospital in rebel-controlled Syria and treating “fighters – from both sides as MSF is, of course, impartial – with serious gunshot wounds”. Much later in the piece, he tells us that “Sometimes, after the casualties, the men with guns would arrive. At MSF we never allow weapons into the treatment area – no matter which side they are on. We did have prisoners from the government forces brought in for treatment and I went to see one after we had treated him. He was being well looked after”.

So, far from being a neutral drop-in centre, Mr McMaster was, in effect, helping to operate a rebel field hospital and salving his conscience by treating the odd prisoner “the men with guns” brought in.

Hand for Syria should clarify who “the men with guns” allow into Atareb Hospital, all the more so as the co-founder of the medical charity Doctors Without Borders, Jacques Beres, had a similar experience with “the men with guns” when he treated Syrian rebels in the besieged city of Aleppo where he claims here <http://tinyurl.com/handchopw1> that 60 per cent of his patients were rebels– and about half of those were foreigners hell-bent on establishing a Sharia dictatorship along the lines some of the afore-mentioned benefactors and fellow-travellers of Hand in Hand for Syria would approve of.

The image is a promotional poster for Atareb Hospital. At the top left, the text 'Atareb Hospital' is written in large blue letters. To its right, a paragraph states: 'is a strategic hospital run by Hand in Hand for Syria just 30 km from war-torn Aleppo. It became famous for treating school children hit by an incendiary bomb attack as BBC Panorama were filming.' The 'Hand in Hand for Syria' logo, featuring a globe and two hands, is in the top right corner, with the text 'Registered charity 1140802' below it. A central blue banner reads 'When Atareb Hospital closes...'. Below this banner are nine circular icons, each with a statistic: 500,000 people without medical care, 1 kidney dialysis unit shut, 34,598 injured people with no A&E, 265 life-saving operations not taking place, 113 women without birth services, 3 empty theatres, 26,070 lost outpatient appointments, 98 jobless staff, and 4,500 sick children with nowhere to turn. At the bottom, it says 'Donate now and help us keep Atareb Hospital open... www.handinhandforsyria.org.uk' and '#SaveAtarebHospital'.

Figure 8: Hand in Hand for Syria’s appeal for their flagship Atareb Hospital, details of which are as opaque as all their other operations.

The moral and ethical issues “the men with guns” give rise to notwithstanding Hand in Hand for Syria, as the above photo on their Facebook page on 16 June 2014 and other pictures included in appendix 2 show, is currently collecting for the controversial Atareb Hospital. They are claiming that this hospital which is only a few miles from the Aleppo front line has 113 births a month, has an A&E dept. that treats almost 100 patients a day, performs 9 life-saving operations a day, has a kidney dialysis unit and sees 71 out patients each and every day of the year. And all of this with only 98 paid staff. They claim to treat 68,704 patients a year, or 188 a day each and every day of the year. Not only that but they claim to offer all kinds of treatment from neo-natal units to expensive kidney dialysis units.

All that expertise contradicts this 29 August 2013 BBC News item <http://tinyurl.com/BBCXSyria1> where the same Ian Pannell described Atareb (as it is now known to be) as “a basic hospital funded by handouts”. The inaccuracy of this description is, however, contradicted by the list of facilities and the funding arrangements discussed above. <http://tinyurl.com/greathosp1> encapsulates their latest Twitter efforts to raise more funds for this “state of the art” hospital.

That Atareb’s very substantial funding was in place prior to the “incendiary bomb attack” of August 26 2013 which featured in Panorama 'Saving Syria's Children' is clear from Hand in Hand for Syria’s website, which in this June 2014 article <http://tinyurl.com/XSyria2> states “after one year our agreement with our INGO partner has come to an end”. Either the hospital is basic, as they claimed, or advanced, as they claim; it cannot be both. The fact that they are so opaque does not help clarify things at all. The trustees of Hand in Hand for Syria should name “our INGO partners” and clarify all other related matters in writing once they publish their audited accounts.

Dr Rola Hallam, who 'stars' in 'Saving Syria's Children' writes here <http://tinyurl.com/XSyria3> about “One of the country's most sophisticated remaining hospitals”: “The hospital costs between \$60,000 and \$70,000 a month to operate, depending on our field costs”. If all \$70,000 was spent on salaries to the 98 locals they employ, this would make an average monthly salary of \$714 each, assuming British

volunteers paid for their own keep and all medicines and running costs were free which they clearly are not. The ratios do not stack up here. If and when they do submit their accounts, we will have to see if the revenues and costs for all activities balance. Conservatively extrapolating from that figure, we would be having to look at figures of at least \$5 million a year just for that one hospital alone.

Mr al-Dairi claims here <http://tinyurl.com/Fadix1> that their employees “are paid around £70-80 a month” or £7,500 or so a month in wages for all the employees of the flagship Atareb hospital. This figure, however, conflicts with Dr Rola’s \$70,000 a month estimation, especially if we take British and Irish ratios, which say wages and salaries are hospitals’ major expenditures as the norm. If, in fact, Mr al-Dairi’s figures are the more accurate, then Hand in Hand for Syria’s massive revenues should be more than sufficient to meet their needs. The trustees of Hand in Hand for Syria should clarify by making their audited accounts and detailed notes thereto open for inspection.

In this Guardian article, <http://tinyurl.com/napalmx7> Hand in Hand for Syria’s Chief of Logistics Fadi al-Dairi, who is also one of its listed trustees, said the closure of their flagship Atareb hospital was “heartbreaking”. “He said the charity has enough money from donors to keep the hospital running, but cannot get it into the country, because it needs a partner to channel the funding, and established charities are pulling out of Syria”.

But Hand in Hand’ for Syria’s website claims they handle all their own logistics so why close for want of a partner to do what they claim to do themselves? To repeat their website claims <http://tinyurl.com/HandC5> : “We’re as concerned as you are about aid getting through. We’ve read the stories about bogus charities and diverted aid, and we want to reassure you that we can guarantee that your donations will be used to help those in the greatest humanitarian need. Not only are we regulated by the Charity Commission but we also accompany all aid and cash donations to their eventual destinations (we don’t delegate their delivery), and we keep meticulous records”. Ms Iman Mujahed has, let us again recall, told us that they track their supplies “even down to the antiseptic.”

If Hand in Hand for Syria now find they cannot work in Syria because they lack partners, then who were they working with previously when they claimed to provide aid to 90% of Syria via more than 100 hospitals and all through their own logistical network? As previous links showed, they claimed to be delivering all the aid themselves, even going so far as to buy expensive satellite phones so they could track their shipments over the Turkish border to the nearby rebel stronghold of Atareb. Because Hand in Hand for Syria are very opaque, these issues cannot be fully settled until a full, proper and independent forensic investigation is done of their financial accounts which, to repeat, are long overdue.

In brief, Hand in Hand for Syria have their flagship hospital in a front line zone in an area not only controlled by Islamic extremists but that has been the scene of recent heavy ground and aerial fighting. They have amassed huge sums of money supposedly to fund this hospital but, outside of their own unverified claims, they are opaque as regards the entire operation surrounding this, their flagship hospital, around which many doubts have been raised and unanswered questions asked.

Extra Points Concerning Atareb Needing Clarification

Hand in Hand for Syria should explain why they positioned their state of the art hospital in Atareb, which is very firmly in rebel hand with the Turkish border being a mere 7km away and the nearest government positions in Aleppo and Idlib being 15 km away by map but much further by road; the villages where the bombed schools are supposed to be are about 4 km from Atareb and again are in areas very firmly under the command of the rebels. As it would be unthinkable that a government supporter or a member of a religious minority, who would almost certainly be summarily executed as a traitor and apostate,

would reveal themselves by availing of their services, Hand in Hand for Syria's claim that they treat people of all religious and political persuasions in Atareb is ludicrous.

Not only is Atareb very firmly in the hands of the Syrian rebels but because it has been at the centre of very heavy fighting, it would therefore be absolutely the wrong place to site a hospital unless that hospital, like the one Paul McMaster worked in, was geared to serving the medical needs of front-line Syrian rebels. This link <http://tinyurl.com/atarebx3> shows Atareb is a strategic cross roads and has witnessed very heaving fighting. This link <http://tinyurl.com/atarebx2> shows the extremist Isis Islamic group controlling Atareb. This link <http://newsmotion.org/fr/tags/46th-regiment> has videos of the heavy weaponry the rebels looted from the armoury of the 46th regiment who were stationed in Atareb. These links <http://tinyurl.com/atarebx1> and <http://tinyurl.com/atarebd2> show Atareb littered with destroyed tanks and other equipment. Given its volatile position, this is not the place to site a state of the art hospital. Hand in Hand for Syria should explain why they chose that site for their hospital and who donated, rented or sold to them the buildings they use.

In this link <http://tinyurl.com/babies1x> Hand in Hand for Syria claim the controversial Atareb hospital is highly proficient at delivering premature babies. They are, in other words, claiming to have a state of the art hospital only miles from the front line and one that is under continued aerial and artillery attack. In these links <http://tinyurl.com/HandHx3> <http://tinyurl.com/HandHx2> Hand in Hand for Syria claims to have set up a 68 bed children's hospital but they do not show any verifying pictures. In this link, <http://tinyurl.com/HandHx> Hand in Hand for Syria claims they set up both a children's hospital and a Syrian office although it is unclear how they managed to fund such a grand enterprise. In this link <http://tinyurl.com/babies2x> one of their leaders is filmed in a bedroom purporting to be a children's hospital. This would seem to be the same unit that is featured here <http://tinyurl.com/xsyria4> just after 29 minutes in Saving Syria's Children. Although Panorama did not identify this unit as being located at Atareb, if it was Atareb, it would further undermine Ian Pannell's "basic hospital funded by handouts" claim.

Atareb, "an area in nice need": In this link <http://tinyurl.com/XSyria5> Faddy Sahloul, co-founder and chairman of Hand in Hand for Syria, states: "We set up Atareb medical institution early in 2013 in a neighborhood we recognized in nice need" So the hospital is less than two years old. It is in a heavily fought over area, it has state of the art equipment and it also got bombed in a high profile aerial attack. Because all of that sounds improbable, Hand in Hand for Syria should clarify matters.

<http://tinyurl.com/napalmx5> Interestingly, at least two of these well-scrubbed Hand in Hand for Syria supporters are featured in the 26 August 2013 Hand in Hand Facebook post <http://tinyurl.com/XSyria6> showing Atareb staff on training in Turkey. Critics suggest that regular staff were evacuated on this date so the Hand in Hand for Syria actors could come and perform their piece for Panorama. Hand in Hand for Syria should again clarify matters both for their own stakeholders and the wider community.

International Hospital Comparisons

If we take Southampton General hospital as a very rough comparison, the quickest glance over their annual accounts <http://tinyurl.com/sotonx1> will show much better governance and professionally-audited figures which allow us to calculate financial ratios. Soton's new and expensive trauma centre, for example, treats 1000 patients a year, a much lower number than Hand in Hand for Syria's flagship hospital does in a much more volatile combat zone.

In Australia, this link <http://tinyurl.com/sotonx2> tells us, a kidney dialysis unit costs a minimum of \$AUD 40,000 per patient. Yet Hand in Hand for Syria can keep an entire unit operating on Syria's front lines for no discernible reason, given that Turkey is only a few

kilometres away on the one side and the Syrian authorities have good facilities on the other.

This link <http://tinyurl.com/sotonx3> tells us that the world-renowned Portland Hospital, England's only fully dedicated maternity hospital, handles 2000 births a year. Yet Hand in Hand for Syria can treat a large number of pregnant women with a fraction of the money Portland, which specialises in the area, has available to it.

This link <http://tinyurl.com/sotonx4> tells us that Dublin's world-famous National Maternity Hospital has 820 employees and this link <http://tinyurl.com/sotonx5> tells us it delivers between 30 and 35 babies a day or up to 12,775 a year, an average of 15.57 babies a day per employee. Its most recent annual report, given here <http://tinyurl.com/sotonx6> claims that it costs €63.3 million to run, with over two-thirds of that coming directly from (Irish) government sources. Although over €50 million of this goes to pay and pensions, it must be noted that, as this hospital has been in existence since 1894, it would not have the significant start-up costs and attendant credibility issues the hospitals Hand in Hand for Syria run have. It is, like its English and Australian counterparts and unlike Hand in Hand for Syria, fully transparent both in terms of fund-raising and in its medical activities. The fund-raising capabilities of these well-established hospitals seem to fade in comparison with those of Hand in Hand for Syria's very opaque Atareb Hospital.

International Medical Corps



Figure 9: International Medical Corps

As their website <http://tinyurl.com/handusa5> shows, International Medical Corps have not only been operating openly in Syria in 2007 “with a range of critical health services, including maternal and child health, mental health, psychosocial support, and gender-based violence prevention and response” but “Due to the ongoing conflict in Syria, International Medical Corps has expanded our services to address the critical needs of affected Syrians both inside Damascus and in bordering countries where refugees are seeking shelter and humanitarian resources. We operate mobile medical services and support health care facilities in and around Damascus, providing primary health care, mental health care and psychosocial support, and distributing critical supplies. In addition, International Medical Corps has scaled up our Syria refugee responses services in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq”.

The International Medical Corps' website also contains their audited reports and it tells us that “The American Institute of Philanthropy rated us an “A”, for unsurpassed efficiency and fiscal responsibility. International Medical Corps is also a member of the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance and has met its Standards for Charity Accountability”.

Its penchant for fund-raising and self-serving publicity apart, Hand in Hand for Syria cannot be compared in terms of professionalism, probity, efficiency or transparency to more established and more respectable groups like the International Medical Corps. Hand in Hand for Syria's opaqueness and its almost umbilical associations with "the men with guns" puts it and all associated with it under a moral and ethical cloud and none more so than those associated with Panorama's Saving Syria's Children programme.

Saving Syria's Children

Panorama's Saving Syria's Children programme, though thoroughly discredited in more informed quarters, does command some serious attention because of the damage it has caused the Syrian peace process. The British Embassy in Washington even went so far as to host a special filming of the event on December 11, 2013 with Frederic C. Hof, Hillary Clinton's former adviser on Syria and well-known Pentagon hawk, delivering some choice opening remarks at the event, which is reported on here <http://tinyurl.com/handusa1> by The Atlantic Council, a very influential Washington think tank.

Based on Hand in Hand for Syria's work, Mr Hof claims that Syria faces a government-fuelled genocide no matter whether the "murderous intent of Mr. Assad and those who kill on his behalf has genocidal motives or not." Mr Hof then bemoans the fact that the USA did not conduct "a punitive, humanitarian military intervention²¹". As Mr Hof's are not the sentiments a respectable charity should have, Hand in Hand for Syria should apologise for their role in enabling people like Mr Hof push Syria to the brink of extinction and annihilation and make appropriate pecuniary amends to the victims of violence in Syria.

Summary

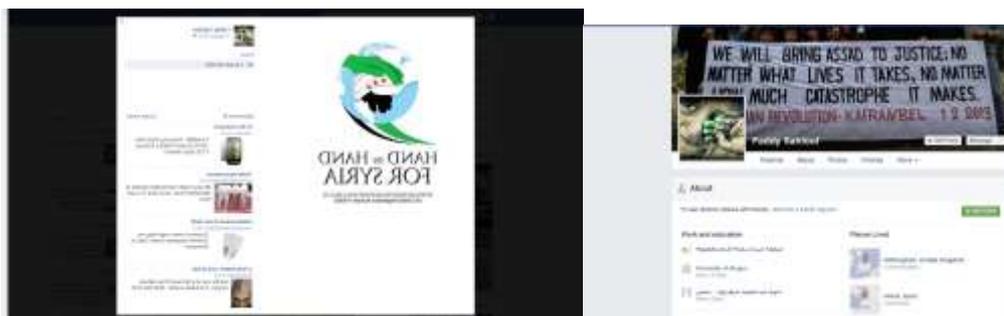
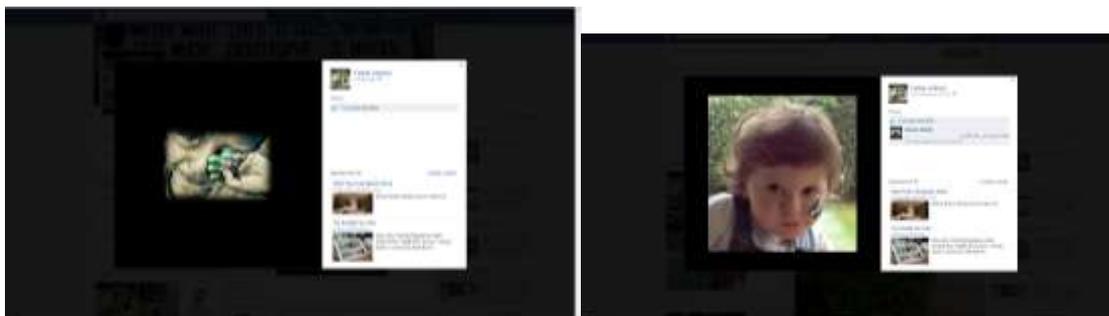
Hand in Hand for Syria has collected vast and, as yet, unaudited amounts of money supposedly to help the victims of the Syrian conflict. Their claims and the guidelines of the Charity Commission notwithstanding, Hand in Hand for Syria and its core leadership in particular, seem to be both very opaque and very politically partisan²². Their claims to offer aid in a non-partisan manner do not seem to stand up to scrutiny and their media activities are likewise open to question. Unless Hand in Hand for Syria, its trustees, its officials and the medics who worked for it can alleviate all these concerns, the police, the Charity Commission, the media, the relevant professional medical bodies and the public they have raised vast sums of money from should demand those answers as well as the appropriate redress if such is warranted.

²¹ In this incredible interview <http://tinyurl.com/handusa2> with a sympathetic Israeli press, Mr Hoff tells us that the leaders of Iraq and Syria are primarily responsible for the violence and Iran should dispense with both of them: "Iranian and Hezbollah personnel have been shocked by the barbarity of the Assad regime....Assad and Maliki - are the principal authors of political disasters that can undermine Iran's security decisively". Given the well-documented war crimes of the Syrian and Iraqi rebels, this is an incredible statement to make but one largely in line with the thoughts of others discussed here.

²² This link <http://tinyurl.com/tubex2> is asking for any evidence Hand in Hand for Syria has ever condemned the crimes of the Syrian rebels in the area it operates in and suggests that the lack of any such condemnations is further evidence of their partisanship. It seems a fair and important point.

Appendix 1: Screen shots of Faddy Sahloul's Facebook page before he made it private on 13 July 2014.

These screen shots show the sympathies Faddy Sahloul. Hand in Hand for Syria's main trustee, has for the most extreme elements of the Syrian rebels. Mr Sahloul should be asked why his Facebook page includes such incendiary photos and why he belatedly limited access to his page. Because he is the main contact point for Hand in Hand for Syria, which has collected vast sums of money from the British public, Mr Sahloul's support for extreme sectarian violence, which he seems to share with Mohammad Al Areifie, the extremist Saudi preacher who funds his organisation, is of public concern and must be investigated with a view to bringing prosecutions if such are warranted.





FRIEND WITH MOHAMMAD AL ABDALLAH



APPENDIX 2: Atareb Hospital: Hand in Hand for Syria's Fund-Raising Claims. These pictures summarise Hand in Hand for Syria's grandiose claims on behalf of their (unaudited) flagship hospital. These have been discussed at some length in the main body of this document.





Appendix 3: Kafr Nabl (also spelled Kafranbel or Kafr Nabil), close to the rebel stronghold of Ma'arrat al-Numan where Hand in Hand for Syria operate a front line hospital servicing rebel fighters and their families and supporters. Many of the pictures rebel sympathisers in Hand in Hand for Syria and elsewhere use come from this town where, these reports <http://tinyurl.com/handusa3> <http://tinyurl.com/handusa4> say, the rebel extremists Jabhat Al Nusra have a very sizeable presence. As their banners indicate, these propagandists support beheading their enemies. Mr Sahloul and his confreres in Hand in Hand for Syria should clarify their position on beheading and the other murderous policies of the Kafranbel propagandists.



Appendix 4: The Muslim Brotherhood on Syria

Political and military alliances in Syria and countries contiguous to it are both very complex and that is reflected both in the ranks of the Syrian rebels and those supporting them from afar. Although, to use Lenin's infamous phrase, there might be many "useful idiots" furthering the rebels' cause, there are, it is now widely agreed, very sinister and dedicated die-hard elements supplying a logistical backbone to them. One such group we now discuss is the Muslim Brotherhood, which is supposedly at the centre of the "moderate Syrian National Council". We will first of all comment on interviews its Turkish-based leader, Mohammad Riad al Shaqfeh, gave, and then reproduce a statement he made and briefly comment on that statement.

In this interview <http://tinyurl.com/MBSyria1> with The Majalla, Mohammed Riad Al-Shaqfa "insisted that the Assad regime cannot be a part of any political solution". Mr Shaqfa then asserted that "humanitarian corridors and safe zones have become an urgent necessity to protect the Syrian people." He then called for the Syrian opposition groups to be supplied arms. These, as we have seen, are the same demands groups like the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights and a number of Hand in Hand for Syria trustees have made.

Mr Shaqfa then says the future Syria "will be a pluralistic, democratic and civilian regime in which all members of the Syrian people will take part. Domination will not be seized by one party or one sect: our people are tired of individualism and exclusion". He believes "that the Syrian society, even with all its sects, is capable of understanding and coexisting despite the attempts of the Syrian regime to make them frightened of each other". All this, however, is not the way things are evolving and such aspirations have been historically foreign to the Muslim Brotherhood.

He then tells us that "Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia and Qatar, took practical steps and began to finance the opposition in order to support the Syrian people. We hope to use this support to fulfil the ambitions of the Syrian people to topple the Syrian regime". However, as the track records of Saudi Arabia and Qatar are the very antithesis of "building a pluralistic, democratic and civilian regime", it is hard to see how they could contribute in any meaningful way to reforming Syria.

Mr Shaqfa then tells us that "the Muslim Brotherhood "support the Free Army of Syria, we coordinate with it and we support it as much as we can". So, support for the Free Syrian Army equates to support for the Muslim Brotherhood and vice versa.

When asked "Do you see a problem of religious and racial minorities?" Mr Shaqfa says "There is no problem in Syria of religious and racial minorities. The Syrian people with all their races, religions and ideologies have coexisted since the oldest ages. But the Syrian regime tried to stir disputes among those sects; it deluded them that it is the protector of the minorities and frightened them of each other. The Muslim Brotherhood has previously stated its stance on this issue through its view of the Kurdish case and its vision about the social structure and the sectarianism in Syria, and both are approved by the group".

This does not seem to be the reality on the ground where most minorities flee for protection to the government lines and where the Alawites of Adra, the Armenians of Kasab and the Christians of Ma'lulah for example, for example, were slaughtered by the armed militias the SNC, the Muslim Brotherhood and the various trustees of hand in Hand for Syria are hand in hand with.

These concerns are echoed in this piece <http://tinyurl.com/MBSyria2> which tells us that "The Brotherhood's concern to showcase its commitment to inclusive, pluralist politics and to reiterate its identity as a "centrist" Islamist organization is commendable given the growing radicalization and sectarianism in Syria. But delivering on its promise will prove a tough challenge. Religious and ethnic minorities as well as secular Sunni Muslims are likely to dismiss Waad as a mere facade for the Brotherhood. Conversely, conservative Sunnis, including some of the Brotherhood's own members, and militant Islamists will dislike Waad's multiconfessional and ideologically heterogeneous self-image and distrust the presence of non-Sunnis and non-Arabs in its leadership".

"The Brotherhood's own members are divided about Waad. Some regard the party as a mistimed gesture that will undermine the organization's ongoing efforts to gain influence within the armed rebellion on the ground, where it has recently become less circumspect about its role in supporting like-minded rebel groups. And the fact that Brotherhood leaders who favor the new party see it as a means to project moderation ahead of possible negotiations with the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Geneva deepens the suspicions of the dissenting minority".

The Muslim Brotherhood, then, are caught between the proverbial hard rock of reverting to their previous intolerance and the hard place of tolerance, which would surrender their ascendancy to those who refuse to compromise and negotiate. This is, in fact, the conundrum of all those who wish for change in Syria and as Yeats' The Second Coming shows, it is not a new one:

*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.*

Whatever about the Syrian government side, the centre has certainly not held on the rebels' side and that is generally what happens when "the men with guns" call the shots, which is precisely what many of the parties mentioned previously, the Muslim Brotherhood amongst them, have, consciously or otherwise, worked towards.

Mr Shaqfa must have known the carnage which ensued would have been the result when he wrote the following sectarian call to arms in March 2011 when Syria could still have been pulled back from the brink. Perhaps the following earlier statement was a truer reflection both of his own opinion and of how the situation has actually played out.

A Statement of Support to the People of Syria

With the name of Allah

Allah had said in Quran: "The permission is granted to the fighters for his well, to defeat the injustice and Allah is capable of making them win", and all prayers and salutations to his messenger Muhammad who has been sent for the mercy of all people, and all prayers and salutations also to Muhammad's companions and followers until the end of the days.

We are – the Muslim Brotherhood – declare that we have got enough from the politics of the Baath-Regime and his infidel supporters in the past years.

We declare, it is enough after all what we have faced from killing, arresting and displacement against our leaders and followers.

It is time for us to come back home and rule Syria under our principles that come from Islam (Sharia), these principles that have been brought back to life by the greatest renewer of the 20th century Imam Hassan Al-Banna – Allah's mercy on him.

Seikh Hassan Al-Banna (1906-1949) the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood.

It is time for our forbidden party to come back home, and there is no way to achieve that goal without igniting and supporting the revolution inside Syria.

The people in Syria have demands: a better life, a more freedom, ... and we have to exploit and push them to take actions that guarantee the overthrow of the current government.

The people are now protesting after the allegations of the bloodshed by the government forces.

These demonstrations should be our aid to make our coup and replace the government. We have to ignite rage, incite and exploit that bloodshed and make it our way to come back home and spread our Islamic principles to rule over the political scene in Syria.

It is time to come back home and rule the Syrian Muslim people who live under the umbrella of the secular regime that supports and protects the principles of tolerance, and guarantees the freedom of thinking and embracing whatever belief the people choose. Such a freedom was the main reason that made the other non-Muslim sects of the Syrian people able to step forward and have a rank and a good contribution in the Syrian life, and also share the wealth with the Muslims on their own land.

It is time for us to come back and force all the other non-Muslim sects to shrink and step back. These sects are the infidel Christians, the criminal Alawites and the infidel Druzes.

It is time for us to come back and rule Syria under the name of Allah – the lord of all lords – and his holy Quran, and to impose the Islamic principles on all who oppose us without discrimination.

It is time for our principles to spread among the Syrian Muslims, to bring back the well and the glory of Allah after they have been lost because of these infidel regimes.

So we support the revolution in Syria with all what we have (money, speech, writings and media conferences), because it is the last hope for our principles to gain success, and the only way to overthrow the Baath-Regime, even if that has to cost thousands of lives of innocent people. We have to push the young Muslims to go down the streets in order to ignite this revolution, **even if that would lead to their death**, because that death means the freedom to those who will come after, **and a victory for us**. We also assure the right of those people to protest and defense themselves, **even if that would cause the death of many policemen and army officers who are basically infidels**, they caused a lot of corruption and destruction in our land, so death will be their fair punishment for what they committed.

It is also too important to remind the Syrian Muslims of the intentions of the other sects and their plans against Islam, and against our freedom, so we do not recommend any sort of collaboration even under the most difficult circumstances, because they – in their instincts – have bad feelings and bad intentions for Islam and for his people. We have to make sure that the revolution will be pure Islamic, and with that no other sect would have a share of the credit after its success.

We pray to Allah to support our people in Syria and lead them to victory.

Muhammad Riyad Al-Shaqfa, the general supervisor of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood

Written by Dr. Muhammad Riyad Al-Shaqfa

the General supervisor for the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood

Monday, 28 March, 2011
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Document Ends.

This document will be periodically updated as issues are clarified and more information becomes available.
