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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

January 11, 2010

230 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-1976  
FAX: (202) 225-3389

DISTRICT OFFICES:  
6525 MORRISON BOULEVARD  
SUITE 100  
CHARLOTTE, NC 28211  
(704) 362-1060  
FAX: (704) 367-0862

197 WEST MAIN AVENUE  
GASTONIA, NC 28052  
(704) 861-1976  
FAX: (704) 864-2445

Mr. Timothy Geithner  
Secretary  
United States Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Geithner:

Viva Palestina (VP), a UK based "charitable" organization with an affiliate in the United States (VP-USA), actively provides financial and political support to Hamas, a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization. Based upon their activities during the past year, as outlined in greater detail below, VP should be designated under Executive Order 13224 for its support of Hamas.

VP has consistently provided "material support" as defined at 18 U.S.C. § 2339B to Hamas in the form of "convoys" sent to Gaza. The first VP convoy, a UK initiative, entered Gaza on March 9, 2009. Once in Gaza, the convoy was warmly received by Hamas officials, including Ismail Haniyeh, leader of the "political wing" of Hamas.<sup>1</sup> VP gave thousands of British pounds of aid and tens of vehicles to the Hamas government. The convoy also included 12 ambulances, a fire engine and 1 million pounds (approximately \$1.4 million U.S.), which was directly given to Ziad al-Zaza, the Economy Minister of the Hamas government.<sup>2</sup> VP founder and creator George Galloway acknowledged his direct contribution to Hamas when stating:

*I, personally, am about to break the sanctions on the elected government of Palestine. By Allah, we carried a lot of cash here. You thought we were all fat. We are not fat. This is money that we have around our waists ... We are giving you now 100 vehicles and all of the contents. And we make no apology for what I am about to say: We are giving them to the elected government of Palestine; to the Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh.<sup>3</sup>*

The second VP convoy, a U.S. endeavor, departed New York in early July with approximately 200 Americans. The convoy gave the donations it raised through fundraising events in the United States to an

<sup>1</sup> "Ismail Haniyeh makes first public appearance since Gaza assault," *Ma'an News Agency*, March 11, 2009, <http://www.maannnews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=209153> (accessed December 15, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> "British MP Hands Aid, Vehicles to Hamas Government," *China Radio International*, March 10, 2009, <http://english.cri.cn/69666/2009/03/10/2001s462536.htm> (accessed December 15, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> "British MP George Galloway Defies International Sanctions against Hamas and Compares Tony Blair to Caligula's Horse," Video, *The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI)*, <http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/2060.htm> (accessed December 15, 2009).

organization in Gaza called Expertise in Consulting and Development (CODE),<sup>4</sup> a group which has received funding from the Union of the Good, designated by the U.S. under Executive Order 13224 in 2008.<sup>5</sup>

In preparation for the trip, VP-USA held more than 20 fundraisers in cities throughout the United States between April and June 2009. Galloway traveled around the country and spoke at most of the fundraisers, some held at college campuses. A fundraiser on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009 in Kansas City raised \$103,000 in a single evening. That night Galloway also claimed to have raised \$2 million for the convoy in the U.S.<sup>6</sup>

Due to a blockade imposed by Egypt, the U.S. group spent only 24 hours in Gaza, meeting with Haniyeh<sup>7</sup> and visiting Hamas run-facilities, such as the Ministry of Prisoners<sup>8</sup> whose mission is to help families of Palestinian martyrs in Israeli jails.

In addition to direct contributions to Hamas and contributions via a Hamas-linked NGO, VP has also provided political cover for the terrorist organization. During the March 2009 convoy, Galloway stated, "This is not charity. This is politics." Galloway's sentiments echoed among leaders of the U.S. convoy. At a July send-off rally in Brooklyn, speaker and Palestinian activist Lamis Deek told the crowd: "It's not about charity... but in every way that we cut it, it is political." She added:

*[I]n choosing Hamas, what they chose was one united Palestinian state on all of the 1948 territories from the north to the very south. That is what Palestinians chose. And in supporting Palestinian choice we are saying we support their right to liberation from violent colonialism.*

The third VP convoy (VP-3), consisting of approximately 100 vehicles, left London for Gaza on December 6<sup>th</sup> with plans to arrive in Gaza on December 27<sup>th</sup>. The convoy is an international effort, with groups joining from the UK, the U.S. and dozens of other countries. Partnering with the radical British group Palestine Solidarity Campaign, the convoy raised most of its money in the UK through fundraising events as well as online and mail in donations. The convoy also partnered with Turkish-based IHH, an organization which was banned by the Israeli government in 2008 for its ties to Hamas.<sup>9</sup> IHH has provided approximately 80 vehicles, while VP-USA contributed 47 vehicles.

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<sup>4</sup> "Viva Palestina Addresses Concerns," Viva Palestina Website, October 31, 2009, [http://74.125.47.132/search?q=cache:37-v3AR9\\_DoJ:www.vivapalestina.us.net/media/article/4+%22Viva+Palestina+Addresses+Concerns%22&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us](http://74.125.47.132/search?q=cache:37-v3AR9_DoJ:www.vivapalestina.us.net/media/article/4+%22Viva+Palestina+Addresses+Concerns%22&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us) (accessed December 15, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> "Treasury Designates the Union of the Good," U.S. Department of The Treasury Press Release, November 12, 2008, <http://treas.gov/press/releases/hp1267.htm> (accessed December 15, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> "\$103,000 pledged for Palestinian humanitarian relief in Gaza," Kansascity.com, <http://pressreleases.kcstar.com/?q=node/21190> (accessed December 15, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> "VIVA PALESTINA USA: Only half of aid arrives at Gaza due to USA, Israeli and Egyptian government interference," Hector Carreon, *La Voz de Aztlan*, July 21, 2009, [http://www.aztlan.net/viva\\_palestina\\_gaza\\_report.htm](http://www.aztlan.net/viva_palestina_gaza_report.htm) (accessed December 15, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> "Viva Palestina: 24 Hours in Gaza," moqavemat.com, Soozy Duncan, July 27, 2009 [http://www.moqavemat.com/old/?lang=ar&state=showbody\\_news&row\\_id=50920](http://www.moqavemat.com/old/?lang=ar&state=showbody_news&row_id=50920) (accessed December 15, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> "Defense Minister signs order banning Hamas-affiliated charitable organizations," Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website, July 7, 2008 <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Communiques/2008/Defense+Minister+signs+order+banning+Hamas-affiliated+charitable+organizations+7-Jul-2008.htm> (accessed December 15, 2009).

Given the above, the United States Department of Treasury should swiftly take action to designate Viva Palestina as a supporter of a Foreign Terrorist Organization, and thus prevent this group from continuing to provide material and/or financial aid to Hamas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Myrick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sue" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Myrick".

Sue Myrick  
Member of Congress

Cc:  
Mr. Stuart A. Levey  
Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence  
United States Department of the Treasury