

BBC 'whitewashed' anti-Semitism in Gaza documentary

From [*The Telegraph*](#)

The BBC has been accused of “whitewashing” the views of participants [in its controversial Gaza documentary](#) after repeatedly mistranslating references to “the Jews” and omitting praise of “jihad”.

The Telegraph can reveal that on at least five occasions the words Yahud or Yahudy – Arabic for “Jew” or “Jews” – were changed to “Israel” or “Israeli forces”, or were removed from the subtitles altogether.

An interviewee praising Yahya Sinwar, the Hamas leader, for “jihad against the Jews” was also mistranslated as saying he was fighting “Israeli forces”.

The BBC is under pressure to reveal [whether taxpayers' money was given to Hamas](#) during the making of Gaza: How To Survive A Warzone. . . the broadcaster issued an apology and [removed the film from iPlayer](#) after it emerged that it had prominently featured the son of a Hamas minister.

On Tuesday, Melanie Dawes, the chief executive of Ofcom, said the BBC [was facing “some really important questions”](#), adding that her organisation was “watching it closely”.

Amid growing questions over the documentary, it can be revealed that on several occasions the word Yahud was wrongly translated. Translations by the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting and Analysis (Camera) raise fresh questions over the BBC's handling of the film.

Around four minutes in, a [Gazan](#) woman among a convoy fleeing from part of the besieged strip is asked by the cameraman:

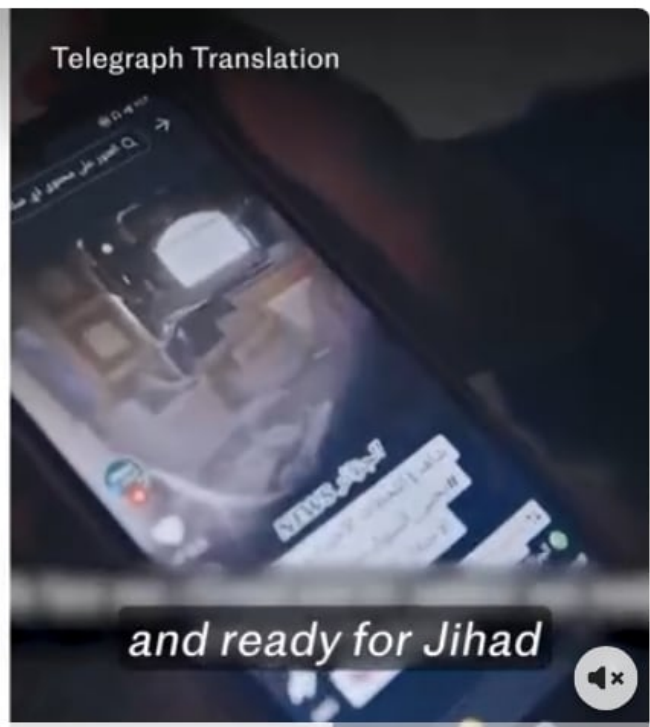
“What’s going on?” She replies: “The Jews invaded our [area].” However, the BBC subtitles quote her as saying: “The Israeli army invaded our area.”

In another clip, around half an hour in, a boy says that he had left home because of bombings and that “the Jews came, they destroyed us, Hamas and the Jews”. This was translated in subtitles as “the Israelis destroyed everything, and so did Hamas”.

In a harrowing scene 40 minutes into the film, in which a doctor amputates the arm of a child in front of the camera, the medic is quoted as saying: “Look what the Israelis are doing to the children of Gaza.” However, the word Israeli was not used by the doctor, according to a translation.

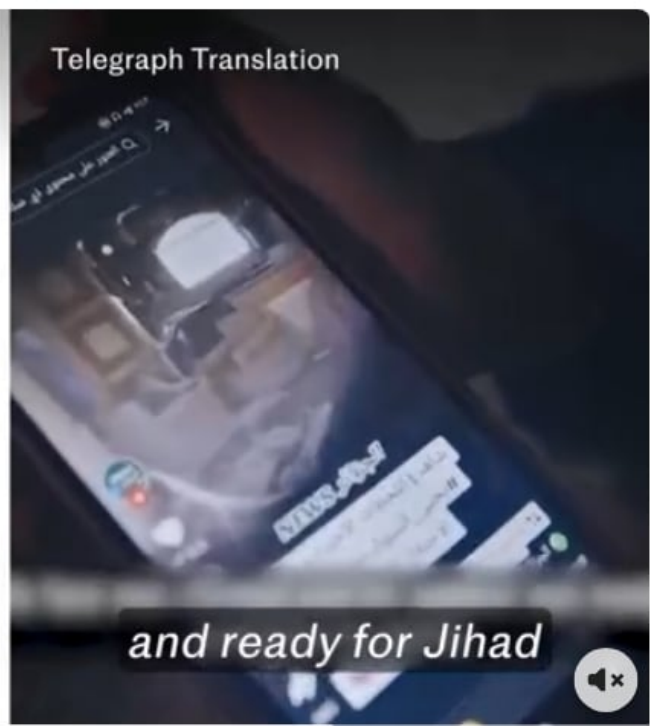
Around a minute later, a woman is interviewed about [the Oct 7 Hamas attacks](#) and is quoted as saying that was the “first time we invaded Israel – it was always the other way round”. However, she actually says: “We were invading the Jews for the first time.”

Towards the end of the documentary, a Palestinian woman holds her phone as she shows the camera crew footage of Sinwar being killed. In the subtitles, she is quoted as saying that “his face was covered and his weapon was ready, prepared for battle”, but a translation reveals she says that he was “ready for jihad”.



Credit: BBC: Gaza: How To Survive a Warzone

Later, the participant is quoted as saying: “The video shows that he was fighting and resisting Israeli forces. He wasn’t hiding.” But according to Camera, the woman says: “He was engaging in resistance and jihad against the Jews. Not underground.”



Credit: BBC: Gaza: How To Survive a Warzone

Alex Hearn, the co-director of Labour Against Anti-Semitism, said the mistranslation of the word Jewish to Israeli was one of a number of “ongoing issues” with “[the BBC's](#) sympathetic coverage of Hamas”.

Orly Goldschmidt, of the Israeli embassy in the UK, accused the corporation of “intentional mistranslation”, which she described as a “sinister and misleading policy of the BBC”.

She said the translation was “not only false and deeply offensive, but it also excuses racism” and “does not allow viewers to see how children, and Palestinians at large, have been taught to hate ‘Jews’ from a very young age”.

She added that omitting the word “jihad” from the translations “downplays the threat of terrorism that Israelis face on a daily basis”, and that the issue of mistranslations went beyond the documentary.