

Withholding Aid to Jordan to Force Extradition of Ahlam Al-Tamimi

by Hugh Fitzgerald



The United States is considering withholding aid to Jordan in an attempt to force the extradition of a terrorist wanted in connection with an attack that killed American citizens.

The story is at the *Jerusalem Post* [here](#).

Ahlam Aref Ahmad al-Tamimi helped plan and aided the 2001 Sbarro restaurant suicide bombing in Jerusalem during the Second Intifada which caused 145 casualties including 15 deaths, seven of which were children.

Two of the fatalities were American nationals.

The Trump administration said it is weighing "all options" to pressure Jordan into extraditing Tamimi, AP reported. She is

wanted on a charge of conspiring to use a weapon of mass destruction against American nationals.

Tamimi, who is on the FBI's "most wanted" list, was tried and sentenced by an Israeli Military Court to multiple life sentences, but was later released under the 2011 prisoner swap agreement Israel made with Hamas to secure the release of IDF soldier Gilad Schalit. She moved to Jordan after her release and has lived in freedom ever since.

She counters that because she was tried and convicted under Israeli law, she cannot be charged with a crime against the US, stated AP.

Deputy assistant secretary for the Maghreb and Egypt Henry Wooster, who is touted as a potential future US ambassador to Jordan, wrote to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in response to questions posed by Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), AP reported, writing that, "The United States has multiple options and different types of leverage to secure Ahlam Aref Ahmad al-Tamimi's extradition."

"We will continue to engage Jordanian officials at all levels not only on this issue, but also on the extradition treaty more broadly," Wooster wrote. "US generosity to Jordan in Foreign Military Financing as well as economic support and other assistance is carefully calibrated to protect and advance the range of US interests in Jordan and in the region."...

All states that refuse to hand over to us terrorists who have wounded or killed American states must be made to pay a price. Jordan has been the third largest recipient of American aid for many years, a quite unnecessary reward for having signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994. Jordan now receives at least \$1.5 billion a year (some calculate the aid to be even more – \$1.75 billion). The American government unveiled terrorism charges against Tamimi "and requested her extradition in 2017

under the terms of a 1995 treaty with Jordan. Shortly thereafter, Jordan's Court of Cassation ruled that the extradition treaty was invalid." And that is where things have stood since: three years of attempts by the American government to have Al-Tamimi extradited, three years of refusals by Jordan to do so, and meanwhile, maddeningly, Jordan keeps being given those enormous amounts of American aid.

Ahlam al-Tamimi is a particularly vicious terrorist. She scoped out sites for an attack, and chose the Sbarro Pizzeria because she knew that it was a favorite of families with children. For her part in planning the attack, and for taking the suicide bomber to the site, Ahlam Tamimi was – and remains – a heroine of the "Palestinian" cause. The suicide bomber detonated himself at the moment when the pizzeria was full. Fifteen people were murdered, including 8 children, and 130 were wounded, many of them very seriously. One survives in a permanent vegetative state.

Ahlam Tamimi was eventually found, brought to trial and – since Israel doesn't have capital punishment, even for the worst Muslim Arab mass-murderers – she was sentenced to 16 consecutive life terms. But she was then freed as part of that appalling exchange in 2011, whereby 1000 "Palestinian" prisoners were released in order to get back one Israeli, Gilad Shalit, a most regrettable act.

Tamimi's orchestration of the Sbarro pizzeria suicide bombing in Jerusalem and subsequent conviction in Israel quickly brought her accolades and rewards from fellow Arabs. Six weeks after the attack, Al Najah University in the West Bank town of Nablus glorified the perpetrators with a recreated Sbarro featuring bloody plastic body parts and partially-chewed pizza crusts. The governing Palestinian Authority (PA) also began payments to the terrorists and/or their families that totaled over \$910,000 by 2019 under the infamous pay-for-slay program. The PA even considered in 2008 awarding Tamimi the Al Quds

Mark of Honor.

In Jordan, Ahlam Tamimi has turned her journalism background (following her college studies before her imprisonment, she completed in 2018 a journalism graduate degree at Amman's private Middle East University) into stardom. Between February 2012 and September 2016, she hosted her own television program, Nasseem al-Ahrar ("Breezes of the Free"), on Al Quds TV, one of Hamas' two global satellite channels. Produced and distributed from an Amman studio, this program focused on incarcerated terrorists in Israel, as she had been. With these broadcasts, particularly during Israel's 2014 Operation Protective Edge against Hamas in Gaza, Tamimi became central to the Arabs' jihadist war against the hated Jews.

Tamimi has also taken her show on the road. She has traveled widely among the Arab states, addressing enthusiastic audiences with a message blending incitement and antisemitism. Her itinerary has included Algeria, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Tunisia, and Yemen.

In 2014 Tamimi won praise as a "success model" at the Arabic website of the Jordanian Media Institute (JMI). Tamimi's laudatory biography, posted online, noted that she had attended "Martyr's University," or Ramallah's Birzeit University, the alma mater of many terrorists. Jordanian television showed a televised "'This is Your Life'-like tribute" to Tamimi and her fellow terrorist-in-love husband, her cousin Nizar, who also escaped an Israeli life sentence via the 2011 prisoner exchange. The October 23, 2018 edition of Caravan, a weekly show on Jordan's most popular television channel, the privately-owned Ro'ya TV, focused on these "special guests" and "heroes." In Jordan, she remains a star in the celebrity firmament.

Ahlam Al-Tamimi has continued to travel, to broadcast, to be lionized in Jordan and in many other Arab lands, for her part

in the Sbarro Pizzeria attack. It is time to close down this intolerable spectacle, and have her extradited to the U.S., where 19 years after that attack, she will at long last be tried specifically for her role in the murder of several Americans. If the Jordanians won't listen to reason or to any still small voice of decency (how would they react if another country not only protected but lionized the Al-Qaeda terrorists who in 2005 bombed three hotels in Amman?), then another method must be tried: not just decreasing, but eliminating altogether, America's generous aid package to Jordan, that many believe ought to have ended long ago.

Is this murderous woman's "freedom" in Jordan really worth \$1.5 billion a year? We'll soon see how King Abdullah and his palace courtiers make their calculations.

First published in