

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 14, 2025

The Honorable Scott Bessent  
Secretary of the Treasury  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Bessent,

We write to request an investigation by the Department of the Treasury into potential ties between the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the U.S.-designated terrorist organization Hamas, pursuant to 31 C.F.R. § 594.201(a)(3).

CAIR's founding and leadership raise longstanding concerns. Executive Director Nihad Awad and co-founder Omar Ahmad previously led the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), which federal authorities identified as a propaganda front for Hamas.<sup>1</sup> Both men attended a 1993 Philadelphia meeting of the Muslim Brotherhood's Palestine Committee, where participants discussed creating a new front group to support Hamas while concealing its ties.<sup>2</sup> CAIR was formed shortly thereafter. In the Holy Land Foundation (HLF) terrorism financing trial, CAIR was named an unindicted co-conspirator, and evidence showed direct financial interactions between CAIR and the now-defunct Hamas-linked charity.<sup>3</sup>

These foundational connections, coupled with CAIR's conduct following the October 7, 2023 terrorist attacks, merit renewed scrutiny. CAIR officials, including Awad, have made statements appearing to justify or celebrate Hamas's actions. Awad described the attacks as people "breaking the siege."<sup>4</sup> Other CAIR leaders referred to them as "decolonization" or framed them as understandable reactions. CAIR joined a public statement condemning Israel's "siege" while omitting any mention of Hamas's massacre.

Since then, CAIR has focused its efforts on supporting anti-Israel campus protests. While peaceful protest is protected, many of these demonstrations have led to incidents of antisemitic harassment and violence. CAIR has provided legal and organizational support to protest leaders,

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<sup>1</sup> *United States v. Abdulqader and Odeh* (2009)

<sup>2</sup> Vidino, Lorenzo. "[The Hamas Networks in America: A Short History](#)." George Washington University.

<sup>3</sup> Trahan, Jason. "FBI: CAIR Is a Front Group, and Holy Land Foundation Tapped Hamas Clerics for Fundraisers." *Dallas Morning News*.

<sup>4</sup> [CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad At American Muslims For Palestine \(AMP\)](#)

including Mahmoud Khalil, who defended the October 7 attacks as “unavoidable.” CAIR honored Khalil at its annual banquet and sued Columbia University to block records from congressional oversight.

CAIR’s recent quiet settlement of a lawsuit<sup>5</sup> that would have revealed its funding sources further heightens concern.

This pattern of historic ties to Hamas, recent public rhetoric aligned with Hamas narratives, and support for radical activism, raises serious questions about whether CAIR’s support for Hamas amounts to material support for terrorism.

We urge the department to immediately investigate whether CAIR maintains financial links to Hamas that constitute violation of U.S. sanctions on Hamas and ensure that none of its assets are being used to advance the objectives of Hamas.

We look forward to your response and our continued collaboration on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Elise M. Stefanik  
Chairwoman  
House Republican Leadership



Tom Cotton  
Republican Conference Chair  
United States Senate

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<sup>5</sup> “[Controversial Muslim charity accused of links to Hamas settles lawsuit rather than disclosing sources of funding.](#)”  
*New York Post.*