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The interview with Sacha Wigdorovits was conducted by Camille Lothe

The facts: An open letter from 70 former Swiss diplomats contains “unproven and factually incorrect allegations” against Israel, according to the Focus on Israel and the Middle East association. The association is responding with a petition to the Federal Council.

Why this is important: Since the acts of terrorism on October 7, 2023, a battle has been raging for the sovereignty of interpretation. Only with the backing of the West can Israel hold Hamas accountable for its crimes.

The background: 70 ex-diplomats demand in their letter that Switzerland should boycott Israel. At the same time, Hamas is not threatened with any sanctions. The letter does not demand that Hamas lay down its weapons or relinquish power in the Gaza Strip.

He is also in favour of supporting the UN refugee relief organization UNRWA – despite its links to the terrorist organization Hamas.

In view of the “massive attacks and unjustified accusations”, the Fokus Israel und Nahost association has decided to launch a petition.

The Federal Council should distance itself from its former employees and continue to treat Israel fairly.

Nebelspalter” spoke to Sacha Wigdorovits, initiator of the petition, about the background and motives behind the campaign.

The Focus on Israel and the Middle East association has found “unproven and factually incorrect allegations” in the former diplomats’ letter. Israel is being “defamed”. Are such false allegations part of the business model in the public discourse against Israel?

Yes, unfortunately this is the case. Many who attack Israel because of the war in Gaza know neither the exact facts nor the legal situation. They blindly believe the lying propaganda of Hamas and its supporters in the West. I am not saying that Israel is doing everything right in this conflict. But the demonization and defamation of Israel is unjustified and unacceptable.

Unlike Israel, however, Hamas is not threatened with any sanctions in the open letter from the former FDFA employees. What does this mean for the Jewish population in Switzerland?

Under the Social Democratic Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey, an anti-Israel attitude has taken hold in the FDFA. Both Israel and the Jewish population in Switzerland have become accustomed to this. The current head of the FDFA, Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis, has been trying to change this since he took office, but as he has not been able to simply wipe the slate clean in terms of personnel, this is difficult. Moreover, he has no influence over former diplomats spreading anti-Israeli Hamas propaganda in public.

In your petition, you ask the Federal Council not to give in to pressure from its former employees, but to do justice to Israel in its struggle for existence. The Federal Council can be sure that it not only has morality and international law on its side, but also the vast majority of the Swiss population. Is the opinion of the majority of pro-Palestine activists being lost in the public debate?

I am convinced of this. The war in Gaza is an issue where there is a huge discrepancy between the published opinion in many media and the loud cries of a few thousand pro-Palestinian activists on the one hand and the opinion of the majority of the Swiss population on the other. I am sure that the vast majority of Swiss people are well aware that Hamas is the only guilty party in this war and that Israel is the victim. A victim threatened by an inhuman terrorist organization backed by two unscrupulous fundamental Islamist countries, Qatar and Iran, which have declared war on the whole of Western civilization.

What do you particularly criticize about the letter from the 70 ex-diplomats?

What is particularly offensive about the letter from the former FDFA employees is that while they call on the Federal Council to impose rigorous sanctions and boycotts against Israel, they treat Hamas with kid gloves. In particular, they refrain from demanding that Hamas lay down its weapons and relinquish power in Gaza so that an administration that is prepared to peacefully co-exist with Israel can take over responsibility there. In addition, the letter is full of accusations directed at Israel that have no factual basis and are aimed solely at creating propaganda for the Palestinians.

Sign the petition here: https://www.change.org/FokusIsrael