

To:
Adv. Yehuda Weinstein
Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
29 Salah a-Din St.
Jerusalem 9010

Date: 15.12.2015
In response please cite: 11432

By fax: 02-6467001

Extremely urgent!



Dear Sir,

Re.: **Demand to open criminal investigation against the organization
Im Tirtzu for incitement to murder**

1. I hereby write to you on behalf of HaMoked: Center for the Defence of the Individual, a human rights organization acting to protect the rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories, to demand the opening of an immediate investigation against activists of the Im Tirzu movement over publications this movement has initiated and circulated against employees of human rights organizations. **These publications constitute severe incitement to murder!** The details are as follows.
2. On December 14, 2015, the organization Im Tirtzu launched a campaign entitled "Shtulim" [lit. "Planted", i.e. foreign agents]. As part of the campaign, and in addition to the publication of a report about the funding sources of Israeli human rights organizations, the organization published on its webpage and Facebook account ads, web banners and video clips, all directed against private individuals, employees of human rights organizations.
3. Our demand to open a criminal investigation concerns these publications, one of which is directed against Adv. Sigi Ben Ari, an employee of HaMoked.

The description of the publications is as follows:

4. Under a large threatening heading, **"When we fight terror, the 'planted' fight us"** appear the pictures of four employees of human rights organizations. The pictures are deliberately distorted to induce in the viewer a sense of demonization of these individuals and the organizations in which they work. At the end of the document, before viewers are urged to join the petition in favor of the bill against "planted" individuals, the following is stated:

Hagai, Yishai, Avner and Sigi are Israelis like us. And they are planted. They are members of the New Israel Fund organizations. And they act against the State of Israel and IDF soldiers. The "Planted" law will outlaw them.

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5. In addition, Im Tirtzu has uploaded to its Facebook page a video clip showing in its opening scene a supposedly Palestinian man raising a knife in order to stab, with ominous background music. This is immediately followed by the pictures of the four employees of the organizations, with the narrator's voiceover linking them to assailants and asserting: "Before the terrorist stabs you, he already knows that Sigi Ben Ari will defend him in court... Hagai, Avner, Sigi and Yishai are Israelis. They live here with us and are planted [agents]. When we fight terror, they fight us. The "Planted" law can outlaw them. Sign it."
6. There can be no doubt that these publications, targeting private individuals, do not fall within the protection of freedom of speech, as they form dangerous unbridled incitement and provocation that put at risk the personal wellbeing and safety of the organizations' employees "starring" in the campaign.
7. Presenting the organizations' employees as enemies of the public and enemies of the people – especially at a time when ill winds are blowing against those who act to protect human rights and those who express a different view – gains a much graver significance and increases the likelihood that an act of violence would be taken against them; which, alas, has recently become a common occurrence in our parts.
8. Obviously such a dangerous campaign cannot be left without response and instigation of enforcement measures on part of the authorities. Failure to take action over these alarming messages clearly signals their legitimation and the abandoning of human rights organizations and their employees to their fate.
9. We note that simultaneously with the letter to you a complaint will be lodged with the police against these publications.
10. In view of the above, we demand that you order the opening of an immediate investigation against the incitement.

Respectfully,

Dalia Kerstein,
Executive Director