

Hezbollah-Aligned German Center Declares ‘Resistance’ against Israel

The NRW state intelligence agency – roughly equivalent to Shin Bet in Germany – monitors Al Mahdi because it represents a threat to German democracy.



ONE OF the groups supplied by Iran is Hezbollah.. (photo credit:REUTERS)

The chairman of the Hezbollah-affiliated Islamic center Al Mahdi in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) urged his supporters to wage “resistance” against Israel on Saturday, according to a report in the regional paper *Neue Westfälische*.

“Israel is the enemy – we carry out resistance,” said Hassan Jawad, chairman of the Al Mahdi cultural center in the city of Münster.

Jawad’s cultural center is building a meeting center for 800 to 1,000 religious believers in Bad Oeynhausen, a spa town with a population of nearly 50,000 in NRW. The Al Mahdi center has served as a hotbed for Hezbollah activity for over twenty years, according to the paper.

The NRW interior minister Herbert Reul told *The Jerusalem Post* on Monday that “when somebody in Germany says that Israel is the enemy, that is, for me, intolerable. I am a big friend of Israel, and the friendship to Israel belongs to Germany’s *raison d’état*. Therefore this statement [from Hassan Jawad] is condemned by me in the strongest terms.”

When asked if the interior ministry plans to ban the Al Mahdi center, the ministry told *The Post* that “associations that support Hezbollah can presently be banned, if financial support [for them] is provable.”

The ministry added that security forces take decisive action against organizations, like Hezbollah, that are opposed to international understanding. The ministry said that where a ban of an organization or individual group beyond sanctions can be implemented, this will also be done. Hezbollah and other affiliated organizations

remain in the focus of the NRW intelligence agency.”

Germany and the EU consider only Hezbollah’s so-called military wing to be a terrorist entity. The US, Canada, Israel, the Arab League and the Netherlands classify Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

The cultural center in Bad Oeynhausen is slated to be completed by the summer of 2018. The purchase of the building totaled 480,000 euros.

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According to the state’s October, 2017 intelligence report, the number of Hezbollah members increased from 100 in 2015 to 105 in 2016. Jawad told the *Neue Westfälische* that Al Mahdi appears in the agency’s reports because his center wages resistance against Israel. Jawad told the paper that the center wants to be a voice for the Shi’ite religion and Lebanese culture, and that the center will provide Arabic and Koran lessons for young people.

There are 950 Hezbollah operatives in Germany, according to the 2017 German federal intelligence report. *The Post* reported in October that combatants from the Lebanese Shi’ite organization Hezbollah have disguised themselves as refugees to enter the Federal Republic. “Since mid-2015 there are increased indications of fighters from Shi’ite militias entering Germany as legal refugees,” according to the intelligence report. “The indications regarding roughly 50% [of the fighters] show a direct connection to Hezbollah.”

Source: <http://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Hezbollah-aligned-German-center-declare-s-resistance-against-Israel-508242>

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