

# 'Queers for Palestine,' Like 'Minks for Fur Coats,' Support Those Who Want to Slaughter Them

gatestoneinstitute.org/20676/queers-for-palestine

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"Queers for Palestine" should talk to "Queers *in* Palestine" to find out about the suffering of the Palestinian LGBTQ community. "Queers for Palestine" should be advocating for the rights of their colleagues in the West Bank and Gaza Strip instead of staging demonstrations against Israel, the only country in the Middle East where LGBTQ people feel secure. Pictured: Anti-Israel protesters at the "queer pride parade" in New Delhi, India on November 26, 2023. (Photo by Sajjad Hussain /AFP via Getty Images)

The anti-Israel group "Queers for Palestine," whose members frequently demonstrate in the streets of US cities to criticize Israel for defending itself against Islamist terrorists, has probably not heard about the case of [Ahmad Abu Markhiya](#), a gay Palestinian man from the West Bank city of Hebron. Even if the organization were aware of the case, it has done nothing to protest against the horrific death of Abu Markhiya.

Since Hamas's October 7, 2023 massacre, during which hundreds of Israelis were murdered, raped, beheaded and abducted to the Gaza Strip, members of "Queers for Palestine" have been demonstrating in the US and Canada in support of the same Palestinians who would slaughter them if they came to the West Bank or Gaza Strip. The group has never spoken out against the atrocities committed by Hamas.

"That's the most insane thing ever because if... those people went to Gaza... Hamas would kill them, literally," commented legendary actor and comedian Jon Lovitz.

"They ( Hamas ) push gay people off of buildings. Israel's a democracy. I understand that it's bad civilians are getting killed in a war, but it's a war that Hamas started, and they wanted a never-ending war."

Abu Markhiya, 25, had been living in Israel as an asylum-seeker after authorities acknowledged his life would be in danger if he returned to Palestinian Authority-controlled Hebron. Friends of Abu Markhiya in Israel believe he was kidnapped in 2022 to the West Bank, where he was murdered and beheaded. The murderer, apparently proud of his crime, recorded the beheading in a video and uploaded it onto social media.

Rita Petrenko, founder of Al-Bayt Al-Mukhtalif, a non-profit organization for the empowerment of the Arab LGBTQ community, said that when they met in 2020, Abu Markhiya's fear was extreme.

"He told me people not only in his family but in the village wanted to kill him," she said, adding that he had fled to Israel as word of his sexual orientation spread through Hebron. "He was scared of his brothers, his uncles, his cousins."

About 90 Palestinians who identify as members of the LGBTQ community live as asylum-seekers in Israel. Before fleeing, they suffered discrimination, and, in some instances, violence.

Palestinian members of the LGBTQ community have never felt safe either in areas under the control of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank or under the Iran-backed Hamas terrorist group in the Gaza Strip.

In 2016, when Hamas commander Mahmoud Ishtawi was accused of having sex with men, he was "suspended from a ceiling for hours on end, for days in a row... [h]e was whipped and guards coasted loud music into his cell, banishing sleep." After enduring days of torture, he was shot to death.

Ishtawi was executed by members of Hamas's military wing, Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, for "moral turpitude," a Hamas term for homosexuality. A Hamas investigation alleged that Ishtawi had hidden money designated for his unit's weapons, before an unnamed man claimed to have had sex with him. The investigation concluded that the money Ishtawi had allegedly stolen was used to pay the man for sexual relations or to bribe him to remain silent. Hen Mazzig, an Israeli writer named among the top LGBTQ influencers and a senior fellow at the Tel Aviv Institute, said:

"If this was the fate of a Hamas commander, imagine the plight of ordinary LGBTQ Palestinians living under Hamas control in Gaza...

"As a queer Israeli Jew whose parents escaped to this country from Iraq's and Tunisia, I have rights that are executorial in the entire Middle East region. In many countries, including my parent's former homes and theocratic Iran, homosexuality is still sometimes punished by public hangings. What a tragedy that a young person (Ahmad Abu Markhiya) had achieved asylum in my homeland, Israel, to live the life he had always dreamed of, only to have it robbed from him by a soulless thug whose values system corresponds neither to the ethics of the ancient faiths nor the modern world.

"The international community must not be silent. But it is."

Palestinian homosexuals living under the PA in the West Bank have also been targeted. In 2003, the European Parliament was informed:

"[F]our Palestinians were killed for being homosexual, and hundreds were forced to flee to Israel. It is alleged that 'harassment of gays' is 'practically official policy' in the PA. The victims are frequently called collaborators and accused as such. It is also reported that the PA police regularly inflicts appalling torture on homosexuals."

In 2019, the Palestinian group alQaws for Sexual & Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society, which is based in Israel, accused the PA of "prosecution, intimidation, and threats of arrest against members of the Palestinian LGBTQ community."

"We have always been public and accessible about our work, through maintaining an active website, social media presence, and engagement in civil society. However, we have never received threats to this extent before. For the past couple of weeks, alQaws and LGBTQ Palestinians have faced an unprecedented amount of violence and incitement, which has escalated in the last couple of days."

The statement came after the PA banned members of the LGBTQ group from carrying out any activities in the West Bank. A PA police spokesperson said that such activities are "harmful to the higher values and ideals of Palestinian society." The group's activities, the spokesperson said, are "unrelated to religions and Palestinian traditions and customs." He warned that the PA police will chase those behind the LGBTQ group and see to it that they are brought to trial once they are arrested.

In 2022, leading PA preacher Sheikh Mohammed Saleem Ali said:

"Our Muslim Palestinian people will not accept a single homosexual openly declaring his abomination... We hereby declare that we reject and abhor all the manifestations of homosexuality and perversion."

"When it comes to Queers for Palestine, what's richly ironic is that many LGBTQ Palestinians seek asylum in Israel – the same country these stateside protesters are rallying against," noted Billy Binion, associate editor at *Reason*, where he writes about criminal justice and government accountability.

"At the heart of this contradiction is the tendency within social justice movements to pick a clear protagonist and antagonist, the oppressed and the oppressor, and to proceed from there in one-size-fits-all fashion. Some progressives decided long ago that Palestine is the former and Israel is the latter, which is the seed from which everything must grow. Palestine, then, stands not only for anti-colonialism but also LGBT rights and reproductive rights, despite that those rights, in any meaningful sense of the word, do not actually exist there...

"'Queers for Palestine' is about as convincing as 'minks for fur coats.'"

"Queers for Palestine" is also the equivalent of "Chickens for Kentucky Fried Chicken" or "African Americans for Ku Klux Klan."

"Queers for Palestine is another manifestation of how our society is really becoming stupid," said prominent author and human rights activist Ayaan Hirsi Ali.

"The experience of Islamic State (ISIS) is not so long ago. The Islamic Republic of Iran is in place. Hamas was actually governing Gaza. And what were they doing to homosexuals? I don't think that they've gone so far as to call them by the acronym LGBTQ and queers and the rest of it. They're not that sophisticated. But they throw them from tall buildings. Families – if you're a Muslim family and within your family there's someone who is suspected of being gay, it's the obligation of the family to commit an honor killing. So, it doesn't even go as far as the government and tribunals and trials. But when that happens, it's done quite publicly. And it's done in the most gruesome fashion."

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