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Fateh Fundraising in Kuwait and the Gulf

Algeria gained its independence in 1962. We knew there was a group of at least 12 businessmen who were the Committee for the Support of Algeria, and we understood that this committee would no longer have much to do after Algerian independence. We were very active at the time, so we contacted the committee. We told them that after supporting Algeria it was time to support Palestine. They responded positively but thought we wanted to collect donations, like others did, to build a mosque or something similar. I recall a meeting with some members of this committee, when they asked us what we wanted to collect donations for. Adel Abdel Karim, who was a member of the central committee, told them we didn't want them to support us financially yet. He told them that we would be launching a revolution, and that after the launch we would be the subject of accusations. No one knew who we were back then. He told them the revolution would be launched with Palestinian blood and Palestinian money. He said that when we were oppressed and pursued, we wanted them to stand by us, to say that we are good and trustworthy men, and call on others to support us. He said once the armed struggle was launched we would ask them for support. Each one of them supported us with as much as they could. They were part of us, and part of Fateh. Brothers Yasser Arafat and Khalil al-Wazir were the two people who met most frequently with this group of Kuwaiti brothers. After Khaled al-Hassan joined the central committee, he used his wide network of contacts to increase the number of Kuwaiti personalities supporting this movement. The late Hani al-Qaddoumi was an important figure in this line of work. In 1960-61 he was the secretary of the founder of Kuwait, Sheikh Abdullah Salem al-Sabah. He was an important connection between our Kuwaiti brothers and us. Visiting Kuwait at the time was difficult, but he always helped us get visas to enter Kuwait, for ourselves and for those we invited to attend our meetings there. A group of Saudis, led by the late Fahd al-Malek, did similar work. Members of the Saudi royal family admired Fateh's ideology. We had a group of official and non-official Saudis collecting money for Fateh and later on for the PLO. This work in Saudi Arabia started in 1964 before the Intilqaq. Prince Salman, who is the governor of Riyadh, and the Saudi Defence minister were proud to support Fateh and admired its principles, especially the principle of

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non-interference in the internal affairs of Arab countries. We preserved this principle because it reassured the Arab countries in which we were active.