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**GLOBAL ANTI-SEMITISM:
Originators, Instruments, Impacts and Recommendations**

The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs is an independent policy institute, established in 1976, devoted to the analysis of key issues concerning Israel and the Jewish people. The Center's fellows are leading scholars and experts from various continents. The Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism program of the Jerusalem Center's Institute for Global Jewish Public Affairs has a wide ranging agenda of in depth analysis of the main trends in contemporary anti-Semitism.

Introduction

Contemporary anti-Semitism has an increasingly global character. Any inquiry into a national situation therefore requires a broad background understanding of developments and trends in global anti-Semitism. This presentation provides an overview of the main characteristics and tendencies of contemporary anti-Semitism.

Characteristics of Contemporary anti-Semitism

Contemporary anti-Semitism uses a number of major hate motifs, which have recurred in various forms over more than two thousand years. They derive from one core motif: the Jews – and nowadays also Israel – embody absolute evil. This motif recurs in a large number of ways, many of which are less explicit and more diluted.

The 2001 United Nations Anti-racism Conference in Durban, South Africa widely revealed the global re-intensification of such anti-Semitism. As contemporary anti-Semitism has so many aspects, we refer in this article to a large number of sources. Many are original publications of the Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism program of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. We recommend them for lecture by the staff of the inquiry commission in order to get a fuller picture of the issues treated in this presentation.

This core motif of anti-Semitism breaks down into a number of hate sub-motifs, of which the main ones are the Jews' alleged lust for power (including money), the Jews' alleged lust for killing (including the alleged responsibility for killing Jesus which was determined and executed by the Romans, thirst for blood, in particular of children) and claiming that the Jews are sub-human.

As has been said earlier, anti-Semitism presents itself in extreme forms as well as in less explicit and more diluted ones. The most extreme hate-incitements against the Jews express themselves differently in the three main types of anti-Semitism – religious, nationalistic-ethnic, and anti-Zionism.

In Christian religious anti-Semitism the Jews are accused of being Christ killers. In Muslim religious anti-Semitism the Jews are inter alia considered animals. Some Muslim traditions, currently quoted, call for the murder of all Jews. In nationalist, ethnic anti-Semitism Jews are charged of belonging to a genetically inferior ethnicity. In anti-Zionism, Israel is accused of being a Nazi state, which has no right to exist. A thorough mapping of hate bodies and the collaboration among them has never been undertaken.

Stages of Anti-Semitism

The various types of anti-Semitism have three stages in common: *demonization, exclusion, and expulsion or extermination*.¹ In anti-Zionism the demonization stage manifests itself as concentrated criticism against Israel, while other states, whose human rights record is far worse, are criticized much less or not at all. An example of exclusion is the boycott campaigns against Israel. The expulsion or extermination threats manifest themselves mainly in Muslim states and the Palestinian Authority. They can also be found however among Neo-Nazis and some Muslims in Western countries

The multiple ongoing attacks on Israel and the Jews in the new century combine into a system, *as if controlled by an invisible hand*. Its sum total is similar to a “*postmodern total war*” against Israel and the Jews.^{2 3} This complex whole is of a different nature than the “*modern war*” of the Nazis against the Jews in the previous century. (One might compare this with hate pollution coming out of many exhausts, as opposed to hate pollution coming mainly out of a huge chimney which spreads it over the whole globe.)

The combination of a great variety of hate originators using multiple instruments leads to new global and national anti-Semitic environments. In it anti-Israelism or anti-Zionism and classic anti-Semitism overlap to a large extent as can be seen from a detailed analysis made of opinion polls, written texts, and cartoons.⁴

The use of a common definition of anti-Semitism can play an important role in the battle against this hate propagation. As such we recommend the the Working Definition of Anti-Semitism of the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.⁵

Originators of Anti-Semitism in the 21st Century

At present a number of major originators of anti-Semitism exist.

1. *Anti-Semitism emanating from Muslim countries*^{6 7 8 9}

Anti-Semitism is widely spread in Arab and other Muslim countries. Extreme anti-Semitic incitement comes from many sources in the Muslim world including from governments of countries who are at peace with Israel. The most extreme hate manifestation originates in Iran, whose president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is a genocide promoter. This has not prevented Western government officials, religious leaders and academics to host him in their countries. Palestinian anti-Semitism has many genocidal elements.

2. *Anti-Semitism from Muslim communities in the Western world.*^{10 11 12 13 14 15}

The mass immigration to Western countries from the Muslim world has also meant the arrival among these of a significant numbers of extreme anti-Semites of a type often unknown previously in those states. One example is

the public calls, mainly by Muslim, of ‘Death to the Jews’ or similar slogans in anti-Israeli demonstrations including, for the first time since the war, in Germany. European governments often try to avoid the subject of extreme racism among minorities coming to the surface or getting the required public attention. Parts of the European elites falsely claim that only white people can be racists.

3. *State sponsored anti-Semitism*^{16 17}

Since the fall of communism, state-promoted or state-sponsored anti-Semitism to varying degrees mainly occur in Arab and Muslim countries. However, in a number of other countries the anti-Israeli positions of governments create a societal climate inductive to anti-Semitism. Venezuela is one such example. To a much lesser extent the phenomenon also exists with the current Labor party dominated government of Norway.

4. *The extreme Right*¹⁸

The anti-Semitic extreme right presently has a revival in Europe. In Eastern European countries this is partly stimulated by reactions to communism and economic problems. In Western Europe the problems related to mass immigration, poor integration of immigrants, as well extreme anti-Western racism among some immigrant groups are enhancing this development.

5. *The far Left and currents in socialist parties*^{19 20}

Politicians of the extreme left and sometimes also those of socialist parties play a major role in the demonization of Israel. During the recent Gaza war for instance, Swedish Social Democrat politicians participated in demonstrations in which there were shouts of ‘Death to the Jews’, swastikas, and banners of Arab terror movements calling for the genocide of Israel. In Norway, even a government minister participated in such a demonstration.²¹

6. *Media*^{22 23 24 25}

Media often report about the Middle East in a one-sided anti-Israeli manner. They ignore context and often underline real or perceived negative acts of Israel, while regularly omitting information about far more negative events in the Arab or Muslim world, including Palestinian society. For many Muslim immigrants in Western countries in particular, but also for others,

there is often no distinction between Jews and Israel. The biased media information thus indirectly leads to physical and verbal attacks on local Jews as well. Media are both originators and instruments of classic anti-Semitism and anti-Israelism.

7. *Academics*^{26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34}

Anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic actions in academia manifest themselves in biased teaching, boycott proposals, divestment initiatives, discrimination of Jews identifying with Israel and sometimes classic anti-Semitic acts. Such initiatives recur on a number of campuses in countries among which the main ones are Great Britain, Canada, and the United States. Anti-Israeli teachers are often also clustered worldwide in some disciplines, such as Middle Eastern studies and linguistics. These and other hate phenomena have been analyzed in detail in a book titled *Academics against Israel and the Jews* published by the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.³⁵

8. *NGOs*³⁶

Non-governmental organizations are in the forefront of attacks on Israel, many of which according to the EUMC working definition have an anti-Semitic character.

9. *Several Christian movements*^{37 38 39 40}

Several Christian movements, in the United States, Canada, some European countries and a variety of developing countries, play an important role in anti-Israeli actions with a strong anti-Semitic character. Many among these are mainstream Protestants. They propose discriminatory measures against Israel, without taking similar positions against other countries, which are extreme human rights abusers. Theological reasons sometimes play a major role in anti-Semitic actions. While a number of activities of originators of anti-Semitism in various fields – such as media, academics, NGOs and the United Nations – are monitored by various bodies, this is not the case for Christian anti-Semitism.

10. *Trade unions*⁴¹

In some countries, trade unions are in the forefront of the anti-Israeli battle. They promote discriminatory actions against Israel, while avoiding such

actions against extreme offenders of human rights. The main such trade unions are in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Other countries where these have manifested themselves include Canada, South Africa, Norway, and Denmark.

11. *United Nations*^{42 43 44 45 46 47}

The United Nations is both an originator and an instrument of anti-Semitism. One extreme form in which this manifests itself is the multiple anti-Israeli resolutions of the UN General Assembly. Another is the multiple discriminatory resolutions of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

12. *Jewish Anti-Semites*⁴⁸

Anti-Israeli and self-hating Jews are often in the forefront of the anti-Israel battle. They may not be very numerous, but they often serve to legitimize the actions of other anti-Semites. They are thus both originators and instruments.

13. *High Schools*⁴⁹

Biased teaching in high schools has two sources: biased text books and teachers. Regarding the former, studies are available in some countries. Only anecdotic information is available about the latter.

Instruments of anti-Semitism

1. *Lawfare*^{50 51}

In recent years the interpretation of international law in an anti-Israeli way has become a major tool in the battle against Israel.

2. *Semantics*^{52 53}

Extreme semantics have become a major tool against Israel. From the point of language anti-Zionism has evolved into an ideology. The master equation that dominates this discourse is that Zionism is Nazism. In recent years many of Israel's enemies have falsely accused it of being an apartheid state.

This coordinated action was decided at the time of the Durban 2001 Conference.

3. Teaching

Teaching at universities and high schools sometimes conveys anti-Semitic concepts. Some teachers at universities promote anti-Israeli ideology instead of the advancement of knowledge. At some universities Jewish students feel physically threatened. Conferences of an anti-Semitic character take place at several universities, for instance about Israel's right to exist. Similar discussions do not take place with respect to any other nation. This illustrates the highly discriminatory character of such gatherings.

4. Cartoons

Cartoons are concentrated tools for transmitting anti-Semitic messages. Many originate from Arab and Muslim sources including countries which are at peace with Israel. They also appear in government journals. Many extreme anti-Semitic cartoons have been published in Europe also, mainly in Greece and Norway, but in other countries as well.

5. Internet^{54 55 56}

Anti-Semitism has adapted itself to the internet. Spreading anti-Semitism there is increasingly effective. It may well lead to a culture where anti-Semitism is socially acceptable.

6. The Battle for the Public Square

During Operation Cast Lead a new phenomenon merited particular attention. Groups of often violent Muslims tried to conquer the public square and at the same time to remove Jewish and Israeli symbols from it. Sometimes the authorities assisted in this process, such as in some towns in Germany and Sweden. In various cities Muslims attacked pro-Israeli demonstrations as well as Jews in the streets. There were arson attempts against Jewish institutions. After some anti-Israeli demonstrations, Muslim prayer services were held in public places—in Europe and the United States. The roles of Muslim organizations in these activities have been not been sufficiently investigated. Attempts to remove Jewish and Israeli symbols from the public square have occurred in the past, mainly on an individual basis (such as

attacking people carrying Israeli flags, or wearing kippot or Stars of David). In these cases the perpetrators were not necessarily mainly Muslims.

7. *Abuses of Holocaust Memory*^{57 58 59}

The main abuse of Holocaust memory has for a long time been Holocaust denial. Additional categories such as Holocaust justification, inversion and obliteration are however becoming important as well. These sometimes appear together with the promotion of alleged Jewish conspiracy theories. A new book on the contemporary abuse of Holocaust memory is under preparation at the Jerusalem Center and will be published later this year.

The subjects of the media, the United Nations and Jewish anti-Semites, which are both originators and instruments of anti-Semitism have been discussed above in the section on originators.

Impacts of anti-Semitism

Global and national anti-Semitic incitement and aggression has already had a number of important impacts in various Western societies.

1. Increased security measures had to be taken for Jewish and Israeli institutions. These often also concern locations other than places of worship and schools.
2. Many Jewish communities try to adopt low profile attitudes.
3. Threats have forced Jews in many places to disguise their identity in the public square. (Not wearing *kippot* or *stars of David*)
4. Jewish communities attempt to avoid conflicts with authorities who take discriminatory positions.
5. Attempts by anti-Israelis to change the content of Holocaust Memorial Day.
6. Some Jews try to become acceptable to anti-Israeli elites by attacking Israel.
7. Some Jews distance themselves as much as possible from the Jewish community, saying that identifying as Jews today has only negative consequences in the circles they frequent.
8. A so far limited emigration of Jews from Europe has taken place, motivated by the reemergence of substantial anti-Semitism.
9. The issue of the future of Jews in Europe has become again a matter of discussion in a number of European Jewish communities.

Recommendations

Many recommendations from the all-party Parliamentary inquiry into Anti-Semitism in Great Britain can probably be adapted for other countries.

The following specific recommendations are partly derived from the British report and partly from our experience in studying global anti-Semitism:

- 1) Adoption of the EUMC Working Definition of anti-Semitism by the Government and law enforcement agencies.
- 2) Consistent government and parliamentary condemnation of boycott attempts.
- 3) The systematic monitoring and recording of anti-Semitic incidents by the competent authorities.
- 4) Intensified policing of hatred on the Internet.
- 5) The systematic monitoring of anti-Semitic incitement -- including anti-Israeli incitement -- and government financial support should be made available for such monitoring bodies.
- 6) The establishment and support of academic centers for the study of anti-Semitism in Canada.
- 7) The sponsoring of interdisciplinary study groups of case studies of anti-Semitism.
- 8) In view of the global character of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism a study group should be established to follow these phenomena.

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