

Call for written submissions – Report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief to the General Assembly

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, is preparing a report on antisemitism in accordance with his mandate to identify existing and emerging obstacles to the enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion or belief and present recommendations on ways and means to overcome such obstacles. The Special Rapporteur invites interested individuals and organizations, including but not limited to experts and organizations concerned with antisemitism, Jewish community leaders, policymakers, and academics, to provide input for the preparation of the report, which will be delivered to the UN General Assembly in September 2019.

Submissions can be sent until 7 June 2019.

REPORT ON ANTISEMITISM France 2019

Summary

Demographic situation

Definition of anti-Semitism

Definition of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

Bill against anti-Semitism in the French Parliament

The figures of anti-Semitism in France

Major anti-Semitic Incidents

Who are the anti-Semites in France

Re-emergence of traditional antisemitism

2014: words not heard since the Second World War

Surveys in 2015 and 2016

Fundamentalist Catholics

The far right

The far left

Muslims

Antisemitic Elements among Yellow Vests Movement

Conspiracy

How to fight against anti-Semitism

First battle: the legal arsenal

Second battle: Internet

Third battle: school

Fourth battle is in the mosques

Fifth battle is in prisons

Sixth battle fighting the import of the Israel-Palestine conflict

The feeling of Jews of France

Some ways to eradicate anti-Semitism

On the coexistence of religions

Demographic situation

France has a population of nearly 67 million. A little over 5 million Muslims and about 500,000 Jews. As a result, France has the largest Muslim and Jewish communities in Europe.

Definition of anti-Semitism

Definition of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

Speaking out, condemning or fighting against anti-Semitism requires that this term be defined. While many books define this term, we have chosen the definition of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, (IHRA) which is "Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards them. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. »

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

The same organization extends anti-Semitism to the hatred of Israel.

The following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not

exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Anti- Semitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

This definition was adopted by Working Definition of Antisemitism (adopted May 2016). For further information, please consult the Fact Sheet on the Working Definition of Antisemitism which outlines the background of the working definition.

To date, the working definition has been adopted and endorsed by the following governments and bodies: the United Kingdom (12 December 2016), Israel (22 January 2017), Austria (25 April 2017) Scotland (27 April 2017), Romania (25 May 2017), Germany (20 September 2017), Bulgaria (18 October 2017), Belgium (14 December 2018), Lithuania (24 January 2018), Republic of North Macedonia (6 March 2018), the Netherlands (27 November 2018), Slovakia (28 November 2018), Republic of Moldova (18 January 2019), Czech Republic (25 January 2019),

Bill against anti-Semitism in the French Parliament

More particularly in France, members of parliament have filed a bill to ensure the definition given by the IRHA is incorporated into French law.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For several years, France, the whole of Europe, but also nearly every Western democracy, have been confronted to a reappearance of anti-Semitism, probably unprecedented since the Second World War.

In 2018, anti-Semitic acts have increased by 74% in France. Once again, for several years now, anti-Semitism has been killing in France.

The hatred of Jews, the social scourge we thought had disappeared, has reappeared in its most terrible manifestations: murders, kidnappings of citizens of the Jewish faith on the sole ground that, because being Jews, they "would have money", desecration of graves.

Daily attacks are multiplying. Today in France, wearing a Kippa means exposing oneself to insults or even physical attacks, and that develops for our fellow countrymen of Jewish faith a feeling of insecurity and malaise in our republic.

The 21st century anti-Semitism has changed. While the old French anti-Semitism has survived, new forms have developed and are now progressing covertly.

Anti-Semitism is a negation of the Republic, a serious threat to national cohesion. It must be fought in its roots.

We know this anti-Semitism mask: it is often hiding behind anti-Zionism. While criticising the policy pursued by Israel governments, the organisation of the Israeli society and expressing opinions against Israel with regards to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict does not constitute anti-Semitism in itself, the very existence of the State of Israel is often only justified by the perception of this State as a Jewish community. Criticizing the existence of a Jewish state is therefore tantamount to expressing hatred towards the entire Jewish community, just as collectively holding Jews responsible for

Israel's policy is a manifestation of anti-Semitism. To paraphrase the President of the Republic, "Anti-Zionism is one of the modern forms of anti-Semitism."

These new expressions of anti-Semitism, perverse because they are masked, insidious because they are dishonest and hypocritical, have led to an important work by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. Its thirty-one Member States, including France, adopted on 26 May 2016 an operational definition of anti-Semitism as follows:

"Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards them. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and places of worship. »

While this definition allows anti-Zionist attacks motivated by hatred towards Jews to be qualified as anti-Semitic, it does not however recognize the criticism of the State of Israel's politics as anti-Semitic.

"It is a question of clarifying and strengthening the practices of our police forces, our magistrates, our teachers, to enable them to better fight against those who conceal behind their reject of Israel the very denial of Israel's existence," as the French President of the Republic stressed.

In the face of the return of the anti-Semitic scourge, the parliament must take a strong stand and put words on what the new anti-Semitism is, in line with the European Parliament in 2017 and the Council of the European Union in 2018, which both recognized the accuracy and effectiveness of the Alliance's operational definition. This is the purpose of this law proposal.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

Single Article

The National Assembly,

Considering Article 34-1 of the Constitution,

Considering Rule 136 of the National Assembly policy,

Considering the European Parliament resolution of 1 June 2017 on fighting anti-Semitism,

Considering the Statement of the European Union Council of 6 December 2018 on fighting anti-Semitism and developing a common approach to security in order to better protect Jewish communities and institutions in Europe

Considers that the operational definition used by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance makes it possible to point contemporary anti-Semitism as precisely as possible;

Considers that it constitutes an effective instrument in the fight against anti-Semitism of a modern and renewed form, in that it includes manifestations of hatred towards the State of Israel justified solely by the perception of the latter as a Jewish community;

Fully endorses the operational definition of anti-Semitism used by the International Alliance for Holocaust Remembrance, as an instrument to be used in the fields of education and training and in order to support the judiciary and law enforcement authorities in their efforts to detect and sue anti-Semitism attacks in a more efficient and effective way;

Invites the government, to spread it to judiciary, education, repressive services in a pedagogic effort.

The figures of antisemitism in France

Let us now look at the figures for antisemitism in France

- In February 2019 following a spate of antisemitic incidents in France, French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner announced that the total number of registered antisemitic incidents in 2018 increased by 74 percent after two years of decrease.¹¹⁹ Castaner subsequently declared that "antisemitism is spreading like poison, like venom, it is r The overall number of recorded antisemitic incidents during 2018 increased by 74 percent with 541 incidents (compared to 311 incidents in 2017).
- • The number of recorded antisemitic violent incidents (attack or attempted attack, homicide or attempted homicide, violence, arson or attempted arson, defacement or vandalism) increased by 89 percent with 183 incidents (compared to 97 in 2017).
- • Within the violent incidents category, antisemitic physical violence against persons increased by 170 percent with 81 incidents (30 in 2017).
- • The number of recorded antisemitic threats (oral threats, threatening gestures or insults, flyers and hate mail, graffiti) increased by 67 percent with 358 incidents compared to 214 in 2017
- • 824 Jewish community sites are subject to protection by police security and military forces.
- During the year, French Jews, who represent less than 1 percent of the French population, suffered 55 percent of all racist physical violence committed in France. This figure is even more striking in comparison to government data showing a decrease in overall racist and anti-Muslim incidents.

Major Antisemitic Incidents

The murder that shook France

The most significant and shocking antisemitic incident in France in 2018 was the brutal killing of Mireille Knoll, an 85-year old French Jewish Holocaust survivor, who was murdered in her Paris apartment by two men, Yacine Mihoub, a 29-year-old neighbor, and his 21-year-old friend Alex Carrimbacus. They were charged with stabbing her to death and setting fire to her body. According to investigations, one of the perpetrators allegedly told the other: "She's a Jew. She must have money." Mihoub allegedly shouted "Allhu Akbar" as they stabbed her.

In contrast to the previous cases of the murder of Ilan Halimi (2006) and Sarah Halimi (2017), French authorities immediately recognized Knoll's murder as an antisemitic hate crime. Some view her murder as marking a shift in the attitude of the French government towards antisemitic hate crimes. This change apparently came in reaction to the anger of the Jewish community at the official response to the killing of Sarah Halimi a year earlier, which prosecutors took months to characterize as antisemitic.

Who are the antisemites in France

Re-emergence of traditional antisemitism

While since the year 2000 antisemitic attacks in France were mainly linked to an importation of the Israeli- Palestinian conflict and derived from radical Islamism, in 2018 it appears that more traditional forms of antisemitism have re-emerged. According to Frédéric Potier, a French government official of the anti-racism and antisemitism body Dilcrah, "we are witnessing the resurgence of a virulent, far-right identity politics that does not hesitate to put its beliefs into action."

Marc Knobel, historian and head of the studies at the CRIF also indicated a re-emergence of old antisemitic tropes involving Jews, money and power. The fact that President Macron previously worked for the Rothschild merchant bank had "fueled a load of rumors" in France.

Although it may yet be early to draw definite conclusions, we may assess that the severe rise of antisemitism in France results from of the convergence of several factors – antisemitic conspiracy theories widely disseminated via online social networks; a rising influence of the radical right and a growingly radical and violent climate on all sides of the political spectrum in French society. French female rabbi Delphine Horvilleur claims that these "horrifying numbers" are a warning sign of a society in a state of breach and failure. Antisemitism is always a prelude to a general violence."

2014: words not heard since the Second World War

On January 26, 2014, during an anti-President Hollande demonstration, racist and anti-Semitic statements were chanted by the crowd: "Jew, France is not yours! ", "Jews, out of France! "Jews, don't want it"

These shouts of hatred have been vociferated by small far right-wing groups, fundamentalists catholics, the far left and some young people from North African immigrant backgrounds.

Polls in 2015 and 2016

France likes polls and we can learn a lot about the situation of Jews through them:

In July 2015, before the November 13 deadly attacks in the Bataclan and the cafés around it, a study was published which revealed that for

56% of those surveyed, Jews have a lot of power and Jews are richer than the average

41% of respondents believe that Jews are a little too present in the media

60% of respondents believe that Jews have a responsibility in the rise of anti-Semitism

The results are even more striking among respondents who define themselves as Muslims: 74% believe that Jews have a lot of power, and 67% that they are too present in the media.

Among the respondents claiming to be Jews, 67% believe that antisemitism has "increased significantly" over the past five years, becoming their main concern, far ahead of unemployment. 11% of them claim to have been personally victim of an antisemitic attack during the year.

In 2016, for the 10th anniversary of Ilan Halimi's murder, the France Jewish Students Association commissioned a survey.

The results of the three questions are as follows

Do Jews today use their status as victims of the holocaust of the Second World War in their own interest? 32% agree, 45% disagree and 23% do not know

Are Jews richer than the French average? 31% agree, 46% disagree and 29% do not know

Do Jews have too much power in the economy and finance? 24% agree, 46% disagree and 30% do not know.

Fundamentalist Catholics

By thinking so hard of anti-Jewish acts claimed by Islam, we forget the old anti-Jewish vindictiveness distilled by Christianity for centuries, and which continues to be taught in some religious schools that do not recognize Vatican 2.

To explain the shouts of hatred on January 26, 2014, the French Catholic weekly magazine "Le Pèlerin" wrote: "the ageing of left-wing Christians has left the field open for identity Catholics".

We can see that there is an alliance between fundamentalist Catholics and the far right.

The second French TV channel had already investigated this alliance in 2010. The investigation, with a hidden camera, was about the way an extreme right-wing group based in Bordeaux, Dies Irae, was working. And how its young members wanted to prepare for the civil war through military-style training and the nucleation of civil society.

In the same report, we see children expressing their hatred of Jews, which they justify by the Gospel, and singing Auschwitz, this "magic camp where showers are free".

The far right

In Europe and France, we are witnessing a return to nationalism on the political scene. For these extremists, Jews are suspected of being a vector for the destruction of the national identity.

The far left

For a particular left, anti-Semitism is of an economic nature. The Jew is no longer the murderer of Christ, nor the representative of an inferior race, but the sovereign banker, businessmen.

In pro-Palestinian demonstrations, banners bearing the inscription "Gaza the new Shoah" do not bother the far-left leaders present. The discourse of the far left is simplistic: Israel is a colonialist state and therefore a state where apartheid reigns and Zionism is a form of colonialism, colonialism is racism and Jews are racist and are like Nazis.

Muslims

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been over-publicized for many years. The consequence of this constant visibility is that many young Muslims identify with Palestinians perceived by the press as the victims.

The confusion between the Palestinian and Muslim causes is a factor of anti-Semitism. Some pro-Palestinians have, consciously or unconsciously, transformed themselves into defenders of Hamas or fellow jihadists, who do not distinguish Jews from Zionists. That is why we have witnessed attacks on Jewish places of worship during pro-Palestinian demonstrations.

To illustrate this confusion, it is enough to listen to the slogans in the pro-Palestinian demonstrations: "Peace in Palestine", "Stop the genocide of Palestinians", "Stop Hitlerian Jewish terrorism", "Jews in the oven", "Death to the Jews".

Some Muslims are at the same time anti-Semitic and negationists. For them, Jews are so devious that they were able to invent the extermination of their parents and grandparents by the Nazis for the sole purpose of fuelling their appetite for domination in the land of Palestine.

Antisemitic Elements among Yellow Vests Movement

Since November 2018 antisemitic manifestations were also witnessed during weekly demonstrations by the Yellow Vest ("Gilets Jaunes") anti-government social protest movement. The violent behavior of some of the movement's supporters and the infiltration of antisemitic elements from the far- left and right were a source of concern for many. A number of antisemitic and anti-Zionist signs have been spotted at the demonstrations, along with hundreds of similar posts by "yellow vests" supporters on social media. 137

However these incidents have been publicly denounced by many members of the movement, and French Prime Minister Édouard Philippe claimed that "it would be false and absurd to call the yellow vest movement anti-Semitic," but he warned that "antisemitism has very deep roots in French society" and promised a tough new law targeting online hate speech by the summer of 2019. Referring to this issue, CRIF's president commented that "I would not say that the movement is antisemitic but I say that these mass movements are always exploited by anti-Semites."

In December, a group of Yellow Vest demonstrators in Paris' Montmartre neighborhood performed the "quenelle" hand gesture, an inverted Nazi salute, and the "quenelle song", hinting at Zionist plots. Both the gesture and song were popularized by Dieudonné M'balá M'balá, a French comedian convicted several times of racism and antisemitism. In the same month, a 74-year-old Jewish woman was subjected to antisemitic abuse while traveling on the Paris Metro, after requesting three supporters of the "Yellow

Vests” to stop their abusive chants and "quenelle" salutes. The three men, scolded her, demanding that she get off the train, while mockingly denying the existence of the Nazi gas chambers.

The conspiracy

A new form of antisemitism is born again: conspiracy. Conspiracy is everywhere: for its followers, Jews are at the root of all the evils of the earth. This form of anti-Semitism is not new: already in the 19th century a pamphlet was written by Henri Gougenot des Mousseaux: “The Jew, Judaism and the Judaization of Christian peoples”

After the September 11 attacks, conspiracy theories were alive again. Thus, on 17 September 2001, Lebanese television Al Manar (Hezbollah channel in Beirut) stated that the attacks were the work of Mossad.

Unfortunately, as we have seen from a close look at the polls, anti-Semitism is no longer the privilege of extremists. A candidate to the moderate right-wing primary in France stated: "Hillary Clinton's proximity to Wall Street super-finance people and her submission to Zionist lobbies are dangerous for Europe and France". This politician was not excluded from his party and the criticism was very soft.

In conclusion, I would like to tell you why the Jews of France sometimes mistake their opponents in their fight against antisemitism.

How to fight anti-Semitism

First battle: the legal arsenal

Bill against anti-Semitism in the French Parliament

Second battle: Internet

While the Internet is of great use to mankind, it also carries the worst ideas, beliefs and incitements to violence, and is used to a great extent by extremists to radicalize and recruit their followers. Indeed, without the Internet, the international jihad movement would not have gained the influence it now has around the world.

The intelligent use of the Internet by jihadists has enabled them to recruit effectively through video, or through communication on social networks such as Twitter. The scope of Islamist speech has thus been extended well beyond the Middle East.

The communication of the Islamic State, which is particularly formidable on the Internet, is succeeding in targeting the French-speaking public more and more effectively. No less than 2,600 websites in French linked to this organization have been identified. Daesh propaganda cells produce about 40,000 French tweets a day.

Third battle: school

The third battleground is that of schools, where appropriate advice for young people is sorely lacking. We must reflect on a new approach to religions in education. The school must be the place where everyone learns the religion of the other but above all learns to respect the religion of the other.

Fourth battle is in the mosques

We see too often preaching inciting to anti-Semitism, hatred and violence. This battle is the most important for the future of Islam and its relations with other religions, but this battle is not only internal. Governments should play a role in preventing money from terrorist organizations from reaching mosques and in regulating their activities. They should prevent extremist leaders from preaching in these mosques, thus allowing them to abuse their power and spread hatred and violence. They should ensure that those who preach religion to others are qualified people, imbued with humanitarian values.

Fifth battle is in the prisons

In numerous countries, the authorities imprison ordinary prisoners with terrorists and promoters of criminal ideologies, who take this opportunity to radicalize those who are in daily contact with them. This has been the case for almost all perpetrators of terrorist acts in France in recent years

The sixth battle is to fight the import of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Not a day goes by without the media reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Many television channels are partisan and turn Israelis into monsters with a single vocation: to drink the blood of Arabs. These satellite TV channels are watched by a great many Muslims who do not know the ins and outs of the conflict. For the young people in the suburbs, Jews are the Israelis, so they are the oppressors. These same young people are solidary with the Palestinians and will therefore attack the Jews in the name of Palestinians.

For a few years now I have accompanied young people from the suburbs to Israel and Palestine so that they can discover the reality of things. They can see the situation with their own eyes. Upon their return to France, they understand that the problem is more complex than they thought and above all that it is up to the Israelis and Palestinians to resolve this conflict, not to the Muslims or Jews who live outside this region.

The feeling of the Jews of France

In view of these surveys, the Jewish community is scared. Indeed, many testimonies point to the fact that a very heavy climate is weighing on the Jewish community. Jews avoid displaying their Jewishness. They hide their Magen David, no longer dare walking around with a yarmulke or put the mezzouza inside their apartment.

Many children had to leave public schools to enroll in Jewish schools even though in many cases religious practice was not the reason.

AJC 2019 Survey of French Jewish Opinion :

<https://www.ajc.org/news/survey2019/France?fbclid=IwAR0vUj60bYv1TqYfFy4ebx6ZFLR33WLH5Z79G0XcQl3JknmzC4KA6adzDI4>

June 2, 2019

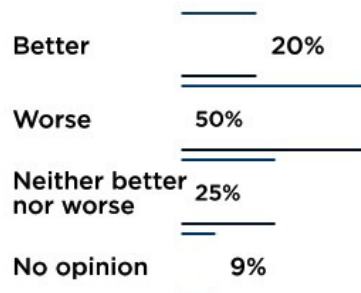


MORE IN
**AJC 2019 SURVEYS OF
AMERICAN, FRENCH,
AND ISRAELI JEWISH
OPINION**

AJC's 2019 Survey of French Jewish Opinion, conducted by the research company Ifop, is based on telephone and face-to-face interviews carried out March 11 - May 2, with a national sample of 771 Jews over age 18. The margin of error is plus or minus 2.1%.



6. Compared to a year ago, do you think the situation of Jews in France in terms of security is...





7. Do you think that Jews in France have a future or should leave France now?

Jews have a future in France	60%
Jews should leave France now	29%
No opinion	11%



15. In your opinion, is France effectively combating anti-Semitism in the country?

Yes, somewhat	35%
No, not really	56%
No opinion	9%



16. Have you personally experienced anti-Semitism?

Yes, several times	33%
Yes, once	25%
No, never	38%
No opinion	4%

Some ways to eradicate anti-Semitism

On coexistence of religions

Living together is not enough, we have to build together

We must not hide the fact that on both sides many (religious) fanatics are doing everything they can to uphold their extremist views. What we need to find now is the means to move forward together.

How?

- Getting to know each other
- Studies
- Strengthening the role of women
- Have a common denominator
- Not be silent in front of racist, anti-Semitic words