

**October  
2020**

## *Monthly Report*

# **ACMS**

## **Antisemitism Cyber Monitoring System**

### *Highlights*

- Violent Antisemitic Attacks Against Jews in Hamburg and New York
- EHRC Report on Labour Reveals Antisemitism Under Corbyn & Breaches of Equality Act
- Increase in Antisemitic Discourse in France and Arab World Following Terror Attacks and French Government's Reaction
- IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism Adopted by Governments, Organizations, and Institutions

## UNITED STATES

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### **Homeland Security Report Names White Supremacists ‘Most Persistent and Lethal’ Domestic Threat**

The report specifies that among other qualities, white supremacists are characterized by their hatred of Jews. According to the report, white supremacists have been responsible for more attacks and deaths than any other ideologically motivated extremists since 2018. Full report available [here](#).

### **Orthodox Man Physically Assaulted on Coney Island Boardwalk**

A man who was walking with his wife and baby was suddenly knocked unconscious with a punch to the face. The victim’s nose was broken during the attack and the perpetrator has not been found.

### **Teenager Arrested on Hate Crime Charges for Attacking California Rabbi**

Following an increase in hostilities directed at a synagogue which resulted in vandalism and harassment, a Rabbi was punched in the head near his synagogue while the attacker yelled antisemitic white power remarks.

### **Jewish Election Candidates Targeted with Antisemitic Harassment**

Numerous candidates have reported online antisemitic harassment and antisemitic vandalism in the real world. Campaign offices and posters belonging to various Jewish candidates have been targeted with antisemitic graffiti and flyers.

### **House Passes Resolution Condemning QAnon for its Antisemitism**

In a vote of 371-18, the U.S. House of Representatives condemned the QAnon conspiracy theory for “fanning the flames” of antisemitism while antisemitism is on the rise in the U.S. and worldwide. Full text available [here](#).



### **U.S. Marine Corps Investigate Soldier with Neo-Nazi Sympathies**

The issue was brought to the attention of his officers after he antisemitically harassed a Jewish woman online who then noticed neo-Nazi quotes, images, symbols, and innuendos throughout his profile. More information [here](#).

### **Jewish Students at University of Illinois Issue Complaint Against Unrelenting Antisemitic Harassment**

The complaint was filed with the Education Department’s Office of Civil Rights after students endured “an unrelenting campaign of antisemitic harassment” on campus. The complaint alleges that students were exposed to a hostile antisemitic environment that included vandalism and verbal assault. University administrators failed to act when notified of the situation and some university employees were “complicit.”

### **Jewish Organizations Call on 165 Colleges to Combat Antisemitism on Campus**

Thirty organizations, led by the Zionist Organization of America, have sent a letter to 165 colleges and university presidents calling on them to address antisemitism on their campus. The letter cites incidents of antisemitism in universities and recommendations for how campuses can address and prevent it.

## United Kingdom

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### **Cabinet Minister Jenrick Given Protection by Counter-Terror Unit after Receiving Death Threats**

The Housing and Communities Secretary received a series of vicious threats to burn down his home and kill his family following his role in the proposed Westminster Holocaust Memorial.

### **EHRC Labour Antisemitism Report Reveals Antisemitism Under Corbyn & 3 Breaches of Equality Act**

The report found that under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn, the Labour party was responsible for: political interference in antisemitism complaints, failure to provide adequate training to those handling antisemitism complaints and harassment, including the use of antisemitic tropes, and suggesting that complaints of antisemitism were fake or smears. The EHRC said its investigation “points to a culture within the party which, at best, did not do enough to prevent antisemitism and, at worst, could be seen to accept it.” More information and full text available [here](#).

### **Former Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn Suspended from Labour Party for Rejecting EHRC’s Report**

The decision was made by the party’s general secretary, David Evans, after Corbyn responded to the EHRC’s findings by claiming “the scale of the problem was...dramatically overstated for political reasons by our opponents inside and outside the party, as well as by much of the media.”

### **Labour Launches Investigation into Corbyn Chief of Staff for Trying to ‘Force Out’ Whistleblowers**

Expletive-filled messages by Karie Murphy reveal she attempted to “trigger” the deselection of MPs who last year condemned Corbyn’s handling of antisemitism within the party and eventually left Labour in objection to it. Following their departure, Murphy wrote, among other things, “F\*\*king idiots. All the work I did to trigger them and they leave before I had the pleasure.”

### **JVL Founder Calls for Labour Members to 'Resist' Starmer's Attempts to Tackle Labour Antisemitism**

Jewish Voice for Labour founder Naomi Wimborne-Idrissi made the comments in an online Palestine Solidarity Campaign meeting discussing resistance options to the IHRA definition and Sir Keir Starmer’s support of the “Panorama whistleblowers.” More information [here](#).

### **Government Ministers Threaten Action Against Universities if IHRA Definition Not Adopted**

After a Union of Jewish Students report showed only one-fifth of UK universities adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism, Universities Minister Michelle Donelan and Education Secretary Gavin Williamson have threatened “robust measures,” such as freezing government funding, until they do. More information [here](#).

### **Report Warns that 79% of Anti-Vaccination Networks Host Jew-Hate**

A study led by Lord John Mann, the government’s Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, predicts that after a vaccine for Covid-19 emerges, the government will need to quickly sideline antisemitic conspiracy theories and misinformation. More information [here](#).



## France's Crackdown on Radical Islam after Teacher Beheading: What's at Stake for French Jews?

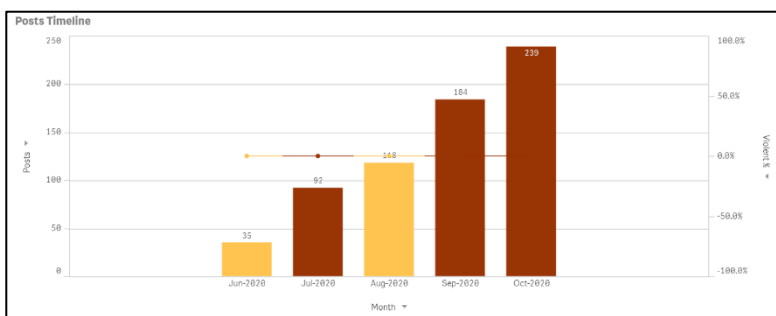
The beheading of history teacher Samuel Paty in a Paris suburb sparked outrage and shock throughout France. The teacher had earlier this month shown his pupils cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in a civics class on freedom of expression after the images were re-published by Charlie Hebdo, a satirical newspaper targeted in a 2015 attack. The attacker was identified as Abdullah A., an 18-year-old Chechen born in Moscow. In addition, a young Tunisian man armed with a knife attacked worshippers in a French church and killed three on October 29, prompting the government to raise its security alert to the maximum level hours before a nationwide coronavirus lockdown. The attack in Mediterranean city of Nice was the third "Islamist terror attack" in less than two months. Few hours later, President Emmanuel Macron announced increased surveillance of places of worship and schools by France's Sentinelle military patrols, which would be bolstered to 7,000 troops from 3,000. The chief rabbi of Nice said all synagogues in the southern French city would remain closed after the attack.

- **Samuel Paty's Murder: Social Medias' Role, Cyber-Islamism & Online Antisemitism**

Samuel Paty was threatened online for showing Mohammed cartoons, sparking heated debate over alleged social media role in the victim's fate. Immediately following Paty murder, Junior interior minister Marlene Schiappa assembled representatives of social networks to discuss bolstering the "fight against cyber-Islamism." Indeed, the father of a schoolgirl had launched an online call for "mobilization" against Paty, giving the school's address in a social media post just days before the beheading. Moreover, before police gunned him down, Abdullah A. posted Paty's severed head on Twitter, claiming that he had executed one of Macron's "dogs of hell," who had belittled the prophet. It should be noted that Abdullah A. was active on Twitter in recent months, disseminating, inter alia, antisemitic posts characterized by a radical Islamist rhetoric<sup>1</sup>.



Abdullah A. (aka Al Ansar) Twitter Account (Aug. 2020): "The yahud [Ed. Note: "Jew" in Arabic] are cursed by Allah, against or for the colonization of Palestine."



ACMS Timeline; Language: "French"; Filter: "Muhammed" OR "Mohammed" OR "Prophète"

In parallel, ACMS data indicates a consistent upward trend in the number of antisemitic tweets mentioning the prophet Muhammed in recent months, with a peak – in terms of absolute numbers and intensity – in October 2020.

<sup>1</sup> Source: ACMS (Antisemitism Cyber Monitoring System); developed by Israel's Ministry of Diaspora Affairs

- **France's Crackdown on Islamism, Head of Pro-Hamas Group Arrested**

Following Paty's murder, President Emmanuel Macron threatened that "fear is about to change sides." Among other strong measures, Macron announced the dissolution of the "Cheikh Yassine Collective" - a pro-Hamas group active in France - due to its "direct" implication in the assassination of Paty. "For too long, cultural associations have been the Trojan horses of radical Islamism," stated Macron. The group's founder, Abdelhakim Sefrioui, is currently being held by police in connection to Paty's murder. Sefrioui was known to French security services for his Islamist activities and antisemitic speeches. In 2006, Sefrioui was part of the presidential campaign of the multi-convicted antisemitic and Holocaust denying comedian Dieudonné.

Furthermore, a matter of days before Paty's murder, Emmanuel Macron has announced plans for tougher laws to tackle what he called "Islamist separatism" and defend secular values. The French president outlined new robust measures, enjoying broad support from French Jewish community who are high on the list of targets for radical Islamists. The measures include placing mosques under greater control and requiring that imams be trained and certified in France. The aim would be to "liberate French Islam from foreign influences", he said, particularly funding.

- **Holocaust Trivialization, Competitive Victimhood & Memories**

Charlie Hebdo's decision to republish cartoons of Islam prophet - to mark the opening of the trial for the deadly 2015 attack against the publication and a Kosher supermarket - have stirred the ire of Muslims across the world who consider depictions of Muhammed blasphemous. Many invokes the Holocaust, shedding light on the rising phenomenon of Holocaust trivialization and "competitive victimhood." By way of example, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei appears to liken Holocaust denial to Muhammed cartoons. "Why is it a crime to raise doubts about the Holocaust? Why should anyone who writes about such doubts be imprisoned while insulting the Prophet (pbuh) is allowed?" Khamenei wrote on Twitter. Iran also announced it will host its third Holocaust denial cartoon contest in response to Charlie Hebdo's republication of Muhammad caricatures and Macron's strong defense of the right to mock religions. Furthermore, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan also invoked the Holocaust in condemning President Macron's crackdown on radical Islam while Fahrettin Altun, communications director at the Turkish presidency claimed that European attitudes demonizing Muslims are reminiscent of how the Jews in Europe were treated in the 1920's.

This narrative echoes a recurrent pattern equating the situation of Muslims in today's Europe with that of Jews before or during the Holocaust. In parallel, the phenomenon of "competitive victimhood" has emerged in France since the duty of Holocaust remembrance became institutionalized in the 1990's. Jews are often perceived as a rival accused of unfairly monopolizing the "victim status." Some controversial Muslim figures argue that the French enforces a harsh legislative framework criminalizing antisemitism and Holocaust denial while it allows and defends the right to mock Islam's Prophet constitutes more evidence of Jewish privilege. The incitation of racial hatred is perceived as the equivalent to blasphemy - an offense abolished by the French Republic in 1881. In his speech at the UN in January 2015, the French philosopher Bernard-Henri Levy suggested that "*Anti-Zionism, Holocaust denial and Competitive victimhood*" compose the new triptych of modern antisemitism.

## GERMANY

### **Violent Antisemitic Attack in Front of Hamburg Synagogue on Sukkot**

A 29-year-old German-Kazakh dressed in military garb and with a note with a swastika in his pocket attacked a Jewish student with a foldable shovel in front of the Hohe Weide synagogue. The victim was taken to the hospital with a serious head injury. The attacker is accused of attempted murder with dangerous bodily harm and was placed in a psychiatric facility. The media and politicians highlighted that both the military clothing and the date of the attack bring back memories of the attack on the Halle synagogue last Yom Kippur.

### **Teenager Prepared Attack and Incited Others to Murder Jews and Muslims**

Investigators in North Rhine-Westphalia will file charges against a 14-year-old right-wing extremist for having called on people via WhatsApp to kill people of Jewish or Muslim faith with a gun or knife in their places of worship. He also procured chemical substances to manufacture explosives which he planned to use to kill Jews and Muslims. He is accused of attempting to incite murder and preparing a serious criminal offense that is dangerous to the state.

### **Head of German Federal Intelligence Service Warns of Steep Rise in Antisemitism**

On the anniversary of the Yom Kippur attack on the Halle synagogue, the head of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV) warned of increasing hostility and violence against Jews. He called on society and security authorities to be vigilant and claimed that the danger mostly comes from radicalized individuals with dreary life circumstances who look to blame minorities for their situation.

### **Teachers Association Laments Pressure from Muslim Parents and Students**

The German Teachers Association warned against a "climate of intimidation" towards teachers. "There are more and more attempts to influence and hinder teachers in their task of conveying values and democracy." Teachers are afraid of dealing with topics such as the Holocaust and Israel or of referring to Mohammed cartoons in lessons on freedom of expression and artistic freedom.

### **European Parliament: EU Money Used for Holocaust Denial in Germany**

European Parliament funds were used to finance newsletters denying the Shoah and calling for the release of convicted Holocaust denier Ursula Haverbeck. The publishing house "W + B Medien," which is run by well-known German militant neo-Nazi Thorsten Heise, received some €35,000 in 2018 from NPD politician Udo Voigt, who at the time was a member of the European Parliament.

## AUSTRIA

### **Far-Right Parties Lose Political Power in Vienna Elections**

At the October 11th Vienna elections, the FPÖ, which was previously the second strongest party, fell to fifth place with 7.11% of the vote. In the 2015 elections they received 30.79%. The new party of former FPÖ chairman H.C. Strache (HC) did not reach the threshold to enter parliament. Specialists believe that the FPÖ lost so many votes because of the latest scandals (the Ibiza affair and financial scandal) but might regain power during the coming elections.

### **Antisemitic Sentiment in the Muslim Discourse about the Normalization and Events in France**

The fiery debate regarding normalization with Israel and the violent events in France has resulted in a marked separatist discourse within the Arabic speaking world, whose traces have been recognized by the ACMS system. The participants in this discourse draw a connection between these two phenomena, considering them as part of a Judeo-Christian plot against Islam and Muslims. This separatist discourse often quotes verses from the Quran including the following, from Sura 2, Al-Baqara, verse 120: “Never will the Jews or the Christians be satisfied with thee even should thou join their religious community.”

لن يرضى عليك اليهود والنصارى حتى تكون من ملتهم.

In the normalization context, this verse is used to argue that pro-normalization Muslim states and citizens in fact aspire to become Jews. They will come to realize that the Jews will not accept them, and the Jews will exploit the gulf states financially, in an attempt to control them. The same verse is also quoted with regards to the events in France, where terrorist attacks have been carried out as vengeance against caricatures mocking the Prophet, and the French President has taken a strong stance against radical Islam. In this context, it is claimed that France, as a Christian country, has entered into open warfare with Islam, and is trying to convert its Muslim population. In this context the verse is used to call upon French Muslims to reject integration into French society. The separatist position fosters a global antisemitic public discourse within the Arab world. We do not expect this trend to abate in the near future.

The terror attacks conducted after the “shaming of the Prophet” earlier this month have strongly influenced the antisemitic discourse on Twitter, both regarding the Jews and the normalization between the Arab countries and Israel. We have identified an embittered discourse that expresses frustration with the European states, that do not do enough to fight Islamophobia, while actively fighting against antisemitism. Many wonder how it is possible that Holocaust denial is a felony in France, but the pillars of Islam can be abused as part of the “freedom of expression.”

### **Bahrain Becomes First Arab Country to Adopt IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism**

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, an MOU agreement was signed stating that the United States and Bahrain would work to combat antisemitism in the Middle East and use the IHRA working definition of antisemitism to do so. This is a historical precedent since Bahrain is the first Arab country to sign an agreement in which it will work to eradicate antisemitism.



## RUSSIAN SPEAKING AREAS

### RUSSIA

#### **Two Citizens Prosecuted for Racist and Antisemitic Social Media Posts**

A Moscow resident and a minor resident of Sevastopol have posted xenophobic and antisemitic content on the social network VK. The 17-year-old minor was sentenced to one year probation, while the trial of the 42-year-old Moscow resident is still ongoing. This is not the first time the latter has been charged with publishing antisemitic content.

### UKRAINE

#### **Jews Attacked in Two Different Occasions—Uman**

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, a young man harassed and robbed a couple of elderly Breslav followers from London in broad daylight while making antisemitic remarks towards them. The second incident took place on the night of October 18<sup>th</sup> when two young Breslav followers were attacked in a dark alley near Rabbi Nachman's grave by three locals. One of the young men was hit in the face by a knife and needed medical attention. The Jewish community in Ukraine considers the two attacks antisemitically motivated, while the local police, which arrested the attackers in both cases, sees the incidents as an "act of bullying" without a nationalist element.

#### **Antisemitic Poster Hoisted During Demonstration—Kiev**

During demonstrations marking "Ukrainian Defenders Day" held on October 14<sup>th</sup>, a poster was erected near the President's Office which said: "Ukrainians! We are celebrating the anniversary of the occupation and looting of Ukraine by the Jewish tribe from the Dnieper region of Vova Zelensky."

#### **Antisemitic Remarks Made by Candidate for City Council—Vinnitsa**

Yelena Zutinskaya, who is running for the municipal proposal on behalf of the "Servants of the People" party, posted a video on her Instagram page containing the following quote: "How the hell [are we supposed] to deal with this f\*\*king eternal Judaism?" After the video was released, Yelena claimed that her words were edited and deliberately distorted.

### LITHUANIA

#### **Jewish Holocaust Memorial Monument Vandalized—Kaunas**

The vandalized monument was discovered on October 7<sup>th</sup>. City authorities restored the monument within days. No suspects were arrested.

### ESTONIA

#### **Estonian Government Declares Hezbollah a Terrorist Organization—Kaunas**

The decision was approved by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Urmas Reinsalu, on October 22<sup>nd</sup>.



## LATIN AMERICA and SPAIN

### CHILE

#### Antisemitic Signs in a Demonstration Against the New Constitution

During a protest the referendum on a new constitution in Las Condes, Santiago, protesters showed up wearing t-shirts with slogans against Israel and performed the Nazi salute. Some of the protesters were equipped with posters supporting the current President of the United States, Donald Trump, and posters against "illegal immigration" and communism. Gerardo Gorodisher, President of the Jewish Community of Chile (CJCh), condemned the presence of neo-Nazi groups at the demonstration.



(Credit: eldesconcierto.cl)

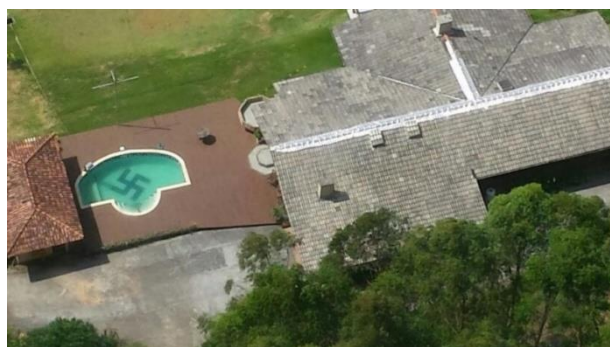
#### Jewish Community Condemns Palestinian Ambassador's Statements Praising Terrorism & Violence

The Israeli Ambassador to Chile, Marina Rosenberg, and the Jewish community condemned the statements of the Palestinian representative in the country, Imad Nabil Jadaa, in which he justified terrorism and legitimized violence, during a virtual meeting held by the Chilean Senate to analyze the situation in Palestine. The controversial statements were made as Ambassador Jada described as "good" and "martyrs" the Palestinians carrying out terrorist attacks against the Israeli population and even accused the Jewish community in Chile of "double loyalty" for their relation with the State of Israel.

### BRAZIL

#### Man with Infamous Swastika Pool Expelled from his Political Party

History professor Wandercy Pugliesi first made headlines in 2014, when it was discovered that he had an enormous swastika tiled into his backyard pool in rural southern Brazil. Pugliesi, 58, named his son Adolf, and police seized a trove of Nazi-related materials from him in 1994. Now he is back in the news after attempting to run for a seat on his local town council. The Liberal Party that he is affiliated with kicked him out last week "for not ideologically agreeing with the affiliate." Fernando Lottenberg, the president of the country's umbrella Jewish organization, the Brazilian Israelite Confederation, praised the removal. The local state Jewish federation's president called Pugliesi "execrable and regrettable."



(Credit: Santa Catarina Civil Police)

### SPAIN

#### Politician from the Ruling Party Claimed "Jews" Responsible for the Actions of the Israeli Government

Sonia Vivas, a member of the Podemos party and a member of the Palma City Council, claimed at the council meeting that "Jews" are voting for a government that violates the rights of the Palestinians (referring to the pro-Israel VOX party). She also compared support for Israel to "institutionalized homophobia." When a journalist asked the politician to clarify whether she meant Jews in general or Israelis specifically, Vivas responded briefly: "You did not understand me because you do not want to understand me. My explanation was clear and comprehensive."

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### IHRA WORKING DEFINITION ADOPTIONS

#### The States and Institutions Listed Below Adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism

The IHRA working definition is a tool which is used as an effective means to educate governments and civil society of the significant problem of Classic and New (Israel-related) antisemitism and Holocaust Denial. It is used as a resource to educate about the differences between antisemitic hate speech and legitimate criticism of the State of Israel, whether you agree with it or not.

Countries, States, and Cities
Albania
Bahrain
Hastings, United Kingdom
Hessen, Germany
Ontario, Canada
Educational Institutions
Buenos Aires University, Argentina
Foothill College, California, USA
University of Warwick, United Kingdom
Additional Organizations and Sports Clubs
Argentine Football Association, Argentina
Borussia Dortmund Football Club, Germany
Global Imams Council (GIC)*
Tennis Borussia Berlin Football Club, Germany

\*GIC is the largest non-governmental organization of Imams in the world and consists of more than 1,000 members from all Islamic denominations. Its governing board, Senior Imams Committee, and Advisory Committee unanimously voted to adopt the IHRA definition on October 29<sup>th</sup>. The GIC has announced “it will be binding on all current and future members of the GIC, including all of the council’s affiliate mosques, centers, institutes, and organizations operated by the Imams of the council worldwide.” The number of affiliates is in the hundreds, according to the GIC’s [website](#).

## SOCIAL MEDIA

#### YouTube Removes Louis Farrakhan’s Antisemitic ‘Nation of Islam’ Channel

The channel was removed for repeatedly violating YouTube’s hate speech policies. However, some individual accounts of Nation of Islam members are still up with tens of thousands of followers.