

2020

The IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism- Legal Analysis

Introduction

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism (the "IHRA Definition" or the "Definition") is an internationally accepted definition of antisemitism drafted by representatives and scholars from around the world. The definition includes multiple examples of contemporary antisemitism as it is manifested in public discourse, politics and media. As of October 2020, there are 34 member countries of IHRA, including the United States, the European Union, Germany, France, Denmark, Finland, Norway, the United Kingdom and Canada, all of whom recognize the IHRA definition of antisemitism. The UN has also endorsed the Definition.

According to the Definition, antisemitism is "a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews." Throughout the ages, antisemitism has adapted itself to the prevalent paradigms and worldview. In medieval Europe and the Islamic world, antisemitism was directed towards Jews as a religion. Jews were accused of killing Christ, desecrating the host, being in communion with the devil against the Christianity and Islam, and of being uniquely cursed by God. As religion lost its prominence in the modern era, antisemitism shifted toward hatred of Jews as a race. Whereas in the medieval era, Jews could abandon their religion and join non-Jewish society, racial antisemitism saw Jews as possessing certain inherent traits such as greed, cunning and dishonesty. In pseudo-scientific social rankings of the period, Jews were assigned sub-human status, at the bottom of the racial hierarchy.

Racial antisemitism was brought to its pinnacle in the Nazi's genocidal "Final Solution" in which six million Jews were murdered. The horrors of the Holocaust and the Second World War, as well as the civil rights movement in the United States and Western Europe, have largely convinced most people in Western countries of the wrongful nature of racist beliefs. While one would be correct in expecting antisemitism to decline or disappear after the Holocaust, antisemitism has once again adapted itself to today's zeitgeist. Today, much antisemitism focuses on Jews as a nation, manifesting itself in allegations of Jewish disloyalty, conspiracy theories about Jewish world domination, or attacks against the Jewish right of self-determination in their ancestral homeland, the land of Israel – Zionism. Antisemites and anti-Zionists focus obsessively on the alleged misdoings of the State of Israel, call for its dissolution, and promote conspiracy theories about the Mossad (Israel's national intelligence agency), "the Israel lobby" and Israel's nefarious influence worldwide.

The IHRA Definition is a useful educational tool as it represents this three-fold historical nature of antisemitism: hatred of Jews as a religion, as a people and as a nation. These three forms of antisemitism still exist today, often overlapping and interplaying with each other. Antisemitism forms an important ideological component of extremist movements worldwide, and Jews find themselves under assault from three main sources: the racist and white supremacist extreme right, the extreme left influenced by theories that demonize Israel and Jewish national identity, and Islamic radicals and jihadists.

While antisemitism continues to rise worldwide and Jewish communities face increased harassment, intimidation and even murderous violence, the IHRA Definition is a powerful means to combat antisemitism. The IHRA Definition can be used as an interpretive tool by legal professionals and law enforcement to identify, prosecute and ensure accountability for antisemitic hate crimes. You cannot effectively address a problem if you cannot effectively identify it.

The adoption of the IHRA Definition is an important first step in national and international efforts to combat antisemitism. However, it is a declarative definition that does not entail sanctions or enforcement. All Western countries have laws that protect minorities and intend to prevent discrimination and persecution. The IHRA Definition provides an objective set of guidelines to identify the antisemitic motivations or objectives behind discriminatory acts. The necessary tools to fight antisemitic discrimination and hatred already exist – the IHRA Definition provides a guide by which to clearly identify and understand what constitutes antisemitism.

The purpose of this booklet is to present some background on the IHRA Definition, to familiarize readers with the Definition itself, to clarify several prominent contemporary antisemitic tropes and finally to demonstrate practically how the IHRA Definition can be used to complement existing anti-discrimination and anti-hate laws, using Canada as a case study. It will examine the IHRA Definition's implementation in three areas relevant to the Canadian context: police classification of hate crimes, hate-motivated criminal offenses, and anti-discrimination and human rights law.

2018

AP

**PITTSBURGH
SYNAGOGUE
MASSACRE**

2019

The New York Times

**One Dead in
Synagogue Shooting
Near San Diego:
Officials Call It Hate
Crime**

2019

BBC

**Monsey stabbing:
Journals of attacker
'referenced Jews'**

2019

The New York Times

**How 2 Drifters
Brought Anti-Semitic
Terror to Jersey City**

2020

*The
Guardian*

**Man charged with
attempted murder
after rabbi stabbed in
London**

2019

THE
NEW YORKER

**A TERRORIST ATTACK
ON YOM KIPPUR IN
HALLE, GERMANY**

2019

DW

**Jews abused, spat on
in Munich anti-Semitic
attack**

**THIS IS
TODAY -
ALL OVER
THE WORLD**

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Background

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) is an intergovernmental, organization composed of 34 member countries - Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States - that unites governments and experts dedicated to preserving and advancing the memory of the Holocaust. In May 2016, the IHRA Plenary, consisting of representatives from all IHRA member countries, adopted the working definition of antisemitism. A number of other non-member countries, as well as the European Union, the United Nations Secretary General and its Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, the province of Ontario (Canada's largest province), and hundreds of municipal and state levels of government around the world also endorse the IHRA Definition.

IHRA provides a general working definition of antisemitism and then proceeds to give eleven examples of contemporary antisemitic tropes. It is important to note that the definition and examples were adopted at the 2016 Plenary as a single document and are meant to be read together. We have given headlines to each of these examples below.

According to the IHRA Definition:

“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 IHRA Definition is unique in providing a set of guidelines by which to identify antisemitism, instead of relying on subjective “gut feeling”. The definition’s comprehensive nature recognizes that antisemitism doesn’t always manifest itself explicitly, often without even using the word “Jew”. Contemporary antisemitism is often coded, targeting “Zios”, “Rothschilds” or the State of Israel. Stereotypes about Jews can also indicate antisemitic motivations: Jews as cheap or particularly good with money or conspiratorial thinking about Jews. Claiming that Jews or Israel are behind major negative events, such as the coronavirus pandemic¹, the rise of ISIS² or other such conspiracy theories, is a classic sign of antisemitism. Jews as a collective are often blamed for the real or alleged misdeeds of individuals Jews, prominent Jewish figures or the State of Israel. References to the Jewish background or identity of prominent Jews in positions of power, with insinuations that they are untrustworthy, corrupt or unduly influential, can also be seen as antisemitic. There is a crucial distinction between criticism of corrupt individuals who are Jewish, and antisemitic “pointing-out” of the Jewish background these individuals, as an explanation for their misdeeds.

The IHRA Definition can assist in identifying - and therefore addressing - antisemitic expressions and actions, even when couched in implicit language or euphemisms. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the Definition can, “serve as a basis for law enforcement, as well as preventive policies.” The UN’s Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief, Ahmed Shaheed wrote in his comprehensive report on antisemitism that the Working Definition, “can offer valuable guidance” and “recommends its use as a critical non-legal educational tool.”

The IHRA Definition covers classical antisemitic tropes, like calling for harm against Jews, stereotypes and demonization and Holocaust denial, as well as more modern forms as antisemitism such as anti-Zionism and Holocaust inversion. The definition also recognizes that contemporary antisemitism is often directed against the State of Israel – delegitimization, demonization and the application of double standards towards the Jewish state, even while denying any animus against Jews. Criticism of Israel, even in harsh or robust terms, is not antisemitic *per se*.

This document will further expand on the crucial distinction between criticism of the Jewish community or the Jewish state, and antisemitic demonization.

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- 1 “White Supremacists’ Dangerous New Conspiracy Theory”
<https://www.haaretz.com/us-news/.premium-the-jews-control-the-chinese-labs-that-created-coronavirus-1.8809635>
 - 2 “Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents 2019”, B’nai Brith Canada,
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/bnaibrithcanada/pages/394/attachments/original/1588351819/B'nai_Brith_Canada_Audit_2019_ENG.pdf?1588351819, p.31

Definition and examples

The IHRA Definition includes contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life. We have classified the eleven examples in order to better explain the nuances between them. The titles do not appear in the IHRA definition.

1. Justifying Harm

Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

2. Demonization and Stereotypes

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.

3. Collective Blame

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.

4. Holocaust Denial

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).

5. Holocaust as Jewish Conspiracy

Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.

6. Disloyalty

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.

7. Denying Jewish Self-Determination

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.

8. Double Standards for Israel

Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

9. Applying Antisemitic Tropes to Israel

Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.

10. Holocaust Inversion

Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.

11. Collective Guilt

Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Canada as a Case Study

In June 2019, the Government of Canada announced that it had adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism as part of Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy³. Additionally, Foreign Affairs Canada has endorsed the Definition as part of its international mandate to promote freedom of religion and combat discrimination⁴.

The IHRA Definition provides an important tool for combatting antisemitism, both at the criminal and non-criminal levels. On a basic level, without criminalizing or legally sanctioning any instance of antisemitism, the Definition provides an objective set of guidelines by which to identify antisemitism. In democratic societies that value and protect freedom of speech, there is always a gap between criminal speech (hate speech or incitement) punishable by law, and expressions of intolerance condemned by society. The IHRA Definition does not aim to criminalize or punish antisemitic speech. Rather, the Definition provides a way for civil society to examine possible discriminatory and antisemitic intent or context of actions or expressions; it allows civil society to identify and address antisemitism in its midst. By doing this, the Definition not only advances the fight against discrimination but contributes to the protection of free speech. By clarifying what precisely constitutes hateful speech, people who express well-reasoned, fair and legitimate critiques of Jews and Israel will be protected from false accusations of antisemitism.

We will proceed to examine three significant areas where law enforcement agencies and legal professionals could use the IHRA Definition in the application of existing laws.

1. Identifying and Classifying Hate Crimes

Hate crime statistics suffer from several major deficiencies. The Department of Justice estimates that of the various forms of criminality, hate crimes are among the most underreported offenses. Among several explanations offered for this phenomenon, one reason is due to the special investigative requirements of hate crimes. In order for an offense to be classified as a hate crime, officers must record some evidence of hate motivation.

3 <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/anti-racism-engagement/anti-racism-strategy.html>

4 https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_developpement-enjeux_developpement/human_rights-droits_homme/fr_edom_religion-liberte_religion.aspx?lang=eng

Police must pay special attention to the circumstances surrounding the offense, and unless they receive special training, they often do not have the tools to properly identify hate motivation. Police may often be reluctant to ascribe particular motivations to perpetrators. The authorities' inability to identify or recognize hate motivation often leads victims to forego reporting to the police entirely. Members of targeted communities may feel that their complaints will not receive an adequate response from the authorities. This in turn feeds a lack of trust and confidence in law enforcement to take the threat of hatred and discrimination seriously. The IHRA Definition provides police with additional guidance to recognize crimes motivated by hate in the form of antisemitism.

Familiarity with the IHRA Definition will also help police understand that many Jews express their Jewish identity through identification with the State of Israel or Israeli cultural events, for example. Therefore, an attack on Jews participating in a pro-Israel rally or at an Israeli film festival could be understood to be antisemitic. Furthermore, Jews are often seen as responsible for Israel's alleged crimes, for no other reason than their Jewish identities. For example, in November 2019, the student union at the University of Toronto expressed opposition to a campaign to provide kosher food on campus on the pretext that such a move might be construed as "pro-Israel"⁵. This goes beyond a mere political dispute involving the State of Israel and demonstrates an opposition to Jews practicing their religious obligations due to a supposed affiliation or connection with Israel.

The IHRA Definition also helps in understanding the fuller public context of suspected antisemitic attacks. For example, antisemitic intent can be indicated by the timing of the incident: during a flare-up of tensions in the Israeli-Arab conflict, on a date of particular significance in the conflict's history, the Holocaust or local antisemitic events, or during an intense public debate on issues related to Jews, such as circumcision or Holocaust restitution⁶.

5 "U of Toronto Graduate Student Union opposes campus kosher food as 'pro-Israel'" <https://www.timesofisrael.com/u-of-toronto-student-union-boycotts-kosher-food-on-campus-over-israel-divestment/>

6 For a more comprehensive list of antisemitic bias indicators, see the OSCE Report "Understanding Antisemitic Hate Crimes and Addressing the Security Needs of Jewish Communities: A Practical Guide", Annex 1, <https://www.osce.org/odihr/317166?download=true>

2. Defining Hatred - The Criminal Code

The Canadian Criminal Code contains three offenses classified as “hate propaganda”: Sec. 318(1) – **advocating genocide**, 319(1) – **public incitement of hatred** and 319(2) – **willful promotion of hatred**. Additionally, hateful motivation is an aggravating factor in sentencing according to Sec. 718(2)(a)(i): “A court that imposes a sentence shall also take into consideration the following principles: ... evidence that the offence was motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, or on any other similar factor.”⁷

The Supreme Court has defined hatred in this context as follows:

Hatred is predicated on destruction, and hatred against identifiable groups therefore thrives on insensitivity, bigotry and destruction of both the target group and of the values of our society. Hatred in this sense is a most extreme emotion that belies reason; an emotion that, if exercised against members of an identifiable group, implies that those individuals are to be despised, scorned, denied respect and made subject to ill-treatment on the basis of group affiliation⁸.

This definition therefore covers expressions that meet this high threshold of hatred, dehumanization and demeaning. As Canada places a high protection on freedom of speech, expressions that are polemical, insulting or highly critical, although they may be offensive to some groups, would not fall under hate speech laws.

As previously explained, one of the IHRA Definition’s main advantages is that it provides wider context to identify and recognize antisemitic expressions and motifs, even when these are not explicit. The recognition that hatred and animus towards Jews can be expressed in couched terms is recognized in Canadian jurisprudence. Thus, the IHRA Definition fits neatly into principles already recognized in Canadian law.

In *R. v Krymowski*⁹, the accused organized a racist protest against “gypsy” refugees and was charged with promoting hatred against Roma, considered an “identifiable group” under Sec. 318(4). The defence conceded that the Roma are an identifiable group but argued that the demonstrations were directed against “gypsies” and there was no evidence that “Roma” is the same as “gypsies”. The trial judge refused to recognize the shared meaning of these terms. Thus, the prosecution failed to prove that the accused had promoted hatred against an identifiable group and the accused was acquitted.

7 Criminal Code (R.S.C., 1985, c. C-46), <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/index.html>

8 *R. v. Keegstra*, [1990] 3 S.C.R. 697 p.39

9 *R. v. Krymowski*, 2005 SCC 7 (CanLII), [2005] 1 SCR 101

Upon appeal to the Supreme Court, the Court noted that the trial judge had failed in his narrow consideration of the term “gypsy”.

It was incumbent upon the trial judge to look at the totality of the evidence and draw appropriate inferences to determine whether the respondents intended to target “any section of the public distinguished by colour, race, religion or ethnic origin”, in this case, the Roma people. Several items of evidence potentially related to this issue. The reference to “gypsies” was but one item of evidence to consider. To illustrate the point, it may be useful to consider whether the offence could be made out even if the demonstrators had made the same statements but without using the word “gypsies”. Among other things, the trial judge in his reasons for judgment referred to the following evidence as fact: (1) the motel outside of which the respondents demonstrated was temporarily housing the refugee claimants who were awaiting the outcome of their claims; (2) some of the participants were seen giving the “Sieg Heil” Nazi salute; (3) Nazi and American Confederate flags were used in the demonstration; and (4) the chant “White Power” was heard during the demonstration. Furthermore, the defence concession expressly linked Nazi persecution to the “Roma people”.

Hence, the ethnic flavour to the demonstration, the fact that it was situated outside a motel housing refugee claimants who were at times described by the witnesses as Roma, and the fact that Roma people are a group historically persecuted by the Nazis while the Nazi theme was apparent at the demonstration were all factors to consider, in addition to the actual words used, in determining whether Roma were the target of the hate speech. In focussing entirely on one of the specific statements particularized in the information, the trial judge misdirected himself as to the essential elements of the offence. In doing so, he erred in law¹⁰.

With this principle in mind, judges and lawyers can consult the IHRA Definition to identify antisemitic tropes behind criminal actions. For example, references to anti-Jewish conspiracies, code words, the State of Israel or known Jewish figures may reveal antisemitic hostility and bias.

10 Par. 18-19

3. Defining Hatred - Human Rights Law and Anti-Discrimination

Every Canadian jurisdiction contains laws to prevent or limit discriminatory activities. Some of these Human Rights Codes include a provision prohibiting hate speech.

In the human rights law case Saskatchewan (*Human Rights Commission*) v. Whatcott [2013] 1 S.C.R. 467, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) unanimously confirmed that hate speech prohibitions included in the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code are Charter compliant. The SCC concluded that the Saskatchewan Human Rights Tribunal had been reasonable in ordering William Whatcott to cease distributing leaflets about homosexuals and to pay damages to the plaintiffs. In the Whatcott case, Section 14 of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code was at issue:

14. (1) No person shall publish or display, or cause or permit to be published or displayed, on any lands or premises or in a newspaper, through a television or radio broadcasting station or any other broadcasting device, or in any printed matter or publication or by means of any other medium that the person owns, controls, distributes or sells, any representation, including any notice, sign, symbol, emblem, article, statement or other representation:

(a) tending or likely to tend to deprive, abridge or otherwise restrict the enjoyment by any person or class of persons, on the basis of a prohibited ground, of any right to which that person or class of persons is entitled under law; or

(b) that exposes or tends to expose to hatred, ridicules, belittles or otherwise affronts the dignity of any person or class of persons on the basis of a prohibited ground.

(2) Nothing in subsection (1) restricts the right to freedom of expression under the law upon any subject.

In this unanimous decision, Justice Rothstein found that s. 14 of the SHRC did infringe on freedom of expression guaranteed by the Charter, but he supported the government's position that the prohibition of on hate speech was a reasonable limit under s. 1 the Charter. In so doing, Rothstein J. confirmed and built upon Justice Dickson's reasoning in *Canada (Human Rights Commission) v. Taylor* [1990] 3 R.C.S. 892.

It is important to note that in his analysis Justice Rothstein essentially defines what constitutes "hate" and distinguishes between "hatred" and "ridicules, belittles or otherwise affronts the dignity" as set out in s. 14(b) of the SHRC:

"... the legislative term 'hatred' or 'hatred or contempt' must be interpreted as being restricted to those extreme manifestations of the emotion described by the words 'detestation' and 'vilification' ... expression that [in the words of the Saskatchewan Code] 'ridicules, belittles or otherwise affronts the dignity of ' does not rise to the level of ardent and extreme feelings constituting hatred required to uphold the constitutionality of a prohibition of expression in human rights legislation... Consequently, they are constitutionally invalid and must be struck from [the Code]."

He further elaborated:

“In my view, “detestation” and “vilification” aptly describe the harmful effect that the Code seeks to eliminate. Representations that expose a target group to detestation tend to inspire enmity and extreme ill-will against them, which goes beyond mere disdain or dislike. Representations vilifying a person or group will seek to abuse, denigrate or delegitimize them, to render them lawless, dangerous, unworthy or unacceptable in the eyes of the audience. Expression exposing vulnerable groups to detestation and vilification goes far beyond merely discrediting, humiliating or offending the victims.”

In addition to these hate speech provisions contained in some human rights codes, all human rights codes prohibit discrimination based on specifically identified characteristics (known as “prohibited grounds”). The principal human rights law for the federal sector is the **Canadian Human Rights Act** (CHRA). The CHRA prohibits employment discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex (including pregnancy and childbirth), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability (including previous or present drug or alcohol dependence), and pardoned conviction. The specific prohibited grounds vary slightly from province to province. Included in the prohibition on discrimination is harassment, a common form of workplace discrimination. Harassment includes any physical or verbal behaviour that abuses or humiliates an individual based on a protected ground.

Jews, especially openly observant ones, can face discrimination and hostility in the workplace. According to federal and provincial human rights commissions, employers must accommodate their employees' religious obligations “up to the point of undue hardship”. Hostility towards religious accommodations of Jewish holidays, for example, without a good faith attempt to reach an agreement, is illegal and can demonstrate antisemitic intent. Derogatory names or references to Jewish stereotypes, such as Jewish financial prowess, may be considered harassment. Jews wearing overt religious symbols, such as kippot, tzitzit or sheitels (wigs) may be denied opportunities because they “don't look the part”. Hostility towards openly Jewish religious garb may stem from certain deeply-held stereotypes about Jews and Judaism.

Alongside classical forms of antisemitic discrimination, Canadian Jews face a new threat of discrimination due to ties with Israel and Israeli institutions. Canadian Jews, especially students and academics, have faced harassment, intimidation and even physical violence by their peers for being openly affiliated with the State of Israel. Although not all Jews have personal ties with Israel, for many Canadian Jews affiliation with the State of Israel is an integral part of their Jewish identity. Not all Jews maintain religious dietary or other religious observances, yet these remain central to Jewish identity. So too, many Canadian Jews express their Judaism through identification with and support for the Jewish homeland.

By relying on IHRA Definition, Canadian human rights commissions can recognize that anti-Israel discrimination is a form of antisemitism. Limiting employment opportunities or unequal treatment of an employee due to their connections with and support for the State of Israel is discrimination and is prohibited under human rights laws. Campuses, which receive federal and provincial funding, must ensure the safety and security of Jewish students and professors from antisemitic harassment.

4. Conclusion

The IHRA Definition provides a useful framework to understand the wide scope of antisemitism. Besides its contribution to the moral stigma that should be attached to antisemitic statements and expressions, the IHRA Definition is a powerful interpretive tool for law enforcement and legal professionals. The IHRA Definition can allow police to more accurately identify the antisemitic motivations behind criminal actions, helping them to overcome several of the significant deficiencies in the tracking of hate crimes in Canada. The IHRA Definition can be incorporated into existing hate propaganda and sentencing laws. Finally, the IHRA Definition can protect Canadian Jews from employment discrimination and harassment.

13 “Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents 2019”, B’nai Brith Canada

Now More Than Ever

Antisemitism has risen drastically over the past decade worldwide. Jewish religious and community institutions, as well as Jewish individuals, have been the targets of harassment, vandalism, violence and even murder. Jewish communities around the world are under intense pressure.

Jewish community watchdogs in the UK reported record high antisemitic incidents in 2019. The recent elections in the UK saw the mainstreaming of antisemitic tropes and stereotypes. In Germany, Jewish worshippers in a synagogue in Halle were narrowly saved from a massacre by a neo-Nazi gunman last Yom Kippur. Despite Germany's dark history, German Jews continue to be subject to violence and terror from far-right, Islamist and radical leftist groups. In France, violent acts against Jews constituted nearly 40% of hate crimes reported in 2017, despite Jews making up less than 1% of France's population. In 2019, there was 27% increase of antisemitic violence in France. In the past decade, a dozen French Jews have been murdered by Muslim extremists. In New York City, the city with the largest Jewish population outside of Israel, attacks on Jews constitute more than half of hate crimes reported. Over the past two years, American Jews have been assaulted and murdered in Pittsburgh, Poway, Jersey City and Monsey.

Canada is a welcoming and safe country for its Jewish population, but we need to be vigilant to ensure that the staggering antisemitism taking place in similar countries like the UK, France and the United States, is not allowed to advance here in Canada.

Recent examples of antisemitism in Canada



The cover of the Fall 2018 edition of neo-Nazi and racist Your Ward News. It was banned from distribution by Canada Post in 2016 and its editor was charged with **willful promotion of** hatred against Jews in 2019.

(Credit: Canadian Jewish News, 2019)



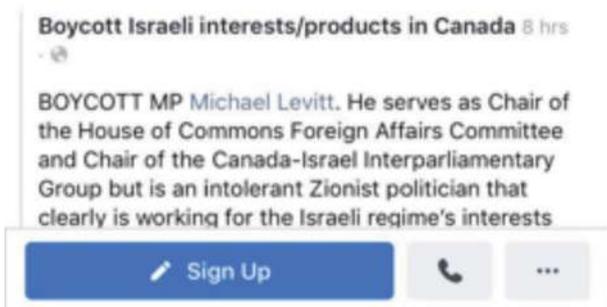
During the 2019 federal elections, numerous billboards of non-Jewish politicians were vandalized with swastikas. The swastika is a symbol associated with Nazism, antisemitism and the German genocide of European Jewry.

(@KarenLudwigNB/Twitter/ Maclean's, 2019)



A Jewish Member of Parliament is accused of representing Israeli interests. Disloyalty is a classic antisemitic charge against Diaspora Jews.

(@CIJAinfo/Twitter/2019)



Antisemitic tweet by a student at Toronto's York University. It promotes traditional stereotypes of undue **Jewish control and influence, as well as greed and financial power.**

(The Algemeiner/ 2019)



Jewish organization calls for dismissal of Regina candidate over 'anti-Semitic' social media posts

BY TAYLOR BRAAT · GLOBAL NEWS
Posted September 13, 2019 6:22 pm

Green Party candidate tweeted that “**Israel is practically a serial rapist,**” and “Israel continuing to colonize land already owned and farmed by another people, the Palestinians.” She also called for Israelis to get mental health support for “**getting over the PTSD**” of the holocaust, and one saying “Zionism is a **made-up cult.**”

(Global News/ 2019)



The Edmonton Journal apologized after publishing a cartoon evoking Nazi caricatures of Jews. Jews have traditionally been portrayed with **big noses, long beards** and a sinister appearance

(Malcolm Mayes/ Edmonton Journal/ via JTA/ 2019).



Ali Amirsalam faces criminal charges for assaulting Jewish participants in the Greater Toronto area's 2019 March for Israel. The man screamed “**Heil Hitler**” and called for Jews to be killed.

(Canadian Jewish News/ 2019)

Pro-Israel students said barred from student union board at Canada's McGill

Union president says it's 'very disappointing' that 'we would vote against a member on the basis that he's Jewish'

By JTA
27 October 2017, 11:34 am | 6
783 shares



The McGill university student union and student newspaper were both involved in antisemitic incidents in 2019. **An editorial by McGill Daily's editors falsely described Zionism as a "colonial movement," a "racist attitude" and "a violent practice."** The editors originally refused to publish a letter to the editor written by two Jewish students decrying the paper's previous antisemitic description of Zionism. The letter was finally published after the administration threatened to pull the Daily's funding. A month later, a Jewish student was threatened by the Students' Society of McGill University Legislative Council with removal from the Board of Directors if she refused to cancel a trip to Israel funded by Hillel Montreal.

(Times of Israel/ 2019)

The International Legal Forum (ILF), is a cutting-edge, Tel-Aviv based, nonprofit organization, performing as an international legal arm fighting against terror, antisemitism and the delegitimization of Israel and the Jewish people.

The organization was established to serve as an international and professional legal hub for lawyers, organizations and activists worldwide eager to contribute to the same estimable cause. The ILF specializes in devising essential, creative and groundbreaking legal strategies and provide legal and factual knowledge, research services, sophisticated tools and global cooperative action network to over 3,000 partners.



The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) is the advocacy agent of Jewish Federations across Canada. CIJA is a national, non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to protecting Jewish life in Canada through advocacy.

CIJA represents hundreds of thousands of Jewish Canadians affiliated with Jewish Federations across Canada.

