



Submission by Wiener Akademikerbund

Warsaw Human Dimension Conference

Plenary Session III: TND I Warsaw, September 29, 2022

In this submission, we will address some of the challenges, good practices and suggestions to improve the situation for minorities in our societies. Special emphasis will be placed on the Jewish communities, which are facing problems in many OSCE pS'. Other minorities are encouraged to take inspiration.

As noted in the *Extended Conference Programme*, we believe that civil society organizations can counter hateful narratives, dispel superstition, and marginalize radical elements seeking to damage social cohesion. In Denmark and elsewhere, there exists effective educational strategies and measures to foster mutual respect, understanding, and social cohesion.

Here in Europe, we have a long and complicated history for our Jewish communities, through centuries. We do not need to go into the details of the horrors that befell Jewish minorities in many European countries during the 20th century. These are well documented already.

After the end of World War II, it was widely expected that anti-Semitism would be relegated to the history books, never to be seen again. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. We have seen several terrorist attacks targeting synagogues and other Jewish organisations, for example the deadly attack at the synagogue in Krystalgade, Copenhagen.

Such attacks are of course met with widespread condemnation, as well as increased security measures. Currently, Danish synagogues and Jewish schools are afforded permanent protection to prevent further atrocities. Events organized by Danish Jews are routinely carried out under police protection. Highly publicized events will have heavy and highly visible protection.

However, while security is good and necessary, the current situation can hardly be considered a satisfactory state of affairs. In a healthy society, where mutual respect and social cohesion are all-pervasive qualities, there would be no need for systematic protection of Jewish or other minorities. The fact that such protection is necessary is a clear sign of unsolved problems. There should be no need for Jews or other minorities to live in a permanent low-level state of fear.

Another indicator of the low-level fear is that Jews rarely wear their Kippah and other traditional clothing in public. One can usefully compare with the Muslims, who routinely do so without incident. Only when Jews also feel safe wearing their symbolic clothing in public can we consider this pervasive problem solved.

Unfortunately, this situation is now common in European countries. For example, ongoing discrimination and intolerance causes Jews in Malmö to constantly carry a burden of extra security. This burden also leads to a steady stream of our Jewish citizens to give up and leave. But do we really want this problem 'solved' by a Jewish exodus? The answer should be a clear 'No!'.

Historically, anti-Jewish sentiment has had a wide variety of causes, from ignorance and superstition to hatred of 'Capitalism'. The latter was a key driving force of anti-Semitism in Germany almost a century ago. It is disturbing that such nonsense could drive events, but it did. Fortunately, these ideas are now widely discredited, with only tiny fringe groups still harbouring them.

If one looks at the terrorist attacks targeting Jews in recent times, a distinct pattern does emerge, unfortunately. Radical Islamic groups, such as Al-Qaeda, have inspired groups or individuals (so-called "Lone wolves") to execute such attacks, through publications such as 'Inspire'. We need to identify and disable any such chains of inspiration in order to restore social cohesion and peace.

Our intelligence services can play a key role, and already do. Identifying and mapping inspiration to anti-Semitism is important, and we need to allocate sufficient resources to this. Also to investigate online communities, such as gaming chats, where radical recruitment often takes place.

For this effort to become more effective, we see a need for it to become more publicly visible. Our intelligence services could usefully publish detailed reports analyzing the motivation for anti-Semitism and other incitements to violence. This will enable qualified public debate, and effective responses addressing the sources of radical motivation.

It is somewhat unfortunate that Al-Qaeda, Hamas and other Islamist organisations are able to draw on Islamic scripture and history to motivate terrorist attacks on Jews. This should be fairly easy to resolve, though, if Islamic leaders will lend their authority to solve it:

If Islamic leaders and organizations use their authority to declare any anti-Jewish passages in Islamic scripture to be invalid and in no way holy, the religious inspiration for terrorism would be eliminated. It should be of obvious interest for everyone in our societies to cut any such ties to intolerance and terrorism for good. Islamic organizations signing the Proposed Charter for Muslim Understanding would be a fine way to accomplish this.

There are more efforts that can be applied and scaled up: The Jewish community in Denmark is engaging actively in raising awareness of the problems, and in dismantling prejudice against Jews. Meeting Jews in person is an effective way to counter conspiracy theories against them.

Another good example is that awareness of anti-Semitism has now become part of the default school curriculum in Denmark. This can easily be duplicated by other OSCE pS', and usefully extended to include awareness of how much persons of Jewish origin have contributed to European arts, culture, science and banking.

Taking pride in our Jewish heritage is a powerful tool to counter extremism and protect social cohesion. This would include many well known great personalities, such as:

Psychologists Alfred Adler and Sigmund Freud. Economist and philosophers Milton Friedman, Ludwig von Mises and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Musicians Fritz Kreisler, Gustav Mahler and Leonard Cohen. Authors Franz Kafka and Stefan Zweig. Nobel laureate scientists Niels and Aage Bohr and Albert Einstein, Otto Meyerhof and Otto Warburg.

Standing proudly with our Jewish heritage would marginalize anti-Jewish sentiment, and facilitate putting an end to it. For we need not only to grant protection to our Jewish communities – we need also to identify and uproot the causes that make such protection necessary.

Wiener Akademikerbund therefore recommends:

- That our Jewish heritage should be clearly appreciated in our educational systems.
- That pS authorities identify the sources of anti-Jewish attitude, and publicize the findings.
- That organizations found to incite anti-Jewish sentiment have any public recognition or funding revoked.

Holocaust Memorial Museum:

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/en>

Terrorist (Jihadi) attack on the synagogue in Krystalgade, Copenhagen, Denmark:

<https://news.yahoo.com/manhunt-under-way-copenhagen-shootings-pm-calls-terrorist-031534633.html>

Jews no longer safe in Sweden:

<https://www.jpost.com/international/sweden-no-easy-place-for-a-jewish-community-683428>

Recent anti-Jewish attacks in Europe:

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/anti-semitic-attacks-in-europe-in-recent-years/>

<https://www.westernjournal.com/man-quran-dashboard-arrested-targeting-jews-la-using-car-weapon/>

Great Jewish personalities:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Austrian_Jews

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Jewish_Nobel_laureates

A Proposed Charter of Muslim Understanding:

<https://islam-watch.org/ExMuslims/Charter-of-Muslim-Understanding.htm>