



# Report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief

01.11.2019 | Ahmed Shaheed (United Nations)

**20 September 2019 - The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the interim report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Ahmed Shaheed:**

### **Summary**

In the present report, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Ahmed Shaheed, identifies violence, discrimination and expressions of hostility motivated by antisemitism as a serious obstacle to the enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion or belief. The Special Rapporteur notes with serious concern that the frequency of antisemitic incidents appears to be increasing in magnitude in several countries where monitors attempt to document such incidents, including online, and that the prevalence of antisemitic attitudes and the risk of violence against Jewish individuals and sites appears to be significant elsewhere, including in countries with few or no Jewish inhabitants. He finds that those incidents have created a climate of fear among a substantial number of Jews, impairing their right to manifest their religion, and that discriminatory acts by individuals and laws and policies by Governments have also had a negative impact. The Special Rapporteur stresses that antisemitism, if left unchecked by Governments, poses risks not only to Jews, but also to members of other minority communities. Antisemitism is toxic to democracy and mutual respect of citizens and threatens all societies in which it goes unchallenged.

The Special Rapporteur urges States to adopt a human-rights based approach in combating antisemitism, as should be done in combating all forms of religious intolerance. He encourages States to identify, document and prohibit, in law and in practice, the commission of antisemitic hate crimes; to enhance government outreach to Jewish communities; to protect individuals at risk of violence; and to take actions in the areas of education and awareness-raising aimed at curbing the spread of antisemitic views. The Special Rapporteur also directs recommendations to the media, civil society and the United Nations on efforts that all stakeholders can make to combat antisemitism and promote religious freedom and pluralism.

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