



Anti-Semitism threatens democracy

22/07/2010 | German Council of Christian-Jewish Cooperation

Statement of the German Council of Christian-Jewish Cooperation (Deutscher Koordinierungsrat)

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([Deutscher Koordinierungsrat der Gesellschaften für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit](#))

Abstract:

The Executive and Board of the Coordinating Council – the Federation of more than 80 societies for Christian-Jewish cooperation – are deeply concerned about anti-Semitic remarks and actions in recent times that often occur in the new livery of anti-Zionist and anti-Israeli pseudo-legitimacy. The fact that these racist and anti-democratic phenomena are favored in statements by members of the Bundestag, is a clear warning to our society. For no less worrying is the fact that society has already largely come to terms with the existence of anti-Semitism and the emergence of anti-Semites in the public. Here lies the real danger to our democracy, for only a democracy that is willing to fight against discrimination and hatred will be able to secure the rights of its citizens.

Anti-Semitism threatens democracy

Statement of the German Council of Christian-Jewish Cooperation about the youngest anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist occurrences

The Flotilla events of 31 May 2010 offered numerous individuals and groups an excuse to express their anti-Semitic attitudes in Internet forums, comment pages and also in public. Even members of the Bundestag gave under the guise of criticism of Israel blatantly anti-Semitic statements. It would be more than naive to assume that Israel's military action has caused these positions; they are rather existing resentments that take the tragic events as cause to express themselves in public.

In the Federal Republic of Germany certain milieus have been solidified, such as right-wing parties

and their voters, in which anti-Semitism and racism are regarded as tolerable or even forming an identity. It can hardly be disputed that alongside also anti-Semitic and racist positions have developed in the Arab-Islamic environment.

How far the poisonous effect has already developed, one can easily recognize in the fact that even children and adolescents not shrink from violence against people because they are Jewish, as happened recently in Hanover.

With great concern we can see that such developments are in many parts of the population by no means shared but already accepted as unchangeable. One can not help feeling that one has largely come to terms with the existence of anti-Semitic milieus and groups.

Instead of the necessary resistance, ostracism and struggle against them, a non-culture of looking away and forgetting has developed. It is obviously not perceived that besides the immediate threat to Jews in Germany, the whole society is threatened, if its foundations are questioned (challenged) by anti-Semitism and racism. These are not marginal developments as they directly threaten the essence of liberal democracy. Whoever favors a humane, enlightened, democratic society, can never accept anti-Semitism and racism with anyone or anywhere.

We demand that social institutions, policy makers, educational institutions, churches and bodies that represent the Muslims in Germany remain steadfast in their fight against anti-Semitism and racism.

It is not surprising that recently those voices have increased that take offense at the policy of the Government of Israel. Given the worldwide spread of violence, such as the suppression of the Kurdish people in Turkey, one may argue, whether such moral pathos is not selective and therefore cheap.

But whoever questions the State of Israel's right to exist, has forfeited any right to an ethical discourse, not only because of the manifestation of anti-Semitism, but also because thereby one blatantly promotes war.

Bad Nauheim, 20. Juli 2010

Executice Committee and executive board of the German Council of Christian-Jewish Cooperation

Translated from the German by Fritz Voll