

## **THE ANTISEMITISM OF THE IRANIAN ESTABLISHMENT – IN VIEW OF THE STATEMENTS MADE BY IRAN'S VICE PRESIDENT**

### **Foreword**

1. The antisemitism of the Iranian Establishment is a main component of Iran's struggle against Israel, as seen in the recent statements of Iran's Vice President. Despite its venom and its harm in the long term, it is not receiving the attention that it deserves.

The following report presents the primary characteristics of Iranian antisemitism.

### **Main points**

A. Iranian antisemitism is state-sponsored, institutional, and an instrument of the regime as part of its official and declared policy to destroy the State of Israel.

B. A major motif of this policy is the official denial of the Holocaust out of a desire to undermine Israel's right to exist and legitimacy.

C. The Iranian regime is operating actively to export antisemitism and encouragement of the denial of the Holocaust. It does this, inter alia, by using a variety of state-run media such as television, websites, and films, as well as international forums, book fairs, and contests that it organizes.

D. Iran is cooperating with extremist rightwing and leftwing parties and organizations around the world to encourage antisemitism.

E. Iranian antisemitism contains also violent elements.

F. It rests on a religious and ideological platform and on the teachings of Khomeini.

G. Action is required to raise the awareness of the international community to the dangers of Iranian antisemitism and to fully condemn it and reject it – especially in light of the Iranian declarations calling for the destruction of the State of Israel.

### **2. Iranian antisemitism is institutional and state-sponsored**

Iranian antisemitism is part of the general strategy for the struggle against the State of Israel with the aim of weakening and ultimately wiping Israel off the face of the map. This is seen in the numerous statements of Iranian leaders – from the President, the Vice President, Members of the Government, senior religious leaders, and ambassadors around the world.

One can say that the Iranian strategy towards Israel consists of three primary components: the development of nuclear weapons; support for terrorism; antisemitism and denial of the Holocaust. The three are inter-linked and provide support for each other. The antisemitic component and the denial of the Holocaust in

the Iranian policy provide it with ideological-religious justification for the uncompromising struggle against Israel.

It is important to emphasize that in recent decades, especially since the fall of the Soviet bloc, Iran stands out as the only country in the world that adheres to antisemitism as official policy.

### **3. Denial of the Holocaust**

Iran leads an official line of denying the Holocaust. In that, too, Iran is an exception, for there is no other country in the world that officially promotes the denial of the Holocaust. The denial of the Holocaust is spread throughout the Iranian elite and it finds expression in conferences such as the Holocaust denial conference that was held in Teheran in December 2006, an exhibit denying the Holocaust in Teheran in July 2007, and in numerous statements by Iran's President Ahmedinajad and senior Iranian officials.

Just one example was President Ahmedinejad's speech in the main assembly in Teheran (2 December 2011) to mark the 33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, with the participation of Hamas' Prime Minister Haniya. In that speech, Ahmedinajad called for stopping the support for the "Zionists" and to liberate Palestine and Jerusalem. He asserted (once again) that the problems of the world originate from American domination and Israel's existence. He also stated that "an important act of the Iranian people is to shatter the modern idol which is the Zionist regime that was created by imperialism and which is inspired by the legend known as the Holocaust", that Iran will not retreat from its nuclear program, and that soon significant nuclear accomplishments will be revealed, despite Western pressure on the matter (Iranian television, 11 December 2011).

### **4. Why is Iran denying the Holocaust?**

There are a number of major reasons.

A. Creating delegitimization for Israel's right to exist – from the Iranian point of view Israel arose because of the Holocaust. Based on this logic, had there been no Holocaust, Israel would have no reason to exist.

B. Creating conditions for the destruction of Israel – based on the logic that the world supports Israel because of the world's feelings of guilt towards the Jews.

C. Demonization of Israel and the Jews – which many times has been a precondition for genocide and an overall attack against the Jewish People.

D. Another claim, which is different from the rest, is that Israel is the one carrying out a holocaust against the Palestinians, and presenting the Jews as those who have perpetrated genocide throughout history, such as the alleged attack by Jews against Christians in pre-Islamic Yemen.

## **5. Exporting antisemitism and the denial of the Holocaust**

Iran is engaged in many and diverse efforts to export its antisemitic policy and denial of the Holocaust. Among them, it is making intense usage of cinema films and television, government websites, book fairs, political cartoons, articles in the press, and more.

In this context, one can note the establishment of Spanish language websites, such as: [www.organizacionislam.org.il](http://www.organizacionislam.org.il) and [www.prensailamica.com](http://www.prensailamica.com) , as well as antisemitic films, the most recent being "Saturday's Hunter" which was screened in Iran in 2011 and which depicts a grandfather who is an orthodox Jewish rabbi teaching his grandson to kill Palestinians. Iranian exporting of antisemitic content is done also through the Hezbollah website [www.almanar.com.lb/spanish](http://www.almanar.com.lb/spanish) and on the Arabic television station "Al-Quds".

In 2005, Iran displayed many antisemitic books at the International Book Fair in Frankfurt. In 2011, about 200 antisemitic books were displayed at the international book fair in Teheran.

International forums are an additional means for exporting antisemitism. The most recent example is, of course, that of Iran's Vice President statements at the UN Drugs and Crime Conference that was held in Iran in late June 2012. Another example is the speech of Ahmedinajad at the UN General Assembly in which he accused Zionism of attacking the World Trade Center as part of an international conspiracy. Yet another example was seen during the course of the "Durban 2" Conference.

Denial of the Holocaust around the world is promoted by official Iranian emissaries. Thus, for example, Iran's Ambassador in Uruguay, Hojatollah Soltani, denied the Holocaust during a speech that he gave at a conference in the capital city Montevideo. In that speech he said, inter alia, "Maybe some people died, some were murdered, I don't know, maybe thousands of Jews. But that figure of 2 million, 4 million, 6 million, that is a lie according to some European historians who have submitted documents." (July 2011)

## **6. Iran is cooperating with extremist rightwing and leftwing organizations around the world**

### Examples of ties with the extremist rightwing

A. The ties between the leaders of the JOBBIK Party (an extreme rightwing party in Hungary) and Iran are known. For example, the members of the party in Budapest organized demonstrations supporting Iran against the American efforts to isolate Iran. The party also receives significant financial support from Iran (for further details see the CFCA – Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism – website

Furthermore, the party's spokesman, Martin Gyongyosi, even participated in a reception for Iran's "Islamic Revolution Day" (9 January 2012), and that was just a

week after he had harshly spoken out against Israel and the Jews, and even denied the Holocaust in his interview with the newspaper, The Jewish Chronicle. In October 2011 an Iranian delegation numbering 23 participants visited towns in Hungary whose mayors were elected on behalf of the extreme rightwing party. Yet another illustration of the connection between both sides is the call by JOBBIK's leader to have Iranian Revolutionary Guards members act as Observers for the European Parliament's elections in June 2009.

B. In 2010, there was a rise in the number of antisemitic incidents in Santiago, Chile's capital, some of those incidents having Iranian involvement. Among other things, the extreme rightwing organization "Patria Nueva Sociedad", in cooperation with a local known Shi'ite activist with ties to the Iranian regime, carried out violent acts against the Jewish community. According to the reports, this cooperation was funded by Iran.

#### An example of ties with the extremist leftwing

Iran maintains close ties with extreme leftwing social organizations in Latin America, which receive funding from Iran. Thus, for example, visits of extreme leftwing leaders to the Iranian holy city of Qom are known, as are joint attempts to promote boycotts of Israel in parliamentary forums, and demonstrations (guided by Iran) against Jewish institutions and figures during Israel's Cast Lead Operation.

### **7. The ideological-religious characteristics of Iranian antisemitism**

The characteristics include the following.

A. The Jews are depicted as a religion and not a people, and are, therefore, not entitled to self-determination and an independent state.

B. The Jews are heretics and unclean, and, therefore, must be segregated from the Believers. This view has roots in the Shi'ite belief, for the hatred of Jews is one of the foundations of Shi'ite Islam and is one of the components from which stems Iran's anti-Israel position.

It is to be noted that also evidence in recent years shows that Nazi Germany itself used during the Second World War this belief to disseminate vicious antisemitic propaganda through very popular radio broadcasts in the Persian language to Iran, thus helping to create the antisemitic infrastructure that exists in Iran today.

C. The land of Palestinian is sanctified, a Moslem Waqf, and, therefore, there is no place for a non-Moslem entity on it.

D. The adoption of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" and the claim that the Jews seek to dominate the world.

E. The hatred for Zionism is the sole area where the regime shows complete adherence to its ideology and serves as a fig leaf for the regime's bankruptcy in other matters. Furthermore, the hostility towards Israel is a central component of the

Iranian regime's ideology and is found in the writings of Khomeini. He presented the hatred towards the Jews and the confrontation between Islam and Israel as a central component of his book Velayat-e faqih. In that book, he emphatically claimed that the Jews brought suffering upon Islam since its beginnings, by using subterfuge against the Moslems. According to the book, Jewish plots against Islam were intended to carry out a Jewish campaign and to pave the way for the infiltration of Western imperialism. The Jews, in cooperation with the West, oppose Islam's aim of spreading to all corners of the world.

According to Khomeini, the establishment of Israel is an expression of the plot against Islam. He drew a close connection between Judaism and Zionism and the process of secularization and Westernization, seeing this as a threat to the very existence of Islam, for the aim was to subjugate Islam to imperialism. Khomeini as well as Khomeini and Ahmedinajad have taken the confrontation with Israel from the ideological plane to an important matter of Iranian national interest.

#### **8. Antisemitism helps to entrench Iran's position in the Moslem world and in the Middle East**

The extremist policy against Israel, the calls for its destruction, and the institutionalized Iranian antisemitism help it entrench its position in the region and serve as a tool for Iran to attain regional hegemony and a position of leadership in the Moslem world. Israel and Judaism are a key card used by Iran in its efforts to find pathways into the Islamic world, with the main principle of the revolution being the leadership of the Moslem world. This is also seen as a tool for strengthening the regime's standing within Iran itself.

#### **9. Iranian antisemitism contains violent elements**

Another characteristic of the Iranian antisemitic policy is its violent and terrorist nature. The worst example of this was the bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires which caused the deaths of many dozens of people. Another example is the abovementioned cooperation in Chile. Moreover, Iran uses Hezbollah channels and operatives abroad to carry out attacks against Jewish and Israeli targets.

## 10. **Conclusion**

Iranian antisemitism and denial of the Holocaust are part of a deep and broad worldview, based on the Shi'ite belief and the revolutionary Iranian ideology. They are part of a systematic, comprehensive, and rationalized official strategy intended to destroy the State of Israel. It is important that policymakers and shapers of public opinion abroad understand these facts, and act accordingly.

**For further valuable information, including video clips and statements, on this subject and other matters dealing with antisemitism please go to the CFCA website [www.antisemitism.org.il](http://www.antisemitism.org.il).**