



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation CONF/PLE(2014)REC2

Adopted by the Conference of INGOs on 26 June 2014

Combating anti-Semitism in Europe

The Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) of the Council of Europe

In accordance with the decision on combating hate speech adopted by the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe on 30 January 2014;

Underlining that racism and intolerance in Europe take various and specific forms, including anti-Semitism;

Deeply concerned by the way in which anti-Semitism in old and new forms is spreading and worsening in almost all Council of Europe member states;

Considering that anti-Semitism is a serious threat and an attack on democracy and the universal values of human rights and social cohesion based on respect for human dignity;

Believing that a balance must be struck between the need to preserve the principle of freedom of expression and the no less important principle of respect for human dignity;

Believing that Europe, whose history has been marked by anti-Semitism and which 70 years ago was the scene of the specific genocide of the Holocaust, has a duty today vigorously to condemn and combat anti-Semitism;

Considering that European civil society as a whole must unite in issuing a strong and urgent appeal both to public opinion and also to national governments and European institutions and in taking effective action so that the poison of anti-Semitism is eradicated from Europe;

Referring to the Council of Europe's work in this area, in particular [ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 9](#) (2004) and [Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1563 \(2007\)1 on Combating anti-Semitism in Europe](#);

Referring to the [decision of the European Court of Human Rights of 7 July 2003](#), which states that "denying crimes against humanity is therefore one of the most serious forms of racial defamation of Jews and of incitement to hatred of them. The denial or rewriting of this type of historical fact undermines the values on which the fight against racism and anti-Semitism are based and constitutes a serious threat to public order. Such acts are incompatible with democracy and human rights" (Garaudy v. France, 65831/01);

Underlining that it was the Ministers of Education of Council of Europe member states who in 2002 initiated the International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January, followed in 2005 by the United Nations;

Calls on Council of Europe member states to:

Implement effectively the recommendations of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights in his comment, "[Europe still haunted by anti-Semitism](#)", of 23 January 2014 and in particular:

Condemn vigorously and unambiguously all manifestations of anti-Semitism (attacks, speech, texts ...);

Collect and analyse data on manifestations of anti-Semitism on a systematic basis;

Respond appropriately to the special protection needs of the victims of acts of anti-Semitism;

Introduce in national legislation provisions of penal law for effectively prosecuting and punishing any political parties or groups which use anti-Semitic arguments in their discourse and activities;

Reinforce, if they have not already done so, their legislation to ensure that the intentional, public condoning, denying or trivialisation of the Holocaust are punishable by effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties, including in the case of acts perpetrated by legal persons;

Intensify their efforts to fight ignorance and intolerance within current and future generations through systematic, on-going education, which should include the accurate teaching of the Holocaust;

Draw up measures to combat racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and include them in national plans and strategies, in the context of co-operation between state institutions, representatives of the Jewish communities and other relevant civil society organisations.

Calls on the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and all relevant Council of Europe bodies to:

Establish a clear legal definition of anti-Semitism, as part of the efforts to combat hate speech;

Examine regularly the issue of anti-Semitism and developments in the situation in the member states and make recommendations for the prevention and eradication of anti-Semitism;

Draw up recommendations for the elimination of anti-Semitic messages and speech on the Internet, including the recommendation that member states establish national authorities responsible for preventing cross-border dissemination and punishing the illegal content of racist and anti-Semitic messages on the web, by making the content authors fully legally accountable for their comments, regardless of the medium used for their expression (access providers and host servers);

Encourage and, where appropriate, propose and organise awareness-raising and training programmes on the subject at European and national level;

Organise on 27 January 2015, International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp, an event on the forecourt of the Council of Europe to be broadcast live by the media as a clear sign of the organisation's resolute condemnation of all forms of anti-Semitism and its commitment to prevent it throughout Europe;

And undertakes to join in these efforts;

Invites the INGOS holding participatory status with the Council of Europe to:

Increase their vigilance and their involvement in combating anti-Semitism in Europe and step up their co-operation to that end, as well as to enable the victims of anti-Semitic attacks to turn to the authorities and receive the attention and responses provided for by law;

Raise awareness among their national members and **encourage** them to take action to prevent anti-Semitism, in particular by proposing awareness-raising and training programmes, and draw the attention of national and European bodies to cases of anti-Semitism.

This recommendation was proposed by the steering committee 'Act against anti-Semitism' and approved by the Human Rights Committee on 24 June 2014