



**STATEMENT OF THE
ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE
BEFORE THE
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
ON
“TAKING STOCK: COMBATING ANTI-SEMITISM
IN THE OSCE REGION”
FEBRUARY 7, 2008
WASHINGTON, DC**

My name is Stacy Burdett, I am the Associate Director of Government and National Affairs for the Anti-Defamation League. I would like to offer special thanks, on behalf of ADL and its National Director, Abraham Foxman, to Chairman Hastings, Co-Chairman Cardin, the immediate past Chairman, Chris Smith, and to all the of Commissioners. Without your commitment to placing the fight against anti-Semitism on the agenda of the OSCE, without your day-in-day-out work to highlight the urgency and importance of getting the US and its allies to stay with this fight, the milestones and accomplishments we reflect on today would never have been possible.

Anti-Semitism is a major concern for the Anti-Defamation League -- not just because we are a Jewish community organization, but because anti-Semitism, the longest and most persistent form of prejudice, threatens security and democracy. It is violation of human rights, and it poisons the health of a society as a whole.

The Anti-Defamation League was established in 1913 with its core mission to combat the then horrific discrimination against Jews in all facets of American life and the growth

of anti-Jewish movements and organizations peddling their hate around the world. And we have learned that, where anti-Semitism flourishes, no minority group is safe. Over nearly a century, as part of the fight against anti-Semitism and bigotry, we have been deeply engaged in the major civil rights campaigns of the last century. The ADL pioneered the development of model hate crime laws, developed anti-prejudice education models and law enforcement training programs to address all forms of prejudice.

Anti-Semitism Intertwined with Anti-Israel Animus

As the Commission heard in its hearing last week, anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish incidents are rising in the OSCE Region, in those states where Jews are present and it is also evident in those states where few or no Jews live.

The 2004 Berlin Declaration laid down an important marker about the newest mutation of anti-Semitism when it said: "International developments or political issues, including those in Israel or elsewhere in the Middle East, never justify anti-Semitism." Yet, reports from governments, the ODIHR, and NGOs all highlight that anti-Israel animus is routinely intertwined with traditional anti-Semitic themes. Cases of anti-Semitism are too often contextualized and explained by hostility over events in the Middle East.

ADL's monitoring of the Arab press, shows that, while anti-Semitic caricatures are indeed more prevalent during times of Israeli-Palestinian tensions, they also appear during periods of calm or even times of progress in peace negotiations. So conflict and violence provide a rationale for anti-Jewish hatred. But, even absent violence which generates headlines, the mere presence, the existence of Israel provides fodder for anti-Semitic propaganda and incitement. [See *Appendix I for examples from the OSCE Mediterranean Partners Region*]

The action spearheaded by this Commission has given rise to a growing international recognition that anti-Jewish incitement can never be defended as mere political criticism or commentary. The European Union's antiracism monitoring body's (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights) [Working Definition of Anti-Semitism](#), used also by the ODIHR, and highlighted by the U.S. State Department, includes instances such as the comparison of Israel or its policy to Nazism. The State Department's 2005 report on Global Anti-Semitism acknowledged the increase of anti-Semitism masked as criticism of Israel: "*The demonization of Israel, or vilification of Israeli leaders, sometimes through comparisons with Nazi leaders, and through the use of Nazi symbols to caricature them, indicates an anti-Semitic bias rather than a valid criticism of policy concerning a controversial issue.*"

Anti-Semitic Incidents and Sentiment in Europe and the US

ADL conducted surveys in 11 European countries released in [May](#) and [July](#) 2007 which revealed that a large number of people believe the classical anti-Semitic canards that have persistently pursued Jews through the centuries.

In some countries, the survey showed anti-Semitic attitudes to be gaining traction.

Overall, fully half of the Europeans surveyed believe Jews are more loyal to Israel than to their own country, and more than one-third believe that Jews have too much power in business and finance.

The survey's findings help underscore the contrast between anti-Semitic attitudes held by Europeans and those held by Americans.

The Anti-Defamation League's 2007 [Survey of American Attitudes Towards Jews in America](#), found that 15% of Americans - or nearly 35 million adults - hold hard core anti-Semitic views about Jews compared to 14% in 2005. These include notions such as: "Jews are more loyal to Israel than America," Jews have "Too much power in the U.S.," or that Jews are responsible for the death of Christ.

Previous ADL surveys over the last decade had indicated that anti-Semitism was in decline ([graph](#)). So it appears that the positive trend toward a more tolerant and accepting America has not taken hold as firmly as we had hoped. These findings, coupled with the ongoing acts of anti-Semitic incidents and hate crimes, suggest that anti-Semitic beliefs endure and resonate with a substantial segment of the American public.

The Anti-Defamation League is preparing to release its annual audit of anti-Semitic Incidents in the coming days. Based on our preliminary findings, we will note an approximate 13% decline, the third consecutive year incidents have decreased. While the statistical decrease is certainly welcome, two thirds of hate crimes that target individuals based on their religion continue to be against Jews. This is an overwhelming number given the small percentage of the US population that is Jewish. And these incidents take place in a broader atmosphere and context that give us reason for serious concern. [See *Appendix ii for a compendium of anti-Semitic incidents in select states from 2000-2006. See Appendix iii for a 10 year comparison of FBI hate crime data broken down by category of the offender's motivation.*]

The Growth of Conspiracy Theories

Against the backdrop of widespread beliefs about Jewish dual loyalty, we were understandably concerned that the publication books and articles by respected authors questioning the loyalties of Jewish Americans could provide mainstream resonance to such false charges and other enduring anti-Semitic themes. The Members of the Commission know well the [article](#), published later as a book, by two professors from distinguished academic institutions, John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago and Stephen Walt of Harvard, in which they claimed that the overwhelming power of the Israel lobby steered American policy in directions against U.S. interests.

The best refutation of this is in former Secretary of [State George Schultz's forward](#) to Abraham Foxman's recent book which I commend to the attention of the Commissioners. These conspiracy theories are not only harmful to Jews, we think they take America's policy debate in a wrong direction.

We continue to see examples of anti-Semitism among academics and opinion elites. A Jan. 7 essay on Jewish identity, published on the Washington Post's website On Faith, panelist Arun Gandhi, a grandson of pacifist Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi, wrote: "*Jewish identity in the past has been locked into the Holocaust experience. . . . It is a very good example of [how] a community can overplay a historic experience to the point that it begins to repulse friends. . . . The world did feel sorry for the episode but when an individual or a nation refuses to forgive and move on the regret turns into anger. . . . The Jewish identity in the future appears bleak. . . . We have created a culture of violence (Israel and the Jews are the biggest players) and that Culture of Violence is eventually going to destroy humanity.*" This libel of an entire people, and of a democratic state trying to defend itself and seeking peace with its neighbors, was mind-boggling coming from someone so respected in the field of nonviolence education and advocacy.

Gandhi apologized: "I do not believe and should not have implied that the policies of the Israeli government are reflective of the views of all Jewish people" -- and later resigned as president of the board of M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, housed at the University of Rochester. Yet his apology did little to undo the connection he made between the Nazi atrocities and the policies of Israel. He merely explained that he erred in making a generalization about Jews because not all Jews support Israeli policy.

Our positive experience in this country has shown that, overall, these are notions that opinion leaders and the vast majority of Americans reject. In response to the Gandhi controversy, author and Washington Post Writer Sally Quinn admitted: "We made a mistake. We went over the line, and we are going to guard against that in the future." Post Ombudsman Deborah Howell later wrote: "The piece should not have been published. The apologies should have come sooner."

In a recent survey on American response to the Walt/Mearsheimer thesis, ADL found a similar rejection of such ideas. When we asked the American people if "American Jews control U.S. Middle East policy—61 percent said no; when asked about the influence American Jews have on U.S. policy – a majority of 55 percent said it was just the right amount of influence.

Professors Mearsheimer and Walt charge the pro-Israel lobby -- in which they include ADL and other community organizations—with having undue and pernicious influence on U.S. foreign policy. The American people overwhelmingly reject that. Only 4 percent of those we surveyed believed that to be true, while 25 percent say the Saudi oil lobby has too much influence; 24 percent the Pharmaceutical Association of America; 11 percent the National Rifle Association and 8 percent the tobacco industry.

Consider these trends in the context of the hate ideology emanating from Iran and the images disseminated by government-supported newspapers in some Mediterranean Partner states of this organization. I have attached to my testimony recent editorial cartoons that offer graphic evidence. You can see a potent and dangerous confluence of factors that compels focused action by an Inter-Governmental Organizations concerned with security and human rights.

The OSCE Role Today

When we first were confronted by the surge of anti-Semitic hate violence in the OSCE region, we were a community still scarred by the United Nations World Conference Against Racism in Durban, and the realization that the international community did not view anti-Semitism as a legitimate human rights issue. For communities in the OSCE Region, there was no one to call, no focal point of responsibility, and an international community largely in denial. Our groups came to this room with a simple request, if international bodies such as the U.N. could not address the human rights violation that is anti-Semitism, let the OSCE, with a record on the issue convene the real conference to address the racism of anti-Semitism.

Since then, the OSCE has become more than a locus of activity and progress in raising awareness about new forms of anti-Semitism and the dangers they pose. The OSCE has been a forum for forthright recognition of and response to anti-Semitism in what continues to be a poisonous and politicized environment. The Commissioners know well, and were deeply involved in, the groundbreaking Ministerial Council Decisions, Parliamentary Assembly Resolutions and tolerance conferences that secured commitments for action by Participating States and for the OSCE institutions. The appointment by the Chair in Office of Personal Representatives on anti-Semitism, on Xenophobia and on Discrimination against Muslims has added political muscle to OSCE efforts to raise the profile of these issues. You heard testimony last week about the initiatives of Professor Weisskirchen in a variety of Participating States and substantive areas and also about the impressive body of work now underway as part of the Tolerance and non-Discrimination program that grew out of your efforts. In only three years, we all agree that ODIHR has made tangible progress in fulfilling its tasking to monitor and report on hate incidents and to share promising programs with states.

So now, in the face of hate, there is a place to call, a locus for action, an intergovernmental partnership with civil society to spotlight and combat this problem. Institutions, including those of the United Nations, are using OSCE materials in areas like Holocaust remembrance and education.

Sadly, six years after we had our first hearing in this room, Holocaust denial has taken on new life, the Zionism is racism canard continues to have life in international fora, most recently in the ratified Arab Charter of Human Rights which calls Zionism an "impediment to human dignity." It was initially welcomed by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. She later distanced herself from it as contradicting the rescission of the infamous Zionism is Racism resolution. Now the UN is planning a review process of the infamous Durban conference. While that process has yet to fully take shape, we know that we need the "center of gravity" in the fight against anti-Semitism that the OSCE has offered, now just as we did then.

On reflection, this Commission should be proud that the labor begun in this room has yielded:

- A sound body of commitments on anti-Semitism by Participating States;

- An assignment of distinct responsibility and point of substantive and political activity on the issue in the ODIHR and the Chair in Office;
- An impressive array of cutting edge programmatic activity;

The Need to Maintain US Focus and Resolve

Both the evidence that anti-Semitism continues to rise in this region, and the OSCE's mission of taking proactive conflict prevention measures point to the need for OSCE to sustain its key role in combating anti-Semitism. A critical component of sustaining momentum is keeping a political spotlight on the issue.

- **Back Up America's Commitment with concrete program support.** The US should resume support for the specialized work of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Tolerance and non-Discrimination Unit and help promote its education programs and other tools to combat anti-Semitism and hate crime. The vast majority of the events and programs that have built momentum in this process are funded through extra budgetary contributions from just a few Participating States. As part of its longstanding commitment to the OSCE Human Dimension, the US was a key supporter of the tolerance agenda and specific programs to fight anti-Semitism. At present, the fact that there is no US funding available for these programs sends the message that US enthusiasm for this agenda is waning.
- **Strengthen the capacity of the Personal Representative of the CiO with staff and resources.** We welcomed the reappointment by the Finnish CiO of the Personal Representative on Anti-Semitism as well as Personal Representatives on Racism and Xenophobia, and on Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims. We have heard for two years questions about their limited capacity. We urge you to support providing them with dedicated staff to increase their effectiveness and allow for a targeted response at a political level as specific problems arise. This staff should closely coordinate and consult with the Adviser on Anti-Semitism Issues in the ODIHR.
- **Urge the Convening of a high level conference on Anti-Semitism in 2009** to provide an important focal point for advocacy and implementation.
- **Make Fulfillment of Commitments to collect data on anti-Semitism and hate crime part of the U.S. bilateral agenda with Participating States.** Data collection is a critical first step to highlight and confront anti-Semitism for policymakers and the public.
- **Help Civil Society Bridge the Gap between Commitment and Implementation.** The US should support ODIHR efforts to build the capacity of non-governmental organizations. Reports by ODIHR and successive OSCE tolerance events continue to highlight a grave disparity between states' commitments in the area of hate crime response and their compliance on the

ground. Empowering civil society to respond can be a vital catalyst to promote the adoption of policies and programs that can begin to close this gap.

- **Engage Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation.** Last summer in Kiev, Commissioners were instrumental in securing passage of a resolution that, among other things, called attention to “the unique contribution that the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation could make to OSCE efforts to promote greater tolerance and combat anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination” The 2007 Mediterranean Seminar in Tel Aviv, indeed showcased in a frank and constructive way the common problems of intolerance faced in the OSCE and the Med Partners Region. The people of Israel, its government and its civil society, engaged and shared lessons from their own experience. In contrast, we were stunned that, especially under the banner of a seminar on tolerance, Arab partners would object to a fellow Partner state’s hosting of a meeting and refuse to attend or to participate only at the level of a junior embassy officer. We hope Commissioners will discuss with colleagues at the Parliamentary Assembly Winter Meeting, how to follow up on the broad sentiment among delegations that this behavior runs contrary to the spirit of the Mediterranean Partnership.
- **Lead by Example -- Strengthen the fight against anti-Semitism and intolerance at home.** Helsinki Commissioners have been instrumental in advancing the fight against global anti-Semitism on the international stage. As legislators, each of you has the ability to also strengthen America’s efforts to address anti-Semitism and hate. The federal government has an essential role to play in helping law enforcement, communities, and schools implement effective hate crime prevention programs and activities. The new Anti-Defamation League audit of anti-Semitic incidents found that, although there was a quantitative decline, a troubling number of incidents took place in public schools against students, and often by students. We know of no federal anti-bias or hate crime education and prevention programming that is currently addressing youth hate violence. Members of Congress should authorize federal anti-bias and hate crime education programs to help schools and communities address violent bigotry.

The Vital Role of the CSCE: Sustaining Momentum and Continuity

The Anti-Defamation League has consistently highlighted the work of the Helsinki Commission as a model parliamentary initiative other governments should replicate. The Commissioners have been an important force in placing anti-Semitism and human rights issues on the agenda of the OSCE and its bodies. You have amplified the Commission’s voice during visits and bilateral contacts with parliamentarians and governments across the OSCE region.

In an election year, and at a time of flux in the ODIHR, the Commission is in a unique position to be the engine that drives sustained US focus and support for the OSCE

tolerance agenda. The Helsinki Commission has worked in a substantive and bipartisan way to engage and shape the focus of administration after administration.

America's leadership in making the fight against anti-Semitism and hate a key issue on the OSCE agenda has been singular in its importance and a credit to both the Helsinki Commission and this Administration. As the Bush Administration lays down markers for the future, and as a new administration crafts its agenda, we will look to this Commission to ensure there is sustained U.S. action to build on the momentum that now exists and to invigorate American efforts to ensure that the OSCE continues to be a "center of gravity" in the fight against anti-Semitism and hate.

Appendix I: Sample Anti-Semitic Cartoons



Ad-Dustur, December 1, 2007 (Jordan) The peace seeking Arab is saying "Annapolis," while the devilish Jew marked by the word "Settlements" is saying "Ana-Iblis", which means: "I am a Satan."



The snake, labeled "Zionism," is about to kill Uncle Sam.

Al-Gumhuriyya, November 17, 2007 (Egypt)

Appendix II:
Sampling of Anti-Semitic Incidents by State 2000-2006

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Florida	179	199	173	102	93	115	81
Maryland	24	14	69	51	28	11	6
New Jersey	244	266	297	209	171	192	213
New York	284	381	350	364	302	408	481
Ohio	7	13	19	25	24	18	44
Virginia	10	12	41	35	37	25	15
Washington D.C.	11	6	27	30	15	6	6

Source: The Anti-Defamation League's Annual Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents

Appendix III:

Ten Year Comparison of FBI Hate Crime Statistics (2006-1997)										
	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
Participating Agencies	12,620	12,417	12,711	11,909	12,073	11,987	11,690	12,122	10,730	11,211
Total Hate Crime Incidents Reported	7,722	7,163	7,649	7,489	7,462	9,730	8,063	7,876	7,755	8,049
Number of States, including D.C.	49	50	50	50	50	50	49	49	47	49
Percentage of U.S. Population Agencies Represented	85.2	82.7%	86.6%	82.8%	85.7%	85.0%	84.2%	85.0%	80.0%	83.0%

Offenders' Reported Motivations in Percentages of Incidents (2006-1997)										
	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
Racial Bias	4,000/51.8	3,919/54.7	4,402/57.5	3,844/51.3	3,642/48.8	4,367/44.9	4,337/53.8	4,295/54.5	4,321/55.7	4,710/58.5
<i>Anti-Black</i>	2,640/34.2	2,630/36.7	2,731/35.7	2,548/34.0	2,486/33.3	2,899/30	3,884/35.8	2,486/33.3	2,901/37.4	3,120/38.8
<i>Anti-White</i>	890/11.5	828/11.6	829/10.8	830/11.1	719/9.6	891/9.1	875/10.9	781/9.9	792/10.2	993/12.3
<i>Anti-Asian / Pacific Islander</i>	181/2.3	199/2.8	217/2.8	231/3.1	217/2.9	280/2.9	281/3.5	298/3.8	293/3.8	347/4.3
Religious Bias	1,462/18.9	1,227/17.1	1,374/18.0	1,343/17.9	1,426/19.1	1,828/18.8	1,472/18.3	1,411/17.9	1,390/17.9	1,385/17.2
<i>Anti-Semitic</i>	967/12.5	848/11.8	954/12.5	927/12.4	931/12.5	1,043/10.7	1,109/13.8	1,109/14.1	1,081/13.9	1,087/13.5
<i>Anti-Semitic as Percentage of Religious Bias</i>	66	69	69	69	65	57	75	79	78	79
<i>Anti-Muslim</i>	156/2.0	128/1.8	156/2.0	149/2.0	155/2.1	481/4.9	28/0.35	32/0.40	21/0.27	28/0.35
Ethnicity / National Origin	984/12.7	944/13.2	972/12.7	1026/13.7	1,102/14.8	2,098/21.6	911/11.3	829/10.5	754/9.7	836/10.4
<i>Anti-Hispanic</i>	576/7.5	522/7.3	475/6.2	426/5.7	480/6.4	597/6.1	557/6.9	466/5.9	754/9.7	491/6.1
Sexual Orientation	1,195/15.5	1,017/14.2	1,197/15.6	1,239/16.5	1,244/16.7	1,393/14.3	1,299/16.1	1,317/16.7	1,206/16.2	1,102/13.7
Disability	79/1.0	53/0.74	57/0.74	33/0.44	45/0.59	35/0.36	36/0.45	19/0.24	25/0.32	12/0.15

Compiled by the Anti-Defamation League's Washington Office from information collected by the FBI

More information about ADL's resources on response to hate violence can be found at the League's Website: www.adl.org