## **Input for the report of the UN Secretary-General pursuant to the UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/78/234 Submitted by the World Jewish Congress**

The World Jewish Congress (WJC), representing Jewish communities and organizations in more than 100 countries around the world, advocates on their behalf towards governments, parliaments, international organizations, and other faiths. The WJC represents the plurality of the Jewish people and is politically non-partisan. As the “Diplomatic Arm of the Jewish People,” the WJC has been active in countless campaigns since its inception: advocating for justice for Holocaust victims and their heirs and protecting the memory of the Holocaust; obtaining restitution of, or compensation for, stolen Jewish property; countering antisemitism and delegitimization of the State of Israel, as well as the denial of Jewish right to self-determination; and engaging in dialogue with other faith-based organizations, but most of all, the protection and fostering of Jewish minority communities around the world. The WJC has had a Special Consultative status to ECOSOC since 1947, among the first NGOs to do so.

Over the last years, Jewish communities around the world have witnessed a gravely concerning rise in antisemitic attitudes, exacerbated by global developments such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the Hamas terrorist attack against Israel on October 7, 2023. The World Jewish Congress urges the United Nations to redouble the efforts to fight antisemitism, which is a form of racism as much as it is a form of discrimination based on religion, as this hatred undermines the UN’s basic principles and founding goals as stipulated in the UN Charter. The fight against racism is incomplete without the fight against antisemitism.

The World Jewish Congress would like to make the following submission:

**Hate speech, incitement to racial discrimination, hostility and violence (preambular paragraph 6).**

A World Jewish Congress (WJC) report, released during the UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva, highlights anti-Israel bias in the English-language Wikipedia. This bias manifests through terminology, framing, and lack of context, using one-sided sources and omitting critical information. Combating hate speech online is essential in preventing its spread to the analogous realm, resulting in attacks against minority communities, and to that extent, the World Jewish congress has also [advocated](https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/wjc-calls-on-european-commission-to-strengthen-response-to-antisemitism) to the European Commission to effectively combat antisemitism by ensuring that platforms fulfill their due diligence obligations in relation to EU Digital Services Act.

A tool to combat the online spread of misinformation which fuels hatred and prejudice is readily available information about historical events concerning targeted communities. The World Jewish Congress, in cooperation with UNESCO, developed an educational resource website aboutholocaust.org available in 18 languages, which offers factual information about the Holocaust. Moreover, this important tool has been integrated with social media platforms such as Meta and TikTok, so that users searching for terms relating to the Holocaust are directed to this educational resource. Additionally, the WJC [advocates](https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/wjc-urges-world-to-combat-antisemitism-during-meeting-on-75th-anniversary-of-the-genocide-convention) for swift removal of content denying or diminishing the Holocaust from social media platforms.

During the Human Rights Council 56th Session, the World Jewish Congress will be holding a Side Event entitled “Contemporary Manifestations of Antisemitism – Voices from Campus”, where Jewish students from around the world narrate their experience of antisemitic and racist prejudice which they have been increasingly subjected to since the October 7th attack of Hamas on Israel and the subsequent Israel-Hamas war.

As part of the WJC Institute for Technology and Human Right launch, which coincides with International Day for Countering Hate Speech, the WJC, in partnership with UNESCO, unveiled a comprehensive report, [“AI and the Holocaust: Rewriting History – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Understanding the Holocaust.”](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000390211) The just-released report, published by UNESCO in partnership with WJC, explores the ethical and educational benefits and challenges that AI, and especially Generative AI (GAI), have on Holocaust memory, education and the spread of Holocaust denial and distortion.

**Extent and impact of systemic racism and effective legal, policy and institutional measures that address racism beyond a summation of individualized acts (paragraph 26).**

The WJC advocates for the implementation of the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of antisemitism](https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism), as well as the National Strategies on Combating Antisemitism. The IHRA definition serves as a valuable resource, illustrating the various forms in which antisemitism manifests and the harm it inflicts on Jewish individuals and communities.

With its comprehensive list of eleven examples of antisemitic expressions, the IHRA Working Definition offers a practical tool for identifying and addressing this pervasive issue. Since 2017, the following 43 states have adopted the (IHRA) working definition on antisemitism: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States and Uruguay. The IHRA definition has also been adopted by various organisations and international and transnational entities. The WJC encourages more states to do so as well.

**Reparatory justice initiatives regarding slavery, the slave trade, the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism, apartheid, genocide and past tragedies contributing to the development and recognition of the dignity of the affected States and their people (paragraph 22).**

Holocaust remembrance plays a crucial role in fostering a collective understanding of the profound impact of genocide and mass atrocities on individuals, societies, and nations.

Such reparatory justice initiatives also include legislation on restitution of Nazi looted art, such as in the UK, US, and France. Germany has established an Advisory Commission on the return of cultural property seized because of Nazi persecution, especially from Jewish possession. The Netherlands has established Netherlands Art Property Foundation to facilitate the restitution of artwork stolen during the Holocaust. The World Jewish Congress encourages states to develop national processes to restitute Nazi confiscated art. Many states also signed Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art and have since implemented the Washington Principles. The WJC advises more action to be taken concerning the matter.

WJC also supports interfaith dialogues and initiatives. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jews and Muslims gathered to observe International Holocaust Remembrance Day and promote compassion amid the Israel-Hamas conflict. The event highlighted shared experiences of persecution and emphasized unity for peace. Husein Kavazović, head of Bosnia’s Islamic Community, and Menachem Rosensaft, a child of Holocaust survivors, addressed the gathering, urging the rejection of antisemitism, Islamophobia, and hatred. They recalled historical acts of mutual aid between Bosnian Muslims and Jews. The event concluded with the launch of the [Srebrenica Muslim-Jewish Peace and Remembrance Initiative](https://apnews.com/article/bosnia-muslims-jews-observe-holocaust-remembrance-day-bcf9f1039d722ddfbf9b4d6af6622f5b), committing both communities to collaboration, remembrance, and combating bigotry. Initiatives like this can strengthen alliances and support among groups.

**The OHCHR would also welcome information concerning laws, regulations, policies and practices adopted to eliminate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance including national action plans against racism, data collection, education and awareness-raising; measures to provide effective remedies, recourse, and redress; promising practices, initiatives, challenges and lessons learned, notably in relation to the areas specified above; as well as the perspectives of women, youth, children and relevant gender dimensions and intersectional analyses.**

One key initiative in combatting antisemitism is the establishment of a nationwide reporting system to document antisemitic incidents, particularly those not classified as criminal offenses. In Germany, to advance this civil-society project in collaboration with federal states, the [Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism](http://rias-department-node.html) (Bundesverband RIAS e.V.) was founded in Berlin in October 2018. This organization aims to systematically record and analyze instances of antisemitism, providing valuable data to inform policy and promote effective countermeasures. The World Jewish Congress advocates for the adoption of initiatives similar to RIAS in Germany, which collect data on antisemitic incidents, to be implemented globally.

[ODIHR Words into Action](https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/4/269756.pdf) is a series of publications developed by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). These publications provide guidance and practical tools for policymakers, law enforcement officials, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to effectively address various forms of hate crime and hate speech and offers support to participating states in implementing their commitments to combat hate crimes and hate speech. The publications cover a wide range of topics related to hate crime and hate speech, including legal frameworks, data collection and reporting, victim support, and prevention strategies. The European Commission adopted the first [EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combatting-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-antisemitism/eu-strategy-combating-antisemitism-and-fostering-jewish-life-2021-2030_en) in October 2021. This strategy includes actions across remembrance, education, and legislation. It aims to ensure the protection of Jewish people, improve data collection on antisemitic incidents, and foster Holocaust education. The strategy also involves enhancing security for Jewish communities and encouraging member states to adopt measures aligned with the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

The United States launched a comprehensive [strategy to counter antisemitism](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/05/25/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-releases-first-ever-u-s-national-strategy-to-counter-antisemitism/) in May 2023. This strategy involves over 100 actions across several domains. These include increasing awareness and understanding of antisemitism, improving the safety and security of Jewish communities, reversing the normalization of antisemitism, and fostering cross-community solidarity. Specific [measures](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/06/02/the-u-s-national-strategy-to-counter-antisemitism-key-actions-by-pillar-2/) include incorporating antisemitism education into federal diversity training programs, improving hate crime data collection, and increasing federal funding for the security of Jewish institutions. The Department of Education has initiated an [Antisemitism Awareness Campaign](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/09/28/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-takes-landmark-step-to-counter-antisemitism/) to address rising antisemitism in schools and colleges. Additionally, the Department of Justice (DOJ) is enhancing community engagement and law enforcement training to prevent hate crimes and improve reporting and response to antisemitic incidents.

Teaching about the Holocaust highlights the dangers of prejudice, hate, and dehumanization. It serves as a powerful example of what can happen when discrimination and racism are allowed to flourish unchecked. The Holocaust is taught extensively throughout Europe as a critical component of historical education, ensuring that the atrocities committed are remembered and understood. In the United States, the [“Never Again Education Act”](https://www.congress.gov/116/plaws/publ141/PLAW-116publ141.pdf) facilitates Holocaust education by providing resources and funding to enhance Holocaust education in schools. Similarly, the United Arab Emirates has [integrated Holocaust education into its curriculum](https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/13/middleeast/uae-first-arab-nation-holocaust-mime-intl/index.html), reflecting a commitment to promoting historical awareness and tolerance. The World Jewish Congress advocates for a comprehensive approach to Holocaust education globally. This initiative stems from the recognition that teaching about the Holocaust is not only vital for preserving the memory of the victims but also crucial for fostering a broader understanding of the mechanisms of prejudice, hatred, and genocide.

The "Meet the Jew" program, also known as Likrat, in countries such as [Austria](https://www.ikg-wien.at/Likrat), [Germany](https://www.meetajew.de/), [Moldova](https://www.likrat.org/) and [Switzerland](https://likrat.ch/de/projekt/), represents best practices in education aimed at combating antisemitism, xenophobia, and racism, particularly from the perspective of students. The program is peer-led, with Jewish youth engaging directly with their non-Jewish peers. Meeting Jewish individuals in person helps to dispel stereotypes by replacing preconceived notions with firsthand experiences. This peer-to-peer interaction makes the discussions more relatable and impactful for participants. By promoting cultural exchange, Likrat encourages empathy and respect for diversity. This approach helps to build inclusive communities where antisemitism and other forms of discrimination are less likely to take root.

Interfaith initiatives facilitate dialogue and interaction between people of different religious backgrounds, helping to build understanding, empathy, and respect for diverse beliefs and traditions. The World Jewish Congress actively supports and encourages the implementation of programs that promote interfaith dialogue, recognizing their invaluable contribution to building bridges.

In 2017, the Latin American Jewish Congress, the regional branch of the World Jewish Congress, along with organizations representing the four Abrahamic faiths in Latin America (Judaism, Catholicism, Evangelism, and Islam), came together in Argentina to sign what is now known as the [“Declaration of Latin America and the Caribbean as an Interreligious Coexistence Zone.”](https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/a-toast-to-interfaith-dialogue-in-latin-america-9-3-2020) This initiative has subsequently facilitated numerous interfaith meetings, conducted in the spirit of peace and interreligious dialogue.

Similar interfaith initiatives also represent the [Abrahamic Family House](https://www.abrahamicfamilyhouse.ae/) in the UAE, which serves as a powerful symbol of tolerance, acceptance, and mutual respect. It demonstrates a commitment to fostering understanding and cooperation among people of different faiths, while also promoting the values of peace and coexistence. This project has the potential to inspire similar initiatives around the world and contribute to building a more inclusive and harmonious society.

Implementing workshops focused on media literacy and critical thinking can significantly help individuals in identifying and critically analyzing hate speech and misinformation online. These workshops, tailored for various age groups, can be conducted in collaboration with educational institutions and community organizations to enhance their reach and impact.

As an example, The [Finnish National Agency for Education](https://toolbox.finland.fi/life-society/media-literacy-and-education-in-finland/) runs media literacy workshops for schools, helping students develop critical thinking skills to identify and counter hate speech and misinformation online.