



24 May 2013

To:

Mr. Mutuma Ruteere

Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Subject: Report on glorification of Nazism: inadmissibility of certain practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Dear Sir,

1. The International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists (IAJLJ) is a non-governmental organization that was founded in 1969 by Nobel Peace Prize laureate René Cassin of France, US Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg and Israel Supreme Court Justice Haim Cohn. The Association enjoys Category II status at the United Nations.
2. The Association is composed of lawyers, judges, judicial officers and academic jurists from many countries who are active locally and internationally. One of the main goals of the IAJLJ is to promote pluralism and human rights and prevent the rise of racism and especially antisemitism and Nazism.
3. The IAJLJ is greatly concerned by the recent rise of racism and Nazism in Europe and elsewhere. We hope that the information presented here, based on official reports published during 2012-2013 regarding racism and antisemitism around the world, will assist you in preparing an accurate and comprehensive report and will improve and facilitate the implementation of GA resolution A/RES/67/154.
4. Neo-Nazi political parties are growing stronger in Europe, despite the painful history of these beliefs and practices in this continent. .
5. As is reflected by a report recently submitted to the Council of Europe, **Nils Muiznieks Report of the Commissioner on Human Rights to the Council of Europe – following a visit to Greece 16 April 2013** (The report is annexed to this letter) the political party “Golden Dawn” gained 6.7% of the Greek votes in the recent national elections and holds 18 seats in the Greek parliament. As the report notes, the party’s website, documents and behavior reveals its fascist and Nazi nature.<sup>1</sup>
6. The report also indicates that different communities in Greece - immigrants, Roma and Jews - are constantly being targeted by members and supporters of “Golden Dawn”. Indeed, some of the “Golden Dawn” MPs have been charged with related criminal offences and their immunity has been removed allowing them to be tried; nonetheless, the IAJLJ finds it worrying that this

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<sup>1</sup> *Id.* §§ 13-17.



political party that expresses anti-democratic views, speaks in favor of violence and supports attacks on vulnerable groups can, in fact, participate in the Greek parliament.

7. Another European state where Nazism and racism are making inroads is Hungary. As noted by the US Department of State in relation to human rights practices around the world,<sup>2</sup> numerous incidents of antisemitism, Holocaust denial and glorification of Nazi figures occurred there during 2012.
8. Among these incidents was the public demand (by a Hungarian MP) to create a list of all the Jewish government officials and members of parliament so as to allow them to be recognized and distinguished in view of the fact that they should be regarded as posing a 'national security risk'. Jewish public figures were verbally and physically assaulted during 2012. In addition, antisemitic articles are still published in various radical newspapers and publications.
9. Most worrying are the numerous antisemitic statements made by public figures associated with right wing extremist groups as well as government officials and MPs. These statements relate *inter alia* to the alleged "blood libel" and ritual killings by Jews (a well-known antisemitic narrative that served antisemitism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and increased the incidence of pogroms against Jewish communities). Moreover, various MPs have been reported to have conducted "genetic tests" to prove that their ancestors are not Jewish or Roma. This behavior is reminiscent of similar acts committed more than half a century ago; acts that should have been eliminated long ago from the public sphere.
10. Although condemnation has been voiced and some of the persons behaving in this way have been brought to justice, these numerous and repeated incidents are a matter of concern and should be addressed by the law enforcement agencies and through preventive education.
11. Similarly, the situation in the Ukraine should be reviewed by the Special Rapporteur. Although incidents of antisemitism and racism have decreased in recent years, they still abound.<sup>3</sup> Antisemitic statements were made throughout the 2012 parliamentary election campaign, in an effort to garner controversial votes. Moreover, several physical attacks and incidents of vandalism targeted Jewish figures, symbols and Holocaust memorials. Nonetheless, the IAJLJ notes that certain public figures, including high governmental officials have condemned these incidents and continue to combat racism and antisemitism.
12. Finally, the IAJLJ wishes to draw the Special Rapporteur's attention to Venezuela and the rise of antisemitism and anti-Zionist statements and incidents in the public media as well as by members of parliament.<sup>4</sup>
13. In light of the above, the IAJLJ firmly believes that a comprehensive report on these countries is needed.

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<sup>2</sup> 'Hungary – Country Report on Human Rights practice for 2012' The US Department of State – Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, pp. 35-38 (the report is annexed to this letter).

<sup>3</sup> 'Ukraine - Country Report on Human Rights practice for 2012' The US Department of State – Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, pp. 36-37 (the report is annexed to this letter).

<sup>4</sup> 'Venezuela – Country Report on Human Rights practice for 2012' The US Department of State – Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, p. 39 (the report is annexed to this letter).



הארגון הבינלאומי של עורכי-דין ומשפטנים יהודים (ע"ר)  
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LAWYERS AND JURISTS (R.A.)

14. The IAJLJ is willing to assist in any way needed by the Special Rapporteur to complete his report and accomplish the important goal of reducing and ultimately eliminating the phenomena of antisemitism and neo-Nazism.
15. We remain at your disposal should there be a need to clarify or elaborate on any of the matters presented here.

Yours sincerely,

Irit Kohn, Adv.

President